



CHAI LIGHTS

June 2021

Pacific Community of Cultural Jews

Orange County, CA 714-739-1366
PacifComm@aol.com www.pccjews.org

End of the Year Party June 27, 2021 1:00 p.m. Lunch is Served!

For the first time since March 2020, we will be having an in-person End of the Year party. Come one, Come all to

Bryon and Suzy Baron's Home
1141 E. Tularosa Ave.

Orange

bryonbaron@sbcglobal.net
714-394-3059 or 657-274-3440



Pacific Community will be providing lunch. The End of the Year party will be outdoors for members only. Protocols will be followed (masks and social distancing).

Please RSVP to bryonbaron@sbcglobal.net **no later than** June 23rd. Hope to see everyone, actually SEE everyone!

Please join me in welcoming our newest members, Norton Schwartz. Norton was a member in 2017, and now returned to our community.

Welcome back, Norton!

And now a word from our President:

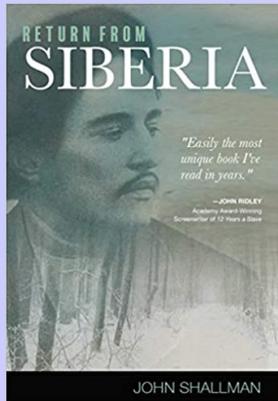
As noted on page 1, your Board at its last meeting decided to hold our annual year-end party in person. They felt that the majority of our members had probably received their Covid shots and would be comfortable getting together following CDC guidelines (masks and social distancing). The party will be for members only and will be held outdoors at the Baron's home and will include a lunch. We hope the majority of you will be comfortable in attending under these conditions. It's been a year and a half since we have been together in person and we have been through some tough times. It will be nice to see each other in person and be able to schmooze and catch up.



Since we will be serving food, we would appreciate it if you would RSVP by the noted date in the announcement.

The Program Committee will be holding a planning meeting during the summer and would appreciate your input as to what programs you would like to see continued and any new programming ideas you might like to see undertaken in the coming year. Hopefully, we will be able to have the majority of these in person. We will keep you posted as to the date and time of the planning meeting.

Bryon Baron
Pacific Community President



BOOK REVIEW RETURN FROM SIBERIA

By John Shallman

This is a true saga of the author's great grandfather who was exiled to Siberia near the time of the Russian revolution. His story was told in a 100 year old manuscript that was found in his attic after his death. He was sent to Siberia because of his pro-revolutionary ideas and political activities.

In Siberia he suffered horrible brutality, as well as near-death experiences. After receiving much help, mostly from strangers, he escaped and wound up in America, where he continued his struggles to lift up exploited workers. His efforts brought him in conflict with some family members, while others continued his legacy.

The book brings out many of the similarities in the political environment of Russia leading up to World War I and present day American politics.

The manuscript that told his story was written entirely in Yiddish. It was translated with the help of staff at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Massachusetts (also by Hershl Hartman, who is one of the founders of the Sholem Community of Los Angeles).

I found this book extremely inspirational and well written. I would recommend it to all.

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

Philosopher's Café

(Our Friendly Discussion Group)

June 11, 2021 - 7:30 p.m.

Via Zoom

The Zoom link will be sent out to those who RSVP to Jim Rothman by June 8th. Look for it in your email. Then on June 11th, click on the link and join in the fun.

To make sure we have your correct email address, please email Jim at jrbythec@aol.com, so he can include you.



Congratulations

Happy Birthday!

Gina Moss - 6/16
Norma Kellam - 6/18
Barbara Bogorad - 6/22
Hana Avishay - 6/28
Nancy Okamoto - 6/30

Happy Anniversary!

Bryon & Suzy Baron - 6/24
Frank & Lee Field - 6/24





Jews to Know Helen Suzman

Helen Suzman was born as Helen Gavronsky in 1917 to Lithuanian Jewish immigrants to South Africa. She started college at Witwatersrand University. At age 19 she left college to marry Moses Suzman, a physician. The couple had 2 daughters. She returned to college to finish her degree, in economics. During World War II she worked as a statistician for the War Supply Board. After the war ended, she obtained a lecturer position at Witwatersrand U.

Suzman became a member of the South African Institute of Labor Relations. She prepared evidence for a governmental commission's inquiry into the laws applying to Blacks in urban areas and to the system of migrant labor. This made her aware of the hardships Blacks faced seeking work in urban areas.

Suzman was elected to the South African parliament (note: Blacks were excluded, due to apartheid laws) in 1953, representing a White district of Johannesburg. In 1959, she joined 11 other Members of Parliament (MPs) in forming the activist Progressive Party. The Progressives called for the right to vote for Blacks, for the abolition of internal passports, and for the legalization of Black trade unions. All the other Progressives lost their seats in the next election, leaving Suzman as the lone parliamentary voice against apartheid for the next 13 years. Often when votes required MPs to stand for counting, she stood alone at one end of the parliamentary chamber and all the other MPs stood opposing her. She was subjected to anti-Jewish and anti-woman verbal abuse by MPs of the Nationalist Party. In a period when the apartheid government censored the press, Suzman's parliamentary privilege ensured that her arguments in Parliament could be published. For example, in 1961, she protested the Sharpeville massacre of 69 Blacks who were demonstrating against apartheid.

Suzman was harassed by the police, and her phone line was tapped by them. She often received phone calls with obscene, racist and/or threatening messages. But Suzman gave as well as she took. She became famous for her sharp wit. She famously quipped that John Vorster, the Prime Minister from 1966-1978, should go on a tour of a Black township in heavy disguise... as a human being!

Suzman was a frequent visitor to prisons to protest the brutal treatment of Black and Communist political prisoners. She visited Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned leader of the African National Congress (ANC) party. He later wrote "It was an odd and wonderful sight to see this courageous woman peering into our cells and strolling around our courtyard" on Robben Island. She reported back to Parliament, and managed to get a sadistic warder removed. Another senior ANC member described how "whenever our treatment in prison... improved a little bit, we knew that Suzman was on her way."

Suzman visited minority townships, resettlement areas and squatter camps to bear personal witness to the suffering inflicted on millions of South Africans. She attended the funerals of anti-apartheid activists. She was inundated with requests by individuals to intercede for them with the authorities.

Although principally concerned with racial discrimination, Suzman was also concerned with other issues, including women's rights. She was instrumental in passing legislation that gave Black women equal property rights in marriage, and divorce by consent. She backed the reform of anti-abortion laws. She was against the death penalty. She supported the decriminalization of marijuana use.

Helen Suzman was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. She died in 2009 at age 91. Flags in (post-apartheid) South Africa flew at half-mast in her honor.

The Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ) honored Helen Suzman as their Humanistic Jewish Role Model of the year 2020-21.

Written by Lee Jacobi. Credits: SHJ website; Wikipedia

Written by Lee Jacobi. Credits: Jewday 12/30/2017; Wikipedia



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

All events via Zoom until further notice

Philosopher's Café - June 11, 2021
 End of the Year Party - June 27, 2021
 Philosopher's Café - July 9, 2021
 Program Committee Meeting - TBD

2020 - 2022 PACIFIC COMMUNITY BOARD

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Bryon Baron	Bryonbaron@sbcglobal.net
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Program Co-Coordinator	Cheryl Cohen	Cjbcohen47@gmail.com
Program Co-Coordinator	Karen Knecht	Knechtfour@aol.com
Publicity	Nancy Okamoto	949-386-0400

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