

On the Town

Dreamer's Ball celebrates B'nai B'rith's 90th

This night has exceeded all our expectations!" said Hallie Avolio to the 450 dinner guests at the Dreamer's Ball at Bacara Resort & Spa. It was a magical night with a sold-out crowd celebrating the 90th anniversary of Congregation B'nai B'rith. "We are lucky that our temple continued to grow for 90 years, starting with our founding fathers to today, with over 800 families!"

Among the many in attendance were Ina and Aaron Eitenberg, Lauren and Steven Katz, Alvin Sugarman, Monica Steiner, Madelyn Palley, Daniel and Mandy Hochman, Laurie Dean, Jim and Stephanie Sokolove, Richard Silver, Louise Wyner, Rachel and Walt Wilson, Sissy Taran, Bobbi Kroot, Anne and Michael Towbes, Carrie Towbes, Robert Skinner, and Barry and Kit Liker.

The Dream Team event committee included Hallie Avolio, Elizabeth Fineberg, Ruth Hartzman, temple president Judi Koper, Adele Rosen, Liat Wasserman, Marcy Wimbish and CBB executive director Elizabeth Gaynes.

Rabbi Stephen Cohen shared the love and enthusiasm: "If the founding families could see their temple today, I think they would be utterly overwhelmed with joy and gratitude."

The event honored those first 14 families, including Girsh, Hochman, Rosenthal, Percal, Hartzman and Friedman. The extended family of founding member Leo Sanders was well-represented. Attending were his grandchildren Scott Tevis, with wife Nancy Robins; Prudy Handelman, with husband Steve;



Erin Graffy



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The Dreamer's Ball celebrated the 90th anniversary of Congregation B'nai B'rith. The event honored both founding members of the Jewish temple as well as its beloved cantor, Mark Childs, who was celebrating his 25th anniversary with the temple. From left, grandchildren of founding members Lester and Viola Girsh: Stephen Hochman, Karen Brown and Daniel Hochman with Cantor Mark Childs.

and Richard Sanders, with wife Rosemary. Great-grandchildren included Julian and Katherine Sanders, Ethan and Hsingyi Reece, and George Sanders and Elsinore.

Richard Sanders reminisced about growing up in Santa Barbara at B'nai B'rith. "It's all about community. It was 100 families back then, and it was such a big deal! We had barbecues and picnics, we had social events and school, and it was all part of our extended family growing up."

Delightful musical entertainment was supplied by "We the Folk," with accordion, acoustic guitar, violin, bass, percussion and some phenomenal vocals. This band included folk dance music ("Hava Nagila"), to which a happy line of guests hopped along, and another dance tune that could best be described as a "klezmer tango." This was great stuff.

CBB's anniversary nicely coincided with Cantor Mark Childs celebrating 25 years at the temple.

Rabbi Cohen said, "Mark Childs, like David in the Bible, you have been our 'sweet singer of Israel.' Your voice has restored us; your music has brought us close to God."

A beautiful prayer shawl made by Sharon Landecker was presented to Mr. Childs.

"Imagine a career that offers something new every day," Mr. Childs gratefully related to the crowd. "Imagine a career where compassion is the bottom line. Imagine the day beginning by being treated like a rock star by preschoolers and then singing at senior centers, where the citizens treat you like a grandson; where many a morning has you at a hospice or hospital easing the transition ... and then in the afternoon you're under a chuppah with another transition. Then you might get an inkling of what it's like to serve as your cantor."

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