

Local Author Arleen Mavorah Turns Hearty Laughs Into Hearty Meals

Attendees could hear the buzz as they entered The Nail Connection in Allenhurst, but it wasn't coming from the emery boards, foot files or buffers. It was the 60 plus people who recently gathered to celebrate the launch of author Arleen Mavorah's new book *There's a Skinny Person Inside Me...But I Shut the B---- Up With a Cookie*, a comic account of a yo-yo dieter. Sharon's Nail Connection hosted the party for their long-time client because the salon turned party venue was the birthplace of the book's title.

This funny, Dr. Seuss-like book takes readers on a week-long journey into the life of a dieter.

The wine and cheese party was replete with all the trimmings, but wait. The centerpiece was a large basket of decorative cookies, with smaller baskets placed around the room.

Cookies at a book party about dieters? "No one ever got fat from a cookie," the author said. It's hard to argue with that.

"If every day were Monday, we'd all be thin," said Mavorah. "Each

Monday millions of people start a diet and, unfortunately, lose their nerve as the week progresses. We are a nation obsessed with being skinny; always searching for some magic diet that will make us thin



forever. In trying so hard to be perfect when we're dieting, we're more imperfect than we realize, and in doing so we are funny. The book outlines the many things we do, or think we do in the name of weight loss. Dieting is no laughing matter, but it matters that we laugh. Humor makes us feel good, and so a lighthearted perspective enables us to view our challenges in a more positive way."

And a lighthearted perspective it is. If you've ever been on a diet, you'll relate to this very unique book. This laugh-out loud gem takes you on a rollicking week, from choosing a diet to exercising, snacking and

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even shopping at a colossal food store.

Mavorah graduated from Brooklyn College with a bachelor's degree in education and has a master's in early childhood education. She taught pre-school, and was a substitute teacher during different periods of her life. But she was primarily a stay-at-home mom, raising her three children, Ian, Cori and Rachel, who are now grown. She is no stranger to the world of dieting. For as long as she can remember, and that goes back to having to shop in the "chubby" department as a child, she's battled with unwanted weight. She struggled often with what's called the see-saw of dieting, or yo-yo dieting, losing and then gaining weight frequently.

Some 20 years ago, she found her way into the weight loss industry. She was a partner in Weight 'n See Inc, went on to work at Jenny Craig as a consultant and later, counseled adolescents.

"From the time I started working in the weight loss industry, I knew I wanted to write a humorous book about dieters. Since I was one of the 'club' I'd be poking fun at all of us," said Mavorah. "And we are so funny. I could write a book about excuses alone. We've used every excuse known to mankind for

not losing weight or, heaven forbid, gaining weight! And so few, amazingly, have to do with overeating."

Mavorah's tenacity and sense of humor have paid off. This summer she published *There's a Skinny Person Inside me...but I Shut the B---- Up with a Cookie*. In her remarks at her book launch, Mavorah said that dieters are in a class by themselves. Reading some excerpts from her book along with commentary brought laughter to the packed room.

"Keep laughing," she said. "It burns calories!"

She wasn't kidding, and demonstrated this by holding up a newspaper article with the headline: Laugh Yourself Thin!

Mavorah went on to say, "While being thin is such an obsession for many, there's a whole other segment of our society that goes to bed hungry each night. Who among us can't conjure up the memory of coming home to the wonderful aromas of our mothers' cooking? It hurts to think otherwise."

For many years she worked with the Jewish Family and Children's Services delivering Meals on Wheels, so it comes as no surprise that 10% of the proceeds from her book will be donated to the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Last year the FoodBank distributed 6.8 million pounds of food to over 260 feeding programs including food pantries, soup kitchens, churches, synagogues, day care centers and senior housing centers.

"Americans spend about 40 billion dollars a year on diets and diet-related products trying to lose weight while the need for emergency food is up 84% from four years ago in Monmouth and Ocean Counties alone," Mavorah said.

"How fitting for a book

about people who eat too much and eat when they think they are hungry, to benefit those, who unfortunately, know the true meaning of hunger. One dollar in the FoodBank equals four pounds of food, which equals three meals. Talk about weight—we don't know how lucky we are. Wouldn't it be wonderful if I can help put a dent, however so small, in that 40 billion dollars and divert it to this very needy cause?"

After her speech, Arleen signed copies of her book, which is gaining popularity and is a great tool for discussions among weight loss groups and book clubs. It can be purchased on Amazon.com. □

