

M'Yad L'Yad

Enhancing lives through uniquely personal
yet anonymous giving



JUNE, 2011

M'YAD L'YAD NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 20

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SPRING BENEFIT FUNDRAISER HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL

Evening Honors Rabbi Ian S. Jacknis and Dr. Eugene Antenucci

On April 10, friends of M'Yad L'Yad sent a strong message of support for M'Yad L'Yad and our Recipients, as 220 people packed the ballroom at the Hamlet Country Club in Commack for a benefit concert honoring our supporters, Rabbi Ian S. Jacknis and Dr. Eugene Antenucci.

The evening, which was co-chaired by Marilyn Leibowitz, Renay Weisberg and Ellen Greenberg, began with attendees crowding around the raffle tables, selecting items they wished to bid on in the Chinese and Silent auctions. Dozens of prizes were offered, including gift certificates to restaurants such as Bistro Cassis and Grasso's, tours of East End vineyards, luggage, sports memorabilia and artwork. Guests also partook of the scrumptious buffet spread offered by the Hamlet.

Board member Susan Lustig welcomed everyone, followed by Cantor Sandra Sherry of Temple Beth El in Huntington (and a M'Yad L'Yad board member) who offered the invocation. Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern presented M'Yad L'Yad with a check for the Suffolk County Community Support

Initiative grant which he sponsored on our behalf, and he then presented a proclamation to our honorees. Next, Town of Huntington Supervisor and

event honorary co-chair Frank Petrone spoke eloquently about why he so passionately supports M'Yad L'Yad. Huntington Councilwomen Susan Berland and Glenda Jackson also offered remarks, followed by a presentation of proclamations to Rabbi

Jacknis and Dr. Antenucci.

Board member Roz Sherman then introduced Dr. Antenucci, a Huntington dentist and M'Yad L'Yad benefactor. She noted that "he gets credit for bringing smiles to faces throughout this room, and he didn't even have to use a

drill on anyone." Dr. Antenucci accepted a Scroll of Honor in his name, as well as a beautiful Tzedakah box, and he spoke of the importance of giving back to the community.

Susan Lustig then introduced our other honoree, Rabbi Ian S. Jacknis of South Huntington Jewish Center, and a M'Yad L'Yad Board member since its inception. Susan noted that "through your efforts

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Honoree Rabbi Ian S. Jacknis addresses the audience



Dancing to the music of Six Gun

"He who waits to do a great deal of good at once will never do anything"

Samuel Johnson

Reflections From The President



Dear Friends,

This has been a very exciting and productive year.

We welcomed five new committed, motivated Board Members; Eden Fisher, Helen Rock, and Barbara Rubel, who are all educators; Mitchell Kantor, an accountant; and Jaret Weber, an attorney.

As M'Yad L'Yad continues to grow, we gain more community recognition and support. Our case-load has increased by twenty percent. Our fundraising efforts have flourished. All of this made us realize that we needed to develop a plan to guide us into the future. With their extensive experience and forward looking vision, Dr. Stephen Greenberg and Wayne Barnstone chaired a Strategic Planning Committee. They made us think about many important issues. Ultimately, after all the meetings and discussions, the Board adopted a well thought-out Strategic Plan

which will allow us to move forward in a judicious, meaningful manner. I thank all who participated in developing this Plan.

Our fundraising activities have met our budget goals. Under the guidance of Marilyn Leibowitz, her untiring energy and a competent, enthusiastic committee, the Spring Event was a magical, successful evening.

And then came a letter from Mark Zimmerman, our Executive Director and Janet Zimmerman, our Social Worker, offering their resignations. Both have executed their responsibilities superbly. Practices and procedures they developed helped make us a more efficient, effective organization. They were the catalysts for our growth. It is with sorrow in our hearts that we wish them well in their future endeavors.

It is now my pleasure to introduce and welcome M'Yad L'Yad's

new Executive Director, Steven Jarmon, who has a marketing and communications background. He has begun shadowing Mark to familiarize himself with our procedures for a more seamless transition. Steve is eager to meet and begin working with Board Members, Sponsors and all who make up M'Yad L'Yad.

As I close this year, I am sad about the loss of two valued staff members. I am happy about all the successes we had this past year. I look forward to engaging a new Social Worker very soon. Implementing our Strategic Plan and working with the Board and our new Staff promises another exciting and productive year.

I wish all of you a happy, healthy summer with good fortune.

Gloria Safran

A RECIPIENT'S STORY

Helen

Helen is a 72-year-old widow. She lost her husband seven years ago. She told me that they did everything together; they were soul-mates. She has suffered from depression ever since. She is under the care of a psychiatrist but hasn't "found a place for herself." Her house has been refinanced twice,

and she is afraid she will lose it. Her daughter, son-in-law and twin grandchildren live with her; they lost their home when the son-in-law lost his job. Helen has a hearing impairment but cannot afford a hearing aid. She also suffers from rheumatoid arthritis.

Financially things are extremely

difficult, which adds to Helen's depression and anxiety.

Helen became a recipient a little over a month ago. She has not yet been matched with a sponsor, and is hoping to be matched very soon.

Janet Zimmerman

M'Yad L'Yad - Helping Hands

Mission Statement

M'Yad L'Yad-Helping Hands is dedicated to enhancing the lives of the needy on Long Island based upon the highest ideals of Judaism. Through anonymous pairing of volunteer Sponsors with Recipients, we extend a helping hand to provide not only material assistance, but also ongoing relationships, friendship and dignity.

Our Program

M'Yad L'Yad-Helping Hands makes it possible to give in a way that is personal, yet always anonymous. We match volunteer Sponsors with needy Recipients, asking Sponsors to send packages to their Recipients four times per year in order to enhance their lives. Sponsors might send toys, clothing, gift cards, school supplies, or other items that are best suited to their Recipient's individual needs. We are a local organization, supporting families on Long Island. To join with us, please call (631) 486-6636 or e-mail us at hands@myadlyad.org.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR SOCIAL WORKER



Pictures of Poverty

Nothing in the world is more grievous than poverty, the most terrible of all sufferings....For one who is crushed by poverty is like one to whom all the troubles of the world cling and upon whom all the curses of Deuteronomy (28:15-68) have descended.

Our Rabbis said: If all the sufferings and pain in the world were gathered (on one side of a scale) and poverty was on the other side, poverty would outweigh them all.

-Exodus Rabbah 31:12 and 31:14

As the social worker for M'Yad L'Yad, I've become familiar with our Recipients' narratives. From listening to their stories, which are diverse, I've seen that they share at least one common denominator. That denominator is poverty. I think that sometimes it's hard for us to imagine what poverty looks like for our Recipients. I'd like to share some specific information with you on this subject which will help you picture what life is like for three of our Recipient families.

Cindy, a 53-year-old mother of two adult children, married to a man with many health issues, recently lost her father to Alzheimer's disease. Her dad had been sick for many years, and she cared for him in her home. Life was extremely difficult. When Cindy's father passed away, Cindy did not have enough money for stamps to send thank you notes to friends and family who had made donations in his memory. Not enough money for stamps!

Jenny, a 65-year-old grandmother who is caring for her teenage grandchildren, was sleeping on a couch, as was her grandson, so that her granddaughter could sleep in a bed and have some privacy. Jenny's grandson, Joseph, is so tall that his feet hung over the edge of the couch and his lack of comfortable sleep was interfering with his school functioning. Not enough money for a mattress!

Jeremy, 12 years old, had to get up in front of his class to give a report. All the boys were told to wear a shirt and tie for the occa-

sion. Jeremy's dad, Marc, did not have the money to buy his son a shirt and tie. Jeremy wore a clean, collared shirt and pressed jeans. He was given a failing grade by his teacher for "inappropriate attire." Not enough money for a shirt and tie!

Luckily for these Recipients, their generous Sponsors have made a huge impact on their lives. Cindy's Sponsor sent gift cards to help defray the cost of stamps and shiva meals. A donation of a pull-out sofa sleeper was given to Jenny's grandson. And Jeremy's Sponsor has sent beautiful clothing to him and also to his sister.

How terribly sad that in 2011 on Long Island there are families who are in such dire need of help. How wonderfully gratifying to know that M'Yad L'Yad families have taken these Recipient families into their hearts, and have let them know that their community will not allow them to be forgotten.

Janet Zimmerman

M'YAD L'YAD SYNAGOGUE PARTNERS

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NORTH SHORE JEWISH CENTER	PT. JEFFERSON STATION		

Organize a collection of toys or clothing to benefit M'Yad L'Yad Recipients. Provide us the opportunity to speak with your members to discuss the problem of Jewish poverty on Long Island. Distribute our Bar/Bat Mitzvah Tzedakah project brochure to your religious school students. These are just some of the ways which your Synagogue or Temple can become a M'Yad L'Yad Synagogue Partner. For information on how to join our Synagogue Partners, please contact our office.

B'YACHAD: TOGETHER

M'Yad L'Yad Works TOGETHER With The Community

High School East Keeps Giving

In our last newsletter we wrote about the annual “Operation Holiday” program at Half Hollow Hills High School East. Coordinated by the Student Government, the students and faculty conducted a fund drive, with the donations being utilized to buy clothing, toys, and other items for two M'Yad L'Yad families for Chanukkah and Christmas. The drive was so successful that funds kept coming in after the packages were sent in December, and as a result, two more huge boxes were sent to an additional M'Yad L'Yad Recipient family in March.

On a related note, M'Yad L'Yad executive director Mark Zimmerman was asked to be the speaker at the Half Hollow Hills High School East National Honor Society Inductions in April. Zimmerman spoke to more than 180 inductees and their families about the importance of community service, telling the students, “You make an impact. You change the world. And that is the take-away for you tonight. You, each of you, can, and will, change the world.”

Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center

Holidays can be the most trying times for many of our Recipient families. When others are celebrating together, our Recipients often find themselves unable to buy the foods, ritual objects, or other items which enable families to enjoy and get meaning from holiday celebrations. We thank the Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center for their donation of Purim packages which have been sent to more than a dozen M'Yad L'Yad families. Recipients received beautifully wrapped packages containing hamentaschen and other sweets to enhance their holiday celebration.

Temple Or Elohim

Once again, M'Yad L'Yad was chosen by the Religious School at Temple Or Elohim in Jericho as one of the charities that would benefit from their Tzedakah collection. Executive director Mark Zimmerman visited the school in October and spoke to the students about what we do. In May, the school held an assembly where the students spoke about tzedakah and the organizations they were helping, and they presented checks to M'Yad L'Yad and the other selected charities. We are proud to include Or Elohim on our list of Synagogue Partners, and particularly proud that it is their young people who have demonstrated an understanding of tzedakah and a commitment to helping others in need.

Temple Beth David

Temple Beth David in Commack, a M'Yad L'Yad Synagogue Partner, donated Passover food which we forwarded to eight of our Recipient families. Matzah, gefilte fish, and other Passover staples were provided to families who otherwise would not have been able to celebrate the holiday with a full table.

We also received a donation of children's books from Beth David, which we sent to six of our families. This is a great example of the type of support which speaks to our mission—enhancing the lives of those in need. M'Yad L'Yad and our supporters go beyond the basic necessities of housing, food, and other core needs. We provide the extras for those who are struggling, in this case by providing books for their children. Thanks to everyone at Beth David who recognizes that what we may take for granted is so important, and so greatly appreciated, by others.

ELIJAH THE PROPHET

Continued from Page 8

He said his goodbyes to the family and raced outside in a huff. As he headed towards his coach, he overhead sounds of rejoicing coming from inside the hut. He stopped and looked back. The children were jumping up and down and squealing with joy over the most wonderful Shabbat they had ever celebrated.

The wife said to her husband, “Who was that man who brought us all that food?” Her husband replied, “Don't you see? It was Eliyahu HaNavi, Elijah the Prophet, who came to bless us.”

Suddenly the wealthy man real-

ized who Elijah the Prophet was. “Elijah is me,” he said to himself.

The message of this beautiful story is that we are all Eliyahu HaNavi, Elijah the Prophet. We are all able to bring blessings to those in need of help. Each of us—M'Yad L'Yad Sponsors, donors, volunteers—each of us has the ability to improve the lives of our neighbors by giving what we can.

A couple of months ago, many of us were sitting around the Passover seder table. In the middle of the table was a glass of wine for Elijah the Prophet. Shortly after the seder meal, the door was opened, and we waited for Elijah to enter. Perhaps

you did not see him come in. Perhaps you said, “Oh well, I guess we'll have to wait another year.” If so, think about the man who approached the Baal Shem Tov. Think about his trip into the woods in search of Elijah the Prophet. And think about the family whom he visited, the family who recognized Elijah in their unexpected visitor. Then look in the mirror. Elijah was not absent from your Seder. Eliyahu HaNavi, Elijah the Prophet, is you—each of you who recognizes that we must help our friends and neighbors who are less fortunate.

SPOTLIGHT ON ... *Jill Cohen*



Jill Cohen, a delightful, vivacious, energy-packed woman has been part of the M'Yad L'Yad Board for three years. She was one of our original sponsors. Jill and her recipient, Rose, an elderly woman, exchanged notes and developed a fondness for each other until Jill was informed that Rose had entered a nursing home and would no longer be participating in our program. As expected, Jill was disappointed, but is now becoming acquainted with her new recipients, an older couple and their adult children, all of whom are developmentally disabled.

Jill's Board membership was initiated when she and friends met with Gloria Safran, President, at a diner, where Jill was asked to attend a M'Yad L'Yad meeting. At the meeting, Jill liked that "everybody was friendly and on the same page; they wanted to give back to the community and help someone in need. This was in sync with my values and interests."

At this time, Jill is secretary of the Board of Directors, as well as coordinator of bulk mailing, including the newsletter and invita-

tions. She was recently named co-chair of the "Synagogue Partners" committee which fulfills new and ongoing joint projects with Sisterhoods, Hebrew schools, bar/bat mitzvah candidates, social action committees, etc.

Jill grew up in Hicksville and attended Hofstra University for her undergraduate and graduate studies. While attending classes, Jill, always involved with the Jewish community, was a part-time youth group leader in three synagogues. After graduation, Jill taught in the Smithtown Central School District. In the midst of all this activity Jill and her husband, Mark, somehow found the time to get married. Talk about "beshert"—Jill and Mark's parents knew each other before Jill and Mark were even born! To make a sweet story short... they got married and continue living happily ever after!

Jill and Mark have a grown son married to "a great girl." They both worked for Teach for America, a non profit organization that sends teachers to under-resourced areas. Sounds like doing good works runs in the family.

They have a two-and-a-half-year-old son who gives Jill much pleasure.

To say that Jill and Mark enjoy traveling is an understatement. They have travelled over the years with their son, to 50 states—a few at a time. Visiting the states became a wonderful "mission" enjoyed by all. Utah is Jill's favorite state because of its magnificent national parks, but she added, "New York is a great state that has everything!" They have also visited countries on six continents and are working on the seventh.

For the past twenty five years, Jill has been teaching Israeli folk dancing at synagogues as part of their Hebrew school curriculum. "I love the contact with kids. They learn about Jewish culture—dancing is a universal language that provides a common link to Jews around the world."

How about persuading Jill to teach us some folk dancing as a fund raiser for M'Yad L'Yad. Sounds like fun!

Kaye Pine

IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

"I am so glad we were able to brighten his day. I wish we could do more. We will continue to pray for his success in the job world and that he and his children will be able to be at peace. By the Grace of G-d, this could be any one of us."

-M'Yad L'Yad Sponsor on receiving a package acknowledgment from her Recipient

SPRING FUNDRAISER HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL

Continued from Page 1

our community has become stronger and our Jewish values have become deeper... We thank you for being our leader, our teacher and our friend." She then presented Rabbi Jacknis with a Scroll of Honor and a Tzedakah box as a token of our appreciation. Rabbi Jacknis offered moving remarks, emphasizing the important work that M'Yad L'Yad does in helping our Recipients.

The evening ended with a rousing



Board Member Roz Sherman presents Tzedakah Box to honoree Dr. Eugene Antenucci

concert by SixGun, whose performance of "country music with a kick" enthralled the audience. Guests sang along and filled the dance floor as the talented musicians offered songs by the Doobie Brothers, Van Morrison, Charlie Daniels, Neil Diamond and more.

Thanks to all who worked so hard to make this evening a success, and to all who attended or contributed in honor of Rabbi Jacknis and Dr. Antenucci.

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NOTE: Donations can be made online at www.myadlyad.org

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- To volunteer to sponsor a M'Yad L'Yad Recipient
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A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mark D. Zimmerman Talks About Elijah the Prophet



I'd like to share with you a story of a wealthy man who approached the Baal Shem Tov, the Rabbi who is considered to be the founder of Hassidic Judaism. The man asked the Baal Shem Tov if he could meet Eliyahu HaNavi, Elijah the Prophet. The man had heard that Elijah wanders the earth to bless people in need of his help. The Baal Shem Tov said to the man, "You can meet Elijah this Shabbat, this upcoming Sabbath. Here is what you must do."

"Fill up your coach with a Sabbath feast: Challah, wine, chicken and vegetables, fruit and other delicacies. Bring this feast to a certain hut in the forest which I will direct you to, and ask if you can spend the Sabbath. There you will find Elijah the Prophet."

On Friday afternoon the wealthy man filled his coach with the feast and headed along a winding forest trail until he came upon the hut the Baal Shem Tov had told him about. He knocked on the door and a poor couple in tattered clothes answered. The wealthy man asked if he could spend the Sabbath with their family.

The husband and his wife were overjoyed to have a guest, even though there was barely enough food to go around. Their emaciated children giggled with excitement.

Then the wealthy man showed them the feast he had brought. For a moment they froze at the sight of such abundance. And then the children cheered, the wife wept with joy, the husband embraced his honored guest.

That Sabbath was like no other this family had ever experienced. They ate well, drank well, sang, and prayed.

The wealthy man kept staring at the poor father. Could this be Elijah the Prophet that the Baal Shem Tov directed him to? The poor man ate until his belly was full, he drank and burped and picked his teeth. The wealthy man asked the poor man to teach him Torah, but the man was illiterate. "This couldn't be Elijah the Prophet," thought the wealthy man. All through that night and the next day the wealthy man waited impatiently for Elijah to appear. But there was no sign of the holy prophet anywhere.

When the Sabbath came to an end, the wealthy man was fuming. "The Baal Shem Tov deceived me. He made a fool of me," he thought.

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M'Yad L'Yad – Helping Hands

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Helping Hands

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**Benefit Fundraiser a
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• See Story on Page 1 •**