

# M'Yad L'Yad

Enhancing lives through uniquely personal  
yet anonymous giving



MAY, 2008

M'YAD L'YAD NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 11

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## BROADWAY BENEFIT CONCERT AT THE WALT WHITMAN HOUSE

*America's Greatest Music at the Home of America's Greatest Poet*

M'Yad L'Yad proudly presents a benefit concert featuring Rebecca Kupka-Overton and Michael Sheetz in an evening of Broadway music at the Walt Whitman Birthplace State Historic Site and Interpretive Center in Huntington Station. We invite you to join us on Sunday, May 18, 2008, at 5:30pm for this delightful evening of music.



Photograph by George Mallis,  
courtesy of the Walt Whitman  
Birthplace Association

Rebecca Kupka-Overton can currently be seen on Broadway in the Tony award winning production of *Jersey Boys*. The multitalented Michael Sheetz has starred in, directed, and music directed

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## M'YAD L'YAD LAUNCHES SYNAGOGUE PARTNERS

*New Cooperative Initiative to Help Families in Need*

Since the inception of M'Yad L'Yad, the synagogues, temples and chavurot in our community have been indispensable to our growth and success. Rabbis, synagogue leaders, education directors and teachers have provided us with sponsors for our recipient families, spearheaded collections of funds and much-needed items, and given us the opportunity to reach out to the "grass roots" of our community. This support has helped raise awareness of the issue of Jewish poverty on Long Island. In turn, M'Yad L'Yad has provided a means to assist those who often contact their neighborhood synagogue in a time of crisis.

In recognition of the essential role played by our synagogues, and to encourage others to follow the lead of

those already involved, we are establishing a distinguished list of SYNA-GOGUE PARTNERS. Under the able leadership of executive board member Susan Lustig, we are pleased to be able to formalize our relationship with Long Island synagogues for the benefit of our recipients. We welcome the opportunity to publicly thank those congregations currently helping M'Yad L'Yad to make a difference in the lives of so many, while also seeking to involve other synagogues in our vital work.

The congregations who have already added their names to our SYNA-GOGUE PARTNERS can be found in the box on page 3 of this newsletter. Following are some of the many ways your synagogue's name can be added to

*Continued on Page 3*

*"Charity and personal force are the only investments worth anything."*  
Walt Whitman

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

## Let All Who Are Hungry...

Spring is here. As I write this, Passover is around the corner. It's the season of hope and renewal. We look forward to sitting around the Seder table with our friends and relatives. This is a happy time of the year.

In the Hagadah we read, "Let all who are hungry come and join us." Do you believe our sages meant "hungry for food?" I think they did. But I also think they intended the word "hungry" to mean more than food. People hunger for peace, for companionship, for a feeling of community, for a feeling of independence and for survival. So, we invite friends and relatives and often a stranger to our Seder table. This is wonderful for one night. What happens the rest of the year? The hungers return.

Anna has two elementary school children and an unemployed husband who fell off a ladder at home. She works at a job that pays slightly more than minimum wage. Does she leave for work each morning with a heart filled with joy? One child has a birthday next week. The other child has outgrown her

sneakers. There is an upcoming class trip for which she needs to send in five dollars. The list goes on and on. None of these are major expenses. However, her salary, food stamps and husband's meager disability payments just don't cover these extras.

According to Anna, her sponsor, Barbara, gives her the feeling that someone cares. The box Barbara sent last time contained socks and underwear for the children, a fresh blouse to brighten her well worn suit, and a book for her husband. Included in the box was a gift certificate to the local supermarket. The certificate will allow Anna to buy Passover food and free some of the family food money to cover a few of Anna's worries. Always in the box is a chatty note telling Anna about Barbara's family, their ideas and activities. Anna feels a connection in the community.

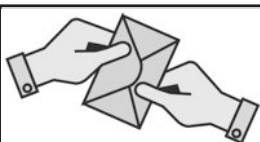
Fortunately, Barbara's friend Bill was upgrading his computer. With her recipient friend Anna in mind, she quickly asked Bill if he would consider giving the used computer to Anna's husband. In their corre-

spondence, Anna had mentioned that her husband wanted to become more computer literate in order to make himself more employable. Barbara's friend agreed. Anna describes her husband as more cheerful now. This family feels they will survive.

This is one story of how "hunger" has been assuaged a bit. There are countless families on Long Island faced with similar problems every day of their lives. M'Yad L'Yad's mission is to comfort our friends by providing these little extras. These extras are not addressed by other social service or government agencies.

I am imploring you to become a sponsor. Together, you and your family can sponsor one recipient. Bring together a few of your friends and sponsor a family collectively. There are many other models of ways to become a sponsor. The M'Yad L'Yad Board and Staff are more than willing to help you. Together, let us try to alleviate some of the hungers. By giving a little, we all get a lot.

Gloria Safran

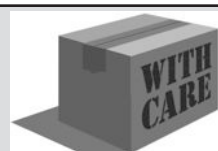


### Cards anyone?

Tribute cards are available from M'Yad L'Yad, which can be used to commemorate holidays, anniversaries, or birthdays, or to honor or remember someone special. The cards include the M'Yad L'Yad logo on the front and a description of our program on the back. We can send a card to whomever you designate, noting your donation, or if you prefer, we can mail blank cards to you that you can use when an occasion arises. Cards can be purchased or sent by us for a \$5.00 donation, or you can buy a set of four cards for \$18.00. By using M'Yad L'Yad tribute cards, you not only financially support our program, but you help us to spread the word about our work to others. To purchase cards, please send in the Donation Form found on page 7.

### Stuff'n the box!

Here are some simple, useful items to include in your packages:



- Kitchen equipment: Pot holders, oven mitts, cutting board, vegetable peeler, etc.
- Hangers, shoe polish, shoe laces
- Tissues, hair brush, comb
- Batteries, flashlights, candles
- Movie passes
- Gift certificates for fast food or chain restaurants
- Supermarket coupons (*which can be downloaded from the internet*)
- Office supplies: Pens, pencils, pencil sharpeners, envelopes, calendar, calculator, stapler, rubber bands, paper clips, etc.
- Small tools, like screwdrivers, pliers, a tape measure, etc.
- Sewing materials, like top threading sewing needles, safety pins, thread
- Battery operated radio/clock

## SYNAGOGUE PARTNERS

*Continued from Page 1*

the list by joining with us to help those in need on Long Island:

- Become a sponsor - Let us match your Men's Club, Religious School, Sisterhood, Social Action Committee or other organization with a recipient in need of support.
- Organize a collection to benefit M'Yad L'Yad recipients - clothing, toys, holiday items, etc.
- Provide us the opportunity to speak with your members in order to discuss the problem of Jewish poverty on Long Island,

and to encourage their involvement as M'Yad L'Yad sponsors.

- Make a financial donation to support the program and recipients of M'Yad L'Yad.
- Distribute our newsletter to your synagogue email list.
- Distribute our Youth/B'nei Mitzvah Tzedakah project brochure to your religious school students, providing young people with the opportunity to participate in the important mitzvah of tzedakah, helping others in need.
- Be creative. We will work with you to find other ways in which

you and your members can support the M'Yad L'Yad program of anonymous charitable giving.

If your congregation is already one of our "PARTNERS," we thank you, and look forward to your continued and increasing participation. If your synagogue is not on our list, we encourage you, your clergy, or your lay leaders to contact us to determine the best way for your congregants to make the "M'Yad L'Yad connection" and become a partner in this important work of tikkun olam, the repair of the world.

### M'YAD L'YAD SYNAGOGUE PARTNERS

CHAVURAT EMET .....SMITHTOWN  
 COMMACK JEWISH CENTER .....COMMACK  
 DIX HILLS JEWISH CENTER .....DIX HILLS  
 EAST NORTHPORT JEWISH CENTER .....EAST NORTHPORT  
 HUNTINGTON JEWISH CENTER .....HUNTINGTON  
 JEWISH CENTRE OF BAY SHORE .....BAY SHORE  
 JEWISH CONGREGATION OF BROOKVILLE .....JERICHO  
 KINGS PARK JEWISH CENTER .....KINGS PARK

MIDWAY JEWISH CENTER.....SYOSSET  
 NORTH SHORE JEWISH CENTER .....PT. JEFFERSON STATION  
 PLAINVIEW JEWISH CENTER .....PLAINVIEW  
 TEMPLE BETH DAVID.....COMMACK  
 TEMPLE BETH EL OF PATCHOGUE .....PATCHOGUE  
 TEMPLE BETH TORAH .....MELVILLE  
 TEMPLE CHAVERIM .....PLAINVIEW

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR SOCIAL WORKER ...

#### *A Drop In The Bucket?*

At least twice a year I update recipients' profiles. I check in to see how they are doing, inquire about their health, their children, their financial situation, etc. I ask about what has changed since our last conversation. The responses are often very sad. Sometimes a recipient has moved because she couldn't afford the increased rent on her apartment. Sometimes a phone number is no longer in service because he couldn't pay the bill. Sometimes someone's clothing size has changed because of a loss of weight due to illness. When I hear how difficult life is for so many of our recipients, how overwhelming their problems are, I sometimes feel that what we do is but a "drop in the bucket." However, when I ask them about their relationship with their sponsor, the responses are truly heartwarming.

One of our recipients, Cindy, is an ovarian cancer survivor. When talking about her sponsor, she becomes so animated, telling me about the mandelbread that was sent to her, the shampoo that she uses from her sponsor, and the gift cards that enable her to buy what she needs. She is so grateful for the care and compassion of her sponsor.

Another recipient, Bob, is clinically depressed. He had "given up on life," in his words, until his sponsor came into his life. Not only does he now have more beautiful clothes than he ever had before, due to his sponsor's generosity, but through her gifts and letters, he knows that his sponsor truly cares about him. Bob wrote in a letter to his sponsor, "I will treasure this gift for the rest of my life because this is a gift from the soul and they do

not get any better than that."

Sarah, who completed treatment for cervical cancer, told me that the gift cards from her sponsor enabled her to shop at Costco to purchase items that she otherwise couldn't afford. She said that it was "such a chesed" that her sponsor had such an open heart. It lifts her spirits greatly to know that someone cares about her and is so generous.

So, when I call recipients who tell me about the hardships and heartache they face every day, they also invariably report on the comfort and support they feel from the anonymous sponsors who have come into their lives. I've come to realize that the recipient/sponsor relationship is more than a "drop in the bucket" – for many it is their lifeline to hope.

*Janet Zimmerman*

## BROADWAY CONCERT

*Continued from Page 1*

ed such shows as *Into the Woods* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. He is currently a graduate student at Manhattan School of Music, studying vocal accompanying. As an added bonus, guests are invited to view the exhibit *Walt Whitman - Long Island and the World* in the



Rebecca Kupka-Overtor

Interpretive Center where the concert will take place. In addition, we are pleased

that Walt Whitman himself will be joining us for hors d'oeuvres prior to the concert.

Invitations to this unique evening of entertainment were recently mailed. Admission is \$50/person, with "Captain's" tickets at \$100/person. Captains will receive a guided tour of Walt Whitman's birthplace home as well as a listing in the program. If you would like to join us for music, hors d'oeuvres and desserts, and a chat with the great Long Island poet, while at the same time supporting our program of charitable giving in an anonymous dignified manner, please call

us at (631) 742-7194. Space is strictly limited, so we encourage you to order your tickets promptly. Corporate underwriting opportunities are also available; for more information, please call our office.

The Board of Directors of M'Yad L'Yad offers special thanks to executive director Cynthia Shor, and the entire staff of the Walt Whitman Birthplace Association for their support and assistance in bringing you this remarkable evening of entertainment.



Michael Sheetz

## SPOTLIGHT ON ... Marilyn Leibowitz

Marilyn Leibowitz first heard about M'Yad L'Yad five years ago while at a casual lunch with a friend. "It talked to me as a way to give back while I was still working full time," said Marilyn. She did find time in her busy work schedule to sponsor a recipient, whom she continues helping to this day. When Marilyn retired, she continued her sponsorship while also joining the M'Yad L'Yad board. She is presently a vice president, and is chair of the fundraising committee. Marilyn believes, "The organization is unique; anonymity makes us different than other groups." Her husband, Marty, is also a valued member of the board who generously offers his time and expertise.

Once you meet Marilyn you will never forget her. She is an energetic, vivacious, bright woman behind whose sparkling blue eyes thoughts and ideas are always flashing. From her years growing up in Brooklyn to her years as a wife, mother and grandmother in Plainview, she has always been an active, involved, woman.

She entered the world of work as an early childhood public school teacher. As was common

practice then, she worked until she had her twin daughters. In the 70's when she was ready to return to work, teaching jobs on Long Island were scarce.

Eager to enter the workforce again, Marilyn began working for the U. S. Treasury Department and by the time she retired, twenty five years later, she had a top management position in tax administration encompassing the New York territory. Her responsibilities included traveling all over the country for the government, attending and conducting seminars, dealing with labor and management affairs, budgets, and more. "I am most proud that I started at the first level of management and because of my focus and determination was able to move up the ladder to positions of greater responsibility."

Marilyn's recent retirement did not mean that her working days were over. On the contrary, her schedule is bursting with activity. She was elected to the board of directors of the Plainview-Old Bethpage Library, serves as a member of the Business Advisory Committee at the Rusk Institute in New York City and is part of the

steering committee of the Institute for Adult Jewish Studies, a cooperative venture of several local synagogues. Through her "Incredible Interviews" business, she helps people prepare for college entrance and job interviews. In addition, she somehow finds the time to teach an English conversation class to recent immigrants for Nassau Volunteers for Literacy. How fortunate we are to have a woman with Marilyn's energy, experience and background as part of our organization!

In spite of all her activities Marilyn makes time to swim at the JCC in Plainview, play piano at a nursing home and enjoy her family.

Marilyn Leibowitz had a real spotlight focused on her recently when along with Mark Zimmerman, Executive Director, and a M'Yad L'Yad recipient, she appeared on cablevision's weekly *Jewish Life* program. Marilyn did a wonderful job of expressing the satisfaction that a sponsor feels when participating with M'Yad L'Yad. For more information about this television program, please see the article on page 5.

Kaye Pine

# M'YAD L'YAD ON CABLEVISION

*Jewish Life, hosted by Stewart Ain*

M'Yad L'Yad was recently featured on the *Jewish Life* television program which appears weekly on Cablevision Public Access. The program, hosted by journalist Stewart Ain, is devoted to topics of interest to the Jewish community of Long Island. Appearing on this half hour interview program were M'Yad L'Yad executive director Mark Zimmerman, vice president and sponsor Marilyn Leibowitz, and a program recipient, known as "Fran," who appeared in disguise to preserve her identity.

The program opened with Zimmerman explaining the history of M'Yad L'Yad. Leibowitz then spoke about her long-time sponsor-

ship of a M'Yad L'Yad recipient. Perhaps the highlight of the program was when Fran spoke about what the M'Yad L'Yad program and her sponsor have meant to her and her family.

Fran was widowed while her two daughters were still very young. She has struggled to support her family, which now also includes her parents and grandmother, who recently moved into her house. As Fran stated, "I can't tell you what this program has done for me and my children...What they do is larger than life."

The *Jewish Life* program has run on Cablevision on three occasions, and is likely to be repeated in the

future. For information on when the program will be broadcast next, please contact Mark Zimmerman at (631) 742-7194. If your synagogue or other organization would like to schedule a viewing of the program along with a discussion about the problem of poverty in the Jewish community and how we can work together, please contact us as well. We thank Stewart Ain for providing us the opportunity to share our story, and for his sensitivity regarding our policy of anonymity, which enabled viewers to hear directly from a Long Islander who is benefiting from the M'Yad L'Yad program.

## A RECIPIENT'S STORY

*Sam and Rebecca*

Sam is 81 years old. He lives in an apartment with his disabled 47-year-old daughter, Rebecca. Sam speaks poignantly about his situation. Years ago he was a professional fundraiser. He did very well, had a happy marriage and helped others. But then his wife passed away and his daughter became clinically depressed, requiring him to take care of her full time. He often remarks that he used to help others, but now he's on the receiving

end. He feels very uncomfortable asking for things, yet he has no choice. Rebecca, who used to work as a psychologist, has diabetes, fibromyalgia, carpal tunnel syndrome, chronic fatigue, and clinical depression. She must take many expensive medications, making it hard for Sam to find the funds to purchase other items.

Sam becomes very emotional when talking about M'Yad L'Yad. He is so grateful to his gen-

erous sponsors, who have given him some very beautiful things, as well as gift cards which have enabled him to purchase some much-needed items to make his and Rebecca's lives more comfortable. But, even more than the material goods, Sam is thankful that someone cares about him and his daughter, that he is not forgotten. He ends every telephone call with the words, "okay, that's enough, I'm getting too emotional."

### GREAT IDEA FOR SPONSORS

Would you like to send flowers or a plant to your recipient, perhaps to note a birthday, holiday, or other special event? Call our office at (631) 742-7194 to arrange for us to send the flowers on your behalf.

What a wonderful way to enhance someone's life, with color, fragrance, and a special note!



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you enjoy writing? Do you have page layout skills?

Would you like to assist in marketing or fundraising efforts? M'Yad L'Yad is looking for volunteers to help us with publicity, fundraising, and other areas of our operation. If you are interested in lending your efforts to our cause, please contact Mark Zimmerman at 631-742-7194 or [hands@myadlyad.org](mailto:hands@myadlyad.org).

# B'YACHAD: M'YAD L'YAD WORKS TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY

## Levittown Elves

Every year, families in the Levittown School District raise funds and purchase toys for needy children on Long Island through a program called the Levittown Elves, which stands for “Enlightening Little ones Via Education & Surprises.” Imagine the surprise when five of our recipient children received new toys for Chanukkah in beautifully wrapped boxes. We are happy to partner with the Levittown School District, and thank Gerri Fox-Wilson and Paul Chisholm for reaching out to M'Yad L'Yad and benefiting our children at Chanukkah time.



*Board game centerpieces donated by Marissa*

## Temple Sinai Teens

For the first of what we hope will be ongoing collaborations, the members of Temple Sinai in Roslyn provided holiday cheer to seven of our recipient families. Teens from the Temple's senior youth group, SORTY, generously donated books, toys, and other Chanukkah presents that were distributed to more than twenty M'Yad L'Yad children. We thank Rabbi Benjamin David and the SORTY teens for their support, and we look forward to working with the members of Temple Sinai in the future.

## High School East Does It Again

For the third time, the student government of Half Hollow Hills High School East raised funds from students, faculty, staff and families, to benefit M'Yad L'Yad recipients. After a highly successful fundraising campaign, students, under the leadership of Spencer Fogel, shopped at Target and purchased clothing, toys, and other items to benefit our families. We thank everyone at High School East, and look forward to other projects in the future.

## South Huntington Jewish Center Dreidel Project

The Sisterhood of South Huntington Jewish Center continued an annual tradition of supporting M'Yad L'Yad recipient children at Chanukkah time. Dreidels representing the Chanukkah wishes of M'Yad L'Yad recipient children were chosen by synagogue members, who fulfilled the wishes by buying gift cards or other requested items. More than 20 children had their Chanukkah celebration enhanced by the members of SHJC. We appreciate the amazing efforts of Gayle Charlack and the Sisterhood members who coordinated this wonderful program.



*Dix Hills Jewish Center Social Action Committee members  
Judy Deutsch, Karyn Likerman and Robin Davidson*

## Dix Hills Jewish Center Chanukkah Extravaganza

Under the leadership of Karyn Likerman and the Social Action Committee, members of the Dix Hills Jewish Center collected toys, games and other items to support many of our recipient families during the Chanukkah season. Hundreds of people attended the synagogue's Chanukkah Extravaganza, and while shopping for themselves, their families and their friends, they also kept in mind the many Long Island families who could not afford to buy presents for their children. We thank Dix Hills Jewish Center for their continuing support of M'Yad L'Yad families.

## Bat Mitzvah Girls Support M'Yad L'Yad

We are particularly pleased when young people demonstrate an understanding of the importance of tzedakah. M'Yad L'Yad and our recipients were recently the beneficiaries of the generosity of two bat mitzvah celebrants. At the Huntington Jewish Center, guests arrived at Marissa's bat mitzvah to find that her theme was “board games.” The luncheon tables were brightly decorated with

board game centerpieces, including Scrabble, Monopoly, Life, Sorry and Candyland. Marissa generously donated 50 board games to M'Yad L'Yad, which were passed on to many of our recipient families. Our recipients also benefited from the financial contribution of Katy, who recently celebrated her bat mitzvah at the Jewish Congregation of Brookville. Katy learned of M'Yad L'Yad from Rabbi Steven Moskowitz and Cantor Marcey Wagner, and she decided to share her gifts with us. Katy designated that a portion of her gift go to the Murray Safran Emergency Fund, which benefits recipients who face a situation which is beyond the bounds of what a sponsor would normally provide for their recipient. We offer our heartfelt thanks to Katy and to Marissa, and we encourage other bar and bat mitzvah students to contact us to discuss ways in which we can work together towards tikkun olam, the repair of the world.

## Bob, The Computer Man

We occasionally receive donations of computers, which we are happy to pass on to our recipient families. We are particularly grateful to “Bob,” the computer man, for his amazing generosity. Bob, who wishes to remain anonymous, is a retired engineer whose “hobby” is computers. He teaches computer skills to senior citizens, and also collects and refurbishes used computers. Bob recently donated one of these computers (along with a printer) to a M'Yad L'Yad family. Being a “full service organization of one,” Bob delivered the computer, set it up, and gave the family a basic instruction in the use of their new system. Bob has graciously offered the same service to other M'Yad L'Yad families in the future, and we look forward to working with him to provide this valuable equipment to other families in need.

# M'Yad L'Yad - Helping Hands



## Mission Statement

M'Yad L'Yad- Helping Hands is dedicated to enhancing the lives of the needy in our community. The anonymous pairing of volunteer sponsors with recipients encourages ongoing relationships and provides friendship and dignity, as well as material support.

## 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) 742-7194 or e-mail us at hands@myadlyad.org.

## Our Benefactors Circle

M'Yad L'Yad announces the expansion of our Benefactors Circle to include a category of Corporate Benefactors. We are greatly appreciative of those companies, organizations, and foundations that have generously donated to M'Yad L'Yad at the benefactors level. We welcome the support of other corporate donors who would like to make a positive impact on the lives of Long Islanders.

### Benefactors

Anonymous (2)  
 Meryl & Stewart Ain  
 Victoria & Hunter Allen  
 Terry Schimek & Wayne Barnstone  
 Rabbi Howard Buechler, Dix Hills Jewish Center  
 Terry & Irwin Fishberg  
 Barbara & Ken Greenberg  
 Ellen & Stephen Greenberg  
 Ilene & Jerry Herz  
 Robin & Douglas Horn  
 Rabbi Ian Jacknis, South Huntington Jewish Center  
 Gail & Jerry Jospa  
 Arlene & Jeffrey Kreisberg  
 Elizabeth Krulik  
 Margery & Larry Kushnick  
 Susan & Lenny Lustig

Rabbi Susie Heneson Moskowitz  
 North Shore Jewish Center Sisterhood  
 Renee & Gary Oshinsky  
 Lesly & Nathaniel Reichel  
 Hinda & Jerry Ritigstein  
 Betty & Sam Roth  
 Erika & Richard Safran  
 Gloria Safran  
 Nina & Julian Sandler  
 Michele & Stephen Scheck  
 Jane & Rabbi Barton Shallat  
 Renee & Stephen Steinig  
 Diane & Gerald Thurer  
 Elizabeth & Stephen Thurer  
 Myra & Harry Wagner  
 Robyn & Michael Weiner  
 Weisberg/Epstein Family  
 Judy Weiss & Jack Zucker

### Corporate Benefactors

Anonymous (1)  
 The David Kimmel Foundation  
 Half Hollow Hills Youth Basketball  
 Herman Goldman Foundation  
 Kushnick & Associates, P.C.  
 Lakeville Industries, Inc.  
 Lustig and Hermer, LLP  
 Rosenberg & Fortuna, LLP  
 U. S. Luggage

## M'YAD L'YAD DONATION FORM

Name/Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like: (please check)

- Additional information about M'Yad L'Yad
- To volunteer to sponsor a M'Yad L'Yad family
- To join M'Yad L'Yad as a Benefactor/Corporate Benefactor  
(minimum donation of \$500)
- To make a donation to M'Yad L'Yad of \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- To make a donation to the Murray Safran Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(to assist recipients with emergency needs)
- To buy Tribute cards     \$5 each     4 for \$18
- M'Yad L'Yad to send a Tribute card (\$5 each)

*Please make my donation or Tribute Card ...*

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgment to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Message: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

*Mark D. Zimmerman, M'Yad L'Yad executive director,  
reports on loincloths, seizure disorders and poverty*

The first time I appeared on television was when I was 10 years old. There was a program on the local educational TV channel which featured a different boy scout troop every week. For our troop's turn, we presented Indian dances. I'd love to tell you that I remember being so excited as we entered the studio - a magical place for a young boy to be in 1964. But in fact, the only emotion I remember is embarrassment.

For the dances, we were dressed in loincloths. The loincloths were open on the sides, requiring some type of garment underneath. Every other scout wore a bathing suit, but I alone did it "right." I wore a pair of my underwear that my mother had died a tan color. No one looked more realistic than I (ignoring the fact that we really looked nothing like Native Americans). And no one was more humiliated than I, dancing in a loincloth with my tan underwear showing.

This past January I received a phone call from one of our recipients, Sonya, a 52-year-old single woman who has struggled with epilepsy throughout her life. She called to tell us that she would be on a Cablevision program about people with seizure disorders. I watched the program, and was touched with how honestly she spoke about her situation, the pain she had experienced in so many personal relationships, and how she struggled to reach a point in her life where she could speak openly about her past and offer to talk with others facing similar problems. She willingly showed her face and gave her name, encouraging viewers to call for more information or to simply talk. Sonya had every reason to keep her situation private, but she stood up to any potential embarrassment or humiliation in order to show that she no longer lets her medical problems control her life, and that others can follow her path.

Many of you had the opportunity to view the *Jewish Life* television program featuring M'Yad L'Yad. Our recipient, Fran, put aside any possible embarrassment to be a part of this program. Though in disguise and using a fake name, she still took a chance that someone might recognize her as she told her story - how her husband's death at a young age left her no choice but to turn to others for support. She willingly shared her narrative, and she proudly watched the program with her children. Fran could have told us that she would not appear on this program, how even in disguise the shame of needing assistance from others prevented her from stepping forward. But like Sonya, Fran understood that her words, her presence, and her openness, would empower others to seek help and strive to overcome their difficulties.

How lucky we are that strong women such as Sonya and Fran are willing to speak out, risking humiliation, in order to help others. They understand something that I as a young boy scout could not understand - that we do not have to let our situation (be it as insignificant as tan underwear or as substantial as a seizure disorder or poverty) take away our humanity. I thank Sonya and Fran for reminding us of that important lesson, and for reminding us that the recipient/sponsor match is a two-way street, with both sponsors and recipients benefiting from the relationship.



### **M'Yad L'Yad – Helping Hands**

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