

# ACHIEZER HOLDS SECOND ANNUAL TRIBUTE DINNER

By Liba Lieberman

Personal involvement is a key ingredient to Achiezer's enormous success as a onestop *chesed* agency for the communities of Far Rockaway and the Five Towns. It also characterized the thousand-plus crowd who attended Achiezer's Second Annual Tribute Dinner, which was comprised of many who work for, volunteer for, or have been helped by Achiezer. Held at The Sands of Atlantic Beach, the dinner was a glowing moment of support and *hakoras hatov*, lit by the reassurance that Achiezer is there if anyone in the community needs help.

Rav Yaakov Bender, *rosh hayeshiva* of Yeshiva Darchei Torah and father of Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender, Achiezer's president, pointed out that Achiezer was named after Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzensky *zt"l*, author of the *sefer Achiezer*.

"I think Rav Chaim Ozer would be very proud to have such an organization as Achiezer named for him," Rav Bender said.

Opening remarks were delivered by Dr. Moshe Schlusselberg, master of ceremonies, who remembered being approached in November 2009 with the idea of a one-stop *chesed* organization. "I said, 'Run with it,' to Rabbi Bender, and he scored a touchdown."

Achiezer fields over one hundred calls a day, calls that reflect every kind of crisis that can happen in everyday life among normal families. Physical health crises, mental health referrals, financial assistance, meals delivered to families staying in hospitals, and financial guidance are just some of the many services that Achiezer employs to meet the needs of the community it serves. Dinner greetings were expressed by Mr. Shulie Wollman, Achiezer's chairman of the board, and Mr. Ronald Lowinger and Mr. Michael Krengel led attendees in reciting *Tehillim*.

The keynote address, delivered by Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender, focused on reflecting on the past, appreciating the present, and looking toward the future. He told a true story of how one small "shidduch" on the part of the Achiezer staff turned around someone's life.

"Mrs. Esther Novak, one of our honorees, made a *shidduch* with someone in a nursing home who badly needed companionship," related Rabbi Bender. "She was very depressed. The *shidduch* was extremely successful and the woman receiving the visits became a totally new and happy person. One day, when the companion was leaving the home, she bumped into a doctor whom she knew. He asked her why she was there. When she explained what she was doing, he looked amazed, because he

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PHOTO CREDITS: MOSHE GERSHBAUM AND TSEMACH GLENN

1. Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender and Rabbi Eytan Feiner. | 2. Rav Binyamin Kaminetzky, Rabbi Elya Ber Wachtfogel, Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender, Rabbi Meshulem Gorelick and Rabbi Yaakov Bender. | 3. Mr. Ronald Lowinger | 4. Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender and Naftali Tepfer. | 5. Rabbi Mordechai Stern and Rabbi Yaakov Bender. | 6. Rabbi Elozor Kanner, Zvi Bokow and Justin Hirmes. | 7. Andy Lauber, Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender and Charlie Harary. | 8. Jay Gelman, Rabbi Shalom Axelrod, Shlomo Zuller and Rabbi Ariel Rackovsky. | 9. Eli Weiss, Rabbi Hershel Billet, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos and Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender. | 10. Shalom Jaroslawicz, Shulie Wollman, Dr. Marcel Scheinman, Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender and Eli Weiss. | 11. Shulie Wollman, Rabbi Dovid Greenblatt, Elisha Brecher, Lloyd Keilson and Rabbi Brouch Ber Bender. | 12. Shulie Wollman, Rabbi Shay Shachter, Rabbi Yaakov Bender, Rabbi Zev Bald, Rabbi Naftali Jaeger and Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender. | 13. Shalom Jaroslawicz, Eli Weiss, Shulie Wollman, Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender and Yoni Novak. | 14. Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender and Rabbi Moshe Weinberger. | 15. Fred Schulman, Rabbi Elchonon Zohn, Rabbi Yitzchak Davis, Rabbi Binyamin Kamenetzky, Aron Solomon, Michael Krengel and Rabbi Richard Bieler. | 16. Menachem Kagan, Rabbi Zvi Ralbag, Daniel Jacobson, Dr. Marcel Scheinman, Moti Schiffer and Heshy Stern. | 17. Yosef Goldberg, Nechemia Salzman, Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender and Moti Hellman.

### **Achiezer Holds Second Annual Tribute Dinner**

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was the doctor of the woman she was visiting. He couldn't believe that, in a few short weeks, someone who had been in a long state of depression could be smiling and have a new sense of purpose. It was a simple phone call, a simple request, but it had extraordinary results."

"What does a 24-hour hotline mean?" asked Rabbi Bender. He then went on to list his staff members, some of them mothers of young children, all of whom keep their phones close, just in case. He noted that even a call coming in at 2 a.m. will always be answered. "And there is one staff member who oversees the hotline, whose phone is never shut off. That person is Shalom Jaroslawicz."

In an "around the world" tour of Achiezer's programs, Rabbi Bender touched on the insurance program run by Sruly Miller and his associate, Ari Silverstein. The program has played a crucial role since the Affordable Care Act went into effect, enrolling over 450 individuals in suitable insurance programs during the last six months. Rabbi Bender then mentioned Meals 'n More, a service coordinated by his wife, Suri, that brings food to families suddenly caught in a hospital for Shabbos. Another program, Achiezer's Behavioral Health Department, run by Dr. Brucha Lowinger Psy. D., deals with behavioral health emergencies, offering solace and advice, and referrals at all times.

Before closing, Rabbi Bender also mentioned Achiezer's Financial Management Program, which offers shopping gift cards to families who fall short of meeting their monthly expenses. "The cards offer dignity and a wholesome solution," he explained. "This chesed movement will continue under the auspices of our community until Moshiach comes."

Honoree video presentations included testimonials from each honoree, as well as from rabbonim and recipients of each honoree's unique form of chesed. Dr. Marcel Scheinman received the Physician Appreciation Award. Rabbi Bender explained in the video, "There is no one like him. He doesn't flinch. He simply wants to help."

For his part, Dr. Scheinman saw the equation very simply. "I never feel









1. A partial view of the crowd.

be and we'll be there."

- 2. Simcha Bernath, Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender, Meyer Leifer, Sholem Klein, Mayer Schwartz, Shmully Kassover, David Adonolem, Jason Shtundel, Yidel Feig, Pinny Ringel, Shloimy Rosenberg, Ben Gilig and Naftali Reiner.
- 3. Rabbi Moshe Bender, Zevi Seidenfeld, Rabbi Yehiel M. Kalish and Yoily Edelstein.
- 4. Pesach Osina, Eli Weiss, Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder, Shalom Jaroslawicz, Rabbi Baruch Rothman and Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender.

an added responsibility. Every time they ask me to see someone, I realize that my role is very small." His rov, Rabbi Zvi Ralbag, pointed out that Dr.

Scheinman "dedicates himself to the *tzibbur*." Yoni and Esther Novak received the Hakoras Hatov Award. As an Achiezer staff member, Esther works with people in a compassionate yet very practical manner. As a couple, the Novaks' motto is, "Tell us where to

A Community Appreciation Award was given to the Community Assistance Fund, which came into existence after Hurricane Sandy, partnering the Davis Memorial Fund with Achiezer to create monies to help families restore their lives and homes. Rabbi Dovid Greenblatt, founder and director of the Davis Memorial Fund, noted in the video presentation that although the

CAF gave out millions of dollars to one thousand families, there was not one dispute. "It was beautiful, a kiddush Hashem," he remembered. "Everyone worked together." On hand to receive the award were Mr. Elisha Brecher, Mr. Lloyd Kielson and Rabbi Greenblatt.

The final award of the evening was presented to Rabbi Zev and Leah Bald, recipients of the Kesser Shem Tov Award. The video presentation featured Rabbi Bald's uncle, Rav Naftali Jaeger, rosh hayeshiva of Yeshiva Sh'or Yoshuv. "Zev and Leah taught their children to care for another Yid," Rav Jaeger shared. "The family has a sheim tov. Zev himself supports Torah causes and has worked to make Yeshiva Darchei Torah the makom Torah it is."

Rabbi Bald expressed his views by saying, "I live in this community. It's my obligation to do what I can. People should help other people. Do what you can. Reach out to Achiezer. Make the Ribono Shel Olam proud."

After each honoree was presented with a beautiful plaque, the evening's program came to a close with a compelling feature presentation titled, "Achiezer: Our Community's One Call for Help." The video throbbed with moments of crisis, each one calling out to Achiezer and finding help. Although a mouthwatering dessert buffet followed the program, it was the heartwarming moments of mesirus nefesh with which everyone came away.

A rhetorical question on video from Rabbi Moshe Brown, rov of Agudath Yisroel of West Lawrence, truly spoke for everyone attending: "How did we exist without Achiezer?"

# Community Briefs

#### MADRAIGOS ANNUAL BREAKFAST

The annual breakfast to benefit Madraigos will take place at the home of David and Channah Bugayer in Woodmere on Sunday, 17 Sivan/June 15, at 9:30 a.m. The guest speaker will be Rav Moshe Weinberger, rov of Congregation Aish Kodesh.

#### SHUVU BREAKFAST RECEPTION

A breakfast reception to benefit the children of Shuvu will take place on Sunday, 17 Sivan/June 15, at 9:30 a.m., at the home of Jeff and Sharona Weinberg in Woodmere. The guest speaker will be Rabbi Mordechai Becher, noted author and lecturer.

#### ANNUAL BREAKFAST FOR BOSTONER BAIS MEDRASH OF LAWRENCE

The twenty-second annual breakfast for the Bostoner Bais Medrash of Lawrence will take place on Sunday, 24 Sivan/June 22, at 9:30 a.m., at the home of Drs. Joshua and Gila Jedwab in Cedarhurst. The guest speaker will be Rav Yaakov Bender, rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva Darchei Torah.

#### **CONGREGATION SHAARAY TEFILA** ANNUAL CHAI DINNER

The 104th Annual *Chai* Dinner of Congregation Shaaray Tefila will take place on Thursday evening, 28 Sivan/June 26, at the Lawrence Country Club. The guests of honor are Dr. Michael and Rose Bernstein and Dr. Steven and Hedy Rubel.

Emergency Hours
(for urgent situations that cannot wait)

**Erev Shabbos / Erev Yom Tov** 

Half an hour after Maariv until 11:30PM

8:30AM until 10 min before candle lighting

Motzai Shabbos / Motzai Yom Tov

**Sunday-Thursday** 

8:30AM - 11:00PM



## Regular Hours

Sunday-Thursday

1:30рм - 2:30рм 6:30рм - 10:00рм

### **Erev Shabbos / Erev Yom Tov**

*Summer:* 5 hours before candle lie until one hour before candle lighting Winter: 3 hours before candle lighting until one hour before candle lighting

#### Motzai Shabbos / Motzai Yom Tov

Summer: 1 hour after Maariv until 2 hours after Maariv Winter: 1 hour after Maariv until 3 hours after Maariv

Lawrence - Shaaray Tefila - 25 Central ave. in the rear parking lot attached to one of the red sheds Far Rockaway - Mikvah - 1121-A Sage St at the end of the parking lot opposite the women's entrance Woodmere - Aish Kodesh - 894 Woodmere Place [BETWEEN CLUB DRIVE AND WOODMERE BLVD.] in the back of the parking lot

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