

## Around the Community



The sixth grade of Yeshiva of South Shore along with Rabbi Yehoshua Meltzer met on Motzei Shabbos for a bonfire “kumsitz” in what was a beautiful evening of organized singing, Torah, ruach and achdus. It was inspiring to see many boys take turns in leadership roles “MCing,” giving divrei Torah, telling stories, leading songs, and connecting with their Rebbe and with each other. Rabbi Draiman also came by and enjoyed singing with the boys. In the words of a parent, “All the boys behaved like true bnei Torah; you should have much nachas!”

The Solidarity with Israel event held on November 8 at Temple Israel in North Woodmere featured guest speaker New York State Assemblyman Todd Kaminsky, Curtis Sliwa of the Guardian Angels, and Yifa Segal, Director of the International Legal Forum in Israel. Topics discussed were the increased attacks taking place in Israel and ending the rise of anti-Semitism throughout the country. Assemblyman Todd Kaminsky spoke about his sponsorship of the anti-BDS legislation in Albany.



From L to R: Yoni Nerenberg, Rambam student speaker; Ann Schocket; Rabbi Steven Graber of Temple Hillel; Cindy Grosz, event coordinator; Curtis Sliwa, founder of the Guardian Angels; Assemblyman Todd Kaminsky; Kenneth Fink, President of Temple Hillel; and Avi Posnick, StandwithUs Managing Director.

## The Marion and Aaron Gural JCC Celebrates Project Kadima's First Anniversary

Last Wednesday night a group of women met at the newly-named Marion and Aaron Gural JCC in the Five Towns, a beneficiary agency of UJA-Federation of New York, to hear Cheryl Friedman, LCSW-R speak about surviving an abusive marriage. The workshop, which is part of a comprehensive program, is made possible through a grant from the Jewish Communal Fund and UJA-Federation of New York and is designed to help single parents move on after divorce. It was an intense and inspirational session attracting women of various ages and religious backgrounds. There was laughter and tears, hand-holding and exchanges of telephone numbers. There was the awareness and relief that finally someone understood.

In the weeks leading up to this workshop, on alternate evenings, young boys and girls attended support groups for children of divorce while on other nights their mothers came together at the JCC for their own bi-weekly support groups. Rosh Hashana gift packages were distributed to close to fifty single-parent families and over sixty school backpacks – complete with age-appropri-

ate supplies, which were provided to the children through UJA-Federation of New York's Supplies for Success campaign – were given out to their children. All this – and so much more – is Project Kadima, the JCC's single parent initiative created to help families move forward during and after divorce and to assure them that they are not alone during this difficult and challenging time.

Celebrating its first anniversary this month, Project Kadima began with a grant from UJA-Federation one year ago. The goal was to identify and recognize the needs of Jewish single-parent households in our community and beyond. The Project Kadima team, consisting of a project coordinator and a staff of social workers, designed a comprehensive program that included an initial intake and offered entitlements assistance, short-term one-on-one counseling, support groups, workshops, holiday events, trips, telephone assurance and more. What began with a few clients and without much advertising or promotion became Project Kadima, a vibrant and vital program at the Gural JCC with close to one hundred members and growing.

At any given time at The Marion

and Aaron Gural JCC, Project Kadima is in action. Clients meet with staff social workers for counseling both day and evening. Our project coordinator is always responsive to calls and emails, be they of cries for help, requests for referrals and information or the sharing of good news. A single family's struggles are unique and often overwhelming. The Project Kadima group has become a family for them. A safe place to turn for concrete help, a ready ear, guidance and support.

During the course of this past year the JCC has brought a variety of lecturers and workshops to their Project Kadima members from Cheryl Friedman and Esther Wein to Barbara Listhaus and Dr. Pelcovitz. Seminars on financial planning, budgeting and navigating a divorce have been interspersed with Mindfulness classes, Zumba and nutritional advice and positive thinking coaching. There is always something happening at Project Kadima – for our clients, their children or the family. Next Tuesday evening, November 17th, Esther Mann and Jennifer Mann, founders of the Navidaters and new staff writers at this paper, will be leading a workshop entitled,

“Jumping Back into the Dating Sea, How to avoid the sharks and other close encounters.” This workshop is another example of Project Kadima responding to the requests and interests of their clientele and helping them move forward with proper tools and confidence, one step at a time.

In addition to their own programs, Project Kadima also offers many opportunities to take advantage of other JCC services such as participating in their coat drives (there is one this Sunday at the JCC 1:00-3:00 pm), utilizing the Rina Shkolnik Koher Food Panty, benefiting from peer-to-peer homework help, or joining their Kosher Kidz Cafe, an educational health awareness class for young girls and teens.

If you or anyone you know is separated, divorced or going through a divorce, contact Project Kadima to schedule an intake, get more information or to show your support. Call Rachayle Deutsch at (516)569-6733 ext. 222. The Marion and Aaron Gural JCC is located at 207 Grove Avenue in Cedarhurst, New York.