

West Side COJO Hosts Candidates' Forum

By Rachel Katz

On Wednesday, August 26, the West Side Council of Orthodox Jewish Organizations (COJO) hosted a candidates' forum for the New York City comptroller and the New York City public advocate races at The Young Israel of the West Side. The event was organized by COJO Chairman Michael Landau and Council of Young Jewish Presidents (CYJP) Chairman David Borowich, and moderated by Mr. Zev Brenner, president of Talkline Communications, as well as Mr. Sheldon J. Fine, vice president of COJO.

The forum provided the four leading candidates from each race with a platform to distinguish their respective backgrounds, records and policies from one another, and served as an opportunity for constituents to gain a nuanced impression of the candidates in an open, candid environment. The event also allowed constituents to highlight issues of foremost importance to the Orthodox community.

The Candidates' Forum represents a continued effort on the part of the West Side COJO to remain socially relevant for its members while maintaining its reputation as a unified voice for the growing number of Manhattan residents who affiliate themselves with it.

"The COJO is very pleased with the forum," said Mr. Landau. "We appreciate the significant turnout despite it being a Wednesday evening in August, which exemplifies the dedicated political involvement of our community. We are also thankful to the candidates for being so generous with their time and for their informative and sincere remarks throughout."

The candidates for comptroller — Ms. Melinda Katz, Mr. John Liu, Mr. David Weprin, and Mr. David Yassky — uniformly highlighted the comptroller's oversight of state pension funds totaling \$81 billion, as well as the comptroller's duty to audit government agencies. Several candidates detailed where they see possibilities to cut expenditure by government agencies, as well as what more the comptroller could do to ensure that state pension funds do not indirectly support terrorist activities.

Ms. Katz cited her record of providing affordable housing in New York and emphasized her mergers and acquisitions background as good training for getting things done. Mr. Liu, the first Asian American elected to the New York City Council, noted that he is a pension actuary by profession, and stressed the need to increase revenue in addition to cutting expenditure. Mr. Weprin highlighted the need for transparency in the city's budget process, and mentioned that certain functional necessities, such as towing cars, should not be perceived as a source of revenue. Mr. Yassky talked about his strong governmental background and accomplishments, as well as the need to ensure a thriving middle class.

The candidates for public advocate — Mr. Bill de Blasio, Mr. Eric Gioia, Mr. Mark Green, and Mr. Norman Siegel — all spoke passionately about standing up for the rights of New Yorkers and acting as a "watchdog" for city government. Each noted the recent 40 percent decline in the budget for the public advocate, and several candidates criticized City Hall for downsizing the budget of its own overseer. Mr. de Blasio stressed the position's mandate to ensure quality of democracy as well as accountability for the city government. Mr. Gioia discussed his own "American dream" rise in politics and promised to ensure the possibility for others. Mr. Green highlighted that he has previously held the position and touted a hundred new ideas his campaign would begin unveiling. Mr. Siegel stressed his non-political background and drew on personal experiences to convey that he is "a dreamer about how things are supposed to be" and that his record shows he takes action.

The event drew nearly 100 people, including New York City Councilwoman Ms. Gale Brewer and community leaders and rabbis from the Upper West Side, Upper East Side, Lower East Side, and Washington Heights, including Yeshiva University.

The forum was coordinated by The Friedlander Group and will be rebroadcasted in its entirety at a later date by Talkline Communications Network.

Toys for Hospitalized Children



Last week volunteers from Toys for Hospitalized Children visited hospitals all around North America. The "Summer Smiles" distribution is meant to bring smiles to kids in hospitals during the summer months when the children would normally be out enjoying the beautiful outdoors.

Thousands Celebrate Completion Of Bava Metzia

Special Shiur Marks Daf Yomi Milestone

By D. Gross

The third day of Elul (August 23rd, 2008) was a day of rejoicing worldwide among *lomdei Daf Yomi*, who marked the completion of *maseches Bava Metzia* in the 12th cycle of "the Daf." Since the completion of *maseches Kesubos* in the current *Daf Yomi* cycle, the Daf Yomi Commission of Agudath Israel has been arranging and broadcasting special *shiurim* across the nation to mark the completion of each *masechta*.

This month, *lomdim* in the U.S. and Canada heard a live broadcast of the 7th Nationwide Shiur, originating at Congregation Bnai Yeshurun in Teaneck, N.J.

Under the aegis of the Daf Plus program, Agudath Israel's Daf Yomi Commission arranged for the *shiur* to be given by one of the most sought-after speakers in the *frum* world, Rabbi Moshe Tuvia Lief, *shlita*, formerly the Rav of Kehillas Bais Yisroel of Minneapolis and recently installed as the Rav at Agudas Yisroel Bais Binyomin in Flatbush.

The topic of this nationwide *shiur* was: "Use Extreme Caution When Dealing with Your Friends' Possessions — *Hizharu bemamon*



Rabbi Lief giving a shiur.

chaveirchem," and was based on the *Gemara* in *Bava Metzia* 86a. Rabbi Lief delivered an in-depth discourse that provided his listeners with a deeper awareness of their obligations to others. He concluded with powerful words of *chizuk* for the *lomdei haDaf* and their families.

Agudath Israel's Daf Yomi Commission now has a 24-hour *Daf Yomi* helpline — 1.212.444.1DAF — which can be used to access nationwide *siyum masechta shiurim* or to access one of a panel of *talmidei chachamim* to answer

short, precise questions related to the *Daf*. The Daf Yomi Commission is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Elly and Brochie Kleinman in memory of their fathers.

Says Mr. Jacob Schlanger, one of the coordinators of the *Daf Yomi chaburos* in Teaneck-Bergenfield, New Jersey, "It was a special honor to be chosen to host this past nationwide *shiur* in our community. We anticipate with excitement future programs offered by the Agudah's Daf Yomi Commission to enhance our *limud haDaf*."

AmeriChoice Health Day Extravaganza

By Usher Glass

The Boro Park Jewish Community Council, in conjunction with AmeriChoice, will be sponsoring a community awareness and health day extravaganza, full of fun and enjoyment, this Sunday, September 6, from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., at 1315 38th Street, between 13th and 14th Avenues.

This exciting event for all

Boro Park children and families will feature free rides, prizes and giveaways. It will include a free live concert, as well as free ice cream and other treats. Exciting clowns will also be there to entertain.

It's a great opportunity for kids to enjoy themselves before the work-filled school year starts.

Mothers can register at the event for a free lecture regarding children's dental care,

"How to protect your children's teeth," and receive valuable gifts. Limited seating is available.

AmeriChoice is the premium insurance company that has been serving Boro Parkers loyally for many years. They have a tremendous network of doctors as well as great customer service, and understand the unique needs of the Boro Park community and its families.



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