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Chevra Gemach Proceeds benefit Chevra Gemach and The Lieutenants Benevolent Association Fund

Community News

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The starting price for a SeniorCheck is \$25, which I find ironic, since my Mom would have to pay more than that in gas and tolls. For more information, see the ad on page 7 of this week's edition. ❖

Wallenberg Congressional Luncheon, July 11

The Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Commission has much to be excited about. After tirelessly advocating in Congress, the RWCCC obtained two-thirds of the Senate for co-sponsorship of the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Act. The bill awards Raoul Wallenberg the highest civilian award, the Congressional Gold Medal, for risking his life to save 100,000 Jews during the waning days of the Holocaust. In honor of the momentous occasion, the RWCCC will be hosting, on July 11, a Congressional Celebratory Luncheon on Capitol Hill. The luncheon will feature prominent senators including Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, who introduced the legislation, Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI), Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), and other members of Congress who will pay tribute to the heroic efforts of Wallenberg. The event will remind future generations how important it is to look beyond ourselves. It will be chaired by Andrew Friedman, Esq., who serves on the LA Fire Department Board.

A special award will be presented to individuals from the RWCCC Board of

Governors for their unwavering support of the Raoul Wallenberg Commission. Stanley Black is the co-founder of KB Management and a philanthropist. The charitable William Nussen is the president of Designs by FMC. Ken Abramowitz is cofounder and managing general partner of NGN Capital. He campaigns for Israel in the hostile global environment. The NYC real estate executive Peter Rebenwuzel's father-in-law was rescued by Wallenberg. His father provided to the Budapest Ghetto. Abe Biderman is managing director of Eagle Advisers, Inc. and chairs Shuvu/Return, a network of schools in Israel for Russian immigrants. Leon Goldenberg, a child of Holocaust survivors, educates the public of the heroism of Wallenberg. Sidney Greenberger is CEO of AristaCare and a strong supporter of legislation relating to Wallenberg. Stanley Treitel, a leader in the Los Angeles community, has advised numerous elected officials on the U.S.-Israel relationship. The Turkish investment banker Erol User is a human rights advocate. Healthplus Amerigroup and Flushing Bank will also be recognized for their corporate sponsorship of the RWCCC.

The luncheon, coordinated by The Friedlander Group, will be honoring Andrew E. Stevens, Emil Fish, and Dr. David Moskovits. Andrew E. Stevens, originally from Budapest, survived the Holocaust by using forged documents. Refusing to hide quietly, Stevens risked his life to forge and distribute false documents to other Hungarians whose

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lives were in danger. Once, Raoul Wallenberg complained that he ran out of the official forms he had been using to save lives. The Hungarian resistance leader, Otto Komoly, suggested forged documents and Wallenberg agreed whereas Stevens delivered them to his office. Stevens detailed his survival and participation in the underground resistance movement in his book *Rebel with a Cause*, published by Allied Artists.

Emil Fish, also a Holocaust survivor, spent the war in the concentration camp, Bergen-Belsen. Sixty years after being liberated, Fish returned to his hometown, Bardejov, Slovakia, with his wife and son in June 2005. After seeing the disrepair and poor conditions of the Jewish cemetery and synagogue, he founded the nonprofit organization, Bardejov Jewish Preservation Committee. The organization restores Jewish properties of Bardejov and advances knowledge of Jewish ancestry and heritage. On December 23, 2009 he was appointed to the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad by President Obama.

The third honoree, Dr. David Moskowitz, is president of the Endowment for Democracy in Eastern Europe. He has also established the American Endowment School, the first foreign national Jewish school in Hungary, a former Soviet satellite country. The school's graduates boast of having an extensive secular education, as well as a strong sense of identity with their Jewish heritage. He

is the recipient of many awards around the world including the Jerusalem Prize, the first officer's award of the government of Hungary, and the entrepreneur of the year award. President Reagan described Dr. Moskowitz as a "true champion for democracy and humanitarian causes in East-Central Europe."

The RWCCC will be marking the sixtieth anniversary of the historic agreement between Germany and The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, better known as the Claims Conference. The organization persuaded West Germany to pay restitution to Jewish victims of Nazism. The luncheon will pay tribute to its leaders who continue to press Germany to meet its moral obligation to the Holocaust survivors.

A major announcement will be made at the luncheon regarding the legislation regarding Raoul Wallenberg with the Congressional Gold Medal. ❖

USDA Pulls Problematic "Religious Exemption" Guidance

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has decided to rescind guidance it issued in May regarding "gender separation" during the administration of federal child nutrition programs. The guidance was directed primarily at schools and camps and covered, among other USDA initiatives, school breakfast and lunch program, as well as summer feeding programs.

At issue in the guidance was a provision allowing religious schools and camps to apply for an exemption in cas-

es where their "specific religious tenets" require separation of boys and girls. No details were given as to how the exemption was to be implemented.

"We did not know if the requirement would involve onerous administrative procedures or, for example, how it would apply to single-gender entities," said Rabbi Abba Cohen, vice president for federal affairs and Washington director for Agudath Israel of America, who raised the concern with the USDA. "More importantly, we did not know if the agency was contemplating adjudicating whether a specific religion's tenet truly required the separation—an inappropriate action that would surely offend constitutional principles."

The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service explained in the guidance that it was prompted by numerous inquiries and complaints that some schools were separating students by gender during breakfast or lunch meal service. The schools argued that such separation was consistent with federal law and that sometimes this separation between boys and girls was necessary for safety and discipline purposes. The guidance rejected these arguments.

Jewish and other religious schools and camps have never been required to apply for a religious exemption in the past. The department informed Rabbi Cohen that lack of proper consultation resulted in an overbroad directive. It said that it was pulling the guidance from its website and that it is instructing its regional and state directors not to enforce the guidance. The agency is currently working on new guidance

that will target the specific problem of safety and discipline and that will be appropriate for, and take into account, the special circumstances of religious schools and camps.

"The USDA is to be commended for understanding the unique problem the guidance presented for religious entities participating in federal food programs and for responding effectively and expeditiously to resolve it," notes Rabbi Cohen. "We look forward to continue working with the agency in the development of the new guidance." ❖

Winners Of LCM's Goldfinger Math Contest

Alexander Mendelsohn, a junior at the Rae Kushner Yeshiva High School in Livingston, N.J., won first prize at the third annual Jacob Goldfinger Memorial Mathematics Contest at Touro's Lander College for Men (LCM). The contest was created to broaden and enrich yeshiva high school students' knowledge of mathematics and enhance their mathematical creativity.

"This contest inspires some of the most mathematically gifted students in yeshiva high schools across the country to push themselves ever further, and Lander College for Men is privileged to play a role in their development," said Dr. Moshe Sokol, the dean of LCM. "Mathematical knowledge is crucial to the United States, and we are delighted that so many young Jewish students show the capacity to make a real contribution to our future."

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