

West Coast Happenings



Jeanne Litvin
West Coast Editor



Events In The West: Touch of Kindness a Non-Profit organization founded in 1978, whose mission is to assist the Jewish needy of Los Angeles by providing a variety of family services with the utmost level of dignity and discretion. Their programs help those without work find jobs, start businesses & earn livelihoods. They provide clothing and furniture, assist with utilities & rent in emergency situations, help children obtain educations and direct those in need to the proper social service organizations. On a weekly basis they provide food for the week, and the holidays. This weekly support restores spirits and allows these families to get back on their feet. They are hosting a golf tournament July 27 at Mountain Gate Country Club.

It's not too late to sign up or become a sponsor at: banquest.com/golffortomchei. The tournament will benefit Tomchei L.A., their food and hardship assistance program

Scholars-In-Residence: August 7-8 **Rav Ronen** and **Dr. Pnia Neuwirth** at the **DAT Minyan in Denver**. Rabbi Neuwirth serves as the Rabbi of Ohel Ari (Minyan Chadash) in Ra'annana and founded a spiritual leadership organization that strives to magnify the voice of centrist Judaism. Dr. Pnina Neuwirth serves as a judge in the Tel Aviv Magistrate Court and holds two Ph.D. degrees from Haifa University. She teaches Torah in Matan HaSharon Raanana and has taught at Stern College for Women.

Community News: **Kahal Chasidim She'aris Yaakov** is now located at 9017 W. Pico Blvd in LA... **Emek Beracha** in Palo Alto, CA, is

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Local LA Leaders Among Those Recognized On Capital Hill

The Kennedy Caucus Room in the Russell Senate office building was packed with more than 200 legislators, Jewish leaders and their supporters who participated in a bi-partisan celebration of American Jewish Heritage Month to recognize the many contributions of the Jewish people to the United States.



Stanley Treitel, Senator Richard Blumenthal, Senator Tim Kaine, Representative John Lewis, Rabbi Levi Shemtov, Ezra Friedlander, Rabbi Gavriel Kleinerman, Richard M. Horowitz, Rabbi Richard Boruch Rabinowitz, Rabbi Hershel Lutch of Aish International.

Hungarian Ambassador And Rabbi Shaul Spira Honored At Bais Naftoli Breakfast

Congregation Bais Naftoli was established 23 years ago in memory of Holocaust survivor, Naftoli Friedman. Now his nephew, Andrew Friedman, is President of the shul and organizes the annual Breakfast where honorees are chosen for their remarkable contribution to Jewish Life. On Sunday, June 28, this year's honorees included Hungarian ambassador Reka Szemerkenyi and Rabbi Shaul Spira.

Rabbi Spira serves as youth director of the Bais Naftoli Congregation and was recognized for his dedicated service and contributions to the Jewish community. Each Shabbos, Rabbi Spira's Amen Club brings enthusiasm to the children of the shul. They must participate with a hearty "amen" during the reciting of *Mussaf* and prizes are subsequently awarded for the most enthusiastic contributors. The rabbi also teaches at Cheder Los Angeles.

Reka Szemerkenyi became Hungarian ambassador to the U.S. back in February. After a long career in politics she is proud to currently represent the government of Hungary in America. Under this government, Jewish life has been experiencing a renaissance. More than 100,000 Jews still live in Hungary. There is now new funding for Jewish education as well as social and cultural programs. 600 Jewish cemeteries are being refurbished and shuls are being rebuilt. Szemerkenyi was venerated as she continues to establish peace and harmony between all Hungarians, irrespective of race, color or religion.

Cantor Moti Boyer came from the East Coast to support the event. In a melodious voice he sang the memorial prayer, *Kel Moleh Rachamin*, in memory of

those who perished in the Holocaust.

Many dignitaries attended including Congressman Edward R. Royce (R-Calif.) Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee; Los Angeles County Supervisor, Mike Antonovich, 5th District; Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer; City Controller Ron Galperin; U.S. Marshal David Singer; Los Angeles Fire Chief Ralph Terrazas; Los Angeles Police Department Deputy Chief Beatrice Girmala; Hungarian Consul Oliver Pinter; German Consul Stefan Biederman and representatives of the FBI, DEA and CHP.

Congressman Royce spoke of his efforts in support of Israel. He spoke about a meaningful letter that he recently authored, a letter which was signed by 90% of Congress, telling President Obama that Congress would seriously monitor the nuclear deal with Iran. He also said that he knew Israel took every precaution to protect lives in the recent Gaza War. He said he had personally visited the caves that were built by Hamas with specific goal of causing casualties, tak-

ing hostages and staging acts of terrorism.

Bais Naftoli, located at 221 S. La Brea with a membership of both Ashkenazi and Sephardi families, is now starting on the search for the 2016 honorees.

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