

Agudath Israel of America Legislative Breakfast



Members of the leadership of Agudath Israel of America (L-R): Ezra Friedlander, CEO of the Friedlander Group; Chaskel Bennett of the Board of Trustees of Agudath Israel of America; Jarrod Bernstein, White House Jewish liaison; Rabbi David Zwiebel, Esq., executive vice president of Agudath Israel of America; Joseph B. Stamm, president and CEO of Med Review, event sponsor; Joseph Zelmanovitz, breakfast chairman and partner at Stahl & Zelmanovitz; Congressman Bob Turner; Abe Eisner; Mr. Leon Goldenberg; and Shlomo Werdiger.



U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer addresses the Agudath Israel of America Legislative Breakfast (L-R): Rabbi Shmuel Lefkowitz, Agudath Israel of America's vice president for community services; Rabbi David Zwiebel, Esq., executive vice president; Mr. Gedaliah Weinberger, chairman of the board; Joseph Zelmanovitz, breakfast chairman and partner at Stahl & Zelmanovitz; Joseph B. Stamm, president and CEO of Med Review, event sponsor; Jonathan Zalisky, senior community relations coordinator of Health Plus, event sponsor; Chaskel Bennett of the Board of Trustees of Agudath Israel of America; and Congressman Bob Turner.

The Yitti Leibel Help-Line Luncheon

BY BRACHA BEER, L.C.S.W.

This year, the Annual Luncheon of the Yitti Leibel Help-Line is honored to have prominent and beloved community members Mrs. Chana Scherman and Mrs. Ciril Stern, L.M.S.W., as Community Service Awardees. The prominent and respected *mechaneches* Rebbetzin Leah Horowitz will be the guest speaker.

The Annual Luncheon is the main fundraising event of the Yitti Leibel Help-Line. This year, it will be held on Sunday, November 20 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Khal Chassidim, 4820 Fifteenth Avenue, Brooklyn, New York. The program will begin at 2:15 p.m.

The Help-Line is a free-of-charge opportunity for members of our community to speak to a *frum* licensed, accredited

mental health professional about any problem, big or small, without giving their names. The Help-Line has responded to the full spectrum of crises, from suicidal individuals (we have intervened and prevented many suicides, *baruch Hashem*) and callers whispering from a closet because they don't want anyone in their family to know they are calling, to commonplace family issues that any one of us might be struggling to resolve.

Our volunteers are highly trained, sensitive to confidentiality, and compassionate. They offer a listening ear and referrals, if necessary. We advertise our Help-Line phone number (718-HELP-NOW) and in addition to our local area, we receive calls from cities across the United States, Israel, and as far away as Mexico, South Africa and Australia.

Vaad L'Hatzolas Nidchei Yisroel On Historical Chizuk Mission

BY RABBI DR. YOSEF ROSENSHEIN

An American delegation of Vaad L'Hatzolas Nidchei Yisroel departed last Sunday for a week-long annual Chizuk Mission to the *nidchei Yisrael* in Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The delegation left for Prague on Sunday, with Rabbi and Mrs. Eli Mansour leading the tour throughout. They will be visiting Theresienstadt as well as the Alte-Neu Shul and the *kevarim* of many *Gedolim* in the region.

On Tuesday, they will head for Baku, losing a full day traveling to Azerbaijan because of the nine-hour time difference between the two countries. After a restful night, they will *daven* with the *bachurim* of the Vaad yeshivah and have breakfast before visiting the schools. The day will be replete with many exciting events, including a concert by the students, a visit to the *mikveh*, a *pidyon haben* (as they will be accompanied by a *kohen*, Moshe Avrohom Cohen), a *kesubah*-writing, and a beautiful lunch in the Vaad synagogue with a kindergarten presentation and a tour of the city. The delegates will be distributing *tefillin* to bar mitzvah boys, as well as *tzitzis* and *mezuzos* to some families.

On Thursday morning they will arrive in Tbilisi, where they will be joined by a group of twelve or thirteen people who will have arrived there the previous night on the private plane arranged for Lakewood *Mashgiach*, the Vaad's *Nasi*, Harav Mattisyahu Salomon, *shlita*. Thus the delegation will number about thirty people, including five doctors and four women.

On Thursday morning, after *davening* in the new synagogue with the people of Tbilisi, the delegation will visit the Vaad's schools, give *shurim* and join the *kollel* on a trip to Gori, where Stalin, *ym"o*, was born and lived. In Gori they will visit the only synagogue left standing after Stalin and his henchmen destroyed all the synagogues there. They will give *chizuk* to the *talmidim* of the Jewish center and meet members of the seminars and their parents.

On their return to Tbilisi, the group will visit the *mikveh* and the motel attached to the *mikveh*, built for those traveling from far to stay overnight in Tbilisi. The main event, in which local congregations will participate, will be a *kesivas sefer Torah* in honor of the *Mashgiach*, which will take place in the new shul. *Osiyos* will be sold, as well as special *parshiyos*, *sedras* and the last two *Chumashim*, which are still available. Anyone in the United States interested in participating can buy any of the above by calling or emailing the Vaad office at zvaad@aol.com. During this momentous occasion, there will be a broadcast from Tbilisi on WFMU 91.1 on the FM dial at 8:00



Rabbis Eli Mansour, Zev Blau, Heshy Augenbaum and Dr. Yosef Rosenshein departing Sunday on their Chizuk Mission



Harav Mattisyahu Salomon blessing Baku boys on an earlier mission.



Helicopter to fly from Baku to Kuba on a chizuk mission

a.m., New York time. This will be followed by a gala banquet, *chizuk* messages and *drashos*, led by the *Mashgiach*.

The next morning, two *brissos*, as well as a *geirus*, on adult men will be held. A Rav from Eretz Yisrael will be arriving to perform the *geirus*, while the renowned *mohel* Rabbi Yitzchok Fischer will perform the *brissos*. Children will entertain at a concert, followed by the distribution of *tefillin*, *talleisim* and *mezuzos* by members of the delegation. On stage, the *Mashgiach* will lead an inspiring *Kabbalas Ol Malchus*. Afterwards, the group will visit the ladies' seminary college as well as the Rachamim Society for destitute elderly Yidden of Tbilisi. The Vaad ladies' seminary now has twenty students, an increase of eight over last year; the first class will graduate at the end of this year. Following a short lunch, a grand shopping tour of Tbilisi will take place.

The Heilige Shabbos in Tbilisi

It is almost impossible to

describe the *ruach* of a *heilige* Shabbos in Tbilisi. On Friday night the congregation will *daven* in the old synagogue, which is over 150 years old, along with the entire Sephardic community, reciting *Tehillim* word by word before *Kabbalas Shabbos* and *davening b'kavanah*, slowly, word by word, together *b'kol rom*. The Friday night meal will be accompanied by warm *zemiros*. There will be *drashos* by members of the *kollel* and a spirited *oneg Shabbos* afterwards.

On Shabbos morning the delegation will *daven* in the new synagogue. *Davening* will be followed by a beautiful *kiddush* and a Shabbos *seudah* at which various people from Tbilisi will share their experiences. After a well-earned Shabbos rest, the Torah and *mitzvah* week will conclude with a grand *melaveh malkah* in the Sheraton Hotel of Tbilisi. The delegation from abroad and the local Jewish community will participate. On Sunday afternoon, the group will return to New York.