

Agudath Israel Welcomes Increase in Security Spending for Non-Profits

As part of the bipartisan 2014 Appropriations Bill passed on Thursday, Congress approved an allocation of \$13 million for the Non-Profit Security Grant Program (NSGP).

The initiative provides funding, in selected cities, for security equipment for non-profit institutions at high risk of violence or terrorist attack. Shuls, yeshivos and other Jewish community institutions have been among the beneficiaries of the program over the years.

"This year's appropriation is of particular significance," said Rabbi Abba Cohen, Agudath Israel of America's Vice President of Federal Government Affairs and Washington Director, "as it represents an increase of \$3 million over 2013 levels."

"At a time when budgets are getting tighter and spending is being dramatically cut, Congress's action represents a meaningful vote of confidence for the program," Rabbi Cohen asserted.

NSGP was authorized in 2004 to help secure non-profit institutions, which are considered particularly vulnerable targets either because of their symbolic value or because they are places where large populations congregate.

Yet, as non-profits, they often do not have the resources to ade-

quately protect their buildings and facilities. The program addresses this problem by providing funds to acquire security cameras, concrete barriers, reinforced doors and other such security enhancements.

NSGP was originally introduced by Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), who continues to be a champion of the program.

Agudath Israel, along with the Jewish Federations of North America and a small group of Jewish community organizations, played a leading role in promoting the establishment of NSGP in 2004.

Since that time, the Orthodox Jewish group has continued to be deeply engaged in this cooperative effort, working with the Administration and Congressional leaders to maintain and strengthen the initiative.

"Protecting those who are at high risk of violence and terrorism has to be a top priority for our nation. It is an imperative that is particularly felt by the Jewish community, which over the years has been the victim of numerous threats and violent incidents by those bent on death and destruction. We applaud Congress for maintaining and enhancing this most vital program," concluded Rabbi Cohen.

NYC Council Speaker Mark-Viverito Warmly Welcomed at Tu BiShvat Seder In Boro Park



L-R: Rabbi Steven Burg, Simon Wiesenthal Center; Mr. Joel Eisdorfer, Brooklyn Borough President's office; Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams; Mr. Ezra Friedlander; Councilman Brad Lander; Rabbi Abe Friedman.

The new City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito; Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams; City Councilmembers Brad Lander, David Greenfield and Chaim Deutsch; State Assemblyman David Weprin, and a representative of Mayor Bill DeBlasio were among the guests in the dining room of Mr. Ezra Friedlander, CEO of The Friedlander Group, to celebrate Tu BiShvat, Jan. 15. The program was led by Rabbi Steven Burg of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

"They're part of the community. They work for the community. They represent the community. So it's only natural to welcome them ... thank them for what they're doing on our behalf," Friedlander said. It was the sec-

ond year Friedlander held the party, allowing members of the city's Orthodox Jewish community to mingle with elected officials.

Speaker Mark-Viverito commented, "My responsibility and role is to build relationships and to really learn about other communities and other cultures."

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams noted that this marks his first joyous Jewish event since entering Borough Hall.

"It was very appropriate to welcome Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams on Tu BiShvat, ... Rosh Hashanah for the trees, with their own recent oath of office which is symbolic of a fresh start to our borough and city," said Friedlander.

Conquering New Horizons in Run-Up To 2014 Parnassah Expo

BY SHIMMY BLUM

Even during the two trail-blazing Parnassah Expos in 2012 and 2013, the Parnassah Network organization has never seen anything quite like the run up to the 2014 Parnassah Expo, which will, *iy"H*, take place over two days — March 25 and 26 — at the New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center in Edison, New Jersey.

Exhibitors at previous expos rave about their success, and are eager to reserve a booth or sponsorship package. New exhibitors ... new speakers ... new seminars ... an email from Israel ... a phone call from Florida ... an email from Microsoft ... a surprise visit from Blackberry's regional sales manager ... a meeting with a top liaison for New Jersey state government ... a meeting with top executives of Investors Bank ...

"I can't keep track of who reserved booths already," Reb Duvi Honig, Parnassah Network's on-top-of-it-all founder and director, sheepishly admits. "The back office finally gets to work without me involved — and I'm honestly not sure whether they actually mind that!"

The networking concept behind the 2014 Parnassah Expo remains tried and true: bring the business world under one roof and help participants and exhibitors discover new customers, vendors, partners, investors, employees, marketing guidance and much more.

An unprecedented 150,000 square feet — larger than for any other general B2B event in the United States — will be dedicated to the expo, covering all the



bases for elite, midsize and start-up businesses alike. Sponsorships from major businesses and community fixtures, such as Investors Bank and *Hamodia*, have been reserved.

The expo will feature very large and well-organized sections for each major industry. There will be specially designated networking pavilions for every industry for both structured and informal networking, in addition to Q&A panels and seminars from leading professionals. A vast stand-alone section will be dedicated to job placement, academic and vocational training and other human-resource related entities.

Innovations include a "Women in the Workforce" section offering tons of company, practical advice and *chizuk* for women working to do their best at home and in the business world. The special deal-making section will serve as a marketplace for entrepreneurs and investors to share their ideas, existing ventures and capital with one another, and find the perfect investors or partners.

A large section dedicated to outsourcing will help partici-

pants who manufacture and/or export overseas.

Another unique section will be the food court, where a range of kosher food establishments and manufacturers (dairy, meat and pareve) will showcase their goods and get to reach a cross section of the public — everyday customers, businesses and institutions alike.

Ahron Richman, president of Jivetel Communications, is one of the countless individuals who recognize the 2014 Parnassah Expo's multifaceted potential. Mr. Richman relates that the enormous strides that his business has made, *b'siyatta diShmaya*, since last year's exposition, have proven that the expo is an invaluable tool to strengthen relationships with current customers, gain new customers and field resume's for job openings.

"Exhibiting at the expo is a most powerful advertisement — and it lets you put a live face to it," he says.

For more information, or to reserve a booth or sponsorship, please visit www.parnassahexpo.com, email info@parnassahexpo.com or call 732-987-7704.

Book Review

REVIEWED BY NAOMI BERGER

Finally, a book for mothers of Jewish boys! And not just a handbook, but an engaging, lively read that covers just about every topic that is Jewish and boy-related, from *bris* to bar mitzvah. From the first page to the last, Beily Paluch connects to you in her humorous yet down-to-earth style, presenting a seamless blend of information, tips, anecdotes and inspiration.

Can you help a baby with jaundice have his *bris* on time? Which homework papers are *sheimos*? How can you keep track of learning hours over Yom Tov and Chol Hamoed? What should you serve at the *vach nacht*? Bring to the *pidyon haben*? What should a mom know if her son is a *bechor*? A *Kohen*? A *Levi*? A lefty? At what point is a pair of *tzitzis* no longer kosher? What are the parame-



Boy Oh Boy!

By Beily Paluch

ters of *peyos*? Can you save a *yar-mulke* that's been through the wash?

These are just some of the questions addressed in the book, which also includes a full chapter on mothers and sons in the Talmud, as well as *segulos* for having a boy and for raising righteous sons. Other chapters discuss boys around the year (volunteering at the *kapparos* center, selling *aravos* and *lulav*

rings, *matzah* baking, staying up all night on Shavuot), running a *Chevas Tehillim*, and organizing a fundraising carnival. Interspersed along the way are insights and observations, ideas and ruminations. They resonate in a way that leaves no doubt: The author is a member of our club!

For added chuckles, the book is sprinkled with a collection of favorite boy moments from mothers near and far.

Boy Oh Boy! has a *heimish*, Brooklyn flavor, but a universal appeal; it homes in on the common threads that bind us no matter our backgrounds or geographic locations.

The book is highly informative yet maintains a light, upbeat voice. Mothers of one boy or a dozen, whether the boys are still young or have flown the nest, will find themselves in this book; it is both a reference and a friend.