

Project Witness Presents ‘Once Upon a Family’ to the Public During the Nine Days

DEBORAH SCHECHTER

On Tuesday evening, June 14, a full-to-capacity audience attended the premiere presentation of “Once Upon a Family,” the Project Witness documentary commemorating 70 years since the destruction of the Jews of Poland. This significant premiere performance took place in the Museum of Jewish Heritage in lower Manhattan — a very appropriate location for the first public viewing of “Once Upon a Family,” since the Museum too, is dedicated to memorializing the Holocaust and recording its impact.

The program included reunions between survivors, liberators and their descen-

dants. The inimitable spirit and courageous determination of Chief Rabbi Yisroel Lau, the evening’s guest speaker, came across in a manner that will be treasured by all those privileged to hear him. His powerful message, followed by the film itself, made the event a truly memorable and unforgettable experience.

The program concluded with a soul-rending *Kaddish* and with a *Kel Malei Rachamim* movingly intoned by Cantor Mendy Werdyger. Further details about this exceptional and deeply-moving evening will be forthcoming in the near future.

“Once Upon a Family” will be presented to a broad vari-

ety of audiences in the near future. Starting this Monday evening, July 20, it will be shown in Boro Park at three separate performances. Two of these performances will be for women only and will take place at Ateres Golda, 1362-50th Street at 5:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. These women’s programs will feature opening remarks by Mrs. Ruth Lichtenstein.

In addition to the women’s programs, Project Witness will also present a special program for men on July 20 at 8:00 p.m. at the Lipschitz Halls, 5000 14th Avenue. At this event, opening remarks will be delivered by Harav Moshe Tuvia Lieff, Rav, Agudath Israel Bais Binyomin.

For several years now, Project Witness has presented its latest documentaries in the Catskills during the Nine Days. This year will be no exception.

On Wednesday afternoon, July 22, a teen camp program featuring “Once Upon A Family” will be presented to over 800 girls at 3:00 p.m. at Monticello High School, 39 Breakey Avenue, Monticello, N.Y. Prior reservations are required.

At 7:30 p.m. on the same evening, July 22, at the same

location, “Once Upon A Family” will be shown for women, with opening remarks being delivered by Mrs. Ruth Lichtenstein.

Based on past experience, large crowds are expected to attend. We suggest coming early to make sure that you are able to find a good seat. For further information, please contact Project Witness at info@projectwitness.org or 718-WITNESS (948-6377). We look forward to greeting you at one of the events.

Key Officials to Be Honored at Shema Kolainu Legislative Breakfast

THE FRIEDLANDER GROUP

On Wednesday, July 22, Shema Kolainu — Hear Our Voices, a school and center for children with autism, will host their Annual Legislative Breakfast at the Renaissance Ballroom, located at 5902 14th in Brooklyn, New York, at 8:15 a.m.

Over 15 years ago, Shema Kolainu was established by a trailblazer named Dr. Joshua Weinstein when it opened its doors to three young school children — the first school and center of its kind.

Today, Shema Kolainu serves close to 1,000 children in home and center-based programs for children on the autism spectrum in all five boroughs of New York City. Said founder and CEO Dr. Weinstein: “This is a remarkable feat accomplished only with Hashem’s help.”

Dr. Weinstein will open the event by offering a warm welcome to all champion advocates of autism. Mr. Peter Rebenwurzel, board chairman, will deliver greetings.

The Shema Kolainu Annual Legislative Breakfast is hosted to educate legislators about the urgency of autism care and research, raise support and awareness, and share ideas about working toward combating autism through effective public policy and legislation. Communal, civic and religious leaders, philan-

thropists and elected officials will be participating to pay tribute to several outstanding public officials for their role in furthering the mission of Shema Kolainu. Several extraordinary officials will be honored for their proven dedication to increasing educational opportunities for children with autism spectrum disorders.

Dr. Merry H. Tisch is chancellor of the New York Board of Regents and brings many years of experience in the fields of education, community service, and philanthropy. Throughout her career, Dr. Tisch has always been a staunch supporter of helping children with special needs reach their highest potential by ensuring they receive a quality education. Dr. Tisch firmly believes that special-needs children should receive the attention they deserve, and Chancellor Tisch has been dedicated to ensuring that this philosophy is always reflected by all stakeholders. Shema Kolainu is grateful to Dr. Tisch for her commitment to their mission to enhance the quality of life of children with autism and their families.

NYC Councilmember Andrew Cohen, who chairs the Council’s Mental Health Committee, will be presented with the Appreciation Award in recognition of his leadership ensuring that the Council

continues to allocate funding for the Autism Awareness Initiative, as well as his tireless efforts to ensure that New Yorkers living with disabilities continue to be represented and guaranteed equal rights.

As is already a tradition at the Shema Kolainu breakfast, Mr. Menachem Lubinsky, CEO of LUBICOM Marketing Consulting, and Mr. Kalman Yeger Esq. will be masters of ceremonies. Prominent communal leaders Mr. Abe Biderman and Mr. Abe Eisner, who are both committed to Shema Kolainu’s continued mission of providing a quality education to its children, will serve as breakfast co-chairs.

Traditionally, the breakfast honors a community-based organization and this year will be no different. Tantzlers is a group of volunteers of over 150 men and 50 women, founded by Mr. Zelig Friedman. Their purpose is to bring joy, strength and hope and a feeling of being cared about, to all people with special needs. The Tantzlers do this by dancing and singing to the music of popular singers. They perform at private homes of those challenged by various medical issues, including cancer, autism and surgery, and at weddings of Jews with disabilities, ensuring joy for all.

To RSVP, contact The Friedlander Group by email: SK@TheFriedlanderGroup.com

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