

Celebration!

PURIM MAGAZINE

13-14 ADAR, 5783 | MARCH 6 - 7, 2023

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Kreplach

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LIFE. INSPIRED.

PURIM AND EDUCATION

In connection with the forthcoming days of Purim, I wish to call the attention of my fellow Jews to a significant event connected with the Miracle of Purim, an event which has a profound and timely message for all of us.

Our Sages relate that when the terrible decree of annihilation of the Jews, planned by Haman, became known, Mordechai went out into the streets and gathered 22,000 children, to whom he taught the Torah and with whom he prayed for G-d's mercy. He imbued them with the spirit of self-sacrifice, so that they declared unanimously, "In life or in death we will not part from thee." By this action the Heavenly decree for the Jews was rescinded and reversed from death to life, and from mourning to gladness—physically, as well as spiritually.

Let us remember that Mordechai was one of the heads of the Sanhedrin, the greatest Jew of his time, "like Moses in his generation." Nevertheless, he went out in person to teach the holy Torah, with piety and self sacrifice, to small children.

Only in this way can we make sure that the young generation will be ours, and, as a matter of course, ensure the existence of our people.

The lesson for everyone of us is clear: No matter what one's station in life, or how important one's activities seem to be, one must first and

foremost, dedicate at least some part of his time and efforts to the most important of all causes—saving our young generation by implanting into them devotion to all that has been holy to us ever since our ancestors received the Torah at Mount Sinai and we became a "Kingdom of Priests and a holy nation", devotion to the point of self-sacrifice. Only in this way can we make sure that the young generation will be ours, and, as a matter of course, ensure the existence of our people. And great is the merit of this work, for herein lies our strength against all Hamans and our security under G-d's protection.

It is well to bear in mind that the education of the young is very much like the planting of a seed. A slight defect in the seed, the like of which in the grown tree may be of little or no consequence, assumes major proportions in respect of the whole growth that is to come from the seed, to the extent of crippling it. Similarly must the utmost care be taken to ensure the proper education and upbringing of our children, boys and girls. A slight deflection from Torah-true education may have a crippling effect, G-d forbid, upon the whole future of the child and generation to come.

Adapted from the teachings of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, O.B.M.

Purim at Chabad

MARCH 6
Monday

5:45pm - Meggillah Reading

LOCATION: at Chabad
17662 Gages Lake Rd. Grayslake

MARCH 7
Tuesday

9:30am - Meggillah Reading

LOCATION: at Chabad
17662 Gages Lake Rd. Grayslake

5:15pm - Meggillah Reading
at A Tropical Purim

LOCATION: Heather Ridge Golf Course
5900 Heatheridge Dr, Gurnee, IL 60031
See ad on page 9.

*For a live reading
near you, please visit
www.chabad.org/purim*

Celebration!

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*Dedicated to the Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, OBM,
whose boundless love and teachings are an
endless source of inspiration and guidance.*

THE STORY OF PURIM

Once upon a time...

A FATEFUL PARTY

It all began in the city of Shushan of Ancient Persia in the 4th century BCE. The reigning King Achashverosh hosted a series of lavish royal feasts in his palace that went on for 180 days – one half of a year! Every citizen living in Shushan was invited. The Jews, too, participated in the great party.

Intoxicated with the excitement of the festivities and days of endless drinking, King Achashverosh commanded his queen, Vashti, to appear before his guests wearing only her crown. Vashti refused. Enraged at her insolence, the king consulted with his ministers and had Vashti executed.

THE BEAUTY CONTEST

The king now needed a new queen. Achashverosh had all the beautiful daughters of the country brought to the palace so that he might choose a wife. The king chose Esther (Hadassah), the cousin of Mordechai, who was one of the leaders of the Jewish people. Heeding Mordechai's advice, Esther did not reveal her identity as a Jew, and observed Jewish law secretly in the palace.



The Story in a Nutshell

The Persian empire of the 4th century BCE extended over 127 lands, and all the Jews were its subjects. When King Ahasuerus had his wife, Queen Vashti, executed for failing to follow his orders, he orchestrated a beauty pageant to find a new queen. A Jewish girl, Esther, found favor in his eyes and became the new queen—though she refused to divulge the identity of her nationality.

Meanwhile, the anti-Semitic Haman was appointed prime minister of the empire. Mordechai, the leader of the Jews (and Esther's cousin), defied the king's orders and refused to bow to Haman. Haman was incensed and had the king issue a decree ordering the extermination of all the Jews on the 13th of Adar—a date chosen by a lottery Haman made.

Mordechai galvanized all the Jews, convincing them to repent, fast and pray to G-d. Meanwhile, Esther asked the king and Haman to join her for a feast. At the feast, Esther revealed to the king her Jewish identity. Haman was sent to the gallows, Mordechai was appointed prime minister in his stead, and a new decree was issued—granting the Jews the right to defend themselves against their enemies.

On the 13th of Adar the Jews mobilized and fought their enemies. On the 14th of Adar they rested and celebrated.

MORDECHAI TO THE RESCUE

Mordechai would spend time at the palace gates every day, waiting for word from Esther. One day Mordechai overheard two of the king's chamberlains discussing a plot to assassinate the king. He told Esther of the plot and she informed the king. The plot was foiled, and Mordechai was credited with saving the king.

THE ANTI-SEMITIC PRIME MINISTER

Meanwhile, Haman, a descendant of Amalek – the implacable enemy of the Jewish people – became Prime Minister of the king's court. The king had issued an order commanding everyone in the palace to bow down in deference to Haman, but Mordechai refused, because Haman wore an idol around his neck. This so enraged Haman that he devised a scheme to annihilate



all the Jews in the kingdom on the 13th day of the Hebrew month of Adar.

MORDECHAI'S REQUEST

Hearing of the evil plan, Mordechai donned sackcloth and ashes and told Esther that she must go to the king and intercede on behalf of her people. To appear before the king without being summoned meant risking her life. Esther requested that all the Jews undertake a three-day fast of prayer and repentance.

Mordechai complied with Esther's request. He gathered the Jews of Shushan – especially the children, 22,000 of them – and they fasted, repented and prayed to G-d.

THE FIRST FEAST

At the end of these three days, Esther stood uninvited before Achashverosh. Upon seeing her, the king immediately extended his scepter. "What is it?" Achashverosh asked. "What is your request?" "I would like to invite the king and Haman to a private party," Esther responded.

During the feast, the king again asked Esther whether she had any request. "Yes," Esther responded. "I would appreciate if tomorrow, again, the king and Haman would join me for a feast."

Haman left the party a happy and proud man. Oh, the honor he was being accorded! But standing at the king's gate was Mordechai – who still refused to bow to Haman – and Haman was enraged. When he arrived home, his wife and wise advisors counseled him to erect a gallows, and then to go to the king and request permission to hang Mordechai. Haman excitedly went ahead and put up the gallows.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Sleep eluded the king that night, so he asked his servants to read for him from the Royal Chronicles. When they reached the episode where Mordechai

saved his life, he realized that Mordechai had never been rewarded. Just at that moment, Haman appeared in the courtyard, planning to suggest to the king to hang Mordechai.

When he entered Achashverosh's chambers, the king asked Haman, "What shall be done to a person whom the king wishes to honor?"

Haman, who was certain that the king wished to honor him, responded: "Bring royal garment and a royal horse. And let one of the king's nobles dress the man and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, 'So is done for the man whom the king wishes to honor!'"

"Great idea," Achashverosh responded. "Now go get the garments and the horse and do so for Mordechai the Jew!"

Haman had no choice but to comply. On the next day he went and honored Mordechai as the king had ordered, and then immediately rushed to join the king and Esther for...

THE SECOND FEAST

"What is your request?" a curious King Achashverosh asked Esther at the feast. "If I have found favor in your eyes, O King," Esther replied. "Spare my life and the lives of my people." Surprised, Achashverosh asked Esther who had threatened her. She replied that it was none other than the wicked Haman. Haman was immediately hanged on the gallows he had intended for Mordechai.

THE TABLES ARE TURNED

Although Haman was dead, his cruel decree remained unchanged. According to Persian law, once a king issues a decree it cannot be rescinded. A new decree was issued, granting the Jews permission to defend themselves against their enemies and to attack and slay all those who would assault them. The Jews experienced a stunning victory in battle.

IN COMMEMORATION

At that time, the 14th day of Adar was consecrated as the festival of Purim, to celebrate and commemorate the great miracle of our people's salvation and the downfall of the wicked Haman.

This holiday, called "Purim," is the most joyous holiday on the Jewish calendar.



Celebrating The Lows

There are many joyous dates on the Jewish calendar, but besides Purim, none of them affect the entire month, causing it to be auspicious and joyous. What is the intrinsic connection between Purim and Adar? Perhaps a comprehension of the unique nature of Purim will allow us to understand why its joy extends throughout the entire month of Adar.

Haman successfully pinpointed the moment when the Jews were at their lowest point. After nearly a millennium of freedom, independence, and constant reliance on miracles, they were now banished from their land, helpless and seemingly at the mercy of the laws of nature. This was a completely new experience for the Jewish nation. Their spiritual status was also significantly affected. The Temple in Jerusalem where G-d's presence was manifest, a symbol of the special relationship He shares with His chosen nation, laid in ruins. As for the prospects of its reconstruction — even the gentiles were aware of Jeremiah's prophesy that after seventy years of exile G-d would return the Jews to their land and rebuild the Temple. Seventy years had elapsed (or so everyone thought, due to erroneous calculations), and the awaited redemption had not arrived.

“The timing has never been better,” Haman thought. “Surely the Chosen People have lost their exalted status. Now is the perfect moment to implement the Final Solution.”

Haman, however, was not yet satisfied. He needed one more sign indicating the Jews' vulnerability. The lottery would have the final say. And indeed, the lottery provided the exact sign he anxiously awaited. The lottery designated Adar to be the month when his nefarious plan would be put into motion. The Talmud tells us that Haman was overjoyed by this favorable omen. “My lottery fell on the month when Moses died,” he exclaimed. The demise of Moses, the “head” of the Jewish nation, was surely a metaphor for the demise of the entire nation!

Haman successfully pinpointed the moment when the Jews were at their lowest point — historically as well as calendar-

wise — to implement his plan... But his plan still did not succeed. Why?

The history of our nation is very much compared to the human lifespan. Through the course of a lifetime every person undergoes drastic changes; fluctuation being the most consistent feature of life. The helpless newborn has virtually nothing in common with the independent, talented personality which will emerge years down the line. Adulthood, too, has ups and downs, happy days and depressing days, fulfilling days and seemingly wasted days. There is, however, one constant: the very identity and essence of the person. John Doe remains John Doe from the day he is born until the day he dies.

The same is true with our nation. We have ups and downs, both spiritually and materially, but our very identity, the fact that we are G-d's chosen nation, is never affected.

It can actually be argued that, in a certain sense, our perpetual relationship with G-d is more evident when we are exiled and downtrodden due to our sins, and G-d still interferes on our behalf, as was demonstrated by the Purim miracle.

This phenomenon demonstrates the durability of our relationship; the ability of our essential identity to survive no matter our external state.

All other holidays celebrate the “highs” of our nation. And therefore their joy is limited, because highs don't last. Purim celebrates a time when we were at a low point in our history — but our relationship with G-d remained intact. Its joy is therefore greater than the joy of any other holiday, because it demonstrates the essential nature of our relationship with G-d — and that is a constant.

The month of Adar, the month which Haman understood to be the most inauspicious month for the Jews, is the happiest month of the year—the month when we bear in mind that “inauspicious” has absolutely no bearing on our relationship with G-d.

By Naftali Silberberg

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THE 4 MITZVOT OF PURIM

MEGILLAH



MARCH 6 & 7

We read the megillah, not just once but twice - on the eve of Purim and again in the morning. The Megillah relates the entire story of Purim and we pay attention to every word. We blot out Haman's name by twirling our graggers and stamping our feet.

Hear the Megillah at Chabad. See page 2.



MISHLOACH MANOT

GIFTS OF FOOD

MARCH 7

This Mitzvah is performed on Purim day. The important thing is to pack up at least two types of edibles or drinks that are ready to eat or drink (e.g. pastry, fruit, beverage) and have them delivered, ideally by a messenger, to at least one friend – men to men, women to women, kids to kids. The ideal messenger? A child of course – they love it!



MATANOT L'EVYONIM

GIFTS TO THE NEEDY



MARCH 7

Dont know any poor Jews? How will my gift get to the poor on Purim day? Not to worry. There are plenty of wonderful charitable organizations that will gladly distribute your tzedakah dollars on Purim. You can even put your matanot l'evyonim money in a chaity box. This Mitzvah goes for ALL of us, even little children... especially little children.



MISHTE FESTIVE MEAL



MARCH 7

Anytime during the day is fit for the Purim feast. It is customary, however, to sit down for a meal and celebration towards the end of the day before sunset, and continue celebrating into the night. It's traditional to include soup with 'kreplach' (stuffed dumplings) as part of the menu.

For recipe see page 12.



THE SECRET OF THE Hamantash

QUESTION:

Why do we eat hamantashen on Purim? I have heard that they are the same shape as Haman's hat. But Haman was the man who wanted to wipe us out. Why would we immortalize him by eating cookies that bear his name?

ANSWER:

This may be a case of mistaken identity. These Purim cakes were originally called mohntashen, which means "poppy-seed pockets." Today most hamantashen are filled with jam, but poppy seed used to be the more popular filling. It was a short linguistic jump from mohntashen to hamantashen, as people assumed there was a connection between the food eaten on Purim and the villain of the Purim story.

The real reason for eating hamantashen is that they symbolize the very nature of the Purim miracle. If you read the story of Purim, you notice that it was a string of seeming coincidences that saved the Jewish people from annihilation. There were no open miracles, no seas split, no plagues, just some twists and turns of history that, when viewed as separate events, seemed quite natural. Only at the end of the story was it revealed that a miracle had occurred.



Jews can always find a food to tell a story. In this case, it is the hamantash. The outside of the hamantash is just plain dough. The true flavor is concealed inside. Beyond the very ordinary veneer is the heart of the hamantash, bursting with sweetness.

Our lives are much the same. At times it seems that we are being pushed and pulled by accidental forces. Things happen to us that seem haphazard and random; there seems to be no system in place, no direction to this cold and harsh universe. This is not true. There is a system. But it is hidden. Below the surface there is a sweet hand and a warm heart that directs the universe.

Rarely do we get to see this hand. Purim is one day when it was revealed, when a crack opened in the outer shell of nature and we glimpsed what lies beyond. Purim reminds us that all those coincidences are no coincidences, and nothing is random. We are still in the middle of our story, so it is hard to see the full picture. But in the end we will see that it's all one big hamantash.

By Aron Moss

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PURIM PERS

and the lessons

QUEEN ESTHER

the reluctant heroine

The last thing Queen Esther ever wanted was royalty. Being chosen as queen of Persia was her worst nightmare come true. She yearned for her previous simple, holy existence and despised the vanity of the palace. Yet it was through this very position, that she was able to save her people. Esther writes down her story (in the Megillah) with a message: No matter how hopeless your situation may seem, never lose hope. There is a purpose in what you are going through. You are destined for greatness.



MORDECHAI

standing up for truth

In a world of conformity, Mordechai teaches us an invaluable lesson. When everyone around him knelt to the ground before the wicked Haman, Mordechai stood tall and strong. No one and nothing would force him to compromise his values. Blending in can seem to be the easier, more conflict-free path, but when something is not quite right, Mordechai teaches us to stay true to who we are, keeping the wholeness within.

ONALITIES

they teach us

HAMAN *inferiority complex*

Underneath all the glitter and might, Haman had a serious inferiority complex. He viewed himself as low and unworthy. Even when he rose to the greatest heights, second only to the king himself, he doubted himself and feared his downfall. So much so, that the only way he was able to keep himself “up” was by pushing others down. He thus enforced a decree that in his presence everyone must bow. With everyone kneeling before him, Haman finally felt good about himself.

Don't let the Haman syndrome get to you! You are intrinsically precious and valuable. You have a G-dly soul, and no one can undermine your inherent greatness.



KING ACHASHVEIROSH *going all out*

Someone who spent 180 days partying and drinking, and then feasted for another seven days with decadent indulgence, obviously had his priorities wrong, but he used his every resource and all his abilities. We can find a positive quality in Achashbveirosh's crassness. We cannot be satisfied by equaling or even surpassing the achievements of another person; we must achieve our own maximum potential, and even beyond. Only by providing others with a spiritual “banquet” worthy of our own “means” do we fulfill our obligation to G-d, to the Jewish people and to the world.

KREPLACH

Traditional Chicken Kreplach in Golden Chicken Soup

5 carrots, peeled
1 onion
1 large zucchini, peeled
1 sweet potato, peeled
1 small beet, peeled
5 celery stalks
Leaves from 1 bunch celery
6 chicken drumsticks
4 cloves garlic
1½-2 tbsp. kosher salt
15 cups cold water
30 wonton wrappers

1. Cut the carrots, onion, zucchini, sweet potato and celery into small pieces. Place the diced vegetables into a pot with the chicken, garlic, salt, water, celery leaves and the whole peeled beet.
2. Bring the soup to a boil and then reduce to a simmer. Cook for 1½-2 hours, then remove the chicken, beet and celery leaves.
3. Remove the chicken skin and bones and shred the meat. Mash about ¼ cup of the soup vegetables and mix it into the chicken with 1-2 tbsp. of the liquid. This will be the filling for the kreplach.
4. Lay out 15 of the wonton wrappers on a piece of parchment paper. Place a teaspoon of the filling in the center of each wrapper.
5. Dip each of the remaining 15 wonton wrappers quickly into cold water and place over the filling. Push down gently to seal the edges.
6. Bring a pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Gently drop 3-4 kreplach into the pot and cook for 1-2 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and place on a piece of parchment paper to cool. Add the kreplach to the pot of soup shortly before serving.
7. To freeze: arrange the kreplach on a baking sheet in a single layer. Place in freezer for 1-2 hours, then transfer to a zip-top bag and return to the freezer until ready to use.

Kreplach are a traditional purim food. The krepel's outer dough conceals the meat within, reminding us that while G-d was "hidden" in the story of Purim, He was there behind the scenes all along.



TA'ANIT ESTHER THE FAST OF ESTHER

MARCH 6

The fast of Ester is a dawn-to-nightfall fast held on the day before the holiday of purim. The fasting on this day commemorates the three-day fast of the entire Jewish nation in the times of Purim. They fasted upon request of Queen Esther, who asked that all Jews refrain from food or drink in her merit before she put her life on the line for the sake of her people.

In the Gurnee area the fast begins at 4:52am and ends at 6:16pm.



MEGILLAH



MIMOSAS



MASQUERADE

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HERE'S *my* STORY

A SOLDIER'S WIFE

MRS. ZLATA HERTZEL

Mrs. Zlata (Freiman) Hertzelt is the principal of the Chabad Girls School in Nazereth Illit, in 1996 her husband, Meir, passed away. She was remarried to Rabbi Yeshayau Hertzelt, the Chief Rabbi of Nazaereth Illit where she was interviewed in May of 2015.

In 1973, just before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, I had traveled from Israel (where I was living) to New York to attend my brother's wedding, and while there, I came to see the Rebbe.

Before the audience was to take place, Rabbi Leibel Groner, the Rebbe's secretary, instructed me to write down my requests on a piece of paper which would be handed into the Rebbe in advance. I did as he instructed – I wrote that I was married with children, that I was teaching in the Chabad school in Lod, and that my children were in daycare which was costing more than the money I was making. I wanted the Rebbe's advice – should I leave my job and stay home with my kids, instead of borrowing every month to make ends meet?

When I walked into the Rebbe's office, he had a big pile of letters on his desk and he reached into it to extract my letter – he pulled it out just like that without even looking for it. He read it quickly and then answered my question with this statement:

"I see you are teaching the children of Israel at the school Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchak, which is named after my holy father-in law," he began. "You should know that the education of Jewish children is a conduit for blessing – both material and spiritual – for you and your family for generations to come."

Then he repeated those words again, and I felt that the audience was over.

It was only after I left that the Rebbe's words started sinking in. I thought: "The Rebbe is telling me that my job educating children is a conduit for blessings. So clearly, there is only one thing I can do – keep working." I called my husband, Meir, and after I told him what the Rebbe said, he concurred with my decision.

Before I could return to Israel, however, the Yom Kippur War broke out and the news we were hearing was not good.

My husband was drafted into a combat unit on a moment's notice and, because I was still in New York, he distributed our children amongst our neighbors and relatives. I was informed that he was sent to the front lines at Ismailia, Egypt but that's all



I knew. I immediately asked Rabbi Groner for another audience with the Rebbe, but he could not schedule it as I had just been to see the Rebbe a few days before. However, after I broke down in tears, he suggested that I wait outside the office and ask for a blessing for my husband when the Rebbe came out.

My heart was pounding, but I mustered the courage to approach the Rebbe as he passed by and make my plea. The Rebbe responded, "When you return to the Holy Land, you will find that all your loved ones are healthy and whole. Be sure to keep in touch with me and let me know the good news. You can call me collect."

He said this three times – once in English, once in Yiddish and once in Hebrew – and I knew his words would come true. I was trembling with excitement because I was sure it was going to happen exactly as he said. And indeed it did.

I had a hard time getting a plane ticket back to Israel because all the flights were commandeered for returning soldiers, doctors and other essential personnel. But I begged the airline – telling them that my husband was in combat and I had no idea where my children were – and so they let me on the plane, even though I would have to sit on the floor.

Once I was on the plane, a soldier gave up his seat for me, and I told all the other passengers what the Rebbe had said. I believe

they were greatly encouraged by his words. Even people who were not religious. All the men present put on their yarmulkes – those who didn't have them covered their heads with napkins – and the plane turned into one praying synagogue. It was very amazing and moving to see this.

At some point during our flight, the plane started zig-zagging in the sky because we had encountered a dogfight between our planes and Egyptian planes. I was so scared that I burst out crying when this was happening, but one of the soldiers said to me, "Why are you crying? Your Rebbe told you that everything would turn out all right for you and your loved ones." And that reminder calmed me down.

When we landed, the airport was absolutely dark, and there was no public transportation of any kind – everything had been turned over to the war effort. But I managed to make my way home, and I located my children.

The war lasted close to three weeks. When the dust settled, my husband came home safe and sound just as the Rebbe said he would. As the Rebbe had requested, I made sure to call New York to report that all was well with my family.

After the war, I returned to work, and I kept on working. I have now been a teacher in the Oholei Yosef Yitzchak system for thirty-five years. I never wanted to block the conduit that was bringing blessings to me and my family. Yes, there were

I WOULD SAY TO ANYONE INVOLVED IN JEWISH EDUCATION: "IT'S A HUGE THING THAT YOU ARE DOING; IT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE WORLD. OUR CHILDREN ARE OUR MOST VALUABLE TREASURE, AND THEY ARE IN YOUR HANDS."

financial difficulties at the beginning, but after a time, my salary increased and I no longer needed to borrow money to send my children to daycare. I saw the blessings increase from year to year. I saw my children growing up, being educated, becoming successful in marriage, in raising their own children. I saw the Rebbe's blessing in action from generation to generation.

And today I would say to anyone involved in Jewish education: "It's a huge thing that you are doing; it's the most important thing in the world. Our children are our most valuable treasure, and they are in your hands."

For this reason, I never retired. People say to me, "What? At your age, you are still working? How do you have the energy for this?" And I answer, "I do it for the blessing and for the happiness it brings me."

Today, I live in Upper Nazareth (Nazareth Illit) where I am the principal of a girls' high school. The girls are bussed in from the entire region, and they are so pleased to come, so pleased with the school – the good education, the good teachers, the good atmosphere. Our school even won a regional prize for excellence. And I really see the Rebbe's blessing all around me, still flowing after more than forty years.

MY ENCOUNTER
with the **REBBE**

An oral history project dedicated to documenting the life of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory. The story is one of thousands recorded in the 900 videotaped interviews conducted to date. Please share your comments and suggestions. mystory@jmedia.org

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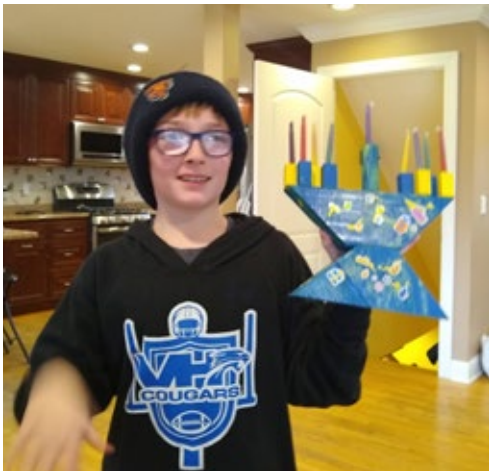
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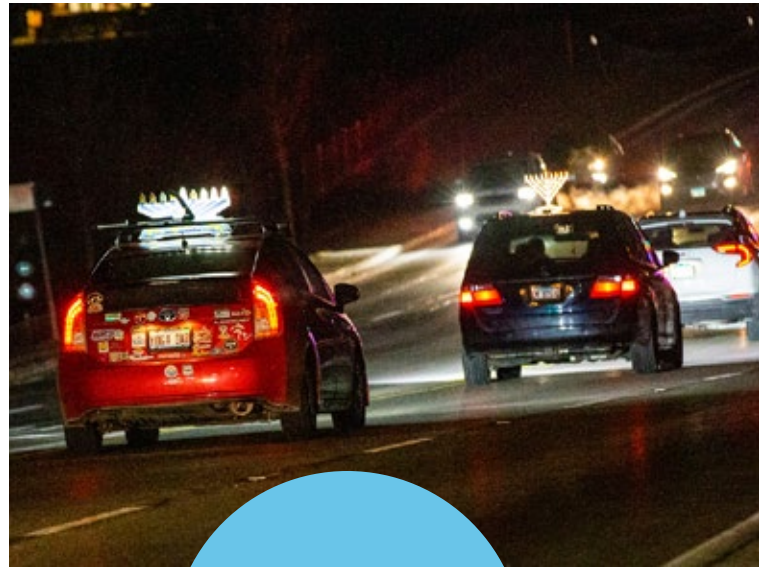


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This publication is in loving memory of Mrs. Henya Federman and her daughter Shterna Sara Federman.