

## HFBA MISSION STATEMENT

THE HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION devotes its resources to performing *chesed shel emet* (the ultimate act of loving kindness). It is the only agency in the New York metropolitan area dedicated to assuring that every Jew, regardless of financial means or religious affiliation, receives a dignified, traditional Jewish funeral and burial.



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### THE HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION

was formed in 1888 on Manhattan's Lower East Side by a group of philanthropic and community-minded Jews who were committed to burying their indigent dead according to Jewish tradition, rather than having them buried in a mass grave in Potter's Field. Since its inception HFBA has interred nearly 60,000 Jews in its two cemeteries. HFBA is also committed to retrieving the identities of those interred and is attempting to provide a gravestone for each unmarked grave.

*For more information about how you can help please see page 6.*

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## ELDER ABUSE

Recent articles in the New York Times, prominently featured on the first page, described the alleged abuse of a well-known 104-year old New York City philanthropist and socialite. Among the allegations, made by the victim's grandson against his own father, was that the woman was being denied proper care, was deprived of medication, had her expenses curtailed despite her wealth and, most revealingly and emotionally abusive, was separated from her beloved dogs, her companions of over a decade.

The AARP Bulletin (June, 2006) has reported that elder abuse has reached alarming proportions with the estimate that between 1 and 3 million adults over the age of 65 have been "injured, exploited or otherwise mistreated by someone on whom they depend for care or protection." Other statistics put the number at 5% of the elderly. As the population ages, elder abuse has become more and more of an emerging problem.

Elder abuse can take many forms, from actual physical violence to threats of violence, verbal and emotional abuse or neglect. Caregivers, or others on whom the elderly depend, may threaten to "put away" the elderly relative, isolate them socially, hide mail, take away the telephone, prevent access to family and friends or withhold medication. To establish mental control, they may patronize, humiliate, instill feelings of guilt, make or override decisions, disregard concerns or medical conditions. Although most cultures, including Judaism, mandate a reverence for the elderly, it is an unfortunate truth that they are among the most defenseless and exploited in society. And because this abuse often involves family members, it has been largely hidden.

The elderly may suffer neglect because they live far from relatives



## THOUGHTS FOR CHANUKAH

The concept of *tikkun olam* includes the assumption that every person is responsible for “repairing” this broken world. As the Chanukah flames illuminate our homes and our hearts, let us all rededicate ourselves to creating a true Jewish society—one without homelessness, poverty, lack of medical care and lack of services for the mentally ill. Until the coming of the Messiah, let the Temple be represented by a merciful, just society in which every human being is afforded full dignity in life and in death.

## ELDER ABUSE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

who may be detached or unconcerned and they are unable to care for themselves. Worse, they may suffer active neglect and abuse when people on whom they depend do not care for their physical and emotional needs, or exploit them financially. There have been many cases of older people, having worked hard and saved for old age, becoming indigent at the end of their lives because of unscrupulous “caregivers.” It is clear that “elder abuse, neglect and exploitation have no boundaries and cross all racial, social class, gender and geographic lines” (Rep. Peter T. King, NY Times, July 27, 2006).

### SIGNS OF ELDER ABUSE INCLUDE:

- ◆ Evidence of malnourishment, dehydration or bruises
- ◆ Stained or torn clothing, ill-kempt appearance
- ◆ Tearful, anxious or excessively passive behavior
- ◆ Reluctance to discuss home life
- ◆ Restrictions on leaving home or using the telephone
- ◆ Abrupt changes in financial arrangements
- ◆ Onset of depression, sadness or fear

It is important for members of the community to watch out for those vulnerable citizens who may need help. If someone complains of abuse, or if there is a strong suspicion of abuse, call the Department for the Aging or the local police precinct immediately.

***For those unfortunate victims of elder abuse whose resources are already depleted when they die, HFBA will provide them with the dignity in death that they were denied at the end of life. We are committed to giving each and every Jew, no matter how poor or alone, a traditional Jewish funeral and burial, the least we can do for those who were mistreated or neglected in their old age.***

UPON REQUEST, A COPY OF OUR ANNUAL REPORT MAY BE OBTAINED FROM OUR OFFICE,  
224 W. 35TH STREET, ROOM 300, NEW YORK, NY 10001 OR FROM THE  
ATTORNEY GENERAL, CHARITIES BUREAU, 120 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, NY 10271.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ Only Jews are buried in Jewish cemeteries. This has caused controversy recently because of the high rate of intermarriage.
- ◆ Although suicides used to be refused burial in the main part of a Jewish cemetery, today suicides are defined as victims of mental illness and they are afforded the full rites of mourning and burial.
- ◆ Embalming and cremation are strictly prohibited by traditional Jewish law.
- ◆ A recent common question to rabbis has been whether those with tattoos or piercings may be buried in Jewish cemeteries. Although this form of “decorating” the body has traditionally been proscribed by Jewish law as a form of mutilation, those whose bodies have been so treated, may be buried in a Jewish cemetery.
- ◆ Members of the priestly class, *kohanim*, avoid proximity to the dead, even in funeral parlors and cemeteries. This rule does not apply if the *kohain* is mourning his own parent, sibling, spouse or child.
- ◆ Amputated limbs must be buried, either in a separate space or with the body if not previously interred.
- ◆ Earth from the Holy Land of Israel is included in the casket.
- ◆ If a casket is used for burial, it must be plain wood, usually pine. In Israel, sheets enwrap the body without the use of a casket.
- ◆ Rather than sending flowers, friends of the mourners are encouraged to give *tzedakah* (charity) in memory of the deceased.
- ◆ People are wished a “life of 120 years” because that was the lifespan of Moses, the great prophet and leader of the Jewish people.

## HFBA HELPS



**M**s. W. had suffered from mental illness for many years and lived with her boyfriend, T., who was similarly afflicted. Their house was home to 23 cats. A year after T. committed suicide, the bank repossessed the home which Ms. W. had assumed was fully owned by T. Faced with the prospect of homelessness, concern about what would happen to her cats, and in despair, Ms. W. committed suicide, leaving no survivors. HFBA performed the funeral and burial.

**W**hen Mrs. C. died after a lengthy stay in a nursing home, the social worker contacted the local *chevra kadisha* (burial society) which refused to bury her because she had had no denominational affiliation, even though she was unquestionably Jewish. Unfortunately, this situation is not uncommon. HFBA is the only organization in the New York metropolitan area which will arrange for a traditional Jewish burial for any Jew, and we buried Mrs. C. with dignity and respect..

**M**s. M. had advanced terminal cancer and yet arranged for HFBA to bury her mother upon her mother's death. One month later, HFBA buried Ms. M. after she herself succumbed to her illness.



# THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS...

... who give of themselves clearing our cemeteries and working in our office. As one of the students from Stella K. Abraham High School For Girls said, "It is a great accomplishment to be able to give knowing that you won't receive in return." Thank you to:

DAVIS RENOV STAHLER YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS  
MA'AYANOT YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL  
NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL  
RAMBAM MESIVTA  
THE ROSENBAUM YESHIVA OF NORTH JERSEY  
SAR ACADEMY  
STELLA K. ABRAHAM HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

...FOR RAKING LEAVES AND CLEARING DEBRIS AT SILVER LAKE CEMETERY THIS FALL



*Students and parents from  
SAR Academy*



*Students from North Shore  
Hebrew Academy Middle School*



*Students from Davis Renov Stahler  
Yeshiva High School for Boys*



*Students from  
Stella K. Abraham  
High School for Girls*



*Students from Rambam Mesivta*

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER IN OUR OFFICE OR ARE PART OF A GROUP WILLING TO WORK AT OUR CEMETERIES,  
PLEASE CALL HFBA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AMY KOPLOW AT (212) 239-1662.

# РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

## **О злоупотреблении беспомощностью пожилых людей.**

В последнее время в печати появилось много статей об участившихся случаях злоупотребления беспомощностью пожилых людей. По некоторым оценкам, от различного рода злоупотреблений страдает от 1 до 3 миллионов стариков, которые становятся жертвами физического насилия, эмоционального давления или финансовых махинаций со стороны лиц, от которых эти пожилые люди зависят. Поскольку доля пожилых людей в общей численности населения все возрастает, злоупотребление их беспомощностью становится все более насущной проблемой, которая может проявляться в виде изоляции пожилого человека от окружающих, его психологического контроля (как то: унижения и запугивания), игнорирования его нужд и медицинских проблем и даже физического насилия над ним.

Эта проблема не зависит от расовой, национальной, территориальной, половой или социальной принадлежности жертвы. Если Вы подозреваете, что пожилой человек является жертвой физического насилия, эмоционального давления или финансовых махинаций, мы рекомендуем немедленно звонить в полицию или городское Управление по делам пожилых.

*Для несчастных жертв злоупотреблений, лишившихся своих последних сбережений, Еврейское Похоронное Бюро обеспечит достойные похороны в соответствии с еврейской традицией, с тем, чтобы даже тот, кто в силу трагических обстоятельств был лишен достойных условий жизни, не был забыт в момент ухода в иной мир.*

## **Некоторые мысли в предверии Хануки**

Принцип *тикун олам* («исправление мира») подразумевает, что *каждый* человек в ответе за совершенствование этого мира. В дни, когда ханукальные огни освещают наши дома и сердца, давайте посвятим себя созданию настоящей еврейской общины – без бедных, бездомных, обездоленных, лишенных медицинского обслуживания и ухода. Когда придет Машиах, будет отстроен Храм. А пока... пусть символом и воплощением Храма будет справедливое и милосердное общество, где каждый человек может жить и умереть достойно.

## **Знаете ли Вы, что...**

- На еврейских кладбищах хоронят только евреев.
- Исторически, на еврейских кладбищах не хоронили тех, кто совершил самоубийство. Но в настоящее время, когда причину самоубийства видят в психологических проблемах / психиатрических заболеваниях, самоубийц хоронят в соответствии с еврейской традицией, соблюдая все обряды.
- Еврейский закон строго запрещает бальзамирование и кремирование.
- Для похорон (в штате Нью-Йорк) используется простой деревянный гроб.
- Мы обычно желаем друг другу дожить до 120 лет (поскольку столько лет прожил Моисей – великий пророк и лидер еврейского народа).
- На еврейских кладбищах не возлагаются цветы, многие кладут на памятник небольшие камушки. В память об умерших обычно рекомендуется делать пожертвования на благотворительные цели (в размере той суммы, которую Вы бы хотели потратить на цветы).
- Еврейские кладбища закрыты по субботам и во время еврейских религиозных праздников. Обычно мы посещаем могилы родных и близких в годовщину их смерти, а также в период между Рош-Хашана и Йом-Кипуром.

## **Помощь HFBA: из наших архивов.**

W. на протяжении многих лет имела серьезные психологические проблемы. Она жила со своим другом Т., который имел аналогичные проблемы, в его частном доме, где они дали приют 23 кошкам. После того, как Т. покончил жизнь самоубийством, его дом перешел в собственность банка, о чем W. не знала. Когда это ей стало известно, обеспокоенная судьбой кошек и тем, что она сама может стать бездомной, W. впала в отчаяние и покончила с собой. У нее не было родных. Еврейское Похоронное Бюро (HFBA) похоронило W. в соответствии с еврейской традицией.

We are pleased to announce that the following names have been added to our

## Leave Your Mark

Donor Plaque in the Weinberg Chapel  
at Mt. Richmond Cemetery:



JACOB AND GILA BURGIDA

BRENDA ELISHIS

JOE AND SHERI FISCH

ADAM AND ALLYSON FISHMAN

LILA AND RUBIN GOLDBERG

STEVEN AND NARALIE HASMAN

LAWRENCE J. HELLMAN

SUSAN AND DR. RICHARD KALISH

ERICA ZUCKER

PLEASE CONSIDER ADDING YOUR NAME  
BY SPONSORING FOUR GRAVE MARKERS  
FOR UNMARKED GRAVES FOR \$600.

## CHESED SHEL EMET—HOW YOU CAN HELP

**PLACE** HFBA *tzedakah* boxes in a house of *shiva* or in your home, school or local kosher establishment.

**CELEBRATE** a *simcha* or commemorate a loss with HFBA cards. Cards cost \$10 and can include a personalized message.

**ENROLL** a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in our “Mitzvah Circle” by suggesting a gift to HFBA to your guests. The generous child who shares his/her *simcha* in this way receives a framed certificate.

**DONATE** your property, used vehicle or boat to HFBA.

**ESTABLISH** an HFBA Forever Gift Annuity or Charitable Trust Plan. In addition to the guaranteed income and tax benefits, these plans ensure that HFBA’s promise of a Jewish burial to future generations of indigent Jews will be fulfilled.

**REMEMBER** to include HFBA in your will with a bequest.

**CONTRIBUTE** to HFBA to ensure an annual *Yahrzeit* reminder for your lost loved ones.

**“LEAVE YOUR MARK”** by sponsoring a grave marker for an unmarked grave for a donation of \$150 and you will receive a framed certificate. Sponsor four markers and a plaque with your name will be added to our roster at the Weinberg Chapel at Mt. Richmond Cemetery.

**ARRANGE** for *kaddish* to be said for the eleven month mourning period following a death of a relative or friend for a donation of \$360.

**INSTITUTE** a perpetual *Yahrzeit Kaddish* for your loved one for a donation of \$180.

**SPONSOR** perpetual grave care for an indigent’s grave for \$600.

PLEASE HELP OUT TODAY BY SENDING A DONATION IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE.