

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.

אגודת אחים חסיד של אמנת
The Hebrew
Free Burial
ASSOCIATION

Chesed

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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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ETHICAL WILLS: JEWISH TRADITION, LIVING LEGACY

As we contemplate the end of life, we make certain to allocate our remaining financial assets in our **will**. It is also important to write a **"living will"** to guide and direct our health care proxy as to our wishes in the event of future incapacitation. Additionally, many people are now writing **"ethical will,"** documents which communicate life lessons and life journeys.

An ethical will is a document, usually written in the form of a letter or narrative, which describes the values and beliefs one holds, the ethical system by which one lives, the story of one's life in terms of the moral lessons learned. It may include recollections of important events, people and experiences in one's life as well as expressions of, and for, forgiveness. An ethical will is a window into one's life, a summary of a human being in terms of their basic personal and spiritual values and their hopes for those they leave behind.

The biblical antecedent of the ethical will is King David's instructions to his son, Solomon, as narrated in the book of Kings I. Even if the reader knew nothing else about him, it is clear from his ethical will that David was a warrior king, interested not only in justice but in revenge. He alludes to difficult times in his life and reveals his closeness to G-d by instructing his son to follow in His ways, expressing the hope that the Davidic monarchy will endure forever. Although short and succinct, David's ethical will contains many important elements and reveals much about his character and his life.

The ethical will is a treasure for those left behind, a written expression of what was left unsaid, a valuable piece of personal memorabilia from a loved one. As an expression of who we are, how we

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UJA Federation
of New York

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HFBA HELPS



An elderly brother, Louis, and sister, Frieda, lived together in a small apartment, subsisting on government aid. When Frieda died, Louis was distraught and after the funeral arranged by HFBA, he moved into another small apartment with a surviving sister, Rose. Several years later, Rose, too, died, followed 2 months later by Louis. HFBA buried both. No one mourned- no one was left.

Marjorie T. died in a hospital after spending 6 months in a rehabilitation facility. She had been divorced for many years and was estranged from her one son who had been raised by his father. Through Marjorie's neighbor, Tess, HFBA was able to locate the son who gave us permission to bury his mother. Although he had had no contact with Marjorie for 20 years, he did attend the funeral with several friends and even reached out to Tess who came to the funeral with him.

Unfortunately, there are instances of HFBA burying several members, and generations, of one family. The Bushovs had come to America in the mid-1970's and six years later, Mr. Bushov died and was buried by HFBA. Several years later, the Bushov son died of medical complications at the age of 53 and his mother died three years later after years of illness. All rest in HFBA's cemetery.

**Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.*

ETHICAL WILLS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

lived, what we learned and believed, an ethical will is a cherished record to be passed from generation to generation as an enduring spiritual legacy.

For more about ethical wills, see So That Your Values Live On: Ethical Wills and How To Prepare Them by Jack Riemer; Ethical Wills: A Modern Jewish Treasury edited by Jack Riemer and Nathaniel Stampfer; Ethical Wills: Putting Your Values on Paper by Barry Baines; as well as the website www.ethicalwill.com

SUMMER IN THE CITY

Each year, hundreds of people die heat-related deaths. If you know anyone who is isolated, elderly or alone, check that their apartment is well-ventilated and cooled by air-conditioning or open windows and a fan. Make sure that they are drinking water or other non-carbonated, decaffeinated beverages to avoid dehydration. If you see or suspect a problem, please report it immediately to telephone number 311. You may save a life.



**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.**

MY LAST TUESDAY WITH THE GREAT HASSON

By Barry List

Special To

The Jewish Week

It was an appropriately gray Tuesday this past Halloween, Oct. 31, and 10 of us were huddled together at Mount Richmond Cemetery in Staten Island helping to lay to rest a poor Jew whose ties to family and community had been severed...

On Nov. 18, 2005, I wrote a column in this space titled "Tuesdays with the Great Hasson." Sam Hasson, born to Turkish Jewish parents on the Lower East Side before the Great Depression, had the misfortune of being a mildly retarded boy during a disapproving era. Shunned by his family, he supported himself as a messenger, then became homeless.

I began visiting him at a ramshackle hotel during the 1980s through a program run by Project ORE, but lost touch in the 1990s when he entered a nursing home and I moved to Baltimore.

Every year I would phone the home to ask the social worker how he was doing. When I phoned before the High Holy Days in 2004, she told me that Sam had died, that he had been buried in a Potter's Field and that his grave could not be located...

[I subsequently learned that] it was indeed possible to locate Sam's grave. Moreover... the Hebrew Free Burial Association, established to give funerals to impoverished Jews, (could) exhume Sam's body and re-inter him in a Jewish cemetery...

I phoned City Cemetery and confirmed that Sam

was buried there and that the location was on record. Provided this information, Hebrew Free Burial said that Sam could indeed be exhumed and receive a proper Jewish burial. [However, they cautioned me that] the bureaucratic process would take a frustratingly long time.

[After some months, HFBA informed me that] there would be an exhumation and re-interment.

[Nine men were gathered for a minyan through requests from a yeshiva, Hatzalah and Luach.com] and Rabbi Shmuel Plafker, the HFBA Mount Richmond Cemetery chaplain, brought the number up to 10...

As we took turns shoveling dirt onto the coffin, Rabbi Plafker called out, "You must have done something special in your life, Sam, just look at the 10 Torah scholars at your gravesite today."

Tragically, many are buried in even lonelier circumstances. Rabbi Plafker says that about a quarter of the people he puts to rest (in the HFBA cemeteries) are mourned by no one at all... [This time through the efforts of the dedicated HFBA staff, another] poor Jew was laid to rest in a proper Jewish grave and received the respect that all are due when they depart this earth...

Barry List works at a professional association for operations researchers in the Baltimore area.

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WE THANK OUR VOLUNTEERS...

We are especially grateful to the many volunteers who help with the upkeep of our cemeteries. This spring they included students from:

NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL (GREAT NECK, NY)
HEBREW ACADEMY OF NASSAU COUNTY (HANC) HIGH SCHOOL (UNIONDALE, NY)
NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL (GREAT NECK, NY)
BROOKLYN COLLEGE HILLEL (BROOKLYN, NY)
YAVNEH ACADEMY (PARAMUS, NJ).

In addition we would like to thank **Dale and Ellen Saltzman**,
and
H. Richard Adelman and friends who participated in our *Chesed Day* on April 22.

All these volunteers have made a valuable contribution to *chesed shel emet*.



Students from North Shore Hebrew Academy



Students from Brooklyn College Hillel



*Students from Hebrew Academy
Nassau County High School*

To see more pictures
of our volunteers,
please visit our
website at
www.hebrewfreeburial.org



Students from Yavneh Academy

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

«Этическое завещание» в свете еврейской традиции и нашего духовного наследия

Размышляя о конце нашей жизни, мы составляем завещание, в котором даем распоряжения касательно наших сбережений и имущества. Не менее важным является назначение «уполномоченного» (health care proxy) для принятия решений в случае нашей болезни и / или недееспособного состояния. Кроме того, многие составляют так называемое «этическое завещание», в котором рассказывают о своей жизни и ее уроках.

«Этическое завещание» представляет собой документ, составленный обычно в форме письма или рассказа, в котором освещены жизненные принципы и ценности завещателя, система этических норм, которыми он руководствовался, а также история его жизни с точки зрения уроков морали, которые он извлек. Такое завещание может содержать воспоминания о важных событиях, людях, жизненном опыте, а также просьбу составителя простить его и / или его пожелание простить родных и близких. «Этическое завещание» является как бы окном в жизнь человека, кратким изложением его основных духовных ценностей, его надежд и пожеланий родным, близким и друзьям.

«Этическое завещание» бесценно для потомков, ибо оно повествует о том, что было недосказано при жизни. Оно является выражением того, *кто* мы, *как* мы жили, *во что* мы верили и *что* познали, и таким образом представляет собой духовную связь поколений.

Помощь Еврейского Благотворительного Похоронного Бюро HFBA

Пожилые брат и сестра, Луис и Фрида, жили вместе в небольшой квартире на государственное пособие. Луис очень тяжело перенес смерть Фриды и после ее погребения, организованного Еврейским Благотворительным Похоронным Бюро, переехал к своей второй сестре Розе. Через несколько лет не стало и Розы, а еще через два месяца скончался сам Луис. Мы похоронили обоих на нашем кладбище, где уже покоилась их сестра. Некому было скорбеть о них – у них не осталось потомков.

Лето в Нью-Йорке

Ежегодная статистика свидетельствует о сотнях смертей в нашем городе, вызванных тепловым / солнечным ударом. Если Вы знаете одиноких и/или пожилых людей, проверяйте пожалуйста состояние их квартир – хорошо ли проветривается помещение, имеется ли кондиционер, вентилятор, открыты ли окна. Следите также за тем, чтобы они пили воду или другие негазированные напитки, не содержащие кофеина, во избежание обезвоживания их организма. Если Вы заметили или предполагаете, что что-то неблагополучно, немедленно звоните в городскую справочно-информационную службу по телефону 311. Это может быть вопросом спасения чьей-то жизни.

Мой последний вторник с великим мистером Хассоном

Берри Лист – специально для газеты *Джунис Уик*

18 ноября 2005 я написал заметку для этой колонки, которую озаглавил «По вторникам с великим мистером Хассоном» и в которой рассказал о Сэме Хассоне, родившемся до Великой Депрессии на Нижнем Ист-Сайде в семье еврейских иммигрантов из Турции. Он страдал незначительным отставанием в умственном развитии, от него отвернулась семья, и ему пришлось работать посыльным. Затем он стал бездомным.

В 80-ые годы я стал навещать Сэма, участвуя в проекте помощи одиноким малоимущим евреям «ORE». В то время он жил в гостинице для бездомных. Затем в 90-ые годы, когда я переехал в Балтимор, а Сэм ушел в дом для престарелых, я потерял с ним контакт и лишь раз в год звонил социальному работнику дома для престарелых осведомиться о Сэме.

В 2004 г. перед Рош-Хашана я вновь разговаривал с социальным работником, которая сообщила мне, что Сэм скончался и был похоронен на городском кладбище в безымянной могиле...

В последующем я узнал, что есть возможность установить конкретное место захоронения Сэма. А также, что существует Еврейское Благотворительное Похоронное Бюро для малоимущих евреев, которое может перезахоронить Сэма на еврейском кладбище...

В пасмурный вторник 31 октября 2006 я в составе *миньяна* (10 мужчин – кворум, необходимый для произнесения молитвы *Каддиш*) участвовал в похоронах Сэма на кладбище Маунт Ричмонд на Стейтен Айленде. Таким образом, малоимущий еврей, потерявший контакт с семьей и еврейской общиной, нашел свое последнее пристанище среди своих братьев по вере.

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:



DR. JONATHAN AND SARI ALTMARK

JACK PERRY ECKER

ANDREW GERSHON, D.D.S.

CYNTHIA KENNEDY

MYRON AND FRANCINE KOLATCH

BRYNA AND JOSHUA LANDES AND FAMILY

THOMAS H. MAUPIN

HOWARD AND MINA MILLENDORF

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.

VOLUNTEER with your friends, classmates, fellow group members, or family at our cemeteries as part of our Cemetery Clean-Up Project.

GIVE us your old *talleisim* for use as part of the dress for deceased men who HFBA will be called upon to bury.

USE your clerical skills in our midtown office as a volunteer.

GET INVOLVED as a professional with HFBA by donating your expertise and skills in an area that can help us.



Original pushka from 1909 at HFBA’s Mount Richmond Cemetery

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