



THE HEBREW FREE BURIAL ASSOCIATION

chesed

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Acts of Chesed

This past Veterans Day, the HFBA Mt. Richmond Cemetery was honored by the visit of a group from the local Kiwanis Key Club made up of freshman students from Staten Island Technical High School who were accompanied by adults from the East Shore Kiwanis chapter.



The Kiwanis are an international group dedicated to giving "primacy to the human and spiritual rather than to the material values of life."* To this end, they annually contribute 6.2 million hours of volunteer time in a practical effort "to render altruistic service and build better communities."*

The volunteers visited several Staten Island cemeteries and, at Mt. Richmond, placed flags on the nearly 175 veterans' graves. Many of the veterans had served their

country in World War II and all were laid to rest by HFBA. The youngsters politely asked questions and soberly read the gravestones. They were particularly moved by the graves of hundreds of babies and children from the early 20th century as well the victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire.

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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 City metropolitan area dedicated to assuring that every Jew, regardless of financial means or religious affiliation, receives a dignified, traditional Jewish funeral and burial.

Chesed is published by

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UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK

As always, we welcome your comments. Please write to us at **224 W. 35th St., Room 300, New York, NY 10001**, call **(212) 239-1662** or send us email at **hebrewfreeba@aol.com**

Upon request, a copy of our annual report may be obtained from our office, 224 W. 35th St. Room 300, New York, NY 10001 or from the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

HFBA Helps

• **F**our years ago, Mr. H. left information and instructions with HFBA regarding his eventual death and burial. Recently, we received a call from a Jewish benevolent society in Brooklyn about an anonymous body which was about to be cremated and had been left in the morgue for the past four months. HFBA discovered that the deceased was Mr. H. and interceded with his niece who was about to have the cremation performed. With her acquiescence, HFBA was able to give Mr. H. the funeral and burial he had planned.

• **R**ecently our caseworker received a call in reference to Mr. C. who had died in a nursing home after having lived in mental institutions for most of his life. Our research revealed that in 1936, Mr. C.'s mother had arranged with HFBA for the eventual burial of her two mentally disabled children. Mr. C.'s sister had been interred with HFBA's help in 1943 and, nearly seventy years after the initial arrangements were made with the mother's considerable foresight, the second of her two children would be buried according to their mother's wish and plans.

• **M**r. K., a well-known photographer in his youth, was left penniless at the time of his death. After learning of his death and burial, several acquaintances raised funds to pay back the cost of the burial as well as to pay for a stone to mark the grave. Their concern was a testament to their affection for Mr. C., their admiration for his work and their gratitude to HFBA.

Recent Referrals to HFBA

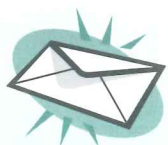
The New York City Public Administrator authorizes the burial of New York City's citizens who die without a will or survivors. Jewish cases are sometimes referred to the HFBA for traditional Jewish funerals. Recently they referred:

- a doctor whose many health problems had impoverished him, whose estranged sister appeared well after his death
- a woman whose nephew identified her remains and who left her in the city morgue with no further effort on her behalf

Other recent cases referred to us include:

- a Russian woman who had died of complications from a liver transplant only five months after coming to America
- a critically ill Russian couple who died within two weeks of each other, the latter never learning of the death of the former

For more information on our services or to find out how you can help, please call Amy Koplow at (212) 239-1662.



Mailbox

Letters such as this remind us that every person has a story even when the end is sad and solitary.

"...Please let me know when Beatrice's funeral will be held. Beatrice was a very kind woman. She loved animals and would provide love and shelter to any animal in need. Similarly, she was a good and thoughtful friend... Beatrice lived alone and feared not getting a proper burial. Bea was comforted in knowing that the **Hebrew Free Burial Association** would be there for her...

D.W. (Beatrice's acquaintance)

Volunteers Help Out at HFBA Cemeteries

Accounts of good-hearted people of other religions cleaning a neglected Jewish cemetery were recently reported in New York newspapers. Fortunately, HFBA draws a cadre of volunteers from area yeshivot, synagogues and community centers.

In September, before the beginning of the High Holy Days, and again in October, groups of volunteers from Stella K. Abraham (HALB) High School, Congregation Anshe Chesed of Hewlett/Woodmere, Westchester Hebrew High School and others, visited HFBA's Silver Lake and Mt. Richmond cemeteries to clean and clear collected debris from around the graves.

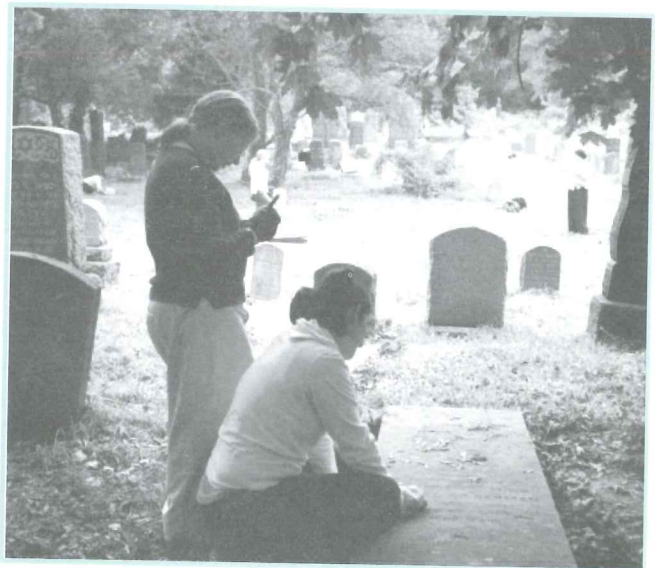
Fred Cohen and Eileen Blecher brought their children, Josh, age 9 1/2, and Zoe, age 7, who had previously visited their grandparents' graves in another cemetery. With maturity and aplomb, Zoe announced that, "It was my first time doing this. It's important to do to keep the cemetery clear and safe." Josh concurred adding, "It was great helping out others before Rosh Hashanah."



***"It's important...
to keep the
cemetery clear
and safe."***

Francie Grossman, a student from SKA, felt that the "experience was amazing" and that other "schools, synagogues and groups should get involved." Not only did the young women say *Tehillim* and work diligently, they also wrote down the names and *yahrzeits* of the decedents so that *kaddish* could be arranged to be said on the appropriate dates. As they left the cemetery, they thanked the HFBA representative "for giving us the opportunity to do this kind of *chesed*."

As a major part of "Freshman Day," students from Westchester Hebrew High School worked hard at Silver Lake one bright day in October. The school intends to continue to make *chesed* work an integral part of their school's annual welcome to freshmen.



Acts of Chesed ...continued from page 1

HFBA appreciates and applauds this act of *chesed* performed by a group of non-Jewish young people who receive no reward other than their own sense of pride in having done a "good deed." We hope others will emulate their noble commitment to "increas(ing)... righteousness, justice, patriotism and goodwill,"* reflecting the Jewish concept of *tikun olam*.

* Quotes from the Kiwanis informational literature.



Long Beach and West Hempstead Communities Organize for HFBA

November 15th, *Shabbat Parshat Vayaira*, was dedicated to a community-wide appeal for HFBA by the synagogues of West Hempstead, Long Island. Many people were introduced to our work for the first time and the response has been heartening.

A most successful fundraising breakfast took place in Long Beach on November 23rd, the day following *Shabbat Parshat Chayei Sarah*. Linda and Juan Sinnreich received HFBA's *Chesed Shel Emet* Award. Nearly 120 friends, family and community members turned out to honor this special couple.

If you can organize a fundraising event in your synagogue, school or community, please call Amy Koplow at (212) 239-1662.



Juan and Linda Sinnreich (center) and Family

Chesed Shel Emet — How You Can Help

As the end of the fiscal year approaches, and thoughts turn to the unhappy task of filing tax returns, we hope you will consider maximizing your charitable donations with a gift to HFBA. Your contribution helps maintain the only New York organization of its kind, one that affords any and all Jews, no matter how poor or alone, a proper Jewish funeral and burial. This act of *tzedakah* guarantees that a soul who may have been abandoned in life, will at least be remembered in death as a full member of the Jewish community.

- **Place** HFBA *tzedakah* boxes in a house of *shiva* or in your home, school or local kosher restaurant.
- **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.
- **Remember** HFBA in your will with a bequest.
- **A donation** sent with the appropriate information will ensure that HFBA will send out a *Yahrzeit* reminder letter. An additional call to our office can arrange for *kaddish* to be said for the eleven month mourning period.
- **Establish** a Perpetual *Yahrzeit Kaddish* for your loved one for a \$150 donation.
- **Sponsor** Perpetual Grave Care for an indigent's grave for \$500.
- **Help out today by sending a donation in the enclosed envelope.**

The Russian Digest, translated summaries of the articles appearing in this issue of Chesed, appears below.

РУССКИЙ ДАЙДЖЕСТ

Добрые деяния (Chesed)

В прошедший День Ветеранов группа молодежи из местного клуба Kiwanis Key посетила кладбище Маунт Ричмонд (Mount Richmond). Они принесли флажки, чтобы украсить могилы 175 ветеранов Вооруженных Сил США, похороненных на протяжении десятков лет при помощи Еврейской Благотворительной Похоронной Ассоциации (HFBA). Эти подростки-неевреи, посвятившие свое время общине, почтили нас тем, что проявили любовь и доброту в действии.

Волонтеры помогают в работе кладбищ HFBA

Перед началом Высоких Священных Дней Рош Ашана и Йом Кипур группы волонтеров из средних школ и одной из синагог, а также семья Коэн-Блэкер с двумя детьми пришли помочь нам на кладбищах Маунт Ричмонд и Силвер Лейк. Они убирали обломки, читали Техиллим (Tehillim) и записывали имена умерших и даты их смерти, чтобы затем в положенное время в память каждого из них был прочитан Кадиш.

Как HFBA помогает

Четыре года назад г-н Х. оставил нашему агентству информацию и распоряжения на случай своей смерти и похорон. Недавно случайно нам стало известно о мертвом теле, оставленном в морге и ожидающем кремации. Когда мы узнали, что это было тело г-на Х., мы похоронили его так, как он того желал перед смертью.

Г-н С. провел большую часть своей жизни в заведениях для умственно неполноценных людей. После того как

нам сообщили по телефону о его смерти, мы выяснили, что еще несколько десятков лет назад, в 1936 году, его мать зарезервировала на нашем кладбище участки для двух своих умственно неполноценных детей. Мы похоронили г-на С. так же, как похоронили его сестру в 1943 году.

Г-н К., в молодости известный фотограф, умер бедным, но не забытым друзьями. После похорон, проведенных HFBA, его друзья в память о нем и в знак благодарности нам собрали деньги, чтобы заплатить за похороны и установить плиту на его могиле.

Среди недавних случаев, направленных в HFBA, были похороны русскоговорящих мужа и жены, дни смерти которых разделяли всего две недели, и умерший последним так и не узнал о смерти другого супруга. Также мы похоронили русскую женщину, умершую в результате осложнений в ходе операции по трансплантации печени всего через 5 месяцев после приезда в Америку.

Мы надеемся на Вашу помощь!

Любые ваши пожертвования направляются на выполнение нашей миссии – удостоить каждого еврея истинно еврейского погребения. Даже один доллар может помочь! Пожалуйста, помогите нам, внеся ту сумму, которую Вы можете позволить, а также приходите как волонтеры помогать ухаживать за нашими кладбищами. Позвоните нам по телефону 212-239-1662.

Русскоговорящие сотрудники агентства ответят на Ваш звонок.

Alan M. Baxter
Jane Baranker
Lucie Blau
William L. Caplan
Martin and Myra Chopp
Philip Dollman and Pamela J. Myers
Drs. Jay A. and Susana E. Frogel
Jackie Herbst
Rabbi David Horwitz
Leba J. Kelemer

Herbert Lasky
Joseph N. Mosak
David and Esther Muirhead
Adam and Pearl Rawson
Belle R. Schlossberg
Judah Schorr and Gail Levey
Minna Monte Seitelman
Rose Ullman-The Ullman Foundation
Ruth Wiesen
Tamila Teitelman

Please consider adding your name by sponsoring four grave markers for unmarked graves for \$600.

We acknowledge, with gratitude, the following companies which have donated to HFBA through their Matching Gifts Programs:

American Express
American International Group, Inc. (AIG)
AXA
BT Foundation
Citibank N.A. and Citicorp
Citicorp Foundation
CNA Guaranty
Compaq Computer Corporation
Deutsche Bank North America
ExxonMobil
Gartner Group, Inc.
Home Depot
IBM
JP Morgan Chase
Mineral Technologies, Inc.
Mutual of America Life Insurance
Net2Phone
Newsweek
OTA LLC
Pfizer, Inc.
Prudential
Thomson Financial
UBS
Vivendi International (Seagrams)

Please double the dollar value of your contribution through your employer's Matching Gift Program.

HFBA Forever Gift Plans

The HFBA Forever Gift Annuity will provide a guaranteed income for life in return for your gift. Beginning at age 65, you will be paid on a quarterly basis. A portion of your annual income may be tax deductible, a portion of the gift qualifies as a current tax deduction and the full value of the gift is removed from your estate, reducing estate taxes for your heirs.

The HFBA Forever Gift Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust assures a fixed income for your life or for the life of your beneficiary (or for a term of years.) Your investment is used to set up a trust that will pay an annual annuity to you or your beneficiary. Upon death, the remainder in the trust is contributed to HFBA.

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.

For more information on either of these plans, please call Amy Koplou at (212) 239-1662.