

Around the LOCAL NEWS Community

Two Words that Just Go Together *Achiezer's Second Annual Dinner*

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Achdus and *Achiezer*. The two words are frequently mentioned together in the same sentence, because somehow, they just seem to fit together.

Last Sunday evening, the juxtaposition could not have been more apparent.

Achiezer's second annual Tribute Dinner once again gave over 1,000 people from all neighborhoods of the Far Rockaway/Bayswater and Five Towns community a chance to set aside *shul* affiliation, yarmulka type and per-

sonal interests, to join together in support of one undisputed cohesive agent: *chessed*.

Achiezer's work is well known throughout our community and beyond, but this dinner gave attendees a unique

chance to get an in-depth, hands-on view of *Achiezer's* inner workings. The upper level of The Sands featured "The Foundry," a fiery display and spectacular walk-through of *Achiezer* solutions, as they're forged. Utilizing The Found-



Eli Weiss, Rabbi Hershel Billet, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Rabbi Boruch B. Bender



Rav Binyamin Kaminetzky, Rav Elya Ber Wachtfogel, Rabbi Boruch B. Bender, Rabbi Meshulem Gorelick, Rabbi Yaakov Bender



Shalom Jaroslawicz, Shulie Wollman, Dr. Marcel Scheinman, Rabbi Boruch B. Bender, Eli Weiss



Shalom Jaroslawicz, Jay Gelman, Michael Krengel



Rabbi Mordechai Stern, Rabbi Yaakov Bender



Rabbi Boruch B. Bender and Dr. Hylton Lightman



Rabbi Boruch B. Bender, Rabbi Eytan Feiner



Suri Bender, Rabbi Boruch B. Bender, Ronald Lowinger, Dr. Brucha Lowinger



Shulie Wollman, Rabbi Shay Shachter, Rabbi Yaakov Bender, Rabbi Zev Bald, Rabbi Naftali Jaeger, Rabbi Boruch B. Bender



Shulie Wollman, Rabbi Dovid Greenblatt, Elisha Brecher, Lloyd Keilson, Rabbi Brouch B. Bender



Shalom Jaroslawicz, Eli Weiss, Shulie Wollman, Rabbi Boruch B. Bender, Yoni Novak, Esther Novak



Eli Shapiro, Eliyahu Frishman, Chaia Frishman, Lisa Altabe, Richard Altabe, Yaakov Gade, Rabbi Dov Silver



Pesach Osina, Eli Weiss, Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder, Shalom Jaroslawicz, Rabbi Baruch Rothman, Rabbi Boruch B. Bender



Menachem Kagan, Rabbi Zvi Ralbag, Daniel Jacobson, Dr. Marcel Scheinman, Moti Schiffer, Hesky Stern

ry's interactive iPod stations, the guests perused Achiezer's programs and services (including crisis intervention, medical recommendations, behavioral health, health insurance, and more), gaining a real understanding of the process through which the community's problems are solved at Achiezer.

To quote one guest: "I always knew that Achiezer had an organized and detailed infrastructure; but getting to see it close up was just eye opening." Indeed, all of the guests – those already familiar with Achiezer, and those less so – entered the main ballroom accompanied by the comforting knowledge that virtually every problem in our community has a solution.

Following a sumptuous buffet dinner catered by Sharmel Caterers as well as a delectable sushi bar by The Sushi Spot, the program commenced promptly in the chuppah room. Master of Ceremonies Dr. Moshe Schlusberg, a resident of Woodmere, opened the program with some personal reflections of Achiezer's modest beginnings, followed by a brief synopsis of Achiezer's mission and accomplishments. Mr.

Shulie Wollman, Achiezer's Chairman of the Board, discussed Achiezer's availability – literally 24/7/365 – and incredible determination to assist our community, despite all the odds. Achiezer senior board members Mr. Ronald Lowinger and Mr. Michael Krengel led the assemblage in *Tehillim*, after which Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender rose for the keynote address.

In a passionate account, Rabbi Bender shared the story of Ruth, an Achiezer volunteer whose regular visits to the nursing home were singularly responsible for bringing a woman back from the brink of depression, to the doctors' amazement. The story was a clear demonstration of what was to become the theme of the evening: the concept that no act of *chessed* can be considered small; and that even a small kindness can save a life and recreate a soul. Describing Achiezer's 24-hour emergency hotline, Rabbi Bender provided a true-to-life, behind-the-scenes view of the lifesaving work that Achiezer does on a regular basis – in myriads ways, both large and small.

Awards were presented to the eve-



Partial view of the crowd

nings honorees: Dr. Marcel Scheinman (Physician Appreciation Award); Yoni and Esther Novak (Hakoras Hatov Award); the Community Assistance Fund (Community Appreciation Award); and Rabbi Zev and Leah Bald (Kesser Shem Tov Award). The feature video, fittingly entitled "Our Community's One Call For Help," included personal and emotional anecdotes shared by community members, as well as messages of support from a variety of local Rabbonim and community leaders. Despite the relatively late

hour on the Sunday evening just before Shavuot, the crowd stuck around to enjoy the lavish dessert spread and bask in the sheer enjoyment of the evening for just a while longer.

The evening was a celebration of the past and a commitment to the future, which left guests from across the spectrum inspired and committed to joining this bastion of *chessed*.

Achdus and Achiezer. The two words go together...not just for one magical evening, but for every single day, of each and every year.

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