

# THE CLANTON PARK HERALD

A monthly newsletter, intended to provide timely and pertinent information to *shul* members

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**From the Rabbi...**

## HAVE SOME CHEESECAKE WITH YOUR CHULENT .... *how to combat the ever-present sin of lashon hora*

Milchigs on Shavuos? It's a fixture, isn't it! Some turn the whole meal into a *milchig Gan Eden*. Others have some post-kiddush cheesecake, wait a bit and then change the table decor before moving on to a classic meat meal; they "have their (cheese) cake and eat it (the chulent) too". The *minhagim* may vary, but the *halacha*, of course, does not. No matter how or when or where you eat your *milchigs*, you typically keep it far removed from the meat. Mixing the two is, of course, forbidden. This Shavuos, though, allow me to suggest that you mix these unmixables.

But before I offer my, admittedly, unusual suggestion on how and why to mix your milk with your meat, allow me to digress into an entirely different subject. Allow me to discuss the *metzora*. The *metzora* is, of course, an individual afflicted with *tzora'as*, a strange white skin disease that was not just a disease, but also and more so a divine sign. The *tzora'as* was a sign from Hashem that the afflicted individual was guilty of *lashon hora*: guilty of gossiping and of finding fault with others. The connection between *tzora'as* and *lashon hora* is established by the *Midrash Rabba* (16, 1) which notes that *metzora* (one who is afflicted with the *tzora'as* disease) sounds very much like *metzo ra* (Hebrew for "finding fault"). A *metzora*, a person afflicted with *tzora'as*, is, presumably, a *metzo ra*, a faultfinder and a gossip.

The Torah's attitude towards the person who developed *tzora'as* is surprisingly harsh. The Torah commands: "And the person who has *tzora'as*, his garments should be torn, the hair of his head must not be cut, he must cover his head down to his lips and he must call out "unclean, unclean" (*Vayikra* 13, 45)." His *tzora'as*, supplemented by uncouth grooming and rent garments, was a badge of shame for the entire world to see. His punishment was also prolonged; it continued for months, for years or for a lifetime of shame and isolation, until, hopefully, repentance caused the *tzora'as* to clear up. This prolonging of punishment is really an anomaly. Torah punishments, both corporal and financial, were usually short-lived. If a fine was to be paid, if a sinner was to be whipped, justice was administered and the case was then closed. This was true for the executed as well. Executed convicts were buried on the day of their death. Letting an executed convict's corpse rot in public for days was in, any other situation, an anathema to us. *Tzora'as* was the exception. Why? Why was the punishment for *lashon hora* so severe and why was it so prolonged?

Perhaps it is *lashon hora's* appalling prevalence that necessitates this draconian punishment. There is, perhaps, no other sin that people succumb to so frequently. People who are scrupulously observant in every other way will spend their Shabbos meals discussing who is getting divorced and who should be get-

ting divorced, who wore something unflattering and who said something unwise. The Torah wanted to counter this. The *tzora'as* carrier, therefore, was to be a living example of the extreme severity of *lashon hora*. His *tzora'as*, his overgrown hair and his rent clothing taught and re-taught the same message to all whose path he crossed. *Lashon hora* is terrible. Those who speak *lashon hora* pay a heavy price. Don't speak *lashon hora*!

It worked. People saw the degradation of *tzora'as*. People knew that the *tzora'as* was the punishment for *lashon hora*. It was clear to all that *lashon hora* was to be avoided at all costs.

*Vus iz geven iz geven iz nisht du*, "what was, was; it is no longer here." *Lashon hora's* enormous gravity is not patently obvious to generations that have not experienced the *tzora'as* punishment. And so the gossip-mongers and the faultfinders ply their trades undisturbed. *Lashon hora* is now a devil that runs amok.

This has to change. We must recreate an awareness of just how serious *lashon hora* is. We must create tangible reminders of its gravity; we must at least ensure that this devil does not join at our Shabbos and our Yom Tov meals. And Shavuos, with its conundrum of meals alternating back and forth between meat and milk might be the best of times to begin this task. It's a struggle, isn't it, to keep all that cutlery and all those Yom Tov foods segregated into their *milchig* and their *fleishig* departments? We manage, of course, and separate they remain. This Shavuos, though, let's not keep them quite so separate. This Shavuos, let us, instead, mix the milk and the meat. If a specific Shavuos meal happens to be a meat-based affair, add some milk items to the menu. Take a *milchig* placemat, set it in the middle of the table and place a hunk of cheese on it. Keep the cheese on the table throughout the meal. If a Shavuos meal happens to be a milk-based affair, do the reverse and add some meat items to the menu. Take a *fleishig* placemat, set it in the middle of the table and place a piece of meat on it. Keep the cheese/meat on the table throughout the meal.

If the conversation veers towards *lashon hora*, motion towards the cheese/meat. Suggest to the family member or to the guest who is in the process of inviting the devil, that it might be wise to have a piece of cheese with the meat. You will, of course, be greeted with shocked silence. Use the silence that follows your suggestion to explain your point. Yes, you will explain, eating cheese and *chulent* together is prohibited. But speaking *lashon hora* is also prohibited and, surprisingly the *lashon hora* prohibition is a vastly weightier prohibition than this specific meat and milk prohibition. This little reminder might just work. Cheese on the table might, in its graphic demonstration of *lashon hora's* seriousness, be akin to the *tzora'as* of yore. That little piece of uneaten cheese might become the most important part of your Shavuos meal.

On behalf of my wife, my family and the entire community, my best wishes for a *gutt*, *lashon hora* free, Yom Tov.

## **Mazel Tovs**

### **Sponsored by ...**

**ZEMER ORCHESTRA (416) 633-5936**  
"Toronto's Freilich Orchestra!" and....

**WAYNE KURTZ VIDEO PRODUCTIONS**  
**(416) 633-4941 "May we only meet b'simcha"**

Steve and Sarah Sherman, on the bar mitzvah of their son, Levi.

David and Penny Zimmerman, on the engagement of their daughter, Shiffie, to Simchy Zimmerman of Montreal.

Gershon and Faige Kaplan, on the engagement of their son, Yitzchak, to Chani Cymbalista of Thornhill. Mazel tov, as well, to the grandparents, Sidney and Pearl Woolf,

Norm and Arlene Weisbart, on the birth of a grandson, Shmuel Boruch, to their children, Moishe and Adina.

Chaim and Marika Weisz, on the birth of a grandson, Adiel Binyamin, to their children Tammy and Daniel Youngerwood.

Gary and Margaret Kopstick, on the birth of a granddaughter, Aviva to their children, Sholom and Rifky. Mazel Tov, as well, to the grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Kopstick.

Sidney and Pearl Woolf, on the birth of a great-grandson, Noach Elkana.

A special mazel tov to all of our graduates!

## **Condolences**

Manashe Laiman, on the loss of his sister, Miriam Shadlowsky.

Sidney Woolf, and Tina Levine, on the loss of their sister, Mimi Lebovic.

Sara Hochman, on the loss of her husband, Pearl Isaac, on the loss of her father, Larry Hochman.

The Kirsh family, on the passing of Bessie Kirsh.

## **Shul News and Rules**

### **Mazel Tov and Yasher koach to the newly installed Executive ...**

President	Gary Kopstick
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President	Moshe Shields
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President	Ken Goldstein
Secretary	Morris Sosnovitch
Treasurer	Aaron Frankel
House Maintenance	Paul Jacobs
Bikkur Cholim	Irwin Diamond
Chevra Kadisha	Hersch Kanner
Communications	Norman Weisbart
Financial	Sandy Hofstedter

Gabboim

Hall Rental  
Membership  
Israel Bonds  
Library  
Social  
Youth  
Bulletin

Gershon Kaplan  
Dr. Yehudi Shields  
Joshua Levi  
Mendy Goldman  
Sammy Nussbaum  
Sid Wellman  
Howard Lyons  
Manuel Kanner  
Ken Stollon

**Yasher koach** ... to Wayne Kurtz, the outgoing Hall Rental director, who tirelessly served the *shul* in this capacity for many years.

**Yasher koach** ....to Samuel Miller for his ongoing work in repairing the *shul's seforim*.

**Tikkun Leil Shavuos**.... see the schedule on page 4.

**Emunah Women 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Emunah Shabbat...** featuring Sara Chana Radcliffe, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 PM at Yeshivat Or Chaim.

## **Youth News**

**A message from Manuel Kanner, our new Youth Director...** We are off to an exciting start with our youth programming. Everyone who attended the Lag Ba'omer event had a great time. Thanks to the Werner family for the great F.W. display.

Yitzchak Kaplan is giving the youth his every last hour before he walks down to the Chuppa. Mazal Tov!! Rebecca Kurtz is busy planning new events after the great beach blast Lag Ba'omer event.

We need everyone's suggestions and help in planning more great events.

In the planning stages... Youth Shabbos services UPSTAIRS!!! All the adults will have the opportunity to sit back and relax during the Shabbos service. We will also be conducting a *davening* prep program for the youth (and youth at heart) to give everyone the opportunity to learn our *Nusach Hatfillah* and *Kariah* and be well-prepared to lead the services in a beautiful manner. We encourage all motivated youngsters to contact us so we can get this off the ground without delay. What's involved?? A 90-minute group meeting once a week, with take home singing practice to *drive your family crazy!* More details to follow.

**Clanton Park Baseball League end of the season BBQ ...** June 26<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM, in the *shul* parking lot, free of charge for all players and coaches.

### **Clanton Park Girl's Youth end of the year celebration at...Rinx!!**

**Who?** All girls in grades 1 - 8 (members and non-members)  
**What?** Rollerblading! Popsicles! Music!  
**Where?** Rinx, 65 Orfus Road  
**When?** Thursday June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:45 - 3:15 PM  
**Cost?** Only \$8!

Reservations must be made by Sunday June 19<sup>th</sup> by calling Rebecca at (416) 633-3649 or email [cpgirls youth@yahoo.ca](mailto:cpgirls youth@yahoo.ca). (A waiver form MUST be signed by a parent prior to the event.)

## **FEATURE INTERVIEW: Max and Ruth Neuburger**

Interviewing the Neuburgers was a delight. Not only did they willingly share with me the details of their lives, they also articulated many of their thoughts and feelings about the *shul*, its history, and their hopes for its future.

Both Max and Ruth were born in small towns in Germany. Max's family was quite affluent, and owned a hotel, an apartment building and several other properties. Secular education was a strong value for the family; by the time he was 16, Max spoke English, French and German, and had a strong grounding in math and the sciences. With this training under his belt, he went off to learn in a yeshiva in Frankfurt. With the Nazis' rise to power, Max fled Germany to Holland, where he studied in a yeshiva for a short time. When it became clear that Holland was also unsafe, he escaped, on a fishing boat, and landed in England. He learned, for two years, at the famous Gateshead yeshiva. For about six months, he was interned by the British as an "enemy alien", but otherwise he survived the war intact. (Not so his parents, who were killed in Thereisenstadt.) Max stayed in England after the war, earning his degree in electrical engineering, and settling in London. In 1950, he met and married Ruth.

Ruth was born in Feurth, Germany; she attended one of the few Jewish schools in southern Germany (one of her famous schoolmates – a grade above her – was Henry Kissinger!). After *Kristalnacht*, her family sent her (and her younger brother, two months earlier) on the *kindertransport* to England. (Unfortunately, her parents perished in Izbica.) Ruth served in the British Women's Army for three years, and though her contributions were entirely clerical, she served with distinction, and attained the rank of corporal. After the war, she continued working in clerical positions for various companies in London. Through a friend, she was introduced to Max.

In 1951, the newlyweds immigrated to Toronto. England had a depressed economy after the war, and it was a generally accepted idea that Canada offered more opportunities for a young couple. They felt that Toronto would be the Canadian city most like England.

They settled initially in the St. Clair area, but they had a strong desire to buy a house, so they moved "up north" at the same time as their friends, the Nussbaums. The house that they bought on Sunbeam Avenue is the same house that they live in today.

Max worked as a self-employed engineering consultant, specializing in mines and metal refining. He became quite well known in his field, and published many articles in the trade journals. He was the foreign correspondent for a US publication called *Design News*; with the help of his "team mate, Ruth," he wrote and edited many articles for this distinguished publication. In addition to helping her husband with his journalistic projects, Ruth did clerical work, and was a store accountant for Shoppers Drug Mart for 15 years.

"Our *shul*," says Max, "was built with a minimum of money, but everyone got involved. We were a very proud community, very close-knit, and everyone was very friendly and enthusiastic." Ruth adds: "Our memories are very fond, but sad, because there are a lot of people not with us anymore."

Max served as Cultural Chairman for many years, responsible for the coordination of lectures and *shiurim*. His responsibility was "to find out what the community really wanted," and he developed a keen understanding of the tastes and interests of the *kehillah*. Many eminent speakers, including Rabbi Lam, were invited to speak at the *shul*. Max also gave *shiurim* and speeches of his own. One Yom Kippur, one of the members was so impressed with Max's speech, he bought Maftir Yonah for him.

"In those days," recalls Ruth, "the women wanted to be on the Executive. Men never came to any decisions!" Although they never did get to serve on the Executive, women were very involved in the goings-on of the *shul*. Ruth served several terms as the Sisterhood President. Under her tenure, the Sisterhood ran many successful and memorable fund-raising programs, including "Millionaires' Night," which was a carnival and auction of gifts, which were "*shnorred* from local manufacturers". "Teas" were a popular form of fundraising – held initially in private homes – and then, in an effort to standardize on kashrus – held at the *shul*. "Continental Tea" which was meant to emulate a dainty Viennese affair, complete with small tables and décor, was another successful Sisterhood initiative.

"The community was different then; it was a family affair." Ruth has pleasant memories of "Purim parties, with creative costumes -- one lady was dressed as a *mechitza*, another as the Gerber baby, another as a Sputnik rocket – and, of course, our very popular joint Purim plays". Max adds: "Social events were different when men and women could enjoy them together. In those days we could [even] sit together!" Max and Ruth are not entirely convinced that the "swing to the right" at Clanton Park has been beneficial.

"Still, there was a strong sense of decorum in the *shul* then," says Ruth. "There were strict rules – no babies were allowed – no candy. One *Rosh Hashana*, I was not allowed to hear the *shofar*, because I had an 18-month old baby in my arms. I had to go to another *shul* in order to hear the *shofar*."

"It was a very good *shul* for raising children. There were many youth groups and activities." Their boys benefited particularly from the *shiurim* and guidance of Rabbi Rabinovich. They have much to be proud of... one son went on to become a cardiologist, one is a Rabbi in Teaneck and Rosh Yeshiva at Y.U., and their daughter is a dentist, in Toronto. They have 16 grandchildren, the first one to be married, G-d willing, next month.

"The future of the *shul*," says Max, "will be defined by the next generation – its scholarship and its attitude. The world changes; the *shul* is part of the world and reflects what is happening in the world; it is a microcosm of the larger macrocosm." For the *shul* to survive and thrive, strong leadership will be the requisite ingredient. "We could do with a [leader like] Sol Edell to unite our community. He and his father were men of experience and sensitivity. They could convince others that their differences are less important than unity when working towards an important aim." The Neuburgers believe that Rabbi Weber has the strength and skill to provide this type of leadership and sense of unity. "Rabbi Weber is trying to pull it together, trying to find a middle way," says Ruth.