

KEHILAT HANA HAR

MITZVAH/SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Member Information and Guidance

5772

2011-2012

This brochure is intended to be a resource for KHN members providing information about the Mitzvah Committee.

Specifically it contains:

- Descriptions of our programs.
- Guidance to members about procedures if one learns of a member in need
- Guidance regarding Shiva practices.

We hope you find this helpful. If you have any questions, feel free to contact one of the Mitzvah Committee co-chairs: Marjorie Kaplan at Marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com or Julie Parker at jaglet@aol.com.

Mitzvah Committee Overview

Introduction

In 2005, a group of KHN members came together with a goal for renewal of initiatives to address social concerns within our community and formed what is now the KHN Mitzvah/Social Action Committee. The Mitzvah Committee has grown to a series of ongoing KHN programs/focus areas led by dedicated KHN members, and is only possible with the dedicated support and involvement of the KHN leadership and the entire KHN community. In 2011, the Mitzvah Committee was formally incorporated as a standing committee in the KHN By-laws.

Our vital functions support KHN's mission statement by upholding the Jewish values and traditions of tzedakah (righteousness); tikkun olam (repairing the world) and gemilut chasadim (acts of lovingkindness).

Our mission

The KHN Mitzvah Committee's mission is to foster a Jewish community where values of tzedakah and tikkun olam are translated into actions, both to assist members of the Kehilat HaNahar community in times of need as well as to better the world one task at a time.

Programs/Focus Areas

Each of the Mitzvah Committee's Focus Areas and KHN Point Persons is outlined below, including the "At-A-Glance" table at the end of this guide.

Volunteers

There is something that every age group at KHN can be involved in, and assistance is always needed for our programs. Please never hesitate to contact one of the Point Persons if

you would like to know more or get involved. Our motto is “actions speak louder than meetings.”

New Ideas

Ideas for new projects/programs are always welcome: contact Marjorie Kaplan Marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com or Julie Parker jaglet@aol.com to discuss.

MITZVAH IN THE KHN COMMUNITY

KHN's HELPING HANDS

Point Persons: Sharon Schwartz (shamar67@verizon.net)
Sally Feineman (feinemom@yahoo.com)

KHN's Mitzvah Committee has a dedicated group of volunteers within our own community whose purpose is to be there to assist members in times of need and to ensure discretion and confidentiality while doing so. This help can include assistance with meals, setting up Shiva, Shiva minyans, sick visits, grocery shopping or other help.

Requesting Assistance: KHN's Helping Hands are there to do just that...help.

In order to respond in the most timely manner, while also ensuring discretion and confidentiality, please follow these simple procedures:

In a crisis situation, or in a time of hardship, if you or someone you know of may need assistance, for example, because of a medical or personal issue, please contact Rabbi Diana at rabbidianamiller@gmail.com, or at [\(860\) 593-7237](tel:8605937237). You can also contact one of our Shul Administrators via phone at [\(215\)](tel:215)

[862-1912](tel:862-1912) or email: littlehul@kehilathanahar.org. Your inquiry will then be forwarded to the point person for the Mitzvah Committee's Helping Hands.

Guidelines for Shiva

These guidelines are meant to serve mourners sitting Shiva as well as friends, family and shul members who are offering to help the family as they prepare for and sit Shiva.

Families should consult with Rabbi Diana regarding any specific ritual practices related to the funeral, interment or Shiva period.

Prior to the start of Shiva:

- When, as in most instances, a Shiva minyan is in the home, cover mirrors if the family tradition calls for this. Traditionally people cover mirrors so as not to feel self-conscious or vain during a period of grief, and because Jews do not pray while looking into mirrors.
- Place a pitcher of water with a basin and some towels outside the entrance door(s) for people to wash their hands as they return from the cemetery. Some families also like to have a bottle of water and paper towels in the car so they can wash immediately after the interment.
- Have a bowl of hard boiled eggs available on the food table; the eggs serve to symbolize the cyclical nature of life.
- Put up coffee and prepare a kettle for tea --- set out all items needed to serve coffee or tea.
- Set out any food the family has arranged to have at the house upon their return from the funeral/cemetery. Some people order platters, and it is helpful to have someone at the house to receive them and set them out.
- If the cemetery or funeral home is a long distance from the home where Shiva is going to take place, provide water and snacks for the family to have in the car or limo during the ride.

Once the mourners arrive home and begin sitting

Shiva:

- Mourners are not to serve others, but sit and receive others. Offer to prepare a plate of food for them with a beverage.
- A meal is usually set out and waiting for the mourners and those returning from the cemetery with them. This meal usually consists of platters of prepared food that can be eaten immediately upon the return to the home. This is customarily the only meal offered to visitors during the Shiva period.
- It is customary to bring a sweet of some sort into the home of mourners, so expect plenty of desserts to arrive. The only appropriate food to be served to Shiva visitors (after the initial meal upon returning from the cemetery) is coffee/tea/other beverages and those sweets that keep arriving.
- Friends or family, outside of the mourners, customarily arrange for the evening meal to be brought to the home each night of Shiva. This meal is for the family only, and should be brought over in time for an early dinner, before the mourners start accepting visitors for the evening Shiva minyan.
- Friends or family members, outside of the mourners, should offer to do any food preparation, serving, and clean up during this time. It is not appropriate for any of the mourners to prepare food or serve others.
- Traditionally we do not greet mourners with questions but rather with a hug, a touch, a simple, "I'm so sorry for your loss" or the phrase *HaMakom yenachem et'chem b'toch shar away'lay Tzion vee'Yerushalayim*, which means *May the Holy One comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem*. It is fine to just say *HaMakom yenachem*.

- If the mourner shows a willingness to talk, feel free to ask about the deceased person. Sometimes the mourner will want to share pictures and stories with those gathered, which can bring much comfort. Additionally, mourners can seek out stories about the deceased from friends and family.

Often one friend or family member, other than the mourners, serves as a point person to organize all the above, including coordinating with people for the bringing of meals and helping out around the house during Shiva visiting times.

Additional assistance that can be offered:

- Shop for paper goods, food and other supplies needed in the household during the Shiva period.
- Make phone calls on behalf of the mourners, informing people of the details about the funeral and Shiva visitation and Shiva minyan times.
- Ask the mourners if they have any other specific family traditions that they wish to be honored and observed during the Shiva period.
- Assist in forming a minyan. The Mitzvah Committee can assist in making sure there are enough Jewish people in attendance to have a minyan for each Shiva minyan service at the home of the mourners. A friend or family member should check to see if this assistance is needed, and call the Shul to let us know if you need more individuals to attend as part of the minyan. (Note: A minyan consists of 10 or more Jewish men or women, including teens past the age of bar/bat mitzvah. Non-Jewish visitors are welcome to participate, but would not be counted as part of the minyan.)

The Role of the Mitzvah Committee in Shiva preparation:

- The Mitzvah Committee at KHN is here to assist members when families and friends cannot do so, or when additional support can be helpful. Please contact Rabbi Diana or the Shul administrators to discuss your needs.

MITZVAH IN THE BROADER COMMUNITY

Project H.O.P.E. (Helping Other People Everyday)

KHN Point Person: Bitsy Recupero
(bitsyrecupero@msn.com)

Started by KHN's founding Rabbi, Sandy Roth, Father Kindon of St. Martin of Tours Roman Catholic Church, and New Hope Councilwoman Geri Delevich, H.O.P.E. is a fulfillment of the vision of members of the New Hope community. Its mission statement is, "For the greater good of the community, to share our time, talent and resources in helping and caring for those who are in need." Groups of volunteers are arranged into "teams" serving on a rotating basis. Team leaders seek out team members' availability to fulfill needs of members of the community. These tasks have included rides to the grocery store or to medical appointments, or help with a meal.

Delaware Valley Interfaith Council

KHN Point Persons: Larry Warshawsky
(larrywarshawsky@comcast.net)
Marjorie Kaplan
(marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com)

KHN is a member of the Delaware Valley Interfaith Council which holds several coordinated activities throughout the year. To date, KHN has been the only synagogue member of the DVIC and KHN's founding Rabbi, Sandy Roth, was recognized by her peers as a DVIC President in 2010-2011.

Brief History of DVIC. Clergy representing churches in the Lambertville , New Hope and surrounding area had been gathering as an informal group since the 1800s. In 1953, The

Delaware Valley Council of Churches was formed; it evolved from the Delaware Valley Pastors Conference and the Delaware Valley Council of Church Women. Recently, members of the Delaware Valley Council of Churches voted to transform the organization to the Delaware Valley Interfaith Council (DVIC).

DVIC is a volunteer commitment, seeking donations and providing service. There is no paid staff; 100% of all donations and all volunteer efforts are committed directly to DVIC's witness and mission in the community.

Activities of DVIC. The Council either sponsors or supports several faith-based activities: Martin Luther King Service Day (which evolved from Mitzvah Day at Kehilat HaNahar); Holocaust Remembrance; Easter Sunrise Service (started in 1953); Interfaith Hospitality Network (active since 1997 and for which KHN is a support congregation--see more below); Habitat for Humanity projects (2002 and 2011); Crop Walk (active since 1978 and see more below); and Thanksgiving Eve Service (active from 1990). The Council also supports programs offered by individual congregations, such as Community Kitchen at Centenary United Methodist and Peace Meal at Trinity Episcopal in Solebury.

The most visible activity of DVIC is the Lambertville Food Pantry. The Food Pantry is the continuation of efforts that began in 1981 and operates today responding to the vagaries of the economy and conditions confronting individuals, acknowledging that those less fortunate will always be among us. The Lambertville Food Pantry has been in continuous operation, and is open two days each week, providing food for 900 to 1,100 clients each month.

KHN Food Pantry Programs

KHN Point Person: Geoff Wyckoff
(Geoff.wyckoff@gmail.com)

KHN collects food and other items throughout the year and donates it to three separate food pantry programs: Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia's High Holiday Food Drive; the DVIC Food Pantry; and the Mitzvah Food Pantry (run by the Jewish Family and Children's Services of Greater Mercer).

KHN's food pantry programs provide an opportunity for every member of KHN to perform a mitzvah simply by bringing non-perishable food items or personal care when they come to synagogue. Food pantry committee members rally members to contribute, help deliver collected items and participate in the recipient food pantry programs. Collection baskets are located in the KHN lobby.

High Holiday Food Drive: Each year, during the High Holiday season, KHN participates in the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia's (JFGP) High Holiday Food Drive with neighboring congregations. Usually synagogues collect a single type of item; KHN has contributed soup (kosher or non-kosher) for the past few years. Soon after the holidays, KHN members deliver what we have collected to a warehouse in Philadelphia and assist in sorting the donations. Last year, JFGP collected over 41,000 lbs. of food and distributed it to six different pantry sites in the Philadelphia area. KHN has been participating in the High Holiday Food Drive since 2002.

Delaware Valley Interfaith Council (DVIC) Food Pantry: After the High Holidays, KHN begins its DVIC Lambertville Food Pantry collection; our recipient for most of the year. This food pantry has run continuously since 1981 and collects food for 900-1,100 clients per month. KHN collects and delivers non-perishable food (kosher or non-kosher) and DVIC accepts

packaged food and personal care items. (Personal care products such as shampoos, toothpaste, and diapers, etc. cannot be purchased with food stamps which is why these items are also helpful). Weekly runs from KHN are made to the food pantry.

Mitzvah Food Pantry: During the month of February, KHN takes a one-month hiatus from the DVIC Food Pantry to help our friends at the Greater Mercer Jewish Family and Children's Services with their Mitzvah Food Pantry. This food pantry only accepts Kosher food so that anyone who uses it can benefit. KHN has been supporting this pantry for over six years.

Interfaith Hospitality Network

KHN Point Person: Julie Parker (jaglet@aol.com)

The Interfaith Hospitality Network is a nonprofit organization of congregations that minister to the needs of homeless women and families by providing temporary housing, meals and other physical needs through a network of committed congregations, primarily throughout Hunterdon County. IHN provides shelter, sustenance and support in caring settings while assisting its guests in resolving their homelessness. The program uses existing community resources: churches and synagogues for overnight lodging, congregations for volunteers, social service agencies for screening and referral. IHN collaborates with county human service agencies to provide supplemental services for its clients and offers them referral advocacy, budget counseling and resume writing assistance. Many of the clients sheltered hold jobs and a high percentage are able to find housing after their stay with IHN.

KHN serves as a support congregation to IHN when clients are hosted at the First Presbyterian Church in Lambertville.

Support congregations, like KHN, supply and serve dinner to the clients. We also supply chaperones to spend the night at the church.

Food for Friends

KHN Point Person: Andre Salz (Andre.salz@aol.com)

Food for Friends is a nonprofit organization serving free hot dinners year-round out of the Quaker Meeting House in Quakertown, and is now in its twelfth year of service. Most local churches as well as people (adults and youth) of many faiths, including Muslims and Jews, have volunteered their services over the years.

Food for Friends serves from two to three meals a month. These meals are served on the second, fourth and fifth Wednesdays of the month. They serve up to fifty people at a time, and when there is room volunteers are encouraged to share the meal with those present. All are welcome and no guest need establish need to come to the meals. Even though Quakertown maybe a long trip North from KHN, Andre Salz, KHN's liaison, would welcome any and all from KHN and says he can always facilitate any volunteer's service.

Cropwalk

KHN Point Person: Jeff Oppenheimer
(jeffopp1@yahoo.com)

The Cropwalk takes place each autumn on a Sunday afternoon in Lambertville along the D&R Canal State Park. It is an ideal activity for all ages. CROP Hunger Walks help to support grassroots, hunger-fighting development efforts around the world, in addition to supporting those in need in our own community – 25% of the funds raised locally benefit the DVC's Lambertville Food Pantry.

Globally, CROP Hunger Walks help to provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, to technical training and micro-enterprise loans, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs.

Winter Coat/Clothing Drive

KHN Point Person: Lisa Stephens
(stephens178@gmail.com)

Beginning in Mid-October in partnership with our friends at Centenary Methodist Church in Lambertville, KHN collects coats and winter clothing in good clean condition in men's, women's, boys, and girls styles, in all sizes. All coats are distributed free within the community.

Holiday Toy Drive

KHN Point Person: Julie Parker (jaglet@aol.com)

Each year, between Thanksgiving and Winter break, KHN collects NEW unwrapped toys for less fortunate children to receive as holiday gifts.

MLK Interfaith Day of Service

KHN Point Persons: Marjorie Kaplan
(Marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com)
Julie Parker (jaglet@aol.com)

Beginning in 2006, KHN held its first Mitzvah Day of Good Deeds in concert with the KHN Shul School. This was a half-day event that provided an opportunity for everyone in the

KHN community to be involved in performing mitzvot. Starting in 2010, KHN invited DVIC congregations to join with us for Mitzvah Day, and we moved the date to coincide with the weekend of the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Day of Service. In January 2011, KHN and DVIC teamed up for the First MLK Interfaith Day of Service at KHN, a program we expect to continue into 2012.

Support for Israel

KHN Point Person: Staci Scheinblum (simontiger@aol.com)

If you would like to help Staci with any specific project, please do not hesitate to contact her.

Support for Magen David Adom

KHN Point Person: Naomi Furguiele
(naomi.the.nerd@gmail.com)

Magen David Adom is Israel's equivalent of the American Red Cross. MDA consists of trained volunteer and professional medical responders who provide all of Israel's pre-hospital emergency medical needs, including disaster, ambulance and blood services. MDA provides 100% of the blood requirements of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and 95% of the blood needs of Israeli hospitals and the general population. MDA answers calls for all types of accidents, medical emergencies and terror attacks with over 100 Emergency Medical Stations and 11 dispatch stations in communities throughout Israel.

The MDA Israel Cord Blood Bank collects donated umbilical cord blood following the birth of healthy children and then removes, tests and types the stem cells. Stem cells have the

unique ability to develop into any of the body's tissue types. They are currently being used to treat cancers and blood disorders but their usage for medical treatment could be for many other diseases. The Israel Cord Blood Bank is a project of MDA in collaboration with the principal hospitals of Israel to launch a national effort on stem cell transplants and research. Existing world-wide bone-marrow and stem cell registries cannot adequately serve the needs of many Jews, including the various Sefardi, Ethiopian, and even Ashkenazi communities. Bedouins, Druze and Israeli Arabs have virtually no representation in any Cord Blood Bank other than in Israel.

KHN has hosted MDA programs and has had Mitzvah Projects to support MDA.

KHN Greening/Stewardship Initiative

KHN Point Person: Staci Scheinblum (simontiger@aol.com)
Marjorie Kaplan
(Marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com).

KHN has worked on a number of greening projects in concert with the Mitzvah Committee over the past few years, including stewardship pledges and education regarding energy efficiency and renewable energy; reusable KHN grocery bags; and programs and lecturers on climate issues.

Mitzvah Committee At-A-Glance

MITZVAH COMMITTEE FOCUS AREA	KHN POINT PERSON
<p><u>KHN Helping Hands</u>: to help members of the KHN community. (illness, elderly, shut-in, shiva and beyond)</p>	<p>Sharon Schwartz shamar67@verizon.net 215-345-4217</p> <p>Sally Feineman feinemom@yahoo.com 215-794-8447</p>
<p>Delaware Valley Interfaith Council</p>	<p>Marjorie Kaplan marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com 609-818-0780</p> <p>Larry Warshawsky Larrywarshawsky@comcast.net 215-794-5351</p>
<p>H.O.P.E. Helping Other People Every Day (to help members of the New Hope community)</p>	<p>Bitsy Recupero bitsyrecupero@msn.com 609-273-6222</p>
<p>Food Pantry Programs</p>	<p>Geoff Wyckoff geoff.wyckoff@gmail.com 609-730-1556</p>
<p>Support for Israel</p>	<p>Staci Scheinblum simontiger@aol.com 215-862-9379</p>
<p>Interfaith Hospitality Network (providing dinner or chaperoning an overnight stay for homeless families)</p>	<p>Julie Parker jaglet@aol.com 609-397-4754</p>
<p>KHN Greening/Stewardship Initiative</p>	<p>Staci Scheinblum simontiger@aol.com or Marjorie Kaplan marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com</p>
<p>Food For Friends (Quakertown)</p>	<p>Andre Salz andresalz@aol.com 215-536-0395</p>
<p>Support for Magen David Adom (provides Israel's pre-hospital emergency medical needs, including disaster, ambulance and blood services)</p>	<p>Naomi Furguiele Naomi.the.nerd@gmail.com 215-345-7747</p>
<p>Crop Walk (Fall)</p>	<p>Jeff Oppenheimer Jeffopp1@yahoo.com 215-794-0441</p>
<p>Winter Coat and Clothing Drive (Fall-Winter)</p>	<p>Lisa Stephens Stephens178@gmail.com (609) 397-8834</p>
<p>Holiday Toy Drive (November/December)</p>	<p>Julie Parker jaglet@aol.com 609-397-4754</p>
<p>MLK Interfaith Day of Service (formerly Mitzvah Day) (January)</p>	<p>Marjorie Kaplan Marjorie.kaplan@gmail.com 609-818-0780</p> <p>Julie Parker jaglet@aol.com 609-397-4754</p>

