

JEWISH LINK

Issue #292

August 1, 2019 | 29 Tamuz, 5779

Just One Life to Hold Bergen Benefit This Wednesday Night

By Pearl Markovitz

As in years past, the founders and supporters of “Nefesh Achat B’Yisrael” or “Just One Life” will join together for its annual benefit evening in Teaneck during the Nine Days, on Wednesday, August 7. According to founder and American Chairman and Israeli Co-Chairman Jack Forgash, “This time of year marking the churban of both of our precious Batei Mikdash can best be memorialized by supporting an organization that has effectively helped to recoup the loss of Jewish lives. It has been statistically proven that there were more Jewish children born in the State of Israel during its brief 71-year history than in all of its prior 2,000 years of history in the land. We can modestly attest that the work of Just One Life has been an important component in that impressive statistic.”

Included in its ever-increasing services to mothers in Israel who are beset with challenges before and after giving birth, Just One Life offers supportive counseling, financial stipends, home visits, referrals to government and private agencies and advocacy. Their headquarters are in the beautifully renovated offices near Rechov King George in the center of Jerusalem.

According to new Director Chaya Katzin, who serves as well as the chief social worker and supervisor of the team of social workers, this past year has seen an impressive increase in services offered. Through an expanded program of workshops, clients are provided with multi-session



Rabbi Marty Katz, executive vice president of Just One Life, with a baby born with JOL's help. (CREDIT: YEHUDIT SHAMIR)

courses in parenting skills, psycho-dynamic approaches to dealing with the past, present and future, mind-body techniques for dealing with stress and anxiety, and identifying behavioral techniques for achieving happiness and comfort. These multi-session workshops are subsidized and often result in creating support groups among the attendees. Interns from both Shaare Zedek Hospital and Hadassah College in conjunction with Hadassah Hospital work alongside the Just One Life social work team.

In appreciation of their work, Dr. Uri Chen, of the Hadassah School of Medicine, wrote a letter to Katzin: “There is no doubt that your assistance brought about circumstances that were optimal to helping women and couples during their difficult predicaments and brought about beneficial outcomes.”

Upon her retirement last year, Madelaine Gitelman, who served as the director of social work at Just One Life for over 30 years, became chairman of the board, which she now co-chairs with Jack Forgash. Upon her retirement, Gitelman received a congratulatory letter from Ambassador Danny Danon, permanent representative of Israel to the United Nations, who shared: “I would like to extend my appreciation to Madelaine Gitelman in recognition of her incredible leadership of Nefesh Achat B’Yisrael. Bringing Just One Life to Israel brought the issue of raising Jew-

ish children straight to the heart of the Jewish world.”

Rabbi Martin Katz, who has served as the executive vice president of Just One Life for close to 30 years, commented upon his recent “awesome” trip to Israel: “I spent many quality hours with Chaya Katzin and her team of social workers. I visited with new mothers and their happy babies. I listened to the testimonies of women who had overcome difficult times and situations with the help of Just One Life. I saw baby triplets born with our assistance as well as Yael, our former client, mother to now 20-year-old quad-

ruplets. On occasion I am asked how it feels to be doing such holy work. My response is that I am simply a messenger. In turn, I would like to thank the generous communities of Teaneck/Bergenfield for being our special partners in this holy work.”

The community is invited to attend the evening of tribute to Just One Life to be held on Wednesday, August 7, at 8 p.m., at the home of Rachel and Azi Mandel, 60 Westminster Avenue, Bergenfield. Co-hosting the evening are Sheryl and Aaron Liberman. Organizers include Rayzel and Ron Yaish, Fraidy and Stuart Forgash, Cindy and Elliot Forgash and Carole and Jack Forgash. The speaker for the evening is the internationally renowned inspirational Torah scholar Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson.

For more information and to reserve, please call 347-996-7751 or visit www.justonelife.org.



“Just One Life” happy babies born in Jerusalem. (CREDIT: YEHUDIT SHAMIR)