

THE DENVER COMMUNITY KOLLEL KOLLEL UPDATE

Because Torah is for Every Jew



April 2012 - Nisan 5772

Kollel Benefit Event “Just Keeps Getting Better”

It was an event that began as many others; people milling about, greeting each other, schmoozing, and waiting for the program to begin. But that was where the similarities to the usual fundraising events ended. And as everyone took their seats, an extraordinary evening began to unfold.

The Denver Community Kollel’s fourteenth anniversary Benefit Event took place Tuesday evening, March 20th, at District 475 in Englewood, Colorado. The hall was packed, the food was delicious. But what made this particular event unique was the power of the message imparted to the participants.

The theme of the evening was *Torah – Heartbeat of Our Nation*. Rabbi Shachne Sommers, Rosh Kollel, began the



Rabbi Spero addresses the standing-room only audience

program with a brief message addressing the idea of the Torah as the life of the Jewish People. He then introduced the premier showing of *Heartbeat of Our Nation*, an original musical and visual production created and produced by the members of the Kollel. And while people may have expected just another dinner video highlighting the many accomplishments of the Kollel, they received far more. The film featured a beautiful new song, whose lyrics portrayed the history of the Torah and Klal Yisroel, from the time the Giving of the Torah to the present day. The powerful words, melody, and vivid imagery, made a tremendous impact on the audience. The musical piece was absolutely phenomenal,” said Josh Krochmal of

Highlands Ranch. “The lyrics were moving, and the music was beautiful.”

Following the showing of the film, the standing-room only crowd was treated to a powerful talk from Rabbi Yechiel Spero, author of the acclaimed *Touched by a Story* series. Upon the conclusion of the moving talk, Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab, Rosh Kollel, introduced a new program, *Heart of the Torah*. A brief video described the details of this exciting opportunity, a special class that will be accessible live via one’s computer. The class will feature an in-depth study of the Ten Commandments, and will be completed in time for the 12th Siyum Hashas on August 1st, 2012, thus giving

Cont. on back



From left: Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers, Reb Tzvi Gelt

Denver’s Jews Gain a Deeper Understanding of the Parsha

Do you know what’s going on in this week’s Torah portion? Sure, lots of Jews spend time reviewing the weekly reading of the Torah, but how often do we actually get the opportunity to really get to the bottom of the parsha?

Rabbi Shachne Sommers, Kollel Dean, has embarked on a project to give people that opportunity. The class is the brainchild of Dr. Joshua Portnoy, co-director of Littleton ICU, and a member of Aish Denver. Dr. Portnoy had attended the in-depth parsha class of Rabbi Yochanan Zweig in Miami, Florida and envisioned a similar class in Denver. He felt Rabbi Sommers was the perfect man for the job and approached him with the proposal. Rabbi



Rabbi Sommers in discussion with participants following a class. Counter clockwise from right: Rabbi Sommers, Rick Gershter, Sholom Levin

Cont. on back

New Bonds Formed, Old Ones Strengthened at EDOS/Kollel Shabbaton

Seven kollel families spent an uplifting Shabbos on the East Side as guests of the East Denver Orthodox Synagogue (EDOS). The Shabbaton had been in the works for some time, having been postponed six weeks earlier due to the happy occasion of the birth of a son to Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, who spearheaded the arrangements of the Shabbaton for the Kollel. Moshe Levy, EDOS President, and Shlomo Fried, gabbai of EDOS, led the effort from their end.

Mrs. Mindy Hecht and her daughter, Jillian, took on the task of arranging, cooking, and serving three delicious gourmet Shabbos meals. On Thursday, the women of the Kollel traveled to EDOS to help prepare the Shabbos food. Led by EDOS member Mrs. Rayna Zussman, the Kollel women had the opportunity to partake in the preparations for the Shabbaton.

The Shabbaton began with candle-lighting at EDOS, followed by services, and a lavish Friday night meal. During the meal, Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers and Rabbi

Mordechai Mandel shared insights on the upcoming Pesach holiday.

The next morning, Rabbi Yehuda Amsel addressed the congregation during services on the topic of “The Significance of the Four Cups at the Seder.” Afterwards, community members enjoyed a kiddush followed by a buffet-



Rabbi Yehuda Amsel (right) and Shlomo Fried

style Shabbos lunch that was open to the entire community. Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab, Kollel Dean, shared words of Torah during the meal.

After lunch, all Shabbaton participants found something to enjoy. Women attended a class given by Mrs. Yehudis Heyman on “The New Moon, Pesach,

and the Jewish Woman,” while men heard Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher’s presentation on “The Origins and Issues of Selling One’s Chametz.” The children enjoyed a Bnos activity program, organized and led by Chaya Devorah Schwab and Rochel Amsel.

Seudah Shlishis, which included inspiring words of Torah from Rabbi Moshe Heyman on the subject of nirtzah, the final part of the Passover Seder, was followed by services and Havdalah, bringing the Shabbaton to a close.

The camaraderie and connections formed over Shabbos, along with the beautiful divrei Torah and z’miros, left an indelible impression. “It was so nice to meet a whole community of wonderful people, most of whom I’d never met before,” said Avigail Rudnick, whose husband Rabbi Gavriel Rudnick of the Kollel gave a talk on “Inspiration and Perspiration: Making Genuine Spiritual Progress” on Friday night. EDOS member Perry Nisson added, “What an outstanding performance, bringing the Kollel and EDOS together for Shabbos. I had a very spiritual Shabbos.”

Kollel Benefit Event

Cont. from front

an opportunity to everyone to complete a section of Torah along with the many Jews who are completing the Talmud.

Following the program, the participants were treated to *Wrap & Roll: A Creative*

Selection of Sushi and Sides. The elegant buffet, which was enjoyed by all, was prepared by the Women of the Kollel. Participants left inspired and uplifted. “The event was absolutely fantastic!” exclaimed Josh Krochmal. “The speaker was fantastic and his words were deeply felt by everybody

there. We even went home discussing the wonderful words and our discussions have carried through today with us telling friends and family.” Harvey Pacht summed it up: “The Kollel Event just keeps getting better.”

To view the video, listen to the soundtrack, listen to Rabbi Spero, or view photos of the event, visit the Kollel’s website at www.denverkollel.org.

Parsha

Cont. from front

Sommers enthusiastically embraced the idea, and the rest is history. “I wanted to help people who are already familiar with the basic themes of the parsha take their understanding to a whole new level,” says Rabbi Sommers. The class, A Deeper Look at the Parsha, is presented Tuesday evenings at Aish Denver in Greenwood Village. Rabbi Sommers discusses a

number of difficulties encountered in the weekly Torah portion, and develops a comprehensive approach to resolve the issues, simultaneously conveying a deeper understanding of the material being discussed.

Rabbi Sommers’ scholarship, insight, and dynamism have made this class a delightful experience for participants. “Rabbi Sommers is a man who loves to teach,” says Robert Pitler, a member of Aish. “You can’t help but get

totally involved with Rabbi Sommers. It makes no difference what your Jewish learning level might be.

His enthusiasm is contagious. You become so involved you do not want the class to end. I encourage anyone to attend.”

For more information on Rabbi Sommers’ classes, other classes offered by the Kollel, or if you are interested in creating a new class, please email rmf@denverkollel.org. You can also get more information on classes and programs at www.denverkollel.org.

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