

## The Afternoon Chevra for Retired Holocaust Survivors

Retired men looking for something to do on Thursday afternoons can now hear lively Torah discussions and get together with other *heimishe* men at the Afternoon Chevra.

Centrally located at the Boro Park Y, at 4912 14th Avenue in Boro Park, Brooklyn, the Afternoon Chevra is a satisfying way to spend time with friends.

The Chevra, beginning at 2 p.m. every Thursday, offers hot potato *kugel* and cof-

fee, an exercise group with Dr. Yosef Rapoport of Metro SportsMed, and a *drasha* from Rabbi Asher Israel.

For more information or to arrange for transportation, call Mr. Yossi Wiener at 718.438.2020, ext. 7450.

The program is cosponsored by Project for Holocaust Survivors at Bikur Cholim of Boro Park and Club Nissim for Holocaust Survivors at The Boro Park Y.

## Community Support Still Urgently Needed for Our Place to Survive

The Jewish community has been extremely generous in its support of Our Place over the last few months. Our Place is able to work to keep Jewish teenagers safe, off the streets, and in rehab, when needed, only because of the community's generosity.

Avi Fishoff, who has assumed the mantle of leadership at Our Place, has been working tirelessly to raise the funds needed to sustain this network of teenage drop-in centers in its current emergency situation. Avi, together with his wife Zisi, hosted an emergency *melava malka* parlor meeting at his home in Flatbush, with hundreds of community activists, lay leaders, *rabbonim* and politicians in attendance. Another parlor meeting, coordinated by Mr. Moshe Engel, took place at the home of Dr. Ari Walfish in Queens. Many prominent *rabbonim* and *askonim* were present at that meeting.

The financial status of this community service organization has changed drastically in the last year. Government funding was abruptly slashed and Our Place suddenly finds itself in the precarious position of having to raise over a million dollars in private funds to account for the shortfall.

So far, all the efforts to secure a new government grant under the 'member items' statute have fallen on deaf ears. This is a foolhardy strategy because, as the saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The cost, *chas veshalom*, of hospitalization or prosecution or imprisonment of a drug user is far higher to society, both financially and morally. The teenagers who are using and abusing illegal drugs and/or alcohol are not headed in any positive direction and are in dire need of intervention. For these individuals, Our Place is heaven-sent. There are hot kosher dinners, fun activities, a group of friends, and empathetic professional staff members available to the many boys for whom Our Place is a second, or in some cases only, home.

Sadly, Our Place and its affiliates may still be unable to remain operational if their budget needs are not met.

There is no questioning the need for this kind of organization to be available for the youth at risk of falling between the cracks. In addition to the boys' drop-in-center, the

organization runs Our Place II for girls, The Living Room for ongoing treatment and meetings for those struggling with addiction, and Yeshiva Simchas Chaim for boys who need a more personal approach. The dedication of the program directors, Chaim Glantz and Sony Perlman, is remarkable. For instance, they managed to somehow keep Our Place running as usual in the midst of a blizzard that strangled New York City.

Aside from teenagers who rebel or who cannot do well in school, the need for a safe haven is a far more serious matter for a whole other subset of the population. For some boys, their own homes are terrible environments of abuse or neglect and there is little chance for them to thrive. They would have nowhere to turn if not for Our Place.

Donations to Our Place are necessary to literally save the lives of these precious *neshamos* in *Klal Yisroel*. In the *zechus* of the



Avi Fishoff speaking with Rav Yisroel Belsky at an Our Place parlor meeting.

efforts to rescue these *Yiddishe neshamos* and allow them to reach their potential, may Hashem *bentch* all of *Klal Yisroel* with true *nachas*.

Donations can be sent to Our Place, 44 Wall Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, New York, NY, 10005.



## Exciting Program Slated for this Year's Oorah-thon 2011

The countdown is on to the Oorah Auction, which will hit the airwaves this *Motzoei Shabbos, Parshas Bamidbar*, May 28. Country Yossi, Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss and Elchanan Schwarz will once again be hosting the event, which will also feature Lipa Schmelczler. This year's program has undergone some changes, with brand new features that Oorah's diverse audience is sure to appreciate.

Join Oorah for a special commemorative tribute to Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* in honor of his 25<sup>th</sup> *yahrtzeit*. Hear stories, reflections and personal memories from *talmidim* who were privileged to be close to one of the greatest *gedolim* of our time.

Oorah's own Dueling Rabbis™ bring together two of today's top names in the *chinuch* world for a debate like nothing you've ever heard before. Tune in to hear what each expert has to say, and which issues are tackled.

Join for a *hartzige kumzitz* with musical guests, including Dovid Gabay, Sruli Wilfiker, Eli Schwebel, and others.

The Oorah-thon not only provides a chance for the organization to focus on their programs, but also gives Oorah families a chance to share their stories with the world. Be inspired as TorahMates express to listeners what makes their learning so special. Hear Oorah families as they share the triumphs of their own personal *kiruv* journeys. Celebrate with a camper from TheZone as he makes a *siyum* on a *masechta* of *Mishnayos* that he completed with his TorahMate. But most of all, you can join in all of Oorah's incredible and diverse *kiruv* work by entering its auction now.

Don't miss the exciting conclusion of the evening, and Oorah's auction, with the live prize drawing beginning at 11 p.m. You can tune in to the broadcast at Oorah.org.



## Ohr Naftoli 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner

By Zalman Lewis

Last Wednesday evening, 14 *Iyar*/May 18, Yeshivas Ohr Naftoli of New Windsor, NY, held its 15<sup>th</sup> annual dinner at the newly renovated Crowne Plaza Hotel in Suffern.

The dinner, under the careful guidance of the *yeshiva's* executive director, Rabbi Yitzchok Krausz, had a *ruach* of *simcha* and *achdus*, and was a *chizuk* for all attendees.

Everyone knows that the purpose of a *yeshiva* dinner is to raise needed funds. However, the difference between a dinner at which everyone is anxiously waiting to leave at the first possible opportunity versus a dinner like this one, where almost all of the attendees remained to the end, is the atmosphere. Ohr Naftoli's dinner was like a family *simcha*. The "Ohr Naftoli Family" was celebrating the *aliyah* and growth of the *mosad* and its *bochurim*.

As both a parent and honoree, the dinner gave me an opportunity to reconnect with the *rabbeim* and other parents and to express *hachoras hatov* for all that the *yeshiva* has done.

Everyone I spoke to felt the same way, and it is a tremendous *chizuk* for parents to collectively share *nachas* from their sons and grandsons.

The highpoints of the dinner were the *divrei Torah* from the two esteemed *roshei yeshiva*, Rav Aron Milstein and Rav Moshe Silberberg, and the professionally produced video.

Both *roshei yeshiva* spoke about *kavod haTorah* and *ahavas haTorah*, themes that resonate with the parent body who know that these are central tenets of the *yeshiva*.

The video showcased the magnificent 52-acre campus of the *yeshiva* as a backdrop to interviews with parents, *rabbeim* and *talmidim*, all of whom spoke *ke'ish echad beleiv echad*, with such *hislahavus*, about the *yeshiva*.

The guests came out of an obligation to us, but they stayed because the dinner excelled in both *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus*. Many said they would *iy"H* return next year even though they are not (yet) parents of *bochurim* in the *yeshiva*.

