

Chicken Soup for the Soul/Daylight Run Weekend

By Jodie Cohen

Our synagogue has recently become part of a group of 13 synagogues called TANS--Tikkun Alliance of the North Shore. This group is a collaborative community effort formed to address issues affecting our world today. The group focuses on *tikkun olam* – repairing the world – which includes tackling problems such as hunger, poverty & the environment.

On January 10th, TANS provided the Jewish community with an incredible opportunity to feed the hungry – to be intimately involved with *tikkun olam*. And, what an amazing day it was!

Our first event with this group was called The Daylight Run—an event designed to provide the homeless in Glen Cove and Hempstead with a hot meal, sandwiches snacks blankets, bags and suitcases, coats, and other important items.

In addition to this one important event, we dedicated a large part of the weekend to the understanding of *tikkun olam*. Our theme of the weekend was “chicken soup for the soul.”

The Friday night “Chicken Soup” Shabbat dinner held at Temple Chaverim was wonderful — very warm and social. Thanks to Hasson Caterers for including delicious chicken soup with the scrumptious dinner and to Jill Schwartz for coordinating all of the logistics. The Friday night service was inspiring and included a wonderful story from the Chicken Soup for the Soul series read by Rabbi Hecht. Then on Sunday morning, we met at Old Westbury Hebrew Congregation (OWHC) to hear the wonderful Syd Mandelbaum, of Rock and Wrap It Up. He inspired the crowd and called on us to continue our work to fight poverty and share our commitment with the next generation. There were many young folk and teens present who clearly embraced the message as well. Then over 200 TANS volunteers prepared food for the homeless, packed our cars and then headed out to Hempstead and Glen Cove to offer food, coats, toiletries, blankets, bags & suitcases to those in need. The weather was chilly but the good feelings felt by us all kept us warm throughout the afternoon.

In addition, an important part of this weekend’s message was becoming educated about food recovery — perishable and non perishable – and how we can all help. We learned that it is perfectly acceptable to donate extra food from a celebration and/or house of mourning and we are asking that anyone with extra food do so. We were given a list of agencies, their addresses and their contact information. These agencies would happily accept food donations (a call to the house manager is required beforehand to see if they can accept the food.) We had so much food left over from the Daylight Run, that we were able to donate a huge dinner, sandwiches and desserts to four agencies that night. Please see the temple website on information on food recovery which includes frequently asked questions (e.g. *Can I*

take food out of a shiva house? – The answer is yes, and there are no legal restrictions, according to the Good Samaritan Act.) Also on the website is a list of agencies that will accept food.

The Jewish community of the North Shore, close to 200 volunteers, came together to make a difference in our brothers' and sisters' lives.

Thanks go out to the whole committee for everyone's involvement, hard work and financial support. What an unbelievable giving and passionate group of Chaverim!

I will leave you with something that happened to me at the end of the day in Hempstead. I was standing by the soup and one man came up to me and asked me if we are coming back next week, as I choked back tears, I answered "not next week, but we will be back again." He gave me the biggest smile that warmed my heart, even on the most freezing day of the year!

Missing from the pictures are committee members Bob Ballin, Steve and Paula Lefkowitz, Joan Kimmel, Risa Greenberg, Russell Willens, Meryl Wittenberg, Rochelle Potash, Sheila Schroeder, Marcia Shiller, Helayne Giller.