

Misaskim Matters

VOLUME #1



ISSUE #1

לאחינו בני ישראל התונים בצד... לאחינו ולאחינו
*Understanding Tragedy with Compassion.
Coordinating Crisis with Expertise.*

Our Crisis Support System At The Scenes & Behind The Scenes



Dear Misaskim Friends,

While it's been a mere five years since Misaskim's inception, Misaskim has become an integral part of Jewish life. To many people, Misaskim equals "shiva-chairs gemach," an award-winning title for Misaskim's most widely-acclaimed project which revolutionized the shiva week.

Yet, Misaskim is so much more than a sophisticated "shiva-chair gemach." As the Crisis Support System, Misaskim:

- **serves as a liaison between our community and government agencies**
- **provides a crisis intervention team for bereaved families**
- **assumes responsibility for community mesei mitzvah**
- **organizes Chol Hamoed outings for orphans**
- **coordinates the annual Tehillim Asifa**
- **and so much more...**

Indeed, much is happening at Misaskim. Our programs are so diversified and wide-ranging. Whenever, wherever, however and even whoever - Misaskim is there for the individual and for the community in time of need.

We are also always striving to make even greater things happen. We listen out to the cries for help and seek to answer those pleas. We initiate, upgrade and implement new programs and services all the time.

With the first edition of the Misaskim Matters, we invite you to peak behind the scenes at the many going-ons at Misaskim. We want to make you – and the public – aware of our ever-expanding programs. Thereby, we hope to reach out and provide our services to all those in need. After all, we are here to help Klal Yisroel by helping one individual at a time.

Sincerely,
The Misaskim Board



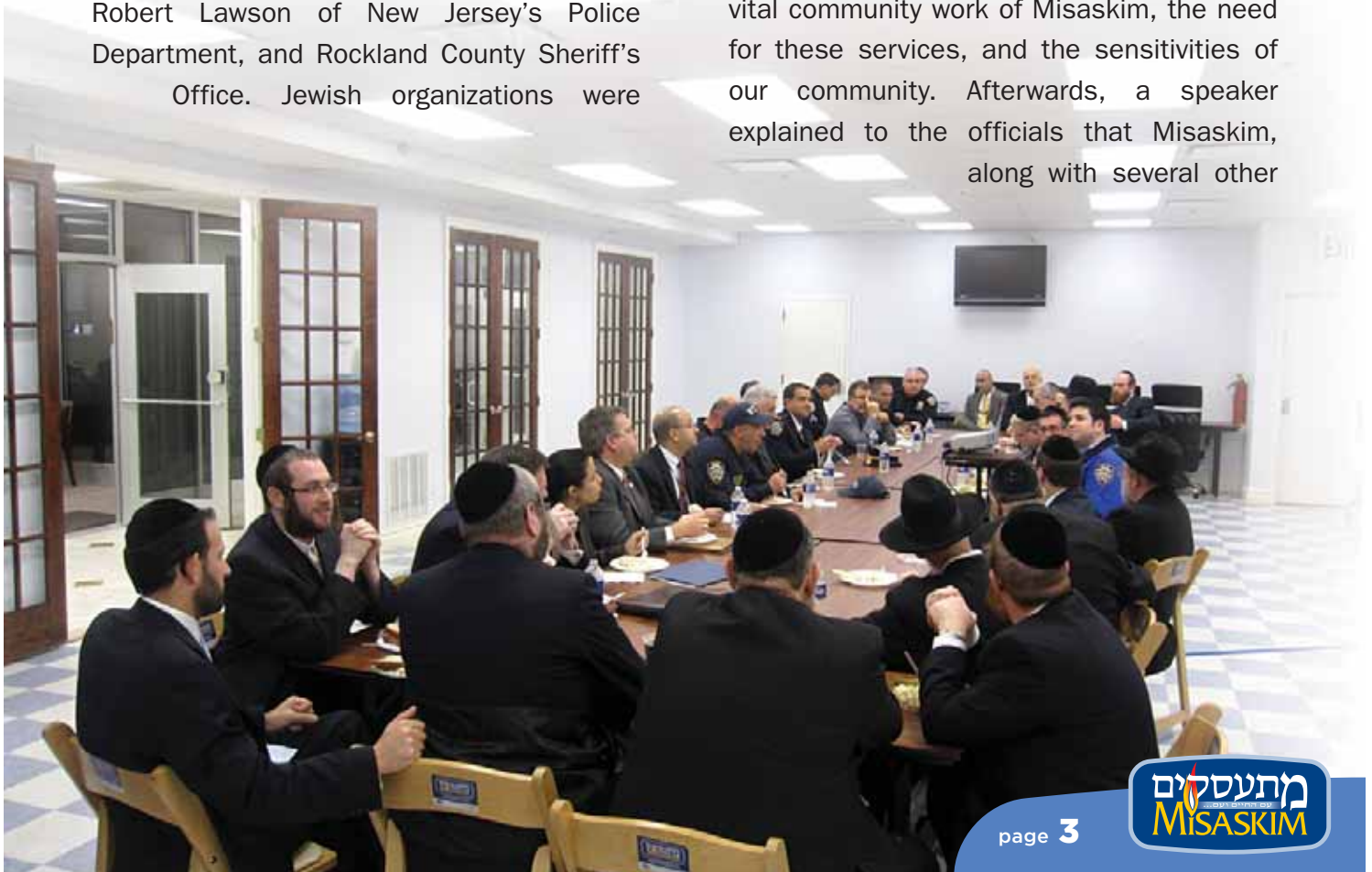
BUILDING BRIDGES

MISASKIM COORDINATES MEETINGS WITH LOCAL AND STATE AGENCIES

Once again, Misaskim bridged community, local and state agencies together by coordinating a meeting to promote a better understanding of Misaskim's pivotal role in the community. Attendees included: NYS Department of Homeland Security, represented by Director Thomas G. Donlon, Chief of Staff James Sherry, and Special Assistant to Deputy Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Seny Tavers; NYS Dept. of Health; NYS Office of Emergency Management; NYPD Police Commissioner's Office; NYPD Assistant Chief Joseph Fox of Patrol Boro Brooklyn South; several local precinct commanders; NYPD Counter Terrorism Division; Chief Robert Lawson of New Jersey's Police Department, and Rockland County Sheriff's Office. Jewish organizations were

represented by: Rabbi Pesach Lerner, Young Israel's Executive Director; Rabbi David Pollack of the Jewish Community Relations Councils; Rabbi Dovid Cohen, CEO of Hatzolah; Rabbi Berish Freilich, Special Assistant to NYS Police Superintendent's Office; Rabbi Mendel Kanarek from Yeshiva Ohr Hameir of Peekskill, and Rabbi Mordechai Gbioff of Chai Lifeline.

The meeting began with a tour of Misaskim's sophisticated equipment and the Emergency Operation Center, which was an enlightening introduction to Misaskim's services. Participants then watched a PowerPoint presentation, further detailing the vital community work of Misaskim, the need for these services, and the sensitivities of our community. Afterwards, a speaker explained to the officials that Misaskim, along with several other



community agencies, such as Hatzolah, represent a small army. These two-thousand highly trained soldiers, our community's volunteers, are ready to be dispatched at a moment's notice in time of emergency. They service the community and are go-between for the law. "After all," as one person commented, "when someone in our community has a heart attack, Hatzolah is called before 9-1-1." Therefore, it is imperative that these organizations work hand in hand with the government agencies.

At the end of this informative meeting, the assistant of the Director of Homeland Security

summarized the impression of the attendees: "If all the places we've gone to would get to see what these organizations offer to their community, ...and would offer them to their own communities, things would be a lot easier for everyone." 💧



REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE ROCKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



RABBI DOVID COHEN, CEO OF HATZALAH



MISASKIM POWERPOINT PRESENTATION



THOMAS DONLON
DIRECTOR OF NYS DEPT. OF
HOMELAND SECURITY



RABBI BERISH FRIELICH
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE NEW YORK STATE POLICE



CHIEF ROBERT LAWSON
LAKEWOOD, NJ POLICE DEPT.



DAVID POLLACK,
JCRC

MISASKIM'S CHOL HAMOED TRIP

MISASKIM SPREADS CHOL HAMOED JOY YEAR-ROUND

Every year, Misaskim coordinates Pesach and Sukkos Chol Hamoed events for the yesomim in our community. Misaskim's staff is working feverishly to coordinate the most spectacular program for the upcoming Pesach Chol Hamoed which is only 9 weeks away.

As an added bonus, Misaskim will soon release the DVD of the trip memories to the 700 community participants, so that they can experience year round Chol Hamoed joy, thanks to Misaskim. The DVD will feature memories of the previous Pesach Chol Hamoed, in which 8 bus loads of families were treated to a once-in-a-lifetime experience at the Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York. Chaplains, Rabbi Jacob Goldstein and Rabbi Public addressed the participants about the little known going-ons in the National Guard's operation. The attendees received an exclusive

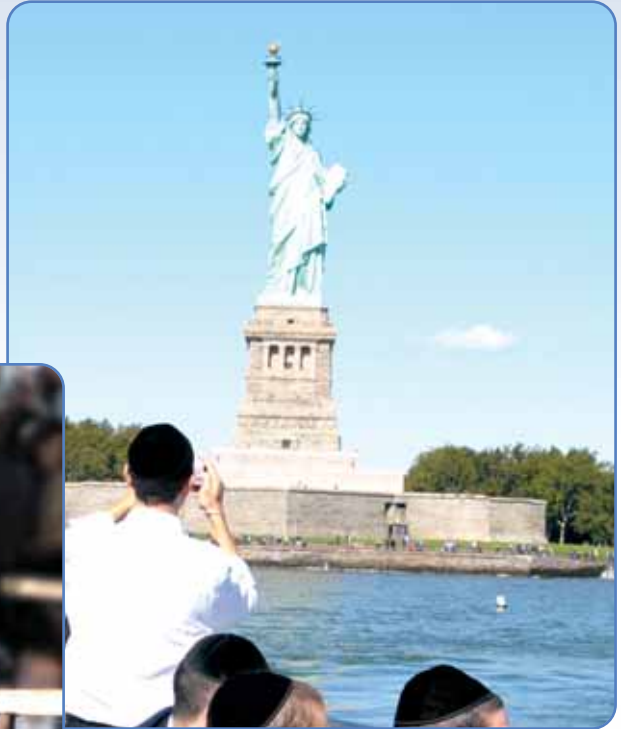
tour of behind-the-scenes at the airfield and explored numerous planes. They also toured the C5 Airplane, the world's largest airplane, used to transport cargo for the army, which can hold up to 90 Mercedes. The families enjoyed a 60 minute juggling show. The event concluded with a Simchas Yom Tov, accompanied by singing and dancing.

The DVD will also feature this past Chol Hamoed Sukkos event in which eleven coach buses transported 700 participants from Lakewood, Monsey, Kiryas Yoel and the Five Boros to New York City for a three hour Circle Line boat ride around Manhattan. The families enjoyed spending relaxing quality time together, relaxing on the sea and reveling in the warm weather and beautiful experience. They enjoyed snacking on light refreshments in the boat's Sukka, built especially for the occasion. Then, the children gathered around on the boat for a spectacular bird show and a ventriloquist



performance. Afterwards, the participants traveled to Misaskim's 5,000 square foot Mega Sukka at Ateres Chynka for a catered Seudas Yom Tov & grand Simchas Bais Hashoeva. Prominent Rabbanim and Misaskim volunteers joined together for this grand four-hour Simchas Bais Hosheava. Skilled jugglers and popular singers, including MBD, Michael Schnitzler and Yumi Lowy, gladdened the hearts of the families.

Indeed, this event injected the joy in the Yom Tov, creating memories which will continue to delight these orphans year-round. 🕯



MISASKIM MEETS WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES IN WASHINGTON DC

Misaskim. It has become a household name. It is an organizational name people use when tragedy R"L strikes. They are reached out to whether it's to prevent an autopsy, or to provide their "avodas hakodesh" at the scene of a tragedy, or for their volunteers to "set up" a house for a family sitting shiva, or for crisis intervention, Chevra Kadisha, or anything else a family might require in their time of need.

Although no one wishes it ever happens, the reality is that tragedy does indeed strike, and as history has proven, tragedy strikes unexpectedly, and unpredictably.

Based on that reality, Misaskim is constantly striving to perfect their organization, and has proven themselves over and over to be the foremost organization which people reach out to when needed. From California, to Florida, from New York to Canada, Misaskim has been there for fatal car accidents, airplane crashes, helicopter crashes, people hit by trains, cars, buses, and fatal fires etc.

On Tuesday, January 19th, a delegation of Misaskim personnel traveled to meet with high-ranking Federal law-enforcement government agencies in their Washington DC offices.

Attending the meeting were representatives of the NTSB, the FBI, and the National American Red Cross, the lead organizations who would be in charge of a crisis should a disaster strike this country.

The agencies were eager to build a bridge between their agencies


and the Jewish Community Organizations, and look forward to using Misaskim as a platform of communication should R"L a major tragedy strike a Jewish neighborhood.

Government officials on a Federal level, fully understand the needs and sensitivities of the Jewish Communities across the United States.

During the meeting, time was devoted to discussing what procedures should be taken if there are Jewish victims involved in an aircraft collision / terrorist attack. It's important to note, that in the Continental Airlines crash of 2009, and the mid-air collision between a chopper and a small airplane over the Hudson River in the summer of 2009, the above government agencies were overly accommodating towards the sensitivity and needs of the Jewish victims. These groups worked together with Misaskim and various other volunteer

Jewish organizations as well.

The agencies were highly-impressed that a volunteer organization like Misaskim, is so well-established, with mobile command centers, numerous rapid-response vehicles - all outfitted for any type of tragedy, and have hundreds of highly-trained volunteers ready to be mobilized at a moment's notice.

Misaskim and the attending agencies committed to keep in touch with each other, and although everyone hopes their services are never needed, should tragedy R"L strike, they pledged to work closely with each other if disaster strikes. 



MISASKIM ON THE SCENE AT THE CONTINENTAL AIRLINES PLANE CRASH IN BUFFALO, NY, JANUARY 2009



ONE WEEK. THREE NIFTARIM. 1,900 MILES.

KIRYAS YOEL & MONSEY VOLUNTEERS TRAVELED LONG DISTANCE
TO BRING NIFTARIM TO KEVURAH

When Mr. Richard Blau passed away on Wednesday, December 27, 2009, he should've had an autopsy as part of the standard protocol for all residents in his institution in Buffalo, NY. When the staff Rev. notified the only known relative about the death, the relative was in a quandary. An elderly fellow with limited resources, the relative had neither the energy nor the finances to arrange a burial. Fortunately, an acquaintance directed him to Misaskim.

Avrumi Friedman, a volunteer from Misaskim's Toronto division transported the body from Buffalo to Syracuse where it was transferred to Lazer Wohlner & Moshe Yaakov Tessler, volunteers from Misaskim's Kiryas Yoel division. They continued the transport to Kiryas Yoel. Shmulie David & Sruly Hyman, volunteers from Misaskim's Brooklyn division completed the transport from Kiryas Yoel to Brooklyn where Misaskim arranged for a levaye and kevarah.

In an ironic twist of Hashgacha, Avrumi Friedman had stopped off at a rest area during the transport, where he met a Jewish family from Toronto with the same last name as the niftar: Blau. After a few moments of discussing Jewish geography, the family members realized that they may be related. They asked to be led to the car, where they recited Tehillim and were melave the aron for a few moments.

Once again, Misaskim did their share, and traveled 900 miles to bring an unknown mes mitzvah to kever yisroel and Hashem coordinated events to ensure that possible relatives, were there to partake in the levaye in a small way.

The same week, a tragic car accident claimed the lives of 20 year old Pasha Leah Azoulah and 10 year old Avrohom Dovid Liberow. While traveling home from a wedding in Grand Rapids, Michigan, a tractor-trailer lost control and crashed onto their car at approximately 10 p.m. The accident occurred 35 miles from the Pennsylvania-Ohio border.

Family members contacted Misaskim, and several teams of trained volunteers were immediately dispatched to deal with the many pressing needs, including chevra kaddisha arrangements, disaster recovery and the Medical Examiner's office. Misaskim worked feverishly throughout the entire night with the Pennsylvania State Police and the coroner assigned to the accident until the bodies were released to Misaskim at 3 a.m. Duvie Nadoff a volunteer from Misaskim's Pittsburgh division began transporting the body and was met en-route by Yossi & Heshy Maragaretten, volunteers from Misaskim's Monsey division, who continued to travel through the wee hours of the morning, so that the levaye could take place in a timely manner. Once again, Misaskim volunteers clocked another 900 miles to preserve kavod hames.

One bystander who observed the scene remarked, "It's amazing how far Misaskim will go – literally – to safeguard kavod hames. Receiving no monetary compensation and little acknowledgment for their effort, these volunteers are there because they care." 



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MISASKIM IN ACTION



MONSEY VOLUNTEERS DELIVERING SHIVA SUPPLIES IN THE SNOW



THE LEVAYE OF HARAV DOVID KVIAT ZT"L AT MIRRER YESHIVA



ILLUMINATING A NIGHT-TIME KEVURAH



CLEANING UP A SCENE OF A PEDESTRIAN FATALLY STRUCK IN STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK



CLEANING UP A SCENE OF A PEDESTRIAN FATALLY STRUCK IN FLATBUSH, BROOKLYN

