



# Dignity & Respect

A publication of South Hills Interfaith Ministries

Spring/Summer 2010

## 31st Holocaust Observance

Suburban Yom Hashoa service marked by readings of survivor stories

by Toby Tabachnick

Staff Writer

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More than a dozen teenage members of St. Bernard's youth group sat mesmerized in the sanctuary of Beth El Congregation of the South Hills Sunday night, April 25th, 2010, some hearing for the first time personal accounts of Holocaust survivors and their rescuers.

"I thought it was amazing that they could find redemption after such traumatic experiences," said Jake Grefenstette, a 10th-grader at St. Bernard's, who was one of hundreds of South Hills community members in attendance at the South Hills Interfaith Ministries 31st Annual Community Holocaust Observance. "And I think it's amazing that people of all faiths came together to share these joys and sorrows."

Eighteen South Hills clergy members, including Rabbi Alex Greenbaum of Beth El and Rabbis Mark Mahler and Jessica Locketz of Temple Emanuel of South Hills, participated in the service, which incorporated audience readings as well as the stories of seven survivors as re-told by seven community members.



*Procession of clergy!*

"These were lives saved because compassionate individuals took risks ... proving whoever saves a life, saves the world," said Rev. Sandra Marsh-McClain, of the First United Methodist Church.

The stories of Sarah Reichman, Hermine Markovitz, Gary Gold, Marlene Gold, Yolanda Willis, Sam Weinreb and Goldie Weinreb each recounted escape, hiding, loss and abuse, differing for each individual, but sharing the common themes of astonishing courage, and the iron will to survive.

To read the entire article please visit SHIM's website, [www.shim-center.org](http://www.shim-center.org), click on interfaith programs.

(Toby Tabachnick can be reached at [tobytabachnick@thejewishchronicle.net](mailto:tobytabachnick@thejewishchronicle.net))

## Mission

South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM) is an interfaith organization actively extending God's love with dignity and respect to the people of the South Hills of Pittsburgh.

## Staff

Executive Director  
JIM GUFFEY

Program Director  
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Community Relations Manager  
JEANNA-MAR SIMMONS

Financial Administrator  
CAROL COWSER

Administrative Assistant  
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COURTNEY BAHR MACURAK

Family Development Specialist  
LORI HALLER

Family Development Specialist  
LORI SELLARS

Community Liaison  
JINAN HISSAN

## Early Childhood Program

Lead Teacher  
CINDY HUMAN

## Programs

- Food Pantry, clothing room and utility assistance
- Early childhood program for preschool-aged children
- After-school homework clubs
- Multi-cultural and interfaith community education

## Contact Us

Learn more about how you can help support our mission, please call us at 412-854-9120 or visit us online at [www.shim-center.org](http://www.shim-center.org).

United Way Contributor  
Choice # 383

# Message from the Executive Director,

Have you heard the joke about the priest, the rabbi and the minister getting together? So many times I have had the opportunity to begin a SHIM presentation with this line. And while it may draw a laugh or two from the audience, the reality is, that is exactly how South Hills Interfaith Ministries began. "When the (South Hills Village) Mall was being built, we were aware that suddenly the corn fields were giving way to creating an 'inner city' in our midst, the center of a large influx of people. And where there are people, there is human need. And where there is need, the religious community should be prepared to serve." Thus Dr. John H. Galbreath, then pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, explained the situation that caused him to convene a meeting with Msgr. Rooney of St. Thomas More and Rabbi Sajowitz of Temple Emanuel of South Hills and through their shared vision, SHIM was born.

While SHIM was founded as an interfaith organization its interfaith programming has ebbed and flowed over the decades. Today, SHIM's interfaith programming consists of the annual Interfaith Holocaust Observance and Interfaith Thanksgiving Service. In this evermore changing, global world in which we live, current events remind us of the continued need for interfaith and diversity programs and dialogue. Just this past holiday season, a commercial airliner bound from LaGuardia Airport was diverted to Philadelphia as the USAirways crew was panicked by a Jewish teen's prayer ritual which involved two small Scripture-filled boxes known as tefillin. In SHIM's day-to-day work with the refugees resettled to the South Hills, we witness first hand the challenges facing these families because of their religious and cultural differences. The truth of the matter is that we as a human race are far more alike than we are different; however, we often let our differences divide us. SHIM's Interfaith/Diversity Committee is committed to achieving the vision of our founders and we need your help. If you have a passion for interfaith and diversity dialogue, we can utilize your time and talents to help guide and enhance SHIM's Interfaith and Diversity programs.

Regards,



Jim Guffey, Executive Director

Please consider joining us at an organizational meeting of the Interfaith Dialogue Committee on Tuesday, June 22 at 7:00 p.m. at SHIM Center, 5301 Park Ave., Bethel Park to learn more about how you can help. Please R.S.V.P. your attendance to Jim Guffey at [jguffey@shim-center.org](mailto:jguffey@shim-center.org) or by calling 412-854-9120 x11.

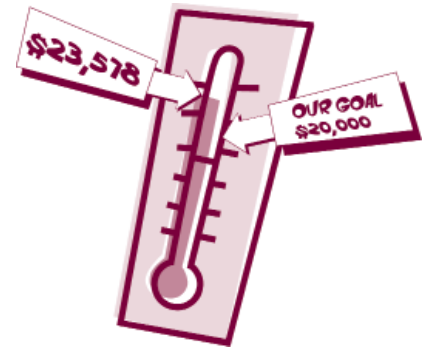
### United Way Contributor Choice

If your work place conducts a United Way campaign you can support SHIM through donor option. Should you choose to designate all or part of your gift, please remember South Hills Interfaith Ministries and our contributor choice #383. The United Way offers an easy and painless way to support SHIM through payroll deduction.

# Feinstein Challenge Stretches Your Giving Dollars

For the 13th consecutive year, Alan Shaw Feinstein offered one million dollars to hunger relief agencies across the country to partially match donations made during March and April. It is a catalyst to help encourage giving during a time when contributions are traditionally down.

During March and April 2010, SHIM received \$22,206.50 in monetary contributions and \$1,372.00 worth of food items for a grand total of \$23,578.50 in donations. We have submitted our report and are anxious to learn what portion of the million dollar challenge will come our way to support our neighbors in need. We thank you for your generosity!



“Mitzvah” in Hebrew means “good deed.” For the 9th straight year, the Shalom Pittsburgh initiative of the United Jewish Federation organized Mitzvah Day on Christmas Day. Spokeswoman Becca Lehner says they started Mitzvah Day to give regular volunteers at agencies and organizations a chance to spend Christmas with their families while still taking care of the needs of those they serve.

SHIM is usually quiet on Christmas Day, but this year there was a flurry of activity at both our Prospect Park Family Center and our Park Ave. headquarters. Thanks to the United Jewish Federation, SHIM was one of more than 40 sites that benefited from the efforts of 420 volunteers.

Ron Stoll and his family spent December 25th at 5301 Park Ave. prepping and painting the Food Pantry and Clothing distribution room floors, a project that has been on the “To do list” since the June 28, 2009 move in.

Their efforts helped to unify and brighten our public spaces.

Our pre-school program at Prospect Park in Baldwin-Whitehall offers stimulating interactive play centers for our 3 and 4 year old classes. This hands-on learning environment necessitates that all surfaces, toys and play areas be thoroughly sanitized on a regular basis to promote healthy play. With this in mind Stephen and Rena Schake of McMurray and their family spent the day disinfecting our pre-school classrooms.

“SHIM was delighted to be a part of Mitzvah Day. We are grateful to those who spent countless hours painting at SHIM Center and sanitizing our pre-school toys at Prospect Park. Our partnership with the Jewish community is a blessing to our organization and the families we serve” remarks Executive Director, Jim Guffey, “We are already thinking of new projects for next year.”

Overlooking the city of Pittsburgh from LeMont Restaurant, Rocky Bleier, football legend and motivational speaker set the tone for the evening as our keynote speaker. He shared his story of triumph over adversity and the need to be driven by your will to overcome life’s obstacles. His eloquent yet humorous presentation captured the attention of a sold out crowd of 230 SHIM supporters, highlighting the fact that you never know when you are going to need a helping hand. For many in the South Hills, SHIM is that helping hand --- the bridge to resources and programs that assists families in moving forward toward self-sufficiency.

Under the leadership of event co-chairs Peggy and Steve Snavelly, Patty and Dan Grealish and Kathy and Ray Buehler, South Hills Interfaith Ministries far exceeded its target goal by raising \$30,000. A special thanks to our event co-chairs for sharing their time, resources and friends. The event was graciously underwritten by Anna and Ed Dunlap, LeMont Restaurant.

“Celebrate with SHIM-Building Bridges for our Neighbors in Need” heightened awareness of the challenges facing the suburban poor, raised dollars to put our mission into action and introduced SHIM to a new group of supporters.

The 2010 “Celebrate with SHIM” event will be chaired by Kathleen and Tony Zimmer of Bethel Park. Details will be posted on the SHIM website soon.

# **F**amily Center Collaboration - Highlighted at National Conference

Located in Whitehall Borough, Prospect Park is a large apartment community which is home to hundreds of refugee families who have been resettled over the past decade. Many of the families are from Burundi, Burma, Sudan, Russia, Iraq, and Nepal. Among the apartments sit the Prospect Park Family Center (PPFC) and the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC) "Families for Learning Center." GPLC and PPFC have been providing services for the refugee and immigrant population together for the past 3 years.

GPLC "Families for Learning Center" serves parents and young children through adult education, parent education, intergenerational literacy activities, and early childhood education. The majority of the GPLC learners are also enrolled in the Prospect Park Family Center. The family center serves families with children ages 0 – 5 years and offers home visiting and groups to families using the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum. The goal of the Parents as Teachers curriculum is to provide parents with child development knowledge and parenting support. Because of the language barriers and often times the lack of interpreters, it can be difficult for family center parent educators to teach many of the PAT topics.

In November 2009, GPLC and PPFC staff met and discussed the Parents as Teachers curriculum. The new collaboration took shape when they realized how they could enhance the families' knowledge while helping each other reach their goals. GPLC and PPFC developed handouts and lesson plans to use during English class that covered PAT topics such as goals, sleep, brain development and nutrition.



It has been found that when the families have a better understanding of the vocabulary and concepts, home visits and parenting groups are more effective. Families are gaining a better grasp and understanding of PAT concepts and it has been enhancing both their English and parenting skills.

On November 7 – 9, Courtney Macurak, the Prospect Park Site Director, will attend the Parents as Teachers national conference in St. Louis to speak about how this collaboration between family literacy and family support is strengthening a partnership while promoting a parents' role as a teacher to her child through classroom and home activities.



# ACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPLIES NEEDED

Can you imagine beginning a new school year and not having the necessary supplies such as notebook paper, pens, pencils, etc? South Hills Interfaith Ministries' (SHIM) Back -to-School Program is held every August and SHIM provides new school supplies and backpacks for the children of our clients both here in the South Hills, as well as, clients of our Prospect Park Family Center. We are encouraging donations of NEW school supplies, backpacks, and / or monetary donations to help make this event a success. We are asking that all donations be received by July 15, 2010. So if you're looking for a way to help your neighbor's in need, pull your resources together and start a Back-to-School drive with your friends, church congregations or work colleagues. Any questions, please contact Natalie Klimas at 412-854-9120 or nklimas@shim-center.org. Thank you in advance for you donations!  
Below is a list of suggested items that are needed:



## Back-to-School Items

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Backpacks         | 10. Note books        |
| 2. Pencil Boxes      | 11. Protractors       |
| 3. Erasers           | 12. Calculators       |
| 4. Pencil Sharpeners | 13. Pens              |
| 5. Glue/Glue Sticks  | 14. Pencils           |
| 6. Markers           | 15. Pocket Folders    |
| 7. Highlighters      | 16. Pencil Sharpeners |
| 8. Colored Pencils   | 17. Scissors          |
| 9. Notebook Paper    | 18. Index Cards 3x5   |

## Our Volunteers Make a Difference

*"... the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be compassionate. It is, above all to matter, to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all."*

**Leo Rosten**

Leo Rosten, teacher and academic, best known as a humorist in the fields of scriptwriting, storywriting, journalism and Yiddish lexicography, could easily have been talking about our core group of 75 SHIM volunteers. Since September 2009 our volunteers have contributed over 4,289 hours of service. According to The Independent Sector the 2009 estimated value of a volunteer hour is \$20.85. While the Board and staff know that our volunteers are priceless, according to the acknowledged standard, SHIM volunteers have contributed \$89,425.65 worth of uncompensated time to SHIM between September 1, 2009 and May 1, 2010. Our success in program delivery is a direct result of the dedication and commitment of our volunteers. For more

information on how The Independent Sector arrives at a dollar figure per volunteer hour, visit [www.independentsector.org/volunteer\\_time](http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time).

At a recent team meeting before food distribution, volunteer Barb Hough shared feedback from a community member who recently became a SHIM client, "She had a really positive experience; she was made to feel welcome and comfortable as a first time client. She said that everyone was so friendly and welcoming. The staff and volunteers really put her at ease." Clearly SHIM volunteers are useful, compassionate and make a difference!!!!

In a renewed commitment to our volunteers, SHIM has instituted a comprehensive volunteer program that includes orientation and training sessions, ongoing communication of program updates, policies and procedures, opportunities to provide feedback on their experiences and a time for celebration and fellowship. To join our team contact Jeanna-Mar Simmons at 412-854-9120 ext. 24.



# NeighborWorks® *Western* *Pennsylvania*

## NeighborWorks Brings Free Money Management Classes to the South Hills

Through a partnership with NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania, SHIM is now able to assist families and households with much needed financial education and counseling services. Like SHIM, NeighborWorks was established in 1968 - the result of a resident-led campaign for better housing. Now, more than 40 years later, the organization empowers individuals and families to reach their dreams through a variety of education programs and one-on-one financial counseling.

Studies have shown that more than one third of Americans do not use a budget to manage their family's expenses. Also, while America is the richest country in the world, ironically, we have the highest percentage of people living paycheck to paycheck with no spare cash.

Since the goal of NeighborWorks is to reverse those trends, plans are underway to host Financial Literacy classes at SHIM. NeighborWorks Financial Literacy classes are designed to help individuals, single parents and families get back on track with their finances. Sessions include topics such as creating a budget, tracking expenses, establishing good credit and setting financial goals. Identity theft and predatory lending are also topics of discussion.

NeighborWorks one-on-one private counseling sessions can put "neighbors" back on the right track towards financial empowerment. In private sessions, NeighborWorks certified counselors provide the guidance and tools necessary for clients to achieve financial stability.

NeighborWorks areas of expertise include:

- Budget Counseling – evaluation of overall financial situation, review of spending habits, developing action plans.
- Credit Counseling – repairing and improving credit scores, setting financial goals.
- Foreclosure Prevention Counseling – negotiation of a mortgage modification agreement with mortgage companies or banks, budget review and action planning.

NeighborWorks looks forward to bringing their free services to SHIM and making it convenient for South Hills residents to take advantage of the assistance they have to offer. Call 412-854-9120 for a schedule of upcoming classes and appointment times.

## Mark Your Calendar!

**Join us for the SHIM Shuffle** on Saturday, October 9, 2010 in South Park for our family friendly 5K Walk/Run. There will be a special category for pets.

### **Thanksgiving Interfaith Services**

Thanksgiving Interfaith Services will be held on Tuesday, November 23 hosted by Our Lady of Grace on Bower Hill Road in Pittsburgh. All are welcome to attend!

### **Angel Emporium**

Our holiday gift giving program, Angel Emporium will be conducted the week of December 6, 7, 8, and 9. Call to volunteer for set up and gift distribution.





# TOUR de SOUTH HILLS

**Saturday, June 19, 2010**

7:00 - 8:00 am Registration Opens

8:00 am Rides Depart

2:00 pm Rides conclude

**Where:**

All rides start and finish at the Fairground Fields in South Park located along Corrigan Drive between the stables and the Clock Tower/Museum.

**Registration:**

Checks / money orders should be made payable to:

SHIM and mailed to SHIM, 5301 Park Avenue, Bethel Park, PA 15102

\$25.00 if postmarked on/before Friday, May 28, 2010; thereafter, \$30.00

**Pasta Dinner / Early Packet Pick-up:**

Pasta Dinner on Friday, June 18, 2010 between the hours of 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. hosted by Hamilton Presbyterian Church located at 4500 Hamilton Road in Bethel Park at the intersection of Baptist and Hamilton Roads across from Cool Springs Golf Center. Entry numbers and t-shirts can be picked up at this time. Tickets can be purchased with your registration or...

CANCELLED

Registration Application

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M.I.: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Eve. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Age (as of 6-19-10): \_\_\_\_\_ Sex (M/F): \_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt Size (S, M, L, XL): \_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt sizes not guaranteed.

**Registration Fees:**

\$25.00 postmarked on/before Friday, May 28, 2010

\$30.00 thereafter

Note: \$70.00 total fee for a family consisting of parents and children under the age of 18.

**Make checks/money orders payable to:**

SHIM

**Mail to:** SHIM, 5301 Park Avenue, Bethel Park, PA 15102

**Select desired course:**

\_\_\_\_ 5-8 mile Family-Friendly

\_\_\_\_ 20-25 mile Intermediate

\_\_\_\_ 45-55 mile Advanced

Note: Riders can choose to alter their course lengths on event day.

**Pasta Dinner**

Friday, June 18, 2010

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Adult

\_\_\_\_ qty. at \$6.00 ea. = \_\_\_\_\_

Youth (age 12 and under)

\_\_\_\_ qty. at \$4.00 ea. = \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Tickets will be held at the door and will not be mailed in advanced.

**WAIVER:** I know that bicycle riding is a potentially hazardous activity. I would not ride unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of the event organizers relative to my ability to safely complete the event. I assume risks associated with participating in the event, including, but not limited to: falls, contact with other participants, effects of weather (including heat and/or high humidity) traffic and conditions of the road - all such risks being known and appreciated.

Having read this waiver and these effects, and in consideration of your accepting my entry, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release South Hills Interfaith Ministries and all sponsors, their representatives and successors, for claim or liability of any kind rising out of my participation in this event, even though the liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of a person named in this waiver.

I hereby grant to the organizers, sponsors and promoting organizations the right to photograph or otherwise reproduce (whether by film, tape, still photograph or otherwise) my appearance/likeness, to own all the results thereof as a work for hire for copyright purposes, and to exhibit, distribute, transmit and/or otherwise exploit such reproductions in the promotion for the event and similar events in the future.

**Signature of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent/Guardian of minor:** \_\_\_\_\_



# South Hills Interfaith Ministries

5301 Park Avenue  
Bethel Park, PA 15102



A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free within PA 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

## BLOOD DRIVE

On Sunday, June 13th at Heinz Field from 2:00 to 7:00 pm you are invited to attend a first time ever event:

### **"Sharing Faith, Sharing Life".**

The Christian, - (The Christian Associates of Southwestern, PA,) Muslim and Jewish Communities are coming together for a faith based blood drive initiative. People of all faith are welcome.

The Central Blood Bank of Pittsburgh supplies 40 medical centers but our region does not supply enough blood products to meet our needs and the blood bank is forced to purchase blood from other parts of the country. We hope to educate the public about these needs, hold a blood drive at Heinz Field, and sign up others to donate between June 14th and July 4th when the need is greatest.

There will be kids activities-arts and crafts, games, music, food, dignitaries, and tours available. We are in the process of coordinating with local media and celebrities.

Throughout the year there will also be 4 faith based drives in different regions between the churches, synagogues and mosques to maintain sustainability.

A can of food is the entrance fee per person to be distributed to the food bank.

### **June 14th is World Wide Blood Donor Day.**

Don't miss this monumental opportunity to share in the support of your faith's beliefs in helping humankind.

For more information contact Steve Hecht at [hechtsl@aol.com](mailto:hechtsl@aol.com) or 412-916-1478