

# 'TeaneckShuls' Yahoo Group Celebrates 17 Years



By Chani Shulman

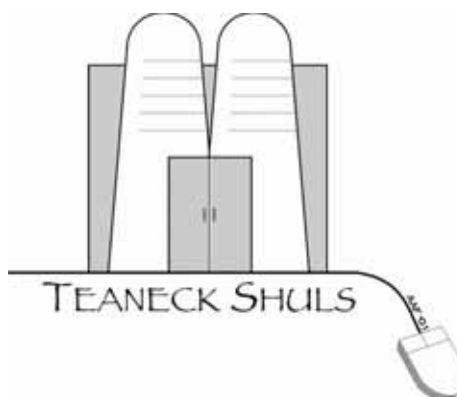
This September, TeaneckShuls, a community email group serving shul-goers and others in the Teaneck vicinity, celebrates its 17th anniversary. Starting with only a handful of members, TeaneckShuls now boasts a membership of nearly 15,000. The TeaneckShuls@yahoo.com email list was originally started by Nathan J. Lindenbaum and Chaim Shulman in an effort to combine individual Teaneck and Bergenfield shul lists to create one central forum for community announcements and notices.

Among the messages that are posted frequently are shul announcements and events, community events, job listings, Tehillim lists, shiva notices, shalom zachor notices, blood drives, Teaneck police alerts, Israel advocacy, job searches, sports

leagues, carpools, houses and cars for sale, free furniture and curb alerts, chesed opportunities and various other requests and notices. (A companion list, TeaneckShulsAnnouncements, is limited to community announcements and shiva notices only.)

Ruthie Levi, a long-time moderator of TeaneckShuls, shared that the most frequent posts after Shabbat are those corresponding to items either lost or found in shul or in a park. The moderators often match up a person posting regarding losing an item with another person posting regarding finding that same item, thus performing the mitzvah of returning a lost object.

Frequently, TeaneckShuls has provided aid to those in a trying situation. During Hurricane Sandy, TeaneckShuls posted crucial information, such as where one could get meals, when the power might be restored, which roads were closed, which stores were open, etc. After Sandy was over, a member of TeaneckShuls thanked TeaneckShuls for



its assistance, and described TeaneckShuls as "the only voice in the darkness."

Even elected officials have used TeaneckShuls as a platform to spread the word regarding health department advisories and community issues.

TeaneckShuls was especially invaluable to one member who traveled to Budapest to adopt a child. Because of residen-

cy requirements, her stay extended to two weeks in Budapest. Wondering how she would manage those weeks by herself, she asked TeaneckShuls to post a message asking if anyone had relatives or friends in Budapest. Along with that message, she gave her number for correspondence. Two hours later, she asked the moderators to take down her number because her phone was "ringing non-stop" with offers of help.

TeaneckShuls has facilitated several kidney donations. Even in cases in which the post requesting the donation has not led to a donation itself, it has provided information about transplants and donations to the community, allowing for the possibility of future donations. Before seeing a post about a 12-year-old girl needing a kidney, it had never occurred to Rabbi Ephraim Simon, co-director of Friends of Lubavitch of Bergen County in Teaneck, to donate his kidney. Once Rabbi Simon reached out to the woman who wrote the post, she informed him that a donor had already been found. "But once I decided to do it for that child, I felt I could and should do it for anyone else in need," Rabbi Simon told The Jewish Link. This ended up leading him to donate a kidney to a father of 10. If it had not been for the post on TeaneckShuls, that man may not have received a kidney. "I think it shows that uniting a community through an email list like TeaneckShuls can bring about the incredible potential for good," said Rabbi Simon.

Among the members of TeaneckShuls are families who have just moved to, or are contemplating moving to, the Teaneck/Bergen County area, using TeaneckShuls to find their way around the community and better settle into their new surroundings. Former Teaneck families who have made aliyah often remain members of TeaneckShuls in order to stay connected, and sometimes to answer requests for an emergency cookie delivery to a child in Israel for a gap year.

Despite being Jewish-oriented, TeaneckShuls is non denominational, and not all members of TeaneckShuls are Jewish. There are local business owners who join the list so they can respond to inquiries relating to their business. There are plumbers, housekeepers and babysitters who have joined TeaneckShuls. The email list is open to anyone with a legitimate interest in "TeaneckShuls"-related matters.

The moderators caution that, while they vet prospective members, readers must use caution as with any public forum. Children under 13 are not permitted to post for safety reasons. Babysitters or those requesting babysitters are urged to get references for their safety.

When TeaneckShuls started, there were very few community email lists. Since that time, dozens of Jewish communities in the U.S. and abroad have created email lists for their communities, many of which are closely modeled on TeaneckShuls.

Of course, TeaneckShuls could not operate effectively without its moderators. According to Levi, each moderator spends an hour or two a day moderating the list and assisting the members. Even with weaning out duplicate or inappropriate emails, TeaneckShuls still has approximately 50 messages posted daily.

There are currently four moderators: Bryan Alter, Kevie Feit, Bernie Suskewicz



# Friendship

# WALK

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## Bike4Chai Raises Over \$8 Million

Jeffrey Rosenfeld, Yechiel Stobezki and David Greenberg, all of Bergenfield, as well as Joshua Einhorn of Teaneck and his brother, TABC rebbe Rabbi Dovid Einhorn of Passaic, recently completed the Chai Lifeline Bike4Chai ride. This two-day, 180-mile ride raised over \$8 million for Chai Lifeline/Camp Simcha. For more details, visit [bike4chai.com](http://bike4chai.com).



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and Levi. Aaron Kornbluth, a former moderator, continues to assist TeaneckShuls with its IT needs. Debby Teicher handles all new memberships and advertising sponsorships. Shulman updates certain community information on [www.teaneckshuls.org](http://www.teaneckshuls.org), which is TeaneckShuls' website. There are a number of other volunteers who provide important information through TeaneckShuls, such as the TeaneckShuls goods and services directory, Tehillim list, weekly eruv notice, bikur cholim and gemachs, to name a few. All the TeaneckShuls moderators and workers operate on a purely volunteer basis. TeaneckShuls offers advertising sponsorships,

but 100 percent of the proceeds are donated entirely to designated local charities. This initiative has raised over \$100,000 for charity to date.

When asked why she became a moderator of TeaneckShuls, Levi responded, "We all need to volunteer in the community for different things—whatever we are good at. For those of us who manage TeaneckShuls, we are running a worthwhile communication tool for the community, which provides a great service."

To join or find out more about TeaneckShuls, email [teaneckshuls-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:teaneckshuls-subscribe@yahoo.com) or go to [groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/teaneckshuls/info](http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/teaneckshuls/info) or [www.teaneckshuls.org](http://www.teaneckshuls.org).

Chani Shulman, a sophomore at Manhattan High School for Girls, was a summer intern at The Jewish Link.



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All discount amounts listed are for 8 week enrollments, discounts prorated for fewer weeks. Discounts will only be granted for campers attending 4 or more weeks.

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