

"You and I Can Change the World"
אתה ואיתה נשנה את העולם

Mitzvah Project Ideas and Helpful Information

*"Tzedakah is as important as all of
the Commandments together..."*

~ Babylonian Talmud

CONGREGATION KOL AMI ~ WHITE PLAINS, NY

March 2017

Dear B'nai Mitzvah Families,

One of the most fulfilling and important parts of the B'nai Mitzvah journey is the opportunity to participate in a Mitzvah Project. Along with the reading of Torah, this project stands at the center of the B'nai Mitzvah experience. A Mitzvah Project allows a child to actively engage in *Tikkun Olam*, the Jewish task of making the world a better place. Could anything we do be more important?! Could there be a better way to celebrate a Jewish child growing up?

This excellent collection of possibilities and resources has been compiled for your reference. At your initial meeting with the Cantor (9 - 11 months before the Bar or Bat Mitzvah), and meeting with one of the Rabbis, your child will report on the project selected and then keep us apprised as the experience unfolds.

Finally at the Bar or Bat Mitzvah service, your child will be able to share the experience with everyone in attendance.

Enjoy this booklet. It is a treasure trove of opportunities for fulfilling some of our most important *Mitzvot*.

We look forward to sharing the B'nai Mitzvah journey with your family.

Mazal tov,



Rabbi Tom Weiner



Rabbi Shira Milgrom



Cantor David Rosen

Mitzvah Information Packet

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Mitzvah Projects

To be a Jew means to help make this a better world. In Judaism it is a commandment (*mitzvah*) to fix the world. As part of the preparations for Bar/Bat Mitzvah, each student must engage in a personal *Mitzvah* project.

A *Mitzvah* project is a volunteer project where a student helps make the world a better place and doesn't get paid. The project should be engaging and meaningful to the student. It can utilize skills and interests he/she has (for example art, music, skateboarding). It can be on a topic that is personally powerful (for example the homeless, cancer, children). It can be done with other students, family, friends, or by himself/herself.

Some students create their own *Mitzvah* opportunity. Others join existing programs or volunteer opportunities. Each project should have an individual stamp on it. For example, if a student is volunteering in a set program, how can he/she add something unique, special or original? If he/she is collecting items, how can he/she expand the project to be more than acquiring things from friends? Ultimately, the *Mitzvah* project is the responsibility of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* as an evolving adult. This booklet gives the students a great selection of opportunities and ideas for them to find something that is truly meaningful to them.

Mitzvah projects must be in process before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* unless arrangements have been made with the Rabbi and/or Cantor. Students are encouraged to get started on their *Mitzvah* projects early.

Mitzvah Poster

To recognize efforts of our students, each *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will create a poster (or similar display) recounting his/her *Mitzvah* project. This poster will be displayed outside the Sanctuary during the Friday night and Saturday morning/afternoon service of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* weekend. We hope the students will share and explain their *Mitzvah* project to the congregation on the day of their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* service.

Enjoy this booklet. Call our clergy or Jess Lorden with any questions about your Project.

Mazal Tov,

Jess Lorden

Executive Director

Volunteer opportunities through Kol Ami

Adopt an Elderly Congregant

Betsy McCormack, (914) 725-7871, betsyrmc@gmail.com

Ginny Ruder, (914) 722-1387, ginnyruder@gmail.com

Visit elderly and housebound congregants. Many of our senior members live alone and either do not have any grandchildren or their families live too far away to visit on a regular basis.

Cooking for the Homeless at Kol Ami

Sundays at 11:15am

Mondays at 12:00pm

Nancy Marcus, (914) 725-7231 - Sunday Coordinator

Laura Green, (914) 949-6113 - Monday Coordinator

Volunteers are needed to plan menus, shop, cook and deliver food that is prepared at Kol Ami for the residents of the Open Arms Homeless Shelter. Bar and Bar Mitzvah students are welcome to participate with or without an adult.

Kol Ami Cares (formerly Social Action Committee & People to People)

Betsy McCormack, (914) 725-7871, betsyrmc@gmail.com

Ginny Ruder, (914) 722-1387, ginnyruder@gmail.com

Our Kol Ami Cares Committee, co-chaired by Betsy & Ginny, can provide a variety of opportunities that may be of special interest for those students who may not have time or transportation to enable them to volunteer after school:

***For the project/event planner**, help plan and run an event from beginning to end with the help of the Social Action Committee. Examples are a blood drive, a Habitat for Humanity build, the annual Westhab fundraiser, or the UJA Food Drive in January. are especially good for kids who do not have the time or ability to get places after school or on weekends and include:

***For the artistic**, help decorate the bulletin board, design a contribution card, design posters for events and prepare the Kol Ami Cares Connection page

***For the salesmen**, sell backpacks for children in Darfur or books for the Yonkers Reads Program at various temple events and before and after religious school

***For the social action conscience**, plan an event to educate the congregation about an issue of interest.

The Kol Ami Pantry

Tuesdays at 9:00am

Jess Lorden

(914) 949-4717 ext. 101

JessicaLorden@nykolami.org

The Kol Ami Pantry, located at the Kol Ami gym, provides non-perishable food and items to members, staff and guests of each. We welcome our students to support the pantry by assisting in doing inventory, stocking shelves with new product, checking for outdated product, and packing grocery bags. If you are interested in volunteering in the Kol Ami Pantry, please contact Jess Lorden.

Volunteer at Kol Ami

Ilene Miller

(914) 949-4717 ext. 115

Volunteers can help with babysitting/child care, office work, arts and crafts, cooking and set-up at Synaplex and other special events or temple programs.

Volunteer opportunities with 3rd party organizations

Action for Post-Soviet Jewry

Karen Rosner, krosner@actionpsj.org

<http://www.actionpsj.org/>

Connect with the Jewish community in Eastern Europe and learn about a part of the world where your family may have come from. Your Mitzvah Project with "Action" will strengthen the Jewish community and provide food, medicine, clothing and other assistance to Jews in need in Eastern Europe. "Action" makes it fun and easy by designing a custom web page for you that links to our site and tells your family and friends about your Mitzvah Project and how they can help make it a success.

"Action" is perfect for any age. We tailor the project based on the person, their interests, and our needs.

American Diabetes Association

Corporate Park Drive

White Plains, NY 10604

Susan Stein

(914) 253-4909

You can: (1) Help with set up, registration, rest stops, food service, entertainment and clean up for their signature one-day fundraising and awareness walk that takes place in more than 130 cities across the United States. (2) Get involved with outreach activities including professional and patient education events. American Diabetes Month (November), Alert Day (March), health fairs -and more; and (3) Office volunteer work.

Areyvut

Daniel Rothner, Founder & Director

(201) 244-6702

daniel@areyvut.org

www.areyvut.org

Areyvut enables Jewish youth to infuse their lives with the core Jewish values of *chesed* (kindness), *tzedakah* (charity) and *tikkun olam* (social justice). A nonprofit organization established in 2002, Areyvut works with Bnai Mitzvah celebrants and their families on personalizing Mitzvah Projects. For your Mitzvah Project, Areyvut can run a Mitzvah Clown training for your friends and guests, help you develop a Tikkun Olam Tour, a bus trip that volunteers at various agencies and can even transform the actual party into a service experience for the family and their guests. Areyvut staff work with celebrants and parents with the goal of infusing the celebration with meaning while actively making the world a better place.

Blythedale Children's Hospital

Valhalla, NY

Jabeen Dinzey

(914) 831-2428

jdinzey@blythedale.org

Blythedale.org

B'nai Mitzvah project opportunities are designed to meet the needs of both our patients and the student volunteer. Volunteers may work individually or in small groups. Projects/activities can be either on or off site, depending on the interest of the volunteer.

For more information, please contact Jabeen Dinzey, Director of Volunteer Services, at email or phone above.

Burundian Refugees Book Drive

86 Greenacres Ave., Scarsdale, NY 10583

Ruth Kohn (member of Kol Ami)

(914) 714-0313

ruthkohn@gmail.com

Mitzvah Project Book Drive to Supply A Library for the Burundian Refugees Finding Safety at the Mahama Refugee Camp in Rwanda, Africa

This crucially-needed project is to help the young Burundian refugees who are studying English to build a library at their refugee camp. Out of the 53,000 Burundian refugees currently staying at this camp in Rwanda, 635 are in the Mahama English Club. This group is learning English so they can improve their lives and the lives of their fellow countrymen and get out of their struggling lives in the refugee camp. They hope someday, with a modern education, they will be able to return to their native country, Burundi, after the violence there has stopped - so that they can be compassionate and honest future leaders of their country. They are "starving" for books to read

The project is to create a book drive where people would donate a book and a \$20 bill. This \$20 bill would be used for mailing costs - which getting books to Rwanda is expensive. We could discuss this part of the project to find a type of book drive that would meet with your concerns and ideals and wishes.

Family Services of Westchester

One Gateway Plaza

Port Chester, NY 10573

Rikki Childs

(914) 937-2320

Family Services of Westchester has 6 family centers that are dedicated to providing a broad range of social and mental health services that strengthen and support families at every stage of life.

Fund raising opportunities :

-Raising funds or collecting needed items for Camp VIVA 1 week sleep away camp for individuals affected or infected with HIV/AIDS

-Holiday Toy Drive/Thanksgiving Food Drive for Head Start Program in White Plains (Head Start is designed to increase school readiness of young children in low income families, in addition to providing comprehensive education, health and nutrition to children and their families)

-A clothing drive for a new program, The Sharing Shelf, a warehouse of gently used and new clothing and shoes for children and youth 0 to 18 years old and infant supplies.

Volunteer Opportunities:

-Being a companion to a senior in the Adopt a Grandparent program or performing at White Plains Guest House, an assisted living facility, or participating in a year-long program, Westchester Junior Youth Council (see website for more details, www.fsw.org)

Food Bank for Westchester

200 Clearbrook Road

Elmsford, NY 10523

Nancy Lyons

Jandery De la Cruz

(914) 923-1100

www.foodbankforwestchester.org

The Food Bank for Westchester serves over 265 local hunger-relief programs throughout Westchester, including food pantries, soup kitchens, child and adult day-care centers, and shelters. The Food Bank provides 95% of all the food given to hungry families, children and seniors as cooked meals or groceries to take home.

Volunteering: The FB4W uses an online volunteer registration system. Please go to our website under **Donate Time**. We are open one Thursday a month from 4-6pm and one weekend day a month for two 1 and ½ hours shifts from 9-10:30am and 10:30am to 12noon. Volunteers 16 years old and younger **MUST BE** accompanied by an adult.

Food Drives: Food drives are always welcome. For information on our most needed item lists, suggestions for food drives and contact information for registering your food drive, please go to our website under **Donate Food**.

Habitat For Humanity of Westchester

659 Main Street

New Rochelle, NY 10801

Jim Killoran

(914) 403-4821

jim@habitatwc.org and can follow on Facebook/Twitter

Habitat for Humanity of Westchester is a program that brings the community together to build homes for those who need them. Students who are fourteen and over may volunteer without adult supervision. Twelve and thirteen year-olds may be able to help depending on the specific project and with parental supervision or a waiver. There are also opportunities for students to volunteer at the Habitat for Humanity thrift shop. Duties include selling and organizing shop merchandise. Volunteers are needed on Saturdays and after school.

JCC of Mid-Westchester
999 Wilmot Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
Mara Roberge, Special Needs Enrichment Director
(914) 472-3300 ext 361
www.jccmw.org

Become a volunteer in our Sunday/Funday program which is a program for children with developmental disabilities, ages 3-19. We accept volunteers beginning at age 12 year old. All volunteers are required to commit to the entire 26 Sundays of the program during the school year to maintain consistency for our children. Volunteers are paired with a developmentally disabled child and work closely to assist the participants in all specialty activities including music, art, sports and theater while building a relationship. Volunteers are also required to participate in the end of the year performances in June. Come join Sunday/Funday and we guarantee you will enjoy the program, participants and make a difference in a developmentally disabled child's life!

The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman
845 Palmer Avenue
Mamaroneck, New York 10543
Jeanette Cohen, Volunteer Coordinator
Volunteer office: (914) 864-5141
jcohen@jewishhome.org
www.jewishhome.org

The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman is a skilled long term facility that provides care for the elderly and also has a short-term rehabilitation program. There are many volunteer opportunities, including reading or playing music for residents, helping with arts and crafts projects, assisting with games such as scrabble, cards or bingo, or providing friendly visits to individual residents. Youth volunteers under age 13 must be accompanied by a parent. Slots may be limited. For more information, please call the volunteer office.

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation

30 Glenn St., Suite 409

White Plains, NY

Jill Waller

(914) 686-7700

jwaller@jdrf.org

JDRF has many ways that you can help to make a difference in the lives of those living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D).

JDRF's grassroots fundraising program helps you combine your personal interests and passions with your commitment to raise money for T1D research.

- Find or start a group event that gathers people together to have fun while making a difference.
- Turn your favorite hobby, sport, or social event into a fundraising campaign that will bring us closer to a world without Type 1 Diabetes
- Participate in the yearly *One Walk* in October at Empire City, Yonkers Raceway
- Participate in the upcoming 5th annual trail run, *A Mild Sprain*, on Sunday, May 22nd at Sprain Ridge Park, Yonkers
- If you love to draw you can become an artist and help make *Ride to Cure Diabetes* posters (this can be done at home)
- Help out with special office projects

Contact Jill Waller at jwaller@jdrf.org for more information

Kids' Kloset

170 E. Post Road

White Plains, NY

Stephanie Roth, Director

(914) 831-7616

sroth@wjcs.com

kidskloset@wjcs.com

www.wjcs.com/children-youth-families/kids-kloset/

WJCS Kids' Kloset is a volunteer-driven program that provides Westchester County children and families in need with donated clothing and related items free of charge. Since Kids' Kloset was opened in 2011, it has provided over 8,000 local children with clothing and diapers. Items like diapers, wipes, underwear, and socks need to be new. Children, newborn to 18 years of age, receive "bags of love" with clothing prepared into outfits. Kids' Kloset is always in need of volunteers to sort and pack clothing. It's a great opportunity for individuals as well as youth, corporate and school groups, community organizations and houses of worship to lend a hand.

Kol Ami-Coachman Birthday Party

123 E. Post Road

White Plains, NY

Alison Adler, (646) 483-4657, aadler3@verizon.net

Lisa Hochman, (914) 834-1555, lisahochman@mac.com

The Kol Ami - Coachman Committee partners with the Coachman Family Center to find opportunities to bring kindness and joy to those who have fallen on hard times. Each month the Committee helps to organize a birthday party for all Coachman kids celebrating a birthday that month. There are many ways to get involved in the Coachman Birthday Party Project and spread Tikun Olam. Here are a few ideas:

- **Sponsor a Birthday Party** - With help from the Committee, sponsors throw a birthday party by setting the menu, planning activities, wrapping birthday gifts and decorating the room.
- **Entertain or Organize Crafts** - Do you have a skill, talent or hobby you would like to share with other kids? Perhaps you could lead a craft project such as decorating cupcakes or making slime, or entertain the kids with magic, puppet shows, games or music? All we need is your enthusiasm to spread some birthday cheer.
- **Sponsor a Mitzvah Morning** - On Mitzvah Mornings, children and adults come together at Kol Ami to make birthday cards and goody bags for the all the party guests. If you sponsor a Mitzvah Morning, you would select and purchase the supplies including bags, candy and small favor toys and then supervise and help with goody bag assembly and making birthday cards.

March of Dimes

1275 Mamaroneck Ave.

White Plains, NY 10605

Karl Uzcategui, Development Director

(914) 610-7523

kuzcategui@marchofdimes.org

The March of Dimes is the leading nonprofit organization for pregnancy and baby health. More than 4 million babies were born in the United States last year and the March of Dimes helped each and every one through 75 years of research, education, vaccines and breakthroughs. With chapters nationwide, the March of Dimes works to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

March for Babies is our spring celebration each year, culminating with a walk in White Plains. We welcome you to come out and walk or to fundraise independently for the March of Dimes. Many students create a walk team, hold a car wash or bake sale or create other activities on their own to support the March of Dimes. Form a team at www.marchforbabies.org. For the latest resources and information, visit marchofdimes.com/ny or nacersano.org.

Meals on Wheels

311 North Street

Suite G-5

White Plains, NY 10605

Susanna Sussman, Executive Director

(914) 946-6878

info@mowwp.org

Meals-on-Wheels of White Plains delivers two meals a day to about 70 people who are unable to shop and cook for themselves. Each pair of volunteers brings fresh hot and cold meals to about ten people on a route which takes about an hour to complete. [All welcome a hot meal, a warm smile and a brief visit, which is important for the clients, most of whom are frail, elderly and alone.] While most of the work takes place on weekdays, there are some deliveries on Saturdays. A student can do the Saturday route accompanied by a parent. Young volunteers can also be of help during weeks when school is not in session. For more information check the website: www.mowwp.org

Miracle League of Westchester

Rick Monzon

(914) 522-1547

rmonzon@mlwny.org

(www.mlwny.org)

The Miracle League of Westchester County's mission is to establish and sustain baseball programs for people (of all ages) with disabilities. Our objective is to provide an opportunity for those individuals to experience the joy and benefits that come from playing our national pastime. Volunteer to be a "buddy" for a special needs child. Buddies are a vital part of the success of the Miracle League. Each Miracle League player is assigned a buddy for each game. The buddy is there to protect the player from balls, assist the player in batting and running the bases, and to be a friend on and off the field.

New Rochelle Humane Society

70 Portman Rd.

New Rochelle, NY

www.newrochellehumanesociety.org

Volunteers needed to walk dogs, socialize with cats, fundraise or work on special events. Students must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian.

Northeast Westchester Special Recreation

63 Bradhurst Ave

Hawthorne NY 10532

Cathleen Benson
(914) 347-4409

www.northeastsspecialrec.org

Offers therapeutic recreation programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities during evenings and weekends. They would love to have a few volunteers at our Saturday programs that serve our children. They have a number of opportunities including assisting with Special Olympics training and competitions, the ability to serve as a crafts or music activities assistant. They also run a six week summer day camp. Other possibilities can be discussed.

Pediatric Cancer Foundation

P.O. Box 785

Mamaroneck, NY 10543

Nancy Joselson

914-777-3127

Njoselson@aol.com

www.pcfweb.org



There are so many enjoyable ways to get involved in this critically important foundation that supports programs to fight pediatric cancer. Adult and child volunteers are greatly welcomed - we have tons of fundraisers including our Annual Walkathon, Bowlathon, and Give Hope Bake Sales (which can be done anywhere, at any time!). You can even create your own satellite event like a danceathon or sportsathon, car wash, and any others you can think of to help raise money to help save children's lives. We can always use school and art supplies for kids who are receiving their education at a hospital. Feel free to call us to brainstorm! We're coming together for a cure!

Songcatchers Inc.

44 Liberty Ave.

New Rochelle, NY 10801

Kathleen McEntee

(914) 654-1178

songcatchers@gmail.com

Songcatchers Inc. is an organization that reaches for peace through music and promotes quality music instruction to children under 13 who would not ordinarily be able to afford this gift of the arts (music, drama and art instruction). We aim specifically to provide high quality that is affordable and accessible to the neediest

members of our community even as we serve a multicultural and multigenerational population. Volunteers meet weekly and share their love of music, drama or art with children ranging in age from 7 to 13 years.

Soup Kitchen @ St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

82 Prospect Street

White Plains NY 10606

Art Bonagura

(914) 980-0424 / TEXT

artb2@optonline.net or artb226@gmail.com

[914-949-5577](tel:914-949-5577) or st.barts.wp@gmail.com

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church runs a soup kitchen each Sunday from approximately 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., which feeds approximately 35 to 50 guests. The soup kitchen depends primarily on volunteers, donations of food, meal preparation and assistance (serving and clean up).

The Coachman Family Center (operated by Westhab)

123 E. Post Road

White Plains, NY

Ivan Smith

(914) 949-1000 x 114

Ivan.Smith@westhab.org

The Coachman Family Center houses families who require supportive services. It provides 24-hour security; a wide range of youth development services including academics, enrichment, life skills, recreation and teen employment; early childhood day care; substance abuse counseling; homemaking assistance; and mental health services.

Volunteer opportunities include after-school homework tutoring program for elementary children in need of extra help in basic subjects, reading to children in the childcare program, organizing birthday and holiday parties, and participation in outdoor recreational activities.

UJA - Federation of New York

701 Westchester Avenue - Suite 203E

White Plains, New York 10604

Donna Divon

(914) 385-2130

divond@ujafedny.org

Designed for young people as they begin their bar and bat mitzvah studies, UJA-Federation of New York's Give a Mitzvah — Do a Mitzvah combines philanthropy with hands-on social action, giving them an opportunity to take their place in the Jewish community in a meaningful way. Through UJA-Federation, more than 60,000 donors pool their resources to help people in need, inspire a passion for Jewish life and learning, and strengthen Jewish communities around the world. Working with more than 100 network beneficiary agencies, synagogues, and other Jewish organizations, our reach spans from New York to Israel to more than 60 other countries around the world, touching 4.5 million people each year.

Westchester Klezmer Program

www.westchesterklez.org

(914) 861-5539

An intergenerational klezmer band program which is among the largest programs of its kind in the country. This is a not-for-profit corporation operating a music performance program to promote community service through klezmer (a traditional form of Jewish dance music). Musicians participate by learning and rehearsing klezmer music and then performing at nursing homes, programs for children with special needs, programs for developmentally disabled adults, synagogues, and other community based events. The band rehearses in Bedford/Mount Kisco on alternate Thursday evenings.

White Plains Public Schools (or your local school district)

Check with the offices of schools close to you for opportunities to volunteer. The White Plains Youth Bureau (contact: Frank Williams, Executive Director, 914-422-1378, ext. 2105, fwill@whiteplainsny.gov) coordinates volunteers for after-school programs. There is also a "Reading Buddies" program at the schools run through JCY. The JCY-Westchester Community Partner's mission is to enhance the educational experience of children in Westchester County through effective learning initiatives and the engagement of volunteer mentors. 914-423-5009; <http://www.jewishcouncil.info/>.

Other Activities

Organize Your Own Mitzvah Project!

B'nai Mitzvah students are encouraged to create their own meaningful Mitzvah Projects. Parent involvement is required.

Here are some ideas...

Teach Soccer, knitting, or something else you love.

Organize a group of friends to visit hospitals and/or nursing homes, talk to and/or perform for the patients.

Organize a fundraiser for an organization or for a worthy cause

Organize a book fair through Barnes & Noble

Organize a clothing/product drive either before or during your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Tutor children in need of assistance. Contact your local library, schools, or community centers.

Participate in a charity walk/swim/other and raise funds for Multiple Sclerosis, Cancer, Cystic Fibrosis, Diabetes, etc. Be creative in your fundraising by reaching out and publicizing through various means.

Get involved with a school based community charity organization

Lend a helping hand during holiday meals for the homeless, military, etc.

Work with an organization that helps the poor and the hungry, victims of abuse, the elderly, people with special needs, etc.

Engage in a number of loving deeds. See the following ideas:

- Clean out your drawers and closets and donate the old clothing to charity.
- Help a classmate who is ill. Bring homework, library books, messages, between home and school.
- Show hospitality. Invite a new classmate over for a meal.
- Write, call or visit your grandparents or special relative. Send a card for their birthday, anniversary, etc.
- Prepare and donate a food package to a needy family.
- Comfort a mourner by paying a visit or sending a card.
- Help out your family or talk with your parents to figure out a new chore or task that will indicate your growing responsibility and maturity.
- Help an older adult who lives in your neighborhood by walking their dog, picking up groceries, etc.
- Volunteer as a family at a soup kitchen for the homeless.
- Write to an elected official about an important social or political issue.
- Set aside some tzedakah every Friday night before Shabbat. Use a family pushka, or a tzedakah container. Decide as a family where the money should go.

If items are going to be collected at Kol Ami, you need to contact the Kol Ami Cares Committee or the office to set up use of a bin and publicity.

Appendices

Good deeds as part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Celebration

Ways You Can Perform Good Deeds at your Celebration and In Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service

- ❖ **Purchase Kippot:** Help support Israel's economy by purchasing kippot directly from Israel. There are several online sources for kippot: www.a-zara.com or www.israelshop1.com or help Ikamva Labantu by purchasing kippot from them: www.ikamva.com
- ❖ **Kol Ami Fund for the Needy** is a fund used to purchase food for our Kol Ami pantry and to provide meals to homeless families.
- ❖ **MAZON, the Jewish response to hunger**, is an organization funded by self imposed taxes that people put on their celebratory banquets. The recommended figure is 3% of the total budget of your party, but more or less is welcome, as you deem appropriate. Mazon supplies note cards to let your guests know of your donation, and it's an easy, efficient way to effectively make sure that you are helping others. **(310) 442-0020 www.mazon.org**
- ❖ **Donate (and even create) centerpieces:** that others can enjoy after your celebration. Some examples:
 - ◆ Flowers to a hospital/nursing home/ halfway house/meals on wheels
 - ◆ Stuffed animal centerpieces, gift basket centerpieces, all of which can then be donated to a children's hospital.
 - ◆ Baskets of school supplies or toiletries that can be donated to a shelter, school, or camp.
 - ◆ Baskets of canned goods or fruit that can be donated to a soup kitchen or homeless shelter.
 - ◆ Baskets of books that can be donated to a Jewish library, school, a children's hospital such as Blythedale or NY Hospital, or other organization (ie White Plains Reads)
- ❖ **Make your goody bag a mitzvah bag!**
When giving your guests a token of your special day think of a way that your purchase can make the world a better place!
- ❖ **Use Your Invitations as a Way to Support Israel**
Send Jewish National Fund personalized tree and water certificates as one-of-a-kind invitations, or use them as favors, table signs, or acknowledgements. These attractive, affordable certificates help beautify Israel. It is a very worthwhile way to connect the bar/bat mitzvah with Israel. For more information call 1-800-700- 1312 or visit their web site at www.jnf.org
- ❖ **Donate 10% of your gift money to one of more organizations.**
This is an excellent time for families to sit together and research worthwhile organizations that interest them.
- ❖ **Purchase trees in honor of guests.**

Instead of, or in addition to, purchasing centerpieces, trees can be bought and the certificate can be placed on a stand in the middle of the table.

- ❖ **Take the leftover cake to homes for the elderly.**
- ❖ **Take the leftover food to a shelter.**
- ❖ **On the day of your celebration collect food for the hungry.**
- ❖ **Make donations in honor of those who are lighting the candles at your celebration.** Consider making the contribution to one of the Temple Funds.

As part of your candle lighting ceremony, announce donations in honor of those who are lighting the candles to a meaningful organization.

- ❖ **Twin with an Ethiopian Jew:** The NACOEJ Bar/Bat Mitzvah Twinning Program provides a terrific opportunity for Jewish youth to get to know, and help, their Ethiopian-Israeli peers.

NACOEJ Bar/Bat Mitzvah Twinning Program

132 Nassau Street, Suite 412

New York, NY 10038-2400

(212) 233-5200 NACOEJ@aol.com WWW.NACOEJ.org

As a Twin you will receive:

- A certificate sent to your rabbi before the event
- The name, photo and bio of your Twin
- If you visit Israel, arrangements can be made so you can visit your twin

Your twin will receive:

- A gift to his/her school in Israel to help buy essential supplies such as books (textbooks and reading), computers, and other educational materials. Classes may enjoy a class trip, and have a group Bar/ Bat Mitzvah party!
- Letters you send your twin

All recent twins have combined their twinning with a NACOEJ mitzvah project. See: <http://www.nacoej.org/get-involved/mitzvah-projects>. Some have been very successful. NACOEJ works with the student to create their own page.

- ❖ **Gift-wrap, greeting cards or party favors.** This organization sends cards and toys to terminally ill children. - **Love Letters Inc.** P.O. Box 416875 Chicago, Il. 60641
- ❖ **Prom clothing - Fairy Godmothers, c/o Cobra wire and Cable**
Attn: Joyce Jesko, 2930 Turnpike Drive, Hatboro, Pa. 19040
- ❖ **Backpacks, luggage, suit bags to Foster Care Luggage, 1746 Kenneth Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46260.**
- ❖ **School supplies - The Coachman Family Center, 123 East Post Road, White Plains, New York - enter through Chester Avenue**
- ❖ **School supplies - for students new to the White Plains school district. Contact Suzanne Lasser, Director of the Newcomers Center: 422-2443.**
- ❖ **Pre-school clothing for The Children's Learning Center (formerly St. Bernard's Center for Learning)**
- Anitta Haywood 632-0180.
- ❖ **Baby clothing for Israel- contact White Plains Israel Action Committee - John Lightstone, at JBL@post.harvard.edu.**
- ❖ **Hair - you can donate your own hair for financially disadvantaged children under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss. For more information - Pantene Beautiful Lengths 800-945-7768, pantene.com**

- ❖ ***Welcome bags for new campers*** - collect sunscreen, lip balm, flashlights, size D batteries, books, socks for: Morry's Camp, 900 Dobbs Ferry Road, White Plains, NY 10607 914-592-3055 (Diane Tabakman) Morry's Camp is a nonprofit, year round youth development organization that provides children from economically disadvantaged communities of New York and Connecticut with valuable summer camp experiences.



If you have any other good ideas, please feel free to contact Ilene Miller, the Co-Chairs of the Kol Ami Cares Committee or a member of the B'nai Mitzvah Committee. It would be our pleasure to share them with other B'nai Mitzvah families.

Sample of organizations for Tzedakah

And once you've become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah...
Giving Tzedakah is a Mitzvah all Jewish Adults are Commanded to do
Connecting Jews Around the World

Wonderful Organizations That Need Support

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation

www.alexlemonade.org

"Fighting childhood cancer one cup at a time"

Mission - To raise money and awareness of childhood cancer causes, primarily research into new treatments and cures. To encourage and empower others, especially children, to get involved and make a difference for children with cancer. For ways to get involved and for opportunities to host your own lemonade stand please go to **www.alexlemonade.org/get-involved!**

American Jewish World Service

45 West 36th Street

New York, N.Y. 10018

Joe Gindi

(212) 792-2900

www.ajws.org

American Jewish World Service [AJWS] is an independent not-for-profit organization founded in 1985 to help alleviate poverty, hunger and disease among the people of the world regardless of race, religion or nationality. It breathes life into Judaism's imperative to pursue justice and helps American Jews to act upon a deeply felt obligation to improve the chances for survival, economic independence and human dignity for all people.

Gilda's Club Westchester

80 Maple Ave

White Plains, NY 10601

Essie Steckler, Member and Volunteer Coordinator

(914) 644-8844 x122

www.gildasclubwestchester.org

The mission of Gilda's Club is to create welcoming communities of free support for everyone living with cancer - men, women, teens and children - along with their families and friends. Our innovative program is an essential complement to medical care, providing networking and support groups, workshops, education and social activities. **See website for "wish list" and other opportunities.**

Global Camps Africa

1606 Washington Plaza

Reston, VA 20190

Philip Lilienthal
(703) 437-0808
phil@globalcampsafrika.org
www.worldcamps.org

Global Camps Africa is a non-profit organization, providing children affected by HIV/AIDS in developing countries with a camping experience away from home that promotes new skills, maturity, independence, an awareness of public health issues, cross-cultural interchange, and fun in a residential camp setting.

Hope and Heroes Children's Cancer Fund
161 Fort Washington Avenue, Irving Pavilion
New York, NY 10032

Bob Bomersbach, Executive Director (212) 305-1420

Kathrine Leiby, Special Events Director (212) 305-1419

The Hope & Heroes Children's Cancer Fund provides philanthropic assistance to the Herbert Irving Child & Adolescent Oncology Center at Columbia University Medical Center. The Fund's mission is to support and expand existing programs, develop new initiatives, and enhance the research that is vital to continuing the fight against pediatric cancer. There are also opportunities for 12 year olds to come and work on art projects with the kids.

Ikamva Labantu
Friends of Ikamva Labantu
215 Overlook Road
New Rochelle, New York

Shannon Norwitz
(914) 310-2504

ikamva@aol.com

www.ikamva.org

Ikamva Labantu ("The future of our nation") addresses the needs of the homeless, disabled, orphaned, and impoverished in South Africa. Kol Ami is in partnership to support the development of the Family Enrichment Center in the community of Khayelitsha - a sprawling township on the outskirts of Cape Town and home to over one million people. There is no formal business district in Khayelitsha, most people live in shacks using communal outdoor taps and toilets. Electricity is not available throughout all parts of the area. Our hope is to help them refurbish their existing Family Enrichment Center.

Project Morry**350 Executive Blvd., Suite 125****Elmsford, New York 10523****Laney Mulholland****914-592-3055****laney@projectmorry.org**

For over two decades, **Project Morry**, a not-for-profit year round youth development organization has provided children from under-resourced communities of New York City, Westchester and Connecticut with a multi-year commitment of year-round programs anchored by a superb residential summer camp experience.

All components of the programs are carefully designed to facilitate individual learning and reinforce positive social and academic skills with the goal of guiding them down the path towards their best selves.

Project Morry is proud to report that 98% of their children graduate from high school, 85% attend college, and the balance are working full-time or have joined the military.

Seeds of Peace**370 Lexington Avenue, Suite 401****New York, NY 10017****Dindy Weinstein****(212) 573-8040****info@seedsofpeace.org**

Seeds of Peace helps create new generations of leaders in communities divided by conflict in the Middle East, South Asia, and the U.S. It equips them with the skills and relationships they need to make the changes essential for peace. The process begins with a transformational camp session in Maine for exceptional teenagers that shifts attitudes and perceptions and builds respect and empathy. *Seeds of Peace's* approach continues through programs that accelerate the impact of alumni who are challenging the ideologies, policies, and practices that perpetuate conflict.

Selfhelp Community Services, Inc.**520 Eighth Avenue**

New York, NY 10018
Adeena Horowitz
(212) 971-7600
ahorowitz@selfhelp.net
www.selfhelp.net

Selfhelp is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to maintaining the independence and dignity of seniors and at-risk populations through a spectrum of housing, home health care and social services, and will lead in applying new methods and technologies to address changing needs of its community. Selfhelp will continue to serve as the "last surviving relative" to its historic constituency, victims of Nazi persecution.

The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous
305 Seventh Avenue, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10001-6008
212-727-9955
www.jfr.org

The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) provides monthly financial support to aged and needy non-Jews who risked their lives and often the lives of their families, to rescue Jews during the Holocaust. The JFR is also committed to teaching the history of the Holocaust and to preserving the legacy of these Righteous Gentiles through their education program.

JFR has a twinning program for Bar and Bat Mitzvah students. The program pairs a Bar/Bat Mitzvah with a Christian rescuer enabling the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, through their donation to make a difference in the daily life of the rescuer and to preserve the rescuer's memory. The stories of rescue are very powerful and the program combines both the mitzvah of tzedakah with education. Visit our website to read stories of rescue and to learn more about the JFR's Bar/Bat Mitzvah twinning program.

Jewish National Fund
42 E. 69th Street
New York, NY 10021
800-542-8733
www.jnf.org/simcha

More Than an Invitation. A Mitzvah. Enhance your special day with a mitzvah by planting trees in Israel or donating towards JNF's water projects in honor of each of your guests with customized JNF invitations. Add meaning to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah with a JNF Mitzvah project. Create your own fundraising website to support a project you are passionate about and help the land of Israel and its people. Choose from: • Adopting a firefighter • The Sderot Indoor Recreation Center • Helping people with disabilities • Bringing baseball to youth in Israel, and more. Visit www.jnf.org/simcha or call 800.542.8733 for more information.