



# CHABAD NEWS

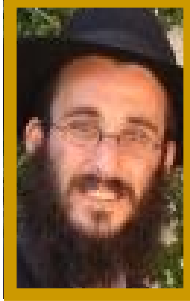
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## MESSAGE FROM THE RABBI

### IN THIS ISSUE:

CHABAD'S FIVE YEAR CELEBRATION MEN'S CLUB BILLIARDS	2
IN APPRECIATION ONGOING EVENTS CLUB CHAI PARTNERS	3
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	4



Did you know that the Megillah, which is read every year on the holiday of

Purim, is the only book in the entire Written Torah in which G-d's name does not appear even once?

Interestingly, throughout the entire story we find that very little of it was miraculous. In fact, most of the story seems to be extremely coincidental. It seems like the work of a great novelist, with all loose ends eventually coming together.

The story begins with the death of Queen Vashti, and King Ahasuerus choosing Esther as his new wife. It is followed by Mordechai foiling a plot to murder the king, Haman's rise to power, and Haman's scheme to annihilate the Jews. The king's discovery that Esther was Jewish and that Haman's plot would have included her is set as the climax of this seemingly fairy-tale like story.

All the events leading up to Purim seem to fit right into an almost natural course. Not

once do we read about a great miracle, such as the sea splitting or manna falling from heaven. All we have is one coincidental occurrence after another.

True, the fact that Haman's scheme backfired onto himself was very fortuitous, but there were no supernatural miracles. No oil lasted for eight days, nor were any firstborns smitten.

That is precisely what makes the story of Purim so special.

Take a look at the world around you. Everything seems so 'normal.' The sun rises every morning in the east, and sets in the west at dusk. Trees and plants grow when they are properly tended to, and will wither and die when neglected. Fire rages and grows when in contact with anything flammable, but will be extinguished when in contact with water.

All this, and much more, is what we've come to know as nature. Like everything else in the world, nature, too, was created by G-d. Nature is G-d's most incredible miracle. We are living a constant miracle. By waking up every morning, we experience this

most miraculous event – life.

Even though we don't feel the G-dliness or the miracle in it all, it is there.

The very name of the Megillah, 'Megillat Esther,' makes this point. The name 'Esther' translates as 'hidden.' The true miracle of Purim, as well as that of our daily lives, remains hidden. But, we know that G-d, although His name is not mentioned in Megillah, was in fact behind all that had transpired, just as He is behind all that happens in the world.

And just as the Jews of that time believed and trusted in G-d that He will save them from Haman's wicked decree, so must we, truly have faith in G-d that He is the one who ultimately controls our destiny.

So this year, when you hear the Megillah being read on Saturday evening, February 27, and on Sunday, February 28, take the time to think about the miracle of Purim, and how much it really relates to your life.

With wishes for a joyous Purim,

Rabbi Mendy Bukiet

*Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch is an organization that provides social, educational, recreational, and religious programming. Chabad is a place where every Jew, affiliated or unaffiliated, observant or non-observant, can come and feel comfortable. We believe that regardless of educational background or affiliation, it is the inalienable right of every Jewish person to learn and participate in our heritage, which belongs to us equally.*

## CHABAD'S FIVE YEAR CELEBRATION

Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch hosted a Gala Auction and Cocktail Evening celebrating five years of community service to the Manatee County Jewish Community.

The event took place on Wednesday, January 13 at Fete Catering and Ballroom at the Polo Grill.

Guests enjoyed fabulous food and cocktails, in an elegant and social setting.

Jackie Mason, famed Jewish comedian, made a guest appearance and spoke eloquently about the importance of supporting Chabad in its wonderful work of Jewish pride and continuity.

Guests had the opportunity to bid on close to a

hundred terrific prizes to help support Chabad.

A video feature presentation demonstrated Chabad's effect on the Jewish community throughout its time in Manatee County, and a beautiful architectural rendition depicted Chabad's dreams for a future Chabad Center.

A live auction, led by auctioneer, Joel Ehrenpreis, took place featuring outstanding gifts.

Surprise raffles were held throughout the evening and a split the pot raffle for one thousand dollars concluded the event.

Guests left the Fete Catering and Ballroom at Polo Grill laden with gifts won at the auction, but

more importantly they left imbued with a feeling of pride for partnering with such a terrific cause.

A warm and heartfelt thank you to the sponsors for the evening namely Fete Catering at the Polo Grill, Schroeder Manatee Ranch, Jonathan Parks Architect, Halfacre Construction Company, Anonymous, Steve & Colleen Shapiro, Joel & Roz Ehrenpreis, and Lou & Ruth Siegel.

This community event was truly a team effort with a crew of dedicated volunteers and coordinators who invested much time and effort to make this evening a truly memorable celebration.



## MEN'S CLUB BILLIARDS

Excitement ran high at Livingston's Amusement Center on Sunday evening, January 31. The Men's Club spent an evening of camaraderie and fun while playing exciting games of billiards.

The Men's Club at Chabad coordinates various social and educational events per year as a means of bringing together Jewish men in Manatee County to socialize and network in a Jewish setting. Special thanks to Larry Cohen for arranging all the Men's Club events. Look out for more information on upcoming Men's Club events this year.



**ONGOING EVENTS***All events to take place at the Chabad Jewish Center***Talmud Classes**

Mondays, 7:30-8:30 pm

Explore the Talmud and its laws in its original text. No prior knowledge of the Talmud or Hebrew is necessary. Book fee: \$45.

**Torah Studies**

Saturday mornings, 9:00 – 9:30

Participate in a fascinating class on the Torah portion of the week. Discover the mystical meanings and lessons behind ancient stories. Admission is free.

**Jewish Learning Institute**

Six Wednesdays, beginning February 3, 7:30-8:45 pm

Do you find yourself caught amidst trying times, uncertain about your future? Are you struggling to muster the inner resources to move forward? Experience a breathtaking saga of six leaders who paved the road to Jewish destiny. Course fee: \$75. Couple's fee: \$135. The JLI is partially underwritten by the Sarasota-Manatee Jewish Federation.

**Weekly Shabbat Services**

Friday night, 7:00, Saturday mornings 9:30

Enjoy warm, family friendly services at the Chabad Jewish Center. Saturday morning services are followed by a delicious buffet Kiddush. First Friday nights of the month also feature Youth services and special Kiddush.

**Chabad Hebrew School**

Sunday mornings, 9:30 – noon

Give your child for the experience of a lifetime at Chabad Hebrew School featuring an outstanding curriculum, professional and warm teachers, hands-on lessons, an innovative Hebrew reading Aleph Champ program, motivational systems and more. Learn it. Live it. Love it.

**Teen Scene**

Sundays, 11:20– 2:00 pm

Join Jewish teenagers throughout Manatee County for a program FOR Teens BY teens. The Teen Scene features trips, hand-on activities, lecturers, optional mentoring training program, weekly brunches, conversational Hebrew, and more.

*For more information on any of the above ongoing events, call Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at 941-752-3030 or e-mail [rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com).*

**PURIM MISHLOACH MANOT**

This year more people will experience the joy of Purim! On Purim, we emphasize the importance of Jewish unity and friendship by sending gifts of food to friends and family, Mishloach Manot. This year Chabad is sponsoring shared Mishloach Manot gift boxes at a low cost so that as many community families as possible can participate in the tradition. Everyone in the community is invited to partake in this special Purim mitzvah. We will deliver Mishloach Manot to any family you choose in the area. Call the Chabad office for more information at 941-752-3030.

**IN APPRECIATION****PARTNER APPRECIATION**

Ramon & Sherri Alvarez  
Anonymous  
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Jerry & Judy Zivic

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**

Ed Buyes  
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Frea Cohen  
Larry & Joan Cohen  
Penny Cooper  
Joel & Rosalyn Ehrenpreis  
Elaine & Marvin Fitzer  
Becka Frey  
Fern Grace  
Lori Greenbaum  
William Gross  
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Taras Kochno  
Scott, Debbie, Leah & Alex  
Pattinson  
Frank & Moraima Rodriguez  
Ricki Rubin  
Barbara Schur  
Steve & Colleen Shapiro  
Ruth & Lou Siegel  
Joe Slavings  
Lauren Vallone  
Mark Walzer

**CLUB CHAI**

Thank you to all our Club Chai Members! Club Chai members provide monthly sustenance to Chabad in multiples of 18 (Chai-Life).

Ramon & Sherri Alvarez  
Rabbi Joseph & Fradel Bukiet  
Don & Carola Coarsey  
Frea Cohen  
Larry & Joan Cohen  
Lee & Trudy Cohen  
Emanuel & Doris DeCoveny  
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Stanley & Dorith Hollander  
Ron & Ruth Hyatt

David & Joan Kasse  
Dawn Kay  
Marc & Audrey Koepfel  
Philip & Rosalind Lieberman  
Barbara Schur  
Lou & Ruth Siegel  
Sandy & Phyllis Silverman  
Mendel Slavin  
Richard & Lauren Vallone  
Jonas & Barbara Weingarten  
Tseza Wieand

Be a partner in our valuable work and community! A monthly donation in any amount gets you into the club. Contact Chabad at 941-752-3030 for more information.

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information, contact Chabad at 941-752-3030, [rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com), or visit [www.chabadofbradenton.com](http://www.chabadofbradenton.com).

### Thursday, February 4: Jewish Women's Circle Event

Join this ever growing and energetic group and enjoy a night out just for women. Meet new friends, socialize, and truly discover the power of the Jewish Woman. Purim Pack & Party: Get in the spirit of Purim with a L'chayim themed pre-Purim party at the Chabad Jewish Center at 7:30 pm. Enjoy refreshments and help pack Purim food gifts for the community. Admission free. Sponsor \$180.

### Sunday, February 14: Purim Musical Presentation

Join Chabad Hebrew School in the third of a series of four cultural experiences for the Purim Musical Presentation at the Chabad Jewish Center at 11 am to noon. Sing along to popular Purim songs with a presentation from the Chabad Hebrew School students. Make Hamentaschen as a take-home treat! Admission is \$5 and free to Chabad Hebrew School students and families.

### Sunday, February 28: Purim in the Jungle

Join Chabad of Bradenton and Lakewood Ranch for Purim in the Jungle. Enjoy exotic African cuisine, lively and interactive drum circle performance, activities for the children, and comedy with the Rabbi & Cantor. Admission \$18 per adult, \$12 per child. Early bird discounts of \$5 per person on reservations and payment before February 18. Sponsor: \$250. Chabad Hebrew School students (only) come free!

### Alternative Arts & Healing with Colleen Shapiro

This expressive art and healing class, designed to increase one's self esteem, will awaken the senses with art and nature projects, writings, movement, and music.

Tuesday, February 2, 1:00-2:00 pm and Tuesday, February 23, 7:00-8:30 pm at the Chabad Jewish Center.

Free! Donations Appreciated. Call 748-8522 for more information.



Harvey S. Mishner, M.D., Board Certified Internal Medicine

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to reserve your space for the March edition by February 15.