



Andy Hartman

At the evening of celebration, marking the completion of the San Jose *eruv*, (L-R): Rabbi Joey Felsen, CEO of the JSN (Jewish Study Network) holding Aharon Levine; Rabbi Menachem Levine, Rabbi of Kehillas Am Echad; Mr. Jeff Rosen, Santa Clara District Attorney; Mr. Bart Hechtman, attorney; and Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio.



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At the evening of celebration, marking the completion of the San Jose *eruv*: Mr. Steve Sherman, Civil Engineer; Rabbi Menachem Levine; Mr. Eli Reinhard, major donor; and Mr. Ephraim Lindenbaum, *eruv* president.

COVERAGE BY

DEVORAH KLEIN

San Jose Torah Community Celebrates Completion of City *Eruv*

The Torah community of Kehillas Am Echad in San Jose, California, under the leadership of Rabbi Menachem Levine, hosted an Evening of Celebration and Appreciation on October 29.

The event was in honor of the tremendous accomplishment of the building of the San Jose community *eruv*. Following nearly a decade of planning, efforts and prayers, the *eruv* was completed and functional the week prior to Rosh Hashanah.

With its population of over one million, San Jose is one of the 10 largest cities in the United States. Until this time, it was the only one of those cities which did not have an *eruv*. *Baruch Hashem*, now that situation has changed, and the members and



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At the evening of celebration, marking the completion of the San Jose *eruv*, (L-R): Mr. Howard Klein, Am Echad member; Mr. Ephraim Lindenbaum, *eruv* president, and Rabbi Menachem Levine, addressing the gathering.

families of the Am Echad community can stroll to shul on Shabbos with their babies and young children, and enjoy Shabbos with the community.

The San Jose *eruv* is currently the

largest *eruv* in Northern California. Rabbi Refoel Szmerla of Lakewood, New Jersey, flew to California three times to help create the *eruv* route. The majority of the *eruv* is made from

actual walls and it meets very high halachic standards. Rabbi Levine and *Eruv* President Ephraim Lindenbaum spent hundreds of hours working out the details of the route and working with officials to explain the importance of the *eruv* and the benefits for the Jewish and larger San Jose community.

Due to its size, the *eruv* required six permits to be built. The cost of getting the permits was nearly \$200,000, while the construction of the actual *eruv* was \$300,000. Donations came from across the community, both from current and former Am Echad members. Community children joined the excitement over the summer by making lemonade stands and bake sales to help raise money. Their efforts successfully raised over \$400!

The *sechiras reshuv* was done by the Santa Clara Valley Sheriff, who has jurisdiction over the whole area. For the *sechiras reshuv*, the sheriff brought in her assistant deputies to watch the procedure. They were fascinated to see it done and learn about

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עש"ק פרשת חיי שרה תשע"ח

City	Hadlakas Neros	Motzaei Shabbos	Rabbeinu Tam	City	Hadlakas Neros	Motzaei Shabbos	Rabbeinu Tam
Antwerp	4:43	5:53	6:11	Los Angeles	4:34	5:42	6:04
Atlanta	5:19	6:27	6:49	Melbourne	7:46	8:49	9:17
Baltimore	4:38	5:45	6:07	Miami	5:16	6:23	6:45
Boston	4:09	5:16	5:38	Milwaukee	4:15	5:21	5:43
Chicago	4:16	5:23	5:45	Minneapolis	4:31	5:38	6:00
Cincinnati	5:10	6:17	6:39	Monsey	4:24	5:31	5:53
Cleveland	4:53	6:00	6:22	Montreal	4:11	5:18	5:40
Dallas	5:11	6:18	6:40	New York	4:24	5:31	5:53
Denver	4:30	5:37	5:59	Passaic	4:24	5:31	5:53
Detroit	4:57	6:04	6:26	Philadelphia	4:30	5:38	6:00
Edison NJ	4:26	5:33	5:55	Pittsburgh	4:49	5:56	6:18
Haifa	4:11	5:20	5:56	Seattle	4:20	5:27	5:49
Jerusalem	4:07	5:20	5:59	St Louis	4:33	5:41	6:03
Lakewood	4:26	5:34	5:56	Tel Aviv	4:22	5:22	5:56
Liberty	4:25	5:32	5:54	Toronto	4:39	5:46	6:08
London	4:04	5:12	5:30	Waterbury CT	4:19	5:26	5:48



Rabbi Yisrael Yehuda Goldstein, Rav in Onod, Hungary, serving as sandak sheini at the bris of the great-grandson of Rabbi Pinchas Weberman, in Miami.



One of the many creative projects depicting *Birchos Hashachar*, created by the seventh-grade boys at the Hillel Academy of Denver.

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it, as they had never heard of such a thing before.

The *eruv chatzeiros* was done at the shul, by Rabbi Levine along with the *Rosh Kollel* of the Jewish Study Network (JSN) of Silicon Valley and San Jose resident, Rabbi Avi Lebowitz.

The Evening of Celebration was attended by many community members, donors, city councilmembers, the County's District Attorney, and the County Sheriff.

The program began with a video presentation, created by Mr. Shmuel Adler, describing the impact the *eruv* already has had on the community.

Following the video, Rabbi Menachem Levine, *Mara d'Asra* of Kehillas Am Echad, addressed the crowd. He noted that the purpose of the evening was to express gratitude to the many people involved in the *eruv's* planning and construction, and highlighted the individuals whose contributions were crucial to the *eruv's*

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existence. Some of these individuals had no prior connection to the Orthodox community, and the *eruv* and this special dinner gave them a special understanding of, and relationship with, the community.

Rabbi Levine thanked Mr. Ephraim Lindenbaum, *eruv* president, and Rabbi Yitzchak Feldman, Rav of Emek Bracha in nearby Palo Alto, who had built an *eruv* there and provided much assistance to San Jose.

He thanked Mr. Bart Hechtman, a Jewish attorney, who devoted his expertise pro bono, despite the fact that he had never before heard of an *eruv*, or of Rabbi Levine; and Mr. Boris Feldman, a top California attorney who has represented companies such as including Google, Genentech, Salesforce, and Hewlett-Packard, and helped Rabbi Levine craft state-wide policies that would allow *eruv* to use highway barriers.

Rabbi Levine thanked public officials, particularly Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio, for facilitating the *eruv* permitting process; Sheriff Laurie Smith for facilitating the *sechivas reshus*; and Ralph Farias of Coastline Construction, who built the *eruv*. Mr. Farias drove up from Los Angeles to attend the event, and was very gratified at the many community members who came over to personally



At the Lower Merion Community *Mikveh Chanukas Habayis* (L-R): Rabbi Baruch Cywiak, director of Special Projects, Mikvah USA; Rabbi Avraham Shmidman, Rav, Lower Merion Synagogue; Harav Yehudah Svei and Harav Shalom Kamenetsky, *Roshei Yeshivah* of Yeshiva of Philadelphia.

thank him for his role in the *eruv*.

Since the establishment of the *eruv*, there have been more young children in shul, and additional youth groups created for children during *davening*. There is also talk about expanding the shul facilities to accommodate more people.

Overall, the *eruv* has generated much excitement both in and out of the San Jose Am Echad community. Many have inquired regarding a potential move, due to the well-known warmth and *Torahdig* environment of the community.



Hagaon Harav Shmuel Kamenetsky, *shlita*, *Rosh Yeshivah*, Yeshiva of Philadelphia, addressing the Lower Merion Community *Mikveh Chanukas Habayis*.

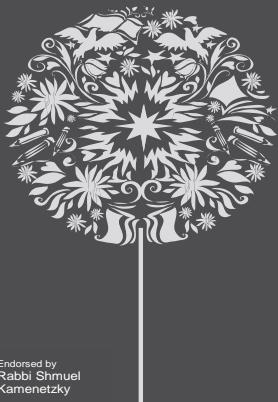
Lower Merion Community *Mikveh Chanukas Habayis*

On Sunday, October 29, over 500 residents and guests celebrated the completion of the Lower Merion Community *Mikvah* - Ateres Hodah Masha.

Hagaon Harav Shmuel Kamenetsky, *shlita*, spoke of the importance of building a *mikveh*, stating "whatever *kedushah* we can bring to the community is our duty."

Dr. D. Stollman praised Rabbi Avraham Shmidman, Rav of the Lower Merion Synagogue, describing how Rabbi Shmidman had the vision and tenacity to start and finish the project. And Rabbi Baruch Cywiak, director of special projects for Mikvah USA, a supporter of the *mikveh* project, encouraged local residents to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity that the *mikveh* presented and urge their friends and neighbors to make use of the new *mikveh*.

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