

DONOR Appreciation **REPORT**

FALL 2025

INSIDE

Thank You for Being There

The Power of Positivity

**Challah Bake Opens the Heavens
for Stranded Israeli**

Rooted in Faith, Growing Together

Meet Sarale Vigler



Thank You For Being There

DEAR FRIENDS,

As I reflect on the past season, I am filled with deep gratitude.

The recent High Holiday season at Chabad of The Nyacks was nothing short of extraordinary — not just because of the full rooms, heartfelt prayers, and joyous community celebrations, but because of the people who made it all possible: YOU!

Every smiling person who walked through our doors, every soul uplifted by a moment of connection, every child who sang along — all began with your partnership. You turned inspiration into action and generosity into Jewish life.

From the first sounding of the shofar to the last dance on Simchas Torah, we saw what happens when individuals — each with their unique story and spark — come together to create something larger than themselves. That's the power of community. That's the power of YOU.

As we look ahead, ***I'm thrilled to share an exciting development: Mrs. Sarale (Ehrenreich) Vigler has joined our team as Youth Director.*** With her warmth, creativity, and passion for Jewish education, Sarale will be launching new programs for children, teens, and families — nurturing the next generation of Jewish pride and connection right here in Rockland.

Thank you for being a vital part of everything we do. Your kindness fuels our mission, and your partnership ensures that the light of Judaism shines brighter every day — for every individual.

With heartfelt appreciation,
Rabbi Chaim Zvi Ehrenreich
Executive Director



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The Power of Positivity

BILL & ALISA STEIN - NYACK

When **Bill and Alisa Stein's** lifelong Jewish journey led them to Chabad, they finally felt at home. Long active in several congregations in Rockland and on the Upper West Side, the Steins first met Rabbi Ehrenreich at a Jewish Federation Day of Learning — and soon, as Bill put it, "we kept bumping into him."



Drawn by the warm family atmosphere they found at Chabad of The Nyacks, the Steins began attending services and Shabbat dinners, deepening their involvement over time.

"We were looking for more spirituality and more learning," said Alisa. **"We wanted to feel more connected, Jewishly, and we were very interested in Chabad in general."**

The couple especially values their close friendship with the Ehrenreich family. Family, in fact, is central to the Steins' story. Their older son's return to full Jewish observance inspired them to strengthen their own commitment to kashrus and Shabbos.

The successful law practice Bill and Alisa built together is now led by their son, Ari, who moved it to Teaneck, where he lives with his wife and children. "I work for my son now," Bill says proudly. **In addition to serving as Haverstraw Town Attorney, he lends his legal expertise to Chabad of The Nyacks, helping move the organization toward acquiring property for its future home.**

What keeps the Steins so devoted to Chabad? For Bill, it's the upbeat attitude. "What impresses me most is the optimism," he said. "There's no doom or negativity — it's uplifting and Torah-driven. The rabbi's sermons focus on Torah, not politics."

Alisa agrees. "The more I learn about the Rebbe, the more I appreciate his focus on positivity. We've traveled to many synagogues and communities, but nowhere else have we experienced this kind of joyful energy."

That positivity was especially powerful at the Kinus HaShluchim, the international conference for Chabad emissaries that Alisa and Bill attended as guests. "It was incredible," said Alisa. "You feel this overwhelming sense of connection and inspiration — and you take it with you."

The Steins have since visited Chabad centers in Barcelona, Lucerne, and beyond, and are now considering joining the Ehrenreichs on The Land and the Spirit, a Jewish Learning Institute trip to Israel.

"Thanks to the Torah learning and the warmth of the rabbi and his family," Alisa summed up, **"Chabad gives us a close connection to our Jewish roots."**



Challah Bake Opens the Heavens for Stranded Israeli

MALI BREZNIK - RAMAT GAN, ISRAEL

When Israeli mother **Mali Breznik** flew from Ramat Gan to New York to study English at the EF International Language Campus in Tarrytown, her goal was simple: to improve her English so she could learn a new therapy method taught only in that language. She expected to return home on Sunday, June 15, after her course ended.

Then the unexpected happened: Israel struck Iran, and all flights to and from Israel were canceled. Suddenly stranded in a foreign country, far from her 11- and 15-year-old children, Mali felt frightened and alone. Her older son turned to social media for help, and through a chain of connections, she was given the phone number of Chabad of The Nyacks.

It was Thursday when Mali reached out. "I was in real despair," she recalled. **Her one request: could she somehow bake challah? "I felt that maybe there would be a miracle and the heavens would open."**

As it happened, Chabad was hosting an impromptu challah bake that very night, in the merit and protection of Jews in Israel. The rabbi drove to Tarrytown to bring Mali. Surrounded by women she had never met, Mali joined the bake with joy and intensity, leading the group in the blessing over the separation of challah dough. Her despair lifted as she felt faith and sisterhood fill the room.

Separating challah is a time for heartfelt prayer. Alongside prayers for Israel and the IDF, Mali voiced her own: that she might find a way home soon.

The next morning, her prayer was answered. At 6 a.m., El Al emailed her a ticket for the first flight back to Israel - departing Motzei Shabbat (Saturday night). The Ehrenreichs welcomed Mali to spend Shabbat with them, offering warmth and calm before her journey home.

"I'm a strong woman who helps others," Mali said. "But in those days I felt sad and desperate. **When the rabbi and his wife opened their home and hearts to me, it felt as if G-d Himself had come down to uplift me.**"



Rooted in Faith, Growing Together: The Kodsis' Chabad Journey

SHLOMO & JUDY KODSI & FAMILY - VALLEY COTTAGE

In a world of shifting loyalties and fleeting commitments, it's refreshing to find people like **Shlomo and Judy Kodsi** - steadfast friends whose dedication to family, community, and faith runs deep.

The Kodsis have been **part of Chabad of The Nyacks since the very beginning.**

"We've been going since Shabbat services were in the rabbi's living room," recalls Shlomo. "Now that Chabad has its own center in Nyack, many of the same people are still there - but every week, new faces walk in too!"

A practicing attorney who enjoys kickboxing, Shlomo is struck by how many local Jews and visitors "seem to come out of the woodwork" to join. But he's not surprised.

"The rabbi is one of the most knowledgeable people I've met," he says. "He exudes such enthusiasm and energy for Judaism that it naturally rubs off on everyone around him. You inadvertently learn a lot just from being around him."

The couple's life is full and busy. They have three teenage children- two sons and a daughter. One son, now a high school senior, celebrated his bar mitzvah with Chabad. Judy, a devoted mother and homemaker, is now pursuing online studies in healthcare administration.

For her, **what stands out most about Chabad is the warmth and nonjudgmental spirit she's found there.**

"If you're just getting involved, there's no 'third degree' about how observant you are or what your background is," Judy says. "Everyone we've met is so friendly and open to different perspectives. We really enjoy going."

As for their feelings toward the Ehrenreichs, Shlomo put it simply. **"I can't say enough great things about them both. They've built something truly special here."**



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Meet Sarale Vigler:

BRINGING FRESH ENERGY TO CHABAD'S YOUTH PROGRAMS

Returning to her roots in Nyack, Sarale (Ehrenreich) Vigler is stepping into her new role as Youth Director with warmth, creativity, and a lifetime of Chabad experience. Raised in a home that prioritized community connections, she's now excited to bring that same spirit to the next generation.

You've grown up around Chabad your whole life. How has that shaped your approach to Jewish youth and community?

I've seen firsthand the power of personal relationships - meeting each person where they're at. That's something I learned from my parents and hope to bring into my own work.

What inspired you to take on the role of youth director?

I love children and working with children!

It's something I'd been considering, and then all the pieces just fell into place. After our daughter Sheina was born in August, we moved back to Rockland. My husband works in Rockland, and when the opportunity came up to step into this role, it just felt right. And, I can't wait to hit the ground running!

What experiences have prepared you to become a Youth Director?

Most recently, I was a preschool teacher in Brooklyn Heights. I've taught in Hebrew schools, including running the acclaimed Aleph Champ program. I coordinated events at C-Teen International. I've been a counselor for kids and teens and a teen camp director. I especially love connecting with teens - chilling, talking, exploring ideas. Additionally, I am currently working towards a bachelor's in Psychology with a minor in education.

What new programs are you excited to launch?

I'm thrilled to start a weekly JUDA afterschool enrichment program for grades K-7 — a fun space to learn about Judaism, make Jewish friends, and celebrate holidays. I look forward to organizing meetups for younger teens and tweens with fun activities and volunteering in the community. And I'm excited to start a "Mommy & Me" group for ages 0-2½, with music and sensory play.

Do you have favorite memories from growing up in your parents' Chabad House?

Definitely! When I was about ten, I ran the children's Shabbos program when Chabad was still in Chestnut Ridge, where we used to live. I looked forward to it every week. I've also always loved meeting new people. I was probably the most rambunctious one in the family — I was known for having no filter!

What are some of your hobbies and interests?

I love dancing, taking walks in nature, and meeting new people — which kind of comes naturally when you grow up with your family running a Chabad Center.

If you could share one message with every Jewish child, what would it be?

Judaism is something to live and celebrate, one step at a time.

Reach Sarale at: sarale@chabadnyack.org

