

CHESED COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT
MAY 2020

The Chesed Committee continues to have a regular schedule of deliveries for the each of the holidays to those who are homebound and/or living in senior residences; a Rosh Hashanah plate goes to each, and honey cakes get mailed to college students and those serving in the military. There was a great gathering of parents and committee members to make latkes for Chanukah, which resulted in happy kids and families for the many holiday parties at Temple as well as for our homebound elders. A hamantaschen-baking extravaganza was held with parents; this group's efficiency quotient is skyrocketing! All recipients are grateful to see the happy faces of deliverers: Mike and Ann Jacobson, Rena Roseman, Michele Howard, Susan Shwom, Carole Taut, Lisa and Angie Desberg, Andi, Scott, Adam and Zack Hannula. Beautiful cards are made by Amy Sherr.

The luncheon and special program that we held last Spring for the Greatest Generation was such a success, with almost 2 dozen people in attendance, that additional "Coffee Chats with Cantor" were scheduled. The Greatest Generation celebration featured tables festooned with hand-embroidered tablecloths done by the members of Sisterhood many decades ago, balloons tied to wooden shoe lasts from the Orenstein shoe factory, copies of Bertha Woodman's book, From the Hill to Main Street were made available, stories by our most esteemed first family, the Rosengard's, and by Stuart Mandell, a singalong with Cantor Vera, and a wall of old pictures and news articles uncovered by Don and Nancy...lots of memories and happy reunions and smiles....

In the Fall, Cantor Vera and Rabbinic Intern Jen Stevens led an informative workshop on Grief and Mourning, and Memorial Rituals. Stories, remembrances, and tears were shared, and then we became creative and painted rocks to be used in whatever format desired. For many, holding the rocks was a meaningful and comforting part of the Yizkor service during High Holidays. Some rocks went directly to the cemetery, to be placed on tombstones.

We held another challah baking class; members of the class donated some of their beautiful challot for our bereavement bags; what a generous gift to our bereaved families. Iris Adams continues to supply our bereavement bags with her very own delicious challot.

Sadly, we lost Janet Kopel this year. As the daughter of the Temple's first President, Janet was a tireless giver of her time and kindness. She and Allan had been sending out birthday cards for a number of years; Rena Roseman has agreed to take over this mitzvah.

Speaking of losses, the Covid-19 epidemic has resulted in postponing several programs that were in the planning; we will reschedule, as able, a time for the Religious School students to help us with Technology tune-ups, for Mary Crowe from Care Dimensions to present another program, for a very old and dear friend of mine to talk to us about the impact of antisemitism on ensuing generations of her family, and additional Coffee Chats with the Cantor. Also, to address the Covid situation, members of the committee plus others formed telephone check-in's to Seniors in our community.

I look forward to seeing all of you in person (as opposed to Zoom) soon!!!!

Be healthy, be safe,

Sharyn Russell