

Flatbush Focus



Yeshiva Bonim Lamokom celebrated a siyum on hilchos tefillah. Harav Yosef Savitsky, Rosh Yeshivah in Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, came to conduct the farher, at which the bachurim excelled. It was a true kiddush Hashem.

night, following the Shabbos *seudah*. Men and women are invited to join Rabbi Mizrachi at Khal Bnei Torah, where he will discuss the Jewish educational system.

On Shabbos morning Rabbi Mizrachi will join Khal Bais Mordechai for *davening*. Later that afternoon, at 4:45, Rabbi Mizrachi will speak to women only at Khal Adas Yeshurun on “The Prestige of Jewish Women.”

The closing session, for men only, will take place at 6:30, at Khal Tiferes Avraham, where Rabbi Mizrachi will explore the topic, “How to Stay Happily Married.” For more information, please call the JCC at (718) 407-1832 or email info@jccmp.org

Shavuos at the Brooklyn Jewish Experience

Shavuos, which celebrates *Mattan Torah*, is one of the most important Yamim Tovim, yet, astoundingly, an overwhelming number of Jews have never heard of it.

Reb Dovid Neiburg, one of the guest speakers for Shavuos at Brooklyn Jewish Xperience (BJX), Brooklyn’s *kiruv* center, shared his feelings: “So many open Jewish *neshamos* in Brooklyn — where can they go for inspiration and sincere exposure to authentic Judaism without feeling judged or out of place? Can such a place exist? The address is BJX at 2915 Avenue K. With such warmth, people cannot help but be attracted to what BJX has to offer, with Rabbi Fingerer at the center of this motivating force,” he said.

Rabbi Fingerer spoke passionately about Shavuos in a special BJX lecture, several days prior to Shavuos, and laid out the exciting program details.

The results of the BJX Shavuos-night program, held in the beautiful, new *kiruv* and Torah center, were astonishing. As Rabbi Fingerer says, “I was absolutely awestruck. It was *‘nes gadol hayah po’* — a miracle transpiring before my very own eyes.”

A delicious catered *seudah* was followed by an evening of learning and five different exciting *shurim*, spanning topics as fundamental as the veracity of the Oral Law and as esoteric as reincarnation. More than 50 students participated in the night of learning which concluded at 4 a.m. — over 50 *neshamos* that otherwise

would never have been exposed to the *kedushah* of *Mattan Torah*.

Mr. Yisroel (Jerry) Gross said, “To see so many eager Jewish souls willing to take a giant leap and step into a shul Shavous night was awesome. I watched them open their eyes, ears, and hearts, all willing to absorb the words of Torah from Sinai.”

Those who want to help BJX reach out to the precious *neshamos* of Brooklyn can help sponsor a program. Please call (646) 397-1544.

‘Filterthon’ Takes Flatbush By Storm

What do you get when dozens of talented technicians, concerned community *askanim* and lay leaders, and a community looking to purify their homes and protect their souls in advance of the holy Yom Tov of *Kabbalas HaTorah* gather in one tent? Why, a Filterthon!

Well over 1,600 Yidden came through the large tent that was erected outside Khal Veretzky in Flatbush last Sunday with desktop computers, laptops, phones, and other devices in tow, in need of filtering for proper internet usage.

The event, co-sponsored by *Hamodia*, was arranged by a few concerned activists who feel that the best way to help the community to protect their families is by offering professional-grade filtering solutions for their devices, with the added incentive of bringing the solutions to their doors — in this case outside the shul where thousands come through on a Sunday.

To this end, a large tent was erected on Avenue L, with stations manned by trained technicians, each station geared to different kinds of devices. From 8 a.m. until midnight, they offered solutions and installed many various kinds of filters, according to need.

Hamodia sat down with the people behind Venishmartem, the powerhouse organization behind this Filterthon, the Filterthon in Boro Park one year ago, and hopefully many more as long as one Jewish home still possesses open internet.

“The goal of Venishmartem is to solve the internet problem at its root, by providing effective and easy-to-use filtering solutions for *Klal Yisrael*. Venishmartem aims

to help tens of thousands of Yidden from all over the world to install effective filtering in the coming years. Venishmartem’s team of technicians researches every existing up-to-date solution for every type of device,” Yaakov, the organization’s founder, told *Hamodia*.

Venishmartem has since its inception been on the lookout for effective, sophisticated solutions, and after constant experimentation have arrived at the VCF (Venishmartem Cloud Filter) solution, complete with a call center which, for a minimal monthly fee, provides a full and tailored service to each customer.

On the heels of their success at the Boro Park event last year, as soon as a sponsor was found for this Flatbush event, they came here.

Yaakov relates one event that expresses the effectiveness of the Filterthon: “One guy came with seven devices! Two laptops, a



Harav Sholom Noach Landau, Rosh Yeshivah, Yeshiva Ohr Shraga and Mesivta Bais Aron Tzvi Veretzky, with the guests of honor at the yeshivah’s 28th Annual Dinner at the Dyker Beach golf course.

few moments of my sharing a few stories with him, he promptly agreed to filter all his devices,” Yechezkel told *Hamodia*.

Despite having spent many years in the arena, Yaakov is nevertheless inspired. “It was so inspiring to see how many Yidden from all walks of life came to get protection on their devices.”

Talented computer technicians from our community volunteering at the Venishmartem Filterthon, where over 1,600 internet filters were installed on a gamut of devices.

Harav Yochanan Kugelman, a well-known *talmid chacham* and *masmid* who is also a technology whiz, sacrificing time from his busy schedule to volunteer at the Venishmartem Filterthon last Sunday.

tablet, a phone, a notebook and two gaming devices... We sat him down with one of our top volunteers who worked with him for over an hour and got all his devices filtered.”

Meanwhile, Yechezkel, a psychologist with addiction counseling training, and his partner at Venishmartem relate his highlight of the day: “A father came in and asserted that in his opinion, filtering isn’t necessary. After a

filter will do. This whole situation has to change. We must ensure that the coming generation doesn’t even have a question about whether to use internet without a filter. Just like *frum* families today don’t have a television, it should be understood that no *frum* person uses unfiltered internet.

“Our children will not be frustrated that the filter blocks the things they like — because they never will have had the experience of using the internet without a filter in the first place. It should become a given for every *frum* Yid that unfiltered internet is a danger to the very fabric of Jewish life. The next generation of *frum* Yidden must grow up with the concept of filtered internet as a basic prerequisite to being an *erlicher Yid*,” he says.

What is their petition to the community? “We need your help!” says Yechezkel, co-founder. “Get in touch with us so we can bring this campaign worldwide, and effect the change that Yaakov speaks of.”

To those who want to answer the call of “*Mi laShem eilai*,” Yaakov can be contacted at info@filterthon.com or at (646) 600-8100 Ext. 3.

As Rabbi Shain told *Hamodia*: “One of the reasons for the *min-hag* to eat *milchigs* on Shavuos is that the utensils of *Am Yisrael* were rendered *treif* due to receiving the *mitzvah* of *basar b’chalav* at *Kabbalas HaTorah*. What we saw today was people of all stripes coming to, *l’havdil*, ‘*kasher*’ their ‘*keilim*’ in order to receive the Torah on Shavuos in a more elevated and purified manner.”

As a public service, Venishmartem filter guides are available free of charge, describing the many different types of filters in detail, for many types of devices. There is an accompanying CD that allows you download protection directly, for a computer or laptop. Rabbanim and principals are welcome to call (347) 869-7331.

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Hamodia would like to include your news and pictures from the general Flatbush area. If you have any newsworthy items you would like to see included, please email flatbushfocus@hamodia.com.