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PaLs

The Newsletter for Friends of Phone and Learn

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IN THIS ISSUE

Finding PaL

At the Jewish Living Expo 2012

PaL dons a kilt

Yehuda Wittenberg joins the Giffnock community for Shabbos

Building Bridges

Working with Tribe and Partners in Torah in Jerusalem

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PaL is dedicated in lasting memory
of Sammy Homburger ז"ל

Finding PaL at the Jewish Living Expo 2012



The PaL team at the Expo: l to r

Dov Harris, Danny Binstock, Tanya Hackenbroch, Leah Heimann, Judy Silkoff, Avi Levison

PaL, Phone and Learn, maintained a very high profile at the Jewish News & Media Group's Jewish Living Expo on Sunday March 18th 2012. Phone and Learn exhibited under the banner of "Where will you find your PaL?" at the event, which attracted people to Wembley Stadium from across the spectrum of the Anglo-Jewish community. The Expo saw thousands of people browsing the exhibits, collecting samples and literature to store in the handy PaL bags the organisation was distributing. In addition to handing out thousands of bags, which were available in a range of five different, exclusive designs, PaL ran a raffle with a fantastic top

prize, which attracted a great deal of interest (see side bar). For most of the day the PaL stand was crowded with people asking questions about the programme while collecting their goody bags and handing in their raffle entries.

Visitors to the PaL stand included the Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks and his wife Lady Sacks, as well as PaL's very own "asktherabbi" Rabbi Harvey Belovski and Executive Director of Tribe Rabbi Andrew Shaw. Volunteers for the organisation wearing trademark PaL t-shirts mingled with the visitors, and posters, banners and of course the seven-foot PaL inflatable phonebox could also be found at different locations within the stadium.

Programme Coordinator Judy Silkoff commented: "It was very exciting to be part of the Jewish Living Expo which brought together so many different facets of our community. It was particularly gratifying to see PaL bags on people's shoulders wherever I turned. Many people whom I spoke with on the day were thrilled to learn more about our programme, and were amazed that such a high quality Jewish learning service was available to them at their convenience and completely free of charge."

Several 'Expo learning partnerships' have already been established following the successful event. 📞

Winner Profile



Pictured
Prize winner
Susan Pearl with
Programme
Coordinator
Judy Silkoff

The prize... An iPhone 4s, co-sponsored by Rose Communications, Kindle 3G and £100 of Amazon vouchers - a perfect start to 'phoning' and 'learning'!

The winner... Susan Pearl, a mother-of-two from Hendon

At the expo to... "Research ideas for my son's Barmitzvah in November."

Noticed the PaL stand... "Because of the big red phone box!"

Thoughts on winning... "I couldn't believe it; I've never won anything before in my life!"

Thoughts on PaL... "The expo was my introduction to the PaL programme and I think it's a fantastic idea, particularly because you can do it without leaving the comfort of your own home. I'm a very active member of my shul (Hendon United Synagogue) and attend shiurim and learn one-to-one there. But PaL would be perfect for my husband and I will be encouraging him to sign up!"



PaL Dons a Shabbos Kilt...

One of the main advantages of the **PaL** programme is its intrinsic flexibility. Indeed, one of the organisation's prime goals is to ensure that every Jew in the UK has the opportunity to explore their heritage and learn more about Yiddishkeit, regardless of their proximity to one of the country's larger, central Jewish communities.

Recently, **PaL** trustee Yehuda Wittenberg was invited to spend a Shabbos with the Giffnock community in Glasgow by its indefatigable leader, Rabbi Moshe Rubin. Yehuda and his family were hosted by the shul's assistant Rabbi, Gary Wayland, and were guests of honour at a sit down Kiddush

attended by over 100 men and women of the wider Glasgow community. Yehuda explained the premise of the **PaL** programme to those in attendance, inviting them to register for a one-to-one telephone learning tutor in the Jewish topic of their choice.

Interest in the community was piqued by **PaL**'s innovative 'Wherever, Whenever, Whatever' structure and many people spoke to Yehuda after the Kiddush to find out more about it. A follow up initiative at the shul's shavuos lunch allowed community members to take away tangible information about **PaL** in the form of a cheesecake recipe card.

Rabbi Rubin commented: "The most important skill one needs in order to appreciate and care about something is being educated and knowledgeable about that subject. If we want to encourage the building of community leaders, shuls and caring Jews then they need to be educated about Judaism. Working with **PaL** is vital for a community that cares about and is conscientious of Judaism."

PaL Programme Coordinator Judy Silkoff added: "We are thrilled to be working in close conjunction with Giffnock shul and would invite leaders and Rabbonim in other provincial communities to contact us for similar initiatives." 



In May 2012 trustee **Danny Binstock** and **PaL** partner **Alan Shorrnick** both completed the Tough Mudder challenge to raise money for Phone and Learn. It's not too late to donate - www.justgiving.co.uk/danny-binstock and www.justgiving.co.uk/AlanShorrnick



In May, as in previous years, **PaL** was invited to speak to British gap year students at the Tribe 'Closing the Gap' dinner in Israel. Some 35 young men and women signed up to learn under the organisation's auspices during the course of the evening, which was held at the OU Centre in Jerusalem. The teenagers, who are coming to the end of their year-long learning programmes, will be contacted by **PaL** and matched with tutors during the summer break before they begin their university courses in the UK.

While in Israel, Programme Coordinator Judy Silkoff also visited a number of seminaries, including Shearim, Meor Hatorah and Michlala Yerushalayim, to speak to girls about signing up as partners and tutors. A special meeting was also arranged at the BYA seminary in Har Nof to bring together girls studying at institutions all over Jerusalem. Some 20 young women registered as tutors during this one event alone.

At the conclusion of her trip, Mrs Silkoff paid a visit to the offices maintained by sister organisation Partners in Torah at the Aish building in the old city. A delegation of Partners in Torah staff members attended the meeting, which proved to be a useful forum for exchanging tips and ideas. Mrs Silkoff commented: "Meeting with the Partners in Torah staff was an invaluable opportunity for **PaL**. As a result of the discussions that took place we have been able to augment our resource bank with an online Hebrew reading course and are looking to implement several other ideas in the near future." 



Phone and Learn (PaL) is a division of Partners in Torah*, USA

www.partnersintorah.org, a unique Jewish identity-building initiative committed to fostering unity among Jews of all backgrounds. **PaL** matches Jews who want to know more about their heritage with a friendly, knowledgeable tutor for an hour a week of Jewish study and discussion, over the phone.

*Partners in Torah is a project of Torah Umesorah.

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