

Opportunities for “Gemilut Chasadim” (Acts of Loving Kindness) at BHSS

- **Center for Food Action:**

Michelle Mitzvah Group has a year round collection for this Mahwah food pantry. Food is always welcome and there are monthly “theme” campaigns. In conjunction with B’nai Mitzvahs, please always request that your guests bring a donation to your services’. Campaigns for food donations outside of BHSS can count towards community service requirements. Contact: Kathy Liebman at Kpk1@aol.com

- **Soup Kitchen at Christ Episcopal Church in Suffern:**

Michelle Mitzvah Group is the liaison with this organization and is assigned Sunday lunches throughout the year. Members of MMG commit to providing the food (often donations can be gotten) and serving lunch to approximately 40 people. Volunteers are always welcome to assist or accept a Sunday on their own. Contact: Steve Simon at steveoum@verizon.net

- **People to People:**

People to People is Rockland County’s largest food pantry working to help struggling Rocklanders through difficult times with dignity through its programs including: Food Pantry, Clothes Closet, Back To School With Dignity, and Project Joy!

A great opportunity for kids is to help with new weekend feeding program for children called “It’s in the Bag”. Last year, People to People provided assistance to nearly 14,000 Rockland households. Contact: Betsy Rodman at betsy@peopletopeopleinc.org

- **Oasis – For Women and Children:**

An organization located in Paterson dedicated to feeding and clothing needy women and children. They also offer educational resources and training towards obtaining meaningful employment. Michelle Mitzvah Group supports this organization in many ways: collecting needed clothing, donating gift cards, participating in holiday gift giving, serving lunch at Oasis, collecting donated food from retailers and delivering it to Oasis, tutoring the women and children, and whatever else they need from us. For B’nai Mitzvahs, any useful collection of items can count towards community service requirements. Contact: Ilyse Smith at mmgbhss@gmail.com

- **Tomorrows Children’s Fund:**

The Tomorrows Children’s Fund was founded by a group of committed parents to help their children and others like them with cancer and serious blood disorders. With the help of friends like you, today, TCF provides a warm, healthy and loving environment for children in treatment; a full scope of services to relieve families’ emotional and financial stress; the very best possible medical care; and funding for research on

these diseases. All of which confirms our belief that through hope, hard work and heartfelt generosity, extraordinary things are possible. There is a long list of items that can be collected to donate to TCF (all must be brand new) such as: cartoon band aids, arts and craft materials, holiday decorations for treatment areas, games, toys, stuffed animals, model kits, tapes, video games, and food products for the TCF pantry. Any fund raising activity is also welcomed; Walk-a-thon, Dance-a-thon, Bowl-a-thon for example. Contact: Lisa Lamster at lisalams@optonline.net

- **Hackensack University Medical Center Child Life Services:**

Child Life Services are healthcare professionals whose work addresses psychosocial issues related to illness and healthcare interactions for infants, children, adolescents, and their families. This program needs gently used early childhood books and new baby toys, organizing a drive for these items would be appreciated.

Contact: Ellen Goldring at egoldring@hackensackumc.org

- **Beth Haverim Shir Shalom's Community Garden:**

Every Spring BHSS plants a vegetable garden with the produce going either to Center for Food Action or the Soup Kitchen in Suffern. Everyone is welcome to volunteer (no experience

needed). Normally volunteers gather on Sunday mornings about 9am to do what is needed in the garden from May to October; other times during the week can be arranged. Contact: Marla Muni at marlasm6@optonline.net

- **Rockland Jewish Family Service:**

Is a not-for-profit, non-sectarian community benefit agency. Our mission, based on core Jewish values, is to strengthen the physical and emotional well-being of adults, children and families. Our community-based services enable individuals to overcome a wide range of personal challenges and develop coping strategies that will lead to richer, more meaningful lives. Contact: www.rjfs.org/volunteering

- **Pascack Valley Meals on Wheels, Inc.:**

Is a non-profit organization that provides meals to people in Northern Bergen County who are unable to shop or cook for themselves due to age or disability. For more than 42 years, they have devoted their energy to passionately advocating for the hungry. There are several volunteer opportunities such as creating Arts & Crafts to deliver with the meals, writing stories about the clients' lives, and fund raising. Contact: director@pvmealsonwheels.org

- **Mahwah Youth Baseball All-Star Program:**

The Mahwah Baseball and Softball Recreation Programs have joined together to offer an "All-Star" Program designed for special needs children between the ages of 6 through

18. This is a non-competitive co-ed program to introduce the basic skills of the game and work on fundamentals in a safe environment while having lots of fun. There are no strikes and outs and children hit a ball off a tee or pitched by a coach based on the child's skill level. "Buddies" from ages 12 to 21 and adult volunteers work with your child and adapt the program based on the individual child's needs. Open to both Mahwah and non-Mahwah residents. Contact: www.mahwahyouthbaseball.org/all-star-program-for-special-needs.html

- **Make Some Noise, Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation:**

Was established by a child with cancer with one purpose in mind: to fund pediatric cancer research. To that end, the foundation serves as a vehicle to secure private funding to distribute to research facilities and promote awareness through its fund raising activities. The designation of funds to various research facilities is cancer specific and based on the foundation's annual evaluation of the latest research. Raise funds for this impactful organization for Community Service. Contact: www.makenoise4kids.org

- **MEVO (Mahwah Environmental Volunteer Organization):**

The Mahwah Environmental Volunteers Organization was founded in the summer of 2008 by a bunch of nature loving teenagers who wanted to make a difference. We envision a

sustainable world with enough resources for everyone, where people don't live in toxic surroundings and where everybody considers their impact on the Earth. MEVO carries out volunteer work to promote environmental sustainability throughout local communities. We plant trees, clean-up polluted areas, rehabilitate soil erosion, start natural agriculture farms, organize electronic recycling drives, educate students on recycling, distribute recycling bins and give away compact fluorescent light bulbs. We want to get people involved in improving their society and working to solve our worst environmental problems. Contact: www.mevoearth.org

- **Ramapo Bergen Animal Refuge, Inc. (RBARI):**

Ramapo Bergen Animal Refuge Inc. believes that all animals have a natural right to humane treatment including proper care, respect, and safe shelter. Our primary mission is to provide sanctuary while finding permanent, loving homes for the many animals that come to us (including feral, elderly, handicapped, and formerly abused animals). Animals in our care receive lots of love in addition to shelter, food, and medical care. Ramapo Bergen Animal Refuge Inc. adheres to a "NO-KILL" policy, giving animals an open-ended stay at a warm, safe place until loving homes can be found. There are many ways that you can help at the shelter without actually volunteering "hands on" with the animals. Contact: RBARI at 201-337-5180 or www.rbaari.org/volunteer

- **Caring About the Strays (C.A.T.S.):**

Since 1995, Caring About The Strays (C.A.T.S.) in Westwood has worked to find homeless and unwanted companion animals in the Pascack Valley area loving "forever homes." They place them in temporary foster homes where the animals receive healthy food, medical care and socialization to ultimately make them wonderful family pets. C.A.T.S. is also passionate about educating the public on the importance of spay/neuter to decrease the numbers of homeless cats and dogs. Volunteer opportunities are fostering animals in your home, working in the C.A.T.S. shop in Westwood, creating winter shelters for feral cats, collecting food and liter, creating foster gift baskets and raising money. Contact: www.care4strays.org

- **P.A.T.C.H. (Pet Adoption through Caring Hands):**

This is a non-profit private organization, which operates a cat shelter in northern New Jersey. Our doors are open to stray kittens or cats needing a home, food, or medical attention. It is our goal to find suitable, loving homes for all of our shelter's feline friends. We will NEVER destroy a shelter cat simply because there are too many. This is our commitment to these wonderful animals who enrich our lives. There are no paid employees at PATCH, only dedicated volunteers. Contact: (973) 835-7202

- **Share Your Soles:**

Share Your Soles has brought *tens of thousands* of pairs of shoes to desperately impoverished people throughout the world: Central America, Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, Africa, Eastern Europe and the United States. Our program has helped people living on Native American Reservations and in the Appalachias, as well as India, Ecuador, Peru, Haiti, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Cameroon, Nicaragua, Tanzania and Ghana. No boundaries. Shoes are given in a way that respected and honored the dignity of those who received them. Sanitized with hot water and bleach. Polished. Sorted. Every person who receives a pair of shoes gets a clean pair in good condition. Organize a shoe drive. Contact: www.shareyoursoles.org

- **Leveling the Playing Field:**

Often for struggling families the cost of the sporting equipment for their kids is a barrier to participation. This organization is all about turning used, un-needed sporting equipment in to opportunities for kids to participate. Organize an equipment drive for this organization for your Community Service project. Contact: www.levelingtheplayingfield.org

- **Let's Play it Forward:**

This is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization started by a group of teens from Westchester, NY. We collect and donate used sports equipment to children and organizations in need. To date we have collected **20,558** pieces of gently used sports equipment. It all began when a few lifelong friends realized that they had an

abundance of unused sports equipment in their garages. We started calling several organizations to inquire whether they could make use of this equipment, and the responses were overwhelming. Let's Play it Forward was founded in February 2012, and our mission is to help charitable youth organizations and individuals in need to obtain the gear necessary to play the sports they love. We collect gently used sporting goods at organized events and through other donations. Organize a drive for used sports equipment. Contact: www.letsplayitforward.org

- **Footloose:**

Footloose will collect and donate dance shoes to the Boys and Girls Club of America, Newark, NJ who partners with the NJ Performing Arts Center and Alvin Ailey to provide dance instruction to under-privileged children in Newark. Organize a drive for dance shoes. Contact: www.footloosemission.com

- **Dance Donations:**

We are a non-profit organization, in collaboration with Brett Raphael and Connecticut Ballet, that solicits and distributes boys' and girls' dance costumes to less fortunate children and dance schools in the tri-state area. Contact: www.dancedonations.org

- **Operation Prom:**

Established in 2005, Operation Prom was originally established to help low-income students attend their Proms by providing free Prom dresses and tuxedo rentals. It has since expanded to

include regular donations of clothing and school supplies to students who are sick, homeless or live in shelters and do not have family to assist them. Organize a Prom Dress drive. Contact: www.operationprom.org or Neisha@HelpPROM.org

- **Pedals for Progress:**

Every year, affluent Americans buy 18 million new bicycles and discard millions of old ones, abandoning many more unused in basements, sheds, and garages. Most of these end up in our already overburdened landfills. Meanwhile, poor people overseas need cheap, non-polluting transportation to get to jobs, markets, customers, and schools. Pedals for Progress has received, processed and donated over 142,00 bicycles and 2,800 Sewing Machines. Used sewing machines and \$10.8 million in new spare parts to partner charities in 38 developing world countries. Pedals for Progress isn't just donating used bicycles: It's also helping developing world economies by promoting self-sustaining bicycle repair businesses. Collect used bicycles for Community Service. Contact: www.p4p.org

- **Nothing but Nets:** is a global grassroots campaign to raise awareness and funding to fight malaria, a leading cause of death among children in Africa. *Nothing But Nets* allows everyone from students to CEOs, bishops to basketball players to join the fight against malaria by giving \$10 to send a net and save a life. www.nothingbutnets.net

- **Organize a letter writing campaign:**

If you feel strongly about an important social or political issue, organize your friends, family, and colleagues to write letters to your politicians (Mayor, Governor, Senator, Congressman, President). Contact: Rebecca McVeigh at 201-512-1983

- **Other resources-**

- Michelle Mitzvah Group at BHSS
mmg@bhss@gmail.com
- www.kidsthatdogood.com
- volunteermatch.org
- Volunteer Center of Bergen County
www.bergenvolunteers.org
- The Good People Fund www.goodpeoplefund.org
- The Giving Effect www.thegivingeffect.com