

‘Miracles Do Happen’

Organ transplant recipient to be honored by Chabad of Great Neck

By SHARYN PERLMAN

“You hear all the time about stories of people who go to the Ohel [the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s grave] and have all kinds of miracles happen, and you

IN THE COMMUNITY

think they’re *bubbe meises* [old wives’ tales], but this one is real,” says George Zobel.

Zobel knows about miracles. In December, he was at death’s door, lying in the Cleveland Clinic, barely conscious, nearly succumbing to advanced liver disease. His only hope for survival was a liver transplant.

Several months before complications from his disease landed him in Cleveland, Zobel, 55, a Great Neck resident, asked several local rabbis if they knew of any agencies that could help him find a suitable liver donor.

Enter Rabbi Yoseph Geisinsky, spiritual leader of the Chabad of Great Neck. The Zobel and Geisinsky children both attended North Shore Hebrew Academy together and the parents became friendly. So when Zobel’s health started to fail, Geisinsky was one of the rabbis he contacted. And it was

Nicole, the 44-year-old woman, also from Great Neck, who donated her liver to Zobel. Nicole, who was childless and is survived by her mother and brother, was dying in North Shore University Hospital when Zobel was in Cleveland. Geisinsky knew about Zobel’s condition and intervened.

The rabbi says that “Nicole’s mother and brother felt very positive about helping and saving other lives [in addition to Zobel, another person received a kidney from Nicole]. It’s really a mitzvah to save lives, an opportunity to do something great,” adding that the process was done “within Halachic and legal parameters.”

Zobel says that “as hard as it’s been for Nicole’s mother, she is happy that at least people gained life from Nicole’s death by donating her liver and kidney.” The Zobels have stayed in touch with Nicole’s family. “In



George Zobel (left) is alive today because he received a liver transplant. Rabbi Yoseph Geisinsky (right) made the “shidduch” between Zobel and the liver.

**‘The shidduch [between the liver and the recipient] was made by Hashem; it was a match made in heaven. I was just the shaliach, the messenger.’
—Rabbi Yoseph Geisinsky**

Slavaticki gently suggested that Zobel visit the Ohel, saying, “George, whenever you want to go, I’ll drop everything and take you.” Zobel never took the offer.

In the fall of 2011, Slavaticki, now married with a baby, was in New York just for the day. He called Zobel, who was by then very sick. Zobel said to Slavaticki, “I think it’s time to go to the Ohel.” They went, both praying for a miracle. Two months later, when Zobel was at death’s door in Cleveland, Slavaticki flew up from Ft. Lauderdale and

prayed by Zobel’s bedside. Nicole died on Jan. 2; Zobel’s new life began

on Jan. 3.

Zobel, who is “not a religious person, but I’m very traditional,” says, “Thank God, today I’m totally fine. I look better than I’ve looked in a long, long time. I’m totally able to live my life with no restrictions.”

Geisinsky would agree with that assessment, adding one thought, “I think George now has to live a life that’s not only his own life, but he has to complete the life of Nicole. He needs to make the world a better place.”

Also being honored at the Chabad of Great Neck dinner will be Abe and Afsaneh Daniels, who will receive the Chesed (Kindness) Award, for their commitment to the Chabad of Great Neck Friendship Circle. Other honorees include Curtis Katz (Founders Award), Jerry and Mojgan Kahen (Builders Award),

continued on page 23

**‘As hard as it’s been for Nicole’s mother, she is happy that at least people gained life from Nicole’s death by donating her liver and kidney.’
—George Zobel,
liver transplant recipient**

Geisinsky who made the “shidduch” between Zobel and the gift of a new liver he received just five months ago, on Jan. 3, at Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York.

Zobel and his wife, Doreen, will receive the Miracle of Life Award on June 19 at the Chabad of Great Neck Annual Dinner, celebrating 14 years of excellence at the Silverstein Hebrew Academy and seven years of The Friendship Circle, which helps children with disabilities.

Reflecting, Zobel says that when he thanked Geisinsky for making the *shidduch*, the rabbi replied, “The *shidduch* was made by Hashem; it was a match made in heaven. I was just the *shaliach*, the messenger.”

Geisinsky knows the family of

fact, we had her mother over for Shabbat dinner recently,” says Zobel.

As often happens, a miracle’s journey does not travel in a straight line. As Zobel explains, the twists and turns of the miracle that today allows him to enjoy life with Doreen, his children and granddaughter, involve other people — especially one Rabbi Chaim Slavaticki, of Chabad of Ft. Lauderdale Beach.

Some nine years ago, Slavaticki, then an 18-year-old descendant of a prominent Chabad family in Belgium who was doing outreach in New York, found his way into Zobel’s Manhattan office, gently coaxing him to put on tefillin. The young man came back often and, over the years, Zobel befriended Slavaticki and came to “think of him as my son.”

Your Home in the Hamptons



90 Guest rooms • Short Walk to Shul • Weddings • Corporate Events



91 Hill Street Southampton, NY 11968 631.283.6500
southamptoninn.com

Find us on Facebook Twitter

Happen

continued from page 17

Congressman Steve Israel (National Leadership Award), Councilwoman Anna and Darren Kaplan (Community Service Award), and Asher and Lauren Abesera (Young Leadership Award).

Abe Daniels, who is receiving the Chesed Award in recognition of his commitment to the Chabad of Great Neck Friendship Circle, says, "I am involved with the disabled children. The community needs Chabad to help these children to be able to do simple tasks so they can be part of the general society." The Daniels do not have anyone in their family who has special needs, but Mr. Daniels says he supports the Friendship Circle because "the children touched my heart."

The Daniels, who are "not religious, we are traditional Persian Jews who believe very strongly in Judaism and Zionism," according to Mr. Daniels, have been involved with the Chabad for 25 years and, as he says, "I believe in their cause and support them

with a full heart."

Daniels, 67, is president of Abraham Daniels Real Estate Investors, Inc., in Great Neck. The Daniels are the parents of two grown sons, Adam and Aaron, and have been Great Neck residents since 1980. They met Rabbi Geisinsky in 1985, "when he just came to Great Neck," says Mr. Daniels. "He was a very sincere and likeable individual, and I really believe in him. He loves to serve the community."

This is the second time the Daniels are being honored by the Chabad. Mr. Daniels explains, "I am not a public person, but since Rabbi Geisinsky asked, I couldn't refuse him. I want to truly honor Rabbi Geisinsky for the impossible task that he was able to do — creating a Chabad. He became very successful and I wish him a lot of luck."

The Chabad of Great Neck Annual Dinner will be held on June 19, 6:30 p.m., at Temple Israel of Great Neck, 108 Old Mill Road. For more information or to make a reservation for the dinner call 516.487.4554, e-mail dinner22@chabadgn.com or visit www.chabadgn.com.



JOIN US

**Village of Kings Point
Candidates Debate**
co-hosted by League of Women Voters of Nassau County
& Kings Point Civic Association

**Monday June 11th 7pm-9pm
Kennedy School Auditorium
1A Grassfield Road**

CANDIDATES

listed in alphabetical order
VILLAGE OF KINGS POINT MAYOR

Michael C. Kalnick (i)
Margie Sasson

**VILLAGE OF KINGS POINT TRUSTEES
SELECT (2)**

Freydoun (Fred) Elnekaveh
David Harounian (i)
Sheldon Kwiat (i)
David Schifter

KINGS POINTERS & ENTIRE GREAT NECK COMMUNITY INVITED TO ATTEND
QUESTIONS for candidates can be submitted to:

kpeca11024@gmail.com

League of Women Voters will review & make final selection of questions

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



SOUGHT AFTER RED CREEK AREA \$499,000

Hampton Bays - Better Than New Renovated 3 Level Splanh With Heated In Ground Pool Located Within Walking Distance To Sandy Peconic Bay! Open Floor Plan With 4 Bedrooms, 4 Tiled Baths, Cac, Central Vacuum, Hardwood Floors. Energy Efficient Tankless On Demand Gas Heating System. Wired For Stereo, Surveillance And Alarm Systems. Maintenance Free Exterior And Large Poolside Entertainment Patio. Overlooks 39+ Acre Wooded Preserve Plus Access Hiking and Mountain Biking Trails, Asking \$499,000

Contact Listing Agent: Anthony
Lubrano
631-728-1116 Ext 14



BOAT, SWIM, FISH" at \$ 999,913 Hampton Bays

Rare 3 Family Mini Waterfront Compound Boasts Private Beach, Floating Dock, Tiki Bar And More. Redone Luxury 4 Bedroom, 3 Bath Main House Directly On Water, Cac, High Hat Lighting, Wide Board Floors, High End Appliances, Finished Basement, Lipa Gas Heat. Plus Renovate The 'Legal' 2 Story Water View House Plus Separate Cottage. Prime Location With Direct Access To Shinnecock Canal, Shinnecock Bay, Peconic Bay, Atlantic Ocean And Beaches By Land Or Sea. Asking \$999,913.

Contact Listing Agent: Anthony Lubrano



BAYFRONT COTTAGE - DUNE ROAD WESTHAMPTON BEACH \$1,100,000

Bayfront Beach Cottage Modest 3 Bedroom On 3 Plus Acres, Fronting On Quantuck Canal With Wetland And Quantuck Bay Views. Use As Is Or Tear It Down And Build Your Dream House Here. Stroll Over The Dunes To Ocean Beaches. Asking \$1,100,000

Contact Listing Agent: Anthony Lubrano 631-728-1116. Ext 14



**Anthony Lubrano
Managing Broker**

Compass East Realty

10 West Montauk Highway
Hampton Bays, New York 11946
Office: (631) 728-1116 Ext. 14
Cellular (631) 255-8700
Facsimile: (631) 728-1012