

THE JEWISH ADVOCATE®

Established 1902

July 10, 2015

Home News Opinions & Commentary Community Arts & Entertainment Guide to Boston Archives About Us Advertise Contact Us

DONATE | SUBSCRIBE | CLASSIFIED ORDER Advertising: INDEX | GENERAL | SYNAGOGUES | MARKET PLACE | REAL ESTATE | CLASSIFIEDS | DONATE

News

Top News | Local News | Israel News | Candle Lighting Times | Suggest a story topic | Submit feedback

Share / Save

Providing dignity one bar of soap at a time

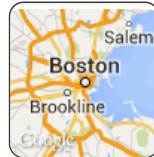
Hope and Comfort distributes toiletries to people in need
By Alexandra Lapkin
Advocate staff



Feingold, on right, donates nearly 2,900 infant toiletry items to Cradles to Crayons in Brighton.

When it comes to helping underprivileged people, food and clothing are the items that usually come to mind. Hygiene products like toothpaste, soap, and shampoo, are almost as important, but often are forgotten in charitable giving.

Find nearby stories



News Bayou

when his daughter Grace turned two, and he and his wife Loren decided to ask for donations to the children's charity, Cradles to Crayons, in lieu of gifts. Feingold and his family are members of Temple Shir Tikva in Wayland. He said the Jewish value of *tzedakah* (charity) helped shape who he is and his desire to help out those in need. "We are lucky, our kids are lucky; they have many things others may not have," said Feingold, who also has a nine-year-old son, Kenny. "We thought, 'How many more presents could they possibly need?'"

In addition to toys and clothing, guests turned up at Grace's birthday party with soap, shampoo, baby wipes, and other toiletries. Soon after, Feingold got a call from a social worker, who thanked him for the contribution and told him about the great need for hygiene items in poor communities.

Children and teens with no access to hygiene products are at risk for bullying, are often too embarrassed to go to school and engage in social activities, and end up suffering in isolation. "Positive feelings towards oneself can be difficult to achieve without the ability to look or feel clean. Think about how you feel after a hot shower or after you brush your teeth," Feingold wrote on his website, hopeandcomfort.org. The organization's tagline is "Providing dignity one bar of soap at a time."

Soon after the birthday party, Feingold began donating more toiletries to various organizations in Boston. His first big donation came later that same year, when he gave 250 tubes of toothpaste to Jewish Family & Children's Service (JF&CS). The following year, in 2011, Hope and Comfort received its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. The organization has been growing steadily since, hitting a milestone of 70,000 donated items and moving from Feingold's garage to a storage space in Newton at the end of last year.

For Feingold, his nonprofit is a family endeavor. Grace and Kenny help out with packing and sorting items at the storage facility. "As we've gotten bigger and began to help more people, I think they have an appreciation for what we're trying to do," Feingold said.

From his synagogue's rabbi, Neal Gold, Feingold found out about the Good People Fund (GPF), a Jewish philanthropy which funds various organizations across the United States and Israel. In addition to a financial contribution, GPF also provides guidance and networking opportunities. Hope and Comfort received an opening grant of \$7,500 from GPF, while relying on individual donations for the rest of its \$100,000 annual budget.

Poll

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders is Jewish. In the upcoming presidential primaries would you vote for him for that reason?:

- Yes. His positions on issues resonate with me as a Jew.
- No. A candidate's policies and politics, not religion, are what matter to me.
- Undecided. I would like to hear more from him.

Vote

Simchah-Celebration

Sharing your Simchah – Celebrations with the Community

Community

HONORABLE Mentschen

Send us your photos along...

Calendars

Community Calendar
Singles Calendar

Candle Lighting Times

PARSHAT PINCHAS

BOSTON	8:04
FALL RIVER	8:02
LOWELL	8:06
SPRINGFIELD	8:09
WORCESTER	8:07
PORTLAND, MAINE	8:05
MANCHESTER, N.H.	8:08



ERUV STATUS:

BOSTON	781-446-9797
MALDEN	781-322-5686
SHARON	781-695-0505

Parenting

A divorced dad treasures his time with his daughter

This past Father's Day, I took my daughter for the...

SUBSCRIBE NOW
THE JEWISH ADVOCATE.

BUY REPRINTS



CEMETERY LOTS

Sharon Memorial Park
Erez Shalom, Sect 3
Lot 264
Only 2 left
\$5,000 for both
978-525-3558
Call after 7:30 p.m.

CEMETERY LOTS

Sharon Memorial Park
Selling Six Lots
Prime Space
Mount Nebo Section
Purchase in lots
of 2, 4 or 6
Call for Details
954-980-3558
sebfinn@bellsouth.net



Feingold receives at least one request a day for toiletries through his online request form from individuals, shelters, schools, and charities. "Items like soap, shampoo, toothpaste, and deodorant are so basic and they're often overlooked by the general public," Feingold said. Personal care products are not covered by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), leaving many people who live below the poverty line having to choose between food and soap and toothpaste.

Hope and Comfort distributes toiletries through two programs: Stock the Shelves brings about 1000 of these items each month to seven food pantries in and around Boston, including JF&CS' Family Table; while Soap for Hope, in partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston, focuses exclusively on children's organizations and schools. The hygiene kits given out by the Soap for Hope program are also used in health and wellness classes in Boston Public Schools to teach the importance of hygiene.

Feingold first began collecting toiletries by buying them himself and receiving donations from volunteers. Now that his nonprofit has gained momentum, most of the toiletries are donated by manufacturers and retailers, and with the help of charity drives in schools.

Feingold, who earned an MBA from Harvard Business School and works full time at Fidelity Investments, runs Hope and Comfort in his spare time. He hired his first full time employee, Julie Williams, a year ago. Williams has an MBA from Babson College and serves as the managing director of the nonprofit. Hope and Comfort is now getting ready to hire two part-time employees to write grants and manage marketing.

In addition to giving out toiletries to various organizations, Feingold conducts surveys to collect data from these organizations to understand why and where the need for toiletries exists and how these items are being used, in order to supply the right ones.

His goal is to give away 1 million products in the next five years. In order to achieve this goal, Feingold wants to expand deliveries to more food pantries and children's organizations. He also hopes to partner with other organizations, like Dress for Success, which provides clothing for job interviews to low-income women. "The demand is far-reaching and endless" he said.

Copyright 2008-2015 The Jewish Advocate, All Rights Reserved



Newspaper web site content management software and services

DMCA Notices

L hair Boutique



WELCOME TO THE
L hair BOUTIQUE EXPERIENCE
WITH A MASTER STYLIST
AND MASTER COLORIST



Tuesday: 9-5
Wednesday: 10-7
Thursday: 9-6
Friday: 9-5
Saturday: 8-4
Sunday & Monday: Closed

617-916-0342
85 Union St, Newton, MA
WWW.L-HAIRBOUTIQUE.COM

CEMETERY LOTS

Sharon Memorial Park
2 spaces, Lot 103, Gibeon 5
beautiful setting near lagoon &
main entrance
\$4900 for both
781-391-5671