



## Winter Newsletter 2017



### Leadership and Management

**Gila Milstein**, President

**Arik Chaim**, Secretary

**Dr. Daniel Lieber**,  
Advisor

**Dr. Daniel I. Brison**,  
Advisor

**Sigal Ankri**, Co-Founder  
& Patients Director

**Batya Levy**, Office  
Manager & Volunteers  
Director



### Greeting from the Board President



I feel privileged to lead this organization of extraordinarily kind, courageous, and compassionate people.

The great spirit of the Stand By Me family was especially on display at our annual Hanukkah party this year, as we shared thoughts about the miracles of the story, and how its lessons can strengthen us in the year to come.

Hanukkah is a celebration of hope and miracles. At Stand By Me, we witness miracles every day. Hanukkah is a constant reminder of who we are. We are a community and a family that believes light can overcome darkness by embracing our Jewish values and embracing each other. Our friends who are fighting cancer are our heroes. We draw strength from you--strength that enables us to give you support and love from our soul.

The same was clear on Purim, as everyone came together to spread joy and celebrate the spirit of miracles. May it stay with us and guide us forward.

**B'ahava,**  
Gila ♥

**DONATE TODAY!**

## Mazal Tov



Congratulations to **Hayuta and Shaby** on the birth of your new granddaughter. May your days be filled with the laughter, smiles and sunshine that only grandchildren can bring you! Best wishes from your Stand By Me community. ❤️

## Story

*A new Stand By Me member, **Susan Shachory**, shares her first experience with the group.*

Last Tuesday, I went to an art glass class with Stand By Me. I was six days post-chemo and couldn't drive, so a volunteer picked me up. Her name was Irit, a lovely Israeli woman who lost her husband to cancer a few years back. She is a surgical nurse who had just traveled with a team of medical professionals to Singapore and the Phillipines to perform surgery. Irit had a warm face and a bright smile. She was compassionate and empathetic. By the time we arrived at the art studio, I felt like I had known her for years.

The owner of the studio was Michal, an amazingly creative woman with a heart of gold. Everyone walked in smiling, anxious to see friends and enjoy a few hours creating an art project. Everyone was warm and friendly as they welcomed me to the group.

We had come together on a clear, cool afternoon to forget about cancer and celebrate life. It was relaxing and cathartic as we designed colorful pieces of glass in various shapes and patterns. Some used the tranquil blues and greens of the Mediterranean sea; others chose vibrant colors like red and black. Each piece reflected the individual artist's creative vision. I had an unbelievable time. I made new friends, traded cell phone numbers, and created a beautiful plate for Shabbat tea lights.

I realized that Stand By Me is more than a cancer support group. It's a family of people committed to helping cancer patients on their journey, reminding them they're not alone and showing them love every step of the way. They listen, they hug, they help. They cry when you're in pain and celebrate when you laugh. They want you to be healthy and strong and they'll do anything to show you they care. They say what they mean and do what they say. They become the friends and family who live too far away, or who don't understand what you're going through. They are angels with wings that never get tired. They are the most amazing people I have ever met.

They have given me strength and courage and support. And on that day at the art studio, they gave me the greatest gift of all: For two hours, I was an artist creating a plate for Shabbat. I forgot I was sick. ❤️

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## Events

### Monthly Meetings



#### **Hanukkah Coffee Break**

Our Hanukkah Coffee Break coincided with the end of the year—a perfect time to wish each other miracles and brightness for the year ahead. We shared different perspectives about the meaning of Hanukkah, like the bond between light and hope. Everyone felt connected and truly hopeful. Thank you to **Unique Bakery** for hosting us. 🧡

#### **Valentine's Day Coffee Break**

We met in February for our monthly coffee break at **Unique Bakery**, this time with a Valentine's Day theme. Patients and volunteers enjoyed decorated tables and red heart-shape cookies as our Stand By Me President, Gila Milstein, welcomed everyone and talked about the love and friendship shared on this special day and every day. 🧡

#### **Monthly Patient Support Group**

This month's gathering incorporated a fun pot luck, allowing members to bring unique dishes, like cheese burekas and tahini bread. We invited **Nira Harrington, PhD**, and **Valentina Nir, MBA**, instructors in the "Circle System" (חוכמת המעגל), who shared with us tools to comfortably deal with fears and to ask for help when needed. 🧡

### Hanukkah Party!

On December 29th, we lit candle number six at our annual Hanukkah party at **Valley Beth Shalom**, where **Rabbi Feinstein** and **Orit Rappaport** and their dedicated team provided us once again with a wonderful event space, which included chairs, tables, coffee, and tea. Our party was planned and executed with flair by **Etty Moshe from Etty Event Planner**. Our members enjoyed delicious food from **Unique Bakery**, great music by **DJ Titus**, and amazing vocals by **Guy Goresh**. Our volunteers established a fun arts and crafts center where kids gathered to create projects and then take their work home, while **Shiran Shpitz from WES Kids Entertainment Group** spoiled our community's kids with face painting, fun tattoos, and games. Magician **Ofek Schlesinger** put on a captivating performance for the guests, and **Eyal Elgrably** captured the photographic memories. And how can anyone forget the huge yellow piñata dreidel filled with fun surprises and small goodies? Everyone left with a beautiful scarf hand-crafted by Stand by Me patients. 🧡



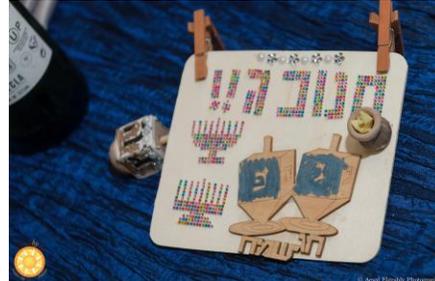
Lighting the Menorah



Kids' Crafts



Dancing



Artwork

## IAC Keshet Sfarim Toy & Book Drive



A gracious amount of games, books, and fun toys were donated to Stand By Me patients' kids, through an [IAC Keshet Sfarim](#) toy and book drive. Thank you to all who donated -- we were able to give 15 different families Hanukkah gifts! 🧡



## Art Glass Fusion



**Michael Hasson, founder and owner of [Fire Glass Studio](#)**, invited Stand By Me patients to her studio to experience a fun and vibrant glass fusion workshop (*featured in story above*). Our patients had the opportunity to learn about methods for firing and fusing glass, how to incorporate different materials into their project, and how to cut and form glass using hand cutters. This therapeutic art experience sparked our patients' imaginations and creativity, helping them to discover and appreciate the artist within. Every member walked away with a one-of-a-kind glass art masterpiece made with their own hands. 🧡

## פורים שמח! ומשלוח מנות איש לרעהו



Purim is a joyous holiday for family and friends to celebrate together and remember the story of Mordechai and Esther.

On Purim we give Mishloach Manot, also called Purim baskets--gifts of food or drink. The [mitzvah](#) of giving mishloach manot derives from the [Book of Esther](#).

It is meant to ensure that everyone has enough food for the Purim feast held later in the day, and to increase love and friendship among Jews and their neighbors.

We were so happy to be able to send Mishloach Manot to Stand By Me family and friends, filled with love and care and delicious items!

**We could not have done it without you:**

**B' Simcha** -- you have brought us such joy and happiness!

**Michal Goldman and team** (parents and children together!) -- for all the goodies, candies and treats!

**Shay Lee** -- for donating all the dry goods needed for the baskets!



And last but certainly not least... We were so fortunate to ALSO receive beautiful, overflowing baskets filled with delicious treats from **Morash Academy** and **Ori Cohen!** Each and every one brought light and joy to each receiving family, spreading even more Purim joy.

תזכו למצוות! ♥

## הכרת הטוב

Thank you to **Prodigy Moving**, who kindly volunteered to help a Stand By Me patient move all of his furniture and supplies to a new apartment in Encino. Thank you also to **Lesli Fero** and **Nathali Levi**, volunteers who devoted time out of their day to organizing and cleaning the new home. Check out their hard work:



They really took the stress off the shoulders of the patient and her family. That's what Stand By Me is—more than a set of services. We are a family who supports each other in whatever way we can. ❤️

Thank you also to **Joseph Skolnick of JMS Express Plumbing**, who came to the rescue when another patient had a plumbing problem in her kitchen and bathroom. Joseph has helped other SBM patients in the past and we cannot thank him enough! ❤️



The weather's nicer now, but who can forget the pouring, freezing (for L.A.!) winter we had this year? For families who don't have the means to buy warm, protective clothing, inclement weather is heart wrenching, watching their children shiver with thin sweaters and holes in their shoes. That's why our hearts swelled with gratitude when **Nationwide Wholesale** and **Hyperdrive Corp.** donated an abundance of clothing to our community of patients. From shirts and pants to gloves, hats, and jackets, they kept our patients' families cozy and healthy. Everything was in new bags and freshly prepared boxes. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity! ❤️

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## Member News



Message from our patient **Fern Gerard**:

I have been battling breast cancer for nine years, and recently started a new treatment available under Compassionate Use. It is not yet FDA approved, but my cancer is responding extremely well, and my cancer markers are going down. I no longer have to breathe with oxygen tanks all the time. Since starting this treatment, I have now been able to move around with no oxygen. The cancer around my liver also seems to be improving, and my liver enzymes are now in the normal range. **I am extremely grateful to Stand By Me and its community.** The support, prayers and love have made an enormous difference. **I feel so very blessed.** ♥

## Health Corner

If you've been wondering about coconut oil, this [Dr. Axe blog](#) is for you!

Check out #5:

"Coconut oil has two qualities that help it fight cancer. One, because of the ketones produced in its digestion. Tumor cells are not able to access the energy in ketones and are glucose dependent. It is believed that a ketogenic diet could be a possible component of helping cancer patients recover.

Two, as the MCFA's digest the lipid walls of bacteria, they also can kill the helicobacter pylori bacteria that has been known as increasing the risk of stomach cancer. Even in studies where cancer is chemically induced, the introduction of coconut oil prevents cancer from developing!"



*Nutrition is an essential aspect of life, especially for those whose immune systems could use a boost. In fact, nutrition for cancer patients can differ from what we usually think of as "eating healthy." According to the National Cancer Institute, "eating the right kinds of foods before, during, and after cancer treatment can help the patient feel better and stay stronger. A healthy diet includes eating and drinking enough foods and liquids that have the important nutrients (vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrates, fat, and water) that the body needs."*

*Nutrition is a personal thing and one size does not fit all. Therefore, before taking any advice from the web, please make sure to consult with your physician. ♥*

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## Message Board

**Spread the word!** Stand By Me provides services to Israeli-Americans, for free and in Hebrew. Our services include:

- **Substantial Care:** transportation, cleaning services, childcare, hot meals and challah delivery
  - **Emotional Care:** visitations, group therapy, psychologists, and therapists for patients and their families; social gatherings and holiday celebrations
  - **Additional services:** chiropractic treatments, aromatherapy, nutrition, acupuncture, Feldenkrais, beauty treatments and more ♥
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## Volunteer with Us!

We need volunteers to help with:

- Visitation
- Phone calls and staying in touch with patients
- Child care / babysitting
- Driving / deliveries
- Food preparation

Please reach out to our Volunteers' Director, Batya Levy,  
at: [BatyaL@StandByMeLA.org](mailto:BatyaL@StandByMeLA.org)



**Thank you** to all Stand By Me Volunteers who consistently commit their time and energy to support Stand By Me and help others. ♥

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