

Anshai Torah Backs the Blue

Donation Presented for Families of Lost Officers

by Deb Silverthorn



Dallas' Fire-Rescue Department Station 27's Brad London, a Driver/Engineer and Paramedic, represented the men and women in blue in symbolically receiving a donation from Congregation Anshai Torah's Rabbi Stefan Weinberg just before Kabbalat Shabbat services on October 27. A fundraising appeal was made for the congregation prior to Kol Nidre to support the families of Dallas' five slain officers—Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol, Michael Smith, Brent Thompson and Patrick Zamarripa—the mitzvah an extension of Anshai Torah's participation in the Conservative movement's support of Project Isaiah through which donations are made to a local food bank (a reminder of the obligation to care for those who need our help throughout the community).

"The gravity of Yom Kippur reminds us that while our attention is focused on our own personal transgressions, we are inextricably bound to the welfare of our greater community. The pain experienced by the families of the five slain officers will remain in our thoughts and prayers," said Rabbi Weinberg. "This past Kol Nidre we encouraged everyone to actively support the grieving families as they struggle to find a way to move forward. A few piggybanks were emptied and the breadth of support demonstrated by the congregation reminded everyone of our civic responsibilities and the tremendous gratitude we owe our policemen and firefighters who protect us on a daily basis."

Brad is the son of Cheryl z"l and Murray London, husband of Audra, father of Vivian and Zachary, and brother of Marc. He became a Bar Mitzvah under Rabbi Weinberg's charge a "few" years ago. The reunion was sweet as a number of family members, including his mother-in-law Sharon Levine and his aunt and uncle, Ros and Phil Sureck, belong to Congregation Anshai Torah, the congregants in attendance proud of their hometown hero.

"This is a career that each of us as firefighters, paramedics, and police officers, and others we work with, have chosen to serve our community that we love. I was taught at a very young age by some of the great rabbis in our community about living a life of giving tzedakah. . .of giving back. . .whether it be through monetary donations or through service," said Brad, a member of the Dallas Fire Department for close to 16 years, nodding in Rabbi Weinberg's direction. "I chose service and I get to do that every day and I get to see a lot of great things and a lot of things no one should see on a daily basis. This contribution will go a long way to support the families of the police officers who risked their lives. That's what we do – it's what we do every day."