



NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2019

FRIENDSHIP FUN DAY WITH MACCABI

The Jewish community came out in droves to support The Friendship Circle and Manchester Maccabi at a joint Family Fun Day held at the Centre. The event was attended by over 500 people, including Friendship Circle members who were on hand to assist volunteers and staff ensuring the day ran smoothly.

A variety of taster sporting activities such as Athletics, Krav Maga, 5-a-side Football, and Karate took place and children of all ages were thoroughly entertained with a host of activities including balloon modelling, nail & face painting, hair braiding and a variety of arts & craft stalls.

Lisa from Vocalisers held a drama workshop and a professional story teller mesmerised the children courtesy of PJ Library.

We were extremely grateful to our headline sponsor 151 products, supporting sponsors BPS Law and Powerplay and everyone who enabled us to put on the event which raised £6,500.



PUPILS LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENCE AND DISABILITY

The Friendship Circle has rolled out a ground breaking programme at BJPS, King David Junior School and NCJPS to encourage young children to think about issues such as stereotyping, attitudes and how they impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

The Year 3 pupils have been learning first-hand from members about some of the challenges people with disabilities are faced with.

Pupils at BJPS were so inspired by the programme that they chose The Friendship Circle as their Charity of The Year. Dassa Fine held a bake sale at home and raised £130 while Talia Kaye and friends put on a stunning performance of Matilda the Musical in her back garden raising £100.

Dassa who regularly sees member Hannah Levy at Hale Shul said 'I really wanted to help Hannah and her friends at The Friendship Circle by raising money for them'.



HAVING A BLAST IN BLACKPOOL

Friends enjoyed a fabulous trip out to Blackpool Zoo this summer which was kindly sponsored by Anne and Phil Hodari. Despite the weather not being on our side, spirits were high and everyone had a great time.

This was the second Friendship Circle outing this year following a day trip to Llandudno in June, where members were treated to a boat sightseeing trip and a charming tramway ride up the Great Orme to take in the breath-taking Welsh scenery.



WALKING IN THE RAIN

Come rain or shine our Walking Group is proving really popular and has been a great way to promote physical activity and social interaction. Tatton Park, Hollingworth Lake and Dovestone Reservoir are just some of the stunning destinations Friendship Circle members and volunteers have already visited.

RUTH RECOUNTS STORY OF SURVIVAL

To commemorate Yom HaShoah 83 year old Ruth Lachs told her heart-rending story to a room packed full of over 30 Friendship Circle members and volunteers.

On a September night in 1943 in war torn Holland, six year old Ruth escaped the Nazis by hiding in a crèche sandpit to avoid detection. Mrs Lachs recounted her experiences and said 'My life was saved by good people who chose to be brave and heroic at a time when it would have been much easier and so much safer to turn away'.

She also gave everyone messages of hope and told members how important it is to stay positive and be strong.

'Just as we must never forget the horrors of the holocaust or the 6 million murdered by the Nazis, so we must remember that there were those who gave life and hope. I thank them today and always for my survival.'



HEALTHY MIND + BODY = HEALTHY SOUL!

Our Health & Wellbeing Course which takes place every 6 weeks is encouraging members to make positive life choices. Using external speakers we have covered a broad range of topics: Mindfulness, Dental Health, Confidence & Self Esteem Building, Stress & Anxiety Management and Healthy Eating. A new Yoga Class is starting in September and Healthy Relationships, and Internet Safety are other interesting subjects we will be covering.



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CHIEF RABBI BECOMES A PATRON

The Friendship Circle are delighted to announce Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis as its honorary Patron.

Rabbi Mirvis officially opened The Friendship Circle's office and drop-in last November and chatted to members and volunteers during the afternoon.

In addition to Chief Rabbi Mirvis we have 11 Patrons who are committed to supporting our future via funding, and also share our vision; helping people with disabilities be seen and accepted as contributing members of society.

The support of our Patrons are integral to making the work of The Friendship Circle possible. If you are interested in becoming a Patron please contact Beverley Rubin.



GOLD: The Steinberg Family Charitable Trust, The Philip J Davies Family Charitable Trust, Beaverbrooks Charitable Trust



SILVER: Judy & Johnny Lyons, Jacky & Michael Edelson, PAH Family Charitable Trust, Lecia & Robert Simons, Manson Family Charitable Trust, Cara and Richard Basso



BRONZE: Sarah and Marc Sivner, The Chyah Davies Foundation.

HOME IS WHERE THE ART IS!



The Friendship Circle were overjoyed to receive a £10,000 National Lottery Award for the weekly Art Therapy Class, which uses art as a way to stimulate thought and discussion through a creative activity. Members have been experimenting with different mediums such as 3D modelling, clay sculptures and painting on canvas. We are also excited to be taking part in the Prestwich Arts Festival from 22nd– 29th September where local people display works of art in their homes, offices and gardens, as part of the Prestwich art trail. An exhibition of our members' work is planned for February 2020.



SATURDAY NIGHT HANG OUT

Saturday night hangout at The Friendship Circle is the new place to be! With the evenings drawing in and Shabbat going out earlier, members are flocking to the HuB to soak up the vibrant atmosphere. With great music, delicious food and an assortment of games on offer, you can feel the buzz and excitement when you walk in the room. Aaron Lowe, Programme Manager said 'I haven't tried it already, come and hang out with us. There is always a friendly face and someone to chat to.'



CURRENT AFFAIRS FORUM

A group of like-minded individuals are meeting once a month to discuss various hot topics in politics, news and current affairs. Energetic and stimulating debates led by historian Robert Kanter have taken place on controversial subjects such as Hate Crime, Donald Trump and of course Brexit! Friendship Circle member Shelley Niven took to the floor at the first session articulating her views on knife crime followed by a lively discussion between the group.

OLI DROPS IN TO DROP IN!

The Friendship Circle touches many people who come into contact with us, even for the shortest time. Oli Kingsley, a 21 year old graduate politics student, came to drop in with his Grandma Marion Dobkin who is a volunteer.



"Today I had the privilege of accompanying my grandma as a volunteer at The Friendship Circle. The 40 minutes I spent there taught me more about acts of kindness and charity than anything else I've ever experienced."

My 40 minutes was spent talking to a remarkably intelligent woman called Shelley. I wasn't really sure what troubles Shelley had been through but that didn't matter. One thing is for certain she is a woman who has remarkable views and an incredible grasp on the geopolitical situation of the world around us. We talked about Israel, about Brexit, about President Trump and his state visit, and even the Royal family.

What hit me was how grateful and moved she was that I, a young politics student was taking a real interest in her views on the world. My 40 minutes at The Friendship Circle taught me that true acts of kindness, compassion, and charity don't come from a place of sympathy but from deep personal respect for the individual, allowing us to connect as friends."

HELP THE HOMELESS Mitzvah Day 17th November



Please drop in items any time before Mitzvah day to The Friendship Circle Office for our campaign. Warm Clothes, Non Perishable Foods, Toiletries, Blankets urgently needed.

FAMILY & FRIENDS RUN FOR FRIENDSHIP

Amongst the tens of thousands who took part in the Great Manchester Run were 31 Friendship Circle supporters. As well raising over £11,500 for the charity, friends and families enjoyed the buzz and atmosphere of the City Centre.



Our youngest runner, 3 year old Joshua Saunders, raised an incredible £750 for the Charity in the Mini Run. Barrie and Michelle Taube ran alongside each other in the Half Marathon completing the 13.1 mile route through Old Trafford, The Etihad Stadium and Deansgate in 1 hour 53 minutes, whilst their son 9 year old Elijah ran the 2.5k Junior Run in just 10 minutes.

Other Half Marathon runners included Richard Basso and Lucy Barnett who surpassed her personal best time crossing the finish line in 1 hour 35 minutes. Zak Kuhillow, 9 raised an unbelievable £2,420 for The Friendship Circle in the Junior Run in memory of his late mother Leora. 'The Friendship Circle is a great charity and I've seen first-hand the fantastic difference it makes to the lives of people with learning disabilities'.

10 EXCITING PROGRAMMES!

- 01 LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES**
A diverse range of 4-5 innovative programmes run every week such as art, dance, music, health and wellbeing, discussion groups and social drop-ins.
- 02 UNFORGETTABLE DAY TRIPS AND NIGHTS OUT**
Day trips to the zoo and seaside along with regular nights' out bowling, wall climbing, club nights, going to the pub or just out for coffee.
- 03 INCLUSIVE SHABBAT MEALS**
Communal Shabbat Meals where as many as 100 guests enjoy fabulous food and great company. We also arrange families to host Shabbat meals for our members on a weekly basis.
- 04 YOM TOV PARTIES**
Holiday programmes are celebrated around the Jewish calendar from fancy dress Purim parties to matzah baking, Lag B'Omer BBQs, and Chanukah candle lighting.
- 05 COMMUNITY INTEGRATION PROJECTS**
Collecting for the homeless, delivering food parcels and volunteering with interfaith and Jewish groups are just some of the volunteering projects on offer.
- 06 ONE-TO-ONE BUDDY PROGRAMME**
Members are matched with buddies, building a close relationship and enjoying activities together.
- 07 TEEN CLUB**
An exciting programme has been designed for teenagers to make friends and hang out in a relaxed setting.
- 08 EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME**
Liaising with local businesses we will be building a portfolio of organisations to help members find suitable work.
- 09 INSPIRING VOLUNTEERS**
Encouraging all our volunteers to take part in regular training, induction and motivational courses.
- 10 DISABILITY EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS**
A programme is being rolled out to encourage children to think about issues that may impact on the lives of people with disabilities; including art and discussion sessions with our members.