

Rabbi's son remembered for his 'life, laughter'

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Dov Benjamin Wisnia was remembered as a “live-out-loud sort of guy” and someone whose “life, laughter and light touched everyone who knew him.”

Wisnia, 33, was the son of Rabbi Eric Wisnia — religious leader of Congregation Beth Chaim in Princeton Junction for 35 years — and grandson of David Wisnia, the former cantor at Har Sinai Temple in Trenton, which has since relocated to Pennington.

Dov Wisnia died Oct. 31 at his family home in Yardley, Pa., after a five-year battle with brain tumors. During that time, he had been involved with the No Brainer Benefit Concert, supporting the National Brain Tumor Society.

A lifelong musician, active in the Philadelphia and Washington, DC, music scenes, he was a member of several bands, including The Sneeks and Halloween Big Band.

By day he was a real estate broker for several prominent firms in the Philadelphia area, specializing in restaurants and food service companies. He became the first “eco-broker” in Philadelphia, championing sustainability and energy efficiency.

A resident of Philadelphia for the past 10 years, he was devoted to bettering his community and serving as an advocate for the city.

The funeral, which had to be delayed because of Hurricane Sandy, was held Nov. 4 at Congregation Shir Ami in Newtown, Pa., because Beth Chaim was still without power.

Beth Chaim's Cantor Stuart Binder described Dov as “a live-out-loud sort of guy; the kind of guy that was the singer at every party.”

“There were so many people at his funeral because he touched so many lives, including people who because of him would later become best friends or spouses,” said Binder. “He was really good at connecting people.”

Binder recalled that when Dov was growing up at Beth Chaim,



Dov Benjamin Wisnia

he was president of its youth group and had been “very active” in both the synagogue and the Reform movement's Camp Harlam.

Born in Princeton, he was raised in East Windsor and Yardley. He was a graduate of Penns-

bury High School and George Washington University, where he studied urban planning.

On the guest book attached to his obituary on legacy.com, many friends and current and former congregants at Beth Chaim shared their memories of a young man some had known since childhood.

Allie (Alice) Leibowitz of Roswell, Ga., reached out to her former rabbi. “I remember Dov as a small child...so adorable, happy and bright..., his parents' pride and joy,” she wrote. “I had no idea of what he was battling the last few years. But had I known, I would have been confident in the fact that he would make the very most of whatever time he had left on the earth.... This was obviously what he did.”

Becky (Rubin) Tountas wrote, “Dov was a staple in my life for many years, and I have so many wonderful memories of him. The outpouring of love at the funeral yesterday was evidence of how much Dov affected so many of us. Dov's untimely death was a huge loss to this world, and I am deeply saddened.”

David and Evelyn Uretsky of Columbus, Ohio, posted their recollection of Dov as someone whose “life, laughter and light touched everyone who knew him.”

In addition to his father and grandfather, Dov is survived by his mother, Judith Glassburg Wisnia; his brother, Avi of Yardley; his sister and brother-in-law, Sara Wisnia and Matthew Schiffer of Sebastopol, Calif.; and his grandmother, Hope Wisnia of Levittown, Pa. Dov was also the grandson of the late Lee and Mae Glassburg.

Funeral arrangements were by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing Township. Burial was at Roosevelt Memorial Park, Trevese, Pa.

Memorial contributions may be made to the National Brain Tumor Society via the “Team Dov” page for the Race for Hope-Philadelphia at braintumorcommunity.org/goto/dov, which as of Nov. 8 had raised almost \$38,000.

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used the phone and electronic devices to reach out to members, especially the elderly.

“It was ‘back to basics’ for us, using cell phones, laptops, personal e-mail accounts, and smart phones to make it work,” Katlin said.

According to Feldman, “I texted as many people as I could and drove out to some seniors personally to check on them. We also elected to go ahead and conduct a scheduled bar and bat mitzva ceremony as planned during our outage. We believe it was a great lesson for our young people to learn first-hand. Sometimes there are bumps in the road, but you deal with them as a community.”

Power outages forced the closure of Abrams Hebrew Academy in Yardley, Pa., for three days; the school re-opened on Nov. 1.

“We were fortunate in that there was no damage to our building,” said Dale Sattin, the school's

director of development & communications, “and that we got our power back as soon as we did, as power to much of the rest of the town was out until that weekend.”

“Once we opened, we contacted all the parents and invited them to come to the school to warm up and recharge their phones and laptops, and a bunch did; we also offered them coffee, hot chocolate, and muffins from the cafeteria,” she said. “We're happy we could be open during the crisis and provide that special service to our community.”

Greenwood House, a nursing, rehabilitation, and assisted-living facility in Ewing Township that is home to over 160 seniors, lost power for two days, but, said executive director Richard Goldstein, “being a medical facility, we're very prepared for disasters.” The home's generator was able to restore some power.

“The conditions have been



In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, Jennifer Reiss, left, a Temple University student from Yardley, Pa., and Lara Wellerstein, director of prevention and support services for Jewish Family & Children's Service of Greater Mercer County, work to fill the agency's food pantry during the power outage from Sandy.

dedication of the facility's staff members. “I spoke to several of the home's residents,” he said, “and they told me they were enormously grateful for the caring services they received during this devastating storm.”

The Jewish Family & Children's Service of Greater Mercer County is requesting kosher food, ShopRite gift cards, and donations for its clients who have been affected by the storm. The organization can be reached at 609-987-8100 or by calling Linda Meisel's cell phone at 609-731-6540.

challenging,” said Goldstein, “but our staff is amazing. Many of them slept over on the Monday and Tuesday nights of the storm in order to be available to others

because we didn't know what to expect.”

Frank visited Greenwood in the days following Sandy and said he was deeply impressed with the