

Unable to save comment (key failed)**Emes Ve-Emunah**

I highly recommend you CLOSE the comments section at this time and let the post rest on its laurels.

You should not be writing columns praising people because it will inevitably lead to lashon hara - that is strongly recommended in Hilchos shmiras haloshon by the way.

jack bauer | 12.19.07 - 10:35 am | <#>

It's Tuesdays with Morrie, not Wednesdays! 😊

aron feldman | 12.19.07 - 10:52 am | <#>

I heard him speak about his personal history in public last year when he came to Mikor Hachayim. You forgot an important detail of his story.

Before he got into the nursing home industry, he was vice principal of Arie Crown. He couldn't take it when a rebbi teaching there came into his office and told him that his family was about to get evicted because Arie Crown was late in paying him rent by a few months. That was the moment he decided to leave formal chinuch and make it rich to make sure this would never happen again. And he vouched that ever since that day, Arie Crown has always paid their teachers on time.

Gershon Seif | 12.19.07 - 11:13 am | <#>

Thank you for a wonderful post. May this inspire more of us to greater learning and better midot.

charliehall | 12.19.07 - 11:39 am | <#>

You forgot an important detail of his story.

You're right. I forgot about that. There is a lot more to his story too. I can't fit it all in to one post. He's done many Chasodim for individual people personally and quietly. Including helping many wealthy business people get started.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 11:40 am | <#>

There are many philanthropists in Chicago that made it big in nursing homes.

eLamdan | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 11:49 am | <#>

There are many philanthropists in Chicago that made it big in nursing homes.

That's right. And some of them started with Morrie.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 11:54 am | <#>

An inspiring post. Yasher koach, Morris Esformes, for all of your work on behalf of the klal.

Over and over again, I find that some of the most intelligent and active people who work for the klal originate from Chicago. It is a successful laboratory for ideas and action.

Elliot Pasik | 12.19.07 - 11:58 am | <#>

There are many philanthropists in Chicago that made it big in nursing homes.

Many make fancy Chasunas/BM's that are planned buy Reb.Maryles 😊

aron feldman | 12.19.07 - 12:12 pm | <#>

I remember as a kid davening in yeshurun (well before Rabbi Cohens days) with Morrie sitting up at the front of the shul. Morrie started a group on shabbos to learn mishnayos with the boys in the shul.

When we would finish masechtas or prakim or whatever else, he would take us all to White Sox games at (old) Comiskey Park and Blackhawk games...

Rafi G | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 12:21 pm | <#>

I should add, nobody wanted to miss learning with Morrie

Rafi G | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 12:27 pm | <#>

When we would finish masechtas or prakim or whatever else, he would take us all to White Sox games at (old) Comiskey Park and Blackhawk games...

Rafi G

Oh Vey! That dosen't pass!

aron feldman | 12.19.07 - 12:37 pm | <#>

Harry

Rename the post Shabbos with Morrie 😊

aron feldman | 12.19.07 - 12:38 pm | <#>

doesn't pass? this was the days before Pirchei. Or at least before pirchei was popular in chicago. Morrie had us kids out there learning on shabbos afternoons. he knew what to do to get us out on shabbos afternoon to learn some mishnayos.

Rafi G | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 2:42 pm | <#>

doesn't pass? this was the days before Pirchei

Rafi, I think Aron was kidding.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 3:46 pm | <#>

Rafi G

I was just kidding!

aron feldman | 12.19.07 - 4:04 pm | <#>

I think it is appropriate to bring up a touchy subject and I hope you won't edit / delete the comment as I think the subject warrants a serious discussion. I am not referring to any particular person so I don't beleive there are issues of lashon hora etc. It is well known that many generous philanthropists have become

exceedingly wealthy via industries that are tainted by scandal. It is well known that some of them have been convicted of a variety of crimes and felonies along the way. Do you feel they should be subjected to honor and respect or reviled by the Torah institutions which they support? This is an issue faced by all types of institutions and hashkafahs. While yeshivas may turn a blind eye as to how their donors make their money, should they and once a person is indicted or worse yet convicted should they be barred from being honored, should the scholl/yeshiva decline their donations?

shmuel | 12.19.07 - 9:23 pm | <#>

I wasn't sure...

anyways, can I ask what prompted this post?

Rafi G | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 9:46 pm | <#>

I was very impressed with the article. It was refreshing and inspiring.

sholom greenbaum | 12.19.07 - 11:30 pm | <#>

Great post (along with your new one on free education), R Maryles. It's a post like this one that makes me very proud to live in such a makom Torah.

Neil Harris | [Homepage](#) | 12.19.07 - 11:57 pm | <#>

Chicago is a great city and all, but I think that people who live there see things through colored lenses. For example, R' Maryles you write:

This Kollel may very well be the model for all Lakewood type community Kollelim to follow.

Then you write:

Morrie had heard about the succces that a Lakewood Community Kollel was having in Los Angeles. He decided that it was time for Chicago.

So I guess that L.A. was the real innovator here and Chicago just copied them.

Also, you contend:

I have been told by knowledgeable people who travel often to other cities for various reasons that, as a percentage of the whole - Chicago probably has more Baalei Battim learning than any other city including New York.

Who told you this? Did anyone do a study?

I think that Baltimore has a very large number of learned baalei batim coming out of ner yisroel. Also, Cleveland has something like three successful community kollelim mostly due to Telshe Yeshiva there.

Actually, I think in many ways the Lakewood Community Kollel in Chicago is a bit of a criticism. Why did people need to come in from Lakewood to get people to start learning in Chicago? In Cleveland and Baltimore the local yeshivos (Telshe and Ner Israel) seem to have been able to get things going themselves. Not only that, Telz in Chicago (from what I understand) is not even local. They were imported from Cleveland. The only local Yeshiva is HTC. Have they been able to accomplish in Chicago what Ner Yisroel did in Baltimore? Why isn't there an HTC community kollel? Wouldn't that have made more sense?
eLamdan | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 9:11 am | <#>

anyways, can I ask what prompted this post?

When I saw that Tzedaka list and saw Morrie at the top. something I almost always see where ever there are such lists... I thought that I just had to wrtie something about this man. I truly admire him.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 9:40 am | <#>

"The only local Yeshiva is HTC. Have they been able to accomplish in Chicago what Ner Yisroel did in Baltimore?"

That would have to assume that HTC is a yeshiva

Meishiv K'halacha | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 9:50 am | <#>

It is well known that many generous philanthropists have become exceedingly wealthy via industries that are tainted by scandal. It is well known that some of them have been convicted of a variety of crimes and felonies along the way. Do you feel they should be subjected to honor and respect or reviled by the Torah institutions which they support?

This is not a yes or no question. In theory no person should ever be honored who has perpetrated a Chiluil Hasehm. But one must be careful in determing when and when not, something is a Chilul HaShem.

The case for nursing home owners is very complex. There are some who are unscrupulous and some who are impeccable. And everything in-between.

There is also the fact that in the vast majority of cases achieveing great wealth will make you some

enemies along the way. Those enemies can make trouble for innocent people.

Another factor is that the nursing home industry is one of the most heavily regulated industries in the country. People can violate and be fined for an infraction as little as not replacing a burned out light bulb quickly enough.

There is also the great likelihood that personnel can make errors... sometimes serious ones... that are ultimately the responsibility of ownership. There are also disgruntled investors whose investments did not pay off as expected. Not every home is a winner - people think that investing with a successful nursing home owner is a guarantee of their own success. It isn't.

People get upset when they lose money and then blame the people they invested with - even though they were warned. Sometimes unhappy investors want revenge especially when they lose substantial amounts of money on an investment.

There are also over zealous nursing home inspectors that are out to make a name for themselves.

Now there are instances where greedy nursing home owners will try and get away with things they shouldn't. They might get caught and spend some time in jail.

One has to consider all those facts and many more before making any judgments about others.

There have been many cases of various accusations made of varying infractions of the rules... some more serious than others... and there have been some nursing home owners who have been found guilty of financial improprieties. In some cases they were exonerated. In others - they had jail time.

Were the infractions worthy of Jail time? Is an accusation where someone was exonerated worthy of our contempt anyway? Is a person who lost his life savings in a nursing home deal that went south correct in his animosity toward a wealthy nursing home owner?

I am not the one to judge.

Does Morrie have enemies? I'm sure he does. Were there some unhappy investors? Probably.

Having been at one time the biggest nursing home owner in the state, Morrie is probably the biggest target of the nursing home industry.

He would be a plum in any DA's pocket if they 'got him'. And so I'm sure they try.

He has never been convicted of **ANY** wrongdoing to the best of my knowledge... If he was not only would I know... the entire city would know.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 10:04 am | <#>

So I guess that L.A. was the real innovator here and Chicago just copied them.

I said model, not prototype. The LA Kollel was first. But the CCK is considered one of the most if not **THE** most to emulate. This was what was said at the recent banquet honoring the 2 RKs. R. Malkiel Kotler was there. I doubt the speaker who said that about the CCK would have said it if it weren't the case.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 10:19 am | <#>

You are bringing me a proof to how great the CCK is from what they said at their own banquet?
eLamdan | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 11:13 am | <#>

You are bringing me a proof to how great the CCK is from what they said at their own banquet?

I'm not trying to **prove** anything. This is what was said in front of hundreds of people by one of the speakers, not the RKs.

Yes, there is a tendency to exaggerate and perhaps there are other Kollelim that can be models too. But they have to be at least in that ball park to make a claim like that.

And based on what they did for Chicago, I don't think it is all that much of a stretch to believe that they are **THE** model for others.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 12:14 pm | <#>

"That would have to assume that HTC is a yeshiva"

Will you ever stop being so bitter?

Nice post RHM

All Relative | 12.20.07 - 12:38 pm | <#>

"Will you ever stop being so bitter?"



Meishiv K'halacha | [Homepage](#) | 12.20.07 - 1:07 pm | <#>

Dear Mr. E-Lamdan

The L.A. Kollel was started by Rabbi Fasman who is a product of Chicago. So in any case the success of community Kollelim is rooted in Chicago.

abcdef | 12.20.07 - 1:16 pm | <#>

Chicago is a real nice Jewish community, and I am not trying to put it down. But so are most other Jewish communities. They are all basically the same. (And I too am "well traveled" like your other sources.)

Having a *Lakewood* Community Kollel is more of a praise for Lakewood than Chicago! More important though, why the obsession with Chicago being "the prototype"?

eLamdan | [Homepage](#) | 12.21.07 - 9:24 am | <#>

"There are also disgruntled investors whose investments did not pay off as expected. Not every home is a winner - people think that investing with a successful nursing home owner is a guarantee of their own success. It isn't."

This is not at all as simple as that. When one invests in a public company one can be fairly (fairly) sure that their money isn't being siphoned off for the general manager's personal pleasure/business use. With the type of limited partnerships such nursing home owners use, there is no investor knowledge of where the money is going. Not only that, but in our Orthodox world, where people hesitate to take someone to court and batei din are largely incompetent, there's no real fear that when a general manager does use the money for his own purposes that there will be any repercussions. So when investors discover that their investment isn't coming near paying off, and see a general partner who is a rich man and big "baal tedakah" then they might wonder what is really happening with the money. Sometimes it might look as if all the limited partners get is paper gains and by the time they pay taxes on the money, there's nothing left.

Also, limited investors find that they have made charitable contributions to institutions leading them to wonder whether when a general partner is said to have given charity it is coming out of his pocket, or that of his investors.

Dan | 12.21.07 - 1:21 pm | <#>

It's been reported that temperatures in facilities owned by Esformes are as high as 94 degrees F. I'm not a doctor, but I don't think that is a good way to make granny comfortable. Still and all, it may not matter, his facilities are filled with goyim.

Al Gore | 12.22.07 - 7:45 pm | <#>

More important though, why the obsession with Chicago being "the prototype"?

That's why it's called the Windy City. Chicagoans love to toot their own horns.

Al Gore | 12.22.07 - 7:47 pm | <#>

>He has never been convicted of ANY wrong doing to the best of my knowledge... If he was not only would I know... the entire city would know.

He sure was convicted

Edited By Siteowner

Jake Goldberg | 12.22.07 - 9:29 pm | <#>

It's been reported that temperatures in facilities owned by Esformes are as high as 94 degrees F.

As I said. The more succesful one becomes the more of a target one is. Rabbi Esformes has never been convicted or even indicted for any crimes of any kind. Not even finacial let alone mistreatment of patients.

That one of his many homes was once 'caught' with e temperature setting that was too high can easily have been a one time event that was mishadled by an employee... or a mal functioning heating system... or any number of explanations. The same is true with any other such accusations.

It's a pity that some people feel they have to knock him down with false information, half truths, rumor, and inuendo. If he were guilty of all the things his enemies have accused him of over the years, he would have been arrested, tried and convcted many times over. Never happened.

But that doesn't stop some unscrupulous bloggers from bringing up every news story they ever read where alegactions about all kinds of nefarious deeds and wrong doings were reported, usually based on information by disgrunteled employees or realtives of patients out to make a buck through a law suit.

Harry Maryles | [Homepage](#) | 12.22.07 - 9:54 pm | <#>

He sure was convicted

I went to that url (which has been deleted) and saw the so called conviction. The penalty was a fine. In an industry that is so over-regulated, that is as common as taking out the garbage. He has never been

indicted or convicted of any criminal behavior on any accusations that were made against him. He's wealthy target. He is going to be accused by people who can sue him. They usually need criminal convictions to base their suits on.

I'm certainly not going to allow you or anyone else to besmirch the good name of Rabbi Esformes by allowing urls like the one you cited that will unfairly embarrass him.

You want mudslinging? go find it somewhere else.

The comment section on this thread is now closed

Harry Maryles | 12.22.07 - 10:20 pm | #

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