

LESSONS IN EMUNAH

'True Stories' With An Emphasis On Faith

EDITED BY NAOMI MAUER

Hashgacha Pratis

By KARI BORNSTEIN

I'd like to share an incredible story, one of a personal regard.....

It began over a month ago. Dvora Lakein (a staff member of our "Connect2" homebound visitation program for Holocaust Survivors, funded by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany) while touching base with her clients, stumbled upon a name of a man who is a Holocaust survivor, and who also receives Meals-on-Wheels. She forwarded his name, and I immediately called Shlomo Spielman to arrange a time to meet for my initial assessment.

When I arrived at Shlomo's house, I was greeted by a gentle face and warm smile. We got to talk about his life, his struggle to stay alive during the Holocaust and his hardships in America. But what struck me about Shlomo is how he remembered each and every detail of what occurred 40 to 50 years ago. We ended our first meeting. I told him that we would be in touch, and that I would call him when I found someone to come and visit him.

Two weeks later, I mailed out Thanksgiving cards to all of the seniors who are apart of the Meals-on-Wheels friendly-visiting program. For some reason, I decided to write my telephone number underneath JCC's address on the envelope — in case a senior wanted to call me, my number would be easily accessible.

Two days later, I got a call from Shlomo. "Hi Kari, I'm just calling to thank you for your beautiful card that you sent me. And Kari, I'm looking at your last name and remembered you told me a little

about your family. Did your grandfather happen to be in Germany?"

I answered, "Yes."

"Was your grandfather in *Bad Reichenhall*?"

I answered, "Yes."

"Was your grandfather a police officer?"

As chills set across my body, I answered again, "Yes".

"Now Shlomo" I said, "before we go any further, let me tell you my grandfather's name to make sure that we're talking about the same person — there must be many Bornstein's around. My grandfather's name is Karl."

"Karl," he said, "*Akiva! Kivi!* — Sure, I... knew... your... grandpa!" I couldn't believe my ears. That's what my grandfather was called — Kivi!

"How did you know my grandfather?" I asked, completely taken aback.

"I lived right across the street from your grandpa in the DP camp in Germany. I was in the *Kibbutz*, and your grandpa was in the police department right across the street. Your grandpa was a great man. Is he still alive?"

"Unfortunately, Shlomo, my grandfather passed away a few months before I was born. I never got to meet him, but I was named after him." As the story goes on, I was so excited about my discovery that I called Vivienne at Citymeals to share my story. She was so moved by the series of events and "coincidence" and asked what we could do next.

Overcome with emotions and excitement, I told her that I would like to learn more about my family, and asked if I could become a volunteer. So, each and every Monday morning at 8 a.m., I go to visit Shlomo Spielman, and each time, I learn a new piece of my family's history..

I wanted to thank you personally, for giving me this wonderful opportunity to work here on this program. I am forever grateful for having this opportunity to make a difference in the seniors' lives. Who would have known, that one would have touched my own life so deeply!

Kari Bornstein, is the coordinator of a new (Citymeals-on-Wheels funded) Friendly Visiting program for homebound Meals on Wheels recipients.

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