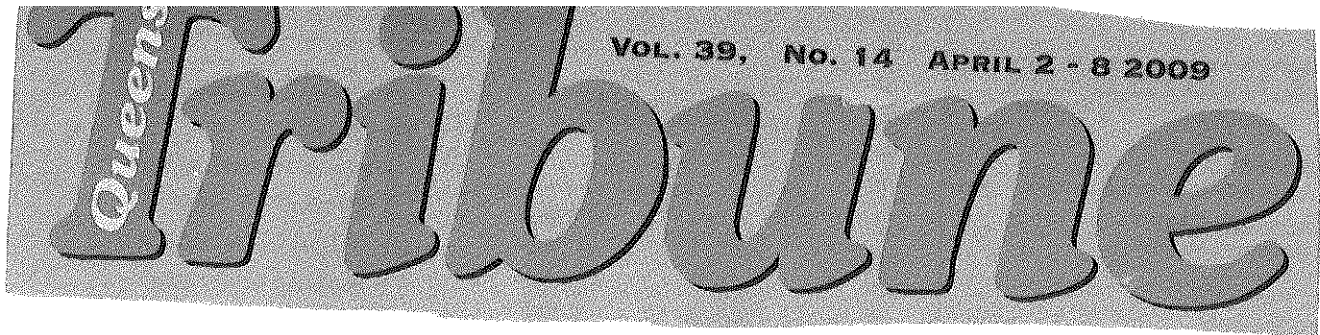


Silence is not an option: Venezuela's Night of the Broken Synagogue
Sponsored by Northeast Queens Jewish Community Council, the Kufperberg Holocaust Center
and Queens Jewish Community Council



Eastern Queens Focus

PEOPLE... PEOPLE... PEOPLE... PEOPLE...
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On Feb 26, a near-capacity crowd at the Hillcrest Jewish Center listened raptly to testimony about the night the main Sephardi Synagogue in Caracas, Venezuela was desecrated by 15 individuals. Destruction and anti-Semitic graffiti was the result. Former Venezuela residents **Jose Kliksberg** and **Daniel Kaswan** described exactly what happened and how the government decided it was just some people who wanted money. The scary thing was that the main computer hard discs containing all the names of the members of the synagogue were also stolen. Since then the main Jewish day school was searched twice under the false excuse that weapons were hidden here, a Rabbi was beaten and, on Feb. 26, a hand grenade was thrown at a synagogue. The theme of the evening was "One must not remain silent...this concerns everyone."

Congressman **Gary Ackerman** delivered a strong statement against anti-Semitism and told of the letter he sent to President **Chavez** of Venezuela demanding that he protect the Jewish residents of Venezuela. The crowd heard Rabbi **Aizenberg** tell the history of the thriving Jewish community in Venezuela which once had 30,000 people and is now down to 15,000. The moderator of the meet-



Dignitaries at the testimony meeting held at Hillcrest Jewish Center concerning the desecration of the Sephardic synagogue in Caracas, Venezuela on Jan. 31. (l. to r.) Rabbi Aizenberg, an expert on Latin America; President of the Queens Jewish Community Council Warren Hecht; former resident of Venezuela Dr. Jos Kliksberg; former resident of Venezuela Daniel Kaswan; Director of the Queens Jewish Community Council Cynthia Zalisky and Director of the Kupferberg Holocaust Center at QCC Arthur Flug.

ing was **Arthur Flug** of the Kupferberg Holocaust Center at Queensborough Community College. **Warren Hecht** of the Queens Jewish Community Council, **Corey Bearak** of the Northeast Queens Jewish Community Council, Assemblyman **Mark Weprin** and Assemblyman **Rory Lancman** also spoke, as did the President of Queensborough Community College **Eduardo Marti**



NEQJCC Chair and Past President Joseph Varon. At left sitting is Ed Harap from Bell Park JC. Photo by Chuck Waxman, Young Israel of New Hyde Park.



NEQJCC Chair addresses the audience. At Left is Queens JCC President Warren Hecht. At Right is Queensborough Community College President Dr. Eduardo Marti. Photo by Chuck Waxman, Young Israel of New Hyde Park.

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