

LOCAL

Next generation supports Israel Bonds

By Debra L. Wallace
Staff Writer

PASSING THE TORCH from generation to generation, or L'Dor V'Dor, can produce a lasting benefit for an entire Jewish community.

This was the theme of the Sunday, Dec. 8, tribute dinner in honor of Shep Lesser and his son, Gary, that was given by the New Leadership Division of the State of Israel Bonds.

Bonds investors say there is much to celebrate this year; there were \$30 million dollars in bond sales the largest total in the history of the Palm Beach Region. Also, 2,000 people purchased bonds.

The Lesser family has a long and glowing history in building the Jewish community in Palm Beach County. The grandfather, Joe, came to town in the 1920s and was a founder of the first temples and other Jewish groups. It was a time when forming a minyan was a difficult undertaking. The family's foundation for the Jewish communal giving, the honorees said, is high ethical standards and honesty.

Some 130 people, from various organizations in the Jewish community, came to honor Gary and Shep Lesser and use them as an example of what the next generation can do to strengthen Israel.

Among the 130 attendees at the black-tie event were newly-elected U.S. Rep. Robert Wexler, Florida Rep. Elaine Bloom and Israel Consul General Ruhama Hermon.

"In every generation we are looking for a symbol for the story of Hanukkah," Hermon said during the fourth night of the festival of lights. "In this generation, our miracle is the State of Israel."

Eric Matheson, local New Leadership Chairman, said the reason for holding the dinner and other new leadership events is to continue the family tradition of having a commitment to Israel.

Matheson himself comes by this tradition through his own family. His father, Bill, has for years held national leadership posts.

"It's important that young people become involved with bonds in Palm Beach. It's important that we keep coming back and that as young people we continue what our grandparents and parents started," Eric Matheson told the bonds supporters at the event.

Investing in Israel Bonds, he pointed out, is also good business. This can easily be seen in the burgeoning business interests from Motorola, Intel, Microsoft and other companies expanding in Israel.

The Lessers were commended for exemplifying the highest level of community service and advancing the cause of Israel.

The Lesser family has a long and glowing history in building the Jewish community in Palm Beach County. The grandfather, Joe, came to town in the 1920s and was a founder of the first temples and other Jewish groups. It was a time when forming a minyan was a difficult undertaking. The family's foundation for the Jewish communal giving, the honorees said, is high ethical standards and honesty.

"I see a lot of great, young faces that I associate



(From left), Gary and Shep Lesser were honored at the recent Israel Bonds L'Dor V'Dor New Leadership Division tribute dinner.

with Gary and the future," said Shep Lesser, a well-known attorney. "It's an honor for me to see my son generate this kind of enthusiasm."

Gary Lesser, 29, also an attorney, said that working for his father for the past four years has made him a better person and given him a clear vision of what really matters.

"I am truly blessed to have all of you, my family and friends, here tonight. It only underscores what we already know, that your support for Israel and bonds is essential," he said.

For information on Israel Bonds call, 561-835-4840.