


Voice OF THE VAAD

Issue 19 | Sivan 5783 | May 2023

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VAAD HOER OF ST. LOUIS
ועד העיר סט. לואיס

Rabbi M.H. Eichenstein זצ"ל
Chief Rabbi 1942-1981

Rabbi S. Rivkin זצ"ל
Chief Rabbi 1982-2003

Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt
Rabbi Yosef Landa
Rabbanim Achraim

Rabbi Zvi Zuravin
Executive Director

Rabbi Avraham Bloch
ראש השוחטים

Rabbi Yitzchak Kowalsky
Senior Rabbinical Coordinator

Mr. Alan Kandel
President

CHIEF RABBI CHOSEN FOR ST. LOUIS

Office Exists in Europe—Business Is to Supervise Preparation of Kosher Meat.

Rabbi Leon Graubart, formerly of Poland and more recently of Toronto, Ont., has been chosen Chief Rabbi by the Vaad Haair, composed of members of Orthodox Jewish congregations here. He will have supervision of the preparation of kosher meat at the St. Louis and East St. Louis packing plants, and of other matters connected with the food supply of the Orthodox Jewish community, estimated at 35,000 to 40,000 persons. The reformed Jewish congregations, with a constituency of about 10,000, do not observe all the kosher regulations.

The office of Chief Rabbi, which exists in London and some European cities, is similar in dignity to that of Bishop in certain Christian bodies, but has less authority, as the Jewish synagogues have a congregational form of government. Not all the orthodox congregations here have ratified the choice of Rabbi Graubart as Chief Rabbi, it was stated by one of the local rabbis today. The Vaad Haair includes members of the different local congregations, and it will seek to have its action ratified by the congregations. Later, a public installation of Rabbi Graubart as Chief Rabbi of St. Louis is planned.

He was ordained to the rabbinate in Poland, and founded the Rabbinical College of Makov. While in charge of a congregation at Stashov, he was chairman of the Resolutions Committee of a congress held in Warsaw in 1910, by direction of the Russian Czar, for discussion of the condition of the Jews in Poland. In wartime, he was in Moscow, as head of the educational association supervising the work of Jewish schools in Russia. He organized the Traditional Liberty Society of Russia, and after the war was a member of the Executive Committee of the Zionist organization in Poland, Lithuania and Galicia. He has been head of the Orthodox community in Toronto since 1920. He is 59 years old, and lives at 5164 Raymond Avenue with his wife and two daughters, their two sons residing in Chicago.

Article from St. Louis Post Dispatch

THE VAAD'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Vaad Hoer of St. Louis, we will feature a series of articles highlighting some events of the past century. We will not endeavor to fully capture all the historical facts, rather share from our archives of letters, telegrams, newspaper clippings and the like to get a glimpse of the building of the Orthodox community of St. Louis¹.

On Motzei Shabbos of Parshas Haazinu 5685, a day before Succos, October 11, 1924, at the B'nai Amoona Auditorium at 1212 Academy Avenue, a conference of congregations was held. This conference was called by the Jewish Record, a local weekly which was published at that time by Leon Gellman. A roll call of the people present showed that all congregations, large as well as small,

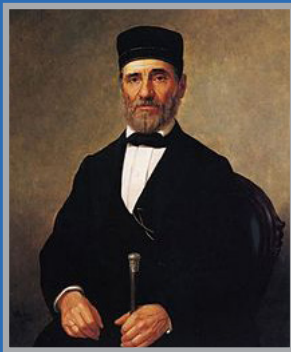
were represented by three delegates. After a considerable discussion, the following resolution was adopted: "Whereas the reports proved convincingly that local Jewish life, in all its facets, finds itself in a confused and uncertain condition, this assembly, consisting of delegates of all orthodox congregations resolves, that a Community Council shall be organized, which shall be the only authoritative organ empowered, to speak and to act in the name of all orthodox Jews in St. Louis." Thus, the organized orthodox Jewish Community was born. The names "Vaad Hoer" in Hebrew and "United Orthodox Jewish Community" in English were adopted at the subsequent meeting held on November 1, 1924, at the Shaare Zedek Congregation².

Jews are believed to have started settling in the St. Louis region in the

¹ With much appreciation to Yehuda Greenblatt for organizing the Vaad's historical files.
² Adapted from "Thirty Years Vaad Hoer" by Mr. Hyman Flaks, addendum to Sefer Brocho L'Menachem

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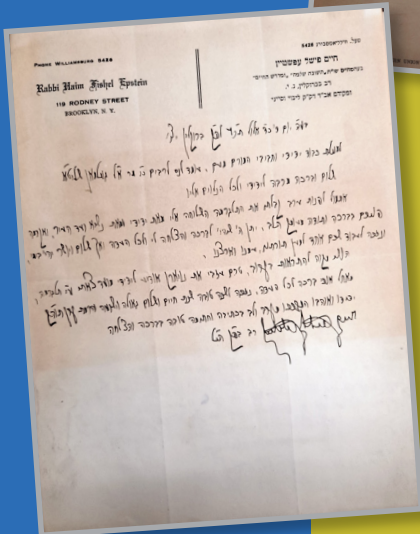
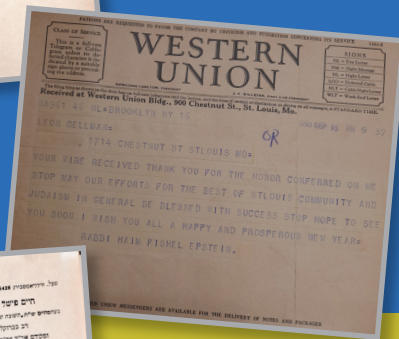
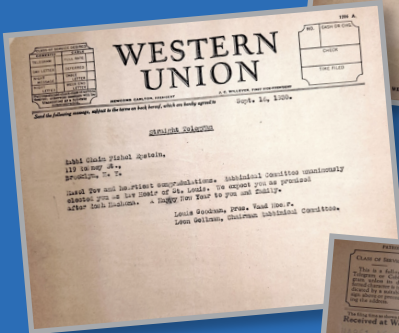
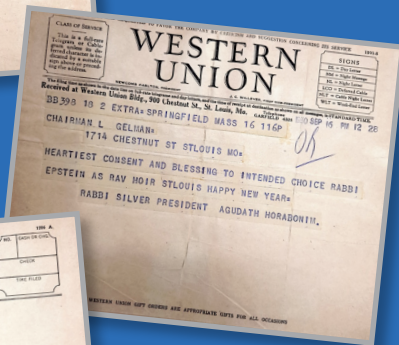
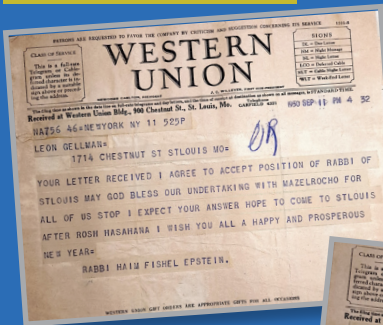
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Rabbi Yissochor Ber Illoway zt"l



Chief Rabbi Haim Fishel Epstein zt"l



Telegrams to and from Rabbi Epstein about his hire, telegram from Rabbi Elizer Silver of Cincinnati congratulating Vaad Hoer for hiring Rabbi Epstein and handwritten letter from Rabbi Epstein

100th Anniversary *Continued from p. 1*

1800's. The first minyan that is known to have formed was organized in 1836. One year later this minyan was formed into the United Hebrew Congregation. It started out as Orthodox, and in 1853, engaged Rabbi Yissochor Ber (Bernard) Illoway zt"l as its Rabbi. Rabbi Illoway zt"l was a musmach of the Chasam Sofer and unique in his time to be a staunch supporter of Orthodox Judaism in America³. It is recorded⁴ that during his tenure in St. Louis, he presided over cases of Gittin and established the proper writing of the city and its surrounding lakes, that is still in use until today. It is known that under Rabbi Illoway zt"l, a regular Orthodox Jewish Community prospered in St. Louis, with a Talmud Torah, Kashrus and Taharas Hamishpacha. Rabbi Illoway zt"l served the St. Louis Jewish community for only one year, during which he attained a rank among the nation's leading and most respected rabbis. But, "his Judaism proved to be too conservative for the members of his congregation." Although United Hebrew maintained strict adherence to Orthodoxy, many United Hebrew members "sought almost desperately to acculturate to their new Midwestern environment." Rabbi Illoway zt"l was to resign his pulpit after the congregation endorsed a new prayer book published by the nascent American Reform movement. In some later years, after he left the Congregation, the United Hebrew became a reform Temple⁵.

Over the next few decades several more Shuls opened up throughout the region. Additionally, numerous organizations promoting chesed and caring for impoverished and refugees were established. After continuous growth of the Jewish community it was realized that an organized body to represent the needs of the Orthodox community was needed. Thus the founding of the Vaad Hoer. The first Rabbi that was hired in late 1927 was Rabbi Yehuda Leib (Leon) Graubart zt"l, author of the five volumes of responsa Chavalim Ba-Ne'imim. During his few years here, he fought courageously to establish proper kashrus standards that all could accept. In 1930 after the departure of Rabbi Graubart zt"l, Rabbi Haim Fishel Epstein zt"l was invited to become the Chief Rabbi, a position he held until his passing in 1942. Under Rabbi Epstein's zt"l leadership the St. Louis Orthodox community defined itself as strongly adhering to halacha and laid the groundwork for the growth of the American Jewish demographic that would flourish after World War 2.

3 Rabbi Illoway once bemoaned, that despite the presence of more than 200 Jewish communities in America in his time, there were only four ordained rabbis in the whole country (including himself); see further details at: <http://halachicadventures.com/english-menu-jerusalem-2008/>

4 Kuntres Haaretz L'areha - pg. 39

5 Adapted from: <https://stjewishlight.org/opinion/remembers-the-first-rabbi-in-st-louis>


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VAAD HOEIR
OF ST. LOUIS

KOSHER CERTIFICATION

February 27, 2023

The following bread items in this Schnucks Bakery bearing an  symbol are **Pareve & Pas Yisroel**:

- Bagels (all varieties)
- Baguette French Bread
- Black Russian Pumpernickel Bread
- Caraway Rye Bread
- Challah
- Cranberry Orange Bread
- Crusty French Bread
- Irish Soda Bread
- Miami Onion Rolls
- Mini Loaf
- Multi Grain Bread
- Pane Italiano Bread
- Rye Bread
- Rye Mini Loaf
- Soft French Bread
- Sourdough Bread
- Sourdough Mini Loaf
- Split Top Bread
- Sweet Mini Loaf
- Vienna Bread
- Wheat Mini Loaf

4 MILLSTONE CAMPUS DRIVE, ST. LOUIS, MO 63146

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Schnucks & Pas Yisroel *Continued from p. 3*

achieved in a commercial setting. A recent innovation in the world of Kashrus, called a “glow-bar” can also be utilized to achieve *Pas Yisroel* status. The halacha states⁵ that even if the fire (e.g. oven) was initiated by a gentile, there is a way for a Jew to participate in the baking process sufficient to classify the items as *Pas Yisroel*. This method is referred to as *hashlachas kistem* - adding a wood chip. In the ovens of old that were fueled by wood and the like, even if the fire was started by a gentile, if a Jew just threw in one wood stick, it would be considered a *heker* - a unique action, which rendered all the baked items as *Pas Yisroel*. Nowadays, because our ovens do not operate in the same manner as in times of old, an idea was presented to comply with the *hashlachas kistem* method. A glow-bar is installed inside the oven which obviates the need for the *Mashgiach* to be the one to turn on the oven⁶. What exactly is this glow-bar? It is a metal rod controlled by a separate switch that is installed alongside the heating mechanisms of the oven. The *Mashgiach* turns on the switch for the glow-bar which is hot enough to bake an item that

would be next to it (e.g. 200F+). The switch for this apparatus is sealed off so that only the *Mashgiach* can adjust it. This now enables the items subsequently baked in the oven to be classified as *Pas Yisroel*.

This system has been installed in all four Schnucks Kosher certified bakeries. Each bakery has a list hanging with which items are now certified as *Pas Yisroel*. As our *Mashgichim* continue to monitor this new system and verify that the glow-bars are properly working, our ultimate goal is to have each bakery product that is *Pas Yisroel* conveniently marked as such. The Vaad Hoeir thanks Mr. Chris Kline - Vice President - Bakery Department - Schnucks, for all his assistance in helping this project become a reality.

For a complete list of local kosher certified establishments please visit, <https://ovkosher.org/food/> .

5 Shulchan Aruch YD 112:9

6 Rabbi Wosner zt”l (Kovetz M’Beis Levi - Hilchos Maachalei Akum paragraph 10) supported this innovation. See Imrei Dovid - Pas Yisroel - Chapter 14 and Living With Kashrus pgs. 63-69 for additional sources.

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