

ShivaConnect.com- New Technology to Help Sit Shiva

August 2011: “There is no time more difficult for a family than when they lose a loved one. We can’t ease their pain, but **ShivaConnect** can help provide information and coordination for sitting shiva,” said founder Sharon Rosen.

ShivaConnect.com is a free resource that features educational articles, a personal *Shiva Registry* to conveniently post and share funeral & shiva details, and many other services that are helpful at a time of loss.

After more than a year of intricate programming and design, a mourner, relative or caring friend can now easily enter pertinent information on a private *Shiva Registry* page. Much more than an online Jewish obituary, it includes funeral and shiva dates, times, places, interactive directions, mourners’ contact information, food notes, synagogue affiliations, family charitable requests, eulogies and who to call if you have a question. A direct link to the *Shiva Registry* page can then be emailed, texted, tweeted, posted on Facebook or found through a search on **ShivaConnect’s** home page.

With “just a click,” family and friends learn sitting shiva details, find local delis to deliver shiva platters, view and post food already planned, make charitable donations, find helpful resources, read eulogies and send thoughtful messages to mourners. Each *Shiva Registry* is typically viewed by more than 100 visitors, making it convenient to “connect” with people both near and far. “People have no idea how helpful posting a Registry can be... until they use it,” added Sharon. “Mourning families appreciate fewer phone calls, less stress, confusion and wasted food.”

Shiva Connect has articles that are of interest to Jews and non-Jews about customs, traditions and preparing your home for sitting shiva, visiting the shiva house, Jewish prayers, poems, kaddish, etc. Another unique feature is the “Yahrzeit Reminder” which is emailed each year a week before the anniversary date, noting when to light a memorial candle.

ShivaConnect was developed by Sharon Rosen, who turned to the internet for help when her beloved Mother passed away. She searched for local Jewish funeral homes and information about Jewish shiva customs, sent emails to friends thanking them for their support and to tell them of her mother’s passing. Another email was sent with final arrangements information and one more with location, days, and times for sitting shiva. She found the internet to be the most efficient and comfortable way to communicate.

Stress grew as the phone kept ringing with questions about food. Friends continued to call asking what was needed, when to send it and people from out of town called not knowing where to order from. An abundance of food was delivered, platters were taken back to delicatessens for overnight refrigeration and others were donated to a local shelter.

Exhausted and overwhelmed by this experience, Sharon thought, “There must be a better way!” and conceived the idea of an all- inclusive online resource to conveniently provide information, assistance and coordination of the bereavement period.

Synagogues, Funeral Homes, Hospices and Jewish charitable organizations are directing families to **ShivaConnect**, providing shiva information cards and encouraging use of the *Shiva Registry* system. Many charities are linked for direct memorial donation. **ShivaConnect** has begun to list helpful resources for a time of loss that are available throughout the United States, such as funeral homes, bereavement groups, senior living facilities, nursing homes, geriatric care services, realtors, movers, consignment shops, legal assistance, financial and insurance consultants, jewelry appraisal, pre-need planning, etc.

Sharon’s vision of creating a comprehensive website to help others is now a reality.

ShivaConnect.com is a tribute to her Mother, who always gave love and support to family and her many, many friends.

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