

Chicago Rabbinical Council Hosts Evening of Appreciation For *Mashgichim*

On *Motzoei Shabbos Parashas Bo*, the Chicago Rabbinical Council hosted an “Evening of *Chizuk* and *Camaraderie*” in appreciation of the *mashgichim* of food service establishments.

Rabbi Sholem Fishbane, *kashrus* administrator for cRc Kosher, explained, “The most unappreciated job in *kashrus* is the *mashgiach*. In truth, they deserve the most credit. They often work in uncomfortable surroundings, with temperamental cooks and low-class workers who are blasting non-Jewish music. Furthermore, the bottom line is that they are the ones responsible for the *kashrus* of the food. We can have a cow that was *shechted* with all of the *hidurim*, but if the *mashgiach* is not diligent [in ensuring] that the oven is turned on in a way that assures *bishul Yisrael*, the meat is not kosher. They, and their wives, deserve recognition for all of their hard work.”

In addition to an opportunity to show recognition and appreciation to the *mashgichim* and their families, the *melaveh malkah* provided an opportunity for *mashgichim* to get to know each other, network, share ideas and realize that they all share common struggles.

The evening’s informative program began with an address by Rabbi Yisroel Langer, *Dayan* in the cRc Beis Din and cRc Kosher’s *tola’im* (bug) expert, who shared updates in the area of *tola’im* and discussed different unique situations that he has encountered.

Rabbi Sholem Fishbane discussed keeping one’s eye on his goals, considering, “Where do we want to be in five years?” He mapped out a five-year plan for *kashrus* at the cRc, including implementing higher standards (such as *yashan*) and spreading the reach of the cRc. He also quoted Harav Moshe Wolfson, *shlita*, who asserted that before Moshiach, the Satan will try very hard to cause more *timtum halev* via non-kosher food creeping into our diets, which breaks down *emunah*. The



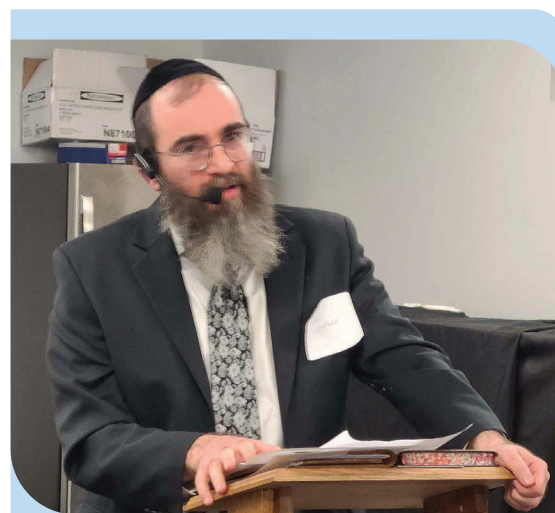
Rabbi Yakov Lopin talking to Rabbi Yaakov Eisenbach at the cRc Foodservice *Mashgichim* Appreciation *melaveh malkah*.

many challenges in today’s world of *kashrus* are a result of this *maaseh Satan*.

In a surprise presentation, Rabbi Fishbane awarded a beautiful set of *Mishnayos* to Rabbi Yaakov Meir Eisenbach, head of the food service *mashgichim*, as a token of *hakaras hatov* for his enormous devotion and dedication to the *kashrus* of food service establishments. Rabbi Eisenbach understands the importance of maintaining strong, personal relationships with the restaurant owners, and goes above and beyond to develop those relationships by setting up *chavrusos* with many restaurant owners, and has become a Rabbinic mentor to many who have been working closely with him.

Next, Rabbi Yaakov Lopin, one of the *mashgichim*, shared his perspective from working in the field of *kashrus* for over 30 years, reflecting on the differences in standards, means of communication and more, that have evolved over the past decades.

In addition, in the weeks prior to the *melaveh*



Rabbi Yisroel Langer addressing the *melaveh malkah*.

malkah, Rabbi Lopin surveyed his colleagues, discussing tips that they would like share with others and what they would like to see done differently. Reb Lopin then shared the results of his investigations with the guests at the *melaveh malkah*.

Following Rabbi Lopin’s address, Rabbi Eisenbach initiated an open forum in which the *mashgichim* engaged in a productive discussion regarding various aspects of their jobs.

The final speaker was Rabbi Yona Reiss, *Av Beis Din* of the cRc, who delivered *divrei chizuk*, sharing encouragement and words of gratitude for the *mashgichim*, who are truly on the front lines of *kashrus*.

“The event was a tremendous success,” noted Rabbi Fishbane. “People exclaimed, ‘This was so fantastic — when is the next one?’ We would like to expand this concept to include other types of *mashgichim*, such as industrial *mashgichim*, and others. The *mashgichim*, and their wives, went home very *mechuzak*.”