

Sabes JCC's Annual Benefit is May 3

Proceeds will support programs for children, seniors and people with special needs, and the JCC's scholarship fund

Question: What do clowns, computers and community leadership have in common? Answer: Debbie and Gil Mann.

The Manns, who are this year's honorees at the Sabes JCC Benefit titled "Ready. Set. Go!", met as teenagers, drawn to each other by their shared interests and desire to make a difference in people's lives and the life of the community. Soon after they married in 1981, they co-founded a computer training business in the basement of their home. Seven years later, they sold

ible team — a team that is filled with love, dedication and deep caring. To Debbie, what is important is family and community."

Added friend Michelle Basman, "Debbie is my go-to person for practical advice and a calming voice. She is always willing to lend a hand to a friend or a stranger."

Gil's volunteerism and leadership has been instrumental in the growth and success of many organizations, ranging from Jewish senior housing to lobbying for Israel. He served as

2008. He has taught doctors and medical professionals about the healing power of humor at many hospitals, including the Mayo Clinic. (Gil says he honed his clowning craft at Talmud Torah and apologizes to all his teachers).

"We see Gil give tirelessly to our community, and the extra effort he

puts out to do clowning to make sick children smile, or an injured veteran, is remarkable," Basman said. "He also cheers us up with his joke to match any topic. How does he know and remember so many jokes? It's unreal."

Community leader Chuck Barry said Gil is the "first person you call" when something needs to happen in

the Jewish community.

"Whatever he tries to accomplish, he does it beautifully and gives at least 110 percent," Barry said. "He works well with everyone and knows how to get things done. If everyone followed Gil's example, we would have the best

• MANNS / see page 19



Courtesy of the Sabes JCC

This year's Sabes JCC Benefit honorees are Debbie and Gil Mann.

the company and continued their work together — this time as volunteers in the Jewish community.

Debbie's main passion has been in the area of education. She served on the board of the Amos and Celia Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School and has taught their students as both a tutor and classroom teacher. She held many volunteer positions at Beth El Synagogue, ranging from strategic planning to developing curricula for the B'nai Mitzva program.

She also served on the board of Sha'arim and on JFCS' Inclusion Committee, helping to ensure that children with special needs have opportunities and support to thrive in Jewish educational settings.

"There are just some people that you like instantly — Debbie Mann is one of them. Always smiling, always a kind word and always willing to help," said Mort Naiman, director of the Jewish Community Foundation and Senior Philanthropy Officer of the Minneapolis Jewish Federation. "She shuns the limelight, happy to help friends, strangers, family and the community. Together with her husband, Gil, they make an incred-

the president of Beth El Synagogue and also chaired its recent capital campaign.

After serving 18 years on committees and the board of the Minneapolis Jewish Federation, Gil stepped into the role as the Federation's interim CEO. In true Gil fashion, always putting the needs of the community first, he agreed to take the job only if his salary would not exceed \$1 per month.

Gil volunteers his time as a public speaker and has authored two books, *Sex, God, Christmas and Jews: Intimate Emails about Being Jewish* and *How to Get More Out of Being Jewish Even if: a) you are not sure you believe in God; b) you think keeping kosher is stupid; c) you think going to synagogue is a waste of time; d) you hated Hebrew school; or e) all of the above!*

Gil has also been a hospital clown, working with adult patients since

Sabes JCC Annual Benefit

Ready

Tuesday,
Hyatt Regency

A community dinner



Manns donated tent to Camp Olami

• MANNS / from page 17

leaders in the country."

In addition to their many other leadership roles, Gil and Debbie have been very active at the Sabes JCC, both having served on the board of directors, involved in fundraising for the J, and through their philanthropic support. And, thanks to Gil and Debbie, the J's Camp Olami received a new and much-needed giant tent that is now the shelter and home base for more than 500 campers each summer.

"Debbie and Gil are the kind of leaders that don't wait to be asked, they figure out what needs to be done and make it happen," said Sabes JCC CEO Joshua Wert. "Their involvement at the JCC benefits the thousands of people who walk through our doors each day. We are pleased to honor such a deserving couple. They are both role models of giving and leadership."

With all they have done for the

community, Debbie and Gil's most important contribution to the future of our community is raising their four children, Josh, Naomi, Danny, and Shoshana, to be active, caring and involved young community leaders.

"Ready. Set. Go!," the Sabes JCC Benefit honoring Gil and Debbie Mann and introducing the JGames (see bottom of Page 17), will take place on Tuesday, May 3 in the Great Lakes Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis, 1300 Nicollet Mall. Cocktails and appetizers will be served at 5:30 p.m., followed by the program and dinner at 6:30 p.m.

All proceeds will support programs for children, seniors and people with special needs, and the JCC's scholarship fund, so that no one is ever turned away due to inability to pay. Tickets for the benefit are available at: www.sabesjcc.org.

— Courtesy of the Sabes JCC

To register, please visit sabesjcc.org.



sabes jcc
minneapolis

Sabes benefit will also launch JGames

In addition to a kosher dinner and tribute to Debbie and Gil Mann, the Sabes JCC's Annual Benefit will also kick off the 2016 JGames, a season of events for the entire community.

What do food, art, golf, trivia, puppies and a ninja warrior have in common? Join the Sabes JCC on May 3 and learn more about its exciting year of events.

For information, visit: www.sabesjcc.org.

Help Brighten Passover for a Jew in Need

By sponsoring a **Passover for All** gift bag, you will make this Passover holiday brighter for members of the Jewish community who face physical, financial or emotional challenges which prevent them from celebrating Passover. More than 200 bags filled with Passover products will be delivered to Jews in the East metro area. To sponsor a **Passover for All** gift bag, complete and return the following form:



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Jewish Family Service of

St. Paul, Passover for All

Program, 1633 W. 7th

Street, St. Paul MN 55102, or call 651-698-0767 or

info@jfsp.org with credit card information.

Name: _____

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