

renewal



Chaya Teldon, co-director of Chabad Long Island, stands by a mikvah at the Chai Center in Dix Hills.

ritual can speak to us today, is one of the most exciting things happening around the mikvah," she said.

Many people are attracted to the mikvahs because the experience is so peaceful and transformative — and physical, Moskowitz said.

"There are so few physical experiences we have in religion. A lot of it is cerebral, prayer," she said. "This is a physical action that has a spiritual element to it."

Many of the newest mikvahs are luxurious, giving off the feel of a spa complete with piped-in music, a fireplace or a Jacuzzi.

"People are shocked when they see the mikvah," Teldon said. "Mikvahs today are gorgeous."

Mikvahs go back thousands of years, and they are a "crucial part of Judaism," said Rabbi Tuvia Teldon, Chaya Teldon's husband and director of the Chabad movement on Long Island. They exist all over the world, including many ancient ones next to the Western Wall in Jerusalem's Old City.

Centuries ago, a mikvah was considered so important that a synagogue would sell a Torah scroll to finance its construction.

Traditionally, women are to

use the mikvah just before their wedding, after childbirth, and seven days after the end of menstruation.

Mikvahs generally are built in discrete indoor locations, and below ground. They are usually attached to a synagogue and must contain at least 200 gallons of siphoned rainwater that is collected on a rooftop.

Women visit them after dusk, alone except for an attendant, and immerse themselves completely in the warm, filtered waters.

"It's a huge part of my life," said Gayle Benno, 41, of Merrick, who uses the mikvah at the Chabad Center of Merrick. "It adds a tremendous amount of spirituality and, I feel, blessings to my family and my marriage."

Benno, who is a member of the Merrick Jewish Centre, a Conservative synagogue, said she had never heard of mikvahs until she was in college. She first used one before her wedding 15 years ago, and has visited one regularly for the past dozen years.

Every month it provides a "special time carved out for me," she said. "I know I have time to talk to God and share all my fears or my hopes or my dreams. It's like this sacred time."

Lifers learn how to save drug overdose victims

BY DAVID OLSON

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When Jeffrey Turner signed up to learn how to administer the lifesaving anti-opioid overdose drug naloxone, he was expecting to practice on a dummy.

But there was no dummy. In fact, at a class Saturday, the only real instruction was a few sentences from a doctor.

"That's totally easy. Wow," the Deer Park resident said. "I thought there was a needle involved."

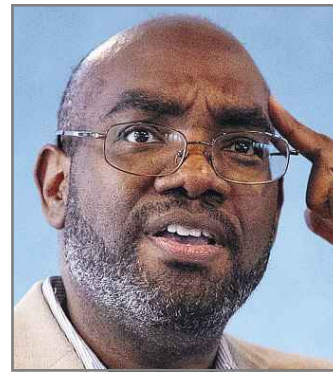
His wife, Jeanmarie, added: "If you've given a nasal spray to yourself, you know how to do this."

The Turners were among 32 people who took a naloxone training class Saturday afternoon at the Huntington Community First Aid Squad building in Huntington Station.

Many were emergency medical technicians. Others were like the Turners: People who know someone addicted to opioids or know someone with a family member struggling with addiction.

Dr. Gregson Pigott, clinical director of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services' trained overdose responder program, told participants that they simply had to press a plunger on the container of naloxone — commonly known by the brand name Narcan — and four milligrams of the medicine would spray into the nose of the person who had overdosed.

Each participant received a kit



Dr. Gregson Pigott

with two state-funded packages of Narcan. Two are given, Pigott said, because if the patient does not revive in three to five minutes from the first dose, a second dosage of Narcan can be squirted into the other nostril.

Pigott described the signs of an overdose — including slow or shallow breathing and a heavy head nod unresponsive to stimulation — and gave participants options for long-term drug treatment.

The Suffolk County medical examiner's office projects that the number of opioid-related deaths in the county will reach a record 429 in 2017 once tests of drug cases are completed. A top Suffolk police official, however, told county legislators Thursday that the number of overdoses — fatal and nonfatal — over the past 12 months has dropped sharply.

Suffolk County Legis. William Spencer (D-Centerport), who helped sponsor the training, re-

NARCAN TRAINING

For information on Narcan training in Suffolk County, visit www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/CountyExecutive/SuffolkCountySubstanceAbuseResourceCenter.aspx

To sign up for Narcan training in Nassau County, visit forms.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/CE/narcan/ontraining.php

Narcan is also available at some pharmacies. The state covers up to \$40 of co-payments for the medicine. No prescription is needed. To find a participating pharmacy, go to www.health.ny.gov/overdose

called how in 2016 a man began overdosing outside a doughnut shop in Ronkonkoma and collapsed. Although he is a physician, all he could do was lift the man's jaw to ensure he was breathing and wait for emergency responders to arrive with naloxone — which "revived him immediately," Spencer said. "I did not have Narcan," he said. "It was terrifying. . . . You bet I have Narcan now."

Andres Echevarria of Amityville said he helped a family member get into treatment about a month ago after she tried to commit suicide following at least five years of opioid addiction.

Echevarria said he attended the Narcan training Saturday so he could "be there for her and for everyone else who needs it." "Everyone deserves a second chance in life," he said.



Naloxone kits were given out during an anti-opioid overdose drug prevention training Saturday.