

The Jewish Forward

Friday, December 10, 2010



The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Gala

“There was a time in New York City when animals were protected... but not children,” said **Deborah Norville**, host and co-chairperson of the November 18 New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Gala. Held at The Plaza, the event honored Steven Golub, vice chairman of the advisory investment bank Lazard. “And yet,” continued Norville continued, “you still read in the papers, ‘Man beats 4-year-old daughter because she soiled her pants,’ ‘Mother of 4-year-old girl [who died] accused....’” **Mary Pulido**, the NYSPCC’s executive director, touted the agency as “the first child protection agency in the United States... [It] maintains the most comprehensive and oldest set of records on child abuse and neglect cases from the organization’s inception.

Other gala co-chairpeople included **Neil Friedman**, president of Mattel, Inc., and his wife, **Amanda**, and **Jerry Storch**, chairman and CEO of Toys 'R' Us, Inc., and his wife,

Jacquie. The organization's Strength of Our Society Award was presented by NBC's senior producer, **Richard Greenberg**, to Emmy award-winning journalist and "Dateline NBC" correspondent **Chris Hansen**.

The evening highlighted the remarkable work performed by the NYSPCC since its incorporation in 1875. The historical notes in the journal inform: "To date there are more than 650,00 files concerning over 2 million children. Notably, the NYSPCC's digitized archives and documents will enable researchers to retrieve original books, documents, ETC. Even the dress that Mary Ellen, the organization's first client, wore when rescued in 1874 will be professionally preserved. When I asked about the percentage of Jewish children who might have come through NYSPCC's doors, I was told, "We accept all children, regardless of race or ethnicity."

The evening's entertainment was by a platinum-selling recording artist who has sold more than 9 million records worldwide, **Sophie B. Hawkins**, whose struggle with her own troubled childhood was chronicled in the 1997 documentary "The Cream Will Rise," which was bought by the Sundance Channel.