ELUL STORIES
Sharing our stories, sharing lives, creating community

Elul is the month leading up to Rosh HaShanah. Each day during the month, a different Temple Beth Torah congregant will share an Ethical Will or portion of one in order to help us prepare for this season of self reflection and personal growth.

Thanksgiving
Mary Resnick-Chan

When my dad passed away, the world and I lost a hero. He helped save countless lives as a volunteer paramedic and fireman in the Plainview Fire Department for over 25 years. While most normal people would run out of burning buildings, volunteer firemen run into the buildings and risk their own lives - often missing family celebrations or much-needed sleep.

As a kid, I loved to play with my dad's helmet since it smelled like a combination of his aftershave and his most recent emergency call. I remember one night that he tried to explain to me that his helmet was used for his protection, of course, but he also liked his helmet so that nobody could see his face. Unfortunately for him, people remembered his piercing blue eyes and distinguished (yes, large) nose. When the family would go to the Plainview Diner or food shopping or wherever, I remember a handful of times that people would run up to my dad like a celebrity (which he was to me) and thank him for his help. He was always humbled and seemed embarrassed. He taught me that helping others is its own beautiful act and needs no recognition.

Every year on Thanksgiving, my dad would volunteer to "stand-by" at local fire houses on Long Island so that other firemen could spend the holiday with their family and friends. My family learned to celebrate Thanksgiving every other day of the calendar year. It was only fitting that my dad passed away on Thanksgiving Day.

I hope that I can pass along my dad's values to my son. I miss him every day.

Mary Resnick - Chan is an active member of Temple Beth Torah and the moving force behind many of our Mitzvah/Tzedakah projects. She and her
husband, Tony, have a wonderful son, Nathan.

Would you like to share your Elul Story? Write an ethical will, in the form of a letter, a story or a collection of sayings. Include the "gifts" you would like to leave to your family focusing on the values and character traits which you feel are most important. Send it in its entirety or send a section of it to: ravsusie@gmail.com.

If you missed any of the previous Elul Stories you can go to www.tbtny.org (media galleries/elul stories).