KOSHER LIVING





PINE VALLEY

The Aish neighborhood extends through several areas, including Pine Valley in southeast Denver and areas in Greenwood Village.

"We wanted to live in a smaller, homier community that has a strong religious foundation and in which people are generally open-minded and welcoming, as well as a community to which we could contribute and make a difference," Eli Berger says.

The Bergers are renting an apartment a few blocks away from Aish of the Rockies, and they hope to be able to stay in the community when it comes time to purchase a house.

Rabbi Yonatan and Sara Nuszen moved from Jerusalem on July 1, 2019, so most of their time here has been during the COVID pandemic and therefore atypical. Rab-



NEWCOMERS

Chaya, Eli and Yossi Berger before the birth of their daughter Baila.

bi Nuszen had been working at the Aish international headquarters in Jerusalem, and considered positions in Toronto, Miami and Baltimore, but when he and Sara came to Denver, "there was just something about the community that was so moving that we knew this is where we belong."

The couple has two young children, another sign of the neighborhood feel.

The Nuszens' initial impressions of the community were reinforced as soon as they moved into their townhouse which shares a fence with Cherry Creek High School, where many of their teenagers he works with as a youth director attend. They were overwhelmed by the hospitality they experienced:

"We didn't even have to cook for two weeks. There was literally a welcoming committee that had different families prepare meals, so that the transition would be much easier on our family. That meant the world to us."

Some of the newcomer families were Shabbat observant. For others, the move to the neighborhood is a step in their journey toward an obser-

vant Jewish lifestyle. Living close to Aish of the Rockies enables them to walk to synagogue on Shabbat, but it also puts them in close proximity with other Jews who can guide them as their Jewish lifestyles evolve.

his current neighborhood growth has not been coincidental. Since 2018, Aish of the Rockies has made a concerted effort, formally called the Community Development Initiative, to attract people to the community and facilitate their moves. That initiative included creating a fund to help families move into the community if needed, and the hiring of Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger as director of community relations and development.

Part of Rabbi Erlanger's job is to recruit new families and coach them as they consider everything involved with a move, such as employment, housing and schools.

He also administers the Community Development Initiative fund.

In addition to the 17 families who have moved into the community in the past two years, Rabbi Erlanger says he has four or five families waiting in the wings "for COVID to be behind them so they can be more active" in their transition.

rett Zuckerman, a professional real estate broker, has worked heavily in the southeast community. A former Aish staff member, he understands this particular segment of the real estate market.

Zuckerman is bound by law and industry ethics to fair housing guidelines, and therefore never steers buy-



Rabbi Yaakov Meyer



Aish of the Rockies COO Zev Jacobs



Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger



el Local realtor Brett Zuckerman

ers to this area because of its Jewish amenities, and conversely, he does not market listings with those kinds of descriptors.

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