



Beth El  
SYNAGOGUE

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**For Immediate Release**

**Brendan McDonough to speak as part of Heroes Among Us in Minneapolis - December 7, 2017**

St. Louis Park, MN – On December 7, 2017, as part of Beth El Synagogue's Heroes Among Us Series, **Brendan McDonough** will offer his take on the spirit of service. Brendan's story of struggle and redemption encourages people to become their best selves, and to seek out support when struggling. This message is especially poignant as we call to mind not only those families whose loved ones are currently serving overseas in harm's way, but also whose loved ones have returned forever changed. **Bill Lunn** from 5 Eyewitness News (KSTP) will serve as the guest moderator for the evening. **Chef Jack Riebel** will be providing the fare for the VIP Reception. A portion of the proceeds of this event will help underwrite Beth El Synagogue's Minnesota National Guard unit support initiative, directly benefiting the 257th Military Police Company, currently deployed to U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

**ABOUT BRENDAN**

Brendan McDonough was on the verge of becoming a hopeless, inveterate heroin addict when he, for the sake of his young daughter, decided to turn his life around. He enlisted in the Granite Mountain Hotshots, a team of elite firefighters based in Prescott, Arizona. Their superintendent, Eric Marsh, was in a desperate crunch after four hotshots left the crew, and seeing a glimmer of promise in the skinny would-be recruit, he took a chance on the unlikely McDonough. Despite the crew's skepticism, and thanks in large part to Marsh's firm but loving encouragement, McDonough unlocked a latent drive and dedication, going on to successfully battle a number of blazes and eventually win the confidence of the men he came to call his brothers.

**ABOUT THE YARNELL FIRE**

On June 30, 2013, while McDonough — “Donut” as he'd been dubbed by his team — served as lookout, his team confronted a freak, 3,000-degree inferno in nearby Yarnell, Arizona. The relentless firestorm ultimately trapped his hotshot brothers, tragically killing all 19 of them within minutes. Nationwide, it was the greatest loss of firefighter lives since the 9/11 attacks. The tragic and compelling story of the Granite Mountain Hotshots is coming to the silver screen with the release of ***Only the Brave*** in October 2017.

Tickets and More information about **An Evening with Brendan McDonough** are available online at [www.besyn.org/onlythebrave](http://www.besyn.org/onlythebrave)

**Date/Time:** Thursday, December 7, 2017, 7:00 pm

**Location:**

**Beth El Synagogue  
5225 Barry Street West  
St. Louis Park, MN 55416**

**About Beth El**

Beth El is a warm, open and caring Conservative Jewish community in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. The synagogue reaches out to its 1,250 households, offering educational, spiritual and social opportunities that nourish the intellect, soul and body. In so doing, familial bonds have been formed between members that stretch “from generation to generation.” Beth El is a center of Jewish life that strives to respond to emerging needs while living out the eternal, sacred values of the Jewish people.

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