

# Seaboard Sentinel

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Fall 2004

## Presidential Ponderings

The Seaboard Region of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs has an ambitious program set for the coming year. Following is a summary of some of what will be happening during 2004-2005/5764-5765 along with some other information.

- FJMC Biennial Convention: The 2005 FJMC Biennial Convention will be held July 13-17, 2005, at the Wyndham Bonaventure Resort in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Among the highlights will be the conclusion of the term of office as President of the FJMC of the Seaboard Region's own Danny Stern of Beth Israel-Owings Mills and the awarding of the region's Ma'asim Tovim ("Doer of Good Deeds") Award to former regional president (1997-1999) Allan Kahan of Ohr Kodesh Men's Club.
- Once again, the Seaboard Region will provide financial support of several hundred dollars each for its Men's Club & Brotherhood presidents, first time convention attendees, regional officers and past regional Presidents. Right now, individual clubs in the region ought to include in their 2004-2005 program budgets additional subsidies for its president, other officers, and club members to attend the 2005 convention. In addition, preparations should be underway for the submission of your club programs for the Torch Awards program. Other information about the convention can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter.
- Blue Yarmulke Men of the Year Awards Program: Honorees from almost all of the regional clubs will be feted at the two events: the January 9, 2005, awards breakfast at Temple Israel, Norfolk, Virginia, and the January 16, 2005, awards dinner Beth Israel Congregation, Owings Mills, Maryland.
- Club Visitations: Throughout the next year, the region's Executive Vice President, Michael Neulander, and I will continue to visit the 23 member clubs within the region. We are anxious to meet with the club officers to discuss FJMC and regional programs, address issues of concern, and to learn how the region can best assist each club. We will be in contact with each club president to determine an appropriate time for us to visit, whether at a board meeting, a Sunday membership brunch, an officer installation, or other program or event of the club. Meanwhile, please let Mike (mneulander@cox.net) or me know if you have a particular program which you would like us to attend.
- Directory: The 2004-2005/5764-5765 Seaboard Region Directory is being compiled & produced by Gary Smith. It will be distributed to all regional and club officers in early November. Additional copies will be available for clubs to distribute among their members.
- It's Academic Program: The annual Seaboard Region "It's Academic" competition once again is being run by Ed Rosenzweig (rosenzweig@navair.navy.mil) with assistance from several other volunteers. Tournaments will be held at clubs throughout the region during the fall.

## Even During The Summer The Region Isn't Inactive

The SEABOARD REGION RETREAT was held on JULY 16-18 2004 at the PEARLSTONE RETREAT CENTER in Reisterstown Maryland. We had 40 men in attendance including many of our FJMC International officers.

Rabbi David Booth, spiritual leader of Temple Beth Torah in Ocean New Jersey, was our program facilitator "From Macho To Mensch". Over the weekend we held a series of workshops and other presentations that sought to address the role of Jewish men in a rapidly changing religious and secular world. Topics included; "What Was Taken From Adam", "A Jewish Vocabulary of Spirituality", "Tzedakah Means Righteousness", "Keruv".

In addition Norm Kurtz, FJMC International VP, conducted a session on FJMC's "Hebrew Literacy" program and Bob Braitman, FJMC Executive VP, conducted Havdalah using FJMC's "Havdalah Guide". He also conducted a workshop explaining how helpful many of FJMC's publications are for increasing programming in our clubs and spirituality in our congregations.

The "ruach" at services was uplifting and the single malt scotch and cigars at the bon fire were a great treat. Needless to say those that attended had a great time those that didn't will have to wait 2 years for the next retreat.

## It's Academic Competition

Assisting Ed Rosenzweig this year in running the 'Its Academic' games is Irv Varkonyi of Olam Tikvah and our Past Regional President, and David Levine of Beth El Bethesda, a former Vice President of the Region.

- Cancelled & Rescheduled: Oct 17: Host - Ohr Kodesh Chevy Chase/Bethesda, competing against B'nai Shalom Olney, and Beth El Bethesda.
- Oct 24: Host - Olam Tikvah, competing against Beth Emeth, Shaare Tefila and Kol Ami.
- Oct 31: Host - Adat Chaim, competing against Beth El Baltimore, Beth Israel Owings Mills and Chizuk Amuno.
- Nov 7: Host - B'nai Israel Rockville, competing against Shaare Tikvah, Kehilat Sholom and Beth Sholom Dover.
- Nov 14 Host - Agudas Achim Alexandria, competing against Adas Israel and Etz Hayim.
- Nov 21: Host - Temple Israel Norfolk, competing against Beth El Norfolk, Gomley Chesed and Rodef Sholom.

## Region Becomes Member of FJMC Foundation for Jewish Life

One of the purposes of the national Federation, is to assist clubs with programming ideas, and programming helps involve men within the congregation into both the Men's Club and synagogue life. Over the years, the Federation has been an active creator of new and relevant ideas for programming for clubs which have been extremely

## Presidential Ponderings contd.

- Keruv Program: One of the most significant initiatives of the FJMC is its Keruv program, a program of inclusion for dual-faith families which is designed to assist Men's Clubs, Brotherhoods, congregations, and their Rabbis in their quest to help families affected by intermarriage.
- World Wide Wrap to be held February 6, 2005: The mitzvah of wrapping tefillin is one of the most vibrant and spiritual rituals we have, yet one that most of us stopped the day we left Hebrew school. This ritual has been performed for thousands of years, yet many children have never seen their fathers wrap themselves in tefillin nor have many fathers ever seen their children in tefillin. It is time to reach out and to teach our friends and children the importance of this sacred act.
- Men's Club Shabbat to be held April 6-9, 2005: Men's Club Shabbat will be held at Men's Clubs/Brotherhoods throughout the region and the country. The date may be different at different synagogues depending on activities at that synagogue. Information about planning for and conducting Men's Club Shabbat 2005 (including a 30-page program guide) can be obtained from the FJMC and will be posted at [www.fjmc.org/mensclubshabbat.html](http://www.fjmc.org/mensclubshabbat.html).
- Yom HaShoah Yellow Candle Program: The Yom HaShoah Yellow Candle™ Program was developed by the FJMC and is implemented in cooperation with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) and the North American Federation of Temple Brotherhoods (NAFTB). Through the active participation of Men's Clubs & Brotherhoods, we make a meaningful effort to preserve the memory of the six million victims of the Holocaust. This year's date is May 5, 2005.
- Regional Growth: The Seaboard Region Executive Board is committed to continuing the growth of our region. We will continue to reach out to unaffiliated clubs and to synagogues without clubs to bring them into the FJMC and regional families. As you can see, we're planning a full and exciting range of events. Your club can enrich its programming by being involved and in each and every one of these programs, or adding one or more each year.

## Region Becomes Member of FJMC Foundation of Jewish Life (contd.)

well received both within the club and in the larger Jewish community. To name a few: The Men's Issues ideas which led to the publication of three source-books - "Hearing Men's Voices", "Our Fathers, Ourselves", "Body and Spirit", and "Listening to God's Voices." A couple of years ago, this group was expanded with the "Let's Talk About It!" and "Building the Faith" which talk about our approach to interfaith couples within the community.

Helping to fund these important endeavors is the newly created Federation of Jewish Men's Club Foundation for Jewish Life. The Seaboard Region became a member of the Federation of Jewish Men's Club Foundation for Jewish Life, to help insure that relevant and dynamic programming ideas, which meet the needs of our Men's Clubs, continue in the future.

## The Region's Gift to YOUR CLUB for Programming Ideas

As the Region continues to grow and strengthen, the leadership of the Region has given each local club a gift - which can help in the never-ending quest for interesting programs which will attract new people. The Region has provided a Two Hundred Fifty Dollar (\$250.00) rebate for clubs to go on to the FJMC website ([www.fjmc.org](http://www.fjmc.org)) and purchase FJMC books and materials. [While I'm writing this article, I'm on the website.] The \$250.00 'rebate' would allow you to purchase a copy of each and every book, teacher's guide and audiocassette or CD from the FJMC's wealth of material from the Art of Jewish Living series, the Hebrew Literacy series, the Hearing Men's Voices series, and the Learning to Pray series. And even after you paid the 15% for shipping of the materials, you'd still have about \$10.00 left for purchasing a duplicate of one or more of the materials.

To obtain your rebate, all you need to do is send the invoice showing the amount purchased to Treasurer Steve Lachter. You can contact Steve by email, [lachter@erols.com](mailto:lachter@erols.com), for further information.

## Programming Ideas: The Art of Jewish Living - Hanukkah

A constant source of concern with many clubs is attracting younger members, particularly men who have young children. Today's families often are two-income families, and many younger men feel guilty leaving their wife on a Sunday morning to attend a Men's Club / Brotherhood program.

One of the earlier publications of the Federation was the Art of Jewish Living Series of books, authored by Ron Wolfson. Three books of the series: The Passover Seder, The Shabbat Seder, and A Time to Mourn, A Time To Comfort, have continued to play prominent roles. The fourth in the series, Hanukkah, is often overlooked, and could be spark at creating a program directed to the very younger men we're looking to attract.

The Hanukkah book seeks to enrich celebration of the holiday to and in addition to explaining what is Hanukkah and the Ritual of the holiday, also addresses the following important topics: The December Dilemmas (the holiday's proximity with Christmas), Religious Holidays in the Public Domain; Pseudo-Christmas and Family Gatherings; Jews-by-Choice and Christmas Gatherings. And, it goes on to suggest a number idea which can be incorporated into interesting and relevant programs for men within your congregation, particularly those with young children.

## Programming of Note - Around the Region

- Kehilat Shalom's Men's Club (Gaithersburg, MD) will have a fabulous art auction on Saturday evening, November 20. There will be much judaica available for bid and purchase, the auction to benefit . For further information contact:
- Ohr Kodesh Men's Club (Chevy Chase, MD) had a raucous pre-election debate, with representatives of both the Bush and Kerry campaigns, on October 9, 2004, with approximately 50 people in attendance.