

FJMC Convention Registration Continues to Grow

Pack your bags! The FJMC Convention is just a few weeks away. In case you are wondering what to pack, a list is given below of some of the items you will certainly want to remember to bring to Convention. Experience five exciting days at the Convention, meeting both old and new friends, and learn about so many programs you can take home to your local Men's Club.

And while you are making your plans, consider bringing the entire family. The location in southern California is ideally suited for combining the convention with some family vacation. Why not extend your stay and visit some of the famous local attractions: the fabulous beaches, fun theme parks and zoos, terrific shopping (the largest shopping mall in California is a short walk from the hotel), many beautiful scenic tourist destinations, museums (including the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Getty Museum), and Hollywood.

FJMC has also arranged some fun pre-convention activities:

- **Tuesday Nite** -- Sunset BBQ on the beach at Surf City USA
- **Wednesday Morning** -- The FJMC Open Chal-

lenge for golfers; and for non-golfers, the first FJMC Tour de Shuls: Beach Edition, in support of the Ramah Tikvah program!

For details, see the *FJMC.org* web page. Discount rates have been established at the Hilton Orange County for the three days before and after Convention

What to Pack

When you pack your bags, what will you be packing? To aid you in bringing essential items, here is a checklist of some items you will need for the Convention:

- Casual clothes (dressy casual for dinners, Shabbat). Keep in mind the temperature in southern California is moderate (typically in the 80's during the day and the 60's at night) with very low humidity.
- Tallis
- Tefillin
- Regional kipot and tee-shirts.
- Pen and paper
- Business cards



Expect the Unexpected at the FJMC Convention Program Fair

Bruce Gordon

Imagine raising \$270,000 in just six months for your club. Do you want to learn how? Visit the booth of the Brotherhood of Congregation Beth Shalom, Northbrook, Illinois, and learn how they commissioned their very own Sefer Haftarah to raise these funds. "We enjoyed great cooperation from the pulpit and the administration to make this project so vital," explained outgoing club president Brad Shaps. "There are still plans for ongoing fundraising."

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Program Fair Chairman Jeff Litt promises, "My dedicated committee and I promise a much improved Program Fair."

There will be 30 exhibits from clubs and officers throughout the country illustrating excellence in all FJMC initiatives. Below are just a few highlights:

- Outgoing FJMC president Mark Berlin will man a booth describing methods of club succession;
- Pittsburgh's Warren Sufrin of Congregation Beth El will describe his club's Stock Challenge. Put in \$20 and you can win big prizes by picking a portfolio that outperforms the other contestants. "My stockbroker is at the bottom of the list along with other financial professionals," Warren mused; and
- Richard Gray has four Shomrei Ha'aretz exhibits planned including Reverend Fletcher Haynes Green Faith initiative, the premier faith based environmental program; Ira

Unger's presentation of the solar powered Ner Termid; his own Soy Candle Program; and Sam Eiferman's battery recycling initiative. "The Program Fair is a great place to interact with knowledgeable people and receive feedback to improve your activities," Richard noted.

Are you going to miss this convention? Don't despair. Fairfax, Virginia Olam Tikvah Men's Club's Bob Watts is going to link the Program Fair to UStream.TV. If you have an internet connection you will be able to visit the various exhibits along with Bob. "Remote viewers will see the Program Fair in real time. They will be able to text any questions they may have," Bob explained.

This is just a smidgeon of what you can expect at the Program Fair. Be sure to visit the fair on Thursday, July 14. Stay tuned to the FJMC website to learn how to link to the Program Fair via UStream.TV.

Summer Is Not Time Off for Club Presidents



Although your club may go into a hiatus in the summer, successful club presidents know that the summer is a key time for planning the year ahead. By late summer, you and the other club officers should have the schedule for the year set. Make sure that the dates don't conflict with holidays and events in either the synagogue or in the community. Enter the dates of your programs into the community calendar. Summer is also a good time to work on your budget to see what programs you can afford and what fund raising you might need to plan. Prepare the publicity for the events for the fall. With proper planning over the summer, you will be off to a great start in September.

This being an odd-numbered year, this summer provides a tremendous opportunity to attend the Convention. For those of you who attend, you will find many new ideas for programming and for otherwise improving the operations of your club (for example, how to bill for membership). Be aware that many of the best ideas come from other individual attendees, in conversations in hallways, over meals or around a pool.



International President Mark Berlin (left) visited the Tree of Life/Or L'Simcha Men's Club in Pittsburgh on April 10, which was his 57th club visit during his FJMC presidency. Irwin Harris (right) is President of the Tree of Life/Or L'Simcha Men's Club.

Ask Dave



Dear Dave,

I am often asked by members why do we need to pay \$10 per member to belong to the FJMC. I am not sure how to answer this question.

A Loss for Answers

Dear Loss,

This question is easily answered by explaining where the \$10 goes and what benefits each member receives from those dues. (Don't feel bad as most members, including club presidents, don't know.) First, \$1.25 from each \$10 in dues goes back to the region to help fund its activities. Then, the remaining \$8.75 it goes to developing training and programming, paying our portion of the CJ magazine that the FJMC publishes jointly with the, Women's League and United Synagogue, operating expenses such as rent and salaries for the three full-time FJMC staff members, and travel expenses for officers to visit clubs and regions and to bring men to training sessions.

Wow, you may say, how do we do all that for \$10. Well, we don't. Membership dues accounts for only 29% of our income. We rely on grants from foundations, the convention journal, and the sale of products, including the Shoah Yellow Candle to help us meet our overall expenses. Every little bit we get from other sources helps us keep our dues down.

Is It Time to Update Your Membership List?

If you haven't lately submitted an up-to-date membership list for your club to the FJMC, it may be time to do so now.



The FJMC bases its dues billing on the number of members identified on the club's membership list. So, if a club had 100 members in 2006 but has been losing members ever since and now has only 70 members, the FJMC will still be billing for 100 members if the club hasn't updated its list since 2006. This is very frustrating for the club because it keeps getting billed for members it doesn't have, and it's a problem for the FJMC because we're adopting our budget based on 100 members from that club when, in fact, it has a lot fewer. And if you multiply that discrepancy by more than 240 clubs, that's a big difference. Also, if we have old names on the membership list, it means that mailings could be going to men who are now deceased.

If the club has a new president since the last membership list was submitted, it is also very important for the new club president to inform our New York office that he is now the club president. Otherwise, important mailings will continue to be sent to the past president and the current president

may be delayed in receiving them or may not receive them at all.

Please, please send an updated membership list and the name and contact information for the current top two club officers to:
international@fjmc.org.

This space could have been filled by your comments and suggestions to other club presidents. Have a good idea you would like to share? Please send them to:

FJMCAvantage@fjmc.org

This is my last *Advantage* and the next issue will have a new editor. I want to thank Allan Gottesman, who oversees all FJMC publications, and Mark Berlin, who created the *Advantage* in 2002 and was editor for six years, for all their help, suggestions and encouragement. I also want to thank everyone else who has contributed and particularly you, the reader, without whom this newsletter would serve no purpose. I hope to see many of you at the Convention. (This will be my fifth.)

Dave Edwards

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