

Planning for the Next President

Does your term of office expire this Spring? Typically, Men's Clubs officers serve for two years, and most clubs install the new officers in the spring. Thus, with the exception of those clubs that have a "President for Life" (usually not a good idea but more on that in a later issue), approximately one-half of the FJMC Men's Clubs will be installing new officers this spring.

Here is a guide for planning the installation event and the transition to the officers for the coming year. (If your club is not installing new officers until next year, so much the better; you simply will have more time to plan.)

By now you should have identified your slate of officers. Probably your club bylaws specify the process for succession. In many clubs, the first Vice-President will automatically be nominated as the



next President. This provides a training period for the new President and makes for a smooth transition. Other officers might move up as well: secretary to Vice-President, etc.

Often, however, the Vice-President, for whatever reason, might not be able to become the new President now. If so, it is important for you or a nominating committee (depending on your bylaws) to meet as soon as possible to identify the best candidates.

Don't neglect to nominate the lower officers and committee chairs as well, as this is a great way to attract some new potential leaders to your club. There

may be some younger members who might not be ready to serve as president yet, but can contribute to the club now in certain delegated duties.

Also, by involving them in club operations now, you may at the same time be training a future club leader and thus assuring the strength of the club for years ahead. Remember, no matter how effective you have been as President, it will not have been a complete success if you leave office without insuring the future vitality of the club.

In This Issue

Planning for the Next President.....	1
Life After Your Presidency.....	2
Ask Dave.....	2
Looking for a New Program.....	3
Share Your Best Ideas..	3

After preparing your slate of officers, you will need to choose a date for an election. You should do this early enough to allow publicity (synagogue bulletin, etc.) and adequate planning.

You might want to consider honoring the new officers by having a brunch or dinner at the time of their installation. This would be a good opportunity for fund raising (such as by publishing an ad book) and publicizing the work of the Men's Club to the entire community.

This would also be a good time to invite a Regional or International FJMC officer as a speaker. Of course this all requires planning ahead and involving a committee to spearhead the work (perhaps using the incoming President as the event chair.)

Life After Your Presidency

So, your two-year term as club President is over. Perhaps you were so occupied with the duties of the office and a multitude of programs that you hadn't given much thought about what you were going to do afterwards.

Your first reaction might be that it is time to party. But over the long term, you will likely find the need to serve the Men's Club for the same reasons that led you to become the President in the first place.

In many clubs, the Past President is designated as an advisor to the Club. Whether or not this is written into the bylaws, the past president can be a very important resource for the club and the new president.

The Past President could also be a valuable resource for tackling special assignments, such as the World Wide Wrap, publicity, or liaison with the synagogue's Rabbi and Executive Director.

Another way to put your leadership skills and experience to use is to become an FJMC Regional officer or committee member. The regions need a pipeline of new leadership just as the clubs do. What better way to promote Jewish life than to step up and serve in your Region.

Mark Your Calendar:

March 20: Men's Club Shabbat
March 29: First Seder, Pesach
April 11: Yom HaShoah
April 20: Yom HaAtzma'ut

Ask Dave

Dear Dave:

I have served as President of my Men's Club for the past 6 years because no one else wants to be President. What can I do?

Long-term President

Dear Long-term,

One option would be to see if two members would serve as co-presidents. That way neither would have the entire responsibility but each would split the duties. With co-presidents, one could run the meetings and the other could arrange the programs. If you were to be one of the co-presidents, you could use this as an opportunity to give confidence to the other so that he might feel comfortable to serve solo down the road.

A second option would be to run the club by rotation of all of the officers. Two vice-presidents, a secretary and treasurer would then take turns in running meetings and planning and carrying out programs. This would provide more variety in your club and might hit on some new winners as programs. A success might also give the person chiefly responsible for that program the courage to step up to the presidency.

(continued, page 4)

Looking for a New Program?

If your attendance at programs has been falling, it may be time to consider some new programs. Similarly, if you desire to attract younger members, maybe you need to find a program (or programs) that would draw them into the club.

The solution might be easier than you think. Why reinvent the wheel when there are already so many good programs that have been tried and tested by other clubs. Here are just a few ideas that appeared in past issues of the *Advantage*. This is by no means an exhaustive list nor will all of these programs be suitable for every club. Nevertheless, you might find just the program you are looking for.

Cookbook. It is likely that some members of your club do some cooking and might have some favorite recipes they would enjoy sharing with other members. You can even find some on-line companies that specialize in printing cookbooks that can be customized to your specifications. The costs are very reasonable, so there would be an opportunity to make some profit as well as hav-

ing some fun. You could even have a prize for the best recipe. If cookbooks don't interest your members, try another topic, such as plumbing hints, wine tasting, etc.

Participate in a sports league. Form a Men's Club team to participate in a local basketball, softball or bowling league. This is a good way to attract young members. Alternatively, you might arrange to attend sporting events, such as a major or minor league baseball game. This would be more appropriate for including a wider age range. You could have a tailgate party before the event.

Father-child activities after religious school. You could arrange to have hot dogs or pizza after religious school and afterwards have a bowling, ice skating, or miniature golf outing.

Card nights. This was a very popular Men's Club activity in the 50's, but it is becoming popular again. Just get a few guys together and have some noshes. Have one before Passover and advertise it as the last chance for "liquid chometz."

Another good source for new programs is to check

the Torch awards. You may find them on the FJMC web site: <http://fjmc.org/local-clubs/club-awards/torch-award>. There are literally dozens of programs. Don't get bewildered. Just look for one or two that would be a good fit for your club.

Share Your Best Ideas

One of the great advantages of the FJMC is the ability to share ideas with other clubs and regions. We would like the *Advantage* newsletter be an instrument to foster that cross-fertilization of ideas.

Toward that end, we ask that you send some of your best ideas for programs or any other tips that you have found useful for the operation of your club. We will be happy to publish those items in a future issue. Of course, with your permission, we will give you credit for your contribution. I am sure you will benefit from the ideas from other clubs just as much as they will benefit from your ideas. Please send your items to me with your name, club position, club name, region, and email address. Submit to david.edwards.tristate@gmail.com.

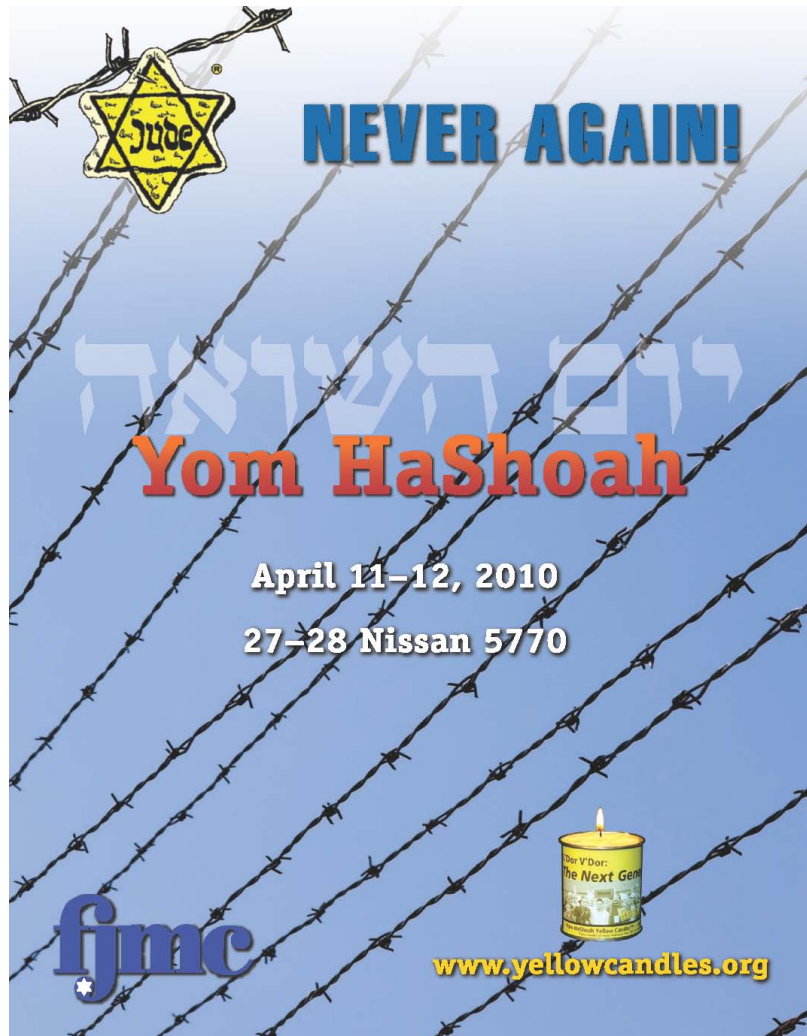
Ask Dave

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A third option would be to use the opportunity to recruit a new member who has the leadership skills and might relish the chance to put them to use. You might check with your rabbi or executive director to help identify potential candidates. I have observed cases where an individual who had no previous interest in joining the Men's Club is willing to be its leader. Some guys are just natural leaders and not followers. They usually turn out to be effective as the Club President. Not only would this solve the problem of finding a new president, it would also add a new, active member and, through his network, perhaps would attract some of his friends as members too.

Send your questions to Dave Edwards at david.edwards.tristate@gmail.com or phone: 412-721-6077 (cell) or 412-521-7494 (home)

Keep in mind the Quality Club Awards are given every year. This is a non-Convention Year so the awards may be presented at a Regional event. The award, an engraved 15 year perpetual plaque, will look awesome in your trophy case.



NEVER AGAIN!

Yom HaShoah

April 11-12, 2010
27-28 Nissan 5770

fjmc

www.yellowcandles.org

Go to:

http://fjmc.org/images/stories/fjmc/PDFs/yhsyc_guide_2010.pdf
for the Yom Hashoah Yellow Candle 2010 Guide for all the information you need to run your Yellow Candle Program

Candle Program Chair:

Bob Weinstein
prwein@cox.net



Quality Club Awards

Start now to earn your Quality Club award for this year. Now is the time to take inventory to see if you will qualify for this prestigious award. And if not, you may find you only need to add one or two things. Credit is given for club activities from June 1 to May 30.

For further information, contact Sandy Victor:
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