

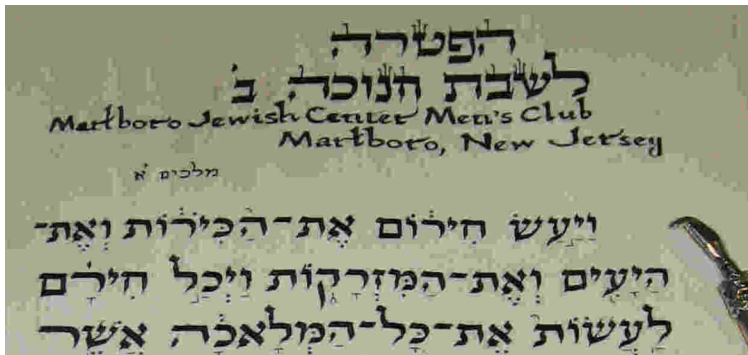
## The Sefer Haftorah Project

The FJMC Sefer Haftorah was unveiled at the 2003 International FJMC Convention in Florida. Written in Israel, the Sefer Haftorah includes all the Haftorot and is written with vowels and trope. After each parasha is a dedication showing which club sponsored it. (There are still a few parshiyot available for sponsorship. Contact the FJMC office if you are interested.)

Over the past 6 years the FJMC Sefer Haftorah has traveled throughout the United States and Canada. Every Shabbat it is in a different shul, and the Sefer also attends FJMC Regional Retreats. The Sefer Haftorah is shipped so that your synagogue receives it on Wednesday. This gives a Bar or Bat Mitzvah time to practice with it prior to their big day. On Shabbat

morning many clubs parade into their sanctuary with the Sefer Haftorah at the start of the Torah service, presenting the scroll to the Rabbi. The morning's Haftorah is read from the FJMC Sefer. Following the service, it may

photo



by Dr. Ira Ungar

be unrolled on tables for congregants to come and get a closer look at the calligraphy and parasha dedications. On Sunday morning many clubs arrange with their shul's religious school to show this unique scroll to the students. Then they pack it up so that it's ready for shipping Monday morning to go to the next shul.

There is no cost to the club: travel expenses are

paid by the FJMC. All a club has to do is make a reservation. Our current schedule is set through June 26, 2010, so contact Dave Gerstein (see below) ASAP to arrange for a visit. With over 240 clubs, and only 52 weeks in the year, scheduling priority will be given to clubs who have not had a recent visit from the Sefer Haftorah.

The FJMC can help your club or shul buy its own complete Sefer Haftorah. It is a powerful fundraising tool. It is also possible to purchase an individual Haftorah portion as a gift for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, or to mark another special occasions, such as a wedding, an anniversary, or the birth of a child.

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## Ask Dave

Dear Dave:

For years, our Men's Club has been struggling to increase membership and, more importantly, active leadership. Right now, Men's Club basically consists of four guys who have been maintaining it on life-support for years (I am one of those hearty souls).

Are others seeing their Men's Club suffering? What have other congregations done to keep their Men's Club, and especially its leadership, vibrant.

Nathan

Dear Nathan:

*Yes, some Men's Clubs are struggling, but many Men's Clubs are extremely vital and function as valuable assets to their synagogues.*

*A club that is struggling like yours clearly needs some help from the outside to figure out the problems and to suggest some solutions. Fortunately, there is a huge amount of expertise available at the regional and International levels to help you.*

*You might first contact the president of your Region to set up a visit from*

*him, and perhaps a few of the other regional officers.*

*You should also consider contacting the International FJMC. There has never been a better time to do so. The new administration has established a goal of having an FJMC representative (such as a regional advisor or an FJMC officer) visit every affiliated club in the next two years.*

*In the past, the FJMC has conducted many regional training sessions with club presidents. Those will continue, but under the new plan there will be an increased emphasis on visits to individual clubs so that help can be tailored to that club.*

*These visits can help identify the problems and suggest programs that would help. If a club isn't attracting younger men, then new programs that include father-child activities, sports programs, and other programs that appeal to younger men might be suggested. If the men are interested in community service, food for the needy and clothing drives might be tried. There are programs for men's wellness, enhancing Jewish observance, wine tasting, and dozens more.*

*Keep in mind there is much willing help available. But don't expect help to appear automatically. It is up to you to seek out help, and let the Region or the FJMC know your needs.*

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



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**Sefer Haftorah Project**  
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For further information on the FJMC Sefer Haftorah please contact:  
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972-596-2034.

## Turn Your Club Around

By Bruce Gordon  
President, Olam Tikvah  
Men's Club, Fairfax, VA  
(Seaboard Region)

*The long time congregants were shaking their heads. "What is wrong with Men's Club? When are you guys going to do something?"*

*The rabbi had become critical. Why don't you do this? Why don't you do that? The assistant rabbi had formed a club for younger men with young children. Board members quit mid-year. The president would call me at the last second to ask me to conduct board meetings. He had other commitments.*

*The Men's Club was in shambles. If the club was still there in six months, I was to be its president.*

**If it is meant to be, it is up to me.** The club was not going to be there in six months if something didn't change. It became clear that the time for leadership had arrived, and my number had been called.

We had a prominent brunch speaker, the economic advisor to the Israeli Embassy. Israel was celebrating its 60th birthday. The club needed success.

My friend had gotten this great speaker and noted author. He would not tolerate anything less than a full social hall. He and I organized a phone tree. More than 125 people filled the hall and enjoyed a fabulous brunch.

I had my wings. Against the nattering nabobs of negativity (thank you, Spiro), we put on a dance with raffle and silent auction. That put more than three thousand dollars in our treasury. We kept afloat. One of the board members commented, "Before you came alive, I was thinking about how I could get out of Men's Club. Now I am thinking how can I contribute more?"

In my first year as president, we accomplished all of our goals. We had a major fund-raising show that drew 300 patrons and grossed \$13,000. We averaged two events per month and operated a \$25,000 budget. We used our profits to give tzedakah to the shul, and to support programs for young people and programs commemorating the Shoah.

How did it happen? Following you will find 10 ways that helped our club revitalize:

**1. Establish a context of fun.** Men's Club requests its board members and general members to

participate in their free time. It cannot be drudgery. Make sure you are having fun and that will be contagious. When there are more than three Jewish men in a room, *ruach* ensues.

**2. Eliminate negativity.** When I got wind that a long-time congregant and former president was writing scathing memos to the rabbi and generally bad-mouthing me, it was time for a sit down. One cup of coffee later, Men's Club had a new member and a great resource. Working things out is what men do. If there is a damning e-mail or verbal criticism directed at one person, I correct the attacker. No one is being paid; we are volunteers. No one should have to put up with an attack. If you are president, you are also the bouncer.

**3. The stakes are low.** Don't worry whether you will be a good president, or if your club will be successful. Just have fun and focus on the next upcoming event. If you string together a year of successful events, lo and behold, your club will be back.

**4. Have a strong membership drive.** Get out your mailer to the congregation no later than August. Be sure to include how your club is part of something much bigger,

namely the 20,000 Jewish men in 240+ clubs that make up the FJMC. Discuss how their membership supports the FJMC initiatives including Yom HaShoah, ecology, World Wide Wrap, wellness, and Keruv.

**5. Have a busy fall.** There is a lot to be said about a good start. Have a big event in November. It need not be a show. It could be Casino Night. Bring in comedians. Utilize your shul and club's strengths and interests. Don't wait until there is risk of inclement weather. Make sure your club builds the sukkah and be sure to grill food for the sukkah. Have a brunch or two. Have a Tailgate Party. Make your presence known.

**6. As president, make missing services a rare event.** It doesn't mean you have to open the doors. It does mean that you are a fixture at the Kiddush Club and the Kiddush luncheon. Work the crowd. Grip and grin. Know everyone's name. Use this time to promote your next event.

**7. Have an interesting page in your synagogue's monthly publication.** I have a column entitled the President's Monthly Memo. I make certain that I acknowledge those who have partici-

pated in recent events. Name names. Have pictures. Get your club involved. Everyone has some good photographers.

**8. Use the FJMC website.** Do you want to learn how to have a meaningful Yellow Candle Program? Go to [www.fjmc.org](http://www.fjmc.org). It's all there. There is a wealth of guidance and material on the website.

**9. Seek the counsel of regional leadership.** Your regional president and regional advisor are there to help you. They want to help you. They have been club presidents and have lived through your challenges. Our advisor gave us great ideas for Yom HaShoah and was a tremendous source of support. So was our former regional president. Use these wonderful resources.

**10. Attend your shul's monthly board meetings.** It's another venue for promoting your club. If you don't attend, the rest of the shul's leadership will not take the club seriously. Also, these meetings help you network as well as learn the issues confronting your congregation.

Congratulations on becoming your club's leader. If you are committed to making your club a vital organization, I can promise you will get more out of this

endeavor than what you contribute.



For information, contact Warren Sufrin  
Build-a-Pair Chairman,  
[BuildaPair.fjmc@gmail.com](mailto:BuildaPair.fjmc@gmail.com)

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10<sup>th</sup>  
**WORLD WIDE WRAP**  
*February 7, 2010*

**Men's Club Shabbat**  
**March 12-13, 2010**  
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**Join the GreenFaith's**  
**Green Jobs, Climate Justice national webcast on**  
**Thursday, Nov. 12, 7:30-**  
**9:00 p.m. ET. Register at**  
[www.greenfaith.org](http://www.greenfaith.org).  
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**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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