

- **Torch Award Entry: TA11- 009**
- Full Title of Entry: **Improving the Health and Wellness of Our Members**
- Entry Category:
  - Men's Club Shabbat
  - Yom HaShoah / Yellow Candle
  - Israel / Masorti
  - Hebrew Literacy / Ritual Literacy
  - Hearing Men's Voices
  - Men's Health**
  - Youth Programming
  - Programs for Young Men (21-40)
  - World Wide Wrap
  - Shomrei Ha'aretz
  - Club Administration
  - Non-FJMC Program
  - Best Overall Programming
  - I'm not sure, so please select for our club's submission.
- Contact Person: **Hal Freed**
- Email address for Contact Person: **hiphal2@comcast.net**
- Club number & Club name: **Club #1150, Har Shalom Men's Club**
- Number of club members: **150**
- Synagogue name, city and state: **Congregation Har Shalom, Potomac, Maryland**
- Club President name (at time of entry): **Joe Kromash**
- Club President name (at time of convention): **Joe Kromash**
- Person preparing entry: **Rob Trachman**
- Email address of person preparing: **tracfam@comcast.net**

## **Part II. Summary Information**

Har Shalom began its Health and Wellness Program in earnest in September 2009. During its first year, the program gained a great deal of momentum that has since carried over to the 2010/2011 year. Our program is comprehensive. Some activities are informative, while others are physical in nature. The focus is on offering variety as we address the needs of Men's Club members of all ages as well as other men, women and children in our congregation. Our goal is to improve the health and longevity of our members and the congregation. The program has been successful and we continue to expand and innovate into new areas to achieve our goal.

**Part III. By submitting this document, I certify, on behalf of the club, that this submission has not been submitted by our club for a Torch Award in a previous year.** Hal Freed, Past President

## **Part IV. Entry Documentation**

Following exciting discussions of the FJMC signature Wellness Program at the 2009 FJMC Convention, our President encouraged our Board of Directors to start a Wellness Program in the Har Shalom Men's Club. We wanted to put in place a comprehensive program that would encourage and assist, not only our members, but the congregation as a whole, to live healthier and longer lives. We created a committee of medical professionals and interested lay members of the congregation to develop a program.

The Har Shalom Men's Club is a very active club in many ways. The Wellness Committee realized that we already had in place many programs that provided opportunities for members to increase health through exercise. We brought those activities into the Wellness Program, acknowledging their benefit and

encouraging participation by all. These programs include softball, basketball, bike rides and golf outings, among others. One of our basketball players sets an example, as he is 77 years old. To get ourselves and our kids going, our Kids 'N Dads program includes ice skating, bowling and laser tag outings. We added to these by initiating an annual Men's Club USY Basketball Challenge game as part of our Youth Program.

We also wanted to bring an information component to the program that would benefit all members of the congregation. We addressed this goal by bringing in speakers for focused lectures. Subjects have included, "The ABCs of MEDICARE" and a panel discussion on "Cardiac Care -The Health of Your Heart", among others. The Wellness Committee wanted a way to easily communicate health information to our members in a way that wasn't time consuming, yet addressed critical issues. To do this, the Committee developed an innovative program that has been most successful. This program, titled "5 Minute Health Tip", is a short talk, presented at our monthly Sunday brunches by a member of the Wellness Committee, on a topic of interest to all congregation. Our Sunday brunches are routinely attended by over 100 men and women. During the two years of its inclusion in our brunch agenda, the "5 Minute Health Tip" has become a favorite component of our brunches. Very often, the presenter is enthusiastically greeted by members with stories and comments about their own experience with the topic of the day. Topics have included: *Colonoscopies, Stroke, Prostate health, Dental health, Stress Management, Healthy aging, Nutrition and Healthy Food Choices, Chiropractic care and Faith and Fitness*. Following the brunch, the "5 Minute Health Tip" is published in the monthly synagogue newsletter, *The Tablet*, and is included in special emails to members. Our Wellness program has also had an effect on our brunch menus. In addition to bagels and lox, we added fresh salad and fruit, as well as egg white soufflés.

One other aspect of our Wellness and Health Program deserves to be addressed. This is our Health Fair. Our first Health Fair was held in March 2010 in concert with one of our Brunches and a blood drive. Over 100 attendees underwent medical exams and received informative brochures. This very successful event led to a larger and an expanded Second Annual Health and Wellness Fair on March 6, 2011. Over 150 attendees were able to undergo over a dozen tests, and obtain medical information from numerous vendors and health organizations. Nobody went away empty handed as shopping bags were filled with literature, healthy food and beverages, and, for some, door prizes.

Har Shalom Men's Club's Health and Wellness program has directly benefited Club and congregation members by enhancing their health and well-being. It has increased the image and admiration of the Club and the FJMC. We look forward to continuing to innovate with new ideas as the program will be a mainstay in the future.

Appendix: Article and Photos TA11-009 Improving the Health and Wellness of Our Members

**Appendix: Article and Photos for TA11-009  
Improving the Health and Wellness of Our Members**

**The TABLET**

July/August 2010

**Initial Year of Wellness Program  
Draws to a Close**

We have completed the inaugural year of the Men's Club Wellness Program. And what an exciting year it has been! Here are a few of our highlights and successful programs, plus a quick look at what is ahead for the 2010/2011 year:

Our Wellness Program began with the "5 Minute Health Tip." This presentation, made at the monthly Men's Club Speakers Series and Brunches, is also published in each month's Men's Club Message as well as in each issue of the TABLET. The tips are designed to give quick but important messages to all members of the Har Shalom community, messages which will help us improve our lives and avoid potential problems. During this past year, the following 5 Minute Health Tip presentations (and their presenters) were featured: Prostate Health (Rob Trachman), Know Your Numbers (Rob Trachman), Diabetes Awareness (Dr. Larry Goldkind), Stroke Prevention (Jerry Breslow), Dental Care for the Whole Body (Dr. Marvin Becker), and, Identity Theft Prevention (Dr. Ken Shere).

Many other exciting, healthy, and informative events took place this past year. For the athletically inclined, we supported softball and basketball leagues, planned a bike ride, played laser tag, went bowling, and played the first USY vs. Men's Club basketball challenge (kudos to the USY team for its victory). In October, Leta Blank spent an evening with us clarifying the "Medicare alphabet." In March, our panel discussion on cardiac health, featuring Drs. Sam Itscoitz, Dennis Friedman, and Susan Trachman, was extremely informative and beneficial. Finally, throughout the year, our Men's Club brunches have featured many more healthy food options.

In June, the Men's Club Speakers Series and Brunch served as a "Mini-Health Fair" event. The brunch speaker was Lucas Seip-Williams of Baltimore Health Coach, who discussed nutrition for high energy, health, and longevity. Also included at our event were the Har Shalom Blood Drive and biometric screening booths.

The upcoming 2010-2011 year will be fun and informative. The 5 Minute Health Tip will continue at our monthly brunches, more athletic activities are planned, another panel discussion is in the works, and we will plan a second annual Men's Club health fair. Please continue your support of our programs and send your suggestions for topics and events to Rob Trachman, Wellness Committee chairperson, at the Men's Club email address noted above.



**Five Minute Health Tip**



**Basketball**



**Oct '10 Bike Ride**



**Oct '09 Medicare ABCs**



**Mar '10 Cardiac Care**



**Nov '09 Kids 'N Dads Bowling**



**March '11 Health Fair**