

## **Part I. Identification Information**

**Submission Identifier Code supplied in a response to your first email:** (165)

**Full Title for Entry:**

Operation Macabbi, Support our Troops Overseas During Hanukkah

**Entry Category:** Non-FJMC Programs

**Contact Person to be listed on Torch Award CD:** Nelson L. Mellitz

**Email address to be listed on Torch Award CD:** [NMellitz@Comcast.net](mailto:NMellitz@Comcast.net)

**Club number & Club name:** South Jersey Men's Club 503

**Number of club members:** 60

**Synagogue name, city and state:** N/A

**Club President name (at time of entry):** Robert Greenberg

**Club President name (at time of convention):** Robert Greenberg

**Person preparing entry:** Nelson L. Mellitz

**Email address of person preparing entry:** [NMellitz@Comcast.net](mailto:NMellitz@Comcast.net)

**Date of entry submission:** April 14, 2007

## **Part II. Summary / Press Release**

### **II. Summary Information (up to 200 words):**

The South Jersey Men's Club (SJMC) Operation Macabbi is designed to give our U.S. troops overseas and in harm's way moral and where possible religious support during Hanukkah. It is very lonely to be Jewish in a military primarily Christian and also stationed in a Moslem country. Many of our club members have served in the military and we know what it means to be one of the few Jews in a military of hundreds of thousands of people.

The goal of the Operations Macabbi is to enlist the support of our community young and old to send cards, letters, and care packages to U. S. troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

We obtained the support of the Jewish Federation of Southern Jersey Educational Director, Jewish War Veteran's Post 126 (largest Post in the country), and six Jewish Religious Schools (three conservative, two reform, and one orthodox) and the local Girl Scout Troop which is primarily made up of Jewish girls.

We know this program was a success because of the great heart warming thank you e-mails and letter from 35 Jewish Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines active duty and reserve component members stationed in Afghanistan and Iraq.

This program became a joint community effort to support our troops with the South Jersey Men's Club leading every step from developing the idea to receiving the thank you correspondence from the troops in harmsway.

### **Part III. Self Assessment of Entry**

Respond to the following self assessment questions with a maximum of 120 words for each. This will be used by the judges to focus on what you found significant in your effort.

**1. Assess program procedural completeness and achievement of program goals:** Program - Operation Macabbi was a complete success. The program was developed to show our support as a Men's Club for Jewish troops in Afghanistan and Iraq during Hanukkah and it grew to include over thousand local community religious school children, a twenty person girl scout troop and a 450 member Jewish War Veterans Post. The most important measure of our success was the over 30 e-mails and letters of thank you we received from Jewish troops in harmsway.

**2. Explain presentation and documentation completeness:** After initial development of the concept to send cards, letters, and care packages to the Jewish troops for Hanukkah, a six-member SJMC committee was put together to develop, plan and follow through with our South Jersey community religious schools. One member of the committee is a Air Force Colonel who recently returned from a tour in Iraq and he had a updated list of Jewish Chaplains and lay-leaders in Afghanistan and Iraq. After that we obtained the support of the Jewish Federation who worked with us to obtain the support of religious schools and the local Jewish War Veterans Post.

**3. Achievements of program goals, publicity, marketing and advanced planningg:** The program resulted in over 700 Hanukkah cards from six religious schools, 200 care packages were sent to the troops, and most importantly knowing that we accomplished the Jewish tradition of supporting our own (troops in harmsway) during their time of need. This was a well planned program which was successful because the South Jersey community joined the South Jersey Men's Club in spirit, with donations of money, food, utility items, and labor in shipping cards and packages. There was an article in the local Jewish community newspaper that acknowledged our program and gain use additional support.

**4. Does the program enhance the image of the FJMC, region and/or your club:** Without question this program gave all Men's Clubs, the Region, and Federation a positive image in the community. Whatever the community in total and Jewish

Community in particular think of being in Iraq, we all joined together to help our hundreds of Jewish troops in Afghanistan and Iraq during the holiday. This effort was as positive an image for the FJMC, the Mid-Atlantic Region, ad all Men's could possibly project - definitely enhanced our image in the community.

**5. Did you include information so other clubs can use this program:** Yes. The president of the Mid-Atlantic Region is aware of the program and has the step by step information needed for other clubs to use the program. Please make my contact information available, so we can expand Operation Macabbi to other Federation Regions.

**6. What is its value in club building - number of named club members**

**participating vs. club size and shul size:** Six club members were on the team but you should have heard the cheering from the room of 50 members present at the kickoff and conclusion meetings who supported the program from cradle to conclusion. I received phone calls and e-mails from local shul leadership that participated in the program saying thank you letting us help and asking to participate next year. We did obtain at least two new members as a result of Operation Macabbi.

**7. What is the effect on club administration: grooming of new officers for club,**

**shul or region:** Individual members working on this program vary on years of membership in the SJMC from less than one year to over twenty years. I would venture a guess that some of the more recent members will be moving up to officers sooner because of the success and pleasure they feel from Operation Macabbi. All six-original team members are in line to work other programs and possibly move up to be Club officers.

**8. Identification of source of program or practice and description of unique aspects. Most programs were not invented out of the blue but evolved. Help us understand where it came from:** The original concept of Operation Macabbi was developed by the South Jersey Mens Club during the Gulf War in 1991. At that time one of our members read about Christmas Cards being sent to troops in the Gulf by school age children. So in 1991 we did send a few hundred cards to Jewish troops in Iraq and Kuwait. In 2005 for Hanukkah we had one of our members in Iraq working for the Multi-National Force (AF Colonel) and we sent him a Menorah, Hanukkah decorations, and few hundred card to be used for the International Zone Hanukkah Party - Green Zone (we have picture of the U.S. Ambassador Zallizad at that Hanukkah party). This last Hanukkah - 2006 we decided to better organize and expand the Operation Macabbi and you can see the great success.

**9. Identification of this program as an adaptation of a previous Torch Award entry or other program. Awards will be given for implementations that are particularly effective. The original sources of the programs will be most pleased to know that their efforts have borne fruit:** Not Applicable

**10. Identification of the part of the programming effort attributable to the men's club if a joint program with another group:** Operation Macabbi is totally an original idea of the South Jersey Men's Club. However, we expanded the program in 2006 to include the Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey which coordinated the initial contact with all South Jersey Jewish Religious Schools and the Jewish Girl Scout Troop. Also, the Jewish War Veteran's Post 126 Commander was on our expanded planning team, this Post has over 400 members some of which helped pack the care packages and cards. This was really a joint effort of the Jewish community and as Mayor of Cherry Hill Bernie Platt (a SJMC member) said this is a wonderful thing your are doing for the troops in harmsway.

#### **Part IV. Entry Documentation**

If requested I can provide scanned copies of a fewof the cards we sent to the troops and e-mails from Jewish lay-leaders in Afghanistan and Iraq and others saying thank you for Operation Macabbi.