

Submission Identifier Code: 139

Entry Title – **Olam Series of Poker – Texas Hold'em Tournament**

Entry Category: Non-FJMC Programs: Social Event

Contact Person to be listed on Torch Award CD: Norm Katz

Email address to be listed on Torch Award CD: normkatz@cox.net

Club number & Club name: 1053 Tifereth Israel Synagogue Men's Club

Number of club members: 50

Synagogue name, city and state: Tifereth Israel Synagogue, San Diego, CA

Club President name (at time of entry): Joel Kriger

Club President name (at time of convention): Phil Snyder

Person preparing entry: Norm Katz

Email address of person preparing entry: normkatz@cox.net

Date of entry submission: 3/21/2007

This voluntary section serves two purposes:

- First - to provide "Summary Information" and key words so that your entry can be found in the archives in the future
- Second – to provide "Press Release" information so that your community can be informed of this outstanding program created by your men's club.

IIa. Summary Information (up to 200 words):

Tifereth Israel Men's Club held its second annual Texas Hold'em Tournament on January 18, 2007. Texas Hold'em has become a very popular game for a crowd and our club seems to eat it up. We had attendees across a wide range of ages, from early 20s to late 70s. We had three tables with 8-9 players each for a total of 25 tournament players. Each player bought in for \$35 and received \$500 in play chips. The event is advertised as a fundraiser for the Men's Club which donates to various charitable organizations throughout the year. The event is held on a Thursday night starting at 7 PM and ending at 10:30 PM. It includes a light pasta dinner along with beverages (soda and beer) and snacks. We hired three local dealers for \$50 each for the night. We had prizes donated by local venues or restaurants along with some gifts purchased at wholesale through a rep that was a synagogue member. All attendees loved the event and requested that we have a similar card night more often. Mainly the comments were the men loved having an excuse for getting out of the house on a weeknight and just "chilling" for a few hours. We decided to host a poker night at least 4 times per year.

IIb. Press Release Body with Title (about 200 words):

Feb 4th, 2007, San Diego

Tifereth Israel Men's Club sponsors Texas Hold'em Tournament.

Tifereth Israel Men's Club raised over \$500 for various charities to which it contributes each year at its second annual Texas Hold'em Tournament held on January 18, 2007. 25 tournament participants ranged in age from early 20s to late 70s. Each player bought in for \$35 and received \$500 in play chips. Prizes included dinner for two at local restaurants, tickets to local theatre, and several classy gifts. The event, starting at 7 PM included a light pasta dinner, beer or soda, and snacks. The tournament lasted exactly three hours, starting with \$5/\$10 blinds and increasing one the half hour to \$100/\$200 blinds until one

player emerged as the tournament winner. Due to the success of the event, which increased 50% in attendance from its debut last year, will now be held quarterly throughout 2007. Contact Tifereth Israel at 619-697-6001 for upcoming dates.

Person writing "Press Release"/"Summary Information" who should be contacted by the media/readers for further information (Name, Address, CSZ, Telephone, Email): Norm Katz, VP. 6660 Cowles Mtn Blvd. San Diego, CA 92119, 619-890-5847

Contact information for Temple Bulletin for submission of "Press Release" (Bulletin Editor, Synagogue Name, Address, City, State Zip): Laurie Gore, Tifereth Israel Synagogue, lauriego@mac.com

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 – Achieved the goal of increasing attendance, perfecting a "formula" for this event through consistency and minor improvements from previous year, getting feedback from attendees, and promoting similar events more frequently to encourage bonding and our shul as a "destination" for men's social activities.

2. Explain presentation and documentation completeness –

We modeled the event after the debut event held a year earlier. We arranged the room in a semi-circle of tables like a real tournament floor and had felt poker mats to make the tables look professional. Felt mats can be purchased for around \$30 each and re-used, which is much less than renting tables from professional casino night party planners. In addition to the light pasta dinner, we had premium beer available and the tables always had pretzels, peanuts, and other snacks flowing. The food budget was under \$200 and was partially underwritten by board members. We hired experienced hold'em dealers for the going rate of \$50 for a 3-hour tournament. Occasionally you might find members that can deal but don't skimp on this because it's critical for your dealers to know what they're doing and be professional at all times. We had published rules of the house available and they were announced at the beginning of the tournament. We made phone calls to all eligible male members of the shul one week before to guarantee our numbers. The tournament winner and runner up each receive an attractive prize valued at \$100 and \$75 respectively. Three consolation prizes are given out for first full-house, straight-flush and four of a kind. We also have a drawing for two additional consolation prizes. Tickets for the drawing are based on your position when you are eliminated from the tournament so the top players get even more chances to win. With 18-25 players, the tournament tends to last exactly three hours. Start play no later than 7:30 PM or the night will wear on too long. 10:30 is a great stopping point.

3. Achievements of program goals, publicity, marketing and advanced planning – We received a huge number of compliments for this event, which was aggressively publicized within our own shul community. A phone tree one week before guaranteed that we had the minimum number of attendees to commit to hiring the dealers. We believe we hit on a great “formula” for a repeatable event. All attendees asked us to do it more frequently. We credit the planning on the fact that we had done this once before and we refined it slightly to improve the ambiance and professionalism of the tournament. The meal was as simple as boiling pasta, heating up some marinara sauce, and toasting some garlic bread. The beer and snacks did the rest. The prizes weren’t the most exciting but the players really appreciated a chance to get away for a weeknight evening from the normal routine of spending the night at home. One player said he was so exhausted from a long day of work but really enjoyed the chance to just chill out at the poker table with the guys.

4. Does the program enhance the image of the FJMC, region and/or your club – Absolutely. It has been one of our more successful in-house social events. We were very pleased to see such a wide range of ages of attendees. The program has broad appeal to Jewish men in our community. Both active members and barely affiliated members were equally represented and all got along great.

5. Did you include information so other clubs can use this program – Yes. See above.

6. What is its value in club building - number of named club members participating vs. Attendance is made up of about 50% club members and 50% non-members. Attendance represented about 10% of male population of the shul.

7. What is the effect on club administration – grooming of new officers for club, shul or region – Positive reaction. Younger synagogue members attended and saw that TIS Men’s Club can put on well-organized, positive social programs for them. Older members just loved the gambling and camaraderie aspects of the event.

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 idea behind this event was based on board members’ interest in Poker and Texas Hold’em through previous home poker nights as well as televised hold’em tournaments and online gaming such as PartyPoker.net.

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. –

n/a

10. Identification of the part of the programming effort attributable to the men's club if a joint program with another group. –
n/a but will consider inviting other clubs next time.

Note: Event coordinator's wife represents a game supply company and can offer supplies such as felt table tops and professional-quality poker chip sets to other FJMC clubs at wholesale prices. Contact normkatz@cox.net.