

# Steps to Attract New Members

1. Target the group you want to attract.
  - Fathers of pre-school age kids (i.e. relatively young men)
  - Fathers of Religious School age kids (i.e. men in their 40's)
  - Singles
  - Empty nesters (but not yet seniors)
  - Participants in other synagogue activities (greater likelihood of their participation in a Men's Club activity than from the general congregation)
2. Have a program uniquely attractive to that group
3. Advertise to that group
4. Have people register for the program and get their e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.
5. At the program itself, try to talk to each of the attendees (or get others to help you).
6. The day after the program, e-mail each of the attendees to thank them for attending and mention another Men's Club program in the near future that might be attractive to them.
7. Hold the second program and follow steps 5 and 6.
8. When you're planning a program schedule for the following year, contact the most promising of the attendees to see if they would be willing to chair a particular program or at least to help in the planning.
9. Once they agree to step 8, ask them to attend Men's Club Board meetings for the three months prior to the program to report on the status of the plans.

## **DO NOT . . .**

- Over-burden one new participants with lots of responsibilities, unless it's clear that he's eager to do it.
- Give total responsibility for a major program with lots of components to a new participant
- Shower a new participant with official designations, such as membership on the Men's Club Board or, even worse, an officership, unless it's clear that he's eager to do it.

# Steps to Avoid Making Your Men's Club Unattractive

## 1. Research and Development

*Is your product (i.e., your programs and activities) one that people want? If not, what is? If it is a valid product, is there a problem with your implementation of it? How can it be improved?*

- Survey your customers
  1. Submit a written questionnaire to congregational lay and religious leaders.
  2. *Only if you have the resources to do so*, take a random telephone or face-to-face (**not** by mail) survey of men in the congregation.
- Analyze the results
  1. Organize a group of no more than 10 men, no more than 3 of whom should be current Men's club leaders. The rest should be relatively new Club members (or even non-members) with fresh ideas, and all should have a forward-looking perspective.
  2. Have the group discuss their needs and interests and what types of programs they like and dislike; also discuss impediments like scheduling, costs, and formats.
  3. Using the information from the surveys and the views of the group, come up with a list of programs. Use the attached list of program ideas to help in the process.

## 2. Create a focus group

- Present the list of the potential programs to a varied group of no more than 8 men (not on the previous group) to see how attractive the programs will be and the likelihood of their success.

## 3. Introduce your new and improved product with advertising

- Taking the "winners" from the focus group discussion, plug the programs into a calendar and create a final program schedule.
- Advertise the fact that the Men's Club has reinvented itself (in membership letters and synagogue newsletters).
- Advertise individual programs.
- Make certain that people are continually reminded that you're presenting a new product. Don't allow any program to take place without some special aspect to it.

# Survey of Congregational Lay and Religious Leaders

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position in the congregation \_\_\_\_\_

1. We've listed some positive and negative traits. Please check those that best apply to our congregation's Men's Club. (You can check as many traits as you would like and add others if you think that are appropriate.)

## POSITIVE

\_\_\_\_\_ Provides service to congregation

\_\_\_\_\_ Provides service to community

\_\_\_\_\_ Innovative

\_\_\_\_\_ Cooperative

\_\_\_\_\_ Follows through

\_\_\_\_\_ Vibrant

\_\_\_\_\_ Involves lots of men

\_\_\_\_\_ Responsive

\_\_\_\_\_ Easy to communicate with

\_\_\_\_\_ Has great youth programs

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## NEGATIVE

\_\_\_\_\_ Attracts an older crowd

\_\_\_\_\_ Tired programming

\_\_\_\_\_ Uncooperative

\_\_\_\_\_ Not responsive to needs

\_\_\_\_\_ Programs poorly developed

\_\_\_\_\_ Hard to communicate with

\_\_\_\_\_ Involves very few men

\_\_\_\_\_ Doesn't follow through

\_\_\_\_\_ Lacks direction

\_\_\_\_\_ Insufficient Jewish focus

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. **This question is not about our Men's Club but, rather, about Men's Clubs in general.**

What do you think a Men's Club should offer a congregation?

A.

B.

C.

3. How does our Men's Club live up to that expectation?

4. What areas of congregational life are currently underserved and might form a basis for attention by the Men's Club? (Examples: youth activities; family activities; fund raising)

5. Are there any other programs or projects that you would like to see the Men's Club tackle that it currently isn't doing?

6. **[For Rabbi and Cantor]** To what extent would you like the Men's Club to involve you in its programming? For example, would you like a program to be built around your area of expertise? Would you like us to consult with you on a more regular basis?

7. The following are some of our major programs and projects. We'd appreciate any comments you might have about any of them that would help us improve them in the future or even drop them if they aren't effective.

<u>Program/activity</u>	<u>Comments</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

8. Are there any other points you'd like to make that would help the Men's Club improve itself?

*Thank you for your time and for your views. We want to continue this dialogue with congregational leaders and will get back to you in the future.*

# Random Survey of Congregational Men

Name of interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewer's initials \_\_\_\_\_

Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from the [name of Men's Club]. We are conducting a random survey of the men of the congregation to determine the types of activities they would like to see. Would you mind answering a few questions? There is no obligation here. This is just for planning purposes.

If **YES**, proceed to the questions below

If **NO**, say "Thank you anyway for your time."

1. When you think of the Men's Club, what three words come immediately to mind?

A.

B.

C.

2. **[For Men's Club members only.]** There are a lot of reasons people are members of the Men's Club. What are 1 or 2 of the biggest benefits that you get from being a member?

A.

B.

3. I'm going to list some general types of activities that Men's Clubs frequently offer their members. Please tell me how interested you might be in participating in these activities if they were to be offered by our club: "very interested"; "somewhat interested"; or "not interested".

	VERY INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	NOT INTERESTED
Parent-and-child programs	_____	_____	_____
Sports or recreational programs	_____	_____	_____
Social activities	_____	_____	_____
Social action/community service	_____	_____	_____
Adult education/enhancing Jewish observance	_____	_____	_____
Speakers	_____	_____	_____
Congregational service (doing a project for the congregation, like ushering, fund raising, or putting together a directory	_____	_____	_____

4. Are there any other types of activities you'd like to see the Men's Club offer?

5. Would you be willing to help in the implementation of one of the activities?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      Which activities? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ No

To help us plan programs and activities in the future, please answer the next few questions.

6. Would you prefer to participate on Sundays or weeknights?

\_\_\_\_\_ No preference

\_\_\_\_\_ Sunday mornings                      \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday afternoons

\_\_\_\_\_ Weekday evenings

Preference for any particular night? \_\_\_\_\_

Preference for dinner or after-dinner? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Would you need transportation assistance?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes

8. What is your age group?

\_\_\_\_\_ Under 25                      \_\_\_\_\_ 36-45                      \_\_\_\_\_ 56-65

\_\_\_\_\_ 25-35                      \_\_\_\_\_ 46-55                      \_\_\_\_\_ over 65

9. Do you have any children living at home? If so, what are their ages?

\_\_\_\_\_ no children                      \_\_\_\_\_ ages 5-8                      \_\_\_\_\_ ages 14-18

\_\_\_\_\_ under 5 years old                      \_\_\_\_\_ ages 9-13                      \_\_\_\_\_ over 18 years old

Thank you for your assistance. Your answers will be combined with those of other men in the congregation to help us plan future programs and activities.

# MEN'S CLUB PROGRAMMING IDEAS

*Between four and seven program ideas are listed below in each category. A more comprehensive list is now being prepared for ultimate availability on the FJMC website.*

## 1. Programs Attractive to Younger Men

**Sports Night.** Have players, coaches, sports writers and/or sports announcers as guests. If it's going to be part of a dinner program, have something like spaghetti that would be attractive to kids. Having the players give a clinic is a plus. Be sure to allow the kids to pose with the players for pictures. Many pro teams will bring along "freebies" to distribute.

**Afternoon with Abba.** Select 3-4 Sundays during the school year and plan after-Religious School father-child activities. Start with each a hot dog lunch in the synagogue or all go out for pizza. Then have a group recreational program, such as miniature golf, bowling, swimming, or ice skating.

**Pre-Chanukah (or pre-Passover) Round Robin Program.** This parent-child program is held during Religious School, so the School's cooperation is essential. Take an age group (spanning no more than three or four grades in school) and have a program in which you have approximately five stations of activities. Divide up the students into that many groups and have them spend about 20 minutes at each station. Hold the program a week or two before the holiday. Possible stations for Chanukah: making latkes or jelly doughnuts; making Chanukah decorations; having the Rabbi discuss the historical story of Chanukah; (for parents only) discussing ways of dealing with the Christmas dilemma; and having the cantor lead Chanukah songs and prayers. Possible stations for Passover: making haroseth; having the rabbi discuss some interesting facts about the parts of the seder; having the cantor lead Passover songs and prayers; (for parents only) discussing *koshering* the house for Passover; and making Passover crafts. A station that could be at either session could be devoted to discussing the lunar calendar. Make certain that special invitations are sent to the parents requesting their attendance.

**Workshop for parents of Bar/Bat Mitzvah-age youth on how to make their special weekend more Jewishly significant.** Unlike the meetings the rabbi has with the parents, this workshop is really about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah weekend but excluding the services. It should discuss how to incorporate elements of Judaism in party themes, centerpieces, and invitations. It also should give ideas on *tzedukah* and ways to explain the service and traditions to non-Jewish friends and relatives. There will likely be several people in the congregation who could relate their own experiences to assist in this workshop. Specific invitations should be sent to parents of 11- and 12-year olds.

**Trivia and Knowledge Competition.** Many clubs call this "It's Academic" after a high school competition by that name in the Baltimore-Washington area and because that has been the name given when there was competition at the FJMC international conventions. Although all the questions could be Judaica, it is suggested that they be a mix of 1/3 Judaica and 2/3 general knowledge. Fewer people will be intimidated and feel inadequate that way. Teams of 3 or 4 people are suggested, and some questions should be individual answer and some team answer. This is a great program for Men's Club v. Sisterhood v. USY. It's also excellent as a friendly competition among nearby Men's Clubs. Although this program interests men of all ages, it seems particularly attractive to younger men. Lists of questions are available upon request.

**Super Bowl Party.** This can be as simple or as elaborate as you want to get. Most clubs having a Super Bowl Party are able to show it on a wide-screen TV. Most have subs or other types of sandwich food plus some food to *nosh* on throughout the game. Some clubs even have door prizes. If at all possible, have it in a room with some comfortable chairs or couches.

**Daddies and Darlings.** Have a Sunday morning breakfast program exclusively for fathers and their pre-school age children, and hire someone to play games, lead singing, or tell stories. Holding it on the morning of the Purim Carnival is an added plus.

## **2. Youth Activities or Programs in Support of Youth**

**Start a Cub Scout Pack.** It would be very nice to have a Cub Scout pack set up for the boys (Grades 1-5) in the congregation, instead of forcing them to join one sponsored by a church. But there are several prerequisites for success. First, you need someone with scouting experience to set it up. Second, you must have total parental involvement. And third, the Men's Club will need to allocate some money to purchase supplies to get the pack started. It is not advisable to start a Boy Scout troop, as that requires an enormous outlay of money (tents, manuals, other camping equipment) and also requires more experienced scouts to help instruct the younger ones. Also, be forewarned that you cannot limit members of the pack to just those in the congregation or even to Jews.

**Kids' Night Out.** This is essentially a child-sitting service provided by the Men's Club. Set aside one Saturday night a month for the Men's Club to have structured activities for children in the congregation while their parents go out for the evening. For a modest contribution, include food like pizza and popcorn with games and videos. Be sure to restrict the ages of the children and set guidelines regarding potential medical problems. Also look into potential liability.

**Youth Olympiad or Maccabiah Games.** This can be an expansion of the regular congregational picnic. The Men's Club could sponsor team events in the morning (assuming that the Religious School doesn't hold classes that day) and individual events in the afternoon. Men's Club members could set up the events and serve as judges. Having ribbons printed as prizes is a nice touch.

**Safe Driving Program for Teens.** The FJMC has a video ("Inbound Mercy") on drunk driving portrayed through the eyes of youth. Use someone from the Police Department who has investigated cases of drunk driving to talk about the subject matter. You might also include a speaker from a safe driving program in your area, especially for those just learning to drive.

**Subsidize Youth Attendance at Camp Ramah or a USY Activity.** The USY activity could be their December international convention or a summer travel program. This can be done through outside subsidies or through some other activity like an essay or art contest. You might also want to attach strings to the awards by requiring that fathers be Men's Club members and by requiring that the youth participate in some Men's Club activity during the year (such as helping to deliver Yom Hashoah candles or assisting with ushering at services). Keep in mind that if your club participates in the Yom Hashoah Yellow Candle Program, youth from your congregation are automatically eligible to apply for the Darkness Into Light Program, where the FJMC subsidizes summer trips to Israel and Eastern Europe that are awarded through the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism.

## **3. Recreation/Health/Fitness Programs**

**Panel of Experts on Various Men's Health Issues.** Which medical conditions you discuss will determine the type of audience you will attract. So if you are aiming for a younger crowd, don't discuss cancer and stroke. To attract a younger crowd, you might consider a panel of experts on three of the following: hair loss in men; the prostate and impotence; snoring; and weight training and exercise. See the FJMC's *Body and Spirit* book, which is part of the FJMC's "Hearing Men's Voices" series for more ideas.

**Health Fair.** This can go in many different directions. Some clubs run them with everything free (including food); others have fees involved. Some have commercial booths; others don't. Some also have individual speakers as part of the Health Fair. Some clubs involve safety aspects in the Fair. Some have at least part of it addressed to children, such as fingerprinting of children or dealing with illegal drugs. Some of the booths you might consider: cholesterol screenings (local Department of Health); vision and hearing screenings (Lions Club); blood pressure testing and blood donation (American Red Cross); various screenings and information from doctors of a variety of specialties; and healthy foods. AARP has a surprising number of slides and printed information for adults of all ages on diet, exercise, and safety. See the FJMC's *Body and Spirit* book, which is part of the FJMC's "Hearing Men's Voices" series.

**CPR Training.** You might be able to get a cardiologist from the congregation to lead this; otherwise you'll need to contact the American Red Cross or an emergency services organization for the use of the dummies to practice the CPR. It's a good idea to split the group into two – a refresher for those who already had training and a beginner's course. If you have it a week or two before the High Holy Days, you can also have the course as training for the ushers, and you can throw in a discussion of the synagogue's emergency procedures.

**Set up a Men's Club team in various sports.** If you have enough people, you can have an intra-club competition, but you might want to look into the creation of a regional league. Among the sports that can be organized in this way are: baseball/softball; basketball; football; bowling. You could also set up a one-on-one competition with golf or tennis.

**Sponsor a synagogue-wide "get healthy" campaign.** This could include a group weight loss and/or exercise program. Keys to its success are weekly weigh-ins and periodic talks by nutritionists, dieticians, doctors, and exercise experts. Set a goal for the collective weight loss for the group and have a "thermometer" gauging the group's progress in the synagogue lobby. If promoted to the hilt, this could give great exposure for the Men's Club and is the kind of thing that a local television station might pick up for a feature. A few years ago NBC's "The Today Show" ran a "Get Healthy America" segment with Dr. Art Ulene. There was a videotape of that series, and it might still be available from your local NBC affiliate.

**Bike 'n Bagel.** On several Sunday mornings in the fall and spring, the Beth Hillel Men's Club in Wilmette, IL, holds an activity where men go on a group bike-ride on a pre-determined course and then stop for breakfast before returning to pick up their kids from Religious School. Or you can make this much more elaborate by sponsoring a **5 or 10 kilometer run/walk/bicycle race**. It can be turned into a big fundraiser if you solicit sponsorships of participants and corporate sponsors (like the Beth Hillel-Beth El M.C. in Wynnewood, PA). To add interest, you could have the students of the Religious School select the recipients of some of the funds.

## ***4. Social Programs***

**Theater Party.** This involves the viewing of either a play or a movie preceded by a champagne reception or followed by a dessert reception. If you have a dessert reception after a play, you might consider inviting the cast and calling it a cast party. Of course, having a play with a Jewish theme is an even more compelling activity.

**Monday Night Football & Discussion of Kosher Sex.** A real man's night out! If you have a wide-screen TV at the synagogue, have a program to watch an NFL football game and serve subs and beer. Before the game have the rabbi discuss "kosher sex" (i.e. what sexual acts are permitted and those that are frowned on by the Torah and Talmud).

**Lower East Side Night.** Have an evening of Yiddish music, movies, or dancing and traditional Jewish foods. For decorations, you can enlarge pictures of New York's Lower East Side in the 1920's and make signs similar to those you would see on the streets at that time.

**Purim Costume Ball.** Attendance is with costume only. You can have an Esther look-alike "beauty contest", and traditional Purim foods are a must. Since the locale for the story of Purim is a Sephardic country, contact a local Sephardic congregation to see what other accoutrements you might have.

**Deep Sea Fishing or Boating on a Lake or River.** There's nothing like getting a bunch of guys together on a boat for a Sunday afternoon of fishing to create some real camaraderie. Be sure that the men involved have fishing licenses and that the boat has sufficient safety equipment.

**Progressive Dinner.** Follow from house-to-house for hors d'oeuvres, main course, and dessert. If you do this on a day near Shavuot, you can add a brief d'var Torah at each stop as a traditional way to observe the holiday.

**A Day at the Races.** This is a program in the synagogue – not at a race track. Basically, it involves betting with play money on some pre-taped “races” and some that are held that day. For instance, you could have a davening race. You could have a race to see who could eat a bowl of ice cream or a pie first without using any hands. Or you could have a race to see who could set up a table with plate, cup, napkin, and plastic the fastest. This is guaranteed to be a lot of fun but does require considerable preparation.

## ***5. Business or Professional Assistance***

**Income tax seminar.** Some clubs run this program every year as a service to their members, but if your synagogue is comprised primarily of professionals who already have their own accountants, this might not be a good program for you. Be sure to have an expert on hand who can answer questions about deductions and the sale of stocks.

**Estate planning or retirement planning seminar.** This is really a far-reaching topic and would need several sessions to cover the subject adequately. Consequently, you might want to limit the subject matter. Among the topics are: wills; trusts; durable power of attorney; living will; long-term care insurance; building an investment portfolio; life insurance; and on and on. Also be sensitive to the fact that many members of your congregation work in these fields, and if you have one as a speaker, you might be taking business away from another. Question-and-answer sessions are vital here, and you might even ask for some questions to be submitted in advance. It might also be helpful for discussion to pose a couple of typical hypothetical situations for the expert to analyze.

**Investment club.** Several clubs have set up these groups, with some limiting the investments to Israeli securities and others opening it to general investments. You will need to set up requirements for entrance into the group, which should include monthly contribution requirements and the willingness to do some of the investment research.

**Networking Night.** This is an attractive program for singles and young married people, because it gives them an opportunity to interact with each other about their professions, exchange business cards, and meet others. It's simply a social activity (wine-and-cheese or beer tasting), where one portion of the evening is devoted to some of the attendees giving a couple of minutes to discuss their line of work. Advertising in the right places is imperative for this to be a success.

**Job Bulletin Board.** The South Jersey M.C. in Cherry Hill, NJ, has set up a multi-state bulletin board of help-wanted and position-wanted ads for Men's Club members. You can contact them to be part of theirs or set one up yourself in your congregation or community.

## ***6. Community Service Activities***

**Deliver Food Baskets to the Needy.** This program may already be set up in your community through the Jewish Social Services Agency or a similar organization. All you need to do is to supply the manpower to distribute the food. You might also solicit contributions of money and food. The Adas Israel Men's Club in Washington, DC, participates in a community program to distribute food on the Sunday before Thanksgiving and again on the Sunday before Passover.

**Collect Clothes for the Needy.** This program can be as simple as making the synagogue a drop-off point for used clothing, but make certain that the Executive Director is OK with that first. Also, be certain to have receipts that you can give contributors that they can use for tax deduction purposes. You might coordinate efforts with a specific homeless shelter and ask for specific articles, such as men's clothing only and personal articles like lines, shaving cream, etc. Note that some shelters prefer that you donate clothing directly to Goodwill or the Salvation Army but to earmark those donations toward their shelters, so that the people can go to the stores and select their own clothing, rather than rummage through a pile of clothes.

**Volunteer at a hospital or other institution on Christmas or Easter.** This is a great opportunity for visibility in the community and is a wonderful *mitzvah* to perform on behalf of the Christian community.

**Hold monthly Shabbat services at nursing homes, assisted living homes, or prisons.** It might be a good idea to contact your local Jewish Social Services agency to see if they are aware of institutions where you could be of benefit. It is best to offer your services at places that are not totally Jewish, since they are in most need of Jewish input. If you go to a nursing home, ascertain in advance how many will actually be well enough to attend. Wherever you hold it, be aware that many non-Jews will also attend. Take only the highlights of the service, which shouldn't last for more than 30 minutes. Discussion of the weekly Torah portion is an added plus. And offer a *kiddush* of wine/grape juice, challah, and cookies. The Adas Israel Men's Club in Washington, DC, has been doing this program for years; contact them for further information.

**Collect and distribute calendars to residents in nursing homes or assisted living homes.** Many kosher supermarkets and butchers and funeral homes print these up. See if they will donate some for you to distribute.

**Opening the synagogue to the homeless.** Beth Emeth-Bais Yehuda in Toronto opens the synagogue to assist homeless in the community. But before attempting this, make certain that it doesn't create a security problem.

## ***7. Congregational Service Projects***

**Provide ushers at Shabbat and holiday services.** Many Men's Clubs provide this service, but few arrange for special recognition, such as all of the ushers wearing a distinctive color yarmulke and/or an usher badge. If your synagogue has a hand-out at services, you might also consider including the ushers' names.

**Clean-up, fix-up project.** The possibilities are endless here. Some examples are getting a group of Men's Clubbers to paint playground equipment or to plant shrubs.

**Create a synagogue time capsule.** This is especially appealing in conjunction with a major synagogue event or anniversary.

**Start a synagogue archives.** A comprehensive synagogue archives is a major undertaking, and before starting this, the chairmen need to be aware of archival techniques. But you could do only parts. For instance, your club could undertake a project to identify all of the students in confirmation photos, or you could organize past synagogue newsletters and put them in acid-free boxes for preservation.

**Create a booklet for the sanctuary that explains the Shabbat service to non-Jews.** The booklet could provide an English transliteration of major prayers and could also explain parts of the service as well as the significance of various objects in the synagogue. This is also a wonderful means of outreach to non-Jewish spouses of congregational members to make them feel more comfortable at services.

**Contribute books to the synagogue library.** This could be as simple as a line-item on the Men's Club budget to donate money to the library, or the Men's Club could create a Men's Club shelf of a particular subject matter. The Men's Club could also spearhead a drive to solicit donations to the library.

## ***8. Fund Raising Activities (Major)***

**Honoree dinner with a donor book.** For this to work you will need 4 or 5 committees – dinner arrangements, dinner reservations, ad solicitation, donor book publication, and advertising. In selecting an honoree you need to consider his contributions to the Club, the congregation, and the community, as well as his ability to draw attendees to the dinner and to attract congratulatory ad purchases. You should also select a recipient for the money raised, not just the Men's Club treasury. Some big synagogue

project or the Religious School are good choices. This really should be a gala evening, so it should feature a catered dinner. Some clubs even offer entertainment or dancing, but recognize that this will cut into your bottom line. In addition to the congratulatory ads, the donor book should contain a biography of the honoree and some tributes by the rabbi, Men's Club president, etc.

**Publish a synagogue directory.** This also can be done as a free service to the congregation. Decide whether you simply want an address and e-mail directory or whether you also want family portraits. If you want the latter, you might want to check out Olan Mills Photographers, headquartered in Chattanooga, Tennessee (telephone: 423-622-5141). They will send a photographer to your synagogue for as many nights as it will take to take family portraits – for free. All they ask is the opportunity to sell the photos to the families. You will also want to include information about congregational activities in the directory. To turn this into a fundraiser, you will need to sell ads to individuals and businesses and/or sell the directories themselves. You will probably do much better, however, to offer the directories for free.

**Publish a calendar.** While it's true that a number of organizations offer Jewish calendars, you can make a special one for your congregation. You can sell birthday, anniversary, and B'nai Mitzvah date notices, as well as ads for congregants and local Jewish merchants. By putting in such information as important numbers to call and candle lighting times, you can make the calendar an important resource for your congregation.

**Goods and Services Auction.** The success of this program will be directly proportional to the amount of work put into securing quality items and services to be auctioned. You might also charge for admission and have door prizes. Also plan for some refreshments – what's a Jewish event without food?!

**Art Auction.** Probably more than any other major fundraiser, you can raise a lot of money with an art auction without a lot of work in setting it up. Usually, the art companies handle almost everything. All you need to do is to arrange for the room, refreshments, ticket sales, and advertising. You will need a few people there on the evening of the event to help out in setting the room up.

## ***9. Fund Raising (Minor)***

**Lox Boxes.** This involves the packaging and selling of a box containing lox, cream cheese, bagels, and Danish for four persons. It can either be delivered to homes or available for pick-up at the synagogue. A variation of this is to bill it as a Mother's Day Champagne Brunch with a brunch package containing bagel, whitefish salad, a bottle of champagne, a red carnation, and the Sunday *New York Times* delivered to the home by 10 a.m.

**Cookbook.** Usually Sisterhoods compile cookbooks, but a lot of men are very good cooks, and it might be very attractive to have a cookbook of men's favorite recipes. And it doesn't have to be totally from scratch because there are some companies that specialize in printing cookbooks for charitable groups. One Men's Club made it a humorous cookbook, mingling entries like a recipe for a peanut butter and jelly sandwich in with traditional recipes. Be sure that you make sure that the recipes are accurate and kosher before you include them.

**Shalach mones baskets.** This involves the delivery of *shalach mones* baskets of dried fruit and some knick-knacks at the cost of only 50 cents each. It doesn't sound like you can make much money here, but it can be a nice fundraiser. At such a low price, you could expect people to buy baskets for lots of people - \$10 will be enough for gifts to 20 people. The key is that you only deliver one basket to a person, even though he might have 15 people sending him one. You simply enclose a list of the people who are giving him the Purim gift. Obviously, the more your sales, the more your profit.

**Hypothetical Stock Market Investment.** The object here is to see who – on paper – gets the biggest profit from the purchase of stock. There is a \$25 entry fee, and each contestant gets a hypothetical \$10,000 to "invest" in his choice of listed stocks. You probably should limit it to The New York Stock Exchange and NASDAQ or you can even limit it to a list of stocks. After several months, whoever has the

most “money” win a prize that has been donated. You could also have a winner for the best predictor of the level of the Dow Jones Industrial Average.

**Sell Sukkah Kits.** Put together all the materials necessary for the construction of a sukkah, so that the materials can be used year after year. Also include instructions and the appropriate prayers for Sukkot. Advertise the sale of the kits during August with pick-up some time after Rosh Hashonah. You might even have a construction demonstration.

## **10. Programs to Enhance Jewish Observance**

**Teach how to conduct a Friday night Shabbat table service.** The FJMC has all you’ll need to teach a course on Shabbat observance in the home – a text book, an audiocassette, a teacher’s guide, and a booklet (*benscher*) with all the prayers and songs. This is especially good to offer new Jews or newlyweds. Offer it over a period of several weeks with one of the sessions being a challah-making demonstration and the final session being a participatory Shabbat dinner for the group.

**Sponsor synagogue skills and/or home observance skills courses.** This can be done jointly with the congregation’s Adult Education Committee, but the Men’s Club could take the lead in developing it. The FJMC has a variety of books and tapes to help with virtually all of the skills. Some others that you might consider are: teaching how to chant a Haftorah or read from the Torah; teaching the duties of the *gabbiim* to expand the synagogue’s pool for Shabbat; showing how to put up a sukkah and the accompanying prayers; teaching how to lift and wrap a Torah; and teaching how to give a *D’var Torah*.

**Distribute Yom Hashoah candles.** Most Men’s Clubs already do this, but all clubs should review their distribution procedures every couple of years. Some clubs distribute candles to the entire congregation and others run a community-wide distribution effort. At the other extreme some clubs merely buy a case of candles and stick them in the Sisterhood gift shop. Of all your club’s activities, it is almost distasteful and sacrilegious to make a profit on the backs of those who were killed during the Holocaust. So clubs really should avoid “selling” the candles. Distribute them to the students in the Religious School or distribute them at Purim or Passover services. Include a return envelope with an opportunity for contributions and be sure to indicate the charitable causes that the contributions will be sent to. At one time many clubs were also distributing the candles to college students, but the problem here is that most colleges prohibit the lighting of candles in dormitories as a potential fire hazard. Further, when Yom Hashoah falls late, some colleges have actually finished for the year at that point. Also remember that stuffing the candles into bags and boxes and distributing them becomes a great activity for the men in your club to work together and encourages leadership development.

**World Wide Wrap.** This is almost a “no-brainer.” Each year on Super Bowl morning, the FJMC sponsors its World Wide Wrap. On this day clubs and synagogues around the world are encouraged to have a special morning Minyan to explain the traditions of wearing tefillin and to give instructions in its use. You might also have some of the older grades of the Religious School attend, but discuss this with your rabbi first. Unless the students are actually putting the tefillin on themselves, they might be too noisy and disruptive. While the FJMC has an excellent video on tefillin, “The Ties That Bind”, you really can’t show it at the Minyan itself. Afterwards, many clubs offer a breakfast that features vegetarian wraps and a program or speaker.

**Participatory Shabbat Dinners at the Synagogue.** This can be part of a Men’s Club Shabbat observance or can be stand alone. Use the FJMC’s *Art of Jewish Living* Shabbat *benscher*.

**Sponsor home hospitality for the holidays program.** This can be done for Rosh Hashonah, Passover, or Shabbat. It can be limited to congregants or can be opened to outsiders, especially local college students. In seeking hosts and guests, be sure to ask the extent of their observance of *kashrut*, you want to make certain that you don’t match a strictly observant guest with a home that does not live up to those standards.

## **11. Men's Issues Programs**

**Have a discussion on how to communicate with children and to deal with their phases of childhood.** See the FJMC's *Our Fathers Ourselves* book from the "Hearing Men's Voices" series for a guide to several different programs on this. Depending on the subject matter, you might want to utilize a professional to lead the discussion.

**Have a discussion of father-son relationships.** This can either be a stand-alone program or a special feature of a Men's Club Board meeting. See the FJMC's *Our Fathers Ourselves* book from the "Hearing Men's Voices" series for detailed information on how to proceed.

**Have a program dealing specifically with men's health issues.** Get a panel of experts dealing with such diverse conditions as prostate cancer, coronary disease, baldness, male menopause, and snoring. See the FJMC's *Body and Spirit* book from the "Hearing Men's Voices" series for detailed information on how to proceed.

**Have a discussion on dealing with older parents.** This could deal with the concept of honoring one's parents and might include legal presentations on topics such as inheritance, medical proxies, and decisions about when life should end. See the FJMC's *Our Fathers Ourselves* book from the "Hearing Men's Voices" series for detailed information on how to proceed.

**Sponsor a weekend retreat for men only.** You can take the opportunity to explore a variety of men's health and spiritual issues, as well as parent-child relationships. Mix in some religious services, sports, and camaraderie, and you've created a weekend that won't be soon forgotten. You might want to consider doing this jointly with a couple of other area Men's Clubs.

## **12. Keruv (Outreach) Programs for Dual Faith Families**

**Let's Talk About It!** This can be done at a Men's Club meeting or a program, but it is more effective when there are fewer than 20 people present. The rabbi would be good as a discussion leader. He should ask attendees the extent to which they have been affected by intermarriage in their families and then list some concerns. He should explain synagogue policies in the area and ask how the congregation can be helpful. A good resource in this area is the FJMC's book entitled *Let's Talk About It*.

**Discussion for Jews-by-choice and their family members.** The purpose of this program is to listen to Jews-by-choice and their families to ascertain problems and to see how others can increase their sensitivity in this area. A good resource in this area is the FJMC's book entitled *Let's Talk About It*.

**Discussion of Reactions to Intermarriage Scenarios.** This can be done at a Men's Club meeting or a program. The purpose of the program is to offer scenarios that will test the limits of our emotional reactions. Discuss what reactions would be if a child would enter an interfaith marriage. What if the chosen mate converts (or chooses not to)? How would you interact with the *machatanim* and grandchildren? What if your child decided to convert? A good resource in this area is the FJMC's book entitled *Let's Talk About It*.

**Skit about stereotypes regarding intermarriages and new Jews.** Most Jews have misconceptions about those involved in intermarriages, and a simple two person skit can raise those views by one unenlightened character only to be "shot down" by statements of another character. If you have a club member with a bit of the show business bug in him, you might consider asking him to write a short skit about the subject. It could be presented at a stand alone program or might even be a nice cap to the Saturday morning *kiddush* of a Men's Club Shabbat observance.

### **13. Programs in Support of Israel and/or World Jewry**

**Israeli Fair.** This is a major undertaking, and unless you have a lot of manpower, you might consider co-sponsoring it with the Sisterhood or other organization. The purpose is to generate interest in Israel. You should set up various booths around the room that would deal with the sights, Israeli food, travel, etc. Sources for information could be the Israeli Tourism Office, the Israeli Embassy, and travel agencies. If your rabbi is considering leading a trip to Israel, you might consider having an information and sign-up desk. Have children in the Religious School help with decorations for the room.

**Roses for Rosh Hashonah.** This is a fundraiser, but you get the flowers from Israel. One club in the Chicago area has ordered them from M & M Roses ([mnmrose@bezeqint.net](mailto:mnmrose@bezeqint.net)). The fact that you would be helping an Israeli business is a plus. Be certain to clear this activity with your congregation's Executive Director, since the congregation might not want to be the pick-up point for all those flowers – especially at the busy time before the High Holy Days. Of course, the flowers don't have to be limited to roses, and you could also offer the flowers on other holidays, such as Passover.

**Panel Discussion of Congregants from Other Lands.** This creates an awareness of different traditions and problems for Jews around the world and personalizes it to familiar congregation members. Have a moderator/facilitator to keep the discussion going and to ascertain if the panelists would want to return to their homeland for a visit or extended stay. You might even jazz up your meal at the program with some traditional food from other countries.

**Theme program for Jews of various countries.** Put together an entire program, including food, entertainment, and discussion of the Jewish community involved for a particular country or area, such as the Jews of France, the Jews of the Far East, or the Jews of South America.

### **14. Men's Club Shabbat Add-Ons**

**Youth Essay or Art Contest.** Provide cash prizes and/or subsidies to Camp Ramah and be sure to divide the entrants into different age groups. Print winning entries in the synagogue newsletter and display the art work around the synagogue. You might also consider having the winners of their age divisions as guests at a Men's Club dinner.

**Men's Club Week.** Why limit your observance to Shabbat alone? You should highlight the importance of your Men's Club by having a whole week of activities, including a Shabbat dinner, a business meeting, and some activity on behalf of the congregational youth. And be sure that you publicize this well.

**Shabbat Dinner.** Have a participatory Shabbat dinner utilizing the FJMC's "Art of Jewish Living" *benscher*.

**Hand-out.** Create a hand-out that, not only indicates who will be leading which portion of the service, but also gives some information about the club itself, including some of its previous outstanding programs and its upcoming activities.

**Have a post-kiddush skit.** No more than 30 minutes into the Saturday morning kiddush, perform a short skit on an issue related to the theme for the Men's Club Shabbat. One club, for instance, had a two-man skit, where one man was making over-generalizations about Jews from various Movements of Judaism, while the other was making more rational observations. The impact was a wonderful discussion of the types of Jews and of our prejudices.