

MASON AREA'S FIRST JEWISH CENTER OFFERS FAMILY FUN FOR CHANUKAH

The Mason / Deerfield / West Chester area Jewish community is receiving a significant boost during this year's holiday season as the area's Center for the Jewish Community offers a plethora of Chanukah* fun programs and celebrations for the entire family.

Kicking off the season with the second annual community-wide **Scholastic and Jewish Book and Chanukah Fair**, the Jewish Discovery Center (www.JDiscovery.com), made available an array of children's books, innovative Chanukah gifts and Judaica in time for Chanukah.

"We wanted to make children's books with Jewish themes and innovative Chanukah gifts easily accessible, for they play a vital role in every Jewish home, playroom, classroom and library," said Rochel Kalmanson, Program Director of The Jewish Discovery Center and Principle of its Chai Tots Early Childhood Center (www.ChaiTots.com).

The fair offered books from leading publishers promoting universal values such as sharing, kindness and charity, and teaching Jewish history and tradition. It also featured a conveniently located one-stop-shop for Chanukah accessories and gifts.

Then, on Monday, December 3, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., children, ages 2-5, are invited to The Jewish Discovery Center with their parents to the **Kids Craft Club**, a pre-holiday craft club for children, featuring **The Olive Oil Factory**. At this hands-on workshop, centered on a genuine olive oil hand press, participants learn how real olive oil is made. Bringing ancient traditions to life, children will squeeze, press, pound and pulverize authentic olives into fresh olive oil, discovering how the

Maccabees of antiquity processed and refined oil for the Menorah [candelabra] in the Chanukah story. When the process is completed, participants will witness the Menorah lit from the oil produced.

This popular pre-Holiday craft club, offered before each Jewish holiday, teaches children the beauty of the holiday, in a fun-filled, hands-on, nurturing environment. Children and adults will experientially learn about Chanukah by enjoying a story, eating potato Latkes [pancakes], learning to play the Dreidel, receiving chocolate Chanukah Gelt [coins] and discovering the entire process of creating oil for use in the Chanukah Menorah.

On the fifth night of Chanukah, December 8th, 6:30 p.m., The Jewish Discovery Center's POPS (Parents of Preschoolers) Club presents **Chanukah Family Game Night N' Latkes**. The popular club for families with preschool-aged children is offering a fun-filled opportunity to join other families for an exciting night of candle-lighting, games and fun while spending quality Chanukah time bonding with family. Families can play Dreidel, boggle, scrabble, monopoly, chess, checkers, and other more age-appropriate games, as they indulge in a choice of potato latkes, apple latkes, sweet potato latkes, cheese latkes and a variety of additional home-made latkes with assorted toppings.

"Chanukah is a time to commemorate our freedom to openly celebrate our values; these programs proclaim that message to the world", said Rabbi Yosef Kalmanson. "We appreciate the community's eagerness to bring a comprehensive Holiday spirit to the area. What a great way to celebrate the growing Jewish community with Chanukah programs symbolizing Unity, Light and Joy."

The entire community is invited for these events, taking place at the newly constructed Jewish Discovery Center conveniently located across from Cedar Village, at 7587 Central Parke Blvd, in Mason.

To learn more about Chanukah, log onto www.JDiscovery.com. Clicking on the Chanukah link brings the surfer to the largest interactive Chanukah website online and provides information and video demonstrations on the hows, whys and whens of the holiday. The site also offers an "Ask the Rabbi" feature for any holiday question.

The Jewish Discovery Center (www.JDiscovery.com) is the center for the entire Jewish community in the Northern corridor and offers numerous classes and educational opportunities to study more about Judaism and its relevance to the post-modern Jew. They also maintain an online library with numerous interactive resources available on their website, www.JDiscovery.com.

The mission of the Jewish Discovery Center and its Chai Tots Early Childhood Center is to transform Jewish values and ideals into a living force in the lives of children, youth and adults through positive experiences. Instilling the desire to live Jewishly, and to actively participate in and contribute to the Jewish community's heritage and practices, is their key goal.

For more information on these and other Chanukah programs, including programs for women, visit the website or call 531.DISCOVER (531.3472).

Media Notice: the events are open to all reporters, journalists and photographers; your coverage is invited. Rabbi Yosef Kalmanson, director of The Jewish Discovery Center will be on hand to answer questions.

***The 8-day Jewish holiday of Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, begins this year on the evening of Tuesday, December 4th and continues through Wednesday, December 12, 2007.**

Chanukah (pronounced at the beginning with a guttural sound), known also as "Hanukah," is among the most widely celebrated of Jewish holidays. It is a time for happy family gatherings around the Menorah [8-branch candelabra], for songs and sizzling potato latkes [pancakes] and games of "Dreidel."



Participants enjoying last year's Chanukah Family Party.