

Hanukkah

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are all accountable to this eternal light," Rabbi Bergstein said. "Beside being a message of freedom, faith and standing up for one's belief, even to the point of self-sacrifice, is that there is an unalterable truth that by adhering to this truth we will light up not only our lives but the lives of others as well. That's our responsibility - to light up the lives of others and that's why we light the menorah on the outside of our home, ideally."

The public display of menorahs also commemorates the

years that Jewish people feared persecution if they revealed their religious beliefs. "This is a lesson to us and all of mankind," Rabbi Bergstein said. "We must light a light and make the world a better world. What was good enough last night is not enough tonight because it becomes what is usual and one must always strive to go higher."

Among the customs of Hanukkah is charitable work and to give gifts, specifically to children. Hanukkah not

only represents freedom of religion, but also the eternal message of the candles. "The presence of God is like a flame upon the heads of each individual, and the individual is like the wick of the candle," Rabbi Bergstein said. "The oil is the good deeds of the individual and greatest of good deeds are acts of charity and this makes the world a resting place for God, which will take place when we all shine like a menorah. Each individual is a candleabra."

Celebrating:
Adat Shalom preschoolers get an early start on celebrating Hanukkah with adults Phyllis Kohn and Debbie Rosenberg. The children include Leah Cohen, Samantha Dean, Naomi Fleischmann, Jace Gittleman, Ethan Grier, Rachel Hollander, Sean King, Alana Lieberman, Daniel Lipsky, Jaclyn Nagel, Andrew Nathanson, Talya Nevins, Mitchell Schwartz, Ari Siegel, Mackenzie Tarockoff and Austin Tucker.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BERGER

Some background on holiday

The Jewish Community Council in Bloomfield Hills offers this background on Hanukkah. What it is
A festive holiday, celebrated for eight days and eight nights beginning the 25th of Kislew on the Hebrew (lunar) calendar. Hanukkah is also called the festival of lights. The word Hanukkah is Hebrew for dedication. What it is not
Although it usually falls in late November or during the month of December, Hanukkah is not the Jewish Christmas. Christmas is a sacred Christian holy day that celebrates the birth of Jesus, the Christian messiah, while Hanukkah is a festival observed by Jewish families.

The History of Hanukkah
This story is told in the Book of Maccabees. In 175 B.C. Antiochus IV became King of Syria, the land to which Israel had been annexed. He tried to force the Jews to renounce their faith and customs and to worship Greek gods. Antiochus' plan was to force a kingdom of one people, all with the same beliefs. He became the champion of an intense hellenization. On the 25th of Kislew in 167 B.C., the enforced hellenization of the Jews reached its peak. Antiochus decreed that any Jew caught observing the Sabbath, having in his possession the Torah or five books of Moses, or in any way maintaining Jewish customs and not worshipping the Greek gods would be killed. He

also ordered that the central Jewish temple in Jerusalem was to be desecrated and called Zeus Olympius. In the small town of Modi'in, located northwest of Jerusalem, a man named Mattathias, along with his five sons, rallied Jews from the entire country to join in opposition to the Syrians. Mattathias' call for action was "Whoever is for God, follow me." On his deathbed in 166 B.C., Mattathias asked his son, Judah Maccabee, to continue the fight for religious and personal freedom. "Maccabee" is Hebrew for "hammer." It symbolizes how Judah and his followers acted as the "hammer of the Lord" while they fought the numerically superior Syrians. The word "Maccabee" is associated with the motto on the banner the fighters raised. In Hebrew, the first letters of the words "who is like unto thee, among the mighty, Oh Lord," spell the word "Maccabee." Judah Maccabee and his small band of followers won a series of military victories over the Syrians. The fighting culminated in 164 B.C. with the victory of Judah Maccabee and his followers over Lysias (the Syrian commander) and his forces. The Maccabees gained possession of Jerusalem and began to cleanse the temple, which had been desecrated. The 25th of Kislew was set as the date for rededication of the temple to coincide with the third anniversary of Antiochus' decree. According to the Book of Mac-

cabees, celebrations to rededicate the temple lasted eight days, and Judah decreed that they be designated as days of rejoicing for future generations. Tradition holds that at the time of rededication, just one oil jar could be found to burn in the Ner Tamid, or eternal light, which hung over the ark containing Torah scrolls. The oil held only enough to burn for one day, but instead lasted for eight days. Since the Maccabees victory, Hanukkah candles have been lit in Jewish homes in all parts of the world to commemorate the re-lighting of the eternal light. The festival reminds Jews that, by fighting Antiochus' tyranny, the Maccabees maintained the identity and religious freedom of the Jewish people and preserved Judaism. **Community celebrations**
Hanukkah is not celebrated solely in the home. There are parties, concerts and plays held in gaily decorated settings. Special events in celebration of the holiday are arranged by a large number of Jewish community institutions. The torch relay, a recent addition to Hanukkah custom, takes place in Israel. A torch is lit in Modi'in, home of the Maccabees. In the relay, the torch is passed until the final runner presents the torch to the president of the state of Israel, amidst a cheering crowd. The relay was established to reaffirm the courage and inspiration of the modern Israeli Maccabees, who persist in their struggles for religious freedom.

Hills' Borders hosts authors on two nights

Borders Farmington Hills offers these events to patrons. At 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2, Kathy Jo Wargin, author of "The Legend of Sleeping Bear and Michigan, The Spirit of the Land" discusses her latest book, "The Legend of Mackinac Island." Folklore tells us that long ago, a large turtle named Makinauk lent his back for the creation of a brand new world - Mackinac Island. With intense dedication to the realism of all characters

and the magic of the island, this new work celebrates the tale in jubilant fashion. At 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 8, photographer Ted Nelson shares his new book "The Nature of Kensington," which features Kensington Metropark. The 94 images captured within bring the understated beauty of southeast Michigan's crown jewel area to life at the living room coffee table. Borders is at 30995 Orchard Lake Road. Call 737-0110 for more information.

Chat room

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ing at the floor of the car. I could tell she was about to cry, holding back tears. Then she said, "I don't want to go in. I'm not going to work." I tried to comfort her by saying it would just be temporary. I would drive down from San Francisco to see her. I told her she had to take her shift. I kissed her goodnight and reluctantly she went in. I never saw her again.

A turn of events
But the story is not over. The next morning I began my three-day drive back to Farmington. The day after I arrived home my dad died from a heart attack. I was the oldest boy and he had left my mother, three young sisters and brother, not to mention a pile of debt. I petitioned the Navy to let me out. Sen. Ferguson sent a telegram to the naval station in Illinois. I was discharged Dec. 30, 1954, and never saw my ship again. Nova and I exchanged one last letter. I intentionally put all thoughts of her out of my mind in order to

accomplish the task ahead of me. Then, this past summer, my brother Pete and his new wife visited me from their home in Fresno, Calif. While talking to them, Nova's name came up. The first time since 1954, I had put her out of my mind until then, and it all came rushing back in torrents. What had become of her? I couldn't stop thinking about her. So I embarked on a search that lasted for months. Two search companies failed to find her. I followed lead after lead and came up empty. I had spoken with a couple of detective agencies who gave me some information not told me by the search companies. I had to get more information on her, but how? She had probably married and had a different last name, but what was it? Since I last saw her in the LA area I took a shot in the dark. I called the LA County Recorder office on Jan. 1, 1999. I asked them to search their marriage records. Two weeks later I received a copy of her marriage

certificate in the mail. I immediately called an investigative agency in Novi with the additional information. While on the phone the detective located her in just 14 minutes. He said he could not disclose her location until he got her permission. I asked him if he had her phone number. He said he did. I told him to call her, I would be right over. The date was Sept. 17, 1999. **Reunited by phone**
Several minutes later I walked into his office and he was speaking to her on the phone. I was excited and motioned to him to ask her if she would speak to me. She said yes. I was shaking. We had a short conversation in which I asked her if I could call her from home in a few minutes. I settled my account with the investigator, thanked him and went home. There Nova and I had a long conversation as if the years melted away. We had both gotten married, each had three children, grown now, and we both divorced in the 70s. She lives just a few miles from where I last saw her, worked as an RN until she retired. We have since exchanged letters and phone calls, as well as photographs. In the first letter she sent was the postcard I had sent her from Hawaii. She had kept it among her souvenirs all these years. I have plane tickets and will visit her in December. Kenneth Kemp is a Farmington Hills resident.

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