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## Gifts ideas for the Festival of Lights

By Susan B. Tauber Special Writer

ift giving is a major part of the holiday season. Friends, families, coworkers and others delight in exchanging presents. It's easy to give gifts to others who share the same holiday as you. But what does a person who celebrates Christmas give to a person whose holiday is Chanukah, the Festival of Lights?

Purchasing something at a place that sells Jewish items helps the shopper select a meaningful gift for a Jewish

The Jewish Community Center and Esther's Judaica Gift World, both in West Bloomfield, stock many appropriate gifts. These include symbols of Chanukah, such as Menorahs (candelabras), dreidles (spinning tops), special books and music.

Chanukah is an eight-day celebration that began sundown, Wednesday, Dec. 8 and ends sundown, Wednesday, Dec. 15.

It reiterates the story of how ancient Jews fought against an immense Greek army to retrieve their holy temple and to regain their right to practice their religion. It recalls an act of faith by the small army of Jews who fought in order to worship as they chose.

Chanukah is known as the Festival of Lights because of the "miracle" that happened when the Jews returned to their temple. They only found enough holy oil to burn for one day. The miracle was that the oil burned for eight.

To commemorate this happy holiday, Jewish families light candles in the Menorah for the eight days. They say special prayers, sing songs and eat foods cooked in oil to remember the miracle of the holy oil.

They also play games, such as dreidie. A dreidle is a four-sided spinning top with a Hebrew letter on each side. The letters on American dreidles stand for "a great miracle happened there." Dreidles made in Israel have Hebrew letters meaning "a great miracle happened here."

The Jewish Community Center has a shop that sells Menorahs, dreidles and other gifts, such as children's books and household items. Because of the Jewish Sabbath, which is sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, the Jewish Community Center is closed Friday evenings and Saturdays. The shop is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on

