

Tikvah Nus



MARCH 2009

Winter in the city of Ottawa can be an incredibly cold place both physically with plummeting temperatures and mentally with the stress of the transit strike and the economy in a recession. The workers in the Tikvah Unit, Jewish Family Services of Ottawa Financial Assistance Unit, are especially aware of this hardship on the city's poorest people and have been spending the winter trying to relieve some of the burden.



During the month of February 70 families have received assistance from the Kosher Food Bank and 110 from Miriam's Well (fresh fruits and vegetables). For those who adhere to the rules of Kashrut the Kosher Food Bank is their only source for ground meat in the city of Ottawa. As well, Miriam's Well is the only food distribution program dedicated to the delivery of fresh fruits and vegetables to those less fortunate. Due to the bus strike the organizers of Miriam's Well arranged volunteer drivers for those unable to get their food in January. For many people, having volunteers bring them their fresh fruits and vegetables was the only way that they could get enough fresh food for the month.

For those who live in the downtown core at one of the city's shelters they were in for a special treat. Tuesday January 27, 2009 saw the first ever Kosher Luncheon for the city's homeless. This special meal hosted by Jewish Family Services, Beth Shalom Synagogue, The Ottawa Mission, Centre 454, The Salvation Army and many others demonstrated to the city's poor that there are many people who care about them and that no one will be left behind.

Aside from Miriam's Well, the Kosher Food Bank, and the Homeless Luncheon, the Tikvah Unit handed out thousands of dollars in direct assistance to 80 families who had no other way of making ends meet.



The mission of the Tikvah Unit of Jewish Family Services is to help the less fortunate with their basic human needs while preserving their pride and dignity. Our goal is to help those in need become self sufficient members of society.

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER

DATES

Friday April 3 @ 6pm

May 1 @ 6pm

June 5 @ 6pm

KOSHER FOOD BANK

March 8 or 22

April 5 or 26

May 3 or 24

MIRIAM'S WELL 2 - 6 pm.

March 30

April 27

May 25

The above programs require reservations

Purim

Fast of Esther March 9, 2009

Purim March 10 - 11, 2009

Passover

First Seder April 8, 2009

Passover April 8 - 16, 2009



This newsletter can be found at www.jfsottawa.com

For information on Tikvah assistance, programming, and events please contact Karen Beutel at 613-722-2225 ext. 350

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PURIM

The festival of Purim is celebrated every year on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Adar. It commemorates the salvation of the Jewish people in Ancient Persia from Haman's plot "to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews, young and old, infants and women, in a single day."

The Persian empire of the 4th century BCE extended over 127 lands, and all the Jews were its subjects. When King Ahasuerus had his wife, Queen Vashti, executed for failing to follow his orders, he orchestrated a beauty pageant to find a new queen. A Jewish girl, Esther, found favor in his eyes and became the new queen - though she refused to divulge the identity of her nationality.

Meanwhile, the anti-Semitic Haman was appointed prime minister of the empire. Mordechai, the leader of the Jews (and Esther's cousin) defied the King's orders and refused to bow to Haman. Haman was incensed and convinced the king to issue a decree ordering the extermination of all the Jews on the 13th of Adar - a date chosen by a lottery Haman made.

Mordechai galvanized all the Jews, convincing them to repent, fast and pray to G-d. Meanwhile, Esther asked the King and Haman to join her for a feast. At the feast, Esther revealed to the King her Jewish identity. Haman was hanged, Mordechai was appointed prime minister in his stead, and a new decree was issued - granting the Jews the right to defend themselves against their enemies.

On the 13th of Adar the Jews mobilized and killed many of their enemies. On the 14th of Adar they rested and celebrated.

