

Here we are in December already. Don't panic, you still have plenty of time to shop for Hanukkah as we don't light the first candle until the 21st.

Last year, I listed 8 things to think about as you lit the menorah each evening. Let me share with you a new list for your consideration this year.

Starting with the *shamash*:

Rabbi Raskin continues to raise the bar for us. We introduced a daily minyan this past year at his urging to help our congregants in their time of need. Our services continue to be filled with wonderful "music" even when it is not a Joyful Noise Shabbat. He helps expand our minds every Shabbat with his insightful d'var Torahs/discussions and does the same with his classes. He truly "lights" the way for us.

1st night

Smell the delicious aroma of the freshly made sweet potato latkes (insert your own special recipe here). Recall the days of your youth when you celebrated this holiday with your siblings and family and smile at the fact that you are now creating those memories for your children or grandchildren.

2nd night:

Although we are entering into uncertain economic times, we have a warm, welcoming shul that acts as a safe haven for us. Know that your synagogue administration is doing everything it can to make sure our synagogue remains financially healthy during these tough times.

3rd night:

Take advantage of what the shul has to offer every Shabbat. Where else can you get both your soul and body nourished for no extra charge? Stay

and enjoy the Kiddush luncheon, catch up with your synagogue family.

4th Night:

Sample the worship alternatives offered on Shabbat, i.e., the Gateway Service led by Gail Greenberg, take your children or grandchildren to Junior Congregations or if they are too young, take them to Tot Shabbat. If you didn't catch a Joyful Noise Shabbat, put it on your calendar for the spring time.

5th night:

Consider participating in one of the activities offered by the group that you feel most comfortable hanging with e.g. Young Families, the Sisterhood, the Men's Club, the Chai Lights, or form your own group/chavurah.

6th night:

Close your eyes and picture the newly beautified approach to our shul. Look at the benches on the side, the pretty landscaping, the two potted trees. All made possible by the hard work of our new facilities Chair -- Scott Silvis and the donation from Ellen and Jeff Cohen .

7th night:

Sit down and review last month's issue of the Family Record or this month's. Look at all the opportunities to increase your level of Jewish knowledge. Give yourself the gift of enrollment for this night.

8th night:

Bask in the glow of the full Hanukiah (Hanukiah was invented to differentiate between a common household electric lamp and the Hanukkah Menorah). Visualize being surrounded by your Jewish community, starting with the shul, expanding to include the local

community and then stretch that eruv to include Israel. I couldn't think of a better way to conclude celebrating this holiday.

B'shalom,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. The name is centered within a light gray rectangular background.