

Days of Our Lives

Chanukah 5760 a *Women for Life!* Publication Issue 13



About *Women for Life!*

Women for Life! is an independent organisation which was formed to unite Sydney's Jewish women in programs of Jewish learning and to create forums for manifesting their talents.

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Editorial

It has been a busy few months since the last issue. We have seen marked expansion on several fronts. We have begun a much-appreciated venture into computer training courses. Our database has grown. More people have paid subscriptions earlier than ever - Thank you! As you'll read, we're holding a Household Finance Seminar in the coming year. And we have begun to increase our advertising to cover our costs! We are grateful for your support.

I would like to thank all the people who have so generously given of their time to assist in so many ways – stuffing envelopes, making calls, making photocopies, getting supplies, updating records. All these little jobs add up and the help is so appreciated. Please call if you can offer assistance!

We wish a mazal tov to our sponsors on their simchas (occasions for celebrating). We also gratefully acknowledge the support of our advertisers.

With this issue, we have a powerful collection of dynamic ideas. Learn about the relevance of Chanukah to our lives. Lori has written the latest

from Jerusalem. We have an inspirational article about the power of Tehillim. There are many tips for the summer: Discover ways to guard your purse strings. Find out about summer health. Acquire some hints for surviving the summer. Make the right summer food choices. We also update you on *Women for Life!* activities. Does your Primary School child have peer challenges? Learn what to do. With all the hysteria about the Year 2000, read about the Jewish perspective. And as a bonus, we have some easy recipes for dinner.

A Happy Chanukah, a safe, relaxing and enjoyable vacation, and may we all grow spiritually!

Gavriella Aber

The Relevance of Chanukah

By Jacki Gluck & Gavriella Aber

Imagine what life would be like if we were forbidden to observe the Shabbat or keep the Yomim Tovim. Imagine having a baby boy and being forbidden to give him a Brit Milah. Imagine that practising these Jewish rituals was punishable by death. *Would you risk your life for your beliefs?*

Over 2100 years ago, Israel was part of the Syrian Empire, ruled by King Antiochus. He worked to unite all his subjects by forcing them to conform to Greek customs. These Hellenistic ways worshipped the physical and intellectual perfection of man, at the expense of belief in the One G-d.

Antiochus had the Holy Temple desecrated so that the Jews could not worship HaShem there and forced Jews to bow to Greek idols. He also outlawed many mitzvos, specifically the following three: performing a brit milah, calculating and observing Rosh Chodesh and keeping Shabbat. While it may seem minor to have chosen these three, upon closer inspection, these three are quite significant.

Brit Milah (circumcision) is a permanent physical reminder on a male body that he is Jewish and that the physical body must serve a higher, spiritual purpose, rather than the Greek philosophy of seeking pleasures.

Sanctifying the new moon, Rosh Chodesh, instils a spiritual dimension to time. We do not exist arbitrarily, but with a task and a responsibility. Time passes and we should be assessing whether we are using it properly. Without sanctifying the new moon, it is impossible to determine the schedule of

Jewish High Holidays. The Syrians wanted to undermine the Jewish sense of time, which is linked to doing their task in the world.

Shabbat is a day set aside to acknowledge our Creator and serve Him. We refrain from our own agendas for a day each week and put our relationship with HaShem as the top priority. The Hellenists wanted to uproot this close link to HaShem.

Imagine a body without restraint, time without meaning and a world without a creator. These were the goals of the Hellenists.

Many Jews were attracted by Hellenistic ideas, and didn't consider them so terrible. They assimilated to the dominant culture around them. But, there were heroic Jews who risked their lives or even lost their lives for their beliefs.

The fact that our Sages declared that Chanukah is to be celebrated every year indicates that its lessons are eternal ones. The yearly telling of the stories of the martyrdom and sacrifice and the bravery and courage of the Jews who stood up for Judaism forms part of the Jewish spiritual diet. Chanukah comes and these ideas arise anew.

Living in multicultural, democratic Australia, it is easy for us to take our religious freedom for granted. But in little subtle ways, we still have these challenges of assimilation to the foreign cultures around us. Are we complacent? Do we consider these influences "harmless", or do we work to maintain our unique way of life as Jews?

Our Jewish dimension is a deep part of our true selves. It is worth the sacrifices that we need to make to protect it.

A Letter from Lori

By Lori Lurie from Jerusalem

We've just celebrated three months in Israel. We are all learning Hebrew and the kids are settling in well. Alan and I are struggling through our daily Ulpan classes, "breaking our teeth" as the Hebrew expression goes. There is a major role reversal in our house – the parents are begging the children for help with their daily hours of homework! We've met many wonderful people and gone to so many places for Shabbat. Our adventure here is well on its way.

One of my favourite places is the Old City of Jerusalem. I love walking on the cobbled pathways through the beautiful Jerusalem-stoned buildings, the hidden alleyways and the shops, the museums, the Square and all the eateries. And of course, the Western Wall, the Kotel.

I am sitting on the back wall of the lower square at the Kotel, watching the hundreds of people approach the holy site. It stands in all its humility, so simple and yet, so imposing and awesome. People stand near the Wall and pray to G-d. It is

the closest point to the Temple Mount, the only major remnant of our Holy Temple.

I watch Chassidim, dressed in their big fur hats or black hats, their long coats, (the stripes and different colours of which indicate the Chassidic group with which they are associated), swaying as they pray. The many men have various styles of head coverings - hats, caps, yarmulkes of all different colours and materials, as well as some hastily held handkerchiefs.

On the women's side there is a whole spectrum praying intently. Some with black attire head to toe, some bescarved or with sheitels, some in skirts of a wide range of lengths and some in pants.

All these people have come to talk to HaShem. There are young and old, students and children, residents of Israel and visitors from overseas. The Wall is a symbol of prayer and hope for the Jewish nation. Here they all are – Jews united together.

I can't help but wonder as I watch them all. Who is more important? Whose prayers does HaShem listen to? Who is more Jewish? Should they all be aiming to be the same, somehow?

In a shiur (Torah class) I recently attended, Rabbi Leff gave an answer. He said a student of the famous Sage, the Chofetz Chaim asked him why he did not tell his many followers what to do, how to pray, which path of Judaism to follow so that they would all be doing the same thing. The Chofetz Chaim in turn asked the student why the Czar's army didn't just have soldiers. Why was there also a navy, an airforce, a tank division? So too, he explained, we Jews are in HaShem's army. We all serve Him with our own tools and our own understanding of what He wants from us. The main thing is that we are true to HaShem and His Torah.

Every single person is important. Each has his/her own contribution to make. Each Jew is vital to our nation. And it is our job to learn to respect the service of others and the unique importance of others, no matter how different their path might be from ours. Then we will be united, together approaching G-d, like the group before me at the Kotel.

I miss everyone in Sydney and think of the community often. I wish you all a wonderful Chanukah and a great, safe and happy summer.

Love Lori

Planned Spending over the Summer

By Cyndi Kaplan

I couldn't believe it – somehow I had spent \$500 in five days on food. How did I do it? I went to the fridge and opened it to examine its contents. Nothing to show for it - most of it consumed! I went back to my desk, opened my purse and pulled out all the receipts. I added them up. They did add up to almost \$500.

Money slips through our fingers very easily. It is effortless to spend a fortune and have nothing to show for it. With the summer holidays coming up, we need to get a grip on our purse strings or we will be in big trouble!

Here are a few ideas to help us manage our spending more effectively. I like to call it "Planned Spending" rather than 'budgeting.' Budgets are like diets – the minute you try to stick to one, you feel deprived and frustrated. You can suddenly only visualise chocolate cakes, rich, creamy desserts and calorie-laden sauces.

The first task in planned spending is to assess how much you have available for household expenses.

Use EFTPOS. Make a plan. I like to have a separate account for domestic spending with an EFTPOS card. This way, I can keep track of what's happening. Make a plan:

- List monthly payment amounts which need to come out of this expense account – food, entertainment, children's clothing, a cleaner, electricity, water, household maintenance and other miscellaneous expenses.

- Keep all receipts of purchases. Every few days, put them into an envelope marked with the month. At the end of the month, compare your actual spending with your anticipated spending plan. (In most cases, we under-estimate how much we will need to spend). Once you have a more accurate picture, you can draw up a spending plan which is more in tune with what actually happens.

Avoid credit cards. Don't spend what you don't have. Avoid credit cards at all costs. It is easy to get out of control and run up debts.

Set aside money for yourself. It is vital that every woman should make sure to have spending money for herself each month, preferably in a separate account. Use this for the hairdresser, a manicure, a beauty treatment or buy something for yourself. However stretched we are, it is essential to look after ourselves and spend money on our appearance or well being.

Teaching children about money. Meet as a family about it. It is never too early to teach children about spending. At the start of the school vacation, work out how much you can afford to allocate for each child for activities, holiday camps and other entertainment. Sit down with your children and explain their financial choices. Then, if they later begin to nag, gently remind them of the shared discussions.

Give each child aged six and up a wallet and some money to spend on snacks and drinks. Then, they will not need to ask you for money each time. They will also be learning about managing their own money.

Find ways to buy well. Travelling and eating out can become very expensive. A friend who went overseas bought rolls and assorted fillings each morning for her family. These served as both breakfast and lunch and saved them the expense of going to restaurants for these two meals. We can take bottles of juice, fresh fruits and snacks from home when going out.

Cost-free excursions. Creative alternatives. Discover all the places you can go in Sydney for free – Centennial Park, museums, libraries, on a bush walk. Do picnics and barbeques instead of restaurant meals. Plan a few treats and outings, but encourage non-commercial activities as well. As an art teacher, I recommend going to an art supply store to buy paper, crayons, paints, glue and scissors and setting aside creative time each day. The children enjoy it, are entertained and it is a cost-effective activity.

If you have a plan to manage your expenses, it is easier to say 'no' to requests beyond your plan and to resist the temptation to overspend.

Cyndi Kaplan is the author of eight books, a successful businesswoman, a worldwide motivational speaker and an art teacher (among other things!). You can reach her on 9386-9110. Women for Life! is planning to hold a women's Household Finance Seminar with her in the coming year!

The Power of Tehillim

By Lucille Ballin

If you have ever been prayed for when you are very ill, as I have, you will know what a great comfort it is. Somehow, I derived strength from the knowledge that people were praying for my family and me. That strength helped me through my treatment and gave me very positive feelings. It was as if people had actually given me some of their own strength at a time when my own was so very depleted. It is a great and wonderful gift.

The Book of Tehillim gives us prayers to say, comfort in misfortune and faith in times of trouble. The word "tehillim" means "praises" and all 150 chapters of the book express a wide spectrum of feelings which are associated with praising HaShem. The words inspire trust, hope, thanksgiving, lament, petition, confession and faith in the promise of the ultimate triumph of good over evil. We address HaShem and our souls reach out in a search for knowledge of and nearness to Him.

King David authored the book, recording in it his experiences of an endless succession of misfortune. He laments the challenges of the evil inclination. He cries for HaShem's help. He pleads for perfection.

The Book of Tehillim is King David's diary of the triumph over his human inclination to be pessimistic and upset about obstacles in his life.

King David succeeded in rising above the most trying circumstances. And he generously left us the words of Tehillim with which to overcome our own obstacles. Everyone can relate to the struggles, problems and yearnings he portrays.

It is easy to praise HaShem in good fortune, but it only the rare and unique individual who continues to praise HaShem even when he is crushed and beaten. Every rebuke, every blow, rather than bring him down, guided King David to discover new ways to praise HaShem for the challenges of his plight.

In Sydney there are a number of women who recite Tehillim daily in the merit of sick people and at life threatening times (see the Busy Body Column). I also often join the *Women for Life!* group of local women who meet monthly to recite the entire book on behalf of people in our community needing a speedy recovery. It does not take long. In about 40 minutes, we each read a few chapters, and between us, the book is completed. Whether reading in Hebrew or in English, the verses are not always easy to understand. But our soul benefits from the exercise and so do those on whose behalf we say the prayers. We would be delighted if you would join us.

Dates of the *Women for Life!* Tehillim Gatherings

until our next Days Issue are:

Sunday, Jan 2, 10am-11am, Mizrahi Shul

Sunday, Feb 6, 10am-11am Mizrahi Shul

Sunday, Mar 5, 10am-11am Mizrahi Shul

Sunday, Apr 2, 10am-11am Mizrahi Shul

Women for Life! Happenings

By Gavriella Aber

A Mikveh Renovation Update

For over a month already, women have been using the beautiful back section of the mikveh facility at Glenayr Avenue! There are still some details to be seen to, such as chairs, clocks and other final touches, but it is in full working order, Thank G-d. It has a warm and pleasant atmosphere there and we are really happy with the results.

We are still accepting donations, if you haven't yet had a chance to contribute. (Sydney Mikveh Society, P.O. Box 77, NSW 2026). If you plan to donate \$1000 or more, please send the funds as soon as possible in order to be commemorated on the wall plaques to go up soon.

Celebration of Women

Our celebration of many talents, which took place in June at the Hakoah Club, was recorded on video. This 2-plus hour video is available for \$25 at 171 Old South Head Road, Bondi Junction (call 9389-7714).

Email mailings

Over the summer, we hope to set up an efficient system for emailing this newsletter and our other mailings to whoever has email access. If you have not yet sent us your email address, please take a moment to do so at aber@matra.com.au.

Geula Wigs

Due to changes with the factory, our order is on hold for the moment. We have samples of the three new styles, (curly, short and headband) as well as the improved long, straight style from last order. People are welcome to call Vivian on 9387-4936 to take a look at them. However, in the meantime, we are unsure how soon the order will be able to be processed. These 100% human hair wigs are all on offer at \$250 each.

We Discovered the Internet

By Susie Zeilic

Have you Yahooed, Hotbotted, browsed, surfed or emailed lately? Do you know what an "ISP" is or what "www." stands for? Recently 40 women gathered to learn about all these terms and more. Earl Schonberger of Atrain Computer Solutions patiently answered the unending questions of participants in *Women for Life!*'s Discover the Internet demonstration. We heard about the history of the internet, its structure and the best and most economical ways to link onto it.

For many of us it was a first exposure to email and internet access. It was a relaxed atmosphere and we had lots of fun learning and discovering. Many women were so relieved to not be in the dark about computers any more! We had delicious sandwiches by Carmel and mouth-watering biscuits by Elite at the lunch break.

Women for Life! plans to run this introductory demonstration course again next year at a different time of day, since there were many women who had to miss out this time. Also, follow-up, hands-on courses are available for groups of 4-6 women. These take place at Atrain premises, where each participant has her own computer to learn on. There is a selection of course options. Please call Gavriella on 9389-7714 or Susie on 9363-5899 if you are interested in joining a small group.

P.S. Don't want to keep you in suspense – "ISP" is Internet Service Provider and "www." stands for World Wide Web.

Taking Care of Yourself Over the Summer

By Dr. Jocelyn Lowinger

Summer is already here. Below are some tips about watching your health during the heat.

- Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer per capita in the world. So it makes sense to look after the skin properly, especially over the summer months. The “slip, slop, slap” campaign is very effective – (slip on a shirt, slop on sunscreen and slap on a hat). But I would add a fourth “s”, namely **S**tay in the shade as much as possible! UV radiation can be reflected from concrete or water – the shade is a safe place to be.

It is a misconception that sunscreen, even SPF30, provides daylong protection. It contains titanium dioxide, which creates a physical barrier to UV radiation. But it needs to be reapplied every few hours to be fully effective.

Even women wearing long sleeves should apply sunscreen on the face, neck and the backs of hands. Many moisturisers now contain sunscreen, so that might be a convenient way to achieve the results.

If you notice any moles on the skin, keep an eye on them. Should there be changes in shape, colour or size or should they itch or bleed, consult your GP.

- Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. Summer fruits are a healthy, refreshing thirst-quenching snack for adults and children.

- Make sure the swimming pools you go to are maintained. Sometimes infrequent chlorination is enough to make the water *look* clear, but not enough to kill the bacteria causing unpleasant effects.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy summer.

Helping Your Primary School Child through Peer Challenges

By Amanda Gordon, Clinical Psychologist

The Primary School years are a time of important learning for our children. Not just in terms of schoolwork, although solid grounding in basic skills is clearly a key to success in later academic endeavours. It seems the most important task of these middle school years is developing a positive sense of oneself.

Being part of the group. When young, children get their total view of themselves from home - from messages given to them by significant family members. However, once they move into Primary School, the opinions of peers take on greater significance. Suddenly, it really matters whether one is liked or appreciated – or not. Being a group member becomes essential. No matter what reassuring words parents can offer, no matter how much fun it is to play with a baby brother, no matter how much one is adored by grandma, one’s value is suddenly measured by whether the other children in class accept you or not.

This can be a terribly upsetting time for parents who have put their heart and soul into building up

their child, adoring and protecting him/her from the dangers of the world. Suddenly, there is very little a parent can do to make things better. The best advice is to teach the child how to get on in a group.

Boys. Among boys, membership in the group tends to be expressed in being allowed to join ball games. Boys who are excluded often miss the opportunities to develop their gross motor skills in this area. This, in turn, makes it more likely that they will be excluded from team sports later in life. A clever parent could take the child to a park regularly to practice throwing and other sports skills. Get together with other families that have a peer in his class to help your child play confidently with others. As a result, your child will gradually fit more readily into the group at school.

Girls. Girls are more subtle in their behaviour towards each other. They talk of “best friends” and have secrets, which hurtfully excludes others. Excluded children feel badly about themselves and find it harder to relate to others.

As parents, we can see beyond the daily struggles our child is experiencing and perceive the essential life lessons they are discovering. Peer groups fluctuate constantly. In fact, most children find themselves excluded from a group at one stage or another for some minor transgression. From this experience, they learn how it feels to not be included. They learn compassion and the value of kindness. They also discover social flexibility - that the ‘rules’ of one group may vary from another. As they mature, they learn to make value judgments about those things that are really important in friendships.

Parents too protective. It is a mistake for parents to be too aggressively protective of their children when they are sad. Don’t ring other mothers and complain about the ill treatment your child has received from their monster. Rather, help your child grieve the loss of a relationship and encourage them to move on to make new friends, with their increased wisdom about friendships.

If the situation requires assistance, invite a peer over to create easy opportunities for your child to make a friend. Encourage your child to sit with a nice child at lunchtime. Remind your child of the qualities they have to offer as a friend. Explain that smiles are more attractive to other children than tears. Help them realise that to make a good friend, you have to be a good friend.

Being bullied. Some kids do become perennial victims. Prime targets are fat children, those who wear glasses, children without uniforms, those with speech impediments, children who are sensitive to criticism or cry easily.

How to help. If your child is continually bullied, victimised or excluded, there are steps you can

take. First, allow the teacher to be your ally. Often a teacher can assist your child to mix with children who are mature enough to appreciate your child and overlook any difficulties. Encourage your child to learn social skills from these mature children and life will become easier.

Another area to work on is the superficial problem that has actually caused the bullying. Some Primary School children need deodorant or to bathe more often. Some need to regularly brush their hair and look neat, make sure that their clothes are clean or that their shoelaces are tied. Buying the “in” style of shoes or the like can sometimes make the difference – or, at least, can help your child go more proudly to school.

Giving your child perspective on the problems is a third way to help. Encourage your child to be sensitive and responsive to others, rather than defensive. Explain to your child that bullies are often unhappy themselves. This defuses the bully’s power in your child’s eyes and often, that is all that it takes to stop them. Define decent, loyal behaviour and encourage them to seek friends who can relate to a true friendship.

We can prepare our children for these Primary School challenges by setting the stage in their earlier years. Give them opportunities to “have friends” and become a good friend.

By high school, most children have had enough peer experiences to know what is important to them in friendships and which relationships to take lightly as they move into adulthood.

The Year 2000 Hysteria

**Excerpts of a talk for our Moshiach Info Series
by Rabbi Yoram Ulman**

The whole world is wondering if the world will come to an end in January, if electricity will fail, if computer records are safe. This arbitrary date, the year 2000 comes from a non-Jewish religion, based on the year someone was born. What is the relevance of all this hysteria to us as Jews?

According to Judaism, the year is now 5760. It is the year counting from Creation and from the first man.

The milestone of a millennium is very significant in Judaism. It says in the Talmud that the whole history of the world is divided into millennia. The first 2000 years after Creation are the years of chaos. There was immorality, which led to a flood. Abraham, the first Jew, was born in 1948, in time to prepare the world for the next stage. It took him 52 years to develop the belief in one G-d, making it exactly the Jewish year 2000.

The second 2000 years are called the years of Torah. During this time, the Torah was given. Then the Jews came to Israel and had the two Holy

Temples. The Mishna was written and towards the conclusion, the Talmud was sealed.

The third 2000 years are called the years of preparation for Moshiach. The final millennium is called Shabbos, when Moshiach will be here.

These millennia parallel the days of the week. The first 2000 are Sunday and Monday, and so on. So we are now at Friday afternoon. There are 240 years to go until Shabbos. But, we don’t have to wait 240 years for Moshiach to come. Everyone who lights Shabbos candles knows that we light them at least 18 minutes *before* Shabbos comes in; we add some of the weekday to Shabbos. Also, according to Jewish law, it is preferable to bring in Shabbos even earlier.

In Torah, the year 5760 has significance. Besides the fact that many great Sages of our generation, including, of course, the Lubavitcher Rebbe have said that Moshiach’s arrival is imminent and that it is irreversible (ie. not dependant on our merit any more), I don’t know of any other year which is more discussed in Jewish sources as being suitable for the coming of Moshiach than the year 5760.

So how do we relate to the year 2000? Everything that happens in the world around us must have some Jewish connection.

The Rambam, a great sage from 850 years ago, explains in the laws of Moshiach at the end of his book that it is not coincidental that other religions have formed, which have differing views on Moshiach. These religions are actually a part of HaShem’s plan to fix the world and prepare the nations, to pave the way for Moshiach so that when the true Moshiach is revealed, they will recognise him. Even though many of our brothers were killed, through crusades, etc. and were lost to Judaism or brought down by the efforts of these foreign religions, these religions have served a positive purpose in HaShem’s plan. There are four major concepts which have been spread around the world due to the promulgation of these belief systems – belief in the Bible, concepts of morality and justice, the idea of the One G-d and of the Moshiach and Resurrection. These are all ideas hijacked from Judaism and distorted. But the world has been permeated with the general concepts. Thus, when the true Moshiach comes, and the falsehoods of these religions will be revealed, the entire world will be able to relate to him.

It happens to be that the year 5760, which is so appropriate for Moshiach’s coming, coincides with the secular year 2000. From the Rambam’s explanation above, we can infer that in the same way that HaShem had something in mind when He brought these religions into existence, so too, He made these years coincide so that the whole world would be considering the concept of Redemption at

the same time. When Moshiach comes, all this excitement will be channelled into truth.

We, the Jewish people, are working to bring Shabbos, the 7th millennium into the world. Ironically, on Friday night, December 31st, 1999, while the rest of the world is watching fireworks and experiencing mass hysteria, we Jews will be actually bringing in Shabbos. Hopefully, the Moshiach will have been revealed even before then. And even the non-Jews will not be worrying about the electricity failing, as we will already have the bright light of the Redemption!

Healthy Holiday Choices

by Arlene Normand, Msc. Nutr. Diet. MDAA

Taking a break from work isn't the only 'holiday' many people experience this time of year. Most people also tend to take a holiday from good nutrition as well.

Chanukah and the summer vacation are times we spend with the family and with friends at numerous parties and get-togethers. Huge feasts, plenty of fattening snacks and alcohol make it tempting to eat and drink more than usual.

Below are some tips to help you stay healthy, without missing the fun.

- Exercise more to burn any excess calories.
- Try munching on raw vegetables in low-fat dips, rather than fried finger foods, potato chips and mixed nuts.
- Fill your plate with low-fat foods like rice, bread, fruit, vegetables and lean meat, and leave less room for richer, fattier foods.
- Limit extras such as margarine, gravy, rich sauces and oily salad dressings.
- If there are high-fat foods you can't resist, such as desserts, have a small rather than a large portion.
- Alternate alcohol intake with low-calorie beverages such as mineral water. Note: alcohol can weaken your resolve to eat moderately.
- Eat low-fat snacks before the party. Then, you won't be as hungry when you arrive.

Have a happy and healthy summer!

Handy Hints for Surviving Summer

- Buy ice blocks and keep a ready supply in the freezer. Better still, make your own healthy ones from juice.
- Don't eat milk products before a long drive because it is unsettling to the stomach.
- Get story tapes for long drives to keep the kids entertained.
- When evening comes and the kids are outside, bring out the insect spray!
- For summer parties, hygiene is important. Be careful to keep food well chilled and protected from

flies. Also, for cut veggies with dips, cut the pieces into one-bite sizes. This way, those who partake of the dips will not stick their bitten vegetable back into the dip for a second bite!

- Keep sandwiches and poppers in the freezer, so you can run out for a picnic or an outing at a moment's notice.
- Do any baking or hanging of laundry in the cool of the night, rather than in the day's heat.
- Sit around the table with the family at the beginning of the summer to schedule plans, so that all the ideas about how to use the time off together will be taken into account.
- Organise a schedule of activities with families with children of the same ages.
- Discuss goals each child can accomplish over the summer. For example, Joe can work on being nicer to his sister; Sarah can work on keeping her room tidier. This pre-summer talk goes a long way towards establishing better habits, rather than letting the time pass without a plan.

Busy Body Column

- A New Chesed Organisation – If you have furniture or clothing to donate to people in need, please call Devorah Markovits on 9365-3104. To roster for cook-ins, (or to donate a good freezer) call Laya Slavin on 9369-2460. All help welcome – it's a big mitzvah! Donations are also much appreciated! (Call if you need any of these services as well.)
- Shifra & Puah – new mothers / ill people needing kosher meals – Daniella Hoffman 9389-5676 (please tell her of new births so she isn't the last to know.)
- Hospital visits – Rochel Blasenstein 9387-5049
- Shir Ha'ma'alos cards and Jewish literature for new mothers – Aviva Lever 9365-4936
- Tehillim Club – monthly meetings, roster system – Chaya Perlow 9387-2631, Rivka Aaron 9363-4306, Zimra Segall 9369-4726 (Call to join or to add names of unwell to list for prayers to be said)
- Shmiras Halashon – to encourage positive speech – Liane Robinson 9388-1181, Rivka Aaron 9363-4306
- Tape Libraries – Yeshiva 9387-3822, Project SEED 9365-5716
- Kasher your kitchen – Daniel Hayman 9369-2022, Kashrut Authority 9369-4286
- Bedika cloths @ \$3/packet – at the mikveh, 117 Glenayr Ave 9130-2509 or at 171 Old South Head Road, Bondi Junction
- "Kol HaMishpocha" – Daily audio Torah learning by phone 9369-2900

What's Cooking – Easy, Quick, Healthy and Inexpensive Dinners!

By Shoshana Monk

These recipes are low cost, low calorie, one pot and children like them! The vegetable quantities and types can vary, depending on what you have in the house. Serve with bread, a tossed salad, and fresh fruit for dessert.

Cowboy Hot Pot

Ingredients:

1 chopped sweet potato or 2 chopped carrots
1 onion sliced 1 red pepper sliced
3 tbs oil 125g green beans chopped
400g baked beans 200g sweet corn
1 tbsp tomato puree 1 tsp barbecue seasoning
120g cheese, cubed 450g thinly sliced potatoes
2 tbsp melted margarine or olive oil spray
salt & ground black pepper to taste

Method:

In oil: fry onion, pepper, sweet potato or carrots. Soften, but do not brown. Add green beans, baked beans, sweet corn with water from the tin, tomato puree and barbecue seasoning. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 5 minutes. Transfer the vegetables to a shallow ovenproof dish. Scatter with cubed cheese. Cover with sliced potatoes, then brush with margarine or olive oil spray. Season. Bake at 190C for 30-40 minutes until golden brown and potatoes are cooked. Serves 4-6.

Stir-Fry Rice & Vegetables

Leftover rice and vegetables from the bottom of the fridge are the basis for this tasty meal.

Ingredients:

½ cucumber 2 spring onions sliced
1 garlic clove, sliced 2 thinly sliced carrots
1 small red or yellow pepper sliced
½ small green cabbage, shredded
4 cups cooked long grain rice
3 tbsps oil 2 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp sesame oil salt & ground black pepper
fresh parsley or coriander (optional)
115g unsalted cashew nuts, almonds or peanuts

Method:

Halve cucumber lengthwise. Scoop out seeds. Slice diagonally. Set aside.
In a wok or frying pan: stir-fry in oil onions, garlic, carrots and pepper until soft (3 Min). Add cabbage, cucumber for 1-2 Min until leaves begin to wilt. Mix in rice, soy sauce, sesame oil and seasoning. Reheat the mixture, stirring and tossing constantly. Add herbs and nuts. Serve piping hot. Serves 4.

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