

Environmental Maccabi for Tu B'Shevat

By Judy August

Everyone knows that when you mix blue with yellow, you get green. So, when the Jewish community comes together to celebrate Tu B'Shevat with a color war – Environmental Maccabi – our blue team and yellow team will together make for a greener environment.

This year, Tu B'Shevat falls on January 22, which will be the kickoff week for our community-wide celebration. Students, from preschool on up, will receive their team assignments in school that week. Anyone else who wants to participate may pick up an entry form and team assignment at the Levine JCC front desk, or in the office of Temple Beth El or Temple Israel.

Participants will select from a list of activities, all relating to this year's environmental theme of water – conserving it, appreciating it, and keeping it clean. Students will compete by completing the activities to earn "leaves" for their team's tree, and helping environmentalism to flourish. Through Environmental Maccabi, organizers hope to teach the Jewish roots of caring for our natural environment, demonstrate simple improvements we can make in our everyday lives, and create fun, meaningful Jewish memories.

Tu B'Shevat, literally meaning the 15th of the month of Shevat, is a holiday which demonstrates the care with which we are to treat our natural environment. The laws of Judaism protect trees from being harvested too young. Any tree planted before the 15th of the month of Shevat is considered a year old on Tu B'Shevat, and then aged a year every Tu B'Shevat thereafter, until the fifth year when the fruit is allowed to be eaten.

Are You, or is Someone You Know, in an Abusive Situation?

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Jewish women who are currently in or have survived a domestic violence situation now have a safe place to go to share information and experiences, gather strength, and find renewed self-esteem and hope. Facilitated by volunteers who have previous experience as domestic violence counselors, communication and discussion are held in the strictest confidence. For information call Carol at 704-609-3120.

The Support Group is a service of Shalom Bayit-NC (formerly Jews Against Domestic Violence), an all-volunteer group working to end domestic abuse in Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Jewish community. To become involved or receive information, email info@shalombayit.org or visit our web at www.shalombayit-nc.org. ☆



Yellow and blue make green! Rachel Kahn and Ben Petricoff invite you to participate in the community Maccabi Tu B'Shevat Color Wars to help conserve and clean up our water.

For the past three years the Charlotte Jewish community has joined together in celebration of Tu B'Shevat. In 2006 we created an Environmental Festival and raised the funds needed to implement recycling at Shalom Park. In

2007 our activities led us out to the carpool lines, where our anti-idling campaign helped teach about air quality. Environmental Maccabi should make our 2008 celebration the best to date. ☆



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