

Wow, what an incredible Kislev (December) month we've had in our community! I'm still buzzing from all the activity, energy and fellowship. First and foremost, I would like to extend a big, hearty thank you to all of our lay leaders and volunteers – as well as John and Karen in the office – for pulling everything together. I also want to extend a heartfelt thanks to all who attended, helped, donated and raised funds as well as brought their spirit and good cheer. I am also grateful to the local media for doing lovely reporting on our Hanukkah events, highlighting our community's joy, creativity and resilience during challenging times.

Our Hanukkah Crafts Bazaar was our (first ever?) event of this type and despite the short timeline, we pulled together a wonderful occasion where with the generous support of individual donors, artisans and the local business community, we had a smorgasbord of beautiful seasonal gift offerings. Our collection ranged from home décor, art, Hanukkah items to candy, freshly baked goods, jewelry, cards and much more. The social hallways

occasion. We had a fantastic latke-making team in the kitchen and our entirely in-house catered meal featured delicious salads, latkes with various toppings and desserts, including some hard cider for some extra cheer! The silent auction at the Hanukkah Party gave shoppers another opportunity to pick up some great items as well as gift certificates. Our two fundraising occasions raised a grand total of just under \$3000, which will help support our synagogue and shine our light in these times that call for a strong, vibrant, local Jewish presence.

[Please see this link](#) to the Little Village article with a great write-up and beautiful photography on our Hanukkah Party and the deeper meaning of Hanukkah.

Not long after, things were slightly upended by the 'Bomb Cyclone' and we deftly moved services online for one Shabbat to keep everyone safe. (I went 'out there' in the cold for a few minutes during the worst part of it and... it was quite an