

Mitzvah Committee Update August, 2009:

Our accomplishments for 5759 / 2008-09:

1. During the summer of 2008 we collected 7,552 items in support of the Somerset County United Way **Stuff the Bus** school supplies drive. Since 2005, Temple Sholom members have donated 13,209 school supply items.
2. Now entering our fifth year, we have served over 2,800 meals at **SHIP's Galley** - a soup kitchen. Since 2005, the Temple Sholom "galley crew" has grown from 7 to 40 volunteers.
3. In September 2008 we teamed with Temple Sholom Men's Club members to demonstrate our community spirit and concern for the environment through the **Adopt-A-Road/North Bridge Street clean up**. Over 100 Temple Sholom members have participated in this project since 2004.
4. In 2007 we initiated the "**Cheer Greetings**" program, through which our valued senior temple members receive cards and personalized greetings for their birthday and for each of the following holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Hanukkah and Passover. Over 150 Temple members have been recipients of these greetings.
5. With the help of **Jewish Family Service**, 39 Temple families delivered **Rosh Hashanah food baskets** to 34 needy families in the Somerset County area. Since 2004, 171 Temple Sholom individuals and families have provided 170 food baskets for Rosh Hashanah.
6. We collected 2,000 pounds of food for the Somerset County Food Bank Network through **Operation Isaiah**, our High Holiday Food Drive. Since 2003, Temple Sholom members have donated over 6,000 pounds of food.
7. During the Religious School's annual Day of Giving in late October, "**The Great PB & Jam-boree**", Religious School students and their parents wrote personal notes of greeting and prepared 200 nutritious lunches for needy children whose families rely on the **Samaritan Homeless Interim Program** (SHIP). Since 2007, Religious School students have provided 300 lunches for disadvantaged children in Somerset County.
8. Our Thanksgiving Turkey, Coat & Blanket Drive in November allowed us to collect 400 coats, blankets and baby items for the **Food Bank Network of Somerset County**; and 343 Thanksgiving food items & 30 turkeys for the **Samaritan Homeless Interim Program** (SHIP). Since 2002, Temple Sholom members have donated 267 turkeys, 1,900 food items, and over 3,000 coats, blankets, winter apparel and baby items.
9. We shared the joy of Hanukkah with others and collected 194 gifts, including 66 gift certificates worth over \$1,615 for the **Somerset County United Way**-Gifts of the Season program as part of our **Giving Menorah** project. Our donations helped the United Way distribute more than 9,000 gifts to families in need. Since 2003, Temple Sholom members have donated over 1,700 toys, gift certificates, and winter hats, gloves & scarves to various agencies including: Jewish Family Service, Chai Lifeline, Ohel Family & Children's Services and the United Way.
10. We '**Smiled for Shabbat**' in January 2009 and donated a total of 378 dental hygiene, toiletry & first aid items to the **Somerset County Food Bank** and for the **Samaritan Homeless Interim Program** (SHIP). Since 2003, Temple Sholom members have donated 5,131 dental & personal hygiene items.
11. For our **TREE-mendous Tu B'Shevat Can-Can Collection**, we collected 57 cans of fruits & vegetables, and other items for the **Food Bank Network of Somerset County**. Since 2003, Temple Sholom members have donated 1,720 cans of fruits & vegetables.
12. In March our '**Plentiful Purim**' food drive for the **Somerset County Food Bank** yielded 106 food items, including canned fruits & vegetables, soup, tuna, pasta, cereal and jars of peanut butter. Since 2005, Temple Sholom members have donated 1,525 food items.
13. Again with the help of **Jewish Family Service**, 40 Temple families purchased and delivered **Kosher-for-Passover food baskets** to 39 families to enable them to celebrate the holiday. Since 2004, 204 Temple Sholom individuals and families have provided 207 food baskets for Passover.
14. We introduced a new project - **SHIP's MOBILE Soup Kitchen**. We drive SHIP's truck to North Plainfield to serve dinner to the needy on the first and third Tuesday evening of each month - serving over 100 meals each trip. Since April 2009, we have served over 600 meals.

Our current and upcoming projects:

1. **STUFF THE BUS - now through August 14th** - Bring new and unused school supplies to the **BUS** in the Temple lobby. Items most needed are: backpacks, lunch boxes, paper, pens & pencils, crayons, 3-ring binders, glue sticks, socks, underwear, band aids, toothbrushes & toothpaste. For more information call Susan Butensky at (908) 231-1945 or email to [suzeeq1042@aol.com](mailto:suzeeg1042@aol.com). Help us meet this year's goal of collecting over 10,000 school supplies!
2. Sign up **NOW - deadline is August 31st** - to help deliver **food baskets for Rosh Hashanah** on Sunday, September 13, 2009. Contact Jill Lavitsky at (908) 725-4068 or email to jlavitsk@its.jnj.com today!
3. **September 18 through October 12, 2009 - Operation Isaiah**. Look for the paper bag in your mail in early September. Help us exceed our goal for 2009 - we want to collect over 2000 lbs. of food to feed the hungry!