

SHOMREI HA'ARETZ/ STEWARDS OF THE LAND

By Dr. Mike Miller

Protect vs. Use: Jewish Footprints on the Land

G-D told Adam in the garden to guard the world he was being given. "If you destroy this world," he was told, "there is no one to come and set it right after you." (*Kohelet Rabbah* 7:28) This should be the call the FJMC regions cannot ignore. Shomrei Ha'Aretz programs can be the vehicle to teach your clubs the importance of this mitzvah.

Many FJMC Regions are planning Retreats for the summer of 2014. This is the time to integrate the principles and programs of Shomrei Ha'Aretz into the operation, activities and presentations at the retreat.

A. Location and Facilities

1. Access to public transportation and/or car pools
2. Practice energy conservation; lighting, Heating, Air Conditioning
3. Water Conservation; Linen changes only on request,
4. Recycle; newspaper, magazines, office paper; plastic bottles, aluminum and steel cans
5. Purchase paper goods and disposable dinnerware made from recycled material.
6. Compost food waste
7. For retreat breakfast and lunch use compostable dinner ware
8. Use Soy Candles for Shabbat

B. **Retreat Favors** made from recycled materials and Handouts printed on recycled paperC. **Shomrei Ha'Aretz Programing (SHA)**

1. Adapt the 2013 SHA Gold torch award (Torah and Environment) for a session. "We invited the Men's Club and young people from the congregation to visit Oleta State Park for a Torah Walk - a nature outing with Rabbi Mario Rojzman and the Beth Torah Men's Club. We included two environmental learning sessions - one from the Torah and one getting to know the natural surroundings. Beth Torah, North Miami Beach, Ed Margolis (email)
Facilitators received the materials before the event.
...Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it; have dominion over...every living thing...."
vs "... and placed him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate it and to guard it."
If you include the walk you have a Men's Health component and a Torah study session.
2. **Session on Energy Conservation**, how to obtain the FJMC-Green Faith Energy Shield. The Energy Shield is a national environmental merit badge for faith communities to be earned by a weekend of activities. The Shield shows that a congregation has prayed, learned, and acted to reduce their carbon foot pint and equipped their members to do the same at home. For session leader or a DVD of a Webinar that can be used by a facilitator contact; <http://greenfaith.org/programs/greenfaith-shield/energy-shield>
3. **Session on how to develop a Men's Club synagogue and/or home composting Program**. Note: the state of Vermont is banning food waste from landfills. Composting will be mandatory. Key source State University Extension programs. Also refer to FJMC January HaShofar.
<http://www.coejl.org/resources/greening-synagogues-synagogue-grounds/>