

Magic Of Mitzvah Day!

Volunteer event allows Christians to celebrate Christmas with their families.

More than 800 volunteers came together Dec. 25 to spread good will at 43 project sites throughout Metro Detroit, making Mitzvah Day the largest single day of volunteering in Detroit's Jewish community. Volunteers replaced Christian staff and volunteers so they could celebrate the holiday with their families.

For the seventh year, volunteers from the Michigan Muslim Community Council worked alongside Jewish volunteers at many sites.

Organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council and the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, Mitzvah Day was co-chaired by Janet Berman, Seth Fisher, Milt Neuman and

Micki Grossman. Volunteers delivered toys to children, prepared and delivered meals, played bingo with seniors, visited with veterans, sorted books for Bookstock and much more.

"The Mitzvah Day spirit was contagious," said team captain Bobbi Gutman. "Although the volunteers are amazing, we have to give credit to people like Chef Michael and the catering staff of Providence Hospital in Novi, who prepared and donated 145 special holiday meals for the Meals on Wheels clients."

The Maple Theater in Bloomfield Township and Riviera Cinema in Farmington Hills also got into the spirit of giving back, donating movie passes for all Mitzvah Day volunteers. *



At Mariners Inn sorting clothes: (back) Phil Pinkelman of Grand Rapids, Logan Wert of Troy, Ruth Lincoln of Detroit and Seth Fisher of West Bloomfield, Mitzvah Day co-chair and a team captain; (middle) Allan Wilson of Waterford, Erin Walker of Huntington Woods, Scott Mitnick and Natalie Perach, both of Birmingham, and Jeremy Walker of Huntington Woods; (front) Rickie Willens of Hamtramck and Les Gorback of Franklin. (Not pictured: David Willens of Huntington Woods.)



Wendy and Howard Lazar, a team captain, show their spirit at Jimmy's Kids in Southwest Detroit.



Linda and Richard Luken of Farmington Hills and Merrick Bartlett of Livonia, center, box meals for clients at the Detroit Agency on Aging.



Hannah and Russ Gordon of Farmington Hills volunteer with Munzer and Maisha wRahman at St. Peters and Paul Jesuit Warming Center in Detroit.



JCRC Executive Director David Kurzmann visits with Jim Tuman, founder of Jimmy's Kids.



Volunteers at St. Leo's, with Team Captain Matt Prentice, left, prepared and served meals to Detroit clients.

Kadima Joins Mitzvah Day

In the spirit of giving back to the community, Kadima clients — for the first time — volunteered for Mitzvah Day on Dec. 25.

Last year, Kadima, which serves Metro Detroiters with mental health needs, was a site for other volunteer groups to offer mitzvahs within Kadima residential communities. This year, Kadima signed up so its clients could volunteer their help to others.

The volunteers picked up more than 50

meals from Forgotten Harvest in Oak Park and delivered them to people in Pontiac who would otherwise go hungry.

Though this was the first time volunteers participated in Mitzvah Day, Kadima clients volunteer throughout the year at Forgotten Harvest and many other organizations, packing meals, working with seniors, helping animals and other activities. Last year, Kadima was honored as one of the top 10 producing organizations at Forgotten Harvest. *



Kadima volunteers: Rivka Grossinger, Kadima staffer Shelley Spinner, Sharon Glazer, Fran Gendler and Kadima Clinical Director Jean Nemenzik.