

Maplewood lights the menorah

MAPLEWOOD — A menorah lighting ceremony was held Thursday, Dec. 26 in Ricalton Square on Maplewood Avenue.

The event was led by Rabbi Sholom Bogomilsky of the Maplewood Jewish Center, who has organized a menorah lighting in the township for more than 20 years. Maplewood Councilman Vic DeLuca and Councilwoman-elect Malia Herman helped Bogomilsky light the candles while a crowd of about 100 looked on.

The lighting celebrated Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, an eight-day commemoration of the rededication of the original Jewish temple in Jerusalem by the Maccabees after their victory over a much larger army.

In the second century B.C., a small army of Jews led by Judah the Maccabee defeated a much larger Syrian/Greek army, reclaimed Jerusalem and rededicated the temple. However, when they went to light the Temple's seven-branched candelabrum (menorah), they found only a single bottle of olive oil that had not been contaminated; the oil should have lasted just one day but lasted the eight days it took to prepare new oil.

"The lighting of the menorah is spreading the miracle of Hannukah and what happened to the Jewish nation," Bogomilsky said. "To commemorate that miracle, we do a lot of things connected to oil, we have donuts and latkes."



Photo by Joe Ungaro

Rabbi Sholom Bogomilsky at the Maplewood Menorah lighting.



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