

Hazon Monthly Report: December 2016

Dear All,

Usually I begin these monthly reports by highlighting specific pieces of news (usually, though not always, good news) from the previous month. For the last month of the year I don't want to do that because it would be invidious to any person or team or department or program that I left out.

We ended the year (I think) in good shape, and in noticeably stronger shape than we ended 2015. During the year we strengthened our staff, strengthened our board, invested in staff training and in improving our culture, and tried to clarify what we're trying to do in places of unclarity. We had (by a hair) more participants than in any previous year. We had evals steadily reporting satisfaction – in many cases improved satisfaction – with our programs. Numbers of our teams and programs are not only delivering successful programs for our participants, they are also working more smoothly and happily internally. And for the first time in three years we added, rather than subtracted, to our organizational net assets.

So, to each and all of you, for your individual and collective contributions, huge thanks. Thank you to each board member for giving of your time, and for giving a significant amount of money (total board giving in 2016 was significantly higher than in 2015). Thank you to each staff person for, in almost every case, time and effort put in above the call of duty.

May we be blessed in 2017 to be able to maintain the momentum that we have, to be honest and self-critical enough to improve, where we need to, and to continue to build an organization that makes the world a better place, and nourishes our own staff and stakeholders.

With thanks and best wishes

Nigel

PS And – if you didn't already – do take a look at the email we sent to the list today, and the one we plan to send on Tuesday. The two (very different from each other) go together and represent a different way of starting the year

What You Can Do

- Marketing is underway for our opening Hazon Retreats for 2017. We would love for you to spread the word about the [Rabbis Retreat](#) (Feb 21-23), and the [Romemu Kabbalah Retreat](#) (Feb 24-26).

2016 Wrap Up

The report for December events follows the 2016 Wrap Up.

These numbers in some cases are provisional and subject to revision.

Multi-Day Programs

- During 2016, **5,645 people visited Isabella Freedman** as part of a multi-day program, with a total of 26,068 person-days. This is a slight increase from last year (5,509 people and 25,218 person-days, a 2% growth).
- On the revenue side, total earned revenue from Hazon retreats, Organization Retreats, Simchas, and Teva Programs was **\$2.33m in total earned revenues**. Last year this total was \$2.06m – an increase of \$260k, or 13%. We averaged \$152 revenue per person per night, compared to \$140 the prior year.
- All told, Isabella Freedman hosted **64 events and 10 Teva sessions**. We had 195 operating days in 2016. Last year, we had 211 operating days, although in 2016 we were active for 2 more weekends, but 20 fewer weekdays. The events break down into: 23 Hazon retreats at Isabella Freedman and 2 programs in Israel. In addition, 33 organization retreats and 8 family celebrations were held at Isabella Freedman and 27 schools participated in our multi-day Teva programs.

One-Day Programs

- This was the first year that we comprehensively collected information on one-day events, classes, parlor meetings, and other interactions.
- In 2016 we held 200 such events, reaching **20,591 total participants**.
- By region, the numbers break down as:
 - 90 Detroit events reaching 11,000 people (including our largest single-day event, the 5000-person Food Festival)
 - 60 New York area events, reaching 4,100 people.
 - 14 Colorado events reached 2,000 people
 - 16 San Diego events reached 900 people
- We were fairly consistent in having between 17-23 events a month, other than the period around the Fall holidays.

Fundraising / finances

It will probably take until April to get audited figures but, thanks to the Campaign For The Future, this was the first year in several that we were able to start to build reserves.

External: Program Overview and Impact

December Multi-Day Events

This past month saw 337 people visiting Isabella Freedman for 4 retreats.

December Events	Type	Start Date	End Date	2016 People	People Days *	2015 People	2014 People
Jewish Intentional Communities Conference	Hazon	12/1	12/4	96	384		169
Moishe House - Jewish Feminist Retreat	Org	12/9	12/11	20	60		
Silent Meditation	Hazon	12/18	12/25	59	472	51	64
Food Conference	Hazon	12/26	12/30	162	810	152	178
December Sub Total				337	1,726		
2016 to Date				5,798	23,436		

*People days equals number of people times number of days

Jewish Intentional Communities Conference

This was the third annual conference, although last year's was held at Pearlstone. We worked with partner organizations to plan their content sessions and the arc of the conference – their sessions were engaging and high-quality, covering topics like income sharing, relationship with wider community, and committing to social justice. The davenen, tisch, and havdallah were beautiful, meaningful, community building experiences. However, year after year participant recruitment continues to become a challenge, and our numbers were down significantly from the first conference held two years ago.

"I truly enjoyed connecting with other leaders of other spiritual communities who may be different in look, but similar in idea. I loved hearing from the next generation of interested Jews and have greater hope for the future of Jewish community."

Moishe House Feminist Retreat

This is the second time this small Moishe House retreat has come to Isabella Freedman in 2016. We would have liked to have had an additional retreat overlapping to better maximize revenue for the weekend. That said, the group was happy, they are doing important work that we want to support, and Moishe House on the whole is an increasingly important partner organization for us, sending multiple retreats to IF yearly.

Silent Meditation

This retreat is beloved by many and is one of our most powerful offerings experientially. Isabella Freedman is uniquely equipped to provide the unique opportunity for a Jewish meditation experience. The teachers are well-recognized leaders in this arena. The impact on participants is very significant as indicated by testimonials. We exceeded our budgeted goals this year, but for the past few years the size of the retreat has been smaller than we would have liked. For 2017 we have set aggressive goals to grow this retreat by an additional 30%.

"So many great insights in meditation, paired with being in nature and appreciating its beauty. Davening was beautiful and powerful and moving." – Retreat participant

Food Conference

A very successful retreat overall. Evaluation data is coming in and is extremely positive. We exceeded our budgeted goal for gross revenue, and reduced costs as well. Highlights included a very strong partnership with JIFA (the Jewish Initiative for Animals), the first-ever Kids' Food Conference, a truly fun and elegant new year's

party, and good representation of diversity across the Jewish spectrum and beyond. This year's conference also serves to set the stage and build momentum for an expanded 2017 Food Conference, which will be held in August and is projected to increase in revenue and participants by more than 25%. While we exceeded our budget, many of the top-level rooms did not sell at full price, leaving potential revenue on the table. We also need to identify new presenters so the conference feels fresh each year. The programmatic constraints presented by the number and size of program spaces on campus are a particular challenge for the food conference.

“The shechita demonstration was a powerful experience for me. I have been interested in shechita for a while, but it is often difficult to find teachers who can speak knowledgeably on the subject or do demonstrations, and I appreciated that Hazon made that possible. I also really appreciated being able to engage with such a broad spectrum of people working on a wide variety of interesting and important tasks within the Jewish community.”
 – Retreat Participant

Bike Ride Updates

December is the first large recruitment period for the Hazon New York Ride, held over Labor Day. We recruited 31 Riders and 8 Crew for a total of 39 participants by year's end. This is the second highest number of participants registered at this time ever and the highest since 2012.

The 2016 Israel Ride has raised more money than almost any other Israel Ride, bringing in \$797,000 in fundraising and over \$1m gross revenues. All participants expressed having an incredible time on the ride, everyone met their fundraising minimums, and we look forward to maintaining good relationships with all.

The 2017 Israel Ride ended 2016 with 118 participants registered, and is on track to be one of the largest yet. We have over 20 information and recruitment sessions scheduled in early 2017, hoping to exceed 30 events before the end of March. Since Khylie began in early December we have focused on creating long-lasting processes for marketing, communications, and recruitment, and look forward to implementing these systems for 2017.

Upcoming Retreats

Upcoming Hazon Retreats	Date	2017 To Date	This Time 2016	This Time 2015	2017 Goal	2016 Final	2015 Final
DLTI	Feb 15	45	32	28	55	38	47
Rabbis Retreat 2017	Feb 21	13		11	20		20
Romemu Kaballah	Feb 24	14			60		

Education, One-Day Events & Regional Work

December One-Day Events	Region	Type	Start Date	People
Farm to OneTable	Colorado	Event	6-Dec	10
Sustainable Shabbat teaching at Shabbaton	Colorado	Event	10-Dec	18
Ignite Chanukah	Colorado	Event	13-Dec	140
Shabbat Cooking at Downtown Synagogue	Detroit	Event	2-Dec	30
Hazon Holiday DIY Festival at the Federation	Detroit	Event	15-Dec	35
Adat Shalom Volunteer Day (seal of sus.)	Detroit	Event	18-Dec	50
Congregation Shaarey Zedek Chanukah Festival	Detroit	Event	18-Dec	75

Public Menorah Lighting at Jewish Ferndale	Detroit	Event	26-Dec	45
Menorah in the D	Detroit	Event	27-Dec	300
Hazon Seal at the Hillel General Assembly	National	Event	6-Dec	12
Joint Conversations: The Flavor of Jewish Life	New York	Event	6-Dec	60
New York Ride & Retreat Parlor Meeting at Nigel's	New York	Event	20-Dec	17
Pickling Event at Footsteps	New York	Event	22-Dec	15
Philadelphia Jewish Food Festival	Philadelphia	Event	11-Dec	190
Moishe House	San Diego	Event	4-Dec	11
Parlor Meeting with Nigel	San Diego	Event	8-Dec	25
Nigel spoke at Orot HaCarmel during Friday Night Services	San Diego	Event	9-Dec	30
December Sub Total				1,063
2016 Total to Date				20,591

Adamah

- Many Adamahniks decided to stay after Adamah as Winterniks to stay connected with the community by taking care of our animals, hauling compost from the dining hall to the farm, and pickling the last of our fall harvest. Winterniks helped provide JOFEE programming for the Food Conference, as well as support for set up and clean up of retreats.
- Rebecca attended the December Gathering at Harvard Divinity School, which brought together folks who lead meaning-making communities/organizations, both religious and secular.
- Recent photos: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#)

Colorado

- **Farm to OneTable** - Becky was the guest educator for a OneTable "Nosh-pitality" event, teaching future Shabbat dinner hosts how to hold a sustainable Shabbat. This was our first program with OneTable in Colorado (they opened up shop here just recently). It was great to do something together and have this first partnership go so well. The OneTable staff person knew very little himself about sustainability and learned a lot in order to prepare for this program, which may inform many future OneTable events.
- **Sustainable Shabbat teaching at Shabbaton** - Becky led a conversation/learning as part of a longer, full-day Shabbaton. The topic was broadly about hosting a sustainable Shabbat but focused specifically on cloth napkins and the environmental concepts around single use and "cradle to grave".
- **Ignite Chanukah** - Hazon was a co-sponsor of this annual event, which is THE young adult Chanukah event in Boulder. As a sponsor, we got to do a "spark", a 90-second presentation.
- We had a terrific cohort of 10 Coloradans attend the Food Conference this year. Existing relationships were strengthened and new relationships were formed. We were especially excited to be able to include a reporter from Colorado Public Radio as part of our cohort. He's currently working on a story about high welfare Kosher meat for a national podcast called Good Food. We also had representatives from Moishe House, three different Hillels, BBYO, and two Conservative congregations.
- Sarah Kornhauser returned from parental leave this month.

Detroit

- **Shabbat Cooking at Downtown Synagogue** - we planned the meal, cooked, and led a dvar torah
- **Hazon Holiday DIY Festival at the Federation** -Hazon ran a DIY fair for JFMD building tenants

- **Adat Shalom Volunteer Day (Seal project)** - Worked with each class on three-bin recycling stations as part of day-long activities. It was a great way to explain the Seal program to a school community. The kids loved making the bins for their classes and now have 'ownership' of their waste management
- **Congregation Shaarey Zedek Chanukah Festival** - Ran a 'bee the shamash' candle-making activity
- **Public Menorah Lighting at Jewish Ferndale** - Hazon was honored to light the public menorah, and we ran a shamash-making DIY
- **Menorah in the D** - we greened the event and ran a kid activity for 300 kids

New York

- **Joint Conversations: The Flavor of Jewish Life** - Hazon's Associate Director of Outreach Shira Sacks ran an outreach table sharing information about the 2016 Food Conference, our curricula, and our work, particularly in the Jewish food movement.
- **New York Ride & Retreat Parlor Meeting at Nigel's** - Nigel hosted a New York Ride & Retreat Parlor meeting for interested riders. He spoke about Hazon, the Ride, and its connection to Hanukkah.
- **Pickling Event at Footsteps** - Really good opportunity to reach a new audience who were interested in the work of Hazon and coming to Isabella Freedman. We learned that Footsteps is partnering with Moishe House which presents even more opportunities for collaboration

Philadelphia

- **Philadelphia Jewish Food Festival** - This year's volunteer-run Philly Food Fest addressed the theme "Waste Not, Want Not." Talented educators ran over twenty sessions, including Jewish Texts on Ecology and Justice, Israeli Dancing, Creating and Using Condiments, and beer-making. There was live music and a community market open throughout the day with local artisan Kosher products. Compared to the previous years, the numbers were significantly lower. We are in conversation with the Advisory Board chairs to figure out if or how to continue to run this program without full-time staff on the ground in Philadelphia.

San Diego

- **Moishe House** - The Moishe House residents and guests were excited and eager to get their hands dirty. They asked if we could study MORE text as a group. They offered blessings of their own to the group and to the land.
- **Parlor Meeting with Nigel** - Nigel led a text study with a group of potential donors. We raised over \$12,000 while Nigel was in San Diego. The group was moved by the conversation. Our hosts, the Einhorn's, are on the Leichtag Board, and gave a personal gift.
- **Nigel spoke at Orot HaCarmel during Friday Night Services** - We reconnected with a shul in town Nigel spoke about the bike ride and ways to get involved

Hazon Seal

- Hazon Seal sites are wrapping up their first year. In December and January, they are meeting with their Green Teams to evaluate their progress over the past year and re-commit to sustainability work in 2017.
- In mid-December, the Hazon Seal Advisory Board met to discuss upgrading the audits and project standards for the next year.

- The Seal was also present at the food conference. Hody ran an introductory session on the Seal, which attracted attention from sites and potential funders, and representatives from four Seal sites connected in person at the Food Conference to discuss their sustainability work.
- The first [Seal video](#) also debuted this month.
- At the Hillel General Assembly we ran a session on bringing JOFEE programming and the Hazon Seal to local Hillels. The session included hands-on JOFEE activities, including [making flour by threshing wheat](#) and a pickling demonstration. Participants got a taste of participation in the Hazon Seal by taking a mini-audit and brainstorming sustainability projects for their institutions.

"Thank you for the time and energy you put into leading our Digging for Torah session at HIGA. I got a lot out of our conversations, including the inspiration to bring the sustainability conversation back to Oregon Hillel."

JOFEE Fellowship

- Midyear seminar (held at Leichtag Commons) was overwhelmingly successful with highly positive feedback from Fellows and all those involved. Fellows appreciated iterative changes in response to feedback from the first seminar and in particular found the Strengthsfinder assessment and workshop with Marsha Berkson to be illuminating and useful.
- 30 JOFEE Fellow finalists began the matching process with 21 prospective placements, with the aim of 17 matches for the second cohort. To date, six fellows and placements have secured final matches.
- Winners for the first round of curriculum submissions were also announced at midyear seminar:
 - Top prize - Innovation and creativity - Josh Kleymer, Cincinnati JCC - "Rosh Hashanah Honeybees" early childhood program
 - Runner-up: Michael Fraade, Louisville JCC - "Farmer Michael's Wagon Garden"
 - Honorable Mention - Integration of Judaics content: Bailey Lininger, Tamarack Camps - Shmita Wild Edibles Cards tabling activity
 - Runner-up: Jess Berlin, Hazon Retreats - "Jewish Rainmakers" Rosh Hashanah / Tashlich / Sukkot program
 - Honorable Mention - Engaging new / underserved demographics: Nicole Cruz, Peninsula JCC - "Pickling and Fermentation Workshop for Families"
 - Runner-up: Rachel Binstock, Urban Adamah - "An Exploration of Jewish Time and Space" learning series for Urban Adamah staff

"It is so helpful to take a step back from the day to day and examine the way we are working and what challenges arise and what patterns we are all noticing about this field and the content we mold and play with every day for participants in our programs." (JOFEE Fellow on midyear seminar)

Video and News

Video

- Learn how to make [old world latkes with Jeffrey Yoskowitz](#) at the 2016 Hazon Food Conference.
- Listen to [Shir Yaakov Feit lead niggunim](#) at the 2016 Hazon Meditation Retreat.
- See the Hazon Seal of Sustainability [in action](#).

News

- [Lippman Kanfer Prize for Applied Jewish Wisdom announces Winners](#), *eJewish Philanthropy*, December 7, 2016
- [8 Colorado Riders Complete the 2016 Israel Ride](#), by Jeff Raizen, Boulder Jewish News, Dec 4, 2016
- [Welcome to Giving Gardens at Yad Ezra](#), by Vivian Hensch, *myJewishDetroit*, December 1, 2016
- [The Priest in the Trees](#), by Fred Bahnson, *Harper's Magazine*, December 2016 issue