

Advertising



20 FREE digital prints
plus **FREE shipping**
use coupon code **FRESNAP**



2005 Eppy Winner -- Best Overall Newspaper Site
Providence, R.I., Monday April 17, 2006 4:55 p.m.

[Welcome, Spam!](#) [Visit Member Center](#) | [Log Out](#)

[RSS](#) | [Customize](#) | [Make this your home page](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [MySpecialsDirect](#)

Search Site

Search Archives

Home
Rhode Island
Business
Classifieds
In Memoriams
Lifebeat
Multimedia
Nation/World
Obituaries
Opinion
Pagina Latina
Sports
Weather
Your Turn



Subscribe

Newspaper In Education
Media Kit
Guide to requesting coverage

Stories with a message for the Jewish holidays

01:00 AM EST on Thursday, December 15, 2005

BY BRYAN ROURKE
Journal Staff Writer

Mark Binder amuses himself with a thought. The Providence author imagines a girl who's asked what she wants for Christmas. She says, A Chanukah Present.

No, the adult says, what do you want from Santa?

A Chanukah Present, she says, repeating the title of Binder's new storytelling CD, from which he'll share tales today through Sunday at several local sites.

While Jews may enjoy the stories, Binder says, others may, too.

"My stories are not particularly religious," Binder says. "They're cultural stories. It's not about how to worship or what to worship."

The stories are about people, and a place: Chelm. That's a mythical place in Jewish tradition, a village of fools, which Binder says is common to many cultures.

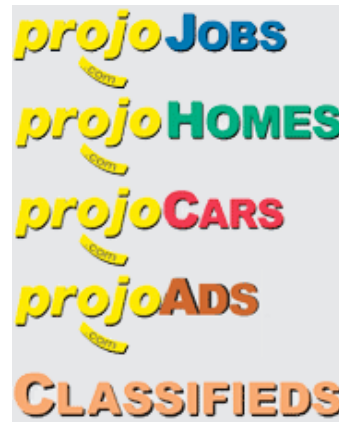
"You feel better about your life when you hear about a fool," Binder says.

Binder embarked on storytelling inadvertently several years ago while working as editor for The Rhode Island Jewish Herald. An article that was supposed to be submitted to the newspaper wasn't.

"There was a big hole in the newspaper and a PSA (public service announcement) wasn't going to fill it," Binder says.

So Binder filled the space. He wrote a story based on the village of Chelm, which led to another story, and another, and, ultimately, a new career.

Binder has produced seven books, including his most recent, The Word's Greatest Challah, and four CDs, including his A Chanukah Present, which is eight



Advertising

newspaper ads

Search newspaper ads and weekly inserts from The Providence Journal
Cardi's Furniture
Champion Windows
More advertisers...
Commercial Real Estate

shop & subscribe

Shop and subscribe among a variety of services

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Archives | My-Netlink |
| Front Page Store | Ticket Center |

tales for eight days. But at his free public presentations this week, he'll tell just a few.

There's the story of a Jewish girl who wants a Christmas present. And her father explains that Jewish people don't give Christmas gifts, but perhaps they could exchange some for Chanukah.

And there's a story about a boy who gets a dreidel -- the four-sided top used for children's gambling games during Chanukah -- and he plays with it, a lot, not just during the holiday but every day of his life.

"It turns out he's the first dreidel shark," Binder says. "He can bounce it off cups and saucers and make it land on the right side."

Many of the stories in A Chanukah Present are stories within a story: A Cold Day in Chelm. Everything freezes. It's so cold, people initially won't get out of bed or leave the house. Then the community finds warmth in each other.

"The villagers come together," Binder says. "The warmth of their singing warms the whole world."

Binder says he likes stories that appeal to all ages and faiths, and "have a good heart."

Mark Binder appears today at Creatoyvity, 808 Hope St., Providence, at 10:30 a.m.; Eastside Marketplace, 165 Pitman St., Providence, at 12:30 p.m.; and Ye Ol' Book Shoppe, 742 Hope St., Providence, at 6:30 p.m. On Sunday, Binder appears at Temple Habonim, 165 New Meadow Road, Barrington, at 11 a.m.; and at Barrington Books, in the Barrington Shopping Center, 184 County Rd., at 1 p.m.

At Temple Habonim, Binder will devote himself to telling tales. At the other sites, he'll be signing copies of his book and his CD, and possibly telling a tale or two.

More headlines...

[Easter sunrise services](#)

More...

ARTICLE TOOLS: [Print it](#) | [Discuss it](#) | [E-mail it to a friend](#) | [Most e-mailed stories](#)

ARCHIVES: [Search for related articles:](#)

Get The Providence Journal delivered to your home or office. [Subscribe now.](#)

Advertising



I graduated in:



1996
1986
1976
1966

Table of Contents

[Home page](#)

[CLASSIFIEDS](#) | [PROJOCARS](#) | [PROJOHOMES](#) | [PROJOJOBS](#) | [OBITUARIES](#) | [IN MEMORIAMS](#)

[Rhode Island News](#) | [Business](#) | [Lifebeat](#) | [Multimedia](#) | [National / World news](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Sports](#) | [Weather](#) | [Your Turn](#)

[Help Center](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Site Map](#) | [About Us](#)

News tip: (401) 277-7303 | Classifieds: (401) 277-7700 | Display advertising: (401) 277-8000 | Subscriptions: (401) 277-7600

© 2006, Published by The Providence Journal Co., 75 Fountain St., Providence, RI 02902.