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Contact: Joey Kaplovitz
jk@cheryldanzigerpublicity.com, (424) 222-9371

Passover-Themed Board Game Chametz: the Search is On! Hopes to Split the Sea of Jewish Games

LOS ANGELES, CA (March, 2011) - Inspired by the classic board game “Clue,” Hazakah is publishing a Passover-themed game that follows an analogous premise -- yet instead of murder suspects and murder weapons, the players of **Chametz: the Search is On!** try to determine which character left an item of chametz in which room.

Chametz is Hebrew for “sour or fermented” and it refers to food that is unfit for Jews on Passover (usually derived from one of the five prohibited grains: oat, barley, wheat, rye and spelt). The chametz featured in the game includes items such as a slice of pizza, a donut and a pretzel.

Moti Rakia, president of Hazakah Inc., says he formed the game publishing company in large part because he couldn't find interesting Jewish-themed games to play on Shabbat with his children. The game is recommended for those aged 7 to adult.

As an homage to the game of Clue, Rakia gives his “Chametz” characters familiar names, albeit with a Jewish twist. Colonel Mustard becomes Colonel Moti (decorated hero of the Israeli Navy); Professor Plum becomes Professor Slivovitz (a kosher-for-passover plum brandy); Mrs. White becomes Mrs. Weiss, and Reverend Green is Rabbi Greenberg. There are also two children (Colonel Moti's twins Chaim and Tzipporah).

In keeping with the Passover theme, the Chametz gameboard features “The Four Questions” –four spaces that require a player to answer one of the 234 trivia questions. Answering correctly gives the player an advantage.

Sample questions:

- The Pharaoh’s daughter discovered Moses in the river. What was her name? A) Batyah, B) Yocheved, C) Miriam? Spoiler Alert: The name of Pharaoh’s daughter was A, Batyah.
- Which grain is missing from this list of 5 grains that constitute “chametz” (oat, barley, wheat, rye and _____) – (see top of article for the answer).
- What is “shmurah matzah”? A) Egg matzah, B) Matzah covered in cream cheese, C) Matzah guarded from harvesting until packing? The answer: C.
- In the Passover song “Echad Mi Yo’deah” (Who Knows One), the “Eight” refers to what? A) Hanukkah, B) Passover, or C) Circumcision. You’ll have to find a Haggadah (the book read at the Passover Seder table) for the answer to that one.

Traditional Jews may be interested in the game because it can be played on Shabbat and Holidays. The design challenge stemmed from the fact that since it's a game that incorporates process-of-elimination, a player would normally have to make written notes to keep track of their progress.

To get around this potential problem, each player is given a Note Board that holds small cardboard chips. So instead of checking off Colonel Moti when you see the card in play, you simply insert a marker in the slot above Colonel Moti's name on your Note Board. The markers are spoon-shaped, again to maintain the theme of Passover (wooden spoons are traditionally used in the real search for chametz).

Chametz: the Search is On! is suitable for two to six players, ages seven and up, and its suggested retail price is \$29.95 (but it's currently on sale for \$26.95 through www.hazakah.com). Hazakah hopes to attract many Judaica stores to carry it soon. If you're interested, call your local store and ask for the game by name!

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Hazakah Inc. is a newly formed publisher of Jewish-themed toys and games based in Los Angeles. **Chametz: the Search is On!** is their debut product. ©2011 Hazakah Inc., All Rights Reserved.

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