A series of three films dealing with aspects of the human condition in entertaining and often comedic style begins at the Landis Theater in Vineland on Sept. 7 and concludes the following week on Sept. 11 and 14, courtesy of the Jewish Federation of Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties.

The fourth annual Jewish Film Festival also offers the opportunity to combine dinner with a movie at the adjacent Mori’s restaurant on two Wednesdays, Sept. 7 and 14. The “dinner and a movie” special for $35 begins at the restaurant at 6:15 p.m. with the movie starting at 7:30. Tickets for the films alone are $8 per person per film. The Sunday showing on Sept. 11 begins at 4 p.m.

Following are brief summaries of each film:

“Five Hours from Paris,” presented in Hebrew and Russian with English subtitles, tells the story of music-loving cabbie Yigal who falls for Lina, his son’s music teacher and former concert pianist. Unfortunately for Yigal, Lina has a husband, who has gone to Canada to take his medical examinations. Set in working class Tel Aviv, the film has been described as a “Chekhovian romantic comedy.”

“Arranged,” performed in English, concerns two women of different backgrounds—one an

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Three films entertain and educate

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orthodox Jew and the other a Muslim of Pakistani descent—who meet while teaching at a public elementary school in Brooklyn. Over the course of their first year of teaching, they discover they have much in common despite their disparate backgrounds and upbringing. Both try to live within the traditions of their faith but are disconcerted that they are expected to enter into arranged marriages.

“The Human Resources Manager” is the longest film in the series at 103 minutes. (The other two are 90 minutes.) Presented in English, Hebrew and Romanian with English subtitles, it tells the story of the Human Resources manager of Jerusalem’s largest bakery. He is separated from his wife, distanced from his daughter and trapped in a job he hates. When an employee, a foreign worker, is killed in a suicide bombing, the manager is sent to the victim’s hometown in Romania to express the company’s condolences. The mission turns into a life-changing experience as he discovers things about himself he never knew before.

Steven Schimmel, executive director of the Jewish Federation, says, “Society can be looked at through a special vantage point through films, and foreign films can do this in an extra special, artistic way. Films dealing with a different culture than ours can present a unique take on universal problems and situations.”

He adds, “The three films are certain to appeal to both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences. (They) present universal human situations from uniquely Jewish and Israeli perspectives and are representative of the finest of today’s Jewish cinematographic art.”

Tickets and more information are available by calling the Federation office at (856) 696-4445, including the dinner and a movie special.

Grant applications due Oct. 14

Matthew E. Pisarski, Principal Planner for the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission, has announced that the deadline for re-grant applications for local arts and historical non-profit organizations is Friday, Oct. 14.

The Commission administers grants given by the N.J. State Council on the Arts (NJSCA) and the N.J. Historical Commission (NJHC). Further details and guidelines, along with the application, may be found on the Commission’s web site, www.ccculturalheritage.org.

Pisarski also announced a Grant Writing Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 22, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts, Millville. To register, or for questions regarding the application, contact Pisarski at (856) 453-2175 or e-mail mattpi@co.cumberland.nj.us.