

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

Journal

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Rabbi's Message

Considering the fact that at no time in the entirety of all American history has there ever been a moment when the Jewish population has exceeded 3% (today it hovers around 2¼%), it is somewhere between remarkable and miraculous to see just how influential and indispensable our People have been to the development of our national identity and civilization. This is a point that has not been lost to the students of the Mike Weiner School of Jewish Learning.

As I've described in previous newsletters, each Sunday we focus on a specific theme, which relates to the contributions of a different American Jew (or Jews) who was either born that week or had a particular milestone contribution that week. In the process, our children of the JCNWJ have come to appreciate that were it not for the Jews of America, our country – indeed our entire world – would no doubt be the lesser for their absence.

Here is a chart of some of the Americans we have studied, and the Jewish lessons we have extrapolated from their lives:

Continued on the next page

Mark Your Calendar

- Sunday, January 3rd
No Sunday School
- Monday, January 4th
7 pm Board of Trustees Meeting
- Friday, January 8th
7:30 pm Shabbat Services
Oneg: Hall, Friedlander, and Post/Goldner Families
- Sunday, January 10th
9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Sisterhood Meeting
- Saturday, January 16th
10:30 am Torah Study
- Sunday, January 17th
9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Confirmation Class
10:30 am Read Hebrew America: Prayers
- Monday, January 18th
7 pm Book Club
- Friday, January 22nd
7:30 pm Shabbat Services (Tu B'Shvat and Naming Ceremony)
Oneg: Kowski, Kahan, Braunstein, and Santillo Families
- Saturday, January 23rd
9:30 am Family Tu B'Shvat Program

Mark Your Calendar (cont.)

- Sunday, January 31st
9:30 am Sunday School
Adult Education Class with Rabbi Dubin

Rabbi's Message (cont.)

DATE	LANDMARK JEWISH-AMERICAN EVENT	EXTRAPOLATED JEWISH THEME
9/20	Hank Greenberg & Sandy Koufax choosing not to play baseball on Yom Kippur	Prioritizing Jewish observance
10/11	Ralph Lauren (born: October 14, 1939) & Isaac Mizrahi (born: October 14, 1961)	History of Jews in the American Garment Industry
10/25	Jonas Salk (born: October 28, 1914)	<i>Bikkur Holim</i> : Jewish mandate to provide care and visit the sick
11/1	Statue of Liberty (dedicated: October 28, 1886)	Emma Lazarus's "The New Colossus" and the Jewish mandate to welcome the stranger
11/15	Louis Brandeis (born: November 13, 1856) and Felix Frankfurter (born: November 15, 1882)	Judaism as a legal system
12/6	Ira Gershwin (born: December 6, 1896), Otto Preminger (born: December 5, 1905), & Sammy Davis, Jr. (born: December 8, 1925)	We studied Porgy & Bess (Gershwin wrote the lyrics, Preminger produced the movie, and Davis starred in the movie) as a springboard to discuss how fundamentally Jews understand how it feels to be on the periphery
12/20	Captain America Comics #1 went on sale (December 20, 1940). Captain America was the creation of Joe Simon (born Hymie Simon) and Jack Kirby (born Jacob Kurtzberg)	We studied the overwhelming Jewish influences on the heroes of DC and Marvel Comics and the Jewish battles for justice they take on

I share these lessons with you for a reason: On **January 31st**, I will be offering the first in a series of Sunday Morning Adult Ed sessions on the same theme our children will be learning that week. Hopefully this list of previous themes will whet your appetite for what is to come.

Registration is not required, nor is regular attendance necessary, but RSVPs would be appreciated. More details (and invitations) will be distributed in mid-January. We hope to see you there!

Rabbi Dubin

Education Update

The Education Committee held a wonderful Hanukkah Party on December 6th. A successful fire drill was held on December 13th, with another fire drill scheduled in the spring.

Calling all Hebrew readers who would like to gain confidence and increased speed in reading prayers. Let's meet in the Oneg Room on January 17th from 10:30 am-12 pm. If you have specific prayers you would like to request, please email marci_braunstein@yahoo.com.

President's Message

A Second Chance

For many people in life, we get one chance to make changes a year. We make New Year's resolutions to try and improve things that we feel we would like to do better. As Jews in the USA, we get two chances. One after Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, where we take a hard look at ourselves, see where we could have done better. Then, at the beginning of Yom Kippur, we recite Kol Nidre, which basically says that we know that we will fail in some of our promises to God, but if after sincere effort, we fail, we "pre-atoned" for these sins. We Jews get a second chance at the secular New Year to make changes again and to try and redirect our lives in a way that befits us.

In speaking for myself only, here are three things that I would like to change in myself for the coming year. (1) I will make an attempt to reach out to everyone in the congregation personally and see how you are doing and what YOU need from the temple. (2) Make more of an effort to reach out to those on the Mishaberach list and see how you are doing when illness strikes and if there is anything I can do, or facilitate the temple doing things to ease your burden. (3) Make more Torah study classes.

I am going to stop at three because I want to give myself a chance to be successful in these goals.

I have one wish for the congregation: that the secular New Year is a healthy one for you and your family. But if it turns out that you need to deal with an illness, please reach out to Rabbi Dubin or myself so that your second family, our congregation, can assist you and make your lives a bit easier. We are all in this together. I have seen this congregation come together when members were in need of help, and it has only made us stronger.

Howie Hirsch



FOOD DRIVE

As a community service project, Sisterhood will be having themed donations to our local county food pantries. Each month we will highlight a specific item needed by the food pantries. In the month of January, please bring soup, pasta, and/or cereal to the JCNWJ.



Community Outreach

We will be joining the AME Church in Washington in the next few months in a show of interfaith celebration. Please look out for further details, and join us in this effort to reach out to others in the community.

Confirmation class will be held on Sunday, January 17th at 10:30 am.

Contributions

- ✧ In honor of Howie Hirsch's 60th Birthday
- Brian & Helene Friedlander
- ✧ In memory of Marvin Koral
- Doreen & Rory Webb

New Mishaberach List Policy

Starting with the first service in January 2016 (Jan. 8), we will be doing the Mishaberach prayer differently. We're starting from scratch with a new list of individuals who will need our prayers for healing.

First, Rabbi Dubin will ask congregants who are present at the service if there is anyone they would like to mention. Next, he will read a list of names obtained from congregants who could not be present at the service. Then we will sing the Mishaberach prayer.

If you cannot be present to say the name of the person, then please send that name to Sharon Herson via email (sharonherson@comcast.net) and indicate how the individual is related or connected to you (so the Rabbi will have that information; it will not be read aloud). Also, please state whether the illness is temporary or long-term. If the former, the name will be on the list for two services (i.e., about one month, unless you indicate something else), and then it will be removed. If the latter, the name will remain on the list until you ask to have it removed. Thank you all for your cooperation.

February Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles and advertisements to be included in the February Issue of the JCNWJ Journal is **January 19, 2016**. Please email articles, photographs, or news items to the Journal Editor, Abby Bauer at abbybauer@comcast.net.

A Reminder from the Sunshine Committee

Please let us know when someone has passed away, is ill or otherwise in need of a little sunshine so that the Jewish Center may be there to support and assist as best we can. Please contact Ruth Schutzbank at (908) 329-6036 or Howie.ruth@hotmail.com.

Wanted: Advertisers for JCNWJ Journal

Kindly take note of the ads at the end of our Journal and whenever possible, support these establishments with your patronage. It's also a good idea to mention that you saw their Temple Ad. If there are any businesses that you use regularly that might be interested in taking an ad in the Journal, please contact Rita Berkowitz (berk721@aol.com) or Ruth Schutzbank (Howie.ruth@hotmail.com). You can also go to our homepage, print out an advertising form and give it directly to them to mail in.



It's the start of the New Year, and new programs from Jewish LIFE!

Alice Eve Cohen, author of *The Year My Mother Came Back (a Memoir)*, is the featured guest speaker on **Thursday, January 7, 12 Noon** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. Join us for *The Irma Horowitz Film Series featuring Falafel and Films Thursday, January 14, 6:30pm* at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater with a special screening of *Havana Curveball*. The film will be followed with Q & A with the filmmakers in California (via Skype).

Looking ahead to February...Chaya Deitsch will lead a discussion on *Here and There: Leaving Chasidim, Keeping My Family* **Thursday, February 4 at 12 Noon** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. On **Friday, February 5**, Chabad of Hunterdon County is hosting a Shabbat Dinner with guest speaker, Rabbi Professor Eli Silberstein. Jay Michaelson will discuss *The Gate of Tears: Sadness and the Spiritual Path*, **Thursday, February 25, 12 Noon** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. (This program is co-sponsored by JFS.)

Save the Date...**Tuesday, April 12** for our 4th Annual Celebrate Israel event at Raritan Valley Country Club in Bridgewater. Our distinguished guest speaker is Malcolm Hoeline, Executive Vice Chairman of the [Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations](#). More details to come!

If you have any questions regarding Jewish LIFE, and to register for special events, please contact the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC at 908-725-6994 x201. To register for synagogue-hosted classes and special events, please register directly through the host synagogue.

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