

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

Journal

PO Box 2, 115 Youmans Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882
(908) 689-0762
www.jcnwj.org

December 2015
Vol. XXXXI Issue 4



Rabbi's Message

To all my JCNWJ Friends,

Happy
Hanukah/Chanukkah/Hanukkah/Hannukah/Channuka/Chanuka/Ha
nuka/Chanukka (etc.,)!

It's funny, because if you receive Chanukah cards in the mail, it's likely you won't have enough fingers on one hand to count the number of different spellings. In fact, there isn't even a definite consensus on how to spell it in Hebrew! Sometimes you'll see חַנּוּכָּה; other times it will be חֲנֻכָּה. The glorious part of it all though, is that neither is wrong. Both are correct. They are simply variations of the same thing. Different ways of depicting the same word. So too with the English spellings. And so too with community.

They say that if you ask ten Jews a question, you get eleven answers. How true! And how beautiful! Consensus and cooperation – two of the hallmark principles that guide all that we do at the JCNWJ – matter when communities want to push forward to accomplish important things. But consensus and cooperation are not the same thing as uniformity of opinion. Consensus and cooperation require not that we all have the same answers as everyone else, but rather that we all have the same goal of living “Jewishly” in a community of love and respect.

continued on next page

Mark Your Calendar

- Friday, December 4th
6 pm Shabbat Family Service
6:30 pm Shabbat Pot Luck Dinner
(*Sign Up Online*)
7:30 pm Shabbat Service
Oneg: Wilson, Schutzbank, and Fenton Families
- Saturday, December 5th
10 am Shabbat Morning Service Led by Cantor Labow (Followed by Light Lunch)
- Sunday, December 6th
9:30 am Sunday School
9:30 am Hanukkah Party
10 am Hanukkah Store Open
- Saturday, December 12th
10:30 am Torah Study
- Sunday, December 13th
9:30 am Sunday School
10 am Hanukkah Store Open
- Monday, December 14th
7 pm Board of Trustees Meeting
- Tuesday, December 15th
7 pm Mah Jongg
- Friday, December 18th
7:30 pm Shabbat Services (Hanukkah and New Members Service)
Oneg: Berkowitz (J/J), Berkowitz (R/J), Tucker, and Simons Families

Rabbi's Message (cont.)

Yes, we all come with our own spellings of Hannukah, but if we did not have such a beautifully wide range, we would most surely be a poorer community for it.

We at the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey rely on and celebrate the variety of Jewish approaches that are lived out by our members. It is the differences that keep us strong, always innovating, never satisfied with the status quo (Dare I say, in this election year of political jockeying, our candidates should take a moment to learn a few things from the way we do things!). Some congregants want more of one thing; others want less of the same. Some were raised in one movement; others in another. Some were born Jewish, some have chosen to become Jewish, and some have made the deep commitment to raise Jewish children. Some are quite conservative in their social perspective; others are tremendously liberal. Some want more Hebrew; others want less. Some want longer services; others want shorter. Some are uncomfortable with "God talk"; others are uncomfortable when God is *not* given a seat in the conversation. Ten Jews, eleven opinions. However we look at it, the one thing that keeps us together and strong is that each one of us, in our own individual way, shares the same deep-seated drive to live lives of Jewish meaning – however we choose to define that.

Rosh Hashanah may be the Jewish New Year, but here in America we can't help but feel a certain twinge of excitement as we approach January 1, the secular New Year. My resolution, as it pertains to JCNWJ, will be to reach out as much as I can to learn more and more about every member of our sacred and diverse community.

With this goal in mind, I would like to extend an open invitation: On Fridays when I'm in Washington for Shabbat services, I tend to arrive in the late morning and then spend the day on JCNWJ business. If you are available on Friday afternoons, I would love to get together to learn more about you – and give you a chance to learn more about me – over a cup of coffee or a light meal. Please be in touch with to me at RabbiDubin@jcnwj.org. If Fridays don't work, let's try a Sunday afternoon after Religious School. Either way, in this season of Hannukka, please help me fulfill my New Year's resolution of rededicating myself to knowing you and representing your voice in the great symphony that is the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey.

Chag Chanuka Sameach,

Rabbi Dubin

Mark Your Calendar (cont.)

- Sunday, December 20th
9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Confirmation Class
- Monday, December 21st
7 pm Book Club
- Sunday, December 27th
No Sunday School

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 December, please bring soup, pasta, and/or cereal to the JCNWJ.



The Sisterhood Meeting is rescheduled to Sunday, January 10th at 10:30 am.

Welcome New Members

Please join us at Shabbat Services on Friday, December 18th to welcome the JCNWJ's new members:

**Harold & Beth Lappin
Brian & Stephanie Fletcher
Efrem & Norrie Zaret**

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

President's Message

Religion and the Modern World

Being a lover of live music, I was appalled to see the massacre in Paris last week.

What upset me more than that venue, as well as the others in Paris, is how religion is being used in the worst possible way. My opinion of what makes religion great and why I am so involved in it is for religion to be able to help people get along with one another. I have been taught my whole life that there is one race of people on the planet, the human race. We need to be able to get along with people who look different from us, have different customs than we do, and have different belief systems. Judaism teaches me that when I see a wrong in the world, it is my responsibility to do what I can to right it.

As I prepare for Thanksgiving and the end of the secular year, I want to dedicate myself to making a difference in our community to foster peace between different religions in the area. In this area, I would like to give a special recognition to my wife Iris, who volunteers at the Methodist church in Hackettstown three days a week to assist in their thrift store and their food pantry. These are the types of activities that we can all do to help show the area that we Jews are normal people and that we are not separatists who want to be left alone, but want to be involved in our communities.

This month, I would like to ask each and every one of you, during the busy month of December, to take one day to allocate some time to do some good in your community. Food banks are in dire need of food, so help the Sisterhood's food drive on a weekly basis. Involve your children. Make sure they know that charity begins with us, and that we do not have to be part of the problem of religion separating people, but locally we can be a small part of the solution.

Happy Hanukkah,
Howie Hirsch

The Mike Weiner School of Jewish Learning Invites all Congregants to bring their children and grandchildren to the...

JCNWJ HANUKKAH PARTY



Where: Oneg Room

When: December 6th, 9:30 am-12 pm

Activities: Enjoy latkes and other Hanukkah goodies, make Hanukkah Candles, assemble the Pasta Menorah, and much more!

Please email Marci Braunstein at marci_braunstein@yahoo.com with the number of adults and number of children attending.

***The Hanukkah Store Will Be Open**



Contributions

- ✧ In honor of Howie Hirsch's 60th Birthday
- Suzi Marr
 - Gladys Dorfler
 - Alan Grening
 - Herbert Hirsch
 - Paul & Donna Fox

MAZEL TOV

From the JCNWJ to Tyler Braunstein on achieving the level of junior Black Belt.

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.

January Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles and advertisements to be included in the January Issue of the JCNWJ Journal is **December 19, 2015**. Please email articles, photographs, or news items to the Journal Editor, Abby Bauer at abbybauer@comcast.net.

Pasta Menorah Building Contest

Help us break our 2013 Pasta Menorah building record of **107** pasta boxes donated to the local food pantry. Please bring 5-10 boxes of dried pasta to the Oneg Room on or before **Sunday, December 6th**. The Sunday School students will be assembling the Menorah during the JCNWJ Hanukkah Party.



Hanukkah 2013 Pasta Menorah

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.

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.



December is a month filled with many fabulous Jewish LIFE programs...truly something for everyone and of all ages!

The month kicks off with *Bobby Wonderful: An Imperfect Son Buries His Parents* with Robert Morris takes on **Thursday, December 3, 12 Noon** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. A special Chanukah cooking event with *Chopped* Champion Chef Rachel Rubin takes place on Thursday, December 3, 6pm at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater.

Celebrate Chanukah with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Musical Ensemble in concert **Tuesday, December 8** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. There will be a choice to attend one of two performances – one for young families (5:30pm) and the other for adults (7:30pm). Both groups will enjoy dinner and candle lighting together at 6:30pm, so bring your Chanukiah and candles! *Please consider becoming a Benefactor of this event.*

Join Jewish LIFE for a special free family Chanukah program... *Farmer Kobi's Hanukkah Match* with Rabbi Ron Isaacs and Karen Rostoker **Thursday, December 10 at 10am**. Your kids will enjoy this interactive fun morning of singing and dancing as the authors tell Farmer Kobi's story! Then at **1pm on Thursday, December 10**, Reb Deb Smith presents *Every Tallit Tells a Tale* at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater co-sponsored by Jewish Family Service. Reb Deb will bring a variety of beautiful tallitot from her personal collection. Dr. Laz, best-selling author of *Switchblades n' Skullcaps*, will be speaking on **Friday, December 11, 6:45pm** at Chabad Jewish Center in Hunterdon County. The evening also includes a community Shabbat dinner. The Jewish Film Series presents *DeliMan: A Freshly Made Documentary* by Eric Greenberg Anjou at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough on **Saturday, December 12 at 7pm**. Discussion and Q & A with film maker Eric Greenberg Anjou will follow the screening. Enjoy some great deli appetizers!

The incomparable Judith Viorst makes a return engagement to Jewish LIFE! Ms. Viorst will discuss her latest book, *Wait for Me and Other Poems About the Irritations and Consolations of a Long Marriage*, on **Wednesday, December 16, 12 Noon** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater (program includes luncheon). On **Thursday, December 17 at 12 Noon**, learn about *The Story of the Music of George and Ira Gershwin*...at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. Jewish LIFE rounds out 2015 with *The Irma Horowitz Film Series featuring Falafel and Films* **Thursday, December 17, 6:30pm** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater with short Israeli films from the Ma'Alah School of Television and the Arts in Jerusalem. Enjoy a falafel dinner while viewing three short Israeli films.

Looking ahead to January...a special event with Alice Eve Cohen, author of *The Year My Mother Came Back (a Memoir)*, will held **Thursday, January 7, 12 Noon** at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater.

The Jewish LIFE 2015-2016 brochure is available at the JCC and is posted on the JCC website: ssbjcc.org. Jewish LIFE is made possible in part by a grant from the Jewish Federation of Somerset, Hunterdon & Warren Counties. **Jewish LIFE needs your support!** Patron and Benefactor opportunities are available. Please contact Laura Friedman, JCC Executive Director at 908-725-6994 x213; LFriedman@ssbjcc.org. 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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