



Mark Your Calendar!

- Friday, June 3, 7:45 p.m.
Shabbat Service -
- Sunday, June 12, 9:30 a.m.
Annual Meeting
- Friday, June 17, 7:45 p.m.
Shabbat Service
- Friday, June 24, 6:30 p.m.
Lay Service

SUMMER SERVICES

- Friday, July 8
6:30 p.m.
followed by pot luck dinner
- Friday, July 29
6:30 p.m.
followed by pot luck dinner
- Friday, September 9
7:45 p.m.

Rabbi's Message

The holiday of Shavuot falls in the middle of June this year, "late" by our secular calendar. Shavuot marks the conclusion of our patient counting of the omer, begun on the second day of Pesach and continued for fifty days. At last Sinai is reached as the Jewish people anticipate zman matan Torateinu, the time of the giving of our Torah.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotsk asked, "Why do we say on Shavu'ot 'the time or the giving of our Torah,' and not 'the time of the receiving of our Torah?'" And he answered: "Because the giving was at Mount Sinai, while the receiving of the Torah is constant: Every time and every moment that a person studies Torah is the time of its receiving."

The whole purpose of our Jewish Center is the study of Torah in its broadest sense; again and again, we honor Judaism by living the words of Torah. One of the highlights of the Shabbaton was seeing our own members come to the bimah and read Torah and Haftarah. As each person read, I felt like Torah was being "received" anew. In fact, that entire Shabbat celebration felt like Torah was being received over and over again as we prayed and sang (and what music!) together. Our ancestors were with us in our sanctuary as we stood with them at Sinai. While the Shabbaton honored a milestone in my rabbinic career, I felt like it honored our entire congregation. It reminded us of what we are capable of.

May the inspiration of that one Shabbat carry over into a future full of promising plans for our congregation. I am grateful both to those who came before us and to those who con-

continued on next page

President's Message

This month I would like to take time to say thank you to the members of the board who have left in the last two years.

Laurie Hessels tended to our building with a love few have shown. She was a tireless and dedicated caretaker who truly loved our building and it showed in everything she did. Laurie Post ran our Sunday school for three years and helped this year to transition our school to the co-op concept. Through her love and commitment and leadership, our Sunday school is thriving. Don Meltz is an inspiration to me. Don was vice president before my term and is a person whose opinions, while sometimes different from my own, is a voice that I have listened to over the years and for that I will always be grateful. Judy Schroeder has been my secretary for the last two years and has done a wonderful job. Judy is a person who had made many contributions to the temple, including running the Hanukah boutique. I was lucky to have had her on the board with me the past two years. Her spirit in board meetings will be missed. Joanne Weiss was another new member of our board. Joanne oversaw Cantor Neff's arrangements for us this year. She is a quiet voice of intelligence and reason. Ken Weiland took over the building from Laurie and continued her loving tradition. Ken's two major additions to the temple are the donation holders on the pews and the simcha tree in the front lobby. His love for our temple shows through his work.

Being on the board of this temple is an honor and responsibility with which each of these individuals handled with grace and dignity. As president, I get to say for the entire congregation THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts.

Shalom,

Howie Hirsch (908-850-1030,
cell 908-295-0073 or email at jcnwjhowie@comcast.net)

IM THE PRESIDENT!
To contact Howie quickly
or simply to say hello,
IM me at:
howardhirschusa on AIM

Rabbi's Message, cont.

tinue to do the work today, all those who planned a wonderful celebration and all those who participated. *Hazak hazak v'nit - hazek*; may we be strong and may we continued to be strengthened. May the receiving of Torah always be constant.

Rabbi Ellen J. Lewis

YOUR VOTE COUNTS!

Be sure to attend the annual Congregational Meeting on **Sunday, June 12 at 9:30 a.m.**

An Open Letter to the Congregation

To say, "A great time was had by all" is an understatement for those who attended the recent Shabbaton in honor of Rabbi Lewis's twenty-fifth anniversary of her ordination. We enjoyed creative programming for the services, interesting guest speakers, and fabulous music, expertly executed by Helene Friedlander and Steve Kunzman, along with familiar and new cantorial selections by our student cantor, Karen Neff. Having members participate in the Torah reading and in the Haftarah reading helped create the inclusiveness with which we pride ourselves. Not only adults shared the bima, but also the Sunday school students took an active role in the service. What could be better!

The Simcha Room was transformed to appear like any beautifully decorated catering hall, with an elegant display of delicious food prepared by Metropolitan Seafood of Clinton, and luscious desserts created by Yvonne of Clinton.

However, in the final analysis, it wasn't the food or how the room looked that really mattered. What mattered was having a celebration, not only honoring our beloved rabbi, but also honoring ourselves in looking for a way to make our Judaism meaningful to each of us. We not only need a place in which to worship, we also need to provide for the Jewish people in the greater communities of Hunterdon, Warren, Morris and Sussex counties, as well as other neighboring areas to join us in celebrating our heritage. We are here because others planned for the us. We need to continue in the spirit of l'dor v'dor and have a plan for the future members to foster their Judaism and pass it on to their children.

Rabbi Lewis has enabled us to use her milestone to raise needed funds for our renovations to include handicap accessibility to anyone entering our doors. We need to forge ahead, making our building accessible to all who come and make our dream a reality. Making our building accessible to all who come for worship and fellowship is our goal. In making our dream a reality, we insure the future of Judaism in our small shtetl in Washington, New Jersey.

For those of you who have not contributed to our project, it is not too late to support this important undertaking. As Jews, we have an obligation to provide a place of worship that does not impede those who wish to pray with us. Please dig deep.

Thank You

Many, many thanks to the following members for contributing their time to make such a fabulous Shabbaton:

Ann Stahl and Rochelle Ostenfeld for decorating, setting up and schlepping!

Esther and Roland Bakonyi, Lisa Bauch and Eric Edelstein for dismantling and setting up the tables and chairs.

Brian Friedlander for taking photos.

Helene Friedlander and Steve Kunzman for the wonderful music.

Laurie Post and Lisa Bauch for coordinating the Religious School's participation.

Daniel Fleckles for his general assistance and numerous hours proofreading the journal.

Dan Hirshberg for helping with publicity.

Jeff Berkowitz for his incredible devotion to this project.

Jeana and Julia Berkowitz for helping in so many ways and for being such great kids!

Judy May for her way with words in English and Hebrew.

Paul May for his inspiring speech at the luncheon (and for counting the donations!)

Howie Hirsch for following our instructions so well!

Judy Schroeder for help in solicitations.

Ron Seidorf for coordinating the Men's Club.

Teri Stanton for picking up the ice.

Mike Weiner for his lovely and touching toast.

The Confirmation Class for helping to serve in the sanctuary.

Jim Arvesen for ushering.

Cantor Neff for her energy and enthusiasm in her singing.

Rabbi Lewis for allowing us to use her simcha to benefit the Center.

It takes a community to put together an event like this.

Our Jewish community did a fabulous job.

Gwen, Jeannie and Sharon

Adult Education

Torah study will meet in June, July, and August. Dates are still to be chosen. If you did not attend the end-of-May session at which dates were selected, please call Sharon Herson if you would like to participate during the summer. A calendar for Torah study and adult education in the fall will be printed in the September newsletter.

Education Committee and PTO News

This has been a tremendous year for the Religious school. Our children have learned so much, and have actively participated in school and Friday night services. I want to especially thank Karen Finkelstein, Rochelle Ostenfeld, Jeannie Berkowitz, and Marsha Gross and all the parents for your hard work throughout the entire year. Have a great summer!

Lisa Bauch



Mazel Tov!

Congratulations
to this year's graduates:

College:

Micha Lewis-Kraus
Katie Ehrlich

High School:

Bryant Simons
Asa Knobelman
Renee Orenstein
Robyn Nagorsky
Brittany Sonzogni
Danielle Rosborough,
Josh Jordan
Daniel Hall
Kate Kunzman.

I thank all the parents and students who came to the service and Oneg honoring our graduates. We are very proud of our "extended family" of young adults and wish them great success in their future endeavors. We hope that they remember that our door is always open to them for whenever they return.

Helen Mattson,
Ritual

**Lost
&**

Found

A pair of women's black pumps and a man's Kenneth Cole black jacket were left at the Center after the Shabbaton. Please call Helen Mattson at 735-4480 for information.

Congratulations Rabbi Ellen Jay Lewis on 25 Years in the Rabbinate

from your colleagues at the
Academy of Clinical and Applied
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769 Northfield Avenue, Suite LL2
West Orange, N.J. 07052

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

A Leadership Opportunity for NFTYites

Calling all teenagers! Don't miss the NFTY Leadership Track at the Union's Biennial Convention – the event that will bring more than 200 of your peers to Houston, TX this fall. Teens will mix learning and prayer with networking and fun – participating in NFTY workshops, listening to special keynote addresses, joining a special trip to NASA, and schmoozing. The NFTY Leadership Track begins on Thursday, November 17; to register, contact 212.650.4070, nfty@urj.org or visit the Web site at www.nfty.org.

Spend a High School Semester in Israel

Can you imagine spending your spring semester in Israel? NFTY's Eisendrath International Exchange has been sending students to Israel since 1962 —why not make 2006 the year you're a part of it? You'll earn a full semester of high school credit while living on a kibbutz on the outskirts of Jerusalem that serves as a base for your exploration of ancient and modern Israel. To learn more and to download an application and course catalog visit www.nfty.org/eie, or contact Jillian Cameron at 212.650.4073, jcameron@urj.org.

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