



Mark Your Calendar!

- Sunday, Jan. 5:
9:30am Men's Club breakfast
11:00am Adult Ed
Pirke Avot has been extended for 2 weeks!
7:00pm Confirmation Class
- Friday, Jan 10, 7:45pm
Shabbat
Oneg - May, Tozzo, Ehrlich, Durst Families
- Saturday, Jan. 11, 10-11:30am
Torah Study
(please note date change)
- Sunday, Jan. 12:
9:30am PTO meeting/breakfast
11:00am Adult Ed
- Sunday, Jan. 19:
8:30am Teacher's Meeting
Sunday School: Diversity Day
- Friday, Jan. 24, 7:45pm
Shabbat
Oneg - Sonzogni, Meltz, Riley Families
- Friday, Jan. 24-Sunday, Jan 26
Confirmation retreat
- Sunday, Jan. 26, 11:00am
Grades 6 & 7 trip to MetroWest

We're on the Web! Thanks go to Wain Schroeder, who will be posting each issue of the Journal at our website:
www.jcnwj.org

Rabbi's Message

My Great-Uncle Charlie left Lvov when he was 14. He was the oldest of eight, the first to arrive on these shores. I used to ask him what life had been like in the place he called "the Old Country." Finally one day he said to me, "You think my life was like Fiddler On the Roof. It wasn't. It was hard. And I don't always like to remember it."

I thought about Uncle Charlie this week as I listened to my students talk about how hard it is to be Jewish this time of year. Certainly their experiences don't compare to the pogroms and poverty of Eastern Europe. And yet it is hard when you are the only Jewish kid in the class, the only one who doesn't want to make a Christmas tree ornament or sing religious carols. It is hard when you use the abbreviation B.C.E. instead of B.C. on a paper and the teacher marks it wrong. It is hard when you are assigned homework on Rosh Hashanah as if it were just a day off from school rather than a day you spend in synagogue.

I found myself thinking of the Yiddish adage, "Shver zu eine Yid - it is hard to be a Jew." And I found myself feeling conflicted. While I would like things to be easier for our kids, I also think it's not so bad for them to experience this kind of hardship. It would be great if the world honored all religions equally and our children could feel accepted and included not despite their Jewishness but because of it, but the world is not that way. And frankly, if we give them the idea that being Jewish should be easy, exactly what are we teaching them? Isn't it better to teach them that the world can be a hard place and that Judaism can give them the strength to survive and prevail? Better to teach them how to stand up for what they believe no matter how many people disagree with them? Better to

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President's Message

Dear Friends,

My kids use to ask me why we, Jews, get to celebrate the New Year twice a year. My response was always the same, "we are so lucky that we get a second chance to evaluate the progress we have achieved in our spiritual commitments made in September." My smarty pants kids would roll their eyes and say that the January celebration had nothing to do with G-d and Judaism — that we make other kinds of commitments called New Year's resolutions. We would then discuss the types of resolutions they had in mind. And, I would always offer my resolution of more exercise and losing weight!

This year my resolution has not changed. I plan to find time to devote to the treadmill and watching what I eat. But, I thought further about my response I used to give the girls regarding the January celebration. By making a commitment to taking better care of myself, G-d's creation, is this not a spiritual commitment? I believe it is, but, I chuckled, when I wondered how to make my morning exercise plans a Jewish experience!

Then, oddly enough, a friend sent me a copy of an article from *Judaism On-Line* written by Rabbi Terry Bookman titled "The Ten Minute Spiritual Workout." The essay proposes a "daily, computer-assisted religious fitness program that develops one's connection to the inner self and to the Transcendent Power of the Universe-God." In a quick synopsis, the Rabbi outlines a shortened morning service that can be done on-line at home or in the office in ten minutes. "Perhaps a sense of cyber-minyan can be attained in the knowledge that others are doing the same," she says. Well, who needs the computer for this prayer service I thought. Why not incorporate her plan into my daily treadmill exercise program

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Annual Membership Drive

The Center is offering its annual special to our unaffiliated neighbors. Offer includes a FREE 6-month membership (January through June).

Privileges include all aspects detailed in our membership packet, with the exception of Sanctuary & Simcha Room use for Life Cycle Events and Religious School Enrollment.

For details and inquiries, please contact Suzanne Marr

Rabbi's Message, cont.

teach them how to live meaningful Jewish lives so that they understand why the concomitant hardships are worth it?

We don't do anyone any favors by teaching them that being Jewish is easy. If there is one thing most adults know, it is that nothing really important is easy. The world doesn't always honor those who have convictions, religious or otherwise. In this month that honors Martin Luther King, I think of Uncle Charlie and all those who survived unimaginable hardships for a life of freedom. And I think of how important it is for our children to learn to stand up for themselves and their own beliefs. Only then will they understand how important it is to stand up for others and bring justice to this world.

Rabbi Ellen J. Lewis

President's Message, cont.

and meditate on the meaning of life as I work my G-d given hips!

So, as of January 1, I will ease the monotony and boredom of the morning walk with my modified version of the Rabbi's outline. I will thank G-d for granting me another day of life, good health and for giving me the soul that makes me uniquely me. I will give thanks for all the people and things in my life. I will think about the mind I have been blessed with that allows me to study and learn the teachings of the Torah. I will think about what good things I have recently done to benefit others, how I helped the world to be a better place and plan new ways of contributing. I will think about those who are sick and ask G-d to bless them with healing. And, I will recite the Sh'ma and meditate on the meaning that all creation is one.

Now, I just need you all to commit to this daily spiritual and physical workout to create the sense of a morning minyan. I invite you all to become more spiritual Jews with me this secular New Year as we become more physically fit together!

May G-d bless you all with the strength to fulfill your resolutions this year.

Shalom,
Gwen

Spiritual Kallah

Share in a complete Shabbat experience with study, worship and song at the annual UAHC regional kallah at Temple Emeth, Teaneck on **January 25**, 9:30am-5:00pm. Mail the fee of \$36 to the UAHC, 56 Ridgewood Rd, Washington Township, NJ 07676. (Let's get a car pool together!)

Scout Shabbat

Mark your calendars for Scout Shabbat, **Friday, February 7**, when all Scouts are invited to services, dressed in uniform, so the congregation may honor Scouts who have achieved religious achievements this year. If you are a Scout and are receiving a badge, award or other recognition from your troupe for an achievement related to Judaism, contact Helen Mattson so you can be included in this service. Be sure to invite your troop for this occasion!

Education Committee and PTO News

Mitzvot of MetroWest

The 6th and 7th grade students are invited on **Sunday, January 26**, to attend a program on Mitzvah projects sponsored by the United Jewish Communities of MetroWest New Jersey and the Jewish Education Association. The program will be held at the Aidekman Campus, 901 Route 10 East, Whippany (just east of Route 287).

All students are expected to attend. Transportation will not be provided. Please accompany your child or arrange for them to go with a classmate. This is an important event and an opportunity that you will not want your child to miss.

Come Make Your Own Tallis

All 6th and 7th grade Sunday School students will be making a tallis on **February 9**. Laurie Hessels will be teaching the group how to make a tallis and to tie the tzitzit.

Adult members are also invited to join in making a tallis and learning the meanings of each loop and knot.

Each tallis needs:

- 2 yards cotton fabric at least 18" x 5' - any design
- 1 spool thread to match fabric
- 3 packages embroidery thread in 2 colors

Please have the materials by January 26.

Thank you from the Confirmation Class

Thank you to Sandy Seidorf for holding a Chanukah Party for the confirmation class. It was a very thoughtful thing for her to do. We all had a great time. Thanks Mrs. S!

Forty-five gifts were delivered for the Chanukah celebration for the Jewish residents at the Hunterdon Developmental Center. Thanks to everyone for supporting this wonderful cause.

The next PTO meeting will be **Sunday, January 12**, at 9:30am. Bring some food and join us for pot luck breakfast!

Hannah Braunstein's Mitzvah Project

My mitzvah project was raising a puppy for the Seeing Eye. Last year we got Inky, a mixed breed. Inky has German shepherd, Golden Retriever, and Labrador in him. There were all kinds of things I had to teach Inky, like ringing a bell when he wanted to go outside.

Inky got to go to lots of places. We went to an airport, a parade, and even here a few times. Inky was always calm and well behaved, even in the mall with lots of distracting noises. The most recent place we went to was Ort Farms for a hayride. He was a little scared, but on the way back he was calm again. Seeing Eye dogs have to be used to many different places, and many different scenarios like loud noises, crowds, tight spaces, and stairs or other obstacles. The perfect place to find all of these obstacles was a football game, and Inky did great!

Another place we had to go to was 4-H Club, "Puppy Tails." Inky and I went to practice turns, distractions, and many other commands. By the time the Seeing Eye has fully trained a dog it will know 300 different commands, and I only taught him the basics. Soon Inky will go back to the Seeing Eye, and I hope I have taught him enough to pass!

In Honor of Rose Schneider

The Jewish Center is announcing that in honor of Rose Schneider's status as a founding member we will be purchasing a sound system to add to our existing system that will enable members who are hard of hearing or hearing challenged, to be able to hear our rabbi and anyone else who speaks from the bima.

Anyone wishing to make a contribution to this endeavor, please send your generous check in honor of Rose Schneider to Andrew Colby.

We are indebted to Rose and all the Schneider family for their vision to corral the local Jewish residents and create a house of prayer, a house of study and a house of simchas, thereby calling it The Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey.

Thanks Rose!

We wish to thank Cheryl and Ed Orenstein for being such gracious hosts for the celebration honoring founding member Rose Schneider. A good time was had by the 35 members of the congregation who joined Rose and her family at this wonderful celebration.

Shoprite/A&P Vouchers

Certificates can be purchased at Sunday School on the following dates: January 5th, January 19th and February 2nd and at Confirmation on January 5th. Call Sandy Seidorf with questions or to make arrangements to support this wonderful fundraiser for the Temple.

Caitlin & Allison Hirsch's Mitzvah Projects

For my Bat Mitzvah project, I am collecting old cell phones. I will bring the phones to a Verizon store and they will program the cell phones so that they will only dial "911" and the phones will be delivered to an abused women's shelter for their protection. My goal is to try to get 100 cell phones. Please help me obtain my goal. Thank you in advance for your support.

Caitlin Hirsch

For my Bat Mitzvah project, I am collecting items to help Noah's Ark Animal Shelter and Rocky Springs Animal Rehab Center. Noah's Ark is a no-kill shelter housing cats and dogs. Rocky Springs rehabilitates only wild animals, and my Mom, Iris, volunteers her time there twice a week. The following is a list of items desperately needed by both centers:

Surgical latex gloves	Paper plates
Infant receiving blankets	Dog/cat food & toys
Gerber baby foods*	Copy paper
Canned evaporated milk (regular only, please)	Antibacterial hand soap
KMR (kitten milk replacer powder form)*	Pedialyte*
Esbilac (puppy formula powdered form)*	Science Diet dog, cat, puppy & kitten foods canned or dry*
Kitchen garbage bags	Wild bird seed 30 gallon size
Kitchen sponges	Plastic bags
	Towels & paper towels

*These brand names must be the same for the animals' sake.

Please help me to help the animals.

Allison Hirsch

Updates to Membership List

We say goodbye and wish good luck to Shelley, Dan and Callie Wright, who have moved

Please send all address, phone number, email or name spelling corrections to Andrew Colby.

Jewish LIFE events

David Harris, Executive Director, American Jewish Committee, "UPDATE ON ISRAEL," **Sunday, January 12** at 11am. Fee includes bagel breakfast: \$10/Jewish LIFE members, \$15/non-members.

Rabbi David Wolf Silverman, **Thursday, January 30**, at 7:30pm: "New Trends in Jewish Philosophy." \$7/Jewish LIFE members, \$10/non-members.

All of the programs will be held at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater.

For further information and to register for Jewish LIFE programs, contact Laura Friedman, JCC Assistant Executive Director at 908-725-6994 x213; LFriedman@ssbjcc.org.

Mazel Tov!

Mazel Tov to Sarah Weinstein and her family on the occasion of Sarah's Bat Mitzvah on December 20th.

In Memoriam

Our sincere condolences are sent to David Simms and his family for the recent passing of David's sister, Susan Fenner, who passed away early in December. Our heartfelt sympathies are with you.

Donations

Yahrtzeit

- Ann Stahl in loving memory of Harriet Horowitz, mother of Ann Stahl
- Leslie & Murray Heller in loving memory of Walter Sobine
- Susan & Dan Hirshberg in loving memory of Mitchell Hirshberg
- Rhonda Jordan in loving memory of Jean Siegel
- Pearl & Stan Ehrlich in memory of Sally Charloff
- Pearl & Stan Ehrlich in memory of Betty Berkowitz
- Rona & Stanley Schick in loving memory of Sally Zemel
- Linda Albin & Jim Arvesen in loving memory of Elizabeth Arvesen
- Linda Albin & Jim Arvesen in loving memory of Elmer Arvesen
- Leslie & Murray Heller in loving memory of Mildred Sobine
- Sally & Richard Eisenberg in loving memory of Arnold Treitman, father of Sally Eisenberg

Prayer Book

Helen & John Mattson in loving memory of Sally Zemel

Tallasim

Helen & John Mattson
Linda Albin & Jim Arvesen in honor of Ricki's Bat Mitzvah

Sound System

Lucy & Dave Banner, Brenda & Dr. Michael Goldblatt,
Elizabeth & Raymond Falk, Mary & Paul Yeazell

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Robin and Colson Hall, Linda Albin and Jim Arvesen

Cancellations Due to Winter Weather

If services need to be canceled on a Friday evening, a message will be left on the Center's answering machine by 5:30 pm. If Sunday School needs to be canceled, a message will be left on the Center's answering machine by Sunday, 7:30am. We will also attempt the snow chain again this year.

WRNJ radio station will broadcast any cancellations. However, be sure to call the Center's phone number for full details and updates left on the answering machine.

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

Name	_____	Email	_____
Address	_____	I/We would like to make a contribution of	_____
	_____	In honor of	_____
	_____	In memory of	_____
Phone	_____	Please contact me/us about membership	_____

Make check payable to Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey, and mail to JCNWJ, c/o Andrew Colby