

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey



## Journal



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### *Rabbi's message*

Even when you think you know what to expect, it is still somewhat shocking to walk around the corner in Memphis and be confronted by the Lorraine Motel. It looks just like it looked in the 1968 newspaper photos. Up on the second floor balcony, a life preserver marks the spot where Dr. Martin Luther King was shot. As you stand in that place, you can turn around and look back through a glassed-in wall into the motel room where King and his colleagues had been chatting moments before his death. The room is preserved exactly as it had been left. After Dr. King's assassination, the Lorraine Motel fell into a steep decline but eventually was preserved and designated an historic site. The site became the home of the National Civil Rights Museum.

I imagine I would have felt just as moved if I had gone to the National Civil Rights Museum at some other time, but it just so happened that I was there a few days before Martin Luther King's birthday. I hadn't been to Memphis since the mid-1980's; the Museum didn't open until 1991. I had forgotten so much of the history of the Civil Rights Movement in our country. We watched footage of the sanitation workers strike including the footage of Dr. King's final speech. His final words made me shiver. As others have noted, they seemed to foretell what would happen to him the next day:

**And then I got to Memphis. And some began to say the threats, or talk about the threats that were out. What would happen to me from some of our sick white brothers? Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't really matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life; longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land. So I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.**

Dr. King paid for his devotion to justice with his life. If ever you can say that one person made a difference, you can make the case for Dr. Martin Luther King. While it is true that the world is not yet a just place, much has changed for the good in the intervening years. Could Dr. King have dreamed that 45 years later we would inaugurate an African American President for a second term on a day named for Dr. King himself?

Dr. King spoke straight out of our biblical prophetic tradition in his defense of justice for all people. President Obama referenced this same biblical tradition this week when he reiterated the prophetic stand, "For history tells us that while these truths may be self-evident, they have never been self-executing; that while freedom is a gift from God, it must be secured by His people here on Earth." We believe we are God's partners in bringing freedom to all humankind. As we are told by the rabbis in Pirke Avot: "Lo alecha hamlacha ligmor, v'lo atah ben horin l'hibatel mimena. It is not your job to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from beginning." Dr. King's legacy to us reminds us of our own teachings. One person can make a difference - or perhaps better said - each person must make a difference.

Rabbi Ellen Lewis



## *President's message*

This month I would like to speak with you regarding change. In the next few months, Rabbi Lewis will be retiring and we will find a new rabbi to lead our congregation. We have established a search committee, and the committee is doing its job of interviewing candidates. We have interviewed 6 potential rabbis so far and have a few more who are also interested in the position. We have been working diligently and seriously in this endeavor, and we will let you know when we have come to an agreement with a successor rabbi.

I use the term "successor" with a lot of thought behind it. Whoever we hire to be our next rabbi, the one thing I can assure you is that it will not be Rabbi Lewis. The new rabbi will have their own style, manners, sermons, new ideas of how to do the things that we feel are the most important to our congregation. But we will also let the new rabbi lead us into the future with their thoughts and most of all, their passion for leading a congregation.

Someone once said that those who can not embrace change will be swept away by it. If you look back to when Rabbi Lewis was hired in 1994, the world was a very different place. When we wanted to notify the congregation of a death or important information, we had a phone chain that started with the president, and the board members would have a list of people to call and let them know something was happening. There really was no internet, almost no one had personal email accounts, Facebook was not even a dream in Mark Zuckerberg's head. In the 19 years since Rabbi Lewis came to our temple, the world of information has exploded.

As for me, I still prefer to get my news directly from people and not find out things from Facebook. But I am not of the generation that if I left my house for a few hours without my Star Trek communicator, I mean my cell phone, I am capable of living my life and going about my business without the phone. For my children, this is not an option. The world is changing faster every day, and with all these new ways of communicating, I urge you to not lose sight of the benefits of people-to-people contact. Call someone up to see if they are OK if you haven't heard or seen them in a while. Hug people when you see them. Embrace the opportunities to engage in conversations with people. One of my biggest fears for my children's generation is that with so many ways to communicate with each other, they do not lose the personal touch of speaking with another human being.

I have made my career in the computer field and understand how fast things move in the digital age. I embrace most of the change, but I truly feel the personal touch is fading into the history books. Do what you can to keep that from happening.

Love Howie



## Mark your Calendar

Sunday, Feb. 3	9:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Sunday School PTO Meeting Confirmation
Monday, Feb. 4	7:30 p.m.	Board Meeting
Friday, Feb. 8	7:30 p.m.	Shabbat Service Oneg: Romanczyk, Torine, Weinstein, Santillo families
Saturday, Feb. 9	10:30 a.m.	Torah Study
Sunday, Feb. 10	9:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 10:45 a.m.	Sunday School Sisterhood Adult Education
Sunday, Feb. 17		No Sunday School
Friday, Feb. 22	7:30 p.m.	Shabbat Service Oneg: Braunstein, J/K Schaffer, S/B Schaffer, Leifer, Hendler families
Sunday, Feb. 24	9:30 a.m. 12:00 p.m.	Sunday School Purim Carnival

## *ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE RITUAL COMMITTEE*

### **Honoring Family Members and Friends**

If you would like to honor a loved one, whether family member or friend, living or deceased, there are a number of ways to do so within the tradition of tzedakah to the synagogue. You may purchase a memorial plaque for the memorial board (\$325), a pew plaque (\$250), a leaf on the Simcha Tree (\$180), a prayer book dedication (\$36), or a donation card (for any occasion, \$5 and up).

If you have a professional activity that you want the congregation to know about, please let us know in time to make the newsletter deadline for that month.

## *Education/PTO*

On **February 3<sup>rd</sup>** we have a PTO meeting at 9:30 a.m., and then at 10:30 a.m. the Confirmation class meets. On **February 10<sup>th</sup>** the Hebrew School children will enjoy making hamentashen to begin the celebration of Purim. There is no Hebrew School on **February 17<sup>th</sup>** for President's Day.

We celebrate the festive holiday of Purim on **February 24<sup>th</sup>** beginning at 9:30 a.m. with the Megillah Reading and Purim Spiel. Then at 12:00 noon we continue our Purim celebration with our annual Purim Carnival. **KIDS SHOULD COME IN COSTUME and BRING A FRIEND!!** There will be a costume contest, along with games and activities for the kids, baked goods, hamentashen, theme baskets, and much more! **Thank you to our Hebrew School families and everyone else who donated items for our Purim Carnival. We really appreciate it!**

Marsha Gross, Education Chair



## *Contributions*



In honor of this year's b'nai mitzvah: Mikaela Bauer, Jill Fesinstine,  
Alex McMullen, Lauren Onweller, Rachel Parilis, and Jill Wilson  
The McMullen Family

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Mishabeyrach for Michael Mattson  
Helen and John Mattson

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In memory of Gussie Zaret  
Lois and Stuart Goldberg

In memory of Rebecca Goldenthal  
Bernard Robins

In memory of Rose Schneider  
Joan B. Chase  
Helen and John Mattson

In memory of Charlotte Fels and Eric Edelstein  
Helen and John Mattson

In memory of Art Sirkis  
Helen and John Mattson

In memory of Rose Schutzbank  
Ruth and Howard Schutzbank

Memories of Rose Schneider, JCNWJ founder, from Joan Chase

Rose Schneider was a warm and caring woman. I always enjoyed our visits, and she never failed to make me smile, laugh and chuckle. She had an array of "Yiddishisms" that were always perfect for whatever story or occasion she described.

Rose enjoyed all the Jewish Center activities, and was a constant figure in the kitchen and social hall before, during and after any event. One evening we had a Jewish humor circle, and she regaled us with funny vignettes and jokes. For about three years, we drove to Stroudsburg, PA for a lecture by a friend of hers who taught at the college there. Rose was no longer driving at night, so we went together. She had been attending the lecture series for many years. Each time, I became more impressed with how wide her circle of friends and admirers was. Many people came up to greet her and show their affection. I cherish the memory of those trips.

*Sisterhood News*  
*Due by January 31, 2013*

Purim is a time for gift giving. The JCNWJ Sisterhood is once again sponsoring the wonderful Mishloach Manot fundraiser for Purim, February 24, 2013. This is a great occasion to give sweets and gifts to your friends, family and co-workers.

Every Temple family participating will receive one small bag of hamantaschen. In each hamantaschen bag is a card identifying the family(s) that contributed to your gift with special acknowledgment to you. Like last year, each Temple family will be mailed the forms to purchase a hamantaschen bag to send to other for Temple members or to purchase extra hamantaschen bags for family and friends.

Although each Temple family will receive only one hamantashen bag, you may make your purchases for as many families as you wish.

This year, your generous contributions will go directly toward the purchase of an AED- Automated External Defibrillator , a [portable electronic device](#) that automatically diagnoses the potentially life-threatening [cardiac arrhythmias](#) and is able to treat them through [defibrillation](#). With simple audio and visual commands, AEDs are designed to be easy to use for the layman. The use of AEDs is taught in many [first aid](#), [first responder](#), and [basic life support](#) (BLS) level [CPR](#) classes.

For more information about Michloach Manot, and to get the forms for this event, check your mail and the temple web site at [www.jcnwj.org](http://www.jcnwj.org) now.

Remember that every dollar contributed will go toward making our Temple

## *Upcoming Jewish LIFE Special Events include:*

Coming in February...

The Irma Horowitz Film Series, featuring Israeli short films, Thursday, February 7, 6:30 pm at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. The following films will be presented by Ma'Alen School of Televisions Film and the Arts in Jerusalem: "Barriers", "Stand Up" and "Cheftzi on Air". Fee includes falafel dinner: \$10/person in advance; \$15/person at the door. Advance registration requested.

Step Up for Israel Film Series, Crossing the Line: The Intifada Comes to Campus, Thursday, February 13, 7 pm at the Birnbaum JCC. Free to the community.

Reuven Firestone, Holy War in Judaism: The Fall and Rise of a Controversial Idea, Tuesday, February 12, 7pm at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. Reuven Firestone identifies, analyzes and explains the historical, conceptual and the intellectual processes that revived holy war ideas in modern Judaism. Fee \$8/person in advance; \$10/person at the door.

**The Irma Horowitz Film Series featuring Falafel & Films** will be showing three Israeli short films **Friday, March 1, 6:30 p.m. at Or Chadash, Flemington.** Dinner at 6:30 followed by films. The films, created by students of The Ma'aleh School in Jerusalem, include Willingly, A Jerusalem Tale and Luz. A falafel dinner is included with the program fee: \$10/person in advance or \$15 at the door. Call Or Chadash to register at 908-806-2122.

**Robert Rosenthal, From **Plagues** to Miracle, Thursday, March 7, 7 p.m. at the Birnbaum JCC. \$8/ person in advance or \$10 at the door. Call the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201 to register.**

**Step Up For Israel Film Series: Speak Up for Israel, Wednesday, March 13 at Or Chadash, Flemington and Thursday, March 14, 7 p.m. at the Birnbaum JCC. Learn how you can speak up on Israel's behalf. Panel discussion to follow film. Free to all. To register, please call program location: Or Chadash at 908-806-2122 or the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201.**

**RESCHEDULED!!!! Peninnah Schram & Gerard Edery, The Minstrel and the Storyteller, Saturday, March 16, 7 p.m. Hosted by Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. Fee: \$18/person in advance or \$22 at the door. Call Temple Beth-El to register at 908-722-7799 to register.**

**Delia Ephron, best-selling author of The Lion is In, Wednesday, March 20, 12 Noon at the Birnbaum JCC. Fee includes lunch and program: \$18/in advance or \$22 at the door. Co-sponsored by Brandeis National Committee, Somerset Chapter, Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough Sisterhood; Temple Beth El, Somerset Sisterhood; Temple Sholom Sisterhood. Call the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201 to register.**

### Feburary Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles, advertisements and photos to be included in the March issue is Feburary 19, 2013. Please email articles, ideas or news items to Journal Editor, Barbara Simons at [bjbs@comcast.net](mailto:bjbs@comcast.net)

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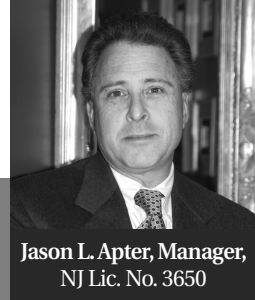
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