

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey



Journal



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www.jcnwj.org

May 2010
Vol. XXXVI, Issue 9

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- *Saturday, May 1, 10:00 am
Bat Mitzvah: Kelsey Shelofsky

- *Sunday, May 2, 9:30 am
Sunday School (Music),
PTO Meeting

- *Tuesday, May 4, 7:00 pm
Adult Hebrew Class

- *Sunday, May 9
No Sunday School (Mother's Day)

- *Monday, May 10, 7:30 pm
Board Meeting

- *Tuesday, May 11, 7:00 pm
Adult Hebrew Class

- *Friday, May 14, 7:30 pm
Shabbat Services: Cantor Coyot Final Service
Oneg: McNamara family

- *Saturday, May 15, 10:00 am
Bar Mitzvah: Jake McNamara

- *Sunday, May 16, 9:30 am
Sunday School (Music)
Sisterhood Meeting

- *Tuesday, May 18, 7:00 pm
Adult Hebrew Class

- *Sunday, May 23
9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Confirmation

- *Tuesday, May 25, 7:00 pm
Adult Hebrew Class

- *Sunday, May 30
No Sunday School: Memorial Day Weekend

Save the Date:

General Meeting

June 6th at 9:30 am

Rabbi's Message

Today was a day full of sacred moments. When I was rehearsing in the sanctuary with a bar mitzvah family, one of the family members noticed the door handles on the ark. They are in the shape of fists. Was there any particular religious meaning to the fists, he asked. I said, no, as far as I know, there is no religious meaning to fists. If the hands were open and if there were a split between the four longer fingers, that would signify the way the cohanim open their hands for the priestly benediction. These fists are just functional. I had never paid them much attention. In fact, until the questioner had pointed it out, I hadn't realized both fists are right-handed.

I do know who created these fists. They were crafted by Matty Schneider. He was a founding member of the temple who died about ten years ago. He also created the ark and was responsible for much of the woodwork on the bimah. If you look closely at the small tarnished plaques below the ark, you will see that Matty made it in memory of his son Larry who died many years ago when he was in his twenties.

In moments like that, I am reminded to be grateful to those who came before us at the Jewish Center. There were others whose contribution is not memorialized by a plaque but whose efforts were also important and from whose work we benefit today. When I look down from the bimah on the row of 6th and 7th graders sitting up front during services, I know that they are the legacy of Matty and all those others who worked hard to establish this congregation. Whenever we do something to create community in our congregation, we honor their memories. I was grateful that the question about the door handles had reminded me to feel appreciative of something I often take for granted.

Later in the morning, my 6th and 7th graders talked about the meaning of minyan. We said that the minimum definition of community is ten. If you can't get at least ten people for prayer, you are not permitted to recite certain prayers. The idea is that we are obligated to do at least that much if we want the privilege of reciting kaddish. I reminded them that when they are 13, they, too, can receive a phone call asking them to be part of a minyan enabling someone else to say kaddish. There happened to be ten students present in that class today; right there in our classroom, our small microcosmic Jewish community, they understood that each one's presence counted.

Then in the Confirmation rehearsal, a student who had been unable to read Hebrew 6 months ago stood in front of the Torah and began to read. One of her classmates had been tutoring her. It was what I call a shehechianu moment, a moment deserving of celebration.

Continued on Page 2

President's Message

This past weekend, I did something that I very much like to do. I rode up to Boston to play percussion with friends that I have been playing music with for the last 30 years. We are all in our early fifties, with me being the oldest. The entire band is located in the Boston area except for me. This gives me a lot of time to think about why I will drive 11-12 hours to play music with my friends for 3 or four hours.

In thinking this over, I guess the first part is that it is just plain fun. We have been playing twice a year for the last 7 or 8 years consecutively and I always have fun. But I think it is more than that. Part of it is that we have formed a small community. These are people that I have grown as an adult with. While we were young and crazy when we started, we have all become responsible adults, with families and careers. Our families are intertwined, although I am somewhat out of the everyday loop by being so far away. Part of it is tradition. When you start doing something and then continue to do it for a number of years, it becomes part of your traditions. We are also there to support each other in times of trouble. This week, our drummer's father-in-law passed away. His wife insisted that we play on Saturday, part of this acting as our form of a wake for her father.

So far, I have talked about family and tradition. To me, these are some of the core values of Judaism. There is little that is more important to me than my family, my temple family and the traditions that I have celebrated throughout my life. I believe that these values define who I am and what I stand for. They tend to give me a base stability that enables me to deal with issues in my life. Knowing who you are, where you have come from, and what you stand for gives you a starting point when you have tough decisions to make. It gives you somewhere to lean upon when times are tough and places to go when it is time to celebrate.

I wish you all a very healthy Spring. Enjoy the flowers and take time to hug the ones you love.

*Love,
Howie*

Wanted: Advertisers for JCNWJ Journal

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Rabbi's Message (Cont.)

Creating community is hard work, but every now and then, you have a morning where you remember why you do what you do. When I march in the processional to see Student Cantor Coyot invested as a Cantor, that will be another sacred moment. I realized almost incidentally that this year will mark 30 years since I was ordained a Rabbi. I have been fortunate since then to experience many sacred moments, most of them small ones like the ones I described today, ones that would not be worthy of headlines but in fact are worth so much more.

May we share many more sacred moments together.

Rabbi Ellen Lewis

Education/ PTO

May is our last month of Hebrew School before the summer break. There is no school on **May 9th** (Mother's Day) and **May 30th** (Memorial Day). **May 23rd** is our Closing Assembly and Confirmation Ceremony – all of the Hebrew School and Confirmation students will participate. Mazel Tov to our confirmands!

We would like to thank our wonderful Rabbi, Cantor, teachers, teacher helpers, and PTO families. You all make our Hebrew School a success, and you are appreciated.

It has been a great year and we wish you a wonderful summer.

Marsha Gross and Karen Finkelstein

(Education Co-Chairs)

June Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles, advertisements, and photos to be included in the June Issue is **May 22, 2010**. Please email articles, ideas or news items to Journal Editor, Abby Bauer, at abbybauer@comcast.net.

Contributions

In honor of Craig's bar mitzvah, a gift to the Rabbi's honorarium
~Lynn and Barry Kestecher

In honor of the bar mitzvah of Craig Kestecher
~Sue Goulden

In memory of Nora and Herbert E, Shifrin
~Laura and Paul Tarlowe

In memory of Ed Lewis
~Barbara Goldman-Wartell
~Rabbi Shira Stern
~Mary Lande Zamor
~Deborah Hachen
~Ellen and Rich Wellins
~Coralie and Paul Corrado
~Benjamin Wolkowitz
~Alison and Sean Katz and Family

Think about this...

After you pray and you put some money into the tzedaka box in the foyer, this is what you are doing:

T Tikon Olam	Repairing the World through
S Shalom	Peace
E Eloheim	With God's
D Devarim	Words,
A Avodah	In Prayer,
K Kadosh	Holiness
A Ahava	And love

Join our Congregation

As we express our gratitude and bid farewell to our Cantor Tifani Coyot (no longer a student) at the oneg that follows Shabbat services on **May 14th**.



Mazel Tov

From the JCNWJ

To Jake McNamara and the McNamara family on Jake's upcoming Bar Mitzvah

A Few Words from Helen

Kitchen:

Where have all the kitchen towels gone? Long time passing...Remember the popular song that talked about the ..."flowers gone?" It was ringing in my head the other week when I was looking for fresh towels in the kitchen and there were none there. If you have taken the towels home to wash, thank-you, and please return them. I, for one (and I know that there are others) have purchased new towels for our kitchen, and have never seen them again. It would be wonderful if they were returned to our kitchen. Thank-you.

Lost and Found:

There are a few jackets, some scarves and a pair of winter gloves that someone is missing. They are hanging up in our coat area near the elevator. Please claim what is yours, the remainder will be donated to charity.

Chumashim:

These are the *Torah* books that were donated by two families ten years ago marking milestones in their lives. We don't have 30 books anymore. Please check your library shelves. If you have borrowed one, please return it. Last Shabbat we had a bar mitzvah and people were looking around for these books when Rabbi Lewis announced the page number for people to turn to following the Torah reading. Thank-you.

Talent Show

I especially want to thank the people who participated in our "Fifth Ever Jewish Center Talent" show on April 10th. Rabbi Lewis began the evening with Havdallah, the separation of the end of Shabbat and the beginning of the work week. It is a very short but beautiful custom in the homes of many Jewish families and we get to experience it at the Jewish Center only at Neilah, the end of Yom Kippur.

Thank-you parents and guests who attended our Talent Show and supported our participants. Thank-you to our Judge, Howie, who was the master of ceremonies, and who also entertained us with his numerous jokes. Everyone had a great time enjoying music, laughter and ice-cream.

Photo Album



Sunday School students celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut with a delectable Israeli Breakfast.



The JCNWJ Sisterhood lets their hair down with rootin' tootin' line dancing!



Attention All Graduates



The Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey would like to recognize our graduating seniors at the June 4th Shabbat service. Caps and gowns not required!

Please contact Rabbi Lewis to share the details of your graduate's educational achievement.

Confirmation Class 2010

*Leana Berkowitz
Hannah Finkelstein
Brett Kestecher
Whitney Kowski
Rachel Longenecker
Danielle Peckman
Josh Shelosfsky
Stephanie Tarlowe*

May your pursuit of Judaic study never cease.

*Thank you for your generous contributions
and kind condolences in memory of my
father, Edward Israel Lewis.*

Your thoughtfulness honors his memory.

~ Rabbi Lewis and her Family

Happy Mother's Day!

Jokes for Jewish Mothers

A Jewish boy comes home from school and tells his mother he has been given a part in the school play.

"Wonderful! What part is it?" replies the mother.

The boy says, "I play the part of the Jewish husband."

The mother scowls, "That's terrible. Go back and tell the teacher you want a speaking part!"

~ ~ ~

An elderly woman is sitting in the waiting room while her daughter-in-law gives birth. A while later, a doctor comes out and says, "Mrs. Goldberg, I have wonderful news! Your daughter in law just gave birth to twins."

Mrs. Goldberg turns to Mrs. Rubenstein and says "Why look at that, my daughter- in- law just gave birth to twins and my husband works in the Twin Towers!"

A while later, a doctor walks up to Mrs. Rubenstein, another women whose daughter-in-law was giving birth and says, "Congratulations, your daughter-in-law just gave birth to triplets."

Mrs. Rubenstein turns to Mrs. Cohen, another soon to be grandmother, and says, "Why look at that my daughter-in-law just gave birth to triplets and my son works at Triple A."

Mrs. Cohen gets up and begins to gather her things. "I have to get out of here," she says, "My son works at Seven Up!"

~ ~ ~

A young Jewish man excitedly tells his mother that he's fallen in love and is going to get married. He says, "Just for fun, Ma, I am going to bring home three Jewish women and you have to guess which one I am going to marry." The mother agrees.

The next day, he brings three women into the house and sits them down on the couch. "Okay, Mom, guess which one I am going to marry," he says.

"The one on the right," she replies.

"That's amazing mom. How did you know?"

"I didn't like her."

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