

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey



## Journal



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[www.jcnwj.org](http://www.jcnwj.org)

May 2011  
Vol. XXXVII, Issue 9

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

\*Sunday, May 1, Yom haShoah  
9:30 am Sunday School(K/1)(Music)  
Men's Club Meeting  
10:30 am Confirmation  
Yom haShoah Program

\*Monday, May 2, 7:30 pm  
Board Meeting

\*Tuesday, May 3, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

\*Saturday, May 7, 10:30 am  
Torah Study

\*Sunday, May 8  
No Hebrew School

\*Tuesday, May 10, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

\*Friday, May 13, 7:30 pm  
Shabbat Services  
Oneg: Trachtenberg family

\*Saturday, May 14, 10:00 am  
Shabbat Services – Julia Trachtenberg Bat Mitzva

\*Sunday, May 15 Yom Ha'Atzmaut  
9:30 am Sunday School (K/1)(Music)  
10:30 am Israeli Breakfast

\*Tuesday, May 17, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

\*Sunday, May 22 Lag B'Omer  
9:30 am Sunday School(K/1)  
PTO Breakfast  
10:30 am Confirmation

\*Tuesday, May 24, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

\*Wednesday, May 25, 7:00 pm  
Sisterhood Book Club

\*Sunday, May 29  
No Hebrew School

\*Tuesday, May 31, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

### JCNWJ Trip to Israel

**Have you ever visited Israel? Would you like to? Do you NEED to?**

All temple members are welcome and encouraged to join Rabbi Lewis on this tour of Israel.

The tour group will be leaving for Tel Aviv on December 21 and returning on January 1, 2012.

ARZA World, a full-service wholesale tour operator, is handling the tour arrangements in Israel. The company combines superior tourism services with enhanced programming, including educators or local guides who remain with the group throughout the tour. Of course, traveling with Rabbi Lewis, with her knowledge, wisdom and experience, will further enhance the trip.

ARZA World has a website for our group:

[JCNWJ Israel Tour page](#)

which includes the tour itinerary, highlights and what you need to know about the trip. - please note that the price on the site is for the Israel land package only and DOES NOT include airfare. Airfare can be booked through the ARZA World site, or you can book your own air fare.

Rabbi Lewis would love to have as many members of the temple have the singular experience of visiting Israel as possible. It has been a dream of hers to bring her congregation to Israel, and this is the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do so.

## President's Message

Sometimes you get to spend Shabbat in your temple with your friends and family. Sometimes you get to spend Shabbat at home with your family. And other times, you are in the middle of nowhere and you are the only Jew.

During my travels to Australia and New Zealand this past month, I found myself in the latter position. Shabbat occurred for me as the sunset, where I was 30 miles offshore on the Great Barrier Reef just outside of Cairns (pronounced like tin cans) Australia. As the sun was setting, instead of reflecting on G-d's love for us, I was simply left to reflect the beauty of our world. I was able to see a sunset completely unencumbered from anything in the modern world, except the boat we were floating on.

The sun came down and the sky lit up with color. Watching the sunset with nothing but water around you is an amazing sight. After the sun set, I was able to go scuba diving and see the beauty of the reef after dark. In the dark, under water at night, you really understand what tunnel vision is. You can only see where you or someone else shines their light. A foot out of your light, you have no idea what is next to you. Some people find this terrifying, others find it exhilarating. But it also makes you believe that there is something more powerful than humans involved in this planet. The varying array of life on this planet simply astounds me. When I first started scuba diving, I thought I wanted to see beautiful fish in tropical environments. While I still want to do this, my favorite part of diving has now become the different coral formations, sponges and other seemingly inactive life forms that come to life at night.

My hope for you this month is to be able to sense what is around you, without actually knowing it is there. Become comfortable with your place in the world, how you fit in, and what you can do to make our planet and our community a better place.

*Shalom and Love,*

*Howie*

## Rabbi's Message

I confess – I can't predict the future. Frankly, I hadn't given much thought to it until I was asked to write an article about the future of the Reform rabbinate. I can write about the past and the present, I said, but find someone younger to write about the future. Find a newly-ordained rabbi who uses a Blackberry, posts on Facebook, tweets on Twitter and creates Power-Point haggadot for Pesach. But don't ask me.

It isn't that I don't care about the future of the Reform rabbinate. I just can't envision how it might look. The future of the Reform rabbinate is interconnected with the future of Reform Judaism; and I can't envision how that might look, either. Fortunately there are some rabbis who have taken on the challenge of thinking about the future. They have broadened the question about the future of the rabbinate into a challenge about how to shape the Jewish future. Their initial venture was a secret one:

*"In the fall of 2009, when it became glaringly apparent that our movement was in disarray, a group of rabbis formed the Rabbinic Vision Initiative (RVI). The HUC-JIR had just gone through a blistering period of turmoil regarding its finances and continued support of three stateside campuses, and the URJ had enacted its restructuring plan. While the national arms of our movement were managing their own budgetary and programmatic declines there was no indication that those institutions, independently or together, had crafted a visionary and coordinated plan for the entire movement. We believed that a first step toward change was for a group of the Senior Rabbis of larger congregations reflecting differing generational and geographical experiences to engage in unpublicized and forthright conversations on a way forward to help transform and sustain the future of our movement..."*

After beginning their deliberations in private, the initial 17 rabbis have expanded their membership and have gone public with their view of the challenges to our rapidly evolving Jewish community:

1. *Jews do not feel an obligation to be Jewish as previous generations once did.*
2. *There is no one way to be Jewish today*
3. *Denominational differences are blurring.*
4. *Intermarriage has dramatically impacted Jewish life.*
5. *Our 20 and 30 year olds are changing the rules.*
6. *National organizations can no longer depend on communal support for Israel.*

They have developed a plan of action for our movement, including the plan to *"Convene selected change agents and visionaries, without regard to institutional involvement, to consider the future of Reform/Liberal Judaism, in order to access the expertise of the "best and the brightest" within our midst."*

Their conclusion includes their wish as well as their concrete promise to make the future of Reform *"the dynamic force that our forebears set into motion so many years ago."* *"We imagine a movement that will deepen commitment to study, prayer, tikkun olam, medinat yisrael and am yisrael; provide basic services to congregations which require them; provide services that individual congregations may not be able to independently support (camps, Israel trips, RAC); anticipate future trends and challenges; serve as an incubator and help attract funding for transformative congregational programming; engage Reform Jewish youth; establish excellence as the single standard and goal for our national organizations and all programs of our movement, including the caliber and preparation of our professionals; and create a culture of creativity within our congregations, among our congregations, and beyond them."*

*We reaffirm our claim on the robust and progressive Reform Judaism that nourished us with vision and purpose. We passionately embrace this profound responsibility: to shape a Jewish future in the 21st century, to decisively meet the challenges of societal transformation, and to commit ourselves to the sacred mission of Reform Judaism, the dynamic, ever-changing, constantly-evolving, living tradition of Jewish life."*

As the Rabbinic Visioning Initiative produces more information, I will share it with you here and from the pulpit. Not knowing what the future will be is no excuse for not planning. The children we educate today will be the leaders of that Jewish community of the future. Our job is to equip them with the tools they need. Our people haven't survived all these centuries by accident. We have always had a plan for living our vision of God, Torah and Israel. May the seeds we plant today grow into the flourishing Jewish communities of the future.

*Rabbi Lewis*

# Jewish Life

## JEWSH LIFE FESTIVAL OF BOOKS & CULTURE EVENTS

**Mark your calendar for the two remaining Jewish LIFE special events of the Season!**

**\* Sunday, May 1, 7 p.m.: Community-Wide Yom Hashoah Observance featuring Leila Levinson**, author of *Gated Grief: The Daughter of a World War II GI Liberator Discovers a Legacy of Trauma*. Location: Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. *Free to the Community*. Please RSVP to Laura Friedman at the JCC: [LFriedman@ssbjcc.org](mailto:LFriedman@ssbjcc.org).

**\* Tuesday, May 10, 7 p.m.: Community-Wide Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration featuring the Israeli Defense Force Musical Ensemble**. Location: Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. **To purchase tickets call "Friends of the IDF" at 212-244-3118 x14.**

## Contributions

In honor of Dylan Yanow and Hailey Ostenfeld who become b'nai mitzvah this Spring

~Sherry and Allen Onweller

In honor of Andrew Needleman's confirmation

~Martha and Jack Needleman

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In memory of Henry Steinhardt

~Lawrence Steinhardt

In memory of Betty Berkowitz

~Rita and Jerry Berkowitz

In memory of my Mother, Sadye L. Hertzmark

~Nancy Robins

In memory of Fannie Garfunkel

~Jan Romanczyk

In memory of Ellen Fuld

~Alison Shelofsky

In memory of Harry Siegel

~Rhonda Jordan

In memory of Pauline Schick

~Rona and Stan Schick

In memory of David Pinn

~Helen Mattson

In memory of my Dad, Marvin Leiter

~Audrie Sonzogni and Family

In memory of Harold Nagorsky

~Ed Nagorsky

## June Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles, advertisements, and photos to be included in the June Issue **May 19, 2011**.

Please email articles, ideas or news items to Journal Editor, Abby Bauer at [abbybauer@comcast.net](mailto:abbybauer@comcast.net).

## **Wanted: Advertisers for JCNWJ Journal**

Reaching hundreds of readers each month in Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, and Warren Counties in New Jersey as well as those residing parts of Eastern Pennsylvania, advertising in the Journal is effective and affordable. Tell your friends and contacts at local businesses whom you patronize about the opportunity to market themselves through sponsoring an advertisement in the online newsletter. For more information on placing an ad, see the Journal Advertising Form (on the temple website) or contact Tracey Bauer.

## Torah Study

Saturday, May 7, 2011  
10:30 am

## Mazel Tov

From the JCNWJ

To the Trachtenberg family on the upcoming Bat Mitzvah of Julia

Alex Parson had a great turn out at his bake sale to raise money for his mitzvah project charity "A Package From Home".

This organization sends packages of necessities to Israeli soldiers. He is also organizing a letter writing campaign to boost the soldier's spirits. Anyone interested in this charity can contact Alex Parson for information.

## Talent Show Thank-Yous

Thank you to Mike Weiner, awesome judge for the Talent Show. It's not the same without you!  
Thank you to all the participants who entertained an audience of jubilant members and their families.  
We never tire of your willingness to perform for us.

Thank you to the clean-up crew, Marsha and Sharon; your help was very much appreciated.

## *More Contributions*

In honor of Helen and John Mattson's grandchild

~Jan Romanczyk

~Judy and Paul May

In memory of Edward J. Lewis, Lillian Jay and Theodore Jay Jr.

~Rabbi Ellen Lewis

In memory of Arthur Tarlowe

~Laura and Paul Tarlowe

In memory of Eric Edelstein's sister, Bea Halpern

~Rona and Stan Schick

~Judy and Paul May

In memory of Tillie Ratzman

~Steven J. Ratzman

In memory of Marian Orenstein

~Cheryl and Edward Orenstein

In memory of Rose Schutzman

~Ruth and Howard Schutzbank

In memory of Naomi Davine, a gift to the Teachers' Education Fund

~Edythe Herson

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