

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey



Journal



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May 2013
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Rabbi's message

When I sat with our Confirmation class this week, I thought of how things have changed in the last nineteen years. The world somehow seemed safer. It was pre-9/11. We still felt invincible in our country. No one would have dreamed that two brothers would wreak havoc on the Boston Marathon. No one thought that a young man would shoot up an elementary school in Newtown. I found myself wondering how to prepare our students for a future that is so uncertain.

The changes are not all bad, of course. Nineteen years ago, if I wanted to communicate with Confirmation, I had to pick up the phone or mail flyers. Now, I email. They don't all read their email, but their parents do. When students want to communicate, they text. If a student is late to class, someone always has a cell phone and can send a message so we can find out if he overslept or if she forgot.

When students need to know how to chant a Torah or haftarah portion, I email an mp3. No tapes, no CDs. One year when the class was a large one, they wrote their Confirmation sermon together via Facebook.

And yet, so much hasn't changed. Students read from the same Torah (well, not the same scroll – this year will be the first time they read from our new Torah). The words of the Ten Commandments remain the same. The prayerbook is the same one they used when they became b'nai mitzvah. Most importantly, they still just like being together, whether on the retreat or in the Simcha Room for class.

And so when I find myself worrying about how to prepare them for the years after Confirmation, I reassure myself that we are already doing the things we can to prepare them – and to prepare ourselves – for a future that can't be predicted. We are teaching them the words of our tradition. We are inviting them into the experience of being a community, even if the community of the Confirmation Class is a small one. We are letting them know each one of them is important to all of us. And we are training them to be leaders of their future communities.

If you have never been to a Confirmation Service, you have missed something special. All of our classes participate, from K-1 through Confirmation. The liturgy celebrates Shavuot, the holiday that commemorates the receiving of the Torah and the commitment to keep Torah and transmit it. We all stand at Sinai again as we did thousands of years ago. That is something that hasn't changed; it is eternal.

Come join us.

Rabbi Ellen Lewis



President's message

Last night while interviewing a prospective rabbi, he asked a very interesting question of Kelsey and Alex. He asked what their most significant Jewish moment was. While they were answering, it got me thinking about what the most significant Jewish moment in my life was.

I have it narrowed down to two moments, and I would like to share them with you. The first moment occurred when I became the treasurer of the temple 14 years ago. On Yom Kippur I was to give the High Holiday appeal as well as chant Torah for the first time since my Bar Mitzvah, which was 30 years earlier. I had practiced my Torah portion of three lines for at least 3 months and had it down to the point where I was very confident about it. The appeal I had written between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, had practiced it twice and was very nervous about giving the speech. When my name was called for my aliyah and I did the blessings, I looked at the Torah being expected to read it for the first time in a very long time. I began to shake. At that moment, I could feel the awesomeness and holiness in our Torah.

The second moment was when the adult B'nai Mitzvah class that Charlotte and I had taught was called to the Torah. Every one of the seven women was scared of reading from the Torah. But to watch each one of them come to the Torah, recite the blessings and read or chant from the Torah was truly inspiring to me.

In this vein, I hope that every one of you will take the opportunity that we will have on May 5th to be able to perform one of the 613 Mitzvot that are listed in the Torah. This mitzvah is to be able to write your own Torah. Since the chance of any of us writing a complete Torah is very, very slim, we can, with the help of Sofer Winer, complete a letter in our new Torah. In my life, I have never had the opportunity to do this, and am anxious, nervous and excited about getting this opportunity.

Please join me and let's make this a great day at the temple, one that will not soon be forgotten.

Love, Howie



Contributions



In memory of Saul Schutzbank
Ruth & Howard Schutzbank

In memory of Lillian Jay
Rabbi Ellen Lewis

Mark your Calendar

Friday, May 3	7:30 p.m.	Shabbat Service Oneg: Wilson family
Saturday, May 4	10:00 a.m.	Bat Mitzvah of Jill Wilson
Sunday, May 5	9:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 12:00 p.m.	Sunday School PTO Thank You Breakfast Confirmation Rehearsal Signing of the Torah
Monday, May 6	7:30 p.m.	Board Meeting
Saturday, May 11	10:30 a.m.	Torah Study
Sunday, May 12		Mother's Day, no Sunday School
Friday, May 17	7:30 p.m.	Shabbat Service Oneg: Jeannie & Jeff Berkowitz, Herson/Fleckles, Bauer, & Simons families
Sunday, May 19	9:30 a.m.	Confirmation Service (all Sunday school participates)
Sunday May 26		No Sunday School

Education/PTO

May is a quiet month as Hebrew School winds down for the year. We have a PTO "Thank You" breakfast on May 5th. All of the PTO members who have worked so hard during the school year should come and enjoy a relaxing breakfast - no meeting, just socializing. There is no school on Sunday, May 12, as we celebrate our mothers on Mother's Day. May 19 is our Confirmation Service and Closing Assembly. All students will participate in the Confirmation Service, so parents should plan to stay that day to support their children.

Mazel Tov to our confirmands this year: Kelsey Shelofsky, Travis Koch, and Craig Kestecher.

Thank you to Rabbi Lewis, Cantor Elizabeth Goldmann, our teachers and their assistants, and all of the PTO families who have made our Hebrew School so successful. It has been a great year and we wish you all a wonderful summer.

Marsha Gross (Education Chair)

Announcements from the Ritual Committee

It's not too late to join the **Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey's Intergenerational Choir** under the direction of Cantor Goldmann. **Please join Cantor Goldmann for choir rehearsal on Friday, May 17th at 6:45 p.m. and Friday, June 21st 6:45 p.m. (immediately preceding Shabbat Service).**

The Intergenerational Choir will be performing at the last shabbat service before Summer on June 28th, a special service in Honor of Rabbi Lewis. **Save the date!**

Next September, we will welcome a new cantor, Lilah Sugarman, who is currently a first-year cantorial student studying at HUC-JIR. The search committee interviewed her and two other candidates via Skype since students spend their first year studying in Jerusalem. The cantor in charge of placement at HUC-JIR does a "match" based on preferences from both the students and the congregations. We are very pleased that Lilah will be joining us, and we look forward to meeting her, possibly in the summer. More on this when we know details.

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).

Announcements

To all shoppers out there who like a good deal. You can get up to \$100 a year off of your temple dues by simply shopping, it's that easy. Purchase, throughout the year, \$2,000 in ShopRite scrip used for groceries and receive a \$100 reduction in dues. For more information please speak to Jennifer Rosenblum on Sundays at the temple or email her at jrxthree@yahoo.com

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.

Sisterhood News

BAKE SALE

Thank you to everyone who helped make the bake sale a success! The bake sale has raised a total of \$334. This will be donated to the Friends of Mike team at Voices Against Brain Cancer. Thank you for all of your support by helping me raise money for a very important cause.

Andrew

SAVE THE DATE!



THE JEWISH CENTER OF NORTHWEST JERSEY'S

SHABBAT CELEBRATION

TO HONOR

RABBI ELLEN JAY LEWIS

Friday, June 28, 2013

6 o'clock p.m.

FOR INFORMATION
or to volunteer your help,
please contact Jeannie Berkowitz
at berkowitz18013@yahoo.com or (484) 767-3744

Hello Everyone,

Recently Jim Aversen and I paid a visit to the office of Jewish Family Services of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties in Somerville, N.J. Our objective was to learn about this agency and its services. Although our Temple is within the area which the JFS serves, few are aware of the services they provide and/or how to access them. We are hoping to create an awareness of the JFS and to promote what it has to offer to our Temple members.

Did you know ?

Jewish Family Services offers Career Counseling Services

Jewish Family Services offers Family & Child Services

Jewish Family Services offers Emergency Assistance

Jewish Family Services offers Senior Support

Jewish Family Services provides Information and Referral Services

Jewish Family Services provides Family Life Education and Support

Jewish Family Services offers volunteer opportunities

Other possibilities include speakers on topics of interest for both Sunday School and Adult Education.

Both Jim and I are hoping to initiate a relationship with JFS to bring their services to the Warren County area and our Temple.

If you would like information on any of these topics, you can contact the JFS directly; see number and e-mail address below. You can also contact me with any questions you may have. If I don't have the answer I will find it for you. Should anyone need transportation to the Somerville office, please contact me. (Jeannie Berkowitz, 484-767-3744, or berkowitz18013@yahoo.com.) Pamphlets will be placed in the entrance of the Temple.

Jeannie Berkowitz

Jim Aversen



*JFS is a non-profit, non-sectarian social service agency whose mission
is to preserve and strengthen the quality of individual,
Family and community life based on Jewish values.*

Betty and Arthur Roswell

Mental Health Counseling Center

Holocaust Survivors Assistance

Refugee Assistance

Special Needs Programs

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Senior Support Services

Family Life Education

Information and Referral

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AmeriCorps

Ohr Tikvah

Career Services

For more information contact:

Jewish Family Service of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties

150-A West High Street, Somerville, NJ 08876

908-725-7799

Admin@JewishFamilySvc.Org

www.JewishFamilySvc.Org



Celebrate Israel Parade 2013

Join ARZA as we celebrate Israel's 65th Birthday and our 35th! This year's parade is on Sunday, June 2nd in NYC.

March with us! Help us demonstrate the strong support for Israel from the Reform Movement!

The [parade registration form](#) should be filled out and sent to ARZA by May 10.

For more information, see the ARZA website or contact ARZA at ARZA@ARZA.org, 212.650.428

Bike the Drive 2013

Team ARZA is riding their bikes on Lake Shore Drive in Chicago! We are an official charity partner of "Bike the Drive," and our team will be raising money to support pluralism in Israel! The ride takes place on Sunday, May 26, and you can support the ARZA team [with a donation](#). If you're in the Chicago area and interested in joining, please [contact Marlene Dodinval](#).

IS THERE AN ISRAEL EVENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY IN MAY OR JUNE?

Please let us know so we can help you organize an ARZA presence and publicize it!

Contact ARZA at 212.650.4280 or ARZA@ARZA.org.

ARZA Calendar 5774

CALL FOR PHOTOS!

The first ARZA Calendar was a hit and here comes the second!

The 5774 ARZA Calendar will feature photos of our URJ and Israel twinned congregations as well as ARZA events, Israel youth programs, program dates and much more!

Send us [high resolution](#) photographs of your activities with your twinned community in Israel or the US so we may consider them for inclusion in the new calendar! Email your photos to ARZA at ARZA@ARZA.org today for consideration. Maybe you will be published!

DEADLINE FOR PHOTO SUBMISSION IS MAY 17.

Information on pricing and ordering the 5774 ARZA Calendar will be included in the May ARZA newsletter, **ARZA Update**.

NOT RECEIVING THE ARZA NEWSLETTER? The ARZA newsletter is a monthly email, filled with information about ARZA activities and information about the Reform Jewish community in Israel. Go to www.ARZA.org and subscribe where it says "Get the ARZA Update."

Upcoming Jewish LIFE Special Events include:

Jewish LIFE invites you to be part of *A Night to Celebrate Israel*, **Tuesday, May 7, 6:30 pm** at Raritan Valley Country Club, Bridgewater. Join us for an evening showing our community's support of Israel and Bond event, featuring Israeli music & dancing, dinner, fun and distinguished guest speaker Joel Mowbray, award-winning investigative journalist and nationally syndicated columnist. Honorees are Rabbi Evan Jaffe, Flemington JCC, and Raffi Mark, Rutgers Hillel Student President, who are being recognized for their dedication to their communities and the State of Israel. The fee for the evening is \$50/Adult or \$18/Student. To register, call the Birnbaum JCC at 908-725-6994 x201.

Jewish LIFE thanks everyone in the community for supporting this year's programs and special events. The Jewish LIFE 2013-2014 brochure will be available in the fall.



**Shimon and Sara Birnbaum
Jewish Community Center**

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Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Debbie Golden

Special Projects Director
Marketing Director

(908)725-6994 x210
dgolden@ssbjcc.org

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June Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles, advertisements and photos to be included in the June issue is May 19, 2013. Please email articles, ideas or news items to Journal Editor, Barbara Simons at bjbs@comcast.net



**What's Jewish About Breast Cancer
What You Need To Know
Become Informed
for Yourself & for Your Family**



Informational Material Provided by
The Cancer Support Community Central New Jersey
and Sharsharet

For more information about JFS Services and Programs
Call: 908 725-7799 Email: Admin@JewishFamilySvc.Org



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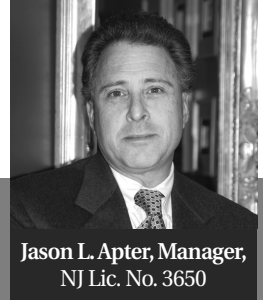
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