

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey



## Journal



PO Box 2, 115 Youmans Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882  
(908) 689-0762  
[www.jcnwj.org](http://www.jcnwj.org)

December 2010  
Vol. XXXVII, Issue 4

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

\*Friday, December 3, 7:30 pm  
New Member Shabbat Service/Chanukah Service  
Oneg: Kowski, Mattson, Kestecher, Gutkin and Bakonyi families

\*Sunday, December 5  
9:30 am Sunday School (K/1)(Music)  
Chanukah Celebration

\*Monday, December 6, 7:30 pm  
Board Meeting

\*Tuesday, December 7, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

Friday, December 10  
Confirmation Retreat commences

\*Saturday, December 11  
10:30 am Torah Study

\*Sunday, December 12  
8:00 am Men's Club  
9:30 am Sunday School and PTO Meeting  
10:30 am Sisterhood Meeting  
Confirmation Retreat concludes

\*Tuesday, December 14, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

\*Wednesday, December 15, 7:00 pm  
Book Club

\*Friday, December 17, 7:30 pm  
Shabbat Services  
Oneg: Nagorsky, Orenstein, Weinstein, Fenton, and Knobelman families

\*Sunday, December 19  
9:30 am Sunday School (K/1)(Music)  
10:45 am Adult Education

\*Tuesday, December 21, 7:00 pm  
Adult Hebrew Class

\*Sunday, December 26  
No Sunday School

### *Rabbi's Message*

The night before I left Israel, I went shopping in Jerusalem with a friend. Our trip had been so packed that it had allowed no time for shopping. We were both looking for last minute gifts to bring home. I had hoped to find some Israeli dreidels to bring back to the Sunday School classes. You might know that Israeli dreidels are different from dreidels you find in the States or anywhere else in the world. Outside of Israel, the dreidel's Hebrew letters - nun, gimel, hay and shin - stand for the words Nes Gadol Haya Sham, "A great miracle happened there." Inside of Israel, the Hebrew letters - nun, gimel, hay and peh - stand for the words Nes Gadol Haya Po, "A great miracle happened here." That one small difference in letters means a world of difference in spiritual geography. The miracle of Chanukah, however you understand it, took place on the very soil where modern Israel exists today. The dreidel's letters remind us of that simple fact.

I couldn't find dreidels anywhere. My friend commented: "Here it is three weeks before Chanukah in Israel, and you can't find a dreidel anywhere. Can you imagine shopping in the States three weeks before Christmas and not being able to find Christmas items?" That was always the second miracle of Chanukah for me – waking up in Israel the day after Christmas and realizing I had missed it. It isn't that both holidays aren't celebrated in Israel, it is just that they feel so different there. You have to know where to go to find Christmas celebration; and, while chanukiyot shine from the apartment windows during Chanukah, gift-giving is much less a part of Israeli tradition than it is ours. I had to settle for buying Israeli candy bars and Israeli bazooka bubblegum (with the comics in Hebrew).

All trips to Israel have the strange quality of visiting an old friend and a new one at the same time. Things change so rapidly in modern day Israel, it is hard to keep up. That's why everyone has to make that first trip to Israel, so you can go back again afterwards and see how much the country has changed. I learned new ways of thinking about planning a congregational trip to Israel. Last Shabbat, when I spoke about Israel from the bimah, I said that trips to Israel used to be about making a connection with the place and now have become about making connections with the people. I am more convinced than ever that we should take a congregational trip to Israel in the near future. As I figure it out, I will share the details with you.

Chanukah is early this year, as we are wont to say, although purists will point out that it always falls on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev. As you light your chanukiyot and chant your blessings, may you meditate on the miracles of your lives and pray for the miracle of peace.

Chag Chanukah Sameach.

Rabbi Ellen Lewis

## President's Message

At this time of year, things tend to get very busy. As I write this letter, Hanukkah is only 3 days away. In addition, many folks feel a need to be with each other at this time of year, probably due to the overwhelming Christian society in which we live, where the month of December turns into a race to do the most shopping, buy the best presents, bake the best cookies and make the nicest holiday dinners. I always look forward to a nice brisket with my wife's home made latkes and applesauce from Teri Stanton. The lighting of the Hanukkah, and watching the flames burn all the way down, to see which candle will last the longest each night, the smell of the latkes cooking, cleaning up after Iris has made a mess in the kitchen hand grating the potatoes for the latkes, seeing temple members join us at Splash this Saturday to sing Hanukah songs and enjoy a wonderful dinner. Did I mention the gelt? With all of these things going on, how is it possible to not be thankful for all we have around us.

We have a unique little Jewish community in the midst of a culture that this not ours. Trying to fit in and keep our traditions is a task that is hard to do, but do them we will, as this is what has kept Judaism alive and well for almost 6,000 years.

I wish you all a Happy Hanukkah.

*Love,*  
*Howie*

## Jewish Life

Jewish LIFE (Learning if For Everyone) programs coming up in December include a **Family Chanukah & Pajama on Thursday, December 2 at 6:30 p.m.** Our special guest will be **Debbie Levy**, author of *Maybe I'll Sleep in the Bathtub Tonight: and Other Bedtime Poems*. Bring your family menorah and candles for a community candle lighting! Jewish LIFE is pleased to welcome back NBC News broadcast journalist and author **Martin Fletcher**. Mr. Fletcher will be discussing his latest book, *Walking Israel: a Personal Search for the Soul of a Nation* on **Thursday, December 9, 7 p.m. Save the date...** for **Stuart E. Weisberg**, author of *Barney Frank: The Story of America's Only Left-Handed Gay, Jewish Congressman*. Program to follow lunch. All programs will be held at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC, 775 Talamini Road in Bridgewater. Please refer to the Jewish LIFE brochure or go to [www.ssbjcc.org/jlfe.htm](http://www.ssbjcc.org/jlfe.htm) for further event details including program fees. Call the Birnbaum JCC at 908-725- 6994 x201 to register and with any questions.

## Education/ PTO

December is a month of fun and celebration. On **December 5<sup>th</sup>** the Hebrew School students will enjoy a Hanukkah Celebration with latkes, music, a play, and more. The Confirmation Class goes on their annual retreat from **December 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>**. Our next PTO meeting is **December 12<sup>th</sup>**.

Also, December 5<sup>th</sup> is the last day of our **Hanukkah Store**. Please stop by between 9:30 and noon to support the JCNWJ PTO.

**There is no Hebrew School on December 26<sup>th</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup> for winter break.**

Happy Holidays!!!

Marsha Gross and Karen Finkelstein (Education Co-Chairs)

## Hanukkah Bazaar

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR OUR  
UPCOMING HANUKKAH BAZAAR!!

THE HANUKKAH STORE IS BACK AT THE JCNWJ!

Shop for Judaica items, gifts, holiday necessities (menorahs and candles, wrapping paper, chocolate gelt, dreidels, children's books, small toys, jewelry, etc.)

All reasonably priced, most items \$1.00-\$5.00.

Have fun shopping and supporting our Temple!

Conveniently open during Sunday School and Friday evening services from November 14th-December 5th. (Please note that no money will be accepted during services, so I.O U.'s will be utilized).

Hanukkah comes early this year so be ready!

Contact Debbie Fesinstine, Hanukkah Store Chair, with any questions.

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## Contributions

In memory of Belle Shure, Sarah Zeiden and Laurretta Pinn  
~Helen and John Mattson

In memory of Rose Sirkis  
~Phyllis and Arthur Sirkis

In memory of her beloved mother, Jean Siegel  
~Rhonda Jordan

In memory of Max Weil  
~Ruth and Howard Schutzbank

In memory of Sally Zemel  
~Ralph Zemel

In honor of the Kowski family  
~Edward Skoller

In appreciation for the congregation  
~Erwin Ganz

In honor of the b'nai mitzvah of Abby Bauer, and Travis and Ryan Koch  
~Helen and John Mattson

In honor of this year's b'nai mitzvah class  
~Rochelle and Tom Ostenfeld, Joyce and Ken Yanow, Doreen and Rory Webb

## 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.



## SAVE THE DATE



Please join us on **Friday, December 3, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.**, when the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey will celebrate the Sabbath and third night of Chanukah, at which time we will also honor our new members. Kindly mark your calendars accordingly.

\*\*\*Don't forget to bring your menorahs\*\*\*

## The Top Ten Reasons Why Everyone Should Celebrate Hanukkah

**10 No big, fat guy getting stuck in your chimney**

**9 Cleaning wax off your menorah is slightly easier than dismantling an 8-foot tall fir tree**

**8 Compare: chocolate gelt vs. fruitcake**

**7 You get to learn cool new words like "Kislev" and "far-shtoonken-ah"**

**6 No brutal let-down when you discover that Santa Claus isn't real**

**5 Your neighbors are unlikely to complain about how your menorah is blinding them senseless**

**4 It's like a big reunion when everyone gathers at the Chinese restaurant on Christmas Eve**

**3 In a holiday character face-off, Judah Macabee could kick Frosty's butt**

**2 No need to clean up big piles of reindeer poop off your roof**

**And the Number One reason why everyone should celebrate Hanukkah is:**

**None of that Naughty-Nice Stuff **EVERYONE GETS LOOT !!!****

## Memorial Plaques

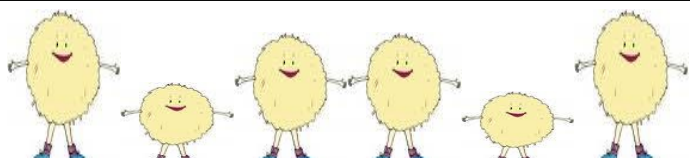
If anyone is interested in honoring a loved one with a permanent bronze memorial plaque, please contact Helen Mattson. Not only will the light on the Memorial Board be lit at the anniversary, or yahrzeit, of that person, but the Rabbi will announce the name and kaddish will be recited by the congregation, as well.

## Save the Date

When: February 6, 2011 at noon

What: B'nai Mitzvah Brunch

For those families who will be celebrating a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in 2011/12. Details to follow...



## January Journal Deadline

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

## Hospitality for Our Cantor

Any member who would like to offer hospitality to student cantor Elana Rosen-Brown during the coming year should contact Sharon Herson by phone or email

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**Torah Study  
December 11, 2010  
10:30 am**

## *The Month After Chanukah*

'Twas the month after Chanukah, and all through the house  
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse. The cookies I'd  
nibble, the latkas I'd taste At Chanukah parties had gone  
to my waist. When I got on the scales there arose such a  
number! When I walked to the store (less a walk than a  
lumber). I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared; The  
gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared, The wine or the  
egg creams, the bread and the cheese And the way I'd never  
said, "No thank you, please." As I dressed myself in my  
husband's old shirt And prepared once again to do battle  
with dirt--- I said to myself, as only I can "You can't  
spend the winter disguised as a man!"

So--away with the last of the sour cream dip,  
Get rid of all chocolate, each cracker and chip  
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished  
"Till all the additional ounces have vanished.  
I won't have a cookie--not even a lick.  
I'll want to chew only a long celery stick.  
I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,  
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.  
I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore---  
But isn't that what January is for?  
Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.  
Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!

# Chanukah Invite

Give a friend a CHANUKAH Gift: FREE Membership to the Jewish Center!

As a membership drive, the JCNWJ is offering free membership from January to June 2011. Send the attached invitation to families who may be looking for their first Jewish community or seeking to join a new one. You may reproduce the invitation in order to send it to more than one family! (Note that the family must accept the gift by **January 15, 2011.**)

If you have any questions, contact Susan McNamara or Melissa Parson at [www.jcnwjmembership@gmail.com](mailto:www.jcnwjmembership@gmail.com).

You are cordially invited to be a member of the  
Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey  
for six months free with Sunday School.\*

To: \_\_\_\_\_

From (member): \_\_\_\_\_

If interested, please fill out and return.  
A membership committee member will contact you:  
The JCNWJ Membership  
PO Box 2  
Washington, NJ 07882

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Chanukah Service December 3 at 7:30 pm  
All are welcome  
[www.jcnwj.org](http://www.jcnwj.org)

\*space permitting

## Teen Summer Opportunities Info Session

**Summer offers limitless opportunities for teens to enjoy camp, travel, internships, volunteering and more!**

**Who:** Teens and their parents

**When:** Tuesday, December 14th at 7:30PM

**Where:** The UJC Aidekman Campus  
901 Route 10, Whippany

**RSVP:** By 12/1 with your name, email & phone number to  
[sgreene@thepartnershipnj.org](mailto:sgreene@thepartnershipnj.org)

Information will be available on a wide array of summer programs – locally, across the US, in Israel and around the world – as well as grants and scholarships to help make these experiences more affordable. You'll also meet representatives from a variety of organizations.

**Think summer!  
Ice cream sundaes  
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Tues-Wed 9:30-5:15 Thurs-Fri 9:30-7:00

Sat 9:30-4:00 (9:30-2:00 During Summer)