

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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Facebook: JCNWJ

June-July 2023

Vol: XLVIII Issue: 9



## Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

While congregations larger than the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey always employ paid staff to get things done, our community is different. Our community relies on the unrelenting enthusiasm of individual members to give of themselves to make things happen. And this, without a doubt, is one of the primary reasons I love being your rabbi so much.

We are more than just a place of worship; we are a place of community, where friends come together to connect, support each other, and build relationships. As a result, our shared sense of belonging, community, and self-sufficiency – not to mention our shared sense of values – fosters a willingness among us to contribute our time and skills for the betterment of all.

From a more specifically *religious* point of view, the selflessness that so many in our community demonstrate couldn't be more Jewish. Whether the offerings of volunteerism from amongst us come in the form of gardening, maintenance, teaching, technical assistance, grant-writing, board involvement, cooking and serving, cleaning, worship assistance and coordination, memorializing, social gathering, *tikkun olam* organizing, communal security, caring for the sick and bereaved, or so many other ways, the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey doesn't hire out the responsibilities of *gemilut chasadim* (acts of lovingkindness). We take responsibility and do them ourselves. I love us for this.

(continued on next page)

## Calendar of Events

### Friday, June 16

7:00pm: Shabbat Evening Service

### Friday, June 23

7:00pm: Shabbat Evening Service

### Sunday, June 25

9:30am: Annual Meeting

Afternoon: Picnic at Berkowitz Home

### Friday, July 14

6:00pm: BBQ and Service

### Saturday, July 22

10:30am: Torah Study (Zoom only)

### Friday, August 18

6:00pm: BBQ and Service

**Yoga:** Wednesdays at 5:15pm

**Note:** Most in-person events will also be available virtually on Zoom.

## Rabbi's Message (continued)

Over the past eight years that I've served as your rabbi, we have always been blessed with talented cantors, whether the professional leadership of Cantors Labow and Lazar or the student leadership of Rayn and Shayna. As much as we savor the remarkable beauty of our cantors' musical gifts, we are individually inspired to offer up our own gifts of musical worship. Ours is a singing community – whether or not we can hold a tune. Here, sincerity and enthusiasm matter more than performance. . . which leads me to the primary point of my message this month.

With fewer and fewer students training to become cantors at Hebrew Union College, it is increasingly difficult to find a student to serve small congregations like ours. Unfortunately, after two wonderful years with Student Cantor Shayna, we will be without a dedicated cantor next year. Is this cause for spiritual alarm? Of course not. In our congregation, we thrive because we live alongside each other with intention and heartfelt engagement.

I am thrilled that Kevin Story, the pianist extraordinaire whom we have come to love for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur worship these past four years, will be with us once again for the holidays this coming year. While we have the business of worship covered, we still need you.

I am excited to expand our established model of community leadership by adding new cantorial opportunities. Share your gifts – you all have them – by taking on a more visible role in our musical worship. No one needs to sing publicly without first receiving support and training to do so. For some, that may mean nothing more than having the sheet music ahead of time. For others, it will require practice sessions. We are not a congregation of passive receivers. We are a family of active contributors.

Moving into the summer months, I begin the process of preparing for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur of 5784. As part of that process, I will pay special attention to the music of our worship. If you are interested in helping us and finding that musical joy yourself, please be in touch with me at [RabbiDubin@gmail.com](mailto:RabbiDubin@gmail.com). Though I already stated it above, it bears repeating: I promise you will receive as much (or as little) support as you need or want.

Above all, let us join together and sing.

*L'Shalom, and Todah MeRosh ("thank you in advance")*

Rabbi Dubin

## President's Message

I am not normally a worried person. I usually try to figure out the best and worst possible outcomes, and then work for the best one that I can choose. But today, I am a bit worried. I am having surgery tomorrow, Monday June 5th, for an enlarged prostate and a possible hernia. I will be spending a night in the hospital, which I have not done since I fell out of the third-story window in my house in 1994.

While I have spent many nights away from home on business and pleasure, this one is hitting me a bit harder than that I will just be away for the night. I may also be concerned because I will have to rest and not do as much as I usually do. And at this time of the year, the gardens need to be tended, and I have continued to plant new gardens and shrubs, and they need to be tended to. This is normally my job, and I am sure that Iris will do a great job tending to them. But I love being outside with the plants and listening to the birds and enjoying the abundant sunshine we have had this spring.

I am also gaining a greater appreciation for what people with medical issues face. I have been a caregiver for most of my married life, as Iris has had many medical issues, and I have been very fortunate that I have avoided any serious issues. To deal with these worries or anxieties, I am going about my normal life, but also trying to get as much done around the house and yard before this surgery. But as I age, I also find that there are more aches and pains associated with everyday life. This means that I am not as capable of working in the yard for as long as I did last year. Things are taking longer to do, and I want to get more done than I think I can.

I guess that this is just a sign that I have lived a remarkably lucky life and that I am going through things that everyone else goes through as well.

I will leave you with my attitude on life that I have shared many times, but I feel that I need to remind myself of this today.

The only thing that I really have control of in my life is my attitude. Things will occur to me, my family, and my temple. Some of these I have a bit of control over, but things will go wrong, and things will go right. When things go wrong, how do you handle them? Your attitude will determine how you get by on a day-to-day basis, and I continue to be an eternal optimist.

I look forward to seeing you at the general meeting on June 25th and the picnic that will follow at Jerry and Rita Berkowitz's house that afternoon.

Love to you all,

Howie

# Updates & Events

## ANNUAL MEETING

This is a reminder that our General Meeting is on Sunday, June 25th beginning at 9:30 a.m. We will be voting on a new Board of Trustees, as well as a proposed dues increase.

An End of Year Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statement were e-mailed out.

After the meeting we will enjoy a picnic at the home of Rita and Jerry Berkowitz.

**\*\*Please RSVP to Howie (jcnwjprez@gmail.com) for both the meeting and picnic.\*\***

## BUILDING UPDATE

If you notice that something is running low and needs to be replaced (either in the bathrooms or kitchen), please let me know.

You can either call or email me at [irishirsch@comcast.net](mailto:irishirsch@comcast.net) or 908-850-1030.

Thank you.

Iris

## JUNE & JULY YAHRZEITS

Alan Berkman	Relative of Rabbi Ellen Lewis
Mary Bronico	Mother of Jeannie Berkowitz
Harry Zaret	Father of Lois Goldberg
Barnet Zaret	Grandfather of Lois Goldberg
Anthony Frank	Grandfather of Grace Marr
Marilyn Quintner	Mother of Marcia Guberman
Jack Leonard	Nephew of Marsha Gross
Elsie Posner	Grandmother of Tracey Bauer
Bertha Guberman	Mother of Erwin Guberman
Edith Kahan	Mother of Sandy Kahan
Zelda Marcovitch	Mother of Edythe Herson
Libbie Kor Frankel	Mother of Jeffrey Frankel
Mike Denneen	Son-in-law of Nancy Robins
Gene Reed England.	Brother of Teri Stanton
Frieda Kalb	Mother of Jerry Kalb
Debra Finkelstein Slovinski	Sister of Shelley Finkelstein
Rena Klein	Mother of Gerri Klein
Joseph Bakonyi	Brother of Roland Bakonyi
Theodore Columbus Jay	Grandfather of Rabbi Ellen Lewis

Note: If any Yahrzeit information is missing or incorrect, please notify the Temple.

# Updates & Events

## TORAH STUDY

We have now started exploring the Book of Samuel. In this book, Samuel becomes a prophet, and a monarchy is established in Ancient Israel, starting with King Saul. Our discussions will continue to be wide-ranging but focused as we analyze some of the Bible's most interesting stories.

Anyone is welcome to join, and it is not necessary to read the text ahead of time. It is helpful to have a copy of the Tanakh (Bible) so that you can follow along. We appreciate Rabbi Dubin's continued participation and insights.

The next meeting will be July 22 at 10:30 am. Please watch your email for the Zoom link.

## FOOD DRIVE

Although we are not collecting food at the Temple right now, we encourage all members to give to charities helping those in need.

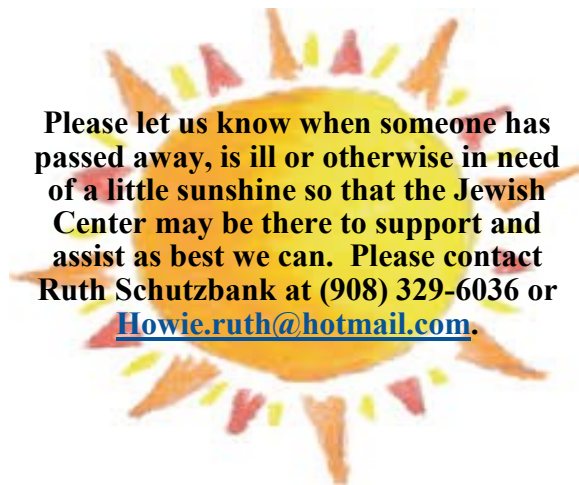
The food pantries are in dire need of supplies to fill their shelves as more and more people are in need and your generosity will help fill that need.

Thank you for your continued support!

-Iris

## A Reminder from the Sunshine Committee

Please let us know when someone has passed away, is ill or otherwise in need of a little sunshine so that the Jewish Center may be there to support and assist as best we can. Please contact Ruth Schutzbank at (908) 329-6036 or [Howie.ruth@hotmail.com](mailto:Howie.ruth@hotmail.com).



# Updates & Events

## ZUMBA

I have been participating in active Zumba (gold) classes taught by temple member Sandy Polsky for the past two months (April and May) at the Habitat for Humanity office in Washington. The classes are fun, the music lively, the workout well-paced, and the teacher is excellent and patient and nonjudgmental (as are the other class attendees).

Sandy also offers Chair Zumba for those who need to be less active. The schedule for all the classes is below. The active (stand-up) classes (Mondays and Fridays in Washington) cost \$5.00 per class; the chair classes are free. No reservation is necessary, you just come. Try one or the other, you'll want to come back!

--Sharon Herson

### MONDAYS:

Habitat for Humanity, 31 Belvidere Ave, Washington. 10-10:45 a.m. STAND-UP CLASS. \$5/class.

### WEDNESDAYS:

Hackettstown Senior Center, Main St., 11-11:45 a.m. CHAIR CLASS. FREE.

Every other Wednesday: Countryview Adult Community, Route 519, Belvidere. 11-11:45 a.m. (next date is 6/14). CHAIR CLASS. FREE.

### THURSDAYS:

Alternating:

Phillipsburg Senior Center, Firth St., P'burg. 11-11:45 am (next class is 6/8). CHAIR CLASS. FREE.

Knowlton Senior Center, Route 94, in Lion's Club building, Knowlton. 11-11:45 a.m. CHAIR CLASS. FREE.

### FRIDAYS:

Washington Senior Center, Brass Castle Rd., Washington. 10:30-11:15 a.m. CHAIR CLASS. FREE.

Habitat for Humanity, 31 Belvidere Ave, Washington. 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. STAND-UP CLASS. \$5/class

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