

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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October 2023

Vol: XLIX Issue: 2



Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

This is one of my favorite times of year. A holiday season of beginnings and commitment. A Jewish Field of Dreams, if you will -- *If you build it, they will come.*

When it comes to building *it*, the *it* I have principally in mind is the JCNWJ community, and there's no question we have tremendous builders amongst us. For example...

So many of us had worried that for the first time in memory we entered the High Holidays without a cantor. Look at the beautiful music we made together, and the meaningful worship our community created! For fear of leaving anyone out of the long list of dedicated volunteers who lovingly contributed both in front and behind the scenes, I will keep from naming specific people. I do, however, feel the need to single out those who provided cantorial leadership. I know I speak for the entire congregation when I express our collective gratitude for Faye Fletcher, Stephanie Fletcher, Sharon Herson, Beth Lappin, Adam Tucker, and our piano player extraordinaire, Kevin Story. Frankly, I've never heard of another congregation providing its own cantorial leadership in quite the way we did. *If you build it, they will come.*

By the time you receive this newsletter, we'll be well into the festival of *Sukkot*, which, at its core, commemorates three things:

(continued on next page)

Calendar of Events

Monday, October 2

7:00pm: Board of Trustees Meeting

Friday, October 6

4:00pm: Hebrew School

6:00pm: Simchat Torah Celebration

Dinner at 6:00pm, Service at 7:00pm

Saturday, October 14

11:30am: Torah Study on Zoom

Sunday, October 15

9:30am: Community B'yachad

Saturday, October 21

9:30am: Hebrew School

10:45am: Shabbat Morning Service

12:15pm: Kiddush/Lunch

Sunday, October 29

9:30am: Hebrew School

Friday, November 3

7:00pm: Shabbat Evening Service

Sunday, November 5

9:30am: Hebrew School

Monday, November 6

7:00pm: Board of Trustees Meeting

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

Rabbi's Message (continued)

- The experience of the *sukkah* that we erect, decorate and occupy, recalls the temporary shelters built by our ancestors in the Land of Israel. During harvest season, the farmers constructed shelters to maximize their hours spent bringing in the yield.
- Another commemoration focuses on the fact that as our ancestors wandered through the desert for 40 years, they built temporary structures of protection from the elements. These shelters enabled our people to arrive finally and safely in the Land of Milk and Honey.
- Finally, three times each year our people journeyed to the ancient Temple in Jerusalem for the Three Pilgrimage Holidays (Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot). With so many convening at the same time, there weren't sufficient accommodations. As such, most people erected temporary *sukkot* for their stay.

This year, volunteers from our congregational family, led once again by Karl Gross, have built our own sukkah for all to enjoy. We invite you to come by, admire the expert decorating – courtesy of our Hebrew School children – and enjoy time in the sukkah with friends and family over the course of the holiday. ***If you build it, they will come.***

Now. About our garden. It's hard to put into words how much pride our Mitzvah Garden brings to the JCNWJ. Several of us have dirtied (literally) our hands in the process, but an extra special thank you goes to Howie Hirsch and Matt Polsky for their ongoing work that has resulted in hundreds of pounds of fresh organic produce going to feed the hungry of Warren County. Just a few years ago, that miracle garden was merely an idea. Today, it brings nourishment and hope to so many. Next year, we encourage more of you to participate – it is so rewarding. ***If you build it, they will come.***

On a related note, thanks to the perennial leadership of Iris Hirsch, we gathered bags (and bags and bags) of nonperishable food during the Holidays to donate to local food banks. Even though our High Holiday food appeal has concluded, people remain hungry so our collection box is in the front hall year-round. Other items the food pantries also distribute (that are always in need) are diapers, feminine hygiene products and the little unopened shampoos/soaps from hotels. ***If you build it, they will come.***

In the other large box sitting in the hallway, we have begun, once again, collecting gently used winter coats. Please bring your coat donations soon, as the weather has already started to turn and we will make our first donation within the next few weeks. If more coats come in after that, we will continue to pass them on to those in need. ***If you build it, they will come.***

Finally, Simchat Torah must be one of the absolute best celebrations in our community as we celebrate the gift of Torah and literally wrap our sanctuary in its holiness. Thanks to the efforts of Shira Dubin, we will introduce a new tradition at JCNWJ for Simchat Torah (**Friday night, October 6**), in which our congregants will not only hold the Torah as we wrap the room, but volunteers will also read snippets of their favorite verses, or parts of their b'nei mitzvah portions, as we journey through the story. If you'd like to participate in this new tradition, please contact me ASAP. If you are hesitant to read in Hebrew, have faith. I'm confident God understands English, too. And you know what? Please bring a friend –

Rabbi's Message (continued)

Jewish or not. What we have going on at JCNWJ is too good to keep to ourselves.

What we have learned through our work, our *tzedakah*, and our prayer is that for us, we are home wherever and whenever we feel the love of this remarkable congregation. Together, we have built this remarkable Jewish family – the only Jewish organization in all of Warren County. I'm glad to report that after demographic realities have shrunk the size of our membership, this year, for the first time in well over a decade, we enter the new year with more members than we had last year. There is renewed hope in a wonderful future for the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey.

We have so much to be proud of, Friends. ***We are building it, and they are coming.***

Chag Sukkot & Simchat Torah Sameach,

Rabbi Dubin



Simchat Torah
Dinner & Service
October 6 at 6:00pm

President's Message

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make these past High Holidays both meaningful and enjoyable. The food at both the Rosh Hashanah Oneg and the break the fast were wonderful. I ate way too much, but with all the delicious food available, it was hard not to. Thanks especially to the Rabbi, Kevin Story, our keyboardist, and to all the folks who either sang a prayer or chanted Torah or blew the shofar or ushered or played any part in the services.

I now look forward to Sukkot, where we will have a service and dinner on Sunday night, October 1st and Simchat Torah, where we hope to have enough people to be able to hold the Torah and wrap it around the synagogue. WE NEED YOU TO SHOW UP TO MAKE THIS WORK. This will be on Friday October 6th at 7 PM.

As the days get shorter and the temperatures cool down, I appreciate the changing of the seasons. In Warren County, there are many places to enjoy watching the leaves turn color. Merrill Creek is one of these places, and we have two hikes scheduled for early October, on the first and the 11th. By the 11th, we should be seeing the leaves changing. One of my favorite spots to take fall foliage pictures is a small pond on Rockport Road in Port Murray. If coming from the temple, you turn at the Mansfield middle school, make a right on Rockport Road and there is a pond on your right hand side. If you catch it at the right time of day and season, it can make a spectacular photo.

I hope the holidays were meaningful to you and helped you to try and be better than you were last year, although for most of you that will be tough, because most of you are absolutely terrific as you are.

With much love,
Howie

Updates & Events

SIMCHAT TORAH

We will observe Simchat Torah on the evening of Friday, October 6, beginning with dinner at 6:00pm. The service will begin at 7:00pm.

New this year, we will be inviting those who would like to read a line or two from your favorite part of the Torah scroll as it is unrolled around the entire sanctuary.

Please see the e-mail that was sent out for more details, or reach out to the Rabbi or Shira Dubin if you would like to participate.

We look forward to seeing everyone for this celebration of Torah.

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 or 908-850-1030.

Thank you.

Iris

OCTOBER YAHRZEITS

Barbara Simons	Wife of Gerry Simons
Esther Newman Lewis	Grandmother of Rabbi Lewis
Belle Fromer Shure	Aunt of Helen Mattson
Nora Lessne	Cousin of Edythe Herson
Frank Bronico	Father of Jeannie Berkowitz
Isadore Sachat	Grandfather of Barbara Simons
Thelma Rivera	Sister of Stuart Goldberg
Henrietta Goldstein	Mother of Iris Hirsch
Celia Robins	Mother of Bernie Robins
Michael Levin	Cousin of Rabbi Lewis
Stanley Shelofsky	Father of Andy Shelofsky

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

DONATIONS

In memory of Henriette Goldstein
- Iris and Howie Hirsch

In memory of Belle Former Shure
- Helen and John Mattson

In honor of the High Holidays
- Jill Gilkeson

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 October 14 at 11:30 am. Please watch your email for the Zoom link.

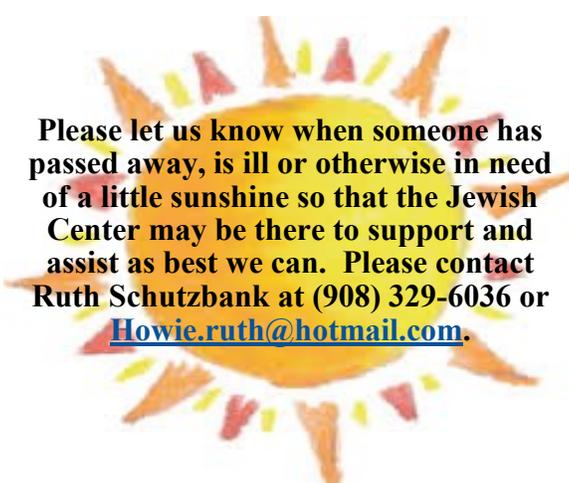
FOOD DRIVE

Thank you for your participation in the High Holiday food drive. We will continue to be able to accept non-perishable food items at the temple. We are also holding a coat drive at this time to provide for those in need during the upcoming winter.

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.

Chaverim *Hebrew / noun / friends*

at JCNWJ

The premise of the JCNWJ Sisterhood is changing from an adult all-female-by-birth group to a more inclusive adult club. The name has changed from Sisterhood to Chaverim. We will host events that will cater to ALL ADULT MEMBERS, as well as, some female/gender neutral events to meet the needs of our changing congregation.



Upcoming Chaverim Events at JCNWJ:

Nov 12 – Community b'yachad & Meeting

Dec 10 – Community b'yachad followed by Congregational Chanukah Party - noon

Jan 28 – Sharon & Risa's 80th birthdays AND "Craft with Teri" Japanese Knot bag. \$6 + material / supplies. Refreshments.

Feb 4 – Mishloach Manot and Passover Wine Fundraising meeting

March ?? — group trip to NYC to see SIX on Broadway. Drive in or take the train/subway together. Meet & depart from temple. NEED YOUR RSVP with \$20 deposit ASAP to guarantee your participation. Fate TBD. We need group of 10 for group discount.

March 22 -- Purim Schpiel & Mishloach Manot Distribution [please pick up]

April 13 – 7:30pm Havdalah, followed by Judaica SWAP Fundraiser & Cocktail Party

May 19 – Annual Mother's Day Tea Party - 1pm

June – annual congregational meeting [no Chaverim meeting this month]

Weekly Wednesday Night Yoga w/ Gina @ The Barn Belvidere, NJ - Spoonful of Om - special monthly rate available.

JOIN us on FB at "**JCNWJ members only**" page for updates and/or add "**WhatsApp**" to your smart phone to get current updates. We look forward to seeing you all at these events!

Questions, please call Suzi 908.343.1135

With warmest regards,

Suzi Marr & Beth Lappin
JCNWJ Sisterhood Co-Chairs

Updates and Events

TAX EXEMPT CONTRIBUTIONS

The following is provided as general information to all members planning to pay dues and/or make a charitable contribution to JCNWJ. **This advice may not apply to all situations and persons, and you should of course check with a financial advisor to be sure you proceed correctly.** Be aware that you may be able to save on federal income tax when you pay dues or otherwise make a charitable contribution (to JCNWJ or any other qualified charity) with this money, even if you do not itemize deduction on you federal tax return.

After years of contributing to tax-deferred 401(k)s and [IRAs](#), income tax is due on that money when you take withdrawals in retirement. Annual withdrawals from traditional retirement accounts are required after age 72, and are generally considered ordinary income and federal income taxes when you withdraw any money from your IRA.

However, you can avoid income tax on your required withdrawal from an IRA by donating your money directly to a qualifying charity, which includes JCNWJ. A qualified charitable distribution is an IRA (but not a 401K) withdrawal that is paid directly from your IRA to a qualified charity. While income tax is normally due on each traditional IRA withdrawal, you do not to pay federal income taxes on the amount transferred to a qualified charity, including JCNWJ.

Please note that IRA owners must be age 70 1/2 or older to make a tax-free charitable contribution. Also, you don't need to itemize your taxes in order to save taxes. Just be sure to withdraw the funds directly from the IRA to JCNWJ by the IRA trustee in order to [qualify for the tax break](#). If you withdraw the money from your IRA and later donate it, it won't qualify as a tax-free qualified charitable distribution. You have to request that the distribution check is charitable distribution. However, you cannot additionally claim a charitable contribution tax deduction on a charitable distribution from your IRA.

Funds must be transferred payable to the charity directly. But you can have the check (payable to JCNWJ) sent to you and you can then forward to JCNWJ for dues and/or any other contribution.

(Prepared by Bob Margolis)

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