

# OR AMI

## Light of My People Award For Excellence in Sisterhood Programming

The Or Ami "Light of My People" Award, established in 1973, recognizes outstanding programs of social justice, community service, and education which can serve as models for excellent sisterhood programming. WRJ's resolutions and constitution call for action and programming in response to Jewish and humanitarian domestic and global needs; the sisterhoods and districts working on programs and projects in their congregations, communities, and throughout the world fulfill this call. The sixty-four projects submitted for the 2007 awards are diverse and excellent; all make a significant difference for those involved as participants or recipients. WRJ applauds your work!

Visit [www.WomenofReformJudaism.org/orami](http://www.WomenofReformJudaism.org/orami) to view successful programs and community service project models which sisterhoods can replicate, adapt, or take in new directions to help to repair the world.

Women of Torah  
נְשׂוֹת תּוֹרָה  
Neshot Torah



WRJ 46TH ASSEMBLY • DECEMBER 12-16, 2007 • SAN DIEGO, CA

### WINNERS

#### A Light Among the Nations

**Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Sisterhood**, Baltimore, MD  
missmagothy@aol.com

To enable sisterhood, congregation, and community members to take action to help stop global warming, as urged by a notice in *To The Point*, the sisterhood joined the campaign "A Light Among the Nations" of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life. They developed a program of awareness, education, and the sale of compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL). The project committee also met with Temple staff about conserving energy within the Temple facility.

#### AFS Shabbat

**Congregation Emanu-El B'Ne Jeshurun Sisterhood**, Milwaukee, WI  
cherny@wi.rr.com

The sisterhood invites American Field Service students from many countries around the world and their host families for a Shabbat service and dinner in congregants' homes. Following the service, an "ask the rabbi" session is held. The evening concludes with a reception. This program has been held for fifty years and 200 people usually attend the service.

#### E.Khaya Project at Mavela

**Sisterhood of Temple David**, Durban, South Africa  
meskinpd@iafrica.com

"E.Khaya" means "my home," and the purpose of this project was to ensure that orphans and children in child-headed households would be cared for and that older siblings would not be kept out of school because there was no-one to care for the younger siblings. The project is modeled loosely on the kibbutz system, in that the program facilitates capacity

building, so that the community is able to assist the orphans. This region has an extremely high unemployment rate of between 70-75% therefore the development of a sustainable community was absolutely essential if the project was to succeed.

#### "Family to Family" Solar Cooker Project

**Temple Sinai Sisterhood**, West Lafayette, IN  
Rosenthal@insightbb.com

Becoming increasingly concerned about the genocide in Darfur, the sisterhood learned about the pin-making project, "Dolls for Darfur," from the Temple's social action committee. They made 100 pins to raise awareness and funds for the people of Darfur and then became aware of the solar cooker project of Jewish World Watch. The cookers allow the women to remain in the relative safety of the refugee camps rather than risk attack or murder when searching for firewood outside of the camps. The project challenges Temple families to donate funds to provide solar cookers to Darfurian families.

#### Hochma Luncheon

**Temple Beth Torah WRJ/Sisterhood**, Ventura, CA  
PSMAAlpha@aol.com

The sisterhood and brotherhood hold this multigenerational event biennially. The event honors Temple women and men who have the wisdom/hochma that can only come from years of life experience. The committee creates a tribute book with a section on information provided by the honorees, who are also interviewed by a teenage member of the congregation. At the luncheon, the teenagers speak about the honorees they have interviewed. The honorees are invited to speak if they wish.

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## WINNERS (continued)

### Judaism Through the Arts

**Congregation Emanu El Sisterhood**, Houston, TX  
BCPI026@aol.com

Judaism Through the Arts, a three-part series, explored works by some of Judaism's most admired artists and composers. Participants were led in discussions by experts in the areas of classical music as well as fine arts, both contemporary and traditional. The Museum of Fine Arts Houston partnered with the sisterhood, providing a conference room, audio/visual equipment, an audio/visual technician, and beverages. Several less-active members have volunteered to work on this project and two new members are looking forward to next year's program.

### Yehi Or Conference: Shining a Light on Mental Health/Mental Illness

**Beth Am Women, Congregation Beth Am**, Los Altos Hills, CA  
mmfamily@ix.netcom.com

The Beth Am Women Social Action Chair attended a session on mental illness at the 2003 URJ biennial. The interest generated led to planning for a 2005-2006 initiative on mental health. The BAW helped focus ongoing congregational programming on the topic and organized a highly successful conference open to the local community. The initiative resulted in a number of BAW and Beth Am events both before and after the conference that focused on the topic of mental illness, the establishment of a Jewish support group for those coping with mental illness and their caregivers, and enlisting seniors to be mentors for young families, especially families under stress.

## HONORABLE MENTIONS

### Austin Children's Shelter Project

**Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood**, Austin, TX  
nvillalpando@statesman.com

The sisterhood partners with the Austin Children's Shelter to host six events a year for children who are removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. Each event provides the children with one-on-one experiences with volunteers. Activities include arts and crafts music, storytelling, face-painting, and a swim party.

### BOWLING for Hunger

**Temple Beth El Sisterhood**, Knoxville, TN  
pardee3@comcast.net

The sisterhood worked two Sundays with religious school students and congregants who painted bowls with the help of a ceramic artist. Bowls were fired and then sold at a Shabbat dinner of chilis and soups donated and prepared by congregants. Proceeds from the dinner went to Second Harvest Food Bank of East, TN and MAZON. Dinner was followed by a social justice service led by the ninth grade.

### Diane Meade Women's Heart Health & Wellness Program

**Temple Emanuel Sisterhood**, Davenport, IA  
k\_beiser@msn.com

Three speakers were invited to the seminar, including a woman cardiologist who spoke about women and heart disease. The seminar was held because a sisterhood member died of a heart attack after experiencing symptoms for a week. Had she known to seek medical help, her death may have been prevented. The sisterhood wanted to alert congregants about heart disease – the leading killer of women!

### "Footprints for the Cure" & "Race Education Day"

**Beth-El Congregation Sisterhood**, Fort Worth, TX  
hollacew@charter.net

The sisterhood's Race for the Cure team sold fabric-footprints for \$5 each and asked donors to decorate them in memory of someone who died from cancer or in honor of a survivor. The sisterhood also coordinated a race education day during Sunday school to raise money and awareness about the fight against breast cancer and participated in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.

### Gift of Life Bone Marrow Donor Drives

**Congregation Ahavath Chesed Sisterhood**, Jacksonville, FL  
Ernst1212@comcast.net

Two bone marrow drives were held by the sisterhood in Jacksonville to try to find a match for a Temple member. In addition, the effort was expanded in Houston with WRJ and URJ's help at the biennial. After the biennial, several congregations held drives of their own.

### Playground Playtime

**Temple Israel Sisterhood**, Minneapolis, MN  
cweitz@comcast.net

Temple Israel sisterhood leaders conducted research on sisterhood membership and learned that they needed to make sisterhood accessible and appealing for all, especially women with young families who may think of sisterhood and themselves as incompatible. Playground Playtime was held for families with children under six at a local indoor playground on a weekend winter morning. It included lunch and provided a sisterhood-based new social experience for the family.

### Project Night-Night

**Temple Emanuel Sisterhood**, Cherry Hill, NJ  
felicef@comcast.net

During this stuff-and-fluff workshop, Temple youth stuffed bears to be donated to homeless children. Cuddle blankets, age-appropriate books, and gift cards were included with the bear in a Project Night-Night tote bag. Participants also stuffed an animal of their choice as a remembrance of their mitzvah, and received a tikkun olam participation certificate.

### Second Annual Women's Community Wellness Event

**Sisterhood of Temple Shalom**, Dallas, TX  
juliburreson@yahoo.com

Sponsored by the sisterhood, the event focused on women's heart health. The speakers included physicians and fitness specialists addressing topics such as hormone replacement therapy, intimacy and aging, and cholesterol. The purpose of the wellness event is to provide women with information and opportunities to learn about specific issues related to their health and well-being.

## COMMENDATIONS

### Children's Books for Israeli Children

**Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood**, Houston, TX  
susangolden@houston.rr.com

The sisterhood holds several children's book drives to support the libraries of the Kiryat Malchi region of Israel. Congregants contribute either new or used books.

### Intergenerational Program: Early Childhood and Sisterhood

**Fairmount Temple Sisterhood**, Beachwood, OH  
IANDA0811@sbcglobal.net

The sisterhood developed a year-long program with the Early Childhood Center involving youngsters in decorating quilt squares which have been made into an intergenerational quilt. The youngsters also did the motzi at

sisterhood luncheons. The program culminated with a lunch for the children and their mothers.

### **Jewish Burial and Mourning Rituals**

**Sisterhood of Congregation Emanuel**, Denver, CO

ahlbreslaw@qwest.net

Congregation Emanuel clergy, the Temple administrator, representatives of the Denver Jewish Mortuary, and chevra kadisha presented aspects of Jewish burial and mourning practices, including end of life decisions, funeral planning, as well as burial and mourning rituals.

### **Lights, Camera, Social Action**

**Midwest District**, IA, IL, Northwest IN, MN, NE, ND, SD, WI

targentar@aol.com

This opening event for the WRJ-Midwest District Convention was intended to feature current issues, motivate people to take action, and create a program model. The town meeting format featured leading speakers from the Reform movement discussing topics on the inclusion of people with disabilities; how American Jews can support the Progressive movement in Israel; reproductive rights; and an update on what the Union for Reform Judaism is doing to "repair the world." This event was covered in the Jewish press and had an overflow attendance.

### **Medical Lending Closet**

**B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim Sisterhood**, Glenview, IL

Marilyn@MarilynGlazer.com

The sisterhood Medical Lending Closet chairperson receives information from Temple members who have medical supplies that they would be willing to lend. If someone needs a cane or bath chair, etc., they contact the chairperson, who puts them in touch with the Temple member who has that item.

### **SAMMinistries Baby Shower**

**Temple Beth-El Sisterhood**, San Antonio, TX

debbiesclosets@aol.com

A baby shower was held by the sisterhood to provide a local shelter with much needed items. A representative from the shelter participated in the shower and spoke about the shelter's mission. Traditional baby shower games were played.

### **Saving Lives – Organ Donation**

**Temple Adath Israel Sisterhood**, Lexington, KY

mbrown1036@insightbb.com

Temple Adath Israel Sisterhood hosted Christ the King Women's Guild for an important educational program on organ donation. The program included a speaker, a question and answer period, and a social hour.

### **Twinning Program**

**Women of B'nai Israel, Congregation B'nai Israel**, Sacramento, CA

denimarshall@gmail.com

The Women of B'nai Israel learned that Congregation Kol HaNeshama in Jerusalem needed materials for its English education program for fifth and sixth graders from poor immigrant families and its tutoring program for seventh to ninth graders. The sisterhood has been coordinating a variety of efforts to collect and send the needed resources.

### **Women's Interfaith Tasting Seder**

**Temple B'Nai Sholom Sisterhood**, Huntsville, AL

jweiner@aol.com

For the past two years Temple B'Nai Sholom Sisterhood has had a Women's Interfaith Seder with tastings of traditional foods. They previously had a Passover women's seder for their members with a few guests, but decided to invite women of every faith to join them. The leader, using their women's haggadah, explained the meaning of the seder.

### **Yom Ha Shoah Commemoration**

**Temple Emanuel**, Kingston, NY

carmel@hvc.rr.com

As part of their Holocaust commemoration, the Temple Emanuel Sisterhood presented the Hudson Valley premier of a film by a Jewish filmmaker, Lisa Lewenz, built around her grandmother's home movies made during the rise of Nazi Germany. A discussion with the filmmaker, a reception, and a candlelight memorial service co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Ulster County followed.

## **SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS**

### **Outreach to Jewish Servicemen/women**

**Temple Sinai Sisterhood**, Washington, DC

csbrand@verizon.net

Based on the WRJ resolution calling on sisterhoods to serve the needs of Jewish service members at home and abroad, the sisterhood developed a multi-faceted outreach effort which included inviting service men and women to community and individual seders; organizing a drive for items needed by military hospitals; and making connections through military chaplains to volunteer in the military hospitals.

### **Supplies for Jewish Soldiers**

**Congregation B'nai Israel Sisterhood**, Boca Raton, FL

kpf204@adelphia.net

The sisterhood implemented a Temple-wide program to collect, package, and ship Judaica supplies for the Jewish soldiers in Iraq with particular emphasis on holiday needs. In addition, the project leaders maintained a list of military chaplains as contacts for distribution to military personnel that it provided to other WRJ sisterhoods through WRJ's listserv.

## **RECOGNITION**

### **Art of Jewish Cooking**

**Beth-El Congregation Sisterhood**, Fort Worth, TX

hollacew@charter.net

### **Aspirations, Activities and Achievements:**

#### **The Importance of Keeping Historical Records**

**Temple Emanu-El Sisterhood**, Dallas, TX

lsteinberg@sbcglobal.net

### **Avodah & Sports Day Fundraiser**

**Women of Isaiah**, Lafayette, CA

familydrucker@hotmail.com

### **Build-a-Bear Party For Donation to Hospice Program**

**Temple Emanuel Sisterhood**, Davenport, IA

k\_beiser@msn.com

### **Carolyn's Pin-Ups: Head Coverings For Women**

#### **Who Have Lost Their Hair**

**Rodef Shalom Sisterhood**, Pittsburgh, PA

bfrogal@yahoo.com

### **Chanukah Dinner 2005 – "Chinese Food and the Movies"**

**Temple Israel Sisterhood**, Akron, OH

bsug11@hotmail.com

### **Chavurah Arts Program for Adult Women**

**Beth-El Congregation Sisterhood**, Fort Worth, TX

hollacew@charter.net

### **Community Service through Knitting and Crocheting**

**Temple Brith Shalom Sisterhood**, Prescott, AZ

shayndleaz@cableone.net

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## RECOGNITION *(continued)*

### Connecting to the World...Jews Around the World

**Congregation Shaarai Zedek Sisterhood**, Tampa, FL  
jilli108@aol.com

### Fall/Spring Clothing Drives For Local Charities

**WRJ Temple Emanu-El of Lynbrook**, Lynbrook, NY  
Alanenadel@aol.com

### Feeding the Hungry

**Congregation Shaare Emeth Sisterhood**, St. Louis, MO  
hansandmarcia@sbcglobal.net

### Friendship: Better Than Chocolate, No Calories, Can Last a Lifetime

**Temple Israel Sisterhood**, Columbus, OH  
cjoyblack@wans.net

### Interfaith Day

**Congregation Shaarey Zedek Sisterhood**, East Lansing, MI  
lrvert@michcom.net

### Knitzvah and its Mitzvahs: Healing Shawls

**Beth-El Congregation Sisterhood**, Fort Worth, TX  
hollacew@charter.net

### Kol Isha: a Retreat for Learning and Worship

**Temple Israel**, Minneapolis, MN  
cweitz@comcast.net

### Love My Body: Women's Health

**Monroe Temple Sisterhood**, Monroe, NY  
glass4@optonline.net

### MFTS/WRJ Midwest District Mini-Mission to HUC-JIR

**MFTS/WRJ Midwest District**, IA, IL, Northwest IN, MN, NE, ND, SD, WI  
targentar@aol.com

### Miriam's Cup Project

**North Shore Congregation Israel Sisterhood**, Glencoe, IL  
scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net

### Monthly Visits to Homes With Adults With Needs

**Washington (DC) Hebrew Sisterhood**, Washington, DC  
mildredamer@comcast.net

### Non Event Tea for Scholarships to the March of the Living

**University Synagogue Sisterhood**, Los Angeles, CA  
cmweitz@verizon.net

### Pizza in the Hut

**Temple B'nai Torah Sisterhood**, Bellevue, WA  
shanaauc@comcast.net

### Rosh Chodesh: Dialogue with Dinner

**Beth-El Congregation Sisterhood**, Fort Worth, TX  
hollacew@charter.net

### Sisterhood Creative/Congregational Service – The Children of Terezin

**University Synagogue Sisterhood**, Los Angeles, CA  
cmweitz@verizon.net

### Sisterhood Mitzvah Day Chemotherapy Caps Project

**North Shore Congregation Israel Sisterhood**, Glencoe, IL  
scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net

### Sisterhood Shabbat Service

**Temple Emanu-El Sisterhood**, Birmingham, AL  
kimroth@charter.net

### Sisterhood Shabbat Weekend

**North Shore Congregation Israel Sisterhood**, Glencoe, IL  
scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net

### Sisterhood's Health Fair

**Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood**, Austin, TX  
nwillalpando@statesman.com

### Spa and Spirituality: A Women's Weekend Away

**North Shore Congregation Israel Sisterhood**, Glencoe, IL  
scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net

### Temple Akiba Mitzvah Day

**Temple Akiba Sisterhood**, Culver City, CA  
prisca56@sbcglobal.net

### Vests for Israeli Police Force

**Congregation B'nai Israel Sisterhood**, Boca Raton, FL  
kpf204@adelphia.net

### Virtual Pantry

**B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim Sisterhood**, Glenview, IL  
Marilyn@MarilynGlazer.com

### Wise Temple Sisterhood's Retreat

**Isaac M. Wise Temple Sisterhood**, Cincinnati, OH  
mco@fuse.net

### Women of B'nai Israel Brochure

**Women of B'nai Israel**, Sacramento, CA  
denimars@comcast.net

### WRJ – Pacific District Chai Line

**Pacific District**, AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, El Paso, TX, UT, WA, WY,  
British Columbia and Alberta, Canada  
ecaplan123@aol.com

### WRJ Sisterhood Walk for Education

**Temple Bat Yam Sisterhood**, Fort Lauderdale, FL  
conifoster@bellsouth.net

### 2007 Spring General Meeting

**Temple Israel Sisterhood**, Minneapolis, MN  
cweitz@comcast.net



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM  
*stronger together*

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