

Illinois Area Day Draws Over Eighty Women

On June 30, women from all over Illinois joined together for a day of spirituality, learning, and connection. Members of eleven women's groups, including our newest affiliate, Women of Or Shalom in Vernon Hills (congratulations and welcome to you all!) as well as several WRJ individual members, met at Beth Tikvah Congregation in Hoffman Estates. Our theme was *Women Uplifting Women* and attendees donated bras to CUPS Bra Drive, a nonprofit organization that distributes bras to those in need at shelters in the Chicago area.

The day began with breakfast sponsored by Beth Tikvah Congregation Sisterhood and a welcome from both Beth Tikvah Congregation President, Laura Reitman, and WRJ Heartland District Co-First Vice President, Cheryl Stern. Ilana Axel, Beth Tikvah Congregation Cantorial Leader then led Beth Tikvah musicians and singers in "Song Uplifting Women", a celebration of music composed by women. Two sessions of workshops followed, including ten programs ranging from leadership training to Lilith Salon to a social action activity.

Our District President, Rozan Anderson, kicked off lunch with a welcome, thank you to the many people involved in creating and implementing the event, and announcements about upcoming events. We concluded with a presentation by Cynthia Gamboa-Morales, CEO and founder of CUPS Bra Drive, who shared her personal story and information about her organization.

Many people had a hand in creating and implementing this event and Heartland District greatly appreciates their work:

- Beth Tikvah Congregation Sisterhood leaders who served on our planning committee: Helen Kornick (Sisterhood President), Alese Goers, Ellen Rosenblum, and Sheryl Kier. You did enormous work managing all the logistics, food, and helping to arrange for speakers.
- Beth Tikvah Men's Club for serving our meals and room setup.
- All our speakers for the time and effort you put into your excellent programs.
- Our Illinois Area Directors, Marci Kops, Joanne Merritt, Myra Hersh, and Mary Fisher for overall coordination of the event; and our West Region Area VP, Janet Buckstein for handling communications and registration.

It took a big team and great energy to pull this off... Yasher Koach!

We look forward to seeing you all at our next Illinois Area Day.