



## MIDWEST DISTRICT M'KESHER

מְקֵשֶׁר

SHEVAT 5777 FEBRUARY 2017

### **A Message from Janet Buckstein**

*Midwest District President*

Greetings!

As everyone who has been reading M'Keshet over the last few months knows, our message has been about creating a WRJ community. A key ingredient to our success is all of you being involved in our many programs and activities... and as you will see if you read on there are many upcoming opportunities for that. But I would also like you to consider other ways for us to build community.

Allow me to share what was a fun and meaningful experience.

Recently Michelle Scheinkopf, Linn Ullenbrauck and I joined Women of Emanu-El in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at their Women of Valor Friday night service. The service honored their Woman of Valor, Sherry Malmon, and included readings relevant for a Women's Shabbat service.

We found the Women of Emanu-El members and all congregants to be warm, welcoming, and enthusiastic in their support of WRJ. I think all of us felt closer after the "ladies from Illinois" met with the "ladies from Wisconsin"; however, what became even more meaningful for me was my experience in writing and delivering the D'var.

After talking with Ruth Treisman, President of Women of Emanu-El, we agreed that rather than do a traditional D'var, that I would discuss the modern meaning of Woman of Valor. I did quite a bit of research, including going to the original text in the bible and how we in Midwest District have communicated it to our members.

*Allow me to share some of the D'var with you...*

*"A woman of valor, who can find? Her worth is far above jewels."  
When we speak of a woman of valor today, what do we mean? Certainly, we have*

*gone beyond the words of Eishet Chayil, the poem that concludes the book of Proverbs. The challenges and needs facing women require a woman of strength, a woman of passion, and a woman of value to her family and community. A woman of valor speaks, but also acts with a just intent, She is dedicated to improving the world in both small and large ways.*

*I have had the privilege to know and work with others at Women of Emanu-El... notably your president, Ruth Treisman, and Nikki Levin who is a member of the WRJ Midwest District Executive Committee. I know you both to be dedicated, warm and supportive of WRJ's goal for ensuring a vibrant future for Reform Jewish Women, and I am confident that you are joined in this passion by every member of Women of Emanu-El. So, Sherry, Ruth, Nikki and all of you with us tonight, you are all Women of Valor. You are women of strength, you are women of action, and you are dedicated to improving the world. And you are joined by 3,500 women in 8 states throughout the Midwest, as well as tens of thousands of women throughout the world, through a global network of hundreds of sisterhoods and women's groups, a WRJ-wide family where every member has an opportunity to learn, grow and feel part of a nurturing community of Reform Jewish women.*

*WRJ provides the resources and support through training, networking opportunities, programming and development tools, and advocacy initiatives to ensure that every one of us can make a difference in the world. We truly are stronger together."*

I know that whenever and wherever I join you I feel that sense of family. When Michelle and I attended the T'fillot Nashim service at Temple Beth Israel in Skokie, we felt the warmth of being with our sisters; and I am also confident that at our upcoming meetings and speakings with sisterhoods throughout the Midwest I will feel the same way. I hope you agree that through our shared vision and passion, we really are a community!

How can you experience community? Participate in the upcoming events listed in the UPCOMING EVENTS section below.

### **But here are some tidbits I thought you'd like to know.**

- Twenty-six of us will be attending the [Fried Leadership Conference](#) and more than twenty of you will be coming in early and will dine together on Thursday night (11 of us will be together on Wednesday night).
- Sisterhood and women's group presidents, have you ever attended a president's brunch? These sessions, coordinated by your Area Directors, bring together close-by presidents to meet and discuss successes and challenges. Metropolitan Chicago will be holding one on February 19, 2017 and

Greater Illinois/Northwest Indiana will be holding one on March 26, 2017.

Watch for your invitation.

- Our annual [Mah Jongg and Canasta Weekend](#) at OSRUI. is being chaired by Marla Goldberg and Audrey Zaprudsky, and YES, lessons will be given!
- Are you a Minnesotan? Janet, Michelle and Laura Cooper will be joining you along with Area Director Beth Ettinger for Area Day on April 7-8, 2017. This annual event brings together sisters from throughout the Minneapolis/St. Paul area as we study, pray and dine together.
- Our [Midwest District Kallah](#) is a wonderful way to re-energize yourself and share spiritual experiences with your sisters. Sign up will be available soon!

I hope to see be with you at all the events you can make!

*L'Shalom,*

### **Janet Buckstein**

President, WRJ Midwest District

Useful links ▶

#### **FORMS:**

[Speakers Bureau Request Form](#)

[Expense Reimbursement Form](#)

[District Deposit Form](#)

### **Creating Our WRJ Community...**

### **Are you Stepping UP?**

*by Janet Buckstein*

While we love to celebrate together, sometimes community means supporting each other in tough times. Midwest District tries its best to let everyone know when our board members need your comfort. I had an enormous sense of family recently at the funeral for Jeanne Eisenberg, Carol Berger's mother and Jennifer Schneider's grandmother.

It was so heart-warming to see so many faces from Midwest District in attendance, showing their emotional support for Carol and Jennifer. This show of support, in good times and sad times is what makes us a unique community.

I know that many of you are doing wonderful things to create our WRJ community. Let me know at [wrijmdp@gmail.com](mailto:wrijmdp@gmail.com) and I'll let everyone else know!

Also - our *Messenger* editor, **Michelle Dloogloff** is looking for articles to include in the next edition. Please send your ideas to Michelle at [m\\_dloogloff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:m_dloogloff@sbcglobal.net).



## Critical Issues by Marilyn Glazer

### Opening Adoption Records and Obtaining Original Birth Certificates

The documentary [A Simple Piece of Paper](#) tells the story of individuals who were able to obtain their original birth certificate and what it meant to them. Illinois State Representative Sara Feigenholtz, a Jewish woman and herself an adoptee, was responsible for the passage of HB5428, The Original Birth Certificate Access Bill, which was signed into law in 2011, details of which is below. Sara recently connected with two sisters that she did not previously know that she had.

HB5428, the Original Birth Certificate Access Bill, has been signed into law! Please visit the [Illinois Vital Records Website](#) to obtain a request form. Individuals born before 1946 can begin requesting the form today, and individuals born on or after January 1, 1946 can fill out the form beginning November 15, 2011.

[Click here](#) to read the entire article. *Questions?* Contact [Marilyn@MarilynGlazer.com](mailto:Marilyn@MarilynGlazer.com).



[Fried Leadership Conference](#) - March 3-5, 2017 Charleston, SC

[Mah Jongg & Canasta Weekend](#) - March 31-April 2, 2017 OSRUI, Oconomowoc, WI [Download the flyer here](#)

[Midwest District Kallah - Kindle Your Creativity, Spark Your Imagination!](#) -April 28-30, 2017 OSRUI, (Exec. Committee meets on the 28th.) [Download the flyer here](#) . Questions? Contact [Donelle Macey](#) or [Karen Schwartz](#)

[Minnesota Area Day](#) - Friday, April 7 & Saturday, April 8, 2017 at Bet Shalom Congregation (details to come...)

[WRJ "Women's Journey to Israel" Mission](#) - May 21-29, 2017

[Metropolitan Chicago Area](#) - Saturday, June 24, 2017 at B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim (BJBE)

[Midwest Leadership Training & Interim Board Meeting](#) - October 27-29, 2017 OSRUI, Oconomowoc, WI  
-Exec.Committee Meeting: Oct. 27  
-District Board Meeting: Oct. 29  
(*details to come...*)

[Simcha Showcase Party Planning 2017](#) - Sun, Feb. 26, 2017 1:00-5:00 pm Temple Chai, Long Grove

[Not Your Grandma's BINGO](#) -Sat. March 25, 2017 - 7:00 pm Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL

**Tell us about any upcoming events that are open to the community!**

Please send a pdf or a website link to: [wrmwblast@gmail.com](mailto:wrmwblast@gmail.com) Materials must be received by the 20th of the month to be considered for the next month's M'Keshet.

**Please Note:** If there is a fee to attend the event, all WRJ members are invited at your Sisterhood rate.

---



**WRJ Fried Leadership Conference**  
Charleston Marriott Hotel  
Friday, March 3 3:30 pm - Sunday, March 5 12:30 pm

***"I love the services! I laugh, I cry, I dance, I sing...It opens my heart and soul and leaves me feeling so exhilarated."*** ---Marlene

Spolane from Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood, Houston, TX

FLC will move you when you experience the powerful prayer of hundreds of women worshipping together on Shabbat. **Join us! [Register Now](#)**

---

## Good & Welfare



Yom Huledet (Happy Birthday) Wishes  
to our Midwest Board Members:

### FEBRUARY:

7 Laura Cooper - [cooper4449@gmail.com](mailto:cooper4449@gmail.com)

- 7 Rachelle Sheffer - [rmsheffer12@gmail.com](mailto:rmsheffer12@gmail.com)
- 12 Lottie Frank - [lottie.frank@yahoo.com](mailto:lottie.frank@yahoo.com)
- 15 Judy Lohr-Safcik - [jklohersafcik@gmail.com](mailto:jklohersafcik@gmail.com)
- 19 Penny Shnay - [plshnay@sbcglobal.net](mailto:plshnay@sbcglobal.net)
- 24 Diane Kaplan - [dlkap@aol.com](mailto:dlkap@aol.com)
- 24 Sally Frank - [Sally.Frank@drake.edu](mailto:Sally.Frank@drake.edu)
- 24 Rachel Willens - [rwil636@aol.com](mailto:rwil636@aol.com)
- 27 Debra Bauer - [debrabauer@gmail.com](mailto:debrabauer@gmail.com)
- 28 Sue Center - [slcenter@wisc.edu](mailto:slcenter@wisc.edu)

### MARCH:

- 10 Karen Schwartz - [Kschwartz62@att.net](mailto:Kschwartz62@att.net)
- 13 Marsha Cooper - [mgc0313@comcast.net](mailto:mgc0313@comcast.net)
- 14 Judith Weller - [wexlerj@comcast.net](mailto:wexlerj@comcast.net)
- 23 Marilyn Weisberg - [mweisberg0@gmail.com](mailto:mweisberg0@gmail.com)
- 25 Heather Levine - [buttrfly8@hotmail.com](mailto:buttrfly8@hotmail.com)
- 25 Roberta Kravitz - [bubbieroberta@gmail.com](mailto:bubbieroberta@gmail.com)
- 29 Sherri Feuer - [feuerslf@aol.com](mailto:feuerslf@aol.com)
- 30 Andrea Blain - [ablain51@gmail.com](mailto:ablain51@gmail.com)



### S'machot (Mazel Tov) to:

[Cheryl Stern](#) on the marriage of her daughter Alyssa on  
New Year's Eve to Patrick Reynolds.

[Karen Dillon](#), WRJ Chai Society member and Communications Chair, on her new  
position as Senior Manager, Individual and Corporate Giving, at the Kohl Children's  
Museum of Greater Chicago.

[Marla Goldberg](#), WRJ Executive Committee Member and Special Events Co-  
Chair, for earning her Masters in Jewish Professional Studies from the Spertus  
Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership. Congratulations may be sent to Marla  
at 2 250 Sherman #2, Evanston, IL 60201



### R'fuah Sh'leimah (Get Well) Wishes to:

Alumnae [Rachel Willens](#) on her recent fall; Western Illinois/Wisconsin Area Director [Nikki Levin](#) on her recent surgery; and Alumnae [Helene Steen](#) on her recent hospitalization.



### Yizkor (In Remembrance) Condolences to:

*Zichrono Livrachá z"l* (May his/her memory be for a blessing)

[Carol Berger](#), VP, Midwest District Service to Sisterhoods & Programming and WRJ Board Member, on the passing of her mother, Jeanne Eisenberg z"l and grandmother of [Jennifer Schneider](#), Social Media Chair. Condolences may be sent to Carol at 4552 Lindenwood Lane, Northbrook, IL 60062 and to Jennifer at 4020 Pennsylvania Ave., Eagan, MN 55123.

Past Midwest District President [Penny Levy](#) on the recent loss of her daughter-in-law, Staci D'Ancona Levy z"l. Condolences may be sent to Penny at 1225 Central Avenue, Deerfield, IL 60015.

### Need a Speaker For Your Next Event?



**REQUEST**  
a Speaker

Having a WRJ speaker available for Sisterhood Services, installations or to just help facilitate or conduct workshops is really easy to do. Just fill out the form and return it to me to let me know what you are looking for.

Also, do you know someone in your Sisterhood who has an area of expertise she might be willing to share? We are looking to expand our Speaker's Bureau and we can only do that with the help of each of you. I am looking forward to your requests and wonderful ideas from each and every one of you. Thanks!

#### Gloria Kaiz

Midwest District Speaker Bureau's Chair

[gloria@kaizs.com](mailto:gloria@kaizs.com) 847-945-3741

[Download the Speaker Request Form](#)



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM  
*stronger together*

### **The Mission of WRJ**

WRJ strengthens the voice of women worldwide and empowers them to create caring communities, nurture congregations, cultivate personal and spiritual growth, and advocate for and promote progressive Jewish values.

### **Connect with us**



[Sign up for our Eblast](#)

[Visit our Midwest District website](#)

**Contact: Janet Buckstein, WRJ Midwest District President**

[jfbuckstein@gmail.com](mailto:jfbuckstein@gmail.com)

[wrjmdpres@gmail.com](mailto:wrjmdpres@gmail.com)