



M'KESHER מְקֶשֶׁר

ADAR 5777 - MARCH 2017

A Message from Janet Buckstein *Midwest District President*

Greetings!

So yes, we get it...we are all about building a WRJ community at Midwest District! But where does this start?

I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the NFTY (*National Federation of Temple Youth*) convention that was held in Chicago a couple of weeks ago, and it really hit me... we start with our youth! Just watching the teens and young adults in attendance embrace their old and new friends was really heart-warming. Since I believe young people travel in packs, I am not surprised that the smallest groups seemed to be three or four. Community is being built!



Certainly, WRJ understands this. We (then our name was NFTS, *National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods*) were largely responsible for founding NFTY over 75 years ago. Our role in founding and funding NFTY demonstrates WRJ's deep and abiding belief in the importance of our youth and commitment to sustaining the future of Reform Judaism. At the recent convention, over 800 attendees were able to see NFTY's appreciation in

action. Midwest District First VP **Michelle Scheinkopf**, representing WRJ North America, introduced the keynote speaker at the Saturday night plenary. This is a huge

honor acknowledging both WRJ and Michelle's work with the NFTY Alumni Campus Connector program. We are so proud of you Michelle!

Throughout the years, WRJ has provided well into the hundreds of thousands of dollars of support for both NFTY and URJ camps. Midwest District has two camps within our geographic footprint: OSRUI in Wisconsin and GUCI in Indiana. Our district has supported these camps with direct donations funded by sisterhoods and women's groups throughout the Midwest. Many of our sisterhoods also fund camp scholarships for their member families. You should have already received a letter from **Kathy Madura**, Midwest District Camp committee chair, asking for your support. Each of you has the opportunity to support our youth. By the way, Kathy is also on the URJ OSRUI search committee for a new camp director. Jerry Kaye will be retiring at the end of 2018 and Kathy will help us to make sure we recognize Jerry and celebrate his many years of OSRUI leadership.

Of course, you can experience WRJ yourself by participating in one of the many events included in this bulletin. Most notably we have included flyers for our [Mahj Jongg and Canasta](#) weekend, [spring Kallah](#) and Minnesota Area Day where you can RSVP or register.

Finally, I want to give a shout-out to all of you who do so much for WRJ, over and above what you do for your sisterhoods and women's groups. You chair committees, lead and coach rising leaders, support and advise sisterhoods, and assure a secure financial future for our WRJ and Midwest District.

One example I was struck with was a recent *Strategies for Success* article written by **Karen Dillon** for [WRJ's Weekly Digest](#), which goes out to all WRJ leaders, including sisterhood presidents. She shared an award-winning program that WNSCI does bi-annually called Vashti's Banquet. Her article described the program and provided tips on how other sisterhoods could implement it. Let's also acknowledge the time and effort that so many of you put forth in writing and blogging for WRJ. Thank you. You assure that we really are "stronger together"!

L'Shalom,

Janet Buckstein

President, WRJ Midwest District

Creating Our WRJ Community... Are you Stepping UP?

by Janet Buckstein

Want to see WRJ community in action! **Michelle Scheinkopf, Kathy Madura and Cheryl Stern** representing WRJ at the NFTY convention. You gave your time to this incredible event and all of us appreciate it!

I know that many of you are doing wonderful things to create our WRJ community. Let me know and I'll let everyone else know!



I know that many of you are doing wonderful things to create our WRJ community. Let me know at wrjmdpres@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 m_dloogoff@sbcglobal.net.



Critical Issues by Marilyn Glazer

Jewish Values and School Vouchers – The Religious Action Center looks at the issue:

Although all American Jewish groups value education, the issue of vouchers is divisive for the Jewish community: the Union for Reform Judaism and the United Synagogues of Conservative Judaism generally oppose vouchers, while the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America traditionally supports them. The Orthodox movement is a proponent of vouchers because, through such programs, *yeshivot* and Jewish day schools gain government funding, a much-needed resource. About 90 percent of American Jews belong to the Reform and Conservative Movements, both of which oppose vouchers.

The Reform movement opposes vouchers for the following reasons:

- Vouchers Threaten the First Amendment's Guarantee of Religious Liberty
- The Government Could Exert More Control over Religious Institutions
- Voucher Funding is a Small Bandage Over a Large Wound Vouchers Do Not Guarantee School Choice.
- Public Schools are the Heart of American Identity
- Jewish Education is Important, But Government Funding is Inappropriate and Illegal.

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

Summer Camp – those words have special meaning to anyone who has ever attended (or sent someone to) OSRUI or GUCI. It is a place where it is not only okay to be Jewish, it is the best place to be Jewish!

WRJ Midwest has always been strong supporters of our camps. Thank you to those who have already sent in your donations to the camp fund. Each year we use this money to make a meaningful difference to the campers who enjoy and thrive at these wonderful institutions.



As our Camp Chair, it is my pleasure to attend the OSRUI Board meetings. I have been asked to remind everyone that it is not too late to sign up for camp but do it quickly as some sessions are already closed. And, you can still apply for campership assistance (even though we are past the deadline). We have also been asked to spread the word at our own congregations. Please check in with your clergy and staff to encourage them to promote going to OSRUI or GUCI.

Also, I am privileged to be on the committee to determine the job description for the person who will become OSRUI's next Director. This will be Jerry Kaye's last summer as director (more to follow on how we will celebrate his incredible service). We need your input as to what you feel are the most important characteristics and qualifications for being the next Director. Please go to OSRUI.org/director and complete the simple survey. All answers will be valued! Also, please know that a nationwide search will be taking place and that there are no "favorites" for this position.

Thank you for all you do for WRJ and for our children. Hope to see you all at Kallah!

B' shalom,

Kathy Madura, WRJ Midwest Camp Chair

Midwest District



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

[Midwest District Kallah](#)

Upcoming District Sisterhood / Women's Group Events:

[Not Your Grandma's BINGO](#)

Sat. March 25, 2017 - 7:00 pm Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL

Let us know about your next event!

If your event is open to the community, send a

April 28*-30, 2017 OSRUI
Kindle Your Creativity, Spark Your Imagination!
**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. [Download the flyer here.](#)

flyer (pdf) to your [area director](#) and we will try to include it.

Materials must be received by the 15th of the month prior to the event.

[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), Deerfield, IL [Download the flyer here.](#)

[Midwest Leadership Training & Interim Board Meeting -](#)

October 27-29, 2017 OSRUI, Oconomowoc, WI

Exec. Committee Meeting: October 27

District Board Meeting: October 29

[\(details to come...\)](#)

Good & Welfare



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

MARCH:

10 Karen Schwartz - Kschwartz62@att.net

13 Marsha Cooper - mgc0313@comcast.net

14 Judith Wexler - wexlerj@comcast.net

21 Marilyn Oskin - Fioskin@aol.com

23 Marilyn Weisberg - mweisberg0@gmail.com

25 Heather Levine - buttrfly8@hotmail.com

25 Roberta Kravitz - bubbieroberta@gmail.com

26 Dale Cone - dconetbi@yahoo.com

29 Sherri Feuer - feuerslf@aol.com

30 Andrea Blain - ablain51@gmail.com

APRIL:

3 Harriet Krasnoff - hrkras@comcast.net

4 Michelle Dloogoff - m_dloogoff@sbcglobal.net

11 Peggy Kipp - pegk56@comcast.net

21 Sheila Rosenfeld - srosenfeldtbi@gmail.com
22 Esther Schak - ers@schak.com
27 Judy Katz - katzinmn@gmail.com
28 Joanne Merritt - joannem@wicresoft.com
29 Sheila Schuman - sschuman@frontiernet.net



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

Sandi Frisel, for a speedy recovery from a broken foot.

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

[Download the Speaker Request Form](#)

Useful links ►

FORMS:

[Speakers Bureau Request Form](#)

[Expense Reimbursement Form](#)

[District Deposit Form](#)



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM
stronger together

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 wrjmdpres@gmail.com
