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## MIDWEST DISTRICT M'KESHER מְקֵשֶׁר

MAY 2017  
IYAR 5777

### **A Message from Janet Buckstein** *Midwest District President*

Greetings!

What a wonderful month we had to celebrate community with our WRJ family!

In early April, Michelle Scheinkopf, Laura Cooper and I journeyed to the “Twin Cities”. Our trip took us to Bloomington, Edina, Minnetonka and Minneapolis; and while we didn’t actually visit St. Paul, our sisters there “crossed the river” to join us. Beth Ettinger, our Area Director for Minnesota and the Dakotas, coordinated this event and had great assistance from the presidents and leaders of all three sisterhoods/women’s groups: Bet Shalom, Temple Israel, and Mt. Zion. You were incredible hostesses to us and all in attendance. Those of you who have had the experience of speaking before an unknown audience know how daunting it can be. Well, imagine my surprise when I showed up at Bet Shalom on Friday night to do the D’var Torah and was greeted by so many friends! It was like coming home.

Approximately 25 women attended at least one of the many events, and they were able to experience the “Power of WRJ” through the services, training and social activities. Our thanks to Rabbi David Locketz, who led our services and co-presented a workshop with Michelle Scheinkopf on “Jewish Women from Suffrage to Today”; and to Sherri Feuer and Ashley Burbul for the workshop on member engagement. Sherri set the stage with her presentation on “Audacious Hospitality” and Ashley followed with the “Millennial Perspective”. Ashley, you bring incredible

insight to us all in understanding how to communicate with younger generations and I look forward to working with you on future WRJ initiatives. And words simply can't express our thanks to Sherri. I think I introduced you as a treasure for our district and I can't come up with anything better than that! Your knowledge of all things WRJ and understanding of all things about us as sisters is a true gift to us.

Finally, my personal thanks to Michelle and Laura for taking this journey with me. I may not always say it in so many words, but your support is incredibly important to me. *Stronger together!*

And how did we end the month? With an **INCREDIBLE KALLAH!** Approximately 70 women spent the weekend at OSRUI. Co-chairs Donelle Macey and Karen Schwartz put together an incredible weekend of celebrating the creative journey with workshops, singing and prayer. Rabbi Carmit Harari from BYBS in Homewood IL, accompanied by Lizzy Scheinkopf, song leader extraordinaire, led joyful and spiritual services on Friday evening and Saturday morning, and an extremely moving Havdalah service. I know that I am not the only one who was almost in tears.

Saturday night Sandi Firsell led us in an event to raise dollars for the WRJ YES Fund. Those of you who know Sandi, know that she always comes up with innovative and out-of-the-box programs. Well this was no different. While we all needed to put our faith in Sandi that her Karaoke competition would actually work, our trust paid off. The performances were insanely fun to do and view, and Sandi's wit and energy as our MC kept us laughing throughout. Oh, by the way, we raised over \$1,000 for the YES Fund!

To use a word that younger people used to use (and may still use), it was AWESOME! I loved being with old friends and making new friends from Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin. I look forward to seeing you at our next district event, the Leadership Training weekend from October 27 to 29 at OSRUI.

What's up next? Iowa! Lynne Turry and I will be celebrating Temple Emanuel of Davenport Sisterhood's Shabbat and installing their new leaders on May 12; and meeting with their board on May 13. Past District President Marla Goldberg and Audrey Zaprudsky (our Midwest District Special Event chairs) will join Agudas Achim sisterhood in Coralville, IA at their Mitzvah lunch on June 4.

We would love to meet with every Midwest District woman's group and join your community of sisters. Just let us know where and when... and give us a bit of lead time!

***L'Shalom,***

*Janet Buckstein*  
*President, WRJ Midwest District*



If you missed the 2017 Kallah, click [here](#) to read **Janet Buckstein's Dvar Torah** from the Shabbat morning service. It's thought provoking, sometimes funny and always inspiring - definitely worth reading!



## **Creating Our WRJ Community... Are You Stepping UP?** *by Janet Buckstein*



What is creating community about? I can't think of a better demonstration than the leadership, teamwork and commitment to our district's success exhibited by Kallah co-chairs Donelle Macey and Karen Schwartz. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

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!

## **New WRJ Outreach Grants For Interfaith Families & Non-Jews in Your Community**

*by Judy Wexler, WRJ Board member and WRJ Midwest District Secretary*

We are excited to announce that WRJ is now providing outreach grants in amounts up to \$1,000 to WRJ sisterhoods and women's groups, to fund programs that reach out to interfaith families and non-Jews within their communities. These grants, made possible by the National Center to Encourage Judaism, are designed to encourage and enhance learning about Judaism and participation in Jewish life.

Some suggestions for programs or projects are: (1) Inviting interfaith or non-Jewish families in your community to a program based on a Jewish holiday; (2) Hosting Shabbat dinners for interfaith families within and outside of your congregation; (3) Developing a specific group for non-Jewish women for your Chai Mitzvah program. Please see the WRJ website for additional programming ideas. Be creative!

The application for these grants is now available on the [WRJ website](#), and applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis over the next year. Any sisterhood or women's group that receives funding will be required to submit an evaluation form upon completion of the program, and programs must be completed by June 1, 2018.



## Jewish Values & 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... [Click here to continue reading the article.](#)

Questions? Contact [Marilyn@MarilynGlazer.com](mailto:Marilyn@MarilynGlazer.com).

**HELLO**  
I AM...

*Your New  
President*

### Sisterhood & Women's Groups Leadership Change

**Sisterhood Presidents** : It's time to fill out WRJ's Sisterhood [Leadership Change Form](#) to make sure your new key leaders receive WRJ news, events, tools, and more! Please email WRJ at [leadership@wrj.org](mailto:leadership@wrj.org) to be added to Yammer.

For WRJ Midwest District, please complete the [Midwest Sisterhood President Info Form 2017](#) and email it directly to Database/Directory chair, [Peggy Kipp](#).

Are you an outgoing sisterhood president and would like to continue receiving district communications and be part of the district? Become an alumnae. [Click here](#) for the Alumnae form and forward it to Alumnae chair [Mae Schwab](#).



### Send Flower Project Cards to the People You Love

Mother's Day is fast approaching, falling this year on May 14. WRJ is partnering with the [JWI Flower Project](#) to send flowers to battered women's shelters this Mother's day. Send a mom (or dad) you love a personalized card and support mothers in need.

Each year, more than 45,000 women and children will spend Mother's Day in domestic violence shelters. For each \$25 contribution you make to the Flower Project, we will mail a Mother's (or Father's) Day card to any loved one you would like to honor. Proceeds from each card help send flowers and financial literacy resources to over 200 domestic violence shelters every year on Mother's Day, as well as support resources that empower women and girls.

[Click here](#) to send your mother or father a card and remind these women that they are loved and appreciated, as mothers and individuals.

## Midwest District



### 2017 District Events

#### Saturday, June 24

[Metro Chicago Area Day](#)  
B'nai Jehoshua Beth  
Elohim (BJBE) Deerfield,  
IL

[Click here](#) for the flyer.  
[Register online here.](#)

#### October 27-29

Midwest Leadership  
Training & Interim Board  
Meeting at OSRUI:  
- [Exec. Committee](#)  
[Meeting: 10/27](#)  
- [District Board Meeting:](#)  
[10-29](#) (details coming soon)

### Sisterhood / Women's Group Events in the District:

Click on the red links below to view the details.

**May 10** B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim  
(BJBE) Deerfield, IL [Games Galore](#)

**May 16** Congregation Emanu-El, Jeshurun, River  
Hills, WI [ABCD - After Breast Cancer Diagnosis](#)

**May 17** Temple Emanuel Sisterhood, Davenport,  
IA [Mah Jongg Tournament](#)

**June 4** Women of Temple Chai, Long Grove, IL [Mah  
Jongg Tournament](#)

**June 11-12** Women of Oak Park Temple, Oak Park,  
IL [Rummage sale](#)

**Jun 25** Women of North Shore Congregation Israel,  
Glencoe, IL [Mah Jongg Tournament and Canasta  
Corner](#)

### Want help publicizing your next event?

If it is open to the community, please send a pdf flyer 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.

Useful links ▶

As you are putting together your newsletters and e-blasts, please use these updated forms:

WRJ Sisterhood Leadership Change Form  
(This is WRJ's Leadership form)  
Midwest District Sisterhood President Info Form 2017  
Speakers Bureau Request Form  
Expense Reimbursement Form  
District Deposit Form  
Alumni Association Brochure 2016-2018

## Good & Welfare



### MAY:

- 1 Judith Geleerd Kitzes - [jdgshopgirl@aol.com](mailto:jdgshopgirl@aol.com)
- 4 Carol Berger - [ponderer4552@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ponderer4552@sbcglobal.net)
- 7 Janet Olson - [Jlolson2011@gmail.com](mailto:Jlolson2011@gmail.com)
- 10 Jill Binder - [jbinder@larkinhoffman.com](mailto:jbinder@larkinhoffman.com)
- 10 Carol O'Neil - [caroljo@tds.net](mailto:caroljo@tds.net)
- 13 Gigi Green - [dblegggreen@yahoo.com](mailto:dblegggreen@yahoo.com)
- 16 Marlen Frost - [minyfrost@aol.com](mailto:minyfrost@aol.com)
- 19 Matilda Oppenheimer - [mountziontemplesisterhood@gmail.com](mailto:mountziontemplesisterhood@gmail.com)
- 20 Lauren Levant - [slevr@aol.com](mailto:slevr@aol.com)
- 25 Sheri Frisque - [sherifrisque@yahoo.com](mailto:sherifrisque@yahoo.com)
- 26 Lisa Greene - [wgreene61@comcast.net](mailto:wgreene61@comcast.net)
- 27 Mae Schwab - [maewash@aol.com](mailto:maewash@aol.com)
- 28 Karen Harlan - [kbh1224@comcast.net](mailto:kbh1224@comcast.net)
- 29 Florence Kesselman Slavick - [flosla@earthlink.net](mailto:flosla@earthlink.net)
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- 30 Marci Kops - [530tffn@gmail.com](mailto:530tffn@gmail.com)
- 30 Carrie Morris - [carriemorris55@gmail.com](mailto:carriemorris55@gmail.com)

### JUNE:

- 2 June Levin - [JLevin1030@gmail.com](mailto:JLevin1030@gmail.com)
- 2 Barbara Rosenberg - [BRosenbergWRJ@aol.com](mailto:BRosenbergWRJ@aol.com)
- 3 Helen Gold - [hlgold1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hlgold1@sbcglobal.net)
- 3 Michelle Scheinkopf - [scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net](mailto:scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net)
- 6 Marcia Koester - [mjkoester@comcast.net](mailto:mjkoester@comcast.net)
- 9 Karen Gutterman - [rkgut@att.net](mailto:rkgut@att.net)
- 10 Cynthia Levy - [macalevy@netzero.com](mailto:macalevy@netzero.com)
- 12 Janet Buckstein - [jbuckstein@comcast.net](mailto:jbuckstein@comcast.net)
- 17 Dr. Julie Luks - [julieluks@gmail.com](mailto:julieluks@gmail.com)
- 18 Cheryl Stern - [cbsternies@aol.com](mailto:cbsternies@aol.com)
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- 22 Judy Stevens - [jstevens22@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jstevens22@sbcglobal.net)

- 23 Kitty Loewy - [kdloewy@gmail.com](mailto:kdloewy@gmail.com)  
25 Rozan Anderson - [rozan@chorus.net](mailto:rozan@chorus.net)  
27 Sue Stein - [sstein@mail-stein.com](mailto:sstein@mail-stein.com)



### Congratulations (Mazel Tov) to:

WRJ Vice President of Affiliate Services **Sherri Feuer** on the birth of her granddaughter Abigail Robbie Martin. Congratulations may be sent to Sherri at: 501 Carlson Parkway, Apt. 415, Minnetonka, MN 55305



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

Area Director, **Judy Lohr-Safcik**, recovering from bronchitis.  
Past District President, **Lois Gibson**, recovering from a recent hospitalization.



### Need a Speaker For Your Next Event?

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. Do you know someone 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)



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

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