

Message from the President



Greetings to all and welcome to the WRJ Midwest District *Messenger*. As the new president of Midwest, I would like to highlight my theme for the next two years, the 4 "E" Experiential Cycle. If you have not read my articles in the *M'Kesher*, the following information will give you a glimpse of the highlights.

The Experiential Cycle is the art of creating an experience where the result is an emotional connection to a person or idea, in this case, WRJ Midwest District and your sisterhood. By having a one-on-one interaction you will deepen relationships with target audiences. And then by implementing the 4 "E"s above, "Entice", "Excite", "Engage" and "Embrace", you can build and foster a sense of community. The success and future of WRJ and Reform Judaism is dependent upon strategies that will truly "Engage" and "Embrace" the Jewish community. Please contact me for more information, and I will be happy to share the plan in more detail with you and your sisterhoods.

Through the *Messenger*, I hope you will learn about the many components of WRJ Midwest District. We are a vital group of women with many talents and a great deal of sisterhood expertise.

Recently twenty-eight women from Midwest attended the WRJ Fried Leadership Conference in Austin, Texas. It was an opportunity for us to join together to learn, to pray, and to exchange ideas. We all were so thrilled with the warmth that exuded throughout the entire weekend.

As first-timer Elena Morone from BYBS stated, "It was my first rodeo and I am still trying to figure it all out, but I'm planning on being there for Kallah leading an art workshop. Julie Silver was a joy for the spirit but my very favorite was Galit Cohen, a female Reform Rabbi with Congregation Kodesh Ve'Chol in Holon, Israel. What a model of tenacity, wisdom, audacity and a go-getter. I hope I have half of it and I'd be happy, working on it."

If you have ever thought of expanding your leadership skills, please consider attending the FLC in two years, the Interim Leadership Training at OSRUI in September, and plan to join us at our next convention a year from this fall. Watch the *M'Kesher* and the *Messenger* for more information. Also, check your email for save the date and registration information. And most important, be sure to share the *Messenger* with your own sisterhoods.

L'shalom,

Lynne Turry

WRJ Midwest District President

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Mark Your Calendar

**WRJ Midwest District/OSRUI
Mah Jongg & Canasta Weekend** March 20-22, 2015
OSRUI, Oconomowoc, WI

RAC Consultation on Conscience April 26-28, 2015
Washington, D.C.

WRJ Midwest District Kallah May 1-3, 2015
Executive Committee Meeting May 1, 2015
OSRUI, Oconomowoc, WI

WUPJ Connections Conference May 13-17, 2015
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

WRJ Board Meeting May 30-June 1, 2015
HUC-JIR Campus, New York City, NY

Chicago Metropolitan Area Day June 27, 2015
Beth Tikvah Congregation, Hoffman Estates, IL

**WRJ Midwest District Leadership Training and
Interim Board Meeting** September 25-27, 2015
Executive Committee Meeting September 25, 2015
OSRUI, Oconomowoc, WI

WRJ 50th Assembly November 4-8, 2015
Orlando, FL



Thank you to everyone who sent material for this edition of "The Messenger."

Did you know that there is a WRJ Midwest Facebook page? Check it out and "like us" at: <https://www.facebook.com/WrjMidwest> and follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/WRJMDW>. And while we're on the subject of online locations, our redesigned WRJ Midwest website is a work in progress. Also, make note of the WRJ website which is www.WRJ.org.

Please share this newsletter with your members, prospective members, congregational leaders, and synagogue professionals.

This communication piece is only as good as its content. Please let me know when you have local and district-wide events to promote and to report. You can always send me information at any time and I will save it for the next edition.

Marilyn Weisberg, Editor
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OSRUI and the WRJ Midwest District Present

Mah Jongg and Canasta Weekend



**EAT
PRAY
PLAY
Eat Again!**



March 20-22, 2015
at OSRUI in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

PLAY • A WHOLE weekend of Mah Jongg, Canasta, games and friends at OSRUI!

- Mah jongg and Canasta lessons available • Hours of playing time and PRIZES!
- Players grouped by skill level

PRAY • Shabbat services - and candles, challah, wine --
Rest and relax and enjoy the beauty of OSRUI

Tables open at 3:00 pm Friday, the weekend officially begins at 5:00 pm, Closing and prizes at 11:30 am Sunday, players may remain until 2:00 pm if they wish.

\$180 per person or \$150 for WRJ sisterhood members (double occupancy in hotel-style rooms). A limited number of single rooms are available for an additional \$75.

The weekend will be coordinated by:
Cheryl Stern and Karen Schwartz, WRJ Mah Jongg enthusiasts

Marcy Frost, WRJ Mah Jongg "Maven" and Terri Argenter, WRJ Canasta "Queen" will be our instructors, and Kristin Stern will share her musical talents as songleader.



Register by March 10, 2015, at www.osrui.org



To contact us:

osruiprograms@urj.org 847-239-6984 [facebook.com/urjosrui](https://www.facebook.com/urjosrui)

URJ Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute • Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

www.osrui.org

WRJ MIDWEST DISTRICT KALLAH 2015

THE ART OF BEING JEWISH MAY 1-3, 2015



OLIN SANG RUBY UNION INSTITUTE CAMP
OCONOMOWOC, WI

JOIN us for a Spectacular Event

Together we will celebrate Shabbat and the Arts. Participate in AWESOME WORKSHOPS in Quilting, Music, Cooking, Dance, Drama, Scrapbooking, Knitting, Cross Stitch, Crochet, Needlepoint, Photography, Flower Arranging, Bead Stitching, Storytelling and More! Enjoy a performance and learn some new dances from the Yonim Children's Israeli Dance Troupe from Madison, WI.

Give yourself the Gift of 24 hours away with your Midwest Sisters.

BONUS! stay Saturday night at no additional charge. Saturday night dinner and Sunday morning breakfast are included. We will have an Art Auction to benefit the YES Fund, Movie, and of course Mah Jongg, Canasta, more treats and FUN FUN FUN!

NEW! Pre-Kallah Workshops at 3:00 on Friday.

Come early and enjoy DRAMA with Harriet Krasnoff (we will be rehearsing a STORAH TELLING skit for Saturday morning), Flower Arranging with Lynne Kleiman, or CHALLAH BRAIDING with Kathy Madura and Barbara Gordon.

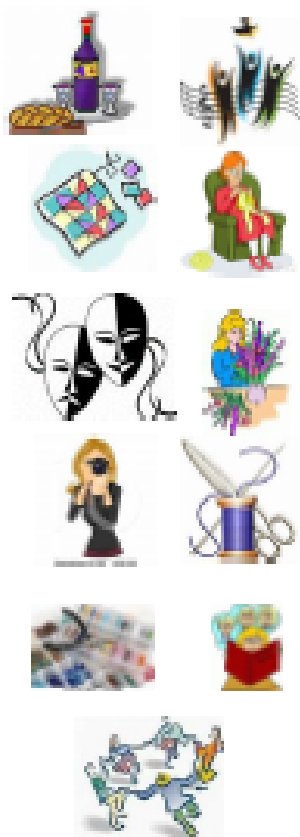
ON LINE REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

<https://2015wrjmidwestdistrictkallah.eventbrite.com>

Register NOW. Some workshops have limited capacity, so hurry for best availability!

Carol Berger ponderer4552@abcglobal.net

Kathy Madura optsisterhood@yahoo.com





WRJ 2015 Fried Leadership Conference

by Janet Buckstein, WRJ Board of Directors, WRJ Midwest District 1st Vice President

From January 30 to February 1, 2015, WRJ gathered “deep in the heart” of Austin, TX for our biennial Fried Leadership Conference (FLC). The conference welcomed over 230 women from more than 100 women's groups. Attendees included current and rising sisterhood leadership, WRJ Board members, and WRJ Board alumnae; and among these participants were 28 women from the Midwest District. We gathered at the AT&T Executive Education & Conference Center at the University of Texas-Austin campus. Together, we learned, we prayed and we played! All essential to developing the close ties to other women charged with leading their congregations’ women’s organizations that help us build success. In fact, first-timer Mary Fisher (Temple Beth El Sisterhood in South Bend, Indiana) said “I appreciated learning that some of the concerns our small sisterhood has are the same concerns that are being discussed in much larger congregations as well. Thanks to attendees being open and caring I came home with new ways to address some concerns with our membership.”

The programs included sessions on developing leadership skills to thrive in sisterhood and community life, and also covered today’s issues close to the hearts of women, WRJ, and the Reform Movement. With a focus on social justice, Israel advocacy, and spirituality, it was a meaningful and busy weekend! There were blocks of workshops led by WRJ Board members and WRJ staff on a wide variety of topics, including: fundraising, running effective meetings, facilitating transition and change, mentoring and developing new leaders, enhancing WRJ’s involvement in social justice, organizing successful programming, providing effective marketing and communications, and preventing and managing conflict. One of the most powerful programs was led by Rabbi David Wolfman, who helped participants consider how to engage the younger generations and reimagine their sisterhood’s mission and relationship to the Reform Jewish community. Midwest District Sisterhood President Leslie Kemp (Temple Beth El in Madison, Wisconsin) said that after sitting in on both of Rabbi Wolfman's workshops, “it was a wake up call that it was really time to sit back and remember ‘Why we are here and do what we do’, and hoping that getting back to that core will re-energize us”.

Beautiful Shabbat services on Friday night, Saturday morning and Havdalah were led by WRJ District Presidents including our own Lynne Turry, along with Songleader-In-Residence Julie Silver, who afterward held a special song session where many of the WRJ women were dancing in the aisles. Sisterhood presidents, WRJ event first-timers, and WRJ District Area Directors chanted the *aliyot* for Torah readers Cheryl Harper, Trina Novak, and Jackie Zev, respectively and WRJ Executive Director Marla J. Feldman delivered an inspiring D’var Torah on Parashat B’shalach. The services were so moving that many of us found our eyes filling with tears. Naomi Shapiro, Sisterhood Co-President at Bet Shalom Congregation in Minnetonka, Minnesota “always finds it a very special experience to share services with my WRJ sisters and having Julie Silver leading us in song was just icing on the cake”.

Following lunch, we visited the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library, where we listened to President Johnson’s phone conversations held in the Oval Office, viewed items from his life and time in office, and learned about his impact on the civil rights movement and other social justice issues. Upon return to the hotel, we headed off to WRJ “Face Time” sessions, in which we discussed issues facing our respective affinity groups, including sisterhood presidents from various-

sized congregations, WRJ District Area Directors, fundraisers and YES Fund chairs, membership chairs, marketing and communications chairs and WRJ Board Members.

Dinner was a real highlight, with Texas-style barbecue and an authentic honky-tonk band played while the women danced the evening away in their finest Texas attire (did you know that many of our Midwest District women own cowboy hats and boots?). Check out Facebook!

Sunday morning featured an optional town hall-style drop-in session, followed by the final event: the YES Fund Breakfast. WRJ President Blair C. Marks welcomed everyone and WRJ Executive Committee member Rozan Anderson (Temple Beth El in Madison, Wisconsin) introduced keynote speaker Rabbi Galit Cohen-Kedem, of Congregation Kodesh Ve'Chol in Holon, Israel, who spoke about her experience as a female Reform rabbi in Israel and the significant impact WRJ has had in furthering gender and religious equality there; as well as the importance of voting for ARZA in the World Zionist Congress elections in order to further gender and religious equality in Israel. WRJ Vice President Sharon K. Benoff spoke about and helped raise money for the important work of the YES Fund, and honored several members with presentations of their new Lifeline pins.

So yes, we learned and we prayed, but let's not forget about the PLAY! Linn Ullenbrauck (WRJ Board Member, Midwest District VP Marketing and Communications and Skokie Illinois-based Temple Beth Israel Sisterhood Board Member) loves connecting and networking with her colleagues and peers throughout WRJ. "I have made friends across the country and connected with WRJ leaders to learn from them so I can be a better leader to my sisterhood." What better way to achieve this than to spend social time together? We are very proud of the warmth and hospitality that Midwest District extends to our WRJ sisters... and FLC was not an exception! Fifteen of us from the Midwest arrived a day early to "Experience Austin". Word spread and we had another fifteen from other WRJ Districts join us for a city double-decker bus tour, a Texas barbecue dinner at Stubbs and live music at The Mohawk. Friday morning we breakfasted at The Driskill Hotel (one of the oldest in Austin) and toured the State Capitol. Of course, each day was not complete without significant time in the hotel's pub/restaurant to bond with other WRJ women from around the world!

WRJ International Board Member and Midwest District Past President and Board Member Susan Pittelman (Congregation Shalom Sisterhood, Milwaukee WI) sums it up perfectly: "The WRJ Fried Leadership Conference was fabulous! The sessions I participated in were informative and thought-provoking — and the services were beautiful and inspiring! I loved spending time with my longtime WRJ friends and meeting so many wonderful women who are just beginning their WRJ journeys. "

Hope to see you all at future WRJ events!



Speak! [breathe]: What I Learned in Speakers Development Training

by Rozan Anderson, WRJ Board and Executive Committee member from Temple Beth El in Madison, WI.

I enrolled for the program, thinking that it'd be a good investment in my personal development. I am a past sisterhood president, a member of the WRJ Board and Executive Committee, and first vice president of my congregation. I've spoken professionally throughout my career, though not frequently. Since I'd like to represent WRJ, my congregation, other organizations, and myself as well as possible, I figured that it would be great to enhance my skills and comfort with public speaking. [speak s l o w l y]

I got so much more from this workshop than I'd ever imagined! [use inflection!]

Before heading to Austin, we'd been asked to prepare a three-minute speech from a list of topics or one of our choosing. We were also given a rubric of things to which we should pay attention, such as supporting our ideas with stories and examples. I opted to speak about mission and vision statements – and hoped to bring these to life as fully as possible!

To start the day, we heard from many course leaders: WRJ Vice Presidents Fredi Bleeker Franks and Sara B. Charney and WRJ Board Members Karen S. Sim and Isabel Einzig-Wein, who worked with us on topics such as:

- Presence: inspiring audiences with power and authenticity (*pause*, etc.)
- Principles of public speaking
- Delivering our messages: conducting workshops and presenting D'verei Torah
- Engaging listeners and fielding questions

Some of us had wondered about the efficacy of preparing our speeches before we were presented with this material, but it turned out to be just the right base from which to work. We could think about our upcoming speeches as we absorbed information.

All too soon [!!!], it was time to give our presentations! For many, it was the first time speaking before such a large group. Others were more seasoned. For all, it turned out to be the perfect safe and nurturing environment. [check posture]

We all supported and learned from one another, as you might imagine! Our facilitators gave expert feedback after each presentation. Not only did I learn so much about a variety of topics, but I was incredibly moved by what we shared with one another in that place. [pause]

Some of us went on to address the whole assembly that weekend – including a couple who had never previously spoken publicly and had been terrified by the thought before the workshop. We cheered each other on – at least silently!

The training was so meaningful, we now have a group set up on Yammer so that we may continue sharing materials and ideas. [pause]

For me, the entire conference was wonderful. The Speaker Development Program was one major highlight! [look around, smile!]

WRJ plans to offer this training more frequently in upcoming months and years, perhaps at WRJ District conventions, as well as at future WRJ Leadership Conferences, WRJ Assemblies, and board meetings. We offer facilitators – our own members – who are experienced, engaging, and empowering, [pause] and fellow participants who will encourage you to be your best self – someone with the confidence to get in front of others and speak about that which is important to you!

I urge you to join in when you see a Speaker Development Program announced! It may transform how you view interacting with others!

And don't forget that WRJ and our Districts provide seasoned speakers to come visit your sisterhoods and congregations, offering a wide variety of presentations and workshops. Information on requesting a speaker is readily available on our web site, or you may feel free to contact me.

Thank you again for inviting me today – I look forward to speaking with you soon or seeing you at an upcoming event!



The Sisterhoods of Minnesota welcomed everyone to Convention October 23-26, 2014 in Bloomington Minnesota at the Hilton Hotel. It was a packed schedule from a boat ride on the Mississippi Thursday night to the closing session on Sunday morning. We experienced “Shabbat Off the Wall” at Temple Israel followed by a delicious Shabbat dinner at the Temple. It was Shabbat Noah with many of the events incorporating the theme of the ark. When was the last time you ended Shabbat morning services with a rousing rendition of “Rise and Shine”. Lucky for us it did not *rain and pour for forty daysies* and the sun was out and everything was *fine and dandy dandy*. Cantor Scott Simon led the music and we even celebrated a Bat Mitzvah. Mazel to Ruth Garner from Mt. Zion Temple St. Paul. Marcy Frost, Penny Schnay, and Marilyn Weisberg also read Torah. The Haftarah was taken from the “Voices” section for Shabbat Noah and read by Janet Buckstein, Rozan Anderson, Michelle Scheinkof, and Alese Goers.

Rabbi Marla Feldman, Executive Director of WRJ, brought greetings from the Board of Directors and staff and shared information and insights about WRJ nationally and internationally. We studied with local Rabbis, Cantors and were led in workshops by Midwest sisters and special guests: Dr. Susan Benfield, Karen Dillon, Sandi Firsell, Sally Frank, Diane Frichol, Marcy Frost, Ruth Garner, Beth Hartman, Rebecca Kanner, Esther Schak, Doris Schyman, Jane Taves, Linn Ullenbrauck, Susan Weinberg, Marilyn Weisberg. We studied Parashat Noah, learned about Women of the Wall, women of valor, time management, gained skills for the YES Fund, fundraising, how to prepare a D’var Torah, reclaimed the story of Noah’s wife, and sang songs to still the soul.

Women of Valor

Pam Altman	Beth Tikvah Congregation, Hoffman Estates, IL
Rozan Anderson	Temple Beth El, Madison, WI
Carol Barrington	Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL
Susan Bayer	B’nai Yehuda Beth Sholom, Homewood, IL
Linda Brubaker	Temple Chai, Long Grove, IL
Janet Buckstein	Lakeside Congregation Highland Park, IL
Rabbi Marla Feldman	Executive Director WRJ, NY
Sheryl Hassell-Bennett	Temple Emanuel, Davenport, IA
Carolyn Heyman	Emanuel Congregation, Chicago, IL
Marlene Kagen	Congregation Shalom, Milwaukee, WI
Lynne Kleiman	B’nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim Deerfield, IL
Cindy Levy Cong	Emanu-El Waukesha, WI
Kathy Madura	Oak Park Temple B’nai Abraham Zion, Oak Park, IL
Ilona Rouda	Mount Zion Temple, St. Paul, MN
Peggy Rubenstein.	North Shore Congregation Israel, Glencoe, IL
Jodi Shablott-Jesser	Beth Shalom, Minnetonka, MN
Sue Tish McMorris	Temple Israel, Minneapolis, MN
Nadine Zuckerman	Congregation Emanu-El B’ne Jeshurun, Milwaukee, WI
Nikki Levin	Congregation Emanu-El B’ne Jeshurun, Milwaukee, WI



Sherri & Marcia Welcome Everyone



Making Shopping Bags for Neighborhood House



The 100 Year-Old Rabbi-
the Last Rabbi Skit




On the Mississippi




We Voted







WRJ Midwest District Biennial Convention
Bloomington, Minnesota



Shaharit Shabbat
October 25, 2014 - 1 Cheshvan 5775

שבת נח
ראש חודש חשוון
Shabbat Noach
Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan

*Through traditional prayers and contemporary poetry,
this Shabbat celebrates and remembers
the Rainbow,
the Animals,
the Flood,
the New Moon
and, most of all, our Sisterhood in WRJ*

Throughout the siddur, readings are marked as a color:
Red • Orange • Yellow • Green • Blue • Indigo • Violet
Please rise and read with your color group as noted.





Past Presidents participate in Installation

Installation



Lynne Turry receives her President's pin

Leadership Transition



Marcy Frost receives her Past President's pin



Study



**We danced and
played all night**





2014 Convention Feedback

What would you like Midwest to accomplish?

- Involve all sisterhoods in WRJ
- More communication between departments
- Not as many last minute things to do
- Better communicate it's purpose
- Help stabilize memberships
- Get all sisterhoods interested in the district
- Another destination weekend
- Strengthen the weak sisterhoods
- Increase involvement
- Engage women in the WRJ mission in meaningful ways
- Entice young active members
- Leadership workshops if can't go to Fried
- Elevator speeches to give young, unaffiliated, and sisterhood members
- Idea generation for involvement, programming and connection
- Connect sisterhood presidents more for info sharing
- Increase membership
- Develop leaders
- Strengthen Area Directors
- Promote Area Days
- Increase participation at district events
- Link members by electronic chat to discuss issues or to get to know each other. Share needs and wants.
- Increase participation at Kallah, Interim, Convention
- Make our sisterhoods feel supported and valued
- Increase awareness of everything WRJ does
- Help all women feel the magic of WRJ

What suggestions or ideas do you have?

- Update job descriptions
- Rather than waiting for sisterhoods to invite a speaker, have an AD or board member come to a meeting or training (ask to be in the agenda)
- Be more visible at the sisterhood level
- Develop initiatives to meet the needs of 20-30 women and single women of all ages
- Recognize sisterhood presidents and encourage them to attend meetings
- Personal greeting/contact by district president to each sisterhood president
- Exchange promising ideas and programs that have worked
- District excursions:
 - Des Moines - Annual Art Festival
 - Madison

WRJ Midwest District Resource People

Call them for ideas and/or tell them of your successes. They are here for you.

KALLAH

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Lots happening at Temple Chai!

By Cheryl Stern

Thanks to the generous funding of Temple Chai's Sisterhood, the East entrance of Temple Chai and the handicap accessible bathroom are now equipped with automatic doors. Temple Chai Sisterhood Opens Doors.

OSRUI/WRJ Mahj-Canasta weekend is March 20-22, 2015. This will be an exciting event run by Karen Schwartz and Cheryl Stern of Temple Chai. Marcy Frost will be teaching Mahj Jongg and Terri Argentar will be teaching Canasta. Join us for a fun filled weekend of EAT, PRAY, PLAY and EAT AGAIN!! The 2016 Convention is being planned as we speak by Cheryl Stern, Linn Ullenbrauck, Carol Berger and Michele Scheinkopf. We have narrowed our venue choices down and are planning on unveiling the Convention at Kallah on May 1-3, 2015!!

Havdalah in Dubuque Iowa

By Emily Kruse

On Saturday, January 10, 2015, four members of the Temple Beth El (Dubuque, Iowa) Sisterhood – Emily Kruse, Cindy Pearce, Phyllis Garfield and Jo Lobertini (and her husband Paul Mareth, too!) – held a havdalah service at Mt. Carmel, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in Dubuque. Sixty-five sisters attended the event that included a brief explanation of Shabbat and havdalah followed by the service. Afterwards, a potluck dinner of soup and bread, provided by the Temple Sisterhood, allowed for casual discussion with the sisters. The event was very well received and praised by the sisters who always welcome an opportunity to learn about other faith traditions. The Temple Sisterhood hopes to hold the same event at other convents in Dubuque to continue our community outreach efforts.

Fall was a busy time for Temple Beth El Sisterhood Munster, Indiana

By Carrie Morris, president

In September, we held our 3rd Smart Chicks and Old Bags Event. Sisterhood members and others some Jewish, some not worked all summer to make this event a huge success. Gently used handbags and costume jewelry were collected over the summer, cleaned and displayed for the event. Smart Chicks was advertised in the local newspaper and even an article was written by one of the correspondents for the paper. The event was open to the entire community and they did come. One of our Temple members was the MC with his corny jokes and was the auctioneer for the "designer" handbags that were donated. We raffled donated gift baskets and served coffee and pastries. The ladies of our Sisterhood and everyone who worked did a tremendous job and helped raise a great deal of money. The unsold handbags and jewelry became a social action event when they were donated to Sojourner Truth House in Gary, Indiana which provides support for to help participants overcome the issues that contribute to their homelessness.

Sisterhood also sponsored the Rosh Hashanah Oneg and also Break the Fast.

Our annual Chanukah supper was held and we had a great turnout. We served approximately 150 people and no one went home hungry. Our junior choir entertained us with Chanukah songs.

On Saturday, February 21 we will be having a Rosh Chodesh and game day. We will begin with a short discussion about Rosh Chodesh at 10:00 am and then move on to games. Of course there will be Mah Jongg and other games. Soup and sandwiches will be served. The day will end with Havdalah at 3:00 pm. Everyone is welcome. Flyers will be issued shortly. Munster is not at the end of the earth so come on out. Lets us know if you would like to attend.

Our Sisterhood Shabbat will be held on Friday, March 13 at 7:30 pm. Our theme is Jewish Journeys and three of our Sisterhood members will tell of their journeys.

Of course there is Mah Jongg every Sunday morning at 10:00 am and we have a good turnout each week.

Sisterhood for everyone at Temple Israel Minneapolis

Sisterhood Cooks for Kids Jeremiah House

Tuesday, February 24th
Volunteers **URGENTLY** Needed!

We need volunteers to cook and to serve food at Jeremiah House. It's a fun way to help young women who are working hard to improve their lives.

The meal is served at 5:30 PM and is finished by 6:30 PM. You can either prepare a food item before the meal, set up and serve dinner, or both.



Sisterhood Book Club The Dovekeepers

Wednesday, March 11th: 7-9pm
Temple Israel

The Dovekeepers is Alice Hoffman's most ambitious and mesmerizing novel, a tour de force of imagination and research, set in ancient Israel.



Challah Baking

Learn how to personalize your Shabbat meal with homemade challah. Marilyn Lipschultz will demonstrate her techniques using organic ingredients and share her recipe and freshly baked challah.

Sunday, April 19th: 9:30am-11:30am
At the Home of Renee Lampert
(Plymouth - Address provided upon RSVP)

Hamantashen 2015 We are baking for Purim!

Bring an apron and join us for laughter and fun baking Hamantashen. There are also selling shifts for the NEW "Pop up" Bakery at Temple. Bake some, sell some, send some. Sign up for as many jobs or shifts as you like.

Intuition....the Gift of Being a Jewish Woman

Everyone Can Use a Little Divine Guidance

Thursday, April 23rd at 6:30pm
Oak Ridge Country Club
\$25/person

Please join us for an evening that will be both entertaining and thought provoking as our guest speakers, Rabbi Sim Glaser and Kayla Michaela, tackle the differences between intuition vs psychic and the Jewish mystical view of the supernatural.

Rabbi Glaser will be there to guide us on the study and meditation of Kabbalistic themes and provide some basics of Jewish mysticism.

Kayla Michaela is a talented Psychic, Medium, Teacher, and Speaker. Her direct and honest style allows clients to navigate through the "fluff" and get down to the core issues or questions.

For Your Consideration:

A Sisterhood Movie Event

Monday, March 2nd at 7pm
Temple Israel

Please join us to 'Consider' and vote on the Sisterhood Bylaws changes and the 2015-16 Slate of Sisterhood Officers.

We'll enjoy a little extra knowledge from Rabbi Gertman about the story of Esther, have a few cocktails, some hamantaschen, and watch the film "For Your Consideration", a Christopher Guest comedy about making the movie Home For Purim. This event is free, sponsored by Sisterhood.



Building a Sukkah

Temple Israel Minneapolis Revises the Leadership Structure

By Betsy Michel, Past President

Two years ago when I chaired the nominating committee it was really difficult to get women to agree to come on the Sisterhood Board. They did not want to commit to monthly meetings or a 2 year term. In the fall of 2013 we began not getting enough people to an Exec meeting and never had a quorum to get any business done. In Feb 2014 we formed a bylaws committee to look at our Board structure and bylaws. Along with the Presidium of Past Presidents and Rabbi Gertman we created a new governance structure and overhauled our bylaws. The philosophy was discussed at several exec meeting this past Fall and approved in Oct and in Jan by the full Board. They still need to be approved by the full membership this spring.

Here are some highlights:

- We eliminated the Exec Committee and shrunk our Board of Directors from 80+ to 16 with a majority present for a quorum. Co-VP's get one vote so women could alternate who attends the meetings.
- Our meetings have moved away from department reports (they are submitted via email before the meeting) to brainstorming and discussion driven. This is not in the bylaws but a fundamental change so that Board member time is worthwhile.
- We added our WRJ rep to the Board and a Parliamentarian as a Presidential appointee without a vote. Our assigned clergy is on the Board but does not have a vote.
- We changed the name of VP of Administration to VP of Development.
- We added a VP of Marketing and Communications.
- We are emphasizing the need for department committee so that the VP's are delegating and not doing everything themselves. We are fostering and grooming these (event chairs, committee members) new leaders to be future Board members.
- We decreased the meeting to 6 per year and at least one every quarter.
- We eliminated the Extended Exec Committee and created an Advisory Board of past presidents, WRJ National and District Board members and honorary lifetime members who will meet and advise the Board and the President as requested.

Board of Directors

Co-Presidents

Staggered term

Treasurer

-Oversee a budget advisory committee

VP(s) of Development (only one vote and one person counted toward quorum)

-Gift Shop Managers

-Chair of Garage Sale

-Chair of Donor Campaign

-Chair of Hamantaschen

-Chairs of other fundraising events

VP of Membership (only one vote and one person counted toward quorum)

-Membership secretary

-Chair of new member event

VP of Programming (only one vote and one person counted toward quorum)

-Social Events Chairs

VP of Ritual and Education (only one vote and one person counted toward quorum)

-sukkah set-up coordinator

- kiddush cup presentation coordinator

-Teko Shabbat coordinator

-Chair Break Fast

VP of Communication/Marketing (only one vote and one person counted toward quorum)

-Corresponding Secretary

-Hakol announcement coordinator

-Social Media Coordinator

-E-blast Coordinator

-Invitations

-Archivists

WRJ rep

Recording Secretary

Community Service Coordinator (collaborate with Temple)

Immediate Past President

Parliamentarian- non voting

Clergy ex-officio

Advisory Board-called to meet by Co-Presidents as needed

Past Presidents

WRJ and Midwest District Leaders

Honorary Lifetime Sisterhood Members

Presidential Appointments (2)

Modern Sisterhood by Kim Wolson, Temple Israel, Minneapolis

Last Sunday I spent a wonderful morning in my kitchen with old friends and new acquaintances learning how to cook chicken soup and make matzah balls. We had the pleasure of learning from the most experienced, Ruth Knelman. The secret to her matzah balls, I learned, is in separating the egg whites from the yolks. First, Ruth whips them and then she folds in the yolks and the matzah meal. The result is perfectly fluffy matzah balls!



This event is a great example of the fun and meaningful events Sisterhood offers today. Temple Israel Sisterhood has evolved over the years but what has remained constant is that the organization brings people together to strengthen the sense of community at Temple Israel. In years past, it was women pouring tea at Oneg Shabbats or planning fundraisers for temple programming. Today, Sisterhood provides educational and social outlets for Temple members.

This year Sisterhood offered cooking demos including soup and challah, a wine and cheese sukkot event including how to build your own sukkah, educational sessions on various Jewish topics such as creation, death and G-d, a book club, a speaker on how to enhance your life by getting out of your comfort zone, community service opportunities and more.

Please think about [attending an upcoming event](#) like a cooking demo, the painting event at Brush Studio, a Sunday morning educational session with the rabbi or help bake Hamantashen for our community. Whether you come with a friend or not, you may walk away with a new one!

WOMEN'S NETWORKING EVENT
FEB 23RD | 7PM | TEMPLE ISRAEL
2324 EMERSON AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS | FREE!
"TIME MANAGEMENT: WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER"
W/ FEATURED SPEAKER: SANDRA BRICK

"Time Management: Work Smarter, Not Harder" means *getting things done*.
How do you get things done?
One way is by learning to process the information and tasks that fill your life.

Presentation will gently cover:

- ▶ Collecting commitments in one place
- ▶ Processing tasks automatically
- ▶ Organizing tasks effectively
- ▶ Reviewing your schedule with ease
- ▶ Do the right things at the right time
- ▶ Managing tasks on the go.

About Our Speaker

Sandra Brick is Operation Manager for Bumblebee Personal Assistants as well as a trainer, consultant, and published author whose special interest is empowering people. She has taught inventing/creativity in the United States, Europe, and Southeast Asia. Her publications include articles and books, which explore theories of creative education. Recently Brick has taught in Stillwater Prison and the Textile Center.

Contact Gail Gendler at 651-259-9699,
gailgendler@edinsrealty.com or Sandra
Brick, sandra.brick@gmail.com with
questions or to register.

Sponsored by the Sisterhoods of
Mount Zion Temple, Temple Israel
and Bet Shalom

Women's Networking Event
Time Management: Work Smarter, Not Harder
Monday, February 23rd at 7pm
Temple Israel

Camp

OSRUI and GUCI – Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute and Goldman Union Camp Institute

<http://osrui.urjcamp.org/about/activities/>

<http://guci.urjcamp.org/about/activities/>

As an active participant in the Reform Jewish community, you are aware of OSRUI and GUCI's impact both as a summertime experience for our children and a year round destination for adults and families. Both camps are considered to be the "crown jewels" of the URJ camps, and we are fortunate they are in our own backyard!

But did you know that from A-Z, our camps offer such activities as: arts & crafts, basketball, biking, boating, campfires, canoeing, cooking, dance, drama, drawing and painting, fishing, floor hockey, foosball, ga-ga, havdallah, horseback riding, Israeli dancing, kickball, martial arts, media, meshugenah races, music, Oconomostock, paddle boarding, photography, physical fitness, pillow polo, ping pong, rock climbing, ropes course, sailing, soccer, softball, song sessions, Shabbat, Star Spangled Mesibah, swimming, talent shows, tennis, tetherball, teva (nature), tubing, ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, wakeboarding, waterslides, and zipline. And yes, there are some very interesting activities that would need further explanation!

After the untimely death of Debbie Friedman in 2011, the Midwest District created a scholarship in memory of Debbie for Tiferet campers who have a passion for Jewish music. Every summer, two campers receive a \$250 campership to attend Tiferet.

Starting in 2013 and continuing through this year 2015, WRJ Midwest District is supporting the construction of the new greenhouse at OSRUI. On January 29, I spoke with Jerry Kaye, OSRUI's Camp Director, by phone. He reported several updates about the greenhouse. Under OSRUI Associate Director Susan Alexander's leadership, the greenhouse is complete. The total cost was \$55,000 so our WRJ Midwest District donations contributed to the greenhouse along with a gift from another party.

- The greenhouse is 40'x20', is heated, and has water as well as useful workshop tables.
- Susan has planted some "pilot plantings" to be used in the new garden that was started summer 2014.
- We'll be able to see, touch, and feel the garden and the greenhouse at Kallah this April!

Sisterhoods are asked to consider making a contribution of **at least \$1.00 per member**, after other obligations to WRJ and WRJ Midwest District have been met. A number of sisterhoods have sent their donations already, and for this we are very thankful. If you have not yet done so, please ask your treasurer to send a check **by May 31, 2015, payable to WRJ Midwest District to:**

Lorri Fishman WRJ Midwest District Camp Co-Chair 8927 Moody Ave, Morton Grove, IL 60053



WRJ Board meeting was held at OSRUI in May of 2014. WRJ Midwest hosted the national board. Our sisters from WRJ were very impressed with our camp and the support provided by our sisterhoods. Pictured above are WRJ Midwest members in attendance. Back row; Linn Ullenbrauck, Michelle Harvey Scheinkopf, Susan Pittelman, Marcy Frost, Carol Berger, Jane Taves, Sandi Firsell, Sally B. Frank, Zabe Williams, Front row: Rozan Anderson, Sherri Feuer, Diane Kaplan, Janet Buckstein, Lynne Turry.

JUST SAY "YES"

The Youth, Education, and Special Projects (YES) Fund represents the collective financial efforts of individual donors and WRJ-affiliated sisterhoods to strengthen the Reform Movement and ensure the future of Reform Judaism. YES Fund grants provide Reform Jewish institutions and individuals worldwide with the tools necessary for religious, social, and educational growth and enhance Jewish life by supporting clergy, cultivating women's leadership, advocating for social justice, providing programming, and offering support.

Did you know that if you go to <http://www.wrj.org/our-philanthropic-impact/yes-fund> there is a "Download YES Fund video" link.

The best way to get your sisterhood members to donate to the YES Fund is to educate them as to what the YES Fund is and what it does.

Why not have several members bring their iPads or laptops to your next meeting. Gather around in small groups to watch the video and discuss what you as individuals and as a sisterhood can do to support and promote the YES Fund and the important work it is doing. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at dlkap@aol.com.

The YES Fund was named in 1955, but the tzedakah roots of WRJ that initially were centered around rabbinic scholarships date to 1913, the same year the organization was founded. Over the past century, the YES Fund has raised millions of dollars through a combination of dedicated campaigns and product sales for projects including: building the dormitory at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in Cincinnati and the URJ Headquarters in New York, establishing the Jewish Braille Institute (JBI International), founding the North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), and helping to create the first URJ camp.

Or Ami "Light of My People" Programming Awards

Established in 1973, the WRJ Or Ami "Light of My People" Awards for Special Achievement in Programming recognizes exemplary social justice, community service, and educational programming that serves as a model for other WRJ Districts and sisterhoods. The awards are given biennially and coincide with the WRJ Assembly.

Read the [guidelines for the 2015 WRJ Or Ami Programming Award](#) today and learn if your sisterhood or WRJ District's program or project is eligible. They will serve as the submission criteria and judging guidelines for the 2015 WRJ Or Ami Award Winners who will be recognized at the [WRJ 50th Assembly](#).

The [2015 WRJ Or Ami Application](#) is now available! Applications are due April 13, 2015. Please read the guidelines above before completing an application.

Past Award Winners

The previous award-winning programs are useful resources for WRJ Districts and sisterhoods looking for new program and advocacy ideas as they can be replicated, adapted, or taken in new directions. For more information on specific projects, please contact the WRJ District or sisterhood directly, using the provided link.

[2013 WRJ Or Ami Programming Award Winners](#)

[2011 WRJ Or Ami Programming Award Winners](#)

[2009 WRJ Or Ami Programming Award Winners](#)

[2007 WRJ Or Ami Programming Award Winners](#)

For more information about the WRJ Or Ami Awards, contact WRJ Program & Communications Associate, Renata Gereck at rgereck@wrj.or or 212-650-4060.

What's Happening in Youth Engagement

What is your Sisterhood doing to connect the next generation to the future of WRJ and Reform Judaism? Are you talking about Israel? Braiding Challah together over a glass of wine? Maybe you are relaxing with Torah yoga or hosting progressive dinners near a local college campus.

If you are nodding your head to any of the above, applaud yourselves! If you are wondering where these young women are or how to find them, we have the tools to help you. Everything you need will soon be at your fingertips on Yammer. And if you don't currently have access to Yammer, chances are good that someone from your Sisterhood does.

- ◆ The WRJ College Outreach Toolbox will be ready to roll soon and will include:
- ◆ a survey to identify current interests, convenient meeting times and more
- ◆ marketing strategies: ideas on how to work with campuses to reach Jewish women
- ◆ program ideas complete with sample invitations and a recipe for success
- ◆ collaboration ideas to work with local Jewish organizations including links to websites that will help
- ◆ interactive tools that allow you to ask questions, share ideas, etc.

If your Sisterhood has program ideas to share that might be useful for others to duplicate, we want to hear from you. Likewise, if you are looking to make connections before the Toolbox goes live, please feel free to contact Denise Fogel, Youth Engagement Chair, at dfogel@usiwireless.com. Our future depends on you to entice, embrace, engage and excite today's youth to make them tomorrow's leaders!

Chicago Metropolitan Area

We are excited to pass on the information about our upcoming Area Day .

On Saturday, June 27th the Chicago Metropolitan Area Of Sisterhoods will be gathering at Beth Tikvah in Hoffman Estates at 8:30am for a light breakfast. At 9:00 we will observe Shabbat Services followed by many interesting sessions. For example, some of the topics will be "How to deal with difficult people,"

"Torah Study," and "How to find the right programs for your Sisterhood," plus many more.

We will come together at lunch, enjoying delicious food and meeting new people with new ideas. After lunch, we will be honored to have as our Keynote Speaker Taal Hasak-Lowy, the Executive Director of American Jewish World Service (Chicago). She will speak on "If Not Now, When? Building a Just Future for Women Worldwide." For more information contact area directors: Andi Blain ablain51@gmail.com or Gloria Kaiz gloria@kaizs.com.

Speaker Bureau

I am Mae Schwab, the District Speaker Bureau Chair, and available to assist your Sisterhood in securing a WRJ International or District speaker for various events. Some uses are YES Fund events, assistance with making a budget or finances, strategic planning and leadership skills. You may also want a speaker for an installation ceremony, a Sisterhood Shabbat, board leadership training/orientation, a Shabbaton, or workshops.

Each Sisterhood is entitled to one District representative each year and one WRJ International speaker every other year. In order to insure that you maximize the use of the WRJ representative to benefit as many women and Sisterhoods as possible, please complete a "Request for Speaker" form.

Contact me at Maewash@aol.com or 847-459-9696 if you need a "Request for Speaker" form. I would like to have a few months notice in order to find the correct person for your event. Looking forward to hearing from every Sisterhood in the District.

ARZA/WZC Elections



This year, Reform Jews will have an opportunity to help shape a more equal, more inclusive Israel by voting from January 13-April 30 for the platform of your choice in the World Zionist Organization Congress (WZC). A vote for ARZA: Representing Reform Judaism represents a vote for progressive ideals of social justice, equality, and democracy in Israel itself and helps build a Jewish state that holds true to the ideals of women's rights, religious pluralism, the growth of Reform Judaism in Israel, a solution to the ongoing conflict, and so much more.

ARZA, representing Reform Judaism, is asking every American Jew who holds these values dear to stand with them. The WZC Elections are vital to the future of Progressive Judaism in Israel and to the relationship between Jews of North America and Israel. **Vote for ARZA: Representing Reform Judaism during the 2015 World Zionist Congress elections.** <http://www.reformjews4israel.org/vote>

It's Now or Never!

His name was Nachshon. His story emerges out of the richness of both Torah and Midrash. The Israelites were on the move, leaving behind the bitterness of slavery. The Egyptian army was rapidly approaching from the rear, and the Reed Sea was in front of them. So our people froze. And then, Nachshon, an Israelite, walked straight into the Sea. An act of faith. An act of courage. He took the future into his hands. The Sea split. And the rest is part of the history of Passover. These are the last days in which you can cast your vote for ARZA's delegation to the World Zionist Congress, that singular parliament of the Jewish People that will convene in Jerusalem in October. On the agenda of the Congress will be items critical not just to Israel's future, but to the future of our own children and grandchildren in America.

Voting in Austin



At WRJ Midwest convention watching live streaming of the Women of the Wall at the Kotel for Rosh Chodesh Heshvan

