



WRJ Midwest District



## The Messenger

SHERRI FEUER, PRESIDENT  
PENNY SHNAY, EDITOR

Summer 2009 5769

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



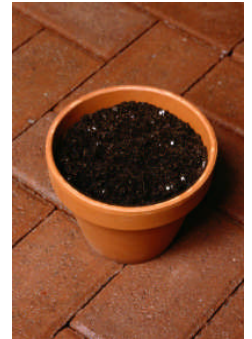
*Dear Friends,*

At our WRJ Midwest Executive Board meeting last April at Camp OSRUI, I gave each Executive Committee member a “mini pot” with seeds. The idea was that we “grow something together” as a new board.

*Sherri Feuer*

Being an over-achiever, I took no chances. I read the instructions, planted *three* pots, affixed labels, and anchored them on my back deck. I did forget to water them for the most part. And, spring this year in Minnesota was brutal—a cross between a freeze and the monsoon season, but I had hope.

I lost two pots within a few weeks. One pot fell off the desk and shattered. Another tipped and dumped its contents during one of the storms. The labels I affixed were gone; I had no idea which ones I lost. On the bright side, one small pot remained on my deck (with nothing but dirt). I considered throwing it out with the other two just for spite. Ultimately, I just forgot about it.



I am relating this story, because it applies to our sisterhoods as well. We all want our sisterhoods and boards to succeed and we think we know how to reach our goals. We believe that if we follow the directions and trust our instincts, good things will happen. *But sometimes plans just don't work!* At those times, we need to reevaluate our situations and consider another course. Valuable life-lessons often come from the things that did not go well--the blunders, the unprepared moments and the times that things just fall flat for no apparent reason. I remember every one of my own--vividly!

#### Editor's Note

This email Messenger is the first of WRJ Midwest's move toward a more timely and less costly way to get it to you. Comments are welcome and printed copies will still be available to those who request them. Let me know if you don't want to keep receiving *The Messenger* in electronic form.

*Penny Shnay*

plshnay@sbcglobal.net

Often we need to just “move on”, shelve or sunset the program and try something new. Some things are just out of our control. Even given the best conditions, things don't always succeed. This year, the economy has put a damper on many of our sisterhoods. Most of us have had to make hard decisions on how to allocate our funds. Our Temples need our support to weather this downturn. Our best-laid plans may not be valid anymore.

(Continued on page 2)



As sisterhood leaders, we must each find our niche to succeed. The Midwest District and WRJ are available for direction. I am hoping that we can all be curious, open and willing to try different avenues to reach, involve and collaborate with our members and each other. Simply, we need to learn from our successes and our failures and then be willing to branch out and try again

Now is a perfect time to evaluate what we do and how we do it! One clear example is the reorganization that the Union for Reform Judaism, our affiliate, is now undertaking. The URJ had planned to restructure—they knew the current structure was not optimal and some things were not working as well as they should. But, our economic downturn forced URJ leadership to reevaluate URJ's course earlier than expected. Now, the URJ has embarked upon a new path. Likewise, WRJ is currently working with consultant Amy Asin in a strategic planning process to determine how WRJ can better serve its mission, its sisterhoods, and its individual members. I am looking forward to this evolution for WRJ, and all of us!



As we move forward this fall with the Jewish holidays, the beginning of the school year, and many other familiar events, consider a glance back before you take a step forward. Take advantage of the training our Midwest District and WRJ has to offer! Attend the District leadership event at OSRUI on September 11-13<sup>th</sup> and bring along a new person for a different perspective. Let WRJ President Rosanne Selfon open your eyes to new possibilities. Make plans to attend the WRJ

Assembly in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, this November and gain experience from other women across the country.

I have been so pleased to see so many of you in the past six months—at Installations, at the Leadership Conference in New Orleans, and visiting your Temples for events. One thing I know for sure—sisterhoods must not be stagnant. Take advantage of the opportunities, reevaluate your role and move on. And, don't forget to keep those failures close to your heart.

L'Shalom,

*Sherrí Feuer*

P.S. Although you will be reading this much later and things may have changed (they always do), I am proud to report, that despite my utter neglect, something "green" is emerging from my mini pot. My husband noticed it last night when he went out to grill! I was oblivious and I hadn't watered the pot for weeks. It wasn't what I planned—but something is growing!





## **Social Action/Critical Issues Opportunity!! Twin with an Israeli WRJ Women's Group!**



WRJ has established a new twinning program, which will excite the women in your sisterhood and congregation by enabling them to make personal connections with Israeli women, create new social action and education programs, and learn first-hand about Israeli society and the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, while assisting the Israeli sisterhoods to meet their goals.

This spring, fifteen Israeli congregation-based women's groups came together to found "WRJ-Israel." Individually, each of these women's groups will formulate goals and develop programming to "energize the women of the congregation, support the congregation, reach out to one another, and empower their members, thus becoming stronger together"

WRJ has offered to provide all of the resource material to develop an ongoing twinning program for your sisterhood. If you are interested in starting a twinning program at your sisterhood, please contact Milta Turner at (630) 837-4441 (milta115@aol.com) or Ann Weisberg at (847) 433-2368 (aweisberg@nssed.org) Midwest District Social Action/Critical Issues Co-Chairs for assistance and information.

If you already have a twin, please let us know so we can list it in the next *Messenger*.

### **YEAR IN REVIEW: JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL (JCRC) MEETINGS 2008-2009**

From Julia Ziev, JCRC Midwest District WRJ Representative

Over 40 Jewish organizations are listed in the JCRC with WRJ and JUF represented on the letterhead. I have attended most of the meetings, and here is a summary of the meetings held this year.

**September** - (Then) Lieutenant Governor Patrick Quinn & State Representative Julie Hamos reporting on their Jewish United Fund (JUF) trip to Israel.

**October** - The Honorable Urs Ziswiler, Swiss Ambassador to the United States.

**November** - An election analysis by Julie Straus, Ph.D.

**December** - Chicago Green Exchange and First Ward Environmental Initiatives: Alderman Manny Flores and developer David Baum; River North "Green" Self Park Garage: Jason Friedman, Friedman Properties; Special Conference Call on Israel's Gaza campaign with Consul General Orli Gil.

**January** - Dana V. Starks, Chairman, Chicago Commission on Human Relations, Ambassador Mark Wallace, President, United Against Nuclear Iran. JCRC PowerPoint expose on anti-Semitic signs at local pro-Palestinian rallies.

**February** - Reports on recent interfaith trips to Israel: U of C Medical School Students, Father Esequiel Sanchez, and, Catholic School educators.

**March** - Former Israeli Ambassador Zvi Shtaubert (General, retired).

**April** - JUF's Chicago Police Department mission to Israel: Deputy Superintendent Daniel Dugan; Chief of Counter-Terrorism and Intelligence, Patrick Daly; Chief of the Organized Crime Division, Ernest Brown, and: Commander of Mobile Strike Force and SWAT, James Roussell. Report on New JCRC Campus Initiative: Emily Briskman, Program Director, Reach Across Illinois Campuses.

**May** - Illinois Holocaust Museum and Educational Center

**June** - Anita Alvarez, Cook County State's Attorney; Lester Crown, Chairman and Rachel Bronson, Vice President, Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Do any of our member Sisterhoods in any have a JCRC? If you do, please contact me at [igziev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:igziev@sbcglobal.net).

## **News from OSRUI**



**From Michelle Scheinkopf**

**We are certainly fortunate to have in our district our Reform Movement camp, Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. Last year our Midwest District Sisterhoods made a contribution to OSRUI that went towards the purchase of a new aqua jump for the waterfront. As part of our on-going commitment to the Jewish camping experience and OSRUI, our Midwest District Sisterhoods have thus far raised \$5049.00. We would like to thank the following Sisterhoods for their much-appreciated 2008-2009 contributions to OSRUI:**

**Am Echod in Lindenhurst, IL  
Temple Beth-El in Northbrook, IL  
Temple Beth Israel in Skokie, IL  
Beth Tikvah Congregation in Hoffman Estates, IL  
B’Nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim in Glenview, IL  
Temple Chai in Long Grove, IL  
Congregation Or Shalom, Vernon Hills, IL  
Temple Jeremiah in Northfield, IL  
North Shore Congregation Israel in Glencoe, IL  
Oak Park Temple-B’nai Abraham Zion in Oak Park, IL  
Temple B’rith Sholom in Springfield, IL  
Temple Anshe Sholom in Olympia Fields, IL  
B’nai Yehuda Beth Sholom in Homewood, IL  
Temple Beth-El in Munster, IN  
Temple Israel in Gary, IN  
Sinai Temple in Michigan City, IN  
Temple Emanuel in Davenport, IA  
Bet Shalom in Minnetonka, MN  
Temple Israel in Minneapolis, MN  
Mt. Zion Temple in St. Paul, MN  
Temple Beth El in Madison, WI  
Congregation Emanu-El B’ne Jeshurun in Milwaukee, WI  
Congregation Shalom in Milwaukee, WI**



**Thank you also to our other sisterhoods who contribute in so many ways to camp by either funding youth scholarships directly to campers in their congregations or by supporting the camp with in-kind donations.**

**If you have any questions about OSRUI please contact either Michelle Scheinkopf at [scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net](mailto:scheinkopf@sbcglobal.net) or Peggy Rubenstein at [pf5449@hotmail.com](mailto:pf5449@hotmail.com).**



## **WRJ MIDWEST Good and Welfare**

### **CONDOLENCES TO:**

- The family of **Muriel S. Levy** (Midwest District and WRJ Board Member)
- **Rosanne Selfon** (WRJ President) on the death of her mother-in-law, Sylvia Selfon
- **Sandi Firsell** (WRJ Board; Midwest Exec Board, aSIS Chair), on the death of her father, Lowell Stolerow

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO:**

- **Barbara Goldfine** (Alumnae), whose daughter, Daniela, received her Masters in Hispanic and Spanish literature
- **Judy Lohr** (WRJ Midwest District Exec Board; VP of Marketing & Communications) on becoming Bat Mitzvah
- **Penny Shnay** (WRJ Midwest District Board, *Messenger* Editor) on becoming Bat Mitzvah
- **Linn Ullenbrauck** (SP, WRJ Midwest District Board), on the Bar Mitzvah of her son, Danny, and the confirmation of her son, Shawn
- **Sandie Sklar** (Alumnae) on the birth of her grandson, Ari Jacob Skla
- **Lynn Magid Lazar** (WRJ First Vice President) on the marriage of her son and the conversion of his fiancée, Sage
- **Marilyn Oskin** (Chicago Area Director, WRJ Midwest District Exec Board), whose son, Michael, received a Dorot Fellowship to study in Israel for the 2009-2010 year and on her daughter **Jodi's** engagement to Rob Harris
- **Jodi Oskin** (WRJ Midwest Board, Ritual Co-Chair) on her engagement to Rob Harris
- **Helen Gold** (WRJ Board Member, Midwest District Exec Board, Lifeline/Circle of Service Chair) and husband, Jerold, on the occasion of their 50th anniversary
- **Diane Kaplan** (WRJ Board Member; Midwest Exec Board) and husband, Howard, on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary
- **Judy Katz** (Alumnae) on becoming an Honorary Board Member at the Neighborhood House in St. Paul, MN

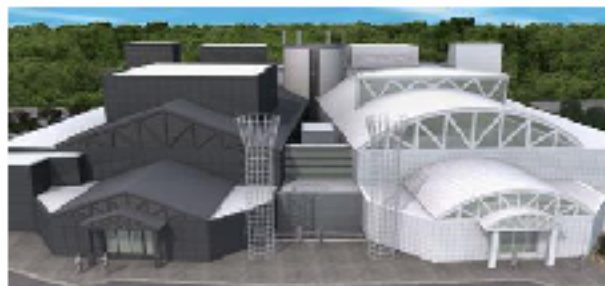
### **SPEEDY RECOVERY TO:**

- **Adrienne Daskal** (Past President MFTS, WRJ Midwest District Board)
- **Barbara Goldfine** (Alumnae)
- **Judy Lohr**

***If you have any joys or sorrows to share with WRJ Midwest District, please send the information to Janet Olson ([mnt2be@charter.net](mailto:mnt2be@charter.net)) or (507) 271-9641. Thank you***

**We are currently updating the Midwest Directory and Guide for a September 2009 release and need your most recent changes. Changes should be sent to Janet Olson at [mnt2be@charter.net](mailto:mnt2be@charter.net).**





## *Chicago, Chicago It's A Sisterhood Town!*

*Chicago, Chicago that Sisterhood town*

*Chicago, Chicago I'll show you around - I love it*

*Get your bottom dollar you lose the blues in Chicago, Chicago*

*The town that Billy Sunday could not shut down*

Please join us for a memorable, spiritual and fun

## *Holocaust Museum and Chicago Experience Weekend*

Friday, August 14, 2009 – Sunday, August 16, 2009

Festivities will include [but not necessarily be limited to]

### **Friday Night**

- Friday Night Dinner @ 6:00 PM TBA
- Friday Night Services at 8:15 at Temple Beth Israel

### **Saturday Day Activity 9:15 - 3pm**

- Shabbat Services @ BJBE at 9:15 followed by Brunch, followed by Speaker Sharon Silver, a hidden child during the Holocaust, followed by Guided Museum Tour until 3

### **Saturday Night**

- Saturday Night Dinner TBA
- Second City – "Girls' Night Out" in Arlington Heights @ 7:30 PM

### **Sunday Morning**

- Spirituality Walk at the Botanic Gardens Led by Rabbi Nina Mizrahi @9:00 AM
- Hotel Accommodations: The Double Tree Skokie Illinois \$109/night per double or Home Hospitality

If staying at the hotel, please make your own reservations by July 24<sup>th</sup> by calling 847-679-7000 (9-5 Weekdays) or 800-221-4701 (24/7). There is a block of rooms under WRJ Midwest District IHM Trip/Code WDI

Please R.S.V.P if you are joining us by filling the form out below and mail to Ilene Kettering, 105 Boardwalk Palatine, Ill 60067 by July 24th. Make your check out to: WRJ Midwest District and mail along with your form.

Name →	Phone #	
Activity	Price	Yes, Count Me In For this
Home Hospitality Friday	No Charge!	
Home Hospitality Saturday	No Charge!	
Friday Night Dinner	Per Person Charge	
Friday Night Services	No Charge!	
Shabbat Morning Services	No Charge!	
Brunch Saturday	\$25 Museum Non-Members	
Holocaust Visit	\$17 Museum Members	
Dinner Saturday Night	Per Person Charge	
Second City: Girls' Night Out	\$37	
Botanic Gardens Spiritual Walk	May be nominal parking charge	

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# IT USED TO BE THE BEST KEPT SECRET

From Sue Schneider

You may ask, “What used to be the best kept secret?” Why, the answer is simple—the WRJ Midwest District Speakers Bureau. But the secret is out and I am pleased to note that we have had many requests for speakers in Illinois and Indiana, and not just from the Chicago area. I would like to get requests from other Temples in the District and I would also like to have more people fill out the Biographical Form. If you did not get one and would like one, please contact me.



Some of you may ask “What is the Speakers Bureau and what can it do for me?” I am glad the question was asked. Each Sisterhood within the District is allowed a speaker from the District one time per year and a speaker from WRJ one time every other year. You may want a speaker for a Women’s service, a Women’s Seder or perhaps for a Membership Luncheon, an orientation meeting with your new board or Sisterhood Shabbat. There are many occasions where you might want someone from the District or WRJ to speak at your Temple.

Since last November the following sisterhoods have had someone from WRJ Midwest visit them: Temple Beth-El, Munster, IN; Temple Beth-El, Northbrook, IL; B’nai Beth Sholom, Homewood, IL; Temple B’rith Shalom, Springfield, IL; Oak Park Temple, Emmanuel Congregation; and Temple Beth Israel, Skokie. Those who spoke at these temples were Terri Argentar, Carol Berger, Sherri Feuer, Sandi Firsell, Marla Goldberg, and Judy Lohr.

If you do want a speaker for an event, please either call me (847-683-8625) or send me an e-mail: [susanjschneider@comcast.net](mailto:susanjschneider@comcast.net) at least six (6) weeks in advance if you are able. I do need advance notice to ensure that the person will be able to speak to your Sisterhood at the time and on the date you want. I am looking forward to filling requests and I am really excited that so many of you are requesting speakers. Please keep up the good work!

*Susan*

***WRJ — Stronger Together      WRJ — Stronger Together***

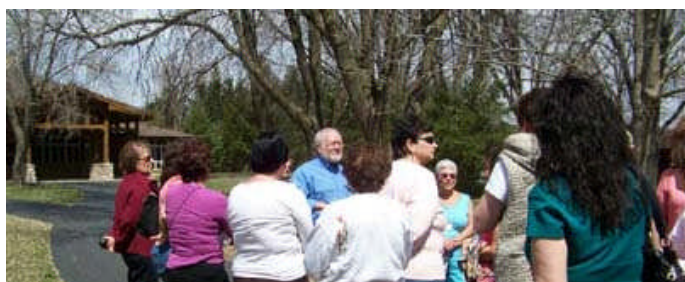
**What Does WRJ Do For  
Sisterhoods?**

WRJ serves affiliated sisterhoods through the preparation of materials and programs to help them function at their most effective level. This includes materials for:

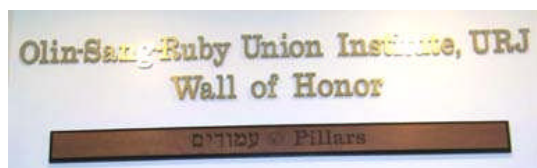
- ✦ local programming
- ✦ organizational and leadership development
- ✦ continuing Jewish adult education
- ✦ education and action on critical issues and community service
- ✦ preschool Jewish learning
- ✦ working with high school and college age youth
- ✦ assisting the aging and the disabled
- ✦ outreach to Jews in the Former Soviet Union and in other re-emerging Jewish communities



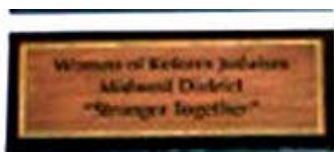
**Havdalah at Kallah**



**Jerry Kaye leads a tour of OSRUI**



**Our Plaque on the Wall of Honor at OSRUI**



**Kallah togetherness**



**Rachel Freed inspiring us at Kallah**



**Listening at Kallah**



**Singing an invitation to Toronto at Kallah**



## Say "Yes" to the YES FUND

From Carol Berger,

The YES (Youth, Education, Special Projects) Fund is facing a deficit in funding during these difficult economic times. Sisterhoods have been asked to make YES fund donations over and above their customary annual commitment. Be creative in planning a new YES fund event! Temple Israel , Minneapolis held a very successful Mahj Jongg sleepover party for the YES Fund. BJBE, Glenview/Deerfield sent a letter to those who have completed Lifeline commitments asking for new support. Does your Sisterhood host an annual Circle of Service Event? It can be a lunch, brunch, tea, Havdalah , or whatever works for you. Honor a Sisterhood member, temple member, or community leader. Midwest District is so fortunate to have Dolly DeCaro and Helen Gold serving as Co-Chairs for our region for YES Fund, Lifeline, and Circle of Service. Please use them as a resource for help in planning YES fund sales and activities. Lindsay Bellows, Manager Department on Development and Special Projects. [LBellows@urj.org](mailto:LBellows@urj.org) , (866) WRJ-5924 is also a great resource to help you in developing a Circle of Service Event and your contact for ordering YES fund materials.

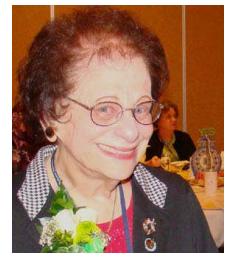


*Dolly DeCaro*

Do your members understand the role of the YES Fund? Perhaps it's time to remind them of the many YES fund beneficiaries, which include rabbis, cantors, educators, the WRJ NFTY Mitzvah Corps, nursery schools, social justice projects, Bat Mitzvah programs in Israel, summer camp and early childhood educational programs in the FSU, and many others, all who depend on WRJ YES Fund support.

Are you selling YES Fund cards etc? Use Uniongrams and other YES fund cards for meeting notices, thank you notes, and other correspondence. The message "this cards represents a contribution to the Youth, Education, and Special Projects (YES) Fund of Women of Reform Judaism " increases the value of the communication and teaches others about the YES fund.

One final thought. Many of us are proud to have completed our Lifeline commitment. We wear our beautiful silver pin at district and national events. Have you ever considered wearing your pin other times? I suggest that you wear it more often. Perhaps start out by wearing it to temple on Shabbat. When people ask you about the pin, proudly tell them about the YES fund, and your personal commitment. Teaching others about the YES fund will make it grow. We are stronger together.



*Helen Gold*

Shalom,  
*Carol Berger*

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE WRJ BOARD MEETING

By Marcy Frost, WRJ Board Member

Business was conducted, votes were cast, plans were made, and issues were tackled at the WRJ Board meeting in New York in early June. In the midst of all the hard work, however, friendships were made and strengthened. This is WRJ, after all, and we are as much about having fun together as we are about working together.



Back Row: Sally Frank, Marcy Frost, Marla Goldberg  
Seated: Susan Pittelman, Helen Gold, Lynn Turry, Diane Kaplan

I arrived in New York on Friday morning to attend a committee meeting. Afterwards, I shared a lovely evening with Midwest District First Vice President Marla Goldberg, who arrived in the city after attending a gathering at Camp Kutz for District leadership. Our evening included dinner, wine, Shabbat services, New York cheesecake, and a stint as Good Samaritans (saving someone's cell phone from being lost in taxi oblivion). The annual Board meeting provided other great opportunities to renew and strengthen friendships within our geographically diverse District, including the traditional District dinner preceding the Saturday night meeting and sitting together as a block during the meetings (Midwest was front and center!).

This year I shared my hotel room with a woman from Southeast District whom I had not met before. As it turns out, we had a lot in common, despite the fact that she is a landscaper and I subscribe to the theory that watering a lawn only leads to having to mow. We spent many hours talking in our room instead of sleeping and had many brief encounters at the coffee station during the meeting. In addition to making a new friend, I met many wonderful women from the Southeast District through her. I am looking forward to reconnecting with them at Biennial in November.

I made one other connection at the Board meeting that serves as a reminder of the WRJ spirit. The weekend after the board meeting, I planned to be in the Philadelphia area for a bat mitzvah. I do not know anyone in Philadelphia except my friend whose daughter was having the bat mitzvah. I looked at the roster of Board members and found a woman who lived in the same Philadelphia suburb as my friend. I introduced myself, told her that I would be in her neighborhood the next weekend, and asked if she could take pity on a poor stranger to her city. She gladly invited me to spend Saturday with her following the afternoon bat mitzvah party. We got to know each other at a quaint Italian restaurant and cried together watching "Fiddler on the Roof." The connections we make through WRJ are priceless!

In WRJ, our friendships make us Stronger Together

*Women of Valor:  
Enduring Jewish Values  
Shaping Leadership*



*With whom do you want to sit?  
What skill sets and talents do you bring to the table?  
Where will this all take place?  
When will we be meeting?  
Funny you should ask, SAVE THE DATE for:*

*2009 WRJ MIDWEST DISTRICT  
LEADERSHIP RETREAT and Interim Board Meeting.  
5:00 pm Friday\*, Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> to noon on Sunday*

*At OSRUI  
Joining us will be our very own  
WRJ President Rosanne Selfon!*

*This event is "for" Board members (including Sisterhood Presidents) and other  
"up-and-coming" leaders*

*Registration Information to follow...*

*\*Executive Committee Meeting Friday 10am*

*Dear Sisters:*

*It is with great pride, pleasure, and excitement  
that I invite you personally for the :*

**2009 WRJ MIDWEST DISTRICT  
LEADERSHIP RETREAT and Interim Board Meeting.  
September 11-13, 2009\*  
At OSRUI**

*Joining us will be our very own  
WRJ President Rosanne Selfon!*



*Our theme is  
Women of Valor:  
Enduring Jewish Values/Shaping Leadership Qualities.*

**What a great opportunity to share Shabbat, observe Selichot, and delve into the building blocks of leadership. Specific sessions will focus on practical skills—such as running an effective meeting and team building. We will reflect upon our talents and competencies. We will explore how to implement changes and consider how to help make our Sisterhoods all they can be. The weekend will have dynamic and fun programming. We will share and encourage one another while engaging in our holy work.**

**Perhaps you can remember your very first Midwest District Program...why not take a minute or two to think about what you would like to “pass on” and have new leaders experience. Personally, I recall it being two short years ago walking into the Bayit at camp, and feeling a buzz—like none other. Women chatting it up, laughing, seriously engaged in topics about communication—such as “active listening.” There were warm and welcoming prayer services, participation by most everyone, and pride in our work as WRJ sisters—my first sense of being “Stronger, Together” in a “large” way. My hope is that you plan to join us for this event and think of at least one “good woman” who could benefit from your Sisterhood and prompt them to attend with you! Publicity will follow shortly, and don’t be surprised if you are asked to help in one way or another!**

**If you have questions, feel free to contact me:**

*Marla Goldberg*  
*Midwest First Vice President, Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL*  
*auntiemar@msn.com 847-492-8044*

*\*Just a reminder! Executive Committee will be meeting on Friday at 10 am.*

# **Area News**

## **Metropolitan Chicago**

From Lynn Turry, Co-Area Director, Metropolitan Chicago

Over sixty women attended the WRJ Midwest District Area Day on June 13 at Temple Beth El in Northbrook, IL, and although it was a miserable day outside, it was a magnificent day inside. After a brief “coffee and...” breakfast, we entered the sanctuary and were led in services by Cantor Kim Harris. Cantor Harris’s voice and humor created the warmth and spiritual mood of the day. Julie Newman, president of Beth El’s Sisterhood then read eloquently from the Torah.

Following services there were two time slots for workshops and each one had three programs per session. Torah study was led by Rabbi Deborah Gardner Helbraun who added great insight into the weekly portion. Other workshops were:

“Nuts and Bolts of Sisterhood - Tools You Can Use” ( Kathy Madura and Marsha Cooper)

“Leadership: The Power of Nice; Why do People Volunteer? Building a Good Team, The Art of Supportive Leadership (Carol Berger)

Navigating the WRJ Web Site (Ilene Lanin-Kettering)

Strategic Planning (Laura Cooper and Marla Goldberg)

Response to all the workshops was positive and reinforced the need for hands-on Area Day programming led by knowledgeable WRJ leaders.

**WANTED!**  
Area News

Share news and photos  
of events in your area.  
Send them to Penny at  
[plshnay@sbcglobal.net](mailto:plshnay@sbcglobal.net)

A delicious lunch was served by the Beth El Sisterhood with time allowed for sharing new and innovative ideas (Recipes for Success) from other sisterhoods. This was followed by an informative video presented by Marla Goldberg, first vice president of WRJ Midwest.

The highlight of the day was the guest speaker, Rabbi Karyn Kedar who shared with the group “Ten Principles of Spiritual Navigation”. Rabbi Kedar spoke of going back to basics, the physiology of anxiety, the art of consumption, and life-affirming versus life-draining. Some of the most important ideas to remember are that we choose to love, make holy choices, surround ourselves with beauty and friends, and live life with purpose.

Quite often when an Area Day concludes people run out the door, hurrying back to their daily routine. However, it was quite evident that this wasn’t the case on this particular Shabbat. Though the sun had finally broken through the clouds outside, women continued to sit and chat, reflecting on what they had learned and the spirituality of the moments they had shared. And so we learned that day, as stated by Rabbi Harry Danziger of Temple Israel, Memphis, Tennessee,

“Sisterhood is as much – or as little – as we choose to make it  
As great or as small as we choose to be”

Lynne Turry, Laura Cooper, Marilyn Oskin

## South Suburban Chicago/NWIN

From Adina Sutlin, Co Area Director, SSuburban Chicago/NWIN

I am happy to report that our area day at Temple Sinai in Michigan City, Indiana was truly a successful day. Although we would have liked to see more participation, we had representatives from all six (6) congregations in our area of the south suburbs of Chicago, and Northwest Indiana. We began the day with registration and a light breakfast, followed with a "getting to know you" icebreaker.



Putting leaves on a Get Acquainted Tree

In a very beautiful and spiritual Shabbat service we came together



Sisterhood Presidents at Services

as all of us took part in the service. The program of this event, provided by Sinai Temple Rabbi Reni Dickman, titled: "Planting Seeds of Redemption, A Women's Role in Protecting the Earth" took us back in time to the very beginning as we studied the creation in the first and second chapters of the Torah, discussed the issues of protecting this delicate planet and the many things we can do to preserve it for the generations to come. My

sincere thanks to Rabbi Dickman for giving us this wake up call.

Following this program we gathered for a wonderful lunch that was prepared with love and care by the Sinai Temple Sisterhood members: Susan Barns, Carolyn Berkowitz, Caryn Glossinger, Estelle Katz, Diana Kohn, and Mary Samelson. We thank all of them for their hard work and the beautiful way in which they presented this lunch for all of us to enjoy. Our business meeting followed the lunch, in which Kristin Stern, my area co-Director, spoke very eloquently about the many social issues WRJ advocates, and the YES fund which supports Youth, Education, & Special Projects. She encouraged the women of sisterhood to get more involved and take an active roll in WRJ. A session of sharing a variety of programs and fund raising ideas, concluded our day.

My sincere thanks go to Kristin Stern for the wonderful job she did preparing the service and organizing everything else to make the day the success it was. Thank you also to all of you who participated in this event. I welcome feedback and constructive suggestions from all of you, with the hope to see you back at our Area Day next year. (Adina Sutlin - Area Co Director)



Sinai Temple Rabbi Reni Dickman and Area Co-Director Adina Sutlin at Shabbat services.

## Iowa/Nebraska



**From Rebecca Gottlieb, Co-Area Director**

**Shalom from Platteville, Wisconsin-- I've been thinking lately about time in the summer and summertime as opposed to "the school year." At our little synagogue in Dubuque, we only have Shabbat services once more "this year," but even**

**though we won't meet at Temple (or for Sisterhood), a few Jewish activities do take place during the summer. One which is related to Sisterhood also takes place in the state of Wisconsin: kids attending camp (or working as counselors) at Olin Sang Ruby. For children from tiny congregations such as ours, and even from small congregations which are large compared to ours, camp is the only place where being Jewish doesn't put them in a tiny minority. They enjoy both learning and making friends-- or being with their friends from previous summers.**

**As a teacher, it makes sense to me that the summer will be different from the rest of the year. I don't worry about whether to have a Sisterhood meeting during the summer, or whether the starting time for services should be different. When I travel during the summer, I often enjoy going to services at other, larger synagogues, but I am glad to know that when Rosh Hashanah arrives and the school year starts, both my work schedule and the schedule at Temple will resume. It will be a new year, with some differences from this year, but the rhythm of the weeks will be similar.**

**Enjoy the summer! Rebecca Gottlieb  
co-area director for Iowa/Nebraska  
Temple Beth El, Dubuque, IA**



## MN/ND/SD



**Traveler Peggy Kipp and Sherri Feuer at Judy Lohr's for her Bat Mitzvah at B'nai Yehuda Beth Sholom**

**From Peggy Kipp, Area Director for Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and traveler**

**I now know what Susan Pittleman meant when she used MFTS to mean "My friends through sisterhood". After attending Kallah in April, I was honored to attend the B'nai Mitzvah of Judy Lohr and Penny Shnay at B'nai Yehuda Beth Sholom in Homewood, Illinois where instead of knowing no one, I met up with several women that I had met and gotten to know at previous Kallahs. The following week, I had the privilege of attending the installation of the new sisterhood board, including presidents Esther Schak and Julie Berg at Temple Israel in Minneapolis. Turnabout being fairplay,**

**Harriet Krasnoff, Bet Shalom Sisterhood President, Minnetonka, MN and several members of Temple Israel, Marcy Frost, Marilyn Weisberg and Sherri Feuer, Midwest District President, attended my installation as sisterhood president.**

**Now, as Area Director, with the help of committee, we are planning our Area Day in November. Watch for news about it.**



## Join Us in Toronto

November 4-8, 2009

WRJ's 47th Assembly

- ♦ Connect with women who share your interests, concerns, love of Reform Judaism, and the special bonds of sisterhood
- ♦ Learn from renowned scholars, rabbis, and professionals
- ♦ Enhance your leadership skills and Jewish knowledge
- ♦ Enjoy a lively and inspirational Shabbat worship service with nearly 5,000 Reform Jews
- ♦ Participate in WRJ's first ever Film Festival

<http://www.womenofreformjudaism.org/47thassembly>



**ONLINE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!**  
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- **Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish**, a Palestinian physician, who became a symbol for hope and peace between the Israelis and Palestinian after three of his children were lost in an Israeli military attack in Gaza, will deliver the assembly's keynote address.
- WRJ will host its first ever film festival. A wide range of movies will be offered, from the humorous to the sublime.
- World-renowned author **Anita Diamant** will be a speaker at the YES Fund lunch, which is now included in your registration!
- **Judy Feld Carr**, who came to rescue over 3,000 Syrian Jews will receive the Dr. Jane Evans: In Pursuit of Justice Award.
- **Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair** will address a special joint session of the Union for Reform Judaism and WRJ.

Eligible sisterhoods may apply for a grant to attend assembly. For information on eligibility and an application, please go to [www.womenofreformjudaism.org](http://www.womenofreformjudaism.org).



***WRJ — Stronger Together***



## **DATES TO REMEMBER**



**Holocaust Museum and Chicago Experience Weekend  
August 14-16**

**Interim Board Meeting and Leadership Retreat  
September 11-13– OSRUI at Oconomowoc, WI**

**47th WRJ National Assembly – November 4-8, 2009  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada**



Visit the WRJ website often!  
[www.womenofreformjudaism.org](http://www.womenofreformjudaism.org)  
*It's your source for everything WRJ!*

***Watch for WRJ Midwest website!***