



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM  
*stronger together*



## MIDWEST DISTRICT M'KESHER מְקַשֵּׁר February | Shevet 5778



A Message  
from Janet  
Buckstein  
*Midwest  
District  
President*

Greetings!

***Why do we  
lead?*** This  
is a  
question I  
have been

thinking about lately. Most of you who are reading this right now are leaders. You are sisterhood/women's group presidents and board members, WRJ Midwest District board members and WRJ North America board members; and you are leaders in your congregations, communities, and places of employment.

Perhaps it is top of mind for me because this is the time of year when many throughout WRJ are actively seeking new and continuing leaders to guide our future. Our nominating committees are hard at work talking with members about leadership opportunities. So, it is also a good time to consider why people step up.

Last weekend Michelle Scheinkopf and I had the great pleasure to participate in a leadership development workshop conducted by WRJ Immediate Past President Lynn Magid Lazar for Temple Beth El Sisterhood (TBE) in Madison, Wisconsin. Lynn led a group of current and incoming sisterhood leaders in a discussion of what is working well and where there are challenges at TBE. Finding and motivating new



leaders was a big part of our conversation. Perhaps the greatest insight for me was that everyone is different and why some step up to lead will be different as well.

When I think about my personal situation, I realize that in almost every organization I have joined over the years, I have taken on a leadership role. Why is that? I think that for me it is about making an impact on those organizations where I am passionate about their mission and work. Over the years these organizations have changed, ranging from developing women's leadership opportunities, to child abuse prevention, to my synagogue, and now to WRJ. For me, WRJ is all about shared vision and passion with sisters throughout the world.

So, I encourage all of you, as you begin your conversations with potential leaders, to find their passion. Do they care about social justice and advocacy? Perhaps they might chair your social action committee or advocacy initiative. Are numbers a real "turn on" (there actually are some of us out there)? They could be your future treasurers. Do they love meeting and engaging with new people? Perhaps they will chair a membership program. Most importantly, get to know your members and what they care about. Yes, it will help you to know where their passions lie, but it will also help you to form deeper relationships and life-long friendships.

Speaking of leadership, we thought you might want to see who has been nominated to serve on the [Board of Directors of Women of Reform Judaism](#). These women work on our behalf to support WRJ's global initiatives to ensure the future of Reform Judaism and our goal of Tikkun Olam, and they support sisterhoods and women's groups throughout North America.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention that our own Midwest District is starting our nominating process. Just last week our nominating chair, Lynne Turry, sent a survey out to our district board and we have asked that sisterhood presidents pass it along to their leaders (a link to the survey is included [here](#)). Why did we send a survey? Because we are looking to find your passion!

I am looking forward to seeing many of you in Nashville next month !

***L'Shalom ,***  
**Janet Buckstein**  
*President, WRJ Midwest District*

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



Last month Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel (TBI) had their 100th anniversary! This is an incredible achievement and they had multiple activities for their members to celebrate it. WRJ Executive Director, Rabbi Marla Feldman, joined them for Friday night services, Saturday morning T'Fillot Nashim services and lunch; as well as their Sunday Board meeting. What was a wonderful addition was the inclusion of Sisterhood Presidents and Midwest District board members from throughout the greater

Chicago metropolitan area. Twenty-four women, from sisterhoods as far away as Milwaukee, joined TBI for Saturday festivities and a special meeting with Rabbi Feldman. Thank you to everyone at TBI for inviting us to share your celebration!

***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!***

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## Articles & Information



[WRJ March Advocacy Webinar  
Registration](#)

*In this session we will be discussing the modern-day slavery that happens all around us- human trafficking. Hear from experts Edee Franklin, founder of Sanctum House- a trafficking survivor's shelter, and Rebecca Chamberleng, counsel in California focusing on human trafficking advocates.*



**Mar 22, 2018 2:00PM Eastern**

**Critical Issues – Marilyn D.  
Glazer Immigration Reform  
February 2018**

**CRITICAL  
ISSUES**  
by Marilyn Glazer

**Immigration Reform – some things never change. This issue has been on WRJ's "radar" since 1945!**

*God upholds the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and befriends the stranger, providing him with food and clothing. You too must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Deuteronomy 10:18-19)*

This citation from Deuteronomy anchors Women of Reform Judaism's profound commitment to immigration reform in Jewish tradition. In fact, the commandment to welcome the stranger is in the Torah 36 times, more so than any other. If you're interested in gematria (significance of numbers in Judaism), you'll recognize that 36 is double 18, double יח (chai) signifies the number 18, but is also the Hebrew word for life. This repetition illustrates the Jewish commitment to this topic; how much welcoming the stranger is in the lifeblood of what it means to be Jewish.

Since its founding, National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS, now WRJ), has been engaged in immigration reform. In fact, one of the very first [resolutions](#) NFTS passed in 1915 was about immigration reform. As Reform Jewish women, members of NFTS and WRJ have deep personal connections to this issue as well. From hearing the cries of help and profoundly understanding the call to action in the 1940s and 1950s, our women have pushed the Reform Movement and our nations to take in immigrants, to offer asylum—acting on Jewish faith, American values, and an insightful responsibility to humanity.



- 1954, 55, 57 and 59 Resolution: Immigration
- 1947 Resolution: Emergency Immigration Legislation
- 1946 Resolution: Plight of Displaced Persons
- 1945 Resolution: Displaced Persons

The crisis in Europe yielded not despair, but consistent dedication to human rights around the world. In the past thirty years, WRJ has passed resolutions calling for asylum for those fleeing violence, those seeking family reunification, and all those whose hearts turn to the United States and Canada, looking for greater opportunity for themselves and their families.

- 2009 Resolution: Immigration
- 2000 Resolution: Right of Women and Children Worldwide
- 1995 Resolution: Immigration
- 1991 Resolution: Aspects of World Jewry: Celebration and Concern
- 1989 Resolution: East-West Relations

In celebrating Women's History Month, we look back at our dedication to this one issue of crucial importance today. WRJ has been a leader for nearly 100 years on this issue alone, and it is with pride that we celebrate our own history. Urge your members of Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform!

**Source: WRJ Published: 3/12/2014. All resolutions can be read [here](#)**

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



### Need help publicizing your next event?

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.

*Party Plan*  
*Showcas*

**MONDAY, MARCH**  
**BJBE SISTERHOOD**  
**WOMEN'S SED**

**Sunday, February 25**

**1:00 - 4:00 p.m. at Tem**

# Vashti's Banquet

Wednesday, February 28

NSCI - Rebecca K. Crown Society

6:00 pm-9:00 pm



Sisterhood/Brotherhood Spring Event  
**NOT YOUR GRANDMA**



The Sequel

Back by popular demand! See what you miss

Saturday, March 24, 2018

7:00 p.m.

**JDAIM**  
Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month

**Click on Banners for Full Flyers**

## Good & Welfare

### Yom Huledet Sameach (Happy Birthday!)

to our Midwest Board Members and Alumnae

#### February:

- 7 Laura Cooper -- [cooper4449@gmail.com](mailto:cooper4449@gmail.com)
- 7 Kerry Leaf -- [kerryannleaf@gmail.com](mailto:kerryannleaf@gmail.com)
- 7 Rachelle Sheffer -- [rmsheffer12@gmail.com](mailto:rmsheffer12@gmail.com)
- 12 Lottie Frank -- [lottie.frank@yahoo.com](mailto:lottie.frank@yahoo.com)
- 15 Judy Lohr-Safcik -- [jklhorsafcik@gmail.com](mailto:jklhorsafcik@gmail.com)
- 19 Penny Shnay -- [plshnay@sbcglobal.net](mailto:plshnay@sbcglobal.net)
- 24 Sally Frank -- [Sally.Frank@drake.edu](mailto:Sally.Frank@drake.edu)
- 24 Diane Kaplan -- [dlkap@aol.com](mailto:dlkap@aol.com)
- 24 Rachel Willens -- [rwil636@gmail.com](mailto:rwil636@gmail.com)
- 27 Debra Bauer -- [debrabauer@gmail.com](mailto:debrabauer@gmail.com)
- 28 Sue Center -- [slcenter@wisc.edu](mailto:slcenter@wisc.edu)

#### March:

- 10 Karen Schwartz -- [Kschwartz62@att.net](mailto:Kschwartz62@att.net)

Yom Huledet



Same'ach!

13 Marsha Cooper -- [mgc0313@comcast.net](mailto:mgc0313@comcast.net)  
14 Judith Wexler -- [wexlerj@comcast.net](mailto:wexlerj@comcast.net)  
21 Marilyn Oskin -- [Fioskin@aol.com](mailto:Fioskin@aol.com)  
23 Marilyn Weisberg -- [mweisberg0@gmail.com](mailto:mweisberg0@gmail.com)  
25 Heather Levine -- [buttrfly8@hotmail.com](mailto:buttrfly8@hotmail.com)  
25 Roberta Kravitz -- [bubbieroberta@gmail.com](mailto:bubbieroberta@gmail.com)  
26 Dale Cone -- [dconetbi@yahoo.com](mailto:dconetbi@yahoo.com)  
29 Sherri Feuer -- [feuerslf@aol.com](mailto:feuerslf@aol.com)  
30 Andrea Blain -- [ablain51@gmail.com](mailto:ablain51@gmail.com)

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### Refuah Shlema

[Sarah Acker](#) , Membership chair and sisterhood co-president of Congregation Shalom, Milwaukee. Friends of Sarah have established a Go Fund Me page to support Sarah's medical expenses. If you are interested in learning more visit: <https://www.gofundme.com/sarabs-get-back-to-awesome-fund> .



[Marcy Frost](#) , Past District President and Bylaws Revision Chair.

[Judy Lohr-Safcik](#) , Area Director, Greater Illinois/Northwest Indiana

We want to wish [Nikki Levin](#) , Western Illinois/Wisconsin Area Director, a speedy recovery from her recent surgery.

## Save the Date!

**"Inspiring our Uniqueness' April 27-29, 2018**

**Write your own words,  
sing your own song**



**KALLAH  
2018**

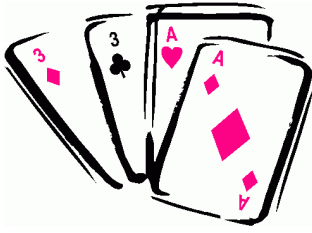
*Write your own words, sing your own song!*

[Click here](#) for the flyer.

Join us for 24 hours (or stay until Sunday) for learning, praying, laughing and games with your Midwest Sisters! More details to come.....

[Donelle Macy](#) and [Karen Schwartz](#) , Kallah Co-chairs

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[Mah Jongg and  
Canasta Weekend](#)

**Note New Date:**  
**September 14-18,**  
**2018**  
OSRUI,  
Oconomowac, WI



**Our Tapestry  
of Values  
Creates the  
Fabric  
of Community**



WRJ  
O

**Connect With Us**



**Useful links ►**

**As you are putting together your  
newsletters & 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](#)





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 this [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).

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**Contact: Ashley Burbul, M'Keshet Editor**  
[msashleymarieb@gmail.com](mailto:msashleymarieb@gmail.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.