

Reflections from the WRJ Northeast District Convention ***Kol Isha: Voices in Harmony***

Who knew nearly two years ago that the theme of our 5th Biennial Convention, *Kol Isha: Voices in Harmony* would be so relevant in the fall of 2016? Throughout our four days in Albany, NY, we spent time listening to inspirational speakers, attending workshops, singing, praying. We focused on the importance of respectful listening and learning and how we need to bring this back to our own sisterhoods.

Some highlights of the Convention:

Sherri Feuer, Vice President of Affiliate Services, Women of Reform Judaism, shared with us strategies and initiatives on how to bring in new leaders and/or help those who hope to grow within their own sisterhoods or District. Cantor Claire Franco, provided spiritual leadership and inspiration through workshops, choir participation and Shabbat services. On Saturday evening Cantor Franco treated us to wonderful concert with a medley of Broadway tunes accompanied by local Cantors Jodi Schectman and Gail Hirshenfang. Barbara Stern, past District president presided over the installation of Northeast District President Vivian Blumstein, the new officers and Area Directors, all of whom will serve our Sisterhoods for the next two years.

We began the Convention Thursday with the final Board meeting of Denise Levine's tenure and ended on Sunday with the first Board meeting of Vivian's term. In between there was much to do! Thursday evening we heard Gloria Glantz, a Hidden Child and Holocaust survivor, give a sobering talk about her life as a "stolen child" in Poland during WWII. We ended the night with a fun pajama party decked out in our new Northeast District pajamas. Social Action, always an important part of Convention, included the collection of items for **To Life!**, a local agency in Albany, NY, that provides support services to breast cancer patients, caregivers, family and friends. We also created Brave Girl Truth Cards that contained inspirational messages for women and girls less fortunate. There was dancing, jewelry making and many workshops on a variety of topics.

We were sad to say good bye to our old and new friends, and many said they were going to continue the excitement gained from Convention by attending the Fried Leadership Conference in March. We hope to see you there and of course at our next WRJ Northeast District Convention October 25-28, 2018!

Diane Heiman, Robin Krieger, Betty Weiner
Convention Committee Co-Chairs