



**In This Issue**

- [WRJ Central](#)
- [Meet your Area Directors](#)
- [WRJ 48th Biennial](#)
- [Voices for WRJ](#)
- [WRJ Central Exec Board Meeting](#)
- [Isha L'Isha](#)

**WRJ Central District**

is your liaison between the Women of Reform Judaism and the local sisterhoods we serve.



Currently we are 36 sisterhoods in Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, Tennessee, and West Virginia. The president, five vice presidents, area directors and committee chairs are available to help you.

We can be consultants and we have an active speaker's bureau. If you want a speaker for a Sisterhood Shabbat or any sisterhood program just contact the chair for Speaker's Bureau and she will work with you to make this happen.

For more on WRJ Central, visit our website at [www.wrjcentral.org](http://www.wrjcentral.org) and contribute to our blog, [Sharing](#)

**Area Directors - The Who, What, Why, Where and How**

There are Area Directors all across North America whose major objective is to ensure that the District is the liaison between local sisterhoods and The Women of Reform Judaism. Area Directors are trained to provide support for local affiliated sisterhoods and their presidents. The Area Directors represent the district at local sisterhood events. Area Directors are on the Central District Executive Committee and on the Central District Board in which they serve.

Area Directors contact local sisterhoods and the sisterhood presidents via email, phone conversations and visit each sisterhood during a biennial period. They prepare reports of these activities to be presented at district meetings, district conventions and interim meetings.

Area Directors provide assistance to their local sisterhoods. They refer any concerns to the appropriate chairs in the district and to the Women of Reform Judaism Experts. Area Directors have been local sisterhood presidents an/or on local sisterhood boards. They have a wealth of knowledge about The Women of Reform Judaism and Central District, plus the experience of being in leadership at the local level.

Area Directors participate in bi-monthly conference calls with the other Area Directors in the district, the First Vice President and the President of the District. They assist with being speakers from Central District and/or WRJ to local events.

Most importantly, Area Directors are aware of WRJ activities so they can pass this information on to their local sisterhood presidents. Many Area Directors have become very attached to their local sisterhoods and bonded with them even when there are changes in leadership.

May 2011

**Leadership conference is a time for New ideas, new places, new friends and**

- A time for re-connecting with old friends and family
- A time that is inspiring and uplifting;
- A time to see through the eyes of newcomers; exciting - like watching your child grow.
- A time where we learned about WRJ
- A time to learn of good resources on the website."
- A time when the world seems smaller every day as our connections grow.
- A time that was a wonderful experience.

*I wish we had more time together.*

**Introducing Our New Area Directors**

**Area Director - South  
Tori B. Wucher**



Hi everyone. I have been a member of Sisterhood for over 37 years (two years before I married my wonderful husband, Rabbi David Wucher.) David and I have two incredible children, Glenda (age 32) and Aliza (age 26). A little over two years ago Glenda and her husband Brian gave us our first grandchild, Jake. Four months ago Jonah Benjamin arrived.

Grandchildren are the BEST. Aliza is a late bloomer and is here in Huntington, WV our hometown. She graduated from college and wants to pursue a job in the "not-for-profit" sector. Meanwhile she earns a living as a helpful salesperson at our local mall. David is a kind, intelligent, thoughtful man who has served our congregation for twenty-two years. He is looking forward to his retirement starting July 1 to pursue his interest in Civil War reenactment as the only Jewish Chaplain present at Gettysburg. He will continue teaching several college classes and hopefully will complete THE book he's been writing for the last 20 years!

Now it's time to clue you in on who I am besides wife, mother, and grandmother (Nona). Trained as a clinical psychologist, I practiced as a clinician and administrator for many years, working in Universities and Jewish organizations. Women's groups like Sisterhood and Hadassah have always been my passion. They have helped me grow as a person and as a leader. I have been President of three Sisterhoods, 2 Hadassah groups, and on the Regional/District Boards of two Sisterhoods. After retiring three years ago, I spend my time teaching one graduate class in counseling, singing in our Temple choir and the Musical Arts Guild, volunteering on the Catering Committee, Caring Committee, and chairing the Community Seder for our local Sisterhood as well as being part of Central District Board. I love the theater, dance of all kinds, and the arts. Sisterhood has been a wonderful way for me to connect with other women who care about their Jewish community and work for the betterment of mankind (and womankind). I am looking forward to working with the presidents of the Sisterhoods in the Southern part of our District and look forward to a productive and helpful relationship with them.

*Tori can be reached at [wucher@comcast.net](mailto:wucher@comcast.net)*

**Area Director- Northern Ohio  
Peggy Behrens**



Peggy, nee Margaret Grodin, graduated from Shaker Heights High School and entered Cornell University to become a dietitian. She married Bill Behrens, a naval officer, in her junior year. When he was discharged a year later, circumstances forced Peggy to return to Cleveland and to delay graduating with

her degree. At forty-six and four children later, she entered Kent State University to receive a BS degree in Education. With three children in college she accepted a position as head of the Home Economics Dept. (now known as Human Ecology) at Shaker High School.

Area Directors enjoy attending sisterhood Shabbat services and programs at their local sisterhoods.

One requirement of the Area Directors is to plan an Area Day, which is a day or afternoon when all the sisterhoods in the Area or part of the Area get together for a Shabbat event. Much planning goes into these events and there is a camaraderie built up between sisterhoods. Sisterhood sharing is one of the most beneficial activities during Area Days.

Most of all, Area Directors are in place to assist and provide information and support to the local sisterhood presidents and their sisterhoods. They want to serve you in your capacity in your sisterhood. Please contact them for any concerns and they would love to hear about your successes.

Marilyn Goldfein  
1st Vice President, Central District



Follow-up Links  
[WRJ Central](#)  
[WRJ](#)

Want a Central District Pin?



Order yours today for only \$10.00 from our own artist, Beth Goldstein at [beth@bethgoldstein.com](mailto:beth@bethgoldstein.com)

More WRJ Central items will be available soon.

WRJ Central Board  
2010-2011

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**Corresponding Secretary**  
Lisa Elyn Semen

**Membership Secretary**  
Lucy Gersten

Bill (William) graduated from the U. of Michigan's engineering school. Two of their children Nancy and Kenneth followed him to the U of M. Gail attended Bowling Green for undergraduate and Ohio State for her masters. Richard graduated from Miami University and Case Western Reserve for his master's degree. All four are married and have two children each. Only one granddaughter out of eight but the next generation has started to arrive with a great granddaughter and great grandson.

Volunteering has always been a big part of Peggy's life. She started in high school as a Red Cross Nurses aide on weekends and vacations, which continued even into college. As a young bride she started a group within sisterhood at the Euclid Avenue Temple (now Fairmount Temple) for her age group. These women formed a nucleus for a young peoples group (YPC) which had both men and women members. Peggy and Bill were joint officers. Peggy became active in the sisterhood as an adult and is still very active. She served as president and for the past nineteen years the main fundraiser making chocolate seder plates. This past year she finally trained a few women to help with the project. She serves where needed, for example, she made the centerpieces for the Central District Biennial in November for Friday night. Peggy was nominated and served on the WRJ Board.

She served on the NCJW board and is still an active member on three committees. She taught special children at Bellefaire Jewish Children's Home as a volunteer for them after being in a paid position. Currently, Peggy is on the Montefiore Senior Living and Rehab Home's Auxiliary Board serving as co-chair for their major events.

Peggy can be reached at [behrensw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:behrensw@sbcglobal.net)

**Area Director- Southwest Area  
Mimi Kaufman**

My name is Mimi Kaufman. I was born and raised in South Dayton, Ohio. I now live in Lexington, Ky. I originally came to Lexington as a University of Kentucky student. I guess Lexington is now home since I have lived more than half my life here!! My educational background is Social Work. I worked in the field in different capacities full time until my eldest child turned 1 years old.



I have been married to my husband Micah for 15 years and we have two children, ages 13 and 11. We decided to move to a 'hobby farm' almost two years ago. It has been a big change from living in the suburbs but we have not regretted it one bit. I stay pretty busy, raising kids, gardening, volunteering at schools, and working part time at Temple Adath Israel's preschool. I am active in our Temple's Sisterhood. I am currently the past president. I served many years as our Program Chairperson. I am dedicated to seeing Sisterhoods thrive. I think that they are the backbone of many congregations. I am happy to serve as an Area Director and only hope that I can be of service to WRJ.

Mimi can be reached at [mkaufman1@insightbb.com](mailto:mkaufman1@insightbb.com)

**Area Director- Western Michigan**

**Barbara Goldberg**



I was born in Toledo, Ohio and lived in Toledo, Chicago and New York growing up. I am a Stephens College graduate. The Congregation Shomer Emunim has been I part of my whole life. Even when I moved away I was back in Toledo spending the Jewish holidays with my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Shortly after I married I moved back here and have lived in Toledo ever since. I have two adult children (Michael and Karen). Needless to say, during the passed 45 years I've been very involved with Shomer Emunim's Sisterhood. I have held various board positions including President. At present I'm a member of our book group, play Mahj weekly at Temple and am looking forward to my favorite sisterhood activity...the RUMMAGE SALE! It's once again time to clean out my closets and sell my unwanted goodies to someone else! I have been a member of the District Board for three years. Membership Secretary was my first job and now I'm Area Director for Western Michigan.

Barbara can be reached at [babzie626@gmail.com](mailto:babzie626@gmail.com)

**Area Director- Central Ohio  
Rachael Lambermont**

I grew up in Delaware Ohio. I went to Oberlin College and majored in music. My plan was to become an opera singer. After college I moved to Florence, Italy where I worked as a nanny and took singing lessons. It was a great experience. After I returned from Italy I went to grad school at University of NC at Greensboro to continue my music study. I got a Masters degree in opera singing and truly enjoyed living in the south. After grad school I went to NYC to sing.



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**Area Directors**

Peggy Behrens  
Laurie Blinder  
Barbara Goldberg  
Mimi Kaufman  
Rachel Lambert  
Charlene Pfenninger  
Tori Wucher

**WRJ Board Members**

Nancy Apfel  
Hilda R. Glazer  
Karen Sim  
Bette Jo Stempel  
Royalyn R. Vert

Here's where the story takes a turn. Once in NYC I realized I didn't like anything about the signers' lifestyle except the singing. I wanted stability, a husband and kids not to mention health insurance. SO I gave up that dream and moved back to Columbus. I did a lot of soul searching and decided to go back to school to become a teacher. I got my teaching degree and began subbing. I worked for Columbus City schools for 2 years as a Special Ed. Tutor. Then I met my husband, Dave, got married and became a mom. Since then I have been a stay at home mom to Owen, age 2 and I love it! Eventually I will have some career so to speak but for now I love what I am doing.

Rachel can be reached at [rachelkalb@gmail.com](mailto:rachelkalb@gmail.com)



**Area Director- West Area**  
**Charlene Pfenninger**

Charlene Pfenninger was born in Cincinnati where she lived until the age of 12. She then moved with her family to Indianapolis. Charlene served as Local Arrangements Co-Chair for the last WRJ District 10 Convention in

Indianapolis. She is a past president of her local sisterhood and Hadassah as well as a former Temple board member of six years. She recently served on Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation's Senior Rabbi Search Task Force. She is currently serving as Membership VP of her local sisterhood and chair of IHC's Associate Rabbi Search Task Force. She has served on the executive committees of National Council of Jewish Women and the Jewish Community Relations Council. Charlene was a member of Junior League for many years serving as the assistant director of the Official's Village at the 1987 Pan Am Games held in Indianapolis. At the WRJ district level, Charlene has served as a vice president, financial secretary, recording secretary, and area director. Charlene received both her bachelors and masters degrees from Indiana University and on a professional level taught 2nd grade for eleven years and college level for two years. She recently retired from 8 years of service in Revenue Accounting at American Trans Air and now works with her husband's law firm. Charlene and her husband, Fred, are the proud parents of 30 year old Ryan, 28 year old Jeff, and 2 year old Whitney (their shih tzu).

Charlene can be reached at [charlene@indianacollections.com](mailto:charlene@indianacollections.com)

**Area Director- Eastern Michigan**  
**Laurie Blinder**

Growing up in Niagara Falls, New York, I was a member of a very small, close-knit Jewish community. My family was thrilled when I took a job with the Travelers Insurance Company and moved to Southfield, Michigan in 1977. It was almost as good as moving to Miami Beach! So many opportunities to interact with other Jewish young people and I didn't have to leave my community.



My husband, Mark, grew up in Detroit and after we married in 1982, we joined his congregation, Temple Israel in West Bloomfield (today the largest reform congregation in North America). As you can imagine this was quite a change for me. I felt that the only way to get comfortable was to get involved. So I joined the Sisterhood and started in the kitchen, working on the committee that cooked the lunches for various programs. The rest, as they say, is history. I went on to work on the Passover Candy sale, the annual Art Fair, the Donor Luncheon, the annual House Tour, College Packages, Service to the Aged, the Gift Shop, the Nominating committee and most recently, the committee to collect recipes and create a new Sisterhood cookbook (the fifth edition). Sometimes I was Chairman of the committee, sometimes a member of the committee. I joined the Executive Board as Corresponding Secretary and quickly moved up to Vice President of Ways and Means and then Sisterhood President. I had been involved in Temple Israel's Sisterhood for over 20 years and was truly honored.

At the same time, Mark and I have raised two children. Rebecca is 26 and Ben is 24. After working for the Travelers and then being a stay-at-home Mom, I worked in the Temple Nursery School for 10 years as a teacher's assistant and then became a Weight Watchers leader. Most recently, I have worked part-time at a retail store for women.

As you can tell I like to be busy and I enjoy being with people. I have attended 2 WRJ National Conventions and several District conventions and enjoyed every minute. I look forward to connecting with the local Sisterhoods in my area and sharing all that WRJ has to offer. Together we can help each other to ensure the future of Judaism in our communities and around the world.

Laurie can be reached at [laurieb621@gmail.com](mailto:laurieb621@gmail.com)

**48th Biennial Assembly**

**Many Dreams, One Vision**

**December 14-18, 2011**

**Gaylord National Convention Center**

### Washington DC vicinity

Connect with women who share common interests, concerns, a love of Judaism, and the special bond of Sisterhood

Learn from distinguished scholars, authors and experts

Worship with inspirational spiritual leaders, including celebrating Shabbat with over 5000 of your peers.

Visit [www.wrj.org](http://www.wrj.org) for more information.

### Hilda Glazer provides the Parsha for this week's *Voices for WRJ*

May 6, 2011  
2 Iyar 5771

This parashah (Emor, Leviticus 21:1-24:23) is part of the Holiness Code and contains instructions concerning the sanctity of the priests, the sacrificial offerings, Shabbat, and the annual festivals. Of particular interest to us, as women, is the guidance for priests regarding areas of family life and who in the community must comply with the divine commandments.

The Sabbath is described as a day of "complete rest, a sacred occasion. You shall do no work; it shall be a Sabbath of Adonai throughout your settlements" (Lev 23:3).

For many of us, Saturday is not Sabbath but a day like any other; and if we are not working, we are doing the things we did not get done during the week. We have given up Shabbat in favor of other parts of our lives that are meaningful to us.

For me, the challenge is to make Shabbat a special day even if it is not what would be seen as traditional or observant. As a child, we had Shabbat dinner at my grandparents' home and went to services on Shabbat morning. When we were teens, we had Shabbat dinner, went to services Friday night as a family and as just us girls on Saturday morning. That Shabbat was a day spent with family and dinner was a given. With my own family, Shabbat dinner is a given no matter what you did after dinner, you were home for dinner.

Is going to a college football game, gardening, or shopping special? For me sometimes it is because it is the chance for my husband and I to spend the day together. We so often sit in the same room doing our separate things that it is special when we are doing something together and acknowledge that it is the doing it together that is important.

Rabbi Yoffie encouraged us to work toward Shabbat as a day of Jewish time:

"There is a magical quality to Shabbat at Biennial... We treasure these twenty-four hours together, because, for once, we celebrate Shabbat as it is meant to be—a respite from errand running and clattering commerce, a day when we pay attention to the holy and the pull of Jewish time." (Excerpted from Rabbi Yoffie's Biennial sermon, December 15, 2007)

Perhaps step one is recognizing that it is Shabbat and setting the day aside as a special day.

May this Shabbat be a time to take in Shabbat and make it part of each of us.

May the light of the Shabbat candles brighten all our lives.

Please share this e-mail with your sisterhood.

Hilda R. Glazer, EdD  
President, WRJ Central District  
[hglazer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hglazer@sbcglobal.net)

### WRJ Central District Board Meeting Update

The last weekend in April, the Central District Executive Committee members were hard at work in Columbus, Ohio for the first full meeting of the committee following the November convention. Executive Committee members worked tirelessly from Saturday afternoon to Sunday morning making leadership decisions to improve our district and review progress on our goals to: energize the district; improve communications throughout the district; educate members about WRJ projects and educate sisterhood presidents about the district and her role.

There were many discussions for making improvements during the upcoming year including review of the many highlights of the last convention and brief overview of suggested improvements for next time which includes having more time for sisterhood sharing! Our vice presidents and area directors are looking at ways to improve communications and marketing by better defining roles and looking at more

innovative ways of communicating. Our website is being updated to include the Central District bylaws and Board job descriptions and the Executive Committee also voted on establishing this newly formatted **Isha L'Isha** to reach more sisterhood members.

Committee members are reviewing better ways to manage the district's money and, beginning the next fiscal year, **voted to collect dues on a floating basis similar to WRJ's dues collection process**. More information about those changes will be disseminated to sisterhood treasurers and presidents as the time gets closer to the change. As a district, we will make better use of the WRJ list of expert consultants available to us and will implement changes to our board for next term based on WRJ's proposed new structure.

**Watch for new items coming with our lovely district pin artwork designed by Beth Goldstein - a t-shirt may make its debut at the next district meeting.** Also in the pre-design stage is a marketing piece to promote membership recruitment and affiliate development for the district. During the meeting, members also discussed Central District's representation on the WRJ Board. **Sisterhoods district-wide should consider submitting a candidate for consideration to the WRJ Board.** It is always nice to see the Central District well-represented on the WRJ Board of Directors.

**If you have any questions about progress being made in the district or WRJ, please contact a member of the Central District Board - we are always delighted to speak about what we are doing on behalf of all the sisterhoods in the Central District.**

### The new Isha L'Isha

This is the first of our new version of **Isha L'Isha**. This issue concentrates on Our new Area Directors and filling you in on what happened at our recent Executive Board meeting.

Now that we have our Area Directors in place, our next issue-- to come out next month will be on **Communications**. Isha L'Isha is our attempt to communicate with you and your membership. Take the opportunity to talk to us and your area director: tell us your success stories and words of wisdom about communicating with your membership, temple and community.

Also, please take the time to visit our Blog, named "[Sharing the Best](#)" and let us know what you and your sisterhood have been doing. Register and then write your brief story. The blog is mediated, which means whatever you enter, the items have to be approved before they show up on the blog, but this is a wonderful opportunity to share and boast and get great ideas.

**Deadline for the next issue-- Communications is June 5, 2011.**

Send articles and images to [ishawrjcentral@gmail.com](mailto:ishawrjcentral@gmail.com)

Looking forward to hearing from you

Hillary Handwerger  
WRJ Central District, Bulletin Editor

105

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