



Isha L'Isha Woman to Woman



SPECIAL POINTS OF IN- TEREST:

- We honor the memory of our very own Betty Benjamin
- Register for a Shabbaton weekend in Columbus, OH April 16-17 See pages 10 & 11
- Keep up with YES Fund and Circle of Service
- Visit us at www.wrjcentral.org

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WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM
CENTRAL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2010
NISAN 5770

Special Projects...The Heart of WRJ From District President Royalyn R. Vert

How many times have you heard that Women of Reform Judaism is "the collective voice and presence of women in congregational life. Stronger together, we support the ideals and enhance the quality of Jewish living to ensure the future of progressive Judaism in North America, Israel, and around the world." Probably more times than you can count.



How often do we speak of the importance of achieving through sisterhood what no individual can do alone?

Have you ever wondered how we enhance and ensure the future of Reform Judaism for our children and grandchildren?

Nowhere are the commonality and strength of sisterhood more evident than in our support of WRJ projects. There is the Youth, Education and Special Projects Fund (YES Fund), which supports the National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), our college students (KESHER), the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), The World Union of Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), The Religious Action Center (RAC), HUC-JIR's School of Sacred Music in New York, WRJ's Alfred Gottschalk Israel Rabbinic Program, and finally, special services to our local sisterhoods. The proceeds from the YES Fund provide support in the form of grants to these organizations as well as other organizations in the state of Israel. Just think, when you send a uniongram or a YES Fund note card, you support all of these organizations, which are essential for the growth and continuation of Reform Judaism.



Another way in which Women of Reform Judaism supports and enhances Reform Judaism is through our support for Jewish Education. WRJ has, on its website, Holiday Guides and sample programs and scripts to help our local sisterhoods educate their members. Two years ago, we introduced our award winning, The Torah: A Women's Commentary and followed up with study guides to help women set up and lead their own Torah Study Groups.

It is amazing when you think of the many ways in which we, women of WRJ, influence the future of Reform Judaism by our contributions to the YES Fund or by utilizing the many resources WRJ offers to our local sisterhoods. We truly are Stronger Together!



*B'Shalom,
Royalyn*

Join the Shabband!

Bring your musical talent and join the Shabband of Temple Beth Shalom for Services during our Interim Meeting

Voices and Musical Instruments are welcome
Rehearsals are right before Shabbat Services

For more information please contact Hilda Glazer at

hglazer@sbcglobal.net



A "WAKE-UP" CALL ENGAGES ROCKDALE WRJ MEMBER IN TIKKUN OLAM

"In each cup is a message for a better world... Tikkun Olam ~ wake up to the possibilities!"

~Dolores Goldfinger

Kulanu, which means "all of us" in Hebrew, is a Washington, D.C. based non-profit organization which supports isolated and emerging Jewish communities around the world, many of whom have long been disconnected from the worldwide Jewish community.

Since its foundation in 1994, Kulanu has connected with dispersed groups of Jews in Uganda, Ghana, India and Latin America. One such group in Uganda, comprised of Jewish, Christian and Muslim coffee farmers, struggled to live off of the meager prices paid to them by locals for their coffee beans. Economic difficulties

only aggravated existing religious and racial problems among this diverse farming community.

Through networking, Kulanu was able to make a connection between them and the Jewish couple who are the owners of the "Thanksgiving Coffee Company" in California. Together, the American company and the Ugandan farmers formed a unique international cooperative whereby the

Thanksgiving Coffee Company buys all the beans from these Ugandan farmers under a fair trade coffee exchange.

Under this fair trade agreement, the Ugandan farmers earned enough money to at last make a profit from their product. The small, previously "disconnected" community of Jews and their Christian and Muslim neighbors and co-workers gained new hope for the future and a greatly improved quality of life. Along with it so have their relationships with one another; helping to insure a future for these Jews. Maybe even a peaceful one!

At Rockdale Temple in Cincinnati, Ohio, long-time Sisterhood member Dolores Goldfinger read the story of these Jews, Christians and Muslims successfully coming together and felt compelled to help support this far away Jewish community. She brought the story to the attention of Rockdale's Rabbi Coran who then introduced it to the Cincinnati Board of Rabbis. In 2009 both Rockdale and Adath Israel Sisterhoods began offering the coffee - called Mirembe Kawomera - or "Delicious Peace" - for sale at coffee tastings set up on Sunday morning during Religious School. Funds raised go directly to support the

healthy and sustainable development of the Ugandan Jewish Community.

As Dolores proudly defines it, "in each cup is a message for a better world." Tikkun Olam - wake up to the possibilities! For more information on how your Sisterhood can be a part of this effort, contact Dolores Goldfinger at dsgoldfinger@cinci.rr.com or the Thanksgiving Coffee Company at jz@thanksgivingcoffee.com

WRJ Rockdale is grateful to Dolores all her work to connect us with this beautiful and meaningful cause.

Information for this article was provided by Dolores Goldfinger to WRJ Central District Executive Board Member Beth Goldstein, also of Rockdale Temple WRJ



ISHA L'ISHA
WOMAN TO WOMAN

The Beginning of a Rosh Chodesh Group



Marlene Abramson
Treasurer, Temple Kol Ami Sisterhood
Temple Kol Ami
West Bloomfield, Michigan

The Talmud records Rosh Chodesh, a celebration of the New Moon, as a special holiday for women. The experience provides women with a creative opportunity to explore the *Shechinah*, the female aspect of G-d and of the female side of the human race and soul through poetry, song, dance and ritual. Celebrating Rosh Chodesh gives us the opportunity to take an ancestral holiday and make it our own today.

Using the Rosh Chodesh Guide by Rabbi Lenore Bohm, printed and distributed by WRJ, Temple Kol Ami Sisterhood planned two celebrations for this programming year - one in October, 2009 and one in June 2010 - hoping to attract at least 10 sisters for the group. The publicity was low key, using our weekly Temple email and an announcement at our first event of the year. Fifteen women expressed initial interest.

Our first celebration was held in October, the month of Heshvan, at President Abby Pook's home and led by Cantor



Kat Hastings. We had eleven sisters

that night. As Heshvan is a month with no holidays, Cantor Kat focused on a lesser-known Jewish woman. She discussed Judith, a woman of great courage and daring. Each of us described a woman who had great influence in our lives, reflecting on her courage, caring and encouragement.

All of the attendees expressed their disappointment with having to wait until June to have another evening like this. We immediately looked for an "empty" date and the second celebration was held in February (Adar). This meeting was led by Irene Swerdlow-Freed, a Sisterhood member. Irene discussed Esther, in keeping with the major holiday in this month - Purim. Our discussion revolved around one aspect of Esther's story - her revelation of her Jewish identity - and how we do or do not proclaim our identity today. Homemade hamentaschen was served while we schmoozed. At each gathering, we will have foods associated with the season or month to further connect us to nature and the cycles of time to which we are all subject.

Irene wrote the opening prayer (borrowing some words in the last line from Marcia Lee Falk) that we used and will continue to use. These words so

aptly describe the tone of our Rosh Chodesh celebrations.

"As the moon glows with the light of the sun, I glow with the light of *Shechinah*. As the moon shares the light of the sun we share the light of friendship and peace. The light is within me, the light shines from me, I am a woman. Blessed art Thou, Divine Presence, Queen of the universe who brings forth the new month of Adar."

Our third meeting will be in June on Sunday morning. A spring day lends itself to meeting outside, further connecting us to G-d and nature. Next year, we plan to meet at least once a quarter.

These celebrations tie us to religious tradition and to each other and offer us an opportunity to grow as women in understanding ourselves and the Jewish way of life. What better way to illustrate this than to read the 2/14/10 email from WRJ President Lynn Magid Lazar, who is visiting in Israel, stating that "Tomorrow morning we pray with the Women of the Wall for Rosh Chodesh Adar." We are connected to Jewish women all over the world when we celebrate Rosh Chodesh.

*"As the moon
glows with the
light of the
sun, I glow
with the light
of
Shechinah..."*

Visit the Central District Website for all of the latest and greatest news

Keep up with:

Your Sisterhoods
WRJ
and
Central District

www.wrjcentral.org





Bringing Sisterhood Shabbat into Our Lives

Attention!

Calling all Central District Board members including our sisterhood presidents!

Our Interim Board Meeting will be held on Friday, April 16 & Saturday, April 17, 2010 at the Marriott ~ Columbus Airport Hotel 1375 N. Cassady Avenue, Columbus, Ohio

For your convenience, rooms have been reserved at \$99 + local tax. You may make your reservation by calling 1-614-475-7551 or 1-800-491-5716.

Make sure that you mention that you are with Women of Reform Judaism. If you prefer, you may make your reservation at www.columbusairportmarriott.com use the group code JUDJUDA

You should have received your registration materials in the mail, if not, or if you need additional copies, you will find them in this issue of *Isha L'Isha* on pages 10 & 11 or at www.wrjcentral.org See the tentative schedule of events on page 5!

Hilda Glazer, our 1st Vice President, and the Women of Temple Beth Shalom are planning an informative and fun meeting. We look forward to seeing you there!

Sport our District Colors!
Order your Central District pin today at beth@bethgoldstein.com



Don't Miss the Isha L'Isha Spring 2010 Issue

Intergenerational Programming and Youth Activities

Please e-mail articles [and pictures](#) to Lisa Elyn Semen @ ahava1978@yahoo.com
Deadline: April 30, 2010

Questions call 517-230-0111 or e-mail ahava1978@yahoo.com



BRINGING SISTERHOOD SHABBAT INTO OUR LIVES
WRJ CENTRAL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING
COLUMBUS, OHIO – APRIL 16 – 17, 2010

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Friday April 16, 2010

- 3:00 PM Executive Board Members meet in Lobby to go to Temple Beth Shalom
- 3:30 PM Executive Board Meeting at Temple Beth Shalom
- 5:30 PM Sisterhood members meet in Lobby to go to Temple Beth Shalom
- 6:00 PM Shabbat Chai
- 7:15 PM Shabbat Dinner
- 9:00 PM Return to Marriott

Saturday April 17, 2010

- 9:00 AM Meet in Lobby to travel to Temple Beth Shalom
- 9:30 AM Continental Breakfast
- 10:00 AM Shabbat Services
- 12:00 PM Lunch and Torah Study
- 1:30 PM Plenary Session
- 2:30 PM Break
- 2:45 PM Breakout sessions
 - A. Making the most in Tough Times
 - B. Invigorating our Sisterhoods
 - C. Ways to be an open & welcoming Sisterhood
 - D. Women and Segregation – not your Mother's Sisterhood
- 4:00 PM Shabbat/Sisterhood Exercise
- 4:30 PM Havdalah – Wine and Cheese
- 5:00 PM Return to the Marriott
Dinner on Your Own
- 8:00 PM Game Night and Ice Cream social or on your own



Come one; come all to the 2010 District Convention in Cleveland, Ohio!!!



Highlights include a tour of the beautiful Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage on Saturday afternoon. Docents will be available for tours to learn about Jewish Cleveland and its wonderful heritage.

A fabulous Cantorial concert featuring Cantors Sarah Sager of Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple, Kathryn Wolfe Sebo of The Temple Tifereth Israel, and Laurel Barr of Temple Emanu El will be the highlight of Saturday evening's entertainment.



Friday evening Shabbat Service and dinner will be held at Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple, Saturday morning Shabbat Services and lunch along with Torah study will take place at Temple Emanu El and Havdalah and Installation will be at The Temple Tifereth Israel. All other workshops will be at The Hilton Hotel Beachwood located on Park East Drive in Beachwood.

More information to follow.



"How lovely to think that no one needs wait a moment, we can start now, start slowly changing the world! How lovely that everyone, great and small can make their contribution towards introducing justice straightaway. And you can always give something, even if it is only kindness!"

~Anne Frank



Kathy Schlaeger
President, The Valley Temple Sisterhood
The Valley Temple
Cincinnati, Ohio

Rabbi Edythe Mencher
comes to Cincinnati

On November 22 at 2:00 p.m. Isaac M. Wise Temple Sisterhood, The Valley Temple Sisterhood and Jewish Family Service with help from a grant from the Jewish Women's Endowment Fund of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati hosted "Great Girls to Wonderful Women: Raising Confident, Competent Daughters." Rabbi Edythe Mencher, LSW, the co-author of the book "Resilience of the Soul: Developing Emotional and Spiritual Resilience in Adolescents and Their Families" and the featured speaker spoke to both Sisterhoods and the general public. She shared her thoughts about raising emotionally resilient children in these times.

Rabbi Mencher's work is grounded in Jewish text and can serve as a guide for those seeking to support and strengthen teens and their families. The book addresses the realities of low self-esteem, depression, eating disorders, binge drinking, substance abuse, and self-inflicted violence among teenagers.

This program was appropriate for mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles, educators and health care professionals.

The program was held at Isaac M. Wise Temple which is located at 8329 Ridge Road in Cincinnati. Cost for the program was \$5. We served a light snack and beverages to approximately 80 people.

It was great to combine two sisterhoods along with Jewish Family Services who could advertise our event as well. The Valley Temple has about 270 families and Isaac M. Wise Temple has about 1400 families so the combining of our temples worked well.

Current Isaac M. Wise Temple Sisterhood president Lorie Eckert and past president Alison Weikel had heard Rabbi Mencher speak at the URJ/WRJ Biennial in San Diego, CA in December of 2007. They knew then that they wanted to bring Rabbi Mencher to Cincinnati.



From left to right; Alison Weikel, Barb Fogel, Lorie Eckert, Rabbi Edythe Mencher, Gloria Wolfson, Kathy Schlaeger, and Joyce Alpiner



*With saddened hearts we honor the memory of our
very own Betty Benjamin*

As first vice president for the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS, now WRJ), Betty created the Circle of Service, the individual donor program of the YES Fund, which supports HUC-JIR, the youth of our Movement, and many other worthy progressive Jewish organizations. Betty continued to be deeply involved with WRJ and HUC-JIR after her presidency of WRJ.

In 2009, Betty was honored at HUC-JIR. Rabbi David Ellenson said, "I am proud to be able to present Betty Benjamin with the Presidents' Medal in honor of her years of service and dedication to the

Women of Reform Judaism."

Contributions in honor of Betty may be made:

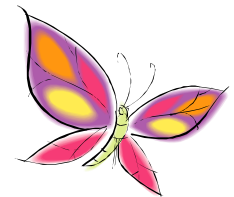
-online at www.wrj.org/donate

-by calling toll-free; 1-866-WRJ-5924

-by sending a check to:

Women of Reform Judaism

633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017



~you will always be missed...

Laurie Freeman

Platter Project Co-Chair

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation

Sisterhood

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation

Indianapolis, Indiana

IHC Sisterhood Sponsors Platter Project to Support Interfaith Hunger Initiative

IHC's Sisterhood added a major project to its Social Action Initiatives this year to contribute to the Interfaith Hunger Initiative. Here's how it all happened under the leadership of Sandy Adland, our Sisterhood Social Action Director and the two co-chairs of the project, Laurie Freeman and Lisa Deremiah.

the designs of several professional artists who donated their time and talent to the event. Members who painted that week will keep their platters once they are fired. Artists painting platters for the project will have them auctioned at a Pancake Breakfast on April 25, 2010 for our congregation that will be cooked and prepared by our Sisterhood.

project funds hunger efforts locally through Gleaners Food Bank and globally, through the Umoja Project in Kenya. Given the recent economic struggles, these funds are needed more than ever. This project could not have taken place without the generous support of IHC Sisterhood Members, the participating artists and two local businesses.

The Project got off to an exciting start on the evenings of February 16th and 17th. Close to 30 painters met at IHC to use their imaginations to create a variety of beautiful platters. Attendees were sisterhood members, their

In addition to the platters made in this effort, Sisterhood has partnered with our 7th grade religious school students. After being educated on the Interfaith Hunger Initiative, they have joined in the effort and painted platters on February 21st. These platters will be offered for sale to 7th grade families. Platters not sold will be for sale at the Pancake Breakfast in April as well.

While Lisa Deremiah and Laurie Freeman co-chaired the event, Cathy Kravitz, a local artist provided humor, enthusiasm and much needed artistic talent and vision. Overall, everyone had a great time and felt wonderful about participating in a much needed cause.

friends (some from other congregations) and their children. They all paid \$30 to paint a platter and participate. The artists were inspired by their own creativity as well as

All profits will benefit the Interfaith Hunger Initiative. This

In true Jewish manner, we will feed the hungry by feeding ourselves. All proceeds will go directly to feed the hungry and everyone has left with a feeling of both physical and emotional fullness!

Keeping up with the YES Fund and Circle of Service

By Karen Stern; Chair YES Fund and Circle of Service

YES FUND – Central District Presidents are always happy to share their ideas, hopefully some maybe helpful for your Sisterhood.

Temple Israel Columbus, Ohio – Melanie Crabill/Chris Zimmer Co- Presidents Sisterhood bought Rosenthal candlesticks and raffled them off to raise money for YES Fund. They have also created a list that includes the birthdays and anniversaries of Sisterhood members, life cycle events, and special awards. The list is also run by the staff at Temple to make sure there aren't any errors/recent deaths on the list. This list is mailed three times a year to every congregant. If they want to send someone a Uniongram, they check the appropriate name and mail in the list to the Uniongram Treasurer. The Uniongrams are \$1.50 per name, with extra donations encouraged!

Anshe Chesed Cleveland, Ohio - Bernice Goldman, President
This Sisterhood has a line item in their budget of \$500 for their annual YES Fund pledge.



ISHA L'ISHA
WOMAN TO WOMAN

Continued on page 9...

...Continued from page 8

Temple Israel W. Bloomfield, Michigan - Sharrie Gladner, President
At each board meeting throughout the year they do a 50/50 raffle - 50% goes to YES Fund and 50% goes to the winner!
There are between 20 – 40 women at each of these meetings. Cost \$1.00 per ticket - 3 tickets for \$10.00. Temple Israel Sisterhood will have another 50/50 raffle at their big fundraiser this spring.



Temple Kol Ami West Bloomfield, Michigan – Abby Pook, President
This Sisterhood sells YES Fund cards to their members, at meetings and in their gift shop. When the dues request goes out they include a sign up sheet for people to order their cards.

This is a wonderful time of year for you to encourage your Sisterhood members to make their personal financial commitment to the YES Fund. Personal and sisterhood contributions are made through the Circle of Service and Lifeline Endowment Fund and can be made in someone's honor or memory.



Circle of Service is a personal individual pledge to the YES Fund: \$18, \$36, \$90, \$180, \$360 or any amount you choose

Lifeline is a pledge payable in one payment or by setting up a payment schedule: \$1800 Silver Lifeline; \$5,000 Golden Lifeline; \$10,000 Pearl Lifeline; \$18,000 Diamond Lifeline; \$36,000 Emerald Lifeline; \$100,000 Centennial Lifeline

If you have some ideas you would like to share, or something that I can help with, please let me know!

Karen Stern, Chair Yes Fund and Circle of Service
(317)-222-1170 or karenstern01@gmail.com

Tina Bissell
Area Director and Past President of
Temple Beth Emeth Sisterhood
Temple Beth Emeth
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Count your Blessings

A few years ago a clever, a low cost/low effort fundraising idea appeared on the WRJ Presidents listserve. We adapted it for Ann Arbor's Temple Beth Emeth Sisterhood with great success. "Count Your Blessings" is a simple sheet listing many possible blessings and a suggested donation amount for each sent to every congregant. We sent a single trifold sheet in our Sisterhood brand color (lilac). The exterior read "Here we are welcoming a New Year... it's time to Count Your Blessings" and a simple explanation on a second panel. Address, return address, and bulk mailing permit were on the third panel. The mailing was timed to reach Temple members between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and the suggested amounts were very small: \$2 or \$4.

The blessings list included the obvious such as good health, my grandchildren, celebrating the New

Year with family and friends, etc. But the best thing about this fundraiser idea is that each Sisterhood can customize the list to express local interests. So we had Zingerman's, the Ann Arbor Art Fair, being able to leave



town during the Ann Arbor Art Fair, and Annie Rose (our cantor). You Buckeyes and Spartans could include "beating the Wolverines" and our Kentucky members could include "Derby Day". The possibilities are endless.

Participants were invited to add their own blessing with the promise of prizes as an inducement to return the form by a deadline date. We gave Sisterhood gift shop \$20 gift certificates for the funniest and the sweetest.

We followed up the mailed paper with electronic reminders complete with a pdf so people could reprint the form if they'd lost track of the original.

Count Your Blessings brought in about \$700, cost very little, and got a great response including comments like "Best fundraising idea ever" and "Great idea!" We are planning on doing it annually!

If anyone would like a copy to use as a template for her own Sisterhood, contact me at tbissell@umich.edu

Check the
WRJ
Presidents
Listserve for
more great
fundraising
ideas!

Meal Planning

(Please check all meals that you plan to attend)

Meal	Attending	Not Attending
Shabbat Dinner		
Continental Breakfast		
Lunch & Torah Study		
Havdalah and Reception		
Game Night/Ice Cream Social		

- I would like a **VEGETARIAN** selection for dinner. Yes _____ No _____

Guest meals are available for the following:

Shabbat Dinner guests _____ x \$25.00 = _____

Continental Breakfast guests _____ x \$10.00 = _____

Lunch & Torah Study guests _____ x \$14.00 = _____

Ice Cream Social guests _____ x \$10.00 = _____

Registration Fee _____

Additional Guest Meals _____

Total _____

Please mail your registration form and payment (make checks payable to WRJ Central District)

Liz McOsker
8759 Tanangerwoods Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45249

If you have any questions, call or E-mail:

Hilda Glazer
614-231-0315
hglazer@sbcglobal.net





WRJ Central District

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Visit us at www.wrjcentral.org

Women of Reform Judaism...Stronger Together

Women of Reform Judaism, an affiliate of the Union for Reform Judaism, is the collective voice and presence of women in congregational life. Stronger together, we enhance the quality and ideals of contemporary Jewish living to ensure the future of progressive Judaism in North America, Israel and around the world.

www.WomenofReformJudaism.org



SAVE THE DATE ***"Go Green, Sisters!"*** ***Sisterhood, You, and Environmental Responsibility"***

When: November 11 – 14, 2010

Where: Cleveland, Ohio

Who: All WRJ Sisterhood members are invited to attend

Tentative Shabbat Schedule

Friday Shabbat Service & Dinner – Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple

Saturday Shabbat & lunch – Temple Emanu El

Saturday Early Evening – Tour of the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage

Saturday Evening – Havdalah & Installation, Dinner & Entertainment –
The Temple Tifereth Israel

Details to follow

WRJ Central District