



WRJ Southeast Newsletter

Women of Reform Judaism-Southeast Federation of Temple Sisterhoods

Our Link to Each Other! Share your News!

President's Message



Having just returned from our Camp Coleman Kallah where four more women from our District became B'not Mitzvah (that makes a total of twelve), I hope I can convey some of the feelings that emanated throughout the weekend. The feelings of love, camaraderie and

spirituality that were expressed as we celebrated with Jo, Joni, Carol and Donna could only be felt at camp. Only WRJ women who are as committed to their heritage and the continuation of it could evoke such spirit. Our guest for the weekend, Rabbi Linda Joseph, Senior Assistant Director of the URJ Southeast Council, helped us understand that life is a balancing act; sacrifices are made; but the rewards we receive are truly worth the effort. Thanks go to Wendy Adamson, who put together a great, informative weekend and Mazel Tov to our 4 fantastic B'not Mitzvah.

Spring is the time for nominating committees both on the local level as well as the District. This is the time when we look at our membership and see who can best serve us in leadership. I know there are many qualified women out there. Enclosed in this newsletter is the nominating form for the District Board. There are many intelligent, capable, wonderful women in our District who deserve to have the honor of serving on our Board. Each Sisterhood can nominate one woman. Please take the time at your next Board meeting to fill out this form and send it to our Nominating Chair, Jo Thompson.

Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find more detailed information on our WRJ Southeast Biennial "Together We Bring Promise" to be held at the Marriott Hotel from October 26 – 29, 2006 in Boca Raton, Florida. Please make sure that your Sisterhood budgets enough funds in the "Leadership Development" line in your local budget so many of your Sisterhood members will be able to attend. Wendy, Andrea and their committee have many wonderful workshops planned to teach and inspire us. Our WRJ guest, Rosanne Selfon, WRJ President, will also be there to offer her expertise and insight to help all of our Sisterhoods. The most rewarding experience of our conventions and get-togethers is the networking we do with one another, the learning from one another's experiences and the learning we do from our Board and WRJ guest. I hope that you will encourage many women to attend this important and exciting Biennial Convention.

We in WRJ are privileged to have role models who create the kind of environment from which we can grow, develop and mature into future leaders of WRJ and beyond. We are fortunate that so many women before us had the daring, determination and foresight to see the larger good and make it happen for others. As you engage, involve and educate women about WRJ and their faith, you may never know how many women you truly affect and how many lives you may change through your dedication and inspiration. We are making a difference for generations to come.

Wishing you a most joyful & fulfilling Passover,
Barbara Shub, WRJ Southeast President

Letter from Israel

Disengagement from Gaza is behind us. So what's next?
 The Palestinian elections are behind us. So what's next?
 The World Zionist Organization elections are behind us.
 So what's next?
 The national elections in Israel are behind us. So what's next?

Circled dates on our personal calendars. Each one represents a certain level of special awareness. Perhaps it's a life cycle event. Perhaps it's something we anticipate with pleasure. Perhaps it's something we dread. Sometimes it's just a circle, causing little emotional reaction; it's just a date, an awareness, a reminder. And then ... so what's next?

That is what living in Israel has been like this winter. Everyone is waiting for the "what's next?" Everyone is taking one step at a time, and no one is quite sure about what's around the corner. So the trick is to keep walking straight ahead and to only turn the corner when it's absolutely necessary. The tourists are back, right in front of us. We are well aware of the buses crowding the streets. Flight reservations to Ben Gurion Airport are tricky to arrange. Hotels are already booked and overbooked for Pesach, the summer, and even next Sukkot. It's once again necessary to make reservations in order to eat at one's favorite restaurant. Buying movie tickets in advance has become de rigueur. The atmosphere throughout the country is upbeat and festive. So why is everyone displaying a renewed addiction to the hourly news?

Festive and upbeat. As long as one doesn't spend too much time searching for the answer to "What's next?" How will the new Israeli government be formed? Will Olmert reach to the right or to the left to create a broad coalition? What will happen within the Palestinian territories with Hamas charged with forming a new government? Will Fatah take over the "bad cop" role in promoting low-level terrorism? Are we going to witness a unilateral disengagement from the West Bank? If so, what will Israel have left to bargain with if the Palestinians decide that they want to negotiate three or four years from now? How will the national budget deal with the twin issues of poverty and of declining standards of education in Israel?

But for us, in our own communities, there is one area in which both certainty and fulfillment can be discovered.

We can now circle one date on our calendars that will remind us that Israel's 58th birthday will take place on May 3rd, Yom HaAtzmaut, Israeli Independence Day. Circle the date, and know that what comes next will be an excellent opportunity for us to both celebrate and educate. As Reform Jews, we have already embraced Yom HaAtzmaut as both a religious and cultural event. Our new prayer book, *Mishkan Tefila*, provides a marvelous resource and jumping off point for creating a big birthday bash in our Congregations, as do the latest program suggestions from ARZA. We can, through thoughtful and creative planning, help to make Israel central to our identities as empowered Jewish women living in North America in the 21st Century.

One thing more: circle the date on your personal calendars for WRJ's next trip to Israel. Plan to join us and become part of a wonderful celebration. Watch the announcements from WRJ: preparations are now underway for a WRJ Mission to Israel in March, 2007 and we really would like you to plan to travel with us!! Don't miss out ... make the decision to circle the dates. Let's have WRJ Southeast be the largest delegation!

What's next? With your help, your commitment, your love, with all of us working together, Israel will continue its movement toward becoming a secure, Jewish, pluralistic and democratic State.

Resa S. Davids, WRJ Southeast, Israel Liaison and National Chair, ARZA/Israel Committee

Nominating Committee

As chair of the Nominating Committee for our District, I invite you to consider nominating someone from your Sisterhood to serve on the District Board. I can't begin to tell you how rewarding it has been for me. My journey began as a committee chair, which resulted in a nomination to be a State Director. The friendships formed, the work accomplished in helping local Sisterhoods, and the opportunity to serve as your District President made this a very satisfying journey for me. Please consider nominating someone by completing the form included in this newsletter and sending it in soon.

Jo Stamler Thompson, Nominating Committee Chair

Camp Coleman Kallah

Those of you who attended the Camp Coleman Kallah the last weekend of March know what a wonderful experience it was for all. Those who were not there were sorely missed. From the Icebreaker on Friday through the Closing Circle on Sunday, old friends were reunited and new friends were made.

Our Registration Bags were filled and distributed by the ladies from Congregation Children of Israel, Athens, Georgia. We received white T-shirts, with our District's new name "WRJ Southeast" and WRJ logos printed in hot pink!

We had a fabulous Kabbalat Shabbat service compiled and led by Adina Baseman Sharfstein, Temple Kol Ami Emanu-El, Plantation, Florida. Adina was our song leader for the weekend. We followed the service with a "Rockin' Oneg Song Fest" led by Adina along with the musically talented ladies from KKBE, Charleston, SC.

Food ... gosh did we eat!! Nellie Ward, the "amazing woman extraordinaire" of Camp Coleman, made us her infamous fried chicken and Apple Brown Betty. YUMMM!!

Shabbat morning we again had a wonderful service, this time led by Rabbi Linda Joseph, the Senior Assistant Regional Director of the Southeast Council, URJ. Again we were led in song by Adina. We were able to be a part of a wonderful experience as four of our district women became a Bat Mitzvah. The B'not Mitzvah ladies who so proudly read from the Torah were: Jo Stamler Thompson, Temple of Israel, Greenville, SC; Joni Hankin, Temple B'nai Sholom, Huntsville, AL; Carol Panicucci, Temple B'nai Sholom, Huntsville, AL and Donna Spencer, KKBE, Charleston, SC. Mazel Tov to them all!

The workshops were both a learning experience as well as a spiritual experience. We had a little bit for everyone. For example, we learned how to create a group Tallit. When you come to Boca Raton, Florida, for our Biennial, October 26-29, 2006, you too will be able to be a part of the WRJ Southeast Tallit that was started at Camp. Other workshops included how to make our leadership lives less stressful, what is involved in doing Rosh Chodesh, learning how to deal with sacrifices we make, and finding balance in our lives.

Havdalah was followed by a lovely wine and cheese social sponsored by the ladies of Temple Kol Emeth, Marietta, GA and Temple Israel, Columbus, GA. Saturday night entertainment and B'not Mitzvah celebration was fabulous and so much fun. Thanks to the KKBE, Charleston, SC women.

TODAH RABAH to all who gave of themselves to make this weekend memorable!

Wendy Adamson, WRJ Southeast 1st VP



With the Torah: (l to r) Joni, Jo, Rabbi Linda Joseph, Carol and Donna.



The B'not Mitzvah ladies with their pink Boas: (l to r) Carol Panicucci, Temple B'nai Sholom, Huntsville, AL; Joni Hankin, Temple B'nai Sholom, Huntsville, AL; Jo Stamler Thompson, Temple of Israel, Greenville, SC; and Donna Spencer, KKBE, Charleston, SC.



Wendy does the Candle Blessing at the Havdalah Service



Havdalah Service at Sunset

Time Management Tips

1. Count all your time as time to be used and attempt to get satisfaction out of every moment.
2. Find something to enjoy in whatever you do.
3. Try to be an optimist and seek out the good in your life.
4. Find ways to build on your successes.
5. Stop regretting your failures and start learning from your mistakes.
6. Remind yourself, "There is always enough time for the important things." If it is important, make time to do it.
7. Continually look at ways of freeing up your time.
8. Examine your old habits and search for ways to improve them.
9. Try to use waiting time-review notes or practice problems.
10. Keep paper or a calendar with you to jot down the things you have to do or notes to yourself.
11. Examine and revise your lifetime goals on a monthly basis and be sure to include progress towards those goals on a daily basis.
12. Put up reminders in your home or office about your goals.
13. Always keep those long-term goals in mind.
14. Plan your day each morning or the night before and set priorities for yourself.
15. Maintain and develop a list of specific things to be done each day, set your priorities and get the most important ones done as soon in the day as you can.
16. Look ahead in your month and try and anticipate what is going to happen so you can better schedule your time.
17. Try rewarding yourself when you get things done as you had planned, especially the important ones.
18. Do first things first.
19. Have confidence in yourself and in your judgment of priorities and stick to them no matter what.
20. When you catch yourself procrastinating, ask yourself, "What am I avoiding?"
21. Start with the most difficult parts of projects, then either the worst is done or you may find you don't have to do all the other small tasks.
22. Catch yourself when you are involved in unproductive projects and stop as soon as you can.
23. Find time to concentrate on high priority items or activities.
24. Concentrate on one thing at a time.
25. Put your efforts in areas that provide long-term benefits.
26. Push yourself and be persistent, especially when you know you are doing well.
27. Think on paper when possible – it's easier to review and revise.
28. Be sure and set deadlines for yourself whenever possible.
29. Delegate responsibilities whenever possible.
30. Ask for advice when needed.

Adapted from A. Lakein. *How to Get Control of Your Time And Your Life*

Ronni Udoff, Leadership Development Chair

Social Action and the WRJ

Here is an update on just some of the vast and varied projects WRJ has addressed within the last two years. WRJ has lent its name and support to causes that speak to the values this organization has always held close to its collective heart.

A complete list of issues and the actions of WRJ is available on the WRJ web site. The causes supported by WRJ include support for adequate Congressional funding for Medicaid, child support, and food stamps; protection of women against violence; protection against hate crimes including anti-Semitism; support for mental health; and disaster relief, including the recent Hurricane Katrina.

The list goes on and on. WRJ has its hand in the areas of safety, health, well being, and education of people across the globe. This is done in the form of letters, speeches, and lending its name to the support of amendments and legislation.

Furthermore, WRJ has a long history of reaching out in times of stress and dire need. A historical summary, found on the WRJ Southeast web site, traces the development of WRJ and its assistance with relief efforts during World War I, and most notably, the creation of the United Nations.

Please continue to give your support and time to this organization which continues to build on its rich history of all forms of giving to people in need around the world.

Susan Gordon, Social Action Chair

Good and Welfare

✧ With great sadness we report that Macon's VP of Programming Ann Dodson's step-son Philip Dodson, Jr. was killed in December. He was with Warner-Robbins' 48th Brigade and was involved in a training accident.

Philip and Ann Dodson can be reached at:
2769 Ellenwood Circle South
Macon, GA. 31204

Stories from our Sisterhoods

Temple Bat Yam, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

I can't believe it is time to report again on our Sisterhood. Time sure does fly.

In December we had our First Annual Arts & Crafts Show and Sale. This was so much fun, and to make it better, we also made money. The best part about the day was that it brought our Temple Members together and showed them what a well organized, dynamic group can do. We even had our Youth Group involved with a table of baked goods and at lunchtime they sold pieces of pizza. The men's club helped us with the set up and dismantling after the event. We also got to see how artistic some of our temple members are. Sisterhood had a Pre-Loved jewelry table which made us a little extra. We will definitely do this project again, and now with the wrinkles ironed out, we will be able to make more money with less work.

The following Shabbat I had the pleasure of presenting to Dr. Fran Smith a plaque honoring her commitment to the YES Fund. It was our chance to honor a very dedicated Sisterhood member. Fran, has been our Sisterhood president and now serves on the National Executive Committee of WRJ.

Then, in January we had Julie Gerber, a past president of our Temple, give a Challah Baking Demonstration. Julie is also a Nutritionist so we called it Chealthy Challah. Everyone went home with a braided challah to enjoy for that night's dinner. This was so special because we had three generations taking part. One member brought her two daughters-in-law with their children. Baking bread is truly one tradition that can be enjoyed by the whole family.

This month we had the showing of The Breast Dialogues. I highly recommend this program for Sisterhood. We had cancer survivors in attendance but it also brought up some lively discussions about our first bra. There was a lot of laughter and some tears, but everyone left feeling a little closer to each other. It also brought some new faces to Sisterhood, including some that have never been to the other programs, so it definitely pays to diversify.

Also, this month we are trying something new. At least it is new to us. It is called Share a Shabbat. The idea is that we invite temple members to a Shabbat dinner with other members, and then we all go to temple together. It is nice as with our busy schedules Shabbat dinner is sometimes rushed or even forgotten, but because of this program we have several families planning their menus. We also have some who don't want to cook, so they are meeting at a local restaurant. The whole point is to Share a Shabbat.

Next weekend we are having our Brotherhood and Sisterhood Shabbat dinner and service. Our Brotherhood isn't very strong, so a couple of years ago we started having the dinner and service together and it is working out very well.

We have two events coming up that are in the planning. One is the district Women's Seder in which we are a participating Sisterhood again. Each year we have a few more at our table. It is something that we all look forward to.

In April we are having a Walk for Education. This will be a two mile walk in a local park. It is for the whole family and already we have some four-legged participants and a few strollers coming along. We were able to get the t-shirts donated and hopefully the refreshments will be donated also, making this a great fund-raiser for Education. Proceeds from this event will be split between our own Religious School and the YES Fund.

Mable Ladin, President



Mable Ladin, President of Temple Bat Yam Sisterhood, presenting the plaque to Dr. Fran Smith.

Stories from our Sisterhoods
Congregation Mickve Israel, Savannah, GA

A beautiful Sisterhood Shabbat Service was held at Congregation Mickve Israel on Saturday, January 28th, honoring past presidents spanning 55 years, all of whom are still involved in Temple activities. A number of past presidents as well as our current WRJ National Board member read portions of the service; Rochelle Frank and Melinda Stein did the Torah Reading; and Carol Greenberg gave a meaningful sermon. The Rabbi assisted in passing the Torah to each of the past presidents in attendance. We're so proud to be able to honor so many wonderful women in our congregation who have provided leadership to our Sisterhood for all these years. Sisterhood sponsored the Kiddush luncheon which followed the service. Special thanks to all who participated and who helped plan this beautiful service.

Thirty members of Sisterhood attended the General Membership Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner held on Wednesday, February 15. Thank you to Margo Webb who hosted the meeting at her home and to Barbara Bart and Toby Hollenberg who led the meeting. New members of Sisterhood were introduced, project updates were presented, WRJ affiliation was affirmed, and new events were discussed. The beautiful Sisterhood quilt was displayed and a plan for a permanent location above the elevator on the sanctuary level was discussed.

Plans are well underway for two major fundraising events: the Fashion Show and Luncheon featuring Three Generations of Sisterhood (Grandmothers, Mothers and Daughters) on Sunday, March 5, at the Temple; and the Historic Tour of Homes featuring eight homes and refreshments in a beautiful garden in the Historic District of Savannah on Sunday, April 23.

Toby Hollenberg and Barbara Bart, Co-Presidents

Congregation Sinai, Sumter, SC

Naomi Warner was honored by the City of Sumter as a "Woman of Valor". She was added to the honor roll of women who have made outstanding contributions to the Sumter Community. Naomi and her husband Warner, (of blessed memory), came to Sumter over 50 years ago. Their gift shop has remained a mainstay of the downtown business community and Naomi continues to work six days a week serving the public. She continues to be an active member of our Sisterhood. Congratulations to a wonderful person.

Congregation Sinai teamed up with the Sumter County Museum to present the second Jewish Heritage Festival March 3-4, 2006. Sisterhood members hosted the Oneg for our community oriented Shabbat service Friday evening. Members of the South Carolina Jewish Historical Society provided lectures about Jews in rural South Carolina on Saturday morning, followed by a luncheon prepared by Museum staff from a recipe book from the Harby family of Sumter.

Kol Eienhu, the top notch choir from KK Beth Eloheim in Charleston treated us to a wonderful program, followed by a dessert reception hosted by Sisterhood. This program was a tremendous effort by a small congregation. It allowed us to partner with the Museum to share the rich Jewish heritage in Sumter and the entire state, and show the impact of our presence.

Our annual bulb sale kicks off in April until mid May. We will celebrate the arrival of Spring and showcase our bulb offerings at our May Day "Spring Garden Party", hosted by Nancy Weinberg. We will have desserts and tea and a tour of Nancy's award winning gardens. Members are encouraged to bring a guest, be that a friend or valued bulb customer.

Susan Scouten

Stories from our Sisterhoods

Tree of Life Congregation, Columbia, SC

The recent WRJ Leadership Conference in February in Atlanta, Georgia, was the first WRJ meeting I have attended. I have been a member of WRJ for 20 plus years, but only became active four years ago. Becoming a part of our local Sisterhood has enriched my life so much by meeting and working with so many wonderful women, by knowing that I am contributing to our Jewish community, and by feeling a closer commitment to our temple and its members. I had listened to so many comments about how wonderful the conferences and meetings were, but to be quite frank, I felt no connection to WRJ National, District, or other "sisters" outside of my community.

WOW! The Leadership Conference, in just 2 1/2 short days, changed that! I experienced such a spirit of warmth, sharing, and willingness to work together at the National, District and local level. The services were inspiring, actually awesome. The workshops were very informative. I left with so many ideas and knowledge to share with my local group. WRJ National and District, rather than being just "those other people" are groups that now feel like an extension of me and our local chapter. Not only did I come home armed with many new ideas, I came home feeling a bond with all of Sisterhood.

The icing on the cake was enjoying the conference with my "real" sister, Harriet Campbell, who is active in her Sisterhood in Augusta, Georgia. I look forward to many more conferences.

Annette Goldstein



At the Leadership Conference: Top row: Sue Scouten, Barbara Shub, Jo Stampler-Thompson, Kim Roth; Bottom row: Shirley Kraselsky, Meg Oppleman, Rhoda London, Marilyn Ernst

Temple Beth El, Ormond Beach, FL

We have lots of interesting projects in the works at this time. One of the highlights has been collecting and sending packages to a Marine unit in Iraq. From our congregants, we asked for and received toothpaste, eye drops, baby wipes, deodorant, wrapped hard candies, little baggies with trail mix, and lots more that these young people need. We have been thanked not only for the items we sent, which they appreciate, but for our concern and prayers for their safety. Undoubtedly, the cards made out by the religious school children "to the troops" made a tremendous impression on the young Marines. We were told that when a package arrived from our sisterhood, a call went out "We have a package from Florida" and all gathered round for their goodies.

We held a paid-up membership luncheon in January at a local country club. The food, the lovely room, and the atmosphere added a nice touch to our annual event. From the sisterhood list-serve we copied a game which was a hit with all of the ladies. We had a list of items that could be found in a ladies purse. Whichever table could collect the most items won a prize – each woman was given a \$5 gift certificate to Publix. Lots of fun and laughs!!

During February we have been planning our Annual Calendar Book, the Vintage Jewelry and Fabric Sale, and finally, the 2nd Annual Sisterhood Shabbaton. We are very excited about these plans and will share the results in the next issue of this newsletter.

Iris Gardener, Sisterhood President

DUES REMINDER

2005-2006 District Dues
Payable Now
\$1.50 per member
Check Payable to
WRJ District 13-SEFTS

Mail to Blair's new address:
Blair Marks
4507 Woodhaven NE
Marietta, GA 30067

Stories from our Sisterhoods
Temple Shir Shalom, Gainesville, FL

The Sisterhood of Temple Shir Shalom held a Shabbat Service, Friday night, March 10, 2006. The spirit of togetherness was evident among all of the readers. BUT it couldn't have succeeded as well as it did if it weren't for the supervision of Debbie Joseph who coordinated the service and helped choose readings for all of the members. I am constantly amazed at the talents that we sisterhood members have. Whether it is cooking, creative table decorations, poster making, ideas for programs, leading a Sisterhood Shabbat, and so much more, we are a cohesive unit. All members have worked together to make our Sisterhood, only in its second year, a rousing success! Thanks to all members for the parts they have played in the two years.

Many new activities are coming up. On March 26 and April 2, 2006, Estelle Aden will present a two part program open to the community, "Shakespeare and His Memorable Creation – Shylock" at Temple Shir Shalom.

On Tuesday, March 28, following Torah study from 10:00–11:00 a.m., interested Temple and Sisterhood members will carpool to Hillel to eat lunch. Debbie Joseph, Assistant Director at Hillel, will meet us there.

Saturday, April 8, is "Rhythm Of Spring" featuring Paul Richards plus dinner and a silent auction, to be held at the temple.

Monday, April 3 and Monday, May 1, is Spanish conversation at the home of Judy Cohen Wilson. If you would like to speak Spanish in a relaxed setting, this event is for you!

Judy Cohen Wilson, President

Congregation B'nai Israel, Boca Raton, FL

WRJ of Congregation B'nai Israel in Boca Raton, Florida celebrated a wonderful "Women's Day" on February 23, 2006. Our annual Women's Service was led by the lay women, with special prayers added by our newest and first female Rabbi, Rabbi Marci Bloch.

After the women's service we all gathered at the doorway of our Judaica Shop, which is run entirely by WRJ. Rabbi Bloch conducted our Mezuzah service. This Mezuzah was purchased at the Houston Assembly and it is the Mezuzah made in the Former Soviet Union. The Mezuzah holds a Torah predominantly scribed by Women.

For our End-of-Year event, we are writing uniongrams to servicemen overseas and our guest speakers will be David and Katherine Jerkins, one of our own members and his wife. David just returned from service in Iraq and will speak with us about his experiences at our luncheon.

Katherine Fleishman, President

Congregation Ahavath Chesed, Jacksonville, FL

Thanks so much to WRJ and URJ for supporting our Gift of Life efforts at the Houston Biennial and within your districts, and helping Glenn Allen from our Temple in Jacksonville. Glenn did receive his bone marrow transplant procedure as scheduled in January and the engrafting is proceeding fairly well. However, due to massive doses of chemo, his immune system is pretty well wiped out, leaving him vulnerable. Consequently, recovery has been much slower than all of us had hoped.

Sharyn and Glenn are still in Seattle, where they have been since the end of October. Two rabbis and their congregations there have been wonderful to them, which has made the whole ordeal much more pleasant.

At this point, Glenn is in physical therapy and we have not heard yet when he might be coming home. Sharyn and his family have been amazing, and surely the thoughts and prayers of so many of us have helped them through months and months of uncertainty!

Cheery, upbeat cards and poems are always welcome. Mail to:
Sharyn and Glenn Allen
525 Minor Ave. N. Apt. 614
Seattle, WA 98109

Rhoda London, Sisterhood President

Stories from our Sisterhoods

Temple B'nai Sholom, Huntsville, AL

Temple B'nai Sholom Sisterhood has had a very good year thus far. We have had some interesting programs. It has been hard getting all ages involved, but I feel if we can get just one from each age group to participate I am happy.

We had a Mah Jongg tournament in the fall. It was an interesting program and everyone had a great time. We hope to repeat this next year. In February we had a Frank Sinatra night. There is a local entertainer who sings just like Frank Sinatra. He put on a terrific show. Unfortunately, this was a bad weather night. Our turnout was kind of low, but those who came had a great time.

Of course, our best fund raiser is coming up. The annual corned beef luncheon will be May 1st. It is amazing that we have trouble getting support throughout the year but on this weekend everyone in the Temple offers their assistance. Men and women, young and old, come out to help. It makes me proud to see them all contributing to this event.

I am happy to say we have five women going to camp Coleman for the Kallah on March 31st. Two of us will be Bat Mitzvahed. I am excited to be one of them. I have been studying hard and am looking forward to this great weekend.

Joni Hankin, Co-President



Frank Sinatra night



Mah Jongg tournament

Congregation Ahavath Chesed, Jacksonville, FL

The 8th annual Women's Spirituality retreat was held at the Montgomery Conference center in Starke. It was a fun event that is always anticipated by all the participants. There were first timers as well as many returning to the retreat. It was a weekend of renewal for the mind, body, and soul.

Everyone enjoyed the Welcome "Wine and Cheese" party, dinner with new and old friends, and then Friday night Shabbat services. Rabbi Cohn brought music and dancing to our religious services as well as bringing her mother along too! We enjoyed Havdalah services under the stars which was quite amazing.

We had the opportunity to decipher Yiddish words, enjoy "vegging with nature"; and building a Mishebeirach quilt. Ellen Hare had us in stitches at the "coffee house", Katie Horovitz was the evening moderator and also recited poetry, and Ellen Wheeler and Tris Barber presented music through the ages for us all to enjoy.

Cantor Bruner taught Torah Yoga and led us in religious services on Saturday. Alisa Pearl's Angel room was relaxing and brought healing to those in need.

We would like to thank those on the committee who worked so tirelessly to bring this retreat to fruition. They are Karen Goldstein (committee chair), Brenda Pollak, Leslie Goldstein, Laurie Simmons, Mindy Grinnan, Alisa Pearl, Tris Barber, Katie Horovitz, Rhoda London, Marcia Nelson, Helene Koenigsberg, Ellen Wheeler, Ellen Hare, Terri Kamm, and Mary Edwards.

Our three Sisterhood guests from Ormand Beach couldn't stop marveling at what a delightful, committed group of women we have. Start thinking NOW about attending next year, since we already have two dynamic women who volunteered to be in charge of our next retreat.

Mindy H. Grinnan

Stories from our Sisterhoods
Congregation Schaarai Zedek, Tampa, FL

We are the two Cindy (i)'s. One spelled with an I, the other with a Y! We are the Judaica Shop Co-chairs at Congregation Schaarai Zedek in Tampa, Florida.

Our involvement with the Sisterhood Judaica Shop has been a rewarding partnership for us both. For three years we have taken over the buying, staffing, and administration for the shop. We also chair the Chanukah Extravaganza; an annual two-week sale of holiday related merchandise. The event garners much publicity in the local Tampa Bay area. It is most exciting to recruit and work with volunteers during this huge sale. One year we had over 70 volunteers share their time just for this one event! It is a huge success each year and fun for everyone to share in the mitzvot of making money for our Sisterhood.

We are proud to house a significant amount of merchandise from Israel and have built and maintain great relationships with Israeli vendors. Many of these vendors travel to the states or they belong to artist consortiums that market their work. Building friendships with our national vendor base as well as with other temple volunteers is a wonderful benefit of our work.

Our philosophy has been to try to purchase unique pieces which are neither mass-produced nor mass-marketed. Our merchandise mix spans the spectrum from traditional religious functional items to funky house wares, jewelry and life cycle event items.

Each spring, we are proud to present our Sisterhood with a large check from the profits of the Judaica Shop. This remains our most significant contribution. We are grateful for the opportunity to share our time and skills in support of Congregation Schaarai Zedek.

Cindy Minetti and Cindi Koch

Temple Emanu-El, Birmingham, AL

Our Sisterhood Shabbat was held on January 27, 2006, and it was a very successful event. We had a very special Friday night service celebrating women, followed by a home cooked meal featuring a guest speaker who addressed the important issue of domestic violence. The service and dinner were very well attended and we received a number of accolades from members of our congregation who felt we had made an impact.

When we cooked for our Sisterhood Shabbat dinner, we prepared extra food to share in a project called The Table. This project was done in coordination with other area agencies to bring people together to feed the poor and homeless on a weekend at a local shelter because weekends are especially difficult times to be homeless and hungry. We were very proud of our Sisterhood's participation in this wonderful project.

We are now gearing up for our bulb sale, which is our biggest annual fund raising event. We have found our annual bulb sale to be very rewarding, both financially and aesthetically. Whenever we see beautiful gardens in our community, we are reminded that our Sisterhood helps to make our community a better place in which to live. I'm certainly proud to have been a part of it.

Lani Powell, Publicity/Communications



Stories from our Sisterhoods

Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim, Charleston, SC

How time flies!!! Sisterhood has been very busy since my last communication with District. We have built our membership, and now have an almost 20% increase (65% of the adult female members of our congregation). I am still amazed.

We have had numerous diverse programs, coordinated by Programming VP Donna Spencer. In December, we hosted a showing of the Debbie Friedman documentary, "A Journey of Spirit", as a Chanukah gift to the Charleston Jewish Community. More than 200 people attended to hear filmmaker Anne Coppel discuss her work. Our annual Tri-Sisterhood event held in January is a joint effort with the local Orthodox and Conservative Sisterhoods. The topic was the joys of multi-cultural adoption. At the end of January we held our annual Sisterhood Retreat. We began the day making fleece lap blankets and shawls for geriatric patients in the Psychiatric Institute, participated in our choice of three Shabbat morning services (traditional, Kol Isha or Yoga), held a brief business meeting during lunch and ended the day with a presentation by a local radiologist who specializes in digital mammography. We celebrated Women's Heart Month with a guest cardiologist discussing women's heart issues in February. In March, we focused on Vision with a presentation on Macular Degeneration by our own Debbie Wallace, OD.

March also saw the 85th birthday of Doris Meyers, our incredible gift shop manager. Doris has held this volunteer role for almost 25 years. In her honor, we celebrated her birthday with a fabulous fundraising dinner dance and named Chosen Treasures the Doris Meyers Sisterhood Gift Shop. All proceeds (more than \$7,000) were given directly to the Temple.

In April, we will have a visit from the new director of the Lutheran Hospice speaking on Palliative Care. Our annual Sisterhood Shabbat is held on the Friday before Mothers' Day. This year, we will honor the volunteers who serve on the Bereavement Committee, the Chevra Kadisha and those who work in the gift shop. The Marion Birlant Slotin Bereavement Fund will be dedicated that evening.

We will celebrate our new members with a dessert party in May. In June, we will hold our third Havdalah and

Drinks event this year. This program is hosted by Sisterhood for any congregants who wish to attend and will be held at the beach. In July, we are hoping to focus on nutrition and healthy supplementation. A spa party has also been discussed. We are also working with our youth group, ChasTY, to make their lounge more "teen-friendly".

We are proud that 11 members will attend the District Kallah at Camp Coleman this year. We are counting on this program to inspire our new members to move into leadership positions.

Marty Lehder Jackson, President

Temple Beth El, Pensacola, FL

Our Pensacola sisterhood celebrated its 85th birthday anniversary last January, as part of Women of Reform Judaism's movement (that began as National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods in 1921). For our Gala affair, we borrowed heavily from ideas we found in the WRJ District 13 Newsletter of Spring 2003. So don't throw them away!!!

The Gala Soiree began with a silent auction (netting \$2000), while friends mingled with hors d'oeuvres, wine, and drinks from a cash bar. Vintage clothing was the dress of the evening. We had flappers with long beads, top hats, mink stoles, veiled hats, poodle skirts, ankle socks and saddle oxfords, pedal pushers, and your daddy's long shirts with rolled up sleeves over rolled up blue jeans. Clothes ran the gamut from 1920 until today.

A three piece combo played for dancing. The music carried us back to the Charleston, to the waltz, swing, jitterbug, and rock and roll. Then we followed up with a reminiscent program recalling our proud history as the oldest reform congregation in the state of Florida.

A professional photographer was around to take our pictures. He has just returned the proofs of all the guests in their marvelous attire. We will post them all at our next luncheon, and they will be available for purchase, with all proceeds going to sisterhood.

What a smashing extravaganza!

Shirley Kraselsky

WRJ District 13 Upcoming Events

Next Newsletter Deadline August 15, 2006

October 26-29, 2006 WRJ District 13 Biennial Convention
Boca Raton, FL

Visit us on the web at www://WRJDistrict13.org

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