

Women's League for Conservative Judaism FLORIDA REGION

FALL 2010

5771

Reaching Out

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מה יפה ירושתנו



We're on the Web!
www.wlcj.net/flr

HAPPY NEW YEAR 5771



L'Shanah Tovah Tikatavu

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello my friends,

Ah – the summer! I hope that this finds you well and that you're not wilting in the heat. Despite the fact that it's hot and miserable outside, we've already started planning some cool Florida Region activities for the coming year. Before you know it, it will be August, and our Region/Sisterhood year will start up. We're hoping to see you either in Tampa, Miami or Jacksonville for our **Cluster Meetings**, so please come on down! Or up – or wherever!

It doesn't seem possible that I've had the honor of being your president for two years now. The support and enthusiasm you have shown me and the rest of the Region Board has been welcome and much appreciated. There may be questions about the long-term sustainability of the Conservative/Masorti Movement, but I wish that our leaders – outside of Women's League, that is - could see what I see here in the sunshine state. I see women coming forward and learning synagogue skills that they were sure they could never accomplish. I also see women discovering (and learning) leadership skills they didn't know they possessed. And I am immensely pleased that several of our sisterhoods are re-establishing themselves. They remember the value of Women's League for Conservative Judaism, have found new leaders and are re-inventing themselves. In the northern part of the state, I speak of **Beth Shalom Congregation Sisterhood in Jacksonville** under the leadership of **Mimi Kaufman**. Central Florida has seen the rejuvenation of **Congregation Beth Am Sisterhood in Longwood**, with **Cathy Swerdlow** at the helm. And in **Miami**, we are happy to see **Beth David Congregation** with **Deborah Waas** and **Melody Torrens** working with their cantor **Jill Jacobs** to provide meaningful and fun programs for their membership. I would be remiss if I did not mention the efforts of our Region officers and Board members who are working with these sisterhoods. They are former Florida Branch presidents **Carol Simon** (WL Training Services chair) and **Phyllis Goldberg** (our own current WL International Vice President) as well as Area Vice President **Jackie Fine** and Area Directors **Joanne Rosenberg**, **Sandy Oser** and **Francine Abramoff**. Thank you ladies, for making Florida Region even stronger and more vibrant.

Most of you are reading this newsletter online, and while we're talking about cyberspace and other wonderful things, if you have not done so, you really must (I don't use that word too often), go to the new Women's League website and see what's going on there. We are proud that Florida had a hand in it, as Phyllis Goldberg has been working diligently with New York on the re-design of the site. Check it out! Go to www.wlcj.org and see what's there for your use. Program ideas – Divrei Hokhmah – Women's League materials such as the Sisterhood Planner and New Directions and Directives – and much more are worth their weight in gold. Did I say gold/? Don't forget to check out the material on Z'havah as well. You'll be glad you did.

We're always on the prowl for up-and-coming- leaders. Forgive me if I sound like a broken record, but if you're reading this, chances are YOU are a woman who can step up to the plate in a leadership capacity. While you're on the website, check on the Leadership Institute box on the left hand side of the homepage: it explains this very worthwhile training better than I can. The skills you learn will benefit you in your organization and private life as well as being a fun and moving experience. I am pleased that several of Florida's Finest are attending the Institute in New York at the end of July and we will let you know when and where the next one will be. This is truly a gift that keeps on giving ... and you know who one of the trainers is? Carol Simon of course ... and if you haven't been to one of her trainings, you're missing out.

We are already planning for our **International Biennial Convention** to be held in Baltimore from December 12-15, 2010. Florida Region always has a large contingent, so start saving your pennies. Talk about a worthwhile gathering!! Please join us as a part of WL's Kehillah Kedoshah – Celebrating Community Woman to Woman. This is an installation year, and while we hate to say l'hitraot to **Cory Schneider**, we will celebrate with our new International President **Rita Wertlieb** and her administration. You really don't want to miss this!!

In the meantime, thank you for all that you do for Florida Region and Women's League and remember how very important you are to me. Please say a few more prayers for peace in our beloved Israel.

Shalom uv'racha,

Genie

Genie Green Blaher

President, Florida Region



The Torah Fund Campaign 2010-2011

KEHILLAH KEDOSHAH

"CELEBRATING COMMUNITY WOMAN TO WOMAN"



Greetings. This is Amy Hymes and I am proud to be the Torah Fund Vice President for the awesome Florida Region.

I can't believe I am now starting my third year so I would like to start out by saying:

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

As of the writing of this article, the 2009-2010 Torah Fund Campaign has ended, although I do not have the final numbers yet. As of the end of May, we raised over \$175,000 which is an outstanding amount given the fact that the economy has not improved. Thanks to each of you who helped in whatever way you could. You make me proud to be part of this Region.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all my Torah Fund Directors for the great job they did this year. Thanks to Jeanette Brownstein, Sheila Chait, Nicki D'Amato, Sandi Rutner, Madelyn Saul and Roz Shever. I look forward to working with all of you again next year.

I am looking forward to the three cluster meetings in Tampa, Miami and Jacksonville in August and to the opportunity to present the 2010-2011 Torah Fund Campaign which is

KEHILLAH KEDOSHAH

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY WOMAN TO WOMAN

The Torah Fund pin commemorates the energizing power of women's community bound together by similar values and beliefs. The images contained within this stylized hamsa reflect women in celebration, dancing and praising. The flame of the Women's League logo alludes to our members who are committed to a common purpose and the unbreakable bonds of sisterhood.

I would be remiss if I didn't take this time to thank those of you who participated in the Torah Fund collection at conference. I am very pleased to let you know that together we raised \$200 which was donated to scholarship in the name of Florida Region.

I know that I can count on all of you to support Torah Fund as you always have. I thank you in advance for everything that you will do to make sure this year's campaign is the best one ever.

MEMBERSHIP

Florida Region Membership: Let's get to know each other!

As the Membership Team of Florida Region, we would like to get to know our Sisterhood Membership Vice Presidents and teams better. Keep an eye out for mailings and an ear out for the phone to ring! Your Area Membership Directors will be reaching out to you over the next few weeks. If you need us sooner, please reach out to us at the emails below.

It really is all about the personal touch of reaching out. Us to you and you to your Sisterhood members. Let's get together and talk about all the best ways to make that happen!

Membership VP	Lara Werwa	lawerwa@gmail.com
Z'havah Chair	Jill Tomar	jill.tomar@gmail.com
Director Area 1	Maxine Solomon	bungymax@tampabayrr.com
Director Area 2	Maxine Romo	cdromo@comast.net
Director Area 3	Diane Kallman	dianekallman@yahoo.com
Director Area 4	Bonnie Turtz	BonnieTJoy@bellsouth.net
Director Area 5	Terry Jonas	tjonas51@bellsouth.net
Director Area 6	Marion Libow	marion@libow.com
Director Area 7	Etta Epstein	expertee25@aol.com

EDUCATION

Shalom Chaverot (Hello friends),

Hope everyone is having a good summer. Summer is hot and we get lazy but we don't stop learning, reading, being busy. As VP of Education, it is my responsibility to pass on information to you. Have I got a project for you and your Sisterhoods. With each Convention, the hostess city decides on a Mitzvah Project. Convention 2010 is in Baltimore MD this December and as their Mitzvah Project they want to buy a book for each 3rd grader in Baltimore city (about 7,000 books.) They have asked Women's League to support this project with donations of \$3.00 for each book in any increment that is desired. I have included flyers for your Educational Directors, Principals etc. as well as one explaining what is occurring. Tell your Rabbi about this and he could help from the Bema with a sermon on Mitzvot. Although I sent a flyer to all the FL Region Sisterhood Presidents, it is possible some didn't get it. Please pass on this information to them. Just to let you know how easy this is, I put the flyer in our bulletin and we have collected money for 102 books so far. It is easy and so rewarding to know that a 3rd grade child, who might not have their own, will receive a book. If by chance someone says: Why should I buy books for children in Baltimore? Your answer can be: Judaism requires us to perform *Tikun Olam* - "repair the world" with *Gemilut Hasadim* - "acts of loving kindness" and *Tzedakah* - "good deeds." God wants us to help everyone, anywhere.

From an ancient Chinese proverb: ***A book is like a garden carried in the pocket.***

Help plant a garden, one book at a time for only \$3.00 a book.

B'shalom,

Anne Schimberg

VP Education

FL Region WLCJ

EDUCATION

WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

475 Riverside Drive, Suite 820, New York, New York 10115/212.870.1260/www.wlcj.org

To All Principals and Directors of Education:

As Women's League for Conservative Judaism plans its 2010 biennial convention in Baltimore, Maryland, we would like to invite the children in our synagogues and Solomon Schechter schools to partner with us in a very exciting community tzedakah project. Entitled **Books for Baltimore: Building a Community of Readers One Child at a Time**, our goal is to purchase a book for every third grader in the Baltimore City Public Schools, 7,000 books! This project incorporates two important Jewish values, study and tzedakah, values that are understood by, and accessible to, children.

In consultation with the Baltimore schools' reading specialists, we have selected twelve titles from Scholastic Books that reflect the appropriate reading level and cultural interests of the students. In many instances this might be the only book the child owns because all too often in impoverished areas such as urban Baltimore, children's books are a luxury item, last on the list of household priorities.

The publisher has offered us a highly discounted price of \$3.00 per book. The books will be presented, symbolically, to students and representatives from the Baltimore City Public Schools at the last plenary session of convention on December 15.

We are asking that you consider involving the children in your school in this tzedakah project in a way that will resonate with them on a very personal level. The recipient of their tzedakah is not a vague organization or a cause far away, but is another child for whom this book could be a precious gift. Each book will contain a specially made bookplate in which the Baltimore child can write his or her name.

We hope you agree to involve your students in this incredibly exciting project. **The deadline for book purchases is October 25, 2010.** Any questions? Please call Lisa Kogen, Director of Education, 212.870.1260 or email lkogen@wlcj.org.

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO INVOLVE THE CHILDREN OF YOUR SYNAGOGUE

Birthday Books for Baltimore: On each student's birthday (or in honor of it, if it does not fall within these dates), he or she can give a present of a book to a 3rd grader in Baltimore. What a marvelous experience, giving rather than receiving! The message and lesson are memorable.

Books for Baltimore Tzedakah Week: Assign one week of school for special attention and earmark the tzedakah collected that week for this project. Encourage your teachers to read one of these books to their students that week. It will not only bring the project home, but it also will stimulate discussion about both diversity and giving.

Books for Baltimore Graphics: Have a contest to create a graphic for this project and use it on posters to hang in the classrooms. Perhaps students could design *Books for Baltimore* pushkes for home and classroom.

Bnai Mitzvah Chesed Projects: Most b'nai mitvah incorporate tzedakah activities into their event. Speak with the rabbi and/or cantor and encourage your b'nai mitvah to dedicate a small amount to this project. \$39 will purchase 13 books!!

USY Tikkun Olam Project: Suggest to the youth director that this would be a fabulous mitzvah project for USY, especially since most USYers are involved in tzedakah projects of one kind or another.

EDUCATION



BOOKS FOR BALTIMORE:

Building a Community of Readers One Child at a Time

Procedures for Purchase

Our goal is to donate an individual book to each of the 7,000 third graders in the Baltimore City Public Schools. The following titles have been chosen by the schools' reading specialists.

1. *Rosa Parks, Freedom Rider* (Keith Brandt)
 2. *I Have a Dream, the Story of Martin Luther King* (Margaret Davidson)
 3. *The Garden on Green Street* (Meish Goldish)
 4. *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* (John Steptoe)
 5. *The Adventures of Spider, West African Folktales* (Joyce Cooper Arkhurst)
 6. *Tar Beach* (Faith Ringgold)
 7. *The Story of Ruby Bridges* (Robert Coles)
 8. *Uncle Jed's Barbershop* (Margaret King Mitchell)
 9. *A Picture Book of Frederick Douglass* (David Adler)
 10. *Teammates* (Peter Golenbock)
 11. *More Than Anything Else* (Marie Bradby)
- Recuerdo Mis Raíces Vivo Mis Tradiciones, Remembering my Roots and Living my Traditions* (Latinas TransNacionales)

Starting to Build:

1. The cost for each book is \$3.00, a deeply discounted rate offered by the publisher.
 2. Your school is responsible for collecting money from the students. If students pay by check, have them made out to your synagogue and/or school.
 3. We have included a flyer for you to distribute to your students. There is enough space on the bottom for you to put in the specific directions for your school.
 4. After collecting the contributions, send **one** check to Women's League for Conservative Judaism, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 820, New York, NY 10115, Attn: Convention 2010 Book Project. **SEND ONLY ONE CHECK, PLEASE!**
- This process can be repeated throughout the year. **Final** orders must be received by Women's League **no later than October 25, 2010.**

Please note that Women's League's handling of the orders will enable us to purchase them in large enough quantities to benefit from the publisher's discount price.

Convention 2010 Special Project Chairs

Ziza Pallia, zpallia@aol.com (410.224.6703)

Myra Promisel, mpromisel@comcast.net (202.265.0196)

Director of Education

Lisa Kogen, lkogen@wlcj.org (212.870-1260, ext. 7160)

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Maxine Frye, mfrve@wlcj.org (212.870-1260, ext. 7165)

Parliamentary Procedure

By Barb Safer

The beginning of the sisterhood year is the perfect time to review your sisterhood's bylaws to make sure they are up to date and reflect the way you are operating. Are the officers and chairs correctly described? Are your membership and voting standards current and reflect the recent changes adopted by Women's League and Florida Region? Does the nominating procedure meet your needs? Your bylaws should be reviewed every two years.

Women's League does not have specific bylaw requirements but has published model bylaws to assist you. As the Florida Region Parliamentarian, I'm happy to review your current bylaws or provide you with a copy of the model bylaws. Contact me via email at barbsafer@aol.com or I'm in the Florida Region directory.

Knowledge of parliamentary procedure, together with your bylaws, can make your meetings go smoother and your sisterhood responsibilities easier. Whether you're a new president, a continuing president, sisterhood parliamentarian, chair, or general member, its worth your time to spend a few minutes with Robert's Rules of Order and brush up on the procedural tools. It will save you time and uncertainty in the future.

Executive Committee—Florida Region

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FLORIDA REGION

Women's League for Conservative Judaism

Reaching Out Newsletter

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Barb Safer—Parliamentarian

Beth Shorstein & Roz Shever

Articles for the next "Reaching Out" publication are due to pvered@gmail.com no later than

Dec. 1, 2010

SISTERHOOD HAPPENINGS

Sisterhood Cluster Meeting in Tampa on Sunday, August 1st 2010



Representatives from Congregation Beth Shalom

Gainesville's Conference Song

From skit night at the Florida Region Conference held at the Holiday Inn, Orlando April 25-26 2010

(sung to the tune of I'm looking over a 4 leaf clover)

We're looking over
A four leaf clover
Here at the Holiday Inn
We're planting ideas
To grow for our gals
Genie and Rita
Are really great pals
No need explaining
The fun remaining
When Florida Region all digs in
We're looking over
A four leaf clover
Leaguers plant and we pray and we WIN !!!!!!!!!!!!!



SISTERHOOD HAPPENINGS

SISTERHOOD OF TEMPLE BETH SHOLOM SARASOTA

This year, our season starts in August with a general meeting and lunch that will honor our Sisterhood members over the age of 90. We also have general meetings planned for September and October, and an installation meeting planned for May. Our Rosh Chodesh meetings resume in October. These programs focus on the theme of *Kehillah* Kedoshah, and we hope they will appeal to most of the women in our Congregation. Our annual Torah Fund Study Day and Luncheon will be held on a Sunday in February in the hopes of attracting people whose work schedules prevent them from attending a week-day event. Our second annual Vashti's Banquet will be in March

In addition, we have several events planned with other Temple arm(s). In August and February, we will be co-sponsoring Intergenerational Havdalah programs in conjunction with Congregational Learning. In October, we will be conducting a break-out session as a part of the monthly Bagels in the Beit Midrash program, also a part of Congregational Learning. We will be conducting a joint program with the Temple Beth Sholom Adult Library in November in honor of Jewish Book Month. In January, we will be conducting Tu b'Shevat programs for our congregational schools. In April, we have two events with the Men's Club – our election meeting and a Pass-over BBQ. We are also hoping to conduct one or more breakout sessions as a part of the Temple's Synaplex programs.

Right now, we have one big fund-raising and social event (a Fashion Show and Luncheon) planned and we are considering a Mah Jongg tournament. We also are exploring ideas for expanding sales in our Judaica Shop, including increased advertising and adding capability to support on-line sales.

And what Sisterhood year would be complete without a Paid-up Membership event and Sisterhood Shabbat? Our Paid-up Membership Dinner will be in December and we will be conducting Sisterhood Shabbat on January 29.

For further information on any of these programs, please feel free to contact:

Judy Lebowich, President
Sisterhood of Temple Beth Sholom
1050 S. Tuttle Ave
Sarasota, FL 34237
Lebowich.judy@comcast.net

Did you know?

There are thousands of children in the U.S. who don't have even 1 book in their homes to read.

Can you imagine what it would be like if you didn't own a book?



What would you do to relax before going to bed?

What would you do to pass the time on a rainy day?

You are invited to join Jewish schools & synagogues nationwide to participate in a fabulous tzedakah project called

Books for Baltimore: Building a Community of Readers One Child at a Time!

Through this wonderful mitzvah, Women's League for Conservative Judaism will collect money to purchase 7,000 children's books!

The goal is for every 3rd grader in the Baltimore City Public Schools to receive 1 book that they can call their own!

For just \$3 you can purchase a book for a 3rd grader & give that child a wonderful gift!

CREATING A CULTURE OF WELCOMING



**A Webinar from the Keruv Committee
of the Conservative Movement
for lay leadership, clergy and professional staff
Wednesday, August 18, 2010
Noon (EDT) to 1:00 PM**

After August 18, you will be able to access the session from the Women's League website, www.wlcj.org
Judaism has a tradition of keruv (outreach and welcoming) that goes back to our ancestors Abraham and Sarah who would hurry to welcome travelers into their tent. The Conservative movement continues that tradition and is committed to

providing a welcoming atmosphere to interfaith families where everyone can feel engaged and involved. We warmly welcome anyone who shares our interest in Jewish life built upon our traditions and adherence to Jewish law.

Find out about the wealth of resources your congregation can employ to help congregants and their families confront life's challenges and celebrate life's joys. We want to share our Jewish traditions, culture and practices with all who are seeking personal connections or who want to help families with their Jewish development.

Join the members of the Keruv committee for a participatory webinar on August 18.

Highlights include:

Creating a Culture of Welcoming, Rabbi Michael Beals (Congregation Beth Shalom, Wilmington, Delaware)

Training Staff and Lay Leaders, Lynne Wolfe (mentor and communications facilitator for the FJMC keruv initiative)

Use of Discussion Groups, Dr. Gary Smith (Adath Israel, Cincinnati, Ohio)

Questions & Answers

Find out what resources are available from the organizations of the Conservative movement

To register: Write to Ariella Brody at neadmin@uscj.org, with participant[s] name, email address, synagogue, synagogue city and state, and synagogue position. Once you are registered we will email you a confirmation that includes the call-in number. There are a limited number of lines available so register early.

The Keruv Committee represents Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, the Rabbinical Assembly, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, and Women's League for Conservative Judaism



REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

GO TO WWW.WLCJ.ORG TO REGISTER TODAY

JOIN OUR REGION COMMUNITY AND CELEBRATE WITH US!

WOMEN'S LEAGUE CONVENTION 2010

DECEMBER 12-15, 2010

MARRIOTT WATERFRONT BALTIMORE

KEHILLAH KEDOSHAH: CELEBRATING COMMUNITY WOMAN TO WOMAN

New for Convention 2010

Gala Vashti's Banquet on Tuesday evening (unlike any party you've ever seen!)

Jewels in the Crown Sisterhood Awards

Hands-on interactive drop-in presentations of Women's League programs

A virtual journal that will be online until Convention 2012, reinforcing the Women's League commitment to the environment. You can put your message up today at www.wlcj.org!

Installation of 2010-2012 officers on Sunday evening

Installment payment plan

Online registration and helpful registration team

Sisterhood Initiative for Convention

Books for Baltimore: Creating Community One Child at a Time: To demonstrate our tangible commitment to the convention theme, Women's League will be presenting a new reading book to every third grader and pre-kindergartener in the Baltimore City Schools (more than 12,000 books)! Sisterhoods with the highest percentage of participation will be recognized at convention.

New Creative Judaic Arts Project for Convention

In addition to presenting 12,000 books to the children of Baltimore, we would like to give them book-marks to encourage them to treat their books respectfully. There are easy directions for creating a book-mark available on the Women's League website, www.wlcj.org. Use these suggestions or be creative. Just bring as many bookmarks to convention as you and your sisterhood can make.

And don't forget the hallmarks of every Women's League biennial convention

- Fascinating speakers
- Inspiring services
- Valuable workshops
- Delicious food
- Wonderful camaraderie
- Region meetings and parties
- Great shopping

**SPECIAL OFFER**

**12 Books
for \$120**

(plus \$17 shipping)
Present this delightful book by Education Director Lisa Kogen as gifts to bat mitzvah girls, graduates, new sisterhood members, teachers, librarians,

camp counselors, friends, and family. Also, make sure your Judaica shop always has them in stock.

Call the order department at 212.870.1260, ext. 7150# or email orderdept@wlcj.org.

**THE REVISED WOMEN'S LEAGUE WEBSITE—
WWW.WLCJ.ORG**

Have you visited the completely redesigned Women's League website yet? You will be delighted to see that all of the password protected materials are easily organized under **WLCJ for YOU**. If Women's League has your email address in its data system, you can easily access the site with a temporary password that we will send you immediately. Then change your password to one you can remember. If you are having any problems, please contact Razel Kessler, 212.870.1263, for assistance.

What you'll find:

- Creative Judaic Arts patterns
- All Women's League resolutions
- Study guides
- Sisterhood Planner, Z'havah Planner, membership materials, ImagePlus, Divrei Hokhmah, Yom Yarak: Green Day Tu B'Shevat Celebration, and more
- Scripts
- BookMarks
- Public Policy Guides

PRESIDENTS SUMMER MAILING

Women's League has created a fabulous informational mailing that should be at presidents' homes soon. Be sure to review the materials and use them to make your sisterhood even stronger.

Inside you will find:

- Summer Update
- BookMarks, volume 2
- New pages for your Sisterhood Planner
- Giving Tzedakah with Thought
- Divrei Hokhmah cards: a new approach for a popular learning tool
- Books for Baltimore flyers
- Creative Judaic Arts

17 Shevat 5771

LISTSERVE JUST FOR JUDAICA SHOPS

Women's League has just inaugurated an on-line discussion group for Judaica shop chairs. Moderated by Chair Jacki Stevens and Lois Silverman, internet services coordinator, this is an opportunity to share questions, concerns, and achievements with other gift shop chairs across the continent. Post your questions to: wljudaicashop@googlegroups.com

Please post only questions and information pertinent to Judaica shops. By sharing our knowledge, we will have more efficient and financially successful gift shops for all of us!

Questions? Contact Jacki Stevens at jstevens@wlcj.org.

REVISED VIRTUAL ROSH CHODESH DISCUSSION

The newly designed virtual rosh chodesh community is up and running as a Yahoo group! Not only is the format new, but it features a new moderator, Rhonda Rosenheck.

Rhonda, who has been involved in Jewish education for nearly three decades, is an alumna of the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education at JTS. She headed the JTS Ivry Prozdor, founded a Solomon Schechter high school, and recently expanded her work into the virtual world.

Every rosh chodesh Rhonda will post new material for study, discussion, and creative joint consideration. At your leisure, you can learn, comment, add new material, share, and debate. You also will be able to suggest areas for future study.

For those participants in the earlier rosh chodesh forum, we apologize for the break in service; you will need to re-register.

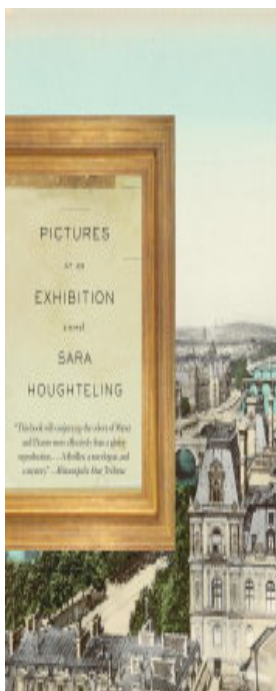
As you sign on, please introduce yourself to the group, and launch right in. The more each person shares and respectfully comments on others' posts, the more vibrant the enterprise.

You must be a member of Women's League to register to participate in the group. After that, the rest is commentary!

Go to:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/roshchodeshdiscussionwlcj>

WOMEN'S LEAGUE SHABBAT
Parashat Yitro
January 22, 2011



ORPAH'S BOOK CLUB SELECTION

Look for the complete Study Guide for first-time author Sarah Houghteling's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, in November 2010. Set in pre- and post-World War II Paris, Max Berenzon, the emotionally fragile son of a successful cosmopolitan art dealer and his artistic and temperamental wife, must deal with the loss of his entire world. Woven throughout this gripping tale is the transcendent artwork, beloved by his family, plundered by the Nazi occupiers.

The study guide will include:

- discussion questions
- overview of looted European art
- discussion of the book and PBS film *The Rape of Europe*
- art works included in the story
- music from Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition"



If you did not send Women's League the name and address of your sisterhood president, the mailing will be sent to the synagogue office, attention sisterhood.

DISTANCE WORKSHOPS

Women's League provides fabulous training on a variety of topics covering every area of sisterhood business and leadership development.

But Women's League knows that the great training it offers isn't always convenient to attend. And that is why we have created **Distance Workshops** that uses the technology of conference calls and online services to bring our advice, tips & tricks, and first-hand experience directly into your home.

There is no charge but pre-registration is necessary. Participation is limited to members of Women's League. To register, log on to our website at www.wlcj.org.

2010/2011 SCHEDULE

September 15, 2010

The How, What and Why of Public Advocacy:
Using resolutions to engage your membership

October 6, 2010

Image Is Everything: Branding for today's women

January 13, 2011

Creative Judaic Arts as a programming essential

February 9, 2011

Ways to the Means: Fundraising in the new economy

March 15, 2011

Program Planning: Crafting a full year of programs,
campaigns, classes, and events

April 7, 2011

Z'havah: Bring Younger Women In

May 18, 2011

Israel: Programs, Advocacy, Education

June 14, 2011

Membership: Grow Your Sisterhood

Torah Study: TISHREI SISTERS

By Lisa Kogen, Education Director

Women as mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, friends, and now even bosses permeate contemporary culture. It can be the iconic image of Lucy Ricardo sitting in that famous 1950s living room knitting booties in an unspoken signal to her clueless husband that she is pregnant, or the heart-wrenching but redemptive story of two abused co-wives in Khaled Hosseini's haunting bestseller, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Women's complicated relationships with men, their children, other women, and their bodies are explored in every possible medium from books, television, theater, and the movies to the blogosphere.

For Jewish women, the holiday of Rosh Hashanah provides additional cultural grist for this mill-- the holiday Torah and haftarah readings offer an unusually rich array of stories of biblical women that resonate with us today.

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah we read (Genesis 21:1-34) about the end of Sarah's barrenness and her subsequent demand that Abraham banish Hagar and Ishmael from their home. The haftarah (I Samuel 1-2:10) recounts a similar theme, this time of the beloved wife Hannah who cannot conceive but who is ultimately blessed with Samuel.

On the second day, in the harrowing narrative of the Akedah (Genesis 22:1-24), Sarah is totally absent from the story. However the presence of the aged mother of this most desired child about to be sacrificed by his father hovers over the entire story. The haftarah (Jeremiah 31:1-19) contains a reference to the fertility-challenged Rachel, weeping for her children.

Rashi understood the texts as a divine gift of remembrance of these women in their barrenness during Tishrei (BT Rosh Hashanah 11a): "On Rosh Hashanah Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah were remembered." It also reinforces the themes of creation (giving birth) and trust in God's mercy to those who accept the divine covenant.

Our understanding of these traditional texts has been enhanced by recent generations of women scholars and clergy. Their experiences and creativity have infused these texts with a uniquely feminine perspective.

The characters in the story are unambiguous to the rabbis: Sarah and Isaac are the progenitors of the chosen Jewish people, Hagar and Ishmael the forebears of a more troubling people. Today, by reading it through a feminist lens, we see a more complicated tale of women competing for love and status.

Tikva Frymer Kensky, in *Reading the Women of the Bible*, brings a vast knowledge of ancient Mesopotamian culture to her understanding of the relationships in polygamous households. She suggests that patriarchal oppression made wives rivals rather than allies, a conjecture that is reflected in the Hebrew word for co-wife – *sarah* – also the word for trouble. Frymer-Kensky comments that while the rabbis sought ways to fault Hagar "...in contrast, readers today tend to be angry at Sarai, to castigate her for being insensitive to the plight of someone for whom she should have felt both compassion and solidarity."

Phyllis Trible's *Texts of Terror* offers an even more pointed analysis. She portrays Hagar as the victim of Sarah's abuse, a rivalry so contentious that Abraham is forced to banish her and her son. In Trible's devastating indictment, Hagar "experiences exodus without liberation, revelation without salvation, wilderness without covenant, wanderings without land, promise without fulfillment, and unmerited exile without return."

Vanessa Ochs' *Sarah Laughed: Modern Lessons from the Wisdom & Stories of Biblical Women* envisions Hagar and her son as dreamers who refuse to succumb to hopelessness and despair.

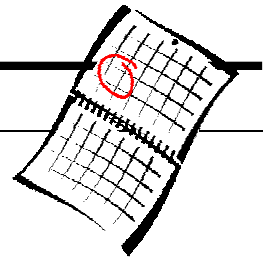
Ellen Frankel's modern midrashim in *The Five Books of Miriam: A Woman's Commentary on the Torah* breathe humanity into the beleaguered Hagar. Also, in *The Torah: A Woman's Commentary* (Women of Reform Judaism, 2007) Judith Plaskow offers an empathetic interpretation of Hagar's plight.

When reading the bible, we realize that the complexities that confound and bewilder us today are, in fact, eternal. We can rejoice, however, that those who now participate in communal conversations about them are our sisters.

Women's League for
Conservative Judaism
FLORIDA REGION

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FLORIDA REGION CALENDAR



Sunday August 1, 2010

FLORIDA REGION CLUSTER MEETING
CENTRAL
Kol Ami, Tampa

Sunday August 8, 2010

FLORIDA REGION CLUSTER MEETING
SOUTH
Bet Breira Samu-El Or Olam, Miami

Sunday August 22, 2010

FLORIDA REGION CLUSTER MEETING
SOUTH
Beth Shalom , Jacksonville

December 12-15, 2010

WLCJ BIENNIAL CONVENTION 2010
The Marriot Waterfront, Baltimore

Feb 13-14 2011

FLORIDA REGION ON WHEELS
Location TBD

March 6,-24 2011

FLORIDA REGION JOINT MEETING WITH
MEN'S CLUB
Location TBD

May 22-24 2011

REGION CONFERENCE
Location TBD