



# Garden State Region

WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

A publication of the Garden State Region of  
Women's League for Conservative Judaism



Volume 1 Issue 2

[www.wlcj.net/gsr](http://www.wlcj.net/gsr)

Choref 5769 / Winter 2009

*Save the Date  
Region Conference*

*Experience The  
Heart & Soul  
of the  
Garden State Region  
May 3, 2009  
B'nai Shalom, West Orange*

- President's Training Session
- Membership / Z'havah Workshop
- Vice President / Activites' Chair Workshop
- Learn About Mitzvah Yomit
- Region Board Installations

## Convention Photographs!



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document or pdf.*



*Meryl Balaban, President*

## President's Message

### "The Times, They Are a Changin'"

Singer, songwriter, Bob Dylan, wrote in the sixties, "The times, they are a changin'..." Could anyone have imagined then the changes we have seen during these past years? The inauguration of the first African-American to the highest office in this land comes on the heels of the greatest economic upset since the Great Depression. As the fighting in Gaza continues in Israel, our concerns for the safety and wellbeing of Israel and her people add to our own personal uncertainty in this ever-changing world.

Changing times challenge us to reaffirm our faith and our commitments. The question is: "Is Women's League for Conservative Judaism still relevant to us and our daughters?" There is a resounding "Yes" to this question.

In keeping with the changin' times, Women's League has also changed its direction. As one of 13 new regions, your Garden State Region Board has been trained with new ideas to share with our sisterhoods. Women's League has continued to keep pace with the changing times by offering International Day of Study, which includes interdisciplinary study (music, art and secular literature), feminist interpretations and intertextual study. Women's League continues to provide guidelines for book clubs, sisterhood training, Leadership Institute, curriculum for adult Bat Mitzvah classes, Biennial Conventions with outstanding authors and speakers, just to name a few.

We recently read of Rabbi Klebansky, the first female scribe who was trained at the Rabbinical Seminary at the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem. Her donation of her first hand written mezuzah to the Masorti Movement, further reminds us of our commitment to encouraging learning of our own members. The society of Kolot biK'dushah was established in the early 1990's as a way to recognize members who had acquired skills as either baalot tefillah (prayer leaders) or baalot kri'ah (Torah readers). There are now three categories of membership in Kolot BiK'dushah:

- **Nashim biK'dushah** - Women who have outstanding liturgical skills and who use those skills regularly. Members of this category must be willing and able to lead services for Women's League and Sisterhood events. Their names will be listed in an international registry.

*(continued on next page)*

## President's Message, *continued*

- **Kolot biK'dushah** - Women with a demonstrated skill as either baalot tefillah (prayer leaders) or baalot kri'ah (Torah readers)
- **Banot biK'dushah** - For post-bat mitzvah girls who have acquired Torah reading and/or davening skills, and who regularly participate in synagogue or USY services.

I encourage you to recognize a woman in each category yearly at your installation or Sisterhood Shabbat. Applications for each category, which is decided by your sisterhood board and signed by your rabbi and cantor, as well as Certificates of Recognition, can be obtained from the Women's League office.

Z'havah, Women's League's newest addition, has the look of the future. By starting this special interest group, you can attract women under 45 years of age who desire to socialize with other women of their age and interests. Your sisterhood can rejuvenate itself by sparking the interest of the mothers of our nursery and Hebrew School children. Please contact Dana Lichtenberg, our Z'havah Chair, [zahavah@optonline.net](mailto:zahavah@optonline.net), for information and help in starting a group.

We live in changin' times. Our region has the resources to help you. Let's work together to increase our membership one woman at a time.

I wish you all a year filled with health, happiness and simchas!  
B'shalom  
Meryl Balaban

### Name the Newsletter!

Thank you everyone for submitting your suggestions for the GSR Newsletter. It has come down to three names. We would like your vote on which one.

- "Women in Bloom"
- "Garden State Musings" or "Musings"
- "Garden State Reflections" or "Reflections"

Send your vote to [sakaufman@verizon.net](mailto:sakaufman@verizon.net) by March 15

## Dates to Remember



March	Women's History Month Orpah II
March 1	"Va'ani Tefillati~This is My Prayer" Jewish Women in Prayer Heschel High School, Manhattan
March 5	<b>President-to-President Meeting</b> Carla Vogel's home Temple Israel, Ridgewood, President
March 10	<i>Purim</i>
March 19	<b>Region Board Meeting</b>
April 9-16	<i>Passover</i>
April 22	<b>End of year rap-up &amp; Board Meeting</b>
May 3	<b>Garden State Region Conference &amp; Installation B'nai Shalom, West Orange</b>

### Mazel Tov

2008-2010 International WL Board members from the Garden State Region:

Ruth Aach	Rhonda Jacobs Kahn
Janet Arnowitz	Sheila Kaufman
Evelyn Auerbach	Ilisia Kissner *
Meryl Balaban	Penny Leifer
Sharon Barkauskas	Karen M. Mazal
Florence Belfer	Marion Mohl
Heddy Belman	Ilene Rothman
Lila S. Frost	Janice Saferstein
Janet Geldzahler	Esther D. Schwarz
Ann B. Goldman	Barbara Spack
Jewell Hirschorn	Lynne WeissMarshall

\*Ilisia Kissner of Beth El Sisterhood, South Orange, NJ, has been appointed as the Women's League liaison to Girl Scouts of America. She is an educator, past Girl Scout Leader and interested in promoting Jewish girls to participate in Girl Scouting. We are pleased to have another one of our members from the GSR join the Women's League International Board.

**Yasher Koach Ilisia!**

**Area Vice President, Karen Mazal**

It has been an exciting time for the new Garden State Region! We have started by scheduling President-to-President meetings, which allow Sisterhood Presidents to meet in a collegial environment and network. As a result, some of our Sisterhood Presidents have decided to have joint programs. There is nothing quite like “sharing the wealth” in our organization.

Speaking of “sharing the wealth”, WLCJ Convention in November was a wonderful experience for all of us who attended. We were able to bring back valuable information to our Sisterhoods. Many of us on the Garden State Region Board were already friendly, but time away at Convention solidified those relationships even more. The winter season gives us an opportunity to absorb information and regroup for the coming months.

My Area VPs have hit the ground running. I am thankful to have such a group of dedicated and tenacious women on my team. Lois Davis, Sue Hill, Lynne WeissMarshall, and Janice Saferstein, you are pillars of support that I have relied on to get the job done. I couldn't do this job without

you! We have Meryl at the helm to inspire us, and Sharon to keep us solvent. Eileen Toll has a great grasp of what needs to be done for membership, and she entices us with her intelligence and wit; Janet Geldzahler is spearheading the Torah Fund effort and lending us her creative talents, and as always, Ilene Rothman is on top of all of the details, and remains a great resource. Sheila Kaufman keeps us on track with well-placed reminders so that she can deliver the quality that we have come to expect from her in the bulletin (not to mention her prowess in graphic design). We all have an important job to do this year, as we are setting the bar for future administrations. Our expectations and hopes remain high. We are working very hard to reach every Sisterhood and help them to assess their needs and reach their goals. Our collaborative efforts will pay off. I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our May 3rd Region Conference. Remember, we're all in this together!

Karen Mazal  
 Area Vice President, Garden State Region, WLCJ  
 (973) 328-1082 / kmanmaz@aol.com



**NEW BOOK AVAILABLE**

**WITH STRENGTH & SPLENDOR:  
 Jewish Women as Agents of Change**

*Written by Women's League Director of Education  
 Lisa Kogen*

The women in this galaxy of remarkable Jewish women each demonstrated determination, courage, and imagination that enabled them to challenge the boundaries of gender and social conventions and to forge new paths to enrich our world.

This project began as Beauty, Brains and Brawn: The New World Balabuste, the Women's League exhibit commemorating the 350th anniversary of the arrival of Jews in North America. Now expanded to 47 women and with a new title, With Strength and Splendor reflects how Jewish women disassembled old gender roles, shattered boundaries and expanded the options for future generations of women.

With Strength and Splendor will make a wonderful gift for adult or teen bat mitzvahs, graduates, teachers, counselors, friends, and family. It is a fabulous title for a sisterhood book discussion or program focus.



Cover Price..... \$39.95  
 Kol Ishah Members..... \$31.95

Limit of 3 books, plus \$6.50 per book for shipping & handling.

**Discounts for Judaica Shops available.**  
 Call (212) 870-1260 to order.

## *Membership & Z'havah Chairperson, Dana Lichtenberg*

### **The Sisterhood I Know and Why You Should Know It Too!**

I recently represented my Morristown Jewish Center sisterhood at my first Women's League Conference, in Michigan. As I looked around I thought to myself "What the heck am I doing here?" For a moment, I considered running for the door. But then I met Robin, Trudi, Debbie, & Victoria. Women like me, younger women looking to connect with other younger women, women committed to their families, to Jewish life and to Conservative Judaism. Women's League, sisterhood's parent organization, recognizes the value of our younger women and has begun to focus their efforts on attracting these women to sisterhood.

My sisterhood, like many within our region has members ranging in age from their 30's to their 90's. And while this is a blessing, it also presents its programming challenges. How do we create programs that will appeal to all age groups and not turn off our younger Sisterhood members and how do we change our programming when so many of our members are happy with the status quo?

Women's League saw this challenge in many Sisterhoods internationally and Z'havah was born. Z'havah is the young women's initiative of Women League. It is a special interest group that engages younger women by reaching out to them where they are, assessing their interests and creating an environment which is both comfortable and familiar for them. The goal is simple: the perpetuation of Sisterhood and Women's League and all the things it stands for and facilitates in our synagogues, in Conservative Judaism and in Jewish life overall.

Sometimes I forget how I got involved with Sisterhood. I had young children at home, I wanted to get out of my house, I wanted to be around adults and have adult conversations and I wanted to feel connected to my synagogue community. I know it is one of those reasons, maybe even several of them, that attracted me to Sisterhood. It is what I found in the women of Sisterhood that kept me coming back for more – friendship, camaraderie, and women, of all ages, who shared common values.

I may sometimes forget why I took my first step in the door, but I never forget why I stay involved. Our Sisterhoods support the synagogue community in ways that many people don't know about or realize. We know that the women of Sisterhood run the gift shop and we all know that the Kiddush committee caters most of the events, but many Sisterhoods also send our youth to summer encampment programs and

regional Kadima and USY events. Our Sisterhoods support the synagogues, our children, the community, and Jewish communities around the world.

My experience with Sisterhood had been both rewarding and enriching for me personally. It is something I am always happy to share and it is something that touches women in all stages of life, with a variety of different interests. Sisterhood has opportunities for all women. The door is open; I invite you to find your entrance.

Dana Lichtenberg  
Z'havah Chair, Garden State Region, WLCJ  
dlichtenberg@jccmetrowest.org



### **Remember Membership**

Make a list and check it twice! Remember to look at the membership list you received from Women's League in September and check it again. Have you received dues from everyone? Now is the time to make those calls before they become former members! Go back a year or two and reclaim women who haven't renewed as sisterhood members.

Looking for ideas to bring women back? You'll find information you can use now at [www.wlcj.org](http://www.wlcj.org) and in the new Blueprint for Membership or ask for assistance from your region membership vice president or the Women's League membership chair.

Remember, the per capita report is due at Women's League on December 31. Make the list...check it twice...It is your sisterhood member's connection to the world of Women's League. Let's make an effort to include everyone. Wishing you a happy, healthy, membership-successful 2009!

### **The Z'havah Planner**

Would you like to know how to involve the younger women in your sisterhood? Would you like a user-friendly basic guide to programming and publicity, with guides you can use today? Order a copy of the new Z'havah Planner, designed by and for women in their 20's, 30's, 40's, and engage the women of your synagogue!

Available to download at [www.wlcj.org/MyWLCJ/Zhavah](http://www.wlcj.org/MyWLCJ/Zhavah)

## *Torah Fund Vice President, Janet Geldzahler*

### **Support the WLCJ Total Fitness Center at JTS**

*“Obesity is just as prevalent in the Jewish community as in the general population...it’s an epidemic.”*  
-Dr. David Medway, Los Angeles\*

Halakhah teaches us that our body is a gift from God, to be tended, protected, and given care and respect because it is holy. And, in the *Mishneh Torah*, Maimonides tells us that “keeping the body in health and vigor, one walks in the ways of God.”

As Conservative Jews, we count on The Jewish Theological Seminary to develop the minds and hearts of the next generations’ most dynamic Jewish leaders—and it never disappoints. Yet no one knows better than JTS that offering opportunities for well-balanced lives and physical activity is just as important as teaching new leaders how to read, study, and interpret texts.

The Torah Fund Campaign of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism also has a history of supporting new Jewish leaders, having funded an active JTS scholarship program and supplied bookshelves for The Library’s rare books and manuscripts, to name just two of our efforts. Now we want to ensure that the compassionate hearts at JTS keep beating in the very best of health by funding the Women’s League of Conservative Judaism’s Total Fitness Center at JTS.

Rabbi Michael Greenbaum, vice chancellor and COO of JTS, said it well in a letter to one of our members:

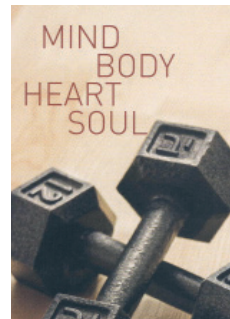
The WLCJ Total Fitness Center at JTS is vital. In a year when our theme is Heart and Soul, how appropriate to undertake a project that nurtures the students’ physical welfare. Let us address the needs of the body. Let us put our energies behind this fun yet critically important project; a project which, I might add, is very much within our capability.

So the time has come for Torah Fund women—for the synagogue Sisterhoods—to “weigh” in and support JTS in renovating and outfitting the WLCJ Total Fitness Center. The center will provide a physical, psychological, and emotional experience that will encourage students to get into shape, increase their physical stamina and abilities, and cultivate the calm and concentration they need for their work and lives. What’s more, the WLCJ Total Fitness Center will feature a fully appointed exercise circuit and free weights.

There will be room for exercise classes, plus new and separate locker rooms, showers, and bathrooms for men and women.

Please contact Carolyn Baron, director of the Torah Fund Campaign, for additional information on the WLCJ Total Fitness Center and about fund-raising ideas for this campaign: (212) 618-8876 or cabaron@jtsa.edu.

Janet Geldzahler  
Torah Fund Vice President, Garden State Region, WLCJ  
(973) 992-2053 / JGParties@yahoo.com  
*Don’t forget to wear your Torah Fund pin!*



### **Tikkun Olam Community Service Projects**

What can be a Community Service Project? Any type of service that your sisterhood sees fit to perform for the community. Does your Synagogue sponsor a Boy Scout or Girl Scout troop? If you would like to start one, there are local resources to help you get started and continue. The Jewish Girl Scouts were represented at our Convention in Dearborn. Locally, past Central NJ Branch president, Ethel Klein can be reached at jandeklein@aol.com Rabbi Lisa Vernon is also working with scouts.

#### **Visiting nursing homes:**

Sisterhood members from Congregation Beth Israel in Scotch Plains are visiting Ashbrook Nursing Home in Scotch Plains and Norwood in Plainfield on alternate Fridays. Several members bring Challah, grape juice and candles. They lead the patients to chant Kiddush and sing Kabbalat Shabbat songs. The patients show their sincere appreciation in participating.

#### **Implementing the Resolutions: Taking Action.**

Be on the lookout for your Sisterhood’s copy the Resolutions that were passed in the Convention in Dearborn.

*(continued on page 13 ~ “Tikkun Olam”)*

## Social Action

### Public Policy

Women's League is actively involved with major issues of the day, including three we are working on in our region: human trafficking, family life education and domestic violence. A one-minute phone call would help with passage of some bills in our legislature. To find your legislators, or some other phone numbers, go to the web site, [www.njleg.state.nj.us](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us). A call from a constituent is very important, and can have a major impact.

\*Human trafficking occurs even in New Jersey, with women being brought here for prostitution and for domestic servitude. A bill, A.3456 and S.297, which provides for an extended term of imprisonment, supervision for life and sex offender registration for the crime of human trafficking, has been stalled in the Legislature since 2006.

Thank the prime sponsors, Assemblywomen Elise Evans and Valerie Vainieri Huttel and Senator Thomas Kean, Jr. Call the Assembly Judiciary Committee members and ask them to move it forward: Linda Greenstein, Peter Barnes, Caroline Casagrande, Reed Gusciora, Amy Handlin and Grace Spencer. Ask Assembly members who sponsored it last session to sign on: Linda Stender, Joan Voss, Joan Quigley and David Wolfe.

On the Senate side, ask the Senate Judiciary members to hold a hearing on the bill. They are: John Girgenti, Bill Baroni, Jennifer Beck, Gerald Cardinale, Nia Gill, Joseph Kyrillos, Ray Lesniak, Paul Sarlo, Nicholas Scutari and Bob Smith.

But primarily call your own legislators to either thank them for being a sponsor, or to tell them that this is an important issue for you, and you would like action.

Another important bill is one dealing with family life education, A.794, sponsored by Reed Gusciora, which requires each board of education to offer comprehensive instruction in family life education, that is medically accurate and age-appropriate; respects community values and encourages parental communication; promotes responsible sexual behavior and addresses both abstinence and the use of contraception; promotes individual responsibility and involvement regarding sexuality; and teaches skills for responsible decision-making regarding sexuality. This would include teaching about abstinence but not exclude contraception and sexually transmitted diseases. The teen birth rate is climbing, and students need information to make informed decisions about their own health.

Thank Asm. Gusciora for being the sponsor. Ask your legislators to cosponsor this, for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

\*And, finally, learn about domestic abuse and what you can do to help. Attend the National Conference on Domestic Abuse, April 26-29 in Washington DC. Join community leaders, rabbis, lawyers, health professionals, educators and advocates exploring ways to empower women and girls, promote healthy relationships for teens and young adults, and support women, children and families affected by abuse. Build concrete skills and learn about practical tools you can bring back to your synagogue and community. For more information or to register, visit [www.jwi.org/conference](http://www.jwi.org/conference), or contact us at [conference@jwi.org](mailto:conference@jwi.org) or 800.343.2823.

I'd love to have you join the committee, to learn about our issues and help develop plans.

Michelle Bobrow  
Social Action Chair, Garden State Region, WLCJ  
[m.bobrow@verizon.net](mailto:m.bobrow@verizon.net)

### A Day In Trenton Public Policy And Children

April 23, 2009

10:00 AM – 3:30 PM

The Historic Masonic Temple,  
100 Barrack Street, Trenton



- What are our children learning in school?
- Is Sex Education in New Jersey really comprehensive?
- Domestic Violence: Custody and Visitation Issues
- Are children at risk?

Sponsored by The New Jersey Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, the National Council of Jewish Women, New Jersey State Public Affairs Committee and Choice New Jersey.

- Hear from NJ Legislators, Attorneys Sex Educators, and Judges.
- Be with us as we honor our many NJ Pro-Choice State Legislators

\$25.00 – Registration required.

Breakfast and Lunch included

For questions please contact [trentontoday@verizon.net](mailto:trentontoday@verizon.net)

Please make your check payable to NJRCRC.

Mail to NJRCRC, PO Box 13, Mt. Freedom, NJ 07970

*Israeli News***Our Children at Neve Hana Also Under Attack**

Neve Hana, located in Kiryat Gat, not far from Gaza is a residential program for children who have been removed from their own homes by court order due to severe dysfunction or psychological trauma in their families. Founded more than thirty years ago to provide a safe and nurturing home environment for those children whose families cannot, Neve Hana today finds itself like the citizens of Ashdod, Sderot, Ashkelon, Beersheva and Omer in the path of rockets fired by Hamas from Gaza.

There are 70 children who live at Neve Hana full-time and 50 children who are day students who come from the surrounding area. At present, the day students are unable to come to Neve Hana. The children who live at Neve Hana are housed in small family units with 8-10 other children and house parents. There are children of all ages in each house and children from the same family are kept together. The children at Neve Hana are also a part of the larger Masorti community. (Conservative Movement 's name in Israel)

The educational curriculum at Neve Hana is that of the TALMUD schools, the system of secular schools providing enhanced Jewish studies developed by the Masorti Movement in Israel). Rabbinical students from Schechter Institute which is affiliated with the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York come from Jerusalem to provide Bar and Bat Mitzvah training. Rabbi Yoav Ende who served there during his student years was recently selected to serve as Rabbi at Kibbutz Hanaton, the conservative Kibbutz in the Galilee.

In addition to classes and religious training, the children also receive counseling and therapy in order to help them cope with their difficult family situations. Neve Hana has a petting zoo which gives the children the opportunity to learn how to nurture and care for live animals as well as develop a sense of responsibility for the welfare of other living creatures. There is also horseback therapy, which has proven to be a very effective form of therapy. Neve Hana also has an excellent bakery, which has been so successful that the breads and cookies that are made there are served to First Class passengers on EL AL flights. The bakery also makes extra bread that is then taken to the center of Kiryat Gat each day for the local residents. Kiryat Gat is a development town. It has traditionally been the site where many immigrants are settled and is not in the center of the country. There is much poverty in the area so the children at Neve Hana learn early to help other people who are also in need. The bakery provides many learning opportunities

for the children. Not only do they learn how to bake bread and cookies but they help run the store. They also develop marketing and accounting skills. For some children, this is an opportunity to train for a career.

In Israel, young people go into the army at age 18. Unlike most soldiers who go home when they have free time, the children from Neve Hana cannot go home. During their free time from the army they can now go to an apartment run by Neve Hana where there is a counselor for them. During summer vacations, the children go up North to the summer facility at Rosh Pina, which came under attack two years ago from the Katyusha rockets in Lebanon. Not only are these children vulnerable because of their family situations but they also must deal with the physical dangers where they live. At present there is a dire need to update two of the bomb shelters at the Kiryat Gat location. There is no shelter large enough and close enough to the houses. Funds are needed to improve the security system. Anyone who would like to contribute can do so by sending in a donation to American Friends of Neve Hana at 820 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017

I would also strongly urge you to go to Neve Hana and see this wonderful place for yourself. It was by far the Highlight of our shul trip several years, both for the children in our group as well as the adults. We all fell in love with the animals, were touched profoundly by the children's stories, inspired by their accomplishments and nourished by the delicious cookies that we ate and purchased. For further information, please contact the office of American Friends. My husband and I are proud to serve on the board of American Friends of Neve Hana with the chair, Janet Tobin, past president of Women's League who with her husband Irwin is very dedicated to the children of Neve Hana.

Sharon Hammerman  
Israel Chair, Garden State Region, WLCJ  
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## Convention Highlights



Meryl Balaban, GSR President (left) and Marlene Herman recipient of the Baalat Mitzvah Award. Marlene, along with other recipients, will be featured in the next CJ Magazine.

### A HUGE SUCCESS!!

Pictures from convention are available to order.  
For more information, contact Meryl Balaban.



2008 GSR Convention Delegates.

Top Row (l to r): Debbie Brody, Elaine Zeitlin, Marlene Herman, Teresa Samtur, Ilisia Kissner, Eve Wasserman, Judy Solomon, Gidget Friedman.

Middle Row: Janet Arnowitz, Marlene Oslick, Anita Nussbaum, Ann-Ruth Rosenzweig, Anne Spring, Ruth Aach, Carole Rubenstein, Vivian Laska.

Seated in front: Janet Geldzahler, Ilene Rothman, Heddy Belman, Meryl Balaban, Sharon Barkauskas, Lynne Weiss-Marshall, Marion Mohl, Gail Weis.

Not Shown: Janice Saferstein, Karen Mazal, Dana Lichtenberg, Florence Belfer, Phyllis Safer, Lila Frost, Ann Goldman, Rhonda Kahn, Lisa Kogen

### 2008 GSR Convention Song

To the tune of "Love and Marriage"

Garden State Region – Northern & Central  
We go together like paper and pencil  
Let me tell you Sisters  
You can't have one without the other.

Garden State Region – Northern & Central  
Neither one of us is temperamental  
And here's the really great thing  
It gets us together with a song to sing.

Try, try, try to separate us  
It's an illusion  
Try, try, try and you will only  
Come to this conclusion....



Heart & Soul, Heart & Soul  
That's Garden State Region's true goal  
Northern & Central  
Ladies, it's elemental.

Garden State Region – Garden State Region  
In this special world, our fans are legion  
We're a really tight group  
That's because we are the right group!

## Convention Delegates' Thoughts

### Why Sisterhood?

#### Because we make a difference!

*First time convention delegate, Elaine Zeitlin, president of Beth Sholom in Teaneck*

Conservative Judaism defines so much of who I am. At the same time I find it to be an isolating factor in my ordinary life. My children are all grown and the days filled with Schechter and Camp Ramah activities are over. Many of my Jewish peers are either secular or orthodox. Co-workers often tell me that they never knew a Jewish person like me before. Someone who keeps Kosher does not work on Friday nights and yet does not wear long black skirts and a wig. With that backdrop, I was excited when the registration form for the Women's League Biennial Convention arrived. Attending the conference, would allow me to encapsulate myself in Conservative Judaism, with woman just like me, for four days.

On November 9th, after arranging for days off and someone to take care of my little dog, I kissed my husband good-bye and headed off to Detroit, (actually Dearborne) Michigan. The days were filled with the usual convention fare - speakers, business meetings, accepting of by-laws, and training sessions. But what was special to me (along with three kosher meals everyday) was being part of this group. Sharing time with the more than 500 delegates, representing Sisterhoods from Conservative synagogues throughout the United States and Canada, allowed me to see first-hand the strength and joys of our movement.

Being at the conference also provided me with inspiration about the future of our movement. The conference attendees heard insightful and up-lifting remarks from Dr. Arnold Eisen, chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary and Rabbi Bradley Shavit, dean of the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. They both spoke of the important role the Women's League and its members have in preserving a strong and healthy Conservative movement.

Being a woman in the Conservative movement is an extraordinary responsibility. We are enabled with the ability to participate equally in the services but also hold a vital role in ensuring that our families maintain a strong Jewish identity. Spending four days with strong, Conservative Jewish Women from around the United States and Canada reaffirmed my belief in the beauty of this movement. And, as a woman, I was inspired by spending time with so many people who hold similar beliefs for our community, for our families, and for ourselves. Life always requires balance but our commitment to Conservative Judaism most always be a significant priority.

### Thoughts from a second time delegate.

Phyllis Safeer

From the moment I arrived at the gate in Newark Airport and saw 10 women sitting in a small circle, I knew I was in the right place with the right people. I had a hunch that these were Women's League ladies and I immediately introduced myself and got the warmest welcome imaginable. We were not even in Detroit yet and my convention experience was off to a great start!

The hotel in Detroit was lovely and while getting into an elevator on Sunday morning I saw my cousin, Judy Berger, from Miami, Florida. I did not even know Judy was going to be at convention. What a nice surprise! I also spent some quality time with my dear USY friend, Judy Solomon (who I did know would be at convention) from our region and the Ocean chapter.

The convention had many wonderful learning opportunities. There were interesting key note speakers, Torah Fund training and workshops, Sisterhood President training, Z'havah workshops...it was hard to figure out where to go first. I know I maximized my learning experience by participating in as many workshops as I could. I also enjoyed the entertainment each evening and the region get-togethers to end the night.

The highlight of the Convention for me was the Z'havah Meet and Greet with Chancellor Eisen. This was a chance to ask the Chancellor questions and hear his views on the Conservative Movement. What a special time for all that were in attendance. There was a standing room only crowd and we were all on the edge of our seats.

The convention was a great experience to learn, grow, network and plan for the future. I hope I can participate in the next convention.



## Directory Corrections

The following are corrections to your 2008-09 Garden State Directory. Please make these notes.

### Page 2: Region Officers

Sheila Kaufman's e-mail is [sakaufman@verizon.net](mailto:sakaufman@verizon.net)

### Page 4: WL International Board Member List

Add: Immediate Past Region Presidents Jewell Hirschorn and Esther D. Schwarz.

Janice Saferstein not Janet Saferstein is a member of the International Board.

### Pages 6-7: Region Past Presidents

Miriam Bergwerk's e-mail is [mbergwerk@aol.com](mailto:mbergwerk@aol.com)

Rosalie Kesselman's e-mail is [savtarose@verizon.net](mailto:savtarose@verizon.net)

Contact information for NNJ Region Past President:

Dolly Moser, Lester Senior Housing  
903 Rt. 10 East, Apt. 414, Whippany, NJ 07981  
(973) 887-1313

Lila Nass's zip code is 33435

### Page 10-11: Region Activity Chairs

Sheila Kaufman's e-mail is [sakaufman@verizon.net](mailto:sakaufman@verizon.net)

Myra Stein's email is [mystein@comcast.net](mailto:mystein@comcast.net)

### Pages 13-24: Rabbis & Sisterhood Presidents

Brick: Temple Beth Or

The new rabbi is Rabbi Royi Israel Shaffin and Rabbi Dr. Robert Fierstien is the Rabbi Emeritus.

Fair Lawn: Fair Lawn Jewish Center

Sisterhood President Fran Kessler's address is 23 Courter Road, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417

Morristown: Morristown Jewish Center Beit Yisrael

Synagogue zipcode is 07960.

Montville: Pine Brook Jewish Center

The new rabbi is Rabbi Mark Finkel and Rabbi Dr. Asher Krief is the Rabbi Emeritus.

Somerset: Temple Beth El

Synagogue address is 1489 Amwell Road

Staten Island: B'nai Jeshurun

The new rabbi is Rabbi Judah Kogen.

West Orange: B'nai Shalom

Synagogue telephone number is (973) 731-0160.

Woodcliff Lake: Temple Emanuel of the Pascack Valley

Synagogue zip code is 07677.



מה יפה ירושתנו

## New Model Sisterhood Bylaws Are Available

When was the last time your sisterhood updated its by-laws? It might be time to take another look and see what changes could be made.

Women's League has just completed the new Model Sisterhood Bylaws. It is available on the Women's League web site ([www.wlcj.org](http://www.wlcj.org)) or by emailing me at [jarnowitz@wlcj.org](mailto:jarnowitz@wlcj.org). I will be happy to confer with all Garden State Region presidents and parliamentarians on the changes that have been made in the model bylaws and how to begin your bylaws revision.

I am always available to answer all your parliamentary questions.

Janet Arnowitz  
Garden State Region Parliamentarian  
Women's League Parliamentarian

## WOMEN'S LEAGUE WEBSITE Make It Work for You . . . [www.wlcj.org](http://www.wlcj.org)

If every member of Women's League logged onto [www.wlcj.org](http://www.wlcj.org) and filled in her personal information, sisterhood presidents, region personnel and the Women's League office would have absolutely 100% correct contact information.

Presidents would only need to fill in a member's identification number and her address, phone and email would be immediately available.

Urge your members to log on today.  
Sisterhood presidents should have every member's identification number.

## International News

### Writing Project To Share

At the Jewish Writing Project, Jews of all backgrounds and ages share stories, poems, memories, and experiences as a way of shedding light on what it means to be Jewish today. Participation in the Jewish Writing Project would be a wonderful Special Interest Group for your sisterhood, and could even be expanded to include teens and younger children. Go to: <http://jewishwritingproject.wordpress.com>.

### Supporting Our Youth

**Personal involvement** Get involved personally and locally by supporting fundraisers, volunteering to chaperone, making a donation to a USY or Kadima scholarship fund.

**Financial support** Due to rising travel expenses, USYers often are deterred from participating. Scholarships and subsidies are necessary, so help organize fundraisers and support youth fundraisers.

**USY on Wheels Home Hospitality** involves different synagogues hosting Wheelniks in different communities. These visits minimize costs and demonstrate the mitzvah of *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming visitors). Last summer, 37 congregations supported the home hospitality program. If you can't host a Wheels bus, perhaps you can offer home hospitality for a meal or supply space to eat.

Be chaperones for a USY convention or conference in your area. For more information, contact: Karen Stein at [Stein@uscj.org](mailto:Stein@uscj.org)

### Walking With Life

Women's League has joined the Rabbinical Assembly, United Synagogue, and the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs as partners with the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies in the 'Walking With' series. The third book in the series, *Walking with Life*, will be published in the summer of 2009.

Each book in the series is a 12-part course for the adult learner who seeks nuanced religious thinking about the Jewish lifecycle, from birth to death.

[www.WalkingWith.org](http://www.WalkingWith.org) will carry materials and links for facilitators and participants to download, adapt and use. Everything will be available free of charge.

### Mitzvah Yomit Cards

Since Convention 2008, Women's League has been inundated with requests for the Mitzvah Yomit cards handed out after Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson's session on Soul Food. The cards, which slide into your Women's League calendar diary pocket, list over a dozen blessings and hundreds of mitzvot that you can recite and do every day. They are wonderful to include in new member kits, Hanukkah gift packages for college students, or Purim mishloach manot baskets, and as Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur handouts. Let us know other ways you have used them.

The cards are available in sets of 25 for \$10.00. Call (212) 870.1260 ext. 7150.

### Domestic Abuse Conference

April 26-29, 2009  
Washington, DC

You are invited to join the members of Women's League at the Jewish Women International's Fourth Conference on Domestic Abuse. Explore ways to empower women and girls, promote healthy relationships for teens and young adults, and support women, children and families affected by abuse.

Build concrete skills and learn about practical tools you can bring back to your community.

To register, visit [www.jwi.org/conference](http://www.jwi.org/conference).

### Garden State Region Donation Opportunities

**Garden State Region Scholarship Fund**  
**Ella Berman Memorial Fund**  
To provide scholarships for  
leadership development opportunities.

**Garden State Region Sunshine Fund**  
To support members of the Board in their time of need.

Checks should be made payable to:  
**Garden State Region-WLCJ**  
Mail to: Sharon Barkauskas,  
9 Abingdon Street, Morris Plains, NJ 07950

*International News*

**This Is My Prayer**

Va'ani Tefillati, Jewish Women in Prayer

March 1, 2009

Heschel High School, NYC



Have you ever felt the need to pray?  
 Do you reach for God when you are grateful for a miracle like birth?  
 When you are mourning a loss?  
 When you or a loved one reaches a milestone?

Learn...network...create...Explore the world of Jewish women's prayers!

Participate in a ground-breaking inter-denominational conference on Jewish women's prayer sponsored by Women's League for Conservative Judaism together with the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance, Women of Reform Judaism, the Jewish Theological Seminary, Heschel School, and the JCC of Manhattan.

The conference will take place at the Heschel High School on Manhattan's West Side, on Sunday, March 1, 2009, from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Materials will be available to duplicate this type of conference in your community.

Call (212) 870-1260 ext. 7165  
 \$36 Registration and lunch

**Tikkun Olam** *(continued from page 6)*

You will find information about **Heksher Tzedek**, the new hashgachah that extends to ethics in the food industry.

**Energy and Its Responsible Use:** Lowering your consumption of energy and its related costs by comparing your usage of heating fuel, electricity and gasoline to last year and trying to use less. This will also help your budget. If we all reduce our consumption, this will reduce demand and continue on hopefully to reduce prices. Conserve, conserve, conserve.

Is something bothering you? How to make it right might be your next project. Please contact Marlene Oslick, to make suggestions or bring up problems that we should tackle.

Tikun Olam Chairperson  
 Marlene Oslick  
 mtocpa@aol.com

**It's Time to Order...**

**CALENDAR-DIARIES 5770**

Place your order now for the new Calendar Diaries from Women's League and have them ready for your pickup\* at the Region Spring Conference on Sunday, May 3rd, at B'nai Shalom in West Orange. The cost is \$7.60 per book.

We must receive your order by March 1st to guarantee delivery at the Region Conference.

The Calendar Diaries include weekly and monthly calendar pages, Shabbat and Festival information, and plastic covers for each book are included. You will find these Calendar Diaries just the right size for carrying with you at all times and for keeping your busy schedule organized. The theme for this year's Calendar Diary is "A Celebration of Women's League".

Buy one for each member of your Sisterhood Board... have a supply on hand as gifts for new members...give them to your rabbi, cantor and their spouses...and, encourage every member of your Sisterhood to order one. Order calendar diaries for sale in your gift shop.

Return the form below with your check payable to **Garden State Region-WLCJ** no later than March 1st. Mail completed form and check to:  
 Sharon Barkauskas,  
 9 Abingdon Street, Morris Plains, NJ 07950  
 (973) 285-1877 or sharon47@optonline.net

\*Note: Sisterhoods will be responsible for the postage for mailing diaries if not attending the Spring Conference.

**GARDEN STATE REGION -  
 CALENDAR DIARY 5770 ORDER FORM**

Sisterhood \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Books @ \$7.60 \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

*International News*



**The Jade Bar Shalom Books for Israel Project**

An international grassroots effort to provide direct help to Israel's students and teachers.  
<http://booksforisrael.wikispaces.com>

The government of Israel has had to divert funding from its schools to national defense. As a result, Israeli public schools need English language reading material to help teach children to read English. The need is there, in all neighborhoods rich or poor, affecting all religious and ethnic backgrounds. Women's League for Conservative Judaism is working together with the Jade Bar Shalom Books for Israel Project to help.

Be introduced to a TALi school in Israel and support the Masorti movement, parent to parent, student to student, community to community!

**Types of Books Needed:**

Gently used or like new paperbacks school reading levels (pre-K to 12).

- Beginning readers
- Classic short stories
- Phonics materials
- Dictionaries
- Dr. Seuss books
- Educational magazines (i.e. Highlights, Discover Kids)
- Chapter books, mysteries
- Harry Potter books
- History & science
- Books on Tape
- Pre-reading skills

**DON'T WANT:** Books in bad condition, torn or dirty  
Hard cover, romances, outdated encyclopedias, textbooks, non-educational magazines, comic books, novels involving violence and sexual content.

**If you would want your child to read it - DONATE IT!**

For information on **The Jade Bar Shalom Books for Israel Project**, contact: Susan Heckler, Associate International Coordinator, [SusanHecklerB4I@aol.com](mailto:SusanHecklerB4I@aol.com).

**••••• We want your sisterhood articles and photographs? •••••**

- Send in your photographs (jpgs, pdfs) and articles (no more than 150 words) about any programs that you would like to share with your Garden State Region and WLCJ women!
- Send to Sheila Kaufman at [sakaufman@verizon.net](mailto:sakaufman@verizon.net)

**Women's League in Washington DC for the Opening of Congress**

Beginning with January 6, 2009, we were welcomed to Washington DC for the Opening of the 111th Congress.

These are exciting times in Washington, DC and an added privilege for all of us to be included/invited in the process once again, as we welcome a new Administration to our capital. Beginning with January 6, 2009, at the Opening of the 111th Congress, we were welcomed to the "People's House" in Washington DC. Our day included the Private Swearing in Ceremony of Congressman Rush Holt (Dem NJ 12th District) sworn in for his 6th term by the Honorable John Lewis and then witnessing the Swearing in of the entire 111th Congress.

We were there as the House of Representatives voted, once again, for Speaker of the House, re-electing Nancy Pelosi (Dem CA 8) with 255 votes to 174 for John Boehner, who was the Republican nominee



for that slot. John Boehner became the House Minority Leader for the second time. We were introduced to and met with many lawmakers and members of the new Obama Cabinet that day as they stopped by to wish Rush Holt and each other well. As the many came to Washington a few weeks later for the Inauguration the good will and electricity in the air continued to rise, different than other years, an atmosphere that will be in our hearts forever. We all wish this new administration and our President well no matter which side of the aisle or the vote we were on. This is such an America!! "What a Country", as Tim Russert of blessed memory always said!!

The recognition, respect and presence we have earned in the Jewish Community and the World Community is something to behold and treasured, sometimes a best kept secret. We are privileged to be an organization that has an opportunity to make a difference in the Greater Jewish Community and the Greater World Community because of all of you and with all of you together.

Heddy Belman  
WLCJ Financial Secretary, GSR Past President  
[hfsbh@aol.com](mailto:hfsbh@aol.com)

## *Sisterhood News*

### **Temple Emanuel of Pascack Valley Woodcliff Lake**

Our first Dec. 25 function, Sisterhood and the Men's Club jointly ran a great day at Temple. The Men's Club had just donated a projector, screen and sound equipment to our synagogue and we have put it to good use.

**Chopstixs and Flix** was a great success. We had 70 people, from the age of 2 all the way to Senior Citizens, attend. We ate delicious Chinese Food and showed three great movies. "Kong Fu Panda" to the kids, in a different room with babysitters, who got community service hours for volunteering for day.

"Journey to the Center of the Earth" was the first family film shown and "Night at the Museum" was shown after our delicious meal. We also had the joy of all lighting the fifth candle for Chanukah and singing songs.

Susan Romanoff, President



### **The Garden State Region Website is Now Up and Running! [www.wlcj.net/gsr](http://www.wlcj.net/gsr)**

Come check our site out! Betty Fertik our webmaster has been working on this site and doing a great job. It is a work in progress, which means it will be continually upgraded and updated as items come up.

Submit your Sisterhood's noteworthy programs to: Betty Fertik at [betty@fertik.net](mailto:betty@fertik.net) and copy Sheila Kaufman at [sakaufman@verizon.net](mailto:sakaufman@verizon.net) for inclusion into the Newsletter!

### **Temple Israel Ridgewood Sisterhood**

Temple Israel Ridgewood Sisterhood volunteers staffed two locations and raised funds for Shelter Our Sisters (battered women's shelter in the area) by wrapping gifts during the holiday shopping season. At our Chanukah party, we made beaded jewelry for the shelter women, and also collected 7 bags of clothing, cosmetics, toiletries and the like for the women.

In February, we will once again knit a blanket or two for donation to Project Linus (Project collects handmade blankets for donation to children who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need of a sense of security, warmth and love).

Carla Vogel, President

### **A message from the Nominating Chairpeople**

Dear Sisterhood President/Nominating Committee Chair:

The nominating committee of the Garden State Region Women's League for Conservative Judaism would like your input on nominations to your Garden State Region board - women who display leadership, dedication and professionalism in the field of volunteerism.

The nominee serves as a role model representing Women's League's Standards for Leadership and are liaisons between the Sisterhood and Women's League and all arms of the Conservative Movement. Your Sisterhood would benefit from these connections.

We look forward to your input in the very near future with names and contact information of women you wish to propose as future Region leadership. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Janet Arnowitz and Heddy Belman  
Nominating Committee Co-Chairs  
Garden State Region, WLCJ  
[janarno@aol.com](mailto:janarno@aol.com) and [HFSBH@aol.com](mailto:HFSBH@aol.com)

Postmaster: Time Sensitive Material  
Please deliver immediately.  
Add Service Requested

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Garden State Region

Choref 5769 / Winter 2009

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## *Leagrams*

**Rose Ann & Gary Rosenthal**

*Mazel Tov on the wedding of their granddaughter Gittel*

**Meryl & Michael Balaban**

*Mazel Tov on birth of their granddaughter Morgan  
Sophie Balaban*

**Betty & Fred Crane**

*Mazel Tov on the birth of their first grandchild,  
Matthew Jacob Crane*

**Meryl Balaban**

*Mazel Tov on being named Eishet Hayil honoree from the  
Sisterhood, the Morristown Jewish Center Beit Yisrael*

**Licia Bonus**

*Mazel Tov on son Elliot becoming a Bar Mitzvah*

**Louise Cangelosi**

*Mazel Tov on birth of grandson Rory*

**Sonia Susman**

*Refuah Shelma - recovering from surgery*

**Marlene and Harold Oslick**

*Mazel Tov on birth of grandson Zachary Nathan Oslick*

**Sharon & Richard Hammerman**

*Mazel Tov on birth of granddaughter*

**Marion & Murray Mohl**

*Mazel Tov on birth of grandson Benjamin Harrison  
Mohl*

**Evelyn & Rubin Auerbach**

*Mazel Tov on 60th wedding anniversary*

**Lila Frost**

*Mazel Tov on birth of great-grandson  
Avraham Lev Lapin*

