

We are delighted to respond to your enthusiasm for the Membership Magnet Program by presenting *Magnets 2*. As with the first volume, this booklet provides descriptions of exciting programs that contain important membership moments! These opportunities to involve, inspire, educate, and empower our members build a strong membership base as well as future leadership for our sisterhoods.

Mathilde Schechter's vision was to create bonds of unity among Jewish women so that we could learn to appreciate everything fine in Jewish life. Her vision becomes a reality when we incorporate the following four elements into our planning for each Sisterhood event. You will find these elements to be an integral part of the Magnet programs:

- A welcoming and supportive sisterhood
- Promotion of benefits of membership in sisterhood: education and empowerment.
- Visibility of sisterhood accomplishments as well as region and Women's League services.
- Valuing our generous and talented volunteers.

Our members are our most valuable asset! May we go from strength to strength in building our Sisterhood communities of women with shared values and vision in order to foster our commitment to Conservative Judaism!

We are grateful to the Sisterhood presidents and chairs who so generously shared their ideas. Todah rabah to Miriam Suchoff, Nancy Scheff and Carol Friedlander.

Gloria Miller Schwartz (z'l), Membership Chair

Janet Tobin, President WLCJ

Please note: In the process of making Magnet 2 Awards available on the WLCJ website, some of the awards had their titles changed –but the material is the same. Wherever possible, the current regions were added to the prior branch names.

Each program has unique qualities that attracted:

- ☺ *Active members*
- 🌸 *New Sisterhood members*
- ☹ *Rarely seen members*
- ☆ *New synagogue members*

Bereavement Committee

For the past 40 years, our sisterhood has provided assistance when a family in our community suffers the loss of a loved one. Our Bereavement Committee contacts the family to make arrangements for the meal immediately following a funeral. After shopping, committee members go to the *shiva* house to set the table, prepare and serve the meal, and clean up. There is no charge for this *mitzvah*.



Contact: Eleanor Schwartzman

Farmingdale Jewish Center Sisterhood, Farmingdale, NY, Eastern Long Island Branch (BQLI)

Bimah Basics

We asked younger members and new members, “What programming would you like us to offer?” In response, this program was organized by our Z’havah group to empower, inform, and educate, as well as to encourage our women to receive aliyot. Our cantor discussed the skills and ritual objects from the synagogue entrance to the bimah. Protocol, greetings, and the service outline were also included.

This program was well attended not only by sisterhood (including Z’havah) members but also by men and a few people considering joining the synagogue.



Contact: Carmen Kirschenblatt

Beth Tikvah Sisterhood, Richmond, British Columbia, Pacific Northwest Region (North by Northwest)

Blankets for Project Linus

During our year-long project we created 17 beautiful knitted or crocheted blankets that were donated to Project Linus for young patients in oncology and other pediatric wards (www.projectlinus.org). We requested that our blankets be donated to local hospitals so our at-large community would benefit from our efforts.

At our initial meeting, experienced knitters and crocheters taught novices. At a subsequent meeting, we displayed many of the finished blankets to encourage participation. One group pieced together a blanket from contributed squares. Working women were able to be a part of this project, because they worked as time permitted. Visiting relatives also lent a hand!

We adopted this idea from the Community Service-*Tzedakah* Seminar at our Branch Conference.



Contact: Janet Kaplan

Kesher Zion Sisterhood, Reading, PA, Eastern Pennsylvania Branch (Mid-Atlantic)

Book Club

Book clubs were hot in our area, but there were no Jewish book clubs. We contacted our branch and discovered that Women’s League publishes not only a recommended list of books but also the *Women’s League Book Review Series*, a set of guides and reviews that enables even the novice to lead a meaningful discussion.

We offer a new book every 8-10 weeks. Members take turns facilitating, which is a successful and rewarding experience for the leader as well as for participants. We meet at the synagogue, typically in the evening

after minyan, and we offer light refreshments. We also hosted a well-attended booksigning with a local Jewish author at a Sunday morning program.

We initially publicized our book club through a congregation-wide mailing. Fifteen women (half sisterhood members) attended our first book discussion. Over two years, between word of mouth, synagogue newsletter, and flyers, we now have a group of 24 women (and an occasional man), most of whom are sisterhood members or who have now joined sisterhood, and some from outside the congregation.



Contact: Shelley Schwartz

Adath Jeshurun Women's Association Sisterhood, Elkins Park, PA, Philadelphia Branch (Mid-Atlantic)

Breakfast and Conversation

On a February Sunday morning, Sisterhood members were invited to meet, socialize, and learn about sisterhood and our future programs. New members were acknowledged.

The breakfast was advertised in our sisterhood bulletin. Flyers with the special invitation “younger children welcome” were displayed throughout the synagogue, sent to new members and board members, and distributed at Sunday Hebrew school. Follow-up phone calls were made to new members. It was nice to meet new women and socialize.



Contact: Gail Rappaport

Sisterhood of The Emanuel Synagogue, West Hartford, CT, Connecticut Valley Branch (North Atlantic)

Chai Society Gala and Auction

We sponsor an annual fundraiser dinner, dance, and silent and live auctions. This year, one temple member offered his apartment in Israel; we “sold” two 4-week stays! The excitement resulted in others considering visits to Israel.

In planning the event, we broke down responsibilities in order to provide more opportunities for members to participate. We called younger members to encourage them to organize tables of their peers. We also offered a price break to young singles if they filled a table. Youth group members greeted, served, and brought their parents. We called all sisterhood members to the dance floor for a group photo. It was a huge success, and three women joined sisterhood that night!



Contact: Janet Reagan

Temple Beth El Sisterhood, Birmingham, AL, Southern Region

Chanukkah Luncheon for Seniors

One hundred and fifty seniors enthusiastically arrived on buses from local nursing homes and day care centers. Our many volunteers greeted and served them a warm, kosher, traditional Chanukkah meal with our formal and elegant table settings. Lighting our large menorah and singing b'rakhot and songs to piano accompaniment were followed by BINGO! As they left, each guest was given an individually wrapped Chanukkah gift.

A large committee of members of all ages, with additional help from our pre-bar mitzvah students and seniors group, purchased and wrapped gifts, set the tables, and helped our guests. Our rabbi and cantor

joined us for this celebration.



Contact: Beatrice Ring

Beth Hillel Sisterhood, Wilmette, IL, Central Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Comfort Caps

We made caps for women who had sustained hair loss while undergoing cancer treatment. A congregant donated the fabric, while Viking Sewing Machine Company provided the pattern and also donated the sewing machines at JoAnne's Fabrics, where we did all the work. We set up an assembly line with a job for everyone! Members from 25 to 70 years old participated. The caps were donated to a local hospital. Attendees received breast cancer educational material.



Contact: Toby Fagin

Etz Chaim Sisterhood, Marietta, GA, Southern Branch

Concert

This concert was a means to get "new faces" into the synagogue. We featured two semi-professional singers and a pianist (all sisterhood members) who entertained with Jewish and Broadway songs. They received a standing ovation and impromptu requests! We had greeters and served cake and coffee. Publicity included a mailing to the entire congregation and posters in the synagogue.



Contact: Barbara Kurlan

Beth El Sisterhood, East Windsor, NJ, Central New Jersey Region (Garden State)

Creating Shabbat for Everyone

This Sunday morning Z'havah program was designed to help Jewish women prepare a Shabbat dinner. Topics included traditions and rituals to welcome Shabbat, enhancing the celebration, dinner discussion of the parashah, and recipes. A local Judaica store set up a Shabbat table and provided Shabbat goods for sale.

The invitations sent to our congregation women (45 and younger) included a request for suggestions for the Shabbat information booklet we planned to create as a take-home piece. Participants also received a gift bag with two Shabbat candles, a small bottle of kosher grape juice, and a coupon for challah dough to be picked up any Thursday at the nursery school. Attendees included women with no prior knowledge as well as women who welcomed Shabbat on a regular basis but who were interested in new ideas.

There is a buzz throughout the shul about Z'havah. *The Jewish News* sent a photographer and is writing about our Z'havah group.



Contact: Alayna Langnas

Sisterhood of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Southfield, MI, Michigan Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Enlighten Yourself: Holiday Kitchen Secrets and Spiritual Journey

A member demonstrated how to prepare several dishes for Rosh HaShanah. During our coffee break we

discussed sisterhood happenings. Then our religious school director, who is also a sisterhood member, led a spiritual warm-up for the holidays.

We changed our meeting time from lunch-time to an earlier hour to attract women who have children in preschool and also those who work and do not want to take off during lunch. A new, younger woman, who was asked to create the postcard invitations on her computer, agreed to become financial secretary after learning new skills with this assignment. Many of the attendees signed up to participate in other activities.

Our program was scheduled (coincidentally) for September 12, 2001; it helped us all cope with the tragedies of September 11 and brought us together as a community. It was so successful the women have requested a repeat.



Contact: Janet Weismark

West End Synagogue Sisterhood, Nashville, TN, Southern Branch

Fashion Show

Our "Spring into Style" fashion show featured a cocktail hour, vendor fair, silent auction, prize raffle, three-course butler style dinner, and fun fashions modeled by members to music. It was well publicized both within the synagogue and in the community. Our goal was to raise funds for the Israel Emergency Relief Fund and for sisterhood.

A dedicated committee and sub-committees met regularly and communicated by e-mail for nine months. This involvement expanded interest in the program. Invitations were also mailed to every synagogue member and sent home with every nursery school child. Posters were displayed in the synagogue and ads were posted in the local papers and local cable network bulletin board. Members brought family and friends, some from the community and from other synagogues.



Contact: Cheryl Goldstein

Congregation B'nai Tikvah Sisterhood, North Brunswick, NJ Central New Jersey Branch (Garden State)

Feng Shui and Chinese Dinner

After a light Chinese meal prepared by our synagogue caterer and birkat hamazon, a Feng Shui expert explained this Asian theory of how energy flow and balance are affected by decorating and furniture arrangement. This fun, informative, and entertaining program was part of a general sisterhood program held on our regular meeting night.

A phone tree and greeters created a welcoming atmosphere. One of the prospective members who attended joined sisterhood that evening.



Contact: Phyllis Fleschler

Temple Ramat Zion Sisterhood, Northridge, CA, Pacific Southwest Branch

Finding Ourselves at the New Year: Women's Tashlich Ceremony

A week before Rosh HaShanah, sisterhood women of varied ages gathered at a park to prepare spiritually for the high holidays. Each brought an herb or flower from her garden, along with a desire to mark the New Year in a way that addressed the specific experience of Jewish women. The tashlich ceremony consisted of

prayers, readings, and self-reflection. During refreshments, each woman created her own fragrant sachet from a potpourri of the herbs and flowers. Even though some of the women had only met that afternoon, all were able to relate to one another's words. A committee designed and led this meaningful ceremony.



Contact: Renee Rudnik

Beth Israel Sisterhood, Worcester, MA, New England Branch (North Atlantic)

Holiday Boutique

Our day-long Early Childhood Education-Sisterhood Annual Boutique is a major fundraiser for both groups. It is also a great way for sisterhood and the early childhood group to get to know one another! Held one month before Chanukkah, 8 am to 8 pm, we get strong support from our temple community.



Contact: Michelle Hirsch, hshirsch@msn.com

Temple Aliyah Sisterhood, Woodland Hills, CA, Pacific Southwest Branch

Holiday Tables

Each major Jewish holiday was represented by a table set for dinner exactly as it would be for that holiday. Our cantor led participants to each table and discussed each holiday. We recited the appropriate b'rakhot for the meal, asked questions about the holiday, sang songs, and sampled foods. Handouts of b'rakhot, recipes, and holiday information were available.

This program was one in a series developed to enable younger women to explore their interests. Our very active Z'havah group co-sponsored the event and was very well represented! At least one Z'havah representative attends our monthly board meetings, so they were part of the planning from the inception.

Our PR included our synagogue newsletter, flyers to all members, and a personal invitation to the Jewish community's Introduction to Judaism class. The *Jewish Review* covered the program. We have been asked to make it an annual event.



Contact: Addie Banasky

Neveh Shalom Women's League, Portland, OR, Pacific Northwest Branch (North by Northwest)

Honoring Our Past Sisterhood Presidents and Shavuot

A perfect Shavuot recipe: Prepare quick and easy dairy dishes with the younger members (babies in tow); mix with a program honoring past presidents; stir with their anecdotes and sisterhood history; top with a delicious brunch; sprinkle with shared laughter and appreciation... a multigenerational success for all! This event was co-sponsored by Z'havah.



Contact: Joan A. Gurgold

Temple Beth Shalom Sisterhood, Sarasota, FL, Florida Branch

How to Raise a Mensch?!?!

This was our second program sponsored by Z'havah. Held in the morning to attract moms after they

dropped their kids off at school, the program featured coffee, nosh, and discussion with a professor of neuro-linguist psychology, who is also a rabbi and educator. We did get moms who don't usually attend our nighttime programming, and one dad attended. These morning programs created great enthusiasm and brought out new faces to our sisterhood!



Contact: Eve Fields

Temple Aliyah Sisterhood, Woodland Hills, CA, Pacific Southwest Branch

Jewish Genetic Diseases

A genetic counselor discussed diseases associated with Jewish women and children. We publicized the program through a flyer, temple bulletin, and phone calls. Our rabbi also promoted it with announcements from the bimah and through the Friday night events sheet. This program appealed to women of all ages. Several new members who attended volunteered to help with other programs.



Contact: Marcia Taple

Temple of Aaron Sisterhood, St. Paul, MN, Midwest Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Jews around the World

This luncheon program series, which highlighted the cuisine and history/culture of Jews in various countries, opened with the Jews of Japan. For lunch, we enjoyed the food (adapted for kashrut) prepared during the cooking demonstration.

Our teachers were sisterhood members who researched the history and culture and prepared handouts. The series was so enjoyable that we have received additional suggestions and look forward to continuing it next year. Publicity included the announcements in the synagogue bulletin and from the bimah, flyers, and a message in our Torah School "Note to Parents."



Contact: Nina Finn

Congregation Kneseth Israel, Elgin, IL, Central Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Judaism and Sexuality

Our rabbi discussed Judaism's views of sexuality. It attracted all ages and received a very positive reaction! We reached out to our members through our newsletter, flyers distributed in our Judaica Shop, and phone calls to new members, as well as to women who had attended previous programs but had not been very active in sisterhood. In addition to greeters and name tags, our executive committee routinely mingles among the women, paying special attention to new faces.



Contact: Laura Zoller

Congregation Beth Judea Sisterhood, Long Grove, IL, Central Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Kitchen Shower

We held a bridal-type shower to restock our dairy kitchen with new utensils and platters for the kiddush that sisterhood provides each Shabbat. Our committee of new and veteran members planned games,

give-aways, a wishing well, and an auction of members' recipes for challah, mandelbread, etc. We also created a "favor" to remind the women of our sisterhood--a magnet with our sisterhood name, date, and decorations of a rolling pin, and ribbon. To generate interest, a phone call followed the printed invitation.



Contact: Laurel Gully

North Shore Jewish Center Sisterhood, Port Jefferson, NY, Eastern Long Island Branch (BQLI)

Melaveh Malkah

Sisterhood, our hazzan, and our synagogue choir collaborated on this Saturday evening program to bid farewell to the Shabbat Queen. A sold-out crowd of all ages participated in havdalah, a delicious supper, Klezmer music, and singing and dancing. An overwhelming sense of joy and ruach made for a memorable evening! An extensive committee planned all phases of the event. We had a sign-in desk staffed by sisterhood members who greeted the guests and assisted with seating.



Contact: Esther Wilner

Sisterhood of Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County, Rockville, MD, Seaboard Branch

Member Interest Raffle Card

To identify programs of interest to our membership as well as to solicit volunteers to help with our events, we have a free raffle at our fall Paid-Up Membership Dinner. The raffle form is a Member Interest Survey the size of a 3x5 index card. (One 8"x11" heavy stock page yields 4 cards.) The card includes: time of day available to help, check off for programs of interest, request to place an "H" next to those in which they wish to help, and a thank you. A copy is mailed to those who do not attend. We create a data base to disseminate the information to appropriate chairs. New members receive a special call to welcome them before the committee meets. At the Paid-Up Membership Dinner we also present new members with a book from Women's League.



Contact: Ilene Rothman

East Brunswick Jewish Center Sisterhood, East Brunswick, NJ, Central New Jersey Branch (Garden State)

Monday at the Mikveh

To increase attendance at our events we developed a teaching program, Mysteries of the Mikveh. We learned about the mikveh, toured the new community mikveh facility, enjoyed a boxed lunch, and concluded with a group discussion. In addition to our regulars, we attracted many women who had not previously attended our events, as well as many guests who were not Sisterhood members. The new women we asked to join our program committee all accepted.

We publicize our events through a flyer/invitation to our sisterhood members, articles in our synagogue newsletter, and poster displays in our synagogue and religious school lobbies.



Contact: Sharon Berry

Sisterhood of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Southfield, MI, Michigan Branch (Central Great Lakes)

New Members Welcome

Our new members and courtesy members (women new to the synagogue) meet with the officers 45 minutes prior to our Paid-Up Membership Dinner. It's an opportunity to greet them, tell them about our committees and programs, provide a sign-up interest sheet, and help them feel welcome. Our sisterhood Chailights group sings, and we serve light refreshments. New members also receive a Welcome Bag—a small bottle of wine, packet of salt, and welcome note. Women who join after our Paid-Up Membership are invited to the next fall's gathering.

This provides an opportunity for newcomers to meet in a small group. When we proceed to dinner, we seat the new members with established members so they can meet additional women.



Contact: Judy Rosenberg

Beth El Sisterhood, Baltimore, MD, Seaboard Branch

New Year Cards

All congregation members receive a professionally printed card. For \$1 a line, computerized names are added to the bottom of the card. Thanks to our sponsors, our expenses are covered. Each year more people participate.

This goodwill brings people closer and helps them feel a part of sisterhood, as well as the synagogue. This successful fundraiser motivates participation as it is earmarked for scholarships for our youth, creates good will and provides great publicity for our sisterhood. A well-organized committee involves many members in the various aspects of this project.



Contact: Diana Blatter

Beth Ahm Israel Sisterhood, Cooper City, FL, Florida Branch

New Year Greeting Booklet

Flyers are sent to the entire congregation for a chai contribution and greeting. Each congregant receives a beautiful booklet in which participants' names are listed along with an inspirational welcome and descriptive list of events from the sisterhood presidents: "We promise you a good time, camaraderie, and you will be performing a mitzvah all at once. We look forward to seeing you."

This is a pleasant and easy way for all congregants to wish their synagogue friends shanah tovah! This substantial fundraiser brings great pleasure to the participants. It also affords those women who cannot "get out of the house" easily a way to make a major contribution to our sisterhood.



Contact: Ida Handel

Sisterhood Shelter Rock Jewish Center, Shelter Rock, NY, North Shore Long Island Branch (BQLI)

Omer Project

Our pilot project for counting the Omer utilized the "trip-tik," Anticipating Revelation (published by Synagogue 2000), to meditate on the meaning of each day. We studied the history and meaning of the Omer with our rabbi at our initial meeting and then stayed connected with each other through our Omer e-group. Participants so appreciated the community feeling and meaningful experience that we plan on

repeating it next year. The chair said, "I wanted to count the Omer, and I didn't want to do it alone. Such is the beauty of sisterhood!"



Contact: Amy Sales

Temple Emanuel Sisterhood, Newton, MA, New England Branch (North Atlantic)

Original Jewel Collection

Hal Sirowitz, author of the book of poems *Mother Said*, spoke at a sisterhood meeting. Reading his book inspired us to remember the words of wisdom our mothers, grandmothers, mothers-in-law, and others have passed on to us. We decided to gather these "wisdoms" to publish in a book of our own in order to perpetuate our own memories. The result was "Original Jewel Collection- Mom's Mentionables." Two sample entries: "Whatever it is, you don't need it" and "If someone doesn't accept an invitation and they don't come, then they don't have to go home."

We solicited the "wisdoms" through a special mailing to all members. We then publicized the meeting at which we distributed the book in our bulletin, with flyers, and with follow-up phone calls. We had a great turnout and great fun.



Contact: Lydia Katz

Orangetown Jewish Center Sisterhood, Orangeburg, NY, Hudson Valley Branch (MetroNorth)

Paint Your Own Miriam's Cup

We held our Sisterhood meeting at a pottery place where we painted our own Miriam's Cups. One of our members taught us about Miriam and her ties to water, and about the new custom of using a Miriam's Cup filled with water at the Pesah seder. This was an educational, fun and relaxing evening where we did something with our hands and could socialize at the same time. We placed a picture of the completed cups in the synagogue newsletter.



Contact: Janet Weismark

West End Synagogue Sisterhood, Nashville, TN, Southern Branch

Passover Recipe Swap

We asked women to submit at least one Passover recipe to be placed in a recipe book to share with other sisterhood members. A colorful cover was designed for the book. On the day of the swap, books were distributed to everyone who had submitted a recipe. Informal discussions about the recipes covered appropriate foods and ingredients as well as traditions and customs pertaining to Passover foods. We shared many ideas and exchanged e-mail addresses for more recipe sharing.



Contact: Lori Rashty Adat Shalom Sisterhood, Farmington Hills, MI, Michigan Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Phone-a-thon

Each July, we hold a very successful Membership Phone-a-thon for two nights in the temple, which has five lines. We check sisterhood members against female members of the temple to create the list of prospective

members. During the phone call, we explain what our sisterhood does for the temple and describe our programs. Volunteers ranged in age from their early 20s to their 50s. We signed up over 50 new members!

The day after the phone-a-thon, we send the bill for dues and include a welcome letter with a list of our varied activities. We ask the new member to check off the activities which interest her; a personal phone call follows. In addition, when a woman joins, we invite her as our guest to our Paid-Up Membership Dinner.



Contact: Shari Lowenthal

Temple of Aaron Sisterhood, St. Paul, MN, Midwest Region (IntraContinental)

PrayerWorks

Under the leadership of a sisterhood member, women meet monthly for an hour to pray for those in need of physical, spiritual or emotional healing, as well as for social causes and world peace. The names to be read stay on the list for a minimum of three months. The sessions also include discussion and study of related Jewish topics, along with songs, psalms and prayers from Women's League's healing service, *Under the Wings of the Sh'khinah*. PrayerWorks now has its own printed booklet and a cassette tape for those who wish to use PrayerWorks at home.

With the help of the congregation's rabbis and the sisterhood community service vice president, PrayerWorks started in 1997 with seven women. There are now over 90 participants. Women have joined Sisterhood because of their participation in PrayerWorks, including women congregants, new members and community women.

Sisterhood honored all PrayerWorks participants for promoting healing and spirituality in the community. The PrayerWorks program was featured in the Fall 2002, Women's League Outlook Magazine.



Contact: Rickie Haith

Beth Shalom Sisterhood, Kansas City, MO, Midwest Branch (IntraContinental)

Progressive Dinner

Our primary purpose was to provide an opportunity for adults only to come together for a tasty, enjoyable evening. We gathered at one home for both the appetizer and dessert courses. For the main course we separated into groups of 10-12 for formal dinner parties at different homes. It was fun for hosts to showcase their homes and/or culinary skills and for the guests to enjoy delicious, lovingly-prepared meals. This successful fundraiser was open to all adult members of our synagogue community.



Contact: Irene Wolpert

Summit JCC Sisterhood, Summit, NJ, Northern New Jersey Branch (Garden State)

Queen Esther's Shower

A month before Purim, we held a Queen Esther's Shower-- after all, she never had one! Invitations included a gift list with prices to refurbish our synagogue kitchen (from ladle to microwave). Members selected the gift item and mailed their checks; the committee shopped and wrapped. The 'shower' was a Middle Eastern feast (additional charge for those who attended), complete with belly dancers and members dressed in costumes. We encouraged families to attend, and gifts were unwrapped by the youngest (5-9 years old)

daughters. We received enough donations to buy everything on our list and to pay for a thorough cleaning of our kitchen. People were talking for months about our great idea and how much fun it was!

The chair wrote thank you notes signed from Queen Esther to every person who contributed. The sisterhood president thanked everyone who helped both at the event and in the synagogue bulletin.



Contact: Debbie Agata

B'nai Tikvah Sisterhood, Westchester, CA, Pacific Southwest Branch

Roll with the Rabbis: A Jewish Sushi-Making Experience

This interactive demo with our rabbi and his wife (also a rabbi) featured an Asian buffet dinner, kashrut discussion, "hands on experience" of making sushi, and b'rakhah for sushi. The ambiance of Japanese decor and music, some members in Japanese dress, tables set with all the equipment and ingredients to make sushi, carry-out boxes for uneaten sushi, and take-home instruction packets made for a great evening!

Co-sponsored by sisterhood, Z'havah, and Men's Club, the response was beyond our expectations and included a wide range of people from young couples to seniors. The Z'havah chairs presented a "commercial" for the younger members. Our *Jewish News* even came out to do a feature story.



Contact: Cindy Shaffran

Sisterhood of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Southfield, MI, Michigan Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Rosh HaShanah Grams

Congregants have the opportunity to send a lovely Rosh HaShanah Gram to other members of the congregation. This creates a warm community feeling while raising substantial funds for Sisterhood. A range of members including new, young, and veteran women helps with mailings and phone calls. Our computer program includes cross-referencing that enables congregants to reciprocate when someone has sent them a Rosh HaShanah Gram.



Contact: Nancy Schulman

Congregation Beth Shalom Sisterhood, Clearwater, FL, Florida Branch

Rosh Chodesh

We combined one study session with a tzedakah project. While studying the differences between tzedakah and gemilut chasadim, 12 gallons of soup and a pasta dinner, which we had prepared for our local soup kitchen, were simmering. We then delivered the food and enjoyed dinner with the clients. What a treat for everyone involved! We attracted members who had never participated in a rosh chodesh meeting, including two bat mitzvah aged daughters.

In a related project, a group of religious school moms and their children met at a rosh chodesh member's home to pick apples and prepare apple pies and applesauce that were delivered to the same soup kitchen. Many indicated an interest in cooking and delivering soup on a regular basis.



Contact: Lynn Collester

Tiferet Bet Israel Women's League, Blue Bell, PA, Eastern Pennsylvania Branch (Mid-Atlantic)

Rosh Chodesh: The Birkat Hamazon

At our first rosh chodesh program, our rabbi discussed the origin and significance of birkat hamazon. We played the Women's League birkat hamazon audio-tape and followed along with the Women's League birkhonim. The group then recited the birkat hamazon together. Participants took the study guide home for further use. This wonderful program set the tone for our future rosh chodesh study sessions, since those who participated really enjoyed the experience.



Contact: Elsa Dragon

Har Zion Sisterhood, Scottsdale, AZ, Pacific Southwest Branch

Round Table Discussion: Valley Secession--Is It Good For Us?

Official community representatives, both supporting and opposing the secession, discussed this issue that will appear on our local November election ballot. Held on our regular program meeting night, it attracted teens and members of the community as well as sisterhood and congregation members. Sisterhood prepared and served refreshments. The program was advertised in the synagogue bulletin, in a press release for local papers and in the *Jewish Journal*. This program can be replicated for any local issue.



Contact: Phyllis Fleschler

Temple Ramat Zion Sisterhood, Northridge, CA, Pacific Southwest Branch

Shalach Monos Baskets

Festive Purim baskets containing home-baked hamantaschen, nuts, and other surprises can be ordered through sisterhood. On the order form is a check-off for congregants who wish to reciprocate when another congregant sends them a basket. Pick-up time is at the Megillah reading, which encourages attendance. A large committee bakes hamantaschen, makes phone calls, prepares mailings, and fills baskets. This is an educational and fun fundraiser!



Contact: Nancy Schulman

Beth Shalom Sisterhood, Clearwater, FL, Florida Branch

Shoot for High Goals

Our sisterhood was very proud to be asked to host our Branch Conference. At our first "brainstorming" meeting to begin planning for this event, our president gave everyone a small plastic basketball key chain with an attached note, "Let's Shoot for High Goals with Heska Amuna Sisterhood." It was a way to get sisterhood members excited about our volunteer work for sisterhood and to say thank you to those attending the meeting: board members, past presidents, and newly active members.



Contact: Judi Abrams

Heska Amuna Sisterhood, Knoxville, TN, Southern Branch

Simcha Faire

This annual event is a one day, upscale vendor showcase with experienced professionals who help plan Jewish celebrations, especially geared to bar/bat mitzvah and Jewish weddings. Party planners, entertainers, DJs, florists, photographers, videographers, stationers, etc., assist over 1,000 attendees, including a large community turn out. Our Judaica Shop is open and does a brisk business.

Veteran and new members make up this active committee. We advertise for vendors as well as for attendees in all the Jewish newspapers and the *L.A. Times*. There is a \$5.00 charge at the door for those who do not make a reservation.



Contact: Sue Richter

Valley Beth Shalom Sisterhood, Encino, CA, Pacific Southwest Branch

Sisterhood Shabbat

Sisterhood Shabbat is a wonderful opportunity for our women to demonstrate new ways of leadership and enjoy a fulfilling Shabbat. We involve many members in the planning and also in leading all aspects of the service, including *Torah* reading. First timers to veterans are glad to participate! During the service we also highlight Sisterhood's accomplishments; our members' participation in the development, strengthening and maintenance of the Seminary through the Torah Fund campaign; and the educational component of our Judaica Shop where our quality Judaica will become family heirlooms. Members are called and praised for their wonderful work.

The Women's League Anniversary Shabbat booklet has a beautiful and easy-to-follow recipe for Sisterhood Shabbat.



Contact: Marla Allentoff

Temple Beth El Sisterhood, Rochester, NY, New York State Branch (International Northeast)

Sisterhood Shabbat

Using the theme, "Temple Aliyah Sisterhood's Women of the Torah," we honored women who had become bat mitzvah, either as a child or as an adult. A group of 20 women performed a cantata of songs and prayers as well as declarations about select women in the Torah. Each bat mitzvah was presented with a small Torah and an invitation to further her Jewish education and become involved with sisterhood. The president drew a connection between Mathilde Schechter's vision to educate women with becoming bat mitzvah.

We prepared two displays, one of enlarged pictures of the *b'not mitzvah* from that time and the other from pictures of the initiation of Mitzvat Torah at WLCJ Convention.



Contact: Lorraine Orenstein

Temple Aliyah Sisterhood, Woodland Hills, CA, Pacific Southwest Branch

Sisterhood Shabbaton

Our first annual sisterhood shabbaton's theme was S-T-R-E-T-C-H. Our members were encouraged by activities and study sessions to stretch themselves spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. The fun sessions as well as serious Shabbat services changed a divergent group of women into a

close network of friends.



Contact: Laura H. Castillo

Congregation Shaar Hashalom Sisterhood, Houston, TX, Southwest Branch (IntraContinental)

Sixtieth Annual Donor Event

Women of all ages gathered to honor more than 120 women who have been sisterhood members for at least 50 years. Each honoree was presented with a corsage, a specially designed pin, and a certificate. Our rabbis and cantor attended; the senior rabbi gave greetings. In addition, the program included a performance by a member who is a cabaret singer. Our sisterhood president gave the State of the Sisterhood report, and a donor update was presented.

Some of the women had not been to a luncheon or inside the synagogue in years. Honorees came with their attendants, daughters, daughters-in-law, and granddaughters. Preschool children led the *motzi*. Babysitting was provided free of charge. What a great intergenerational program and a super way to make members feel a part of Sisterhood! One member commented, "It was one of the best Sisterhood experiences that I've had." At future Donor events we will honor the newest 50 year members.



Contact: Marci Draluck Pine

Ahavath Achim Sisterhood, Atlanta, GA, Southern Branch

Skills and Thrills Auction

For this annual silent and live auction, we solicit donations from our membership as well as from community businesses. The members donate both Jewish skills-- teaching Torah trop, helping with Hebrew reading skills, haftarah trop lessons, etc.--as well as secular skills such as knitting lessons, planting an herb garden, educational evaluation for a child entering school, etc. We raise funds for our synagogue while enjoying a fabulous time!

We attract new members by asking non-members to participate. A very large committee plans and implements this event. In this way, everyone feels as if she has made a difference and helped to contribute to the success of the auction. The night of the event, our youth and some of our men help. This Sisterhood event attracts the participation of the entire congregation!



Contact: Marcy Bacine

The Women's Club of Germantown Jewish Centre, Philadelphia, PA, Philadelphia Branch (Mid Atlantic)

Start the Year with Tzedakah Membership Dinner

Instead of our regular entertainment, we planned a hands-on tzedakah project, Fill the Sock, and created a higher-than-expected turn-out for the event! We made centerpieces by wrapping diapers, paper towels, toiletries, tissue, etc., in cellophane. Members were asked to bring similar items, along with a new pair of socks, to be used for the evening's tzedakah project. These items were stacked on tables. Each woman took a pair of socks, stuffed one sock inside the other, and then walked around the tables filling the sock with the donated items. The completed socks and centerpieces were then donated to a local women's shelter. This tzedakah activity could be done at a leisurely pace while we sat, visited, talked, and ate. What a great way

to start the year!

We have greeters and nametags at the dinner. New members' nametags have a special sticker so everyone can tell that they're new and welcome them.

We mail invitations to the membership dinner to all synagogue women. We also make phone calls to all first-year synagogue members, who receive complimentary sisterhood membership.



Contact: Eve Appelbaum

Beth Judea Sisterhood, Long Grove, IL, Central Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Study in Prayer (For Women Only)

Sisterhood wanted to create an opportunity for women to increase their knowledge of Jewish prayer and to feel more comfortable in services, particularly shacharit. This idea developed from a membership survey in which many younger members expressed their discomfort when attending the weekly morning minyan. This was a new experience for many, since the congregation had recently permitted women to be counted in the minyan. A three-part learning series focusing on the daily prayer service was developed. The congregation's rabbi and two local female rabbis taught the series and provided study guides.

The women felt more comfortable at services after attending the series. It was so well attended that we are going to continue it next year, using ideas generated by the participants. There was extensive publicity in the synagogue as well as in the community, including the *Detroit News*.



Contact: Dolores Greenspan

Sisterhood of Congregation of B'nai Moshe, West Bloomfield, MI, Michigan Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Thursday Circle

Since 1993, this lively monthly discussion group has focused on current events and topics of interest to Americans and Jews. It is an opportunity to socialize, share ideas, learn, and have a great time! Many of the men now join in. Because of popular demand, we now also meet in the summer twice a month!



Contact: Ruth Grossman

Congregation Tree of Life Sisterhood, Valley Stream, NY, South Shore Long Island/Brooklyn Branch (BQLI)

Volunteer of the Month

The catalyst in any successful organization is a motivated and energetic membership. To say 'thank you' for our volunteers' unselfish dedication and hard work, we created the Volunteer of the Month Award, which is presented at each monthly meeting to a member selected by our executive committee. The honoree receives a lovely certificate designed by a member, a 15% discount at our Judaica Shop for the month, complimentary Sisterhood lunch, and recognition by our synagogue during religious services and in the monthly bulletin. A beautiful Volunteer of the Month poster board with the honoree's picture is displayed in the synagogue for the month.



Contact: Jeanine Rogozinski

Jacksonville Jewish Center, Jacksonville, FL, Florida Branch

We Are Family!

Our installation program, Academy Award Show, honored every chair and officer and used the Sister Sledge song as its theme. The awards were based on the Oscars, e.g., "Best Film in a Foreign Language" for Sisterhood Shabbat. Each person was handed a thank you speech that included the names of all committee members. The program included "commercials" for Sisterhood projects and Torah Fund, as well as greetings by the Branch president. The program was videotaped.



Contact: Alison Newman

Adat Shalom Sisterhood, Cheswick, PA, KIPOT Branch (Central Great Lakes)

Women's Minyan

Our congregation does not count women in the minyan. We attract women of all ages who have a need to say kaddish for a loved one, as well as those who just want to be a part of this program. A Sisterhood member leads the minyan, which includes teach-ins about the service. The women take part in the readings in English and Hebrew.

Tzedakah collected after services is donated to various causes. The first was designated for the Masorti Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program for Children with Special Needs in Israel, one of Women's League's special projects.

The minyanim are publicized through our phone squad and in our congregation bulletin. We have never had fewer than 20 women out of a membership of 75. Moreover, we attract women who might not come to meetings. Our Women's Minyan is open to all women in our community.



Contact: Olga Brahin

Sisterhood Adath Israel, Woodbridge, NJ, Central New Jersey Branch (Garden State)

Women's Health Fair: To Life!

Sisterhood's Prescription for Healthy Living

Our Paid-Up Membership Dinner was produced with the help of Wyeth Laboratories. A healthy buffet dinner was followed by presentations about women's health by two physicians. At three break-out sessions, booths were set up by various health professionals who offered information, answered questions and provided pertinent printed material. There were doctors, dietitians, a pharmacist, and a fitness trainer. Participants could receive testing for glucose, bone density, and blood pressure, as well as instructions for breast self-examination and information on herbs and vitamins.

This educational program was extremely well attended by women of all ages, including many who had not previously participated in our programs. Greeters at the door and a check-in table ensured a friendly welcome for all guests.



Contact: Sharon Berry

Sisterhood of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Southfield, MI, Michigan Region (Central Great Lakes)

Membership Moments - Year Round

- Personal connection- nothing replaces the phone call.
- Rotating assigned greeters to welcome every woman and also to introduce new members to others.
- Name tags
- Showcasing events and accomplishments via sisterhood brochure and bulletin board, Judaica shop, synagogue bulletin, website, display cases. Use photos.
- Periodic survey of members - their wants, visions.
- Buddy for new members; many women avoid entering meetings alone
- A We Missed You cards
- Appreciation for the efforts of all members: thank you notes, recognition
- Judaica Shop personnel as advocates

Women's League Membership Resources

- *Blueprint for Membership*
- *Sisterhood Planner*
- *Women's League Public Relations Handbook*
- Women's League Membership Chair and Z'havah Chair
- *Join the Women's League Partnership Brochure*
- WLCJ Membership Cards
- Leagrams

Create Opportunities to:

- Identify your target groups
- Survey their special interests and needs
- Develop programs and services to meet their needs
- Formulate a PR plan that encourages participation in the programs and services

