

THE SISTERHOOD PLANNER

A PUBLICATION OF WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



learning



living



linking



sharing



Sisterhood & Women's League:

A Partnership Enriching

Jewish Women Worldwide

THE SISTERHOOD PLANNER
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HELEN FRIED KIRSHBLUM GOLDSTEIN
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM
PRESIDENT
1962-1966

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thanks the many Sisterhoods, Branches and individuals
who made contributions to this publication:

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INTRODUCTION.....

It is through learning and doing together that we build connections and strengthen our Jewish identity.

This Sisterhood Planner presents programming ideas for every facet of Jewish life. We have provided a wealth of different programs. There are some to stimulate, to challenge, to motivate, to educate, and to entertain. The key to successful programming is planning, sharing, interaction among the membership, and public relations. But it is valued volunteers like you who will make your Sisterhood programs a success.

I wish to acknowledge, with gratitude, the Sisterhoods and members of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism who shared their programs with us. All their contributions led to the formation of this Sisterhood Planner.

My thanks to Carol Simon, Women’s League Program Chair, and Lisa Kogen, Program Director, for their expertise and many hours of dedication to this publication.

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to Rhonda Jacobs Kahn, Public Relations Director, for her knowledge and guidance and the efforts she expended in compiling and organizing this book.

To our President Gloria Cohen, my special thanks for your encouragement, leadership and support.

Judith Gottesman
Chair, Sisterhood Planner
2006

The Women's League Sisterhood Planner

GOALS OF SISTERHOOD PROGRAMMING

- To present educational and stimulating programs that are relevant to Jewish women
- To convey the religious teachings and values of Judaism
- To encourage the performance of *mitzvot*
- To encourage Jewish observance in the home
- To increase commitment to Torah Fund, the Jewish Theological Seminary and Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies

THE ROLE OF THE SISTERHOOD PROGRAM CHAIR

- Consults with liaisons to Women's League
- Maintains files that include all Women's League mailings and resource materials, as well as other resources
- Utilizes the current programming materials from Women's League
- Organizes a committee of women from different age groups, backgrounds and interests
- Works with the education vice president and all other Sisterhood committee chairs

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM WOMEN'S LEAGUE

- Divrei Hokhmah* to open each meeting
- International Day of Study packets
- Sisterhood Anniversary *Shabbat* material
- Orpah's Club-The Women's League Book Club: annual book selections and guides for Jewish Book Month (November)
- Torah Fund Programs
- Departmental Newsletters
- On-line resources at www.wlcj.org

RESOURCES TO KEEP ON HAND

- Current mailings from Women's League
- Past mailings from Women's League
- List of appropriate commercial and local library video/dvd/movie listings
- Updated Torah Fund materials
- Talent list of Sisterhood and synagogue members' skills (use the Profile of a Sisterhood Member)
- List of local sources for speakers: colleges, non-profit organizations, historical societies, special interest groups, day schools, and other Jewish and general organizations

LEVELS OF SISTERHOOD PROGRAMMING

1. The program that offers companionship
2. The program that entertains
3. The program that informs about the world in which we live
4. The program that gives insight into what it means to be a Jewish woman
5. The program that leads to action on behalf of the community
6. The program that enriches personal and Jewish life
7. The program that leads to a life of greater Jewish commitment and fulfillment

MAKING YOUR PROGRAM YEAR A SUCCESS

1. Create a Program Committee composed of people from varied backgrounds, ages, and general interest groups, as well as all Sisterhood committee chairs.
2. Prepare an agenda or calendar of activities for the year as early as possible. Know what areas you want to cover for every season and/or holiday.
3. Plan a variety of programs in a variety of formats. Plan programs that are interesting, informative and fun, or try planning programs around a recurring theme for the year.
4. Appoint chairs and committee members for each program.
5. Involve as many members as you can to generate more *ruah* and better attendance.
6. Have a workable budget for the whole year and for each program.
7. Use Women's League programs.
8. Use resources within your congregation: Sisterhood members, USY, religious school staff, other professionals
9. Remember the programs of the past—repeat the good ones, tweaked to keep current and interesting and reconsider the not-so-good.
10. Publicity, publicity, publicity! If people don't know about a program, they won't come.

CALENDAR FOR THE YEAR

These suggestions for monthly programs were selected from the Sisterhood Planner to show you how to vary programs throughout the year. Alternate serious programs with fun ones. Hold some in the mornings or afternoons and others on evenings or Sundays. Some programs are long-term commitments (to a soup kitchen or reading program), others are just one-time events. Decide how many programs your Sisterhood can manage and then try for one or two more over the course of the year.

SEPTEMBER: OPENING PROGRAM

Enlighten Yourself, Holiday Kitchen
Secrets and Spiritual Journey
Chocolate and Chuckles

MARCH

Esther's Night Out
Purim Carnival

OCTOBER

Torah Fund Program

APRIL

Jews Around the World
You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby

NOVEMBER: JEWISH BOOK MONTH

Read to Me
Book Fair

MAY

X-Rated Sex in the Bible

DECEMBER: HANUKKAH PROGRAM

Kulanu Haverim: A Parent Toddler
Havurah
I Made It Out of Clay

JUNE

Spring Into Style: Fashion Show
Boutiques

JANUARY

Sisterhood *Shabbat*

JULY

The Jewels of Sisterhood Tea
Membership Tea/Pool Party

FEBRUARY

Tu B'Shvat Seder

AUGUST

Dip the Apple in Honey

THE PROGRAM BUDGET

The Sisterhood Budget Committee should allocate a sum based upon the expenditures of the previous year and anticipated programs for the coming year, allowing a margin for increased expenses. The Program Committee should function within this budget. Program bills should be submitted in accordance with the regular practice of the Sisterhood.

ON-GOING PROGRAMS

1. Library "story-telling" for pre-schoolers on a regular schedule
2. Community service projects: Volunteer at soup kitchens, shelters, hospitals
3. Special Interest Groups
4. Study Programs
5. Visits to nursing homes, veterans' hospitals, senior centers, etc.
6. Visits to newcomers and unaffiliated women to encourage membership
7. Creative handcrafts
9. *Rosh hodesh* group
10. Book Club

WOMEN'S LEAGUE TRAINING SERVICES

WHERE YOU ALWAYS
HAVE A FRIEND!

The Women's League Training Services Department can help get your Sisterhood program year started.

Trainers will customize a Seminar or Retreat to meet the needs of your members and direct the leadership of your Sisterhood.

Call Women's League at
212.870.1260 to schedule.

EVENT PLANNING

When planning a major performance event, there are several questions you need to ask first:

Why are you planning this event?

Is there a theme for the event?

Who is the audience you are trying to reach?

Who will sponsor the event?

Do you have a place to hold the event? Will there be a limit on how many can attend?

Will a fee be charged for the event or is it free to the community?

What is the total budget for the event? How much can be spent on the performance aspect?

Can you recruit workers to help with the event? (publicity, tickets, refreshments, decorations, etc)

Can you find sponsors or patrons in your community to help fund the event?

Are there people in the community who can provide "in-kind" services? (hospitality, equipment needs, programs, etc.)

Do you or your committee have any preconceived notions about the type of performer (adults or family event, not a band, etc.)?

Compiled by Judy Caplan Ginsburgh, Jewish Entertainment Resources
www.jewishentertainment.net info@jewishentertainment.net

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MAKING A PLAN.....AND STICKING TO IT: THE POSET PLAN

POSET: PLAN ORGANIZE SUPERVISE EVALUATE THANK

PLAN

1. Start early to plan each program.
2. Know your audience (age, demographics, etc).
3. Know those members on whom you can depend for help.
4. Determine the best date according to the availability of the speaker, Jewish community calendar, *etc.* Clear dates with the proper agencies and with your Branch.
5. What is the budget for each program? Do you have resources for royalties, fees, rentals?
6. Brainstorm with the committee to identify goals:
 - How does the topic relate to Jewish life?
 - Find topics and programs in newspapers, magazines, television, films.
 - Be attuned to serendipity such as when a speaker suddenly becomes available.
7. Some cautions:
 - Don't bite off too much! The best programs are often the simplest programs.
 - Do not underestimate the intellectual level of your audience.
 - Speak to the needs of your members—their concerns and interests.

ORGANIZE TIME

1. Determine the form of the program.
2. Determine the admission cost, if any.
3. Break the program into component parts and appoint chairs, committees and/or subcommittees, if necessary; involve other chairs in related areas. Delegate as much as possible.
4. Contract with the speaker. Be sure the speaker is aware of the nature of your membership.
5. Confirm with the synagogue that the space is available and reserve it as early as possible.
6. Publicize the event—bulletins, flyers and invitations; broadcast e-mail; newspapers, television, radio if appropriate. Phone reminders of the program to the membership.
7. Plan hospitality if necessary for program participants
8. Troubleshoot with the committee. Plan alternatives and backups.
9. Arrange for decorations, centerpieces, displays, etc.

SUPERVISE—OVERSEE

1. Ask for reports by a certain time. If not received, call.
2. Don't be afraid to check on what everyone is doing—but do it nicely.
3. On the day of the program, arrive early to coordinate and supervise.
4. Work **with** people—and **for** them, as a worker and not just as the boss.

EVALUATE FORMALLY AND INFORMALLY

1. Learn from successes and mistakes.
2. Copy everything and keep one copy for yourself.
3. Keep a file of all of your sources, contacts and expenses and keep easily accessible. Pass on all notes to the president.

4. Questions to ask:
- Was the program stimulating?
 - Did it achieve its purpose?
 - Did it involve as many people as possible?
 - What made it Jewish?
 - Was the planning adequate?
 - How could it be improved for the future?

THANK EVERYONE!

1. Publicly thank everyone who worked on the program and all those that attended it.
2. As soon as possible, write thank-you notes to everyone who helped no matter how small the job. People will be more likely to do something in the future if they feel appreciated for what they have already done in the past!



PROGRAM TIME LINE

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Three months before: | Choose your program committee; invite any speakers |
| Two months before: | Feature events in Sisterhood and synagogue newsletter and local newspapers. Place flyer/poster on synagogue bulletin board. Arrange for cooking committee and serving help, if needed. |
| One month before: | Submit a work order to the synagogue office with a room set-up and for use of the kitchen. |
| Two weeks before: | Activate phone squad to remind members. Contact guest speaker and verify transportation and final details. Confirm that all committees are working on schedule. |
| One day prior: | Set tables, decorate room. Refreshments should be ready. |
| Day of event: | Arrive at least two hours early to supervise. |
| One week after: | Be sure all thank-you's to speakers and committee members are in the mail. Schedule an evaluation meeting and prepare a report for the next Sisterhood board meeting. |

PROGRAMS COME IN EVERY SIZE AND SHAPE!

FORMATS

ASK THE EXPERTS

Lecture
Interview
Forum/symposium
Debate
Classes

THE ARTS

Poetry reading
Sing-A-Long
Slide shows
Exhibit/display of the work of members, local artists
Resident artist program for the year
Workshop demonstrations
Book reviews
Book and author
Book club
Judaic crafts fair
Theater club

ISSUES & RESPONSES

Socio-drama
Round table discussion
Trigger script

THE CALENDAR

Women's *Seder*
Sukkah meals for the homeless/homebound/group home residents
Tu B'Shevat garden event
Gift shop/book display for each holiday
Shabbat family service and dinner
Shabbat 101, 102
Putting the pizzazz in Pass-over
Rosh hodesh group

PERFORMING ARTS

Films and videos
Theatrical presentations
Israeli dance club

JUST FOR FUN

Fashion Show
Tours (homes, historic sites, museums)
Spa retreat
Show & kvell
Exercise classes

LET'S EAT

Progressive dinners
Picnic in the park
Holiday cooking demonstrations
Recipe exchange
Kitchen hits & horrors
Kosher wine tasting

TOPICS

Women's Health
Spirituality
Self-defense
CPR
Domestic abuse
Genetic engineering
Environment
Consumer fraud
Current events
Modern scientific advances

Israel
Jewish Genealogy
Jewish liturgy
Agunot
Jewish food
Jewish women in film
Jewish women in history
Jewish antiques/heirlooms
Jewish music
Jews of different countries

The American Jewish Experience
Jewish calendar/holidays
Jewish lifecycle
Jewish home
Issues of aging
Conservative Jews in Israel and Worldwide: *Masorti/Mercaz/Masorti Olami*

CATCHY TITLES

Laughter for the Health of It
Reduce Your Waste Size: You & the Environment
Chocolate & Chuckles

Life Is Not a Stress
Rehearsal
Hametz Free House and Soul
Stitch N' Schmooze

X-Rated: Sex in the Bible
A Taste of Tradition
Sushi in the *Sukkah*
Jewish Aerobics

RESOURCES

VIDEO AND FILM

American Jewish Committee

www.ajc.org

Ergo Media

877.539.4748

Jewishvideo.com

Gelman Jewish Heritage Video Collection

JCC of Washtenaw County, 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

734.971.0990

jewview.org

National Center for Jewish Film

Brandeis University, Waltham, MA 02454

781.899.7044

brandeis.edu/jewishfilm

United Synagogue of America Department of Education

155 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010

212.533.7800

www.uscj.org

Women Make Movies

212.535.2447

www.wmm.com

WOMEN'S LEAGUE MATERIALS

International Days of Study (complete resources for self-directed study with leaders guides, family activities)

Kohelet (2006)

Ruth (2005)

Esther (2004)

Song of Songs (publication date: 2007)

Lamentations (publication date: 2008)

Divrei Hokhmah (mini-study units to begin each meeting or to expand and use as a source for a study group)

Proverbs (2005)

Ten Commandments (2006)

ON-LINE RESOURCES

www.wlcj.org (the official Women's League website)

www.aldenfilms.com (videos of Israel and Judaica)

www.cantors.org (music store hosted by Cantors Assembly)

www.eJewish.info (comprehensive site of Jewish information)

www.jewishculture.org (National Foundation for Jewish Culture site)

www.jewishentertainment.net (resource for Jewish entertainers and programs)

www.jewishfilm.com (comprehensive film resource)

www.jewishgen.org (Jewish genealogy)

www.jewish.music.com (music, videos and books)

www.jewishstore.com (videos, Judaica, books, software, etc.)

www.learn@jtsa.edu (courses and information)

www.mazornet.com (information on just about everything Jewish)

www.soundswrite.com (Jewish music)

www.jew-feminist-resources.com (varied information and resources)

Book Reviews (concise guides for book reviews)

www.wlcj.org (the new Women's League website will contain frequently updated program ideas and suggestions)

Women In Law/Women in *Halakhah* (resources used for a major symposium on issues affecting women in American civil law as well as in Jewish law)

Aleph Bet Variations (Second Edition), Hebrew alphabets for needlecrafts

Head Coverings (directions for a variety of head coverings)

Ways to the Means (ideas, how-to's, materials)

ROSH HODESH GROUPS

Cultures worldwide feature new moon ceremonies, but for Jews, *rosh hodesh* observances have been especially connected with women. One *midrash* explains that women were exempt from work on *rosh hodesh* as a reward for not having contributed to the creation of the golden calf in the book of Exodus. Other sources connect *rosh hodesh* with women's monthly cycles.

Each month, women from Sisterhoods throughout North America gather to celebrate the new Hebrew month with ceremonies, prayers, songs, and study. If you are interested in beginning an on-going *rosh hodesh* group in your Sisterhood, you can contact Women's League for a compilation of celebrations or see Women's League Outlook Magazine, Spring 2005, for descriptions of several.

In general, a *rosh hodesh* group meets either on the new moon itself or the closest Sunday.

Different aspects might include:

- Introductions (using English and Hebrew names, adding *bat* [daughter of] and the mother's name)
- Rituals such as candlelighting, reciting blessings for new moon
- Meditation/yoga
- Study of Torah portion, significant holidays of the month, or other topic
- Guest speaker
- Creative activity, music, singing, dancing
- Food

RESOURCES:

www.ritualwell.org

The Rosh Hodesh Table: Foods at the New Moon (Judith Y. Solomon)

The Book of Blessings (Marcia Falk)

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Although we always hope that our entire membership will attend every program and event, we know that most of the time members attend just the events which interest them and that are held at convenient times. What interests one member may not interest another; a good day and time for one may not be good for another.

One solution: plan programs for smaller groups on topics or activities that meet their needs and interests. Such special interest groups or SIGs, can be a one-time meeting or a multi-session course or an on-going group. If there is great interest in one subject, more than one group can meet at different times during the day or on different days of the week.

TO HELP START YOUR SIGS

1. Survey your members for their interests and the best times for meetings.
2. Match those with similar interests and identify potential leaders to organize each SIG. The leader should have some knowledge of the topic or the skill.
3. Decide if SIGs will be one-time or on-going. The group might want to extend its schedule and invite additional women to join.
4. Publicize the initial meetings of the SIGs.
5. Instructors/teachers: The synagogue's young adults might be able to teach or lead skills that your members may not have such as computing, music and sports.
6. Ask each of the different SIGs to share something at one big event at the end of the year.

..... SISTERHOOD SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) SURVEY

Name_____

Address_____

Phone_____

E-Mail_____

Indicate your preferences below:

| SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP | | PREFERRED TIME | | FREQUENCY |
|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| | | DAY | EVENING | |
| Creative Handcrafts: | ___Knitting | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Crochet | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Needlepoint | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Quilting | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Judaic Handcrafts | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Other (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| Fine Arts: | ___Painting | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Sculpture | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Calligraphy | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Other (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| Study Groups: | ___Film/Media | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Contemporary Jewish Women | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Other (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| Judaic Studies: | ___Basic Hebrew Reading | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Bible Study | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Bat Mitzvah Class | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Jewish History | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Synagogue Skills | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Other (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| Kosher Culinary Arts: | ___Cooking Class | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Dinner Hug | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| Language Arts: | ___Hebrew | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Yiddish | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| Literary: | ___Book Discussion | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Creative Writing | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Poetry | ___ | ___ | _____ |
| | ___Other (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | _____ |

| SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP | | PREFERRED TIME | | FREQUENCY |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | DAY | EVENING | |
| Performing Arts: | <input type="checkbox"/> Drama Hug | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater Trips | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Choral Group | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Network/Support: | <input type="checkbox"/> Older Adults | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Caretakers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Singles | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Single Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Working Women | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Computers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | Health: | <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Defense | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diet & Nutrition | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Just for Fun: | <input type="checkbox"/> Mah Jong | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Scrabble | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service to the Community (specify) _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service to the Synagogue (specify) _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would like a SIG dedicated to: _____ | | | | |

Z'HAVAH

Z'havah gives younger members of Women's League Sisterhoods a point of focus and connection with the larger organization. We believe that future leadership will flow from this sense of belonging.

Z'havah is a mechanism for each Sisterhood to reach younger, unaffiliated women who may not be aware of—or interested in—the traditional Sisterhood package.

Sisterhoods offer activities for younger women under the umbrella of the Sisterhood/synagogue.

WLCJ resources and contacts are available. Each Branch includes *Z'havah* programming at its conference and other Branch meetings and assists Sisterhoods in attracting younger women by organizing smaller scale activities directed to their interests.

SAMPLE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS) FOR Z'HAVAH



LEARNING

Yoga Torah Night
Learn to Layn
Adult *Bat Mitzvah*
Theater Group
Museum Mavens
Investment Club
Rosh Hodesh Study
Famous Jewish Women

LIVING

Mommy & Me
Math Skills for
Toddlers
Kosher Gourmet
Spa Splurge
Israeli Dancing
Creating New Rituals/Enhanc-
ing Old Ones
The Sandwich Generation



LINKING

News & Views
Reading Readiness Tutoring
The Israel
Connection
Computer
Literacy
Religion in
American Life
Women's Health
Forum
Jewish Girl Scouts
Interfaith Activities



SHARING

Leadership Training
On-Line and On-Time
Between the Generations
Dealing with
Infertility
On Being a
Caregiver
Coats for Kids
MADD



TRIGGERS: WHAT, WHY AND HOW!

A trigger is a relatively short presentation, usually about fifteen minutes, which provides the stimulus or “trigger” for discussion. It may be an acted-out script or a movie, video or slide presentation. It is an excellent way to involve members in a program, by relating to a situation and discussing solutions within the framework of Jewish values. (See page 99 for several scripts available from Women’s League.)

Plan ahead. A film, video or slide presentation should be previewed before deciding if it is suitable. In the case of a live performance, give out parts well ahead of time, plan for one or more rehearsals, arrange for props, microphones, lighting, etc. Some scripts lend themselves to cold readings and can be used in an emergency when the planned program falls through, such as when a speaker is late or cancels at the last minute.

TECHNIQUES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Panel of Sisterhood women, each taking a different point of view
2. Panel of experts with Jewish backgrounds and identification. The audience asks questions.
3. Buzz sessions in which the audience is broken into small groups to discuss prepared questions. Report to the group at-large after 20 to 30 minutes of “buzzing.” Each group could handle a different question.
4. An expert reacts to the script, which she/he has read in advance.

RESOURCES

Women’s League has scripts on topics that lend themselves to discussion.

Ergo Media (purchase only)
P0 Box 2037, Teaneck, NJ 07666
800.695.3746 3

Women’s League Trigger Scripts
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 820
New York, NY 10115
212.870.1260

Alden Films (purchase and rental)
P0 Box 499
Clarksburg, NJ 08510
201.462.3522

B’nai B’rith
823 UN Plaza
NYC 10017
212.885.7700

GETTING THE DISCUSSION STARTED

Many scripts, videos and films come with sample questions that can be adapted. If questions must be devised, consider:

- What is the message of this script, movie, or video?
- How is it Jewish?
- How does this Jewish message relate to the audience?
- Does it represent Conservative Judaism in ideology as well as in actions?
- If it is based on the Bible, is it the Jewish interpretation?
- If there is no direct Jewish reference, how can it be related?
- Are there appropriate quotations from Jewish sources?

TORAH FUND

The Jewish Theological Seminary (New York, NY), Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies (Los Angeles, CA) and Schechter Institute (Jerusalem, Israel) are the educational powerhouses training tomorrow's rabbis, cantors, educators, and lay leaders. Their students provide inspiration, vision and leadership to Jewish communities around the world. Bright, motivated and caring, they are the best of Conservative/*Masorti* youth, committed to nurturing the next generation of educated Jews.

The Torah Fund Campaign, a truly grass-roots effort, first began more than 60 years ago as a scholarship fund for the Seminary. It has expanded considerably to include residence halls, library resources, and landscaping on all three campuses and the Women's League Seminary Synagogue and Education Pavilion at JTS. It is now raising additional funds for scholarships for all schools including the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano (Buenos Aires, Argentina). Torah Fund assures that our traditions, rituals and culture continue to thrive as women across North America support these outstanding institutions through specifically designed Sisterhood programs.

TORAH FUND AND YOUR SISTERHOOD

Torah Fund goals for each Sisterhood are set by the Branch Torah Fund Vice President and the Branch President who notify the Sisterhood. Sisterhoods are encouraged to have a hundred percent participation! Those who participate at the Guardian level (\$300) or higher receive beautiful jeweled pins as a token of appreciation. Those who commit to an annual donation of \$5,000 or more receive an elegant gold crown pin. The Torah Fund offices can provide you and your Sisterhood all the resources necessary for a successful Torah Fund campaign.

There are innumerable programs available to enhance your Sisterhood's programming, as well, including scripts, videos, multi-media presentations, speakers, and tours. You can also design special events to recognize Torah Fund donors, such as a luncheon or dinner, dessert reception, trip to a museum, gallery or historical site, or a visit to the Rare Book Room at JTS.

For a complete guide to Torah Fund, visit <http://www.jtsa.edu/development/torahfund> or contact Carolyn Baron, Executive Director, 212.678.8876 (CaBaron@jtsa.edu).

Videos available from Torah Fund:

Learning, Learning, Learning

And the Gates Opened:
Women in the Rabbinate

The Eternal Light: A Historical
Retrospective



THE PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

Good public relations and publicity will encourage your members to participate in your programs—no matter how big or small, how entertaining or educational—build public support, inspire contributions, provide recognition, and create pride in your Sisterhood. There are many vehicles for promoting events, programs and projects, but no single promotional vehicle will do the complete job. A creative combination of communication methods is your best road to success.

PUBLICITY ROUND THE YEAR

1. Include the public relations chair when setting up the Sisterhood calendar for the year.
2. Establish a public relations committee of women who have the following skills: writing, editing, layout, computer, internet, crafts.
2. Allow enough time for each publicity task.
3. Keep a large scrap book or album with all the flyers, invitations and programs from the year.

PROMOTIONAL VEHICLES

Sisterhood Bulletin or Newsletter
Bulletin Boards
Synagogue Bulletin
Flyers
Posters
Postcards
Invitations/E-vites

Synagogue or Sisterhood Website
Local Jewish newspaper
Telephone Squad
Pulpit announcement
School and pre-school newsletter
Hold the Date Cards
Display/centerpieces

ON THE BIG DAY

Everyone who walks into a Sisterhood event should feel welcome and at ease: provide name tags.

Looks do count: be sure the venue is attractive and, if appropriate, use centerpieces.

Every encounter can be an opportunity to teach about Sisterhood: display Sisterhood materials, distribute brochures, publicize the next event.

BRAND YOUR SISTERHOOD

Try to keep the same or related look and sound to all of your Sisterhood publicity so that people can readily identify something that they get as *Sisterhood!*

WORK THE WEB

1. Send out frequent broadcast e-mails.
2. Publish on your synagogue or Sisterhood webpage.
3. Submit the information to your Branch website.

THE MEDIA AND YOU

There are several different ways to make the public aware of your story:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Newspaper releases | Cable television |
| Radio/television interviews | Public Service Announcement (PSA) |
| Internet | |

To be successful you need to know the deadlines, in what format an editor wants to receive the information, if pictures will be helpful.

THE SISTERHOOD PLANNER

Helpful Surveys and Forms

Program Worksheet

Public Relations Plan

Public Relations Timetable

Profile of a Sisterhood Member

Sisterhood Talent Survey

PROGRAM WORKSHEET

One copy of this worksheet should be kept by the vice president responsible for the program. One copy should be kept by the chair.

EVENT _____

DATE _____

TIME from _____ to _____

PLACE _____

EVENT CHAIR _____

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE _____

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Publicity _____

Refreshments _____

Program _____

Arrangements _____

Other _____

_____ Clear program and committee with Sisterhood president

_____ Clear date with synagogue and community calendar

_____ Invite speaker, presenter, etc.

_____ Determine budget and get approval from appropriate vice president

PUBLICITY

_____ Hold the Date Card

_____ Flyers

_____ Invitations

_____ Press Release

_____ Pulpit Announcements

_____ Synagogue/Sisterhood Bulletin Spots

_____ Broadcast E-mail

_____ Phone Chain

PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS

_____ Blackboard/chalk

_____ Chairs & Tables

_____ Decorations

_____ Hand-outs

_____ Lectern, microphone, lights

_____ Projection equipment, VCR, TV (extension cords, spare parts for equipment)

_____ Pencils & Notepads

_____ Name tags

_____ Display

_____ Background Music

_____ Refreshments

PROGRAM

- _____ Preview film, video, tape
- _____ Stage management (music, lighting)
- _____ Props, costumes, etc.
- _____ Information for introduction of speaker(s)
- _____ Assign *d'var Torah*

HOSPITALITY

- _____ Menu-planning/shopping
- _____ Cooking
- _____ Notify kitchen supervisor
- _____ Set-up
- _____ Clean-up
- _____ Table Decorations

BUDGET

EXPENSES

- _____ Speaker/performer
- _____ Rental fees
- _____ Printing
- _____ Postage
- _____ Publicity
- _____ Presentation
- _____ Refreshments

INCOME

- _____ Admission
- _____ Sales
- _____ Sponsors

COMMENTS

PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

Event _____ Chair _____
 Date _____ Location _____

| Target Audience | Bulletins | Letters | Flyers | Posters | Announcements | Media Releases | Phone |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|--------|---------|---------------|----------------|-------|
| Internal | | | | | | | |
| Sisterhood Members | | | | | | | |
| Congregation Members | | | | | | | |
| Officers/ Board | | | | | | | |
| Men's Club | | | | | | | |
| Religious School | | | | | | | |
| Youth Groups | | | | | | | |
| External | | | | | | | |
| Other Sisterhoods | | | | | | | |
| Other Synagogues | | | | | | | |
| Other Organizations | | | | | | | |
| Clergy, officials | | | | | | | |
| Others | | | | | | | |

PUBLIC RELATIONS TIME TABLE

Event _____ Chair _____

Date _____ Committee Members _____

| PR Vehicle | Assigned to | Date needed | Completed |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Hold the Date Card | | | |
| Sisterhood Brochure | | | |
| Sisterhood/Synagogue/ School Bulletins | | | |
| Bulletin Board Posters | | | |
| Flyers | | | |
| Invitations | | | |
| Reminder Cards | | | |
| Initial Press Release | | | |
| Pulpit Announcements | | | |
| Internet placement | | | |
| Broadcast E-mail | | | |
| Centerpieces | | | |
| Telephone Squad | | | |
| Second Press Release | | | |
| Post-Event Press Release | | | |
| Other | | | |

..... PROFILE OF A SISTERHOOD MEMBER

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Days _____ Telephone Evenings _____

Fax _____ Cell phone _____

E-mail _____

Birth date _____

Marital Status _____ Husband's Name _____

Anniversary _____

Occupation _____ Full Time _____ Part Time _____

Children

Name _____ Age _____

Name _____ Age _____

Name _____ Age _____

Name _____ Age _____

The best time for me to attend meetings is:

_____ Morning _____ Early Afternoon _____ Evening _____ Sunday Morning

_____ Other (please specify) _____

If child care were available, it would make a difference in my participation _____ Yes _____ No

If transportation were organized (e.g. carpooling), it would make a difference in my participation

_____ Yes _____ No

I come to Sisterhood meetings primarily for:

_____ Entertainment _____ Education _____ Camaraderie _____ Dialogue _____ Religious Concerns

_____ Other (specify) _____

Hobbies _____

Special Skills _____

Special Interests _____

Comments _____

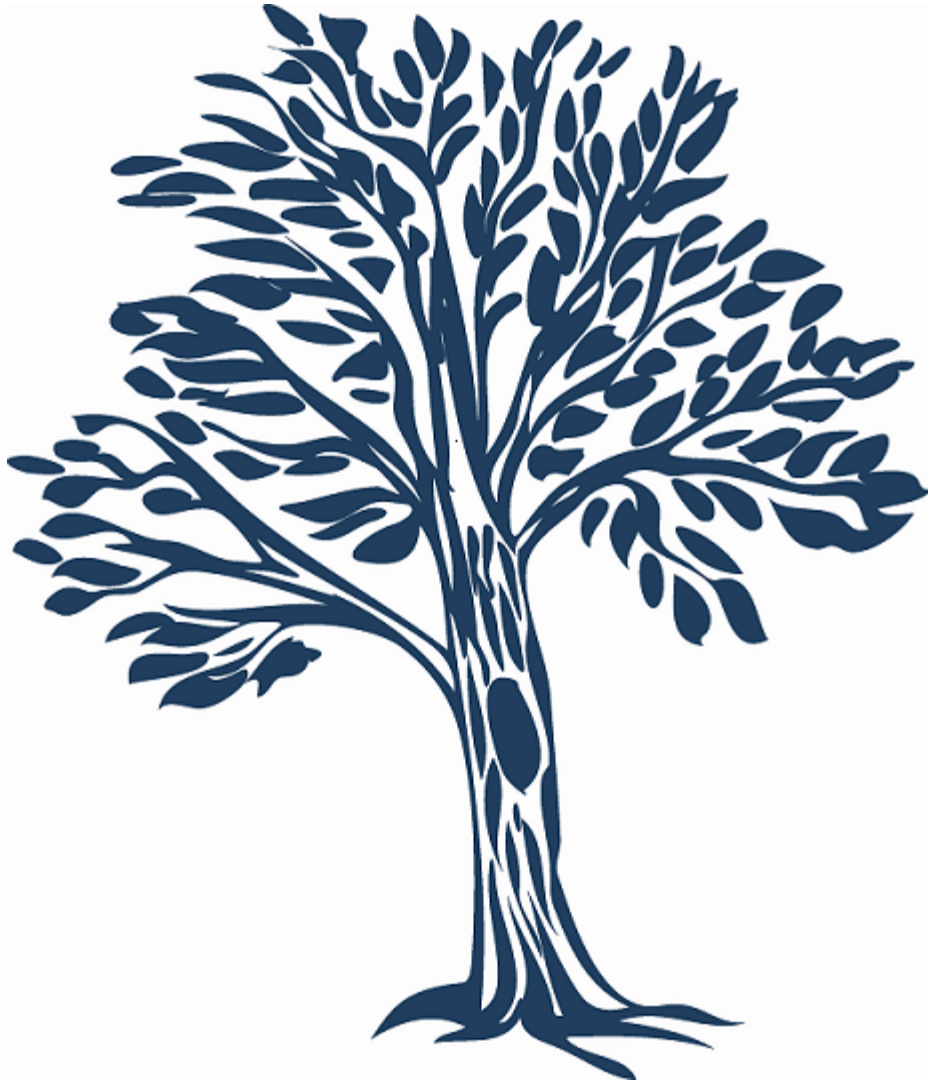
SISTERHOOD TALENT SURVEY

We are always looking to utilize the skills and talents of our members. We are asking that you let us know of any talents and skills you would like to share with our Sisterhood.

Please Check any that apply to you

- ☐ Dancer (style _____)
- ☐ Israeli Dance Teacher
- ☐ Singer
- ☐ Pianist
- ☐ Other musical instrument player _____
- ☐ Stage producer
- ☐ Actress
- ☐ Writer
- ☐ Poet
- ☐ Artist (medium _____)
- ☐ Calligrapher (☐ Hebrew ☐ English)
- ☐ Graphic designer
- ☐ Photographer
- ☐ Judaica (subject _____)
- ☐ Data processor
- ☐ Computer programmer
- ☐ Website designer
- ☐ Knitter/crocheter
- ☐ Textile artist
- ☐ Seamstress
- ☐ Exercise/fitness expert
- ☐ Yoga instructor
- ☐ Librarian
- ☐ Beautician/aesthetician
- ☐ Teacher (subject _____)
- ☐ Chef/gourmet
- ☐ Medical expert (subject _____)
- ☐ Early childhood specialist
- ☐ Lamaze coach
- ☐ Laleche teacher
- ☐ Travel professional
- ☐ Naturalist
- ☐ Lawyer (subject _____)
- ☐ Appraiser (subject _____)
- ☐ Expert on _____

PROGRAMS



learning

BIMAH BASICS or GOING UP

CATEGORY
Adult Education

INTRODUCTION
Bimah Basics is a program of synagogue skills in which participants learn the how and why of wearing a *tallit*, the blessings for putting on a *tallit*, the Torah blessings, and the choreography and protocol of the *bimah*.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE
The program should be held in the sanctuary. Depending on the skill and knowledge level of members, the program can be a one-time session with handout materials or as an on-going class.

TIME FRAME
Each topic can be covered in a 15-minute session prior to meetings or Saturday morning services or as a refresher course every year or two.

PERSONNEL
Sisterhood women who are knowledgeable and comfortable teaching about the topic or the rabbi, cantor or education director

BUDGET
This is a low budget program. Expenses would be for handouts, tapes and publicity

MATERIALS
Facilitator guides, handouts, *tallitot*, tapes or compact discs of the blessings

RESOURCES
Women's League tapes

COMMENTS
This is an excellent educational program for women who want to strengthen their synagogue skills and to encourage *Z'havah* members to participate.

INTERNATIONAL DAYS OF STUDY

CATEGORY

Adult Education

INTRODUCTION

The original goal of the Women's League Days of Study was to have Sisterhood women across the country studying the same text on the same day. As of 2006, there are study packets on *Megillot Ruth, Esther* and *Kohelet*. *Song of Songs* will be available in 2007.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Materials can be ordered from the Women's League office. Each study packet has a full user-friendly guide for leaders that includes background information and questions for discussion, making it possible for any Sisterhood member or lay leader to conduct the study session. Each study packet has materials for Bible and rabbinics study and a Judaic arts project. *Megillat Esther* includes a children's study program to run in conjunction with the adult study.

TIME FRAME

The material is available for use as a one-day program or combined as a series of study programs. It would also be appropriate for *rosh hodesh* study or as part of a Sisterhood *Shabbat* luncheon program. The materials are so rich that they could be used for follow-up study in the same year or in another year

PERSONNEL

Sisterhood women willing to serve as the teachers. Leader's guides make it possible for anyone to moderate the sessions. You do not need a professional

BUDGET

Materials are available for a fee of \$15 to \$20 from Women's League. They might need to be copied for everyone's use. Other costs would be for a meal if a full day is planned.

MATERIALS

Megillot Ruth, Esther, Kohelet Study Packets contain all the materials for duplicating as well as the Judaic arts projects

RESOURCES

For any questions or additional information contact the Women's League office at 212.870.1260, ext. 7160#

COMMENTS

The use of these materials has been a favorite event in many Sisterhoods and Branches

PURIM SEUDAH

CATEGORY

Adult Education

INTRODUCTION

Utilize the Women's League Day of Study Materials for the Book of Esther. Plan a full day's events of study, festive meal, *tzedakah*, song, dance, and a Purim *schpiel*.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Begin with registration and then 45-minute study sessions, dependent on number of expected participants. Follow with dinner and singing and dancing. Present a Purim *schpiel* (humorous presentation) using the women of Beauty, Brains and Brawn.

TIME FRAME

Time is needed for study leaders to become familiar with their material and for the Purim *schpiel* to be prepared.

PERSONNEL

Women to lead study sessions using Women's League materials (they do not need to be professionals) or ask teachers/Jewish educators to present sessions. *Schpiel* writers, actors, producers. Catering, registration, publicity.

BUDGET

Food, paper goods, decorations (masks and groggers). Fee to participate should cover all expenses.

MATERIALS

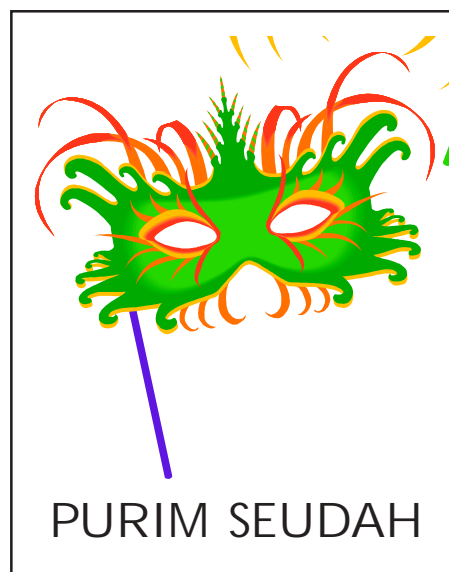
Women's League International Day of Study kits for the Book of Esther

RESOURCES

Southern New Jersey Branch

COMMENTS

This enjoyable program combines education, social action and fundraising and creates camaraderie.



X-RATED: SEX IN THE BIBLE

CATEGORY

Adult Education

INTRODUCTION

The rabbi or other expert discusses biblical passages relating to Judaism's views of sexuality. Invite a psychologist or social worker to discuss some of today's issues of sexuality; see how the two differ.

TIME FRAME

One time, one hour program

PERSONNEL

Rabbi and psychologist/social worker or other knowledgeable persons.

BUDGET

Honoraria and light refreshments

RESOURCES

Bible
The Mikvah Project (Janice Rubin and Leah Lax)

COMMENTS

This program can lead to an ongoing discussion between the rabbi and Sisterhood members on various topics.

MYSTERIES OF THE MIKVAH

CATEGORY

Adult Education

INTRODUCTION

To understand the ritual of the *mikvah*.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Visit and tour a local *mikvah* facility. Ask the attendant or other knowledgeable person to lead a discussion. Be sure that the presenter can speak from a Conservative point of view.

TIME FRAME

One time, an afternoon or evening

PERSONNEL

Knowledgeable person to lead discussion

BUDGET

Donation to *mikvah*

RESOURCES

The Mikvah Project (Janice Rubin and Leah Lax)

COMMENTS

This can be an educational and informative program that can attract women who are curious about the *mikvah*, its history and rituals.

A STUDY IN PRAYER

CATEGORY

Adult Education

INTRODUCTION

This “Women Only” program is a learning series to increase knowledge of Jewish prayer and to feel more comfortable at services.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Arrange with the rabbi or cantor to teach the learning series. Provide a study guide.

TIME FRAME

It can be held either in the morning or evening. It can be monthly or once a week depending on the group.

PERSONNEL

Rabbi or cantor to act as the teacher.

RESOURCES

Siddur, Bible

COMMENTS

The program will enable women to feel more comfortable at services. It can be ongoing with different study topics such as women in the Bible, and/or the holidays and festivals. A *rosh hodesh* group may begin as the women learn and pray together.

PRAY TELL

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

A lecture series based on the prayer units from Women's League *Aytz Hayim He* curriculum

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Four Sunday morning lectures, with speakers covering the topic of a chapter. Speakers can be either/or local clergy and educators.

TIME FRAME

Four Sunday mornings, 1½ hours each

PERSONNEL

Chairs to select and invite speakers; refreshments; publicity

BUDGET

Honoraria for speakers, publicity, refreshments

MATERIALS

Blessed Are You...Jewish Prayer (Women's League *Aytz Hayim He*)
Pray Tell by Rabbi Jules Harlow (Hadassah, 2003), possible handouts supplied by speakers, refreshments and paper goods

COMMENTS

This can be used as a joint program for several local women's groups (other Sisterhoods, Hadassah, etc.)

THOSE LEFT OUT

CATEGORY

Learning/Books

INTRODUCTION

This program is based on the Women's League publication *With Strength and Splendor: Jewish Women as Agents of Change*, which initially was developed for geographic balance. There is certainly room for more names to be added to the roster of deserving women. This program is a way to search out and identify others who are worthy of recognition.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Phase I

Members submit names and biographical sketches of women who deserve recognition. They should include photographs and/or relevant memorabilia. Collect, collate, edit material. Create a physical space and/or publication for displaying the gathered material.

Phase II

Schedule the program for unveiling your new "agents of change" for a rosh chodesh, a March meeting (Women's History Month), or close to Mother's Day. Select members to make presentations on each of the personalities, discussing their contributions, difficulties encountered along the way, and why they are significant. Have a moderated panel "by" these women (played by sisterhood members). Invite any of the women who are alive as featured guests. After the presentation, hold a reception for the honored "guests" and participants. Sell copies of *With Strength and Splendor* available at a discount from Women's League.

TIME FRAME

Give enough time to gather the materials and to create a beautiful display or publication.

PERSONNEL

Publicity, event coordination, selection committee, editorial, design/layout/display

BUDGET

Publicity and printing

MATERIALS

Display cases or boards or printing

RESOURCES

With Strength and Splendor: Jewish Women as Agents of Change by Lisa Kogen

COMMENTS

This program was developed by Amanda Siegel, education vice president, Central Great Lakes Region.

ROSH HODESH: THIS MONTH IN JEWISH WOMEN'S HISTORY

CATEGORY

Adult Education

INTRODUCTION

The rediscovery of women's connection to rosh hodesh has led to a range of traditions, ceremonies, and activities for women's celebrations at the beginning of each month. This program offers the opportunity to infuse rosh hodesh with women's stories or simply to find an occasion each month to recognize the achievements and contributions of Jewish women, past and present.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Highlight several Jewish women whose lives or achievements are connected to specific days of an individual month. The women might cluster around a common theme or represent the diversity of Jewish women's achievements. If you are celebrating rosh hodesh with a meal, consider doing a little photo research and creating place cards that feature the women.

TIME FRAME

A monthly meeting or rosh hodesh celebration

PERSONNEL

Sisterhood members interested in going through the relevant weeks in the *This Week in History* section at www.jwa.org, and choosing women to highlight and talk briefly about at the monthly meeting or Rosh Hodesh celebration.

BUDGET

If creating placecards – cost of xeroxing

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

The best place to begin is "This Week in History" at www.jwa.org. Entries generally list additional resources.

With Strength and Splendor (Lisa Kogen, Women's League for Conservative Judaism, 2008)

Jewish Women: An Encyclopedia (Hyman and Moore)

COMMENTS

This program can be expanded to include women in your community with birthdays that month or deceased women whose lives or achievements are somehow connected to specific days in the month. If you think a particular story you have come up with should be included in the Jewish Women's Archive *This Week in History*, contact editor@jwa.org.

Jewish Women's Archive (www.jwa.org)

PROGRAMS



living

BOOKS & BAGELS

ORPAH'S LIST: THE BOOK CLUB OF WOMEN'S LEAGUE

CATEGORY

Books, Libraries, & Periodicals

INTRODUCTION

Book clubs, especially Jewish book clubs, have become very popular.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

A group of women meet every month or so to discuss a book that they have all read. There should be one coordinator, but members can take turns as facilitator and host. Introduce a new book every 8 to 10 weeks and use Jewish Book Month as the kick-off with the Orpah's List selection (to be announced each summer).

You might choose to read Jewish classics that people have never gotten around to reading or you can try new Jewish books. Pick books and schedule dates during the summer so that a list can be distributed at the beginning of the year.

BUDGET

The cost of the books should be covered by participants. Sometimes you can get a discount on books purchased through the publisher or from a local book store.

RESOURCES

Orpah's List: The Book Club of Women's League and Women's League Book Review Series
The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Start Your Own Book Club, by Rachel W. Jacobsohn (1998)

The Jewish Reader Guide to Book Groups (www.yiddishbookcenter.org/TheJewishReader)

Online Community for Reading Groups (www.readinggroupguides.com)

Jewish Book Awards, for fiction and non-fiction (www.jewishbookcouncil.com)

Subscribe to the Jewish Literary Supplement (www.jewishculture.org)

Koret Jewish Book Awards (www.Koretfoundation.org)

Sydney Taylor Book Award for Children's Literature (www.jewishlibraries.org)

Become a member of the Jewish Library Association (www.Jewishlibraries.org) and receive a quarterly *AJL Newsletter*.

COMMENTS

In a twist on a theme, as participants in Orpah's List, the Book Club of Women's League, women across the country will be reading the same book in honor of Jewish Book Month in November. Participants can receive a Women's League bookmark.

Publicize the Book Club to the whole congregation to entice more women to join



FINDING OURSELVES AT THE NEW YEAR: A WOMEN'S TASHLIKH CEREMONY . . .

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

The New Year is a new beginning. This is an opportunity to prepare spiritually for the High Holidays. *Tashlikh* is a ceremony usually performed on the first afternoon of Rosh Hashanah, at a stream or river, where Jews empty their pockets of crumbs into the water. It symbolizes the casting away of sins so that you can start the new year “empty.”

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

A week before *Rosh Hashanah*, Sisterhood women gather at a park, each bringing an herb or flower from her garden. The ceremony should consist of prayers, readings and self-reflection. Then each woman will create her own fragrant sachet from a potpourri of the herbs and flowers that have been brought.

TIME FRAME

One afternoon

PERSONNEL

Knowledgeable leader to discuss the holidays’ relationship to women and to guide the prayers and reflections.

RESOURCES

The Book of Blessings (Marcia Falk)

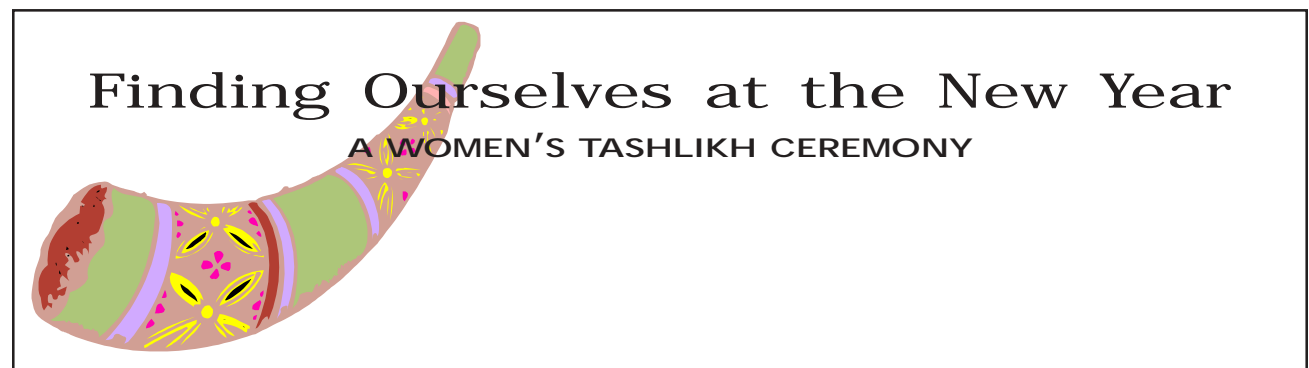
Entering the High Holy Days (Reuven Hammer), *Jewish Days* (Francine Klagsbrun)

www.jew-feminist-resources.com/index.html (Excellent website for books, resources, gifts, etc. about Jewish feminist issues)

www.ritualwell.org (outstanding website created by KOLOT, Center for Jewish Women and Gender Studies, offering a wide variety of ritual activities for holidays, rites of passage, projects, etc.)

COMMENTS

This is a rewarding spiritual experience marking the New Year in a way that can address the specific experiences of Jewish women.



WOMEN'S SEDER

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

The women's *seder*, which is a new ritual developed by Jewish feminists, has become immensely popular over the past decade. It offers the opportunity to infuse the Passover narrative with a woman's voice and experience. In your celebration of this special program, you can use existing *haggadot* or create your own. Many Sisterhoods or Branches have already held women's *seders*. Ask around for additional advice.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

The women's *seder* has no set formula. The event can consist of a full meal or a variation, such as the symbolic *seder* foods and dessert. The ritual follows the format of the regular *seder*, with discussion and food as part of the celebration. It can be enhanced by singing and dancing.

TIME FRAME

Begin months in advance with planning and publicity

PERSONNEL

Food, decorations, preparing/ordering the *haggadot*, publicity, reservations, set up, program

BUDGET

Determine the costs of food, decorations, *haggadot*, additional expenses (musicians, belly-dancers) and set the fee at least to cover.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

There are many women's *haggadot* in print, which you can find at Amazon.com or Barnes and Noble books. The first, and some think still the best, is: *The Journey Continues: The Ma'ayan Passover Haggadah*, Tamara Cohen, editor.

If you want to create your own, the best sources for doing this are *The Women's Seder Sourcebook: Rituals and Readings for Use at the Passover Seder* and *The Women's Passover Companion: Women's Reflections on the Festival of Freedom* (Sharon Cohen Anisfeld, Tara Mohr & Catherine Spector, Jewish Lights)

www.jew-feminist-resources.com/index.html (Excellent website for books, resources, gifts, etc. about Jewish feminist issues)

www.ritualwell.org (outstanding website created by KOLOT, Center for Jewish Women and Gender Studies, offering a wide variety of ritual activities for holidays, rites of passage, projects, etc.)

COMMENTS

This program is well worth the expenditure of time and money. It offers women a unique opportunity to experience the Passover celebration with greater personal and spiritual value.

ESTHER'S NIGHT OUT

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Connect issues of female self-esteem and the holiday of Purim

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Speaker on issues of self-esteem, body image, etc. and the rabbi or Jewish educator to speak about *Megillat Esther*

TIME FRAME

Evening or Sunday morning close to Purim or during Purim carnival

PERSONNEL

Chair, publicity, moderator

BUDGET

Honorarium for speaker

MATERIALS

Copies of *megillah*, decorations with the holiday theme

RESOURCES

Women's League Day of Study material for *Megillat Esther*

Esther's Night Out



YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Learn about Jewish customs and traditions surrounding the birth of a baby

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Display baby pictures of members of the Sisterhood board (or the membership at-large). Give members time to identify each picture. Whoever identifies the most babies correctly wins a prize. Follow with a look at Jewish customs surrounding the birth of a baby given by the rabbi/cantor/youth director or other expert.

TIME FRAME

One to two hours

PERSONNEL

Chair, publicity, display

BUDGET

Display materials, honorarium

MATERIALS

Display materials

RESOURCES

Women's League's *Jewish Baby Book*

COMMENTS

This is a way to involve *Z'havah* women in a program



JEWS AROUND THE WORLD

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Highlight the cuisine, history and culture of Jews living in various countries around the world.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Sisterhood members research the history, foods and culture of specific countries and prepare materials to handout. If available, use a film or video. Add a cooking demonstration of foods specific to the country and serve samples of the food. Find ritual objects from different countries and discuss how artistic styles reflect the host culture.

TIME FRAME

This can be an on-going program with a focus on different places each time

PERSONNEL

Women to do the research, preparation and food presentation

BUDGET

Cost of food

RESOURCES

General reading: *The Jewish Cultural Tapestry: International Jewish Folk Tradition*, Steven Lowenstein

Cooking: *The New York Times Jewish Cook Book: More than 825 Traditional and Contemporary Recipes from Around the World*, Linda Amster, ed.

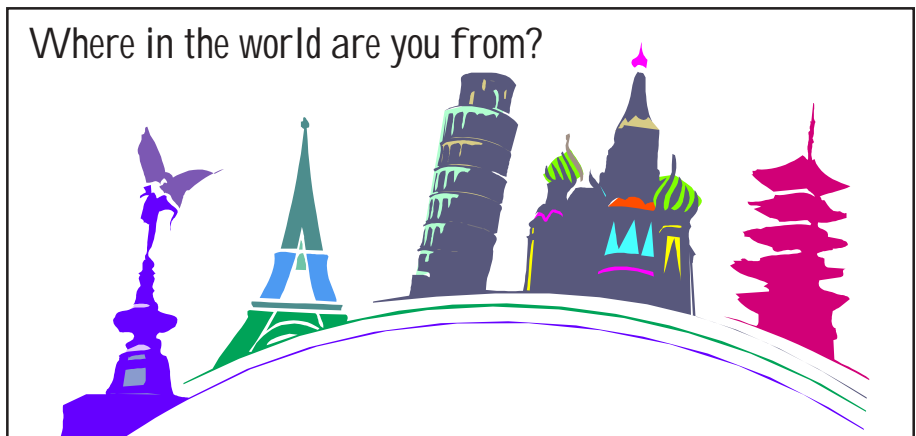
The Jewish Holiday Kitchen: 250 Recipes from Around the World, Joan Nathan

Sephardic Flavors: Jewish Cooking of the Mediterranean, Chronicle Books LLC Staff

The World of Jewish Cooking: More Than 500 Traditional Recipes from Alsace to Yemen—Olive Trees and Honey: A Treasury of Vegetarian Recipes from Jewish Communities Around the World, Gil Marks

COMMENTS

This can become an annual event focusing on a different country each year. Take advantage of members of your congregation who come from different cultures.



AT OUR TABLE

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Each Jewish holiday has its own flavors, rituals and objects. This program illustrates how a holiday table can teach as well as enhance the celebrations.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Tables are designed around each holiday. Borrow holiday table items from the Judaica shop or personal collections. Participants can walk around and discuss the specific holiday, learn the appropriate *b'rakhot* and rituals, sample foods, and sing songs. Provide handouts of *b'rakhot*, recipes, holiday information, special ideas for children.

TIME FRAME

One evening or Sunday afternoon. Program can also be a series before every holiday.

PERSONNEL

Food preparation
Table design and set up
Design and create handouts
Knowledgeable person to speak

BUDGET

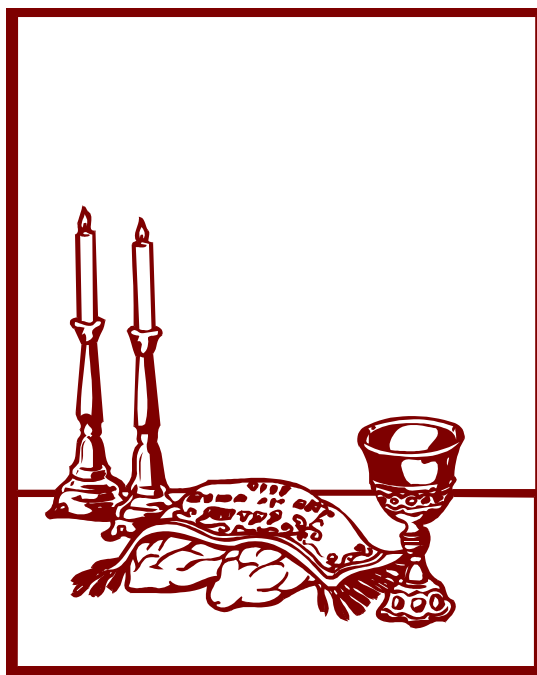
Cost of the foods

COMMENTS

Excellent program for *Z'havah* or nursery school/religious school mothers or as an outreach program to those who are new to Judaism.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM IDEA

A very interesting book is the WLCJ classic *The Jewish Home Beautiful* by Betty Greenberg and Althea Silverman. Even a discussion *about* this book would be a fascinating Sisterhood program. Read over one of the chapters, discuss how the book reflects a very radical change in the social and cultural lives of Jewish women from the mid-twentieth century to today.



SIMCHA FAIR

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Do you know all the things you will need for a successful *bar/bat mitzvah* or a Jewish wedding? A *Simcha* Fair introduces an array of vendors who can provide all the necessities.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Invite party planners, entertainers, DJs, florists, photographers, *kippah* suppliers, videographers, stationers, caterers, etc. to rent tables to show their products. Ask them to provide donations for raffles or silent auction. Arrange for tables, chairs and electricity (for videos, if vendors use them).

TIME FRAME

Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Start planning at least six months before.

PERSONNEL

Contact with vendors
Raffles/auction/gift packages/door prizes
Arrangements
Set-up
Publicity

BUDGET

Charge vendors \$100 to rent a table. You can also charge a minimal admission charge. Raffles bring in additional funds.

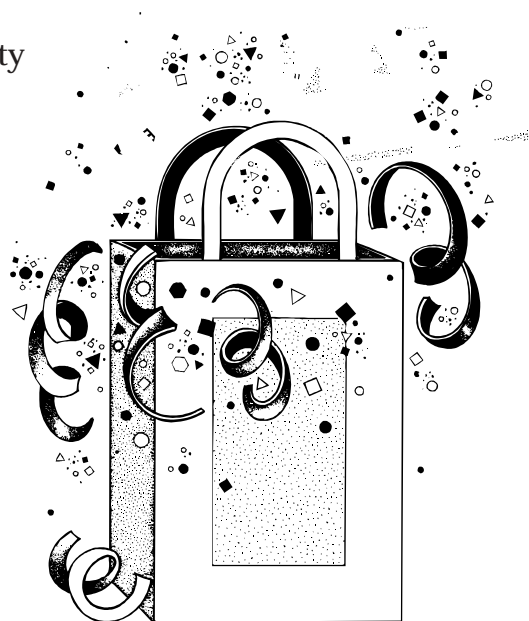
MATERIALS

Tables, decorations, information, and lots of publicity

COMMENTS

There is usually a very large turnout as everyone enjoys sampling food and getting new ideas. Open the event to the whole community.

This is a great way to get your *bar/bat mitzvah* and Hebrew School parents involved. They are the ones who most want the information.



Simcha Fair

ENLIGHTEN YOURSELF: HOLIDAY KITCHEN SECRETS
AND SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

CATEGORY
Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION
A spiritual warm-up for the High Holidays and an opportunity to learn about holiday rituals and special foods

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE
Invite an expert (religious school director, rabbi, member) to explain the home rituals of the holidays. Engage a chef/cooking teacher for a demonstration of special foods and to prepare a luncheon. After lunch, focus on the spiritual aspects of the season with a speaker, readings or meditation.

TIME FRAME
One time event, in the morning so that it can culminate with eating the prepared foods

PERSONNEL
Speaker, chef, shopping and preparation

BUDGET
Cost of food, chef

RESOURCES
Holiday books and cookbooks
Miriam's Well (Penina V. Adelman)
Preparing Your Heart for the High Holy Days: A Guided Journey (Kerry M. Olitzky, Rachel T. Sabath)
Entering the High Holy Days (Reuven Hammer)
Jewish Days: A Book of Jewish Life and Culture Around the Year (Francine Klagsbrun)

COMMENTS
A wonderful way to begin to get ready for the holiday season, to meet new members and have fun.

THE TIES THAT BIND: THE TORAH BINDER PROJECT

CATEGORY

Creative Judaic Arts

INTRODUCTION

The tradition of creating Torah binders to be used at life-cycle events is enjoying a renaissance. This project can include a discussion of the history and traditions of Torah binders as well as the creation of a Torah binder that reflects the women who created it.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Each participant chooses passages from the Bible or *siddur* that are personally meaningful. They then write the texts on narrow strips of paper. The paper is inserted into colored bias tape, reminiscent of inserting prayers into the *Kotel*. The bias tape strips are sewn together into 18 long strips which are braided together, using three strips per braid, into six braids. The six braids are again braided to form two wide bands. Lastly, join the final two braids to create the Torah binder.

TIME FRAME

This project can be done in several hours at one meeting

PERSONNEL

Someone well versed in Bible and *siddur*.
Coordinator for the art project
Purchasing materials

BUDGET

Supplies, refreshments

MATERIALS

Colored paper and pens, bias tape

RESOURCES

Siddur, Bible and other Jewish texts
Women's League Day of Study, Book of Ruth

COMMENTS

For the Sisterhood that originated this project, the entire experience was both educational and inspirational. The resulting Torah binder is beautiful and unique. The project bound the women together as they learned more about themselves and each other. They also share the knowledge that their special wishes and most meaningful prayers are enclosed in the binder that is wrapped around their Torah.

HIDDUR MITZVAH: FABRIC BACKED PLATES

CATEGORY

Creative Judaic Arts

INTRODUCTION

This is a creative way to explain the *hiddur mitzvah* (beautifying the observance of a *mitzvah*) and acquiring a crafts skill.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Provide plates and Jewish-themed fabric
Cut fabric at least 1" larger plate. Make sure to allow for a concave plate.
Evenly apply a generous amount of Mod Podge® to back of plate.
Place fabric with right side onto plate and smooth side out.
Apply another generous amount of Mod Podge® and work out all air bubbles.
Allow to dry thoroughly before trimming edges with a scissors.
Note: Plates cannot be immersed in water or put in dishwasher.

TIME FRAME

Two hour session

PERSONNEL

No specific personnel necessary, but someone with experience in the craft would be helpful.
Invite the rabbi or an educator for the discussion of *hiddur mitzvah*.

BUDGET

For craft supplies

MATERIAL

Clear glass plates
Fabrics
Mod Podge® (high gloss)
Spray polyurethane

RESOURCES

www.milechai.com/fancydelancy (303.893.6942)
www.nvo.com/1800dreidel
www.Jewishpeople.com (click on Jewish Fabric)
www.fabricparadise.com

DIP THE APPLE IN THE HONEY

CATEGORY

Creative Judaic Arts

INTRODUCTION

Create apple and honey plates as a summer project to prepare for the high holiday season.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Purchase plates and bowls and clean them with alcohol.

Prepare/purchase stencils of appropriate symbols.

Participants can use either the stencils or paint freehand.

Dishes should air dry for about two days or they can be put in an oven for 30 minutes at 250° - 300°.

TIME FRAME

Two hours plus drying time

PERSONNEL

Someone familiar with glass painting

BUDGET

Plates and bowls can be purchased at a discount store for about one dollar each.

Supplies

MATERIALS

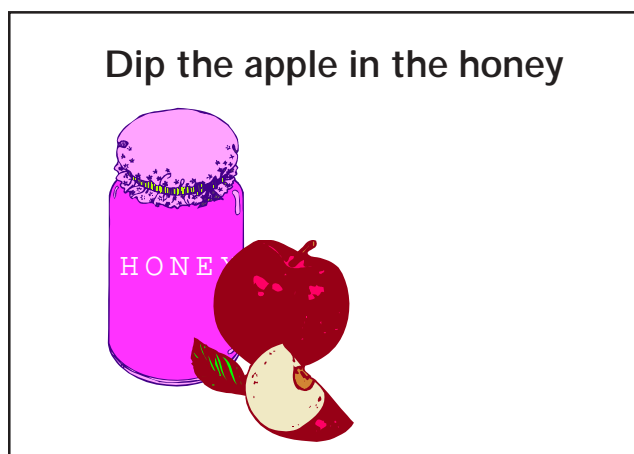
Plates/bowls, paints, alcohol, paper towels, brushes, pictures, and stencils

RESOURCES

Crafts books

COMMENTS

This is a good event for all ages and can be geared to different levels.



I MADE IT OUT OF CLAY

CATEGORY

Creative Judaic Arts

INTRODUCTION

A session at a local ceramics studio

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Rent time at a local ceramics studio, located all over the country. Choose a studio that offers Judaic pieces such as *hanukkiot*, candlesticks, *seder* plates, *mezuzot*, or decorative Judaic plates. The Sisterhood pays for the rental of space; each participant pays for her own materials. Bring food and drinks to help pass the time while waiting for the firing to finish.

TIME FRAME

Several hours

PERSONNEL

Contact with studio, publicity, refreshments

BUDGET

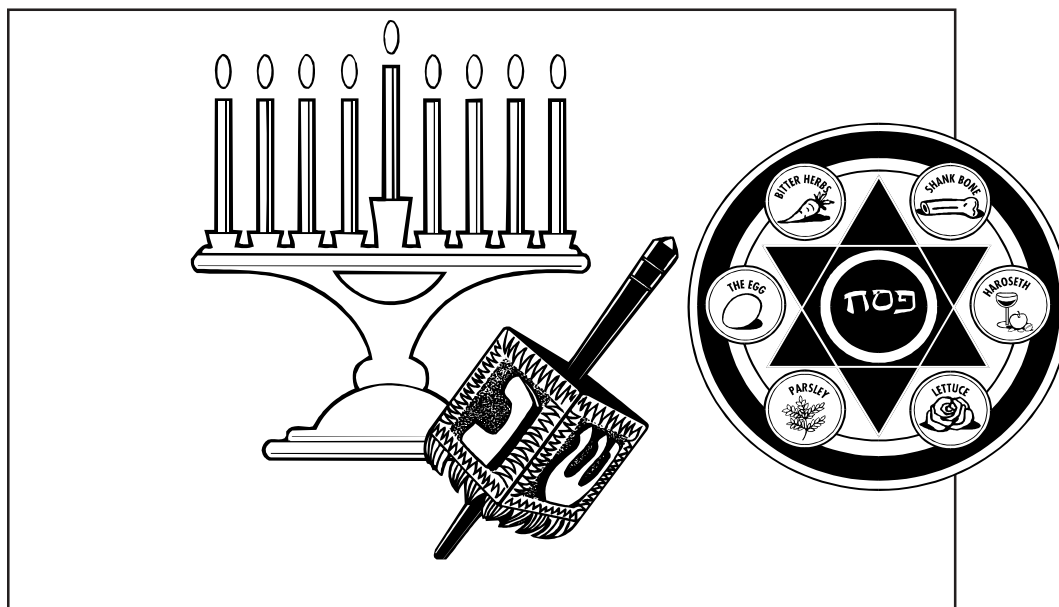
Rental of space and refreshments

MATERIALS

Should be provided by studio. Refreshments and paper goods need to be provided by Sisterhood

COMMENTS

You can also use regular cups as the base for creating a Miriam's Cup to be used at the Passover *seder*.



CREATE A SISTERHOOD ARCHIVES

CATEGORY

Archives

INTRODUCTION

Archives are records, photographs, tapes, letters and documents relating to a family, organization, or community, etc. It is important for a Sisterhood to maintain an accurate and up to date archive in one place that is accessible to all. Today's material is tomorrow's archives.

DESCRIPTION

A successful archive program should begin with an initial workshop to explain the why and how of establishing and maintaining a Sisterhood archive. The Women's League Archives Committee is prepared to offer such a workshop. Once a committee is established, it should meet on a regular basis.

All material in an archive must be ICP (Identified, Catalogued and Preserved)

TIME FRAME

On-going after an initial workshop/orientation

MATERIALS

Archival pens, photo books, magnifying glass, scissors, glassine acid-free folders, plastic clips, flat storage boxes, large storage envelopes, staple extractor, circle dots for photo numbering, double-sided tape

RESOURCES

Women's League Archives Committee

IF THIS OLD THING COULD TALK

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

A wonderful way to connect the generations of women in your synagogue. Everyone brings in a special memento or heirloom from their past and describes its history and personal importance.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Women are invited to bring in their favorite family heirlooms, photographs, Judaica or mementos. Arrange displays of the items and invite each woman to speak about her selection. This is particularly meaningful if done in conjunction with a school or USY group. In addition, the stories and photos of the items could be published as a memory book.

TIME FRAME

People need enough time to make their selections and choose what they want to say to the group. Invitations need to go out several weeks in advance. Either have the items brought in advance to a locked space where they can be beautifully displayed or just ask everyone to bring their items to the microphone and speak about it in a less formal atmosphere.

PERSONNEL

Chair, publicity, display, publication of memory book
Judaica or antiques expert to help explain the items, their uses and their artistic history

BUDGET

Display materials and publication of book

MATERIALS

Display stands, table clothes, easels, digital camera, audio tape for the stories

RESOURCES

Judaica books, such as catalogues from Jewish museums, which you can use to identify the history of some of the Judaica that is brought in

COMMENTS

This can be an easy one night program, with a simple invitation to bring in a personal treasure and share its tale, or a more complex, multi-generational production culminating in the publication of a beautiful volume for your congregation.

ANTIQUES ROAD SHOW

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

An appraiser looks at members' treasures

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Hire an appraiser (or someone from your synagogue with the appropriate knowledge) who comes in for an evening to evaluate things that are brought in, preferably Judaica

TIME FRAME

Evening

PERSONNEL

Chair, publicity, set up, scheduling, contact with appraiser, refreshments

BUDGET

Fee for appraiser, refreshments

MATERIALS

Display materials, paper and pencils for people to take notes

COMMENTS

Can invite appraiser to discuss the synagogue's own Judaic treasures such as Torah silver, Kiddush cups, stained glass windows, etc.

THE JEWELS OF SISTERHOOD TEA

CATEGORY

Membership

INTRODUCTION

To introduce women under 25 or so, who are daughters/granddaughters of members to Sisterhood.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

A Sunday tea for the Jewel Members of Sisterhood. Invitations should include a description of Sisterhood and a calendar of events highlighting those that might appeal to the younger women.

TIME FRAME

Mother's Day tea or brunch with possible additional programming of a fashion show or informal entertainment

PERSONNEL

Chair, public relations, collection of names, catering, centerpieces, and solicitation of gifts or raffle prizes, someone to follow up on-line

BUDGET

Food, decorations, printing

MATERIALS

Sisterhood brochures, token gifts, gift certificates

COMMENTS

This comes from a Sisterhood that has three levels for membership: regular membership, silver membership for seniors and the Jewel Associate. The membership brochure reads:

"We're all different types, at different stages in our lives...married, single, divorced, widowed, new moms, soccer moms, day school moms, religious school moms, empty nesters, working women, students, seniors, retirees. But we all have one basic commonality which binds us together: the importance of Judaism in our lives. Regardless of your stage in life, your age, your interests, or your background, Sisterhood offers something for everyone."



SPEED FRIENDSHIP

CATEGORY

Membership

INTRODUCTION

Spend an afternoon or evening getting to know other women

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Begin with some refreshments, or even a light dinner.

Set the room with rectangular tables, two chairs on each side.

Assign every woman to a table.

On the table, provide questions (about half a dozen) that could initiate conversation about Sisterhood/Women's League, personal history, life in the community, hobbies, etc. The women chat for three to five minutes. Ring a timer and the women on one side of the tables all move one seat to their left. They begin again, chatting with the new person across the table.

Continue until the women reach the chair in which they began.

TIME FRAME

An afternoon or evening for approximately three hours depending on the food to be served

PERSONNEL

Seating, food arrangements, questions

BUDGET

Food

MATERIALS

Questions, name tags with seating assignments

COMMENTS

This is a lovely way to meet new members and get to know each other.



DINE OUT IN STYLE

CATEGORY

Ways & Means

INTRODUCTION

This is a fun evening with each course of a meal served in a different home. The number of homes needed is determined by the number of attendees. Dessert can be held in a central place like the synagogue so that everyone can join together.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Arrange for hosts for cocktails, main course and dessert. Kosher homes should be used whenever possible. Guests can decide which homes they want to go to or, for creating new friendships, randomly assign places. Notify guests as to which houses they are going for which courses.

Menus can be individualized or a set menu planned for all the homes.

TIME FRAME

A Saturday night works well.

Begin planning about two months in advance.

BUDGET

Price the event per individual \$18.00 – \$36.00 per person.

COMMENTS

This is an opportunity for “adults only” to come together for an intimate, tasty and enjoyable event. It is fun for the hosts to showcase their homes and culinary skills while their guests enjoy a deliciously prepared meal. It also offers people the chance to interact with people they may not usually have much to do with.



SPRING INTO STYLE

CATEGORY

Ways & Means

INTRODUCTION

This is a Fashion Show which includes prizes, boutiques, designer clothes, and food.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Contact local vendors and clothing shops to invite them to participate in the boutique. Concentrate on products that will enhance the fashion show such as handbags, jewelry, accessories, make-up, cosmetics, etc.

Ask local merchants and/or vendors to donate raffle and door prizes.

Select models and have them try on the clothes beforehand. Hold a rehearsal. Prepare a script to describe the clothes.

If the synagogue does not own enough tables for all the vendors, you can rent extra tables. Just take the extra expense into consideration in your budget.

Include refreshments and/or a cocktail hour preceding the show.

PERSONNEL

A large committee with many sub-committees is needed to arrange for the fashions, raffles, boutiques, set-up, decorations, dinner and clean up

TIME FRAME

One evening. Begin planning approximately nine months in advance.

BUDGET

Admission costs should cover foods, rentals and decorations. Vendors can either pay a fee to participate or donate a percentage of their profits.

COMMENTS

The program needs to be well publicized to get the maximum attendance. It is always a fun evening and very profitable.

Models can be intergenerational: members, their daughters, mothers and/or granddaughters

THE SYNAGOGUE KITCHEN REGISTRY

CATEGORY
Ways & Means

INTRODUCTION
A 'bridal shower' to stock the synagogue kitchen

PROCEDURE
Inventory the synagogue kitchen and prepare a master list of what is needed. Mail this list with a specially created invitation to Sisterhood and congregation members.

The attendees purchase the gifts from the master list and they are opened at the shower. You can add games and give-aways. Decorate festively.

TIME FRAME
One evening

PERSONNEL
This program takes a lot of preparation to inventory the kitchen and prepare lists and handouts and lead the games

BUDGET
For prizes, gifts and refreshments

MATERIALS
Invitations and registry list created as a bridal registry

COMMENTS
Magnets decorated with a rolling pin or other kitchen utensil and ribbon can be given out as favors. Include the Sisterhood name and dates of upcoming events.

Add an auction of recipes for various dishes and desserts or prepare recipe cards to give out.

THE SYNAGOGUE KITCHEN REGISTRY



A 'shower' to stock the synagogue kitchen with everything to prepare delicious and soothing meals for our times of celebration and our moments of need

SCRAPBOOKING

CATEGORY

Just for Fun

INTRODUCTION

This can be an ongoing Special Interest Group or a one-time event. Each participant needs to bring personal pictures and mementos

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

The room is set up with tables and materials.

TIME FRAME

An evening program for 2 to 3 hours

PERSONNEL

The ideal would be to have someone from a local store that specializes in scrapbooking to lead the session. Otherwise, ask a member of Sisterhood who enjoys scrapbooking to lead.

BUDGET

Refreshments, scissors, stickers, special paper

MATERIALS

Scissors, punches, stickers, paper, ribbon, and each participant needs to bring some personal pictures

RESOURCES

Creative Memories.com

COMMENTS

This is a fun way to share pictures and memories while creating keepsakes.

FEEL THE ENERGY: FENG SHUI AND YOU

CATEGORY

Just for Fun

INTRODUCTION

This can be a fun event focusing on the Asian philosophy of energy flow and how balance is affected by a room's arrangement

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

A Feng Shui expert explains the theory of energy flow, and a kosher Chinese meal is served.

TIME FRAME

Evening

PERSONNEL

Feng Shui expert, caterer or food committee, arrangements and set-up and clean-up.
Check with your local decorating/furniture shop to find an expert in Feng Shui.

BUDGET

Stipend for Feng Shui expert
Charge for the meal (suggestion: \$18.00 - \$25.00 per person)

RESOURCES

The expert should bring materials

COMMENTS

This is an informative and entertaining program. It can be expanded by asking the expert to discuss specifics with individual members.

ROLL WITH THE RABBI: A JEWISH SUSHI MAKING EXPERIENCE

CATEGORY

Just for Fun

INTRODUCTION

This is a fun evening with a hands-on experience. It helps if the rabbi is a fan of sushi and the food is a plus!

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Set the stage with Japanese décor and music and have tables set with all the equipment and ingredients needed to make shushi. Have some members wear kimonos. Provide carry-out boxes for any extra uneaten food and take-home instruction packets.

After an interactive demonstration with the rabbi, or other knowledgeable person assisted by the rabbi, serve an Asian buffet dinner. Include a discussion of *kashrut* and learn the appropriate *b'rakhah* for sushi.

TIME FRAME

One time, evening.

PERSONNEL

Shopping
Arranging for Japanese ambiance
Invitations and publicity
Music and entertainment
Set-up and clean-up

BUDGET

Cost needs to cover all supplies. You should be able to charge approximately \$28.00 - \$36.00 per person.

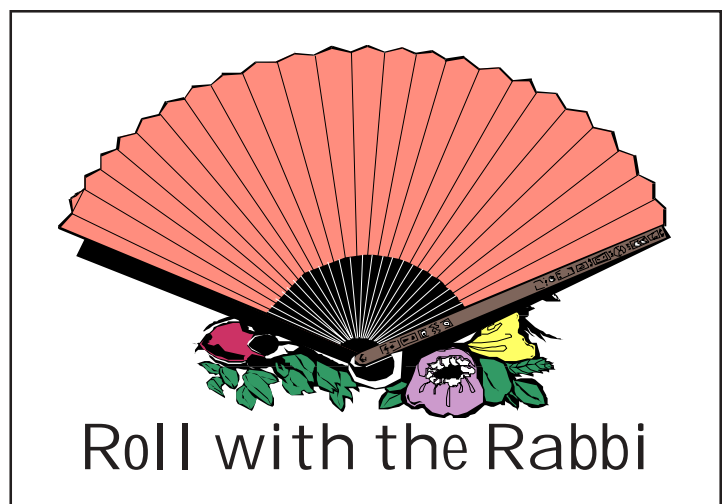
RESOURCES

Information on kosher fish and *kashrut* involved. Check with the rabbi.

COMMENTS

This is a wonderful social evening with a lot of interaction and excitement.

You can include a discussion of the Jews of Japan or a presentation from someone who has traveled or lived there.



VICTORIAN TEA

CATEGORY

Just for Fun

INTRODUCTION

A fantasy afternoon of polite conversation, tea and games

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Set the room up with small, beautifully decorated tables. For the centerpieces use teapots and teacups and various types of tea which you can raffle off after the event. Refreshments are tea and coffee, small cakes, scones, finger sandwiches, and fruit. Games might include Scrabble, Mah Jong, Trivial Pursuit, backgammon.

TIME FRAME

A Sunday afternoon in the spring, for one or two hours

PERSONNEL

Chairs for tea, fashion show, games

BUDGET

Food, teapots, tea

MATERIALS

Teapots, tea, games, tables, chairs

RESOURCES

Borrow games from members. Ask a local shop to supply the clothing for the fashion show. You might want to limit the fashion show to hats or accessories, in keeping with the Victorian theme.

COMMENTS

This could be a lovely way to meet new members or as a paid-up members event

You are
invited to
Sisterhood's
Victorian
T ea



Please
join us for
an afternoon
of tea
and games

COLOR ME BEAUTIFUL

CATEGORY

Just for Fun

INTRODUCTION

Color Me Beautiful is a national organization that provides color and fashion consultants

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

The image consultant talks about how a person's coloring (hair, skin, eyes) suggests what colors are the most attractive when selecting clothes, accessories and jewelry. People are assigned to a season (fall, winter, spring, summer) and for each season, there are different types of coloring. Two Sisterhood members are selected from a drawing for a brief color analysis. The consultant works with each as the rest of the attendees watch and ask questions.

TIME FRAME

Two hours

PERSONNEL

Chair, publicity, drawing

BUDGET

Fee for consultant and her costs (\$110+ and \$10 per swatch packet)

MATERIALS

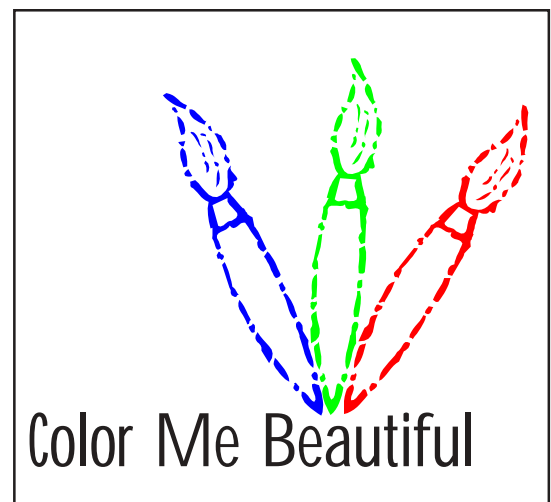
Cards for drawing of names, mirrors

RESOURCES

Color Me Beautiful phone: 703.560.7111

COMMENTS

A fun way to beat the winter blahs.



CHOCOLATE & CHUCKLES

CATEGORY

Just for Fun

INTRODUCTION

A fun evening of jokes and comedy routines performed by the women and other members of the synagogue.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

This event is usually held in the evening with all kinds of chocolate desserts and candies served. To be worthwhile, at least four people should perform a comedy routine or tell jokes.

TIME FRAME

A weekday or Saturday night

PERSONNEL

Food, decorations, entertainment

BUDGET

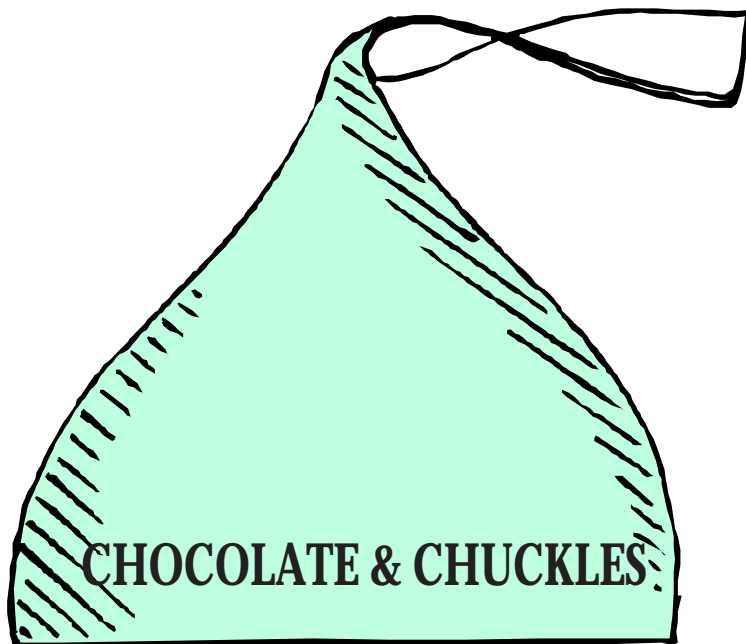
Food, decorations

MATERIALS

Food, decorations, microphone, stage lighting

COMMENTS

A delightful evening of decadent chocolate and delightful humor.
Be sure that the entertainers do not overstep the bounds of good taste in their humor (chocolate is another matter).



FILM SCREENING: MAKING TROUBLE

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

What is it that makes funny Jewish women so funny . . . and so Jewish? Is it a nose wrinkled just so, accompanied by a devilish grin or a sarcastic punch line? Is it the acerbic humor of generations of immigrant and first-generation women who used their brains and their wit to claim a place in American culture? Produced by the Jewish Women's Archive, this award winning documentary honors six Jewish entertainers — Molly Picon, Fanny Brice, Sophie Tucker, Joan Rivers, Gilda Radner, and Wendy Wasserstein — who successfully moved from vaudeville and the Yiddish theatre to Broadway, from Ziegfeld's Follies to *Saturday Night Live*. Get ready to duck when the zingers fly and guffaw at this entertaining, insightful documentary — an exhilarating mix of contemporary performance, interviews, and rare archival footage.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

The film can be rented on its own or accompanied by a speaker. To arrange a screening, contact Lauren Antler via email at lantler@jwa.org or by phone at 617.383.6774

TIME FRAME

The film is 85 minutes long. With a discussion following the film, allow two hours.

PERSONNEL

Publicity, event coordination

BUDGET

\$500 for the film alone

\$1000, plus travel and accommodation for the film with a speaker

MATERIALS

The Jewish Women's Archive will provide posters for publicity and souvenir postcards.

RESOURCES

Depending on the scope of the program, the speaker/discussion leader could be a local performer, a scholar of Jewish women, or a representative from the Jewish Women's Archive.

COMMENTS

In its first year, *Making Trouble* played to sold-out audiences of young and old, men and women at festivals in over 70 cities around the world. The Jewish Women's Archive is pleased to share this important film that celebrates the legacy of these six trailblazers who helped shaped the American comic tradition.

Jewish Women's Archive (www.jwa.org)

VASHTI'S BANQUET

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Following its amazing success in New York and other cities, you can stage your own.

Over the past several decades, Jewish women have been seeking new and imaginative ways to create rituals that are personally meaningful. Not all of these observances need be serious and heavy handed.

Vashti may be the first woman to “just say no!” We can only guess that she was so empowered because of the presence and support of the other women at her banquet. We all harbor fantasies about the harem thanks to *The Arabian Nights* and the films of Cecile B. DeMille, but there is no written account from the ancient world about life in that segregated world. In this new ritual, capture the atmosphere of joyfulness and triumph that must have surrounded Vashti and her companions. The women-only guests can taste the sisterhood of ancient Persia with activities known from anthropology and literature enjoyed by women: food, music, belly dancing, story telling, and beauty secrets.

This program appeals to women of all ages. The harem can be seen as the quintessential women’s space – where they lived together, mourned together and danced together.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Food: Find a caterer (or cook) to prepare Middle Eastern food. Decide whether meat or dairy, buffet or finger food. Have platters of dried fruits and nuts around the room.

Decorations: Replicate your imaginary harem. Ask a party planner or someone creative in your sisterhood to design the space. Include draped fabrics, rugs, pillows, costume jewelry (from a party store).

Entertainment: Find a female group to perform Middle Eastern music with authentic instruments or use CDs, belly-dancers, story-tellers, fortune tellers.

Study materials from the Day of Study of Megillat Esther, email mfrye@wlcj.org.

TIME FRAME

This project takes several months to plan. Set the date as close to Purim as possible.

PERSONNEL

Catering, publicity, decorations, study, entertainment. Invite a cosmetics or skin-care representative (Mary Kay, Avon, Ahavah). Ask local merchants for samples. Find a henna specialist and a manicurist for nail painting (not full manicures)

BUDGET

For publicity, decorations, entertainment

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

Music: Pharaoh’s Daughter (www.pharaohsdaughter.com)

Divahn (can order from Amazon or www.divahn.com)

Books: *Megillat Esther* by J.T. Waldman (www.jewishpub.org or from Amazon)

Jewelry: www.toomeys-mardigras.com

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION: JEWISH HISTORY THE NEW FANGLED WAY

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

While Jews have traditionally been known as the “people of the book,” it’s also not far-fetched to call us the “people of the film.” Jewish history, long the subject of countless manuscripts, multiple-volume sets and even bestsellers, is now presented in two very different films. One is a traditional six-hour series for PBS, *The Jewish Americans*, that aired in January 2008. The second is a much edgier and irreverent short film called *The Tribe*.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

The Jewish Americans examines how a tiny minority made it into the American mainstream. While the Jewish story is typical of other immigrant groups, it is also unique in that despite subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle discrimination, Jews were able to transcend marginalization and succeed far beyond their proportional numbers in culture, politics, the arts, science, and business. It features an interesting array of interviews with historians, clergy, and Jewish personalities and celebrities. The series is narrated by Liev Schreiber.

The Tribe is an 18-minute romp through Jewish history, told through the experience of the Barbie Doll, the quintessential assimilated Jewish princess. *The Tribe* features an abundance of multi-media images, including archival footage of real historical events, interviews, cartoons, and block figures, and a grand finale midrash on Jewish identity, delivered in slam poetry.

TIME FRAME

An on-going series at sisterhood meetings, educational program, or adult education

PERSONNEL

Publicity, arrangements for showing

BUDGET

For rental of DVDs and viewing equipment

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

The Jewish Americans can be purchased at www.pbs.org. Its companion volume, written by historian Beth Wenger, *The Jewish Americans: Three Centuries of Jewish Voices in America*, can be purchased separately or with the DVD at Amazon.

The Tribe and study guide are available from www.tribethefilm.com.

COMMENTS

While it might speak to younger women (such as *Z’havah*) in particular, there is enough fodder in *The Tribe* for discussion that nearly everyone can be entertained by it.

VASHTI'S BANQUET

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Following its amazing success in New York and other cities, you can stage your own.

Over the past several decades, Jewish women have been seeking new and imaginative ways to create rituals that are personally meaningful. Not all of these observances need be serious and heavy handed.

Vashti may be the first woman to “just say no!” We can only guess that she was so empowered because of the presence and support of the other women at her banquet. We all harbor fantasies about the harem thanks to *The Arabian Nights* and the films of Cecile B. DeMille, but there is no written account from the ancient world about life in that segregated world. In this new ritual, capture the atmosphere of joyfulness and triumph that must have surrounded Vashti and her companions. The women-only guests can taste the sisterhood of ancient Persia with activities known from anthropology and literature enjoyed by women: food, music, belly dancing, story telling, and beauty secrets.

This program appeals to women of all ages. The harem can be seen as the quintessential women’s space – where they lived together, mourned together and danced together.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Food: Find a caterer (or cook) to prepare Middle Eastern food. Decide whether meat or dairy, buffet or finger food. Have platters of dried fruits and nuts around the room.

Decorations: Replicate your imaginary harem. Ask a party planner or someone creative in your sisterhood to design the space. Include draped fabrics, rugs, pillows, costume jewelry (from a party store).

Entertainment: Find a female group to perform Middle Eastern music with authentic instruments or use CDs, belly-dancers, story-tellers, fortune tellers.

Study materials from the Day of Study of Megillat Esther, email mfrye@wlcj.org.

TIME FRAME

This project takes several months to plan. Set the date as close to Purim as possible.

PERSONNEL

Catering, publicity, decorations, study, entertainment. Invite a cosmetics or skin-care representative (Mary Kay, Avon, Ahavah). Ask local merchants for samples. Find a henna specialist and a manicurist for nail painting (not full manicures)

BUDGET

For publicity, decorations, entertainment

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

Music: Pharaoh’s Daughter (www.pharaohsdaughter.com)

Divahn (can order from Amazon or www.divahn.com)

Books: *Megillat Esther* by J.T. Waldman (www.jewishpub.org or from Amazon)

Jewelry: www.toomeys-mardigras.com

BREAST CANCER OUTREACH PROGRAM

CATEGORY

Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

Women's League and Sharsheret, the only national organization dedicated to addressing the needs of Jewish women facing breast cancer, are partnering this October for National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Each year, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur lead into Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a relevant time to address women's health as many of the passages we read over the holidays focus on women: Sarah, Rachel, Hannah. In each of our communities there are women and families facing breast cancer every day. In the spirit of tikkun olam, plan a local outreach event to raise awareness about breast cancer and help save lives!

These local outreach events are vital to the quest to raise awareness about breast health, breast cancer genetics and the impact on the Jewish community, and the issues specific to Jewish women fighting breast cancer.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Invite a local breast cancer survivor to introduce the event.

Recite a psalm for those who are ill.

Hear from a Sharsheret representative or present a Sharsheret video.

Recruit a local physician and genetic counselor to address medical questions.

Moderate a question and answer session.

Spread the word to local women by distributing educational materials at local doctors' offices, breast centers, and gyms.

Review breast self exam techniques on breast models.

TIME FRAME

Consult your community calendar to choose an open date in October. Contact Sharsheret (866.474.2774 or info@sharsheret.org) for a local representative, if available.

PERSONNEL

Publicity, event coordination

BUDGET

Publicity

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

Request Sharsheret health information packets and giveaways.

Elana Silber, Sharsheret's Director of Operations (866.474.2774 or esilber@sharsheret.org)

PASSIONATELY PINK HAVDALAH PROGRAM

CATEGORY

Jewish Living/Mitzvot

INTRODUCTION

Featured at a Saturday night havdalah service, this program focuses on breast cancer awareness, including discussion of treatment, survival, and even prevention. Whether or not individual members have had breast cancer, there are no women who do not have family members and/or friends who are either victims or survivors.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Invite a local specialist, a social worker (Jewish Family Services) or other health professional who can speak for a few minutes.

Ask a young women from USY to lead the service.

Decorate the room with pink tablecloths, balloons and paper goods; serve little pink pastries and pink m & m's, pink lemonade, fresh fruits.

Ask everyone to dress in pink.

Pass pink baskets for everyone to put in donations for an appropriate charity such as Susan G. Komen Cure for Cancer Foundation, Gilda's Club, Sharsheret, or local

TIME FRAME

This is a good program for October, national Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

PERSONNEL

Publicity, event coordination

BUDGET

Publicity, refreshments and decorations

MATERIALS

Request materials from breast cancer or other organizations as giveaways

Susan G. Komen Foundation: www.komen.org

Gilda's Clubs: www.gildasclub.org

National Institute for Jewish Hospice: www.nijh.org

Sharsheret: www.sharsheret.org

COMMENTS

Perhaps dedicate the evening to women who have died of breast cancer – or survived. This program was created by Tammy Roberts and a committee from Suburban Jewish Community Center B'nai Aaron, Havertown, Pennsylvania (Mid-Atlantic Region).

SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING SHABBAT CANDLESTICKS

CATEGORY

Jewish Living/Mitzvot

INTRODUCTION

In addition to highlighting women's skills in leading services, this program is a creative and engaging way to develop and share family histories within the context of Jewish ritual (candle lighting).

Before you begin, discuss with your rabbi how members should deal with the halakhic considerations of handling and moving candlesticks on Shabbat.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Well in advance, line-up women who will display and speak about their familys' candlesticks.

Organize your Friday night service, with each woman speaking *briefly* about her own candlesticks as an introduction to each of the prayers or other parts of the service. These individual stories should not be more than a few lines. If you have many more stories than parts of the service, you can have two women speak before each segment.

Prepare a booklet of the expanded stories of the candlesticks that can be handed out or placed on the tables during dinner.

Plan an appropriate Shabbat dinner for members and their families.

Set up a display of the candlesticks, labeling each set with the family story.

TIME FRAME

Time to organize the meal, service and presentations and to print.

PERSONNEL

Publicity, service coordinator, dinner coordinator, presentation coordinator, editor and design for the booklet

BUDGET

Publicity, printing, Shabbat centerpieces

The cost of the meal should be covered by reservation fees.

MATERIALS

History of various candlelighting traditions and candlestick types. Copies of the appropriate blessings. Display materials.

RESOURCES

For a discussion of candlelighting, refer to the *Mitzvah Yomit* materials at www.wlcj.org.

COMMENTS

This program was designed by the sisterhood of Congregation Beth Yeshurun, Houston, Texas for its Sisterhood Shabbat (Friday night) service.

MAKING TOUGH DECISIONS: THE SHRINKING PIE (EASY)

CATEGORY

Jewish Living/Tzedakah

INTRODUCTION

In this time of heightened need and shrinking resources, we are forced to make difficult choices about our charitable giving. This activity demonstrates how difficult and sometime life-enhancing decisions are made. In addition to its use as a values clarification exercise, it also creates a model for group decision-making in which individuals must advocate for specific positions, work through disagreements, and reach a compromise.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Introduce the issue: Your sisterhood has \$13,000 to dispense this year in tzedakah allocations. How will you determine the disbursements? In small groups, discuss how to allocate for the following (or any others that you might want to include):

The local Jewish seniors home is in dire need of roof repair. Many of members have family and friends there. The home has no money and is asking local Jewish organizations for assistance. The cost of the repairs is \$15,000.

The synagogue needs to fix up the social hall used for simchas and various events, generating much income for its coffers. The cost of the renovations is \$50,000.

The Israel scholarship program has been depleted and this year five students have requested financial aid for study in Israel.

The local women's shelter needs funds to offset their growing influx of mothers and children. As the community's support diminishes, the urgency is growing.

The volunteer fire department needs new equipment and uniforms. They have appealed to various local organizations for support. The cost of the new supplies is \$40,000.

The Hebrew school's budget has been slashed but it is in desperate need of new books. They have appealed for help. The cost of the new books is \$4,800.

Three of the synagogue's Torahs are in need of repair. The cost is \$6,300.

Reassemble to present and discuss each group's findings.

TIME FRAME

10 minutes for introduction/20 minutes for discussion/10 minutes for recap

PERSONNEL

Publicity, presenter

BUDGET

None

RESOURCES

This is taken from the Mitzvah Yomit materials (Tzedakah) available at www.wlcj.org

PROGRAMS



linking

..... COMMUNITY SERVICE RESOURCE LIST

Project Linus

www.projectlinus.org
Prjctlinus@aol.com

Environmental Background Information Center (EBIC)

www.ebic.org
45 West 21 Street, Fourth Floor
New York, NY 10010
888.769.7729

Cancer Information Service of the National Cancer Institute (NCI)

Rex.nci.nih.gov or Cancernet.nci.nih.gov
800.4.CANCER

Genetic Counseling — Valuable Information for You and Your Family

610.872.7608

American Jewish Congress
Commission for Women's Equality
212.360.1548

National Jewish Girl Scout Committee

33 Central Drive
Bronxville, NY 10708
914.738.3986 FAX: 914.728.6752
NJGSC@aol.com

Adult Day Centers

NCOA/NIAD Association
409 Third Street, SW
Washington, DC 20042

National Adult Day Services

202.479.6682

National Religious Partnership for the Environment

1047 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10025

Environmental Defense Fund

257 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10010
212.505.2100

A Jewish Perspective on the Environment

ABC TV, documentary produced by JTS and COEJL. Call Women's League for information.

Coalition on the Environment & Jewish Life

(Women's League is a member agency)
443 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016
212.684.6950 Ext. 215
coejl@aol.com

National Marrow Donor Program

3433 Broadway Street, NE Suite 500
Minneapolis, MN 55413-17762
800.MARROW2
www.marrow.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800.799.7233 or 800.787.3224

NCADV

POB 18749
Denver, CO 80218
303.839.1852
www.ncadv.org

Canada — Assaulted Women's Helpline

Toll Free: 416.863.0511 (24 hours) in French:
800.387.8603

National Center on Women and Aging

Heller School
Brandeis University
Waltham, MA 02454
800.929.0199
www.brandeis.edu/heller/national/ind.html

Walk for Breast Cancer

800.ACS.2345
www.cancerorg/makingstrides

NATIONAL WEB SITES FOR AGING SERVICES

Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies

www.ajfca.org

The Social Security Administration

www.ssa.gov

Administration on Aging

www.aoa.gov

US Government Site for Medicare Information

www.medicare.gov

AARP

www.aarp.org

Elderhostel: Educational travel organization for those 55 and over

www.elderhostel.org

US Department of Veterans Affairs

www.va.gov

American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging

www.aahsa.org

American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging

www.abanet.org/aging

Meals on Wheels Association of America

www.mowaa.org

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization

www.nhpco.org

National Family Caregivers Association

www.nfcacares.org

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMMING RESOURCES

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL)

www.coejl.org

Shomrei Adamah

www.geocities.com/guardiansoftheearth

The Nature Conservancy

www.nature.org

DISABILITIES PROGRAMMING RESOURCES

Bar/Bat Mitzvah for the Special Child

72 Sderot Yerushalayim, Beer Sheva

Israel 84811

zivah@masorti.org

or c/o

Masorti Foundation

475 Riverside Drive

New York, NY 10115

877.287.7414

JB International (Jewish Braille)

110 East 30th Street

New York, NY 10016

212.889.2525

Council for Jews with Special Needs

Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus

12701 N. Scottsdale Road, Suite 205

Scottsdale, AZ 85254

480.629.5343

ECO SHABBAT

CATEGORY
Environment

INTRODUCTION
To celebrate and promote environmental awareness within a Jewish context, this week-long environmental celebration includes an evening of recycled art, a volunteer project and text study culminating at a *Shabbat* service.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

1. Assign different committee members to plan each portion of the program
2. Determine best date for such a program
3. Gather recycled materials for art projects (posters to promote the Environment)
4. Contact the rabbi for help with text study and to speak
5. Develop an environmental project that volunteers can implement during the week before Eco *Shabbat* or the day after in response to all they learn over *Shabbat*.

TIME FRAME
Week

PERSONNEL
Chairs for publicity, art project, recycling, *Shabbat* program/service

BUDGET
Poster board, materials to assemble art project, publicity

MATERIALS
Recycled items for posters (items found around the synagogue)

RESOURCES
Women’s League *Environmental Shabbat*
Women’s League *A Friday Evening Service Devoted to Ecology*
Women’s League *Earth Day – A Friday Evening Service*
Congregational rabbi
Local recycling materials/information

COMMENTS
Sisterhood and congregation members will realize that environmental issues are very much tied into Jewish beliefs and practices and that there is much more to concern for the environment than just recycling.

TU B'SHEVAT SEDER

CATEGORY

Environment

INTRODUCTION

In ancient times, *Tu b'Shevat* was a time for renewal of commitment to God and for sharing the yield of the land with the poor. Today, on *Tu b'Shevat* we celebrate our commitment to protect all of God's creation.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

A committee should study the history and traditions of *Tu b'Shevat* and choose the appropriate format for a *seder* or celebratory service and meal. There are several texts available to use as guidance.

TIME FRAME

One evening every year or every other year

PERSONNEL

Chairs for food, program, decorations, auxiliary projects

BUDGET

Food, paper goods, publicity, printed materials

MATERIALS

Text of the *Tu b'Shvat seder*

RESOURCES

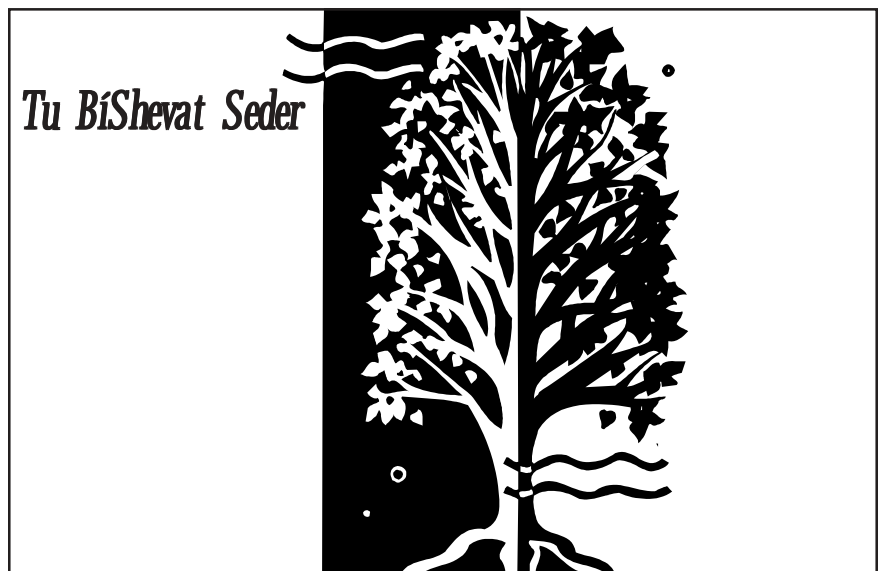
COEJL (Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life)

Women's League *Tu b'Shevat Seder*

Internet for other sources

COMMENTS

Embellish the program by distributing fruits eaten in Israel and by asking individuals to participate by reading poems, songs, skits and other elements.



FASHION WITH COMPASSION: A CHILDREN'S FASHION SHOW

CATEGORY

Mitzvah/Fundraising

INTRODUCTION

This is the perfect program for going green. It involves recycling clothing, and it is a mitzvah because of the donation of the clothes to children who might need them. Whatever clothes are left should go to a shelter.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

People donate their children's gently worn and cleaned clothes.
The event is a brunch followed by a fashion show featuring members' children and grandchildren as models using the donated clothing. (Who would resist seeing their children or grandchildren modeling?)
At the end of the show everyone is invited to take the clothes that would benefit their children from the racks.

TIME FRAME

You need enough time to collect a reasonable selection of clothing. Perhaps ask for the contributions as people are doing their spring cleaning. Clothing then needs to be sorted by size, wearability, and whether for boys or for girls.
Decide which age children you want to invite as models and ask for volunteers who will choose from the collected clothing (or their mothers can choose for them) to model.

PERSONNEL

Brunch committee
Clothing collection team
Model coordinator

BUDGET

Food, rental of racks to hang the clothes, and printing the program booklet

MATERIALS

Clothing racks

COMMENTS

This sisterhood made it a fundraiser and asked for the following donations:
\$100 *Bal-Toyve*: included brunch for two adults, special mention in program booklet and reserved front row seats
\$72 *Menschen*: included brunch for two adults and special mention in program booklet
\$54 *Mishpokhe*: family of four or more including two adults
\$18 *Dervaksn*: adults and children 13 and up, per person
\$9 *Kinderlekh*: children 3 to 12
No charge for children under 3

THE GARDEN PARTY

CATEGORY

Tikkun Olam: The Environment

INTRODUCTION

This program addresses how to separate truth from hype about organic vs. non-organic food. An activity can involve a how-to lesson in creating your own home compost bin.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Begin with a short discussion about the relationship between organic and non-organic foods and their relation to the environment

Invite a speaker with expertise on the subject – nutritionist, health-food store owner, organic garden supply shop owner – to talk about the difference between organic and non-organic foods. This could be a panel discussion or debate

Invite someone from a garden store, or an experienced gardener, to talk about composting and its relationship to the environment. Provide instruction for creating a backyard or indoor compost bin.

Invite members to make their own compost bins.

See if people can tell the difference between organic and non-organic fruits and vegetables with a taste test.

TIME FRAME

Can be a nighttime activity, or perhaps on a Sunday morning

PERSONNEL

Nutritionist, health food store owner, garden store owner/worker, experienced gardener

RESOURCES

<http://www.composting101.com/what-to-use.html>

<http://www.epa.gov/waste/conserve/rrr/composting/basic.htm>

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1595245,00.html>

<http://www.bottomlinefitness.com/2009/05/24/organic-vs-non-organic/>

COMMENTS

Members could plant food bearing gardens, either at home and/or on the congregation's grounds, and donate the yield to a homeless shelter or local food bank.



GREEN FAIR

CATEGORY

Tikkun Olam: The Environment

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing emphasis on the environment, we are aware of ecological problems but we often lack the knowledge for making informed decisions and behavioral changes. A day-long (or shorter) fair, that provides information and hands-on activities, can promote environmental responsibility.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Select topics you want to include, such as:

- household cleaners: what is safe, what is not?
- making your kitchen environmentally sound: paper vs. cloth, cleaning products,
- party goods, appliances (electricity)
- organic vs. non-organic foods: hype or truth?
- diapers: cloth vs. paper
- natural resource conservation in the home: electricity, water
- making our children environmentally responsible
- making our elderly parents environmentally responsible
- automobiles: what is out there? How do various makes and models effect the environment?
- Heksher Tzedek: What is it? Why is it important?
- Judaism and environmentalism

Arrange for presenters on the various topics: specialists or those with an interest and expertise in the topic

Arrange for materials and resources (websites, printed materials, etc.) on the selected topics

Presenters can speak to the large group or they can be situated in separate locations and individuals move around from one to another

TIME FRAME

This program can be short (1½ - 2 hours) or a full-day program for families with crafts and activities for children

PERSONNEL

Organizing committee

Presenters

Leaders of children's activities (USYers, teachers)

BUDGET

Honoraria for presenters

Food

Crafts supplies

Publicity

PLASTICS DEPOSITORY

CATEGORY

Tikkun Olam

INTRODUCTION

One aspect of saving the world is to not increase the amount of non-recyclable objects in land fills. This project will allow us to save on the amount of plastic, which is not biodegradable, that is being dumped in land fills.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Sisterhoods create a central depository to which congregation members bring their used plastic grocery bags. Then these bags are taken to an appropriate recycler to be converted into some other usable product.

TIME FRAME

This can be an ongoing project for the congregation and can be performed in conjunction with religious schools. Students bring used plastic bags to each session.

PERSONNEL

Organizer

Publicity

Team to collect bags and bring them to recycling center as necessary

BUDGET

Cost of making or securing the collection receptacle

COMMENTS

This is an excellent program to relate a mundane activity to a mitzvah.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS CAN CELEBRATE

CATEGORY
Disabilities

INTRODUCTION
All children deserve to celebrate a *bar/bat mitzvah* and to feel included within the Jewish community.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE
Show the video about the *Masorti* Movement’s *bar/bat mitzvah* program for children with special needs in Israel or *Someone Is Listening* about sign language from United Synagogue. Follow with a speaker who can help design a program of services for your congregation.

TIME FRAME
This can be a one-time event that initiates an on-going program for your Sisterhood, depending on the needs in your community.

PERSONNEL
Chair for initial event
Committee to determine needs, organize and train volunteers

BUDGET
Stipend for speaker

RESOURCES
Women’s League for either video, 212.870.1260
JBI International, 800.433.1531

COMMENTS
This can become a major commitment for your Sisterhood, perhaps working in conjunction with USYers.

READING: GOD'S PLAN

CATEGORY

Disabilities

INTRODUCTION

Every child, even if mentally challenged or developmentally disabled, is an important part of the Jewish community. We need to be sensitive to their needs and help reduce the stigmas often attached to these disabilities.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

A panel presentation after audience reads "God's Plan" (see next page) followed by questions and answers. Panel consists of rabbi, psychologist, parent of developmentally disabled child, physician

TIME FRAME

Evening meeting. Allow enough lead time to engage the appropriate experts.

PERSONNEL

Coordinator, publicity

BUDGET

Stipends, if necessary

MATERIALS

Information from local service providers

COMMENTS

Program can initiate the formation of committee to evaluate the synagogue's responsiveness and accessibility to the disabled as well as stimulate people to volunteer at community service agencies.

GOD'S PLAN

Shay and his father walked past a park where some boys Shay knew were playing baseball. Shay asked, "Do you think they will let me play? His father knew that most boys would not want Shay on their team.

Shay's father approached one of the boys and asked if Shay could play. The boy said, "We are losing by six runs, and the game is in the eighth inning. I guess he can be on our team and we'll try to put him up to bat in the ninth inning." In the bottom of the eighth inning, Shay's team scored a few runs but was still behind by three.

At the top of the ninth inning, Shay put on a glove and played in the outfield. Although no hits came his way, he was ecstatic just to be on the field, grinning from ear to ear as his father waved to him from the stands.

In the bottom of the ninth inning, Shay's team scored again. Now, with no outs and bases loaded, the potential winning run was on base. Shay was scheduled to be the next at-bat. Would the team actually let Shay bat at this juncture and give away their chance to win the game?

Surprisingly, Shay was given the bat. Everyone knew that a hit was all but impossible because Shay didn't even know how to hold the bat properly, much less connect with the ball. However, as Shay stepped up to the plate, the pitcher moved a few steps to lob the ball in softly so Shay could at least be able to make contact. The first pitch came and Shay swung clumsily and missed.

The pitcher again took a few steps forward to toss the ball softly toward Shay. As the pitch came in, Shay swung at the ball and hit a slow ground ball to the pitcher. The pitcher picked up the soft grounder and could easily have thrown the ball to the first baseman. Shay would have been out and that would have ended the game.

Instead, the pitcher took the ball and threw it on a high arch to right field, far beyond reach of the first baseman. Everyone started yelling, "Shay, run to first. Run to first." Never in his life had Shay ever made it to first base. He scampered down the baseline, wide-eyed and startled. Everyone yelled, "Run to second, run to second!" By the time Shay was rounding first base, the right fielder had the ball. He could have thrown the ball to the second baseman for a tag. But the right fielder understood what the pitcher's intentions had been, so he threw the ball high and far over the third baseman's head. Shay ran toward second base as the runners ahead of him circled the bases toward home.

As Shay reached second base, the opposing shortstop ran to him, turned him in the direction of third base and shouted, "Run to third!" As Shay rounded third, the boys from both teams were screaming, "Shay, run home!" Shay ran home, stepped on home plate and was cheered as the hero, for hitting a grand-slam and winning the game for his team.

"That day," said the father softly with tears now rolling down his face, "the boys from both teams helped bring a piece of the Divine Plan into this world."

FOR MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLES . . .
Isaiah 56:7

CATEGORY
Disabilities

INTRODUCTION

There are many ways a congregation can meet the challenge of becoming accessible to all. These different projects and synagogue redesigns could be part of a year-long accessibility program.

- Purchase large print copies of prayer books and other books used during services
- Place the reader’s table on the floor of the sanctuary, rather than raised and inaccessible
- Install a paper-cup dispenser next to water fountains
- Provide transportation to services and all synagogue functions
- Even if your synagogue is not planning on a major renovation, you should be ensuring that the building is wheelchair accessible and with bathrooms for the handicapped
- Purchase assistive listening devices for those with hearing loss and encourage them to sit near the front of the sanctuary
- Have a program about “invisible” disabilities such as diabetes, epilepsy, high blood pressure, mental illness, and serious illness.

SAVING NOAH'S ARK

CATEGORY

Environment, Youth/School

INTRODUCTION

Learn about animal life and concerns from the experts

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Invite a speaker from a local zoo or animal rescue organization, with or without creatures in tow.

TIME FRAME

One hour

PERSONNEL

Chair, publicity, coordinator with school/youth director

BUDGET

Often, speakers from organizations will come for gratis or a token donation to the organization.

MATERIALS

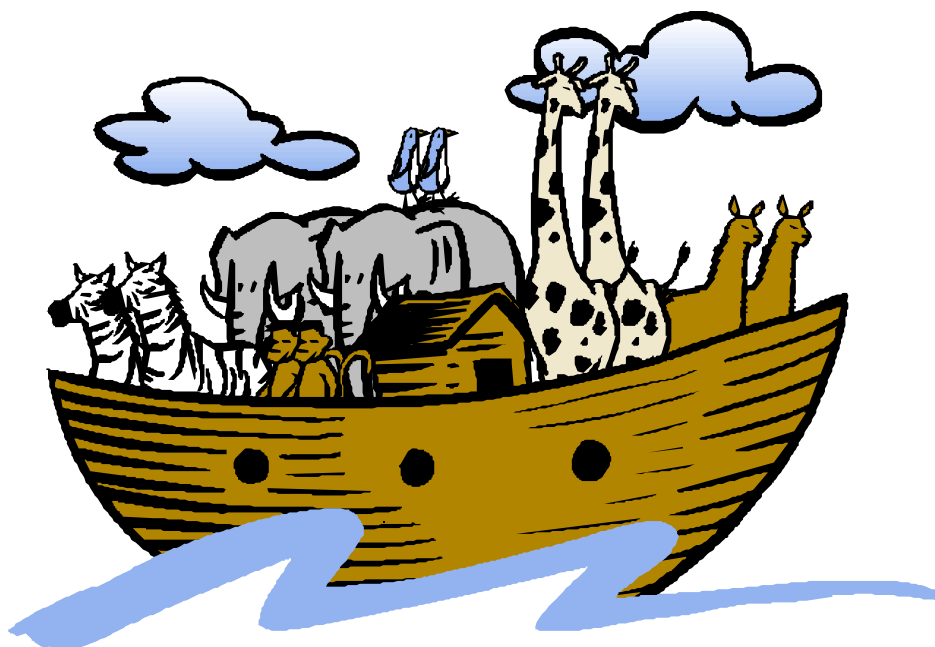
Lots of newspaper for the floor!

RESOURCES

Copies of the story of Noah and appropriate children's literature. Hand outs from the zoo or organization

COMMENTS

A wonderful program to hold in conjunction with the nursery, religious school or USY



COLLEGE OUTREACH

CATEGORY

Youth/School

INTRODUCTION

To keep college students in touch with their home synagogues and aid them in their continuation of Jewish practice away from home.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

1. Maintain a data base of all college students from the congregation (or just the children of Sisterhood members), with mailing addresses and e-mail addresses
2. Several times a year, send themed boxes to those on your list, depending on your Sisterhood's budget:
 - In September, send a *Shabbat* box containing candlesticks, candles, matches, wine cup, grape juice, bagel chips (to substitute for perishable *hallah*), kosher snacks, a box of raisins.
 - In December, send *Hanukkah* boxes with candles and the appropriate blessings, *latke* mix and oil, applesauce, *dreidel*, *gelt*, and decorations.
 - In February/March, send Purim items: juice, *hamentashen*, mask, *grogger*, *megillah*
 - In April, send boxes with *haggadah*, *matzah*, wine cup, Passover kosher chicken soup cups, grape juice, chocolate, snacks
3. Include all college and graduate students on any broadcast e-mails from the synagogue.

TIME FRAME

Ongoing throughout the year

PERSONNEL

Chairs for data, purchasing, packing, mailing

BUDGET

Box ingredients and postage

MATERIALS

As needed for each box
Data base system

RESOURCES

KOACH

COMMENTS

This can be presented as a benefit of Sisterhood membership.
It is essential to have the exact addresses where packages can be delivered. This list needs to be updated annually.

KULANU HAVERIM: A PARENT/TODDLER HAVURAH

CATEGORY

Youth/School

INTRODUCTION

This program is geared for those children not yet of religious school age. Children and their parents meet with other families, and come together in a Jewish setting to celebrate holidays and *Shabbat* with crafts, stories and songs. The children make friends while parents network.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

1. Obtain names of families with pre-school children and invite them to an inaugural session.
2. Ask a qualified person to be the organizer/facilitator.
3. For the inaugural session, plan a craft simple enough for children from two to five years old. Choose stories and songs related to the theme. Plan and prepare a snack.
4. Explain the day's craft and its connection to Jewish life. Offer as much explanation as necessary given the make-up of the group. Serve a snack. Facilitate the parents meeting each other.
5. Set a schedule for on-going meetings, once a month or before holidays.

TIME FRAME

Ongoing, with the group determining the frequency of meeting. Meetings can be held at the synagogue or in private homes.

PERSONNEL

Organizer/facilitator (most likely a parent with age-appropriate children)
Back-up facilitator/helper

RESOURCES

Jewish crafts books, Internet sites, ideas from religious school and preschool teachers in the community

BUDGET

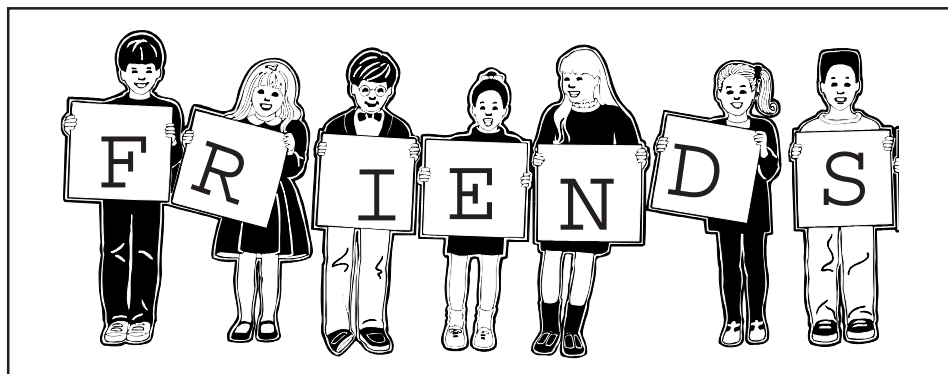
Craft supplies, refreshments. Determine whether there will be a charge to join.

COMMENTS

This has been enormously popular. If held on Sunday mornings, parents with children in the religious school spend the morning at the synagogue rather than just dropping off the older children.

MATERIALS

Crafts material, snack foods, books



PROGRAMS



shari ng

..... WOMEN'S LEAGUE ON THE WORLD SCENE

Women's League supports and participates in the programs of these organizations. As members of a Women's League Sisterhood, you are encouraged to become involved in these organizations and to call on them for programming materials and resources.

Support of Israel

Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations

www.conferenceofpresidents.org

MERCAZ (Movement to Reaffirm Conservative Judaism)

www.mercazusa.org

American Zionist Movement

www.azm.org

United Jewish Appeal

www.ujia.org

Jewish National Fund

www.jnf.org

Israel Bonds

www.israelbonds.com

Canadian Jewish Appeal

www.cjc.ca

Canadian Zionist Federation

Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel

www.masorti.org

Neve Hanna Village for Children & Youth

www.nevehanna.org

Magen David Adom

www.magendavidadom.org

Encourage Social Responsibility

Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA)

www.jewishpublicaffairs.org

NCSJ Advocates on behalf of Jews

in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia

www.ncsj.org

World Jewish Congress

www.worldjewishcongress.org

American Jewish Congress

www.ajc.org

Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

www.rccrc.org

Coalition to Stop Gun Violence

www.csgv.org

Perpetuate the Conservative Movement

Jewish Theological Seminary (New York)

www.jtsa.edu

Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies at University of Judaism

www.uj.edu/Ziegler

Schechter Institute, Jerusalem

www.schechter.edu

Seminario Rabbinico Latino Americano (Buenos Aires)

www.seminariorabinico.org.ar

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

www.uscj.org

Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs

www.fjmc.org

Masorti Olami-World Council of Synagogues

www.masortiworld.org

EDUCATE AND ADVOCATE: LET THEM KNOW!

CATEGORY

Public Policy & Advocacy

INTRODUCTION

Educate members on an issue and encourage them to inform their elected officials of their position and desired action. Issues might include Israel affairs, genocide, human trafficking, civil liberties, etc. Women's League sends out Action Alerts when there is urgency for action.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

1. Inform members about an issue through mail, e-mail, phone, or at a meeting. Schedule a meeting on the issue with expert speaker or informed panelists. Be prepared with postcards, pre-printed letters, petitions, etc. so that members can take action after getting the information.
2. Provide names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for local/national officials.
3. Encourage members to make their positions known on issues important to them through letter-writing, phone, e-mail, etc.

TIME FRAME

Procedures should be in place so that members may take immediate action whenever necessary.

PERSONNEL

Public Policy & Advocacy Chair, committee to phone and e-mail members

BUDGET

Printing and postage

MATERIALS

Educational background papers; phone-tree program (through the synagogue); broadcast e-mail capability

RESOURCES

Women's League Resolutions, newspapers, television, radio

COMMENTS

Women's League, as a member of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, can help you determine the issues for which your Sisterhood can begin an educational advocacy program.

IN THIS CORNER

CATEGORY
Public Policy and Advocacy

INTRODUCTION
This is a quick way to fill in time when waiting for a program that is late to start or if a speaker does not show up at the last minute. It's a good idea to keep a list of current "hot topics."

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE
Divide the group into smaller groups and set them up in each of the corners of the room. Give each group a current topic to discuss, such as women's health, current events, ethics, community issues, stem cell research, etc. Spend 20 minutes discussing the topics. Call everyone back together and ask a representative of each group to summarize the discussions.

TIME FRAME
Five minute introduction and set up; 20 minute discussions; 15 minute wrap-up

PERSONNEL
Moderator

BUDGET
None

MATERIALS
Chairs, cards with subjects

RESOURCES
Current newspapers and journals from the synagogue library, Women's League Resolutions

COMMENTS
An easy-to-do format that can become a regular feature of your meetings or for a last minute programming emergency

A CALL TO ACTION

CATEGORY

Israel Affairs

INTRODUCTION

To heighten awareness of Israel's current struggles and conflicts and to find ways for individuals to make a difference.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Invite a panel of speakers, such as a State Congressman, members of the media (local and Israeli, such as the Jerusalem Post), USY regional or national president, and a representative of a pro-Israel activist group such as AIPAC. The room should be set up for a panel presentation and then separate tables for small group interaction.

Speakers present for 15-20 minutes with questions after each. Break for lunch or refreshments. Return to individual tables to discuss specific issues. Provide questions and written instructions. Each table should choose a recorder to present to the whole group after the discussion.

TIME FRAME

4 hours, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM (Sunday)

PERSONNEL

Chairs for event, publicity, refreshments, liaison to organizations and speakers

BUDGET

Honoraria for speakers. Charge for luncheon.

MATERIALS

Pads and pencils on each table, refreshments
Postcards to fill out if necessary

RESOURCES

Informational material from organizations, newspapers, list of local members of congress and politicians

COMMENTS

The luncheon menu can feature Israeli foods and products from Israel.

IT'S A MITZVAH PROJECT

CATEGORY

Community Service

INTRODUCTION

This is an on-going project that could be for the year or for a specific limited time period.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

The objective is to collect specific items for a local homeless shelter. The first thing to be done is to ask the shelter for a list of needed items. Signs and labeled collections boxes should be placed around the synagogue (lobby, office, religious and nursery school entrances).

Information about the project should go in the synagogue bulletin and the local Jewish paper.

TIME FRAME

This project could be for several weeks or can be on-going.

PERSONNEL

Publicity, distributing the boxes around the synagogue, delivery to the shelter

BUDGET

Publicity and collection containers

MATERIALS

Paper and collection containers

RESOURCES

Local shelters, Jewish Family Services, local Jewish community centers

COMMENTS

This is a wonderful synagogue or community-wide project that can involve, not only the Sisterhood, but the Men's Club, USY and Religious and Nursery schools, as well.

INTERFAITH TEA

CATEGORY

Community Service

INTRODUCTION

A program to share traditions and/or timely topics with women from various religious institutions in your community.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

The first step is to identify the content of the program: book review, comparison/discussion of holidays, presentation of a topic from sacred texts. Send invitations and publicity to all the area houses of worship. Sisterhood members act as hostesses to ensure that all of the women attending the event feel welcome.

TIME FRAME

This event is a three to four hour annual event

PERSONNEL

Centerpieces, food, invitations, publicity

BUDGET

Printing costs, food, centerpieces, program speaker

MATERIALS

Centerpieces, script for the program

RESOURCES

Depending upon the scope of the program, the resources could be a local speaker, rabbi or other clergy.

COMMENTS

This can be an annual tradition in your Sisterhood. The Sisterhood that submitted this program has been holding the event for over 40 years.

Recommended topics:

Speaker discuss women's stories from sacred texts

Highlighting Jewish holidays

Speaker on Righteous Gentiles

Presentation about Women's League's *Beauty, Brains and Brawn: The New World Balabuste*

WEDDING MEMORIES

CATEGORY

Jewish Living/Community Service

INTRODUCTION

Share wedding memories, pictures, and attire and then contribute the gowns to a charity

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Create a wedding atmosphere with hors d'oeuvres and wine. The wedding gowns, mother of the bride and/or bridesmaid dresses can be displayed around the room. "Guests" can be asked to bring wedding pictures for display or for a game of "Guess the Bride." For a *Z'hava* event, it might be fun for the women to model their own gowns.

There are several organizations which collect the dresses for donations to brides who can't afford them. Invite a representative to speak about the charity.

An added attraction could be an exhibit of wedding contracts (*ketubbot*) with a speaker or artist to discuss them.

TIME FRAME

An evening program

PERSONNEL

Food, decorations, liaison with charity

BUDGET

Food, decorations, invitations

MATERIALS

Invitations, flowers (which can be donated by a local florist), displays for pictures and/or *ketubot*

COMMENTS

In Miami, Bridal Gemach accepts all female wedding attire to be donated to needy Jewish women. Other organizations around the country and in Israel would appreciate donations of wedding attire.



READ TO ME

CATEGORY

Community Service

INTRODUCTION

A special time to share and read to youngsters

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Volunteers go to a shelter for abused or homeless women and spend time reading books to the children, either brought from home or donated by a local bookstore.

TIME FRAME

This can be done once a week or more, preferably one day in the morning and another day in the evening so that older children can experience the program. Most of the volunteer readers read for 30-45 minutes at a time.

PERSONNEL

Contact with home
Coordinator of readers
Readers

BUDGET

Books (if not donated)

MATERIALS

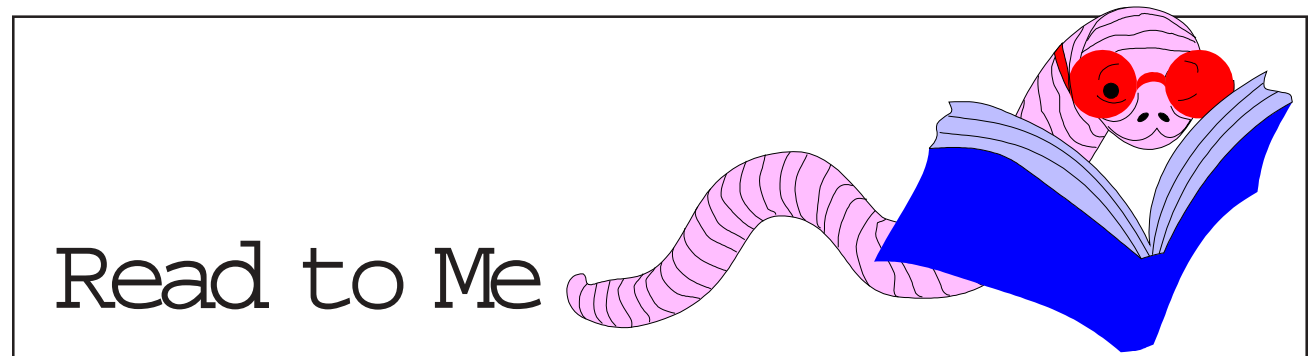
Books

RESOURCES

Local shelters, Jewish Family Services and the local Jewish community center

COMMENTS

This could be a wonderful inter-generational project for USY and Sisterhood.



FROM OY TO OHM

CATEGORY

Women's Health, Jewish Living

INTRODUCTION

A yoga class that draws on Jewish spiritual sources as well as the Eastern inspirations of yoga.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

A qualified teacher should be hired, schedule set up (once a week is best), registration requested. A quiet room with a comfortable floor is needed.

TIME FRAME

One and a half hours every week

PERSONNEL

Publicity, registration, instructor

BUDGET

Salary, room rental

MATERIALS

Exercise mats (or ask everyone to bring her own), cd player

COMMENTS

If you provide babysitting, this can be a wonderful program to integrate the generations in your Sisterhood



TO LIFE! SISTERHOOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR HEALTHY LIVING

CATEGORY

Women's Health

INTRODUCTION

This is an opportunity for women to learn from health care professionals. Attendees visit different booths for information, to have questions answered, and to pick up pertinent materials. Women of all ages enjoy and benefit from this program.

DESCRIPTION/PROCEDURE

Arrange for health care professionals to staff various booths. Invite a physician to introduce the event with a talk about women's health.

Professionals can include doctors, dentists, chiropractors, podiatrists, nutritionists/dieticians, pharmacists, fitness trainers. They can provide testing for blood pressure, glucose, bone density, as well as instructions for breast self-examination, and information on herbs and vitamins.

As an added attraction, serve a healthy buffet dinner or luncheon.

PERSONNEL

A large committee to arrange for the professionals, publicity, invitations, foods, and set-ups/clean-up. This needs at least six months planning.

BUDGET

Charge \$18.00 – 28.00 per person to cover expenses

COMMENTS

Provide a session or area for teens focusing on dermatology issues, exercise, eating disorders, date rape, campus safety, etc.

THE SISTERHOOD PLANNER

Scripts

DESCRIPTIONS OF SELECTED SCRIPTS

SAMPLE INSTALLATION SCRIPTS

Jewish Traditions Flowing With Milk and Honey

Kolot Nashim: Women's Voices

SAMPLE TRIGGER SCRIPTS

When Is It Time For Me?

Letters: Bintel Briefs for Today

Contact Women's League for a complete listing of available scripts.

Scripts Available from Women's League

INSTALLATION

Jewish Traditions Flowing with Milk and Honey:

Candies and sweets serve as metaphors for incoming and outgoing officers. (included)

Musically Speaking (Cantor Rena Shapiro, Temple Beth-El, Poughkeepsie, NY) Participants sing a number of easily recognizable pieces of music appropriate to the work of the officers.

Let Us Have Songs (Ellen Leonard, Bnai Sholom, Newington, CT) Contemporary Israeli songs accompany installation

Hiddur Mitzvah: Treasures of Our People (Rabbi Michael Katz, Temple Beth Torah, Westbury, NY) Ritual objects associated with different officers are handed from outgoing to incoming officers. Women are called according to the formula for *aliyot*.

A Remembrance of Our Mothers (Miriam Goldfarb, Adat Ari-El, Van Nuys, CA) Women who are being installed are connected to women of the past. The primary focus is the relationships between the installed women and their immediate female forebears.

Special Days: The Special Women of Sisterhood (Ronni Karlsberg, Temple Beth Abraham, Nashua, NH) A celebration of women who fulfill special functions appropriate to the calendar of Sisterhood. Each official function is associated with a particular holiday.

Walk in the Path of Understanding (Phyllis Haas, Philadelphia, PA) Using inspirational quotes from famous personalities and world literature, officers are charged to find models of wisdom from the past.

Torah: An Installation (Rickie Leiter, Barbara Sanofsky, Temple Beth-El, Springfield, MA) Officers are associated with the Torah and its binder, breastplate and *yad*. Good for *shabbat*.

I Am Confident and Unafraid: (Lila Nass, Central NJ) Employing *havdalah* as a metaphor for the separation between *shabbat* and the weekdays, this installation separates the ending of one

administration and the beginning of a new one. Good for *havdalah* installation.

One Heart One Purpose (Lois Silverman, Temple Beth El, Utica, NY) Outgoing and incoming officers, who serve with dedicated hearts, are associated with biblical and other statements about the word *heart*.

Sound and Light (Gertrude Klaus, Highland Park Conservative Temple and Center, Highland Park, NJ) Each officer is likened to various parts of the sanctuary. It is meant to be done in a darkened room, using a spotlight to shine on the individual officers and the area of the sanctuary associated with her office.

TRIGGER

When Is It Time for Me? (Zelda Wolf Jacobs, Adath Israel, Cincinnati, OH) Different women (i.e. unmarried, single mother, caretaker for elderly parents) deal with the conflict of time for others and time for self. (included)

A Woman's Place: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (Barbara Hollander, Central NJ): Situations in which women might find themselves compromised by authority figures.

Help! I Need Somebody (Lois Silverman, Temple Beth-El, Utica, NY) The need for community and Sisterhood's role in providing support and friendship post-funeral, post-emotional or physical trauma.

Do You Hear Me? (Lillian Hemmendinger, Ethel Klein, Audrey Napchen and Lila Nass, Central NJ) Expectations parents place on children.

Male and Female He Created Them (Diane Bernstein, Beth Shalom, Clearwater, FL) Several issues dealing with homosexuality within the Jewish community.

Letters: Bintel Briefs for Today (Lois Silverman, Temple Beth-El, Utica, NY) An introduction of several issues facing today's Jews. (included)

SISTERHOOD INSTALLATION

JEWISH TRADITIONS FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY

By Sue Bengele and Carol Simon (Florida Branch)

Suggestion: distribute candies as you go through the program.

We have much in which to take pride, for our accomplishments are many. We have deep, strong roots nourished over the years by wise and compassionate leadership, and our current administration has continued in this tradition.

The Talmud tells us that honey is one of the seven healing substances. Tonight, we honor the honey in our Sisterhood; the sweetness of our Sisterhood leadership, those who have served Sisterhood for the past year and those who will be our “honey” for the next year.

This evening is dedicated to our Sisterhood leadership, but let us not forget that our Sisterhood has benefited from those that have come before us, those who nurtured us who, like the bee, spread honey year after year. It is because of the strength of our women that our Sisterhood is one of the best in the Women’s League network.

We are blessed as a Sisterhood and as individuals to continue to receive wisdom, love and sweetness from our past Sisterhood presidents [names].

We are reminded of the sweetness of Judaism in each of the Jewish holidays by the foods we eat.

During Rosh Hashanah, in almost every community, Jews eat sweet fruits to evoke a sweet year. Honey is added to many dishes. Many Jews greet each other with words that express hope for a good, healthy and sweet New Year.

Will the outgoing Board of Directors please rise.

Each of you assumed the responsibility of a portfolio over the past year. You have ensured that our Sisterhood thrived under your leadership. We know that we can continue to depend upon your support of the goals of Women’s League, **Now and Later**. On behalf of Sisterhood we thank you and hereby discharge you from your duties as members of the Board of Directors. Please be seated.

On Yom Kippur, the fast is broken in many communities by eating sweet buns made with cinnamon, nuts and raisins. Sukkot dishes have been adopted from the many lands of the Diaspora.

Will the outgoing Treasurer please rise.

We now have the facts and figures you entered to guide us to future accomplishments. On behalf of Sisterhood, we thank you for your accuracy and dependability, worth at least **100 Grand**. You are officially discharged from your duties. Please be seated.

Will the outgoing Corresponding, Financial and Recording Secretaries please rise.

Our three secretaries, our **Three Musketeers**, have worked tirelessly to help Sisterhood run smoothly. You have sent our messages, recorded our words and watched over our financial obligations. Your responsibilities have not always been among the most glamorous but they certainly have been among the most important. We say a hearty *todah rabbah* for a job well done. You are officially discharged from your duties. Please be seated.

Will the outgoing Community Service Vice President please rise.

You represented us with dignity and grace as you carried out your duties. Thanks to your work, we have carried on a great tradition. We know that you will continue bringing **S'more** credit and honor to yourself and to our Sisterhood. On behalf of Sisterhood, we say *todah rabbah* and officially discharge you from your duties. Please be seated.

Will the outgoing Education Vice President please rise.

You have had the task of being our teacher. You have brought into our Sisterhood knowledge of our Jewish heritage and joy into our *davening*. You have shared so much with us. We have been able to savor all the treats you brought to us as though we were walking down **5th Avenue** and admiring all its treasures. *Todah rabbah* for leading us down the path of knowledge. You are officially discharged from your duties. Please be seated.

Will the outgoing Torah Fund Vice President please rise.

By your actions, you have encouraged a higher standard of interest and participation from all with whom you have worked. Your focus and optimism have enhanced our Sisterhood. Knowing you will continue to serve Sisterhood with a **Starburst** of enthusiasm, we thank you and discharge you from your duties of this office. Please be seated.

Will the outgoing Membership Vice President please rise.

As Membership Vice President, you have ensured that our Sisterhood continues to grow in numbers. The women of Sisterhood have called on you to be their **Lifesaver**, with your expertise and ideas on how to attract and keep members. You have helped Sisterhood grow and flourish and you have achieved the goals of your office with dedication and a smile. *Todah rabbah* for a job well done. You are officially discharged from your duties. Please be seated.

On Simhat Torah, a round carrot sandwich with honey symbolized gold coins and the worth of the Torah. In Vilna, Shabbat Bereishit was known as the Honey Sabbath.

Will [the current president] please rise and come forward.

Your administration has brought new ideas and acclaim to our Sisterhood. You have been our teacher and our guide. You have looked both to the past and to the future and you have influenced our progress with your wisdom, creativity, vision, dedication, commitment and strength. Everyone has come to appreciate your inner beauty. During your presidency, you could often be overheard saying to a member of Sisterhood, "I am so proud of you; you are doing such an outstanding job!" It is with love, affection and respect that we mark this mo-**Mentos** occasion. We thank you tonight for all that you have done for our Sisterhood and we now officially discharge you from the office of president. You can now **Take 5**. *Mazal tov!*

[Outgoing president gives remarks.]

The sweetness of Hanukkah is enhanced with chocolate gelt. Sephardic Jews serve bimuelos, round doughnuts, rolled in cinnamon and honey and Israelis serve sufganot, jelly-filled doughnuts.

The following women have been elected to the Board of Directors for the _____ term [read the

names]. Will you please rise.

Indispensable to the smooth functioning of Sisterhood's multifarious activities are its Board members. Through your strong belief in the goals of Sisterhood you will help promote projects that will strengthen the bonds between our members, the Conservative Movement and *klal Yisrael*, the Jewish people everywhere. You are the **Milky Way** of Sisterhood. It is with great pleasure that we install you as members of the Board of Directors. *Mazal tov!* Please be seated.

For Purim, women in Eastern communities made sugar-starch fingers causing non-Jews to call Purim the sugar festival. Sephardic and Eastern communities alike bake sweet cakes filled with almonds, nuts and marzipan, honey cakes, strudels, cookies, and hamantaschen.

Will [Treasurer] please rise and come forward.

You are being honored today with the task of keeping the books of Sisterhood's accounts and it is your responsibility to keep accurate finances for the next two years. We will look to you to continue the management of our treasury. Your **PayDay** is helping Sisterhood remain fiscally responsible. We hereby charge you with the duties of Treasurer. *Mazal tov!*

Will [Corresponding Secretary] please rise and come forward.

It will be your responsibility to keep the members of Sisterhood aware of what is happening, both in Sisterhood and with our members. It will be your job to inform our members of the happy and not so happy occasions in our lives so that we can share lots of **Kisses** with our Sisterhood family. We know that you will be a wonderful messenger, linking all members of Sisterhood together. We hereby charge you with the duties of Corresponding Secretary. *Mazal tov!*

Will [Financial Secretary] please rise and come forward.

As Financial Secretary, you will be responsible for maintaining accurate records of our membership billing, keeping our financial standards high and in good order. We have no doubt that in **Crunch** time, you will contact each of our members to make sure that they pay their dues in a timely manner. We hereby charge you with the duties of Financial Secretary. *Mazal tov!*

Will [Recording Secretary] please rise and come forward.

As Recording Secretary, it will be your task to record the minutes and all the **Tidbits** of information that occur at meetings and events. We know that your minutes will be precise, accurate and as interesting as you are! We hereby charge you with the duties of Recording Secretary. *Mazal tov!*

Will [Community Service Vice President] please rise and come forward.

As Community Service Vice President, it will be your responsibility to develop programs to stimulate and educate the membership of Sisterhood about *tikkun olam*, repairing the world. You are **Ms. Goodbar** for all of us. We hereby charge you with the duties of Community Service Vice President. *Mazal tov!*

Will [Education Vice President] please rise and come forward.

Within the scope of education, there are many areas designed to inform and educate, from the reading of books of Jewish content to practical lessons regarding ritual observances, and the many creative

Jewish art projects that enhance our homes and synagogue. Like **Coins of All Nations**, there are many aspects of education that link together to form the whole. As Vice President of Education you will keep us informed and enlightened so that our commitment to the education of the women of Sisterhood, and their families, may continue. We hereby charge you with the duties of Education Vice President. *Mazal tov!*

Will [Torah Fund Vice President] please rise and come forward.

You represent the hopes and dreams of the future. In fulfilling your duties as Torah Fund Vice President, you will make significant contributions to Conservative Judaism. A dove soars high to reach its goals. You are our **Dove**, for we know that you will be soaring ever higher to carry out your office with compassion, wisdom and foresight. We hereby charge you with the duties of Torah Fund Vice President. *Mazal tov!*

Will [Membership Vice President] please rise and come forward.

The task of keeping Sisterhood together goes to you. As Vice President of Membership, you will see that new members and old are bound together. We look to you to increase our numbers as well as to increase participation in Sisterhood. We know that with your quick smile, your boundless energy and your willingness to give everyone a **Hug**, Sisterhood will grow and flourish. We hereby charge you with the duties of Membership Vice President. *Mazal tov!*

The Bible refers to Israel as the "land of milk and honey." This metaphor suggests comfort, sweetness and peace, all of which describe our Sisterhood. On Shavuot, in celebration of the giving of the law from Sinai, Mount Sinai-shaped sweets and cakes are served in many communities. Since the Torah is compared with milk and honey, honey cake and cheesecake are often served.

Would [President] please rise and come forward.

There is a special quality about someone who conducts her life performing *mitzvot* and *gemilut hasadim*, acts of lovingkindness. There is a glow about her, a goodness, a sweetness, a vitality, an inner strength. [_____] has special qualities that have led her to the office of President of Sisterhood. She is our **Sugar Baby!** When a job is required, she never shirks responsibility, but rather attacks it with a smile and expert care, as if there was a **Pot of Gold** at the end.

We have talked of the sweetness of each holiday and the sweet attributes of our outgoing and incoming Board, which have all been inspired by the sweetness of our incoming president, [_____]. Although each of our officers fits a particular category, it is our president who serves in a very special capacity. She is being honored with the highest office we can bestow, that of the presidency of Sisterhood. It's an impressive title and you are an impressive woman who will wear it well. You have demonstrated an unusually willing heart and a winning smile that makes everyone want to work with you. Your skills of organization are matched by your creativity and your dedication to Jewish life and growth. You will bring to the office of president the unique stamp of your personality and your expertise, and our Sisterhood will benefit because of it.

It is now our honor and pleasure to install you as Sisterhood president for _____. *Mazal tov!*

[Present president with pin and gavel. Incoming president offers remarks.]

Tonight, as we begin the next chapter in our history, we charge our new leadership to carry on the

SISTERHOOD INSTALLATION

KOLOT NASHIM: WOMEN'S VOICES

Written by Pacific Southwest Branch

This script was written for the 2004 Women's League Biennial Convention to augment the exhibit Beauty, Brains & Brawn: The New World Balabuste celebrating the lives of 31 Jewish women who contributed wisdom and creativity, their voices, to the world. The script includes these women, however, you may choose other Jewish women or select a few from each group in this script. An excellent prop is the Beauty, Brains & Brawn: The New World Balabuste poster series created by Women's League. (Sets of posters available from WLCJ office).

[One or more narrators may read the script.]

Tonight as we welcome and honor the women of the outgoing and incoming Board of ____, we also celebrate the lives of Jewish women whom we recognize for their wisdom, strength, courage, and creativity. Although the diversity of their lives took them on different journeys, they share a heritage and a tradition. As both Jews and women, they often overcame great difficulties while following their dreams and some rose to incredible heights of achievement and influence.

They were and are women who excelled in commerce, finance, sports, philanthropy, science, law, and education; some were authors, others entertainers. Their individual voices were heard around the world and they, together with our women here tonight, have made, and continue to make a difference! They are an integral part of *Kolot Nashim*, Women's Voices from the past and present.

Among some of these women's voices are our past presidents whom we are honored to have here with us this evening. As your name is called, please rise and remain standing.

(Call names of past presidents in attendance)

Your voices through the years have provided our foundation, encouraged us, and continue to help us to maintain our high standards, and we thank you. You may be seated.

DISCHARGE OF OUTGOING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We ask the outgoing Board of Directors, for the years ____ to please stand.

As you conclude your service on our Board of Directors and take pride in the work you have accomplished, we present the following women who excelled in the field of sports using their energy and athletic talents. Like you, their passion and their voices were heard through their accomplishments. They had the strength and desire to participate and compete for something meaningful in their lives.

BOBBIE ROSENFELD was an Olympic gold medallist from Canada at the 1928 International Olympic Games in Amsterdam. She helped to topple traditional barriers against women participating in sports, by first being an all around athlete, then later a coach and sportswriter.

SENDA BERENSON born in Vilna in 1868, was known as the "Mother of Women's Basket Ball." She was the author and developer of the first basketball guide for women, which stressed socialization and cooperation rather than just competition.

THELMA "TIBY" EISEN played in the All American Girls Professional Baseball League of the 1940s and '50s, when women filled the roles of professional male ball players during World War II.

These female professional baseball players were memorialized in the movie “A League of Their Own.”

You, as Board members, have demonstrated a desire to participate in leadership positions with your talent, time and energy. We are grateful and say *todah rabbah*. We discharge you from office with the knowledge that we may continue to count on your expertise. Please be seated.

DISCHARGE OF TABLE OFFICERS

Will the following outgoing Officers please come forward:

- (Name) Treasurer
- (Name) Financial Secretary
- (Name) Recording Secretary

The women we highlight next came from upper-class backgrounds. They could have spent their time and money in self-indulgence, but instead, raised their voices and chose to work in areas that gave meaning and purpose to the larger community.

ARLENE SCHINITZER a philanthropist born in 1929 in Salem, Oregon, is the region’s most renowned patron of the arts. She is one of the founders of the Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies at the University of Oregon, and The Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation which provides assistance to those whose needs are not met by other charitable agencies.

REBECCA GRATZ, born in 1781, was the foremost American Jewish woman of her day, and one of the earliest known Jewish women activists. She organized the first Jewish Sunday school, worked to create charitable and educational institutions and helped found the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society and the Philadelphia Jewish Foster Home and Orphan Asylum.

These women, through their devotion to their communities, answered the voices of those who cried out in need. You have answered the call of our Sisterhood with your financial and historical portfolios. You have maintained scrupulous records and have contributed to fiscal and policy decisions of our organization.

You exemplify high standards of trust, confidence and integrity. We applaud the dedication and the extraordinary efforts you have made and it is with deep appreciation and admiration that we discharge you from your respective offices. Please be seated.

DISCHARGE OF OUTGOING VICE PRESIDENTS

We call upon the outgoing vice presidents to come forward: (Names and titles)

The following women have been engaged in the fields of medicine and health. Their voices contributed in ways that would vastly improve the quality of our lives.

JESSIE MARMORSTON, born in 1903, was a physician, scientist, professor of medicine and author. Her research into the connection between hormone secretion and cancer contributed to the discovery of the link between stress and disease.

BESSIE LOUISE MOSES founded the Bureau of Contraceptive Advice in 1927, the first birth control clinic in Baltimore, Maryland. She instructed doctors in contraceptive strategies and was a lecturer in women’s educational institutions throughout the country.

ROSALYN YALOW became the first American born woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize in

Medicine in 1977 for the development of a technique to measure insulin in the blood of diabetics. She continues to be a beacon for young women who aspire to the highest levels of achievement in science. Dr. Yalow was honored by Women's League's with the Mathilde Schechter Award in 1978.

These three women held highly regarded positions in medicine and developed techniques that helped to make a difference in our world.

As vice-presidents you have helped to make a difference in our Sisterhood and beyond. You were always ready to act with enthusiasm and expertise. We acknowledge with much appreciation your commitment, wisdom and determination. You are an inspiration to those who follow. We express our gratitude for your work, time and effort, and we discharge you from your vice-presidencies. *Todah rabbah*. Please be seated.

DISCHARGE OF PRESIDENT

And now, (President), please come forward. As we prepare to discharge you from the office of president, we highlight the following three women:

ROSA SONNENSCHNEIN, born in Austria in 1847, was the founder and editor of *The American Jewess*, the first English language magazine for Jewish women in North America. An ardent Zionist, she was one of the 21 women attendees at the First and Second Zionist Congresses.

RUTH BADER GINSBURG was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the United States Supreme Court in 1993. The first Jewish justice since 1969, she is known for scholarly and balanced opinions and is an especially ardent advocate for gender-related issues.

LILLIAN RIFKIN BLUMENFELD, the daughter of Russian immigrants, was born in 1897 and raised in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. She was a progressive educator with a boundless love and commitment to her students. She believed that the classroom was not only the place to access knowledge, but also a laboratory for daily living.

With their voices, these women have been innovators in their chosen fields. Their determination, perseverance and democratic style of leadership, have paved the way for us all.

(Name of President), you can be described as an innovator. You have done more than lead. You continue to inspire and motivate our women to take on new challenges, while always being invested in their successes. What a superb leader and wonderful role model you are for all of us! As president of our Sisterhood, you have (list her accomplishments and other personal reflections)

We discharge you with deep appreciation and know that you will continue to be a blessing to our Sisterhood and to Women's League. *Y'ishar kohahekh*.

INCOMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We are proud to say that we "stand on the shoulders of the ones who came before us," as we now ask the Incoming Board of Directors to please rise:

As you begin your term of office on the Board of Directors for ____ we are proud to showcase women who used their voices in the field of entertainment.

PAULINE BERMAN, born on the eve of the 20th century, demonstrated great talent and energy as an institutional organizer. She was the first woman in the nation to host her own radio program in

Orlando, Florida, and became renowned for speaking out against hate, bigotry and prejudice.

SOPHIE TUCKER was considered radical for an Orthodox woman at the turn of the twentieth century. Having been dubbed the “Red Hot Mama” of the Ziegfeld Follies, she became a beloved stage star on two continents and referred to herself as a “gutsy model of ahead-of-her-time feminism.”

THEDA BARA was born Theodosia Goodman in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1890, and became famous for her portrayal of sexy, beautiful, predatory women. She was alluring, unusual, and referred to as “the vamp.” She was the first fabricated screen star.

GILDA RADNER, born in Detroit in 1946, is best known for her comedic abilities especially on Saturday Night Live, delighting audiences with her sharp and witty repertoire. Diagnosed with terminal ovarian cancer, Gilda dedicated the rest of her too-brief life to helping other cancer patients and their families.

DORA WASSERMAN was born in 1919 in Chernikhov, Ukraine. Known as the *grande dame* of the Yiddish Theater in Canada, she preserved and gave voice to strengthening Yiddish culture.

We are aware that it is the duty of the Board of Directors to lead, believing that a great leader is not necessarily the one in the spotlight, but often the one leading the applause. Women are intrinsic to their own times. This is your time! We look forward to the next few years as you raise your voices and build bridges to the future of our Sisterhood, and Women’s League for Conservative Judaism. It is our pleasure to officially install you and wish you *mazal tov*. Please be seated.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

We continue with the installation of table officers. Please come forward: (Names and Offices)

Although the following six women lived in different times and places, they represent some of the best, most creative and brightest in the business and financial world.

CARRIE MARCUS NEIMAN, merchant and fashion authority, established Neiman Marcus Department Stores in 1907. Her high standard of service and uncompromising demand for quality became a signature of the company.

IDA COHEN ROSENTHAL, a Russian immigrant who came to the United States penniless, founded the Maidenform Bra Company in 1928. As a result of her success she established and funded the Ida William Rosenthal Fellowship in Judaica and Hebraica at New York University.

JENNIE GROSSINGER who was born in Austria in 1892, turned a run-down Catskill Mountain farm into an American institution. Always involved in charitable causes, she raised millions of dollars in war bonds during World War II.

SHIRLEY POLYKOFF was born in Brooklyn in 1908 and believed that women could be whatever they wanted to be, including blonde. She set the world afire with her famous slogan for Clairol, “Does she or doesn’t she?”

ESTEE LAUDER was born Josephine Esther Mentzer to immigrant parents in 1910. She transformed beauty into big business by cultivating classy sales methods and giving away samples, to create a cosmetic empire.

RUTH MOSKO HANDLER, co-founder of Mattel, Inc., was known as “Barbie’s Mom.” Introduced in 1959, Barbie has become a \$2.6 billion business. In 1975, Ruth, a breast cancer survivor, gratefully and proudly established “Nearly Me,” a company that manufactures breast prostheses.

These women listened to their inner voices, excelling in their spheres of business. Leaving a legacy of success and achievement, each understood that leadership is not only position, but also action.

We know that each of you possesses the wisdom and perseverance of these women. Your tasks involve important financial and detailed record keeping. We know you will use your talents, skills and vigor to carry out the responsibilities of your respective offices and bring dedication to your new positions, enhanced by your optimism and organizational expertise.

It gives us great pleasure to install you as the (name the offices) of _____ Sisterhood for the term of _____ *Mazal tov!* Please be seated.

INSTALLATION OF VICE PRESIDENTS

We turn to our incoming Vice Presidents. As your name is called, please come forward: (Names and vice presidencies)

The following women were passionate about, and devoted to, the fields of education and religion where their voices were heard.

RAY FRANK was born in 1861, and although never ordained, was known as the Girl Rabbi of the West. One newspaper called her the “first woman since Deborah to preach in a synagogue.” Her tireless efforts and lifelong enthusiasm for Judaism opened the door for Jewish women’s long journey toward public religious leadership.

MATHILDE ROTH SCHECHTER was born in Germany in 1857. As the wife of Rabbi Solomon Schechter, she was the founder and organizer of National Women’s League of the United Synagogue of America, the original name of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism. A passionate advocate for Jewish education for all Jewish women, Mathilde Schechter, together with Henrietta Szold, was also a co-founder of Hadassah.

ANNE LAPIDUS LERNER was the first woman appointed to a high administrative rank in a Jewish educational institution of higher learning. Today she remains a distinguished member of the Jewish Theological Seminary faculty, author and lecturer.

The voices of these women were motivational forces in their respective fields of endeavor. They inspired, educated and earned the respect of men and women alike. Many times their aspirations were met with discouragement, but they moved forward with faith, devotion, commitment, and sincerity of purpose.

We are witness to your sincerity and know that each of you brings the qualifications of knowledge and understanding to the office of vice president. You have shown yourselves to be outstanding leaders.

We officially install you as vice-presidents of _____ Sisterhood aware that your leadership will bring our organization to even greater heights.

We wish you *hatzlahah*, success, and *simhah rabbah*, much joy. Please be seated.

INCOMING PRESIDENT

It is with joy that we invite (Name) to please come forward as we prepare to install you as our president for the next ____ years.

We take this opportunity to reflect upon three prominent women authors. Their voices will always be heard thanks to their books, plays and publications.

LILLIAN HELLMAN, born in 1905, was one of the major playwrights and authors of 20th century America. Never breaking with her steadfast determination and beliefs, particularly during the infamous McCarthy hearings, her plays often reflected social justice themes that provoked controversy.

SADIE ROSE WEILERSTEIN was a leading author of Jewish children’s books and short stories. *K’tonton*, the Jewish Tom Thumb, and the best known of her characters, first appeared in Outlook Magazine in 1930. She received the Yovel Award from Women’s League.

JUDY BLUME started her climb to recognition as a best selling author of children’s books, with 75 million copies translated into more than 20 languages. Her love of children led her to establish The Kids Fund, a charitable and educational foundation.

(Name), authors bring wisdom, inspiration, excitement, imagination and beauty to our lives, and that is what you continue to bring to our esteemed organization.

[Add a few personal things about the president, her leadership qualities, and accomplishments in Sisterhood.]

We have recognized Jewish women from the past and the present, who used their individual voices in their various journeys. The authors and writers to whom we referred, not only composed and created, but they were involved in the process of education.

Through your years of service to Sisterhood, you have used your voice to lead, teach and inspire. In your journey to this special day, you have done more than just believe, and work, you have helped to create a vital and dedicated Sisterhood, and we thank you for making a difference!

It is with great joy and pride that I officially install you as President of _____ Sisterhood for the years _____. May you go from strength to strength. *Mazal tov!*

[Present President’s Pin and gavel or any other gifts]

President’s remarks

CONCLUSION

We have heard about the different roads and endeavors women have chosen and we are proud of their accomplishments, fortitude and perseverance.

Each of you here is a positive force for our future. We know that through our individual voices, each one of us in Sisterhood makes a difference!

Jewish women choose different paths in life, but no matter the road, we take a little of each other everywhere!

TRIGGER SCRIPT

WHEN IS IT TIME FOR ME?

by Zelda Wolf Jacobs (Adath Israel Sisterhood, Cincinnati, Ohio)
Written for the Women's League Biennial Convention 1988

CAST

Kol Isha (Every woman whose narration links the vignettes)
Single woman, her biological clock running out
Woman with divorced daughter and grandchildren
Woman with elderly parent
Widowed woman/divorced woman
Super woman
Friend

TIME

25 minutes + discussion

KOL ISHA: A woman is a multi-faceted being. She begins as a daughter and then she becomes many things ... a sister, a girlfriend, a wife, a second wife, a mother, a career woman, a nurturer, a caregiver, a divorcee, a single parent, a widow, single by choice, single by chance, half a couple, a grandmother, alone ...

She is pulled in many different directions and is confronted by multiple choices, some thrust upon her and not by her own volition. And every once in a while, she justifiably asks, "When is it time for me?"

Do you remember your dreams when you were a little girl? I remember mine. I loved playing make believe and I dreamed that someday I would grow up, meet someone tall, dark and handsome, get married, have four children, and live happily ever after. It didn't turn out that way.

VIGNETTE I: SINGLE WOMAN, BIOLOGICAL CLOCK RUNNING OUT

WOMAN: You know we've been friends for a long time. We've gone through a lot together, and I want to share something with you. I've thought about this a long time and I've finally made a decision: I'm going to have a baby.

FRIEND: Are you sure? Babies are forever!

WOMAN: Don't think I don't have a lot of misgivings, but I'm 35 years old and pretty soon it'll be too late. It doesn't look like I'm going to be married any time soon.

I would have loved to have had a traditional marriage and family, but that just didn't happen. I didn't want to get married when I was in school, and then I didn't find anyone with the right chemistry. Anyway, I wasn't ready to settle down. I had career goals. By the time I reached 30, there were fewer opportunities, and where do you find eligible Jewish men at my age?

FRIEND: I hear you. But what will your parents say about an unmarried daughter and a grandchild?

WOMAN: My mother will be upset at first but then she'll be supportive. My father won't talk about it. He'll hope it'll just go away.

FRIEND: What will you do about your job? Can you work all the way through your pregnancy? How will you explain it to your co-workers?

WOMAN: I don't have to give any explanations and I'm not doing anything I'm ashamed of. I'll take vacation and maternity leave just like everyone else having a baby.

FRIEND: But how will you cope as the kid grows older? What will you do when the baby is up all night with colic or teething? And what about when the baby's sick?

WOMAN: Look, I'll have to work it all out. I know I want this baby more than anything. I want something of me left when I'm gone.

FRIEND: Have you thought about this person you're talking about? Babies grow up. What will you tell the kid when it asks about its father? He was a sperm bank donor?

WOMAN: I've always done what was expected of me. I've been a good daughter and a successful businesswoman. Should I feel guilty about doing something that is so important to me? **When is it time for me?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS

1. Is the woman justified in denying her child a male role model?
2. Is she justified in bringing a child into the world in an artificial situation to satisfy her own desires?
3. Could the Zero Population Growth argument be relevant here? Or is the opposite relevant, in view of the need for Jews to increase their numbers?
4. Can and should the Jewish community provide support for women in this situation? How?

KOLISHA: Life has a way of playing tricks on you, doesn't it? Perhaps your story is a little different. Perhaps you did marry. Perhaps you did have those children. What did you dream for them? Happiness? A family of their own? Financial independence and the *naches* of seeing them get on with their lives? Sometimes it does happen that way, but sometimes

VIGNETTE II: MOTHER WITH DIVORCED DAUGHTER AND GRANDCHILDREN

WOMAN: Rachel's back home with us, now that her divorce is final. I ache for her. After ten years, her marriage is a statistic. And what a change for us, having her home! Three generations in one house, and each with a different way of living.

FRIEND: I'm so sorry to hear that. How old are your grandchildren?

WOMAN: David is 9 and Mollie is 7.

FRIEND: What made Rachel decide to move home? I'd have thought that she'd want to stay where her friends are.

WOMAN: She thought she'd be better off near us. The divorce and move have been really tough on David and Mollie and living here gives them some stability. But it's tough on me.

FRIEND: I don't know if I could live with my daughter again no matter how well we get along. And as for my grandchildren, I like to love them and leave them.

WOMAN: Everyone's been trying really hard, but it's been difficult. Bedtime is hectic. Rachel lets them stay up much too late. Meals are worse. I don't say too much because there are enough stresses on the three of them without my adding to it. But I can't stand shoes and clothes all over; their music shatters my ears; we don't like the same television shows. Should I have to buy another television set to keep peace in the house? I'm trying to be reasonable and Rachel is trying, too. It's just hard to walk the line between being understanding and having reasonable expectations.

FRIEND: You'd think that when your children get married and move out, your responsibilities and worries would be over! At least the children are in school.

WOMAN: That's another thing. I thought I was finished with carpooling 20 years ago. Rachel's been out looking for a job, so I have to be home to meet the school bus, then drive the kids to Hebrew School and pick them up two hours later. I never thought I'd have to do that again. And meals for five people seven days a week! Remember when your children were young, and you went into the bathroom and locked the door because that was the only place you could get some privacy? I'm doing that again.

FRIEND: I feel for you, but what can you do? You have to be there for your children when they need you. How is Richard coping?

WOMAN: Barely. He tunes out a lot. David and Mollie are his pride and joy, from afar. In the house, it's another story. He's not long on patience. I try to keep things on an even keel in the house. Why do I always end up the referee?

FRIEND: You need extra hands, extra wheels and extra hours!

WOMAN: And a different conscience. I'm angry all the time. I'm jealous of Richard because he can walk away each day. I'm angry with Rachel for not working harder at her marriage and then coming back with her children and expecting me to watch them. I really feel put upon. Now is the time when I should be free to do what I want for myself. I want to make it easier for Rachel and her children, but **when is it time for me?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are Jewish mothers more obligated than other mothers to manage the family?
2. When is it time to say "enough"?
3. What behavior is reasonable to expect from grown children moving back home? When should a parent permit grown children to move home?
4. What should be the responsibilities of grandparents toward their grandchildren?
5. How can everyone's space be successfully respected in a multi-generational household?

KOLISHA: We are often frazzled by the hectic pace of life when there aren't enough hours in the day, and sometimes we just want to stop the world and get off. We may be sustained by the anticipation of our oldest child's getting a driver's license and relieving us of some of the carpooling. Yet we're terrified at the thought of that child behind the wheel of a car.

Sometimes we are thrust into a role we never anticipated playing. When you were young and dreaming of your future, did you ever think you'd be parenting your parents?

VIGNETTE III: WOMAN WITH AN ELDERLY PARENT

WOMAN: I can't go with you to the meeting today. I have to take my mother to the doctor.

FRIEND: Isn't she driving any more?

WOMAN: Not if I can help it! She's getting a little confused and last week she got lost. She just couldn't remember where to turn and went way out of her way. She made it home okay but she was very upset. So now I think I need to take her wherever she wants to go.

FRIEND: I know what you're going through. After my mother died, my father went downhill fast. He couldn't cope. After he set two fires when he left pots on the stove, we realized he couldn't be on his own any more. That's when he moved in with us. It's been difficult, but we don't want him to go to a nursing home. Besides, he refuses to consider it. He wasn't easy to live with when I was growing up and he hasn't improved with age. Honor thy father and mother. How about honor thy children?

WOMAN: Growing old is the pits, isn't it, but what's the alternative? Before, it was children; now, it's my mother. I'm not complaining and if she knew I was even talking about it, she'd be upset. But, she refuses to take a cab. It's too expensive. So, because I don't want her to drive, I take her wherever she wants to go and I assure her it's because I want to be with her and not because I feel obligated. She'd feel terrible about that, and so would I. But it has changed my life.

FRIEND: Having elderly parents is a blessing, if they grow old gracefully and can be independent. But when they're sick ... well ... my mom had Alzheimer's disease and those last two years were terrible for all of us.

WOMAN: Don't we sound awful? But there went my plans. The children are finally out of college; there's no more tuition to pay. We were planning a three week trip to celebrate our anniversary, but there's no way we can be away for so long. Oh, I feel so guilty talking like this.

FRIEND: Don't be ridiculous. You're a wonderful, thoughtful daughter, doing the best you can.

WOMAN: I guess so, but I so looked forward to the children being on their own, when I could go back to school, when we could travel. But it's not going to happen. I've devoted my life to being a good wife, a caring mother, a dutiful daughter, a concerned citizen. **When is it time for me?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What kind of support does someone need when she becomes a parent to her parent?
2. Where does the husband/wife relationship fit in?
3. Is there ever a time when a nursing home is a better alternative for an elderly parent? How do you deal with the parent who refuses to accept this alternative? How do you deal with your own sense of guilt?

KOL ISHA: Do you think you've seen all my facets? Not by a long shot. I know that a woman who is single (and *not* by choice) can have a fulfilling life...or a lonely one. Me? I'm not sure. I'm married. I have children. I filled multiple roles. First, I was daddy's girl then I was a wife. Now I'm no longer daddy's girl ... or a wife. But I am a mother. Is that all? Really, who am I?

VIGNETTE IV: WIDOWED AND DIVORCED WOMEN

WIDOW: We were married for 20 years. How could he leave me with three kids? He was a wonderful father. What will we do without him? There are so many decisions I have to make by myself now. Who do I take the car to for repairs? How do I prepare the taxes? Whose going to shovel the snow? I'm frightened about finances. Will I have enough money to maintain the same standard of living? Will I be able to help the kids in school and as they start their own careers?

Besides being devastating, his death made other big differences. I'm now a fifth wheel. Oh, my friends are very nice about inviting us for *Shabbat* meals. But for social occasions, a woman alone makes for an awkward number. When I am invited with other couples, it's a funny feeling. This is the first year I won't be going to the synagogue dinner dance. All the single women end up at one table.

Weekends are the worst. Everyone does things as a family. We're a family, but part of us is missing. I know he didn't want to die, but I'm angry at him for leaving us.

We had such dreams, but we didn't have time to fulfill them. We were going to travel, babysit our grandchildren and grow old together. Well, the children will grow up and get on with their lives, but what about me? I'll probably grow old alone. But I'm not ready. **When is it time for me?**

DIVORCED WOMAN: I'm still angry. We had our differences in the 20 years we were married. All married couples do. Nothing extraordinary. But how could he leave me with three children?

What will we do without him? What do I know about stopping a toilet from running? I have to call a service man for everything and it costs so much. I'm frightened about finances. Will I have enough to maintain my lifestyle? I want the children to go to camp, to college.

His running off was a rotten thing to do to me, but it was a *terrible* thing to do to his children. They don't understand how their father could leave them. I think I hate him. They still hope for reconciliation, but it will never happen.

The divorce has made a huge difference in my life. I'm now a threat. Everyone I know is a couple. I find myself only socializing with other singles. Weekends are the worst. Everyone does things as a family. We're a family, but one of us is missing.

We had such dreams. We were going to grow old together. The children will grow up and get on with their lives, but what about me? I'm not finished yet. **When is it time for me?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How can children be helped to understand that their parents are divorcing each other, not them?
2. What support mechanisms can the synagogue and Sisterhood offer for the single person?
3. How can the Sisterhood encourage networking for singles?

KOL ISHA: Lest you think this is only a sad story, let me assure you that there is a song in my heart! There are many, many more facets to *Kol Isha*, this voice of *everywoman*. She's super woman, she's super daughter, she's super wife, she's **supermom!**

VIGNETTE V: SUPER WOMAN

FRIEND: I think you're amazing. Ask you to chair an event and you're right on it. It's true what

they say: if you want something done, ask a busy person to do it. You're one of the busiest people I know.

WOMAN: C'mon, you're embarrassing me. Anyway, I'm just super organized. I wake up in the morning, plug in the coffee, shower, put make-up over my puffy eyes, nudge the kids to get dressed, eat breakfast and get to the bus. I zoom through my breakfast, wake up David and pour his coffee. I make it to work for eight hours of intense creativity, and if I'm lucky there aren't any calls from school about anything requiring stitches.

In the evening, while the kids do homework, I do laundry. I think it grows during the day. When Sara ran for class president, I listened to her speech folding sheets because I couldn't get to school to hear her give it. After they're in bed, I work on my volunteer commitments.

My life is speeding by. As long as everything falls into place, I'm ready.

But there are so many possibilities for glitches. If one of the kids gets sick, it's me who has to stay home. That's affected my career. I love my job and I'm good at it. But I also worry about my kids. We have such hectic schedules and the pace is affecting my marriage. Something has to give. Aren't you sorry you asked me?

FRIEND: When do you find time for your parents? I spend a lot of time driving mine around.

WOMAN: Actually, we're going to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in May and we're having an open house in their honor. I'm doing it all myself.

FRIEND: You leave me breathless.

WOMAN: Actually, you'd be surprised at what really goes through my mind about being a "super mother, wife, daughter, volunteer." I'd like to be able to sleep late one day or take piano lessons or just read a novel. What am I trying to prove? Sometimes, it's just not fun. It's hard to be all things to all people. **When is it time for me?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Can someone successfully accommodate her "super" visions and still have time for herself? How?
2. When is it time for a women to stop and "smell the roses" and take stock of her own needs?
3. When both parents are working, should the mother alone have the responsibility to stay home with a sick child? How can a family with two working parents restructure itself?
4. Should a mother have to put aside her career goals when her children are young? If so, how can she make up for lost time when her children grow older?

KOL ISHA: A woman is multi-faceted. She begins as a daughter and then she becomes many things: a sister, a girlfriend, a wife, a second wife, a mother, a career woman, a nurturer, a caregiver, a divorcee, a single parent, a widow, single by choice, single by chance, half a couple, a grandmother, alone...

She is pulled in many directions and is confronted by multiple choices, some made easily, some made with difficulty, some thrust upon her and not of her own volition, and every once in a while she justifiably asks, **"When is it time for me?"**

TRIGGER SCRIPT

LETTERS: BINTEL BRIEFS FOR TODAY

By Lois Silverman

Scene: Editorial offices of a weekly Jewish paper

Actors: Editor and staff writer of the advice column, Bintel Briefs for Today

Time: 10 minutes plus discussion

WRITER: Can I come in?

EDITOR: Could I stop you if I tried?

WRITER: Not today, Boss, not today.

EDITOR: What's on your mind?

WRITER: You know that new feature we decided to run, the advice column?

EDITOR: Yes, you were all for it, weren't you? Bintel Briefs for Today.

WRITER: I know you didn't like the idea and I'm beginning to agree with you.

EDITOR: Why?

WRITER: Look at these letters. Each one is worse than the last.

EDITOR: They can't be all that bad.

WRITER: Really? Look at this one from a 17-year-old girl whose mother and father marched for civil rights in the 60's. They taught her that everyone is equal—whites, blacks, browns, Asians, gays, disabled. She starts dating a gentile, and now her parents are objecting. She can't believe they're such hypocrites. She's really confused, but doesn't want to sneak around to see the guy. What should I tell her?

EDITOR: She's not going to marry the guy, is she?

WRITER: How do I know?

EDITOR: Well, say, something like: If your parents were so active in the Civil Rights Movement, give them time and they'll come around.

WRITER: I can't write that.

EDITOR: Why not?

WRITER: I can't advise someone to continue dating a non-Jew.

EDITOR: Come on! Don't tell me you're that narrow-minded.

WRITER: I'm not "narrow-minded." I'm concerned about Jewish continuity.

EDITOR: Calm down. You're taking this way too seriously.

WRITER: Sorry, but my brother married a non-Jew and it's torn my family apart...

OK, forget that girl. Tell me what to write to this woman whose husband is in jail. He was caught in an insider's trading deal that he claimed he knew nothing about. She can support her family financially, but it's moral support she needs. She's ashamed to go to the synagogue. The kids had to transfer schools. Her in-laws never stop crying and her own parents aren't any better. She asks what she should do to make it through these next five years. Well, what should I tell her?

EDITOR: I am beginning to see your problem.

WRITER: Or this one who found out her child is gay. Her husband accepts it with a lot of difficulty. She feels guilty and embarrassed. Listen: "Why do we have to label people? It limits how we view people and how they view themselves. A person is just a person.

EDITOR: Aren't there any easy questions in that mailbox?

WRITER: Sure, if you think abuse, drugs and alcohol are easy questions! Or there's pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex, date rape, divorce, and single mothers.

EDITOR: Sorry I asked. What's that one?

WRITER: "Please help me. I know that being a Jew has never been easy. There have always been obstacles and pressures from the outside, but why are there so many now from inside? My husband and I have been out of school for only a few years, and we don't make much money. We have a lot of student loans. When we wanted to join our local synagogue, there were dues, initiation fees, building bonds, and religious school tuition for our six-year-old. When we told them we couldn't afford to pay that much, they told us to go someplace else. But there's only one synagogue and we want to become part of the community, but we really can't make ends meet with what the synagogue wants to charge us. What do we do?"

EDITOR: I certainly sympathize with that.

WRITER: This one from a new college graduate could just as easily have been written by a senior citizen: "The leaders of the Jewish community want us to remain Jewish and follow the traditions, right? So why aren't they helping keep down the cost of kosher food? Buying kosher meat is just too costly now that I'm on my own. And what about the people who are on fixed incomes? Are we better Jews for keeping kosher?"

EDITOR: Did she really write "better Jews?"

WRITER: Hey, the letters only get worse. Read this one:

EDITOR: "When my father got cancer last year he really began to suffer. And it isn't just physical. He never complains, but I can see it in his eyes. He's lost his will and I don't know how to help. Just before he went into the hospital this last time, he asked me a favor, could I get hold of some pills? The next day he went into the hospital and he's been there ever since. He doesn't say anything, but his eyes plead for help. We once had a dog. When he got old and sick, the vet said we should have him put to sleep to be humane. We did and we cried, but the dog was at peace and we didn't feel any guilt. What

should I do now about my father?"

EDITOR: What should she do? How can you tell her what to do?

WRITER: That's the point. I can't really help them make their decisions. What they decide will change their lives.

EDITOR: My grandmother used to say that everything is *bashert* (pre-determined).

WRITER: You mean I should tell these people that we are just pawns in the great stream of life? No matter what we do the outcome is pre-ordained?

EDITOR: How do I know?

WRITER: Well, all I know is that my grandmother would have known what to do. Answers to questions came easier then. She would have said, "*Gott vil helfen*, God will help."

EDITOR: Well, they had fewer problems then.

WRITER: I don't think there were fewer problems, just more basic ones like food and survival.

EDITOR: You're right, I guess. The world today does present us with challenges that our grandmothers wouldn't have dreamt of in their worst nightmares.

WRITER: Yes, the problems are different. But there must be some guidance from Judaism for those who have questions! Judaism has to lead me to the answers the way it did my grandmother. It must be relevant for today. It must be!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Can Judaism be relevant for today? Should it be? Should it change with the times?
2. Were there really fewer problems in our grandmothers' times?
3. Are things in life really *bashert*? Is this a Jewish value?
4. Is there ever justification for euthanasia? What does Judaism say about assisted suicide?
5. What responsibilities do Jewish communal organizations have to keep individuals Jewish? Where does the synagogue fit in?
6. Is observing *kashrut* a prerequisite for being a good Jew? Is being a member of a synagogue?
7. Should financial considerations determine one's Jewish lifestyle or affiliation?
8. How can congregations and Sisterhoods support victims of abuse, rape, drug abuse?
9. Should a person's acceptance in a Jewish community be determined by his/her sexual preferences?
10. How can Sisterhoods be supportive of gays and the parents of gays?
11. What does Judaism have to say about "white collar crime"?
12. What should be a Jewish parent's approach to interdating?