

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 rabah* 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 sweet tradition of _____Sisterhood.