

Lakeland
Hills
Jewish
Center



Gazette

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Hanukah 2005

Next Issue submission deadline: Mar 15, 2006

Stone Soup Synagogue Wine

*Submitted by Marilyn
Gurtman-Oppenheimer
President
office@lhjc.org*

On a recent Friday night, there were 4 adults and 1 child at services.

LHJC can always use financial contributions, and we are always grateful for them – find me a synagogue that DOESN'T want money. Right now money problems won't kill us, but apathy might.

At the risk of sounding overly poetic (or whatever that word is when you ascribe human emotions to an inanimate object), LHJC is the skeleton. Without its members, the heart and soul, we are nothing. We can't survive or thrive when we are used only to name a baby, bar mitzvah a child or bury somebody. What happens in between all these life cycle events? Why do we have trouble getting 10 people to attend Simchat Torah celebrations or a Chanukah party?

Ever since my family joined LHJC, I've heard people ask, "What does the temple offer me?" I respond by saying "How do we contribute to the life of the synagogue?" - we didn't join just to attend services. There can be social events, classes, trips, clubs – you name it. BUT – people have to be interested enough to participate. Want a book club? Trip to a show? Talk to me, or anyone else on the board – let's get it started.

Sure it involves some work, but the reward will exceed the effort required to put these events together.

It's hard work to be part of such a small synagogue. I know I get so much more out of being a member of LHJC – involvement in services, wonderful friendships with fellow congregants, and interaction with the rabbi. This is where my Jewish home is.

We have the following committees. Most consist of one person, if that. The more people involved, the easier it is for us to keep LHJC alive:

- Advertising
- Bereavement
- Community Relations
- Fundraising
- Gazette
- Hebrew School
- Hospitality
- Membership
- Religious Services
- Phone Squad

I'll end with two stories that I told over the High Holidays, but deserve repeating.

Stone Soup:

Once upon a time, somewhere in post-war Eastern Europe, there was a great famine in which people jealously hoarded whatever food they could find, hiding it even from their friends and neighbors. One day a wandering soldier came into a village and began asking questions as if he planned to stay for the night.

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From the Rabbi "Your Hanukah Candle"



Submitted by Rabbi Antonio
Di Gesù
rabbi@lhjc.org

Dear Friends,

Shalom. It is that time of the year again... Hanukah, the Festival of Lights, is just

around the corner. Every year, by kindling the lights, we commemorate the victory of the Maccabees over the Greeks, the victory of Judaism over Greek polytheistic religion. The fire of these candles over the centuries has acquired several symbolic meanings. According to one of them the fire of the Hanukkah lamp symbolizes the Torah. Every night we light the Hanukkah candles using another candle. On the eighth day we use one candle to light the other eight, and still the light of this candle is not diminished. In the same way, when one knows Torah and shares it with others, he has increased other people's knowledge, yet his knowledge of Torah is not diminished. And these people will hopefully share with others what they have learned from him, "kindling" the world around them with Torah.

The Mishnah teaches: "These are the things for which there is no limit: food left in the fields for the poor, first fruits offered at the Temple, visits to the Temple of Jerusalem during Holy Days, acts of loving-kindness, and learning Torah." According to this list, learning Torah and performing acts of loving-kindness share this common trait: "there is no limit," i.e. the more, the better. The more time we spend learning and teaching Torah, the better it will be for ourselves and our communities. The more time we spend perform acts of loving-kindness, the bigger our impact on the world around us will be. According to another list learning

Torah and performing acts of loving kindness have another common trait: "These are the things whose fruit one eats in this world, and make one worthy of the world to come: honoring one's parents, acts of loving-kindness, and bringing peace between men. And learning Torah is as worthy as all of them."

I want to share something with you from my life in New York. During the past four years I have seen poverty, I have been in elevators smelling ammonia, and I have prayed and hoped to leave with no harm the buildings where I found myself. I have volunteered with "God's love we deliver" (GLWD), a non-denominational organization that brings food to people with HIV who cannot leave their homes or who do not have the money to buy a decent meal every day.

I will never forget the first day on the field. I arrived at the church where the volunteers assemble the meals, met the volunteer who would come with me on my first route, prepared the meals I would deliver, and started delivering. My first five clients were distributed between a project and two subsidized buildings with single-room occupancy. I was ready to meet people who struggle with the disease, not people who struggle with the disease and with poverty. I was relieved by the fact that I heard only the voices of three of them, and did not see their faces too. Raspy voices, tired voices, sleepy voices. Stale air mixed with cigarette smoke coming out from the slightly open doors. I was happy that three of my clients did not open the door completely, but only enough to pass the bag of food to them. I peeked inside, and immediately wished I had not. One room was crammed with all kinds of objects piled one on top of the other: bags of stuff from floor to ceiling, dirty dishes and clothes on the floor, the kind of confusion that makes me dizzy. In another room the part of the floor I could see was covered with left-over food. A door that opened showed a

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Stone Soup Synagogue Wine

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"There's not a bite to eat in the whole province," he was told. "Better keep moving on."

"Oh, I have everything I need," he said. "In fact, I was thinking of making some stone soup to share with all of you." He pulled an iron cauldron from his wagon, filled it with water, and built a fire under it. Then, with great ceremony, he drew an ordinary-looking stone from a velvet bag and dropped it into the water.

By now, hearing the rumor of food, most of the villagers had come to the square or watched from their windows. As the soldier sniffed the "broth" and licked his lips in anticipation, hunger began to overcome their skepticism.

"Ahh," the soldier said to himself rather loudly, "I do like a tasty stone soup. Of course, stone soup with cabbage -- that's hard to beat."

Soon a villager approached hesitantly, holding a cabbage he'd retrieved from its hiding place, and added it to the pot. "Capital!" cried the soldier. "You know, I once had stone soup with cabbage and a bit of salt beef as well, and it was fit for a king."

The village butcher managed to find some salt beef . . . and so it went, through potatoes, onions, carrots, mushrooms, and so on, until there was indeed a delicious meal for all. The villagers offered the soldier a great deal of money for the magic stone, but he refused to sell and traveled on the next day. **Moral: By working together, with everyone contributing what he/she can, a greater good is achieved.**

Synagogue Wine:

In another nameless town in Eastern Europe, the local synagogue was preparing for a visit from a famous scholar from another town. It was decided that they would have a wonderful meal that Shabbat after services, and the rabbi requested that everyone contribute a glass of wine to a communal barrel for kiddush.

Mr. Schwartz thought to himself, "Well, money is very tight – I can't afford to do this. If everyone else puts wine in, who will know if put in a glass of water." Mrs. Goldberg said "I'm a widow – I can't afford this! I'll put in a glass of water – nobody will notice." On and on, so it went... That Shabbat the rabbi opened up the barrel, and the water poured out. **Moral: If we assume that someone else will take care of it, nothing gets accomplished.**

My best wishes for a Chanukah filled with light, good family and friends, and latkes of course.

Yoga Dynamics

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Winter 2005-2006 Schedule

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	8:30p - 10:00p
Wednesday	9:30a - 11:00a
	11:00a - 12:30p
Thursday	9:30a - 11:00a
	11:00a - 12:30p

Class size is limited and by appointment only
Privates available

Cheryl Kiviat 973-962-9330

LHJC Part of Ringwood Hunger Walk 2005

Submitted by Jason Okin

On a beautiful, warm afternoon of October 2nd, a wonderful tradition was continued for its eleventh year. It was the annual Ringwood Hunger Walk.

Music was provided by the Rusty Strings Band. Mayor Wenke Taule read an official proclamation from the Borough of Ringwood. Representatives from the various religious communities read prayers. LHJC's spokesperson was **Eileen Kirschbrown**.

Then a multitude of people; young, old, some with infants, some with pet dogs started their walk.

Many wore new brightly colored Hunger Walk Tee shirts given to those who had brought in \$100.00 in donations. It was not a speed or distance walk, but a symbolic walk to complete a commitment for those who donated money as sponsors. It was also in support of our neighbors here in North Jersey who are in need.

All of the proceeds were for the our local food pantry the Center For Food Action. More than \$6,000.00 was raised. Many thanks to temple members who walked and those who sponsored Hunger Walkers.



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From the Rabbi “Your Hanukah Candle”

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completely empty room: a twin mattress on the floor, no sheets, a chair with a cup on it, naked walls, a dirty windowpane, and three colorful caftans hanging from three hooks on the wall. Was this everything she owned? I did not dare ask the woman in front of me, whose cheeks had furrows made by her medications. With her strong accent from some African country, she was joking with my companion, I do not know about what. I just wanted to leave. Four years later, however, I am glad I did not.

Since that first day I have done this route or a similar one every week, sometimes more than once a week, and I have overcome my initial discomfort. The people I have met weekly have become a part of my emotional landscape. We chat, joke, and know each other by name. If we bump into each other in the street we stop to chat a little. Some of them have let me into their lives, sharing stories from their past and talking about present difficulties and dreams of a better future. During these four years I have also trained other volunteers, who in turn will train other volunteers, and so on. And all of us will bring a moment of joy and normalcy to the lives of these people, who otherwise would be – some of them at least – lonely and completely ignored by the world. For me this is my Mishnaic act of loving-kindness, my candle that lights the others.

Each one of us has to find his or her own candle, and together we will bring light and happiness to the world.

Happy Hanukkah.

Finding God in Biloxi

Submitted by Judu Yudof
President of United Synagogue

Editors note: This is a letter from Rabbi Isidoro Aizenberg who officiated at Rosh Hashanah services for the congregation in hurricane-damaged Biloxi, Mississippi.

As a congregational rabbi for three decades I often witnessed people asking to say the Birkhat Ha’Gomel, the blessing recited by one who has recovered from a serious illness or who has survived any kind of danger. But in all those years I was never part of a community where all its members stood up to recite this blessing in unison. This was the case during the Torah reading service of the Jewish community of Biloxi, Mississippi, which I had the unique privilege in leading during the recent High Holidays. This was an exceedingly moving moment being in the midst of a community where many of its members had lost so much to the ravages of Katrina, but who were grateful to have had their lives spared.

Retired last year from my congregational obligations, my wife and I had made all kinds of plans to celebrate the High Holidays. I had even rejected invitations to lead other congregations in these services, looking forward to joining other members of my community in prayer. Far was it from me to imagine that only six days before Rosh Hashanah I would receive a call from Harry Silverman, the southeastern regional director of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, asking me if I was still available and willing to lead the High Holiday services for Biloxi’s Beth Israel Congregation, the only synagogue on the Mississippi coast. The United Synagogue would coordinate and defray the cost of our stay.

Mr. Silverman’s call was obviously radically different from all the others I had received. This invitation represented an opportunity to fulfill such a great mitzvah and such a unique way of ushering in Rosh Hashanah that I could not refuse. I was left with exactly five days to prepare for the holidays, not exactly the time framework that I usually allowed myself during my years as a pulpit rabbi.

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Finding God in Biloxi

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But prepare we did and together with my wife, Edna, I flew to Atlanta and from there on to Gulfport, the airport serving Biloxi. Along with us came Efrem Epstein, an enthusiastic young ba'al t'filah who had been asked to chant the prayers. Flying over the Biloxi area before landing, we could already spot the first visible signs of the hurricane's destruction. So many of the houses we could see were covered with a blue tarpaulin temporarily replacing roofs that had been blown away by the storm. As a member of the community told us, this is "tarpaulin city."

Upon retrieving our luggage and walking out to the warm, humid breeze of the Gulf coast, we were welcomed by a sheriff's car. Our initial surprise to this rather unexpected welcome was soon dissipated by the warm handshake of sheriff Jerry Mathews, a member of Beth Israel, who had offered to take us to our hotel. On the way Jerry was kind to make a detour so that we could see the devastation with our own eyes. No matter how much we had read about the hurricane's utter sweeping destruction, and no matter how many pictures we had seen in the press and TV news about the havoc caused by the sweeping 20 feet high waters and powerful winds, we could not be prepared for what we saw. Many of the neighborhoods brought back images of the black and white pictures of bombed Dresden after World War II. We were driving by blocks upon blocks where only skeletons of houses stood, twisted metal and torn trees. The partly sunken U.S. 90 coastal highway forced Jerry to bypass large sections of the road. An offshore casino built on two barges the size of a football field and eight floors tall had been lifted by the stormy waters and deposited two blocks inland destroying everything on its path.

Emotionally and physically exhausted from this "tour", we made our way to Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi. In light of the fact that much of Beth Israel's building had also been destroyed by Katrina, the community succeeded in just a few days to secure one of the base's chapels for the services, to be held there thanks to the assistance of Keesler's Jewish Chaplain, (Maj.) Rabbi Kalman Dubov. We, New Yorkers, were very conveniently housed just across the street from the chapel in one of the base's motels. Kosher holiday meals were shipped for us by Mr. Silverman from Florida. He also saw to it that the whole

community of about 75 families would receive round challas, honey and kosher wine.

After a short rest we were ready to usher in Rosh Hashanah. We had a full house. Each mahzor—all of them together with the Torah scrolls and other prayer books had been rescued before the hurricane hit—included a New Year card, one of the hundreds made and sent by children from Jewish religious schools from across the US. Joining Beth Israel's members were a few of the enlisted Jewish personnel on the base and many Jewish volunteers that were in the area working with FEMA, the Red Cross, and other aid organizations. Wearing their ID tags and informal clothing and having taken off for just a while from their daunting work, they yearned—that is the word they used—to join with other fellow Jews in turning the leaf and welcoming 5766. One young Jewish man originally from Puerto Rico told us after the conclusion of the services: "Thank you so much. I needed to be here tonight."

Among the volunteers we met young men and women as well as retirees from New York and from Oregon, from Texas and Florida. One of them was a specialist in evaluating which remaining housing was fit to be rebuilt, while two others were forensic dentists working to identify storm victims from dental records. They were all lodged in temporary housing such as airport hangars together with sixty other people, while others slept in tents. All were united by the wish to help people rebuild their lives.

For as long as I can remember I have asked in the course of our services "Who shall live and who shall die, who by fire and who by water." But never before did these words affect me with such profound poignancy. While joining in the U'Netaneh Tokef with Efrem, I continued asking myself, "and who in the congregation lost their home and who did not, and who is despairing and who has gained the strength to rebuild, and who is asking if there is a God in the world and who has been left with faith unscathed?" I don't have answers to these questions. What I do hope, however, is that by our presence and by joining the community in the High Holiday prayers, we offered this congregation a measure of emotional support and the validation of the millennial principle that all Israel are responsible one for another.

Bat Mitzvah Ladies' Class

Submitted by Penny Safane

I must admit, I'm getting nervous. It seemed like we had so much time... We gave ourselves two years to prepare for our Big Day, June 3, 2006. Now, here it is, December and we have just six months to go!

There's so much to do between now and then, but we'll do it. There are nine of us. Nine, half a Chai. Half a Chai is better than none and nine heads are better than one...but I digress.

We still have to learn our Torah portions, which we will be able to do because Marilyn Oppenheimer has graciously agreed to record them for us and make CDs for each of us. Thank you Marilyn for undertaking such a big project. We appreciate it! (I was just wondering, is lip-syncing allowed? I guess not due to the prohibition of using electronic devices on Shabbat, among other reasons.)

We also have to familiarize ourselves with the Shabbat morning service so that we can each lead the part of the service which Rabbi Antonio has assigned us. However, there are several more Shabbat learning services during which will be able to accomplish this. So, we should be fine.

Then there are the details regarding the Friday night service and one prior to our group Bat Mitzvah and the luncheon that will follow Shabbat morning services... Oh, but we have been discussing our plans for months now, so I'm sure everything will come together. As I said, nine heads are better than one.

So, what am I worried about? Everything will be fine...but wait, I don't have a thing to wear... Oh, yes I do!

I already have my tallit... a beautiful silk and organza tallit. Rabbi Antonio taught us the meaning of the tallit as well as how to put it on. Then we discussed how it can make you feel; sheltered, protected part of something larger. By June 3rd, I'm sure I'll feel I've earned the right to wear that beautiful tallit, and entitled to be

called to the Torah, along with the eight other Bat Mitzvah Ladies. Nine Bat Mitzvah Ladies, which as I said is half a chai and half a chai is better than none.

Shalom!

Saul Kohn

Submitted by Alex Kirschbrown

What is a patriot? One who loves, supports, and defends one's country. I think a patriot to me is Saul Kohn. Who is Saul Kohn you ask? He is a survivor from the Holocaust. He's also helped many people.

Saul Khon just passed away in September. He was a great man and he was kind to all creatures. I heard a story that one time he helped this man wash windows during the Holocaust at a concentration camp and everyone was weak. When he finished washing the windows with that man the man gave him bread and Saul shared it with the people in his tent. Before he died he used to bring bread for us to bring home.

He used to take his neighbor's daughter to a pond to feed the ducks. He took his other neighbor on some of his trips that he took. I never heard him yell. He went through a tough life but at the end of his life he was very happy. He always thought on the positive side like the glass is half full not half empty. He would never hurt a fly.

I think he will always be in my heart. I just wish I could have learned more about him. I always wanted to give him a call when he was in the hospital but I just kept forgetting to. I heard a lot about him when we had temple. It was a very sad day for everyone. That is where I got all these stories from. There were others but I just can't remember them. All I know is that all the stories I heard were very happy, not sad one bit. Every time we finished services at the temple I would hear him telling stories. I sometimes wish that everyone could be like him.

United Synagogue Convention

Submitted by Marilyn Gurtman-Oppenheimer

I just went to a convention in Boston. It was under the auspices of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), the umbrella organization for our movement.

I wanted to see how other synagogues like ours – small, in a not heavily Jewish area – survived. There were lectures geared both to small and large synagogues, with issues unique to both. People got a chance to network and exchange ideas to bring in people and increase their interest and involvement in Jewish religious and social life. USCJ was very busy informing us of all the programs and resources it has available – quite an organization.

The good will at this conference was amazing. People just started talking – “Where is Ringwood?”. “HOW large did you say your synagogue was? (it was a great conversation starter)”.

It’s comforting to see that I am not the only one who struggles with my Judaism – I think that USCJ is doing the same. The issues they are currently grappling with are: Where on the religious spectrum is the Conservative Movement heading, and how do we maintain ourselves in a changing society where life is no longer in the shtetl, centered around the shul.

After spending three days going to classes, meeting other synagogue officials and networking, I wanted to share some observations – as always, some serious, some not:

- Enormous synagogues share the same problems that we have, just on a much larger scale.
- People’s eyebrows can go up only so high when they hear about our size.
- I should really contact USCJ to inform them that in my opinion, a 200-family synagogue is NOT small.
- There were people there representing congregations in Mississippi and Louisiana – it was

moving to see others just go up to them and say, “What do you need? What can we do?”

- In a room of over 500 people, three announcements had to be made to get a minyan – we’re really not alone.

I would say that the main thing I learned here was that no matter how big or small a congregation is, the most important thing we can do is to reach out to each other. I don’t want to assume that just because we are 45 families instead of 450 that we know everyone. We are all vital members, hidden treasures that need to be befriended and nurtured. People are more involved when they feel that they are vital members of any community and have something to contribute. Who knows, maybe we’ll do some more social stuff & get a minyan more often (see my other article).

LHJC Hosts Thanksgiving Interfaith Service

Submitted by Jason Okin

On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, November 22nd, our temple was the host congregation for the annual interfaith service. Participating congregations along with LHJC were the Ringwood Community Presbyterian Church, Saint Catherine Roman Catholic Church, and the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd.

Neighbors and friends from the different religious communities got to be together, pray together, and give thanks together for all the bounty and the freedoms that we have as Americans.

This year the sermon was given by the Catholic Priest, Father Pat Panos.

The program complete with Psalms, prayers, and readings was thoughtfully put together and printed by our **Rabbi Antonio**.

Alex's Bat Mitzvah is Over (Sad to Say) But Here Comes The Holiday Season

Submitted by Eileen Kirschbrown
1st Vice President

I've finally recovered from **Alex's** Bat Mitzvah, even enough to have Thanksgiving Dinner at my house. I'm so proud of Alex – she did a terrific job. Alex looked and acted so mature that day that some people didn't recognize her. It was such an exciting time. There were so many people to see and so many things to do. Thank you to everyone who shared this wonderful event with us.

My family has a lot to be thankful for this year. We are thankful to have been able to have an incredibly special event that brought our family and friends together. We are thankful to be part of this wonderful Jewish community and to be surrounded by such caring people.

I am especially grateful to **Marilyn Gurtman-Oppenheimer** and **Rabbi Antonio** for organizing the wonderful trip that about 25 people took to B'nai Jeshurun in NY for Friday night services the day after Thanksgiving. For those who took the trip, it was well worth it. The building itself was very beautiful and services were held, it seemed to me, like "theatre in the round." The two Rabbis (one male and one female) leading services were in the middle of the room and instruments (if my memory is correct, these consisted of a piano, violin and bongos) were played during the service. The music added a beautiful element to the services. However, there were no English readings and no oneg at the end of services. I feel that something was missing without these two elements. At the end of services, everyone just left the building and it seemed that a "connection" with other people was lacking in that community. When you experience something different from what you are familiar with, it helps you to appreciate what you have. I am very happy to be a part of Lakeland Hills Jewish Center.

Membership

Submitted by Audrey Kopple
memberinfo@lhjc.org

If you know of any Jewish families who have just moved into the area, or have lived here awhile and are still unaffiliated, please contact her at memberinfo@lhjc.org or call 973-839-3834.

Grin

As a teacher, Ms. Jones, was very curious about how each of her students celebrated Christmas. She called on young Patrick Murphy.

"Tell me Patrick what do you do at Christmas time? she asked.

Patrick addressed the class, Well Ms. Jones, me and my twelve brothers and sisters go to the midnight Mass and we sing hymns, then we come home very late and we put mince pies by the back door and hang up our stockings. Then we go to bed and wait for SANTA CLAUS to come with all of our toys.

Very nice Patrick, she said, "Now Jimmy Brown "what do you do Christmas eve?"

Well, Ms. Jones, me and my sister also go to Church with Mum and Dad and we sing carols and we get home ever so late. We hang up our stockings waiting for Santa Claus to bring our presents."

Realizing there was a Jewish boy in the class and not wanting to leave him out of the discussion, she asked, "Now, Isaac Cohen, what do you do Christmas eve?"

Isaac said, "Well, it's the same thing every year. Dad comes home from the office. We all pile into the Rolls Royce, then we drive to his toy factory. When we get inside, we look at all the empty shelves and begin to sing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

Then we all go to the Bahamas."

Difference Between Christmas and Hanukah

Submitted by Marilyn Judovin

1. Now, if anyone asks you what the difference is between Christmas and Chanukah you will know what and how to answer!
2. Christmas is one day, same day every year, December 25. Jews also love December 25th. It's another paid day off work. We go to movies and out for Chinese food and Israeli dancing. Chanukah is 8 days. It starts the evening of the 24th of Kislev, whenever that falls. No one is ever sure. Jews never know until a non-Jewish friend asks when Chanukah starts, forcing us to consult a calendar so we don't look like idiots. We all have the same calendar, provided free with a donation from the World Jewish Congress, the kosher butcher, or the local Sinai Memorial Chapel (especially in Florida) or other funeral home.
3. Christmas is a major holiday. Chanukah is a minor holiday with the same theme as most Jewish holidays. They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat.
4. Christians get wonderful presents such as jewelry, perfume, stereos... Jews get practical presents such as underwear, socks, or the collected works of the Rambam, which looks impressive on the bookshelf.
5. There is only one way to spell Christmas. No one can decide how to spell Chanukah, Chanukkah, Chanukka, Channukah, Hanukah, Hannukah, etc.
6. Christmas is a time of great pressure for husbands and boyfriends. Their partners expect special gifts. Jewish men are relieved of that burden. No one expects a diamond ring on Chanukah.
7. Christmas brings enormous electric bills. Candles are used for Chanukah. Not only are we spared enormous electric bills, but we get to feel good about not contributing to the energy crisis.
8. Christmas carols are beautiful... Silent Night, Come All Ye Faithful.... Chanukah songs are about dreidels made from clay or having a party and dancing the hora. Of course, we are secretly pleased that many of the beautiful carols were composed and written by our tribal brethren. And don't Barbara Streisand and Neil Diamond sing them beautifully?
9. A home preparing for Christmas smells wonderful. The sweet smell of cookies and cakes baking. Happy people are gathered around in festive moods. A home preparing for Chanukah smells of oil, potatoes, and onions. The home, as always, is full of loud people all talking at once.

10. Christian women have fun baking Christmas cookies. Jewish women burn their eyes and cut their hands grating potatoes and onions for latkas on Chanukah. Another reminder of our suffering through the ages.
11. Parents deliver to their children during Christmas. Jewish parents have no qualms about withholding a gift on any of the eight nights.
12. The players in the Christmas story have easy to pronounce names such as Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. The players in the Chanukah story are Antiochus, Judah Maccabee, and Matta whatever. No one can spell it or pronounce it. On the plus side, we can tell our friends anything and they believe we are wonderfully versed in our history.
13. Many Christians believe in the virgin birth. Jews think, "Yossela, Bubela, snap out of it. Your woman is pregnant, you didn't sleep with her, and now you want to blame G-d? Here's the number of my shrink".
14. In recent years, Christmas has become more and more commercialized. The same holds true for Chanukah, even though it is a minor holiday. It makes sense. How could we market a major holiday such as Yom Kippur? Forget about celebrating. Think observing. Come to synagogue, starve yourself for 27 hours, become one with your dehydrated soul, beat your chest, confess your sins, a guaranteed good time for you and your family. Tickets a mere \$200 per person.

Better stick with Chanukah!

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Phone Squad	Marilyn Judovin
Social	Marilyn Gurtman-Oppenheimer
Sunshine	Orly Steinberg
Tree of Life	Orly Steinberg
Yizkor Plaques	Richard Nadler

Free Youth Group
Membership

Just a reminder....LHJC pays the membership fee for all children of active members who wish to join any youth organization sponsored by United Synagogue. The two available organizations are United Synagogue Youth (USY) and Kadima. Both are represented at Shomrei Torah in Wayne and Temple Israel in Ridgewood

The Annual Ringwood
Menorah Lighting
will take place on
Monday, December 26th
at 5 P.M.
on Skyline Drive in front of Wachovia
Bank.

**The Board and Officers of
LHJC Wish You
Happy Hanukah and
A Happy and Safe
New Year**

The Token Jew: A Perspective of Life in a Non- Jewish Army

Submitted by Jennifer L. Sheldon

In the 230 years that the United States Army has been in existence there has always been one undeniable truth, we fight for the right of every citizen to have the right to live as they choose, one of them is the right to practice religion. One of the big comforts to military personnel stationed anywhere in the world is that they can take time out of their somewhat unusual lives and walk into a chapel and speak with a chaplain. No matter what the faith the chaplain himself is, he has been trained to help all soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and coast guard personnel to keep their relationship with whomever they see as their higher inspiration at the forefront of their lives.

In my almost 6 years in the Army, some of the most profound feelings I have ever felt have been from the chaplains that I have had the privilege to know. As a Jew in the US Army, it is not unlike my childhood growing up in Wanaque. I was one of a very small handful of students in my school who was Jewish. It is such a small army that if you have ever met a Jewish chaplain or soldier for that matter most likely, you will either run into them again or you will meet someone who knows them. But even more surprising is that the most important lesson that I have taken with me in my life came from a Muslim chaplain when I was stationed in Korea. The imam had told me that, the truth of life's mysteries does not come from one priest, rabbi, minister, imam but from the common thread that all religions hope for, each in their own individual ways: Loyalty to G-d, Duty to fellow man, Respect for all, Selfless Service to all less fortunate, Honor to elders, Integrity to bosses and employers and Personal Courage to face the unknown and overcome all obstacles. All of the qualities listed above are what we learn from the day a person comes into the army and strive to live every day of their military lives. We call them the Army Values.

I have enjoyed every moment that I have spent in the army and look forward to many the many years ahead in the future. As a Jewish soldier, I also understand the importance of how the army allows me the chance to go to synagogue and pray with everyone and also gives me and all of the other Jewish soldiers in the US armed forces the sense of satisfaction that even though we are not in Israel in the IDF, we are still able to have a place in the world providing safety and security for every single person around the world in places where we are called to help.


Last year, when I received orders that I was going to deploy to Afghanistan, that was the second scariest moment of my life. My shock from having to deal with the fact that I was going to be sent to a country where women are looked upon as second class citizens, which is the normal for most countries that practice any Arab faith but also that I had not just one strike against me for that but that I had two more strikes against me, the second being that I was a Soldier from the US and three, being a Jewish Female Soldier. I previously mentioned that getting my orders for deployment was the second scariest moment in my life, the first was when they told me I had to give them my dog tags, Since I am Jewish going into a Muslim country I had to get my dog tags that stated my religion as Jewish and get new ones made with NO RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE listed on them. I was foolish enough to ask them why and they had said to me that, we are going to train you so that you will not have to worry about those men over there bothering you but this is just so that you have that extra degree of safety. I had received numerous briefings on many different subjects and the most eye opening one was about what happens to soldiers when they get caught or captured. It was something that I would never wish on anyone to happen to but we had to see it for ourselves so that we realize how important all of the training we were about to receive was.

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The Token Jew: A Perspective of Life in a Non- Jewish Army

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In closing, I have never been so happy to be a Jewish soldier in the US Army and when my time is up in the military, I will still be happy to have served and hopefully made a change in the lives of people, anywhere in the world. As for the Muslim chaplain that had inspired me from that day on, he has been one of the happiest reasons I joined the Army, to make new friends and have all kinds of people from different backgrounds all work together without regard to what goes on in the news, internet, or word of mouth. Hopefully everyone can take something from that.



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Getting the Story Out

Gary Oppenheimer
webmaster@lhjc.org
Newsletter, PR & Webmaster

Editors note: The views expressed below are those of the editor, and do not necessarily represent those of the board of LHJC.

There is an old question, supposedly first asked by President Abraham Lincoln:

“If you call a tail a leg, how many legs does a dog have?”

Five?

No... calling a tail a leg does not make it one“

A few weeks ago, **Rabbi Antonio** took a group of LHJC members for an outing... to “BJ” as it is known locally, for a one of a kind Friday night Shabbat service experience.

Way back when, congregation B'nai Jeshurun on West 88 street in Manhattan, was a faltering Conservative congregation, with shrinking membership, and a building sorely in need of repairs, experienced three separate yet interrelated events that not only turned the temple around but also initiated a change in how the congregation identified itself.

The first was the arrival of Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer, who changed the service to include music, much of it from his native Argentina, and dance.... recharging the enthusiasm and spirit of the people. The result was a growth in the membership and weekly attendance.

Second was the collapse of the roof of the temple one Friday night after the building emptied out. No one was hurt, but it was clear that the building would be unusable for the foreseeable future. In an act of friendship and support, the Church of St. Paul & St. Andrew reached out to the congregation and offered the use of their church building. For several years, both the Jewish congregation of BJ and the Methodist community of SPSA shared the same magnificent building, To make it work for everyone, a large curtain with the quote “How good and how pleasant it is when brothers and sisters dwell together in unity” is raised or lowered, hiding either the cross or the Torah ark, depending upon which congregation was using the church.

Over time, BJ membership grew to several thousand family units of all varieties. BJ welcomed all members of the Jewish family, including an active gay and lesbian community.

Eventually, BJ came to realize that its openness conflicted with some of the tenants of the Conservative movement, especially when it came to issues of sexual orientation. BJ came to the conclusion that it no longer could remain a part of the Conservative movement... in part because they did not wholly accept gay and lesbian participation, and in part because the rightward drift of the Conservative movement was in conflict with the liberal trends of the BJ community.

In short, its members perspective on Judaism, and the movements demands upon those members had diverged, and were no longer traveling the same road.

BJ chose to become independent of any “official” branch of American Judaism, although they have retained many of the traditions and practices often associated with the Conservative movement.

This has happened to a number of other temples around the country. Indeed, according to The Jewish Week, the Conservative movement, once the largest in the country, has been losing members for the past 15 years, while other movements, especially the Reform, have been growing.

All of the major movements have in past years, moved towards the “right” (Conservative movement moving closer to the Orthodox on some issues, and the Reform movement, once indifferent to Kashruth, now encouraging it), one has to wonder if their memberships may have chosen not to move with them. Indeed, an image forms in my mind... of a circle dance, where the men all move to the right one step, and end up with new partners.

In the commercial world, some businesses manage to stay in touch with the changing desires of their customers (think the migration from VHS to DVD), while others change without looking back over their shoulders to see if their customers are coming along (think “New Coke”).

Judging from the lack of growth of the Conservative movement in general, and the limited participation of LHJC members in temple functions and services in particular, one has to wonder if here too, the movement, so well suited for urban settings, may have become a less appealing in the suburban/rural setting LHJC is in. More to the point, one has to wonder if all of the movements

have taken one step to the right, leaving their members better suited for a new partner.

This column, Getting the Story Out, has always been oriented around the effort to get more sunshine for LHJC in the local Jewish community... to have the temple be something other than that "hard to find synagogue somewhere near Ringwood and Wanaque".

Once people found it, they have had to determine for themselves if LHJC is right for them... "too Jewish", "not Jewish enough", etc. In my admittedly limited experience, temples calling themselves Conservative have ranged all the way from one my cousin goes to in Teaneck which does not allow women to participate, to another we visited once in New York state that had the distinct look and feel of a Reform temple.

While most people at LHJC may think of themselves as Conservative, it is clear that this is, at best, an imprecise definition. Furthermore, there is no clear definition of what a Conservative Jew actually is – with the possible exception, if you like recursive logic, that a Conservative Jew is one who belongs to a Conservative temple.

Judging from the lack of active participation by many, if not most Conservative Jews in their temple functions (religious, educational, and social), the question must be asked.... are temples trying to serve New Coke to a Pepsi Generation?

Today, American Jewry is grouped into four main movements – Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist, and Reform. According to About.com (admittedly, not necessarily a final authority on all matters Jewish):

Reconstructionists believe that Judaism is an "evolving religious civilization." In one way it is more liberal than Reform Judaism - the movement does not believe in a personified deity that is active in history and does not believe that God chose the Jewish people. In another way Reconstructionist Judaism is less liberal than Reform Judaism - Reconstructionists observe halakhah (Jewish Law) if they choose to, not because it is a binding Law from G-d, but because it is a valuable cultural remnant.

Reform Judaism believes that the Torah was written by different human sources, rather than by God, and then later combined. While Reform Judaism does not accept the binding nature of halakhah (Jewish Law), the movement does retain much of the values and ethics of Judaism as well as some of the practices and culture.

Conservative Judaism maintains that the ideas in the Torah come from God, but were transmitted by humans and contain a human component. Conservative Judaism generally accepts the binding nature of halakhah, but believes that the Law should adapt, absorbing aspects of the predominant culture while remaining true to Judaism's values.

Orthodox Jews believe that God gave Moses the whole Torah (Written and Oral) at Mount Sinai. Written Torah refers to the first five books of the Bible. Oral Torah interprets and explains the Written Torah. Orthodox Jews believe that the Torah contains 613 mitzvot (commandments) that are binding upon Jews. Modern Orthodox Jews strictly observe halakhah, but still integrate into modern society. Ultra-Orthodox Jews, which includes Chasidic Jews, strictly observe Jewish laws and do not integrate into modern society by dressing distinctively and living separately.

The strength and vitality of LHJC is best nurtured if the members and their movement are on the same page.

Some years back, BJ took a close look at itself in a mirror and asked if what it saw really reflected its true nature.

From time to time, it is important for any temple, LHJC included, to do the same... to make sure that it is one the same path as its members – both to meet their needs, and to best draw strength from them.

It just might be that declining participation in temple functions may be an indication that not everyone's compass is pointing to the same direction.

The Conservative movement seems to be facing the old adage, "tell me where my people are going, so I can lead them there"

What's Cookin' Good Lookin'?

Submitted by Marilyn Judovin
www.geocities.com/lynniejud/

CRISCO DOUGH

source: my Grandmother

Yield: maybe 100, depending on size of cookies

- 1 lb Crisco
- ¼ lb unsalted margarine
- ¾ - 1 cup sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- scant cup of cold water
- 6 ½ (approx) cups flour
- 1 large egg
- pinch salt
- 1 tsp vanilla



Mix all together.

Dough does not have to be refrigerated. Roll out and use cookie cutters of your choice, or a glass to cut rounds. Bake cookies for about 10 - 15 minutes or until golden brown.

This dough also makes a great apple cake. Knead and divide into 4 or more (maybe even 8) parts. Roll out on a floured board. Spread some Corn Flakes Crumbs on each piece, then top w/cinnamon, sugar, chopped nuts, jelly* sliced & pared apples. Top with a little more corn flakes crumbs. Roll up and place on greased cookie sheet. Sprinkle tops with cinnamon & sugar. Bake for about an hour at 350. Dough can also be used for pie crust.

*Note: Pineapple jelly works well, but it's a personal preference for the flavor of jelly.

Our Family

Happy Birthday

11-Dec	Trevor Kiviat
12-Dec	Franklin Rikon
29-Dec	Marcy Kopple Lowe
3-Jan	Mellysa Rose Stiel
18-Jan	Carolelee Mendelson
29-Jan	Pat Nadler
29-Jan	Margo Rosenbaum
1-Feb	Jerilyn Okin
5-Feb	Claire Axelrod
13-Feb	Cliff Safane
15-Feb	Aaron Rikon
18-Feb	Henry Kanarek
23-Feb	David Kiviat
24-Feb	Melanie Axelrod
25-Feb	Tracy Rosenbaum
25-Feb	John Schweighardt
26-Feb	Jaymee Steinberg
28-Feb	Nina Rosenbaum
6-Mar	Teisha Bader
7-Mar	Muriel Kanarek
8-Mar	Jordan Adler
16-Mar	Erez Bader
18-Mar	Cheryl Kiviat
22-Mar	Audrey Kopple
23-Mar	Doris Markman
25-Mar	Todd Donow
28-Mar	Eric Frey
28-Mar	Samantha Manjorin
1-Apr	Daniel Frey
13-Apr	Heide Stiel
17-Apr	Ian David Spaulding

22-Apr	Peggy Strauss
25-Apr	Carly Miller
25-Apr	Melanie Miller

Anniversaries

3-Jan	Margaret and Michael Kurnov
26-Mar	Heidi and Mark Stiel
28-Mar	Peggy and Dan Strauss
29-Mar	Sherry and Ira Schiowitz
1-Apr	Debbie and John Schweighardt
8-Apr	Penny and Cliff Safane
12-Apr	Faith and Richard Spaulding
18-Apr	Dorris and Rabbi Harold Markman

Mazel Tov:

Leah Oppenheimer on being awarded first place in the West Milford photo contest.

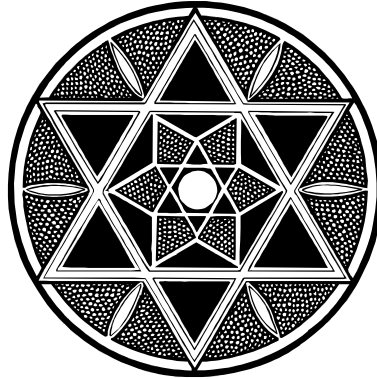
Get Well Soon...

Richard Nadler, who has been under the weather for a bit

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Richard Nadler
 Lakeland Hills Jewish Center
 PO Box 115
 Ringwood, NJ 07456

Information Related to the Departed

English Name	
Hebrew Date of Passing	
Secular Date/Time of Passing	
Your name/address	



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