
Temple Israel of Northern Westchester

Year in Review — June 2017 to May 2018



Director of Education and Youth Programming Report Wendy Pein

CJL Highlights

Special Jewish Holiday Programming –

We continue to implement experiential learning in the CJL, most notably around the Jewish holidays. For Tu B'Shevat, the CJL held our first annual Tu B'Shevat Dessert / Ice Cream Seder during which our students enjoyed the fruits of Israel, learned about their symbolic meaning and enjoyed 4 flavors of Ice cream and how they represent the different seasons. On Purim, our 8th – 12th grade students helped run Purim activities for our younger students and our Tot CJL population. Passover highlights included Selfie Seders for our 9th-12th graders and creative Seders for our 4th – 6th graders during which we discussed what question we might add to the 4 questions and called it #thefifthquestion.

Experiential Learning - On Wed., October 25th, our Bogrim (11th and 12th grade students) visited *This is Hunger*, an interactive, traveling exhibit about the issue of hunger in America, created by Mazon (www.mazon.org). The Bogrim then presented what they learned about hunger to the 8th/9th grade Pathway to Confirmation Class.

On President's Day, 13 CJL volunteers, including 10 of our CJL youth, traveled to volunteer at the HUC-JIR Soup Kitchen in New York City. The trip also included a debriefing of the experience with HUC-JIR

rabbinic and cantorial students. Our students had a very positive experience and are asking for us to plan a similar trip to the soup kitchen next year.

To celebrate Israel's 70th Birthday, the CJL joined in the Brotherhood's Friday night celebratory Israel service. Our CJL students read Israel's Declaration of Independence, lit candles on the menorah, and joined the congregation in singing the HaTikvah. In addition, the CJL joined the WestchesterIsrael@70 celebration in Hartsdale, NY. Eleven of us attended this community celebration during which we heard the IDF ensemble sing classic Israeli songs and also learned about Israel drone technology – a few of our students even had the opportunity to fly a small drone!

Mitzvah Moment – This past February, CJL held its first annual Mitzvah morning. Our lower grade students and their parents/families participated in mitzvah-oriented activities which included making sandwiches for the Homeless shelter in Peekskill, learning about the importance of recycling and making recyclable bags, making cards for the Caring Committee to deliver to those who are in need, and learning about the issue of hunger in America and the organization MAZON which seeks to help alleviate hunger for all. Our Education Committee and staff helped run the program for our CJL families. The morning culminated with CJL lunches by grade. Through participating in social action and eating together, we sought to foster a greater sense of community in the CJL

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Hebrew through Movement was added to the CJL – This year, one of our Hebrew resource teachers, Ariella Wehrle, became trained in Hebrew through Movement (HTM), a technique of teaching Hebrew through auditory learning and responding to Hebrew commands through movement. She then brought this specialty to the CJL in the lower grades. Each week, our K/1 – 3rd grade students spent 15 minutes listening, responding, and understanding Modern Hebrew through movement!

Opportunities for Student-Directed Learning – This past spring, a series of electives were offered to our CJL teens on Wed. evenings. Our CJL Faculty including our Rabbi and Cantor offered courses such as God on Your iPod, You Won't Believe this is in the Torah, and Jew-ishness on the Stage. Next year, we plan to give teens/tweens more input as to what type of electives will be offered.

Grants Received by the CJL

The CJL received a micro-grant from the Jewish Education Project- This fall, the CJL received a micro-grant from the Jewish Education Project (JEP) for our Shabbatalat program. Shabbatalat is a Tot CJL program which combines a brief Tot Shabbat service, dinner, and games/entertainment for our children ages 5 and younger. The purpose of Shabbatalat is to foster community among the Tot CJL families. Shabbatalat includes programming for the young children so that parents have time to interact and connect with one another.

Youth Programs

TIPJY – We started a 6th – 8th grade junior youth group this year called TIPJY (Temple

Israel Program for Junior Youth) and held fun, social events following Wed. night CJL. These events included building edible Hanukkah houses, a Hamantashen bake-off, and a “Lots of Matzah” event during which our teens baked a delicious matzah crunch-style dessert.

TIPSY – Our Senior Youth Group (9th – 12th grade) had a busy year with activities social, religious and social action activities such as Game Nights which raised money for tzedakah, Shabbat dinners, bowling and ice-skating at Bear Mountain. We have elected our 2018-2019 Youth Board which include our new co-presidents, Ilana Epstein and Jack Eisinger.

Adult Education Report

Norman Newman

2017-18 saw a varied number of programs from Adult Education...from the Brotherhood Evening Lecture Series, to J.E.W.E.L presented by Jack Judd, to a MARS Scholar In Residence presentation by Rabbi Barry Schwartz.

The programs, presented in the mornings, afternoon and evening are free to the public and cover a variety of topics. A summary of this year's offering include:

Three classes with Rabbi Shoshana Hantman on The Jewish Influence on Comedy, Stage and Film.

Four classes with Jack Judd on Jewish Immigration to the Americas 1636-2000

The Wilder Image: The Hudson River School by Cynthia Anderson

A showing of the film Havana Curveball, showing a new twist on tzedakah and tikum olam.

Lunch with Cantor Ben Ellerin, Parody, Satire, and Jewish Musical Comedy

Who Is A Jew by Barry Feinberg

A Review of the Civil Rights Tour by Rabbi Jennifer Jaech

The Hidden Jews by Bruce Appelbaum

MARS Scholar in Residence Program with Rabbi Barry Schwartz, noted author and Director of the Jewish Publication Society speaking to the CJL children and a special breakfast for the adults.

Keep your eyes open in the Fall for a new schedule of interesting programs. Have an idea for new subjects?...feel free to email adult education or robin@tinw.org

Finance Committee Report Steve Rubinstein

The Finance Committee, mandated in Article IX of the By-Laws, serves as an advisory body to the Temple Board. The committee works closely with the Treasurer and Financial Administrator in monitoring the current budget and facilitating the development and preparation of the new annual budget.

For the second year in a row, the Temple has operated with a projected budget surplus. The chief factors, once again, were

conservative spending and better than anticipated revenue (membership and plot sales were two major contributors). There were also a few unanticipated expense overages such as Information Technology (to help us become firmly ensconced in the 21st Century).

If you are wondering where any given year's variance (actual vs. expected) shows up in the following year's budget, take a look at the General Fund line in the Analysis of Funds Activity (handed out at the Congregational Meeting). You'll see that this year's ending balance is almost \$137,000. The difference between this year's and last year's ending balance coincides with the projected surplus for this year – the \$137,000 represents the aggregate surpluses (and deficits) TINW has experienced over the past 70 years.

The General Fund also can be construed of as a "rainy day" fund. While we are glad that the balance is positive, the Finance Committee is always mindful that the budget requires ongoing oversight.

Sisterhood Report Adrienne Szendro & Andrea Wertheimer

Each year we promise our members to do our best to fulfill our mission, all together, and we hope they will agree that this year was a success. We'll take a look at each facet:

- *We provide an environment of friendship, intellectual and spiritual growth:* Sisterhood members and guests joined together for several programs. The year began with wine

glass painting with members and friends. Other highlights included adult challah baking and joining with families to teach tots how to make challah. A spiritual highlight every year is our Women's Seder, this year attended by approximately 50 women, and we were privileged to share this tradition with multi-faith friends. Brotherhood and Sisterhood joined forces to present the feature film "The Women's balcony". We are capping the year with our annual dinner where we will dance to the Israeli beat. And of course we cannot forget the friendship shared in our weekly knitting and Mah Jongg groups.

- *We enrich our Temple through social and educational programs:* Our Paid-up Membership dinner featured a guest WRJ speaker who introduced us to "Women of the Wall." Our own Rabbi Ferris followed this program in November with a Q&A about her own experiences as one of the first women Rabbis and her first-hand experience at what would emerge as "Women of the Wall". In December we viewed the Documentary "Secret Jews of Calabria, which prompted a stimulating discussion of our heritages, known and unknown. For a cultural experience, nearly 50 Temple members ventured into the city for the Broadway Show "A Band's Visit" about an Egyptian band stranded in a small Israeli town.
- Our successful *fundraising*, another facet, through the generosity and

kindness of our Congregation, helped bring *financial support* to our Temple, our local community and the world community. Many of our fundraising activities have become staples: Our annual rummage sale, book fair, our Sisterhood Shop, and Mishloach Manot. We have added others in recent years, babka and hamantaschen sales. Proceeds from these benefited the Temple as a whole in addition to our religious school, and music programs. We help provide Yads to B'nai Mitzvah's, and helped pay for Hebrew learning software. Outside the Temple we contributed to the Founding Mothers Fund, World Union for Progressive Judaism and the Jane Evans Sisterhood Service Fund, HIAS, the YES fund (Youth, Education and Special Projects), the Jewish Braille Institute, and the American Cancer Society Relay for Life.

- *We engaged women in the pursuit of Gemilut (acts of kindness), Tikkun Olam (healing the world) and Tzedakah (Righteousness).* supported "Empowering Women Worldwide" to help generate awareness of the immigrant experience and with our interfaith friends, we assembled and provided kits of personal necessities to those in need in our own community. The kindheartedness of our Sisters especially shined as we supported each other through illness and difficult times with meals, rides and friendship.

The last line of our mission statement reads “*We make a difference*”. We had another successful year making that difference and look forward to the year ahead.

We thank all those who help us in achieving our mission- all the staff, friends at Brotherhood, all Sisterhood members and our congregation, and of course those Sisters of the board who worked tirelessly in helping to deliver all our programming.

If you would like to join Sisterhood or would like any additional information, please contact us at sisterhood@TINW.org.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee Report Jen McLaughlin

The BBMC has had a successful year, scheduling the 2020 dates for approximately 25 families. As always, we field a variety of questions from the families during the planning of their events.

Caring Committee Report Amy Hersh Cherie Marcus

The Caring Committee continues to pay for shiva meals when requested, drive congregants to doctors' appointments, and organize meals for congregants who are home-bound due to medical issues.

Building Committee Report

Building Committee Report 2018:
by Steven Krisky

As Chair of the Building Committee for the last 6 years I know sometimes one “cannot see the forest for the trees”. To shed sunlight on all we’ve accomplished, here’s

an impressive top of the trees overview of 34 highlights:

- Rebuilt stone wall from corner of Glengary Rd to Hessian Hills Rd driveway entrance.
- Implemented a brand new signage program to welcome visitors to our sacred home.
- Installed new & improved sound system in the sanctuary.
- Laid new carpeting in Sanctuary & Reception.
- Reconfigured pews to enhance Sanctuary experience.
- Installed new computer monitors throughout all school classrooms.
- Installed new air-conditioners in all classrooms.
- Added handrails on both sides of stairway to lower parking lot.
- Upgraded kitchen w/new stainless steel worktops and (2) brand new pantries.
- Safely boarded up and secured house on Yorktown property.
- Designed and installed new school playground.
- Built new Conference Room complete w/wrap around furniture, carpeting, HVAC, sound proofing & AV equipment.
- Deployed Homeland Security Grant w/(8) brand new doors, security system, communication system, & HDTV camera monitors.

- Enlisted village help relocating neighbor's unsightly garbage/recycling area.
- Repaved & restriped entire upper parking lot.
- Created lighted center median at driveway entrance for better safety, traffic flow & parking.
- Rebuilt garbage collection pad.
- Reclad entire exterior of temple building.
- Planted new landscaping on entry median and Center Island.
- Rebuilt lower parking lot with new curtain wall drainage system.
- Added new curbing on exit driveway for better drainage.
- Worked with village to reroute water away from driveway entrance.
- Worked with village to add a TINW sign at intersection of Mt Airy & Grand St.
- Installed new flooring in Classrooms 5 & 6 and carpeting in CJL Office and Hebrew Center.
- Installed series of retro lighting fixtures to canopy walkway and added programmable timer.
- Rebuilt & rededicated Burdick Community Room complete with temple library as well as multi-media capability w/state-of-the-art surround sound system, drop down media screen, projector, new windows, window treatments, pantry, coffee station, carpeting, lounge furniture, renovated ark doors, computer stations, new lighting system, HVAC & artwork.
- Designed & built beverage/snack center for Conference Room & installed new housing for AV components.
- Relocated Confirmation Class photos to main hallway for better visibility.
- Added artwork throughout first floor.
- Rebuilt rotted window sills on 2nd floor classrooms.
- Allocated sufficient funds over time to pay for upcoming cost of new roof & new exterior lighting.
- Installed state-of-the-art welcome monitor at entrance for visitor information.
- Purchased new stainless steel kitchen cabinetry.
- Installed a 25-year, 56 Kilowatt full solar array on roof to create green energy and enormously reduce our electric expense by over \$15,000 per year.

Finally, I am enormously grateful to the entire Building Committee who have contributed mightily to the upkeep and beautification of our sacred home: Glen Wolland, Michael Bogin, Mark Casso, Jon Fein, Suzanne Gardos, Terry Kardos, Howard Permut, Jim Rice, Ellen Roth, Merrill Roth, Steve Rubinstein, Steve Samuels, Randall Swan & Russ Watsky.

Ritual Committee Report Cherie Marcus

The focus of the Ritual Committee is to offer and arrange aliyot for our services, especially the High Holy Days. We also assist our clergy for Selichot, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Purim, Shavuot, Yizkor services and other holidays and periods of reflections.

In 2017-18 the Ritual Committee engaged in new initiatives. We discussed having more congregants as Torah chanters, monthly tot Shabbat Services, encouraging sanctuary decorum and establishing a greeter table in the lobby for Friday night services.