



Chai Line

The Newsletter of WRJ Pacific District

Spring 2010 5779

From the President – Sandy Gatlin

I have just returned from Sacramento where your District Board met with enthusiasm and intent to take care of the business of our district. It is such a joy to work with women who are creative and think with purpose and commitment. The executive board met all day and came up with some wonderful suggestions, conversations, and decisions that will bring forth growth and significant services to our District.

In the meantime, a wonderful leadership development program for all the Area Directors was taking place in the room next door, led by Past President Nancy Marcus. Our district is so blessed to have the brainstorming and skills of these women working together to develop positive connections to the sisterhoods with whom they work. I heard it was fabulous!!

The next day, in a room of district leaders, executive team members, board members, past district presidents, local sisterhood presidents and WRJ Board members, we heard glowing reports from all the departments. Success stories, new programs, the WRJ strategic plans that are in process, committee reports and more. There we were, thirty four women coming together to do the business of our wonderful district. The budget, the convention report, by-laws, standing rules, films about Gefilte Fish, World Union, and our website...oh my!! One wonderful item after another – two action packed, business filled days of incredible leadership among women who just seem to make things happen with ease and enjoy it! Not forgetting that we are Jewish women, a Jewish organization, we also had God on the agenda.

At the close of the meeting when all the work was done, I took a deep breath, and just thought for a moment. It has been a year and a half since I became the President of the district. Endless phone calls, emails, meetings, conference calls, reports and travels are all a part of my daily life. This was not a dream or my imagination; this was central to all the mitzvot that we perform together as a team. Life is good on our District board. Life is good in WRJ-Pacific District.

With that said, please take a look at the nomination forms that just went out and think about where you might fit in and contribute to this wonderful experience....then fill them out, get it signed, endorsed, and send it in. There are many wonderful ways that your participation can help us lead our way into the next two year team of our District as we strengthen our bond with all the Women of Reform Judaism and our Pacific District.

B'Shalom,
Sandy



**Sandy Gatlin, President
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**HAPPY
SPRING!!**

This Chai Line is going out by e-mail to those whose e-mail addresses we have. Our hope is that this will enable Sisterhood Presidents to more easily share this publication with their membership.

Lag BaOmer
May 2

Shavout
May 18 - May 20

S'lichot
September 4
Rosh HaShanah
September 9 - 10

Yom Kippur
September 18

Sukkot
September 23 - 29

SAVE THE DATES

Northern CA All
Sisterhood Day - San
Mateo
June 27, 2010

Southern CA All
Sisterhood Day - Orange
County
July 11, 2010

Pacific NW All Sisterhood
Day - Bellevue, WA
June 13, 2010

WRJ Pacific District
Convention 2010
Sacramento, CA
November 4 - 7, 2010

GOOD AND WELFARE

See WRJ PD website:
www.wrjpacific.org

AREA DIRECTORS

Submitted by Linda Henderson – WRJ Pacific District 1st VP

I don't know about you, but I am ready for sunshine and warmer temperatures! Pesach has come and gone which should be the harbinger of spring.

All of our Area Directors and leaders assigned to sisterhoods have been in contact with the presidents of our sisterhoods or with the person designated as the contact. Each makes several efforts to have a personal phone conversation on a quarterly basis along with e-mails from time to time. The relationships that are developed are so important to Pacific District and to our sisterhood women.

Please, sisterhood presidents, consider inviting your Area Director to your installations, retreats, events and to a board meeting where she can make a brief presentation about Pacific District. Area Directors and Pacific District Officers are available on request to visit your sisterhood, too. How about board training? Just contact Diana Paul, VP for Service to Sisterhoods Dcpaul1@comcast.net.

If there is an All Sisterhood Day or event in your area, make every effort to attend – and to ensure that your sisterhood is represented. Watch your e-mails for details in the coming weeks

Pacific District's 50th Convention is just a few months away on November 4-7, 2010, in Sacramento. Many, many women are already involved in planning an amazing experience for you. Inspiring workshops, terrific speakers, great opportunities await every woman who registers or volunteers "Connecting and Continuing – Keshet v'Hemschiyot" (practice saying it)

Read more about it in this issue of the Chai Line and watch for e-mails with important information. You'll see our logo branding to let you know that you are receiving a Convention E-mail. There will be new projects and opportunities in which to participate.....so be sure to read those emails and circulate them among your women. I am so excited about this 50th (Golden) celebration...and what better place than in Gold Country.

As your 1st Vice President, it is my responsibility to oversee the Convention. Your Convention Co-Chairs, Rhonda Daniels, who will be coordinating programming and workshops, and Deborah Sibner, who will be managing facilities and local arrangements, have been very, very busy. *This is your Convention and needs your participation...on committees and, as volunteers. Please, please consider what you and your sisterhoods can do to be part of the connecting that will ensure the continuing as we recognize our sisterhoods, Pacific District, Women of Reform Judaism and ourselves and the wonderful things that happen when we connect and continue. WOW!*

I hope each of you and your families enjoyed Pesach and were renewed and warmed with energy as our world is brightened with sunlight and spring growth.

Lindie





New WRJ Pacific District Mission Statement



At the recent WRJ Pacific District board meeting on March 13-14 in Sacramento, the board crafted the mission statement for our district, below.

The mission of WRJ Pacific District is to:

- Promote the aims of Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) helping sisterhoods/women's groups participate effectively in the activities of WRJ.
- Assist in the organization of new sisterhoods/women's groups in the district.
- Bring the sisterhoods/women's groups in the district into closer cooperation and association with one another to further their respective activities.
- Help sisterhoods/women's groups achieve their highest potential within their congregations, their district, and the world of Reform Judaism.

Convention Scholarships

Scholarships will be available for registration costs for sisterhoods who have not sent members to the last two conventions, in 2008 and 2006. Please be thinking about sending your members to Sacramento in November. More information will be sent out soon to sisterhood presidents.



WRJ Scripts and Your New District Website

By Ellen Bick, VP Marketing & Communications

Scripts: There is a valuable accumulation of wonderful scripts and services on the WRJ website for your use. Here is what you will find. First you have to log on to the WRJ website: www.wrj.org Yes, that's right, you no longer have to type out the whole name of Women of Reform Judaism. Then you have to log in. Not everyone is able to log in to the WRJ site, so ask your sisterhood president for her log-in to get you going. Once you have logged in, type in *scripts* in the Search box.

At this point, you will see what the site has to offer: 1 ice-breaker; 7 installation services; 9 sisterhood Shabbat services; 2 Rosh Chodesh services; 5 havdalah services; and 7 women's Passover seders. There is even a chocolate seder. You can download and adapt any service here to fit your own needs. Using several of these services may be just what your own sisterhood Shabbat committee needs as their own inspiration to get started.

Now if you have a dynamite service or script of any kind that you would like to share with other sisterhoods, please email it into the WRJ office at: wrj@urj.org I know that your service will be very much appreciated and a welcome addition to our growing library.

District Website: We have just unveiled our new district website: www.wrjpacific.org The website has been a long time in coming and will most certainly be worth your time to use on a regular basis. Our intent was to use the website to build a district community, to give support to and connect our members and sisterhoods, and to give members the tools and information they need. We hope that the website becomes a familiar place for you to find information, to share your successful events, to advertise an upcoming program, and to keep up with Convention and All Sisterhood Day news and registration. There is also information about how our District is organized and who are our leaders. The Lifecycles section will let you congratulate, thank, or offer sympathy to members.

I would like to thank our very hardworking website designer, Gretchen Zalkind, co-president of Temple Israel Sisterhood of Hollywood. She spent many hours working in tandem with our website committee to put this together. Many thanks to our committee members: Linda Henderson, B'nai Israel, Sacramento; Julie Feldman, Rodef Sholom, San Rafael; Lauren Shapiro Milana, Adat Shalom, Poway; Lauri Brown, Emanuel of Tempe, AZ; and Ellen Bick, Beth Israel in Portland.

At this time, we have turned the site over to our new webmaster, Lauri Brown. Please send her any articles and pictures of successful programs, services, or events. She will also publicize any upcoming event that is open to women from other sisterhoods. Please send Lauri this information at: glabrown@cox.net It has been a wonderful experience to work with women all over our district to help put this together. Our committee is now meeting again, via conference call, to discuss marketing the website so it will be used and enjoyed by all sisterhood members.

Please let me know if you have any comments or suggestions. I look forward to hearing from you:

ellenbick@comcast.net



District Leadership Application Deadline Approaching



Dear Sisterhood Presidents, Co-Presidents and Sisterhood Leadership,

The 49th Biennial Convention of WRJ Pacific District will convene November 2010 in Sacramento, California.

The election of new Officers and Directors continues to be one of the most important functions of the Assembly. The strength of Reform Jewish women in our community and our ability to collaboratively achieve our shared goals emanates from the leadership that is elected. It is truly a Jewish value for women to step forward and share their talents with us all. Additionally, women may submit their own names for consideration, by completing an application with the endorsement of their sisterhood.

1. Each Sisterhood may submit the names(s) of candidates(s) even if another member of that Sisterhood is presently holding an elected position in the District.
2. It is suggested that you submit a current nomination form for the incumbent who demonstrates the desire to continue her leadership position with the District.
3. All Sisterhoods are encouraged to submit candidates to serve as Directors.
4. The residence of the Officers shall be geographically distributed throughout the District, whenever feasible. No Sisterhood may have more than one District Officer, except in the case of the Immediate Past President, who serves automatically as the result of a previous election. While an individual Sisterhood may not have more than one Officer, it may have in addition to an Officer: a Director, and /or Chairwoman.

Please make copies of the nomination and endorsement forms before filling out the first one. Please note that the nominations committee must receive both forms in order to process the nomination.

A completed list of names submitted to the Nominating Committee, who are not on the proposed slate, will be forwarded to the newly elected President for consideration as Chairwomen for Distinct Committees.

The deadline is April 30, 2010. Please let me hear from you as soon as possible.

By Laws Article IV, Section 2: Eligibility for Office

- A. Any Jewish woman, who is a member in good standing of a congregation affiliated with the URJ, and who is a member of a Sisterhood affiliated and in good standing with WRJ and WRJ/PD shall be eligible for election to an office in this District.
- B. In the event that an Officer or Director becomes ineligible during her term of office, the President shall declare her position vacant.

By Laws Article VII: Nominations and Elections: Duties of the Nominating Committee:

Section 2 – The Chairwoman of the Nominating Committee shall notify all Sisterhoods and all elected District Officers and Directors that they may submit to her, on the official form and properly endorsed, the names of candidates who may be eligible for office according to Article IV, Section 2, of these By Laws.

If there are multiple applications for a particular office, the Nominating Committee must choose that officer from those applicants. If there is only one submitted application for a particular office, the Nominating Committee, in its deliberations, shall not be limited to the submitted names only, but shall consider all women eligible for office.

The job descriptions per the district by-laws are below.

L' shalom,

Edith Caplan, Nominations Chair
ecaplanwrjpd@aol.com

From WRJ Pacific District by-laws

Article IV: Elected Officers and Directors

Section 1: Composition:

A. Officers

1. The elected Officers of the Executive Committee of WRJ/Pacific District shall be: President, First Vice-President, five (5) Vice-Presidents (refer to Article V, Section 1), Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and the Immediate Past President.
2. Officers should be affiliated with different Sisterhoods with the exception of the Immediate Past President.

B. Directors

1. One (1) Director shall be elected for every four (4) Sisterhoods within each of the Areas of WRJ/Pacific District (See Standing Rules, Article I-A) as identified in these By Laws.
2. A minimum of one (1) Director must be elected for each Area.
3. One (1) additional director may be added to any given Area of WRJ/Pacific District, at the discretion of the District President, and with the consent of the Executive Board.
4. In the absence of a Vice-President in any geographic area of the District, the Nominating Committee may designate a Director-at-Large for that area who will be accorded the perquisites of an Officer.

Section 6: Duties of Officers and Directors

A. The President shall:

1. Be the chief executive officer of WRJ/Pacific District.
2. Preside at all meetings of the District Biennial Convention, Officers and the District Board.
3. Assign a Vice-President to serve as the Executive Officer of each designated department corresponding to the administrative structure of WRJ.
4. Appoint all Chairs with the approval of the Executive Board.
5. Call special meetings when necessary.
6. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees in their work with the exception of the Committee on Nominations.
7. Attend all conventions of WRJ, meetings of the WRJ District Presidents, and annual meetings of the WRJ Board of Directors.
8. Perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office of President.

B. The First Vice-President shall:

1. Assist the District President and serve in her role if necessary.
2. Directly supervise Area Directors.
3. Ensure that reports of each Area Director are presented at District Board meetings
4. Directly supervise and be responsible for the chairs of the District Biennial Convention.
5. Assume such other duties assigned to the office by the President.

C. The Vice-Presidents shall:

Fulfill the responsibilities of their offices and departments as designated by the President, corresponding insofar as possible to those of WRJ.

D. The Treasurer shall:

1. Purchase a Blanket Position Bond, or equivalent coverage, to bond the President, First Vice-President, Treasurer, the General Chair(s) and the Treasurer of the District Biennial Convention.
2. Supervise the collection of all dues and other funds of WRJ/Pacific District.
3. Pay all approved bills and keep current records of all monies received and disbursed.
4. Render financial reports to the President and Chair(s) of the Budget and Finance Committee at designated intervals and to the Executive Board at each meeting.
5. On completion of her term, present a complete audited written report of the finances of WRJ/Pacific District during that term.
6. The Treasurer, after determining the number of Sisterhoods in each geographic Area, shall inform the Nominating Committee Chair as to the number of Directors to be nominated from each Area.

7. All checks require two of the following signatures: President, First Vice-President, and/or Treasurer.
 8. Assume such other duties assigned to the office by the President.
- E. The Recording Secretary shall:
1. Take minutes of all meetings of the District Board.
 2. Take minutes of the complete proceeding of the District Biennial Convention.
 3. Keep a permanent record of all proceedings of the District Conventions.
 4. Be the custodian of the archives.
 5. Assume such other duties as are assigned to the office by the President.
- F. The Corresponding Secretary shall:
1. Send out all WRJ/Pacific District mailings.
 2. Keep a current mailing list.
 3. Work closely with the President in handling WRJ/Pacific District correspondence.
 4. Assume such other duties as are assigned to the office by the President
- G. The Directors shall:
1. Communicate directly with the First Vice-President regarding their assigned Sisterhoods.
 2. Participate in the implementation of area events in their geographic area.
 3. Develop lines of communication between WRJ/Pacific District and the local Sisterhoods to which they are assigned.

Section 7: Required Reports

- A. Each Director and Director-at-Large shall submit a report to the First Vice- President as and when requested.
- B. Each Officer and Committee Chairwoman shall prepare a report to include a summary and an evaluation of her activities during her time in office. Such reports shall be given to the President at the District Biennial Convention which shall become part of the records of WRJ/Pacific District. Additional reports shall be submitted to the President as and when requested.

Please use these forms

You can find the Nomination and Endorsement forms on our website: www.wrjpacific.org under Resources.

Forms must be received by April 30, 2010



YES Fund Event Planning

By Phyllis Bigelson, WRJ PD Vice President, Development and Special Projects

Are you aware of all of the information your sisterhood has access to on the WRJ webpage? Has your sisterhood planned a YES Fund event lately? The following is some very useful information on how to do a successful and fun event...

Planning an Event for the YES Fund: Circle of Service and Lifeline

How to begin:

1. Name the (co)chairs and establish a committee
2. Determine the type of event you would like to have
 - Brunch
 - Lunch
 - Tea
 - Dinner
 - Dessert
 - Hors d' oeuvres
3. Decide on the types of programs you would like to include
 - [YES Fund Presentation](#)
 - A speaker

- honoring someone in your sisterhood, synagogue, or community (consider your first Lifeline members or the oldest living past sisterhood president)
- story teller
- book review
- musical program

4. Contact WRJ for assistance

Request YES Fund items and resources to give away, sell, or to use for decoration. Contact the WRJ office form more information.

5. Form sub-committees

- Pick a date, time and place: at the synagogue, in someone's home, in a private room of a restaurant, outdoors
- Prepare a budget for the event
- Plan the food: cook or cater? If you can have the event underwritten (perhaps by your Lifelines), then you might choose not to charge for the food portion.
- Design, print and mail invitations: Consider using [Uniongrams](#) or something comparable that indicates clearly that this is a sisterhood/WRJ event that will benefit Circle of Service and Lifeline.
- Plan and execute table decorations and gifts: Magnets, stickers, YES Fund items or donated items for door prizes and gifts.
- Take reservations and make follow-up calls to non-responders
- Set up the room: Place a table for filling out Circle of Service pledge cards if this is a "stand-up" affair. Assign a current Circle of Service member to a prospect for some personal time. If this is a sit-down meal, consider pre-assigning tables, making sure that there is a current Circle of Service member at each table to interact with new members and facilitate collecting applications and checks.

Congratulations, your sisterhood and congregation members have just raised money for WRJ's YES Fund!

All checks must be made out to WRJ-Circle of Service or WRJ-Lifeline. When forwarding checks to WRJ for multiple contributions, send along a list of all individual contributors and the amount of each contribution; please specify if he/she is starting or completing a Lifeline



3rd Annual YES Fund Tea

By: Cher Krichmar, VP for Affiliations and committee member for the Tea

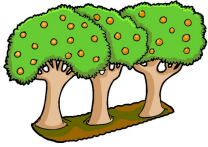
Seven sisterhoods will once again hold their annual YES Fund Tea. The sisterhoods participating in this Tea include: Temple Beth Sholom – Santa Ana; Temple Beth Ohr – La Mirada; Temple Beth David – Westminster; Temple Beth Tikvah – Fullerton; Temple Beth David – San Gabriel; Temple Bat Yahm – Newport Beach; Congregation B'nai Tzedek – Fountain Valley.

We have reservations for over 100 women! This year the tea will be held at Temple Beth David in Westminster on April 25th from 2-4 p.m. Nancy Marcus, former WRJPD President, will be our guest speaker for the YES Fund. We will also have musical entertainment provided by the lovely Arielle Miller, also a member of Beth David Westminster.

As always, we provide wonderful treats for the tea – cream cheese & cucumber tea sandwiches, tuna tea sandwiches; scones with lemon curd, jams and cream; fresh fruit and dried fruit; lots of yummy desserts and, of course, a variety of teas. A \$5.00 donation is requested to cover the cost of the foods for the afternoon. We will also hold a raffle. Last year one of the many beautiful raffle items included a Brighton Menorah, which everyone wanted!!!

We have raised thousands of dollars for the YES Fund in the last two years and we are hoping to continue with this amount of donations collected. If you would like to attend, please contact either Ann Farber from Temple Beth David Westminster, or me! We would LOVE to have you come and spend the afternoon with us and enjoy good friends, entertainment and, of course, good eats!! Hope to see you there with the rest of us!! Don't miss this great event!! ckrichmar@aol.com





University Synagogue Sisterhood Celebrates Tu B'Shevat

Sylvia Rose, University Synagogue Sisterhood

On Wednesday, February 3, 2010, 34 people participated in a thought-provoking and spiritually satisfying Tu B'Shevat seder.

Tu B'Shevat, also called Jewish Arbor Day, notes the importance of trees historically, as well as for today and for the future. The seder service, written by Sisterhood member Rabbi Miriam Hamrell, led us through the various fruits and nuts that demonstrate differences. Each seder plate had items on it that were hard on the outside but soft inside, soft inside but hard outside and soft all the way through. As we drank white wine or grape juice, then white mixed with a little red, then white mixed with a lot of red, and finally all red, we learned about the importance of trees and their fruits.

Rabbi Joel Simonds led us through the seder, encouraging discussion and the sharing of experiences. To thank him for making the service so beautiful and meaningful, Sisterhood gave him tomato plants for the vegetable garden being tended by the religious school for the benefit of SOVA, the kosher food pantry.

Sylvia Rose
University Synagogue Sisterhood



Affiliations & Reaffiliations

By: Cher Krichmar, VP WRJ PD

Our district is the only district in WRJ lucky enough to have a V.P. in charge of Sisterhood Affiliations. The other districts have recently chosen a person in their district to chair this tremendous position. Our district has a big challenge compared to other districts, as we are so geographically large. We have started having conference calls with other districts, and since Pacific District has had this position now for 3 ½ years, we are able to give a lot of input to other districts and brainstorm together.

Many unaffiliated sisterhoods want to know, "Why should we affiliate?" For those of you that know all the great reasons to this question, I know you can probably answer this question quite easily. But perhaps some of you may still wonder what WRJ does for you.

Let me give you a few great reasons to affiliate – and remind you also why you chose to affiliate.

- Affiliated sisterhoods are more likely to have an active sisterhood with the WRJ connection
- Resources to help sisterhoods
 - Programming
 - Support by having a WRJ speaker; programs; listserves; membership information; lots of great informational support; WRJ and district website for any and all questions 24/7 (www.wrjpacific.org and www.wrj.org)
 - Leadership training opportunities
- Honor to congregation
- Part of an international organization

Women also have a chance to connect with other women besides their own sisterhoods, which brings camaraderie amongst neighboring sisterhoods. Collectively, sisterhoods are **Stronger Together!!!**
We are proud of our district and want to continue to keep it strong! Let me know if you know of a Temple who wants to start a women's group, or who may want to start a discussion about affiliation!
I am happy to hear from you!
Cher Krichmar ckrichmar@aol.com



Celebrating Purium with Shelach Manot baskets

By: Phyllis Bigelson, WRJ PD VP Development and Special Projects

This is the second year Temple Ahavat Shalom in Northridge, CA has successfully held a fundraiser for Purium, netting several thousands dollars. The following is a description of the marvelous and successful event, written by TAS Sisterhood President, Robyn Blachman:

To fulfill the laws associated with Purim of sending gifts of food and drink to friends, Temple Ahavat Shalom Sisterhood presents Shelach Manot baskets. Congregants receive a list of all TAS congregants, clergy and staff and are asked to go on-line or use the list they received in the mail to pick congregants, clergy and staff to whom their family would like to send a Shelach Manot bag. Each congregant, clergy and staff member receives a bag regardless of their being picked by another congregant. Everyone receives one bag with a lovely note that says:

On Purim, we emphasize the importance of unity and friendship by sending gifts of food to friends and family. The Temple Ahavat Shalom Sisterhood brings greetings and best wishes to you and your family for a very happy and joyous Purim. We hope that you enjoy your Shelach Manot treats as we celebrate this happy holiday.

The following Temple members send you greetings:

Every congregant has names on their list thanks to the generous Temple members who donate \$180. This \$180 puts their names and wishes on everyone's letter. Others donate \$18 for their first member choice and \$3 for every choice after that.

Responses from members have included:

One older gentleman was deeply touched to have been hand delivered a gift from the temple.

"My family and I really appreciated the Purim basket. Heard you worked very hard getting this together for the Temple. What a happy surprise when it arrived! We loved it!"

"... I want to compliment whoever needs to be complimented on the Shalach Manot for Purim. I hesitated for two reasons and in the end, missed the boat. When I saw the advertisement that said they would be filled with "Kosher" treats, I got nervous and imagined lots of jelly candies and not much more! Next year, we're in! They were plentiful and not the least bit 'cheesy'!"

"Just dropping in to tell you that the Purim baskets were most impressive. I can see that the work that was involved was awesome. Thank you for undertaking this huge task."

"Dear friends. How lovely to receive the fun-filled Purim basket. Thanks so much for your part in remembering one and all."

"Yesterday I was truly delighted by the arrival of my TAS Purim Basket. The Hamantachen were delicious and the rest of the goodies were fun. It really gets you in the holiday mood. I know next year I will participate by ordering for my nearest and dearest."

"Thank you for bringing your idea to sisterhood and for all your hard work in making this fundraiser a success."

Just received a call from a recipient who thought it was soooooo nice and the kind of thing that will make people appreciate their membership. She was so pleased to receive it and said it was a great package!

Purim at Congregation Albert

Congregation Albert Sisterhood created the Purim celebration for our congregation. For over 5 decades we have organized a Purim carnival with games and a deli. More recently changes have included jumpers, a raffle, vendors and a silent auction. But the fundraiser that grows is Hamantaschen - lines form before the doors open and we can never bake enough!



By: Deborah Sibner, Co-Chair

Planning for the 50th Biennial WRJ-PD Convention continues with many of the details coming together and most committees now being fully staffed. However, we will still be soliciting and welcoming help at the convention itself so for those of you who would like a job (small or large) there will definitely be an opportunity!

What we are asking for right away is for each sisterhood to designate one of its members as a “convention liaison”. We would like to create an email list of all convention liaisons who could receive outgoing information about convention to disseminate (and promote it) amongst their sisterhood membership. So presidents, please designate a liaison and send her name, phone number, and email address to Denise Stephens at dstephens58@hotmail.com.

Many of the traditional convention events will continue with the addition of a couple of new things added to keep things interesting. One change is that we are going “green”. And by now you may have heard about the convention bag project spearheaded by Susan Cox and Elaine Berghausen. Along with Susan and Elaine, women from all over the district have donated remnant fabric and/or their time and talent to help with the sewing of these hand-made bags. Long after convention, you’ll be using your bag for shopping, schlepping, and just plain showing-off! Thanks to all who have contributed to this project. These bags will be the symbol of our green convention.

A lot of work is going into the workshop planning to make the classes interesting and meaningful. When you receive your registration packet you’ll find some great workshops arranged in themed tracks so that if you have an area of interest, you can stay on subject throughout convention. Or you will be able to attend workshops on different subjects.

We have put together the menus and the food sounds yummy! We have taste tested at the WRJ-PD board meeting held at the Doubletree in April and we will be able to report on how good the food will be in the next update. A vegan meal will be offered as an alternative to the standard meal. The vegan selection should satisfy kosher-style, gluten-free, and cruelty-free requirements. Standard meals will of course be kosher-style.

Saturday night will be our all-fun entertainment night. We will have the traditional Chinese Auction and a few new fun activities. One of those new activities will be “Work of Our Hands”. This will be an opportunity for WRJ-PD artists and artisans to showcase and sell their works. Watch for a separate flyer that will be going out with all the details.

So get ready for Connecting and Continuing as a woman of Reform Judaism at our Pacific District 50th convention in Sacramento. It will be an uplifting and exciting event. You will return to your own sisterhoods with great ideas and an enthusiastic spirit to infuse your own programs with all that we are. Can’t wait to see you in November!

* * * * *

Report from Diana MaKieve, VP of Programming and Advocacy

I don't know about you, but I'm ready for Spring! Winter has been more grey and wet than any winter I can remember here in Northern California. Our Advocacy news has been a bit dreary too, with discouraging reports of embattled Israeli women fighting for their right to pray at the wall, Health Care Reform mired in the appalling political mess of Washington, and the earthquakes of Haiti and Chile left images of destruction and suffering etched in our minds. I looked forward to Passover and the traditions that are comfortable and welcoming to me in my Synagogue, Sisterhood, and home. I yearn for the renewal that Passover stands for, and the hope that it brings to my heart that change will happen and people will heal. I looked forward to tasting the sweetness of charoset and matzoh that are my weakness for those special eight days, and, I imagine that I will also see blue skies and feel the warmth of the sun.

Action to take now:

Women of the Wall: Our message is clear: The Kotel belongs not just to one individual, group, or denomination but to all Jews. The treatment of women as they engage in meaningful prayer and ritual undermines the Jewish and democratic values that are so essential to the state of Israel's well-being. For up-to-date information, visit www.urj.org/israel/wow.

Hold a Rosh Chodesh prayer group in solidarity with Women of the Wall & send a summary with photos to solidarity@womenofthewall.org.il

Chile, Aid Earthquake Victims: The Joint Distribution Committee Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief (JCDR) has convened a coalition to assist the victims of the massive earthquake in Chile. Donations to JCDR Chile Earthquake Relief can be made at <https://www.jdc.org/donation/donate.aspx?type=JCDR>



FROM JOURNALING TO DANCING

34 de-stress in redwoods at Beth Am Women's retreat By: Janet Ghent

They walked in the redwoods, danced, wrote in journals, studied holy texts and played mah jongg. They discussed their favorite books, made collages and Havdalah sets, and enjoyed margaritas to honor a late friend. Thirty-four congregants of Beth Am in Los Altos Hills converged March 5 to 7 at the Sequoia Retreat Center in the Santa Cruz Mountains for the first annual Beth Am Women's retreat.

Titled "Finding Hope and Peace in Stressful Times," the retreat gave participants an opportunity to get to know each other and themselves in a tranquil environment, away from everyday distractions. Sharing an informal Shabbat as well as a Sunday study session with Rabbi Janet Marder, they pondered such questions as what does it mean to pray and how can one refresh oneself on a daily basis. Among the paths are nourishing oneself by spending time in nature, enjoying music and dance, and discovering the healing power of silence and being alone.

The event was proposed headed by Heidi Sloss, a new member, who planned and coordinated the event with Rabbi Marder and members of Beth Am Women. "Getting away from the busyness of our lives can be relaxing and rejuvenating," Sloss says. "The first women's retreat at Beth Am was all that and more. We created a community of caring women that had been hungry to connect. Women left feeling in tune with each other and their inner wisdom."

Louise Stirpe-Gill, a Beth Am board member, agrees: "From lighting the first candles of Erev Shabbat to extinguishing the light of the Havdallah candle, the women of Congregation Beth Am laughed, cried, played, learned and prayed together. Lighting a candle in the darkness is the most elemental human symbol of hope. Spending time *being* instead of *doing*, we took a first step in finding our voice, and creating community."



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Susan Martin, Rabbi Janet Marder and Sandy Hirsh





WRJ PACIFIC DISTRICT
NORTHERN AREA
PRESENTS
ALL SISTERHOODS DAY 2010



From Hand to Hand
We Inherit Our Future

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 27, 2010
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Featuring Our Guests

SUSAN PITTELMAN
WRJ Executive Board Secretary

&

DR SONDRALTMAN
MD, Obstetrics and Gynecology
On Women's Sexual Health

Peninsula Temple Beth El
1700 Alameda De Las Pulgas
San Mateo, Ca

WRJ Pacific District NW All Sisterhood Day

Save the Date: June 13th

Temple B'nai Torah, Bellevue, WA 10:30-3:30

Sisterhood: Following in the Footsteps of Miriam

More info to come.





Southern California All Sisterhood Day

Save the Date!!!! Sunday July 11, 2010

Cher Krichmar and Phyllis Bigelson, WRJPD Vice Presidents



This year we will hold our annual ASD at Temple Beth Sholom, in Santa Ana. This event will be co-hosted by Temple Beth Ohr Sisterhood of La Mirada. We are very pleased that our special WRJ guest speaker this year is Wendy Adamson.

We have many different workshops to choose from that will interest the newer sisterhood members as well as the seasoned sisterhood members. Registration materials will be sent out very soon to your sisterhood presidents! So, check out the great programs and get your registration back to Nancy Griffin as soon as possible!!

Wendy will be doing leadership training on Saturday afternoon from about 4 – 6 at Lainey Mitzman's home. We will have a short Havdalah service following training followed by dinner. If you want to stay and schmooz after that, we will be playing mahj at Lainey's!!!! All of this great information will be included in your ASD registration package – so be sure to save the date and plan to come to a great time in the O.C.!!!

Sandy Gatlin, our district president and Linda Henderson, our executive vice president will also be there. Not to mention we have many active past district presidents whose wonderful input has helped make this ASD planning so smooth and fun to plan!

So, mark your calendars now, and come to see new friends and connect with old friends from San Diego to Santa Clarita! Don't miss this exciting day (and afternoon and night) here in the O.C.! Hope to see many familiar faces and new ones too,



WRJ PACIFIC DISTRICT BOARD AND DIRECTORS 2008-2010

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1974-76	Bernadine	Brenner**	OR		
1976-78	Marcia	Levin**			
1978-80	Juliette	Nathan**	CA		
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