PRESIDENTS’ REPORT

As I write this I’m really stunned with what a strange and different year it’s been and how I really expected things to be different by this time. I remember having conversations with other board members over the summer and in early fall about Sisterhood and what we’d be able to offer, and Liza Theuman (who works in the health care industry and thereby has first-hand knowledge of what’s going on) trying to push back on my eternal optimism. She warned me that it was going to get worse, and she was right.

But, we’ve persevered and have been able to find creative ways to continue offering programs to our members (thanks in large part to Liza’s great ideas). Much has been put on the Zoom platform including Board Meetings, the new “Chai Lunches” (18th of the month, now “Chai Teas” for the winter), book club meetings and the knitting group. We’ve added movie discussions and Karen DeCross has come up with new Zoom Game events.

Our membership Celebration was an inspiring presentation by Julia Walsh and Monica Gurrell on the “Stitch by Stitch” project that Julia participated in, along with a video documentary on creating a Torah in Cross Stitch. Due overwhelming interest, Julia offered the program to Sisterhood a 2nd time when she presented the program for Hadassah. We all hope the project will come to the Memorial Art Gallery so we can see some of the panels in person. And, if/when things change Julia will host a “Stitch the Torah” hands-on session so we can experience the project for ourselves.

Because the WRJ N.E. District Convention (11/6-7) was held virtually, a number of Sisterhood members were able to attend. They did an amazing job organizing all the speakers, the music, and discussion sessions. It was very interesting and worthwhile and gave us a lot of ideas of things we can do with our own Sisterhood.

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Thanks to Rabbi Rochelle’s technical skills we will still be able to host a virtual Sisterhood Shabbat in February, followed the next day by the Annual Sisterhood Spirituality Retreat. Passover Tastings will also be virtual with an opportunity to share recipes.

As always, we hope we are providing our membership what you are looking for. Cindy Finestone and Liza Theuman are helping us continue with our Listening Campaign. You will find information about a questionnaire in this issue. We will be following up with phone calls to talk to you about Sisterhood to hear your thoughts about what’s working, not working, what you’d like to see us do differently, etc. If at any time you have ideas or just want to talk, please feel free to contact us! And let’s hope that vaccine comes to all soon so we can get back together in-person!!

Susan Fogal and Monica Skerker, Co-Presidents
(381-7056) (381-9367)

THE 2020-2021 BLUE BOOK IS AVAILABLE!

An electronic copy of the 2020-2021 Blue Book will be sent to our email list. Please contact the Sisterhood office at 244-7060, ext. 233 or wrj@tbk.org to receive a printed copy.

CONNECTIONS CHANGES

Starting with this issue, Connections will be sent by email. Printed copies will be mailed only to those Sisterhood members without email addresses or upon request. If you wish to receive a printed copy in the future, please contact the Sisterhood office at wrj@tbk.org or 244-7060, ext. 233.
**JEWISH SOLDIERS PROJECT COLLECTION**

February 14, 2021

The Jewish Soldiers Project will once again be collecting holiday mishloach manot packages for our Soldiers both stateside and abroad. Please drop off your baked goods, either store bought or homemade at the south entrance of TBK on Sunday February 14th between 9:30-11:30am. Give the gift of love to those who are keeping us safe.

**BOOK DISCUSSION LED BY JUDGE KAREN MORRIS**

The Color of Love: The Memoir of a Mixed Race Jewish Girl by Marra B. Gad

Thursday, January 28th at 7:30 pm

Winner of the 2020 Midwest Book Award in Autobiography/Memoir, *The Color of Love* is an unforgettable memoir about a mixed-race Jewish woman who, after fifteen years of estrangement from her racist great-aunt, helps bring her home when Alzheimer’s strikes.

We have three copies of the book to “share” amongst those wishing to read before participating in the discussion. You can make arrangements to pick up a copy by contacting Charlene Caplan at 271-0696 or caplancharlene72@gmail.com.

More details about the Zoom call will be shared by email at a later date or by contacting Charlene.

**CHAI TEA**

Chai Lunch will be replaced by virtual Chai Tea during the colder months. We will continue to meet on the 18th of each month.

Zoom links will be sent by email. For more information, please contact Liza Robbins Theuman at 201-2024 or ltheuman@rochester.rr.com.

**SISTERHOOD PROGRAMMING SURVEY**

During this unusual time, we are working hard to provide programming that works for you.

Please go online to our Google Form Sisterhood Programming Survey at https://forms.gle/DfbnHqVVB3U2myXA7 to respond. If you prefer a paper copy, please contact the Sisterhood office at wrj@tbk.org or 244-7060, ext. 233.

We plan to follow up with phone calls, so you’ll be hearing from us soon! We appreciate your input!
**SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE THROUGH WRJ/SISTERHOOD BERNSTEIN AWARD FOR JUDAIC STUDIES**

The Philip S. Bernstein Scholarship Award is given to one or more young people in our congregation. This award originated as a WRJ/Sisterhood loan fund more than 50 years ago. It was renamed in 1986 to honor the memory of Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, who served as spiritual leader of our temple for more than five decades. In 1999, the fund was redesigned to be a monetary award rather than a loan. The recipient exemplifies all the qualities for which Rabbi Bernstein stood. The award is given based upon commitment to Judaism and sincere interest in the pursuit of studies related to that commitment. The award will be given to persons of high school age and above who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to Judaism. The scholarship is not based on financial need. **Deadline for application is April 15th.**

For more information, please contact WRJ/Sisterhood office at 244-7060, ext. 233.

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**JUDAICA SHOP**

We are open by appointment!

As always, we are a great shopping choice for all of your Judaica needs - when planning for a bar or bat Mitzvah, for a tallit, or a gift! We carry jewelry, giftware, tallisim, mezuzot, shabbat items, candles and more holiday items. TBK members always receive a 10% discount on all regularly priced merchandise. Special orders welcome.

To make an appointment, please call 244-7060 or email juliawalshroc@gmail.com.

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**SPIRITUALITY RETREAT ON ZOOM!**

Saturday, February 6th
9:30 am – noon

Please join us for our annual Sisterhood retreat on Saturday, February 6th from 9:30 am to noon. This year’s retreat will focus on *Sharing the Burden - finding balance in leadership and living* and will be facilitated by Rabbi Rochelle Tulik.

Our retreat is open to all, including female and female identifying, Jewish and Jew-ish, and both members and non-members of TBK and WRJ/TK Sisterhood.

There is no fee to participate, but registration is required. A Zoom link will be provided upon registration.

Donations are gratefully accepted and will go towards the YES Fund. To donate, please send your donation to the Sisterhood office at 2131 Elmwood Avenue, Rochester, NY 14618. Be sure to indicate that it’s for the Retreat.

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**WRJ/TK SISTERHOOD IS ACTIVE ON FACEBOOK!**

Please like the WRJ/ Temple B’rith Kodesh Sisterhood Facebook page to see updates on events and more!

While you’re on Facebook, be sure to also check the WRJ Northeast District Facebook page for continuous updates across the district that are open to all Sisterhood members. The monthly virtual calendar is posted the last week of the previous month. Zoom events are open to all.
NEW DATE FOR ART SHOW
The Art Show committee had decided it would be unrealistic to think that the show could be held in April of 2021. The NEW DATE will be SUNDAY OCTOBER 25, 2021. Watch for more information as it gets closer.

COLLEGE CONNECTION FALL PACKAGE 2020
The TBK/WRJ College Connection committee recently mailed packages to 23 students. Since the pandemic caused us to get a late start collecting names and addresses, we couldn’t get anything out in time for the holidays. We decided to focus our package instead on joy and relaxation/stress relief. The packages included pens with inspirational sayings, glass magnets with Starry Sky themed designs, football shaped stress balls for the boys, facial moisturizing masks with animal faces for the girls, Fruit Roll Ups, Charms lollipops, a handwritten note from Rabbi Stein and Rabbi Tulik, and a printed note from Sisterhood with a colorful Shalom graphic saying “We hope this small gift brings you a little peace and joy from home during this stressful and difficult time!” Everything was packaged in royal blue bubble envelopes with colorful cardstock confetti inside and address labels with the same Shalom graphic as the one in the note.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT CELEBRATION
On October 22nd around 30 Sisterhood members gathered via zoom to listen to Julia Walsh’s fabulous Stitch the Torah presentation. Julia spoke about the Stitch the Torah project she was involved with. She shared an informative video about the project and great pictures that showcased her work and other aspects of the project. A huge thank you to Julia for presenting! It was a great evening!

SISTERHOOD PHILANTHROPY AND PERSONAL DONATION OPPORTUNITIES
Many people in our communities are in need of help, especially when it comes to food. We as a Sisterhood decided to make a donation to Foodlink this year since they provide for the entire community. We were able to donate in proportion to what we have not spent on programs for our members this year.

Additionally, many organizations affiliated with our TBK community could use your help. If you find it possible in your budget, consider making a personal donation to the following organizations (and their respective addresses):
Blessed Sacrament - 534 Oxford St, Rochester, 14607
Keeping Our Promise - 888 Pittsford Mendon Center Rd, Pittsford, 14534
Baden Street Settlement House - 86 Vienna Street, Rochester, 14605
RAIHN - 142 Webster Ave, Rochester, 14609
Foodlink - 1999 Mt. Read Blvd, Rochester, 14615
Tempro – TBK
Thank you for your generosity!

FRIED WOMEN’S CONFERENCE
March 12-14, 2021
The 2021 Fried Women’s Conference will be held as a virtual conference, as was the 2020 conference. No packing, no travel, no hotels required – so easy. Fees will be nominal at $54. We encourage you to put it on your calendar.
FOR MORE DETAILS SEE: https://wrj.org/fried-womens-conference-2021

WRJ SISTERHOOD SHABBAT
Friday February 5, 2021 at 6pm
This will be a Zoom service. WRJ/TBK Sisterhood will lead the congregation in prayer, and we would love your participation. Hebrew and English reader participants are needed. It is an opportunity to experience a service of ruach, song, prayer, and friendship as we pray together as Sisters, even though we will be in our own homes.

We look forward to hearing from you! Please contact Fran Swire at francine@triuna.com or 586-5860.
WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

WRJ/TBK Sisterhood welcomes our new members:
Sue Lococo
Sharon Parkman
Susan R. Reed

The best way to make membership a meaningful experience is to give your time and/or talent. As the Temple and community depend on us, so we depend on you! We are involved in so many things, on so many different levels, that we are sure that you will find something that fits you just right! We hope to see you soon!

VIRTUAL MOVIE DISCUSSIONS

We continue to meet virtually once a month to discuss movies and series that are available on Netflix, Amazon Prime, HBO, or at the Public Library.

In the fall we discussed Four Seasons Lodge, Frieda Kahlo, The Resistance Banker, Cuties, The Two Popes and The Trial of the Chicago 7. Movies have been chosen for each discussion by attendees at the previous discussion. Everyone attending agrees that these movies continue to expand our knowledge and result in excellent conversations.

Please watch for emails with Zoom links and specifics for future movie selections and discussion. For more information, please contact Monica Skerker at 381-9367 or mskerk26@gmail.com.

PASSOVER TASTINGS

Sunday, March 7th at 2pm

Mark your calendars for Sunday, March 7th at 2pm for a Zoom Passover Recipe Sharing and Discussion. Please share your favorite Passover recipes in a Word document by Thursday February 25th to ltheuman@rochester.rr.com. We will then gather them together and distribute them with your Zoom invitation for discussion. As the date gets closer maybe, just maybe, we will make an announcement about a cooking demonstration by a mystery chef!

SENDING BIRTHDAY WISHES

Below you will see the names of your friends and family, and, perhaps, even yourself. We hope that you will check off the names of those to whom you wish to send birthday greetings. The cost of each greeting that you send is $1.00. Paula Ouzer-Mauro, our “Birthday Wishes” Chair, will gladly send a note for you. It’s just that simple!

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<td>Gladys Wolsky</td>
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<td>Rebecca Utech</td>
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Name _________________________________________________________

Phone_________________________________________________________

# of recipients @ $1.00__________________ Total $ __________________

Make checks payable to WRJ/TBK Sisterhood. Mail to the Sisterhood Office, 2131 Elmwood Ave., Rochester, NY 14618
Temple B’rith Kodesh
WRJ/TBK Sisterhood
2131 Elmwood Avenue,
Rochester, NY 14618

Connections
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Purim is a time for celebration and joy.
We wish you all a Happy Purim.

ONGOING

Knitting/Crocheting The group is currently meeting virtually once a month. For further information, please contact Diane Pinchoff at 446-0384 or adpinchoff@yahoo.com or Julia Walsh at 244-6249 or julialwalshroc@gmail.com.

Mah Jongg There are opportunities for virtual play. For more information, please contact the Sisterhood office at wrj@tbk.org or 244-7060, ext. 233.

Blessed Sacrament Unfortunately, we cannot participate in our usual volunteer activities at Blessed Sacrament right now.

Donations Please remember to bring a food donation in support of various food pantries, cosmetics for women’s shelters and baby food. “Box Tops for Education” and “Labels for Education” for School 52 Please save these labels found on Campbell’s and General Mills food products packages. Deposit any time in the box outside the WRJ/Sisterhood Office.

Donations for Tempro Please continue to collect travel size and full size shampoo, soaps and creams which we will distribute to the Tempro houses.

If you’re planning to drop off at TBK, please call the temple office before coming.

CALENDAR

January 2021
Mon. January 4
Mon. January 18
Thurs. January 28

February 2021
Fri. February 5
Sat. February 6
Mon. February 8
Thurs. February 18

March 2021
Sun. March 7
Mon. March 8
Thurs. March 11 - Sun. March 14
Thurs. March 18

April 2021
Mon. April 5
Sun. April 18
Sun. April 25

Movie Discussion 4:00pm
Chai Tea
Book Discussion: The Color of Love: The Memoir of a Mixed-Race Jewish Girl
Sisterhood Shabbat
Spirituality Retreat
Movie Discussion 4:00pm
Chai Tea
Passover Tastings
Movie Discussion
WRJ Fried Conference
Chai Tea
Movie Discussion
Chai Tea
Jewish Roots – TBK and Mt. Hope Cemetery