

## **SISTERHOOD CORNER—January, 2019**

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### ***From the President's Desk...***

In January we celebrate *Tu B'Shevat* (January 21<sup>st</sup>)—the birthday of the trees. Just as the trees are dormant during this time of the year, our Sisterhood will also be “resting”, with no meetings or programs for the entire month of January. But we are busy getting ready for the rest of the year with exciting programs and events planned.

We will be showing the movie “*The Band's Visit*” at our luncheon on Wednesday, February 6th. Our next book review will be on Wednesday, February 13th where we will discuss the book “*Modern Girls*” by Jennifer S. Brown.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in 2019 at one of our many programs. Best wishes for a peaceful New Year!

*B'Shalom! Judy Frank*

### ***News and Notes...***

- Be a media mogul! A \$5 contribution makes you a sponsor of our Sisterhood bulletin. Please mail your contributions to:  
Judy Arkin c/o EHNTJC Sisterhood  
4500 Dempster Street • Skokie, IL 60076

#### **Our Media Moguls this month are:**

***Esther Berman***  
***(in memory of Abe & Sara Yelen),***  
***Marcy Feinberg, Esther Javetz***  
***Bobbie Levin, Evie Lowenthal,***  
***Dori Marks,***  
***Idelle Peaceman***  
***(speedy recovery of daughter Paula),***  
***Ada Rabinowitz and***  
***Adrienne Tanner (grandson's birthday)***

If you have news to share, contact Judy Arkin at kjarkin99@comcast.net.

- Sisterhood donation cards are 8/\$10 and the Chai cards are 6/\$18. The cards are available in the synagogue office or through our Gift Shop.
- Thank you to the knitters who contribute their time to work on shawls for breast cancer patients at North Shore Hospitals. The synagogue office has copies of the instructions. For more information, call Idelle Peaceman at (847)254-7745.

### **BOOK CLUB TO DISCUSS**

#### ***“Modern Girls”***

by Jennifer S. Brown

The next meeting of the Sisterhood Book Club will be on **Wednesday, February 13th** at **10:30 a.m.** at the synagogue.

This immensely readable story is set in the immigrant Jewish community on the Lower East Side of Manhattan during the mid-1930s. Brown describes every aspect of life in a tiny flat—from the smell of baking bread, to the crowded living quarters, to the constant noise and commotion on the streets, to the clothing, and even to the distinctive odor of Aqua Velva.

Rather than overwhelming the reader with minutiae, Brown uses the smallest of details to enhance the storyline. She also skillfully weaves accurate historical details into the story. Hitler is on the rise in Europe, where violence against Jews is increasing. Jews are trying to escape to America, but a recently passed law reducing the yearly quota of Jews entering the United States has made leaving Europe more difficult. Unions are on the rise, many immigrants belong to the Socialist Party and demonstrations, often violent, are commonplace.

Please join us for a lively discussion!  
Refreshments will be served.

#### **Please RSVP to one of our Book Club Chairs:**

Dorothy Lipstadt	(847)673-3525
Elaine Lampert	(847)537-1240
Judith Rae-Ross	(847)708-4541

### ***Good and Welfare...***

- Wishing a ***Refuah Shlayma*** (a complete and speedy recovery) to Evelyn Sternfeld, Ellen Lebowicz and Gail Helfer.
- ***Mazel Tov*** to Barbara Brotine on the birth of her granddaughter, Maya Lillian Brotine.
- ***Mazel Tov*** to Shellé Malina on the birth of her great-granddaughter, Makayla Crescenti.
- Our condolences to Men's Club President, Steve Hara on the loss of his mother, Sylvia Hara.



#### ***EHNTJC Sisterhood***

is affiliated with the Women's  
League for Conservative Judaism

### **TODAH RABAH • תודה רבה • THANK YOU**

- Thank you for the birthday Leagram. It made a special day more special.....Ruth Schack.

## ***GIFT SHOP GAB - VOLUME TWENTY-FIVE***

The gift shop is booming! We are becoming a more go-to place for unusual items. The Rock of Ages Chanukah Party was a success for us as well as for the synagogue. We took in \$295 in two hours!

Even though we don't have a January program, please don't forget our cozy and cute accessories. In addition to the socks, we will have patchwork hats and warm six-foot long scarves in the same funky colors as the socks. Check us out for hostess and kid gifts, too. Our sock monkeys are always looking for a home. When spring is a little closer, we will be presenting some new and exciting additions to our gift shop.

And no report can be complete without thanking the devoted committee members who work tirelessly whenever needed.

Thanks from your Gift Shop Co-chairs!  
Sandi Cowen, Marcy Feinberg and Adrienne Tanner

## ***Tu B'Shevat - January 21, 2019***

**by Dr. Esther Javetz**

This holiday always symbolized the physical land of Israel, and the tradition has always been to eat Israeli fruits (even dried) on this day: pomegranate, dates, figs, carobs etc.

We know that this is Rosh Hashanah for the trees; and this is a planting holiday. Let's talk about trees and the land of Israel.

When the first Aliyah of Jews occurred (1882-1903), the pioneers found a bare country; there were no trees; not on hills, not in valleys, not on mountains and of course not in the desert.

Since the majority of the Jews were expelled around the year 70 (when the second temple was destroyed), the country was invaded and sometimes ruled by different people. They cut all the trees for their use without taking care of replacing them. It is like the difference between owners and renters; renters do not care about the property, they just use it, while owners take care of the property, so it is well maintained for future use as well.

When the Jews settled back in Israel, and especially since the state was born in 1948, Tu B'Shevat became an opportunity to forest the country by children and adults. In addition, the state and Keren Kayemet have invested in forestation. Forestation influences weather, preservation of soil, and the development of animal population.

We can all participate in adding trees to the land of Israel through Karen Kayemet L'yisrael (Jewish National Fund). Think: trees!

## **OUR DISTINGUISHED JEWISH WOMEN—**

**PAST AND PRESENT: *Rebecca Gratz***

**by Joanne Stein**

The beautiful, socially prominent Rebecca Gratz was born in Philadelphia in 1781. Her wealthy German-Jewish parents practiced traditional Orthodox Judaism. Rebecca was the seventh of her mother's twelve children.

Her parents both died young and Rebecca became responsible for running the household. When one of her sisters also died prematurely, the household included the sister's nine motherless children.

Rebecca fell in love with a young attorney but refused to marry him because he was not Jewish. He married someone else and Rebecca remained single all her life.

She immersed herself in charitable work and founded the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society which cared for the influx of new Jewish immigrants. This society was the first Jewish philanthropic institution in the U.S.

She also founded the Philadelphia Orphan Society, the first Jewish orphan home in this country, which sheltered and educated orphaned children until they found adoptive homes. She served as its secretary for 40 years.

In addition, she established the first Jewish Sunday School system in the U.S. in 1838. The school was free and open to everyone, and provided Jewish girls with an education for the first time. The Sunday School movement spread to many other cities and was considered the most important element for Jewish education in this era.

There is a story that she became the source for the character Rebecca in Sir Walter Scott's novel "*Ivanhoe*". She knew the American author Washington Irving and nursed his fiancée through a grave illness. Irving was a friend of the famous English author and told him Rebecca's story. Scott was so impressed that he is said to have modeled his beautiful fictional Jewish heroine after her.

Rebecca Gratz remained unmarried by choice but made such an impact on children's welfare that some of the organizations she started still survive more than a century after her death.

## **Torah Fund 2018-2019**

Women's League and Torah Fund are proud to support the education of future rabbis, cantors, educators and scholars who will serve as the gifted leaders and innovators of the Conservative Movement. Torah Fund has raised more than \$95 million since its inception as a grass-roots fundraising campaign. Individual donors to Torah Fund at the Benefactor level (\$180) or higher receive the distinctive Torah Fund pin in recognition for their gift. Your participation in our annual campaign will help our Sisterhood reach our 2018-2019 goal.

Thank you for your support!

Evie Lowenthal

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