

SISTERHOOD CORNER—March, 2023

Diane Rosenfeld, President (raynesd@aol.com) Judy Arkin, Editor (kjarkin99@comcast.net)

From the President's Desk...

There are four important mitzvot of Purim that one is commanded to fulfill. They are listening to the entire megillah being read, giving gifts of food (mishloach manot) to friends, giving support or tzedakah (matanot l'evyonim) to those in need, and eating a festive meal (seudah). However, there are also many other customs in which we may partake. One such custom that has been around as early as the 1500's is the "Purim Shpiel."

The Shpiel is a musical parody--usually is a dramatization of the Book of Esther. Purim shpiels became widely used by Ashkenazi Jews as early as the mid-1500's. By the 18th century in Romania and some other parts of Eastern Europe, Purim shpiels had evolved into broad-ranging satires with music and dance. By the mid-19th century, some routines started to be based on other Bible stories.

Today, Purim shpiels are performed annually in many American synagogues and in Jewish communities in much of Europe. Our synagogue will be presenting our 14th Shpiel, "The Lyin' Queen," a spectacular production, written by our in-house creative director, writer and entertainer, Ken Dermer. Please support our shpiel this year by attending in-person on March 4th or 5th, or in-person or virtually on March 1th or 12th. You can call the office for more info at 847-675-4141.

And now for a well-known Purim phrase....."If Purim is here, can Pesach be far behind?" Speaking of Pesach, please join Sisterhood on March 23rd when Julie Weill will present a new innovative and interactive Women's Passover seder!

L' Shalom, Diane Rosenfeld

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:

Barbara Barnett

(in honor of my family),

Esther Berman

(in honor of my grandchildren),

Joan Cook

(in honor of grandson

Hayden Chandler Kaplan's birthday),

Fran Givertz

(in honor of my family and friends),

Mickey Gordon

(in honor of my grandchildren),

Bobbie Levin,

Esther Manewitz

(in honor of our grandchildren),

Dori Marks, Ada Rabinowitz and Judi Stein

Our Sisterhood is an affiliate of



*Knowledge is of little help if
not ruled by common sense.*

Good and Welfare...

- **Mazel Tov** to Mickey Gordon on the birth of her great-granddaughter, Ivy Mae Gordon.
- **Mazel Tov** to Debbie Groman on the Bat Mitzvah of her granddaughter, Nina Groman.
- **Mazel Tov** to Debby Reinstein on the Bar Mitzvah of her grandson Max and son-in-law, Andrew Madof.
- **Mazel Tov** to Shirley Lubowich on her 95th birthday and her 76th wedding anniversary.
- **Refuah Shlema** to Joan Cook.

If you have any "Good & Welfare" to share, please contact Judy Arkin at kjarkin99@comcast.net.

DATES TO REMEMBER...

by Judy Arkin - Programming V.P.

Thursday, March 23rd at 7:30 p.m.

Women's Seder—led by Julie Weill

Wednesday, April 19th at 11:30 a.m.

Miep Gies portrayed by Megan Wells

Wednesday, May 3rd at 10:30 a.m.

Book Club – (ZOOM only)

"The Matchmaker's Gift"

by Lynda Cohen Loigman

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WAYS & MEANS

by Judy Frank - Ways & Means V.P.

Our Sisterhood Cards can be purchased through our gift shop. These cards can be used in honor of or in memory of someone. There are two sizes: small are 8 for \$10 and large are 6 for \$18.

I want to remind everyone about our "Leagrams". It is a wonderful Sisterhood fundraiser in which all members can participate. A Leagram is sent to members with wishes for a Happy Birthday or Happy Anniversary. Your name will be included on each Leagram sent for an annual cost of \$54.

847-530-4572 or Judy@tcscorp.com

Our next

Sisterhood Book Club



**will meet Wednesday, May 3rd
at 10:30 a.m. on ZOOM to discuss
"THE MATCHMAKER'S GIFT"**

by Lynda Cohen Loigman

Even as a child in 1910, Sara Glickman knows her gift -- she is a seeker of soulmates and a maker of matches. But among the pushcart-crowded street of New York's Lower East Side, Sara's vocation is dominated by devout older men -- men who see a talented female matchmaker as a dangerous threat to their traditions and livelihood. After working in secret for more than a decade, Sara must fight to take her rightful place among her peers, and to demand the recognition she deserves.

Two generations later, Sara's granddaughter, Abby, is a successful Manhattan divorce attorney, representing the city's wealthiest clients. When her beloved Grandma Sara dies, Abby inherits her collection of handwritten journals recording the details of Sara's matches. But among the faded volumes, Abby finds more questions than answers. Why did Abby's grandmother leave this library to her, and what did she hope Abby would discover within its pages? Why does the legal work Abby once found so compelling suddenly feel inconsequential and flawed? Is Abby willing to sacrifice the career she worked so hard for in order to keep her grandmother's mysterious promise to a stranger? And is there really such a thing as love at first sight?

Anyone whose life has been touched or inspired by a grandparent will be drawn to *The Matchmaker's Gift* --its vision of how one generation can affect another through shared stories and connections.

Don't forget to complete the e-mail survey we recently sent to you to help guide our selections for next year!

Carol Gottlieb and Dolly Zavell - Book Club Chairs

EDUCATION CORNER

by Cheryl Sklar- Education Committee

Purim: A Feminist Perspective

Purim is a holiday where women take center stage. The two key women, Queens Vashti and Esther, are heroic in different ways. They took opposite approaches when confronted with difficult situations. What they have in common is that once they made a decision they did not waiver.

The Megillah opens with a party being held by King Ahasuerus. The King summons his wife, Queen Vashti, to appear with her royal crown. When the Queen refuses, she is banished; some say that she is killed. Midrash is critical of Vashti, both as a person and for her actions. Vashti is identified as the great-granddaughter of Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king who destroyed the first temple and exiled the Jews to Babylonia. Additionally, she is described as both wicked and vain as she enslaved Jewish women and forced them to work on Shabbat. While she may have been commanded to come to the party wearing only her crown, she refused the King's command because she had developed a skin ailment, and not because she objected to appearing in the nude. However, when Vashti's actions are evaluated from a modern perspective, she can be commended for her courage and disobedience. She had to have known that refusing to appear before the King would result in serious negative consequences, nevertheless she stuck with her principles.

Esther is the more reluctant heroine of the Megillah. When King Ahasuerus decides that he needs to find a replacement for Queen Vashti, he invites women of the kingdom to apply. Esther does not initially offer herself as a candidate, rather she does so when convinced by Mordechai, her uncle/brother, to apply. Esther is selected as the new queen but she hides her Jewish identity. However, when Haman, the King's prime minister, plans to murder all of the Jews, Mordechai convinces her to plead her case before the King to save her people. This was a dangerous step for Esther as appearing before the King without his permission was punishable by death. Esther knows what happened to Vashti who refused the King's order; now she too will defy the King by presenting herself without being called. Esther's strength is that, like Vashti, once she determines her course of action, she does not back down. We learn from the Megillah that as women, it is important to stand up for our beliefs, regardless of the risks.

