From the President’s Desk...

Plans for our Torah Fund Chai Tea on Wednesday, March 2nd (1:30 p.m.) are underway. Invitations have been mailed and we hope you will join us for this special event! If you are not already a Torah Fund donor, you may still contribute in order to attend. Minimum donation is $18.

Upcoming events include a March 11th Rosh Chodesh Program (with a complimentary light lunch) and our Book Club will meet on March 16th. On Wednesday, April 6th at 7:30 p.m., Rebbetzin Julie Weill will once again lead our Women’s Seder. Sisterhood will lead the Shabbat morning services and sponsor the Kiddush luncheon on May 14th. As a Sisterhood member, you are encouraged to participate. Watch your mail for more details on all of our events!

I hope everyone is doing well! Recently I’ve been helping the family of one of my long-standing friends with issues of aging, and have become aware of how important it is for each of us and our families to have a plan. Then we will know what to do when such incidents occur as we age. We also need to know where our documents and resources are and how they are to be used and protected. I hope each of you have made plans and informed your families in advance of the time of real need.

B'Shalom! Evelyn Lowenthal

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 Marcy Feinberg, Miriam Goldberger, Ricki Herling, Joan Cook and Shelle’ Malina. 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.

• Being thoughtful now costs less! Inclusion on all Leagram birthday and anniversary greetings is only $54 for a year. Contact Debbie Reich at (847)272-4057.

• Need a gift? Check out our GIFT SHOP case in the Social Hall. Call Evie Lowenthal at (847)673-2505, Marcy Feinberg at (847)318-9266 or Idelle Peaceman at (847)254-7745 for more information.

WELCOME to our new Sisterhood Members...

Goldie Brandhandler, Lucille Kulwin and Deanna Shoss

BOOK CLUB TO DISCUSS

“Cut Me Loose: Sin and Salvation After My Ultra-Orthodox Girlhood”
by Leah Vincent

The next meeting of the Sisterhood Book Club will be on Wednesday, March 16th at 10:30 a.m. at the synagogue.

This brutally honest memoir tells the story of one woman’s struggle to define herself as an individual. Leah Vincent was born into the Yeshivish community, an ultra-Orthodox Jewish sect that shuns the modern world. When, at sixteen, Leah was caught exchanging letters with a boy—breaking a religious ban on contact between the sexes—her family cut all ties. Sent to live on her own in New York City, adrift and unprepared for the freedoms of secular life, Leah’s desperate loneliness coupled with her stubborn loyalty to the dogma of her past, pulled her into a vicious cycle of promiscuity and self-harm. It took a shocking state of despair to empower her to transform a life of tragedy into a tale of unexpected triumph, one that illuminates both the oppressive world of religious fundamentalism and the broader issues facing young women from all backgrounds as they grapple with sexuality and identity.

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

RSVP to one of our Book Club Chairs:
Dorothy Lipstadt (847)673-3525
Elaine Lampert (847)537-1240
Judith-Rae Ross (847)673-7728
SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS ABOUT PURIM...
by Judith-Rae Ross

So hard to believe...we’re already planning for Purim (March 23-24), the most joyful holiday in Judaism. So joyful, in fact, that our forebears believed that after the Messiah came, every day would be Shabbat, except for one holiday—Purim.

Some modern rabbis assert that Purim never happened. There was no King Achashverosh, no Mordechai, no Queen Esther and certainly no Haman.

I disagree. Purim has been celebrated since ancient times. Achashverosh may be a translation of another Persian king’s name. The rest also seems plausible. Haman wasn’t the first anti-Semite; Mordechai not the first Jewish treasurer in court.

Esther marrying a Persian king is also plausible. In Verdi’s opera ‘Nabucco’, King Nebuchadnezzar not only marries Abigail, he converts to Judaism. Esther is also in the tradition of Jewish women warriors, such as Judith or the wife of Lapidot recounted in Deborah’s writing.

But why is Purim celebrated with such abandon? On Purim every traditional restraint is thrown to the winds. The children dress up in costume; the reading of the Megillah in synagogue gets interrupted with graggers (noisemakers) every time Haman’s name is mentioned; Shalach Manot, baskets of Hamantaschen and sweets are exchanged between neighbors; and adults get roaring drunk. According to one teacher at a Jewish day school, it’s commanded that adults get so drunk that they cannot tell the difference between ‘who is a man or who is a woman’.

Is Purim the Jewish answer to Mardi Gras? Perhaps. Jewish life in the shtetl, ghetto and Jewish sections in cities was structured; the more observant, the more structured. Even the most religious Orthodox Jew must have chafed at life with such precisely defined roles that individual thoughts or aspirations were often considered heretical.

Purim gave everyone the opportunity to break free, if only for a day. It’s the Jewish escape valve. We all need a little Purim. Chag Sameach!

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CHAI TEA HIGH JINKS!

New items have been ordered for the Gift Shop! So to make room, we’re clearing out our current inventory at greatly reduced prices.

Stop by the Gift Shop table and pick up some great bargains during the March 2nd Chai Tea—and watch for our grand “re-opening” at the Women’s Seder in April!

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Good and Welfare...

- Wishing a speedy recovery to Judy Klowden
- Wishing a speedy recovery to Paula Carroll
- Thank you to Glenda Elam for her generous donation to our Sisterhood in memory of her nephew, Adam Bonhenkamp
- Mazel Tov to Molly Sweet on the birth of her great-grandson, Owen Alexander Bomberg
- Mazel Tov to Marlynn Fleischer on the birth of her great-grandsons, Max Sideroff and Charlie Collias
- Mazel Tov to Shelle’ Malina on the birth of her great-grandson, Brooks Morrison
- Mazel Tov to Barbara Wax on the Bat Mitzvah of her granddaughter, Rachel Weisberg
- Mazel Tov to Paulette Levy on the Bar Mitzvah of her grandson, Spencer Stone
- Our deepest sympathy to the families of past Sisterhood Presidents Bertelle Meyers and Arline Dubow. May their memories be for a blessing.

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SISTERHOOD SHABBAT
Saturday, May 14th

If you are interested in participating in our Sisterhood Shabbat, please contact Judith-Rae Ross at (847)673-7728 or harryleroy418@gmail.com.

Hebrew and English parts, and non-speaking roles are available.