From the President’s Desk...

As I’m writing this message, it is Rosh Chodesh Kislev and our year is progressing with old and new program offerings as planned. Thanksgiving is a few days away and our December 3rd Latke Luncheon and Boutique will be here and gone all too soon. On Monday, December 22nd we have our first Rosh Chodesh program of the year, chaired by our Administrative Vice President Judith-Rae Ross. We hope to have a short Shacharit service and discussion on the significance of Rosh Chodesh being a women’s holiday, as well as a light brunch -- watch for details to follow.

Looking ahead to 2015, we will have our Games Day! on Wednesday, January 7th, beginning with lunch at 11:30 a.m. We are planning a Tu B’Shevat Seder and prize bingo event on February 4th. Save Wednesday evening, March 18th, for Sisterhood’s third annual Women’s Seder with Rebitzen Julie Weill.

If you have a great idea or want to help out on a Sisterhood project, please let us know by leaving a note in my box in the synagogue office, e-mailing me at eviel@prodigy.net, or calling me. Best wishes for a Happy Chanukah and a healthy New Year. Stay warm--our weather already says winter is coming!

B’Shalom! Evelyn Lowenthal

BOOK CLUB TO DISCUSS

“The Golem and the Jinni”

The next meeting of the Sisterhood Book Club will be on Wednesday, January 14th at 10:30 a.m. at the synagogue. We’ll discuss “The Golem and the Jinni” by author Helene Wecker.

In “The Golem and the Jinni”, a chance meeting between mythical beings takes readers on a dazzling journey through cultures in turn-of-the-century New York.

Chava is a golem, a creature made of clay, brought to life by a disgraced rabbi who dabbles in dark Kabbalistic magic and dies at sea on the voyage from Poland, leaving her unmoored and adrift as the ship arrives in New York in 1899. Ahmad is a jinni, a being of fire born in the ancient Syrian desert, trapped in an old copper flask, and released in New York City, though still not entirely free. Ahmad and Chava become unlikely friends and soul mates with a mystical connection. 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

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 Miriam Goldberger & Bobbie Berkowitz.
If you have news to share, contact Judy Arkin at kjarkin99@comcast.net.

Sisterhood donation cards are 10/$10 and the Chai cards are 6/$18. The cards are available in the synagogue office.

Check out our GIFT SHOP cases for new honey dishes, hostess gifts, mezuzahs and kosher parchments! Call Evie Lowenthal at (847)673-2505 for more information.

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.

Welcome

to our new Sisterhood Members...

Gail Miller
Bernice Kessler

WELCOME
...And Why is There a SHAUM On the Dreidl?
by Judith-Rae Ross

It all started with my spinning dreidl. The letters on the dreidl stand for “a great miracle happened there.” Why does the dreidl say shaum “there;” why not “po, here?” Actually, in Israel the po has replaced the shaum.

Shortly after that, I learned that the miracle of the oil that burned for eight nights only became miraculous in c.600 C.E., when the Rabbis decided Hanukkah needed a miracle. Thus, Hanukkah became the holiday that celebrates the miracle of the one day’s oil supply lasting 8 days --“the Festival of Lights.” Lights are celebrated during the cold winter months.

Oops, in 600 C.E. the world was warming, and Eretz Yisrael had a temperate to hot climate. Why would winter be thought of as dark and cold? Two and two sure don’t equal four when it comes to Hanukkah.

It’s plausible that the Maccabees ate latkes while gathered around the army’s campfire. But Columbus brought back potatoes from the “new world.” He also brought cocoa, the prime ingredient in chocolate. Before that there were neither potato pancakes nor chocolate for Hanukkah gelt. Besides, the word gelt is Yiddish.

All these paradoxes reveal that our Hanukkah customs originated in post-diaspora 16th-century Europe—not the Judean hills; hence, the shaum on the dreidl, latkes, Hanukkah gelt, and the miracle of light during dark winter.

Pre-miracle Hanukkah marked the Jew’s victory over the Greeks in the first guerilla-type war. It took 27 years before Judah Maccabee won, but what a victory! The Jews triumphed and Judaism survived.

Celebrate Hanukkah with all the trimmings, but remember we’re really celebrating our enduring Jewish identity...that’s the real miracle!