Ezra-Habonim, the Niles Township Jewish Congregation

SISTERHOOD CORNER—June-July, 2014
Evelyn Lowenthal, Sisterhood President        Judy Arkin, Editor (kjarkin99@comcast.net)

From the President’s Desk...

As another year of Sisterhood activities draws to a close, I want to thank everyone for joining and supporting EHNTJC Sisterhood. Your support has helped us provide many interesting and informative programs, as well as fundraising that has enabled our Sisterhood to contribute our annual commitment to the synagogue, sponsor some Shabbat Kiddush luncheons, provide funds for a new computer for the office and support the Fox Torah Project. Though we were a few hundred dollars short of our Torah Fund quota, we have sent $4,000 to Women’s League as our 2014 contribution.

We are now starting to plan for the 2014-2015 Sisterhood year which begins on July 1st. We hope to continue to provide Jewish, as well as timely programming for women, families and the congregation. We will be having an opening event the first week in September and will keep you informed of our full calendar of events soon.

Women’s League of Conservative Judaism has raised their per capita dues for all affiliated sisterhoods, so after serious discussion we have decided to go to a tiered dues structure for the coming year. The base dues will remain at $36, with a $54 Silver Level and a $72 Gold Level with little perks for silver and gold levels.

Have a wonderful summer and watch for our upcoming programs!

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
- Thank you to Dorothy Lipstadt for being a Media Mogul!
- 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 hostess gifts, mezuzahs, menorahs and kosher parchments! Call Davida Grossman 847-673-0772 or Evie Lowenthal 847-673-2505 for more information.

I want to thank all my Sisterhood friends for their donations, cards and get well wishes after my recent surgery. I am doing well and I hope to see everyone very soon!

Best regards from Dorothy Lipstadt

Good and Welfare...

- Our Sisterhood is deeply saddened by the loss of our beloved member and past Sisterhood President, Renee Stern. Our condolences to her daughter, Karen Bogetz and family.
- Our deepest sympathy to member Esther Manewith on the loss of her brother, David Lieberman.
- Also, to Naomi Shisler on the recent loss of her sister, Judith Kanter.
- And to Executive Director Jeanette Sigler on the loss of her grandfather, George Muedeking.
- Mazel Tov to Nora Saposnik on the birth of her first great-grandchild, Zev Elan Saposnik.
- Mazel Tov to Veronika Urban on the birth of her twin granddaughters!

Our Book Club will be back in the fall with “The Goldfinch” by Donna Tartt. Watch for details in our next newsletter.
The saddest day in Jewish history is the Ninth of Av, which falls on Tuesday, August 5th this year. On this day the Babylonians destroyed the First Temple in 586 B.C.E., and the Romans burned down the Second Temple in 70 C.E. It also marks the date when the Jews were expelled from England in 1290 and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. The events commemorated on Tishah B’Av are so tragic that, two millennia ago, the Rabbis ordained that Jews should refrain from pleasurable activities from the beginning of the month of Av until the end of the 9th of Av. These activities included swimming, cutting hair or shaving, drinking wine or eating meat, except on the Sabbath.

To commemorate the destructions of the two Temples, the rabbis designated Tishah B’Av as a full 24-hour fast day. In addition to not eating, it is forbidden to drink any liquid, bathe, wear leather shoes, put on makeup or perfume or to have sexual relations. As on Yom Kippur, pregnant women, nursing mothers and severely ill individuals are freed from the obligation of fasting if their health would be endangered. Unlike Yom Kippur, one is permitted to smoke and work on Tishah B’Av, although one should not work if it distracts him or her from mourning.

On the evening of Tishah B’Av, Jews gather in the synagogue to read the Biblical book of “Eicha” (Lamentations), an ancient dirge written by the prophet Jeremiah after the destruction of the First Temple. This short book recounts not only the destruction of Judea, but also much of the Jewish moral fiber. Jeremiah describes Jewish mothers cannibalizing their dead children in order to survive the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem.

During the synagogue service, it is customary to sit on the floor, not in seats, in the style of mourners. As is the case with mourners, Jews are not supposed to greet each other on Tishah B’Av.

During the morning service, “tefillin” are not worn, since it is considered too joyous an act for such a sad day. The donning of “tefillin” is postponed to the afternoon Mincha service.

There is only one happy association with the holiday of Tishah B’Av. According to an ancient tradition, the Messiah will be born on this day!