



Chai Lines International Northeast Region Women's League for Conservative Judaism

Networking to Engage, Enrich and Empower
Conservative Jewish Women

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IN THIS ISSUE

Click on name of article to go to that article.

- [FROM OUR REGION PRESIDENT](#)
- [FROM THE EDUCATION VP](#)
- [FROM WOMEN'S LEAGUE](#)
- [FROM THE REGION TORAH FUND VICE PRESIDENT](#)
- [NEED HELP? HELP IS AVAILABLE ON THE WLCJ WEBSITE](#)

PLEASE NOTE: *I'll be away visiting my daughter, son-in-law, and baby granddaughter in England. I will be without my computer and limited computer access and so there will be next newsletter will be delayed until I get back.--Your Editor Lois Silverman*

GUEST MESSAGE

**Marcia Nabut, President, Sisterhood Temple Beth El,
Rochester, NY**

JUST GIMMI DA LIGHT

This past summer, as that string of 90 degree days was getting started, some kids with good intentions took some sidewalk chalk and provided some gentle thoughts to consider while walking at Cobb's Hill reservoir in Rochester: walk together, care about each other, think good thoughts and such like. Good printing, nice colors and lots of hearts and arrows. One group was different. In white spray paint the message was "Just Gimmi Da Light." Within a few days sprinkles washed away the sidewalk chalk. Someone came and sprayed black over the white words.....but they still showed.....even after the summer and fall and snow, when I come around the eastern bend on the north side of the water, they still ask...even demand....."Just Gimmi Da Light."

So what did the author mean "Just Gimmi Da Light?" Is this what you say when you search for meaning? Who can help with a search? Who would I ask? Where could I go? Who might help me understand? Whose role is it to help us when we come to something not clear?

I walk the reservoir every day when it is not bitter.....and there is a thrill as I come around the eastern bend to find the demand still there. Someone wants to know something. "Just Gimmi Da Light."

The Book of Genesis closes with the death of Joseph, who has promised that God will bring the Hebrews out of Egypt and lead them back to the land saved for them. The Book of Exodus, *Shemot*, opens with three *parshiot* describing the process of leaving Egypt: *Shemot*, *Vaera* and *Bo*.

Three years ago- as the new president of my Sisterhood at Temple Beth El in Rochester, I prepared a small address for the congregation. The *parasha* was *Vaera*.....the first seven plagues; it was January; as I recall, I mentioned there were

only 74 shopping days until Pesach! It felt unusual for me to have begun with *Vaera* three years ago and *Bo*, last year. Both were opportunities to discuss plagues and Pesach.

This year, reading and rereading *Shemot*, I began to think I was really in the midst of a prequel: a story containing events that precede those of an existing work. I felt as though—when I began with *Vaera*—the story had already begun before I got there. Thinking about the issue this way, I do wonder about the order in which the writing was done! Torah writers were an inspired bunch. Did they realize they couldn't hop right into the conflict between the Hebrews and Pharaoh without some kind of introduction and *then* decide to write *Shemot*?

Is there someone who can shed some light on this....I've been thinking about this for quite a while, so could you "Just Gimmi Da Light?"

FROM THE EDUCATION VP LOIS SILVERMAN

Is the glass half-filled or half-empty? This question has been used as an indicator of whether a person is an optimist or a pessimist.

Of course, there are some who ask "does it matter?" After all the glass can be refilled.

So in this time of strife, disenchantment, and lack of civility, I remember those students at the State University of NY who helped me carry my books without asking, opened doors, and laughed with me when this computer person made a rookie mistake. There is a future for us who laugh, who dream, who demand excellence in oneself and others.

I affirm that belief as I post this prayer by Shaul Tchernichovsky.

Shabbat Shalom
LOIS

AN AFFIRMATION
by Shaul Tchernichovsky

Laugh, laugh at all my dreams!
What I dream shall yet come true!
Laugh at my belief in man,
At my belief in you.

Freedom still my soul demands,
Unbartered for a calf of gold.
For still I do believe in man,
And in his spirit, strong and bold.

And in the future I still believe
Though it be distant, come it will
When nations shall each other bless,
And peace at last the earth shall fill.

FROM WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



*Networking to engage,
enrich and empower
Conservative Jewish women*

Next resolution for review and discussion

The next resolution to be considered, on immigration, is up on our [website](#). Please take a look and comment. Be prepared for an online conversation on June 12, followed by an online vote of the membership. You should have received information about joining the discussion earlier today.

Please support our Ad Journal

It's important that Women's League leaders like you demonstrate support. This journal is one of our most important fundraisers. Place an ad today by clicking [here](#).

It's not too early to start thinking about Purim!

.... and the Women's League *megillah*. If your sisterhood would like to be considered as the host of the beautiful megillah for next year's Purim reading, please contact [Lisa Kogen](#) soon. The chosen sisterhood will be announced at Convention.

A BOLD NEW OUTLOOK



CONVENTION UPDATES

Meet the Chair

Barbara Ezring, of Charlotte, NC, comes to her position as Convention 2017 Chair with a remarkable store of Women's League experiences. [Click here](#) to find out more.

Hotel room rate

Room availability and rates are not guaranteed after July 7.

Hotel reservations received after that date may be charged at the regular hotel rate, not the special convention rate. For further information and to book your room, [click here](#).

Check out [Convention Day-by-Day](#) for the latest information.

Bid 'n' Buy

Our silent auction has always generated a lot of excitement -- much needed funds -- during the Judaica and Crafts Fair. This year's will be held the on Sunday, from 9:30 to 3:30. We invite your sisterhood to donate an item such as a mezuzah, Jewish CD, tzedakah box, women's head covering, or challah cover. These items easily fit into a suitcase. Please fill out the attached form and return it to Chair [Fran Radel](#).

If you donate an item, your sisterhood and synagogue will be acknowledged. Please bring the item with you and deliver it to our designated donation area at the Bid 'n' Buy tables.

Special Convention project

Sisterhoods can download a flyer with blank space to advertise their **Mathilde's Mentionables** campaigns. Log on to [wlcj.org](#) and go to Member Documents. Look under: **12. CONVENTION 2017**

18th Annual Masorti Women's Study Day

The Schechter Institutes, Midreshet Schechter and Women's League for Masorti Judaism, with the assistance of the Masorti movement, are proud to present the 18th Annual National Masorti Women's Study Day.

"Chai" Years Exploring Attitudes Towards Women and Other "Others"

Friday, June 23, 2017 at 8:30 AM
The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies
4 Avraham Granot St. Jerusalem

For more information and to register, [click here](#)

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We have joined Amazon Prime. Initiate your shopping session through our website. Amazon will rebate a percentage of the sale back to Women's League.

The only requirement is that you initiate your online shopping session through our website. Click on the Amazon logo on the top of our [webpage](#) (near the Facebook icon) than click on the Amazon shopping cart on the next page. Do that for every purchase.

FROM THE TORAH FUND VICE PRESIDENT MARILYN COHEN

WLCJ Torah Fund Chair Debbi Goldich's D'var Torah delivered at the Torah Fund Cabinet Meeting June 7, 2017 *Parashat B'ha'alotecha*

Has three major units dealing with the Israelite's journey from Mount Sinai. The first concerns the tabernacle's rituals and laws regarding the Levites and the Passover offering. The second deals with the choreography of who marches where and in what order in the wilderness and how a cloud leads their way. And the third unit shares Moses' challenge of leading a complaining nation through the wilderness and his own sibling rivalry.

There is a lot to talk about here. I could have chosen what I thought was the unfair sexist treatment Miriam received when she was punished and Aaron was not, when they both spoke badly of their sister in law.

Or, I could have discussed spirituality and asked how and if we feel guided by god when we are journeying in our own wilderness and looking at a bleak future as the Israelites were.

Instead, as I was studying the *parasha*, one line spoke to me. So, I decided to take this opportunity in my last torah fund cabinet meeting as chair to discuss an issue that is all too common to many of us in this room. The issue of intergenerational conflict.

In the first part of this portion we read that god spoke to Moses to say that "... from twenty five years of age up, they (the Levite men) shall participate in the work force in the service of the tent of meeting but at the age of fifty they shall retire from the work force and shall serve no more." wow, retired at the age of fifty. How many of us hit our peak professionally and in volunteer capacity after age 50? But god goes on to tell Moses that at the age of fifty they shall retire from the work force

and shall serve no more. Those older than fifty may assist their brother Levites at the tent of meeting by standing guard but they shall perform no labor.

I had a difficult time with this law and the possible intergenerational conflict it promotes. Those of us over fifty know that we still have lots to offer. Possibly the law was mandated to prevent intergenerational conflict so that younger members have an opportunity to lead in their own manner without oversight. They would not be overshadowed by choruses of "we have always done it this way" or "we tried that already and it didn't work". During this administration working with Carol Simon and Rabbi Lilly Kaufman, we recognized that it was time to retire old ideas and attitudes. By doing that we created the opportunity for innovation, creativity and success. Our leadership team made some small changes but also some very large ones. I am proud of the work we have done to modernize torah fund. I thank you both Carol and Lilly from the bottom of my heart for believing in me and the opportunity to work with you to make those changes.

getting back to the law, perhaps this law was written this way to prevent those over fifty from having to check their pride and recognize that with age comes physical and mental limitations. And yet, the law continues not by saying that those over fifty can never set foot in the tent, but rather they may assist their brother Levites by standing guard but not performing labor. From this second part of the law, I recognized a tenet that we in Women's League and torah fund have known for many years-that knowledge and wisdom come with experience. We value our predecessors and long time volunteers. But, I hope that as women's league enters the next 100 years we continue to value our younger members and appreciate that age is not a qualifier for experience and ability.

The Levites over fifty had the opportunity to mentor the next generation and pass on the knowledge gained from a lifetime of previous service. This ensured the development of future leadership and the continuation of their holy work. We in women's league and especially those of us on the torah fund cabinet can appreciate this model of honoring those who came before us and valuing our women as strong leaders. Our long time volunteers are valuable in every stage of life, especially here on the torah fund cabinet. I looked to those long time volunteers many times throughout the last three years for their advice. I sought the counsel of our past torah fund chairs. So to Evelyn, Evelyn, Gloria, Cory, Rita, and Lauren, I thank you now for sharing your years of experience with me and I value all of you.

As we finish the first 75 years of torah fund, it is our responsibility to mentor the next generation so they continue our holy work. Like our ancestors who stood at Mount Sinai and passed down the law from generation to generation, and the women's league women in 1942 who started torah fund and passed it to those of us in this room, we have the inherited responsibility of passing down torah fund and its importance to the next generation.

Maybe sometimes we do feel we are journeying in a bleak wilderness like the Israelites. Our membership is decreasing and our economics are different than they were just six years ago but, we also have the potential for hope, fulfillment and joy in our work. Look what we have accomplished together. Our team of region torah fund vice presidents from this administration and those I worked with in the previous one have worked tirelessly to stem the tide of a decreasing total every year and they did it!. They are an amazing group of women and I am thankful they were on my team. I thank all 29 of you for your friendship and devotion to our cause. I promise to take you out of my speed dial but not until after convention!

And finally to all of you, members of the torah fund cabinet; I thank you for your continued efforts. Let's keep working together, under age 50 and over age 50, and let's look for the opportunity to create that hope, fulfillment and joy that I know exists and will prevent us from feeling like we are the Israelites marching in a bleak wilderness.

Let's do god's work as only we can.

TORAH FUND CAMPAIGN 2016-2017



The 2016-2017 campaign will be ending soon. Please remember to forward your donations.

If you have any questions, please contact me at:

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marilyncohen@bell.net

[Check out the New Torah Fund Guide and all the other materials to run a great campaign!](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4fcgm1vx528ze9x/AADNqaT_GXwnbZaISMo_m6Ona?dl=0)
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4fcgm1vx528ze9x/AADNqaT_GXwnbZaISMo_m6Ona?dl=0

**NEED HELP?
HELP IS AVAILABLE ON THE WLCJ WEBSITE.**

Programs, membership ideas, education material, and more available at wlcj.org

[Click here to visit the WL and explore all the resources](#)



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