

Garden State Region News - March 20, 2026



**STAND
WITH
ISRAEL**



**STAND UP
TO JEWISH
HATE**

WL Week

Visit GSR Website

**Registration Open for
GSR Spring Conference & Installation of Officers
"JEWISH LATINOS - COMING TO AMERICA"
Sunday, May 3, 2026
8:30 am- 4:30 pm
Congregation B'nai Israel, Millburn**

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MESSAGE FROM SHEILA KAUFMAN, GSR PRESIDENT

Dear Affiliate,

Shalom!

I am very excited to announce that registration for the **GSR Spring Conference** to take place on May 3rd at B'nai Israel in Millburn is open. An all-day event that will celebrate "**Latino Jews - Coming to America**" and culminate with the Installation of the 2026-2029 GSR Administration.

The conference committee led by Susan Winter and Helene Knee have put together a great day. We will begin with our business meeting, the presentation of Milestone Awards, and membership vote on the Slate of Officers for the next



administration. This will be followed by a panel of three women discussing their lives in Ecuador, Venezuela, Mexico, and Panama and what brought them to America. After a festive lunch celebrating the Latino culture we will break into workshops on Genealogy, Jewish Jeopardy, Latino Music and Dance, or a craft project making Mexican flowers and painting a vase. Frankly, you will have trouble figuring out which one you want to go to. We will end with an Installation Ceremony, honoring the current outgoing administration and welcoming in the new. Festive desserts will follow. This will be a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends and make new ones. Sign up early to save money! Tributes can also be made for both administrations and anyone else that you want to wish well to. The flyer is below, please adhere to the deadline. I look forward to sharing this day with you.

The Women's League Convention 2026 is July 12-15 in Alexandria, VA. WLCJ Shabbaton is July 10-12. Registration is open. Celebrate the B'not Mitzvah class, installation of the International Board, daven, shop, celebrate America's 250th anniversary and a whole lot more. The Jewels in the Crown Awards will be presented. Hope your sisterhoods submitted the application. Check out the [Convention Website](#).

Lastly, I had a busy day last Sunday. In the morning, I visited the women of Temple Israel & JCC in Ridgewood at their Women's Health program. I learned things that I did not know! Then in the late afternoon, I traveled to Temple Beth El of Somerset for their Women's Seder. A delicious dinner and Seder! What a fun day with wonderful programs and seeing so many of you. Thank you both for having me.

I want to come to your sisterhood's function to meet all of you. Please reach out if you have not done so already, there is not much time left! Have car, will travel!

Ahm Yisrael Chai!

Shabbat Shalom,

Sheila

Sheila Kaufman
President, Garden State Region WLCJ
gsrcpresident24@wlcj.org
"Networking to engage, enrich and empower Conservative Jewish women"

2024-2026 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President - [Sheila Kaufman](#)
VP, Programming - [Susan Winter](#)
VP, Sisterhood/Affiliate Support - [Cheryl Sessler](#)
VP, Torah Fund - [Sindy Manas](#)
Secretary, Communications - [Ilene Rothman](#)
Secretary, Corresponding - [Susan Sferas](#)
Secretary, Financial - [Lisa Katz](#)
Secretary, Recording - [Carol Kotch](#)
Treasurer - [Donna Franklin](#)
Parliamentarian - [Dorothy Cohen](#)
Immediate Past President - [Lynette Seader](#)
Advisor to the Board - [Meryl Balaban](#)
Advisor to the Board - [Heddy Belman](#)

GSR REGION PROGRAMS

- **Sun. May 3, 2026 @ 8:30 am - 4:30 pm** - GSR Spring Conference and Installation of Officers - "Jewish Latinos - Coming to America" at Congregation B'nai Israel, Millburn. **REGISTRATION OPEN**

- Sun.-Wed. July 12-15, 2026 - WLCJ Convention 2026, Alexandria, VA ; WLCJ Shabbaton is July 10-12. [REGISTRATION OPEN](#)



Garden State Region
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JEWRY

we are Women's League
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JEWRY

JEWISH LATINOS - COMING TO AMERICA

2026 Garden State Region Spring Conference & Installations

Sun., May 3, 2026 ~ 16 Iyar 5786
Congregation B'nai Israel ~ 160 Millburn Ave, Millburn, NJ
8:30 AM ~ 4:30 PM
 Check-In/Continental Breakfast 8:30 am
 Conference officially begins at 9:15 am SHARP!
 Installation begins at 2:30 pm

Sign Up for Workshops:

- Genealogy
- Jewish Jeopardy
- Latino Music & Dance
- Craft Project (add'l \$)
- Mexican Flowers & Painted Vase

Jewish Latino Panelists:

- Heddy Belman, Ecuador
- Deborah Bendayan, Venezuela & Mexico
- Vicki Kleinberg, Panama

Social Action Project:

Please bring **baby formula & diapers, wipes, kids' socks** to donate to these organizations in our region:

- Bobrow Kosher Food Pantry, South Orange
- 180 Turning Lives Around Shelter, Hazlet
- Ida Kushner Central Jersey Diaper Bank, New Brunswick

Tentative Agenda:

- Business Meeting including Slate Approval
- Panel Discussion
- Latino Lunch
- Workshops
- Installation
- Dessert Reception

Cost & RSVP Deadlines:
 payment by check or *credit card (3% service fee)*

**Early Bird: April 10	\$45 / \$46.35
**Regular: April 19	\$55 / \$56.65
Craft (20 person limit)	\$10 / \$10.30
Installation & Reception Only	\$10 / \$10.30
Tributes	\$18 / \$18.54

Sheila Kaufman, GSR President
 Susan Winter, GSR Conference Chair
 Helene Knee, GSR Vice Conference Chair
 Toby Maser, WL Consultant

more info: Susan Winter — winter.susan@gmail.com

Click to Register 

****You MUST register - There will be NO walk-ins!****

All Sisterhood & WL Individual members are invited and encouraged to attend!

Mazel Tov to our Outgoing and Incoming GSR Boards who will be discharged and installed at our Spring Conference. Thank them and wish them well with a Tribute to be included in the Spring Conference program.

OUTGOING BOARD 2024-2026

INCOMING BOARD 2026-2029

REGISTER / PROVIDE TRIBUTE



Questions? Susan Winter at winter.susan@gmail.com

SISTERHOOD AFFILIATE PROGRAMS



[MAHJONG DAY AT TEMPLE BETH EL](#)

Karen Goen loves puzzles, games, and writing. She found a way to unite those passions by writing "Searching for Bubbe Fischer," a memoir of her experiences as a Mahjong novice, as well as a manual for all players looking to improve their own game. Karen has delivered her lecture, "The Psychological Benefits of Mahjong," to audiences who share her enthusiasm for the camaraderie and challenge of the game and also offers her insights into each new card as it comes out.

And she will be doing just that at Temple Beth El, as she gives us

["Tips and Tricks for the 2026 Card!"](#)



Join us for her talk

[Thursday, April 16, at 11 am](#)

**Then have lunch and spend the afternoon playing Mahjong!
Bring your Mahjong group and all your friends!**

- ❖ *The cost for lunch and refreshments during the game is \$36.*
- ❖ *Please make checks payable to "Temple Beth El".*
- ❖ *If you are coming to hear the talk only, there is no charge.*
- ❖ *This program will not be on Zoom; in person only.*

[RSVP by April 9th](#) to phyllis.miller@gmail.com



RSVP

Sisterhood Affiliates,

Do you have any programs that you would like others to know about?
Either to publicize your event in advance or to share your affiliate
program afterwards.

- To publicize your event in advance, send a flyer in jpg or pdf format with Registration link.
- To showcase your affiliate programs post event, submit up to 3 photos with captions and a few sentences to describe your program. (We will shorten if necessary.)

Please e-mail your programs that you would like posted in this newsletter to both [Ilene Rothman](#) AND [Sheila Kaufman](#).



Torah Fund supports programs and scholarships at the five Conservative/Masorti global institutes of higher education.



Announcing Our 2025-2026 Campaign Theme:

Oseh Shalom

עשה שלום

Maker of Peace

We strive to make a significant impact through scholarships and programs that benefit students at The Jewish Theological Seminary, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, Schechter Institutes, Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano, and The Abraham J. Heschel Seminary.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we help committed Jewish students become the rabbis, cantors, educators, synagogue administrators, social workers, scholars, researchers and lay leaders of tomorrow.

When you support Torah Fund, you help educate students in New York, Los Angeles, Israel, Latin America and Europe—and you align with those who value learning, knowledge and providing the future generation with relevant skills to fortify the Jewish people.

Visit www.jtsa.edu/torah-fund

Oseh Shalom Bimromav, “may the One who makes peace in the heavens, make peace for us and all the people of Israel,” appears at the end of Kaddish and in other prayers, and is also a song. We help foster Jewish unity by our support of the five global Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher education.



PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO TORAH FUND!

TORAH FUND GIVING LEVELS

Golden Supporter: \$8,100
Keter Kavod \$5,000
Scholarship Patron \$2,500
Patron \$1,200
Associate Patron \$600
Guardian \$300
Benefactor \$180

FOR OUR U.S. SUPPORTERS, go to inspired.jtsa.edu/torahfund
Or send your check to the Torah Fund office.

FOR OUR CANADIAN SUPPORTERS, go to torahfundecards.jtsa.edu/canadian
Make a donation of any amount with the minimum purchase of one ecard.
Or send a check to The Jewish Theological Society, 100 Elder Street, North York, Ontario, M3H 5G7.

The dedicated philanthropy of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism, Torah Fund supports scholarships and programs in the worldwide Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher Jewish learning.

TORAH FUND

3080 Broadway, New York, NY 10027
(212) 678-8876
www.jtsa.edu/torah-fund • torahfund@jtsa.edu

We have beautiful new ecards!
Think of Torah Fund for any greeting.

We're expanding our collection with two new designs by Israeli artist Bracha Lavee—a thank-you card and a mazal tov card.

Show your care by sending a Torah Fund ecard for any occasion. For only \$5 per recipient you can send an attractive ecard—and you can even schedule it for a specific time!

Revenue from ecard purchases benefits the Torah Fund general campaign, and our affiliates receive credit for purchases. Make your selection today at torahfundecards.jtsa.edu

For our Canadian supporters, go to torahfundecards.jtsa.edu/canadian

And for our Canadian donors:
Make your gift to Torah Fund online via our ecards!
For a minimum C\$5 ecard purchase, you can add a contribution of any amount to Torah Fund.

It's easy! Select the card design you'd like to send and follow the user-friendly prompts to complete your transaction.



Torah Fund supports scholarships and programs at the five worldwide Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher education:

Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies in Los Angeles, Schechter Institutes in Jerusalem, Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano in Buenos Aires, and The Abraham J. Heschel Seminary.

Thanks to our donors, we ensure quality education and diverse opportunities for students to become future Jewish leaders serving the broader Jewish community.

Our Jewish future is in your hands!
Visit torahfundecards.jtsa.edu
and send an ecard today.

[Click HERE](#) to send a Torah Fund E-Card
[Click HERE](#) to donate to this year's 2025-26 Torah Fund Campaign
[Click HERE](#) to donate to the Torah Fund Legacy Society
[Click HERE](#) for the Torah Fund Chadashot Newsletter

Any questions please e-mail Sindy Manas at smanas750e@gmail.com.

GOOD & WELFARE - GARDEN STATE REGION
Share your news and nachas with us!

Let us know if you have any simchas, special birthdays/anniversaries, well wishes, and sorrows to pass on to [Sheila Kaufman](#).

Birthday Wishes

Wishing all who have March anniversaries and birthdays, **Yom Huledet Sameach!**

Mazel Tov

- Carol Kotch, GSR Recording Secretary, on publishing a book, "The Good Life".

Refuah Shlema

- Gail Kosher, Past President EBJC Sisterhood.

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

Make a Donation to the Garden State Region to:

- Honor someone special
- Wish a Mazel Tov to a Bar/Bat Mitzvah family
- Send get well wishes
- Send condolences

Our **Scholarship Fund** helps to send women to WLCJ Convention and Leadership Institute where they learn necessary skills to share with our sisterhoods.

The **Sunshine Fund** supports members of the GSR Board in their time of need.

The **Evelyn Auerbach Education Fund** to sponsor an annual GSR Region educational event.

To make donations, contact Donna Franklin, GSR Treasurer, at gstrtreasurer@wlcj.org and include which fund(s) to make the donation to.

Or mail your check payable to "GSR-WLCJ" to
Donna Franklin, 7 Liddy Place, West Caldwell, NJ 07006
Donations can also be made via Credit Card.

Donate to GSR using Credit Card

WLCJ PROGRAMS AND MESSAGES

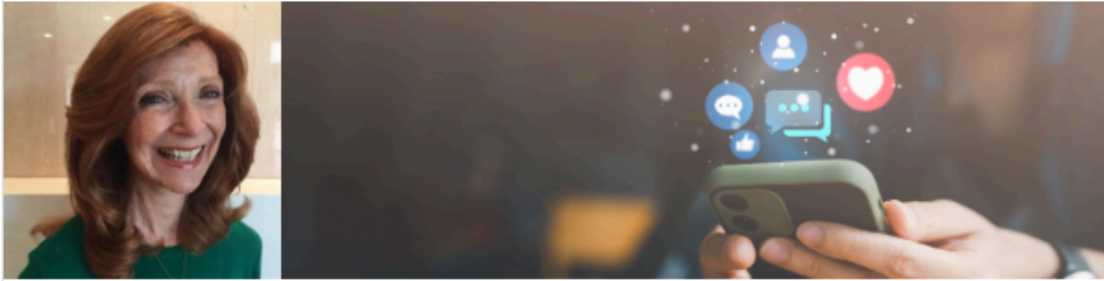
Shabbat Message

March 20, 2026 | 3 of Nisan, 5786

The Pursuit of Connection

Pam Schlosberg

WLCJ Financial Secretary



We hear the ding every morning—that social media call to connect. We grab a cup of coffee, green tea, or a protein drink in one hand and balance our phone in the other. And we're off to check who is reaching out, waiting for our response, or simply poking us. It's a mindless daily ritual of trying to engage and connect.

There are emails to scroll; group texts to decipher; Facebook threads to like or award a well-chosen emoji; Instagram photos and videos demanding our view; newsfeeds; and podcasts . . . the list is daunting. All promise the chance to connect with our communities and set the tone for our day.

[Read more](#)

WLCJ CONVENTION 2026

WLCJ SHABBATON & CONVENTION 2026

Friday–Wednesday, July 10–15, 2026

Registration is Now Open! Take advantage of our **Early Bird discount available through April 30, 2026** and secure your spot today.

Hotel room rates are guaranteed through **June 7, 2026**, so be sure to make your reservations early.



[VISIT THE CONVENTION 2026 WEBSITE](#)

[Register](#)

PURCHASE YOUR AD FOR THE CONVENTION 2026 VIRTUAL AD JOURNAL TODAY!

Don't let the moment pass without honoring the people who make our community shine. Whether it's a thank you, "*mazel tov*," or a personal note of appreciation and gratitude, now is the time to secure your spot in the Virtual Ad Journal!

[PURCHASE YOUR AD](#)

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS: WHY WL INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP?

JANET TATZ AND FINDING JEWISH CONNECTION IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Janet Tatz grew up in the Conservative movement, following in her mother's footsteps of service and leadership. Today, living in the "do-it-yourself" Jewish landscape of the West, learn how Janet honors that memory, and discovered a new way to have a fulfilling Jewish life, through **WLCJ Individual Membership**.

[READ](#)

HELP KEEP WLCJ UNITED NATIONS NGO STATUS!

WLCJ needs your help to renew our UN credentials! If your Sisterhood Affiliate hosted programs between **2022–2025** addressing UN goals (like ending poverty, promoting peace, reducing inequality, etc.), we need to include them in our application. Please use the link below to submit a brief summary and a copy of your event flyer.

[SUBMIT YOUR PROGRAM INFO HERE](#)

SUPPORT SCHECHTER & ELEVATE YOUR SEDER: SPECIAL DISCOUNT ON BEAUTIFUL HAGGADOT

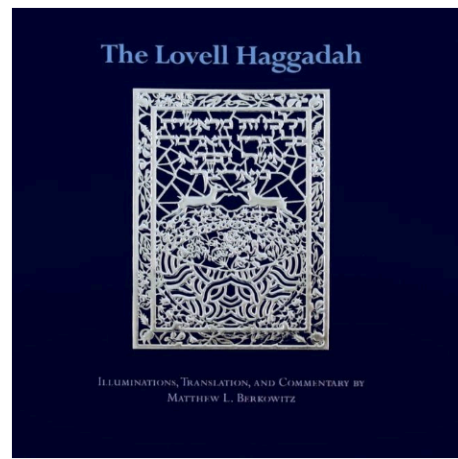
Enhance your Passover table and support the Schechter Institutes in Jerusalem! Schechter is offering a special holiday discount on two beautifully illuminated *Haggadot*.

Choose between the fascinating, history-rich **Schechter Haggadah** (featuring 115 classic illustrations and deep commentary) or the vibrant, family-friendly **Lovell Haggadah** (featuring 27 original illuminations and an egalitarian translation). All profits go directly to the Schechter Institutes.

Click haggadah picture below to purchase.



The Schechter Haggadah: Art, History and Commentary



The Lovell Haggadah

WL INCLUSION AND MISHPACHAH

B'NAI MITZVAH PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (ADRABA) OF THE MASORTI MOVEMENT

Sun | Mar 22 | 12:00 pm ET | Online

Join the WLCJ Inclusion and Mishpachah Committees to hear from the founders of Adraba, an incredible Masorti program in Israel preparing young adults with special needs for their B'nai Mitzvah. They will share how we can bring this "hidden gem" to our North American communities.

[REGISTER](#)



UPDATES: PROGRAMMING WITH PANACHE

LOOKING FOR FRESH PROGRAM IDEAS?

The WLCJ Kehilah and Education Committee is preparing the third edition of our program guidebook, updating our collection of creative, meaningful programming for Regions and Sisterhood Affiliates.

We need your help! Submissions are open to EVERYONE (not just officers) and may include successful programs you have presented or attended. Or that you plan to present. Share your ideas and help inspire others!

For reference, you can view past editions here:


[Volume I](#)
[Volume II](#)



[SUBMIT A PROGRAM](#)

Use the online form to submit program ideas or send any questions to Fran Hildebrandt at fhildebrandt@wlcj.org or 248-318-8301.

WL READS


 ONLINE

Sunday, April 12, 2026
at 1:00 pm ET



Join WL Reads for a lively conversation with international bestselling author Randy Susan Meyers. Known for her compelling voice and acclaimed novels, Meyers will discuss her latest book, *The Many Mothers of Ivy Puddingstone*, a thought-provoking exploration of altruism, justice, and sacrifice. **Registration is now open.** Read along and join us on Sunday, April 12 at 1:00 pm ET—even if you haven't read the book yet.

REGISTER

 QUESTIONS

Karen Block
WL Reads Chair
kblock@wlcj.org

LET'S TALK



REGISTER

NEXT-GEN WOMEN LEADERS: IN CONVERSATION WITH CAMERON FIELDS

Wed | Apr 29 | 8:00 pm ET | Online

What does the future of Jewish leadership look like? Join us for an inspiring conversation with **Cameron Fields**, a dynamic emerging leader, public health advocate, future medical student, and WLCJ Individual Member. From the front lines as an EMT to the heart of campus life at Hopkins Hillel, Cameron will share her journey and reflections on the unique challenges and bold opportunities facing the next generation of women leading with purpose.



The WWOT, the Weekly Words of Torah, each week through the end of June 2026, will connect to the **2025-2026 / 5786** Torah Fund general campaign, *Oseh Shalom – Maker of Peace*. To read more Weekly Words of Torah, [click here](#).

Parashat Vayikra

What can a tiny letter teach us about finding holiness in a safe room? This week, Rabbi Margie Cella explores the mystery of the miniature *aleph* in *Parashat Vayikra*, a small detail that reveals how God's presence dwells not only in grand sanctuaries, but in the most confined and courageous spaces of our lives.

READ THIS WEEK'S WWOT

OTHER WLCJ PROGRAM REMINDERS

Click the image to explore each program series and to register.



Sessions will meet on a Tuesday night each month over Zoom at 7:30PM ET Nov 11, Dec 9, Jan 13, Feb 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9

MAKOM B'YACHAD



Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday

12 noon ET, 9am PT, 10am MT, and 11am CT

A virtual service for our WLCJ Sisters to recite *Mishaberach* (the Prayer for Healing) and Psalms, and study *Kaddish*.

<https://zoom.us/j/630830287>

Meeting ID: 630 830 287

Password: 875936

SHARE YOUR SISTERHOOD HAPPENINGS WITH US!

Look for all the info both here and on our Website & Facebook pages.

Follow the Garden State Region!

If you would like to contribute a flyer or picture to our newsletter please forward to [Ilene Rothman](#) and [Sheila Kaufman](#).

[Click here to connect with the Garden State Region Facebook page.](#)

[Click here to visit the Garden State Region website.](#)

Make sure to click both **Like** and **Follow**.


It's another great way to learn about everything happening in our Region.



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Ilene Rothman
GSR Secretary Communications / Newsletter Editor
gsrcommunications@wlcj.org

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