

Garden State Region Programs - March 13, 2026



"Jewels in the Crown" Deadline Extended to March 17!



REMINDER

Election of the GSR Slate of Officers for 2026-2029 will take place at the May 3, 2026 GSR Spring Conference at Congregation B'nai Israel in Millburn. The Slate of Officers and bylaws for handling region nominations and elections is provided below in the Announcement of Officers. Submission of an alternate slate of officers is due by March 19, 2026.

Thank you to Lynette Seader, Nominations Chair and her nominating committee of Heddy Belman, Arlene Bernhardt, Donna Burkat, Phyllis Miller, Teresa Samtur and Susan Sferas for preparing our Slate of Officers for 2026-2029.

We are proud to present our List of Officers.

| | |
|--|--|
| President | Sindy Manas, Temple Beth Ahm, Aberdeen |
| Vice Presidents | |
| Programming VP | Bonnie Isaacson, B'nai Shalom, West Orange |
| Sisterhood Support VP | Cheryl Sessler, Cong. Beth Shalom, Livingston |
| Torah Fund VP | Ilene Weber, Pine Brook Jewish Center, Montville |
| Secretaries | |
| Communications | Lynette Seader, Highland Park Conservative Temple-CAE, Highland Park |
| Corresponding Secretary | Barbara Leveene, Temple Beth Ahm, Aberdeen |
| Recording Secretary | Ilene Rothman, East Brunswick Jewish Center, East Brunswick |
| Financial Secretary | Lisa Katz, Cong. Beth Shalom, Livingston |
| Treasurer | Donna Franklin, Cong. Agudath Israel, Caldwell |
| Parliamentarian | Dorothy Cohen, Morristown Jewish Center Beit Yisrael, Morristown |
| Immediate Past Pres./Nominations | Sheila Kaufman, Miriam Sisterhood, Oheb Shalom Cong., South Orange |
| Advisor to Exec./Past Pres. Council | Meryl Balaban, Morristown Jewish Center Beit Yisrael, Morristown |
| Advisor to Exec. Comm. | Heddy Belman, Pine Brook Jewish Center, Montville |
| Archives | Heddy Belman, Pine Brook Jewish Center, Montville |
| Directory | Teresa Samtur, Cong. B'nai Tikvah, North Brunswick |
| Hospitality - Events | Teri Manes, Highland Park Conservative Temple-CAE, Highland Park |
| Madricha | <i>Selection to be made by Region President</i> |
| Sunshine Fund | Fran Katz, Cong. Ahavat Olam, Howell |
| Ways & Means | Nancy Mayrowetz, Cong. Ahavat Olam, Howell |
| Webmaster & Zoom Support | Helene Davis, East Brunswick Jewish Center, East Brunswick |
| Programming Team | |
| Education | Leslie Gleaner, B'nai Shalom, West Orange |
| Sustainability/Environmental | Helene Knee, Highland Park Conservative Temple-CAE, Highland Park |
| Public Policy | Marlene Oslick, Temple Beth El Mekor Chayim, Cranford |
| Social Action | Tova Rothschild, B'nai Shalom, West Orange |
| Israel Affairs | Rahel Shapiro, Temple Israel & JCC, Ridgewood |
| Social Justice/Community Affairs | Susan Winter, Highland Park Conservative Temple-CAE, Highland Park |
| Sisterhood Support/Membership Team | |
| Team | Arlene Bernhardt, Temple Israel & JCC, Ridgewood |
| Team | Joan Gillman, Cong. Beth Shalom, Teaneck |
| Team | Sebley Hausler, Temple Beth O'r Beth Torah, Clark |
| Independent Member | Jacalyn Walzer, Cong. Agudath Israel, Caldwell |
| Torah Fund Team | |
| Consultant | Sharon Hammerman, Cong. Agudath Israel, Caldwell |
| Torah Fund Team | Donna Burkat, B'nai Shalom, West Orange |
| Torah Fund Team | Elise Norwitz, B'nai Shalom, West Orange |
| Torah Fund Team | Janice Saferstein, East Brunswick Jewish Center, East Brunswick |
| Torah Fund Team | Susan Sferas, Cong. Torat El, Oakhurst |
| Region Representative | Helene Knee, Highland Park Conservative Temple-CAE, Highland Park |
| Region Representative | <i>Open</i> |

Election of the Slate of Officers for 2026-2029 will take place at the Garden State Region Spring Conference on May 3, 2026. Following are the Garden State Region by-laws for handling region nominations and elections. Any questions can be addressed to Nominating Committee Chair [Lynette Seader](#) or 732-429-9777.

Article IX, Section 3 – Nominations/Elections

Garden State Region by-laws

- A. By 90 days prior to the region conference at which elections, take place the nominating committee shall report to the region board, immediately sending its written report to the League nominating committee, and circulate its report to the region's affiliates together with a copy of Article IX, Sec.3b, which states the right to petition.
- B. Additional nominations may be made 45 days prior to the Region Conference at which elections take place by petition signed by the representatives of at least 3 affiliates within the region, together with the written consent of the nominee, submitted to the region nominating committee.
- C. Upon expiration of the final date for additional nominations where no additional nominations are presented, the slate of the nominating committee shall become the electoral ballot.

D. The slate of the region nominating committee plus the nominations by petition shall be in the hands of the affiliate boards of directors at least one month before election at region conference. The names shall be listed alphabetically for each office if there is more than one candidate.

GSR REGION PROGRAMS

- **Sun. May 3, 2026 @ 9 am - 4 pm** - GSR Spring Conference and Installation of Officers - "Jewish Latinos - Coming to America" at Congregation B'nai Israel, Millburn
- **Sun.-Wed. July 12-15, 2026** - WLCJ Convention 2026, Alexandria, VA;
[Registration Open - See below](#)



SISTERHOOD AFFILIATE PROGRAMS



HIGHLAND PARK
CONSERVATIVE TEMPLE
Congregation Anshe Emetz

The Sisterhood of HPCT-CAE invites you to attend our 2nd Annual

TORAH FUND BRUNCH

Sunday, March 22nd

10 am - Noon

The Multiple Meaning of Matzoh – It's A lot to Digest

Donation to Attend:
\$18 – to benefit Torah Fund

Torah Fund Pins,
Torah Fund Cards for Sale
Pin Raffle \$18/chance



Noam Blauer is in his final year of rabbinical school at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He is the Hadar Student Rabbi at Rutgers Hillel. He earned a BA in Philosophy and English Literature at McGill University, as well as an MA in Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, with a focus on Jewish thought. Noam has served as a rabbinic intern at Brandeis Hillel and at Temple Beth Shalom in Livingston, New Jersey.

Noam is proud to have been born and raised in Montreal, Canada.

An RSVP is required.

Please mail your check to the Temple office payable to JTS.

You can pay at the door,
but please RSVP so we can plan accurately.

RSVP by March 13th to Lynette Seader-Coordinator
lynetteseader59@gmail.com 732-429-9777

Questions? Contact Sue Kheel –
VP Torah Fund (732) 259-6907

Thank you for supporting Torah Fund.

201 South 3rd Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904 732.545.6482 www.hpct-cae.org



Noam Blauer
Speaker



WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM
Engage, Enrich, Empower
Forging A Stronger Tomorrow

TORAH FUND
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

RSVP



[MAHJONG DAY AT TEMPLE BETH EL!](#)

Temple Beth El of Somerset
1489 Hamilton Street
Somerset, NJ 08873

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 to phyllis.miller@gmail.com by April 10th.

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.



- [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.

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



NOT ALL THOSE WHO WANDER ARE LOST

What happens when you travel across the globe to the Southern Hemisphere? For **WLCJ International Vice President Fran Hildebrandt**, an adventure to Australia and New Zealand became a profound reminder of the power of global Jewish community. From exploring historic synagogues to unexpected moments of connection far from home, Fran reflects on how belonging transcends borders, and how the friendships we build in our WLCJ community mirror the welcoming spirit found worldwide.

[READ THE SHABBAT MESSAGE](#)

JEWISH EARTH ALLIANCE



NETWORK BRIEFING: STOP DATA CENTERS SUBSIDIES

Tues | Mar 17 | 8:00 pm ET | Online

Join the Jewish Earth Alliance to discuss the environmental and economic impacts of AI data centers and how the Power for the People Act of 2026 aims to protect everyday consumers from rising electricity costs.

[REGISTER](#)

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

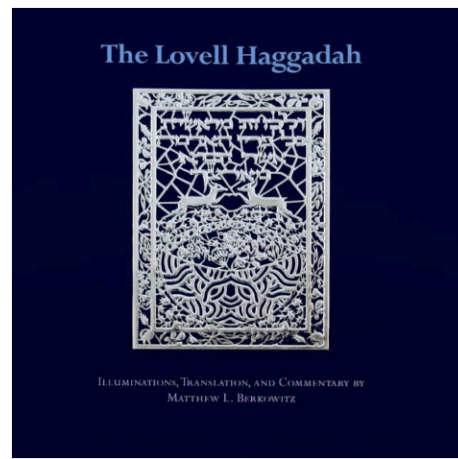
Enhance your Passover table and support the Schechter Institutes in Jerusalem! Schechter is offering a special holiday discount on two beautifully illuminated *Haggadot*.

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 hagaddah 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

WLCJ CONVENTION 2026

It's Official: WLCJ Convention 2026 Registration is OPEN!

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

JEWELS IN THE CROWN 2026

Celebrate your Sisterhood's achievements by applying for *Jewels in the Crown*, a special recognition honoring outstanding programming, leadership, and community impact. Award recipients will be recognized at **WL Convention 2026**.

Click [here](#) to complete the online application

[here for PDF](#) version.

NEW - [Click here](#) to view the video of the application procedure.

"Jewels in the Crown" Deadline Extended to March 17!



Be sure to submit your application by **March 17!**

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

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



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 Vayakhel-Pekudei

Why were women's mirrors used to build the Tabernacle's wash basin? In her reflections on *Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei*, Rabbi Margie Cella unpacks the Torah's text to reveal a beautiful lesson about women's dedication, spiritual agency, and vital participation in Jewish ritual life.

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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New York, NY 10027
Office: (405) 870-1260



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

Garden State Region Women's League for Conservative Judaism | 3080 Broadway Suite K900 | New York, NY 10027 US

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