



The Voice of West Clarkstown Jewish Center

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May/June 2019

Nissan/Iyar/Sivan 5779

Rabbi Jill Hackell

(email jghackell@gmail.com)

Rabbi's Message:

We are well-acquainted with counting off time. A rocket sits on a launch pad, and we count down the seconds: ten-nine-eight-seven-six-five-four-three-two-one-Blast off! How often have we counted the days until an event we have been waiting for? A birthday, a graduation, a vacation. Only two more days to go! Some people enjoy crossing days off on the calendar, until that big day comes.

The Seders are behind us, and we have started the counting of the days of the Omer. Every evening we count, counting UP this time. One day, two days... until we reach forty-nine (seven weeks). Each day is expressed in days and in weeks: for example, 16 days, which is 2 weeks and 2 days of the Omer.

So what is Omer, and what are we counting towards?

Like many things in Judaism, there is a historical reason, a traditional reason, and additional spiritual interpretations that provide layers of meaning, allowing each Jew to find something in the tradition that speaks to them.

First, the historical. The ancient land of Israel was agricultural, and whether people would have enough to eat was dependent on the harvest. The barley crop came to ripeness at Pesach, and the wheat crop would be ready seven weeks later. A bundle

Of barley (omer) was waved after the first day of Pesach, and each day was counted until the wheat crop was harvested, when two loaves of bread would be waved as an offering to celebrate the successful wheat harvest.

These seven weeks also mark the period between the freeing of the Israelite slaves from Egypt (which we celebrate so joyously on Passover) and our arrival at Mount Sinai, to experience God and receive the Torah (which we also celebrate with joy on Shavuot).

Spiritually, these seven weeks become a period to be mindful of ourselves. How can we metaphorically shed the things we are slave to, and be ready to stand before God at Sinai? There are many interpretations of each day of the omer-counting as a step to work on our virtues and vices. Are we generous or withholding? Compassionate or judgmental? Yielding or stubborn? All of us have tendencies toward some traits that could use a little balancing with their opposites. This is a time of year that many people dedicate toward becoming more aware of our tendencies and working to finding more balance where necessary. Ancient and modern Jewish events have added additional commemorations during this period. **Yom HaShoah** (Holocaust Remembrance Day) is May 2nd. Yahrzeit candles in memory of the Six Million should be lit the night before.

The sadness of **Yom HaZikaron** (Day of Remembrance of Israel's Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism) on May 8 morphs into joy for **Yom HaAtzmaut** (Independence Day for the modern State of Israel) on May 9. Join the community-wide memorial service for Yom HaZikaron at the JCC-Rockland May 7 at 7 pm.

May 23 is **Lag B'Omer**, the 33rd day of the counting of the Omer, a day of bonfires in Israel, in commemoration of the lifting of a plague in the days of the Talmud.

June brings us **Yom Yerushalayim** on June 2, commemorating the reunification of Jerusalem in the Six Day War.

Finally, **Shavuot** is the culmination of our counting of the Omer. Seven weeks have passed, and the 50th day, the first day of Shavuot will be celebrated on Sunday, **June 9th**. We will hold services that day at 9:30 am, including Yizkor. As always, you can find our schedule of services on our website: westclarkstownjc@gmail.com.

L'shalom,
Rabbi Jill

Ask Our Rabbi:

Q: Why do we wash our hands before we eat challah after services at shul?

A: Traditionally, Jews are required to wash their hands and say a blessing before eating any meal that includes bread or matzah. Water is poured two or three times each on the right and the left hands. The two-handled pitcher makes it easier to alternate hands but is not required for this ritual - any vessel will do. Unlike most blessing situations, the blessing is recited **AFTER** the washing. We say,

ברוך אתה אדוני אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וציונו על
נטילת ידים

*Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al
n'tilat yadayim.*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and commanded us concerning the washing (literally: lifting) of the hands.

It is customary not to speak following the blessing until after reciting the blessing for bread and partaking of some.

This hand-washing tradition is not related to personal hygiene, and a person is still required to perform this ritual even if his or her hands are clean. (You may remember that at the Passover Seder, there is a hand-washing without a blessing at the beginning, but nonetheless, before eating the matzah before the meal, there is another hand-washing with the blessing).

The hand-washing tradition derives from various practices concerning ritual impurity from when the Temple stood in Jerusalem.

The priests who performed the temple rituals were given gifts of oil, wine and wheat that could be eaten only after ritual washing. The ancient rabbis extended this practice to all Jews before eating meals. Some sources suggest that the practice was instituted so the temple's washing ritual would not be forgotten.

Now you know how to do it! You, too, can volunteer to perform hand-washing and *motzi* (blessing for bread) after services on Shabbat evening and morning. Let me know if it's your first time, and I will do it with you, until you are comfortable.

Shalom Rav!

As the winter metamorphizes into spring many changes appear. Warmer weather, longer daylight, and all the changes Mother Nature brings to us. We are tired of being home bound. Get out, attend a service and revel in the beauty of it.

From the famous Hillel - "Al Tifrosh Min Hatsibur". "Don't Separate from the Congregation". Bringing this phrase to the 21st century is also apropos. We all need to share our responsibilities and not retreat. We try our best to make WCJC viable and support each other in both happy and sad times.

Try to have positive emotions on Sisterhood. Make your spare time West Clarkstown Jewish Center time.

Although she is not Jewish, Tiffany Hamilton, who is an administrator in higher education at a local college, has a great outlook on life. "Lead by serving and gain by giving". This is her foundation to her life's work. Isn't it also applicable to us in our daily lives?

Unlock your potential to help Sisterhood and WCJC by becoming more active.

Jeff Plotkin started a trend by writing a check to Sisterhood in memory of his mother, Sylvia Plotkin. Several of us have continued with this by joining and making a donation in memory of a deceased female relative. What a unique and proud way to honor them. It helps to keep their memory alive.

Our next Sisterhood meeting will be on Sunday, May 19 at 10:00am at WCJC. Breakfast will be served. There will be an open discussion and concrete plans for the rest of the year. Please RSVP to me.

Hope you enjoyed the Passover holidays.

L'hetra'ot,

Sheila Paris

Men's Club News

When you receive this letter Passover will have just been completed. This means we are headed towards summertime.

The Men's Club would like to thank everyone who participated in our wine sale this past April.

The very important remembrance of Yom HaShoa is fast approaching. This year it occurs on May 1st/2nd. We must never forget the slaughter of over 6 Million Jews in the World War II era. In the words of historian, Stephen Ambrose, "The Holocaust was the most evil crime ever committed. "The Men's Club is providing you with a candle to show the world that we care. The Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs suggests a donation of \$18 per candle. The candle is lit on the night of Wednesday, May 1st at sundown. The community wide memorial service this year is on Sunday April 28th at New City Jewish Center at 5:00 P.M.

The "Mexican Train" is back. Save the date of Sunday, June 2nd at 1:00 P.M. The Men's Club will be holding a Mexican Train Dominos game day at that time. The cost remains at \$5 per person for this fun-filled participation event. Snacks, coffee and cake will be served. Prizes will be awarded to the winning player at each table. Contact Steve Paris at sparis@cw.edu or at 914-625-4199, Dave Tessel at duvies85@aol.com or Harriet in the Synagogue office.

The Men's Club's final meeting of the year will be our night out. The date will be Tuesday, June 11th at 6:00 P.M. The restaurant venue will be determined and notification will be made via e-mail, phone call, and from announcements during Shabbat services.

The Men's Club urges everyone to try and attend at least one Shabbat service per month of both Friday night and Saturday morning services. This will help to make a Minyan possible for all services.

Fraternally yours,

Steve Paris

YOM HASHOAH

This Thursday--May 02nd-----27 Nissan is the date set aside to remember the Holocaust. Of course we do not need a specific date to remind us of the significance of this terrible time in both the history of the Jewish people and the history of the World.

I feel that our generation is in between the generation, before us, who lived through the Holocaust, and the generation(s) which follow us for which we need to teach not to forget.

I grew up in a Kosher home in Brooklyn, where Yiddish was spoken, especially by my maternal grandmother-who was shomer Shabbos, and who lived with us. Growing up, in a secure environment----it never occurred to me to inquire about my grandmother's siblings, or parents (my mother's grandparents)

For that matter, I never gave much thought to those relatives, of my grandmother who visited us-----those with the numbers on their arms.

My grandmother left Poland, with my mother, who was a young child, to join my grandfather, who arrived first and served in WWI.

Of course later on, in my adult life-----I became aware of the fact that my grandmother's entire immediate family had perished in the Holocaust, And of course, I became very aware of the significance of those relatives who visited our home.

Yet my grandmother--Bella Yaruss---maintained her strong faith. She was Shomer Shabbos and davened at an orthodox shul. She endured seeing her two sons (my uncles Jack and Benny) serve in and return from WWII. So when I think about the Holocaust-----although I never personally experience the fear and terror-I think about my grandmother's family-----Lost generations----past, present and future. We have an obligation, as perhaps the last generation with a link to the Holocaust, to always remember and teach.

I'm sure that many in our congregation and families also can claim a more personal side to those who perished. Besides the yahrzeit candle, I will be lighting this Yom Hashoah----I will be sending in a donation to our shul----in sorrow, love, and remembrance of all who perished-----as well as those who my grandmother Bella lost---That's my story-----what is yours,

Jeff Plotkin

Donations

Yahrzeit

Gilbert & Lillian Zinn in memory of Jacob Zinn and Ruth Korman

Linda Haber in memory of Sid Haber, Mary Schneider & Hennie Schneider

Susan & Stanley Alpert in memory of Stan's mother Rose Alpert and Susan's grandfather Isaac Goldberg

David Talmas in memory of Jack Talmas

Arlene Janis in memory of her father Alexander Kletsky and her mother Jacqueline Kletsky

Maxine Moskowitz in memory of her father Norman Moskowitz

David & Marilyn Tessel in memory of her brother Murray Prager

Irwin & Reva Davis in memory of his mother Sally Davis

David & Victoria Stone in memory of his father Edward Stone

Herb & Fran Boxer in memory of Max Boxer and Mac Boxer

Steve & Diane Klein in memory of her mother Rose Weiss

Philip & Joyce Ress in memory of his mother Selma Ress-Gerson

May Birthdays

Fred Finkelberg	May 2
Rabbi Jill Hackell	May 10
Susan Alpert	May 11
Rebecca Wing	May 11
Stephen Paris	May 20
David Levine	May 24
Florence Simon	May 28
Sheila Paris	May 30

May Anniversaries

Linda & Al Scherzer	May 21
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May Yahrzeits

Mac Boxer	May 2
Rose Weiss	May 4
Samuel Green	May 5
Meyer Finkelberg	May 6
Milton Levine	May 12
Marilyn Nack	May 13
Abraham Bloomfeld	May 14
David Dubinsky	May 15
Samuel Massler	May 15
Sally Davis	May 15
Ira Yaruss	May 15
David Farb	May 19
Belle Citrin	May 21
Cynthia Bove	May 22
Bertha Gordon	May 24
Gussie Reinstein	May 24
Blanche Wechman	May 24
Eva Rubin	May 25
Laila Perlmutter	May 27
Bessie Kaplan	May 29
Milton Ansel	May 31

June Birthdays

Jerry Perlmutter	June 1
David Miliken	June 8
Ruth Geneslaw	June 9
Gavin Murphy	June 12
Ryan Paris	June 13
Susan Davis	June 20
Edie Bialo	June 28
Lindsey Maschler	June 28
David Maschler	June 28
Barbara Schleier	June 29

June Anniversaries

Tammy & Randy Davis	June 8
Diane & Steve Klein	June 15
Reva & Irwin Davis	June 15
Lil & Gil Zinn	June 29
Rose & Jerry Perlmutter	June 30

June Yahrzeits

George Reinstein	June 1
Barbara Schiffman	June 2
Frances Bialo	June 5
Leah Goldberg	June 5
Zel Birenback	June 6
Bella Yaruss	June 7
Ruth Boxer	June 8
Sol Haber	June 9
Dorothy Novinsky Liebert	June 10
Phyllis L. Stone	June 10
Robert Granek	June 12
Lena Feingold	June 14
Rose Jacobson	June 14
Frieda Goldberg	June 15
Harry Goldberg	June 15
Walter Hyman	June 15
Louis Prager	June 16
Rudolph Schleier	June 17
Abe Meyers	June 18
Harris Davis	June 19
Abraham Schreider	June 19
Albert Cytryn	June 21
Morris Citrin	June 24
Pauline Massler	June 24

Rebecca Silberzan	June 26
Meyer Friedberg	June 28
Robert Plotkin	June 29

Sunshine Cards

from -Sheila & Steve Paris – **to-** Jeff Plotkin -
Happy Birthday & thanks for all you do for WCJC

from -Fred & Michele Finkleberg-**to** Harvey Ingber
- Happy 75th birthday

from -Marilyn & David Tessel, Lil & Gil Zinn, Sheila
& Steve Paris, Bobbie Schoenfeld,, Roberta & Allen
Shane, Diane & Steve Klein, Fred & Michele
Finkelberg, Susan & Stan Alpert, Tammy & Randy
Davis **-to-** Stefanie & Mark Benson - Mazal Tov on
your 50th wedding anniversary.

from- Susan & Stan Alpert, Sheila & Steve Paris -
to- Lil Zinn - Happy Birthday

In Sympathy

from - Diane & Steve Klein-**to-** Sheryl Sanders &
Family - In memory of your loving mother

from -Sheila & Steve Paris, Harriet Moskowitz, Lil
& Gil Zinn,-**to** Jerry Sachs - In memory of your
beloved wife, Rhoda Sachs

from -Fred & Michele Finkleberg - **to-**Lenny
Michaelson -in memory of your sister, Roberta
Tilem

Thank You

Thank you to the following people for
donating to our kitchen:

Tammy & Randy Davis
Jeff Plotkin
Lil & Gil Zinn
Sheila & Steve Paris
Susan & Stan Alpert
Roz & Dave Levine

Thank you so much to our synagogue family for
coming to Shabbat services on April 6th to help us
celebrate our anniversary !

We greatly appreciate all of the donations & cards
in our honor and look forward to sharing lots of
simchas with you all !

Stefanie and Mark Benson

Help WCJC by Selling on E-Bay

Barbara & Julie Shair have access to an E-Bay
website. Items can be sold here.

Please donate jewelry...costume, gold, silver,
single earrings or parts of a piece are
acceptable.

Small antique items can be listed.

You can bring items to Harriet in the office

Tues. or Thurs. 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

The funds support our Kiddishes.

Call: **Barbara Shair 845-354-7223**

Remember before you throw away we use e-
bay.

Challah of the Month Club

The following families have joined and participated in the Challah of the Month Club:

Thank you to:

Maddie & Harvey Ingber
Susan & Stan Alpert
Fran & Paul Weiner
Marilyn & David Tessel
Herb & Fran Boxer
Diane & Steve Klein
Roberta & Allen Shane
Marc Levine
Shimmy Cohen
Roberta Schoenfeld
David & Anita Talmas
Marianne & Harry Bloomfeld
Barbara & Curt Schleier
Roberta & Allen Shane
Diane & Steve Klein
Lil & Gil Zinn
Ronnye and Barry Deutchman
Maddie & Harvey Ingber
Susan & Stan Alpert
Sheila & Steve Paris
Shimmy Cohen
Ronnye & Barry Deutchman Marilyn & David Tessel
Fran & Paul Weiner
Tammy & Randy Davis
Roberta & Allen Shane
Lil & Gil Zinn
Diane & Steve Klein
Anita & Dave Talmas
Anita & Dave Talmas
Maddie & Harvey Ingber
Ronnye & Barry Deutchman
Bob & Stephanie Wechman
Bob & Stephanie Wechman
Barbara & Curt Schleier
Marilyn & David Tessel
Tammy & Randy Davis
Roberta & Allen Shane
Susan Ravner & Al Tabin

Dave Talmas

Lil & Gil Zinn

Susan & Stan Alpert

Dave Talmas

The next list is the families who have reserved a month in the near future:

Susan Ravner & Al Tabin - May

David Talmas - June

Diane & Steve Klein - July

Please join the club and call **Susan Alpert** or **Herb Boxer** for information!

May Minyan List

May 3 & 4 Zinn, Alpert, Ansel

May 10 & 11 Benson, Bialo, Bloomfeld

May 17 & 18 Boxer, I. Davis, R. Davis

May 24 & 25 Deutchman,

Finkelberg, Geneslaw

May 31 & June 1 Ingber, Jacobsen, Klein

June Minyan List

June 7 & 8 Ravner, Levine, Moskowitz

June 14 & 15 Paris, Prlmutter, Plotkin

June 21 & 22 Schleier, Scherzer,
Schoenfeld

June 28 & 20 Seltzer, Shair, Shane

Important Websites

West Clarkstown Jewish

Center: www.westclarkstownjc.org

Rockland and

Jewish: <https://www.facebook.com/RCjewish/>

Comedy Corner

A strong wind blew off a Religious Jew's hat. A non-Jewish young man ran to get the hat and returned it to the religious Jewish man. The man, being grateful, gave him a \$20.00 tip and said "God Bless You". The young man passed a race track on the way home. Figuring the \$20.00 was found money, went in at the 7th race & found that a horse by the name "Stetson" was running. He put all Twenty \$'s on him and won. The next race "Top Hat" was running. He was not a favorite, but he placed all his winnings, which was sizeable now, on this horse and he won an enormous amount of money. Now he saw another horse, felt very confident and put all his money on this one.....And LOST IT ALL. He went home very disappointed and told his father he was betting on all horses with the name of hats, and why, and lost it on the last one." What was the name of the horse", asked his father. He said "Chateau". His father said "Stupid, that's a house, Chapeau is a hat. What horse won? "A Japanese horse by the name of Yarmika"

Submitted by Lil Zinn