



THE REFORM TEMPLE
OF ROCKLAND
Brighter Together

2019-2020 Annual Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the President, <i>Adrian Modansky</i>	page 3
Rabbi Report, <i>Rabbi Benjamin Sharff</i>	page 4
Cantor Report, <i>Cantor Sally Neff</i>	page 6
Director of Congregational Learning Report, <i>Brad Zicholtz</i>	page 7
Executive Director Report, <i>Susan W. Caminez</i>	page 8
Adult Education Report, <i>Wendy Fleischman & Susan Klein</i>	page 9
Car Club Report, <i>Barry Fleischman</i>	page 10
Caring & Inclusion Initiative Report, <i>Eva Steen</i>	page 10
First Responder's Fund	page 12
House Report, <i>Jeff Grossman</i>	page 13
Membership & Marketing Report <i>Fran Grossman, Sharon Hlittman, Mike Rutter</i>	page 14
Men's Club Report, <i>David Firstenberg</i>	page 15
Religious School Report, <i>Cathy Klein & Tama Shor Beck</i>	page 16
Sisterhood/WRJ Report, <i>Jill Tanney</i>	page 17
Social Action Report, <i>Helayne Pfeffer & Sue Emanuel</i>	page 18
Treasurer's Report, <i>Stephen Hlittman</i>	page 20
2020-2021 Budget Report	<i>website link</i>
Bylaws Committee	page 21
Education Campaign Donors	page 22
2019-2020 Annual Appeal Donors	page 23

Message from the President



Dear Fellow Congregants,

Here I am starting my second term as President. It is definitely starting out differently, but I am looking forward to it as much as I did the first. Serving our congregation and making a difference is what I hope to continue to accomplish. I have many ideas that I want to implement for The Reform Temple of Rockland. I hope that my contributions to date have strengthened our Temple, and will continue to do so.

There are so many people on both the Executive Committee and/or the Board of Trustees we need to thank. They devote their time, expertise and ideas, and RTR would not be the same without them. We work as a team, and that's what makes us who we are.

When I think about what can help RTR more, people or money you might be surprised with my answer. I choose people. Money can't buy your presence and we are nothing without you. You are needed for us to survive, grow and move forward. If we have your participation then I believe your financial support will follow. Our future in the Jewish community depends on you. Your suggestions and feedback shows you care about RTR. Please share your thoughts with myself or anyone on the Board of Trustees.

I am and will always be available to discuss any matter on your mind about Temple. Enjoy your summer, the best way possible during this uncertain time. Although our building is closed, the Temple is open and business goes on. Hope to see you on our zoom services or in the building at a meeting/function in the near future.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Adrian Modansky".

Adrian Modansky, President
President@rtrny.org

RABBI'S REPORT

Rabbi Benjamin Sharff

This fiscal/programmatic year started off relatively quietly. There were weddings where Rabbi was the officiant. Services were held with a number of wonderful volunteers filling in while Cantor enjoyed the second summer of her earned and deserved sabbatical. Brad and Rabbi taught a summer Adult Education course on some of the *Forbidden Stories of the Bible* that was both well attended and well received. Rabbi enjoyed attending the annual Men's Club Golf Outing. Rabbi then had his first of two surgeries. Rabbi is so grateful to all of the volunteers and staff who helped to cover for him, especially Cantor Harriet Dunkerley who filled in for life cycle emergencies while Rabbi recovered. Rabbi then returned to Eisner Camp at the end of July to serve his weekly stint as faculty.

During this summer there were also funerals, hospital and rehab visits, home visits, b'nei mitzvah lessons, baby namings and even a surprise wedding in addition to the regular meetings and preparations for the High Holy Days. Rabbi also continued his duties serving in the CCAR Convention Committee and as the Vice President of the Rockland Board of Rabbis.

With the fall we saw the return of our regular programming and worship services which was kicked off with a highly successful service in the Park as Cantor's first service back. However, due to inclement weather, it was held in the social hall of RTR. Rabbi and Cantor officiated at our fall b'nei mitzvah, while Rabbi began co-teaching Confirmation/Academy with Brad.

Rabbi joined Cantor in our Selichot Program with Rick Recht. Unfortunately it was not the experience we were hoping it would be, but the Sunday morning concert with Religious School was an overwhelming success. This then led us into highly engaging and powerful High Holy Day worship experiences with the use of our Mishkan HaNefesh.

We tried a new experiment of having the sukkah in the parking lot, which worked really well, and may be explored again in the future. Simchat Torah was once again a tremendous success and well attended. The

band was fantastic and the Torah was unrolled and rerolled without incident.

There were 50th anniversary celebrations and vow renewals. The Jewish War Veterans joined us for Veteran's Shabbat. Rabbi continued to serve on the Board of Federation and on the Rabbinic Advisory Council for Yaffed, an organization fighting for the inclusion of secular education in Yeshivas.

Rabbi Sharff and family were then honored to have so many of the congregation join them in celebration of Emily being called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah. It was a wonderful and overwhelming celebration. Rabbi Sharff is especially grateful to the congregation for their support.

B'nei Mitzvah continued and Rabbi Sharff and a select group of lay leaders traveled to Chicago for the URJ's Biennial. Though the attendance was not what they were hoping for, it was still a very inspirational and insightful gathering.

January began with some travel by the Sharff family followed by a return to our regular programming. Rabbi then had his second surgery in January and Rabbi is grateful to the Cantor and staff for covering during his recovery. It also meant that Rabbi was unable



to travel to Washington, D.C., for L'taken with our confirmation student. Thankfully the team was able to arrange for another congregation for our student to travel with, who by all accounts, had a wonderful time.

Susan arranged a meeting with a representative from the Alzheimer's association so that the staff could learn how to better serve our members who are suffering from dementia related challenges.



Around this time, news began to circulate about a new virus that could pose a risk to the health and safety of the community at large. Information was slow to come in and national, state and local officials were slow in issuing edicts as to how to effectively respond. During this time, it was decided to hold our Purim Carnival and our Purim spiel as well as a Bat Mitzvah, and a funeral, which both used a preliminary form of social distancing. However, immediately following these events, as the news became more dire, the decision was made to close our facility and to pivot to all virtual engagements. B'nei Mitzvah and weddings were postponed along with a spring fundraiser and all ancillary community programs. CCAR convention, which rabbi helped to plan for the past year and a half was cancelled and replaced by a virtual convention.

Since that time, we have transitioned to zoom Shabbat services and Taste of Torah along with virtual meetings. Rabbi has continued to be engaged with the greater Rockland Jewish Community with regular Rabbinic-Federation meetings along with Clergy-Lay

leader meetings to get a sense as to how other congregations are also handling the pandemic. Procedures have included closing the building, limiting attendance at burials, no in-person shiva minyan, and planning for the strong possibility of a virtual High Holy Day experience.

All of this was done while Rabbi's family struggled with the ravages of Covid-19 with Joy attending to her family in Atlanta for six weeks. Virtual b'nei mitzvah lessons are ongoing along with virtual learning experiences.

Rabbi is working closely with the Health, Safety & Security Committee as well as Ritual to examine what the fall will potentially look like. Given the uncertainty, we are planning for the worst case scenario while hoping for the best case scenario. More information will be forthcoming as final decisions are made.

In the meantime, Rabbi, along with Cantor, continue to reach out to congregants and do their best to support you, the Rockland Jewish community, and the greater Rockland community during these times of upheaval, fear and concern. This also includes the incredible and unfortunate changes occurring within the URJ due to the correct but very sad decision to cancel all URJ camping for the summer.

Rabbi continues to communicate to the congregation with the weekly e-d'var Torah as well as the weekly drash and occasional blog post. And as always, Rabbi is always available to serve the needs of the community within the framework of physical distancing requirements.



CANTOR'S REPORT

Cantor Sally Neff

It was another fantastic musical year at The Reform Temple of Rockland. Here is a sampling of my work this year:

Pre-pandemic:

Up until the pandemic, work at RTR continued as usual. Our B'nei Mitzvah program was quite successful, I participated in Adult Education and the Adult B'nei Mitzvah class. We had monthly Rosh Chodesh ceremonies, weekly Taste of Torah. The choir, band, and Jr. Choir continued to make beautiful music, and Religious School music was also going well. I spent last summer's sabbatical working on a piece of music which we premiered as a sermon anthem on Yom Kippur. We had nationally known Jewish artist, Rick Recht, in house for Selichot. We had Cantor Barbara Ostfeld, the first woman cantor, visit along with several other female cantors to present her book. We were in preparations and had had many rehearsals to get ready for an amazing performance of *Jewsical* involving ten area cantors.



Pandemic:

Unfortunately the pandemic derailed or postponed a lot of events that were well underway in terms of preparation. These included not only *Jewsical*, but also Rock Shabbat, Beatles Shabbat, and the Women's Seder. We began our adaptation to this new normal by finding ways to present our worship services virtually. This means that I create a new Visual T'filah service every week. I have also created Virtual prayerbooks for festivals, Shiva, and Funerals. We have had, sadly, several virtual funerals and shivas along with burials (with social distancing.)

In order to adapt to this changing situation, I have had to increase my skills in several areas, especially the use of Keynote, Garage Band, Reaper, Zoom, iMovie, Final Cut Pro, and my guitar skills. I am also grateful to Steve Iger for having recorded several accompaniments for me.

I have recorded a few video pieces that we sent to the congregation through Facebook as sources of comfort.

I have also created several parody songs to present in worship. I solicited material for a virtual Coffee House, but so far have only received two submissions.

I have spent a lot of time trying to learn how to do "virtual choir" videos. These are extremely complicated. They say that they take about an hour for every minute of final video. These being my first two, I fear it has been more than that... I have now completed two of these videos - one for Jr. Choir and one for Adult Choir. Both are on the synagogue's YouTube channel and were premiered during worship. Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons have moved to an online format, which is admittedly more challenging. Our students are working through this though and doing their best.

I am in constant contact with my colleagues - rabbis, cantors, and educators, looking for new ideas on how to do things well, promote congregational relationships, and put out excellence online. I am excited by how much I have learned and hope to continue to bring you an increasingly satisfying, beautiful, and participatory musical experience at RTR.

One more thing: We do not yet know how we will do High Holy Days. Authenticity in prayer is vitally important to me. I feel VERY strongly that prayer is not a performance. You can be assured that however High Holy Day services reach your soul, I will be praying them - not performing them - and I hope that you will pray WITH me, rather than listen to me.

In community - whether together or apart, we will make it through this. I miss you all.

DIRECTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL LEARNING REPORT

Brad Zicholtz

As the school year is drawing to a close let's take a look back at this incredible year of learning and connection. In our school, so much happened. Before the pandemic, we learned about the Jewish value of caring for animals at our Noah's Ark program. Our children even got to help train young chickens to fly! Our 10th Grade Confirmation student travelled to Washington, D.C., to meet up with hundreds of other Reform Jewish teens to learn about important issues up for vote in congress. Every student in our school got to make their own mezuzah and we were able to hang brand new, beautiful mezuzot in each classroom thanks to the generous donation from the Waldorf family. We also had a phenomenally successful Purim spiel and carnival. We added new games and made the whole experience more family friendly.

We also had several very successful and meaningful grade-led Shabbat services. Families of all different backgrounds had an awesome night at our 2nd Annual Trivia night. This Purim, we collected 75 pounds of Mac and Cheese "groggers" that were donated to People to People. Our learners also created a "Mitzvah Mall" where they raised \$300 for causes that were meaningful to them.

Of course, right after Purim we were put into lockdown. We took only one week off and then were right back in the swing of things on Zoom. While we shortened our time together, we made the best of it. Our teachers were incredible creating fun interactive lessons for their classes.

Overall, our learners are happy to be here and have learned so much. I want to publicly thank all of our hard working, dedicated teachers: Tobe Rebhun, Debbie Erdheim, Jessica Griffel, Dede Adika, Lisa Jay, Carol Mansdorf, Yaffa Zweig, Fawn Fleissig, and Cantor Neff. If you know someone who might be interested in our school which is FREE next year, please have them call me.

In our Adult Ed programming, we had a spectacular year. We started off with our popular series about, *Forbidden Stories of the Torah*. We followed it up with

our incredible Scholar in Residence, Rabbi Amy Scheinerman. The weekend she joined us was such an incredible weekend of learning. Post shelter-in-place the learning continued. We had Zoom sessions on the Amazon Prime show *Hunters* and the Netflix show *Unorthodox*. This past year we also started an adult B'not Mitzvah class. These women will become b'not mitzvah sometime next Spring.

In our Youth Programming, we sadly say goodbye and thank you to Robin Condoluci and Elise Lehrman who are both retiring after dedicating decades to our Temple's youth. We will miss them! We are in the process of reimagining the youth program and are currently searching for a new advisor.

Even with all the upheaval this pandemic has brought to our world, RTR's commitment to creative and engaging education will continue. Thank you for a wonderful year.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Susan W. Caminez

I was only five months into this position when I wrote last year's Annual Report. Though circumstances are vastly different than last year, my only hope is now, more than ever, you can see the value of our RTR community. We are here for each other, we care for each other, and we can gather together no matter what the circumstances are. It has been my honor and joy to serve not only as your online host but as your Executive Director.

Administrative

- Reviewed and recorded over 350 personnel files and brought current files into compliance.
- Closed storage unit saving the congregation \$3500 annually.
- Cleaned out Classroom 7 so it could be used in time for the start of the school year.
- Continued to train on a new database, preparing school registration, membership profiles and online directory (*coming soon*).
- Created and documented comprehensive procedures for security, ushers and maintenance assignments for the High Holy Days.
- Ensured all staff and Board members were in compliance with various trainings.
- In response to the pandemic: drafted a Pandemic Response Plan and an employee plan, worked with cleaning company and maintenance to ensure the building was deep-cleaned, and learned new software on the fly to conduct online services. Continues to work on safety needs and preparations for the building reopening.

Committee Support & Involvement

The Executive Director serves on the Membership & Marketing Committee and the Security Committee. She regularly attends Board and Executive Committee Meetings. She moderates the quarterly Committee Chair Meetings. The Executive Director supports all committees as needed.

Cemetery: visited our properties, reviewed processes, and obtained updated maps. Entered Riverside plots and purchases into our new database for accurate recordkeeping.

House: assisted large renovations by supporting outside vendors, organized extensive cleaning and prep for the High Holy Days (such as ceiling tiles, lights, painting, power washing), worked with various companies to get our elevator to code, and continues to handle day-to-day building concerns and improvements.

Membership & Marketing: created in-house flyers and worked hand-in-hand with Chairs to promote our brand and increase our outreach on a regular basis.

Security: on behalf of the committee she attended the Safety & Security in Faith-based Institutions by PACE University and NYS Homeland Security and the Rockland County Jewish Organizations Safety Meeting. Installed safety kits and procedures through the entire building and implemented new safety procedures for the High Holy Days. Offered congregation additional safety trainings. Remains in close contact with the Clarkstown Police Department and recently reviewed and updated security assessment. Is also temple contact for the Secure Community Network, a national Jewish security non-profit.

Community Involvement

- Assisted community members with Homeland Security Grant procedures and questions.
- Created *Some RTR Good News* for community engagement in conjunction with Membership & Marketing.
- In December, she attended the four-day NATA (National Association of Temple Administrator's) in Chicago where she learned about the changing cultural landscape and evolving communications, networked, and volunteered at a local food pantry.

Congregational Life

- Oversaw large congregational events including Shabbat in the Social Hall, Rick Recht, the High Holy Days, Emily Sharff's Bat Mitzvah, a sudden modified Purim Cocktail Hour, and this year's unique Annual meeting.
- Currently hosts online services and helps with online programming. Assists congregants with Zoom regularly and created training videos.

ADULT EDUCATION REPORT

Co-chaired by Wendy Fleischman & Susan Klein

The Adult Education Committee at RTR had a busy and productive year with varied events. Some of our events are ongoing and many are special “one time” programs. We would like to thank those of you who attend and support the programs we bring to the congregation. If you have not attended an event or program, we have plenty for you to try for the coming year!

This past summer we began with *Forbidden Stories of the Bible* – a two-part discussion led by Rabbi (July) and Brad (August) which was extremely well-attended.

In September, we hosted a Lunch and Learn about the High Holy Days; a 3 session program.



In October, we showed the movie *Dancing at Jaffa*, a very heartwarming story, with a lively discussion.

Our major event for this past year was hosting our Scholar-In-Residence, Rabbi Amy Scheinerman, in October. She spent three days with us and many activities surrounded the weekend. Thank you to WRJ/Sisterhood, the Religious School and Men’s Club for working with us to make the weekend extra special.

Our discussion of the book *Button Man* by Andrew Gross was held in January. Thank you to Jill Tanney for leading. We hosted this discussion with WRJ/

Sisterhood.

In March, we had an extremely informative discussion of the book *How to Fight Antisemitism* by Bari Weiss, led by Rabbi Sharff.

Unfortunately, our eagerly-awaited speaker, Rabbi Mitelman was postponed, due to Covid-19 closing of the temple. His topic was to be a discussion on “Jews and Science” – we hope to have him speak in the coming year.

Thanks to the wonders of Zoom, Brad led us on lively discussions of *Hunters* (starring Al Pacino) and *Unorthodox*, which we watched ahead of meeting.

Adult Ed partnered with Car Club to discuss *Faster* by Neal Bascomb via Zoom.

The committee approved a new monthly discussion group called Breaking News and Views. This group was to be led by Gerry Lenkowitz (of blessed memory) and Alan Sadovnick. Alan has graciously agreed to lead one Wednesday morning a month, TBA.

Adult Education sponsors Taste of Torah weekly on Saturday mornings, Torah Topics weekly on Thursday mornings (on hold due to pandemic), Adult Hebrew and Adult B’nei Mitzvah. Breaking News and Views with Alan Sadovnick will be added, hopefully this coming September.

We have many events and discussions (including trips) planned for 2020-21. Read your temple (e)mail for all information, including any adjustments we have to make for virtual programming.

Thank you all for your ongoing support.

CAR CLUB REPORT

Chaired by Barry Fleischman

It has been over two years since we have created our Car Club at RTR. With over 25 members and a core group of about a dozen members who attend every meeting and event, we are a very active group.

We meet every month on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30 PM. Currently, we have Zoom meetings, but normally meet at RTR in the Tucker Lounge. We have an event outside of RTR every month in non-pandemic times.

We converse with each other almost every day by email and are always seeking new ways to keep our interests alive. Car shows are now on Zoom and we even had a book discussion with Adult Ed on a Jewish car-oriented theme.

Since our last report, we have held the following events:

- Greenwich Car Show
- Trip to Automotive Restorations in Stratford, CT
- A picnic and car show with the world famous "Chowder Club" in CT
- Deadman's Curve Car Show at the Sheraton in Mahwah (indoors and outdoors)
- Trip to the Malcolm Prey Achievement Center to view the car collection
- Lime Rock Park to view the races
- Movie Night to view *Ford vs Ferrari* at a local theatre
- 2nd annual Car Club Dinner with spouses at La Terrazza in New City

We are always looking for new members and welcome any additions to our group. Please contact Barry Fleischman at barrymb@aol.com or 845.494.4023 to join.

CARING & INCLUSION INITIATIVE REPORT

Chaired by Eva Steen

The Caring & Inclusion Initiative was created in November of 2012 with the express goal being to reinvigorate and coordinate an effective effort to meet the special needs of our members and guests. Another goal that we agreed upon was to better connect in meaningful ways during personal moments of need and times of celebration. As this project has evolved, we have made great strides towards both ongoing goals.

We strive to not only create additional gateways for those with disabilities to access our congregation, but also to create stronger relationships among present members within the congregation.

Of the four original committees that were formed, only Chesed is still fully functioning. Chaired by Judy Levy, the volunteers on this committee work towards supporting congregants in several ways:

Bereavement Team

Led by Mimi Fetterman

The Bereavement Team, made up of volunteers, Committee Chairs, RTR Board members, Sisterhood Board members and Men's Club board members and Clergy, was put in place so that each congregant who sits Shiva is assured of having a minyan. The grieving family also receives a phone call from a Bereavement Team member offering condolences from our RTR congregation. A follow-up call is made to the family approxi-

mately two weeks later reminding them that their RTR family cares about them. (Please note: If the caller senses that the family may need additional support, this information is passed along to our clergy.)

A Shiva meal is offered to families sitting Shiva. We use Bagel Boys in New City. Bagels, cream cheese, etc. are delivered to the grieving family. Most families decline the offer. In the past year, six meals were delivered. (Please note: We did not offer Shiva meals during the Coronavirus crisis and most Shivas were conducted virtually.)

During the past year, approximately thirty-three families were contacted by the Bereavement Team.

Simcha Recognition

Led by Elaine Simon

A mazel tov card is sent to every congregant family that has notified the temple office about a simcha.

Comfort Shawls

Led by Helayne Pfeffer

Shawls are hand-knitted by the Knitting Circle members and are distributed to congregant families by our clergy when they visit the home of a family that has suffered a death.

MiShebeirach Bears

Led by Helayne Pfeffer

Handmade stuffed teddy bears are given to congregants who may need some comfort, during difficult times and illnesses.

Outreach to Homebound Congregants

Led by Judy Levy

Visits and phone calls to congregants in their homes are made as the need arises. (Please note: No visits were provided during the pandemic.)

Milestone Birthdays and Anniversaries

Led by Eva Steen

Cut flowers are delivered to congregants who are celebrating a 90th birthday or a 75th anniversary. During the fiscal year, we've had 10 floral arrangements delivered to congregants. (Please note: These deliveries have been discontinued during the pandemic.)



Past accomplishments of this initiative include:

- Installation and upkeep of:
 - the Hearing Loop on the sanctuary level of the temple;
 - the video recording and streaming system in the sanctuary;
 - the electronic bulletin boards in both lobbies;
 - Periodic workshops and seminars for our Religious School teachers on the topic of inclusion
- Speakers and workshops for the congregation and wider community on multiple topics regarding mental health
- Peer led support group for those diagnosed with cancer
- Compilation of a manual identifying mental health services throughout the Rockland/Hudson Valley area (available on our Committee's webpage)

Any congregant who would like to volunteer, please contact Eva Steen (e.steen821@gmail.com)

FIRST RESPONDERS FUND



During the pandemic, many of us were searching for some way in which to be helpful without putting ourselves and our families at increased risk of infection. Those of us who are grateful to be in positions of comfort and good health needed to feel that we were aiding those on the front lines of this struggle. To those ends, a modest project was launched.

The goals of this project were five-fold:

- First and foremost, we donated nutritious and safe food to Montefiore Nyack Hospital employees as well as staff at the New City Ambulance Corps.
- Secondly, we provided congregants the opportunity to assist these crucial public servants in a direct and concrete way. As stated above, we believed that there was immense value to those of us who are safe and secure to feel that we've helped others in our community, and for our congregants to see RTR as having a clear role in this.
- Thirdly, we believed it was important for RTR to mount a project such as this one independently of other community groups.
- Fourthly, RTR has a direct business relationship with Montefiore Nyack Hospital in that they are rent-paying users of our parking lot. We believed that it is important for us to show our appreciation for this relationship in a distinct manner.
- And finally, we patronized Turiello's Pizza House in Nyack and The Little Diner in New City, thereby supporting two local businesses.

To launch this project, several congregant families donated "seed money" and then all congregants were invited to participate if they so wished, to whatever degree they were able. No existing temple funds were used for this project.

To date we have provided 150 meals to Montefiore Nyack Hospital and 60 meals to the New City Ambulance Corps. Both organizations have now notified us that, thankfully, the immediate pandemic crisis has abated and their staff schedules have returned to normal. They thank us for our support and no longer need us to deliver meals.

We will no longer be soliciting congregant donations to this Fund. Remaining money will be donated to several local Rockland organizations that provide food assistance to those in need.

HOUSE REPORT

Co-chaired by Jeff Grossman & Barry Schoenberg

The major building update project is in the final phase of construction. We have completed the majority of planned tasks to date and hope to wrap up our project by the fall. To date we have finished the following jobs:

- Replaced the Roof
- Built the Drainage and Retaining Wall
- Replaced an HVAC unit
- Installed 13 new programmable thermostats
- Replaced all metal exterior doors
- Replaced all classroom windows
- Replaced exterior lighting fixtures
- Rebuilt the upper level ramp and replaced all metal railings
- Replaced the lower level cement stairs
- Installed a new burglar alarm system
- Installed a new fire alarm system and sensors
- Installed a 16-camera security system
- Replaced the ceiling in the middle social hall
- Caulked all existing window panes
- Repaired the foundation in classroom 5
- Built a drainage system to prevent driveway icing in the winter

We are currently working on the kitchen design and hope to start construction within the next month or two. In terms of spending, we are currently within the \$1,000,000 budget approved by the congregation and will be evaluating our final project, the bathrooms, as soon as we complete the kitchen.



MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING REPORT

Membership Co-chaired by Sharon Hittman & Michael Rutter Marketing by Chaired by Fran Grossman

First and foremost we hope that everyone is safe and in good health. This has been a challenging “second half” of the RTR year for all. The M&M committee started out strong continuing to put our marketing effort against our FREE Religious School effort through PR, print, online media and word of mouth.

As of this report RTR has 318 member families of various ages, and we have welcomed 7 new families, 5 of them with school age children this year. Bringing young families into the RTR family continues to be a primary focus and we continue to help promote RTR’s FREE Religious Education Program for all grades Pre-K – 12th grade. Now more than ever word of mouth is important. Please be an RTR ambassador and help us spread the word to all of your friends, families, and neighbors!

A new initiative this year will be looking at ways to bridge the gap of “Religious School families” who are uninvolved with the larger RTR community into active RTR members.

With social distancing a priority for at least the first half of our new fiscal year the M&M committee is also looking for ways to reach you, our members through online opportunities, traditional mail and live phone calls.

In the past we made a concerted effort to support our heavily attended events such as the High Holy Days, Rock Shabbats, Chanukah, and Purim to name a few. Now we are looking toward augmenting our online efforts. One initiative is working on ways to securely and safely invite extended family and friends to join in on our special zoom Shabbat services. If you have friends or family who would like to attend these services please email the office.

We are also happy to announce that we have two new Membership Co-Chairs, Sharon Hittman and Michael Rutter. They will be focusing on new member solicitation, orientation and retention.

We have also brought back into the fold the “Friends of RTR” offering for past members who want to stay connected to RTR. Now for a small donation past members who have moved away will be able to stay connected to their RTR community via e-connections and other RTR communications.

Brand awareness continues to be an initiative. We are working on making the RTR logo/name and brand ubiquitous with Reform Judaism in the county. After three plus years of promoting *Joyful Judaism* the word is organically getting out and you will be seeing the RTR name being integrated on more premiums and marketing material where appropriate.

Below are the highlights of continued activities and initiatives that the M&M committee continues to support:

The M&M joint committee strives to keep our mission statement at the forefront of everything we do. We are currently revisiting this statement to make sure it is still our north star. *RTR is a welcoming beacon in Rockland County where Reform Jews can explore their individual Jewish identity and connectivity, inspiring friendship, spirituality and community service.*

We continue to work with a three-pronged strategy; retention of existing members, soliciting new members with a focus on younger families, and keeping in touch with lapsed members. Creatively our messaging has been and remains *Joyful Judaism*. This message is woven, visually and through messaging in all of our communications and actions. We enjoyed a few months of Susan hosting a *Some Good News* segment via E-Connections, which is a perfect example of spreading *Joyful Judaism* even during a pandemic.

Retention:

For our current members we continue to work on better internal communications looking for more ways to connect.

- Birthday cards
- High Holy Days Cards

- Phone calls to every member to wish them a Happy New Year
- Reaching out to congregants with the help of the Board during the pandemic
- Working on the development of new human interest clubs i.e. *The Car Club*
- Encourage wearing name tags so members can greet each other by name
- Supporting events and programming where appropriate

New Members

- Receive a hand delivered RTR welcome bag to their homes
- Receive a personal invite and phone call from an M&M committee member inviting them to the New Member Shabbat and events
- Receive a \$50 Free Program Event Voucher to help encourage New Members to get involved. Vouchers can be redeemed toward any RTR social event
- Created a process for better follow through with prospective members

Exiting Members

- Exit interviews for departing members to better understand their reasons for leaving

Ongoing Communications

- The Marketing Committee continues to support the office and all arms of RTR by supplying copy and creative solutions via flyers and other communication vehicles throughout the year.
- Update and maintain flat screen communications (now on two levels of the Temple) where we visually share highlights of recent events as well as promote upcoming events. We are looking at way to bring this experience online.
- Support our larger Jewish community through vehicles such as *The Jewish Standard*, journal ads and sponsorships of JCC events.
- Promote programs via online sites, Facebook, traditional print media, outdoor signage and PR where possible.

MEN'S CLUB REPORT

President: David Firstenberg

It was a short but busy year for Men's Club. Over the summer we had our baseball event watching the Boulders and then hosted the "Back to School BBQ" which was a great success.

This was followed by Sukkot and Simchat Torah dinners shared with WRJ/Sisterhood. For our second year in a row we went up to West Point and attended an Army hockey game. It was Army vs. Air Force which the home team won.

We supported our Youth Group in the Annual Blood Drive by many of us giving blood but and providing a bagel breakfast.

The Purim Carnival was the last outing for most of us before we started isolation, the children had a great time.

Whenever things start up again at RTR your Men's Club will be there supporting our congregation. in the meantime, stay safe and healthy.



RELIGIOUS SCHOOL REPORT

Co-chaired by Cathy Klein & Tama Shor Beck

Though it has been a year of extreme challenges with the mandatory shutdown of the building due to the COVID-19 crisis, we are pleased to report how quickly and well the school was able to pivot to online learning. With the help of Susan Caminez orchestrating the technological shift to Zoom, Brad Zicholtz, our Director of Congregational Learning was able to quickly get the teachers up to speed with using Zoom and adjusting their curriculum to allow for virtual learning. Other than an initial delay of only one week once the announcement was made, classes were back in session on Sunday mornings and Tuesday evenings. Students were thrilled to see their classmates remotely and to share music sessions with Cantor Neff and online classroom activities with their teachers. Besides regularly scheduled classes, several special online events were created including Cooking, Music, a live Israel tour with a guide, Treasure Hunt and games.

We both logged into many of the Sunday morning sessions to see the Zoom process in action, and we were happy to see the children as well as many parents who joined in the Zoom with their kids. We appreciate all the school parents for their support, trust and encouragement to help their children develop a deeper sense of connection to our shared history, the beauty of Judaism and the desire to be life-long learners and participants in social justice. We are most appreciative of their continued commitment to keep their children engaged after the switch to Zoom sessions when the building closed during the lockdown. It is not an easy task and their dedication to their children's Jewish education is admirable and appreciated.

The RTR Religious School continues to expand further under Brad's leadership and is showing some initial success of the FREE Religious School program. We are

happy to report that during this past school year (2019-2020) our overall enrollment increased by 17% from the year prior. The largest increases were in the target sector, grades K-2 enrollment, which increased from 18 children in 2018-19 to 27 students this year (50% increase). Since 2017-18, the school's total enrollment has increased from 47 to 69 students (47% increase). As we look ahead to the second year of free tuition, we appreciate the generosity of those who committed to helping our school grow through their contributions to the Education fund, which has allowed us to attract new families to our school in the hope they will continue their education with RTR and expand the membership of our community.

We are grateful to RTR's WRJ/Sisterhood and the RTR Men's Club for their continued financial support for school and youth programs. We appreciate ongoing contributions of supplies and holiday foods funded by WRJ to help the children celebrate all the holidays with the sweet tastes of Judaism, and we want to especially extend our thanks to Amy Rapaport who has been the WRJ School liaison behind these activities for many many years. This year's joint effort between the Men's Club, Youth Committee, youth directors and School Committee parents to put on a fantastic updated Purim extravaganza and brunch was a great example of how working together can make great things happen. We appreciated the increased volunteerism of the school parents who helped create new games and ran the game booths alongside the Men's Club and Youth Committee volunteers to make the Purim event such a success.

The plethora of activities and events our learners have been engaged in during this past school year is evident in Brad's report to the congregation. We look forward to seeing what the summer brings, as Brad

and the School Committee have been brainstorming several fun activities for the RTR school children and their families. We hope to keep the RTR connection alive during this unusual summer when all URJ camps and other camps are shuttered.

In this next year, we look forward to continuing along this path of growth, excitement and creative learning in the RTR Religious School program.



WRJ/SISTERHOODREPORT

President: Jill Tanney

WRJ had a very interesting and creative 2019-2020 with support from our 114 plus members! We would like to thank everyone who participated in our events, whether by organizing, fund raising, or participating just for the fun of it! We would like to thank all of those who contributed their time and effort in supporting all of the WRJ projects. Our reach goes from our temple to the community to the region and beyond.

Our year started in July with a book swap and drive that not only benefited the readers in our group, but the amazing overflow was donated to the Nyack Center and several other institutions and libraries in the county. September included making challah in the temple kitchen to be brought home to bake. We can't wait for the new kitchen! November was our Fall Brunch and Boutique with Sisterhood coming together with our audacious hospitality, and shopping with a variety of vendors.

Our Fall season included a healthy round of offerings

from the Theater Group. Unfortunately, due to the advent of Covid-19, our theater season is on hiatus, as is Broadway; to resume in the future with our full support and enthusiasm.

The Judaica Shop had a very good year with orders that continue to keep it in good stead. Orders can still be made and filled from afar.

We supported our youth in various ways by donating: to the Religious School for supplies and activities for regular classes and special events; giving Student Scholarships; mailing Holiday Packages to college students; supplying B'nai Mitzvah Certificates, and giving extra for specifics when requested.

Within the temple we organized onegs, temple dinners for holidays and more. Our Women's Seder was canceled due to Covid-19, but we hope that it will be back in person for the coming year. We worked with Adult Education on various events, including book

discussions and movies. We had our annual Bake Sale to go with the temple Blood Drive on Super Bowl Sunday. The Purim Shaloch Manot project was run by Sisterhood and benefited the entire congregation. We organized the shoe drive, participated in the seasonal temple winter coat drive and in the ongoing food drive for the Rhoda Bloom Food Pantry. This year included an additional WRJ drive for gift cards for seniors who were having difficulties.

Our community outreach included support of ARC and the girls at Skokie House. Visits were made to assist in activities and support them during the holidays. This assistance extended to all of ARC, Jawonio and other service organizations.

As our world turned to a virtual one by the time March had finished- we had our meetings by Zoom. We had a Cocktail/Mocktail Party for our Spring Annual Meeting. More meetings were scheduled for the virtual world of Zoom. The Knitting group moved from the once a month in person at the temple to a weekly virtual format for anyone who wanted to schmooze.

Participants didn't, and don't, need to knit or crochet to enjoy the audacious hospitality! We also connected to Yammer, a WRJ conversation format that allows our members access to webinars and other events.



We are in a new world with a new set of technology and opportunities. We look forward to a wonderful 2020-2021. Thank you again to one and all who helped to make this year another successful one for WRJ of RTR!

SOCIAL ACTION REPORT

Co-chaired by Helayne Pfeffer & Sue Emanuel

The Social Action Committee has been very hard at work this past year. Thanks to a very committed group of members and our very generous congregation we have gone above and beyond for our Rockland County Community in need. The following are some of the projects and programs we took on for the Rockland Community at large.

We have our ongoing obligation to The Rhoda Bloom Food Pantry of barley, which thru monetary donations, and packages of barley we deliver to the Food Pantry monthly.

We had our "Back To School With Dignity" that we collected during the summer months for the children of families that use the services of People To People. We are trying to find out the needs of the schools in our county, so we can help the children who are in need in our community.

We collected "gently used" jackets and coats, new hats, gloves, and scarves to be distributed to several agencies throughout Rockland.

The Youth Group did their Midnight Run, and provided the homeless in NYC with a meal, and some warm clothes and socks.

We had a drop off to The Center for Safety and Change of gently used Infant items, and clothes, diapers, wipes, bottles etc., were collected at RTR and dropped off at the CSC. We also dropped off many hats and scarves.

The Religious School had a PJ day, where children were asked to bring in new PJ's and wear PJ's to school as a reward.

We had a Toy Drive where we collected unwrapped toys for children in need of families who use the pan-

try at People To People.



This coming year, we will be once again focusing on the needs of our community and our ability to receive donations.

Now we are focusing on the growing need for food in Rockland County. We are asking congregants to make donations directly to the food pantries and feeding programs. A list of pantries (with the greatest need) will be sent to the congregation in the following weeks.

We will be co-chairing with our Adult Ed Committee to bring you programs based on undoing racism in our community.

We have our ongoing collection of cleaning supplies, and toiletries that are collected for TOUCH and The Rhoda Bloom Food Pantry, and travel size toiletries for The Center for Safety and Change.

As you can see we at RTR have been very busy doing mitzvah work throughout Rockland. We thank you for your continued support to this committee, without you we could not come to the aide of the less fortunate in Rockland County.

We collected donations, to buy gift cards for seniors, who have trouble making ends meet.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer: Stephen Hittman

Linked on this page, please find the Proposed RTR budget for the fiscal year 7/01/2020 – 6/30/2021 for your review prior to the Annual Congregational meeting on June 28, 2020. Some points to consider as you review these documents:

- In late April, 2020 we applied for eligible funds from the Stimulus Program offered through the Federal Government (known as a PPP Loan). On May 1, 2020 we received the funds we applied for - \$126,452.00. This is not reflected in the attached documents. The funds received are a loan from the Federal government which if utilized in accordance with the term of the second Coronavirus stimulus legislation (the "Act") will be converted to a Grant. The 2 key requirements are that at least 75% of the proceeds are utilized for salaries (with a cap of \$100,000 of annualized salary per recipient) and the remaining amount (up to 25%) be spent to pay rent or basic occupancy costs. We have already created the proper accounting record keeping to document our compliance with the Act's reporting requirements.
- The Church's lease contract is due to expire on May 31, 2020. When we were informed that we couldn't continue to occupy our building (due to the Crisis), we informed the Church they wouldn't be able to continue to utilize our facility. We currently have a security deposit from the Church. Once we have determined what/if anything is due RTR for excessive usage or damage, we will return the balance unless the Board determines another course of action.
- In this budget we have assumed the building will be closed until approximately January 1, 2021. This will certainly reduce costs in certain areas (security, maintenance, onegs, organist, to name a few) – it will also have a negative impact on some revenue streams we have relied upon for many years (HHD tickets, HHD appeal, Dues). Our goal has been to prorate appropriate expenses using the same timeline.
- In this budget we are not building in any raises except those we are contractually obligated to provide for this coming fiscal year.
- We have increased the attrition and allowance for uncollectible dues to 5% for each – this is simply a reflection of discussions between Jeri N., Robert M., and myself.
- Men's club has committed to contribute \$14,000.00 towards our Youth Advisor's salary.
- WRJ is in the Budget for the same \$7,500.00 as the previous year – but as of the release of these documents they have not had an opportunity to meet to confirm their commitment for this year.
- We are budgeting to transfer approximately \$119,500 from various donor designated and unrestricted funds (see the revenue page) to supplement the cash flow for the budget year. Any remaining deficit will be funded from the RTR Facilities Fund.

The above is being given to you simply so you have a sense of what is taking place from the Treasurer's perspective. If anyone has any questions please send them to me and I will respond to you as soon as possible.

BYLAWS COMMITTEE

The Bylaws Committee has been working extremely hard over the past several months updating the Bylaws that govern how RTR operates and conducts business. The Board of Trustees has reviewed the document and voted to approve the changes and send them on to the full Congregation for approval. We are now ready for our members to review the document and make comments and ask questions.

The changes fall into several categories. Some were simple grammar corrections and some were deletions to remove references to sections that had to do with the merger. Other changes were more substantive in nature and include updates to sections that needed clarification. And finally, we added several new sections to add functionality to how we operate and several sections that were sorely needed to help us operate with more clarity.

To highlight the **major** changes, we offer the following:

- Article III Section 5 was added to allow the Board of Trustees to remove a member who engages in detrimental behavior that is harmful to RTR.
- Article IV Section 3 clarifies the financial responsibility of members who are eligible for High Holiday Day tickets.
- Article V Section 6 amends the responsibilities of the Recording Secretary.
- Article V Section 7 clarifies signatories for the disbursement of funds.
- Article VI Section 2 reduces the number of Trustees for the year 2020-2021 and for the following year 2021-2022.
- Article VI Section 12 clarifies the process of how the Board of Trustees can spend extra-budgetary funds.
- Article VIII Sections 6-9 was added to include committees that have been established over the years but never added to the document.
- Article VIII Section 10 has been rewritten to better define the role of the Audit Committee.
- Article IX has been rewritten to define how Auxiliary Organizations operate.
- Article XII has been refined to clarify several sections about the Nominating Committee.
- Article XX has been changed to add a sentence about protections for Board of Trustee members.

Copies of these bylaws can be viewed on our website.

EDUCATION CAMPAIGN DONORS

Anonymous Donors	Marty & Norma Gottlieb	Lawrence & Amy Rapoport
Eugene Arkin	Leonard Gross & Libby Tulin	Norman & Vivian Resnick
Alvin & Jane Aronoff	Jeff & Fran Grossman	David & Libbi Rosenblum
Dave & Pamela Auerbach	Meir & Miriam Gur-Lavi	Lawrence & Barbara Rosenzweig
Stewart & Suzanne Bader	Michael & Lisa Haber	Larry & Shelley Ruderman
Bruce Beck & Tama Shor Beck	William & Estelle Hans	Elliot & Diane Sachs
Steven & Laurie Becker	Stephen & Sharon Hittman	Sheryl Santi
Steven & Janice Bergman	Ellen Holtzman	Peter Schaefer & Margaret Schwartz
Simon & Stefany Bergson	Anne Jacobs	Jason & Hilary Schwartz
Marcia Berk	Michael & Rita Jacobs	Henry Schwartz
Eric & Lisa Berkowitz	Adam & Jenn Kalender	Leon & Beatrice Schindel
Phillip & Patricia Beutel	Murray Kaplowitz	Seth & Ruth Schlanger
Mark & Nancy Brecher	Rita Katz	Barry & Sally Schoenberg
Matthew & Felice Burgay	Judith Kiss	Jorie Sear
Brett & Susan Caminez	David & Susan Klein	Rabbi Benjamin & Joy Sharff
Gwenn Canfield	Michael & Catherine Klein	Benjamin & Jane Shavitz
Elaine Casper	Aaron & Michelle Kleinman	Larry Beck & Susan Silver
Jerome & Simona Chazen	Gerald & Petrina Koblin	Leonard & June Silverman
James & Robin Condoluci	Steve & Irene Kopelman	James & Marcia Simon
Steven & Nancy Dachs	Michael & Joanna Landau	Samuel & Elaine Simon
Thomas & Wendy D'Arminio	Edward & Marilyn Lawner	Myrna Soslowitz
Ira & Susan Emanuel	Jeffrey & Marcy Leif	Boris & Bella Spektor
Allen & Miriam Fetterman	Joseph & Andrea Leighton	Barry & Cris Sperman
Walter & Barbara Fiedler	Sean & Susan Levin	Lillian Spier
David & Laurie Firstenberg	Gerald & Joan Lenkowitz	Daniel & Heidi Spitzer
June Fischer	Stephen & Judith Levy	Edward & Eva Steen
Barry & Wendy Fleischman	Stuart & Rochelle Linder	Morton & Marlene Stoll
Matthew & Fawn Fleissig	Richard & Robin Loeb	Peter & Rikke Stone
Steven & Deborah Forman	Michele Lowy	Jordan & Deborah Turner
Mimi Frishman	David & Jeanne Marks	Donald & Jo Ann Waldorf
Howard & Leslie Gabler	Tina Miller	Madeline Weinberg
Barbara Gass	Robert & Adrian Modansky	Barry & Laura Weiss
Marshall Gilbert	Ronald & Sherri Nahum	Howard & Barbara Wilen
Ellis Gitlin	David Greenberg & Cantor Sally Neff	Warren & Terry Willen
Eric & Jodi Gischner	Christopher Nelson & Jill Barkan	
Jeffrey Glaser	Evan & Jeri Newman	
Marcia Glasser	Bernie Perry	
Stanley & Shelle Goldstein	Jeff & Helayne Pfeffer	

2019-2020 ANNUAL APPEAL DONORS

Anonymous Donors	Len Gross & Libby Tulin	Lawrence & Carol Miller
Alvin & Jane Aronoff	Jeff & Fran Grossman	Tina Miller
Ariel & Sara Aufgang	Scott & Robyn Haber	Robert & Adrian Modansky
Alan & Valerie Bagun	Susan Haimowitz	Cantor Sally Neff & David Greenberg
Bruce Beck & Tama Shor Beck	William & Estelle Hans	Evan & Jeri Newman
Steven & Laurie Becker	Ellen Holtzman	Norman & Carole Nudelman
Steven & Janice Bergman	Stephen & Kathleen Iger	Jeff & Helayne Pfeffer
Simon & Stefany Bergson	Anne Jacobs	Lawrence & Amy Rapoport
Marcia Berk	Janet Kaminsky	Norman & Vivian Resnick
Eric & Lisa Berkowitz	Leonard & Edith Kanchuger	Russell Rizner & Julie Buffington-Rizner
Bernard & Elaine Berson	Joel & Cantor Kanter	Joel & Shelia Rosenberg
Phillip & Patricia Beutel	Murray Kaplowitz	David & Libbi Rosenblum
Ronald & Deborah Bloom	Rita Katz	Cyril & Roberta Ross
Robert & Kathleen Bookman	Aaron & Peg Kershenbaum	Michael & Mia Rothstein
Jerry & Louise Boyarsky	David & Susan Klein	Jeffrey & Sharon Rubin
Matthew & Felice Burgay	Michael & Catherine Klein	Elliot & Diane Sachs
Gerald & Linda Camhy	Norman Klinger	Alan & Susan Sadovnick
Brett & Susan Caminez	Audrey Koenig	Sheryl Santi
Warren & Sharon Cohen	Joel & Marci Koral	Leon & Beatrice Schindel
James & Robin Condoluci	Stuart & Renee Kratter	Jason & Hilary Schwartz
Steven & Nancy Dachs	Alexis Kriedman	Jorie Sear
Harvey & Barbara Erdsneker	Ira & Eileen Laderman	Asher Seibert & Melissa Simon
Ira & Susan Emanuel	Michael & Joanna Landau	Rabbi Benjamin & Joy Sharff
Allen & Mimi Fetterman	Myron & Nina Lazar	Benjamin & Jane Shavitz
Walter & Barbara Fiedler	James & Micki Leader	Roger & Esther Siegel
David & Laurie Firstenberg	Ruth Lee	Steven & Arlene Silverberg
Cantor Mimi Frishman	Martin & Helene Leibowitz	James & Marcia Simon
Howard & Leslie Gabler	Jeffrey & Marcy Leif	Samuel & Elaine Simon
Barbara Gass	Joseph & Andrea Leighton	Barry & Cris Sperman
Steven & Elaine Geller	Gerald & Joan Lenkowitz	Daniel & Heidi Spitzer
Eric & Jodi Gischner	Sean & Susan Levin	Edward & Eva Steen
Howard & Gail Golden	Stephen & Judith Levy	Donald & Jo Ann Waldorf
Michael & Cantor Elizabeth Goldmann	Warren & Jane Livingston	Mark & Ellen Warner
Linda Goodsmith	Michele Lowy	Madeline Weinberg
Phillip & Diane Gottfried	Jay & Marcia Lurch	Howard & Barbara Wilen
Marty & Norma Gottlieb	Clifford & Sima Malat	Warren & Terry Willen
Paul & Ellen Gould	David & Jeanne Marks	
Martin & Vanessa Greenberg	Beryl Meyer	

Thank you!



**THE REFORM TEMPLE
OF ROCKLAND**
Brighter Together