

HCRJ

MARCH 2019

HOUSTON CONGREGATION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

Progressive Dinner



In the stated core values of Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism is the idea that a small membership base is the best way to preserve a warm and intimate community. While this may indeed be true for many aspects of congregational life, it is equally true that maintaining such intimacy demands nurturing relationships regardless of how many members we may have.

Intimacy is relational, and as it is with all relationships, the intimate nature of a community is dependent on how well people know each other. Such familiarity, however, can pose a number of significant challenges.

As members come and go throughout the years, the landscape of a community morphs. New members frequently do not know anyone for extended periods of time, while longer standing members often feel most comfortable with those whom they already know. These types of challenges are common in congregations with an ever expanding membership base. With more members, it can often feel less intimate, less warm and less inviting. For many longer standing members, the ability to remain familiar with and connected to the congregational family can often be somewhat strained, as familiar faces seem to fade into a crowd of strangers.

Bridging this “familiarity gap” involves generating opportunities for members to engage each other on a regular basis, but onegs after services and holiday celebrations are very limited in terms of how well members can get to know each other. After all, how much can you learn about someone while waiting in line for a cookie on Friday night?

One of the most successful congregation-wide mixers has been the HCRJ Progressive Dinner. It has been almost ten years since we held such an event, and we are excited to announce our grandest effort ever!

Please mark your calendars for the 2019 HCRJ Progressive Dinner which will take place on Saturday night May 4. The basic premise of the evening is to have small groups of members meet and greet over a first course at one home, a second course with a different mix of members at a second home and a fabulous dessert reception at the temple. Details regarding this program are forthcoming. Please save the date.

The 18th century Hasidic master, Rebbe Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev taught the following regarding human relationships. He said in a lifetime *“a person reaches in three directions – inward, to oneself; up to God; out to others. The miracle of life is that in truly reaching in any one direction, one embraces all three.”* It is our hope that our coming together for a Progressive Dinner in May will enable us to feed the soul as we deepen connections with one another.

Progressive Dinner: May 4, 2019

Be a part of this exciting program. Sign up to participate at:
www.hcrj.org/events/progressivedinner

The success of this event is dependent on finding families to host dinner or appetizers throughout the city. For more information and to sign up as a host, visit:
www.hcrj.org/events/progressivedinnerhost

March Calendar

- | | | |
|----|----------|--|
| 1 | 6:00 PM | Tot Shabbat |
| | 6:15 PM | Family Dinner |
| | 7:15 PM | Family Shabbat |
| 3 | 9:00 AM | Religious School Family Breakfast |
| 4 | 12:30 PM | HCRJ Golf Tournament |
| 5 | 12:00 PM | 60+ Men's Group Lunch |
| 6 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jongg |
| | 10:30 AM | Panel Discussion: What Next? Being Prepared for Our Senior Years |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Colored Pencils |
| 8 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services |
| 10 | | No Religious School |
| 11 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Yoga |
| 12 | 12:15 PM | Senior Chai Purim Program |
| 13 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jongg |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Colored Pencils |
| 14 | 9:00 AM | Spring Break Social Action Project |
| 15 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services |
| 16 | 9:00 AM | Spring Break Social Action Project |
| 17 | | No Religious School |
| 18 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Yoga |
| 19 | 11:30 AM | Knitzvah Group |
| 20 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jongg |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Colored Pencils |
| 21 | | Purim |
| 22 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services (Purim Shabbat) |
| 23 | 10:30 AM | Bar Mitzvah of Eli Bernosky |
| 24 | 9:30 AM | Religious School |
| | 11:30 AM | Bark Mitzvah |
| 25 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Yoga |
| 27 | 10:00 AM | Senior Chai Mah Jongg |
| | 1:00 PM | Senior Chai Colored Pencils |
| 29 | 7:15 PM | Shabbat Services |
| 30 | 9:30 AM | Tacos and Torah |
| | 4:15 PM | B'nai Mitzvah of Brett and Scott Leben |
| 31 | 9:30 AM | Religious School |
| | 10:30 AM | Book Discussion: <i>Educated</i> |

Family Shabbat

Family Shabbat: March 1

Tot Shabbat: 6:00PM

Dinner: 6:15PM

Family Services: 7:15PM

Menu: Chili, salad, mac-n-cheese and nuggets. \$5 per person.



Saturday, March 30 at 9:30am

Do you like breakfast tacos? Do you want to learn more about the weekly Torah portion? Then, join us for Tacos and Torah as Rabbi Gross leads us in a lively discussion on the weekly portion! Sign up with Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org.

Mitzvah Projects

Scott and Brett Leben - The Leben Family is donating a Little Free Library to HCRJ in honor of their son's Scott & Brett's B'nai Mitzvot. A Little Free Library is a free book exchange that allows you to take a book, or leave a book to share. Scott and Brett are looking for donations of new or used Jewish themed books, including children's books, adult books, books with Jewish authors and Jewish cook books to help keep the library stocked. Please deliver books to the HCRJ lobby and mark them for the Leben Family.

Eli Bernosky - In honor of my Bar Mitzvah (3/23), I am asking for donations to Houston Pets Alive. I've chosen this nonprofit because their mission is like a safety net for BARC and the Harris County Animal Shelter. I hope you will consider contributing as a way to celebrate with me. Every little bit will help me reach my goal. Visit <https://www.houstonpetsalive.org/donate> to donate directly, or to view a list of items needed that I am collecting in a box at HCRJ's foyer.

HCRJ Family Bingo



For all ages! Prizes for bingo winners!

Sunday, April 7 at 12:00PM

\$8 per person in advance, \$12 at the door

Includes 3 bingo cards for 10 games, pizza and drinks

Register at <http://hcrj.org/event/familybingo2019>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Honors and Memorials Fund

In honor of Sue Sue Aron's birthday and in honor of the birth of Aviana Faith Marino

From **Marvin and Ann Lerner**

In honor of the birthdays of Kenny Friedman, Sue Sue Aron, Dolph Simon, and Lone Moran and the anniversaries of Jack and Barbara Markman and Dolph Simon and Elizabeth Berry

From **Larry and Kaki Buck**

In memory of Morris Lewis III

From **Julia Miller**

In memory of Anne Stephens, Bill Rosenthal, Beth Rosenthal and J.B. Kiefer

From **Sherry Snyder**

In memory of Margaret Veta

From **Sherry Snyder**

In memory of Dr. Herb Fred

From **Marcia and Bill Chaffin**

From **JoAnn and Mikal Innerarity**

In memory of Bertha Mayerhofer

From **Stephen and Lila Shain**

In memory of Hyman and Helen Schwartz

From **Sylvia Brauer**

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In honor of Rabbi Gross and the HCRJ team

From **Marian De Paula**

In memory of Zaiba Zaidi, sister of Waju Syed

From **Susan and David Sheinkopf**

In memory of Dr. Herb Fred

From **Debbie and Stuart Goldman**

General Operating Fund

From **Ted and Maria Johnson**

Oneg Sponsorship

From **Ted and Maria Johnson**

From **Marlene and Allan Zoloto**

Mitzvah Day

In memory of Elsie Moran

From **lone and Sidney Moran**

Sabbath Oneg Sponsorships

A wonderful mitzvah opportunity awaits you!

Celebrate a life cycle event or honor a loved one by sponsoring a Friday Night Oneg (Sabbath reception), a Family Sabbath Dinner or a Religious School Breakfast. These events represent just some of the ways our community gathers in fellowship, and your sponsorship enables us to frame these occasions with additional beauty and joy.

If you wish to sponsor a meal or a Sabbath reception, please contact the temple at least two weeks prior to the event. Thank you for your ongoing support of HCRJ.

- Sabbath Oneg —\$100.00
- Religious School Breakfast—\$100.00
- Family Shabbat Dinner —\$150.00
- Contribution to Arrangements Fund

March Oneg Sponsorships

March 1: Oneg sponsored by the Slosburg family in honor of Esther's baby naming.

March 8: Oneg sponsored by the Levinson family in appreciation of HCRJ's culture of philanthropy.

March 15: Oneg sponsored by Patti and Ed Hurwitz in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary.

March 22: Oneg sponsored by the Bernosky family in honor of Eli's Bar Mitzvah.

March 29: Oneg sponsored by the Leben family in honor of Scott and Brett's B'nai Mitzvah.

Brag and Boast



Mazel Tov to **Shauna and Jacob Siegel** on the birth of their daughter, Lilly. Lilly was born on December 16.



Mazel Tov to **Jacqueline Hecht** who has been named a Fellow for the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Jacqueline was recognized at the 2019 AAAS Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. on February 16.



Mazel Tov to **Eli Bernosky**, son of Missy and Ron, and grandson of Ian and Cyd Baron. Eli will become a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, March 23.



Mazel Tov to **Scott and Brett Leben**, sons of Michelle and Mitch, grandsons of Elaine and Sid, and nephews of Erica and Jason Frankel. Scott and Brett will become a B'nai Mitzvah on Saturday, March 30.



HCRJ's Boomers and Friends group at Tuesdays with Morrie at A.D. Players at The George Theater on Saturday, February 9.



Social Action Spring Break

Join us for two social action projects over Spring Break!
Sign up for these projects with Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org.



Thursday, March 14
9:00AM to 12:00PM

Join us for our Spring Break weekday project at Kids' Meals! The mission of Kids' Meals is to end childhood

hunger by delivering free healthy meals to the doorsteps of Houston's hungriest pre-school-aged children and through collaboration provide their families with resources to help end the cycle of poverty. We will prepare meals in the Kids' Meals kitchen. **For ages 8+!**



Saturday, March 16
9:00AM to 12:00PM

Volunteer with us during the weekend at the Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston aniMeals on Wheels Program! aniMeals on Wheels was founded so that senior recipients of the Meals on Wheels Program would not feel compelled to share their limited food and resources with their four-legged friends. Many Meals on Wheels clients are isolated from their families and friends, and their pets provide them with much-needed companionship, exercise and affection. We will be inventorying the donations, repacking donated pet food for delivery to Meals on Wheels clients and organizing the pet food room. **For all ages!**



Purim Shabbat: Friday, March 22 at 7:15PM

Join us as we celebrate Purim as a congregation! The Sabbath experience will be an evening of joyous celebration. A Purim Band (graciously underwritten by Mike and Kitty Kahn in honor of Mike's 60th birthday) will add energy and exuberance to our holiday observance which will include a megillah reading and hamantashen for all.

Hamantashen Baking Day: Sunday, March 3 at 10:00AM

Meet in the HCRJ kitchen to make delicious hamantashen for our Purim events in March! To sign up for the baking day, please contact Carol Danek at cdanek22@gmail.com. We also need volunteers to make and then freeze dough prior to the baking day. The recipe for the dough will be emailed upon request.

Join us for the **SPRING**

CARS

Coffee & Conversation

Saturday, April 6 from 10 am to 12 noon

Car detailing demo at 11 am

HCRJ Parking Lot

801 Bering, Houston, TX

FREE and open to the entire community! RSVP to Justin@hcrj.org to reserve a spot to show your special car

Cars, Coffee & Conversation is sponsored by:



Join us for the
**3rd Annual
HCRJ Mah Jongg Game Day**
Sunday, April 28
1:30 – 4:30 PM

Food! Fun! Prizes!

Early registration: \$36 (before March 15th)

Regular registration: \$40 (after March 15th)

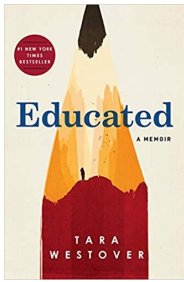
<https://hcrj.org/event/mahjongg>
to register and pay

Players of all levels welcome. You don't have to be a member to participate - please invite all your mah jongg friends to join us!!! We have great raffle prizes this year (like Breakfast Klub and Demeris BBQ gift certificates and a Facial at Origins)!



Bring your favorite dessert item (and the recipe) – HCRJ will compile all the recipes and provide a Bakebook as a gift to you!

Questions: Please contact Debbie Barrash (dibphd@gmail.com) or Justin Deutsch (justin@hcrj.org)



Book Discussion: *Educated*, By Tara Westover

Sunday, March 31, 10:30AM

At our next book discussion we will discuss the memoir, *Educated*, by Tara Westover. This is an unforgettable memoir about a young girl who, kept out of school, leaves her survivalist family and goes on to earn a PhD from Cambridge University.

Born in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college,

Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far or if there was still a way home.

Jay Stailey will lead our book discussion. Jay has been a principal in both low income and highly affluent neighborhoods. His storytelling skills, keen understanding of children and reflection in public schools and how they work makes Jay an expert of education and parenting. *Educated* can be purchased on Amazon. To sign up for the book discussion, please contact Justin at 713-782-4162 or justin@hcrj.org.



The Senior Chai program is dedicated to enriching the lives of those 60 and above. Your input is valuable to us in shaping a calendar of events that meet your interests, so please send any programming ideas to hcrj@hcrj.org. This program is underwritten by the Barg and Shelby families in memory of David & Mozelle Barg and Robert & Esther Shelby. Please RSVP for all Senior Chai programs to Melissa Wolfson at hcrj@hcrj.org.

Purim Lunch and Learn

March 12, 12:15PM to 1:45PM

The YMCA and HCRJ's Senior Chai program will once again be joining together for a hands-on learning experience. Come learn about the Jewish holiday of Purim from Rabbi Gross and then make hamantashen, a jelly filled cookie traditionally eaten on Purim. This program is designed to engage guests of all faiths. Open to the community and no cost to attend.



Yoga Class

Mondays, 10:00AM to 11:15AM, No cost to attend

Taught by Suzy Shapiro, a certified yoga instructor, this class will focus on strength and stamina, balance and flexibility, and a new sense of well-being.



Mah Jongg

Wednesdays, 10:00AM to 12:00PM, No cost to attend

Join us for a weekly game of mah jongg! Coffee and light snacks are served. Instruction provided on request.

60+ Men's Group

March 5 at 12:00, Lunch will be served, no cost to attend

Men 60+ are invited for lunch and conversation as we develop this new program. A significant volume of recent literature has made us aware that close friendships often contribute to a happier more fulfilling life. Led by Jay Schaffer, the hope of this group is to create an environment where men can freely express themselves and close friendships are formed. As in Vegas, our credo will be "*what's said in the men's group, stays in the men's group*"!

Panel Presentation: What Next? Being Prepared for Our Senior Years

Wednesday, March 6 at 10:30AM

Join us in March for a panel discussion to learn how to prepare for the senior years! This discussion is important for children who have senior parents and also seniors who want to learn how to have a plan in place. We will have four speakers discuss various topics followed by a question and answer session and breakout opportunity.



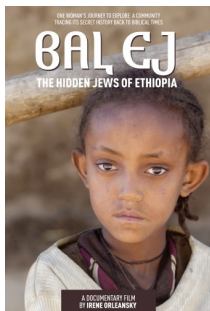
Colored Pencils

Wednesdays, March 6—April 10, 1:00PM to 3:00PM

Art Teacher, Noelle Shawa, will be teaching a 6-week drawing course starting on Wednesday, March 6. Explore and enjoy the many possibilities of colored pencils. Learn shading, shaping and creating realistic drawings with this diverse and exciting medium. No experience required. Please RSVP to Melissa at melissa@hcrj.org.



We are thinking about establishing a bridge group at HCRJ. If you are interested, please contact Melissa at melissa@hcrj.org.



Film Screening: *Bal Ej: The Hidden Jews of Ethiopia*

Sunday, April 14 at 2:00PM

Join us for our April film screening at HCRJ! Following a hundred-year-old account of the prominent Jewish Polish scholar Jacque Faitlovich, the film-maker travels to discover and explore a sect of secret Jews in Ethiopia. Named Bal Ej, craftsmen, for their artisan skills, they have been persecuted by their Orthodox Christian neighbors who slandered them as evil-eyed and hyena-people and have been deprived of the basic rights such as ownership of land, the reason for adopting crafts such as pottery, weaving and iron smithery. Fearing persecutions, they appear Christians outwardly, and practice Judaism in strict secrecy. The synagogues are hidden deep in the mountains and had never before been visited by strangers. Some of their ancient traditions trace back to biblical times and have been completely forgotten by the rest of the world. *Bal Ej: The Hidden Jews of Ethiopia* lifts the curtains of hundreds of years and reveals the history, customs and culture of this remarkable community to the world.

Following the screening, the film's director, Irene Orleansky, will join us live from Israel via Skype. Born in Ukraine in a family of holocaust survivors from Poland and grown up in Russia, Irene is an Israeli musician, producer, ethnographer and film maker. Irene dedicated the last few years to exploring culture, music and traditions of remote Jewish communities in Asia and Africa.

Refreshments will be provided. RSVP to Justin at 713-782-4162 or Justin@hcrj.org.



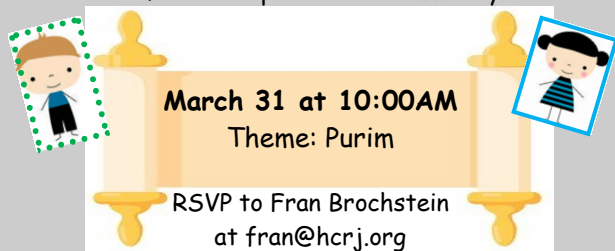
HCRJ Passover Seder Friday, April 19 at 6:00PM

HCRJ's annual first night Passover Seder is planned for Friday, April 19. The Seder is open to HCRJ members and their families. Please register early to ensure your spot. Space is limited.

Reservations and payment can be made online at <http://hcrj.org/event/hcrjpassoverseder/>

Torah Tots

Have a tot 18 months - 4 years old? Parents and tots are invited to join in to learn about the Jewish holidays through stories, songs, movement, crafts, community and so much more! This monthly program is free and open to the community.



Bark Mitzvah 2019 @ Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism

Sunday, March 24th, 11:30 a.m.
801 Bering Dr., Houston 77057

Free and Open to the Community

Dog Chew toy giveaway (if registered by March 14)
Pet Vendors: groomers, trainers, specialty treat shops, pet adoptions, vets and more!
Food Trucks: pizza, burgers, hot dogs, grilled cheese, Italian ice, drinks & more to purchase
Bark Mitzvah Service led by Rabbi Steve Gross at 12:30pm
Celebrate Purim! All dogs dressed in costume get special Purim treats
Music with DJ EZ BAR MITZVAHS



All pets must be on leashes please!

Canine RSVPs requested to Justin at 713-782-4162 or justin@hcrj.org

Bark Mitzvah 2019 sponsors: Mark Kariel & Al Risher, Meilinda Neumann, & Jim Rosenschall

BIRTHDAYS

3/2 Amber Hoffman
3/3 Alan Brochstein
3/5 Cathy Dante
3/5 Linda Schaeffer
3/6 Joan Levy
3/7 Lee Herman
3/8 Debbie Goldman
3/8 Edward Hurwitz
3/8 Stephen Shain
3/8 Brett Zamore
3/9 Fran C. Brochstein
3/9 Ellen Shohet
3/11 JoAnn Innerarity
3/12 Lance Kassab
3/13 Harriette Bearden
3/14 Hannah Melcer
3/15 Ruth Schlanger
3/15 Malorie Barbee
3/16 Cheryl Fielkow
3/16 Steven Hecht
3/18 Doris Bernard
3/18 Erica Frankel
3/19 Robert Lait
3/20 Jason Kariel
3/20 Susan Brochstein
3/20 Norman Loewenstern
3/20 Susan Rachlin
3/21 Michael Kahn
3/22 Carol Danek
3/22 Edward Schreiber
3/24 Michael Lawch
3/25 Linnea Kob
3/25 Michael Le Burkien
3/23 Ryan O'Malley
3/23 Gayle Tonn
3/24 Lori Farris
3/25 Elliott Polunsky
3/25 Ted Wedel
3/26 Ken Cohen
3/26 Sarah Percy
3/27 Michelle Renfrow
3/27 Scott Wenderfer
3/28 Moise Levy
3/28 Donna Siegel
3/29 Laura Frank
3/30 Erika Frankfort
3/30 Ellen Slosburg
3/31 Gary Muslin

KIDS' BIRTHDAYS

3/1 Kyra Rubinstein
3/1 Jake Shaper
3/2 Sloane Andrews
3/4 Camille Andrews
3/3 Dylan Alexander
3/7 Elijah Mogil
3/7 Eli Zamore
3/8 Esther Slosburg
3/9 Max Mills
3/10 Olivia Frankfort
3/10 Alex Frankfort
3/11 Gavin Greenberg
3/12 Alex Renfrow
3/12 Max Kariel
3/18 Trudy Jacobs
3/18 Harrison Rosenthal
3/19 Ella Shaw
3/20 Jacob Cosgrove
3/20 Dylan Kamin
3/21 Brooke Appelbaum
3/22 Scott Hurwitz
3/22 Lilly Sline
3/23 Cooper Braverman
3/23 Isabel Perkins
3/23 Amy Shohet
3/27 Eleanor Spain
3/30 Layla Salomon

ANNIVERSARIES

3/3 Marc & Betsy Levinson
3/5 Lance & Carol Kassab
3/10 Mike & Lauren Eagle
3/10 Roy & Lisa Sheinbaum
3/11 Jonathan & Sara Wilson
3/16 Ed & Patti Hurwitz
3/17 Mark & Newie Brinker
3/20 Mark & Laura Rosenfield
3/22 Norman & Andrea Steel
3/24 Efisio & Lori Farris
3/25 Alex & Victoria Lazar
3/27 Joshua & Melissa Tabin
3/30 Richard & Melissa Hudson
3/30 Chad & Anat Shaw

YARZEITS

3/1 Carl Herman
3/1 Mary Malloy
3/1 Ruth Rosen
3/1 Fred Soifer
3/2 Roslyn Elterman
3/2 William Plotkin
3/4 Morris Butkin
3/3 Ruth Klaus
3/5 Don Rosenfield
3/6 Raymond Smith
3/7 Deedie Butler
3/7 Jerry Robinson
3/7 Steve Wisoker
3/8 Sara Toubin
3/8 Jerry Kamin
3/10 Mittie Tartakov
3/11 Eva Gordon
3/11 Mildred Kantor
3/11 Rica Penn
3/14 Ida Brody
3/14 Edward Glantz
3/15 Tessa Naden
3/16 Michael Chaikind
3/19 Kenneth Berretta
3/20 Jimmy Deutser
3/21 James Blinkoff
3/21 Samuel Meyrowitz
3/22 Lonnie Frankel
3/22 Israel Helfgott
3/22 Salome Krinsky
3/22 Celma Rosborough
3/24 Evelyn Klitzner
3/26 Sam Brochstein
3/26 Pam Butler
3/26 Ronald Turk
3/28 Hyman Hurwitz
3/28 Aaron Rose
3/29 Martin Debrovner
3/29 Jean Utay
3/29 Samuel Kent
3/30 Larry Pfeffer
3/30 Bob Lipshutz
3/31 Margaret Rosenthal
3/31 Renay Polk

You are invited to join HCRJ
for our monthly



March 1, 2019
Dinner 6:15 pm
Sabbath Services 7:15 pm

\$5.00 per person

Please feel free to bring a side dish to show off your culinary talents.

March Family Shabbat Menu

Chili, salad, mac-n-cheese
and chicken nuggets

Steven M. Gross, Senior Rabbi
rabbigross@hcrj.org

Michael P. LeBurkien, Rabbi Emeritus
rabbileburkien@sbcglobal.net (private email)

Melissa Wolfson, Executive Director
hcrj@hcrj.org

Fran C. Brochstein, Interim Director of Education
fran@hcrj.org

Michael Mason, Director of Lifelong Learning
mike@hcrj.org

Justin Deutsch, Program Coordinator
admin@hcrj.org

Michelle Renfrow, Director of Youth Engagement
hcrjyouth@hcrj.org

Marna Meyer, High School Principal
marna@hcrj.org

Adam Weinstein, President

Adam Forman, Vice President

Jaime Perkins, Secretary

Debbie Barrash, Treasurer

Bruce Shelby, Past President

Rochelle Sinderbrand, Bookkeeper
rochelles@hcrj.org

Jaime Perkins, Membership Chair

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Website: www.HCRJ.org

Newsletter articles, suggestions for articles and corrections are welcome. Deadline for submission is the 15th of the month.