

CONNECTIONS

Mayor Sue Bauman honored JSS friend and tireless volunteer Abe Landsman, 88, as the city's most senior employee.

Abe Landsman

"Ability is Ageless"

BY STACY SCHIFF, M.A., JSS Volunteer Coordinator

Our buttons were popping. During National Older Americans Week in May, Mayor Sue Bauman recognized one of our own, Abe Landsman, as the most senior employee of the City of Madison for his job at the downtown Senior Center. We at Jewish Social Services were so pleased. We had already decided to highlight Abe in *Connections* for his countless hours of valuable volunteer work with us, which he does modestly and quietly. (When asked to be interviewed for this article, he smiled at the ground and said that he doesn't do anything we'd want to write about.)

A native New Yorker, Abe, now 88, worked as a production manager in the garment industry for many years and retired in 1979. Always a hard worker, he served in the United States Army for three and a half years during WWII in a bridge construction unit that took him through France, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Abe and his late wife Gloria had two children – Marcia, still in New York, and Howard, whose family he joined here in Madison.

Moving to a new location can be difficult for a retiree. However, Abe jumped right into community service, and not with a sparse schedule, either. Besides his work at the Senior Center and in other agencies, at JSS Abe serves on the Senior Adult Committee, volunteers at the Lechayim Mealtime Plus program each week, and was a member of the JSS Board. He also spends up to eight hours per week at the JSS office doing clerical work for the staff. While this alone is impressive, perhaps even more important is the support Abe gives his cohorts. He's often the first to tell others of a friend's illness, to encourage them to visit those who are ill or alone, and to show friendship with kind deeds – *g'milut hasidim*.

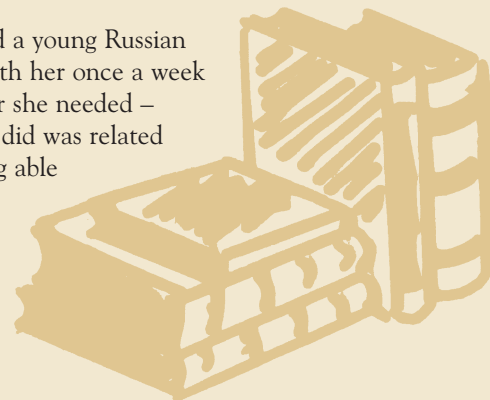
Abe, athletic and fit, continues, in New York style, to walk almost every place he goes, rain or shine. He watches his nutrition and even suggested a Lechayim program on the benefits of soy.

Mayor Sue Bauman said of Abe that he "demonstrates that aging is not a barrier to a person's commitment to the community and he embodies the idea that ability is ageless." We agree. Abe teaches us all by example that selfless dedication to others brings longevity.

More Retirement Rewards

As a JSS volunteer, retired teacher Helen Klibaner tutored a young Russian girl from fourth grade through middle school. "I'd meet with her once a week at her school, for an hour or so, helping her with whatever she needed – math, English or spelling," said Helen. "Mostly the work I did was related to academics, but she also definitely grew in terms of being able to relate to other kids and make friends. That was very gratifying. I don't have any grandchildren, and for me it was just a nice thing to be with a child every week."

If you, too, are retired and have some time to volunteer, call Stacy at JSS, 278-1808.



inside

Leaps of Faith 2

Campus Donor Connection 2

Tribute Donors 3-4

Friends of JSS 4

Russian Corner 5

Hand in Hand Success 6

A Loving Bond Helps Dance Artists Discover Leaps of Faith

Francie says, "I didn't know who they were except this adorable young couple in pain." Doug says, "She was our angel, and she taught me how to pray." Each talks of their meeting as if it were a mystical connection meant to be.

The couple is Li Chiao-Ping, the international modern dancer-choreographer, and Douglas Rosenberg, noted visual artist-filmmaker, both UW-Madison faculty. In January 1999 they survived an automobile crash which threatened Chiao-Ping's life and her ability to ever dance again. Nine surgeries and excruciating rehab later, she did. The near-death experience and its aftermath is recounted in their project, "Venous

Flow: States of Grace," in which they refer to the bond they developed with Francie Smith Saposnik of Jewish Social Services.

Doug recalls that first night at UW Hospital's ICU: "The door opens and this guy comes in and I thought he was a priest – he was the hospital chaplain." Doug accepted his prayers, but added, "well, you know, frankly, I'm Jewish." Since the couple had no congregation, the chaplain called Francie, who just happened to be in her office and ran to their bedside.

Doug muses, "When she came in she looked so familiar to me." Francie shepherded him to a private exam room and held his hand while he sobbed. He said he needed to pray, though he never had before. So they did.

At his request, the next day Francie returned with a transliterated *Mi Shebeirach* prayer, which they all said together every day for the next six weeks of the hospital stay. Fridays she would bring challah. "Early on they expressed a strong desire to implement any kind of force possible for healing," Francie

says. Doug identifies himself as "spiritually Jewish." Chiao-Ping was raised Taoist in a family of Chinese immigrants, but also attended Christian Sunday school as a child.

Music was curative, too. On one of Francie's visits, she saw Chiao-Ping sitting up in bed, her upper body dancing gracefully. When a cousin sent them the Debbie Friedman *Mi Shebeirach*, that became part of the daily ritual and they sang it before each of Chiao-Ping's subsequent surgeries.

Francie witnessed healing through visualization. "Chiao-Ping told me she visualized herself and Doug standing in a field underneath a Chinese red silk *huppah* (canopy) rustling in the wind."

That materialized about a year later. JSS was able to refer them to Rabbi Brian Field from Shaarei Shamayim, who helped them work out a unique wedding honoring each other's cultures.

In the U.S., fully 1/3 of all Jewish households are intermarried, and more than half of all children born to a Jew live in interfaith families, according to a report by the Jewish Outreach Institute (www.joi.org). Most Jews raise their children with some Jewish heritage. In fact, Doug and Chiao-Ping describe their son's *bris* (circumcision) as "a leap of faith."

When JSS staff is approached by interfaith couples we provide a place to talk as well as offer links to the Jewish community. Doug is touchingly grateful. "It became clear we were part of . . . a Jewish community that is really strong. I never experienced that before."



Photo by Jay Daniel

*"Bless those in need of healing
With r'fua shleima
The renewal of body,
The renewal of spirit."*

— From *Mi Shebeirach*,
Deborah Lynn Freidman (ASCAP)

DONOR CONNECTION

Big Mitzvot on Campus

Thanks in part to funding by the Kibbutz Langdon Foundation, JSS Volunteer Coordinator Stacy Schiff directs 27 University of Wisconsin student volunteers helping the elderly, adolescents and Russian émigrés. The foundation was created from the sale of the Kibbutz, a Jewish cultural co-op from 1971-1984, which housed about thirty students. We talked to Sam Norich, a founder of Kibbutz Langdon, who is now general manager of the publishing firm for the Yiddish, English and Russian *Forward* newspapers.

What were the Kibbutz's activities?

When there were important international events in Israel and elsewhere we took a leading role to reacting to them on campus. When Israel was invaded in October '73 – the Yom Kippur War – we organized students in support of the State of Israel.

How did you finance the property?

(After initially collecting membership fees and a down payment loan) in the third year leaders of the Jewish community gave us

private donations out of their own pockets. I guess the house had proven itself in their eyes as not just a hippie hangout but a Jewish center on campus.

How was the Foundation started?

We had written a charter which required that if and when the kibbutz ever closed the accumulated assets would be used for some public good. So (we) proposed that we should establish a foundation that would make grants on an ongoing basis.

JSS Offers A Sincere

Thank You

for Your Tribute Gifts

The following contributions were made between March 8, 2002 and May 14, 2002

IN HONOR OF

Sue & Hal Blotner's 50th anniversary
Sanford Diamond

Thanks to Blotners, for hospitality
Irving Shapiro

Jane Brotman Austin's birthday
Barbara Spierer

Anne Dinsmore
Phil Shallat

Janice Fiksel
Iosif and Inna Verbnyy

Best wishes, Bob Fox
Frances Weinstein

Bonnie Kammer
Robert and Sandy Schwartz

Helen Kaplan
Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Leah Kessel's birthday
Barbara Spierer

Sharon Kessel's birthday
Barbara Spierer

Beatrice Kosowsky
Mark Kosowsky

Janet Kramer's birthday
Irving Shapiro

Marc & Diane Krasnick's anniversary
Therma Princer
Robert and Sandy Schwartz

Art Kravat's 95th birthday
Paul and Sherry Minkus
Joseph and Glenna Shutkin

*Abe Landsman being honored by the City of
Madison*
Barbara Spierer

Gerda Lerner
John Tortorice

Ruth Levey's special birthday
Lorelei Wexler

Susan Lipp's birthday
Roberta and James Lazarz

For speedy recovery of Dan Pierotti
Betsy and Bezalel Haimson
Lowell and Julie Lakritz

Robert and Sandy Schwartz
Barbara Spierer

Birth of Eliana Pierotti
Murray and Susan Katcher

Barbara Roth and Larry Shapiro wedding

Robert and Lynn Berman
Ghita Bessman

Russell and Ruth Frank
William and Claudia Haus

Mark and Ilene Laufman
Harvey and Rona Malofsky

Therma Princer

Miriam Robinson

Barbara Spierer
Gerald and Vicki Stewart
Frances Weinstein

*Birth of Karen & Harry Roth's grandson,
Adam*

Lowell and Julie Lakritz

B'nai Mitzvot of Dinah and Erin Rotter
Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Roy & Muriel Rotter's 50th anniversary
Alan and Harriet Hyman

For speedy recovery of Roy Rotter
Seymour and Ruth Levey
Harvey and Rona Malofsky
Barbara Spierer
James and Nancy Youngerman

Francie & Irv Saposnik's 40th anniversary
Annabelle Argand
Denny and Gary Geller

Stanley H. Langer
Robert and Sandy Schwartz
Barbara Spierer
Clara Sweet

Carol Schaber
Marilyn Graves

Bob Silvers
Kenneth Opin and Jan Silvers

In appreciation of Barbara Spierer's support
Nachman Sharon

David Vexler, college graduation
Sylvia Sugerman

IN MEMORY OF

Jonathan Aked
Lillian A. Yatvin

Livia Bergen
Dorit Bergen

Philip Bernstein & Leonora G. Bernstein
Mark Bernstein and Tracy Honn

Shirley G. Epstein
Leon Epstein

Erving Haber
Michael and Sue Baumblatt
Betsy and Bezalel Haimson
Heinz Hoffman
Kay Jarvis-Sladky

Bernard Howards
Gary Howards

Ben Koppelberg
Gerald and Vicki Stewart

How Tributes Help

We appreciate when you honor and remember others with a gift to JSS. Gifts that are unrestricted in nature allow JSS to use them where the greatest needs exist.

Every donation means a great deal to us. We have made every effort to make sure our thank you lists are accurate and complete, but if we have inadvertently neglected to list your name, please let us know. Call Sherry Minkus, 278-1808. Thank you.

Thank You for Your Tribute Gifts *(continued)*

<i>Mollie Laitman</i> David Rhoda Berman Betsy and Bezalel Haimson Dale Thieben	Ralph and Charlotte Musin Therma Princer Mitchell and Sharon Rapkin Joan M. Riggs Barbara Spierer Steven Morrison and Goldie Kadushin	<i>Norman Perelman</i> Beth Perelman
<i>Manucher Javid</i> Marilyn Graves Mark Bernstein and Tracy Honn Smith & Gesteland LLP Steve Skalet Thomas and Lynn Ansfield Verlyn Edseth Rachelle Richardson	<i>Meiqing Levin's mother</i> Irene Messnick	<i>Mabel Pizer</i> Betsy and Bezalel Haimson
<i>Ida Lakirtz</i> Michael and Sue Baumblatt Natalie Borenstein Barbara Daane Alfred and Lois Frank Jacki and Milt Friend Betsy and Bezalel Haimson Kay Jarvis-Sladky June Klein Irwin and Helen Klibaner Roslyn Kopelberg Merilyn and Joel Kupferberg Lawrence and Jean Landweber Roberta and James Lazarz Roz Levin Harvey and Rona Malofsky	<i>Sol Levin</i> Robert and Lynn Berman Norman Bernstein Frances Bicknell Thomas Palay and Diane Gutmann Barbara Himes Bettine and Daniel Lipman Charlotte Martin Irene Messnick Edward Schten Gerald and Vicki Stewart	<i>Benjamin Schubert</i> Annette Howards <i>Betty Schubert</i> Gary Howards <i>Nadine Shapiro</i> Irving Shapiro <i>Saul M. Smoloff</i> Leona Smoloff <i>Robert Sondel</i> Lawrence and Jean Landweber <i>Rabbi Manfred Swarsensky</i> Arnold and Verjel Beiler <i>Arthur Sweet</i> Lawrence and Jessica Sweet <i>Sam Sweet</i> Bertha Sweet <i>Sally Walzer</i> Lewis and Judith Leavitt <i>Arvin Weinstein</i> Freya Grand
	<i>Charles Lipstein</i> June Klein <i>Edie Newman</i> Beverly Bassin <i>Bess Paskin</i> Natalie Borenstein June Klein	

Thank You to Friends of JSS

The following contributions were made between March 1, 2001 and February 28, 2002.

We apologize for having mistakenly omitted these names from our previous listing.

Epic Systems Corporation	Joshua Feierman	Esther Kaplan	Rachelle Richardson
Mildred Kayes Survivors Trust	Fadey Feyman	Gennady and Svetlana Karlyuk	Harry and Nina Rosefelt
Alexander and Bella Alexandrov	Judy and Daniel Frankel	Natalya Kolesnik	Victor Rosenberg Estate
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Jack Bernfeld	Max Gratch	Harold and Beatrice Levine	Lynn Silverman and David Hansen
Leonora Bernstein	Marilyn Graves	Nadiya Lisogor	Elinor and Jerome Stotsky
Nikolay and Sheyla Bodnikevich	Nataliya and William Grimm	Myra Marantz	Anne Sweet
Lonna and Joel Brooks	Julius Grunes	Susan Minkus	Roger C. Sweet
Vladimir and Tatyana Budker	UW Department of History of Science	Ada M. Mitchell	Liya Tsinovaya
Eva Deutschkron	Robert and Charlotte Hodes	Sylvia and Henry Naiman	Iosif and Inna Verbnyy
Cherie and Ronald Diamond	Deborah Kades	Allan H. Nelson	Nadya Vinokur
Natalya Dobrorez	Ben Kadis	Judith Nelson-Stern	Earl Wajdyk
Margarita and Anatoliy Dvoskin	Dori Kalish	Angela Paratore	Joel and Mathilda A. M. Weinstein
Vivian Edelman	Dora Kaplan	Mary Phelps	Richard Wesenberg
Leon Epstein		Belle Radwin	Felix and Ina Yoffe
Solomon Eydelman and Iskra Leybina		Robert Radwin and Pamela Potter	Helen Zawacki

A Sweet Story

This is about a marriage between a candy company and JSS. Jeff Peterson, owner of River City Vending and Coffee, was at the wedding of a friend whose husband-to-be was the son of one of the first couples to be resettled by JSS in the 1970s. When a friend of the family asked him, "can you use people who don't speak English very well?" the answer got him thinking.

Since 1995, Jeff has hired eleven resettled émigrés to stock "honor system" snack trays at his Monona business. It's a way they can learn English and American culture while earning a modest living. An émigré works among locals in a five-member team from 6:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. five days a week to stock 1200 trays with candy bars, chips and other snacks for offices within a 60-mile radius.

The first day Janice Fiksel, JSS Re-settlement Coordinator, comes along to interpret and is always available during training, but for the most part the other employees help the newcomer along. Jeff comments, "Our people all have fond memories of those who worked here because they respect their work ethic, and they have a good sense of humor."



Jeff understands this isn't a "real job" for the émigrés, whose only deficit is in language. "All the immigrants we've had are highly dependable and eager to work and they are intelligent. Unfortunately everyone's been overqualified – chemical engineers, civil engineers – very smart, very quick learners." After about a year, they've acquired enough English to move on.

One person who entered the company as a professional, however, is Svetlana Yegorova, whose voice answers the phone at River City. She used to be a financial analyst in St. Petersburg, and was hired as Jeff's bookkeeper.



JSS thinks the world of Jeff's commitment to and respect for the new Americans. It's indeed a marriage made in heaven. If you know of a company with similar interests, please contact Janice Fiksel at 278-1808.

Business owner Jeff Peterson loves to work with Russian émigrés like his bookkeeper Svetlana Yegorova.

Did you know...?

■ JSS is a member of the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies (AJFCA), a network of over 145 Jewish Family Service and other specialized Jewish human service agencies throughout the United States and Canada. JSS Board President Stefanie Kohn and Barbara Spierer, Associate Executive Director, recently returned from this year's AJFCA national conference in San Antonio.

■ This year's poignant and timely theme was *Restoring the Hope* and included workshops and plenary sessions on Refugee Resettlement after 9/11, Trauma and Family Life, Healing from Trauma and Largescale Community Crisis Role of JFS. More traditional issues covered were Jews and Disabilities, Addressing the Needs of the Homebound and a program on eating disorders called Eating Feelings. Special sessions for board presidents and presidents-elect included Building Your Board from the Ground Up and Harnessing Passion and Supporting Change in our Boards. (www.ajfca.org)

Русский уголок «Сладкая» история

Эта история о браке между кондитерской фирмой и ЕСС. Джефф Петерсон, владелец River City Vending and Coffee, был на свадьбе подруги, чей будущий муж был сыном эмигрантов, - одних из первых, поселенных ЕС Службой в 70-х годах. Друг семьи спросил его, может ли он дать работу людям, которые плохо говорят по-английски. Вопрос заставил его задуматься.

С 1995 года Джефф нанял 11 эмигрантов. Для них работа в фирме это не только зарплата, но и возможность учить английский и познакомиться с американской культурой. Эмигранты и коренные жители работают вместе в команде из пяти человек с 6:30 до 12:30 пять дней в неделю, наполняя конфетами, чипсами и т.д. 1200 подносов для офисов в радиусе 60 миль.

В первые дни работы Дженис Фиксель (координатор ЕСС) помогает ввести в курс дела, но и работники Ривер Сити всегда готовы помочь новенькому. «У всех нас сохранились приятные воспоминания о тех, кто работал здесь, потому что они относились к работе с уважением и имели хорошее чувство юмора», комментирует Джефф.

Джефф понимает, что для людей, единственный недостаток которых язык, это не «настоящая работа». «Все иммигранты, работавшие на нас, люди, на которых можно положиться, умные и усердные работники. Все они хорошо образованы (химики, инженеры и т.д.), схватывают на лету. В течение года их английский уже позволял получить более квалифицированную работу.

Исключение – Светлана Егорова, чей голос отвечает на звонки в Ривер Сити. В Санкт-Петербурге она работала финансовым аналитиком, а здесь стала бухгалтером.

ЕСС благодарна Джеффу за его уважение к новоиспеченным американцам. Вот это и называется «браком, заключенным на небесах».



Applause for Hand in Hand Ventures

Hand in Hand is pleased to announce the successful completion of three programs.

Madison's first Jewish Healing Service, held on April 21 at Gates of Heaven Synagogue, brought together a wonderful mixture of people – from the elderly to teenagers, and those whose Jewishness spans the spectrum of our community. Bruce Freeman and Lynette Margulies inspired opportunities for the participants to give each other strength and comfort. Gathering together under an outspread tallis was a warm, intimate and moving ending to the hour-long service. The next Jewish Healing Service is

scheduled for Sunday, October 6, at Gates of Heaven.

An enthusiastic group of kind men and women attended our *Bikur Cholim* training on April 28. They will now take their hearts and skills to homebound, ill or isolated people. If you missed the training, there are still ways to learn and join. Just call Stacy Schiff, 278-1808, Ext. 26 (stacyjss@mjcc.net).

The loss of a loved one affects us all at some point in our lives. The need for our seven-week Bereavement Support Groups appears apparent, since those beginning on both April 10 and June 19 filled quickly. They are led by JSS Group Work Coordinator

Lauren Meyers, 278-1808, Ext. 27 (laurenjss@mjcc.net), and HospiceCare counselor Maria Hansen.

JSS is grateful to Joe and Jeanne Silverberg and an anonymous donor for funding these and other Hand in Hand Programs. Please call 278-1808 to find out other funding opportunities.

A 700-Pound Harvest

A windfall of food. That's what our conference room was full of after Passover this year. Both Kohl's Foods and Sentry of Hilldale donated their post-Passover stock to Jewish Social Services this year – 700 pounds' worth. We're in a position to know families who could really use some help putting food on their tables. What we can't use, we're passing along to Second Harvest for those in the greater Madison community. The donated food – from pancake mix to salad dressing, and lots and lots of matzoh – will be going to many households thanks to the generosity of these caring merchants. Thank you!

Jewish Social Services of Madison
6434 Enterprise Lane
Madison, WI 53719-1117

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Jewish Social Services of Madison Connections

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