



You Are Doing a Mitzvah!



By Dawn Berney, Executive Director



JSS staff know the impact we have on the lives of our clients, volunteers, and even our donors.

Our readers rarely get to see the good we do up close, because we must protect the confidentiality of our clients. But many clients, volunteers, and donors want the wider community to know how we change lives here. And we are

using this issue to give them an opportunity to tell you.

I hope you see that by supporting JSS in whatever way you choose, you are doing a mitzvah (a good deed). Whether you reach out for our assistance, attend our events, offer your time as a volunteer, or donate goods, services, or funds, you allow us to fulfill our mission. As you read the stories and look at the faces in the following

pages and reflect on this season of thanksgiving and miracles, consider the good deeds you are performing right here for your community by supporting JSS.

"Acts of kindness never die. They linger in the memory, giving life to other acts in return." Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l.



(Another) Blessing to the Jewish Community

JSS honors Tim and Kathy Mazur for taking the mitzvah of tzedakah (creating justice in the world through charitable giving) so seriously. For the past two years they have generously funded JSS's chaplaincy program. Their support demonstrates the power of charitable giving on people's lives. The Mazurs enable JSS to care for the spiritual needs of unaffiliated Jews in our community at this very difficult

time in history. And they provide so much more than financial support! They are active participants in growing the program, from sponsoring Rabbi Eric Weiss' inspiring talk last fall, to helping us launch our new pen pal program by donating notecards featuring one of Kathy's beautiful paintings. Their generosity and vision bless us and our community.

Tribute Donations

JULY-OCTOBER, 2020



Tribute Gifts

A tribute gift is a meaningful way to convey sympathy to the bereaved, memorialize a loved one, commemorate a special occasion, or honor a person's life and accomplishments.

Your gift to Jewish Social Services made in honor or memory of this special person ensures a legacy that extends far into the future. To make a Tribute gift, please visit our website at jssmadison.org or call 608-442-4081.

In Memory of Harriet Amsterdam
Sara Berg

In Honor of Frederic and Trude Arm
Benjamin Arm

In Honor of Richard (z"l) and Elizabeth Askey
Benjamin Arm

In Honor of Rabbi Renée Bauer
Dr. Robert Bauer and Rosylind Bauer
Joseph and Carol Chulew
Dr. Roseanne Clark
Felyce Gilford
Lynn Lederman
Dr. Erica R. Serlin

In Memory of Ghita Hill Bessman
Dr. Marcus Cohen and Sheila Cohen
Louise Goldstein and
Bruce Thomadsen

In Honor of Paul Borowsky
Eve-Lynn Siegel

In Honor of Ari Jacob Censky
Marianne Rosen

In Memory of Iva Cohen
Marc Shovers and Jan Loeb

In Memory of Alice Fenyo
Dr. Marcus Cohen and Sheila Cohen

In Honor of Thomas and Jeanne Foss
Benjamin Arm

In Memory of Lois Frank
Barry Mirkin and Dr. Irene Mirkin

In Memory of Lottie Frank
Jerri McCallum-Schwartz and
Robert D. Schwartz

In Memory of Ralph D. Gants, brother of Fred Gants
Rabbi Paula Winnig

In Memory of Ruth Bader Ginsburg
Jack Sherman

In Memory of Jeff Golden
Kathleen N. Nichols

In Honor of Toony Goldenholz
Haya and Moshe Yuchtman

In Memory of Herman Goldstein
Kendall and Mary Rouse

In Honor of Izzy Liam Goldstein
Livia S. Asher
Brad Goldstein and Rachel Rosenfeld

In Memory of Kaete Granick
Barbara L. Granick

In Memory of Florence Grossberg
Dawn Berney and Ed Angelina
Steven Koslov and Mary Fulton
Louise Goldstein and
Bruce Thomadsen
Jim Mackman
Karen Pollak
Elaine R. Rosenblatt
David J. Schwartz
Eve-Lynn Siegel
Bill and Bunny Spitz
Robert Van Der Leest
Rabbi Paula Winnig

In Memory of Dolores Colen Gruen
Dr. Michael Ostrov and
Dr. Karen Ostrov

In Honor of Betsy Haimson
Judith Herstand

In Memory of Edgar R. Holmes
Barry Mirkin and Dr. Irene Mirkin

In Honor of JSS Staff, For All the Good Work You Do
Marjorie Aiello
Maya Garbuz
David Goldenberg

In Honor of Dawn Berney, and Wonderful JSS Staff & Volunteers!
William and Corliss Karasov

In Memory of Yakov Kaplan
Bela I. Elkin

In Memory of Iver and Molly Karp
Norma Klagos

In Memory of Erin Karp
Norma Klagos

In Honor of Seymour Katchkey
Anonymous

In Memory of Judith Klehr
Louise Goldstein and
Bruce Thomadsen

In Memory of Sheldon Klein
Carol Klein

In Memory of Julia Lakritz
Amy Lakritz

In Memory of Loris (Lou) Levy
Andrea H. Levy

In Honor of Jim Mackman
Eve-Lynn Siegel

In Honor of Tim and Kathy Mazur's Anniversary
Eve-Lynn Siegel

In Honor of the New Grandson of Sue Milch & Wilt Saunders
Louise Goldstein and
Bruce Thomadsen

In Memory of Betty Sommerfeld Miner
Merle and Patti Sweet

In Memory of Marshall Mitzman
Rabbi Irvin and Vivian Ehrlich

In Memory of Robert Pantoga
Donna A. Friedsam

In Honor of Nancy Resnick
Dr. Marcus Cohen and Sheila Cohen

In Honor of Ralph Rice
Yael and Eric A. Lund

In Memory of Matilda Ripley
Louise Goldstein and
Bruce Thomadsen

In Memory of Reine Rothblatt
Cheryl Lerner

In Honor of Francie Saposnik
Joseph and Carol Chulew

In Memory of Naomi Siegel
Daniel and Bettine J. Lipman
David J. Schwartz
Eve-Lynn Siegel

In Honor of Bill and Bunny Spitz' 60th Anniversary
Dr. Marcus Cohen and Sheila Cohen

In Memory of Meyer and Beatrice Sweet
Merle and Patti Sweet

In Memory of Ruth Tsotsis
Rachel Reed

In Memory of Mindy Wiseman
Alene Wiseman

In Honor of the Marriage of Ben Wolf and Kate Snyder
Dr. Jeffrey Kushner

In Honor of Nan and Jim Youngerman
Daniel and Bettine J. Lipman

In Memory of Betty Zechman
Linda S. Barrett
William and Bunny Spitz



JSS 2020-2021 Board of Directors

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Volunteering Updates



Denny Geller, Debbie Spear, and JSS Volunteer Engagement Coordinator Paul Borowsky, prepare menorahs for delivery in 2019.

Our current volunteers help in many socially-distanced ways. Through phone calls to program participants, gift baskets for Rosh Hashanah and Hanukkah, and online and written correspondence, we are working to all stay connected during an ever-evolving situation. We will continue to reach out to program participants, clients, and volunteers

to develop safe ways to keep in touch. We invite you to share your ideas and experiences as we work to find ways to provide support throughout the community safely.

Have an idea, a suggested topic, or presenter? Questions or suggestions for volunteering? I look forward to hearing from you: paul@jssmadison.org or 608-442-4083.

★ *Jewish Social Services Extends a Sincere Apology to Some 2019 Contributors*

In the Summer 2020 issue of *Connections*, we accidentally omitted some of the generous donors who supported JSS during 2019. We extend our deepest apologies. Without ALL of our donors, JSS could not provide valuable services to our community.

Harriet (z"l) & Michael (z"l) Amsterdam
Beth Israel Center
Lawrence Dahl
Bernie & Lenora Goldstein
Herman Goldstein (z"l)

Steven Goldstein & Laura Heisler
Islamic Relief USA
Steven Levine (z"l)
Rona Malofsky (z"l)
Joel & Deborah Minkoff

Pearl Nathanson
Carol Ottenstein & Ronald Sklansky
Muriel Rotter
Sol Zaichick

Maskerade Parade with JSS Staff

JSS staff in costume greet visitors for our safe drive-by fall celebration on October 28. See if you can recognize staff in their various creative costumes!



JSS Changes Lives!



FAMILY



“ Maya Garbuz has provided our family with invaluable assistance in the process of adapting in a new country. ”

We would like to express our deep gratitude from our entire family – new immigrants – to JSS case manager Maya Garbuz!



MARINA



“ Personally for me, a lonely woman with hearing impairment, JSS has been like a caring mother. ”



LINDA



“ In 2020 JSS provided assistance for me and my family to get stable housing. I want to say a big ‘thank you’ to Jewish Social Services for the excellent work that they do. ”



JUDI



“ Joni (Pico, JSS Social Worker) made me feel a warmer, truer, lucky connection with the Madison Jewish community. ”

BETH



“ My dad was dying. He asked for a Rabbi. Rabbi Renée... was exactly who we needed. I knew, though it wouldn’t be the same, things would be alright. ”



M & O



“ In challenging days, we made a call for help (a cry of our souls) to these remarkably kind people. And for three years now we have been feeling their care, attention, and constant support. ”

We are grateful to fate for such a generous gift – a meeting with the wonderful people at Jewish Social Services (Maya Garbuz, Dawn Berney, Paul Borowsky and Jim Mackman). Our gratitude and a deep bow to you all.

Beit Olamim: A Serene Oasis on Madison's West Side

By James Stein, MD, President of Jewish Burial Association of Madison



I invite you to take a walk or drive to visit Beit Olamim, located within Sunset Memory Gardens at 7302 Mineral Point Road. The driveway is complete, so you now can enter directly off of Westfield Road. With our recent beautiful plantings and landscaping, our community

space already feels more serene. It is heartwarming to see families using the driveway to visit their loved ones.

Madison's Jewish cemetery is a place of life where we connect to those who have moved on and keep them alive forever in our hearts, just like the trees,

shrubs, and flowers keep living from season to season. If you have questions about the Jewish Burial Association of Madison (JBAM), please see our website at www.jbamadison.org, call 608-467-3493, or email info@jbamadison.org. We are here to help.

Doing Mitzvot (Good Deeds) at JSS and Beyond

By Linda Reivitz, Past President, JSS Board of Directors



Many years ago, I decided I was going to do one good deed every day. Give someone a call. Visit or lend a hand or an ear when needed. It seemed like a nice thing to do. I wasn't expecting a Nobel Prize, but if it brought a little joy to someone, so much the better.

How lucky for me that, in 2011, I joined the JSS Board, an organization whose mission is doing mitzvahs! In my first few years on the Board, change was the watchword. Senior staff who had made JSS one of the most respected social services

“ Many years ago, I decided I was going to do one good deed every day. ”

agencies in Dane County were leaving. But they were replaced by new staff, and our excellence in compassionate service never wavered.

We continued to picnic with seniors and deliver menorahs to them at Hanukkah. We held Shabbat programs at senior living facilities and offered Lechayim meals and programs on Mondays. We began a chaplaincy program to serve the spiritual needs of

Jews not affiliated with a local congregation. With generous funding, we initiated the Levy lecture series each summer. Over the years, I experienced many of these and I saw how much joy they could bring. The smiles tell all.

A few years back the Board made the decision to partner with HIAS to resettle refugees. I had the opportunity to help people new to the U.S. learn to grocery shop (so many boxes

Continued on page 6

of cereal!), to register kids for school, to go to a public library for the first time, and to share laughs over silly Swahili-English translations from Google. Helping the stranger is one of the most basic of our Jewish values, repeated in the Torah

more times than any other. That decision brought even wider community support to JSS.

My tenure on the Board is now done. I'll miss my trips to the JSS office, interacting with the staff, and hearing the Gan (preschool) kids chattering in

the playground. I'll keep trying to do my own mitzvah every day (you can too). I leave the board knowing that JSS will continue also.

Why Jewish Social Services Matters to Us

By Ronnie Hess and Ron Rosner, Volunteers and Contributors



Ronnie: I don't know if my father, Louis Hess, benefited from a Jewish social service network when he arrived in New York during World War II, but I would like to believe he did.

Ron: I remember my father, Louis Rosner, writing checks on weekends to various charities.

Ron and Ronnie: We both learned from our families the importance of connecting with people committed to helping others – refugees settling into a new home, needing food, clothes, a job;

or providing assistance and a sense of community to seniors, the infirm, disabled, and disadvantaged.

We think it was our friendship with Barbara Spierer, Francie Saposnik, and Louise Goldstein that got us involved with Jewish Social Services. They thought there was something we could offer by way of skills, time, and inclination. We hope they were right.

Ron: Ronnie started out giving a talk at a Lechayim Lunch. She befriended a woman who had grown up speaking French, as Ronnie had; the two became lunch buddies. We've also delivered menorahs and

“ *We've found new resonance in the old cliché: 'It is better to give than to receive.'* ”

honored our friends and their families with tribute gifts, in moments of joy and sorrow. Contributing to refugee relief in Madison is of special interest to Ronnie. JSS's work in this area is vital.

Ron and Ronnie: We've found new resonance in the old cliché: “It is better to give than to receive.” We're grateful that in small ways we're helping people live more peaceful and prosperous lives through JSS.



*Warm Hanukkah
Wishes from
JSS Staff*



Staying Connected While Staying Safely Apart

By Paul Borowsky, Volunteer Engagement & Events Program Manager



At JSS, Zoom gatherings are “the new normal” (for now).

With online-only programming, there are both challenges and opportunities. The most challenging aspect is not being together in person. The opportunity is the wide variety of people we can invite (from anywhere with an internet connection) to present and participate. We realize that joining in an online event is dependent on a person's willingness and computer experience, and on having the right equipment. We are in the process of surveying people

who participated in pre-COVID programs to find out what barriers people have to joining us online.

Don't forget that every Monday a volunteer leads Yoga from a Chair on Zoom. You can also find links to Zoom recordings of our guest programs on the JSS website under the “Programs” menu (jssmadison.org/zoom-recordings). Look for recorded programs on health and wellness, history, ecology, and more. Many of these are

the personal experiences of friends and participants of JSS. Topics include: talk with local author Doug Moe, retracing family histories of the Holocaust, working with Tibetan refugees, life and resilience after becoming blind, and learning to play the wooden spoons during COVID times.

Many new presentation and discussion topics are in the works. Rabbi Renée Bauer will present topics related to the Bible and Jewish wisdom on the third Thursday of each month. Her presentations on using Jewish wisdom to help during challenging times, and her discussion of Eve and Lilith in the Garden of Eden are among the Zoom recordings you can find on the JSS website.

Volunteer of the Year Award Goes to Betsy Haimson



At our Annual Meeting in October, JSS Board and staff presented Betsy Haimson with our 2020 “Volunteer of the Year” Award. Betsy began volunteering at JSS over 20 years ago. She participates in many aspects of our work including

strategic planning and currently serves on the Senior Adult Committee, helping with event and program planning. We appreciate Betsy's dedication to helping JSS adjust to COVID times

“ What an honor to be selected as ‘Volunteer of the Year’ at JSS. I adore teaching Yoga from a Chair. I am, every week I teach it, completely overwhelmed by the fantastic group of people who join me! ”

- Betsy Haimson

by moving “Yoga from a Chair” to an online format. Monday without yoga is like a luncheon without food! Thank you, Betsy, for your decades of service to our community.

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Together we create the light of hope in our community.

RABBI'S CORNER by Rabbi Renée Bauer



The Talmud records a debate about the lighting of Hanukkah candles. Shammai says: On the first day one kindles eight lights and, from there, gradually decreases the number of lights. Hillel says: On the first day one kindles one light, and from there on, gradually increases the number of lights. (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b)

Shammai's decreasing light reflects the story of the jug of oil that lasted 8 days. But instead, we celebrate according to Hillel, lighting candles based on the days that have passed, not the days that are left. And Hillel's practice reflects the principle that holiness should always increase, never decrease.

As we add one candle to our menorah each night, let us use Hillel's reasoning as spiritual guidance.

“ *Just as we add one candle at a time to the menorah, we can add more light to the world with simple, small deeds.* ”

When we ask, “when will this pandemic end?” let us shift our attention to where we have been. Let us find power in the creativity and resiliency we have used to adapt to life in the time of COVID.

Just as we add one candle at a time to the menorah, we can add more light to the world with simple, small deeds. We can call a family member, write a note to a friend, volunteer for an hour, help an immigrant find the right English word, say a kind thing to a stranger. With each small gesture we increase the light.

Jewish Social Services is here to help if you are struggling to find light in your life or if you want to brighten someone else's. Do not hesitate to reach out to us.

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Jewish Federation
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