

CONNECTIONS

Jewish Social Services of Madison

Newsletter Sponsored by the Anna & Oscar Bentley Fund

Winter 2004, Vol. 3 No. 3

Typical Eve: "I tell everyone I'm a singer. It was my maiden name."



Eve Becker Not A "Sit-Around Kind of Person"

Vivacious and outgoing, at 83 Eve Becker looks entirely in her element at the microphone, singing the Yiddish part of *Tumbalalaika* beside her daughter Diane Becker Krasnick at the JSS Senior Shabbat. One Friday afternoon every month, these intimate gatherings bring a Jewish flavor to four retirement residences – Oakwood Village, Meriter Commons, Independent Living and Coventry Village.

"She *schlepps* me along," says Eve, but it's clear Eve is having a ball visiting with the participants, some in wheelchairs, some not Jewish.

Music, laughter and reflection usher in these Sabbaths. Usually JSS director of senior services Francie Smith Saposnik officiates, calling on different people to light the candles and lead the prayers over wine (or grape juice) and challah. Francie's *d'var Torah* (reading) inspires friendly conversation on the subject. At Francie's side at Oakwood and Independent Living is Diane, a trained cantorial soloist with a vibrant personality and her guitar.

On one day at Oakwood Village, 14 participants

and eight volunteers took part. Hannah Barnett, 6 ("and a half!"), and her sister Maya, 9, stopped by with their mom Victoria Champaine to do a *mitzvah*.

Eve got involved with JSS when she moved to Madison eleven years ago, looking for a way to volunteer and socialize. Francie introduced her to the Monday Lechayim Lunchtime Plus Program, where Eve immediately made friends. Now she is the official greeter there, a shoo-in job because a "hello" and hug from Eve are one of a kind.

Eve, who was born in Poland and moved to America with her family at the age of 4, lived most of her life in Philadelphia. Her ready smile belies a life of trials: She has lost her husband and a daughter, and both she and Diane are cancer survivors.

Still, Eve spreads her particular brand of sunshine as the volunteer who writes all the JSS birthday cards. If she knows the person, "I may add a little touch of humor, like 'How you doing? This is Eve.'" Not a "sit-around kind of person" (her words), JSS is fortunate to fit into Eve's busy schedule!

JSS runs on volunteers like Eve. If you'd like your interests matched to a JSS job, call Louise Goldstein, 278-1808, ext. 26.

inside

From Chaos to Coping **2**

Mental Health Programs **2**

Tribute Donors **3-6**

Russian Corner **7**

Donor Connection **8**

And At Coventry...

When you meet the petite and refined Sylvia Sugerman it's hard to imagine her chiseling away at a big slab of marble. But she is an accomplished sculptor whose home at Coventry Village is a tasteful backdrop to her fluid figures. Three and a half years ago, Sylvia moved from San Antonio to be with her children Bobbie and Bill Malone. She called on JSS.

"Francie was so wonderful," she says, "helping me get organized. I didn't know anybody, or where to turn. And she knew everything."

Sylvia attends services at temple, but also goes to the JSS Senior Shabbat "downstairs." "Everybody's welcome," she likes to say. "Several times our non-Jewish residents have come in – people who are interested in other people's religions."

At Coventry, volunteer Les Goldsmith plays the guitar and leads the songs and prayers. "He is just perfect!" Sylvia exclaims. "He is delightful. He makes it so nice for everybody."



Esperanza and Sylvia Sugerman

One Man's Journey from Chaos to Coping

"Mental illnesses are biochemical brain disorders that can severely disturb people's abilities to think, feel and relate to others and to the environment."

—National Alliance for the Mentally Ill- Dane County

His life had fallen apart. He reported exhaustion. Fibromyalgia. Chemical sensitivities. And he slept a lot. Stuart (not his real name*) also had a major mental illness as diagnosed by his psychiatrist, yet he was unable to accept it.

Now the man who still clung to his professional persona was about to be on the street, homeless.

Stuart is an educated man who had had a career in health care. But when the JSS social worker met him, he was living in chaos in an apartment after his long-term girlfriend had left him, and there was no one to pay the bills.

According to the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), 23% of American adults ages 18 or older – a staggering one out of four people – suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year, but only half report their problems impair daily functioning. Treatment success rates are good: 60% for the first episode of schizophrenia, 65-70% for major depression and 80% for bipolar disorder (also called manic depression). Yet the mental illness stigma persists.

JSS associate executive director Barbara Spierer notes, "Sometimes people like Stuart are 'under the radar' of the mental health system because they won't acknowledge their illness. It didn't matter to us. He was scared and needed help right now."

While not a mental health treatment agency, JSS offers resources, practical solutions and support to people with mental health issues and to their families.

Stuart had both a physician and a psychiatrist, but no one to come to his home. He had a family, but they lived out of town. His parents were elderly. And though Stuart felt his siblings didn't care, we discovered they were burned out from trying to get him to move off the dime.

So JSS got to work on a plan. First we dealt with his financial crisis by helping him get disability benefits. Next, we got him on a waiting list for subsidized housing so he'd have a secure home.

Then we looked at the *quality* of his life. He was too sick to clean, and he was isolated. So we brought his case before another agency. They paid for an aide who would clean, provide companionship and report back with any concerns about her client's welfare.

Through our own First Friends program, JSS tried to get him out a little, and kind people in our community pitched in to help. We connected Stuart with a volunteer visitor, arranged for membership in a congregation and offered transportation. Though rarely well enough to attend services, he felt he now had friends.

Stuart tells people he's "eternally grateful" that JSS stuck by him. We wouldn't have had it any other way.

You could also be a First Friend and lighten someone's life. Call Louise Goldstein, 278-1808, ext. 26, to find out more. For more information on mental illness and what you can do about it, visit www.namidanecounty.org.

**Certain circumstances in this story have been altered to ensure confidentiality.*

... "one out of four people suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year"

Do You Know Someone With a Mental Illness?

Images of people with brain disorders have long been the fodder of Hollywood: from the psychotic inmates in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* to the aggravated and aggressive hero in *Anger Management*. But when problems like these strike close to home, it's no laughing matter.

The JSS Advisory Committee on Mental Illness is addressing the issues of mental illness with a number of programs.

"Loving Your Neighbor as Yourself: Removing the Stigma from Mental Illness II"

To reduce the isolation that distresses many mentally ill people and their families, on February 12, we sponsored this community conversation as a sequel to a Yom Kippur discussion led by Larry Kohn at Temple Beth El.

For Parents of an Adult Child...

This spring, JSS will be joining the University of Wisconsin School of Social Work, NAMI and the State Bureau of Mental Health in sponsoring a day-long workshop "Midlife and Aging Families: Planning for the Future." It will answer the question, "How can I prepare for the time when I can no longer take care of my adult child with a mental illness?"

This proactive, nuts-and-bolts approach will help parents think about a realistic "succession plan" and address legal issues such as a special needs trust. It's expected to originate from the Pyle Center on the UW campus, and be fed via satellite to Green Bay, La Crosse and Milwaukee. For more information, contact Lauren Meyers, 278-1808, Ext. 27 or laurenjss@mjcc.net.

JSS also has a Mental Health brochure available free of charge. Call Lauren if you'd like one.

JSS Offers A Sincere

Thank You

for Your Tribute Gifts

The following contributions were made between October 1, 2003 and December 31, 2003

IN HONOR OF

Sarah Lesley Aked, Bat Mitzvah

Milton and Joanne Yatvin

Trude Arm

Ron Arm and Linda Jameson

Sue and Mike Baumblatt, thank you for a wonderful Rosh Hashanah evening

Irving Shapiro

Eve Becker, speedy recovery

Sylvia F. Epstein

Darlene and Stuart Schwartz

Russell and Liz Whitesel

Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Robert and Sandy Schwartz

Kathy Blumenfeld, speedy recovery

Joan M. and Kenneth Riggs

Maria Cancian

Harriet Brown and Jamie Young

Ann Chase, her sister

Estate of Lucile Levy

William Fried

Howard and Debra Fried

Happy Hanukkah, Aaron Friedman

Judith and Michael Rothschild

Happy Hanukkah, Jenny & Michael Goldban

Judith and Michael Rothschild

Happy Hanukkah, Beccah Rothschild

Judith and Michael Rothschild

Louise Goldstein, appointment as Volunteer Coordinator

Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Herb and June Gronik

James and Nancy Youngerman

Dieter and Dolores Gruen

Michael and Karen Ostrov

Claudia Haus, speedy recovery

Robert A. and Lynn Berman

Tam and Ken Kaplan, their marriage

Roberta and James Lazarz

Judith Zukerman-Kaufman, for her help in preparing Anna Young for her Bat Mitzvah

Harriet Brown and Jamie Young

Lev Laurence Kerlow, his birth

Sol and Corlie Blumenfeld

Larry Kohn

Bernard Biales

Bobbie Kunin, happy 80th birthday

Leonard and Rose Steinig

Abe Landsman receiving special service award

Sarah Cutler

Bobbie Lazarz

Steven Koslov and Mary Fulton

Bobbie Lazarz, happy birthday

Barbara Spierer

Ruth & Sy Levey, their anniversary

June Klein

Joan M. and Kenneth Riggs

Dov Margolis, his birth

Louise Goldstein and Bruce Thomadsen

Bilha Mirkin and Yair Mazor

Mark Perlman, happy 80th birthday

Kato L. Perlman

Jeff and Sheryl Spitzer-Resnick

Gloria and Sandy Spitzer

Julie Roth, her engagement

Lawrence and Jean Landweber

Ruth Rothstein

Harvey Dym

Francie Smith Saposnik

Richard and Joan Leffler

Francie and Irv Saposnik

Rayla G. Temin

Stacy Schiff, good luck in new home

Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Sidney and Marrian Schwartz, 69th anniversary

Ray and Judy Hamel

Vonda Shaw

Judy Ettinger

Judy Sidran, election as President of JSS

Jerilyn Goodman

Roberta and James Lazarz

Judy and Ben Sidran receiving the Ben Minkoff Volunteer Service Award

Jerilyn Goodman

Ruth Siegel, happy birthday

Louise Goldstein and Bruce Thomadsen

Irwin and Helen Klibaner

Lawrence and Jean Landweber

Judy and Daniel Pierotti

Barbara Spierer

Hannah Siegler, her birth

Aimee Siegler

Smart Recovery

Gail Jacob and Henry Steinberger

Barbara Spierer

Evelyn Colburn

Kenneth Colburn

Barbara Spierer & Lauren Meyers for their loving & caring help

Sandra Porter

Belle Spitz, happy 90th birthday

William and Barbara Spitz

Len Steinig, his birthday

June Klein

Continued on page 4

Thank You for Your Tribute Gifts *(continued)*

Rose & Leonard Steinig, their anniversary

June Klein

Michael Stone, Bar Mitzvah

Carol and Joel Wish

Sylvia Sugerman, in appreciation

Beatrice and Harold Levine

Lewis Toppel, happy 60th birthday

Ted Sherwin

Leah and Scott Toppel

Judy and Ben Sidran

The Caring Volunteers, thank you

Anne Marion

Senior Adult Volunteers

Nancy Dodge and David Watts

Fran Weinstein becoming a great grandmother

Estelle Krasno

J. Martin & Anne Wolman, special wedding anniversary

Joan M. and Kenneth Riggs

IN MEMORY OF

Jonathan Aked

Milton and Joanne Yatvin

Hilda Barash

Abraham Landsman

Louise Becker and Max Becker

Eve Becker

Gene Boyer

Judy and Ben Sidran

Allan S. Brown

Harriet Brown and Jamie Young

Bernie Chortek

Sol and Corlie Blumenfeld

Frieda Cohn

Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Estelle Krasno

Sanford Diamond

Murray and Shirley Denmark

Alison C. Dorner

Miriam and Morris Finkel

Rob and Peg Gibson

Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Audrey and Jack Keyes

Abraham Landsman

Daniel and Bettine Lipman

Florence Lippman

Sam Lippman

Helene and Ed Neubauer

Robert and Janelle Pasch

Barbara Peltin

Hannah Pickett

James and Lynn Schultz

Shelly and Dick Seesel

James and Melissa Sosman

James and Andrea Stein

Harvey and Bonnie Wendel

Sauk Garden Apartment Homes

Murphy & Desmond

Alexander Elyanov

Isaak Usyatinskiy and Galina

Kholodenko

Ethel Feitlinger

Judy and Ben Sidran

David and Sara Fellman

Nancy Reynolds

David Fellman

Michael and Sue Baumblatt

David T. and Rhoda Berman

Sol and Corlie Blumenfeld

Joe Fellman

David and Estelle Goldenberg

Joel and Mary Grossman

Thomas L. Johnson

Rosalind Levin

Ralph and Charlotte Musin

Sandra Porter

Robert and Sandy Schwartz

Irving Shapiro

Barbara Spierer

Joan Webb and Thompson Webb III

Marvin Golden

Harvey and Jane Storm

Kalman Goldenberg

Abraham Landsman

Arlene and Hershel Rotter

Norman Greenberg

Jan Greenberg

Jake & Freada Harris

Larry and Beatrice Harris

Brother, Benjamin, sister, Bernice and Mother

Annette Howards

Mark Krasno

Robert A. and Lynn Berman

Estelle Krasno

Sol Levin

Daniel and Kathy Levin

Dorothy Levy

Robert A. and Lynn Berman

Lucile Levy

Betsy Abramson and David Seligman

Edward Capper

Ann Chase

Greg Dutch and Sandy Estep

Barbara and Daniel Esser

Amy and Simon Feiglin

Howard and Barbara Fradkin

Dorothy Gursky

Dennis Gustin and Sandra Martinson

Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Beverly and Don Isett

Jonathon and Rebecca Kaiser

Denise Kaplan

Lane Klein

Irwin and Helen Klibaner

Estelle Krasno

Claire Krom

Jeff and Donna Landsman

Lawrence and Jean Landweber

L. Robert and Kathleen Levy

Stan and Ann Levy

Daniel and Bettine Lipman

Harvey and Rona Malofsky

Celia and Richard Margolis

Judy and Daniel Pierotti

Frema Pittelman

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.

Continued on page 5

Thank You for Your Tribute Gifts *(continued)*

Harry and Karen Roth
Darlene and Stuart Schwartz
Diane Seder and Bruce Rosen
Sara J. Sherkow
Judy and Ben Sidran
Judy Sikora and Steven Siehr
Barbara Spierer
Isabelle and Si Toder
Lynn and Ira Wachtel
Russell and Liz Whitesel

Sidney Mailick

Nancy and Aaron Brower
Nancy and Jesse Ishikawa
Paul and Sherry Minkus
Mel Morgenbesser
Steven H. Morrison and Goldie
Kadushin
Erica K. Richmond and Burke Richmond
Stephanie Robert
Judy and Ben Sidran
Francie Smith Saposnik
Barbara Spierer

Claire Mansoor

Robert A. and Lynn Berman

Lou Miller

Joel and Marilyn Kupferberg

Judith L. and Henry V. Olneck

Michael Olneck and Joanne Brown

Steve Orman

Judy and Daniel Pierotti
John and Barbara Fleming

Bunny Perelman

Robert and Carey Chiesa
Kathryn Lederhause
Seth and Leslie Perelman
Russell and Liz Whitesel

Lenard Porter

Robert A. and Lynn Berman
Alan R. and Harriet Hyman
Jeffrey and Judith Kravat

Therma Princer

Norma Axelrod
Paula Barcik
Ghita Bessman
Sol and Corlie Blumenfeld
Dora Brand
Dana Corbett
Mary and Peter Dotti
Lester and Ann Druck
Richard and Jacqueline Epstein
Sylvia F. Epstein

David and Estelle Goldenberg
Betsy and Bezalel Haimson
Diane Becker Krasnick and Marc
Krasnick
Jeffrey and Judith Kravat
Joel and Marilyn Kupferberg
Lowell and Julia Lakritz
Abraham Landsman
Irving Levy
Harvey and Rona Malofsky
Paul and Sherry Minkus
Ralph and Charlotte Musin
Edward Pickett and Jan Leach
Mary Ramberg
Barbara Roth
Robert Royko
Ann Shapiro
Barbara Spierer
James and Andrea Stein
Carol and Ernest Stricker
Sue Sweet
Joyce Temkin
Ruth and Harry Wardle
Russell and Liz Whitesel

Dorothy Raineri

Jerome and Lois Keisler

William Rohan

Betsy and Bezalel Haimson

Irv Saposnik

Betsy Abramson and David Seligman
Julius and Hildegard Adler
Trude Arm
Sally G. Balkin
Michael and Sue Baumblatt
Janice Beers
Arnold and Verjel Beiler
Kurt Bergen
Fredlyn and Eli Berger
David T. and Rhoda Berman
Robert A. and Lynn Berman
Ghita Bessman
Ruthanne Bessman
Carla Blum and Ismor Fischer
Sol and Corlie Blumenfeld
Natalie Borenstein
Ashraf Boroukhim
Gerald and Lorraine Borsuk
Marcia Bradley
Fred and Esther Brauer
Rachel F. Brenner
Roza Brown
Maria Cancian and Chuck Kalish
Roman A. and Virginia Carpenter
Joshua and Flo Chover

Buz and Karen Cohen
Marsha Cohen and Michael Pressman
Sarah Cutler
Eva Deutschkron
Bill Dodge
Nancy Dodge and David Watts
Bonnie Edelstein
Sylvia F. Epstein
Mimi Farber
Tillie Fischer
Boby Frank
Lottie and Joel Frank
Irene Geller
David and Estelle Goldenberg
Jean and Ted Goldman
Les Goldsmith and Dale Kunin
Susan Goldstein
Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman
Jerilyn Goodman
Jan Greenberg
Paul Grossberg and Dean Ziemke
Betsy and Bezalel Haimson
Irving Handelsman
David Haskin and Mary Michal
Simon and Billie Hellerstein
Cecelia Hiesiger
Merry Hunter
Alan R. and Harriet Hyman
Nancy and Jesse Ishikawa
Alfred and Sylvia Kadushin
Jonathon and Rebecca Kaiser
Daniel and Lynn Kaplan
Murray and Susan Katcher
Joseph F. Kauffman
Herman and Jean Kirschen
June Klein
Daniel Kleinman and Susan Bernstein
Irwin and Helen Klibaner
Lawrence Kohn and Laurie Buchalter
Deborah and Ron Konkol
Roslyn Kopelberg
Marc and Judith Kornblatt
Janet F. Kramer
Diane Becker Krasnick and Marc
Krasnick
Estelle Krasno
Jeffrey and Judith Kravat
Paul and Atsuko Kusuda
Stanley and Sandra Kutler
Judith Laitman
Amy Lakritz and Mark A. Weiner
Lowell and Julia Lakritz
Abraham Landsman
Jeff and Donna Landsman

Continued on page 6

Thank You for Your Tribute Gifts (continued)

Judy and Howard Landsman
Lawrence and Jean Landweber
Stanley H. Langer
Heidi and Charles Lauhon
Anne Layton
Lewis and Judith Leavitt
Phyllis Lefcowitz
Joan Lerman and Ken O'Neill
Alan and Jean Lettofsky
Seymour and Ruth Levey
Daniel and Kathy Levin
Beatrice and Harold Levine
Daniel and Bettine Lipman
Bobbie and Bill Malone
Celia and Richard Margolis
Constance Markey
Victoria Meyer
Sue Milch
Arnold and Evelyn Miller
Paul and Sherry Minkus
Gilead and Galila Morahg
Mel Morgenbesser
Steven H. Morrison and Goldie
Kadushin
Alan R. Orenberg
David and Sandie Ottenstein
Perle and Asher Pacht
Kato L. Perlman
Edward Pickett and Jan Leach
Hannah Pickett
Judy and Daniel Pierotti
Sandra Porter
Simcha and Keren Prombaum
Belle Radwin
Warren and Gerry Randy
Miriam and Ruben Reininger
Nancy and David Resnick
Rachelle Richardson
Joan M. and Kenneth Riggs
Miriam Robinson
Parker and Lucile Rosefelt
Danny Rosen and Shani Lasin
Gayle Rosen and Andrew Sugarman
Barbara Roth
Harry and Karen Roth
Judith and Michael Rothschild
Arlene and Hershel Rotter
Royal and Muriel Rotter
Judith and Robert Rubin
Mildred Rubnitz
Jerome and Lynn Schmidt
Ann Schuster
Darlene and Stuart Schwartz
Robert and Sandy Schwartz

Alan and Laurie Schwartzstein
David and Shelley Schwarz
Diane Seder and Bruce Rosen
Grace B. Seidenberg
Amy Shapiro and Jeff Olenick
Ina G. Sharkansky
Joseph and Glenna Shutkin
Judy and Ben Sidran
Daniel and Ruth Siegel
Jeanne and Joe Silverberg
Margaret Skinner
Robert and JoAnn Skloot
Judith Smith Leland
Debra and Jack Spear
Barbara Spierer
William and Barbara Spitz
James and Andrea Stein
Leonard and Rose Steinig
Gerald A. and Vicki Stewart
Elinor and Jerome Stotsky
Sylvia Sugarman
Louis H. and Julie Swedarsky
Bertha and Helene Sweet
Bessie Sweet
Clara Sweet
Helen S. Sweet
Sophie Sweet
Sue Sweet
Harvey Temkin and Barbara Myers
Temkin
Harry and Marjorie Tobias
William and Roberta Tracy
Shirley Volpiansky

Max and Gerda Wald
Susan Wasserman
Frances Weinstein
Sybil Weinstein
Russell and Liz Whitesel
Marjorie Winkler
Suzanne and Mitchell Wolf
Laurie Zimmerman and Renee Bauer
The Ethnic Connection
M & I Bank
Yvonne and Barry Sacks

Lawrence Serlin

Kenneth Kushner and Erica Serlin

Larry Shapiro

Vivian Berry

Gerald and Lorraine Borsuk

Judith Utevesky and Steve Rankin

Nadine Shapiro

Jeanne and Joe Silverberg

Adolph & Miriam Silver

Larry and Beatrice Harris

Jeffrey Sollender

Dyana and Randall Gold

Edna Sulman

Daniel and Ruth Siegel

Rabbi Manfred Swarsensky

June Klein

Sam Sweet

Bertha and Helene Sweet

Would You Like To Receive Connections In The Mail?

JSS *Connections* is published four times a year. If you're not currently receiving it in the mail and would like to be, please call Sherry Minkus at 278-1808, or complete and mail this form to JSS, 6434 Enterprise Lane, Madison, WI 53719.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

How did you hear about *Connections*?

Did you know..?

- JSS geriatric social worker Nancy Dodge also coordinates our Emergency Financial Assistance program. In 2003, 95 people across Dane County received grants of up to \$200 to avert eviction, reverse a utility shut-off, buy medications, and more. JSS social service staff and colleague agencies such as Headstart, Domestic Abuse Intervention Service, Community Action Coalition, First Call for Help, Briarpatch and Centro Hispano can apply on behalf of their clients.
- The St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church recently sent JSS \$1,000 to support the Emergency Financial Assistance program.
- Nearly 90% of JSS's operating expenses in 2003 supported programming, not administration or fundraising. JSS prides itself on giving access to all and does not charge clients for most of the help we provide.
- In the last fiscal year, almost half (47%) of the JSS budget came from individuals, 21% from MJCC, 14% from United Way and 18% from grants, government, foundations and investment income.
- During Hanukkah, volunteers delivered 44 menorahs to seniors in nursing homes and assisted living facilities so they could light "candles" in this way.

Jewish Social Services of Madison

Judy Sidran, *President*

Steven Morrison, *Executive Director*

Barbara Spierer, *Associate Executive Director*

Services to Individuals and Families Under Stress

Barbara Spierer, LCSW, Ext. 21

Senior Services

Francie Smith Saposnik, LCSW, Ext. 19

Nancy Dodge, LCSW, Ext. 18

Group Programming

Lauren Meyers, MSSW, Ext. 27

Refugee & Immigrant Services

Janice Beers, MA, Ext. 17

Volunteer Services

Louise Goldstein, APSW, Ext. 26

Vehicle Donations

Sherry Minkus, Ext. 12

Connections

Rachelle Richardson, *Editor*

Christine Pavelko, *Designer*

Janice Beers, Lauren Meyers,
Nancy Dodge, *Contributing Writers*

RUSSIAN CORNER



An Impromptu That Ends in Perfect Harmony

Several times each year, JSS resettlement coordinator Janice Beers plans and accompanies Russian-speaking seniors to events specific to their culture, including a variety of concerts and ballets.

So when the renowned Moscow Boys Choir appeared in Madison recently, she worked with the staff of the Civic Center to arrange for an exclusive reception after the performance. "The seniors always appreciate excellent music. And they were really looking forward to meeting these young, talented singers," she says.

But when Janice arrived at the theater and spotted a number of choristers from the Madison Boychoir and their families, she decided on the spot to invite them to join their small group.

It turned out to be quite a treat for all involved. With Janice acting as interpreter, the 35 seniors enjoyed a fun "encore" as boys from opposite sides of the world eagerly compared notes.

The American boys didn't expect to hear that their Muscovite counterparts all attend a special school where they practice *every day*. Their faces showed no surprise when the Russian musicians said their favorite game was "football" – but turned quizzical when they found out that's "soccer" in America!

Then one Madison youngster asked, "What's your favorite food?" and almost in unison they cried, "McDonalds!" Everyone laughed.

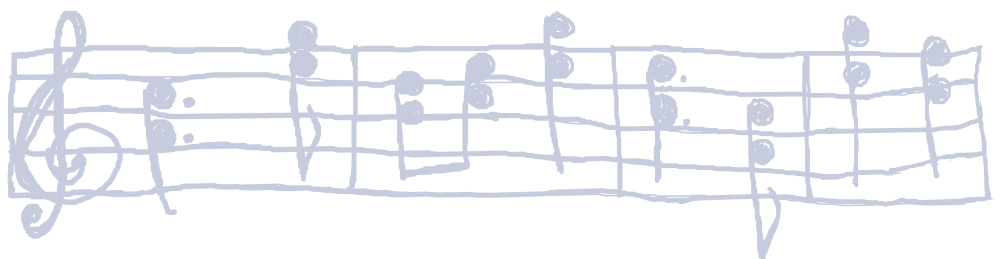
International, intergenerational friendships were formed on a whim that night, and they continue to grow. As the Madison Boychoir rehearses for its spring concert featuring songs from each boy's heritage, their Russian pronunciation coach will be Ilya Fiksel, a retired émigré who has been living in Madison since 1993, and is a six-year member of the JSS Board.

"You can't plan for poignant moments like these," says Janice. "This night proved that age, culture and language need not be barriers. I feel so privileged to have been a part of it."



JSS is expecting another refugee family from the former Soviet Union. If you'd like to help with their resettlement, please call Janice at 278-1808, ext. 17.

After their show, Moscow Boys Choir members (in tuxes) chat with members of the Madison Boy Choir, while Russian-speaking seniors look on (off camera).



May Their Memories Be For A Blessing

Almost every day someone sends a “tribute” check in to JSS because someone matters to them. Sometimes it’s to mark the celebration of a happy event, or to send hope for someone in trouble. Often it’s to honor the memory of one they care about, to keep alive their dreams, their values, their enthusiasms. Sometimes it’s to satisfy the need to “do something” for the loved ones left behind.

It would be impossible to publish this issue of *Connections* without acknowledging the loss of someone very dear to us, Irv Saposnik. Not because he was an admired academic, not because he was an internationally respected Jewish scholar, not because he was an ardent activist, not because he was a devoted mentor. He was all of these, but we miss him because he was one of our own, the husband of Francie Smith Saposnik, father and grandfather. And we loved him.

When one of our own passes away, the tables are turned. We at JSS, who are so good at caregiving, are put in the position of accepting care from others – the kindness of sitting and listening, of food and help getting through the day, of prayers and rituals, of letters

and hugs and much more. As you can see from the listing of memorials to Irv in these pages, many, many people were moved to donate to JSS to support what mattered to him during his life, and his life with Francie.

In accepting these gifts, Francie and her family wrote, “The donations made in honor of Irv would have touched him deeply, moved him to tears, and filled him with gratitude. Those are our feelings as well. In addition, Irv would have been filled with genuine humility and awe at your goodness.”

Irv Saposnik was a hero, a *mensch*. His was a particularly public life. Yet every life is precious, every person someone’s hero, someone’s gracious friend, someone’s helpmate, someone’s soulmate. Everyone is deserving of tribute. And sometimes circumstances arise, and these same people need the help of JSS.

Francie said of Irv, “He always believed in expressing thanks.” That goes for all of us at JSS as well. We are very grateful that you choose us, and in so doing, that the people we help matter to you.

*True instruction was on his lips,
and he did not give voice to injustice.
He walked with Adonai in peace and honesty,
and brought comfort to many.*

–Malachai 2:6

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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Madison, Wis.
Permit No. 1341

Jewish Social Services of Madison

CONNECTIONS

Published by Jewish Social Services of
Madison four times a year



JSS

6434 Enterprise Lane
Madison, WI 53719
Tel (608) 278-1808
Fax (608) 278-7814
E-mail jss@mjcc.net

www.jewishmadison.org/JSS



Affiliated with the
Association of Jewish Family &
Children’s Agencies