

# CONNECTIONS

Judy Pierotti and husband, Dan, have supported the work of JSS for thirty years.



## Judy Pierotti

### Turning Negatives into Positives

2011 will mark the thirtieth anniversary of Judy and Dan Pierotti's association with Jewish Social Services. While both served on the Board of Directors, Judy tells us that what really solidified her connection with the agency was becoming a host family for Inna and Felix Yoffe, who arrived as refugees from the former USSR in 1981.

Judy rolled up her sleeves, providing instruction in everything from English to driving a car to the nuances of culture in America. The unanticipated outcome, she tells us, was that, "The Yoffes became family and still are. They are a second set of parents to our children," even though the couple moved away some time ago.

Judy's passion for the pursuit of social justice was inherited from her late parents, Ruth and Sol Weiner. It continued as she earned an MSW degree, and flourishes today as she serves on the Beth Israel Center Board and co-chairs its Social Action Committee with Bob Skloot. Judy has also been very active in local and national political campaigns.

Another of Judy's passions is preserving oral histories. Thus, in 1987, she established her business, *Voice Treasures*, to "capture the voices and treasured stories of loved ones." Her first interview, with Holocaust survivors, Rabbi Joseph z"l and Anneliese z"l Schwarz, parents of David, got her hooked. Since then, Judy has conducted and edited literally hundreds of interviews with individuals across the country.

As an offshoot of *Voice Treasures*, Judy has been engaged to develop special projects. One, for the Wisconsin Council on Developmental Disabilities entitled "Fragile Families," helped restore benefits to individuals who are unable to work. Another was a history of Madison's YWCA. Ten years ago, she produced a video entitled

"Building the State of Israel," which brought together four strangers then living in Madison: Judy Lichtenstein, Kurt Bergen z"l, Henry Kaplan z"l and Verjel Beiler. They discovered connections from their storied pasts that they did not know they had. Two years ago, Judy produced a video that paid tribute to six local Hadassah women: Anita Parks, Ghita Bessman, Fran Weinstein, Charlotte Musin, Elsie Glass, and Ethel Tarkow.

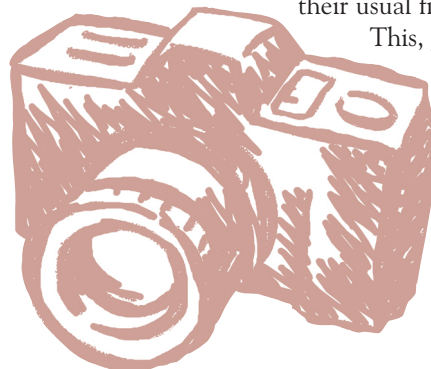
Judy's boundless energy led her in yet another direction twenty years ago. What began as her offer to work as the official photographer for the Jewish Federation of Madison grew into a thriving photography business where she preserved the memories of countless families throughout the Madison community at B'nai Mitzvah, weddings, and other life cycle events.

Judy and Dan have always supported the work of JSS through generous gifts to the annual Friends campaign, the Foundation For the Future Endowment Fund, and frequent tribute donations honoring friends and family. But this past year, Judy found a truly creative way to support the work of JSS. She has now retired from her photography business (but not from *Voice Treasures*), and decided that it was time to clear out the many boxes of negatives from past simchas (special celebrations).

Instead of simply discarding them, Judy began to call families in the Madison community and beyond who she thought might like to retain the negatives. She had only one request: that in return, they make a special donation to JSS, over and above their usual financial support of the agency.

This, Judy's latest project, isn't complete yet. But already, it has brought in significant financial support, helping JSS to continue its work.

Thank you, Judy, for all you do and especially for your latest *mitzvah*.



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# Michael Schoenfield

*“You brought me home...”*

Michael Schoenfield's first introduction to Madison was in 1963, when he visited with his youth group from Temple Emmanuel in Milwaukee. The young people stayed at a local Unitarian church and participated in an interfaith forum. The stay was only overnight, but Michael tells us he, “fell in love with the city.” He returned in the late 60's, left and returned two more times before he settled for good in 1984.

Michael is a political activist with an arguably colorful past. He describes himself as a “60's counter-culture type.” At the same time, he spent much of his career employed within the system. After high school, he traveled to Washington, DC to “work on Bobby Kennedy's campaign.” After Kennedy's assassination, Michael returned to Wisconsin and “dropped out,” for a while.

Michael earned a Bachelor's degree from UW-Milwaukee and, later, a Master's degree from UW-Madison, both in Political Science. After earning his Bachelor's, he worked as a community organizer with Father James Groppi, a famous Milwaukee civil rights activist of the time. Michael tells us that he also wrote grants for the “social service agency branch” of the Commandos, a group that Father Groppi organized in his capacity as NAACP Youth Advisor.

During his time in Milwaukee, Michael also worked in the field of planning and development and in probation and parole. In later years, he worked for a number of State legislators, as well as for Governor Tony Earl and Lt. Governor, Marty Schreiber. Most recently, he is very proud of the work he did on WI Senate Bill 27, sponsored by Representative Marlin Schneider and State Senator Julie Lassa. The law requires health insurance plans to cover the cost of hearing aides for young people.

Life has not been easy for Michael. In 1958, he was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes and later with Diabetic Neuropathic Cachexia, which he says is a very rare complication. As Michael describes it, “All systems turn against you.”

In addition, he must contend with severe migraines that he has also had since early childhood. Michael describes his diabetes as “always slightly out of control,” despite his rigorous attention to his treatment regime. Because as a child he was teased about having the disease, he tells us he “went for decades without telling anyone” that he was diabetic because he was afraid of the stigma. When, finally, he was forced to confide in people because of incidents concerning his insulin levels, he was relieved to find that those around him were quite accepting.

In terms of treatment, Michael says he has, “gone from the very beginnings—the ‘dark ages’ and crude forms of insulin and technology in diabetes to unbelievable resources today.” In the beginning, “they didn't even know that exercise helped,” he commented. Today he wears an insulin pump that he has had for ten or fifteen years.

Despite these medical difficulties, a recent heart attack and other life challenges, Michael does not feel sorry for himself. He says he “quit working three or four times in recent years, but always went back. Finally, in February 2009, he retired permanently from State employment. When staff from JSS visited him at home where he is mostly confined to bed, he was very upbeat and joyfully engaged in conversation.

Michael had three requests of JSS: that we help him re-start his application for SSDI, that we connect him with a rabbi, and that we find him a friendly visitor. On the first request, to lift the burden from the shoulders of Michael and his wife, Linda, a JSS social worker became Michael's Authorized Representative with the Social Security Administration. She helped Michael complete the paperwork and arranged for the interview to be done by phone. Ultimately, the application was successful and Michael received retroactive benefits back to the time that he was determined to be totally disabled.



Rabbi Yona Matusof very graciously agreed to visit Michael and continues to do so. Additionally, what seems to be the perfect volunteer match resulted from introducing Michael to Mike Pressman who visits at least weekly.

While the men have different passions—sports for Mike P and politics for Mike S—they have found common ground and never lack for discussion topics. JSS also arranged for members of the Temple Beth El Youth Group to do much needed yard work and Linda called to tell us how much it helped.

About these connections, Michael tells us, “You have made me a member of the Jewish community here, and I can't tell you how much I appreciate that. You brought me home and it's been a long time since I've been home.”

## Type 1 Diabetes

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Type 1 Diabetes... develops when the body's immune system destroys pancreatic beta cells, the only cells in the body that make the hormone insulin that regulates blood glucose. To survive, people with Type 1 Diabetes must have insulin delivered by injection or a pump. This form of diabetes usually strikes children and young adults, although disease onset can occur at any age. In adults, Type 1 Diabetes accounts for 5% to 10% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.”

For further information go to:

Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/diabetes](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes)

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International  
[www.jdrfwesternwisconsin.org](http://www.jdrfwesternwisconsin.org)

# Thank You

for Your Tribute Gifts

The following contributions were made between July 1st, 2010 and September 30th, 2010.

**IN HONOR OF:**

*Birth of Elijah Aaron Miner*

Donald & Kathy Miner

*Harvey & Trudy Barash*

Simcha & Keren Prombaum

*Janice Beers*

Paul & Sophia Moroz

Rachelle Richardson

*T'filla Bensche*

Barbara Spierer

*Dick Bessman's graduation*

Barbara & Frank Tuerkheimer

*Mark Blumenfeld's speedy recovery*

Barbara Spierer

*Nancy Dodge*

Frances Culbertson

Howard & Judy Landsman

*Good health to Deb Feltman*

Deb's family

*Rachel Louise Feltman-Frank, Mazel Tov on beginning college*

Deb Feltman & Jeff Frank

*David Fletcher*

Beverly Bassin

*Terrie Goren*

Jonathan Biatch & Bonnie Margulis

*Adam Gratch & Sara Holwerda's engagement*

Janice Gratch & Steven Wilensky

*JSS Staff & Volunteers*

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*Dr. & Mrs. Harold Jellinek's 35th wedding anniversary*

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*Isabelle Lutrin*

Judy & Ben Sidran

*Elizabeth Maier & Allen Madsen's engagement*

Dan, Bettine & David Lipman

*Elizabeth Maier & Allen Madsen's wedding*

Jonathon & Rebecca Kaiser

*Steven Morrison's retirement*

Sally Balkin

Jamie & Adam Gepner

Louise Goldstein & Bruce Thomadsen

Joel & Marilyn Kupferberg

Daniel & Bettine Lipman

Les Goldsmith & Dale Kunin

Bunny & Bill Spitz

Harvey Temkin & Barbara Myers Temkin

*Bessie Onheiber*

Sam & Maria Onheiber

*Continued on page 4*

## 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. **Cards notifying the honoree or family are sent immediately.**

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 Barbara Spierer, 278-1808. Thank you

## Thank You for Your Tribute Gifts (continued)

---

*Don & Gwen Packard's 50th anniversary*

Stanley & Sandra Kutler

*Judy Pierotti*

Deborah Martin

*Kris Rasmussen's presidency of JSS*

Jim & Michele Rohan

*Sara Rosenzweig*

Bilha Mirkin & Yair Mazor

*Anna Schuster*

Constance & William Markey

*Robert Schwartz, speedy recovery*

Corlie & Sol Blumenfeld

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Gerda Wald

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Stephen Austin & Jane Brotman-Austin

Corlie & Sol Blumenfeld

Paul & Sophia Moroz

Celeste Robins

Judith Torres

*Bill & Bunny Spitz's 50th wedding anniversary*

Barbara & Frank Tuerkheimer

*Adel Stern's birthday*

Steve Stern & Florencia Mallon

*Alec Weintraub's Bar Mitzvah*

Joel & Marilyn Kupferberg

*Jean Weissburg's special birthday*

Joel & Marilyn Kupferberg

*Noam Yuchtman*

Moshe & Haya Yuchtman

*Mark & Bill's marriage*

Sally Balkin

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Sally Balkin

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*David Berman*

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Judy Karofsky

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Harvey & Rona Malofsky

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Barbara Spierer

The Steiner Family

Julie & Louis Swedarsky

Jim & Nancy Youngerman

*\*Julia Lakritz Immigration Services Fund*

*Continued on page 5*

## Thank You for Your Tribute Gifts (continued)

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Jerome & Lois Keisler

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*Donald Sharfman*

Jeffrey & Marcy Kushner

*Robert Sherman Essock*

Kent & Valerie Mannis

*Sarah & William Silverman*

Lynn Silverman

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## Leave a Legacy to Jewish Social Services

A Talmudic story tells of a man who planted a carob tree. Asked when he thought the tree would bear fruit, he replied, "After 70 years." Asked whether he expected to live that long, he responded, "I did not find the world desolate when I entered it, and as others planted before me so do I plant for those who will come after me."

Of the many ways in which people can contribute to Jewish Social Services, planned giving options offer donors unique and meaningful ways in which to support JSS's mission today while leaving a legacy for future generations. The benefits of planned giving stretch beyond the immediate need and help JSS prepare for the future by ensuring our ability to continually provide services and programs to enrich the lives of those we serve.

If you have not yet included JSS in your estate plans, the

following are some of the most popular methods to accomplish your goal. The advice of an attorney and qualified financial planner is necessary to assess your personal situation and help you to decide which options might best serve your goals.

- Charitable Bequest
- Gifts of Life Insurance
- Retirement Plan Assets

If you would like further information on providing for Jewish Social Services in your estate plans, please contact Terrie Goren, JSS Executive Director, 278-1808, ext. 235, [tgoren@jssmadison.org](mailto:tgoren@jssmadison.org). Jewish Social Services does not provide tax or legal advice and the information herein is not intended as legal, tax, or investment advice.

## Thank You for Your Tribute Gifts *(continued)*

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Harold Woolf

Flora Van Wormer

Charlotte Woolf

Arthur Wortzel

Clarice Wortzel

Minnie & Phillip Zulty

Wesley & Beverly Zulty

*Omission: Sylvia and Jack Brakarsh should have been listed as Friends of JSS in the Summer edition of Connections. We regret this omission.*

At JSS we never take anything for granted, least of all your generosity. This is the time of year that we hold our collective breath, hoping that we've earned the community's support and that folks who have not yet made an annual gift to JSS will do so by December 31.

Here's a comment from our most recent client satisfaction survey:

"JSS provided wonderful services! I rely on it like a lifeline."

This client is just one of the hundreds we help throughout the year. JSS' aim is to restore peace of mind to individuals and families who are experiencing the kind of difficulties that could befall any of us.

We're especially grateful to those of you who have already renewed and even raised your commitment through our annual Friends of JSS appeal. However, we have a way to go. More than half of JSS's donors typically make gifts in December, so you can understand why our peace of mind hinges on your confidence in JSS as a valued community asset.

If you're one of those who usually donate to JSS but have not done so yet, please know how significant your act of *tzedakah* is. Every dollar is important.

There is an envelope on this page for your convenience, or you can make a secure online donation to Friends of JSS at [www.jssmadison.org](http://www.jssmadison.org).

Thank you.



**JSS**

*Caring. Connections. Solutions.*

# Thank You

## Foundation For the Future Donors

The Foundation For the Future Endowment Fund was created in 2003 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of JSS. Four percent of the interest earned annually is utilized to support the work of the agency. It is vitally important that the *corpus* continues to grow. To make a gift to JSS that will last forever, contact Terrie Goren, 278-1808.

We thank the following donors for their additional gifts to the Foundation For the Future Endowment Fund in the last year:

Marcus and Sheila Cohen

Jacob E. Goldenberg Foundation  
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Louise Goldstein and Bruce Thomadsen

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Judy and Dan Pierotti

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Anonymous - 4

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Alfred Kadushin,

*in memory of Sylvia Kadushin*

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## Thank You Foundation For the Future Donors *(continued)*

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# Did you know...?

## ■ In 2009:

- 335 JSS clients were disabled
- 178 were unemployed
- 418 had incomes under \$18,000
- 144 received emergency financial assistance
- 286 participated in senior social and recreation programs
- 218 received immigration services
- 425 were over the age of 65.

- One hundred members of the community gathered at the Barbara Hochberg Center for Jewish Student Life for the JSS 32nd annual meeting, Sunday, October 31st, where they met JSS Executive Director, Terrie Goren and bid farewell to retiring staff social worker, Nancy Dodge. The Honorable Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson spoke eloquently on the topic "Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof—Justice, Justice, We Shall Pursue." Elizabeth Borsodi Wolkstein set the mood with lovely harp music.

## Jewish Social Services of Madison

Kris Rasmussen, *President*

Terrie Goren, *Executive Director*  
Ext. 235, tgoren@jssmadison.org

*Services to Individuals and Families Under Stress*  
Barbara Spierer, LCSW, Ext. 230  
spierer@jssmadison.org

### Senior Services

Francie Smith Saposnik, LCSW, Ext. 228  
francie@jssmadison.org

Nancy Dodge, LCSW, Ext. 226  
ndodge@jssmadison.org

*Immigrant & Refugee Services*  
Janice Beers, MA, Ext. 225  
janice@jssmadison.org

### Volunteer Services

Louise Goldstein, MSW CVA, Ext.227  
louise@jssmadison.org

*Vehicle Donations*  
Terrie Goren, Ext. 235  
tgoren@jssmadison.org

## Connections

Barbara Spierer, *Editor*

Christine Pavelko, *Designer*

Laura Fernandez, Terrie Goren,

Francie Smith Saposnik,

Norma Sober, Barbara Spierer

*Contributing Writers*



# Learn While You Earn

**L**aura Fernandez is a third year law student at UW-Madison. She has been working as a part-time bilingual assistant to Janice Beers, JSS Director of Immigrant and Refugee Services.

In 2002, when I graduated from UW-Madison, I had big plans to move abroad to teach English and pursue journalism in China. Life happens, however, and I found myself enjoying my job as a restaurant manager, a position I took to earn some money while I solidified my plans to go abroad.

I enjoyed the job mostly because of the opportunity to interact with the Spanish-speaking migrant workers who staffed the restaurant. In fact, I was re-living the cross-cultural experience that I had thrived on in China. I was fascinated to learn what had driven my co-workers to come north, and humbled by many of their difficult backgrounds.

Over time, one of the friendships grew into a relationship, and I eventually married my husband, Fermin. Without much thought, we pursued his legal status without the help of an attorney or someone like Janice. In retrospect, we were very naïve and quite lucky to have come out of it mostly unscathed. During the process, I became obsessed with immigration law. I became active on immigration forums, blogged and wrote about immigration topics, and got to know some innovative attorneys who work with people in our situation.

At the ripe old age of twenty-eight, I thought I was too old to go back to school. That sounds amazing now! Fortunately, I was frequently told otherwise. I decided I would go to law school if I could get into the University of Wisconsin, and the rest is history.

It has been an immense pleasure and an excellent experience working with Janice during the last six months. JSS offers an amazing and rare service to the Madison community, and I am truly honored to be a part of it. I have also learned a lot of practical things about the law that no one teaches you in law school.

I will be graduating in December, of 2010 and opening my own immigration law practice. I plan to specialize in family and humanitarian-based immigration law.

*Editor's Note: Best of luck, Laura. You have done excellent work during your time at JSS. We are delighted that you will remain in the immigration field.*



**Fermin, Laura and baby Gabriel Fernandez.**

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

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6434 Enterprise Lane  
Madison, WI 53719  
Tel (608) 278-1808  
Fax (608) 278-7814  
E-mail [jss@jssmadison.org](mailto:jss@jssmadison.org)  
[www.jssmadison.org](http://www.jssmadison.org)

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# Nancy Dodge: A Gifted Social Worker

By FRANCIE SMITH SAPOSNIK  
*Director of Senior Services*

For more than fourteen years, it has been a joy for Jewish Social Services to have Nancy Dodge as a part of us. Saying goodbye to her is not an easy thing. She has contributed much to each of us privileged to work with her—as colleagues or as clients. She has taught and exemplified the best of the social work profession with wisdom, wit, deep knowledge and ethics.

Nancy has been an integral part of the professional staff, as well as my valued colleague and friend. She has been a compassionate, competent social worker to countless people JSS serves. Prior to joining the JSS staff, Nancy was a star JSS volunteer. She has also been an active part of the community, spearheading work to support family caregivers. She has served in medical and home settings, been part of

the faculty of the UW School of Medicine, worked as a psychiatric social worker in the VA Hospital and as a social worker for Elder Care, now Care Wisconsin.

Nancy is a gifted social worker who has been a gift to all fortunate enough to know her. She is a down-to-earth, genuine person, whose smarts, humanity, and passion have combined to make JSS a better place. She blends the ability to work with diverse populations with her interest in diversity. She is competent in the culture and jargon of social work; at ease with Jewish culture and Yiddishisms; and has travelled widely, including Latin America, Africa, China and Europe.



Nancy's work with Holocaust survivors stands out as an example of loving, understanding care and commitment well beyond basic expectations. All of this is done with great respect and affection for people, with scrupulous regard for individual confidentiality, and with a creative touch.

In a 2006 *Connections* interview, Vera Croner z"l, said of Nancy, "Nancy always makes time for me. If she is not there, then I get lost. Nancy is part of my life now." And she was, until the very day that Vera died.

Nancy, there is no doubt that JSS will miss you, and be grateful to you. We send you on with the fondest of good wishes.