

CONNECTIONS

Karen Shevet Dinah performed a special *mitzvah* this year.



The Magic Shofar In Memory of Janice Wood

We thank Janice's family for allowing us to share this touching story

The *Magic Flute* tells an imaginary tale set in a distant time and place.

The *Magic Shofar* is a tale that is true and happened right here in Madison. It occurred on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, after JSS Director of Senior Services, Francie Smith Saposnik, responded to an urgent request from HospiceCare.

The HospiceCare social worker explained that they were assisting the family of Janice Wood, who was nearing the end of her life. Her Jewish son-in-law, Bill Mintz and his family were here from Chicago and felt that especially at this time, they needed to hear the *shofar*, a sound that Bill's wife, Judith, later said, "could open heavens' gates." However, they felt just as strongly that they couldn't leave Janice's side to visit a synagogue.

Just days before, Francie had heard Karen Shevet Dinah blow the *shofar* as they shared New Year's celebrations at the Oakwood Retirement Community and at a JSS sponsored Russian tea at Segoe Terrace. The closeness of the experience prompted Francie to ask Karen if she would volunteer yet again, as a special *mitzvah*.

So it was that immediately after services, Francie and Karen arrived at the hospice facility. With a sense of urgency, they asked at the desk to be directed to the room of Janice Wood. The nurse gently informed them that Janice had just passed away. There was a moment of silence and awe. "We know the family was looking forward to your coming today," the nurse said. "Perhaps this is not the time," Francie ventured. But then, Sister Georgeann Roudebush, a hospice chaplain who was standing outside the room, recognized Francie and gestured for them to come closer. Karen and Francie quietly joined those who were there to support the family.

Just then, Bill opened the door. He was grateful to see them. He seemed to feel it was still an

important time to fulfill the *mitzvah* of hearing the *shofar*. While he was trying to decide how to accomplish this, a freckled faced boy with bright red hair peeked around the door of an adjacent family lounge. He looked like a Norman Rockwell painting. It was Benjamin, Janice's twelve year old grandson. He was followed by his two siblings, nineteen year old Alice and seventeen year old Noah. Then the door to Janice's room opened again, as her bereaved daughter, Judith, joined the group. The closeness of the family and the weight of their loss became part of their determination to hear the *shofar*.

The whole experience took on a sense of *basheret*, that it was meant to be, when Bill looked at Karen and they realized that they had met recently at the First Unitarian Society on University Bay Drive, also the home of Congregation Shaarei Shamayim where Karen is affiliated. (She is also a member of Beth Israel). Bill explained that his childhood friend, Zaccai Lewis had built the congregation's Torah Ark. When Bill stopped to see it, Karen was rolling the Torah scroll, a special *mitzvah*, in preparation for the High Holy Day readings.

At Bill's suggestion, all proceeded to a very private, almost hidden garden near a pond with a lovely fountain cascading down. They stood at water's edge, under a tree bowing forward with some sort of fruit. Karen had brought a *Machzor*, and opened it to the *shofar* service. Benjamin, who was preparing for his upcoming *Bar Mitzvah*, peered into the book. He followed as Francie explained and read the calls, "*tikiah, ... shvarim, ... truah, ...*" Then he was ready to try it and he did very well indeed!

The ancient sounds seemed to mingle with the ripples on the pond as the wind picked up to join in. When the service ended, suddenly, the wind became stronger. The tree bent lower and showered all assembled with its heavy bounty of walnuts. As the nuts bounced around the pond, the family, feeling a need to return to their loved one, departed with thanks and hugs.

It had been a mystical moment in a place that seemed magical.

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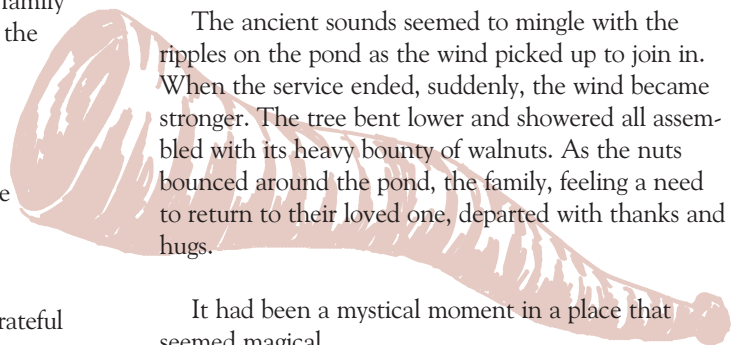
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Job Corps – One of America’s Better Kept Secrets

Charlie is a shy, likable eighteen year old. He doesn’t bring a lot of attention to himself and he gets along well with adults and peers. Of course, there are the usual teenage tussles with his mother, but nothing out of the ordinary.

Charlie has his challenges. His parents divorced when he was little. His father dropped out of his life. His mother worked very hard to hold the family together, but Charlie and his siblings grew up very poor. For his mom, putting food on the table meant using her food stamp card and visiting food pantries weekly.

Academics didn’t come easily for Charlie. He is bright, but he was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder and has a learning disability. Despite special education and some terrific mentors, he barely graduated from high school. He’s never held a job because he couldn’t seem to get it together to complete applications, even with help, and the job market for teens has been challenging these past few years.

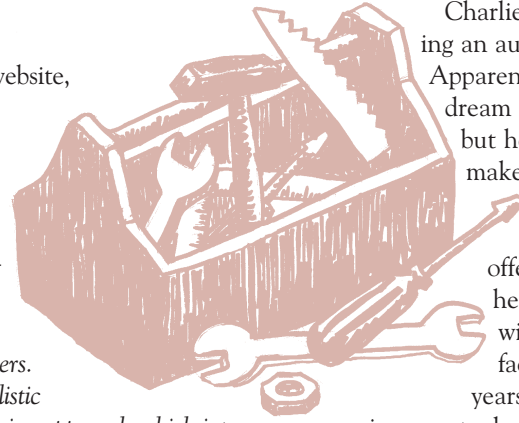
After graduation, Charlie knew that he couldn’t continue to live at home unless he could help his mother financially. She had recently been laid off and the situation was dire. The only solution that Charlie could think of was to join the military. This terrified his mother who was afraid that her son’s passivity and difficulty in staying focused would put him at more than the usual risk.

The JSS social worker had an idea. She knew of the federally sponsored Job Corps, didn’t know much about it, but thought it might be a real option for Charlie. So, she got to work, educating herself. She went to the website, www.jobcorps.gov and started reading. With the help of one of his mentors, she introduced Charlie to the idea and he liked it.

According to the website, *“Through a nationwide network of campuses, Job Corps offers a comprehensive array of career development services to at-risk young women and men, ages 16 to 24, to prepare them for successful careers. Job Corps employs a holistic career development training approach which integrates the teaching of academic, vocational, employability skills and social competencies through a combination of classroom, practical and basic learning experiences to prepare youth for stable, long-term, high-paying jobs.”*

Next the social worker contacted the regional Job Corps representative and discussed Charlie’s situation. She was told that he sounded like an excellent candidate. The staffer provided a list of required documentation including a high school transcript, medical information, along with contact information for four references. The social worker spoke with Charlie, his mom and his mentors and began to collect

the information. She accompanied him to the orientation session. After that, Charlie was on his own. He scheduled a follow up appointment with the program representative and got himself there. As required, he kept in touch with her to track the progress of his application.



Charlie is interested in becoming an automobile mechanic. Apparently, this has been a dream of his for a long time, but he didn’t know how to make it happen. He was able to select a site in another state that offered this training and he has been accepted. He will live at the Job Corps facility for up to two years, in a very structured

environment where anyone using alcohol or drugs or breaking other codes of conduct will be dismissed. At the same time, those who follow the rules will receive a stipend, in addition to room, board, medical and dental care, training, mentoring and help in finding a job. There is also funding provided to travel home for a visit several times a year.

Charlie’s family, mentors and social worker are very excited that he has been given this opportunity. They all look forward to hearing good things. For Charlie’s part, he has already expressed his appreciation to everyone, has arrived at his site and tells us that he is thrilled to be a Job Corps participant.

Save the Date!

Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer in the Jewish Population

Joanne M Becker speaks at the Liesl Blockstein Lecture Sunday, February 12, 11:00 AM at Temple Beth El

Temple Beth El and Jewish Social Services are pleased to announce Joanne M. Becker will be the honored speaker at the 2012 Liesl M. Blockstein Annual Memorial Lecture on Sunday, February 12 at 11:00 am at Temple Beth El. Joanne’s talk is entitled, *Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer in the Jewish Population*. Joanne is a

Certified Genetics Counselor at the UW Oncology Genetics Center at UW Madison. She will be speaking on genetic counseling as it relates to cancer genes and the Jewish population. David M. Kushner, MD, UW Madison Carbone Cancer Center, will also be participating in the presentation. Please mark your calendar and be sure to join us.

The Liesl M. Blockstein Fund was established by her family as a memorial fund after her untimely death in 1986. The Fund supports two purposes: a scholar-

ship for a Wisconsin woman who chooses to study at the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in the fields of rabbinical studies, cantorial studies or education, and presenting an annual lecture at Temple Beth El. The Liesl Blockstein Memorial Lecture series annually honors a Wisconsin woman involved in politics, academics, the arts and/or cultural affairs to address our community. This lecture is co-sponsored by Temple Beth El and Jewish Social Services of Madison in which Liesl was actively involved.

Thank You

for Your Tribute Gifts

The following contributions were made between July 1st, 2011 and September 30th, 2011

IN HONOR OF:

Natalie Borenstein
Sol & Corlie Blumenfeld
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Julita Jankowska
Bev Donenberg
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Jeffrey & Marcy Kushner
Leah Kessel, Speedy Recovery
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Ronald & Harriet Dinerstein
Darlene & Stuart Schwartz, grandson Benjamin
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Elliot & Marlynn Dorff
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Livia Siroky Asher

IN MEMORY OF:

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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)*

Irving Ginis

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**Julia Lakritz Immigration Services Fund*

It has been a tough year, and JSS clients have felt it. We know that there are many families that are living on tighter budgets due to layoffs, changes in benefits, and increases in daily living expenses. And yes, JSS is feeling the strain too. We strive to treat everyone that enters our door the way in which we would expect our own families to be treated.

We also 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 have earned the community's support and that those who have not yet made a gift to the Friends Campaign will do so by December 31.

We are especially grateful to those of you who have already renewed and even raised your commitment through the Friends Campaign. However, we have \$100,000 more to reach our goal. More than half of JSS donors typically send in their gifts in December.

Raising these funds ensures that JSS can meet the needs of an anticipated 1,000 clients in 2012.

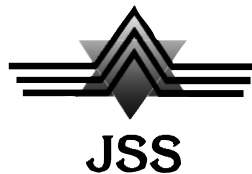
If you are one of those who usually donate to JSS but have not done so yet, please know how significant your gift is. Every dollar is important in helping us reach our Friends Campaign goal.

Here is a comment from our most recent satisfaction survey:

"I am extremely satisfied with all your help! I always keep you in my mind like I do my family; where I can share not only problems... but joy too."

For your convenience, an envelope is included in this issue of Connections. Or, you can make a secure donation online at www.jssmadison.org.

Thank you.



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
Betsy Goldenberg Haimson, Director

Louise Goldstein and Bruce Thomadsen
Betsy and Bezalel Haimson
Judy and Dan Pierotti

Jane and Evan Pizer

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*in memory of Harry J.
and Belle Goodman*
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in memory of Samuel Greenbaum
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Nancy and Jesse Ishikawa
Deborah Kades

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in memory of Sylvia Kadushin
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Howard and Judy Landsman
Lawrence and Jean Landweber
Stanley Langer
Mark and Ilene Laufman
Roberta and James Lazarz
Phyllis Lefcowitz
Rosalind Levin

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Did you know...?

- Both Louise Goldstein and Janice Beers have received hard earned re-certifications, Louise as a Certified Volunteer Manager and Janice as an Accredited Representative with the Federal Board of Immigration Appeals.
- Once again families of the Madison Jewish Community Day School have donated food items to be distributed among JSS clients in need. We thank the students and their parents for this *mitzvah*, especially during these trying economic times.
- In 2010, 452 JSS clients were age 65 and over, 431 were between the ages of 35-64, 430 had incomes under \$25,000, 411 were retired, 357 were disabled, and 104 were unemployed.

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Barbara Spierer
Contributing Writers

Leave a Legacy to Jewish Social Services

The Tithe

Once there was a pious farmer who owned a large field. Every year the field yielded a thousand measures of grain, of which the farmer set aside one hundred measures as a tithe for the needy.

When he was about to die, the man called his son and said to him, "My son, I am leaving this field to you. Be careful to tithe each year, for that is why the field has rewarded me so well."

The year of the father's death, the field produced a thousand measures, as it had always done, and the son set aside one hundred measures for the needy. But the next year he set aside only ninety measures, and the field produced less at the next harvest. Each year he decreased the measures he set aside, and each year the harvest was poorer. Finally the field yielded only one hundred measures.

His relatives came to see him wearing their finest holiday clothes.

"Why do you rejoice when I have suffered this misfortune?" he cried. "You should have compassion for me!"

"Why should we not rejoice?" they replied. "Before you were the householder, your father made sure that the needy received the tithe. But now you are the needy who need the tithe as your field only produces a tenth of what it once did."

Chastened by their words, the son tithed fully that year. The following year, the field once more produced a thousand

measures of grain, as it had in the days of his father.

—taken from *THE CLASSIC TALES; 4000 Years of Jewish Lore* by Ellen Frankel

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. Jewish Social Services does not provide tax or legal advice and the information herein is not intended as legal, tax, or investment advice.

IRA Charitable Rollover Option Extended Through 2011

You can transfer funds directly from your IRA, tax-free, as a gift to Jewish Social Services of Madison through December 31, 2011.

The compromise tax bill ("Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Authorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010") extends until December 31, 2011, a provision known as the "Charitable IRA Rollover" which allows taxpayers age 70_ or older to make tax-free transfers (of up to \$100,000 per year) directly

from their IRA to charities.

The IRA Rollover was first enacted in 2006 as part of the Pension Protection Act. The provision allows individuals aged 70^{1/2} and older to donate up to \$100,000 from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to public charities without having to count the distribution as taxable income.

Jewish Social Services does not provide tax or legal advice and the information herein is not intended as legal, tax, or investment advice.

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VOLUNTEER CONNECTION

Leland Potter: Driving "Miss Daisy"

Many JSS volunteers are looking for a way to step out of their familiar routine and take on something that is low stress, but at the same time, meaningful. Volunteer driver Leland Potter's story combines both elements.

Leland is a social worker who came to JSS in 2008 to volunteer for the Driver Connection. He worked for a few years for Columbia County Child Protective Services, spending a lot of time with scared, confused and often resentful parents and children. He now works for Jefferson County Family Court Services, completing custody studies of divorcing parents and offering custody and placement mediation. Once again, he finds himself in very challenging situations where poverty, neglect and abuse are sad realities. While Leland is pleased to note that his success rate in mediating these extremely difficult situations exceeds 50%, this is work that can be hard on the soul.

At JSS Volunteer Manager, Louise Goldstein matched Leland with a energetic, upbeat senior who resettled in Madison from

another country. Her family moved out of state some years ago, so she is especially appreciative of this service.

Leland enjoys exploring cultural differences by going to ethnic stores that he might never have known about. He loves hearing the fascinating tales from his passenger about how she lived through times that he only learned about in history class.

Leland finds that, although they have had very different life experiences, he and "Miss Daisy" still come together through their "common humanity." The conversation never lags and he has an appreciation for her "grandmotherly advice."

Leland and his companion shared a laugh when he brought his dog along on one outing and before they knew it, the dog made a fast meal out of a just purchased loaf of bread! That was the first and last shopping trip for his pet.

The JSS Driver Connection is always in need of volunteers. As the population of seniors continues to grow, that need will be even greater. Think about how you might feel if you were no longer able to drive, especially in this climate. Then consider joining the ranks of the Driver Connection. A small amount of time can make a very big difference.

Turn your tzoris into a mitzvah –
a charitable gift to Jewish Social Services and help individuals in critical need:

- Frail elders
- Individuals with disabilities
- Troubled families
- Refugees and Immigrants
- And hundreds of others of your neighbors, friends and relatives



It's easy—with your vehicle title in hand—call us! Towing is free!
Jewish Social Services, 278-1808