



National Council of Jewish Women Greater New Orleans Section

Bulletin

www.NCJWneworleans.org

October 2020

The Treasure Hunt for Nazi Looted Art

Between 1933 and 1945 thousands of paintings and other art objects were stolen by the Nazis. Museums and homes, mostly Jewish, were systematically looted, and the artwork stored often in caves and salt mines.

Now the NCJW Membership Committee is presenting a webinar addressing this subject entitled "The Treasure Hunt for Nazi Looted Art". Our speaker Chrissy Gregg, Assistant Director of Distance Learning at The National WWII Museum in New Orleans, will focus on the story of the tracing and rescue of priceless works of art.

The Jewish Federation, GNO, has agreed to partner with NCJW on the program, which will be moderated by Kenneth Hoffman, Executive Director of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. "This should be a fascinating presentation," stated Patty Barnett, the event chair.

The webinar will take place on Thursday, November 5th at 7:00 pm and is free to all members and those interested in exploring membership in NCJW. For further information or to register, please see our website at NCJWNewOrleans.org.



Where the Nazis Hid \$3.5 Billion of Stolen Art

In the spring of 1945, with the Third Reich crumbling, the Nazis hid their stolen art in a sealed salt mine. When U.S. troops arrived, they found that the opening to the mine had been destroyed.

General Meeting

A colorful poster for a General Meeting. The background is a vibrant, abstract painting with splashes of red, yellow, blue, and green. The text is overlaid on this background. At the top, it says 'JOIN US FOR OUR GENERAL MEETING' in large, white, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, in a yellow box, it says 'OCTOBER 19 | 7PM', 'NO COST', and 'ON ZOOM'. The main title of the meeting is 'Uncomfortable Conversations about Race: Racism and Ourselves' in white text. Below the title, it says 'FEATURING Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg' with a small portrait of her. At the bottom, the NCJW logo is shown next to the text 'Greater New Orleans Section'.

On October 19th NCJW held the first of our three General Meetings for the organizational year. (The other General Meetings are the Hannah Solomon luncheon on January 25th, 2021 and the Closing Meeting and Installation on May 23rd, 2021.)

Adjacent is the post card which was mailed to the whole membership announcing the event. It was a challenging topic, but was so sensitively and delicately executed by NCJW National's Scholar-in-Residence, Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg, that it was a great success.

We look forward to additional programming in the future dealing with the topic of Racism in all its complexities.

Presidential MESSAGE



Democracy, The Rule of Law and...Q Anon

If I am timing this right, a very important Presidential election is right around the corner. This moment leads me to reflect upon our Democracy, the Rule of Law we depend on, and our societal institutions which support that Democracy.

One of those institutions, the Supreme Court of the United States, has just taken a huge blow with the loss of stalwart fighter for Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who died on erev Rosh Hashanah. Justice Ginsberg believed passionately in our country, our system of Democracy, and the Rule of Law. She was a righteous Jew who never acted with the expectation of an eternal reward. She always worked tirelessly to be a good person because Justice in this life is its own reward. She will be sorely missed.

The dictionary defines Democracy as a system of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people being governed. In large societies such as ours, this is typically accomplished through elected representatives.

The Rule of Law, which is basic to the survival of our Democracy, is the concept under which all persons, institutions and entities are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated.

There are four guiding principles of the Rule of Law:

- Supremacy of the Law
- Equality Before the Law
- Accountability to the Law
- Fairness in Application of the Law

In addition, the Rule of Law requires separation of powers, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness, and transparency.

The Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of our country and delineates, with all its amendments, the national frame of government of the United States. All laws, both national and local flow from this bedrock document.

The basis for guaranteeing that our Democracy and the Rule of Law will survive is through citizens being part of the common weal and exercising our participation in decision-making through voting.

Never has the right to vote been under fiercer assault through drastic efforts at voter suppression. We at NCJW have taken our cue from Justice Ginsberg regarding the vital importance of voting. We have fought to register voters wherever we can find them. We have promoted voting by mail and early voting. We have organized non-partisan efforts urging people to exercise their right to vote. Hopefully our efforts will not be in vain.

One of the strangest anomalies of our present democratic climate is the phenomenon of "Q Anon." Who would

(continued on page 6)

NCJW Scholarship Program A Recipient's Testimonial



In 2002, Jody Portnoff moved to New Orleans on a whim and quickly turned to the Jewish community to make connections. While working at the Jewish Community Center, she made the decision to attend the Tulane School of Social Work to obtain a Master's Degree. Strapped with student loans from undergraduate school, she began to explore options for making the financial commitment a viable one. She learned about NCJW's Scholarship program and contacted one of the co-chairs, Nancy Timm. That co-chair was the author of this article, and I am here to tell you what

Jody (now Jody Braunig) would like others to know about her experience as a recipient.

The Scholarship Committee, made up of about 15 NCJW members, has a policy of respecting the confidentiality of applicants and recipients. When someone applies and is interviewed by a co-chair, the application is presented to the committee with as much anonymity as possible. Jody has waived confidentiality in order to promote the Scholarship Program. She stated "I want others to have educational opportunities and I plan on paying back when I can." At present, she is donating her time, passion, and energy to NCJW to show her gratitude. As part of giving back Jody recently chaired the Board retreat. "NCJW got me started with my career," she says, "and I will

always be thankful for the scholarship I received."

The Scholarship Program depends on donations to help fund the service, and although the allocations are grants, our hope is that past recipients will remember the program when they want to honor or memorialize someone. All the program's recipients meet the following requirements:

1. Jewish
2. Live in the greater New Orleans area
3. Demonstrate financial need
4. Have a realistic plan for their educational goals

To make a donation, please send to:
Nancy B. Timm
5708 Garfield Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

WHAT'S BETWEEN THE COVERS ... IN THE **BLUE BOOK**?



... Phone numbers, addresses, information, forms, advertisers and note space – all located by using handy black tabs on sides of pages to guide you.

Want a listing of officers, Past Presidents, award winners or a board member's phone number? See the **Administration** side tabs.

Interested in learning about past and present NCJW national and local services? Find the **Services** tab.

Need to contact a national or state representative, a local council person? **Governmental Contacts** tab will provide the needed information.

Desire the address, phone or even email of our local synagogues and communal organizations? Go to **Jewish Community Contacts** tab.

Want to remember or honor a dear friend or relative? Just want to contribute? Find the fund descriptions and funds' forms through using the **Forms and Funds** tab.

Signing up a new member? Making a change in your own directory listing? Again, turn to the **Forms and Funds** tab.

Need the phone number, address or email of a member? Look under the alphabetized **Directory** side tabs.

Want to call, email or drop into the NCJW office? See the phone, hours, email all under **Advertiser/Thank You/Office Information** tab at end of white pages.

Looking for the phone or ad page number for one of our business advertisers? Want to enjoy messages sent by members? Turn to blue pages at back of book and find tab **Index of Advertisers**.

Need a place to jot down a friend's phone number or address change occurring since directory was published? Go to last blue page with **Notes** tab.

Our Blue Book aims to meet all our members' needs!

HAPPY HUNTING!

**Contact Barbara Greenberg, Chair, if have any questions.
504 236-5411 or mgreenb747@aol.com**

Requesting Hannah Solomon nominations!

Our upcoming Hannah G. Solomon award event is slated for January 25, 2021.

As always, this annual prestigious award is bestowed upon an individual who has made a positive impact not just in our Section, but in our community at large.

The criteria for the award is a person who:

1. Has brought about important programs and services through his or her leadership in a volunteer capacity.
2. Is known for his or her interest, activity and stands on issues with which NCJW is in sympathy.
3. Has been a catalyst for social change.

All nominations must be in writing and include a resume and rationale for nominating the candidate.

Nominations are due by November 30.

Please mail to Vivian Cahn, 2934 DeSoto St., New Orleans, LA 70119 or email to vcahn@cox.net.



Birthday Dollars Donors

Louise Glickman, in honor of Susan Hess for her birthday and hard work & commitment

Michele Goldfarb
Cathy Glaser

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Greater New Orleans Section

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Anti-Semitism Webinar

The final webinar in our Plague of Anti-Semitism series took place on October 4th with the presentation of “Is Anti-Zionism the latest form of Anti-Semitism?” with special guest speaker Rabbi Ammiel Hirsch, Senior Rabbi of the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in New York City.

This ambitious project was comprised of four webinars presenting an informative overview of the historical and contemporary issues involved in anti-Semitism, and its current national and global upsurge. Rabbi Hirsch noted that anti-Semitism is one virus with which the Jewish people have always had to contend. In addressing the question of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, Rabbi Hirsch said that the longing for a Jewish homeland begins in the Bible with over 3000 Biblical references relating to the establishment of a land for the Jewish people. Every Jewish person is familiar with at least one of these references with the wish for “Next year in Jerusalem” during Passover.

Moving to contemporary times and the question of anti-Semitism, Rabbi Hirsch

said the community should exercise caution in assuming that anti-Zionist positions are always inherently anti-Semitic. However, due to the long history of prejudice and persecution, Jews have developed keen instincts enabling them to recognize canards and antisemitic attacks on Israel. He believes there must be a response, and the response can only be generated if the community is informed and possesses a solid understanding of Zionism, anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

Preceding Rabbi Hirsch, in August Steven Pomerantz, a former assistant Director of the FBI and former Director of Counterterrorism, spoke to the issue of hate crimes as defined by the FBI. In an excellent summation of the webinar appearing in the September issue of *Southern Jewish Living*, reporter Richard Friedman observed that Pomerantz was “concerned about the stresses and turmoil taking place today in America; from the frustration and anxiety that the Covid pandemic has triggered, to the racial turmoil that has erupted in the streets,

to what is expected to be a bruising Presidential election. ‘This is a volatile mix,’ he said, suggesting that historically when there is “volatility and turmoil” Jews are caught in the maelstrom.”

Partnering with Hadassah, Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans, and the Anti-Defamation League with moderator Aaron Ahlquist, the webinars more than met their goal of providing informative and thought-provoking expert presentations to engage the community in facing a critical issue. Committee members who contributed to the success of the series were Susan Hess, Marsha Halteman, Vivian Cahn, Robin Giarrusso, Kathy Shepard, Dana Shepard, Karen Sher, Shayna Blum, Loel Samuel, Barbara Kaplinsky, Ana Gershanik, and Lis Kahn.

For information on the entire series or to log on to the recorded presentations, please contact our office at 504-861-7788.

THE CURRENT STATE OF LATINX AMERICA

This summer Ana Gershanik attended virtual sessions of a Unidos US conference. This group is our country's largest Latino nonprofit advocacy organization promoting progressive changes in public policy that include immigration reform, a path for citizenship for undocumented immigrants, and reduced deportation.

The biggest challenge for the Latinx community is the current pandemic. Latinos constitute 18% of the U.S. population, and 33 % of those affected by COVID-19. Janet Murguia, President and CEO of Unidos US, was joined by prominent national leaders and governors of states with large Hispanic populations such as Gov. Tom Wolf of Pennsylvania and Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico, to address the most pressing issues that Latinos

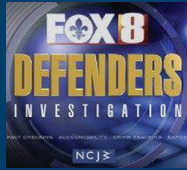
face from the pandemic - from health and economic impact, to appropriate access to health care. Many live in high-risk neighborhoods as well as in multigenerational households where grandparents raise their grandchildren and are at higher risk for infection.

There is also a large proportion of Latinos who are essential workers or work in unsafe environments where they risk greater exposure to the virus.

In a panel shared by Murguia, and Marc Morial, former Mayor of New Orleans and current President of the National Urban League, both emphasized the need for joining forces to collaborate in fighting police discrimination towards Black and Latinos and racial injustice. “Tu lucha es mi lucha”, said Murguia (“Your fight is my fight”) talking about

the solidarity of the Latino community with the Black community and the importance of working together in civic endeavors such as the current efforts of the Urban League and Unidos US in registering voters.

Final recommendations of the Conference were the protection of undocumented immigrants and their families; the need for the government to provide some kind of assistance such as “the heroes act” that helps families of mixed status; the role of the media to highlight essential workers who are bringing food to our tables so their rights will be protected and they will not be deported; and to continue advocating for those immigrants who contribute to our economy but do not have the benefits to protect them.



FOX 8 AND NCJW CELEBRATE THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF “FOX 8 DEFENDERS,” THE AWARD-WINNING CONSUMER ADVOCACY PROGRAM.



Susan Tramontana

“Fox 8 Defenders” is NCJW’s longest running and most visible community service project, and one of its most successful endeavors. This has been made possible because of more than 65 NCJW volunteers

who have spent countless hours helping consumers in the greater New Orleans area. “Fox 8 Defenders” tackles a host of issues that affect people in communities across WVUE’s viewing area, from the Northshore to the Southshore., and from the River Parishes to the Bayou Region.

The program has fielded well over 15,000 calls and emails in the past 10 years, saving Louisiana consumers nearly \$3 million dollars in relief. Fox 8 and NCJW

educate viewers by alerting them to the latest IRS, Social Security, travel, and other scams. When NCJW volunteers believe it to be necessary, a FOX 8 Defenders investigation is conducted.

This program was brought back to the Greater New Orleans Section from the NCJW Convention in St. Louis almost 27 years ago by Hannah Solomon recipient and past Section President Babette “Babs” Isaacson. It was first hosted by WDSU as “Six On Your Side.” With help from Lois Shepard, the program grew through the years, receiving recognition and awards, including a Regional Edward R. Murrow award.

The joint venture with FOX 8 has been fulfilling and rewarding.

Shelley Brown, Anchor/Reporter at FOX 8, has been the Reporter for most of the years, and has earned well-deserved recognition from the Louisiana Associated Press and the New Orleans Press Club, and also received a Suncoast Emmy along with the Regional Edward R. Murrow Award, for the ongoing series “Limo Bus Investigation.”

Susan Tramontana, executive director for the past 15 years, summarized the purpose of the program: “For some people, we are their only hope for help. Their situation may not always make it on air, but our volunteers listen and work to point them in the right direction for resources that could offer help. We are a sounding board, a source of information, a source of help, and obviously a source of multiple successes,” she said.

Loel Samuel, past president of NCJW and a Life Member, became chairman of Fox 8 Defenders in 2016, succeeding Barbara Bresler and Babs Isaacson. “The Fox 8 Defender program more than fulfills NCJW’s mission of turning progressive ideals into action, and working for social justice,” she proudly says.

To further illustrate NCJW’s dedication to the Greater New Orleans community, NCJW volunteers have kept the program thriving despite having to work remotely during the pandemic. Despite these challenging times, NCJW volunteers in the early months of the pandemic logged over 500 calls a month - an almost 300% increase!

NCJW Executive Committee and Board Members

President	Susan Hess
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Development	Barbara Greenberg
Membership	Karen Sher
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Recording Secretary	Gail Chalew
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	Jessica Frankel
Ex-Officio	Barbara Kaplinsky
	Susan Kierr
Honorary Vice Presidents	Florence Schornstein
	Celia Katz
	Julanne Isaacson

ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

Term 2020-22

Reproductive Rights chair	Benay Bernstein
Advocacy Committee	Alysse Fuchs
Anti-Semitism Chair	Marsha Halteman
Stair Chair	Carol Newman
ADL Chair, Way co-chair	Al Page
Gala Chair	Tana Velen

Term 2019-2021

Member Involvement	Patty Barnett
Membership & Hannah Solomon Coms.	Rollie Rabin
NCJW Way Co-Chair	Ina Davis
Family Justice Center	Susie Jernigan
Personal Giving	Jenny Nathan Simoneaux
Advocacy Co-Chair	Alanna Rosenberg

Board Retreat

Due to COVID restrictions, we could not physically be together for the yearly NCJW New Orleans board retreat, but we didn’t want that to stop this important training opportunity! On Sunday, September 13th, Jody Portnoff Braunig led our section in a unique virtual board retreat entitled “A View from Our Window.”

With many of us stuck at home during the quarantine, we spent a lot of time gazing out of our windows. Windows give us an opportunity to look outside---to be aware of what’s happening in our environment, in our community and in our city.

During this board retreat, we not only had the opportunity to learn about each other by sharing the views from our own personal windows, we also reflected on the view from our local NCJW window. What do we envision for the future of NCJW New Orleans and what do we see as an opportunity?

The virtual board retreat focused on three objectives:

1. Building and nurturing relationships between new and returning board members.
2. Creating a shared understanding of the current state of the organization – our challenges and opportunities.
3. Inspiring and engaging all board members so they are excited about NCJW and their role in its success.

We are all looking through different windows, and we have different views, but we are here because we all see the same thing - the opportunity to make a difference and make a change for the betterment of our society.

BEST FRIENDS FOREVER PROGRAM



Deena Gerber



Leslie Becker Crane



Ashley Barriere

It's often said, "To have a friend, you have to be a friend." In the spirit of this sentiment, NCJW GNO hosted a Best Friends Forever (BFF) Zoom on Wednesday, September 30 at 7:00 PM.

According to Karen Sher, NCJW Membership Vice President and organizer of this program, this unique friendship-themed program's purpose was to:

- ✓ Shed light on the healing benefit of friendships,

- ✓ Demonstrate what it means to have a friend at all stages of life and,

- ✓ Explore that magical glue that keeps friends together.

Presenters included **Deena Gerber**, **Leslie Becker Crane** and **Ashley Barriere**. Gerber spoke on friendship from the vantage point of a grandmother and a former Tulane University Professor of Social Work. Leslie Becker Crane, a life strategist and confidence coach, talked about

friendship from the point of view of a millennial newlywed. New Orleans attorney Ashley Barriere, and a BFF to a large group of friends known as "the herd," moderated.

Our go-to people behind the scenes, helping to make this event possible were our wonderful stalwarts Kathy Shepard and Dana Shepard. Additional thanks go to Barbara Kaplinsky for publicity, and to Shayna Blum for designing the beautiful and appealing flyer.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER – (continued from page 2)

have thought that a group of right-wing conspiracy theorists which believes democrats are running a ring of pedophiles and cannibals (really???) out of the (non-existent) basement of a New York pizza parlor could actually not only exist, but thrive?

Of course this conspiracy theory is not the only one out there, but it is surely the most bizarre. So how does it keep on growing? According to Wired magazine, my "go-to" source for all things technical, whenever Q posts about the conspiracy he leaves oblique clues called "Q drops" which followers must interpret. To belong

to the Q Anon pack is to be part of a massive crowdsourcing project that sees itself as cracking a sinister mystery. In other words, Q Anon behaves in gaming parlance like an Alternative Reality Game, or ARG. ARG's are designed to be multi-platform scavenger hunts. Users consider them fun, but as in the case of Q Anon, they can spin dangerously out of control in this world of endless social media.

It is both horrifying as well as fascinating at the same time, and I will be watching closely as these events transpire.

Susan Hess



Champion Square voter registration event sponsored by the City Council – l to r: Matt Davis, Lilli Geltman, Susan Hess, Deena Gerber, Ina Davis, Sylvia Finger

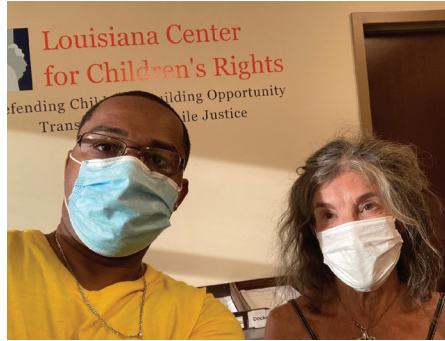
LCCR

Louisiana Center for Children's Rights (LCCR) has been actively responding to what's happening in New Orleans. Their office is closed and staff is working remotely. They are in touch with their 300 plus client families, many of whom had worked in the service industries. Access to food is a main concern, as is access to the internet to get their kids online learning and other entertainment activities. LCCR created an online resource site for the families, updated daily, and they make one-on-one check-ins with individuals.

LCCR attorneys have been adjusting to the closure of Orleans Parish Juvenile Court in mid-March. When the court closed, it suspended nearly all hearings with zero alternatives (i.e. remote hearings) established. Evidently Orleans Parish was the *only* parish in the entire state that did not have a Juvenile Court remote hearing plan in place. As a result, children arrested during the second half of March were being needlessly detained for longer periods and in environments that are higher risk for virus outbreak.

To address this, LCCR began working with the Mayor's Office to push the Juvenile Court toward developing hearing alternatives and easing the juvenile jail population. These efforts have begun working! The population at the Juvenile Justice Intervention Center has fallen from a peak of 49 children (above the 48 total capacity) in late March to 29 children this week.

We've heard that Louisiana's juvenile system is experiencing an outbreak of



Shon Williams and Susan Kierr

COVID-19. Shockingly, last week's data reflected that **half** of all COVID-19 cases for youth in detention nationally were located in Louisiana. Parents have had almost no access to their kids.

LCCR is urging Governor Edwards to issue an emergency executive order authorizing the immediate release of children in Louisiana's Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) custody, focusing on children currently being held for offenses that are not crimes of violence; who have served more than 50% of their sentence or adjudicated disposition; or who have less than one year remaining on their sentence or adjudicated disposition.

Shon Williams was sentenced to life as a juvenile. LCCR worked to obtain his release. He was such an impressive, intelligent, young man that the LCCR invited Shon to join the staff. He is now Outreach Coordinator and Project Assistant. Susan Kierr is NCJW's liaison to LCCR.

NCJW Cares

- ◆ In honor of NCJW
By Elene Miller Blotner
By Bob and Mindy Caplan
- ◆ In memory of Wendy Good
By Barbara Greenberg
- ◆ In memory of Shirley Haspel
By Barbara Greenberg
- ◆ In memory of Arielle Schwartz's mother, Roselyn B. Koretzky Schwartz
By Arielle Schwartz
- ◆ In memory of Lillian Kessler Koretzky and Helen Lipofsky Schwartz, grandmothers of Arielle Schwartz
By Arielle Schwartz

Scholarship Program Donations

- The Irma M. Isaacson Memorial Fund:
Harry Blumenthal -
in memory of Hannah Blumenthal
Amy and John Haspel -
a generous donation
Roland C. Bonin -
in honor of Hallie Timm
The Timm Family -
in honor of Marjorie Bissinger's 93rd birthday
The Sara B. Stone Educational Enrichment Fund:
Sue Singer -
in honor of Susan Kierr's award
in honor of Vivian Cahn's award
in memory of Wendy Good
in memory of Thaia Pick
The Clara and Roy Schwarz Memorial Book Fund:
Amy and John Haspel -
a generous donation

Welcome to our Newest Members!

July 1, 2020 – October 1, 2020

Please note their contact information in our upcoming directory.

Judy Barrasso
Ashley Barriere
Rand Foreman Bergman
Debbie Berins
Bonnie Chambliss
Rachel Chamness
Serena Deutch
Robin Isaacson DeWeese
Laurie Diamond
Bethany Friedman
Manya-Jean Gitter

Michelle Goehring
Emily Kupperman
Mara Kupperman
Jordan Lawrence
Carrie Marks
Sophie Oreck
Elizabeth Pereira
Susan Rosenblat
Dashka Roth
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National Council of Jewish Women
Greater New Orleans Section

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BLAST FROM THE PAST



In 1997 NCJW GNO turned 100 years old! What a milestone! The celebration was held in grand New Orleans fashion on the St. Charles Ave. streetcar. Recognize anyone? Were you there?