



National Council of Jewish Women

Greater New Orleans Section

Bulletin

www.NCJWneworleans.org

November/December 2021

October 18th Meeting Begins on a High Note!



Clare Burovac

The curtain rose recently on the Opening General Meeting of the NCJW-GNO Section, to reveal our new and esteemed leader, President Gail Pesses, wielding the gavel and conducting the business of NCJW. The special treat of the evening beckoned.

Clare Burovac, our guest speaker, delighted members, as she spoke about her life and what led her to become the first female to attain the top position of General and Artistic Director of the New Orleans Opera.

Ms. Burovac, undeniably a woman of substance with a vivacious personality and terrific sense of humor, wowed the more than forty attendees on Zoom with a talk filled with amazing facts about the New Orleans Opera, and details about how it is reaching out to the greater community to spread the joy of opera to young and old. Mesmerized by the story of Clare's exciting and unique career,

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The image (shown above) features members of The New Orleans Opera Chorus, guest soloists, members of OperaCreole, and the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. Entitled 'The Lacrimosa Project', it takes its name from a song in Mozart's masterpiece composition Requiem, composed in 1791. Lacrimosa is Latin for weeping and tearful. To view the full video, log onto <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkjqeuy8WVY>

"Neighbors Organizing Neighbors" Super Block Captains Program is the newest NCJW Community Service

"Neighbors Organizing Neighbors," a program of Together New Orleans (TNO), is the newest Community Service to be funded by the National Council of Jewish Women, GNO.

TNO is an umbrella organization of citizen institutions, committed to building a more powerful vehicle for citizen action in the Greater New Orleans area.

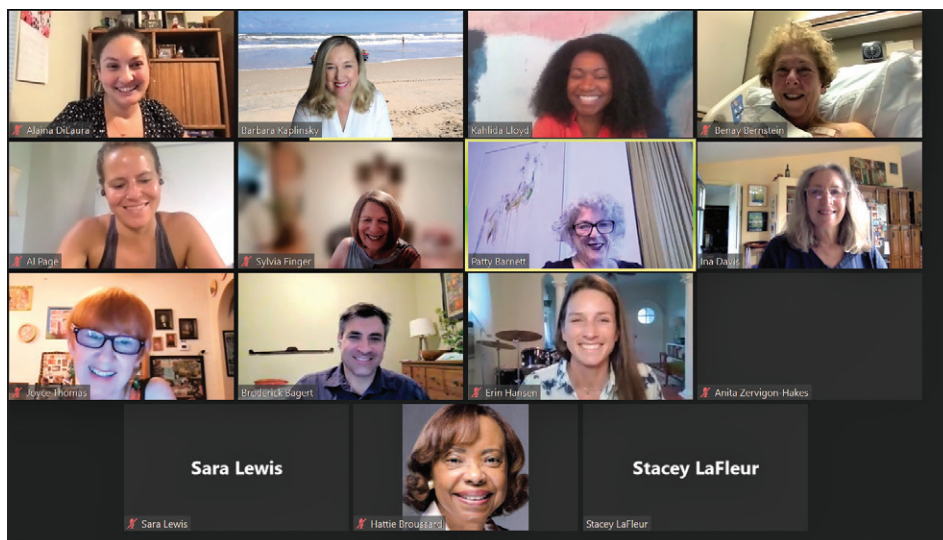
*This project is designed to engage **Super Block Captains** (SBC) in recruiting and training more than three hundred Block Captains who will coordinate voter mobilization efforts throughout New Orleans neighborhoods.

Sixteen Super Block Captains have been recruited from NCJW-GNO, the League of Women Voters and the voting arm of NCJW – Engaging New Voices and Voters. They will each recruit and supervise up to twenty 'on the

ground' Block Captains in an effort to increase voter turnout in this fall's City Council and subsequent elections. SBC responsibilities include confirming Block Captain volunteers, reminding them of key election dates, following up with them to ensure they are completing their voter list, and thanking them for their service following elections.

Barbara Kaplinsky is chairing the SBC effort. SBC leaders supporting the effort are **Sylvia Finger and Stacey LaFleur**, Co-Chairs of Engaging New Voices and Voters. Other SBCs are **Patty Barnett, Benay Bernstein, Hattie Broussard, Candes Carter, Tracey Couret, Ina Davis, Maddie Fireman, Sara Lewis, Ebony Morris, Al Page, Joyce Thomas, Judge Miriam Waltzer and Anita Zervigon-Hakes.**

* This is a purely grassroots/non-partisan effort and is not supporting any candidate or party.



Participating Super Block Captains, top row (l to r) Alaina DiLaura, Barbara Kaplinsky, Kahlida Lloyd and Benay Bernstein; second row (l to r) Al Page, Sylvia Finger, Patty Barnett and Ina Davis; third row (l to r) Joyce Thomas, Broderick Bagert, Erin Hansen, Anita Zervigon-Hakes; bottom row (l to r) Sara Lewis, Hattie Broussard and Stacey LaFleur. Missing from the screen shot are Candes Carter, Tracey Couret, Maddie Fireman, Ebony Morris, and Judge Miriam Waltzer

Presidential MESSAGE



By Gail Fenton Pesses

Why did you join NCJW? Maybe it was a family expectation, or you wanted/ needed to have a copy of our "Blue Book" Directory. Perhaps you were lured by the myriad

opportunities NCJW offers to make our community and world a better place. Was it because someone reached out and asked you to join? Or you wanted to meet other Jewish women and make new friends?

I had recently graduated from college and gotten married when I joined NCJW-GNO. Despite my best friend's mother (Grace Hudson) being president, I knew very little about the organization. My mother worked full time with my father in their business, leaving no time for volunteering. Her Blue Book was her vital link to the Jewish community, and she frequently commented on the importance of having one. I signed up.

Several friends joined at the same time as I did and all of us quickly became involved in our then evening branch, Moonlighters. My circle

of friends enlarged as I met women of all ages who shared my growing interest in making our community and world a better place. I attended a fabulous National Convention where I got to not only understand and appreciate the organization better, but got to really know our own local leaders, from every walk of life.

What has kept me "hooked" is that unlike some non-profit organizations, NCJW-GNO's focus and work has continued to evolve to meet the changing needs of women, families and children. As the role of women has changed over the last 125 years, NCJW has embraced our new and expanded opportunities in relationships, work and society. We now speak out on issues important to us, educate our members as well as others about issues pertinent to our lives and apply this knowledge when we adopt new community services. We work hard to remain relevant to the most pressing issues affecting women, children and families in today's society.

Something happened the other day when I was speaking to a Jewish woman. As soon as she found out that I was President of NCJW-GNO, she began to apologize for not being more active in our section, saying that she did not

have the time, worked long hours, had children. These were all very valid explanations. I responded, not by highlighting what she is missing, that she really should come, etc. I told her how important her membership is whether she is active or not. Because of her membership, I am able to tell Congressmen, Legislators, City Council Representatives and others that I represent nearly 1,000 members of our organization as I advocate for the changes we want and need.

Our members are our lifeblood and provide a rich source of information, passion and innovative ideas as we strive to build an even better world. Whether you are marching for abortion access, writing letters to congressperson and senators about vital pieces of legislation or just taking the time to read this bulletin, your membership is critically important.

As we begin to celebrate the 125th anniversary of our Section in 2022, I want to thank each of you for your contribution as a member of NCJW-GNO. Whatever your reason was for initially joining, we are so happy that we can still count you in our numbers and in our hearts.

"Our members are our lifeblood and provide a rich source of information, passion and innovative ideas as we strive to build an even better world."

Gail Pesses



We've are having the time of our lives; 125 years of service to our community

The NCJW was established in 1893 by Hannah G. Solomon. The New Orleans Section was created four years later in 1897. For 125 years, our Section has blended community services with community needs. We have established programs that demonstrate relevance and, often, the need for social and legislative change.

Happy 125th, NCJW-GNO!

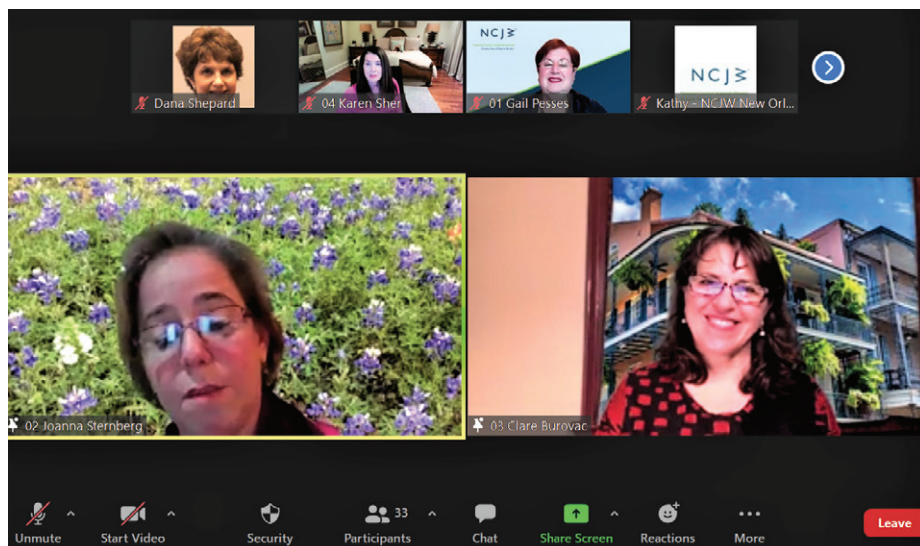


OCTOBER 18TH MEETING – (continued from page 1)

our members learned that the opera's work goes far beyond the stage with programming in communities and schools. One of the highlights of the meeting was a moving video excerpt from the Lacrimosa Project (The Lacrimosa is part of Mozart's Requiem) which was produced in memory of those members of

our community who we lost from COVID-19.

NCJW member Joanna Sternberg, Director of Development of the New Orleans Opera, moderated the program including assisting with the Q and A.



Leaders and Guest Speakers at the NCJW-GNO Section Opening General Meeting. Pictured on the top row (l to right) are Dana Shepard, event organizer Karen Sher, and NCJW President Gail Pesses. Middle row (l to r) Joanna Sternberg, Director of Development of the New Orleans Opera and Clare Burovac, General and Artistic Director of the New Orleans Opera.

NCJW®

National Council of Jewish Women
Greater New Orleans Section

President

Gail Pesses

Editor

Barbara Kaplinsky

VP of Administration

Judge Robin Giarrusso

Engaging New Voters and Voices Voter Registration Efforts



ENVV House of Worship Co-Chairs Candes Carter (Gert Town) and Barbara Kaplinsky register new voters at Broadmoor Church drive.

While NCJW plans for voter registration were disrupted by COVID and then IDA, we continue to work to make small strides forward.

NCJW member Ruth Bilbe is the team leader for ENVV high school voter registration. She delivered hundreds of

voter registration forms, together with instructions for both paper and online registration, to high schools around the Metro area. Over 120 completed forms were delivered to the Registrar of Voters. In addition, 2 high schools followed up with registering their 130 students online, for a total of 250 new voters.

NCJW member Barbara Kaplinsky, together with NCJW coalition partner Gert Town, represented by Candes Carter, have been working to set up voter registration events at houses of worship across the city. In addition, Barbara is working with Together New Orleans to build a volunteer base of block captains to increase voter turnout in every election (see related 'Super Block Captains' article).

NCJW recently partnered with Lower 9 on a Candidate forum, via Zoom, for high school students. NCJW member Jill Israel assisted with the technical details.

Although registration of newly naturalized citizens at the Department of Immigration has not yet fully resumed, NCJW did hold a registration event at the Courthouse in early

November, coordinated by NCJW member Sue Dicharry.

If you are interested in working with ENVV on any of these projects, check NCJW website or sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0c49afad2da5fd0-september>

You can also contact Sylvia Finger at 504-231-1398.



NCJW Board Member Barbara Kaplinsky registers new voters online at Voter Registration Drive.

Ruth Sent Us

By Maddie Fireman

Hundreds of New Orleanians, including our own NCJW members, gathered for an abortion rights rally and march on October 2. It was one of many across the country organized by The Women's March Movement, and this year women and allies rallied ahead of the Mississippi case to be heard by the Supreme Court. Women carried signs reading "Always My Choice," "I'm an Angry Black Woman," and "Ruth Sent Me," in honor of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, of blessed memory.

Marchers protested the Supreme Court's unsigned order refusing to block an anti-abortion rights law in Texas, as well as an upcoming case from Mississippi. Louisiana's only three abortion clinics are seeing a significant increase in patients travelling from Texas.

On December 1, the Supreme Court will hear arguments from Mississippi. This case will decide whether all state laws that ban pre-viability abortions are unconstitutional. *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* is one in a long series of cases meant to challenge *Roe v. Wade*.

Our friends at Lift Louisiana laid out the dangers of this law:

- There is no way the court can uphold Mississippi's ban without overturning *Roe's* core holding — that every pregnant person has the right to decide whether to continue their pregnancy prior to viability.
- If *Roe* were overturned, twenty-four states could prohibit abortion outright and eleven states, including Louisiana, have "trigger bans" in place, which would ban abortion immediately.
- The Louisiana 15-week ban, passed in 2018, rests on what the Supreme Court decides in this case.
- The people hurt most by abortion restrictions are those who already face barriers to accessing health care—including women, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), and those working to make ends meet.

In a statement in support of a lawsuit against the Texas abortion ban, Sheila

Katz, CEO of NCJW, had this to say.

"National Council of Jewish Women is committed to increasing abortion access because we are a Jewish organization, not despite it. Our tradition views abortion as essential health care, not only permitted but in some cases commanded when a life is at risk."

Calls to action are forthcoming! We will be ready!



We've are having the time of our lives; 125 years of service to our community

Helping our community's children has always been a priority of NCJW. During the war and early post war years NCJW volunteers were deeply involved with smoothing the way for the flood of refugees into this country. They met them at the docks...at all hours of the day or night... providing them with food, lodging and transportation.

Happy 125th NCJW-GNO!



Local activists march for the pro-choice cause of our lifetime



Susan Hess, ex-officio President of NCJW, pictured here (center) rallied with hundreds of New Orleanians at an October 2nd abortion rights march, one of many across the country organized by The Women's March Movement.



Call for Donations of Gently Used Clothing!

After a long couple of years of dealing with the pandemic, and now the aftermath of Hurricane Ida, people are desperately in need of many basic items, including clothing. All forms of dress, casual and holiday clothing are needed. After all, everyone deserves to look their best.

The mission of **Sister Hearts Thrift Store & Decarceration Program** is "Helping Individuals Find the Greatness Inside Themselves". This re-entry program offers transitional housing and support in Arabi to women released from prison. It is supported by an NCJW community services allocation, and by donations and volunteer efforts.

Sister Hearts is encouraging NCJW members to clean out their closets and look for gently used clothing, shoes or accessories to donate to their clients.

People can drop off their donations to Lilli Geltman at her home. Lilli will pick up clothing from people only if they cannot lift the bag themselves or who are no longer driving. Contact Lilli at LHGeltman@gmail.com (610) 999-9204 to donate or get involved with Sister Hearts.



NCJW linking arms with Sharsheret to Support Breast Cancer Survivors

NCJW is planning an event with Sharsheret - an organization supporting Jewish women diagnosed with breast cancer and ovarian cancer. Sharsheret provides healthcare resources, financial assistance, communal support, and educational programs to women and their families in the U.S.

As Ashkenazi Jews are at higher risk of carrying a BRCA gene mutation,

Sharsheret's focus is with young Jewish women and families.

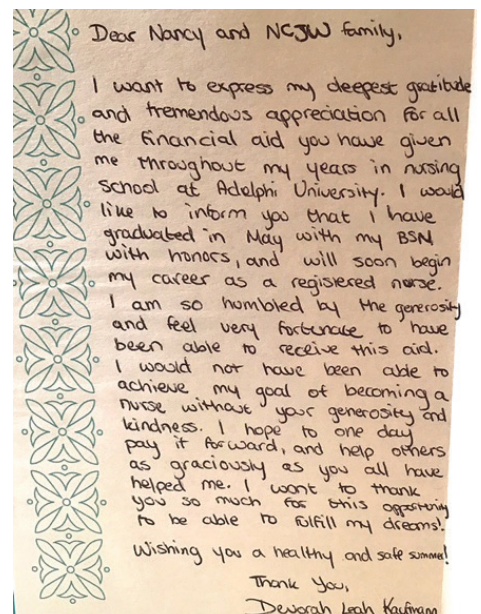
Sharsheret is Hebrew for "chain." In the Spring, we will look forward to linking arms to share this information. Keep your eyes open for this important program.

For more information or to get involved please call Lilli Geltman (610) 999-9204 or Nancy Pesses (504) 259-9123

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During the early 1900's, NCJW Academic scholarships were awarded to Jewish children, which continues today. Lunches and truancy support for public school children were provided. And new immigrants were taught English.

Happy 125th NCJW-GNO!



NCJW 125

SAVE THE DATE!!

NCJW GREATER NEW ORLEANS SECTION
CELEBRATES OUR 125th ANNIVERSARY

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2022
HIGGINS HOTEL



**DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE
AN ANGEL BALL HOSTESS?**

WE WANT YOU TO BE ONE OF OUR TABLE HOSTESSES FOR OUR AMAZING SALUTE TO ANGEL BALL ON APRIL 9, 2022

**H--HAPPY AND HOSPITABLE
O--ORIGINAL AND ORGANIZED
S--SAVVY, SILLY AND SERIOUS (SOMETIMES)
T--TERRIFIC AND TALENTED
E--ELEGANT, EAGER, AND ENTHUSIASTIC
S--SPECIAL AND SOMEBODY EVERYONE ADORES
S--SENSIBLE, LIKE TO SMILE, AND SPREAD SUNSHINE**

WANT TO BE THE HOSTESS WITH THE MOSTEST AT THE EVENT OF THE YEAR –
NCJW 125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION SALUTE TO ANGEL BALL? CREATE A
TABLE OF FUN FOLKS TO CELEBRATE AND MAKE MEMORIES WITH YOU!

**CALL OR TEXT FOR MORE DETAILS: KAREN SHER,
504-723-5492, TRICIA KIRSCHMAN, 504-231-7963,
OR JESS BACH, 310-927-6377.
PLEASE LET US KNOW BY DECEMBER 1, 2021.**

Welcome to our *Newest Members!

**Emma Herr
Katie Lasky**

**August 15 to October 15, 2021*

**NCJW Announces
New Legacy
Giving Project**

According to The Legacy Giving Committee, led by Co-Chairs Susan Hess and Carole Neff, NCJW-GNO Section will be launching a "Legacy Giving Project" in order to ensure the long-term goals of our organization. Stay tuned for more information.

NCJW Cares

Sheryl Title, Chairwoman

**In memory of Barbara Straus,
mother of Betty Smith**

◆ Dana and Louis Shepard

In honor of NCJW

◆ Harriet Handelman

◆ Tiffany Richardson

**In memory of Richard
Schornstein**

◆ Barbara and Mark Kaplinsky

◆ Toby and Joel Mendler

**Donations received as of October 18, 2021.*

The Season of Giving Has Begun!

NCJW's 2021-22 Personal Giving Campaign has begun! Check your mailboxes soon for our annual solicitation, which celebrates 125 years of the NCJW, Greater New Orleans Section. Personal Giving supports so many essential functions of our section, and every gift counts. Our goal this year is to increase participation at every level. Let's demonstrate the collective impact of NCJW-GNO through our generous contributions. Please contact Jenny Simoneaux Nathan at jenny.nathan@gmail.com, with questions or to get involved with the Personal Giving Team!

**Dust off your old
photo albums!**

We are looking for more pictures, newspaper articles and memorabilia from past Angel Balls. Please send your pictures to Digital Scrapbook Committee Jody or Sara at jodyportnoff@gmail.com or saramayeux@hotmail.com.





National Council of Jewish Women
Greater New Orleans Section

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(504) 861-7788

Have You Changed Your Address?

If so, please contact the office

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Fax (504) 861-0044

Email ncjwgno@gmail.com

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We've are having the time of our lives; 125 years of service to our community

During the forties, NCJW supplied funds and volunteers to the Charity Hospital Pediatric Recreation Program. We promoted child advocacy through The MAGIC TREE. This morphed into "Let's Tell a Story" which became the Number One children's show on WDSU! NCJW also tackled juvenile delinquency. Its 'Teen Town' recreation program for area teenagers led to the formation of New Orleans Recreation Department (NORD).

Happy 125th, NCJW-GNO!



Officers

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Al Page

Karen Sher

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