National Council of Jewish Women

Greater New Orleans Section

Bulletin

www.NCJWneworleans.org

May/June 2023



Sara Lewis to Receive NCIW Emerging Leader Award



NCJW of New Orleans is proud to recognize Sara Lewis with the NCJW Emerging Leader Award, given each year to a new member who shows great promise for future leadership.

The award will be presented to Lewis at the NCJW Closing Luncheon and Installation on June 11, 2023.

Sara has been a board member of NCJW since 2021. After volunteering on the development/ fundraiser and membership committees, she spent two years chairing the Community Services Committee which evaluates services for our section and determines the funding for each service. This past year, she chaired the Hannah Solomon Committee which chose the recipient of the honor as well as planned the community luncheon celebration.

According to President Gail Pesses, "Lewis is known to express concern for others and how they are doing, bringing policy down to person-to-person level."

Sara is an attorney, practicing in the areas of oil and gas, environmental and commercial litigation and is a partner with Wall, Cook & Lewis, LLC. She also is on the boards of Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans and the Crescent City Farmers' Market and is a member of Junior League.

Lewis grew up in Buffalo, NY, where her grandparents, who were Holocaust survivors, settled. Her sister attended Tulane, and now all of their immediate family lives in the New

Sara earned her law degree and mediation certificate at Tulane University, magna cum laude, receiving the Dean's Scholarship. She also completed an externship with Judge Federicka Wicker of the Louisiana Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal as well as an externship on domestic violence at Southeast Louisiana Legal Services with Judge Bernadette D'Souza.

Sara is married to Leonid Krasnozhon and they enjoy sharing their home with Honeysuckle, their rescue dog.

Presidential MESSAGE



We can finally fulfill our longing to be with other people that intensified over the last 2+ years. We can enjoy being outside in the fresh air by choice, enjoying the breezes, the scenery and being a part

of nature.

Long before we had websites, Facebook, Tik Tok and YouTube, I learned to appreciate the joy of connecting with the earth. Both of my parents were amateur gardeners. While they left the "heavy lifting" of landscaping to the pros, they would happily spend Sunday afternoons in the garden. Bushes would be pruned, weeds plucked and on occasion, seeds would be planted. I can recall how as a young child, my mother and I planted flower seeds along the little walkway leading to the front screened-in porch. Every day we would check for a glimpse of that first tiny leaf, knowing that soon we would be rewarded with more leaves and then flowers too. Spending an hour or two at Springtime would later reward us with the yellow, pink, orange and white flowers waving to us every time we came or left our house, year

I have continued our ritual of planting seeds in my garden every spring. As I dig in the mud, I am instantly connected to those years with my mother as well as the years yet to come. I have made a few minor changes to our ritual – adding music from my "gardening" playlist on my phone, always wearing sunscreen and a hat, inviting my dog to languish in the sun on the patio and this year, thinking about the end of my term as President of NGJW-GNO.

Becoming President in the waning days of the pandemic 2 years ago, there were still so many challenges that had no game play chart. The tension of remaining vigilant against Covid vs resuming opportunities for in-person events and relationships persisted.

Now, having weathered the Covid pandemic, we <u>are</u> able to gather, create, educate, advocate, and enjoy the work of our Section. Over the past 2+ years, like a well-loved garden, our section has been

able to continue our legacy of advocacy by cultivating necessary and innovative ways to accomplish our goals. We ensure the future of our organization by examining current challenges to our lives and planting seeds of change for future generations to tend. This "Faith in the future, Belief in action" truly is one of the strengths of our organization. As (continued on page 3)

Congratulations and Kudos to our NCIW FOX 8 Defenders!



Meg Gatto, WVUE anchor and FOX 8 Defenders reporter was the featured speaker at a recent NCJW Fox 8 Defenders Volunteers Luncheon. Gatto updated the team on her series which exposed deplorable living conditions at several local apartment complexes. These buildings are managed by a nonprofit religious organization

which is tax exempt yet receives millions in state funding. The religious organization is Tennessee's Global Ministries Foundation (GMF Preservation of Affordability Corporation).

This long running series has earned Gatto and the Defenders another Suncoast Regional Emmy nomination. Congrats to the Defenders Team for shedding light on this issue.

Welcomed to the Team were two new volunteers - - Meredith Cunningham and Michele Gelman. Both women come with years of work experience that will help in assisting New Orleans consumers. Gelman, a mother of two daughters, is a former business owner and a past president of Congregation Gates of Prayer. Cunningham, a mother of three, is an attorney.

 According to Susan Tramontana, Director, FOX 8 Defenders, WVUE TV plans to continue to support this wonderful outreach program to the greater New Orleans community.

"I've been with them almost thirty years now and it's been a pleasure," Tramontana said.
"My NCJW volunteers are magnanimous and gracious and so smart and caring...what could be better?!"

 NCJW FOX 8 Defenders are always looking for new volunteers to participate in this important work. If interested, contact Loel Samuel at <a href="https://linear.ncbi.nlm.n

You can see the story in the series by typing in this link to your URL.

https://www.fox8live.com/video/2023/04/14/fox-8-defenders-group-residents-sue-owners-willows-apartments/



NCJW FOX 8 Defenders honored with Emmy Nomination for outstanding work:

Pictured (left to right) are Michele Gelman, WVUE's Meg Gatto, Susan Constant, Ann Levine, WVUE's Susan Tramontana, Susan Kappelman, and Meredith Cunningham. Not pictured: Loel Samuel, NCJW/Fox 8 Defenders Volunteer Chair and Nora McAlister.



National Council of Jewish Women Greater New Orleans Section

PresidentGail Pesses

Editor

Barbara Kaplinsky

VP of Administration

Judge Robin Giarrusso

2022-23 Nominating Committee Report

New nominations

Officers		
Gail Chalew	President	2023-25
Jody Portnoff Braunig	Executive Vice-President	2023-25
Susan Constant	Vice-President	2023-25
Robin Giarrusso	Vice-President	2023-25
Sara Lewis	Vice-President	2023-25
Carol Newman	Vice-President	2023-25
Diana Mann	Corresponding Secretary	2023-25
Kathy Shepard	Treasurer	2023-25
Tricia Kirschman	Assistant Treasurer	2023-25
Gail F. Pesses	Ex-Officio Past President	2023-27

Continuing in Elected Positions

Vice-Presidents

Karen Sher Vice-President 2022-2024

Elected Board

Tana Velen 2022-2024

Ex-Officio Past President

Susan Hess 2021-2025

Honorary Vice Presidents

Julanne Isaacson Celia Katz

Florence Schornstein

New Elected Board Members 2023-2024 Elected Board I - year term

Robin Goldblum	2023-24
Barbara Greenberg	2023-24
Carole Neff	2023-24

2023-2025 Elected Board

Jessica Bach	2023-25
Sylvia Finger	2023-25
Lilli Geltman	2023-25
Amelia Halstead	2023-25
Ronda Kottle	2023-25
Nancy Pesses	2023-25
Killian Philipson	2023-25
Lynne Wasserman	2023-25

2023-2024 Nominating Committee

Chair	Barbara Kaplinsky
Ex Officio Chair	Ina W. Davis
Ex Officio Past President	Gail F. Pesses
From the Board	From the Membership
Cathy Glaser	Dana Keren
Dana Shepard	Rollie Rabin
Jenny N. Simoneaux	Pamela Steeg
Lynne Wasserman	Joanna Sternberg

Respectfully submitted:

Nominating Committee 2022-23

Chair – Ina Weber Davis Ex-Officio Chair – Loel Weil Samuel Ex-Officio Past President – Susan Hess

From The Board: Tricia Kirschman, Diana Mann,

Sheryl Title, Tana Velen

From the Membership: Jessica Bach, Leslie Fischman,

Sherri Tarr



PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

in gardening, we are able to enjoy the beauty of the greenery planted by those who came before us while offering continuity by planting new seeds now

I am grateful for the colorful bouquet of people I have had the opportunity to work with and learn from. I want to thank my Executive Committee and General Board members for all of the challenging work they have done over the past 2 years. As I have said in the past, each of you has made me look good! I could not have done this job without our Office Administrator Carolina with Office Chair Dana Shepard. I am greatly indebted to our esteemed past presidents who offered unwavering support, guidance, and friendship. And to my children, who are my flowers - A huge thank you to my daughter, Nancy Pesses who was the recipient of the NCJW seed early in her life and has blossomed into a capable leader of this section. Thank you

to my son, Danny Pesses, who has supported me by listening and occasioning giving me advice as well as solving too many "unique" IT situations to recall.

I want to wish incoming President, Gail Chalew, Mazel Tov. Gail's careful deliberations on matters and her ability to listen beyond the actual words said are going to stand her in good stead as she takes over leadership of this organization. Installation is June 11th. I hope to see you. I may just have a flower from my garden pinned to my dress.

Finally, I want to thank each of you for trusting the past and future of our organization in my hands. As most of you know, I love NCJW-GNO and what it stands for. It has been a pleasure to be your president. Now I think I will go outside and enjoy my garden.

Gail Pesses



So, do I really need a Will? Doesn't Louisiana law write it for me if I don't have one?

Yes, Louisiana law will write your Will for you if you die without one. But do you really want Louisiana law to decide who gets your assets and who administers your estate?

Let's look at an example: Your husband dies first, and you get an automatic "usufruct" over his one-half of the community property assets, and your children receive the "naked ownership interest." With that usufruct, you would not be able to sell or refinance your

"Another Way of NCJW Legacy Giving: Wills"

house without your children's consent, nor could you sell any securities without their consent. If you remarry, your usufruct ends at that time.

What if you have young children who are under the age of 18? If your husband dies without a Will, in addition to the Succession Proceeding, you would also have to open a Tutorship Proceeding to be appointed as your children's Tutrix and to get the power over what they have inherited. At the age of 18, you lose that legal control over their inheritance. If both you and your husband die with young children, the Court will appoint someone to raise your children and to manage their inheritance, which could be people that you wouldn't have

selected. Also, your children will have the right to receive their inheritance at the age of 18.

Of course, you can fix all of this with a well-drafted Will. Also, if you want to include NCJW to receive a legacy, you will need a Will to accomplish that. If you have already done your Will and want to make a legacy to NCJW, consider adding a simple provision with a Codicil to your Will. You should consult a competent estate planning attorney for specific advice.

NCJW can help answer your questions. Call either Co-Chairs, Susan Hess at (504) 615-5294 or Carole Neff at (504) 439-0052.



THANK YOU TO 2023 GIVENOLA DAY DONORS!

NCJW was proud to once again participate in the 2023 GiveNOLA Day held on Tuesday, May 2. We raised nearly \$4500 from 44 donors!!

Thank you to all our donors who supported NCJW on this year's GiveNOLA Day sponsored by the Greater New Orleans Foundation.

Justine Aguiar Harriet Aguiar-Netto Bradley & Daniela Bain Patricia Barnett Sheldon & Benay Bernstein Jody Braunig Gail Chalew Shellye Farber Michele & Vadim Gelman Ana & Juan Gershanik Robin Goldblum Seth & Julie Schwam Harris Amy Haspel Nathan Kanter Barbara Kaplinsky Betsy Threefoot Kaston Patricia Kirschman Emily & Zach Kupperman Dani & Vanessa Levine **Betty Moore** Leann & Ted Moses

Elizabeth Murov Mary Anne & David Mushatt Jenny Nathan Simoneaux Carole Cukell Neff Gail Fenton Pesses Nancy Pesses **Kyle Roberts** Loel Samuel **Emily Schoenbaum** Arielle Schwartz Fran Simon Lynn Skelding Joanna Sternberg Shelly Tyler Tana Velen Eileen Wallen Marjorie & Roy Weiner Arlene Wieder Joy Willig Colleen Yates Lisa & Gary Zoller

NCJW joins with others to spearhead Reproductive Justice Events

NCJW teamed up with Touro Synagogue, Lift Louisiana, 10,000 Women Louisiana, Hadassah, Temple Sinai, and Women of Reform Judaism - Southwest District (WRJSW) to organize Reproductive Justice events in May.

The events included a 'Repro Havdalah' and a gathering of Jewish delegates at the Capital for *Women on Wednesday*'s 'Religious Freedom Day' to advocate for reproductive rights.

At the Repro Havdalah at Touro Synagogue, supporters came together to build community, study Jewish texts, and prepare to support our Jewish delegation heading to Baton Rouge. This event is part of a larger NCJW national annual programming for Repro Shabbat and connects us to a wide network of activists and leaders who are supporting the work of NCJW throughout the country.

Women on Wednesday is a project of LIFT Louisiana, headed up by longtime NCJW member Michelle Erenberg. This project brings women up to the state capitol on a regular basis to strengthen advocacy skills and influence the legislative process to protect reproductive healthcare.

According to NCJW Public Affairs Vice President Al Page, Jewish teachings guide us to believe that abortion access is a critical piece of healthcare in a moral society.

"We believe that it is vital that our lawmakers and broader community understand this religious perspective," Page said. "When such access is denied, it is a violation of the religious freedom which our Constitution guarantees."

NCJW Israel: Needed Now More than Ever

With the election of the most radical right-wing government in Israel's history, the work of NCJW in Israel on behalf of women and children is more important than ever before.

In March, members of our section had the opportunity to meet Kalela Lancaster, Israel program director for NCJW, and to learn how NCJW is bringing its unique Jewish women's progressive approach to advancing social justice and gender equality in Israel. Brenda Brasher, former

New Orleanian and longtime NCJW Israel Chair, planned and moderated the Zoom program.

Brenda and Kalela shared their own experiences of protesting nightly the proposed judicial overhaul and its impact personally and on their families. Kalela also described the Israel programs made possible by our section's funds and those of other U.S. sections.

According to Gail Chalew, NCJW Program Chair, "We all left the Zoom session awed by these women's personal commitment to democracy in Israel and a better understanding of how NCJW Israel is bettering the lives of women and children there."

For those interested in directly helping Israeli organizations and activists make a meaningful impact to strengthen Israeli society and democracy, donate to NCJW's Israel Granting Program at ncjw. org/igp2023.





And, women are at the forefront of the struggle to defend Israeli democracy.











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Independent Journal

NCJW Scholarship Program

By Nancy Timm

The Scholarship Committee will be meeting in June to review applications and award grants to students who meet the criteria:

- Jewish
- Greater New Orleans resident
- · Demonstration of financial need
- Realistic plan for educational degree

It is vital for the program to receive donations from our membership. With graduation from high school and college right around the corner, please consider a donation to one of the funds in honor of your favorite graduate. Donations can be mailed to:

Nancy B.Timm 5708 Garfield Street NOLA 70115

The Irma M. Isaacson Memorial Scholarship Fund provides need-based academic scholarships to local Jewish students.

Lisa Silverman- In honor of the birth of Hart Bond Sheaunholtz, son of Lauren and Jason Sheaunholtz Nancy and Steve Timm- In memory of Shaw Thompson

The Clara and Roy Schwarz Memorial Book Fund provides monies to assist in the purchase of textbooks and technology for Irma M. Isaacson Memorial Scholarship recipients.

Amy and John Haspel- a generous donation

The Sara B. Stone Educational Enrichment Fund provides grants for additional educational expenses.

Madalyn Schenk- in honor of Judy Barrasso In honor of Nancy and Steve Timm

Nancy Timm- in honor of Judy Barrasso

June Leopold- in honor of Elaine Haas' birthday

We hope you will consider a donation. As one recipient stated recently in a thank you note, "Thank you again from the bottom of my heart for granting me the opportunity to attend university and launch my career."

Personal Giving Campaign Wraps Up June 30th

Each year, generous contributions from NCJW New Orleans members ensure that our section can continue to thrive and make the greatest impact for the lives of women, children, and families in Louisiana and Israel. As of this bulletin's publication date, 74 members (and counting) have contributed over \$20,000 to the 2022-23 Personal Giving campaign.

It is not too late to join the campaign! You can make a secure online donation at ncjwneworleans.org/donate or mail a check to NCJW c/o Jenny Nathan Simoneaux at PO Box 791398, New Orleans, LA 70179.

BIRTHDAY DOLLARS

Cynthia Rittenberg

The 30th Anniversary of the National Voter Registration Act Celebrated

Engaging New Voices and Voters (ENVV) helped to organize a program at Ben Franklin High School (BFHS) to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, also known as the Motor Voter Act.

This Act, which was signed into law by President Bill Clinton, advanced voting rights in the United States. It did so by requiring state governments to offer simplified voter registration processes for any eligible person who applies for or renews a driver's license or applies for public assistance. The law requires states to register all applicants who use a federal voter registration form and prohibits states from removing registered voters from the voter rolls unless certain criteria are met.

Three judges, The Honorable Miriam Waltzer, Calvin Johnson, and Edwin A.

Lombard, spoke to Ben Franklin students about the importance of registering to vote. They also shared some of their firsthand experiences with the students.

Waltzer, the first woman to serve as a judge in Criminal Court for Orleans Parish, retired in 2002 but continues to work tirelessly to ensure that everyone eligible, including those who were formerly incarcerated, has the right to vote. Judge Johnson was a judge in Orleans Parish for 17 years. Now on the faculty of Loyola's College of Law, he continues to be involved with individuals in the criminal justice system, advocating for their recovery through job readiness and community service projects. Judge Lombard served in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal from 2003 to 2022 and has been involved in elections all over the world, including Bosnia, Indonesia, and South Africa.

Following the judges' presentation, BFHS's Student Advocacy Board and volunteers from Engaging New Voices and Voters helped to register eligible 17- and 18-year-old students to vote.

Ben Franklin Student Activities and Alumni Affairs Coordinator John Parauka said. "We are honored and privileged to have these legal giants sharing their time and their experiences with our students. We want all our students to know that voting is vital to the health and future of our democracy."

We are hoping to facilitate similar programs in other schools. Please contact us if you can reach out to other high schools. envvnola@gmail.com

Generous NCJW Members Donate 'nearly new' fashions to SisterHearts

SisterHearts Clothing Drive Organizers Lilli Geltman, Sara Lewis, and Nancy Pesses successfully delivered two carloads and a truckload worth of goods to SisterHearts Thrift Store in Arabi, after collecting items at designated drop off sites in Mid City, Uptown and Metairie.

NCJW organizer Lilli Geltman expressed appreciation to all the generous NCJW donors.

"Thank you to everyone who supported NCJW's clothing and home goods collection drive. When we asked for donations, our

members rose to action," she said.

Proceeds from the thrift shop sales will fund SisterHearts Decarceration Program which helps formerly incarcerated individuals transition successfully back into society while providing transitional employment, meals, developmental training, and medical & resource referral.

NCJW collects goods year-round to support the store and program. If you have items to donate, contact Lilli at lhgeltman@gmail.com.



Sara Lewis receives donations from Nini Bodenheimer



Nancy Pesses, Sara Lewis, and Lilli Geltman delivered three vehicles filled with donations to the staff and volunteers of SisterHearts! Proceeds from thrift shop sales will fund SisterHearts Decarceration Program.



Lilli Geltman and Karen Sher pose amidst the many bags of fashionable donations.

Welcome to our newest members!

New Members and Member Changes - January 15, 2023 - May 1, 2023



Melanie Ehrlich

Ehrlich, Melanie (Dr) (Dr Kenneth Ehrlich) 1450 Crescent Drive New Orleans, LA 70122 W: 504-888-8888 mehrlich8@yahoo.com



Sandra

Herman, Sandra 150 Broadway St Suite 512 New Orleans, LA 70118 C: 504-858-1145 sandraherman44@gmail.com



Chelsea

Hylton, Chelsea (Chandler 4935 S Johnson St New Orleans, LA 70125 C: 843-822-8740 Chelsea.hylton@gmail.com



Klos, Naomi Yavneh (Dr) (Mr Stanley Yavneh Klos) 1807 Calhoun Street New Orleans, LA 70118 C: 813-728-3868 Yavneh Klos yavnehklos@gmail.com



Marilyn Miller

Miller, Marilyn (Dr) 826 Dante Street New Orleans, LA 70118 mgmnola@gmail.com



Roberts, Kyle (Ms) 1000 Bourbon St, # 234 New Orleans, LA 70116 C: 504-628-1443 lkyleroberts@mac.com



Ellie Streiffer

Streiffer, Ellie (Ben Horwitz) 7830 Freret St New Orleans, LA 70118 C: 504-579-4816 ellie.streiffer@gmail.com



Wells, Debbie 405 Audubon Tr New Orleans, LA 70121 C: 973-495-9549 debbiehotz@gmail.com

Member Database updates since the January 15, 2023

Ahlguist, Elizabeth (M/M Aaron) 2221 Adams Street New Orleans, LA 70118 ebahlquist@hotmail.com

Garrett, Anne (Mrs Richard) 2712 Whitney Pl, Unit 526 Metairie, LA 70002 grannyamg@aol.com

Kadosh, Avital M (M/M Jordan) 1131 S McKnight Rd. Richmond Heights, MO 63117. C: 651-308-8254 avitalostfield@gmail.com

Page, Al 2123 Laperouse St New Orleans, LA 70119

Schlesinger, Lisa A (Ms) 1574 Jefferson Ave New Orleans, LA 70115 C: 504-400-0881 lisaas724@gmail.com

NCJW "Takes Flight" to Madame Butterfly

More than twenty members (including their friends and/or spouses) recently attended Madame Butterfly at Mahalia Jackson Theater. Discounted tickets were offered to NCJW by the New Orleans Opera by virtue of their NCJW membership status.

The title character of Madame Butterfly-a young Japanese geisha who clings to the belief that her arrangement with a visiting American naval officer is a loving and permanent marriage—is one of the defining roles in opera. The story triggers ideas about

cultural and sexual imperialism for people far removed from the opera house, and film, Broadway, and popular culture in general have riffed endlessly on it. The lyric beauty of Puccini's score, especially the music for the thoroughly believable lead role, has made Butterfly timeless.

According to Karen Sher, NCJW Membership Vice President, NCJW hopes to continue in 2024 this wonderful new NCJW tradition of attending the Sunday Opera matinees.

"As the years go by, unfortunately, there is a diminishing interest in the opera. Our local opera needs our support," Sher said. "The 21 tickets sold to our members are 21 seats that might have been empty at the Sunday performance, without the support of NCJW members. A huge thank you to Joanna Sternberg for making the arrangements and Ginger Brook, for preparing the attractive Madame Butterfly e-flyer.



Featured here are happy attendees and opera aficionados Tricia Kirschman, Ronda Kottle, Mindy Levitt, Jane Berins, Karen and Leopold Sher and Peter and Sheryl Title. Other NCJW members in attendance (not pictured) were Lynn Plotkin, Miriam Waltzer, Sandy Raisin, Carolyn Lenz, Helena Nathan, Eileen and Dana Wallen, and Susan and **Howard Green.**



Leopold and Karen Sher connect with Clare Burovac, General and Artistic New Director at Orleans Association at the production of Madame Butterfly.



National Council of Jewish Women Greater New Orleans Section

> 6221 S. Claiborne Ave., Suite 208 New Orleans, LA 70125 (504) 861-7788

Have You Changed Your Address?

If so, please contact the office

Phone (504) 861-7788 Fax (504) 861-0044

Email ncjwgno@gmail.com



NCJW attended the Jewish Federation's 2023 Oscar J. Tolmas (OJT) L'dor V'dor Reception at the OJT L'dor V'dor Lobby at the Goldring-Woldenberg Jewish Community Campus. The event brought together beneficiaries of the Oscar J. Tolmas Charitable Trust to celebrate Oscar's legacy in New Orleans. Pictured here (left to right) are Kathy Shepard, President Gail Pesses, Lisa Romano, OJT CPA and Vice President, Vincent J. Giardina, CPA and OJT President and newly installed Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans Chief Executive Officer Robert French.



Other special guests at the Oscar J. Tolmas L'dor V'dor Reception were Jewish Federation's Cait Gladow, Mara Force and Barbara Kaplinsky.

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Robin Goldblum

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Kathy Shepard

Assistant Secretary:

Tricia Kirschman

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