Jewish Family News



September 2016 Volume 12 No. 3

JFS's Knitzvah Thrives at 10 Year Anniversary

Repairing the world can be done one stitch at a time through yarn, hooks needles, and big hearts. Knitzvah, knitting for a mitzvah, has lifted hearts and hopes, one loving stitch at a time over these 10 years. Barbara Berlant started Knitzvah this way 10 years ago after a short chat with IFS SV Executive Director. Mindy Berkowitz. She simply wanted to know if anyone wanted the baby

caps she made. One thing led to another, and together they put out the call for all knitters, crocheters and seamstresses with a little extra time and extra love. Ten years later, Knitzvah has grown to 122 members strong and donates their hand-crafted items to 22 agencies. To date, this devoted group has donated over 20,000 beautiful handmade items to the community.

From its humble beginnings as a source of lap blankets for JFS seniors and families, Knitzvah has



Happy Knitzvah members and friends

extended its reach to making warm hats for migrant farm workers, stuffed toys for foster children, blankets for homeless families, special caps for cancer patients – and so much more. The story of Knitzvah is one of talent and great commitment, sharing, friendship and collaboration, and the desire to do deeds of loving kindness. Not only are the donations bountiful, they are beautiful and reflect the artistry and creativity of each member. These treasured volunteers work all month long to give away these items to those in

need.

Longtime member Vicki Nosanov Goldman, middle school teacher, engages many of her students to contribute to Knitzvah, Leni Master makes crochet squares, recruits others make squares, enlists and Wendv and Alex Fotland assemble

gorgeous blankets. One of Knitzvah's newer and very creative projects is for VITAS Healthcare. The members are making "figit quilts" for Alzheimer's patients to help them fidget with safe, colorful

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The Jewish Family News is published four times a year by Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley 14855 Oka Road Suite 202 Los Gatos, CA 95032 (408) 556-0600 www.jfssv.org

From Our President

A Time to Reflect

Richard Namm



The High Holy Days are rapidly approaching and a season of reflection is here. "What did I accomplish this

past year?" "What might we do next year to improve the lives of other people?" Such thoughts led my wife and I to become involved with Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley.

Around 2001-2002, we began to deliver food packages to older members of the Jewish community on the major holidays. One gentleman, Adam, a Holocaust survivor in his early 90s, shared his stories with high school students and continued to invent new gadgets until his late 90s. Only Hollywood could imagine his tales, but we were lucky enough to get a taste of the lessons learned.

In addition to an increasing number of food deliveries, my wife volunteered as a Friendly Visitor, a program that allows you to build a relationship with a local senior. Over the years, we became great friends with Pearl and experienced the ups and downs so typical of later life. She touched us and our extended family in many, many ways.

Adam, Pearl and others may be gone, but their imprint is unmistakable. Our wish to help people in need became a mission to aid the organization responsible for that assistance. In 2014, I was approached to join the JFS Board. In January 2016, I

became co-President with Robin Sabes and President in June 2016. I'm busy like everyone else, but it's a purpose I must now follow.

How does JFS change lives? With a paid staff of just 18 people... many who are part-time...and 600 volunteers. What's the cost to the recipients of most services? Nothing. How can JFS do it? Because the agency receives grants (public and corporate) and many, many generous tax-deductible donations.

You may wonder, "Why should I contribute to JFS? I'm established and comfortable." To that I ask, "Can you guarantee one of your friends or family members will not need help?" You just never know.

As we consider the impact of our lives during this most special season, let's remember the less fortunate among us and vow to make a change.

> L'shana tova, Rich



Executive Director's Message

Seeing People's Lives Transformed, Right Before Our Eyes

Mindy Berkowitz



Dear Friends,
September is
a sweet month.
It ushers in
autumn and
school is now
in full swing.

It's a high energy time at JFS as we distribute hundreds of Rosh Hashanah food packages (thanks to your support!), tally our 2016 Backpack Drive results, resettle refugee families, welcome new staff—and get ready for Embrace-A-Family. We see grateful smiles on our clients' faces, receive donations of garden veggies and Knitzvah creations, hear the sounds of congratulations from our ESL class (celebrating a student's landing a first job in America), and meet new volunteers. Good things are happening!

The JFS SV Home Care Program is now two years old – and thriving. Lauren Pizzulli is our Home Care lead, serving as an advocate for our clients. (Want to know more? Call Lauren at 408-357-7453.)

★ We would love for you to see JFS in action, so we've planned agency tours on December 1st, 14th and 20th at 10 AM. JFS staff will personally show you all the good that we do together to help families that face challenges have better lives. Call Lori Cinnamon at 408-357-7467. It would be our privilege to give you a tour of JFS.

After 13 years as Executive Director, this is still the best job I've ever had, and I am so grateful for it. All of us at JFS - staff, volunteers and members of our Board of Directors are blessed to take part in *tikkun olam* and see the results of how we repair our world. We never wonder if the work we do is relevant to Jewish survival or to the community at large. We see people's lives transform right before our eyes.

Wishing you a sweet New Year in which you enjoy the blessings of making the world a better place.

B'shalom, *Mindy*

P.S. Since the end of June, thanks to your support, we've raised over \$11,000 for emergency food and more than \$27,000 for emergency services for refugees! It means the world to us.

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Area Code 408 Avital Agam......357-7450 Anna Bennett......357-7425 Mindy Berkowitz.357-7455 Galina Chyorny..357-7458 Lori Cinnamon......357-7467 Valerie DuBose......357-7542 Azita Eshagh......357-7457 Caroline Golpashin.....357-7449 Elena Kulvets......357-7406 Chad Lama......357-7459 Natalie Lazar......357-7448 Zoya Lazer......357-7452 Tami Levi 357-7454 Sheila Monheit...... 357-7451 Lauren Pizzulli...........357-7453 Gary Spivey......357-7453

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JFS: Celebrating 10 Years of Knitzvah

Knitzvah • continued from page 1

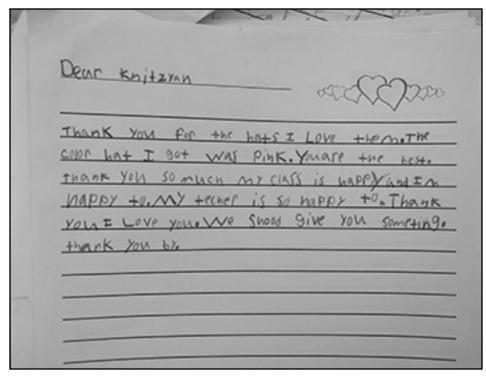
quilts that can trigger memories. Several members have embraced this project and have sewn many creative quilts over the last few years. Other members pick the projects to meet the community need and suit their interests and talents. Some members volunteer between meetings sort and distribute the work to 22 organizations

Knitzvah receives many heartfelt thank you notes that show how much these items mean to those in need, like this beautiful note from the Palliative Care Unit at Valley Medical Center:

"One of our young patients just returned from a trip of a lifetime to Hawaii with her husband. She is very ill and that may have been their last trip together. We gave her the beautiful light blue blanket. It is the perfect reminder of her amazing trip to Hawaii, the color of the ocean and her toes in the warm sand. Your kindness extends far beyond your skilled hands."

There is incredible warmth and camaraderie at each monthly Knitzvah meeting. Meetings typically have about 40 "Knitzvers" as well as newcomers. Members share stories about the handicraft they are donating. It is amazing how many items - easily over 100 - are donated each meeting.

In celebration of its 10-year milestone and stupendous achievement, Knitzvah held a special celebration at the Levy Family Campus. At this birthday party, members of two beneficiary agencies, Bill Wilson Center and AAUW's Gifts 4 Teens, gave



Thank you letter from a 2nd grader, whose class received snuggly caps and blankets from Knitzvah

testimonies, and Kntizvah members received awards for their achievements.

Also to commemorate Knitzvah's 10-year milestone, the APICC is featuring a Knitzvah artist exhibit in the second floor gallery of the Levy Family Campus now through October 28th. The exhibit showcases Knitzvah members' exquisite and artistic handcrafted items. Each of these beautiful items has a story of giving from the heart that gives

recipients hope for a better future.

Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley is so very proud of Knitzvah. Join us in wishing "mazel tov!" to Knitzvah on all its achievements. May their gifts continue to warm the hearts and souls of all they touch!

members inexperienced and rusty (we'll teach you!) to pros are always welcome to join. Knitzvah members meet monthly at the Levy Family Campus as well as weekly at Chai House. For more information, contact Lori Cinnamon, loric@ifssv.org or 408-357-7467 or visit our website at www.jfssv.org

Discover the J.

Jewish education, cultural events, preschool, camp, fitness, aquatics & more.



Addison-Penzak JCC of Silicon Valley Levy Family Campus www.apjcc.org

Rather receive this newsletter by email? Let us know at ifs@ifssv.org



JFS Needs Community Support for Emergency Food

A story is told of Binyamin HaTzadik. A woman came to him and said, "Rabbi, feed me!" He replied, "I'm sorry, but our pantry is empty, and there is nothing left in the community tzedakah fund." Then looking at her thin face and desperate eyes, he reached into his own pocket in order to feed this woman and her family.

Like Benyamin HaTzadik, JFS needs to find ways to feed our extended family.

This year the FEMA National Emergency Food and Shelter Board (EFSP) withheld its annual allocation (\$775,000 in 2015) to Santa Clara County as it did not meet their criteria used to determine allocations. Because of Santa Clara County's astronomical housing rate we have many people living in poverty - even if our actual poverty rate is above the federal standard used by EFSP. Our County's EFSP Board is seeking an appeal, but unless that appeal is approved, Jewish Family Services doesn't have the funds (\$48,000 in 2015) for our food package program.

We need to collect over 12,000 pounds of kosher food and we need your help to make this happen.

Ways to help:

- Beginning this summer, look for specially marked food donation bins at the Levy Family Campus as well as at local synagogues. We hope you will give generously.
- Hold a food drive to benefit the families and seniors JFS helps. Involve your havurah, book group, walking club, or fellow bnai mitzvah families to help.
- Your group/school class/club can sponsor a group holiday food purchase/ packing event where your group purchases desired items (list provided by JFS SV), makes cards and decorate bags for needy seniors and families.

Contact Lori Cinnamon at <u>loric@jfssv.org</u> directly to get information regarding High Holiday food packages. Your group can shop for the food, decorate cards and provide 10 High Holiday packages for 10 households.

- Sponsor a food package for \$36 each. You may do so in honor or memory of a loved one.
- Volunteer with our food collection and distribution program.



Food insecurity is a big problem in our community for the clients we serve and we really need your help and support. Your support is the lifeblood that allows us to help so many people.

For more information, please contact Sheila Monheit at sheilam@jfssv.org or 408.357.7451

Volunteers: Repairing Our World

Start the New Year by Volunteering - and Find More Meaning in Your Life

More than 600 volunteers at JFS SV find meaning and purpose in their lives from giving their time and energy to others. As we approach these New Year days of reflection, please consider enriching your life and the lives of others through volunteering.

Embrace-A-Family: Volunteers are needed October through December to help in every aspect of Embrace-A-Family. Now in its 9th year, Embrace-A- Family brings Hanukkah gifts to low-income families, home-bound seniors, and Holocaust survivors in the community who would otherwise go without. We need volunteers to create and deliver community dreidel boards, greet gift donors in the JFS office, check in and wrap gifts.

YA-LIVE!: Join our young leadership group of people in their 20's and 30's who want to make the world a better place.

Friendly Visitors: Create a lasting friendship with an isolated senior or disabled adult during weekly visits. Friendly Visitors always say they get so much more than they give.

Shabbat Meal Delivery: This is a wonderful and easy way to bring joy, connection and nutrition to an isolated senior. Deliveries take place on Friday. Volunteers must have their own transportation.

Chaplain Aides: Lead monthly services at a local senior facility on Friday afternoons or early evenings. Bring Jewish connection and memo-

ries to an appreciative audience. You should be comfortable leading an abridged Hebrew service and short 'drash' discussion, and developing a connection with seniors.

ESL Tutors: Help recently-arrived refugees learn English, leading to getting their first jobs in America. Opportunities abound for English as a Second Language tutors and teachers, and career mentors.

Office Assistance: Help with data entry, quarterly mailings, be an afternoon receptionist, and more.

Event Committees: Help with planning and executing JFS appreciation events. Ongoing.

Knitzvah: Our group meets monthly and creates beautiful handmade items for more than 20 organizations in our community. We knit, crochet, quilt, and more. Don't know how? We'll teach you! New members warmly welcomed.

Food Glorious Food: We always need more - food, volunteers, and donors. There are ongoing opportunities throughout the year to help collect, sort, pack, and deliver food to our neediest clients and to seniors residing in our local facilities. Your hand-delivered gifts are appreciated on so many levels. And of course, just dropping off food in our bins is simple, gratifying, and a wonderful way to involve even our youngest volunteers in this important aspect of tikkun olam. Due to this year's funding shortfall, we need your help more than ever!

Volunteering at JFS requires a screening process. For more information contact Lori Cinnamon, Manager of Community and Volunteer Engagement, 408-357-7467 or loric@jfssv.org



Thank you to everyone, including Assemblyman Kansen Chu and his staff, who helped make our second Equipped to Learn Backpack Drive a great success. You contributed more than 150 backpacks and all the supplies needed to give our preschool through adult learners a great start to the school year.

Volunteers: Repairing Our World

Getting Ready for Embrace-A-Family 2016

JFS SV is now preparing for our 9th annual Embrace-A-Family giving program. It's how we help lowincome families, homebound seniors, disabled adults and Holocaust survivors in the community who would otherwise go without gifts during the winter holiday season. Thanks to your support, Embrace-A-Family grows each year. Last year our community contributed nearly 1,000 toys, clothes, and household goods, and more than \$14,000 worth of gift cards. You also contributed \$7,500 for Shabbat meals, refugee transportation needs and additional gifts.

How Embrace-A-Family Works

November 17 - December 23 thoughtful donors pull dreidel tags from Embrace-A-Family gift boards, purchase the specially selected items on the tag, return the gifts and tags

to the JFS SV offices, and put a large smile on someone's face. Embrace-A-Family gift boards will be located at:

- Local synagogues
- Local Jewish day schools
- Israeli preschools
- Levy Family Campus
 - •JFS SV office, 2nd floor
 - Main lobby
 - Yavneh Day School/APJCC Preschool lobby

More Ways to Help

Schedule an Embrace-A-Family party with your friends: We'll give you dreidel tags with wishes to fill; you and your friends purchase gift cards and gifts, and have a wrapping party. You'll have a great time making wishes come true — and knowing that you brought happi-

ness to children, adults, and seniors in need.

Volunteer and get an insider's view: Help make and update dreidel boards, check in gifts, wrap presents, and more. Groups, families and individuals welcome.

Back by popular demand: Target Online Wish List

Once again you'll be able to shop online at our Target registry. This is a great option for those who prefer to shop online or for non local donors. Look on our website www.jfssv.org or the JFS SV Facebook page in October for information about how to do this.

For more information and to volunteer please contact Lori Cinnamon at 408-357-7467 or loric@jfssv.org.



A FREE Breakfast to Benefit Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley

Wednesday, March 15, 2017 8:00 AM Villa Ragusa 35 S. 2nd Street, Campbell

For more information or to RSVP in advance: goodmorning@jfssv.org



Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley

Emergency Fund for Refugee Services



JFS SV urgently needs your help! Each year, we welcome refugees who have experienced persecution due to their religion, ethnicity, political expression or sexual orientation. They come from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Former Soviet Union and various countries throughout Africa. The people we help are fleeing dire and often violent circumstances.

This year JFS SV will serve **200+** vulnerable refugees with resettlement, vocational English language training, job search assistance, case management, and emergency food assistance. Our services to refugees have been funded through HIAS, County of Santa Clara, United Way Silicon Valley, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and generous gifts from corporations and individuals.

To keep our Refugee Services work going strong, JFS SV is conducting a special fundraising effort. Recently, **United Way Silicon Valley announced it will cease making investments in local community organizations such as JFS**. Our Connections to Work for Refugees Program has depended on annual awards of \$50k-\$100k from United Way for the past decade. This imminent financial loss and its impact on JFS SV clients was extensively covered in the Mercury News, demonstrating the importance of securing replacement funding.

In response, Jewish Family Services SV announces launch of the Emergency Fund for Refugee Services – with a \$25,000 lead gift from Harvey Belsky.

"I felt a compelling need to help when I read about the loss of United Way funding.

I want to ensure JFS can keep offering programs that so effectively serve these refugees in crisis."

~ Harvey Belsky

Please join Harvey and others in the Emergency Fund for Refugee Services effort.

Your gift will ensure that vulnerable refugees can build new lives and live in safety and freedom.

Jewish Family Services Emergency Fund for Refugees						
Enclosed is \$ as my gift for the JFS Emergency Fund for Refugee Services						
Please make checks payable to <i>JFS SV, 14855 Oka Road, Suite 202, Los Gatos, CA 95032 (408)556-0600</i>						
□ Visa □ MasterCard Card #		Sec. C	ode #	Exp		
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Address						
Signature		Email				
☐ In honor ☐ In memory of						
Please notify:						
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JFS: Serving Our Community

JFS Offers Therapeutic Counseling Services

JFS SV provides professional therapeutic counseling to individuals and families facing a range of issues and life challenges. We provide support to children, adults, and families during times of crisis or periods of transition. Our counseling services are conducted Monday through Friday and are available on a sliding scale. We provide:

- Individual counseling services in a supportive, respectful and confidential environment
- Counseling and support for families in crisis or dealing with relationship issues
- Emotional support during times of transition (relocation, career change, divorce, empty nest, etc.)

Our professional counselors on staff include:

Anna Bennett, MSW, CSW

Anna is a registered Associate Clinical Social Worker. She has been working in the social services field for 15 years and has an extensive background working with individuals experiencing serious mental illness, substance abuse, and chronically underserved populations. As a therapist, she takes a client-centered approach and believes strongly in an individual's resiliency and capacity for change. She specializes in working with adolescents, couples, LGBTQ populations, and individuals living with anxiety and depression. Contact Anna at 408-357-7425, annab@jfssv.org

Lauren Pizzulli, Social Work Intern

Lauren is a second year MSW student at the University of South-

ern California. With a concentration in Mental Health and a sub-concentration in Military Affairs, her main focus is in counseling through evidence-based interventions. Prior to starting her MSW, Lauren spent five years as an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapist working with children diagnosed on the autism spectrum. This is where she discovered her love for social work. As a therapist, she takes a strengthbased approach and believes strongly in the connection between one's thought process and actions. She specializes in working with children and families, military and veterans, and individuals living with a range of mental illnesses. Contact Lauren at 408-357-7453, laurenp@jfssv.org

For more information on JFS counseling services, please contact Anna Bennett at annab@jfssv.org,

Visit our website www.jfssv.org

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Thank you to the following Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley legacy donors who help to ensure that the needlest members of our Jewish community will always be supported and protected:

Cookie Addison Ginny and Bob Baird Rabbi Allan and Mindy Berkowitz Kimberly and Robert Chortek Doris and Rick Davis Susan Greenberg-Englander and Jeffrey Englander Lorraine and Sy Hoff David and Debby Hoffman Rita and Jerry Jacobson Carolyn and Max Lettween Ruth and Stanley Litwin Patti and Richard Namm Lynn Offenhartz and Andrew Weinberg Art and Gladie Rabitz Linda and Ron Rossen Rochelle Rubenstein Eleanor and Richard Rusnak Cyndi Sherman and Stephen Schleimer Helena Smith, z"l Laurien Yehuda Segall, z"l Jeffrey Warwick (list in formation)

You too can help JFS SV transform lives and restore hope for more than 6,000 people each year. You will be joining a visionary group of donors who believe in preserving our Jewish future. With your help, we will continue to be a safe haven for generations to come.

For more information, please contact Executive Director Mindy Berkowitz at 408-357-7455 or mindy@jfssv.org.

Donations June 16, 2016 to September 2, 2016

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...and many generous anonymous donors

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In honor of Marshall Burak's special birthday: Mindy Berkowitz

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In honor of Susan Englander's birthday: Bettina Rosenberg

In honor Emily Isaacs' wedding: Rhonda Farber In honor of Mina Itzkowitz's birthday: Fagie Rosen, Natalie Schriger

In honor of Michelle Gabriel's birthday: Len, Lainee, Ben, and Noah Engel

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In honor of Arlene Greenberg's birthday: Marcia and Joe Riggio, Marcia and Harry Ratner

In honor of Debbie and Howard Katzman's 65th anniversary: Fagie Rosen

In honor of Gary and Susan Latshaw's anniversary: Rhonda Farber

In honor of Shelley and Michael Nagel's 50th anniversary: Marcia and Harry Ratner

In honor of Nancy & Marty Newman's anniversary: Jackie and Steve Dines, Rhonda Farber, Susan Pier-

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Sandy Mayer's father Margie and Edward Cahn, in honor of Michele

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