

# FAMILY MATTERS

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We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Please contact us at:

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## BOARD SPOTLIGHT: **HENRY SKOBURN**

In June 2005, Henry Skoburn, a long-time board member of Jewish Family Services, will become board President. He is looking forward to continuing the important work of JFS and those who came before him—caring for those in need.

"We serve a population that may not have the resources necessary to get the help they need," he said. "They look to service agencies such as JFS to get help—that's the reason that I feel it is so important to be community-minded and serve on this board."

A native of Boston, Skoburn has worn many hats throughout his life. After earning his master's in Urban Planning at the University of Rhode Island, he married his college sweetheart, Esta, and they moved to Albany. Skoburn explained that he began his career working for the state in the Governor's Planning Office, but "this is New York, so that department soon disbanded."

During the next decade, the Skoburn's two daughters, Heather and Kara, were born. Henry says he spent the seventies working in the Department of Environmental Conservation, "authoring documents that seemed important at the time."

In 1979, he began studying at Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Communications, and graduated in 1981. Since then, Skoburn has worked for Beckman Associates Advertising and Time Warner Cable, and in the mid 1980s started up his own production company, Skoburn Producing. Henry produced "Carmine's Table," for NewsChannel 13 and was the assistant director of the cooking

show when it was produced by Time Warner. His current professional focus is producing educational, medical, and corporate projects.

Skoburn initially became interested in JFS after learning of its adoption program—his sister and brother-in-law had recently adopted their son, piquing his interest in local adoption programs. He soon became involved, and was eventually asked by his friend, Jean Kaback, to serve on the JFS board.

Honored to be asked, Skoburn accepted eagerly and he has gone on to serve in various positions on the executive board, most recently as vice president.

He hopes that during his tenure as president, JFS will be able to reach out to an ever-expanding population. "We are called Jewish Family Services," he said. "We're going to be looking at a broader perspective of what the word 'family' means. There are many young families, for example, and we want to take a look at what their needs are, and how we can meet those needs."

"I am pleased to be turning over this position to Henry," said Ian Arcus, current board president. "His commitment to serving those in need, as well as his dedication to Jewish Family Services, is truly commendable. With his sense of creativity and compassion, I have no doubt that he is the right person for the job."



# Upcoming JFS 150TH ANNI

## EVE'S WOMEN TO PLAY FOR JFS 150TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### JFS AND TEMPLE ISRAEL TEAM UP FOR ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION

A special night of klezmer and jazz is in store for the Capital Region as Eve's Women comes to Temple Israel on Sunday, April 25th at 7 p.m. to celebrate Israeli Independence Day. The event is a wonderful collaboration between Jewish Family Services and the Friends of Israel and is one of the signature events of JFS' 150th Anniversary Celebration.

Eve's Women returns to the area after a successful opening for Chava Alberstein this summer during Second Wind

Productions Washington Park Series. In fact, Mona Golub, Artistic Director for Second Wind, is producing the show for JFS.

Their concerts have been called the "hottest ticket in Israel" as they entertain with both traditional and original Jewish music that sport a flavor of world, ethnic and Jazz stylings. Four women make up this truly eclectic musical group—Orit Orbach on clarinet and flutes, Daphna Sadeh on double bass, Alona Turell on keyboards and piano, and Michael

Rahat on drums and percussion.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for Temple Israel and JFS to work together and bring great Jewish culture to the community," said Rabbi Paul Sifton of Temple Israel. JFS' executive director Anshel Weiss concurred. "We're thrilled to work hand in hand with Temple Israel to make this musical experience a reality for our community."



Opening for Eve's Women will be Ricky Penn, an Israeli-born performer who sings in 16 languages in a variety of vocal styles ranging from Israeli/ Chassidic to

*continued on back panel*

## NANCY TIMPANARO-HOGAN IS SINGER/COMIC TO CDGLCC PRODUCTION WILL BENEFIT JEWISH FAMILY

It may have started around 1968, when Nancy Timpanaro tried to sneak up the aisle to go to the bathroom during a performance by Totie Fields at the Colonie Coliseum.

Totie, the great stand-up comic, actress and singer, didn't miss a beat. She called out from the stage, demanding to know where Nancy was going, haranguing her, and working the episode into the show. Nancy, 15, was mortified. "My initial reaction was to crawl into a hole," she said. But she was also thrilled. Here was Totie, a short, brassy, Jewish, heavyset woman—who celebrated those qualities with great flair, understanding and comic effect—recognizing Nancy, who was also heavy and self-conscious about being different.

"She was talking about stuff that was relevant then and relevant today, this obsession with women's bodies," Nancy said. "She was talking about something that was very painful for me, about being fat. She was turning the tables, saying, 'I'm fat and I'm sexy.'" In Totie Fields, Nancy saw a multifaceted, genuine personality who shared the truth about herself with the audience. "She was a real pioneer of women in comedy," she said, noting how performers like Totie Fields and Phyllis Diller empowered her and many other female singers and comics.

Nancy went on to become a well-known performer,

beginning in the 1970s in New York City. But Totie Fields never stopped resonating with her, and in the early 1990s she developed and co-wrote her own one-woman show based on Totie's life. Since then she has played "Adorable Me! The Totie Fields Story" all over the country.

On February 27-29, Nancy will bring Totie to the Linda Norris Auditorium at the WAMC Performing Arts Center in Albany. The three performances are being produced by Capital District Gay and Lesbian Community Council's Three Dollar Bill Productions, in association with the WAMC Performing Arts Center, and will benefit Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York and the Council.

Miriam Adler, assistant director of Jewish Family Services, said the organization welcomes the opportunity to be involved in the production. "It's nice to be able to again work with the Council as JFS celebrates its 150 years of service," she said. "We've had a great collaborative relationship over the past decade or so and hope to have it continue well into the future."

JFS has a solid history of working with the Council and the local lesbian and gay community. Michael Weisberg, a former board member and counsel to CDGLCC, presently serves on the JFS board and is the Chair of the 150th Anniversary Celebration. In addition,

# ANNIVERSARY Celebration Events

## FAMILIES WILL HAVE LOADS OF FUN AT PRE-PURIM CELEBRATION

Jewish Family Services and the Robert and Dorothy Ludwig Schenectady Jewish Community Center have joined forces to bring you a great program on Sunday, February 29th.

Families are Fun: A Pre-Purim Celebration is a family focused event for children from preschool age to 5th grade and, of course, their families. It is also one of the many events Jewish Family Services is bringing to the community to celebrate its 150th anniversary of serving the Capital District Jewish community.

Chaired by JFS board member Eli Taub, Families are Fun will feature locally known musician Ruth Pelham and her dynamic program, The Music Mobile, as well as Dr. Mark Levy and his wonderful puppet show. Ruth and the Music Mobile have been enchanting local children for over a quarter of a century while Mark's puppetry has made learning torah and Jewish history more accessible to young children at Congregation Ohav Shalom and other synagogues throughout the region for



the past several years. In addition the program will also include special Purim activities & games in the gym.

Admission is \$3 per person or a maximum \$8 per family plus one non-perishable food item that will be donated to the Regional Food Bank as Purim gifts. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Drinks, treats and Purim goodies will be provided but if you want to eat lunch please bring a picnic dairy lunch to eat with your family.

Space is limited so please be sure to reserve your spot by February 26th by calling JFS at 482-8856.

## TOTIE FIELDS IN ADORABLE ME! SERVICES FEB. 27-29

JFS has worked professionally with Libby Post, President Emeritus of the CDGLCC board, through her company, Communication Services, which provides marketing, public relations and development services to the agency.

"Adorable Me!" is a singing, stand-up comedy. Nancy wrote the book for the show with Bobby Pearce; the music and lyrics were written by Robert Bendorff. The show is set at a sold-out performance in April 1978 at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas. The show does not use actual material from Totie's acts – Totie died of a heart attack at age 48 in 1987; her heirs did not allow the use of it – but contains all original material based on the comedian's life and art. It is not an impersonation, Nancy says, but rather a chance for Nancy to inhabit Totie's skin for an hour and three quarters, to communicate her personality, warmth and passion, and to tell her story.

Nancy has won multiple awards for her musical comedy, including for "Adorable Me!", and rave reviews in the New York Times, Newsday, the New York Post and many other media. In the Capital Region in recent months, she has appeared in several benefit performances, and starred in



### Adorable Me! The Totie Fields Story

will run for three performances at WAMC's Linda Norris Auditorium, 339 Central Ave., Albany, on Friday, Feb. 27 at 8 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 28 at 8 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 29 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person and are available at the Linda Norris Auditorium Box Office or by calling 465-5233, ext. 4 or 800-323-9262, ext. 4 or by going online at [www.wamc.org](http://www.wamc.org).

"The Beat Goes On," a musical revue at the Saratoga Arts Council for five consecutive weekends in August 2003. She is one-half of Wild Wiser Women, which is opening Jan. 31, 2004 at the Saratoga Arts Council with "Two Mrs. ... One Hit," which will run for 10 Saturday nights (except Feb. 28, when she appears in "Adorable Me!")

# LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO?

## UNCLE SCHMUEL WANTS YOU!

Jewish Family Services might have the answer. We're always looking for new volunteers to serve on our board committees and help with our special events. This is a great way to get to know the agency and begin your career path to becoming a JFS board member.

If you're interested, give JFS Executive Director Anshel Weiss a call at 482-8856.



## JFS Announces Annual Dinner Award Recipients

Jewish Family Services is pleased to announce the recipients of its Volunteer of the Year and Community Service Awards for 2004. The awards will be presented at the agency's upcoming annual dinner slated for Sunday, June 13th at Temple Israel. The event begins at 5 p.m.

Dr. James Strosberg will receive the Volunteer of the Year award for his outstanding volunteer activities in the Jewish community.

Rabbi Beverly Magidson will receive the Community Service award for her years of service to the community first as a rabbi at a local synagogue and now as the chaplain at Daughters of Sarah Nursing Center and the co-ordinator of the United Jewish Federation/Jewish Family Services Chaplaincy Program.

**Watch for further details about the dinner as the date gets closer.**

## THE NOREK FAMILY TRANSITIONS PROGRAM

*continued from page 1*

can be crucial to healing and comfort. The Transitions Program works cooperatively with the Chaplaincy Program of the United Jewish Federation to respond to spiritual needs.

Rita Schachne, MS is coordinator of the Transitions Program. Ms. Schachne is a registered nurse with many years of clinical experience. She served as Executive Director of the American Cancer Society of the Capital Region for 15 years developing outreach programs and patient services. The program is planning to develop a resource library and group educational and counseling opportunities as the need arises.

Thanks to the gift from the Norek family, we are pleased to be able to develop this program so that many people who may have limited financial resources or emotional supports will have access to quality services offered with dignity and care.

## SHERMAN FUND ESTABLISHED TO SUPPORT INTERNSHIPS IN AGING PROJECT *continued from page 1*

adults, including care management and counseling programs, and supportive visits. JFS collaborates with the Daughters of Sarah Nursing Center and Senior Services of Albany to provide educational experiences for the Internships in Aging Project.

Dr. Sherman noted that many social work students initially enter the field wishing to work with children and families, but are so deeply affected by their work with older

adults that they switch their focus.

"Students have said that initially they never would have considered gerontology," said Dr. Sherman, "but after the Internships in Aging Project, they say that they never want to do anything but work with seniors. This partnership with Jewish Family Services and the other Internships in Aging agency partners benefits our students, and the entire community, enormously."

Jewish Family Services also benefits from UAlbany social work interns in other program areas, most notably with the Supervised Visitation Program. The School of Social Work strongly emphasizes field work as part of a well-rounded curriculum, believing that the experience gained by interns at agencies is an invaluable resource in preparing them for a career in social work.

# JFS Online!



Great changes have taken place on Jewish Family Services' website, [www.jfsneny.org](http://www.jfsneny.org). If you haven't seen it yet, go online and take a look at all of our wonderful new resources and features.

- The website now features a fascinating and detailed history of the agency, as well as the yearlong schedule of anniversary year events, in our "150th Anniversary Celebration" section!
- "Ask Miriam," a column by Miriam Adler, ACSW, focusing on emotional and psychological issues, is now reprinted courtesy of the Jewish World. "Ask Miriam" can now be viewed in our "News and Commentary" section!
- Our "Special Events" section is constantly updated, with information about all of JFS' upcoming events, as well as acknowledgements for our donors and sponsors!
- Check out our "New Programs" section to read about all of the new and different ways JFS is benefiting our community!
- The Lindsey Baron Teen Leadership Program will soon have their own section where you can see photos from their recent volunteer work, and read about highlights from each event!
- As always, you can also use our website to read past editions of our newsletter, learn more about existing programs, print out donation forms, and check out links to our community partners.

See you on the Web!

[WWW.JFSNENY.ORG](http://WWW.JFSNENY.ORG)

**EVE'S WOMEN TO PLAY  
FOR JFS 150TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR**  
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Broadway tune and much more in between. Starting her career at the tender age of 4, Ricky won first place in talented kids' contests in Israel. In the Israeli army, she was the singer of the unit and later gave concerts all over the country and has even sung at the White House.

When Eve's Women performed here last they received rave reviews in the local media. "Like that old bagel commercial, you don't have to be Jewish to love them and everyone did, conferring a standing ovation and a rare-for-an-opening-act encore," wrote Michael Hohanadel for The Daily Gazette.

Tickets for the concert will be available at Temple Israel, The Book House at Stuyvesant Plaza in Albany, The Open Door in Schenectady and by phone through JFS at 482-8856. Tickets are \$22 per person in advance (this includes group rates) and \$30 at the door.

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## SHERMAN FUND ESTABLISHED TO SUPPORT INTERSHIPS IN AGING PROJECT

The University at Albany's School of Social Welfare and Jewish Family Services have recently partnered to establish the Susan R. Sherman Fund to support the School's Internships in Aging Project. Proceeds from the fund will be used to provide stipends for graduate-level interns who assist Jewish Family Services in its work with older adults.

The Internships in Aging Project (IAP) is a graduate educational program that prepares Master of Social Work professional social workers for leadership roles in mental health and social services for older persons. Students take coursework in gerontology and spend three days a week with area social service agencies learning directly to provide services to older adults. IAP plays an important role in the School of Social Welfare's larger efforts to address the critical needs of a

quickly growing elderly population. The project's goal is to see more social workers entering the gerontology field, which has an escalating need for more professionals.

The fund was created by and named in honor of Susan Sherman, Ph. D., one of the early directors and founders of the University's Institute of Gerontology, as well as a former chair of the University's Baccalaureate Program in Social Work. Dr. Sherman currently serves on the advisory board of the University's Center for Jewish Studies, as well as the Board of Directors for the Albany Collegiate Interfaith Center. Dr. Sherman, named a Distinguished Service Professor, retired from the University at Albany in November of 2002.

"We created this fund as a way to preserve my connection with the School of Social Welfare and the

University," said Dr. Sherman. "I believe that this endowment honors both my ideas about aging and the strong dedication I feel to the Jewish community."

Anschel Weiss, Executive Director of Jewish Family Services, praised Dr. Sherman's efforts and the creation of the fund. "These days, it's very difficult for a graduate student to do an internship without a stipend," he said. "Before this endowment fund was set up, we were getting donations for stipends from many sources, but there was always the chance that that money would one day no longer be there. This fund ensures that the money will continue to be there for our social work interns."

The IAP interns who work with Jewish Family Services receive a hands-on learning experience in the wide variety of programs JFS has designed for older *continued page 5*

## THE NOREK FAMILY **TRANSITIONS PROGRAM**

Through a generous endowment from Al and Meryl Norek, JFS has created the Transitions Program, which expands services to families and individuals dealing with serious illnesses and bereavement. Our experiences with families in crisis have helped us to understand that the needs can be complex and go beyond concrete services when serious illness or death strikes a family.

The Transitions Program offers individuals and families support, advocacy, referral and counseling. These services are offered within a context of understanding that illness can seriously overwhelm the coping abilities of families. Therefore, our program is designed to offer spiritual and emotional support,

and advocacy and specific guidance through the maze of choices and decisions that are often faced.

The Program will also make the effort to help those who need to connect or reconnect with their faith communities and families in times of difficulty. Often in times of grave challenge, it is one's faith or family support that

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Al and Meryl Norek