

# Family MATTERS

Fall 2013, Vol. 2, No. 3

## LMKO

### (Laughing My Kepele Off)

Nearly 100 people came out for Jewish Family Services' 160th Anniversary Celebration kick off event starring comedian David Glickman. For more than an hour, Glickman kept his audience in stitches as he performed his hilarious song parodies and recounted stories of his own family's holiday celebrations, including one memorable Passover Seder at which long-lost cousins from California—Kitty Shanu and Vitsy Vanu—showed up for dinner! Speaking from his heart, Glickman shared always funny and often touching stories about his wife Susan, to whom he refers as his beshert. He explained, "...that's a Jewish word that means 'no fear of alimony.'"

About halfway through his show, he apologized to the crowd for not being a typical joke-telling comedian. "Just so you know," said Glickman, "I'm definitely not one of those comedians who stands on the stage and tells jokes like this one: 'An Irishman, an Italian guy and Jewish man were all running a marathon. As they approached the 10 mile marker, the Irishman said, "Ay, I'm so thirsty. I must have a pint of ale." With that, the Italian guy panted, "Ah, I'm so thirsty. I must have a nice glass of Chianti." The Jewish man then said, "Oy! I'm so thirsty. I must have diabetes!'"

"He certainly knows his audience," said JFS board member Clara Simon, and his audience loved him! More than once loud guffaws and peals of laughter could be heard from the crowd. "This is exactly the type of event we wanted to kick off our anniversary year," said Christine Holle, JFS' Executive Director. "The agency has been around for a long time and helps families through many hardships and serious situations. A bit of levity about family traditions is a nice counterbalance to that."

Additional 160th anniversary events are in the works, including our Annual Celebration in May, 2014. 



**ABOVE**  
David Glickman (Comedian) and Christine Holle (JFS Executive Director) greet guests as they arrive at Steamer No. 10 Theatre.



**LEFT**  
David Glickman sings, "Thanks for the savings bond" to the tune of "Thanks for the memories."



**LEFT**  
It's a nearly packed house before the show gets underway. Pictured in the front row are Joe Cocozza and Sandi Alexander.



## A Message from the Board President

We have all been enjoying a fall blessed by Mother Nature's gift of fabulous weather; a side-splitting comedy kick-off to JFS's 160th year; strong and effective services; and committed staff and board at the agency.

This year has been an exciting one. We hosted a very successful annual celebration at Shabbos House, presented interesting educational programs and have been working to increase the reach of the programs and services offered by JFS. I am confident that the JFS home is in good order and our staff remains ready to meet the needs of our community with a variety of services and programs for individuals, families and the community.

We have so much to be proud of, as do you, who help make it all happen with your ongoing support. As President of JFS's Board of Directors I want to personally thank you for all you do to bring hope, health and family harmony to our Jewish community and our friends and neighbors throughout the Capital Region.

Bob

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## Tradition Continues

In my last message, I wrote about traditions—family and holiday traditions and the long-standing tradition of JFS serving families in our community. This time, I would like to write about another long-standing community tradition—the Golub family.

For more than 80 years, the Golub name has been associated with benevolence and philanthropy in and around the Capital Region. Helping in both large ways—like the Jewish Federation's Golub Center, the Children's Hospital at Albany Medical Center, libraries, universities and museums—and in smaller, less visible ways, "Golub" is more times than not the first name that pops into the collective mind of local charities when something is needed. Their ongoing tradition of enhancing and improving the quality of life in the community speaks to their commitment to chesed and tzedakah—compassion and charity.

In celebration of our 160th anniversary of helping generations of families, we will honor the Golub family, who have embraced similar ideals of supporting our community for decades.

I hope you will join me as we honor the Golub family—Neil and Jane, Gerry and Geraldine, David and Andrea, and Mona—at our 160th Anniversary Gala on May 22, 2014. We know that this will be a very special evening and are privileged to present the Anshei Weiss Community Builders Award to the Golubs.

Wishing you and your family a Hanukkah season filled with light and a new year filled with peace.

Kindest regards,  
Christine

### Upcoming Workshops from Haven of Schenectady

**Grief and the Holidays:  
Getting to January Emotionally Intact**

Tuesday, November 26, 2013

6:00–7:30 p.m.

*For adults who are dealing with a loss.*

**Helpful Hints for Caregivers During  
the Holidays**

Wednesday, December 4, 2013

6:30–8:00 p.m.

*For professionals and family caregivers.*

Workshops are free of charge and held at 703 Union Street in Schenectady. Reservations are encouraged: (518) 370-1666 or info@havenofschdy.org.





## Ask JFS: When Grieving Becomes Depression

**Q** *I'm worried about my mother. My Dad died three months ago and since then her emotions have been a rollercoaster. Some days she cries and can barely get out of bed and other days she tells stories about my dad that have my brother and me in stitches. It's the down days that have me most concerned. I often wonder if she is really depressed. How can I tell the difference between normal grief and something more serious like depression?*

**A** Losing someone you love is very painful. And the more significant the loss, the more intense the grief will be. People experience all kinds of difficult emotions and it may seem like the pain and sadness will never go away. It's normal to feel this way, but there are ways to tell whether or not a person is coping with the loss or if they are getting stuck, and


potentially depressed.

Grieving is a highly personal and individualized experience and there is no "normal" timetable for healing. Since your father died three months ago, the fact that your mother is still grieving is quite typical.

What is normal about losing a loved one is that the person will feel a variety of emotions, and they will have a mix of good days and bad days. Grief can make a person feel sad, guilty, anxious and fearful. It can also include physical symptoms like nausea, insomnia and weight gain or loss.

In addition, when people are grieving, they can have moments of pleasure or happiness. You mentioned that your mother will tell funny stories about your dad. Reminiscing about a loved one

after they have passed helps your mother maintain a connection to your father, and solidifies in her mind the meaning of their relationship. Both are a natural part of the healing process.


Grief can be a rollercoaster and this is what distinguishes it from depression. If your mother is constantly feeling empty and full of despair, overcome with pervasive guilt, or can't function at home or work, it is an indication of something more serious and it may be time to talk to a mental health professional. However, if her mood vacillates between sadness and an ability to perform normal daily activities, she is likely experiencing the typical ups and downs of grief. Support her, and enjoy her stories about your dad. They will likely help you with your grief as well. 

## Meet Nancy Dunn - Coordinator of Supervised Visitation

Last month, when JFS hired Nancy Dunn, we gained a calm, knowledgeable clinician who has the gift of helping people in crisis. Nancy is our new Coordinator of Supervised Visitation—a program that gives children and parents a safe/neutral environment, where legal matters are checked at the door and families can begin to have healthy interactions with the guidance of a mental health counselor.

Most of our families are referred to JFS through the court system because there is either a history of domestic violence; there are custody issues due to divorce; or child protective services are involved due to abuse, neglect or trauma in the home. Despite these often grim circumstances and family histories, Nancy's experience working with complex situations makes her well-suited to help them. "I enjoy helping people understand their histories, and through self examination and honest introspection, they can ultimately begin to stabilize their lives."

Prior to joining JFS, Nancy was a trauma specialist at Equinox, where she was part of a team that helped homeless women reintegrate into the community. The range of challenges these women faced included mental health issues and histories of abuse or neglect.

Nancy applies that same team approach in helping JFS families. On a given day she could be on the floor playing a game with a family or in a team meeting with the Department of Social Services reviewing a case. The process can be complex, and families really don't want us in their lives, but there are positive outcomes. "Last week, a father was granted unsupervised visits with his children," said Nancy. "The ruling brought tears to his eyes, but this father was committed to his children and he completed the Family Court requirements and followed JFS' recommendations." This type of reunification brings meaning to our work with families and we are delighted to have Nancy on our team. 



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*Save the Date*

MAY 22, 2014

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

*160th Anniversary Celebration*

HONORING

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