



Family MATTERS


Fall 2014, Vol. 3, No. 3

Haven at JFS Expands

Haven at JFS is just completing its first year as a new service at Jewish Family Services of NENY. For over thirty years, Haven of Schenectady provided bereavement counseling for individuals and families in that area of the Capital Region. As they searched for a new partner to sustain their mission, they decided to affiliate with Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York. Jeannie Straussman, Clinical Social Worker and Program Director of Haven at JFS, says "It is an honor to continue the tradition of Haven of Schenectady and to expand services by reaching out to the rest of the Capital Region."

In the past several months outreach to the Jewish community has increased, with meetings with the Board of Rabbis and individual Congregation Rabbis, UAlbany Hillel, as well as the Daughters of Sarah Residential Life staff. As Ms. Straussman explains, "Haven at JFS provides counseling and support for people of all faiths and backgrounds who are dealing with loss of a loved one and struggling with major life transitions. We recognize that grief is a natural and normal process and that each person copes in an individualized and unique way. Our knowledge and understanding of Jewish traditions, beliefs and practices related to death, dying and mourning is also extremely helpful in working with members of the Jewish community."

In addition to counseling, Haven at JFS provides education and support programs such as "Dealing with Change and Transition," an upcoming program for seniors at Congregation Gates of Heaven in Schenectady, and offers workshops for professional staff. We're also forming a peer support group for individuals who have experienced the death of a spouse, partner or significant other.

Services are easy to access by contacting Haven at JFS at 518-370-1666 to schedule an appointment or to learn more about our services. 

NNORC Breakfast Club



Seniors Nosh, Visit & Learn

Tax issues. Legal documents. Probate. These topics are not for the timid, but learning about them is beneficial, especially for seniors. This is what inspired Judy Avner, our new Coordinator of Social Engagement, to launch the NNORC Breakfast Club.

This monthly forum will give seniors an opportunity to come together, nosh on a bagel, socialize and learn useful information. The idea is to bring in guest speakers from the community who can simplify complex topics, provide new information and stimulate discussion.

"Often times, seniors are looking for a way to get together at the beginning of the day to visit and talk about the events of the day. Later in the day they get busy and the time for conversation and reflection seems to have been replaced by other appointments and activities," said Avner. The NNORC Breakfast Club gives seniors an opportunity to gather early in the day, have a bite to eat and discuss a range of useful topics.

The first two Breakfast Club sessions will address critically important legal issues and will feature two attorneys with expertise in elder law. On November 19, Kim Verner, Esq., from the Herzog Law Firm will discuss *Legal Documents Every Senior Needs to Have*, such as durable powers of attorney, living wills, healthcare proxies and more. And then on December 10, Steven Levy, Esq. will discuss *Probate and How to Avoid It*. These monthly meetings held at the Albany JCC from 9:30–11:00 a.m. are designed to provide practical information that directly affects seniors.

"We are grateful to the Albany JCC for lending us a room to host our Breakfast Club," said Avner. "It's a central location for seniors to gather and we're hoping for a great turnout for our first meeting." 



A Message from the Board President

It seems that Fall is a time when I am most reminded of how blessed I am to be here in this place and time. It is a *shehechyanu* (who has given us life) moment! My table is full. My plate is full. My calendar is full, and my life is better because of it all.

We are so intricately connected to one another. Even in times when technologies are blamed for isolating and insulating us from each other, we check out Facebook to see what families and friends are doing. In an instant, we can see who is enjoying an autumnal walk crunching leaves in early moonlight, calming a crying newborn grandchild or sipping a hot cider at the apple orchard. But I realize that this might be the world I have created around myself and it is not the same reality others face. If I turn on the radio, read a paper, get a CNN sound bite or take a phone call from someone in desperation, my outlook can suddenly change. The staff at Jewish Family Services understands the many worlds in which people walk. Some walk on trails peppered with fall leaves, while others may be fraught with sadness, stress or loss. We work hard to be mindful and patient with everyone—to take the time and do the deep listening necessary to create trust, hope and healing. As we enter a season of thanks and giving for us all, realize you are always welcome at our table. Peace to everyone!

Bob

When I reflect on this last year I am awed.

I am awed by the professionalism and excitement the JFS staff brings to their work every day. Individually, JFS staff members are a treasure of knowledge, training, and experience. Collectively, these professionals provide a full range of supports and services that address the issues our clients are facing, regardless of the stage of life they're in: families navigating difficult separations; 50-somethings struggling to balance responsibilities to their own families while caring for an aging parent; and seniors safely aging in place with dignity and independence.

I am awed when I hear clients in our waiting room before their weekly anger management group. Their individual circumstances and journeys are different, yet they typically have two things in common: they need help developing skills to manage stressful situations and they've been ordered to take these classes. Yet after only a few weeks with the group, they develop such camaraderie and there is such positive energy, it's really heartening to witness.

And last, but certainly not least, I am awed by the continued generosity of you, the community. The generous spirit that embodies our supporters—who not only share their treasures with JFS, but also give their time and talent—ensures that JFS can continue to be *the* caring agency for the Jewish community.

We at JFS have much to be proud of. Every day we help people move through and beyond those issues that are preventing them from living their best lives. We also have much to be grateful for, so I wish to thank you again for your kindness, your caring, and your generosity.

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

Kindest regards,
Christine



Family MATTERS

Published by Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York (JFSNENY).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Robert Gumson
President

Linda Cohen
Vice President

Clara Simon
Secretary

Ira Lobel
Treasurer

Brian Daniels
Assistant Treasurer

Stephen A. Ribner
Immediate Past President

Christine A. Holle
Executive Director

BOARD MEMBERS

Daniel M. Bernstein

Jocelyn Dax

Dr. Marvin Garfinkel

Glenn Liebman

Bill Nathan

Karen Setzen

Rachael Woren

Deborah Rosen Zamer

For information
please contact:

JFSNENY

877 Madison Avenue
Albany, NY 12208

P 518-482-8856

F 518-489-5839

E info@jfsneny.org

jfsneny.org

JFS receives funding from:

Supported by
Jewish Federation
of Northeastern New York





Give Bubbe & Zayde a Ride

Project 5 is looking for drivers to transport Jewish seniors.


Project 5 is an all volunteer transportation service that takes Jewish seniors to medical appointments, shopping and errands, religious services, cultural and social events, lunches with friends or wherever they want to go.

Drivers can volunteer for one-time or weekly rides—**whatever** works for their schedule. Helping Jewish seniors maintain their independence is a mitzvah. It's a rewarding way to get to know

the most valued members in our community.


If you would like to be a volunteer driver, contact Sally Bratspis at JFS at 518-482-8856.

Learn more about Project 5 at jfsnyny.org/Project5.

Project 5 receives funding from Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York and Armory Garage. The generosity and caring of our volunteer drivers provide over 1,300 rides each year. 

New Support Group for Widows and Widowers

Grief and bereavement are very unique for each person, but there is mutual understanding and help that people mourning the death of their life partner can give to one another. The new support group for widows and widowers will provide a warm, caring and safe place to share feelings, coping strategies and ideas about facing holidays and anniversaries. The groups will be held at JFS in Albany and facilitated by mental health professionals experienced in bereavement counseling.


For more information about support at Haven of JFS please call 518- 370-1666 or email jstraussman@jfsnyny.org. Haven at JFS looks forward to providing this new service in addition to our ongoing individual, couple and family counseling. 

Albany Seniors Learn About Living Healthy


Living with a health condition can be debilitating and isolating, especially for seniors. But participating in the Living Healthy Workshops has inspired over 60 Albany seniors to take charge of their self-care.

The Living Healthy Program is a series of highly interactive health education workshops that utilizes the evidence-based Chronic Disease Self-Management Program curriculum developed and tested at Stanford University.

The workshops are for people dealing with a chronic or ongoing health condition who want to learn how to self-manage and take control in dealing with pain and fatigue, discover better nutrition and exercise choices and learn better ways to talk with their doctor and family about their health.

Recognizing the need for this type of program among Albany seniors, JFS staff members became certified by the Center for Excellence in Aging & Community Wellness to lead Living Healthy workshops. The curriculum is very comprehensive and includes a range of topics such as symptom management, exercise, medication usage, and working with healthcare providers. "Participants are given homework assignments from the free course book and they develop self-care actions plans," said NNORC Nurse Pat Gumson. "The groups are small and intimate, so everyone feels comfortable sharing hurdles and successes." JFS offers two Living Healthy sessions each year. 

JFS Welcomes New Board Member

Daniel Bernstein is a labor and employment attorney at Bond, Schoeneck & King. He is a lifelong Albany community resident and an active member of the Jewish community. As president of the Cardozo Society at Albany Law School, he brought several notable speakers to the school to present on a variety of contemporary issues affecting the Jewish community, with a focus on Israel-related issues. He also participates regularly in Jewish Federation events and is a member of the ENRICH Jewish leadership program. Dan is a graduate of Albany Law School, UAlbany, and—reaching back—Hebrew Academy. 



Daniel S. Bernstein



Jewish
FAMILY
Services
Northeastern New York

877 Madison Ave.
Albany, NY 12208

jfsneny.org

NON PROFIT ORG

US POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT #587

ALBANY, NY

You Shop. Amazon Gives. JFS Smiles.

Did you know that every time you shop on Amazon.com you could be making a donation to JFS? And it doesn't cost you extra to do so? It's true.

When you shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchase to the charitable organization of your choice—JFS!

Smile.Amazon.com is the same as Amazon.com—same low prices, huge selection and big convenience.

How Does It Work?

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com on your computer or mobile device. Log in using your usual amazon.com username and password. On your first visit, enter "Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York" (our whole name) in the "Select Your Charity" box. After that, JFS will automatically receive donations based on your eligible purchases.

Does JFS Benefit from AmazonSmile?

YES! Even though 0.5% doesn't sound like much, it certainly can add up if hundreds of people designate JFS as their charity on smile.amazon.com.

If you have any questions, please give us a call. We would be happy to tell you more about this valuable program: 518-482-8856.

The small print: *Sorry, but you cannot receive a tax deduction for amounts donated from your purchases on AmazonSmile. Donations are made by the AmazonSmile Foundation and are not tax deductible by you.*

