

PILLARS

A PUBLICATION OF THE NCJW GREATER LONG BEACH AND WEST ORANGE COUNTY SECTION

► NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Barbara Shipnuck



It is hard to believe that another year has gone by and it is time to change our calendars, as I once again wish you and yours a Happy New Year. It really does seem that time flies—although there have been periods this past year when it seems more like time stood still. I hope you are taking care of yourselves and those you cherish and finding some joy and fun in these difficult days. For NCJW Greater Long Beach and West Orange County, it has been a year of continuing to adapt to new circumstances: to carry out our mission to improve the quality of life for women, children and families and safeguard individual rights and freedoms, while protecting our own members and following all health guidelines which changed several times throughout the year.

We have remained mostly virtual in our activities. As guidance shifted we were able to reinstate Hugpacks with a small group of fully vaccinated participants stuffing backpacks in a large space. We had one outdoor celebratory social event, and recently have begun to hold a series of small gatherings for a few new members and Board members to meet and discuss why they joined and what they want to be involved with. If any of you would like to join one of these, please contact me.

We are now looking forward to our first hybrid event: the annual Shirley Stein Book Review that we sponsor jointly with Sharon-Carmel Hadassah. Many of us curse Zoom but through its wonders we are able to connect with the author of *The Dressmakers of Auschwitz* who lives in London. Attendees will be able to choose whether to participate from the comfort of home or attend lunch with others who are fully vaccinated.

Community Service has continued. In addition to Hugpacks, we made blankets for the homeless, supported several organizations that provide relief to the most vulnerable in our community and participated in community drives for food, clothing and sanitary products.

Advocacy has had a banner year. While we continue to focus on women's health and reproductive rights, immigration, sex trafficking, homelessness and economic justice issues locally, we have led the State NCJW effort in opposing contracts between UC medical residency programs and Dignity Health which restrict reproductive health services from being provided in their hospitals. We are watching carefully the effort of Hoag Hospital to extricate itself from their existing partnership.

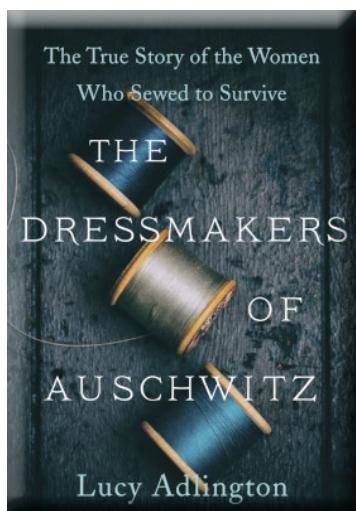
The issue of having accessible reproductive health services, including abortion, is one many of us thought was settled decades ago. As states heightened their attacks on a woman's right to make health decisions for her own body, NCJW National determined that we needed to launch a campaign that focused on this most important issue. It is called 73 Forward – 1973 being the year that Roe vs. Wade was decided by the Supreme Court. Jewish teachings allow for abortion, so arguments that abortion violates religious freedom tell only a narrow side of the story. And, of course any restrictions fall most heavily on the economically disadvantaged, so this is an economic and social justice issue as well. NCJW is working with a wide range of partners on the campaign and has options for individuals and Sections to join. You can read all about the campaign on the national website and there are updates in the Weekly Advocacy WrapUp. Locally, the Advocacy Committee is mapping out our strategy for participating in the campaign. If you have an interest in joining them, please contact the VPs at advocacy@ncjwlongbeach.org. And, thanks to donations from two generous donors, we have set up a restricted fund for Reproductive Health and Rights to allow us to support these efforts.

In looking back at what I have written, it appears that the pandemic has not dampened our service and advocacy efforts in 2021, only our ability to enjoy each others' company while participating in them. Please stay connected, and join as you are able. Please contact me with any suggestions you have for expanding our efforts to live our mission. Once again, Happy New Year and may we meet down the road.

ATTEND YOUR WAY BUT DON'T MISS IT! By Sharon Brannon and Lisa Raufman, Co-VPs Programs

NCJW will join with Sharon-Carmel Hadassah on **January 24, 2022 at 11:00 am** at **The Grand in Long Beach** for the annual Shirley Stein Book Review. Members and friends who are fully vaccinated are invited to join us either in person for a lovely luncheon, or on Zoom. Our speaker, author Lucy Adlington, will be addressing us long-distance via the miracle of electronics from London! She will discuss a little-known aspect of the Holocaust that she has researched and written about.

A complete salmon lunch will be individually wrapped to assure minimal interaction, and all the serving staff have been vaccinated. The cost of the lunch is \$40. Please [register](#) on our website or send your check to NCJW Long Beach and West Orange County, 6216 E. Pacific Coast Highway #239, Long Beach, CA 90803. If you would prefer to attend virtually, you can register in advance at NCJWLongBeach.org. There is no charge to watch, but donations are encouraged as they will be given to the [Holocaust Musem LA](#).



About the book:

The Dressmakers of Auschwitz: The True Story of the Women Who Sewed to Survive powerfully chronicles the stories of the women who used their sewing skills to survive the Holocaust, stitching beautiful clothes in an Auschwitz concentration camp, an extraordinary fashion workshop within the horror of World War II. At the height of the Holocaust, twenty-five young inmates of the infamous Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp – mainly Jewish women and girls – were selected to design, cut, and sew beautiful fashions for elite Nazi women in a dedicated salon. It was work that they hoped would spare them from the gas chambers.

This fashion workshop – called the Upper Tailoring Studio – was established by Hedwig Höss, the camp commandant's wife, and patronized by the wives of SS guards and officers. Here, the dressmakers produced high-quality garments for SS social functions in Auschwitz, and for ladies from Nazi Berlin's upper crust. Drawing on diverse sources – including interviews with the last surviving seamstress – *The Dressmakers of Auschwitz* follows the fates of these brave women. Their bonds of family and friendship not only helped them endure persecution but also to play their part in camp resistance. Weaving the dressmakers' remarkable experiences within the context of Nazi policies for plunder and exploitation, Lucy Adlington exposes the greed, cruelty, and hypocrisy of the Third Reich and offers a fresh look at an unreported chapter of the Second World War and the Holocaust.

About the author:

Lucy Adlington is a British historian and writer with more than twenty years' specialization in social history. Her previous non-fiction titles include *Stitches in Time: The Story of the Clothes We Wear* and *Women's Lives and Clothes in WW2: Ready for Action*. Her fiction titles include the award-winning young adult novel *The Red Ribbon*. She runs the History Wardrobe series of costume presentations and has an extensive collection of vintage and antique clothing.



► KINDERGARTEN FESTIVALS ARE BACK!

By Judy Leff and Linda Fox, KFest Co-Chairs

Long Beach Early Childhood Education KFests are back in person! Like so many other events and programs, the Festivals went virtual in 2021 but were viewed by over 2,000 people! We certainly missed seeing the many children preparing to enter Kindergarten/Transitional Kindergarten, their parents, and the agency representatives with their resource-filled tables. The first Kindergarten Festival of 2022 is from 8:30 am - noon on Saturday, January 8th at Dooley Elementary School. **Volunteers urgently needed!**

As a partner, the NCJW Section has been part of the planning and volunteer staffing for the Long Beach KFests since 2004 thanks to our own Barbara Wolfe and then LBUSD Superintendent Chris Steinhauser. On one of the three Saturday mornings between January and March, parents and children participate in readiness workshops, receive school information and learn about available resources from a variety of community agencies. Each child gets a "passport" to fill and then receives a backpack, donated with monies from the NCJW Denise Berro Kindergarten Festival Fund, and filled by LBUSD with school supplies as well as a book from Long Beach Rotary. Contributions to our Berro Fund are always very gratefully accepted.

On the day of the event, NCJW volunteers are asked to sign in families, provide important information for the day or offer support. For each KFest, we are in need of a minimum of 10 enthusiastic, vaccinated NCJW volunteers. Come join us at one KFest or more!

If you have questions or you wish to volunteer for the first KFest on Saturday, January 8, 2022, please call (657) 235-2511 and leave a message for Linda Fox, Trish Goldin or Judy Leff or email communityservice@ncjwlongbeach.org. RSVPs are a must!



Please save these upcoming dates and locations:

January 8, 2022
Dooley Elementary School

February 5, 2022
Roosevelt Elementary School

March 5, 2022
Burcham Elementary School



► **NCJW member Renee Florsheim delivered the 2500th cake to the Los Angeles chapter of For Goodness Cakes!**

*By Bobbi Horowitz,
Co-VP Resource Development*

Renee Florsheim, from NCJW, delivered the 2500th cake to [For Goodness Cakes](#), Los Angeles chapter in photo! This is an ongoing community service project of our Section. If you are interested in baking a special cake for a foster child, please contact Bobbi Horowitz at communityservice@ncjwlongbeach.org or call (657) 235-2511.



Thank you LA Sprinkler Renee for baking + delivering our 2500th cake in LA

► JOINT NCJW-AAUW PROGRAM FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

by Lisa Raufman, Co-VP Programs

Child Care & Financial Insecurity Facing Women Post Pandemic: Concerns & Solutions

Thursday, February 17, 7-8:30 pm

Long Beach City College & on Zoom

Plan to attend an interesting and informative program about the particular effect the pandemic has had on women. Four local leaders will speak, followed by a question-and-answer period.

Main topics to be addressed are:

- How has the pandemic affected working women in Long Beach related to jobs lost and how do local companies assist with child care issues?
- What does LBCC offer that can improve career options for affected women, and is the child development program being expanded to help meet the needs of working women?
- Can a Long Beach Commission on the Status of Women bring improvements in Pay Equity and meet working women's needs?
- What can research from O.C. show us about child care needs of working women?
- Challenges and a Call to Action

We expect our audience will primarily be interested in how we can be advocates for working women, what role can NCJW and AAUW play in shaping legislation, and what community volunteer opportunities might exist for us to fill.

As of now, we are planning to have a hybrid program hosted at LBCC. People will be able to attend in person and via the college's zoom link. We are hoping that all speakers (below) will be able to attend in person. All details for registration will soon be available on our website. You can contact advocacy@ncjwlongbeach.org with any questions you may have.



Suzie Price
Long Beach City Councilwoman,
Deputy District Attorney
Orange County



Herlinda Chico
LBCC Trustee and
L.A. County Supervisor Field Representative



Tunua Thrash-Ntuk
Executive Director, LA LISC
(L.A. Local Initiatives Support Corporation)



Tina Alva
Director of Partnerships &
Government Affairs
First5 Orange County

► WELCOME NEWCOMERS

We hope to meet you in person soon!

Adrienne Alpern
Sharon Bergeron
Janet Lipson
Sara Stern-Nezer

► WELCOME CIRCLE by Deb Lelchuk and Cynthia Gordon, Co-VPs Advocacy

With approximately 45,000 Afghan men, women, and children still living on seven military bases around the country, there is a need to mobilize community resources to help guide these Afghan families through their early days and months in the USA. 700 more Afghan refugees are expected to come to the LA/LB area by the beginning of the year.

Together with partners in the American Jewish community, HIAS (a partner of NCJW, Inc.) is launching a network of Welcome Circles. The goal is to support Afghan refugees as they begin to acclimate to their new lives in their new communities. Among other things, each Welcome Circle will help secure housing, provide necessities like furniture and clothing, and assist in accessing government benefits such as schooling, food, and health care.



HIAS will provide varied support to the circles, including dedicated staff, resources on best practices in resettlement, peer-to-peer mentoring, and technical expertise -- all designed to assist along the way.

This is an opportunity to act on our values. A group of NCJW members is interested in forming a Welcome Circle to support a family. If you would like to learn more and possibly join us, please contact Advocacy VPs Cynthia Gordon and/or Deb Lelchuk at advocacy@ncjwlongbeach.org.

► WHAT YOU MISSED! DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM by Cynthia Gordon, Co-VP Advocacy

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT AND HOW TO HELP

On October 27, about 30 NCJW and community members joined together online to hear from four dynamic speakers about the problem of domestic violence: what to watch out for, how to help, and how domestic violence manifests in the Jewish community. Our speakers included:

- Judge Jacqueline Lewis, who runs the domestic violence court in West Covina
- Deidra King, the Community Based Services Coordinator at Jewish Family & Children's Service in Long Beach
- Ellen Goldsmith, LCSW in private practice
- Julie Schwarz, Executive Director of [Project WomanGood](#), a nonprofit organization she founded in 2020 to assist women leaving abusive relationships.

As a follow-up to this program, a Community Service vintage clothing drive was organized for November 14, to support Julie's Mom-Up Shop at Long Beach Vintage, located at 737 Pine in downtown Long Beach. The drive was very successful; Julie sold several items during the collection and took many more wonderful items back to her store to sell later. Check out her store when you have a chance!

In case you missed this program, you can find the video recording on our website on the [Webinar Archives](#) page. You can also find the recording on our [YouTube channel](#), along with other event videos from last year and this year.

► NCJW'S HUGPACKS – A VERY SPECIAL WAY TO GIVE YOUTH ENTERING FOSTER CARE A HUG!

By Linda C. Fox and Sara Millman Silva, Co-Chairs HugPacks



After September's very successful and enjoyable packing session for incoming high school youth, HugPacks return to the Alpert Jewish Community Center Auditorium on **Thursday, January 13, 2022 from 6 to 7:30 pm** for our second session for K-2nd grade students entering foster care. In a mere 90 minutes, support students entering the LA County foster care system by assembling backpacks filled with all kinds of items appropriate to the grade level, including toiletries and hygiene products, school supplies, books and more. And monetary donations to the HugPack Fund are especially needed this year. You'll feel so great that you have contributed to

healing the world just a little bit, whether by packing with us or sending a donation!! Snacks and drinks will be provided to sustain you while you stuff!

We are told by our distributing partner, LA County Department of Children's and Family Services (DCFS), Lakewood Office, that the backpacks fly off the shelves as the caseworkers pick them up for their assigned youth. No wonder: they have over 3,000 cases in the area!

All COVID-19 protocols for Long Beach/LA County/AJCC in place at the time will be followed, including proof of vaccination and masks. RSVPs a must: please email Linda at communityservice@ncjwlongbeach.org or call (657) 235-2511 and say you'll volunteer! All are welcome, so come and bring a friend! No experience needed!

And save the dates for the two remaining 2021-2022 sessions and grade level packings at the Alpert Jewish Community Center:

Thursday, March 10, 6 - 7:30 pm

Thursday, May 12, 6 - 7:30 pm



► YOUR COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN VERY BUSY!

By Andrea Friedenthal,
VP Community Service

Thanks to those of you who stepped up for a variety of projects (sometimes with last-minute notice), we are branching out into many areas with new community partners, and 2022 will be even more diverse! There is something for everyone, so stay ‘tuned in’ or you’ll miss your chance to help in a way that fits your style.

Here's what the past couple of months have included:

- We packed our quarterly 150 Hugpack backpacks (generously donated by Temple Israel!) full of school supplies and hygiene items and sent them off to LA County DCFS, Department of Children's and Family Services. This particular HugPack event was specifically for high school students. The next batch is in January for elementary kids and we need your help both in energy and funds.
- Our citywide Yom Kippur food drive was a huge success! We collected more than 3,000 pounds of food and other items and delivered them to the JFCS, Jewish Family & Children's Services and to LBCC's Viking Pantry to help homeless folks, students and seniors. It was by far the biggest food drive JFCS has received and all the local Jewish agencies collaborated.
- Temple Israel's Winter Coat Drive, which we cosponsored, garnered a big collection of wonderful coats, jackets, sweaters, caps etc. We partnered then with the Gray Panthers who ran a signup for low-income seniors to receive a coat or jacket. Part of our collection went to give warm jackets to 75 seniors in need. The 2nd batch of jackets went to Mama J's Coat Drive for kids at Roosevelt Elementary School. The remaining and last-minute collections went to St. Luke's, which runs a shower program for about 125 people a week. They always need men's sturdy clothing and some women's clothing, including clean, used underwear and bras. Temple Israel also donated rain tarps that were purchased by this committee and given to St. Luke's as well.

Lastly, my favorite, We Care of Los Alamitos, one of our OC partners for family homeless prevention, donated dozens of toys. Those toys were picked up by Mama Juanita and donated to the VFW in Compton for kids who have lost their parents in the wars.



**We ARE GRATEFUL for your caring,
your commitment and your desire to do Tikkun Olam!**

Donate on our website, for any of these causes, and just specify what project captures your heart. Have a pet project you want us to get involved in? Contact Andrea Friedenthal at communityservice@ncjwlongbeach.org for any questions or open opportunities.





National Council of Jewish Women

GREATER LONG BEACH &
WEST ORANGE COUNTY

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► RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

*By Bobbi Horowitz and Tila Carroll,
Co-VPs Resource Development*

Thanks to those who have responded so far to the annual fund-raising campaign!
Sorry if we missed any recent donors by print time! We'll list you next time.

Dale Blessing

Vicky Cahn

Tila Carrol

Lauren Friedman

Dawn Haldane

Judith Hardaker

Bobbi Horowitz

Joan Leb

Judy Leff

Judith Lorber

Barbara Millman

Mona Panitz

Barbara Shipnuck

Barbara Shoag

Sherri Sobel

Dale Strok

Cheryl Waterman

Barbara Wolfe

Ilsebill Wolfe

► TRIBUTES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

by Barbara Millman, Tributes and Corresponding Secretary

We offer a special thank you to the following donors who have made contributions to the programs of NCJW:

Jack and Binnie Berro for their generous contribution for our programs for the Homeless, Women's Reproductive Rights, and Immigration Services.

Linda Fox for her continuing contributions to HugPacks.

Phyllis Karn for her contribution to NCJW, Inc, and the General Fund.

Sara Silva for her continuing contributions to HugPacks.

Dale Strok for contributions to the General Fund in honor of our 75th anniversary.

Romie Temkin for contributions to the General Fund in honor of our 75th anniversary.

► SAVE THE DATE!

May 15-17, 2022

Make your plans now to attend Washington Institute, the premier national NCJW event. There will also be an opportunity to attend this event virtually. Subsidies will be available to members with requirements to be announced.