

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

▶ A Message From Our President *by Maria Osorio, President*



As I write this we are midway through Sukkot, probably my favorite Jewish holiday. Sukkot is a little like Thanksgiving. It is a festival for giving thanks for many things, like food and shelter. Sukkot celebrates the gathering of the harvest and commemorates the miraculous protection G'd provided for the children of Israel when they left Egypt. On October 9th we celebrated Sukkot at the AJCC. We helped decorate the sukkah, met the Afghan women the NCJW Welcome Circle has resettled in the community, reconnected with old friends, and met our newest members. It truly was a wonderful way to return to in-person membership gatherings.

And, before we know it, Thanksgiving will be upon us. For many of us, this time of year may mean traveling to visit with family and friends, enjoying traditional holiday foods, and reflecting on the people and things for which we are grateful. Soon thereafter, we will be celebrating Chanukah. I hope you are all able to spend time with family and friends during the Thanksgiving and Chanukah holidays, each time making new memories.

During this season of gratitude, I would like to acknowledge each of you for all you do for NCJW Greater Long Beach & West Orange County. Your support, time, and contributions are much appreciated. This year we participated in Long Beach Gives for the first time. We set a goal of \$25,000 and we surpassed it. Thank you to all of our peer fundraisers and donors, as well as the team of volunteers who worked diligently on this project. Your efforts helped ensure that our HugPacks program will continue to provide backpacks full of needed hygiene items, school supplies, comfort items like books and toys, and a “best wishes” note to children who have been abused and neglected.

I would also like to acknowledge that this time of year can be challenging for many. The holidays can bring on feelings of stress, anxiety, and sometimes depression due to a number of reasons. Please remember to look to each other, and look out for one another. Remember to take breaks, connect with friends, breathe, plan ahead, continue healthy habits, reach out to someone, share a cup of coffee or even a simple smile, and express your appreciation to those who have helped you. It's the small things that sometimes have the greatest impact.

Finally, as you are all aware we are an advocacy organization, which means we must all vote on November 8th (or earlier, voting early always helps). Voting gives us the power to make our opinions heard. For this, I am thankful!

May you enjoy a bountiful Thanksgiving, a joyous holiday season and healthful, Happy New Year!



We are looking for our next Recording Secretary! Maybe it's YOU?!
If you are interested in being more involved, we invite you to join us!
Please email us at info@ncjwlongbeach.org.

▶ **LONG BEACH GIVES WAS A SUCCESS FOR NCJW!**
By Bobbi Horowitz and Dale Strok, Campaign Co-Chairs



The Long Beach Gives Campaign was a huge success in raising over **\$25,000** in funds for NCJW's important HugPacks program for children in the foster care system. Knowing that someone cares makes a huge impact on their lives!

With our first-time participation in Long Beach Gives we did fabulous! We exceeded our goals and appreciate all the support from NCJW members, family, friends, and the Long Beach community. Our Peer Fundraisers helped us to significantly exceed our goal. A special and heartfelt thank you for the Berro's generosity and support with their matching grant of \$10,000. We matched it plus raised more than an additional \$5,000!

Here are the wonderful Peer Fundraisers:

Jack and Binnie Berro
Ruth Cooperman
Linda Fox
Andrea Friedenthal
Trish and Jared Goldin
Dawn Haldane
Jeanne Halliday
Bobbi Horowitz

Judy Leff
Joanne Levy
Judy Lorber
Maria Osorio
Barbara Shoag
Sara Millman Silva
Phyllis Spear
Dale Strok



► **WELCOME BACK TO THE TENT**
by Natalie Swit, Co-VP Membership



The holiday of Sukkot is known in the Jewish tradition as “Z’man Simchateinu—the Season of Our Joy.” There are many reasons to rejoice at this time of the year. On Sunday, October 9, 2022, 65 members and guests of NCJW of Greater Long Beach and West Orange County joyfully came together for its first membership gathering in three years. We celebrated with good food, friendship, and as required by our bylaws held a short business meeting. One of the most joyful parts of our coming together was to meet Hameeda, Masoma, and Reema, the Afghan women that NCJW’s Welcome Circle has helped to resettle in Long Beach. For further details of their journey and adjustment to Long Beach, see the article

by Michele Samit from the Welcome Circle. The afternoon concluded with an arts and craft project led by Linda Waltzman. Guests created paper pomegranates to decorate the Alpert JCC Sukkah and to take home to decorate their own sukkahs. A lovely afternoon was had by all. NCJW looks forward to future opportunities to come together to celebrate and to make a difference in the lives of women, children, and families locally, statewide, and nationally.



► **WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!**
by Carrie Tinker, Co-VP Membership

Judy Carey, Stacey Levine, Shelby Page, and Kellie Sala.
Thank you to President Maria Osorio for gifting memberships to:
Shelby and Kellie.

Reminder to returning members, if you haven’t paid your annual dues, now is the time!



▶ NCJW OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE
by Andrea Friedenthal, VP Community Service

NCJW needs you for new and ongoing projects!

Collection of Abortion After-Care Kits
Saturday and Sunday, November 5 and 6,
10 am-2 pm
In front of Alpert JCC



NCJW Is gathering supplies for kits to be donated to clients of Planned Parenthood of Orange and San Bernadino Counties. These kits contain comfort items given to patients after a procedure. Donate supplies by dropping off any of the listed items or by donating to the Abortion Access Fund. Each kit costs \$7. Individually wrapped menstrual pads, disposable heat patches, hand sanitizer, hand wipes, Oreo cookies, Luna bars, individually wrapped tea bags. If you can help pack the kits, go to communityservice@ncjwlongbeach.org. You can donate directly to: ncjwlongbeach.org/donate, Abortion Access Fund.

Winter Coat Drive
Thursday, November 10, 11 am-2 pm,
Friday-Sunday, November 11-13, 10 am-2 pm
Alpert JCC



WARM OUTER GARMENTS ONLY for needy seniors, children, the homeless, veterans, and low-income families. Any size or style, any gender, blankets and caps, too.

We received a thank-you letter from Long Beach City College, LBCC Basic Needs, regarding the October Food Drive and our ongoing support of their students. The NCJW community donated 481 lbs of food and two gift cards totaling \$45! Our thanks to all who donated.



▶ CARING CORNER
by Jeanne Halliday, Chair

NCJW wants to recognize the touchstones in the lives of our members. If you know of any of our members who are ill, have passed away, gotten awards or had special celebrations, please be in touch with Jeanne Halliday at info@ncjwlongbeach.org. We want them to know that we share their sorrow as well as joy! Cards were sent to the following members over the past two months:



- Sharon Brannon..... Speedy recovery from knee replacement
- Barbara Cohen.....Thinking of you and hoping for your son’s recovery
- Kim DeCelles.....Get well soon
- Harriette Ellis.....Speedy recovery from your hospital visit
- Linda Fox..... Speedy recovery from your accident and get well soon
- Family of Eileen Hopp.....Sympathy on the passing of Eileen
- Barbara Millman.....Hope your back is feeling better
- Sara Millman Silva..... Congratulations on being elected President of the National Directors Council YouthBuild USA

▶ WELCOME THE STRANGER *by Michele Samit, Core Welcome Circle Member*

As summer turns to Autumn, Jews around the world celebrate the harvest festival of Sukkot—joining with relatives, friends, and strangers to share food, conversation and stories. NCJW-GLB/WOC celebrated the holiday with an in-person get together, where we reconnected with old friends, greeted new members, and officially welcomed our sponsored Afghan women, Masoma, Reema, and Hameeda, into our tent.

It was a beautiful day filled with delicious food, arts and crafts, laughter, and tears. Core Welcome Circle Lead Naomi Steinfeld introduced the women, then Welcome Circle member Gail Levy interviewed them. Masoma, Reema and Hameeda bravely shared their stories of fleeing the Taliban; being hastily evacuated from Kabul to Tirana, Albania to continue their graduate studies in horticulture in a joint program between Tirana University and Michigan State University. They gave us insight into their adjustment process. They have accomplished so much since coming to Long Beach that it's hard to believe that it's only been a year since they fled their homes in Afghanistan!

With NCJW'S Welcome Circle's Core team members continued support and assistance, along with our membership's dedicated volunteers and donations, they have settled into housing, started the asylum process and begun entry-level jobs. They described learning bus routes, studying for final exams, obtaining employment, and adjusting to American culture. Overcoming huge obstacles, they completed their Master's program in September, all graduating with honors.

With degrees in Advanced Techniques in Horticulture, they are interning at The Growing Experience Urban Farm with a focus on adapting crops to climate change.

It was wonderful to introduce them, and to finally welcome them into our community. It was extra poignant to do this on Sukkot, a harvest holiday where we celebrate all things agricultural, and where the Sukkah itself reminds us of our own people's escape from slavery in Egypt. Our ancestors lived in temporary homes as they fled oppression and bloodshed, so Sukkot is a holiday that reminds us of our vulnerability—how we were once despised by society, made to do menial work without protection, and how we suffered violence at the hand of the state. Perhaps Masoma, Reema, and Hameeda's stories resonated so deeply with our membership because, though most of us live in comfortable homes, their journey and Sukkot itself reminds us that this was not always so.

Masoma, Reema, and Hameeda hope that their education and experience will lead them to fulfilling careers where they can make a difference—like farming, organic food certification, food science, hunger nonprofits, water science, landscaping, or aquafarming.

The Welcome Circle team is helping them in that endeavor, looking for permanent employment with the goal of self-sufficiency. We are hopeful that all NCJW members will reach out to their contacts and keep their eyes open for job openings. It really does take a village.



▶ WE HELP GET OUT THE VOTE
by Deb Lelchuk, Co-VP Legislation and Advocacy

Since September, a group of more than 30 women have been reaching out to low propensity voters across the country and urging them to vote in the 2022 midterm elections. Eighteen attended one or more of three house parties hosted by Lydia Pinto, Reva Alban, and Yetta Kane. And an additional 10 or more have been writing at home. Overall, more than 1,600 postcards for Reclaim Our Vote and nearly 500 letters for Vote Forward have been written.

The Get Out the Vote efforts culminated in a program, Preparing for the Propositions with the League of Women Voters and co-sponsored by the Temple Israel Social Action Committee. The program was attended by approximately 40 people in-person and many more via livestream. You can watch the recording at <https://www.tilb.org/temple-israel-livestream/>.

Thank you to our house party hosts, our intrepid writers, and hosts:

Reva Alban, Sharon Bergeron, Viki Cahn, Tila Carrol, Ruth Cooperman, Starr DaMauer, Judith Dubowy, Lynn Epstein, Linda Fox, Lauren Friedman, Cynthia Gordon, Teri Hershberg, Bobbi Horowitz, Yetta Kane, Sharon Kenigsberg, Arla Lewis, Judy Leff, Gail Levy, Natalie Lissak, Roni Love, Maria Osorio, Lydia Pinto, Lisa Raufman, Joy Rubin, Kate Sachnoff, Cookie Sieger, Nancy Slusher, Michelle Sztraicher, Dale Strok, Natalie Swit, Carrie Tinker, Linda Waltzman, and above all, our Voting and Elections chair Chana Ham-Rosebrock.

Are YOU ready to vote?



OUR VOTE IS OUR VOICE



**OUR DEMOCRACY IS AT ITS STRONGEST
WHEN EVERY VOICE IS HEARD**

NCJW
National Council of Jewish Women

**▶ MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL:
ADVOCACY, WHO ME? YES, YOU!**
Thursday, November 17, 7 pm, AJCC



You may think advocacy is not your thing. But maybe you don't really know what it is. You know there are issues that you care about. You know that change is needed.

Join us in a social setting to talk to folks who are already involved as well as others who don't know if they want to be. Please RSVP to advocacy@ncjwlongbeach.org.



GREATER LONG BEACH & WEST ORANGE COUNTY

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RECORDING SECRETARY
Will YOU step up?

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
Barbara Millman

BYLAWS CHAIR
Sherri Sobel

FUN, UPCOMING PROGRAMS!
by Sharon Brannon, VP Programs

The Program Committee is planning two upcoming special events. We welcome everyone who would like to join in. On November 30, we are planning a day trip to the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana. The highlight will be the exhibit of Gue Pei: Art of Couture. A tour will be followed by lunch at the on-site Tangata Restaurant. The Bowers also has a terrific gift shop! More information and details will be announced.

On December 11, at the lovely home of Judy Leff in Rossmoor, we will have our annual Chanukah Brunch from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm. Plans and more information will be announced, but put the date on your calendar and plan to be there!



TRIBUTES
a note from the Editor

Tributes will be listed in the next issue as our corresponders are not able to provide information at this time. NCJW continues to need your tributes and contributions in support of our on-going projects.

Tribute cards are a great way to send sympathy, get-well wishes and congratulations to your friends. You can donate to ncjwlongbeach.org/donate or mail a check to NCJW along with a note telling us how to direct your gift and send to **NCJW, 3801 E. Willow Street, Long Beach, CA 90815.**



The Chai Campaign is still seeking donations!

Life members have been asked to make donations to NCJW in lieu of annual dues which they no longer have to pay. The following life members have made donations, in addition to those listed in the last PILLARS:

Linda Fox

Judy Leff

Deb Lechuk

Joanne Levy

Barbara Millman

Barbara Shoag

Dale Strok

We appreciate their continued financial support. To make a donation to the Chai Campaign, or to donate to any other campaign, you can donate to ncjwlongbeach.org/donate or mail a check to **NCJW, 3801 E. Willow Street, Long Beach, CA 90815.**

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