



Julie S. Solberg  
President



Jason Moss  
Executive Director

**Building  
Community,  
Enhancing  
Jewish  
Life**

Dear Friends,

We hope the start of 2023 is going well for you and your family. We are proud of how we have been working to not only positively impact the lives of our community, but also working towards our mission to strengthen and enhance Jewish life in our community. It has been a busy year for us, from holding our 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Every Person Has a Name, to continuing to offer security trainings as part of our Comprehensive Community-wide Security Plan, hiring our new Camp Gan Shalom Director, and adding three new Board members.

As we get closer to the start of Spring, we are excited to share with you this issue of our Federation FOCUS newsletter. As you will read in the next several pages, we are “pulling back the curtain” to share with you some of the important advocacy work we do that oftentimes goes unnoticed but ensures that our fellow Jewish community members are protected, represented, and feel comfortable expressing and engaging with their Judaism.

In addition, this issue includes thoughts and comments we recently received from community members about what they like most about our Jewish Federation and the value they say our Jewish Federation adds to our community. Plus, we have asked our newest Board members to share some thoughts about why they believe in the work our Jewish Federation does. And, we will also recap some of our most recent programs and work we’ve done over the last several months. Lastly, we have included some ads for you to see what we have planned for the next few months including our hands-on, interactive security trainings, our Cultural Arts’ Spring musical, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, Camp Gan Shalom, and more.

We are always looking for ways to increase opportunities for our community to connect and participate. We truly appreciate the ongoing support and participation we receive from community members like you. Together, we continue to build our community and enhance Jewish life in our area.

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# OUR COMMUNITY



Laura Zuckerman (TBI Pomona), Susan and Phillip Hain (Temple Sinai of Glendale)  
Volunteer Readers | 2023 Every Person Has a Name

## LAURA ZUCKERMAN Temple Beth Israel (TBI) of Pomona's President

What impresses me the most about the Jewish Federation are two things. First, the wide variety of events they offer. It is truly remarkable. Participating in a program like Every Person Has a Name has had a profound impact on me. And, second, as the TBI President, I appreciate how available Executive Director Jason Moss is to support the work of not only my congregation but all of our community's synagogues.



Tina Quick-Snedaker and Michael DiRosa  
The Twilight Zone | JFed Players' Fall 2017 production

## MICHAEL DIROSA JFed Players Volunteer Actor

I don't know where I would be without the Jewish Federation, and, in particular, the JFed Players. They have been my family away from my biological family. Being able to participate in the Jewish Federation's Cultural Arts shows has not only provided me support, but also given me many opportunities to give back by doing something I love... acting. To me, the Jewish Federation is people helping people, especially in time of need. Thank you for all you do.

## SARAH COOPER Camp Gan Shalom Parent

The Jewish Federation feels personalized. Their staff know the local communities and create meaningful events and experiences that bring people together. Our family has been affiliated with Camp Gan Shalom in some way since 2009. Our sons, now 18 and 15, started off as campers and have loved mentoring younger kids as a counselor and a CIT.



Sarah's son Noah as a camper with one of his  
Camp Gan Shalom counselors

The camp is a hub of Jewish summer engagement in the San Gabriel Valley. We also have been grateful for the Jewish Federation's strong voice in an area where Jews are spread out. Whether it's reminding local schools of the dates of Jewish holidays, advocating on behalf of Jewish causes at town hall or city meetings, or raising awareness about ways to counter antisemitism, the Jewish Federation is always there.



Richard and Ruth Goldstein  
Jewish Federation's Chesed Society Reception

## RICHARD AND RUTH GOLDSTEIN Literary Circle and Chesed Society members

We appreciate the leadership and support the Jewish Federation and its Executive Director, Jason Moss, provide our community. And, we love the Jewish Book Festival and the other region-wide offerings you provide. From the security trainings on how to deal with an active shooter to the musical programs and plays, we value the Jewish Federation and are happy to support it as it works to bring our community together.

# OUR IMPACT



## MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

### AVI BILU

I believe our Jewish Federation is an important resource in advocating for and protecting Jewish values in our community. In a polarized society where misinformation can be disseminated quickly, it is such a benefit to have our Jewish Federation to protect our beliefs, culture, and Israel. We live in a melting pot of cultures where our Jewish Federation is the standard for humanitarian and crisis responses. Our Jewish Federation is there to ensure that education and programs are available to sustain our Jewish community today and for future generations. I chose to join our Jewish Federation's Board to maximize my impact and to support a cause which aligns with my family's beliefs and values. I am excited to be able to use my past Weizmann Day School Board experience and professional skills to help shape and guide our organization into the future.



### JULIE GAMBERG

As a secular Jew and parent, I know first-hand how vital it is to feel connected to my community. Over the years, I've benefitted from our Jewish Federation's programs and services, which have helped my family feel less isolated and more supported. So, when the opportunity arose to give back and help others experience that same sense of belonging, I jumped at the chance!



For those of us who value our Jewish identity and heritage, having an organization like our Jewish Federation is essential. When you look at the ways our Jewish Federation is serving and representing our community - from supporting Jews at all stages of life, to promoting Jewish culture to advocating for Jewish safety and inclusion - it's clear that their role is crucial. It also provides a sense of unity and solidarity among Jews of all backgrounds and beliefs, bridging the gaps between cultural Jews like myself, and those with varying levels of religious observance.

I'm inspired by the work of our Jewish Federation and proud to be part of an organization that is making a real and needed difference in the lives of Jews throughout the greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys.

### LAWRENCE LURVEY

Our Jewish Federation has a vital role in making sure that the Jewish community stays together and can live by its values. That means that when there is hate and antisemitism, our Jewish Federation gives the community voice to speak out and the tools to protect itself. That means that when our kids need schools, or books, or summer camp, our Jewish Federation is there to help with a program. That means when something like COVID or any catastrophe comes along, and people need to feel connected, they have a way to do so. I have spent my career in health care trying to help people but I am constantly reminded that the help people need comes from the community. I am joining our Jewish Federation's Board to help make our community stronger.



## OUR MISSION

To build community by strengthening and enhancing Jewish life.

## OUR VISION

The Jewish Federation is a resource for everything Jewish in the greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys. We are a safe place for people to find their way into and connect with both their Judaism and the Jewish community. The programs and services we provide celebrate the Jewish community and create opportunities for people to engage with the beauty and richness of Jewish culture. And we are the Jewish voice for our local community, the eyes and ears that serve to locally educate and promote Judaism and Jewish life.

### JEWISH FEDERATION BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Julie Solberg President	David Levy Vice President	John Carlton CFO	Julie Bank Secretary
Mickey Bernath	Avi Bilu	Julie Gamberg	Lawrence Lurvey
Jeanine Mann	Stuart Miller	Oran Reznik	

### JEWISH FEDERATION STAFF

Jason Moss Executive Director	Rebecca Russell Program & Community Outreach Director	Cantor Judy Sofer Cultural Arts Program Director	Karen Galeana Operations & Communications Manager
Debby Singer PJ Library & PJ Our Way Program Director	Robyn Brahinsky PJ Library & PJ Our Way Program Assistant	Annabella Tornek Camp Gan Shalom Director	Susan Hain Bookkeeper

# OUR ADVOCACY &

As you may remember, our Jewish Federation conducted a community-wide survey during the Spring of 2021. Our goal with the survey was to get a better understanding of who our community is, how people engage and participate in Jewish life, and what they would like to see from our Jewish Federation. We learned a lot from the survey results, and the findings continue to guide our work. One specific area we learned from the survey was that many people still wanted clarification about what our Jewish Federation does and our impact on the community. This newsletter, Federation FOCUS, was developed as a response to the survey. We learned that we needed to do a better job sharing and highlighting the work of our Jewish Federation.

Let us start by sharing that our mission is to strengthen and enhance Jewish life in our community. In everything we do, whether through the programs and services we provide or any other aspects of our work, we work towards fulfilling our mission each day. While we hope people are familiar with programs like our annual Jewish Book Festival, Camp Gan Shalom, the Cultural Arts programming, Every Person Has a Name, and PJ Library, you may not be aware of the other important work we do that often happens behind the scenes. And while you may not see it, we know it directly impacts our community every day.

With this in mind, we thought it would be helpful for us to “pull back the curtain” and share with you a handful of examples of advocacy work we do, as the Jewish voice, on behalf of the greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys’ Jewish community.

## PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSES



When issues arise and a public response (or statement) from the Jewish community is needed, people look to us to respond. In the past, these statements have been in reaction to a wide variety of topics, including publicly denouncing hatred and antisemitism, attacks on religious institutions, situations that arise in Israel, and others. And when natural disasters occur, we establish emergency campaigns so community members have a local entity they can donate to help those affected.

When this happens, we pass 100% of all donations on to the organizations working to help people in need.

## OUTREACH TO LOCAL SCHOOLS



Twice a year we reach out to the local schools on behalf of Jewish families. In this communication, we share with school administrators an 8-year calendar of Jewish holidays and ask that they avoid scheduling school events like Back-to-School night and homecoming dances that conflict with any holiday. In addition, we remind them that students cannot be penalized in any fashion for missing school due to religious observance according to California Education Code. And if a need arises, we encourage their staff to use our Jewish Federation as a resource.

## HOLIDAY RESOURCE GUIDES AND PASSOVER



Several years ago, we started putting together holiday resource guides (i.e. High Holydays, Hanukkah, and Passover), sharing a collection of collated online resources, as well as promoting what our area synagogues have scheduled, with the community in order to enhance holiday celebrations. And, following a request from a community member last year, we started working with some of our local grocery stores to ensure that a larger quantity and selection of Passover-related foods is available. By partnering, we’ve shared with the grocery store chains which locations are centrally located for our community so they can expand their holiday displays. We also publicize the stores which have sections dedicated to Jewish holidays.

# COMMUNITY WORK

## COMMUNITY-WIDE SECURITY PLAN



Shortly after the hostage situation at the Colleyville, TX synagogue, we contacted Secure Community Network (SCN) to let them know that rather than have all of our local synagogues contact them individually to coordinate security trainings, our Jewish Federation could coordinate trainings for our entire community. Over the next several months, we developed our Community-wide Security Plan in partnership with SCN.

The goal of the security plan was four-fold: to help establish continuity around security throughout the local Jewish community; to ensure our Jewish Federation and its community partners were doing everything they could to help keep the community safe; to keep the community informed; and to encourage community members to participate in ongoing security trainings.

The plan itself targeted ten specific aspects of security the local Jewish community institutions should be doing to help make our community safer. These tasks include strengthening relationships with local law enforcement agencies and working with them to conduct an annual Site Threat Vulnerability Risk Assessment and performing recommended security upgrades. In addition, the plan urges institutional leadership to inform and keep their respective members up-to-date on their current security procedures and to promote the importance of their members' participation in security trainings.

We shared our plan with the FBI. After reviewing the plan, they asked if they could use it as a model template and share it with other faith-based communities to help them create their security plans. Through the effort of this plan, our community will be better prepared when (not if) an incident occurs.

## CONFRONTING AND COMBATING ANTISEMITISM



In March, our Jewish Federation began implementing a plan to confront and combat antisemitism that takes place in and around our community. We have contacted all of our region's elected officials to take steps to denounce and to work with us to combat antisemitism. In our outreach, the Jewish Federation has outlined a seven-part action plan requesting that each city: pass a resolution denouncing antisemitism and hatred of all forms in their respective cities; adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism; appoint a city staff member to serve as a liaison with our Jewish Federation to combat antisemitism; encourage them to develop an educational plan (or partner with organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League, the ADL) to train municipal staff and law enforcement personnel on detecting and reacting to all forms of modern-day antisemitism; and we are requesting every mayor to sign the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and U.S. Conference of Mayors statement to combat antisemitism. We are also planning to work with our local schools to take similar actions.

At the beginning of May, our Executive Director, Jason Moss, plans to write an Op-ed outlining what has been requested of our elected officials and encouraging the community to support this effort. While we know that we will not be able to eradicate antisemitism entirely, we hope that through our efforts, our Jewish Federation will reduce the instances of antisemitism in our community.

We hope these examples further illustrate our Jewish Federation's impact on our community through our vital advocacy work. Although sometimes this work does not get the attention it deserves, people often tell us how much they appreciate us taking such a leadership role. Through our programs and this work, our Jewish Federation is ensuring there is a strong and vibrant community for Jews living in the greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys.

If you have any questions or suggestions, or want to learn more about the work our Jewish Federation does on behalf of the local Jewish community, please contact our Executive Director, Jason Moss by sending an email to [jmoss@jewishsgpv.org](mailto:jmoss@jewishsgpv.org) or calling 626.445.0810.



What we have done...

# NOVEMBER 2022

## COMMUNITY ISRAEL TRIP

Last fall, Cantor Judy Sofer, our Cultural Arts Program Director, took a group of 20 community members to Israel for a 12-day tour. For many, it was their first time visiting. Not only did they experience Israel's culture, but they also walked through Jewish and Israeli history by touring various sites throughout the country. Some of the trip highlights included visiting Caesarea, Nimrod's fortress in the Golan Heights, the caves of Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, swimming in the Dead Sea, walking through the Old City of Jerusalem, and visiting Yad Vashem.



## PJ LIBRARY HANUKKAH

In a special celebration for our community's youth and their families, PJ Library created and delivered Hanukkah kits to families to help engage with and celebrate Hanukkah. In addition to a special Hanukkah author program at Southern California Children's Museum, with author Alan Silberberg and his book *Meet the Latkes*, we held a very special 4<sup>th</sup> Night Family Hanukkah concert with crowd-favorite Jason Mesches. This virtual concert helped our families celebrate the festival of lights and included a special candle-lighting ceremony where the children lit their menorahs over Zoom. Seeing so many people simultaneously lighting their Hanukkah menorahs were a sight to see.



## JEWISH BOOK FESTIVAL

Our 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Jewish Book Festival was another smashing success. This year's festival brought together an incredible array of authors and subjects, ranging from several novels and a couple of family-author events to current events, a special cookbook event, and our first One Community, One Book event. There was something for everyone and most events were held both in-person and virtually to ensure that everyone was able to attend. Without the hard and tireless work of our Jewish Book Festival committee and the financial support of our Literary Circle members, this year's festival would not have been the success it was.

## FESTIVAL OF JEWISH MUSIC

This year marked the 15<sup>th</sup> year we have held the Festival of Jewish Music. As in previous years, the collection of songs featured in the festival were in celebration of Jewish music, with many Hanukkah song selections. The festival included performances by Kol HaEmek (our community choir), our Jewish Youth Orchestra, local cantors, and Temple Beth Israel's Shul Band. This program continues to add the sound of Jewish music during the holiday season.



**COUNTERING ACTIVE TERROR THREATS**  
INTERACTIVE AND HANDS-ON SECURITY TRAINING

Learn the skills and tools to keep yourself safer during an active shooter incident. This hands-on, interactive training will be conducted by and in partnership with Secure Community Network (SCN).

Two dates & locations to choose from:  
**April 19, 7 p.m.**  
Temple Beth Israel of Pomona  
3033 N Towne Ave, Pomona

**April 20, 7 p.m.**  
Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center  
1434 N Altadena Dr, Pasadena

To register, visit:  
[www.jewishsgpv.org](http://www.jewishsgpv.org)

This training is part of the Jewish Federation's Community-wide Security Plan.

THE JEWISH FEDERATION  
OF THE GREATER SAN GABRIEL AND POMONA VALLEYS'

**JFED PLAYERS**  
COMMUNITY THEATER ENSEMBLE  
PRESENTS

**PERFORMANCES**  
**SATURDAYS:** April 15, 22, and 29 | 8 p.m.  
**SUNDAYS:** April 16 and 23 | 3 p.m.  
**THURSDAYS:** April 20 and 27 | 7:30 p.m.

**LOCATION**  
Porticos Art Space: 2033 E Washington Blvd. Pasadena, CA 91104

TO PURCHASE TICKETS,  
VISIT [WWW.JEWISHSGPV.ORG](http://WWW.JEWISHSGPV.ORG)

# - FEBRUARY 2023

## ANNUAL MEETING

On January 8, our Jewish Federation held its 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. The meeting included a performance by Kol HaEmek, the awarding of the annual Kimberly Dawn Ellis scholarship to Avery Handley (Temple Beth Israel of Pomona) and our inaugural High School Junior Scholarship to Anya Rose (Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center), and a Jewish Federation update from our President, Julie Solberg. We also awarded the 2022 Volunteer of the Year to Joanne Karr for her outstanding contributions to our Cultural Arts program. The meeting also featured a very special keynote conversation between Josh Rawitch (President, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum) and Peter Dreier (professor, author, and baseball enthusiast), moderated by our Jewish Federation Executive Director Jason Moss.



by our own Jewish Youth Orchestra and "Eli, Eli" by Cantor Allison Weiss (Temple Sinai of Glendale), and a reflection by Rabbi John Carrier (Pasadena Jewish Temple & Center) who also led us in the traditional Mourner's Kaddish. This year, more than 130 volunteers read 7,748 names of those who were murdered during the Holocaust. Thanks to a new partnership with American Friends of Yad Vashem, and support from Pasadena Jewish Temple & Center's Sisterhood, we were able to arrange an exhibition from Yad Vashem entitled "With Me Here Are Six Million Accusers: The Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem."



## EVERY PERSON HAS A NAME

We were once again pleased to be able to hold this year's event at Pasadena City Hall and continue our partnership with the City of Pasadena as our co-sponsor of this important and meaningful event. Our commemoration ceremony was highlighted by remarks from local elected officials (Pasadena Mayor Victor Gordo, Congresswoman Judy Chu, State Senator Anthony Portantino, and representatives from L.A. County Supervisor Kathryn Barger and State Assemblymembers Christopher Holden's and Blanca Rubio's offices), moving performances of "Oifn Pripichik"

## ELDER FINANCIAL ABUSE TRAINING

In our Jewish Federation's continued effort to help the community feel safer, we coordinated a special training as part of our Comprehensive Community-wide Security Plan with two FBI Supervisory Special Agents. The training focused on trends and examples of how older citizens often are victims of financial scams. During the trainings, the FBI agents shared tips and insights on what to look for in order to keep attendees safer. Our Jewish Federation is committed to continue offering similar trainings in the months ahead.



## Camp Gan Shalom

SUMMER 2023

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

**KEHILLA (K - 5th)**  
\$315 per week

**MANHEEGIM (6th - 8th)**  
\$365 per week

**CIT\* (9th - 10th)**  
\$75 per week  
\*Must complete application and interview process.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

EXTENDED CARE AVAILABLE

WHEN? WHERE?

**June 12 - July 21 (Weeks 1-6)**  
Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center

**July 24 - August 4 (Weeks 7-8)**  
Temple Beth Israel of Pomona

HOW TO REGISTER?

For more information, to register, or to apply for the CIT program visit: [www.jewishsgpv.org](http://www.jewishsgpv.org)

JEWISH FEDERATION

OF THE GREATER SAN GABRIEL AND POMONA VALLEYS

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY IN ISRAEL THIS FALL FOR

# Tastes of ISRAEL

NOVEMBER 11-21, 2023

11-day culinary tour  
\$4,600 per person, plus airfare.

For more information, contact Cantor Judy Sofer, [jsofer@jewishsgpv.org](mailto:jsofer@jewishsgpv.org) 626.445.0810

JEWISH FEDERATION

OF THE GREATER SAN GABRIEL AND POMONA VALLEYS



**JEWISH  
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# THESE ARE EXTRAORDINARY TIMES FOR THE JEWISH WORLD.

The **Jewish Federation of the Greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys** continues working to ensure our community feels supported, connected, and represented.

Make a donation to the **Jewish Federation** today and help us address and respond to the needs and challenges our Jewish community faces.



TO DONATE VISIT  
[WWW.JEWISHSGPV.ORG](http://WWW.JEWISHSGPV.ORG)



**JEWISH  
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