



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024



MESSAGE from Linda Steinberg, President

We are truly shaping the next chapter for NCJWC.

Mazel Tov to Monika Simon and the 20 members of the newly recreated Montreal Section. We are so excited and look forward to working with you on Council initiatives and introducing you to our awesome_organization.

Through a collaboration of 21 NCJWC leaders we are moving our Strategic Plan forward. Sheila Neuberger, Toronto President; Jordana Corenblum, Vancouver President and Debbie Wasserman, National Past President are each leading an Implementation Focus Group. Their discussions bring excitement, reflection and endless possibilities for a stronger, more cohesive and vibrant National organization. Areas being discussed are: improving efficiency, enhancing communication, leadership development, membership recruitment, outreach, expansion and fundraising. We will share our next steps with you in the fall.

Meanwhile, our National committees are developing inspirational educational programs and webinars, which support the **pillars** of our Board's Agenda and contribute to the work of our 6 Sections

The **Antisemitism Committee** has planned a series of webinars on 'Women on the Front Lines' which will culminate in an event at our AGM in November.

The work of the 'Women 2 Women (W2W) Committee Against Racism' is on hold following October 7th. Many rallies are being held throughout the country in response to the escalating incidents of Antisemitism. NCJWC members joined Toronto Section at the 'Canadian Women Against Antisemitism' rally on March 24 at Queen's Park. The speakers included Melissa Lantsman, MP, Deborah Lyons, Special Envoy on Holocaust Remembrance and Antisemitism and 2 university students who spoke about their horrific antisemitic experiences on campus which resulted in these women stepping away from their studies. This well-organized rally is a testament to the determination of women to fight hatred. Our presence was featured on local news.

Dr. Allison Sekuler, who is internationally recognized for her research will present 'Defy Dementia' on June 5th, the second webinar planned by the **Ageism Committee** .

Responding to **ALUMA's** unprecedented need for more trauma therapy counsellors following October 7th, our Sections raised \$18,707 in an emergency campaign. An additional \$5000 was donated to the Yoseftal Hospital in Eilat for the creation of a children's computer centre to acknowledge Israel's 75th anniversary. This centre has become even more important with the recent displacement of so many Israelis.

Plans are underway for National's AGM (November 2-4) and the International Council of Jewish Women's Conference and Executive meeting (November 4-6) in Toronto. All NCJWC members are invited to attend and will have an opportunity to mingle during events which overlap.

The ICJW provides an important platform to discuss global issues effecting women and humanity.

A recent zoom meeting with the Presidents of the affiliate organizations was both inspiring and heartbreaking as I learned more about the plight of women living in poverty in South Africa and the assistance that our affiliate organization provides on a regular basis.

Debbie Wasserman and myself attended the ICJW conference in Panama last fall and Debbie will attend the conference in Slovakia this May. I am looking forward to visiting our NCJWC's Sections in the fall.

NCJWC has a rich history of serving our communities and our National Board and Sections ensure that we continue to carry this torch. Yashar Koach to all.

Chag Sameach to you and your families.

We pray for peace in Israel and a world where Jews can once again live in peace.

Linda

Letter of Appreciation from Gadi Lifshitz, ALUMA

Dear Linda

I can't find enough words to express my gratitude and the gratitude of our entire team. We continue the healing journey of our clients as well as ours. We are proud of our long-standing partnership with the NCJWC.

Please share our gratitude with your wonderful community.

Warm regards,
Gadi

Gadi Lifshitz
Tahel Organizational Practices, www.tahel-op.co.il +9725029374

MITZVAH DAY

Congratulations to each Section for your exceptional contributions and positive impact on your local communities through Mitzvah Day. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of both Toronto and Winnipeg, NCJWC was shortlisted for the prestigious "The Edwin and Esther Shuker Outstanding International Mitzvah Day Award" in the U.K. The award winners were announced on Thursday, April 11. Union of Jewish Women - Johannesburg, South Africa, and Maccabi Ukraine were the recipients of the 2023 award. Best wishes to all of you, as the real winners are both the recipients and those of you who have made a positive difference in their communities.

NCJWC COMMITTEES

AGEISM COMMITTEE

The Ageism Committee has produced three Ageism Reports since last fall based on the *National Institute on Ageing* evidence briefs, spearheaded by Dr. Samir Sinha — *Affordable Housing, Social Isolation, Safe and Appropriate Medication*.

Thank you to Rochelle Garfinkel, Vancouver Section, and Naomi Kingston, Toronto Section, for making the reports look so good and readable!

The Committee is delighted that Dr. Allison Sekuler has accepted our invitation to present a webinar "Defy Dementia" on June 5, 2024. She is one of the most accomplished Neuroscientists in North America with ground-breaking research that aims to develop methods to prevent, detect and treat age-related sensory and cognitive decline. See Webinar Details in this report!

Monika Simon, Vice President and Committee Chair

ANTISEMITISM COMMITTEE

After the approval of the Board at the Annual General Meeting last October, the Antisemitism Committee created two templates to assist Sections with outreach programs. One provides the elements to build an antisemitism presentation as an outreach program, which includes a short video on the history of antisemitism, an account of a Holocaust survivor, and the personal stories of antisemitism experienced by members in your own Section.

The other template seeks to help each Section to advocate in its own city equipped with a list of questions to ask municipal leaders what action they have taken to stem the rise of antisemitism locally.

It falls on all of us to work together with political leaders to mitigate this age-old challenge!

If you would like to know more about these templates or join our committees, contact Monika Simon at monikaandrew@gmail.com.

We also want you to be aware that our President, Linda Steinberg, has invited Deborah Lyons, Canada's Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism as a keynote speaker for NCJWC's Annual General Meeting in the fall. We are crossing our fingers that her schedule will allow her to join us.

Monika Simon, Vice President and Committee Chair

UPCOMING WEBINARS:

SAVE THE DATES:

DEFY DEMENTIA

Learn some strategies to reduce dementia risk.



Dr. Allison Sekuler, FSEP, FPS, FAPS

DATE: Wednesday, June 5, 2024

WHEN: 2:00 pm EST

WHERE: ZOOM EVENT

REGISTER: To be announced

The Anti - Semitism Committee presents

“WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINES”

The first Webinar of 3 will be held on Monday June 3, 2024.

Further information will be forthcoming.

Stay tuned....

SECTION UPDATES



EDMONTON UPDATE

For a small community, Edmonton Section has stayed active and will continue to stay active as you will read in the following report.

During the third week of October, the Edmonton Section implemented an early Mitzvah Day Community Project by helping the Bissell Centre in downtown Edmonton with socks and other vital items to help the homeless and people in need with winter wear. A light lunch was provided by volunteers on October 22, 2023. This community program helped over 250 people who required assistance.

Jewish Family Services depends on the Edmonton Section of NCJWC with funds to help the SMART (Seniors Making Age Related Transitions) Program continue to be provided in the community. A cheque presentation was made to JFS in November, 2023. This is greatly appreciated by all those in the community who receive help, including counselling and other related services.



On January 29th, the Edmonton Section sponsored an event called Pro-Semitism featuring Caroline D'Amore – a social media and business sensation. Although not Jewish, Caroline speaks out bravely against antisemitism and she discussed how she stands with Israel at this difficult time. This event was organized by Jewish National Fund of Canada, and NCJWC was proud to be a part of this interesting and important event.

On Sunday, March 3rd, the Aviv Israeli Folk Dance Association celebrated 18 years in the Edmonton Community. A large dance festival was held, and NCJWC – Edmonton Section was a proud sponsor of this fun event.

In the spring, the Edmonton Section will be supporting the Edmonton Jewish Film Festival, which is an important event for the Jewish and general community of Edmonton.

NCJWC – Edmonton Section has enjoyed working with the National Board, and we look forward to implementing the recommendations and goals from the National Strategic Planning Process.

Jodi Zabłudowski, President Edmonton



SIMCOE COUNTY UPDATE

Simcoe County is continuing its two regular monthly programs. The first is a Book Club, meeting virtually on the first Monday of the month. The second is a drop-in in lunch, held at a local restaurant either the last Wednesday or Thursday of the month. For the months of June, July, and August, we hope to host a brown bag lunch at members' homes, with the host providing beverages and desserts. These lunches prove to be a great way to introduce potential members to Council.

On the last Monday in July we will be holding our third annual Mahj/Canasta Day. It has grown from 8 to 14 tables last year. We can accommodate a maximum of 20 tables. We will be contributing a portion of the money raised to a National Initiative, specifics to be determined a later date.

Unfortunately, last year Mitzvah Day, which is held in November, was not as successful as prior years, likely due to the situation in Israel. We will be investigating other options for this year. In the early weeks following October 7th, Simcoe County section teamed up with Am Shalom Congregation and PJ Library to collect essential medical supplies to be sent to Israel through UJA Genesis. Our social action committee has been knitting hats for the Israeli soldiers.

The PJ Library connector for Simcoe County, Allison Sullovey Charland has joined our executive committee with the goal of engaging younger women. She has had some success and continues to work hard. An event for Purim, which was held at the Holly Public Library on Essa Road, was a huge success.

Allison has suggested a program called "Adopt a Family" for Passover. She is asking any families to put a few more chairs at their tables, to host an area family who would otherwise be alone for Seder. In January we gathered in person at Am Shalom to view a heart wrenching presentation by Shye Weinstein, a photographer who grew up in Simcoe County, but now lives in Israel, of his experience photographing, escaping and surviving the Hamas massacre at the Supernova Music Festival on October 7th.

He has since gone on to several speaking engagements throughout North America. Shy posts informative information on his Instagram: @shyeklein

In mid-May we will be hosting a restorative yoga/meditation evening led by our member Cheryl Sylvester. The theme will be 'restoring resilience' and will be held in person followed by tea & cookies for those that wish to socialize.

Our member, Michaela-Sue Goldblatt continues to send out cards for life cycle events. Members are welcome to contact her directly to have a card sent.

Once again, we are grateful to Linda Steinberg for her leadership and to her committees that continue to develop such excellent programming that make being part of NCJWC so worthwhile.

Marilyn Goldhar and Susan Rubin, Simcoe County



FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM

NCJWC Toronto was invited by Minister Ya'ara Saks and Foreign Minister Melanie Jolie to a consultation. The event provided NCJWC Toronto with the opportunity to express our collective concerns about growing antisemitism in the GTA and Canada.

On Sunday March 3, 2024, NCJWC Toronto was invited to participate in this important, by invitation only event. Organized in partnership with Secure Canada, guests heard from Muslim Leaders from around the globe speaking out against terror and evil. Panellists addressed the implications of denial and the vulnerability of western democracies to the dangers of extremism.



PASSOVER FOOD DRIVE

The Passover Food Drive 2024 is now underway, and volunteers and groups are busy packing nearly 3,000 boxes and preparing to deliver them to households experiencing food insecurity during Pesach.

An evening with food writer, “Feast with Leah Koenig”, was a success! Thanks to this program partnership with Prosserman JCC, NCJWC Toronto shone a spotlight on the 2024 Passover Food Drive.

On March 5, NCJWC Toronto hosted a Games Afternoon. We were thrilled to welcome both new friends and old. Alongside enjoying ourselves and forging social connections, we were delighted to raise over \$800 for the 2024 Passover Food Drive.

TORONTO JEWISH QUILTING PROJECT

Made with 100% Love & Care

The women of the TORONTO JEWISH QUILTING PROJECT have been keeping busy every Wednesday making quilts for those touched by cancer. They have gifted 12 Angel Quilts in the last few months.

This photo shows a young women wrapped in the warmth of an Angel Quilt during her treatment.



L'CHAIM CANCER SUPPORT

The Great Pink Challah Bake hosted by Rabbi and Rebbitzin Plotkin of Chabad Green Lane raised \$1800 for the NCJWC Toronto L' Chaim Cancer Support Program.

A new focus on the needs and interests of young women diagnosed with cancer is underway. A program is being planned for late spring 2024, focusing on Planning a Family in the Face of Cancer, featuring a panel of leading medical experts in this field. A follow-up program, centered on adoption, surrogacy, finding spiritual meaning, and addressing mental health, is also in the works. We are excited to expand our reach and engage new audiences in our vital work of supporting Jewish women with cancer.

ONE VOICE

After many years of devoted work on this project, the remarkable group of multi-faith women, the One Voice members, have completed their comprehensive toolkit. In the coming weeks, it will be printed and mailed to all faith leaders in the GTA. This will coincide with a virtual event to launch the publication, featuring faith leaders, professionals in the field of domestic violence, and survivors.



VANCOUVER UPDATE

Vancouver, which was established in 1924, has had a couple of really big events in the last several months as we step into our 100th year.

Our Games Day for Israel was a huge success. We had 120 people gather for a fun filled afternoon - everyone has such a great time. AND we were able to send \$8000 from our section to support Aluma!

We also had a stellar event in Honor of International Women's Day. On Monday March 25th, NCJWC Vancouver proudly welcomed over 140 people to the first ever live recording of the BEYOND A BALLOT podcast. We are so thrilled that we had the opportunity to partner with this incredible company on this event. We value the importance of women not only having the right to vote (which was not established federally in Canada until 1920!) but also, exercising that right in an informed way.

Please take the time to listen to this incredible episode of this incredible podcast. You can listen to it [here](#). (Unfortunately, the audio tech at the venue did not set up the recording properly but it's still absolutely worth the time).

We are really excited about our upcoming food security programs that will be starting in May. We are collaborating with Jewish Family Services and our Jewish community garden to bring farm to table interactive educational programming to families in our community.

Jordana Corenblum, Vancouver President



WINNIPEG UPDATE

The Winnipeg Section organized another successful Mitzvah Day on November 19, 2023. Our section collected books and art supplies for the mobile library at Rossbrook House, an inner-city youth drop-in centre. We were thrilled that approximately 20 other local organizations participated in their own mitzvah projects. Since the Winnipeg Section spearheaded the first Canadian participation in International Mitzvah Day in 2019, we are so excited to see the increased participation in Mitzvah Day, especially across NCJWC sections!

On November 26 we hosted a Games Day event to raise funds for the Yoseftal Hospital in Eilat. The event took place at the Adas Yeshurun Herzlia Synagogue and was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Just before Purim, we baked hamentashens and assembled our annual mishloach manot packages for Jewish Child and Family Services to distribute to their clients. We had help from many enthusiastic volunteers!

We launched our Instagram in April, which is now live! Our followers continue to grow daily. Please follow us at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C5gnGrxup1Y/?igsh=YnVmaDZpcDMzb3Zx>

Our new Women Working branch continues to meet monthly and provides support and friendship for newcomers to Winnipeg to share job searching and career advancement tips.

After Pesach, we are planning an Intergenerational Baking 4 a Cause fundraising event in May. We will be baking knishes and burekas and proceeds will go towards Aluma and section programming. The community is invited to attend.

Leah Craven, Winnipeg



MONTREAL UPDATE

We are on the cusp of expansion! After nearly 11 months of meetings and preparations, the NCJWC Montreal Section Committee has received the green light by the Board to become our newest Section! We are still small but very excited about the prospect of growing the group of women dedicated to fulfill Council's mission in our community through education, service and social action.

Monika Simon, Montreal

**National Council of Jewish Women is proud to announce
the revitalization of MONTREAL SECTION**

If you or someone you know is in Montreal and seeking

- a non-denominational Jewish Women's Organization
- friendship and camaraderie
- a commitment to making a positive difference in the community
- collaboration with like-minded women

Please reach out to us at info@ncjwc.org with your contact information.
We can't wait to connect!

For more information: call 514-525-1869 or e-mail her at monikaandrew@gmail.com

On behalf of the Board and Officers

*The holiday of Passover reminds us that our freedom is an extraordinary gift to be cherished!
We wish you, your family and the entire Jewish community a joyous and meaningful Passover.
Chag Pesach Sameach!*





Dedicated to furthering human welfare in the community.

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