

# Bulletin

# NCJW<sup>SM</sup>

Vol. 26, No. 3  
March-April, 2021  
[www.ncjwgrs.org](http://www.ncjwgrs.org)

 [facebook.com/ncjwgrs](https://facebook.com/ncjwgrs)

National Council of Jewish Women  
Greater Rochester Section

Please join us as we celebrate our honorees at the

## *2020-2021 NCJW, GRS Recognition Brunch*

**Sunday, April 25, 2021  
at 11:00 a.m.**

*Parking lot opens at 10:30 a.m.*

**Temple B'rith Kodesh Parking Lot  
2131 Elmwood Avenue  
Rochester, NY**

**Hannah G. Solomon Award Recipient  
Dr. Daniel Ari Mendelson  
Highland Hospital Geriatrician**



**Our Woman of the Year  
Nancy Gabrielsen-Tinnes**

**An invitation will be in your mail shortly,  
or register now at [ncjwgrs.org](http://ncjwgrs.org).**

*See inside for more about our honorees*

**NCJW,GRS  
Officers & Directors  
2020 - 2021**

*President*  
Jane Amstey

*President-Elect*  
Lisa Waltzer

*Treasurer*  
Ellie Rosenbloom

*VP Administration*  
Lisa Waltzer

*VP Membership*  
Nancy Gabrielsen-  
Tinnes

*Financial Secretary*  
Brenda Comisar

*Recording Secretary*  
Wendy Strauss

*Immediate Past  
President*  
Amy Stein

*Directors*  
Linda Bice  
Rikki Brodsky  
Donna Cohen  
Marilyn Fenster  
Cindy Finestone  
Sandra Frankel  
Barbara Grosh  
Cindy Hirschberg  
Gloria Kaplan  
(Honorary)  
Emily Levin  
Jennifer Loviglio  
Lisa Maas Vangellow  
Karen McArthur  
Leslie Newman  
Melissa Pheterson  
Terri Richardson  
Pauline Rutberg  
Cathy Schneider  
Kathye Simon  
Randi Fox Tabb

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As you travel life's path, what are your greatest passions? What calls you to want to make an impact for change? How can you feel interconnected in the world? These are big questions and take time to answer. Yet, we all want to feel a sense of belonging and mattering.

"Belonging" relates to feeling a sense of community and a bond that we share with a group of people. "Mattering" speaks to our connecting individually at a deeper level and how we are adding value to the world. For our community to flourish, it is important to focus about our collective well-being. With the pandemic continuing to affect our lives, a full rotation of seasons has passed. Early spring approaches, bringing colorful crocus blooms and more sunlight to each day. It is important to be mindful of the toll Covid-19 has taken on each of us and what we can do collectively to care for one another. During this past year, the NCJW,GRS board leadership has made a commitment to continue to do our good work. We have celebrated milestones and shown care during difficult moments. While each of us has had trials and tribulations, we have found joy, connections and support from the moments we have shared together. We will continue to find creative ways to provide opportunities for our section

members to actively engage in passionate areas of interest to heal our world.

One way we can focus on positive impacts is to practice mindfulness and the act expressing gratefulness. We each can pay attention to small and important things. For instance, we can think of the people who research and approve vaccines; the individuals who manufacture the millions of doses; those who transport supplies around the world; staff who manage the complexity of coordinating schedules for distribution; healthcare workers who give all their time and energy to save lives; cleaning staffs who sanitize and disinfect repeatedly to keep us safe; and those folks who administer vaccinations to the multitudes of people. How can we show gratitude for everyone in the chain trying to end this pandemic? A small act of kindness or acknowledgment shown to someone else may make their entire day. Recognizing someone's efforts, giving a compliment, providing an encouraging word – all can go a long way. Take time to notice and share positivity in the world. These actions will come back to you, building a sense of belonging and mattering. ☹

**Jane Amstey**  
NCJW,GRS Section President  
Janera1@yahoo.com

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## NOMINATING COMMITTEE NEWS

The Nominating Committee has worked to fill the positions of the NCJW Greater Rochester Section officers and board of directors and it is awaiting approval of the slate by the current board.

The 2021/2022 slate will be available to the NCJW,GRS membership on our website (ncjwgrs.org) and will be shared via e-blast by March 21. We ask that each member vote by April 21 by sending an email to info@ncjwgrs.org saying either, "I approve the slate for

2021/2022" or "I do not approve the slate for 2021/2022." If you do NOT send an email by this date, your vote will be counted as approving the slate as presented.

The Nominating Committee members include: **Jane Amstey, Lisa Maas Vangellow, Ellie Rosenbloom, Michele Ruda, Pauline Rutberg, Amy Stein**, (chair), and **Lisa Waltzer**. ☹

**Amy Stein**

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# GRS PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

We are very proud of the past, current and ongoing efforts of the Public Affairs Committee. Our committee is strong and committed, and we continue to meet monthly (or more as needed) to discuss and plan for our 2021 priorities and initiatives.

A few items of note:

1. As we did so passionately in 2020, we will continue to work diligently on voter advocacy. The 2022 elections are not far off and we want to ensure every person has the same information and access with regards to early voting and no-excuse absentee voting. **Vancy Boyar**, with **Shari Woldenberg** and **Mollie Traub**, will be leading these efforts.
2. The committee will continue to work with Planned Parenthood of Western New

York (PPWNY) to safeguard reproductive freedom. **Debora McDell-Hernandez**, from Planned Parenthood, joined our January meeting to discuss the organization's 2021 legislative priorities and how we might partner with them in some of these efforts. The committee will continue to discuss how we can be most effective and we hope to schedule another Take Action Night with PPWNY in the near future.

3. A letter and email were sent in January to all newly elected New York State legislators. Thank you to **Shari Woldenberg** for drafting the letter. The purpose of the letter was to introduce the legislators to NCJW – our history, our mission, our advocacy. We then followed up to schedule zoom meetings with them. At the time of this writing, we have four zoom meetings

scheduled with representatives, and are working toward setting up several more. Thank you to **Karen McArthur** for setting up these meetings.

4. The committee is in the beginning stages of organizing some educational programming regarding gender and sexuality issues, with a focus on reducing discrimination and harm. We hope to have more to report in the future on this very important endeavor. Our committee member, **Dr. Lara Evans**, is leading this effort.

Thank you for the support and assistance of the NCJW,GRS membership and our greater community. ≧

Respectfully submitted,  
**Rikki Brodsky** and **Lisa Maas-Vangellow**, Co-Chairs

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## MARCH PADNESS IS HAPPENING!

As I write this article, it's still only February, but the NCJW,GRS P.A.D. Project's March PADness is well under way. You, our members and friends, have been dropping off products at Soralee Cook's house or sending it through the Amazon Wish List that we set up. Our wonderful crew of assemblers have already assembled 17 kits and they are being dropped off at the agencies we often donate to.

The whole project is brought to a higher level thanks to the beautiful and plentiful work of **Nancy LeVant** and **Mollie Traub**, who have sewn over 500 drawstring bags, giving

each recipient a discreet way to accept her gift of menstrual products, and a lovely bag to use in other ways when it is empty. Thank you!

Thank you also to **Emily Levin**, who designed the perfect blast and prepared



additional publicity for the project.

We would also like to thank Wegmans for its donation of a generous gift card that allowed us to purchase enough pads, tampons and liners for 100 kits.

Despite the complete lack of in-person parties since March 2020, we have been able to continue helping our community in this important way. You can find the link to the Amazon Wish List at the NCJW,GRS website. ≧

**Gina Horowitz**  
ginarose@rochester.rr.com

# SPECIAL "DRIVE-IN" EVENT TO HONOR HANNAH G/ WOMAN OF THE YEAR RECIPIENTS

We are excited to host a unique NCJW,GRS recognition brunch in a socially distanced, in-person manner! You, family members and friends are invited to join us for our first drive-in event to be celebrated in the parking lot of Temple B'rith Kodesh at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 25. A delicious box meal of your choosing will be available, followed by presentations to Nancy Tennes, our Woman of the Year, and Dr. Daniel Ari Mendelson, the Hannah G. Solomon recipient.

Each registrant also will receive an amazing gift bag.

Attendees will be able to see our speakers from their cars thanks to a large, strategically placed screen. And sound will come through the car radio!

This is sure to be a wonderful event that you do not want to miss. Please note that due to Monroe County

Health Department regulations, everyone will be required to remain in their cars for the duration of the event. ≧



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## DR. DANIEL MENDELSON, GERIATRICIAN, to Receive Hannah G. Solomon Award

Dr. Daniel Mendelson, a geriatric medicine specialist, is the recipient of the 2020-2021 Hannah G. Solomon Award, which will be presented at the NCJW,GRS annual recognition event.



As a practitioner, the care and compassion Dr. Mendelson shows to his patients are exemplary. Despite the long hours associated with his hospital position, he makes all his patients feel as if they are his

Palliative Care Consultation Service and helped create a similar service at Strong Memorial Hospital. He formerly served as medical director at the Highlands in Brighton, Monroe Community Hospital and Visiting Nurse Service of Rochester and Monroe County.

A professor of medicine at Highland Hospital and the William and Sheila Konar Family Professor in Geriatrics, Palliative Medicine, and Person-Centered Care, Dr. Mendelson's work focuses mainly on palliative care. This is a challenging area of medical practice, requiring an especially high level of sensitivity.

only patient -- and that he has all the time in the world to schmooze and administer appropriate medical therapies.

In his "spare time," Dr. Mendelson was the co-chair of the Senior Rabbi Search Committee at Temple B'rith Kodesh. That search, after countless hours, resulted in the appointment of **Rabbi Peter Stein**, known to us at NCJW as the husband of our own wonderful past president, **Amy Stein**.

"We cannot possibly cure every disease or solve every problem, but we can always be humane and hard working and try to do the right thing for each person we work with," Dr. Mendelson says.

Dr. Mendelson received his bachelor's degree from the Rochester Institute of Technology and his master's and medical degrees from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. In 1999, he went to Highland Hospital to establish an inpatient, acute geriatrics service. He later co-founded the hospital's Geriatric Fracture Center. He founded Highland's

Dr. Mendelson is a humble, thoughtful physician, who will no doubt provide an address well worth hearing. Please join us to honor this outstanding medical professional. ≧

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# INTRODUCING NANCY GABRIELSEN-TINNES, NCJW Woman of the Year

*"If you want something done, ask a busy person." Benjamin Franklin*

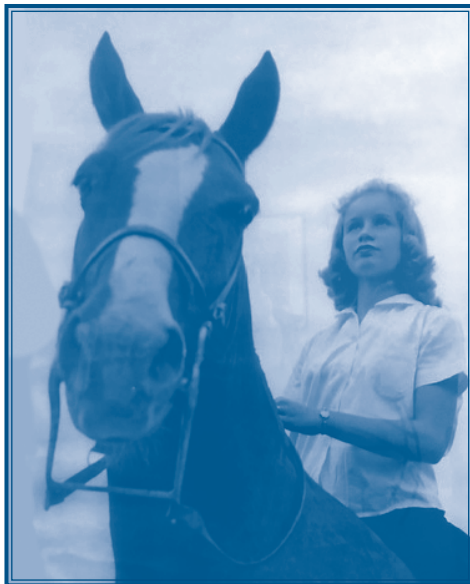
A native of Oregon, Nancy came to Rochester 50 years ago, thinking she would be here for a very short time. How lucky for NCJW, GRS and Rochester that Nancy is still here!

Nancy was introduced to NCJW by close friend and past president, **Soralee Cook**. "Nancy is a warm, friendly person who is committed to NCJW," Soralee noted. "Her energy, dedication and care about issues is why she should be Woman of the Year."

A dedicated leader and section vice president, Nancy has chaired our annual recognition brunch, worked on climate programs, supported our PAD project, organized and led a tour of the Susan B. Anthony Museum and House, and assisted with the celebratory event. A hard-working member of numerous committees throughout the years, Nancy is always ready to take on multiple responsibilities. Nancy speaks of being an ardent supporter of the NCJW mission and is respected as someone who tries to move us forward in our initiatives in any way she can.

"I like the passion of my fellow NCJW members and appreciate the way they open their arms to me at all of our meetings and events," Nancy said. "I am particularly proud of the commitment we have made to support the work of Planned Parenthood."

In addition to her work with NCJW, Nancy is proud to be a



past president of the local chapter of Cure Childhood Cancer and a current docent at the Susan B. Anthony Museum and House. She has volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House and for the 911 call center. Having worked for NY State Social Services placing babies for adoption, Nancy is a retiree of The Summit at Brighton, where she served as marketing director. Rarely idle, Nancy is an avid reader. (Seek her out for suggestions of books to read!)

A world traveler, Nancy has spent time in India, Asia, Europe, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. She is interested in learning about different cultures and traditions and seeing how others live. She tries to look for the joy that life offers and seeks to find humor in her days. She quipped, "You can't get through life without laughing."

Nancy is devoted to her family. Her son Eric is a social worker in Oregon and his wife, Kristin, works in public policy. They are proud parents of Nathan and Tommy. Her other son, high

school teacher Alex, lives in Cleveland with his wife, Tracy, also a teacher, and children Max and Ruby.

"Nancy is a grandmother extraordinaire!! At the drop of a hat, she will travel to Cleveland to see her grandchildren's swim meets and piano recitals. Since her other grandsons live in Oregon, which is not as easily accessible, Nancy makes it her business to communicate with them regularly through email, phone calls, and social media. Her happiest times are when her grandchildren come to visit her in Rochester. She plans an agenda for each day they are here, taking them to museums, parks, comic book stores, and fun restaurants. They even occasionally have a 'sit on the couch' day," said **Rachel Wicks**, an NCJW member and longtime friend of Nancy's.

Board member **Linda Bice** said when asked to offer some remarks about her dear friend her thoughts turned to a large framed picture that hangs in Nancy's living room: it shows Nancy as a young girl on her family farm in Yam Hill, Oregon, sitting atop her horse, Diamond.

"This young girl, so filled with the joy and promise, ready to begin her journey, has not changed one bit," Linda said. "Those fortunate enough to know Nancy, appreciate her great sense of humor, boundless determination, and focused commitment to women's rights and equality. She never wavers in her desire to make this world a better and more just place." ≥



# CONSIDER COLLEGE UPDATE

I recently sent a note to all the Consider College parents to whom we send children's books—Alazia, Annali, Briana, Jeannette, Lucy, Mari, Idalis, Jaelind, Virginia, Meltun, and Viviana – asking for feedback about the Next Generation Book Club. More specifically, I wanted to know whether the book selections were appropriate and if the parents had any suggestions for us.

The following are some of the responses I've received:

Idalis: My baby is struggling with reading. So, if you can send some easier books I could read to her and then she could read it back. I would appreciate it. . . I learned the importance of reading to kids when my baby was in the NICU. That's why I love the fact Consider College keeps in contact with us and our babies.

Viviana: The books are perfect for us. He shows interest in each book you send. We love that you send some English and some Spanish! Thank you.

Briana: Briell and I have been receiving the books. She loves them and she always makes sure her books are out by either side of the beds so I can read to her or she could crack one open. . . . She enjoys all of the books so whatever you send is fine with us both. Thank you so much!!!! We appreciate you! And love you!

Annali: Yes, Melanie is getting her book and I've been meaning to ask you if we can keep them at kindergarten level for her or Disney type so she can stay into them. The bigger books she can understand yet definitely can't get the Spanish books -- they make her angry.

Jeannette: We are loving it since we read two or three books before bed.

Meltun: Every book that we've received has been great. Rowan loves all of them.

I told the CC alums that when the pandemic is over and we're able to see each other safely, I'm hoping to have a big catered picnic at one of the park shelters for them and their families. Many thanks to our loyal team of book buyers: **Thelma Nemeroff** (who visits the Webster Library give-away table regularly), **Nancy LeVant, Ronny Frishman, Sharon Kovalsky, Julie Nusbaum, Gina Horowitz, Julie Holzbach, Liz Steinberg and Ruth Rappaport Kristal**. Each month one of them accompanies me to a book store to select and purchase some books for Consider College's "next generation." ≧

**Mollie Traub**

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## LOTS OF EMAILS: WHY SHOULD WE READ THEM?

One of the things I most love about my NCJW membership is the ability to be involved both locally and nationally. NCJW has so much to offer! There are opportunities to advocate with our legislators; opportunities to jump in and help in a hands-on way, such as by working on the P.A.D. Project, collecting items to be shared with people in need or making phone calls; opportunities to learn during webinars or just to have fun online like the February havdalah and chocolate tasting event.

Also, these days, there are many emails. Pre-COVID, my inbox was pretty full; now it is overflowing from all of the organizations that I care about because this is the primary way they can get my attention, especially now that in-person activities are not happening. Jane Yamaykin, our section's staff liaison to national NCJW, helped me understand all of the different emails that we are receiving. Here's what you're seeing in your inbox:

- Our NCJW Greater Rochester Section sends out e-blasts a couple of times each month. These local NCJW emails are labeled – NCJWGRS. You will find our bulletin, information about local events, including the April 25<sup>th</sup> Hannah G. Solomon Drive-In Event, "March Madness" and other NCJW,GRS information.
- National NCJW sends out several e-blasts each month. Yamaykin said you can log onto <https://www.ncjw.org/customize-email-experience/> to indicate areas that are most important to you and ask for specific emails.
- The Weekly Wrap Up, currently called First 100 Days Newsletter, is a policy and advocacy update. This weekly email explains what's happening, how it relates to NCJW's priorities and ways that NCJW members can take action. It is very informative, interesting and well written.
- Our inboxes are also filled with invitations to webinars and

events that national NCJW is making available. Some of these are big events, such as the recent forum about reproductive rights and opportunity for advocacy. One time it was an invitation to hear from Stacey Abrams. Often the webinars are about specific topics and areas of leadership.

- The final category of emails that we get are about specific topics that are either very timely and important or relate to subjects that individuals have expressed interest in.

I have found that having A LOT to read means that there is A LOT going on. If I can help you navigate any of the NCJW mail in your inbox, please send an email to me at [amysteinncjw@gmail.com](mailto:amysteinncjw@gmail.com). Thank you for reading...and reading. More importantly, thank you for doing, as we work together to improve the quality of life for women, children and families, and to safeguard individual rights and freedoms.≧

**Amy Stein**

## A PASSOVER MEMORY

The year is 1949 in Brooklyn, a few days before Passover. My mother and I are walking to my Tanta Dora and Uncle Gezer's apartment on Eastern Boulevard. Gezer is my grandmother's oldest brother. We are going to help Tanta Dora get ready for the first seder. When we arrive at the building's entrance my mother presses a button and we are buzzed in. The whole apartment building smells like onions cooking in chicken fat. It's heavenly.

My mother takes my hand as we climb the two flights of marble stairs. I skip down the dimly lit hallway. My aunt's head is already poking out of her apartment door. She bends down and plants giant wet kisses on my 6-year-old face. Her cheeks are red and warm and she, too, smells of onions. My mother sees me standing with my legs crossed and sends me to the bathroom. Sitting on the toilet, my feet dangle several inches above the black and white tiled floor. Afterward, I reach for the long chain that hangs from a tank mounted on the wall above. The bathtub, unlike ours, is old fashioned and has "feet." I stoop down to inspect them when I hear what sounds like a splash from behind the shower curtain. Startled, I jump back. Then, gently, holding my breath, I tug at the pleated shower curtain that encircles the tub.

It takes me a moment to understand what I am seeing: a fish under the water, at the bottom of the tub, its tail swishing back and forth. I jerk back a second time, eyes agape. *Why is there a fish in my aunt and uncle's bathtub?* I

wonder. *And more importantly, where do they put it when they need to take a bath?*

My musings are interrupted by loud knocks on the bathroom door. "What are you doing in there?" my mother yells. I open the door and tell her there is a fish in the bathtub. I grab her by the hand and show her. She says without further explanation, "It's for Passover," and then tells me to go play with my dolls.

A few days later, we arrive at Tanta Dora and Uncle Gezer's apartment for the first night of Passover. Many family members are already seated around the seder table that takes up most of the living room. There is barely room to walk behind the chairs to get to our seats, and once you sit down, it is not an easy task to leave the table. My great Uncle Gezer is like a conductor at the head of the table. He is wrapped in his prayer shawl, his enormous white beard giving him a very biblical look. Before he finishes the kaddish, I inform my mother that I have to go to the bathroom. She tells me to crawl under the table so as not to disturb anyone.

In the bathroom, I immediately look behind the shower curtain. The fish is gone! When I return to my seat, via the under-the-table route, I ask my mother, "What happened to the fish in the bathtub?"

She whispers back, "It probably got too big for the bathtub, and Uncle Gezer threw it back into the East River where it was reunited with its family. Would you like a little piece of gefilte fish, darling?"

Now, I know that most early memories are elusive snapshots from times long gone, veiled composites of sights and senses. And, yes, I might have allowed myself some poetic license, but the memory of the fish in Tanta Dora's bathtub is as real and clear today as it was some 70 years ago!



There is a book, [The Carp in my Bathtub](#), by Barbara Cohen, published in 1972. The story takes place right before Passover, when the two children, Leah and Harry, attempt to keep their mother from turning the carp, that she keeps in her bathtub, into her famous gefilte fish. You already know the fate of my carp, but I won't tell you what happens to the carp in Cohen's story. You'll just have to read it to find out! ≧

**Linda Bice**

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Welcome to our newest member Yosepha Freeman. If you have a friend or relative interested in joining NCJW please contact me at [ntinnes@frontiernet.net](mailto:ntinnes@frontiernet.net) and I will be happy to reach out to answer any questions or provide additional information. ≧

**Nancy Tinnes**, Vice President Membership



**P.O. Box 92444  
Rochester, NY 14692**

TIME VALUE



OR CURRENT RESIDENT

## THANK YOU For Helping Us "Spread the Love"

A heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone for their support and donations as we continued to Spread the Love for the third year to our friends and neighbors in the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Community. Masks were made with love, hand sanitizer was donated from two generous sources, amazing women dropped bags and boxes of donations on my doorstep and the Amazon driver stopped by several times a day. With all that love and effort, we received over 600 items to fill

60 bags with masks, hand sanitizer, hats, gloves, and warm socks! **Jane Amstey** delivered the bags on February 12, just in time for Valentine's Day and the week of snowstorms. There are too many names to mention, and many deliveries arrived without a note telling me who the generous sender was, so if you did not receive a personal thank you, I apologize and please know your donations were received!

I look forward to next year when we can all gather together on Super Bowl Sunday to assemble bags in person. If you have other projects you feel speak to our mission please reach out and let me know so we can continue to help and serve our friends and neighbors in the greater Rochester area. ☸

**Terri Richardson**  
terrilrichardson@gmail.com