

**Bulletin**

**NCJ**  <sup>SM</sup>

Vol. 28, No. 2

April, 2023

[www.ncjwgrs.org](http://www.ncjwgrs.org)

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National Council of Jewish Women

Greater Rochester Section

*2023 NCJWGRS  
Recognition Brunch*

Sunday, May 7, 2023

11:00 am

**Irondequoit Country Club**

4045 East Ave.

**Hannah G. Solomon Award Recipient**

*Georgia Carney*

Founder of SewGreen Rochester

**NCJWGRS Woman of the Year**

*Linda Bice*

**Register at:**

[ncjwgrs.org](http://ncjwgrs.org)

**NCJWGRS  
Officers & Directors  
2022 - 2023**

*President*  
Lisa Waltzer

*Membership VP*  
Amy Stein

*Treasurer*  
Brenda Comisar

*Financial Secretary*  
Pauline Rutberg

*Recording Secretary*  
Wendy Strauss

*Immediate Past  
President*  
Jane Amstey

*President Elect*  
Ellie Rosenbloom

*Honorary  
National VP*  
Judy Abelman

*Directors serving  
until 2023*

Linda Bice

Marilyn Fenster

Sandra Frankel

Jennifer Loviglio

Rina Schnauffer

Cathy Schneider

Sarah Walters

*Directors serving  
until 2024*

Rikki Brodsky

Donna Cohen

Cindy Finestone

Cindy Hirschberg

Adrienne Markus

Leslie Newman

Terri Richardson

Lisa Vangellow

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Looking back on all that we have done this fiscal year, I am so proud of the work we have accomplished, and I am excited to update you on everything we have planned for the remainder of the year.

We kicked off the year in October with our opening event, featuring Jody Rabhan, chief policy officer for NCJW. Jody spoke eloquently about the work our national office is engaged in, and provided an inspiring and motivating take on how she continues to show up in the face of a seemingly uphill battle. Her reminder that "hope is a discipline" was just what I needed to hear, and I have more faith than ever that our national leaders are the right people to guide us on our journey for justice.

Our partnership with Vote Forward was a wonderful way for our section members to be involved in encouraging people to vote. This past fall, our members wrote over 1,000 letters to disenfranchised voters in Pennsylvania and Arizona. Many thanks to Vancy Boyar and Nancy Bloom for coordinating our voting rights subcommittee and for their incredibly hard work in making this happen.

Our P.A.D Project yielded over 1,500 kits in 2022, totaling more than 23,000 pads donated to people in need. A giant thank you to Gina Horowitz and Soralee Cook for their tireless work to adapt this wonderful program amidst the challenges of the coronavirus and to ensure its continued success.

We were excited to have three local synagogues participating in NCJW's 2023 Repro Shabbat, which coincided with Parshat Mishpatim, the Torah portion containing the verses commonly used as the foundation of Judaism's approach to reproductive health, rights, and justice.

On March 21, we had a free screening of the HBO documentary film,

THE JANES, followed by a Q&A with actual members of The Janes, an anonymous collective of women who worked in Chicago in the early 1970s to provide abortion care to 11,000 women prior to the passage of Roe V. Wade.

This year's Hannah G. Solomon Humanitarian Award and Woman of the Year event will be held at 11 a.m., May 7 at Irondequoit Country Club. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to honor both Deacon Georgia Carney, founder and director of SewGreen, and Linda Bice, NCJWGRS board member, for these special awards, respectively. You can read more about these incredible women in this bulletin. We hope to see you on May 7 as we celebrate them!

Finally, we hope you will join us on June 14 at TBK as we install our new board members and officers, and thank those who are rotating off our board (more details to come in the next few months). As my time as NCJWGRS president comes to a close, I would like to express my gratitude to our board for their support throughout my term. I know we will be in wonderful hands as Ellie Rosenbloom takes up the mantle! I've said it before, but I am in such awe of this incredible group of women on our board, and it has been the honor of my life to stand up and be counted among them as a leader of NCJW. ∞

In partnership,  
**Lisa Waltzer**  
lisakwaltzer@gmail.com

### **Change of address?**

If you have a change or correction of address, please contact **Brenda Comisar** at **BrendaRComisar@gmail.com**

**Remember to check out our  
website for the latest news:  
ncjwgrs.org**

## BUNCO NIGHT

On a cold winter evening in January, a group of NCJW women got together at the home of Donna Cohen to play the dice game, bunco. It was a fun way to enjoy the company of old and new friends. We not only played the game, but of course ate as well. Attendees brought delicious delicacies for everyone to enjoy. It was a wonderful evening to help break up the winter doldrums. ≧



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## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Community Connections Committee is supporting a variety of local agencies and activities. In November, committee members participated in a book drive for School #10 via the Rochester Education Foundation and helped to deliver 78 new books for the school library. In January, members of NCJWGRS provided baked goods for School #10's Staff Appreciation Day.

The committee also provided support for the organization Keeping Our Promise, including a large donation of panty liners, as KOP requested.

We hope to further our connection with Keeping Our Promise in the future.

We are also looking to continue our work with Foodlink and hope to schedule an onsite educational program for our members this coming summer. Please contact Adrienne Markus at [adriennemarkus@gmail.com](mailto:adriennemarkus@gmail.com) if you would like to join this fabulous committee. ≧

**Adrienne Markus**

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## PARTNERING TO SPREAD WARMTH WITH OUR NEIGHBORS

The NCJW Greater Rochester Section and the 5th Street Block Club partnered again this year for the "Spread the Love" initiative to provide care for families in need during the winter season. Around Valentine's Day, NCJWGRS members generously purchased hats, gloves, socks and red-colored backpacks. Some beautifully knitted items also were created with care. This year, 100 backpacks were assembled by volunteers from NCJWGRS, 5th Street Block Club, staff from the city's Rise Up Rochester and the David F. Gantt Community Center. Sweet candy and little notes of love were included in the backpacks.

The festive assembly day took place on February 18, 2023. Gina Horowitz helped out at the event, as she "loves assembly lines!" Gina's expertise came in handy since it complemented her work with the P.A.D. Project in putting together menstrual cycle kits for those in need. Eric Kittles, director of the Gantt Center, was

very supportive, hosting the event's location. Spread the Love backpacks were distributed to youth and families at the Gantt Center and at the 5th Street needs cupboard. Rise Up Rochester staff provided the backpacks to families whom they work with and who experience gun violence in our community.

It was a special assembly and distribution day. The Spread the Love event provided an opportunity to meet new people and have meaningful conversations. As Block Club Captain Tunya Griffin noted, "Share the love, it's about doing exactly that -- it is sharing the love, meeting the needs of the people on the ground. This is a grassroots effort." ≧

**Jane Amstey**

# TIME TO VOTE TO APPROVE THE NEXT SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR THE GREATER ROCHESTER SECTION

Each year the National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Rochester Section reviews and creates the slate of officers to oversee our organization. We are grateful for the diverse and talented women who have served in leadership capacities and given their time to propel our organization forward. Since several women are stepping off the board at the end of June 2023; the section would like to extend great thanks to Linda Bice, Sandra Frankel and Paula Rutberg for their service to our members. The enthusiastic effort, wisdom, and leadership these women have brought to the Board of Directors will be greatly missed.

In addition, Lisa Waltzer will complete her term as president at the close of June. Fortunately, our board will continue to benefit from Lisa's thoughtful guidance as she takes on the role of Immediate Past President. Lisa has had such a positive impact on the direction and activities for the section, and positively navigated through the difficult time of the pandemic. Brava to Lisa for all her accomplishments! Thank You!!!

The proposed slate of officers and board members is listed here for consideration. Voting by the membership to approve the slate is conducted electronically. Members should submit their vote to: [ncjwgrs@gmail.com](mailto:ncjwgrs@gmail.com) All votes must be submitted by March 31, 2023. No response from a member is considered a "yes" vote to approve the slate. Please take a moment to vote for our section leadership.

Officers of the Executive Board July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025:

**President** - Ellie Rosenbloom

**Treasurer** - Brenda Comisar  
(term ends June 30, 2024)

**Financial Secretary** - (currently vacant)

**Recording Secretary** - Leslie Newman

**Membership Chair** - Terri Richardson

**Immediate Past President** - Lisa Waltzer

## **Board of Directors:**

### **Term Ending June 30, 2025:**

Jane Amstey

Marilyn Fenster

Jennifer Loviglio

Debbie Schaal\*

Rina Schnauffer

Cathy Schneider

Barb Snyderman\*

Amy Stein

Wendy Strauss

Sarah Walters

Rebecca Zaretsky\*

### **Term Ending June 30, 2024:**

Rikki Brodsky

Donna Cohen

Cindy Finestone

Cindy Hirshberg

Lisa Maas Vangellow

Adrienne Markus

\* First term on the board

# MEET GEORGIA CARNEY, 2023 HANNAH G. SOLOMON AWARD RECIPIENT



Georgia Carney, founder and director of SewGreen Rochester, moved a lot with her family during the early years of her life. They eventually settled in Chattanooga, Tenn., long enough for her to graduate from high school. She

attended Smith College in Northampton, Mass., where she was a theater major, focusing on costume design and construction -- and enjoying reading the plays she worked on.

Her first professional jobs were at regional theaters, including the Santa Fe Opera. She eventually arrived at Geva Theatre, where she worked for 28 years doing pattern making, draping, tailoring, and sewing costumes.

An early inspiration for her future ministry occurred when she saw a man sitting at a treadle sewing machine, repairing clothes for people in San Francisco's skid row. Light conversation about sewing repairs led to deeper exchanges and lit a creative spark in Georgia's mind about how sewing could become a way to teach and empower people. She started a mentoring ministry in Rochester in 2011, which opened sewing workshops around the city. After she became a deacon at South Wedge Mission, she pursued a grant through the National Episcopal Church and was awarded \$30,000 to start SewGreen Rochester. A nonprofit organization, SewGreen is dedicated to rescuing for reuse everything to do with sewing, knitting, crocheting, and needlework. Georgia knew that she wanted to locate the store on the city's west side, which is generally underserved, and after starting out on Arnett Street, she found the perfect location on West Main Street. The store is filled with shelves of fabric, yarn, needles, instruction books, and sewing machines, almost all donated, that patrons can purchase. Classes also are offered.

Recycling fabric, sewing machines, buttons, yarn, and needles are at the heart of SewGreen's philosophy. The organization is committed to environmental stewardship. It is also committed to sustainable repair. Twice a month, Rochesterians can bring broken bikes, small electronics, and clothing to the

Repair Café in the South Wedge. Volunteers, including Georgia, repair the items, show how it's done, and spread the idea of repairing rather replacing.

Through Rochester Works, Rochester City School District students have been offered internships at SewGreen. These students accepted the challenge to design and implement a community service project on their own. In one situation, an intern with no sewing skills but an artistic flair asked the other interns to sew fabric totes. They brought them to an Arnett block party, where over 50 people enjoyed decorating the bags with acrylic paints provided. These students experienced the personal empowerment of a self-initiated, community project.

The NCJWGRS P.A.D. Project has been the beneficiary of SewGreen's community spirit, too. We were invited to submit an article to their newsletter inviting readers to sew drawstring bags. Since that time, we have received 1,000 drawstring bags, and some of our new friends there have held P.A.D. parties for their own groups.

Working with Keeping Our Promise, SewGreen has welcomed the Afghan community, providing the women with fabric and with sewing machines that are donated and refurbished when necessary.

Some interns are paid, such as one woman who was exiting an abusive relationship. While working in the safe environment at SewGreen, she gained retail and customer skills, self-confidence, and in time found her way back into the world. Once a struggling person achieves success in solving small problems, she can ask herself, What else can I solve? Georgia always wants to do things with people, not for them.

One group of volunteer workers acts as button sorters. Georgia calls them a "godsend." Coming from the intellectually disabled community, they sort the contents of large jars of "grandma's buttons," some vintage, some ordinary, which find new homes after the sorters' work is done.

When asked if she is proud of her accomplishments, Georgia replied: "Not proud, humbled, that an average, middle-aged woman can start something, have faith, and see where it goes."

Georgia and her ministry have been a blessing to our community, spreading light and love all around. ☹

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

# MEET LINDA BICE, 2023 NCJW WOMAN OF THE YEAR

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We had the honor of speaking with Linda Bice over the phone to find out a little more about this special honoree. Here is a synopsis of what we learned:

Linda was born in Brooklyn. She lived there with her grandparents until age 7 when she moved to Valley

Stream, Long Island, and grew up in a community where all the houses looked the same. Linda loved the theater and acted in a lot of productions in high school -- ultimately receiving a drama scholarship to Bowling Green University in rural Ohio. She chose that school because she liked its name and she had never been to the Midwest.

She ended up in Rochester because her then-husband worked for Eastman Kodak. She continued to act in community theater and did voiceovers for commercials. She branched out of theater and went into speech therapy in the Greece public schools. After taking some time off to raise children, Linda got her master's in reading and special education. She then spent most of her career teaching 4th grade in the Canandaigua schools. After retiring from that work, she was hired by Nazareth College to teach literacy courses in the Education Department as an adjunct professor.

Linda met Nancy Tinnes (2021 Woman of the Year) through her realtor. Nancy introduced Linda to NCJW; before that Linda had never belonged to any Jewish organizations even though she was raised in a (non-practicing) Jewish household. Nancy asked Linda if she would like to be on the board. Linda said yes and has been an involved member ever since.

Linda didn't think she was good at administration or organization, but agreed to coordinate an education program for NCJW about the federal court system. She was terrified; but received a ton of support from fellow NCJW members and she found that very gratifying. Linda said she truly felt like she had found a home with NCJW. To be so helpful to a community in such a quiet way was really satisfying to Linda. Working with NCJW gives her purpose and an opportunity to work with like-minded women.

While Linda's creativity always revolved around acting, she dabbled in art as well. (Fun fact: Linda's brother is a professional artist.) She started taking classes at the Memorial Art Gallery in watercolors, clay pots, and drawing. Watercolors interested her a lot and Soralee Cook introduced her to classes at the Brighton Senior Center. She's been attending those classes for several years and has learned different techniques to hone her skills. Linda and Soralee have both had their art pieces shown in an art show for people over 50 at the West Islip Art Museum. In addition, Linda entered the 6x6 art show locally where she sold a piece!

Linda said she has always loved to do little things for people, even strangers. She believes these small acts of kindness, the quiet things, really show the world who you are as a person. Even something as simple as smiling at a stranger or giving a tip to the guy at the gas station who cleans your windows.

At the end of our inspiring conversation, Linda said: "The person who gives gets more out of it than the person who receives."

Linda Bice is truly deserving of being named NCJW 2023 Woman of the Year. ☺

**Rikki Brodsky** and **Lisa Vangellow**, NCJW 2022 Women of the Year

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## COMFORT CARE PROJECT

On February 22nd, we partnered with TBK Sisterhood and our local Hadassah chapter to pack 120 comfort care kits to give to Planned Parenthood for people who have come to Rochester for abortion care. This work is a vital part of NCJW's efforts towards abortion justice, giving pregnant people dignity in their choices. This project brought volunteers together from across the community, and was a true cross-organizational collaboration. Thank you to all who participated! ☺



## NCJWGRS MEMBERSHIP BOOK 2023

The NCJWGRS 2022-2023 Membership Book has been mailed out. Please let us know if you have NOT received your copy. If you notice any additions or corrections that need to be made contact Donna Cohen.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who made this year's Membership Book possible. Mollie Traub has once again been our chair of advertising. She has done a yeoman's job in connecting with past advertisers as the book has not been published in three years. Special thanks always to Ronny Frishman who

proofs all the copy for both the book and our bulletins. Thanks to the invaluable help from our printer, Remy Fenster, who makes this book possible. He has done our printing for as long as I can remember and he always comes through for us.

We hope you enjoy this year's NCJWGRS Membership Book. ☺

**Donna Cohen**  
raquet19@aol.com

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## NCJWGRS P.A.D. PARTIES ABOUND

On January 24, 2023, a wonderful and generous group of NCJWGRS women gathered at Temple B'rith Kodesh for a P.A.D. party. We were hoping to assemble 200 menstrual kits but easily reached 250, thanks to everyone who brought items with them and to the many others who sent pads and tampons ahead of time. After enjoying conversation and desserts, the group got to work and, as usual, finished more quickly than we could believe. Completed kits were donated to Mothers In Need of Others (MINO), Mary's Place, Dimitri House, and Veterans' Outreach. Thank you to all who planned, brought desserts, contributed, assembled, and delivered.

On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, GRAWA (Greater Rochester Association for Women Attorneys) held its annual service party and ShinShinim Jewish Federation Israeli Emissaries had their first. Kits for these groups went to the Community Food Cupboard, Refugees Helping Refugees, and Baden Street Settlement.

A delightful group of 14- and 15-year old members of Rabbi Rochelle Tulik's confirmation class at Temple B'rith Kodesh packed 25 feminine hygiene kits in under 20 minutes. They filled the drawstring bags with pads, tampons, pantliners, two pieces of candy and a card saying, "This is a gift from TBK confirmation class 2023 and National Council of Jewish Women." The 25 kits were delivered to Baden Street Settlement, which has had a 100-year relationship with TBK.

Also holding parties this winter were: the Temple Sinai Women's Chavurah, Beth El Sisterhood, and SDNA Dietetic and Nutrition Association at R.I.T. Beneficiaries included Dimitri House, the YWCA, Charles Settlement, Cameron Community Ministries, Catholic Charities Family and Community Services, the House of Mercy, MINO, and the Community Food Cupboard. Another group sent its kits to the Brockport Migrant Education Program.

If you want to donate, hold a party, or learn more, contact [ginarose@rochester.rr.com](mailto:ginarose@rochester.rr.com). ☺

**Gina Horowitz**

Tribute cards are a meaningful way to express your sympathy, honor family and friends, and commemorate special occasions and life cycle events. Your donation helps support NCJW projects.

Tribute cards are available for  
**\$5.00 each (6 cards for \$25.00).**

To purchase cards or have a card sent, call **Cathy Schneider** at **586-7575** or

**555cathy555@gmail.com**



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## PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Public Affairs Committee is moving ahead with an important agenda. Our incredible leaders, Rikki Brodsky and Lisa Maas-Vangellow, were named our women of the year last June, and then they passed the chair torch onto me. Less than a month later we hit the ground running as Roe V. Wade was overruled. Banding together with local synagogues and community partners, we held a Havdalah for Abortion Justice and spoke at a Rochester Sexual & Reproductive Justice Task Force demonstration. Rikki and Lisa continue to serve as our committee’s liaisons in this important work.

We started autumn off with a bang, opening our VoteForward letter writing campaign for the 2022 midterms with an informational and action-focused program at Kings Bend Park. The VoteForward effort continued toward Election Day with a number of letter-writing parties hosted by our members and an incredible show of support with dozens of letters written at our opening event in October. We sent over 1,000 letters to get out the vote for the midterms, and we look forward to a renewed effort as we head toward 2024.

Public Affairs continues to address so many important subjects. We observed Repro Shabbat the weekend of February 17-18, with local synagogues joining us to focus their Shabbat service on reproductive justice. On February 21, we joined TBK Sisterhood, Hadassah and Planned Parenthood of Central and Western NY to pack 120 comfort care kits to give to Planned Parenthood for people who have come to Rochester for abortion services. This work is a vital part of NCJW’s efforts toward abortion justice, giving pregnant people dignity in their choices. This project brought volunteers together from across the community and was a true cross-organizational collaboration. Thank you to all who participated!

**For more information and to join us, see our eblast!**  
We look forward to bringing even more to our community in the year to come. ≡

**Sarah Walters**  
Sarahewalters7@gmail.com

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) is a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideals into action. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW strives for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children, and families and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms.*