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On Oct. 7, Project Isaiah sorting took place at Temple Sholom. The Jewish Family Service Agency and Jewish Women International-B.C., which co-sponsor the Jewish Food Bank, offer a big todah rabah to everyone who contributed to this food drive this year. There were almost 700 bags donated in total, an increase of 36 percent from last year.

These donations help feed 400 Jewish community members who rely on the Jewish Food Bank each year. JFSA and JWI-BC thank their many community partners for advocating the food bank's needs: Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver, the synagogue partners, the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver, Temple Sholom for gifting the use of space for sorting, and the many other volunteers and donors.

## Appointments

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada Vancouver section held its annual general meeting on Oct. 22 at Temple Sholom. The newest edition of the board of directors was installed by Anne Melul. President Catherine Stoller, treasurer Fran Ritch, secretary Linda Arato, social action chair Anne Lerner and past president Debby Altow will steer the coming year's actions, with an emphasis on the 90th anniversary celebration of Council in Vancouver, which will take place on Nov. 16 at VanDusen Gardens. (See page 5 in this issue for more information on that celebration.)

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At its 2014 annual general meeting on Sept. 11, MOSAIC announced its board of directors and table officers. Gabrielle Smith stepped down after one year as president and chair, having served a full six-year term. She is succeeded by Dr. Mehran Kiai, who will now chair the board. Kiai joined MOSAIC's board in 2009, and has served on the finance committee for the past three years. He has more than 25 years of senior level management experience in both public and private sectors.

Also departing the MOSAIC board is Bark Kong, who has served as treasurer for six consecutive years. However, four new members were recruited. In sum, the officers confirmed at the AGM were Kiai as chair, Cheryl Nelms as vice-chair, Maia Tsurumi as secretary and Hariprasad Suvama as treasurer. Smith will serve as past chair and Adam Policzer and Jeff Brooks as members-at-large.

Policzer was born in Hungary in 1938. He arrived in Chile in 1946 and, in 1975, moved to Canada with his family, seeking a safe haven from the military dictatorship. He was an architect in Chile and, after two years of Canadian training, he continued practising in British Columbia. In 1982, together with a partner, he opened an architectural firm specializing in affordable and subsidized housing. When he retired in 1999, the firm employed 15 people. Since then, he has been busy with volunteer work (mainly with the Latin American community), some consulting and small-scale architectural work.

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Last month, Simon Fraser University appointed Shauna Sylvester, the current executive director of SFU Public Square and Carbon Talks, as director of the Morris J. Wosk Centre Centre for Dialogue. The announcement followed Janet Moore's appointment as director of SFU's Semester in Dialogue program earlier this spring.

Sylvester and Moore succeed SFU professor Mark Winston, who pioneered the Semester in Dialogue program in 2002, and became the founding academic director of the Centre for Dialogue in 2006. Winston will remain a fellow with the Centre for Dialogue. His new book, *Bee Time: Lessons from the Hive*, illuminating his reflections on three decades as a bee biologist, has just been released.

# JSA honors dedication, hard work

GYDA CHUD

As the Jewish Seniors Alliance of Greater Vancouver marked its 11th annual general meeting on Sept. 11 at the Sidney and Gertrude Zack Gallery, it was indeed an evening of celebration inspiration and innovation.

JSA past president Serge Haber welcomed a standing-room-only crowd and led them in a minute of silence to honor those who had passed away during the year.

Adolf Zilbershtain, president of the Most Bridge Russian seniors group, brought greetings and extended thanks on behalf of its 150 members for the financial support JSA had given them.

Bernard Jackson, president of Jewish War Veterans Shalom Branch – one of only three branches in Canada – followed and gifted JSA with greetings and a monetary donation.

Treasurer Milton Adelson reported that JSA is in good standing but that adequate funding remains an ongoing challenge and priority.

Attendees learned from Pamela Ottem that JSA's peer support program is now the largest in the city, and that JSA is looked to for guidance, mentorship and support by many organizations offering similar services. Ottem lauded the peer support leadership of Grace Hann and Charles Leibovitch in building the program, which now serves more than 150 seniors and includes peer counseling, a home visiting program, phone calls to isolated seniors, an information and referral phone line, transport to medical appointments and a new bereavement support group.

Representing the membership committee, Lyle Pullan reported that JSA gained 46 new members this past year. He encouraged attendees to consider themselves as committee members, and to "Sign 'em up!" The goal is 100 new JSA memberships for the next year.

Joining the meeting was Shelley Rivkin, associate executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver, who spoke about how much JSA and Haber are valued. She said Haber served as a mentor not only for Federation, but for all who advocate for the well-being of the community's elders, who number 5,000 and whose numbers are expected to double in the next decade.

As JSA celebrated its 11th year and Haber's nine as president, his report highlighted JSA's numerous accomplishments in advocacy, outreach, the *Seniors Line Magazine*, the Empowerment Series, fall symposium and spring forum, where JSA has achieved a 25 percent increase in attendance. He honored the work of executive coordinator Karon Shear, his "right hand," for her conscientious hard work and dedication, and the commitment of Rita Propp, office assistant. Together with the 4,000 hours of JSA volunteer activity, this is what makes JSA the "best of the best," he said.

Ken Levitt, board vice-president paid



**Jewish Seniors Alliance of Greater Vancouver board and staff 2014-15. Standing, from left: Janet Kolof, Timothy Newman, Marilyn Glazer, Barbara Bronstein, Lyle Pullan, Claire Cohen, Gyda Chud, Ida Gitlina, Rubin Feldman and Binny Goldman. Seated, from left: Karon Shear (staff), Shanie Levin, Ken Levitt, Serge Haber, Marilyn Berger, Milton Adelson and Rita Propp (staff). Missing from the photo are Debbie Cossever, Marie Doduck, Lionel Fishman, Sylvia Gurstein, Sylvia Hill, Pamella Ottem, Rita Roling, Edith Shier and Jackie Weiler, as well as peer support staff Charles Leibovitch and Grace Hann.**

tribute to Haber. Levitt asked the audience to ponder how many 86-year-olds they know who are such exemplary leaders and contribute with such vitality on a tiny, shoestring budget. Very few, he suggested. Haber was elected president emeritus in a unanimous vote.

Certificates of merit were presented to "retiring yet always rewiring" board members, Pullan presented the nominations slate of returning and new board members and the election included the executive board for 2014-15.

Incoming JSA president Marilyn Berger, in her acceptance speech, concluded the AGM with the message, "Let's do this together, as JSA continues to grow, flourish and thrive."

After the meeting, there was dinner in the Wosk Auditorium with entertainment by Tzimmes, after which four honorees were celebrated, each of whom were nominated by their individual organizations for their contribution in service to others and ensuring that they enjoy life to the fullest.

Natasha Likhohatnikov, nominated by Chabad of Richmond, has been a volunteer since her arrival in Canada from Ukraine. She volunteers in an ongoing capacity often several times each week. According to Rabbi Yechiel Baitelman, Likhohatnikov spends more hours at Chabad than he does. She is involved in the Women's Art Club, whose participants are from the former Soviet Union, and in Chabad's Community Kitchen. She cooks for Chabad community activities, helps coordinate volunteers, and much more.

Stacey Kettleman was put forward by Congregation Beth Tikvah. She has been a part of Beth Tikvah for many years, and works hard to help many seniors and people who are isolated and need assistance. She thinks nothing of whipping up a meal,

whether it be for Shabbat, a Yom Tov or just a warm dinner, and then delivering it to a senior in need. She also ensures the senior has food in his or her home, getting groceries for them if they do not. If Kettleman hears about a senior perhaps not attending an event, she will make a point of getting that person a ride – trying to make sure the senior is not alone, but part of the community.

As a writer, photographer, tribute-card creator and honorary JSA life member, honoree Binny Goldman brings an enthusiastic and positive presence to the many activities she undertakes for JSA. She rarely misses meetings, voluntarily undertakes assignments with devotion and the results are extraordinary.

Last but not least, Edith Shier created *Senior Line Magazine*, now published three times each year. To quote Haber, the magazine "is the only written communication to the seniors in the Jewish community and continues to receive rave reviews as the best of the best."

Concluding the festivities, Haber was presented with a gavel and plaque by Berger for the work he has accomplished, the legacy he leaves and the contribution he will continue to make to JSA. He received a standing ovation. For his outstanding contribution to JSA and in memory and honor of his late wife Elinor, the Serge and Elinor z"l Haber Peer Support Fund has been established.

Haber urged everyone to be here and there with all our heart, and to press governments at all levels to play a much stronger role in the well-being of seniors.

Dinner co-chairs were Bernice Dorfman and Regina Boxer. ❖

**Gyda Chud** is secretary of the Jewish Seniors Alliance of Greater Vancouver executive and board of directors.