



Jewish Federation OF GREATER SANTA BARBARA

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focus on
Federation

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Ron Stern ERIC ISAACS,
EMI PHOTOGRAPHY

RECONNECTING TO COMMUNITY

Ron Stern was born in Berlin, Germany in 1927. In 1933, his family fled the Nazis after Stern's father was forced out of his job as a bank director, arrested and beaten by the Gestapo, but released a week later. His extended family was forced to "sell" their home, and hardware and lumber business, to an SS officer in their small town of Montabaur.

Stern, his parents, and siblings settled in England and Stern later served in the Royal Air Force. Sponsored by a family friend in Los Angeles, Stern emigrated there in 1949. With his Air Force training and a lifelong love of flying, he became an airline pilot. His work took Stern all over the world and in 1963, thirty years after his family was forced out of their own country, he returned to Berlin, for what was supposed to have been a three-month stay. It turned into 18 months — a fortuitous development as Stern had met his future bride.

Barbara was a native-born German and Lutheran whose father had been a member of the Nazi party. She was devastated by guilt over the actions of her countrymen and the allegiance of her father. The two married and returned to the States, soon settling in Santa Barbara. Out of respect for his wife's feelings, and not to "rub it in her face," Stern, admit-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Gerald Stern (r.), a cousin to Ron, helped spearhead the Montabaur memorial, which he unveiled in 2013 with Mayor Klaus Mies (l).



Tikkun Olam: Repairing the World

Jewish Federation's **Children and Family Programs** practice *tikkun olam* every day at the Bronfman Family JCC, touching lives and connecting people to community. We spoke with one woman, new to Santa Barbara, for whom Federation provides a comforting link to Jewish life on the Central Coast.

Leehe Barel is a young mother with a toddler named **Maya** and another baby on the way. From Israel, she and her family are in Santa Barbara temporarily while her husband **Itay** does post-doctoral work at UCSB. Leehe and Maya attend Family Time, a free program that offers arts and crafts, music, stories and dance for little ones and their parents.

How old is your daughter Maya?

She is two years old.

Which programs do you attend or use at the Federation's Bronfman Family JCC?

Family Time every Friday with the lovely Holly Chadwin.

What has your experience been like?

We were welcomed with open arms and a very warm atmosphere. There are lots of activities for kids, such as playing, indoors and out, storytelling, arts and crafts, and of course [the] blessing on the challah and eating it afterwards.

I understand you are here at least temporarily from Israel — welcome! Do you feel that Federation and the JCC have helped you connect with Jewish life here?

Yes, very much. When we just got here we weren't sure exactly how Jewish life is being held here. We had no idea there's such a great community who keeps the Jewish tradition so alive. Thanks to the Federation, we had a chance to celebrate Purim and Passover properly there, just like at home in Israel.

It was the Federation people who informed us about the other Jewish activities and services being held at Santa Barbara, such as Tot Shabbat at the Temple.



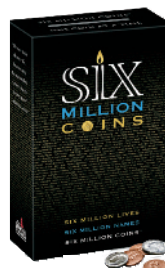
Leehe, Itay and Maya Barel

It also has been a great opportunity to expose Maya to Jewish tradition, to the blessings and to the holidays through different art projects regarding the Jewish legacy.

What would you say to other young Jewish families about Federation programs?

We would definitely recommend every Jewish family to become a part of it. [Like] *Family Time*, we are certain all programs are wonderful and would mean a great deal to every Jewish community member. We intend to participate in more programs in the future.

Six Million Coins™



Over \$1,100 was raised, representing more than 110,000 coins collected, all of which will support local Survivor services! Thank you to our co-sponsor, Mount Sinai Memorial Parks and Mortuaries.

Info: **Ruth Steinberg**,
957-1116 x123 or rsteinberg@sbjf.org

We inspire. We connect. We answer.

WE ARE YOUR JEWISH FEDERATION.

Message from the Executive Director



Tikkun olam, “repairing the world,” is one of the cornerstones of Judaism. It is at the very heart of who we are as Jews. It is at the core of what we do at Jewish Federation, and it is the theme of this issue of *Focus*.

Tikkun olam takes many forms in the work that we do and the efforts we support. Sometimes it is an act that is immediately, physically impactful, such as when members of our **Young Adult Division (YAD)** teamed up with **Habitat for Humanity** to fix up low-income housing units or when members of our “**Schmooze Crew**” assist the larger community to feed the homeless through the Freedom Warming Centers each winter. Our **Jewish Women’s Network** partnered with Jewish Family Service to provide holiday food and gift baskets for local housebound seniors. And, of course, every Tuesday, we provide a hearty, nutritious lunch and great entertainment to seniors, at no charge, through our very popular **Schmooze Room** program.

While programs such as Schmooze Room feed people’s stomach, other Federation-led endeavors feed the soul. **Art at the JCC** has

brightened our walls, highlighted local artists’ works and stirred people’s sensibilities since 1999. We recently commemorated the Tenth Anniversary of our *Portraits of Survival* permanent exhibit, which tells the story of 39 local Holocaust Survivors through their photographs, mementos and in their own words. Docent-led tours of the exhibit have connected thousands of visitors — from high school students to police officers, from church and civic groups to elected officials and the community at large — to these profound and poignant stories, and provided inspiration to fight hatred and bigotry in all its forms.

As you read this issue of *Focus*, I hope you will consider the ways in which you practice *tikkun olam* in your own life, and I invite you to join the Jewish Federation of Greater Santa Barbara as we work to serve, strengthen and secure our community.

B’Sshalom,

Michael S. Rassler

RON STERN (CONT. FROM FRONT)

tedly not a religious man, stayed away from the Jewish community.

Barbara’s mother later emigrated from Germany to Santa Barbara and lived with her, Stern and their daughter **Roxana**. Stern says they often talked about the war, but his mother-in-law always claimed that everyday Germans had no idea what was really happening to their Jewish neighbors.

It was only many years later, Stern says with tears in his eyes, that his wife’s mother finally admitted that they did know, but said “What could we have done?”

Barbara passed away in June, 2008. Six months later, Stern saw a listing in the Santa Barbara News-Press calendar for a lunch at the Jewish Federation. He decided to attend and found a new sort of home. Noting that he doesn’t



Pictured above: Ron Stern’s father’s home in Montabaur, Germany, before the Nazi takeover. His grandfather’s name appears over the center door. When Stern was there in 1974 with his wife, that name had been replaced with *Meningen*.

Women’s Division

Together with Jewish Family Service, the **Jewish Women’s Network (JWN)** filled **Baskets of Love**, which were delivered to local homebound seniors through the Senior Visitation Program. The women brought joy and love into their homes with generous donations of goods that were delivered to these seniors before Chanukah. They assembled and wrapped the baskets during our December Coffee Hour.

Info: **Jilli Spear**, 957-1115 x107 or jspear@sbjif.org



Baskets of Love Top: Cliff View Terrace resident, Kirsten Ytting, receives a basket. Above: (l-r) Volunteers Joyce Lukas and Diane Zipperstein.

“come for the eats,” Stern says he feels comfortable at the Jewish Federation, “amongst my own crowd. Jews are Jews.” He has become involved as a Schmooze Room volunteer and as a docent at the *Portraits of Survival* exhibit, telling his story to a new generation of young people — some of them, as it happens, students at San Marcos High School where his daughter Roxana is an assistant principal.

And, just last year, Stern and his family experienced a small measure of closure when their ancestral hometown of Montabaur created a memorial, unveiled on the anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, honoring the lost Jewish community of their town.

Info: **Jewish Federation**, (805) 957-1115; info@sbjif.org



Portraits of Survival: 10-Year Anniversary Event

UCSB Chancellor Henry Yang and Dilling Yang with Mara Vishniac Kohn and Dr. Emeritus Walter Kohn



Survivors Julie and George Rusznak
PORTRAITS PHOTOS BY ERIC ISAACS, EMI PHOTOGRAPHY

focus on

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE



Family Purim Party

Thursday, February 26 • 5 - 7 pm

Join us for stories, songs, snacks and games in our brightly colored, child-friendly space!

FREE and open to the community.

Info: **Holly Chadwin**, 957-1116 x109 or hchadwin@sbjf.org

SANTA BARBARA VILLAGE TEAMS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Jewish Federation is pleased to announce a new chapter of growth for one of our key community-wide collaborative efforts.

Santa Barbara Village (SBV), founded in 2010 in collaboration with **United Way Santa Barbara**, **Center for Successful Aging**, and **AARP Santa Barbara**, has been operating under Jewish Federation's fiscal sponsorship since its inception.

SBV, a membership organization of active seniors who want to continue living independently as long as possible, has teamed up with **Community Partners**, its new fiscal sponsor. We are very proud of our work with SBV and the tremendous impact it continues to make in helping local seniors age with dignity and security. Federation will continue to collaborate with SBV on a number of activities and programs, including the very popular *Matinee at the J* and the **Schmooze Room** programs. SBV will continue to work from the Federation's Bronfman Family JCC for the next few months until its relocation to a new home base.



NEW CD Release:
"Zingt Zhe Kinder!
A Yiddish Folk Music Legacy"

by **Lorraine**
Gutenplan Silverberg
Klein

Order your CD on our website today!
Suggested donation: \$18
Proceeds benefit the Jewish Federation.

JFS WELCOMES NEW CLINICAL PROGRAMS & SENIOR SERVICES COORDINATOR

Nina Mahaffey, MFT, has been a licensed psychotherapist for 17 years and an RN since 1980. In both capacities she has worked with clients and their families at Santa Barbara County Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services; with patients in chronic pain, recovering from traumatic brain injuries, living with HIV/AIDS; as a case manager; and in private practice. She is fascinated by the psyche/body interface and the transformative power of imagery, dreams, and symbols. She also has administrative experience, most recently as a manager for ten years at Santa Barbara City College. In her new role at JFS, she will collaborate with Director Barbara Kuhn to promote our clinical services, to create professional development opportunities for interns and clinicians, and to provide effective, accessible counseling support to the many diverse members of our community in need.



Nina Mahaffey, MFT

Wanted: Volunteer Visitors for Our Seniors & for Special Projects

VOLUNTEERING IS GOOD FOR YOU AND A GREAT WAY TO GIVE BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY!

Volunteers are at the heart of our mission of *tikkun olam*. Volunteer Visitors provide weekly companionship to homebound or isolated individuals, cultivating appreciation of others' stories and strengths, and restoring a meaningful sense of belonging and connection to our human community. Please join us!

Contact: **Nina Mahaffey, MFT**, JFS Clinical Programs & Senior Services Coordinator at 957-1116 x 119.



Volunteers for special events and projects throughout the year, like Schmooze Room, office assistance, and the Jewish Festival, are always needed.

Contact: **Mike Witt**, Volunteer Services & Programs Manager, 957-1116 x 113.

Visit! Participate! Learn more about JFS and our programs!

Contact JFS Director **Barbara Kuhn**, 957-1116 x115 or bkuhn@sbjf.org

YAD: Young Adult Division

FEED THE HOMELESS

Every year YAD comes together with the greater community to feed the homeless in Pershing Park on Christmas Eve. YAD members brought homemade food to warm the stomachs and hearts of less fortunate community members.

Save the Date!

YAD Purim Party
Wednesday, March 4

Info: **Jilli Spear**, 957-1115 x107 or yad@sbjf.org



Baking a Difference YAD will come together once again to bake delicious challahs: one to enjoy at home and one to feed a local senior. Join us **Thursday, January 29** at Jewish Federation.

focus on Federation

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of Greater Santa Barbara

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Jewish Federation
of Greater Santa Barbara

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www.jewishsantabarbara.org

Join our e-mail list! info@sbjf.org

Hours: Mon-Thurs: 9 am - 5 pm;

Fri: 9 am - 3:30 pm

All events take place at the Bronfman
Family Jewish Community Center
(BFJCC) unless otherwise stated.

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Jewish Federation
OF GREATER SANTA BARBARA

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Get Involved.

Here's what's happening in the
community and at the BFJCC:

JANUARY

- 11** Art @ the JCC Opening Reception
- 13** JWN Coffee Hour
- 13** Annual Board Meeting
- 18** Book of Life Ceremony
- 19** MLK Day
- 20** Lion of Judah/Pomegranate Tea
- 22** JWN Happy Hour
- 29** YAD Baking A Difference

FEBRUARY

- 4** Tu B'Shevat
- 10** JWN Coffee Hour
- 11** JFS/NASW Movie Night
- 16** President's Day (CL)
- 19** JWN Theatre event
- 19** JFS/NASW CEU Workshop
- 26** Family Purim Party

MARCH

- 1** Fabric Art Opening
- 2** Jewish Festival (May 3)
Sponsor and Vendor Deadline
- 4-5** Purim – Megillah Reading
- 4** YAD Purim Party
- 10** JWN Coffee Hour
- 17** Women's Philanthropy Lunch
- 19** JWN Happy Hour
- 26** Comedy Night

For more details, visit

www.jewishsantabarbara.org

Jewish Federation Annual Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 13 • 5 - 6:30 pm
at Jewish Federation

Refreshments catered by Sababa

Join us as we thank our outgoing
Board Members and welcome our
incoming Board Members, together
with the new Officers.

Book of Life Ceremony

With gratitude and appreciation, the
Jewish Federation of Greater Santa
Barbara is pleased to announce the
inscription of **Dr. Alan Wyner (ז"ל)** and
Louise Blumberg Wyner into the Book
of Life. Join us for this special occasion.



**Sunday,
January 18 •
2 pm at Jewish
Federation**

Info: **Marilyn
Simon-Gersuk,**
957-1115 x106
or
marilyn@sbjf.org

2015 Santa Barbara Jewish Festival

Sunday, May 3 • 11 am - 4 pm

Oak Park, Santa Barbara

Sponsor and Vendor Deadline: March 2

Art at the JCC

**Black and White and Shades
Opening Reception**

Sunday, January 11 • 2 - 4 pm

Free and open to the public



Italian Marble Sculpture, by Bela Bacsí

Exhibit runs

January 11 – February 25, 2015

Women's Philanthropy Luncheon

Tuesday, March 17 • 11:30 am
at El Encanto Hotel

PEARL SOCIETY

Women who make a gift of \$1/day
(\$365/year) are recognized by becoming
part of our Pearl Society. Beginning in
2015, our Women's Philanthropy Luncheon
will celebrate our Pearl Society donors.

Women's Division info: *Jilli Spear,*
957-1115 x107 or jspear@sbjf.org