

NA'AMAT Now!



A publication of NA'AMAT USA

Summer 2020

Meet our executive board

This issue of NA'AMAT Now continues with profiles of the national executive board, written by Sharon Sutker McGowan.

Susan Isaacs, Vice President, Publicity and Public Relations



As the founder and president of a successful boutique advertising agency, Susan Isaacs was a natural choice as vice president of publicity and public relations. Isaacs has major ambitions for her term. "My goal is to have NA'AMAT become a household word in every Jewish household. I like a challenge, so I am dreaming BIG!"

Isaacs joined NA'AMAT about 17 years ago when she was invited by a friend to a meeting. She was greeted warmly by the women. "I had never been a member of any other organization before, but I felt like I was at home. I joined that very evening."

She got involved quickly, serving on committees for the Eilat chapter in the San Fernando Valley Council. A few years later she was asked to become chapter president.

"I learned many new skills. Since I have my own business, organization skills and meeting deadlines came easy for me. The challenge for me was learning to be comfortable speaking publicly." She learned to speak at events when she became council president. She admits to still getting butterflies, but jokingly says, "don't tell anybody."

Isaacs has visited NA'AMAT facilities in Israel several times. "I love meeting the children and women at our daycare and alternative high schools and seeing how important our work is in the U.S.," she said.

Isaacs and her husband Avraham have three children and seven grandchildren.

Linda Schoenberg, Recording Secretary

Many NA'AMAT members know Linda Schoenberg as the woman who gets them moving every Monday morning during "Live with Linda." The exercise session began after people were beginning to shelter at home as a result of COVID-19. Sessions are recorded, and videos are available on YouTube. As of this writing, the classes have raised \$237 for NA'AMAT from

—Continued on next page

Inside

Letter to the editor.....	2
Message from the President.....	3
NA'AMAT Israel leaders offer Zoom updates.....	3
NA'AMAT Reports	4

Remembering Edythe Rosenfield

Edythe Rosenfield, NA'AMAT USA national president from 2007 to 2010, recently passed away at 91 years old. Mrs. Rosenfield, who lived in Middletown, Conn., had been a member since 1967.

Mrs. Rosenfield visited Israel 16 times, participating in international meetings and seminars. She served twice as a delegate to the World Zionist Congress.

"She was wise, she was smart, she was compassionate... Edythe influenced so many of us, and we in turn were able to put her training to good use in helping develop leadership skills in others," said Debbie Weiner, a former national board member.



A retired nurse, Mrs. Rosenfield was known for her sense of humor. She created and taught classes that included "The Fun, Pun, and Power of Words."

"She was a mentor, a trailblazer, a motivator and a creator," said Tal Ourian, a former national board member. "I was drawn to her immediately. She inspired me with her enthusiasm, smarts, kindness, devotion to NA'AMAT and her big smile. She welcomed us, the newbies, with open arms, driven to shape us into future leaders of her beloved NA'AMAT," added Ourian. "Edythe was very devoted to NA'AMAT and wholeheartedly believed in its mission; you felt compelled to follow her."

Mrs. Rosenfield was known for organizing workshops and seminars for new leaders, and instilling in them her belief in NA'AMAT. "You knew when you came to her seminars that you were up for an educational and inspiring experience," said Ourian.

Mrs. Rosenfield is survived by her two children and three grandchildren. She was married to her late husband, Robert, for 55 years. Her family asked that donations in her memory be made to NA'AMAT USA.

Executive board

Continued from previous page

voluntary donations.

Schoenberg, who is a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine with a Ph.D. in immunology, retired in 2016. She is also an avid folk dancer. She was encouraged to join NA'AMAT about 15 years ago by Robin Lieberman, a fellow dancer and the former president of the Cleveland Council.

As a veterinarian with a doctorate, Schoenberg is especially inspired by NA'AMAT's scholarship program for Israeli women who want to pursue advanced studies. "It's not the biggest thing, but I think it's amazing," she said.

Schoenberg also is impressed with NA'AMAT's work with teenagers at the Kanot youth village, which she visited while participating in the NA'AMAT USA convention in Israel last year. Kanot's science team recently took first place in the "Science Accelerator" competition sponsored by NASA. In addition, the Technovation team created an application designed to help teenagers who have dropped out of school connect to activities and support. "To be able to give these kids a life to me is the best gift," said Schoenberg.



Rhoda Birnbaum, Treasurer



When Rhoda Birnbaum moved to Delray Beach from New Jersey 24 years ago, a friend from New York invited her to join NA'AMAT USA. Although her friend was involved before she moved to Florida, she never told Birnbaum about the organization. "I asked her, 'Why didn't you say something?'"

Birnbaum joined the Shoshana Club, and became an active member, and eventually its president. She later was president of the Palm Beach County Council for 10 years. "If I'm going to be part of an organization, I have to do something about it," she said.

When she lived in New Jersey, Birnbaum worked for an accounting firm. She is serving her first term on the executive board after being on the national board for several years. To prepare for her role as treasurer, she was part of the finance committee and now heads up the budget and finance committees. The new budget includes cost-saving measures such as moving area offices into individuals' homes and using the national office's phone lines.

Birnbaum is most proud of NA'AMAT installations that give young people an opportunity to better themselves — particularly the technological high schools and the Kanot and Ayanot youth villages. "I want them to have the self-esteem that they need to succeed," she said.

Birnbaum and her late husband, Jack, had four children — two boys and two girls — and six grandchildren.

Gail Simpson, Vice President, Strategic Planning

Gail Simpson hoped to convince her husband, Myles, to make

Aliyah when they were visiting Israel in 1972. That didn't work out, so they decided to find other ways to support Israel when they returned home to California. At an organization fair, Simpson signed up for several Jewish women's organizations, including NA'AMAT.

"Out of all the organizations, they were the only ones who called me," said Simpson, who soon started the Shira chapter with two other women. A job transfer sent the family to northern Virginia, where they lived for 3½ years.

In 1978, the Simpsons returned to the LA area. By that time, the Shira chapter had merged with another group, which in turn split in two: the Nili chapter, which Simpson joined, and Netanya. In 2010, when Simpson was serving on the NA'AMAT national board, she helped form the Mitzvah club, where she is a member.

In her new role, Simpson is working to streamline NA'AMAT and make it more effective. "We had a hierarchy of national, area, councils and clubs," she said. Now with technological advances such as email, free long-distance calling and Zoom, "you don't need someone in Chicago to call a member in Chicago." Technology also makes it possible for members at large — who live where there are no clubs — to become more connected and involved.

Simpson would like to create online programs featuring Israelis who benefit from NA'AMAT's work, such as scholarship recipients and students at technological high schools or youth villages.

She and her husband have three sons and eight grandchildren.



Letter to the editor

I received the (Spring 2020) newsletter yesterday and it was a mood lifter. I have lived 101 years and most of those years were involved with Pioneer Women/NA'AMAT. But never have I seen so much enthusiasm and activity doing marvelously with the new leaders.

I was on the first seminar to Israel in 1964 (I think) and we were assigned to sleep in a "Maabara" — sleeping on a straw floor and washing with a spigot near the floor. We endured for a few days then rebelled and made reservations at the Dan Hotel in Tel Aviv on the beach. They called us "spoiled Americans" and I guess we were.

When I was 11 years old (1931) Golda slept in my bed. She would not spend the money for a hotel room. But you can read about it in a recent book about Golda.

I just want to tell you that what you are doing now is fantastic. Such lively haverot and wonderful work. Much better than in my day. I retired in 1979 to Miami and tried hard to found a chapter here, but no luck. I affiliated with the Broward chapter instead.

Again, thanks for sending me the newsletter and letting me know that the work still goes on. It makes me happy.

NA'AMAT was my life!

Norma Salz, Aliya Chapter, Buffalo, NY

Message from the President



By Jan Gurvitch

For the past few months, we have lived through some challenging and game-changing moments. We mourn the loss of nearly 138,000 people in the U.S. alone who died of COVID-19. We also mourn the death of George Floyd and deplore the inequity facing Black Americans every day.

We all have become familiar with “sheltering in place” and learned socially responsible behaviors that include maintaining “social distance,” wearing face masks and carrying personal hand sanitizers. We also learned to shop online for groceries and purchase food from our favorite restaurants using curbside pickup. Many of us are now skilled at taking advantage of assorted shopping apps including Amazon, Grubhub, Uber Eats, Instacart and more. We truly became tech-savvy citizens of the 21st century.

Our Jewish community, whose values are embedded in community and family, has been challenged by the necessary

restrictions. We enjoy coming together whether in small or in large groups. At NA'AMAT we met this challenge head on. Through the technology of Zoom, we now exercise, have book club discussions, listen to informative speakers and even share a l'chaim together — all virtually. Our national weekly eblasts are filled with opportunities to learn, have fun with friends and connect with our NA'AMAT community. They also keep us updated about NA'AMAT's activities in Israel.

Unfortunately, along with the medical pandemic we are experiencing a social pandemic that includes increased cases of domestic violence, anti-Semitism and racism. George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis sent shock waves throughout the world. It became clear that racism and hate remain embedded in our country.

And so, as NA'AMAT women, we ask you not just to call out objectionable racist behavior, but to answer the call to justice and join with those that pledge “no more hate in our state.”

Wishing you a healthy summer and a happy and sweet New Year!

NA'AMAT Israel leaders offer Zoom updates

By Sandra Reuben

More than 75 NA'AMAT members, decided to fire up their computers for a Zoom call on June 10 with NA'AMAT leadership in Israel. Though we were disappointed that the quarantine forced Hagit Pe'er (president of NA'AMAT Israel) and Shirl Shavit (director of the International Department) to cancel their June trip to three U.S. cities, hearing their voices and seeing their faces was a great alternative.

Both Pe'er and Shavit expressed deep appreciation for all the support from NA'AMAT USA.

Below are some highlights of the discussion, moderated by Deanna Migdal, NA'AMAT USA's executive director.

- Pe'er stressed the importance of NA'AMAT continuing to inspire women and to help them achieve their goals. She works to ensure that NA'AMAT maintains an effective relationship with the Israeli government.
- Planning is on hold for events marking NA'AMAT's 100th anniversary next year.
- A short multilingual spot is appearing frequently on Israeli media to tell women at risk how to access professional counseling provided by NA'AMAT for victims of domestic abuse. In addition, Pe'er has been making frequent media appearances. As a result, calls to NA'AMAT's domestic violence hot line have increased by 120 percent compared to the months prior to COVID-19.

- Home of NA'AMAT – Glickman Center in Tel Aviv is at full capacity for sheltering abused women and their children. Nonetheless desperate women still come to NA'AMAT pleading for shelter and help. During the quarantine, many women are forced to live in close quarters with their abusers. Pe'er said that families of all cultures have been affected.
- NA'AMAT hopes to resume legal services in the fall, probably only with group sessions. Centers throughout Israel are experiencing increased demand for help with issues of domestic violence, job terminations, new wills and powers of attorney, and family matters such as marriage, divorce and custody.
- Most of the 197 day care centers re-opened in May after a two-month closure. With a drop in attendance, some centers were closed and the remaining children were referred to nearby NA'AMAT daycare centers. They were scheduled to remain open until Aug. 8.
- High schools re-opened in May, with social distancing and health regulations. They are now closed until Sept. 1 for the summer break.

Did You Know?

... that NA'AMAT USA is part of an international movement that includes Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay?



NA'AMAT USA

21515 Vanowen Street, Suite 102
Canoga Park, CA 91303

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SKOKIE IL
PERMIT NO. 72

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



<https://naamat.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/naamatusa>
naamat@naamat.org
(844) 777-5222

NA'AMAT NOW is written and produced by Complete Communications Inc., Skokie IL

NA'AMAT Reports



Renew your membership now!

By Selma Roffman

Vice President, Membership

As we navigate these unprecedented times, it is important that we stand together with NA'AMAT as it continues to support vital educational and social services for women, children and families in Israel. The cost of membership is small, but what you give is priceless.

In Israel, 26 percent of the population is unemployed and domestic violence is on the rise. Enrollment in day care centers is affected by this financial situation and women's shelters are filled to capacity. As members of NA'AMAT, we feel our family's pain. We know we must help.

On the positive side, a team of students from Kanot, the NA'AMAT youth

village, won first place in a NASA competition, and 200 professional scholarships and 10 research grants in STEM fields are being awarded this September.

Caring for the welfare of the people of Israel is at the core of who we are. Now is the time to open our hearts and our pocketbooks.

The membership committee, which includes Susan Miller, Sandra Reuben and Yehudit Shamir, suggests a way to do a simple act of kindness now: **Gift a NA'AMAT membership to a friend or family member** when you pay your dues this year.

Thank you for being a member of our wonderful NA'AMAT community. You are appreciated.



'Spread the word, not the virus'

By Susan Isaacs

Vice President, Publicity and Public Relations

During the COVID lockdowns, the national board worked diligently to keep the organization connected with weekly e-blasts offering learning and other interesting opportunities. We encouraged members to forward and share posts with

nonmembers to get the word out about NA'AMAT.

We also changed our messaging on some ads in LA geared to retirees. Our new message reads *"Join NA'AMAT, ZOOM with us and make new friends, and enjoy activities, speakers, games, exercise classes, and more!"* We hope this gives our membership a boost.

We are planning to expand our banner ad campaign to websites such as the *Jewish Journal, The Forward* and *Jewish Week*. We have created a landing page with a questionnaire that asks: In what city do you live? What are your interests? The membership committee will then contact respondents and try to find a local chapter for them to attend (or Zoom with).

NA'AMAT face masks have been available for purchase online since late June! We hope that you will buy one or more and photograph yourself wearing the masks as you go out into your communities. Please email your photos to the national office or to your local chapter's newsletter editors for publication. Pictures go a long way in helping us promote our organization.

Thank you to Esther Friedberg, whose creative talent I rely on to assist me in our PR efforts, as well as to Deanna Migdal, national executive director, who supports and encourages our campaigns.

Update your contact information

If you have moved or changed your primary phone number or email address, please let us know by calling the national office at 818-431-2200 or emailing membership@naamat.org.