



Newsletter

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Dear Friends:

Just as with all things in our lives, there is indeed a “cycle” in the life of all organizations, including the International Council of Jewish Women. These cycles have one overriding purpose: renewal. In order to grow and move forward, renewal is essential; renewal brings new insights, new energies, new commitment and the opportunity for new growth to our organization and we welcome it.

The spring of 2014 is ICJW’s “moment of renewal”. We will welcome new leadership; we will welcome new ideas; we will welcome new energies, and we will offer recognition and honor to those women who have led (and in many cases continue to lead) our organization.

This edition of the ICJW Newsletter celebrates this renewal and those who have brought us to this point in our history. As we look forward to our Quadrennial Convention in Prague in May, we are proud to introduce our six newest Honorary Life Members, who will be officially recognized at the Convention, together with the installation of our new leaders.

As in past editions, we feature two of our affiliates – the National Council of Jewish Women in Australia, the “home affiliate” of our incoming President, Robyn Lenn; and the Voluntarias Judeo Mexicanas – our rejuvenated affiliate in Mexico. We feature our ongoing efforts at the United Nations, including three exciting programs that we presented at the recent UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York, and our campaigns at the UN and through our affiliates around the world to fight against the reprehensible practice of trafficking. We include an update on our continuing work in Israel to resolve the international issue of agunot. Clearly we have achieved much since our founding, and our commitment to achieve even more continues without interruption.

I have been truly blessed to have had the opportunity to lead this wonderful organization for the past four years. Our founders, Hannah G. Solomon of the United States and Bertha Pappenheim of Germany created this organization with faith in the subsequent generations’ ability to lead it and ensure not only its survival but also its growth. I have indeed been privileged to carry the torch of leadership forward but, as shown in this edition of our Newsletter and previous editions since 2010, I could not have done so without the support and energies of our members and affiliates around the world.

So as you read this Newsletter and enjoy the achievements of your ICJW sisters, please take a moment to congratulate yourselves for enabling ICJW to celebrate the future in 2014. Your continued support and energies will ensure that the celebration will continue for many years to come. And as I have written many times before: “May we go from strength to strength”.

With very best wishes,

Sharon Gustafson

ICJW President 2010-2014

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From ROOTS to FRUITS –

Members of ICJW from across the globe will gather in Prague, capital city of the Czech Republic in May 2014 for the organization's 22nd Quadrennial Convention. The theme of the Convention is "From ROOTS to FRUITS – Jewish Women Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow."



ICJW's Quadrennial Convention takes place every 4 years and combines a program of educational and cultural events with discussions of issues of concern to the members of ICJW. Alice Veselá chairs the organizing committee, which is comprised of members of the local ICJW affiliate, the Council of Jewish Women of the Czech Republic (CCJW). She explains that the Convention theme, "From Roots to Fruits – Jewish Women Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" puts the spotlight on the changing role of women in the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe and around the world. "We have been privileged to rediscover our roots during the decades since the end of Communism, and to join up with the rest of the Jewish world, through organizations like ICJW, and share in the fruits – the results of the efforts of modern Jewish women around the world."



Alice Veselá



CCJW Logo © Mark Podwal

We are very privileged to have Dana Bérová, formerly the Czech government minister of Informatics, introducing the Convention theme at the official Opening Dinner at the Prague Intercontinental Hotel. A welcome reception will first be held at the Prague City Hall in Old Town Square, with an official welcome by the Mayor of Prague. Other special guests will include Ambassadors from the USA, Israel and Australia, the Chief Rabbi of the Czech Republic, Rabbi Karol Sidon, and Helena Klimova, founder of the Czech Council of Jewish Women.

There will be many opportunities for Convention delegates to explore the history of Prague, with tours of the Terezin Stadt Museum, the Hagibor Senior Care Home, and the Lauder Jewish School. An escorted walking tour of Prague's Jewish District will be introduced by Leo Pavlat, the Director of



Jewish Women Meet in Prague

the Jewish Museum, and by the American artist Dr. Mark Podwal, who has immortalized Jewish Prague in his paintings. Other options for touring include visits to Castle Melnik, Prague Castle, and visiting the sites where Mozart and Kafka lived and worked.

The Convention will explore various aspects of the past, present and future of the Czech Jewish community. There will be a screening of the movie "Nicky's Family" about Nicholas Winton, an Englishman who organized the rescue of 669 Czech and Slovak children just before the outbreak of World War II, followed by a discussion with the film-maker Matej Minac. The directors of the Lauder School and Rabbi Joshua Spinner, president of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, will talk about the importance of their school to the current renaissance of Jewish life in Prague. Looking ahead, two local sociologists will lead the discussion on "What Has Happened to the Mishpacha?"

There will be a panel presentation exploring the status of women and girls in Europe today. This will be followed by group discussions on topics of universal relevance: "Changing Women's Roles", "ICJW at Work", "Agunot and Jewish Gender Equality", "Interfaith and Intercultural Initiatives", and "The Horrors of Human Trafficking. The trafficking discussion will be led by Ruth Dearnley, international director of the "STOP THE TRAFFIK" organization.

At the celebratory dinner for Yom Ha'atzmaut - Israel's Independence Day - the guest speaker will be Dr. Bonna Devora Haberman, author of the ICJW Bea Zucker Online Bible Course and a founder of Israel's Women of the Wall group. The delegates will also be entertained by the Mishpacha Choir, which was an underground Jewish choir that performed secretly during the Communist era.

At the conclusion of the Convention, the Gala Closing Dinner will feature the induction of ICJW's new president, Robyn Lenn from Australia, who will lead the organization for the next four years until the 2018 Quadrennial Convention.

To find out more about attending the Convention from May 4-7, 2014, please contact the Prague Convention Office: icjw.prague@yahoo.com



© Mark Podwal, "Roots and Fruits",
courtesy Forum Gallery, NY

Human Trafficking - Raising

Rita Fishman is one of ICJW's representatives to the United Nations and an active member of the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons (CSTIP). She explains how raising awareness about human trafficking and slavery can really make a difference to the lives of its victims.

Photos by Leslie Sternlieb



How are people duped into a life of slavery? Can you imagine being so desperate that you are willing to believe what a stranger tells you? Being so poor and your family so needy that you would put yourself at risk, in the hope and belief that you can improve your life and the lives of your loved ones?

This scenario may sound bizarre to most of us, but it happens across the world to men, women and children. Unfortunately, these events take place in the shadows - we would not be able to identify a trafficker or a trafficked victim if we saw them in the street.

The 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report, produced by the U.S. Department of State, highlights the difficulty of victim identification. Based on the information that governments have provided, 40,000 victims have been identified in the past year, but social scientists estimate that there are as many as 27 million individuals living as slaves. This means that we are only identifying a fraction of those who are enslaved.

Luis CdeBaca, Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, says in the Report that we must not lose sight of the basic idea that human trafficking is a crime, and governments are responsible for fighting it

in a way that restores victims and deters those who would steal another's freedom. These are the foundations of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards and the U.N. Protocol's "3P" approach that works to "Prevent, Protect and Prosecute".

Successful victim identification is the starting point to stopping this crime and for meeting those international standards.

A progressive approach to victim identification involves a basic underlying assumption that the more you look, the more you find. It is the responsibility of governments to find more innovative, holistic ways to uncover human trafficking victims.

The TIP Report goes on to identify the following initiatives in victim identification:

1. Empowering frontline responders beyond the police to identify victims.

Many trafficking victims actively avoid law enforcement. Creative approaches to identifying victims can involve social workers, religious institutions and community leaders, who can all build trust relationships.

2. Recognizing that offenders can be victims.

Unidentified trafficking victims are often punished for crimes committed under coercion. Some countries recognize this situation and have developed laws or policies to allow courts to forgive trafficked victims for their crimes. For example, some U.S. states have passed "safe harbor" statutes to ensure that children are treated as victims and provided with social services.

Governments have an interest in raising awareness of this crime as part of their comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy. While it is ultimately the responsibility of governments to identify victims, protect their rights and provide support services, partnerships with NGOs and civil society have been very beneficial. Telephone hot-

Awareness to Help the Victims

lines, operated by charities in partnership with government agencies, can help victims to understand their rights and their options. When victims feel that their needs and concerns are being addressed, they are more likely to cooperate with police and prosecutors.

Members of the public can be important partners in this struggle to identify victims. When the public becomes aware of the indicators of human trafficking, and whom to contact, they can effectively help to identify and save a person in trouble. According to the TIP Report countless survivors in many countries have been discovered because an aware person who cared alerted authorities.

Increased awareness can prevent some people from becoming victims. One of the most far-reaching public awareness campaigns is Slavery Footprint, now expanded to include its companion NGO, Made in a Free World. They have educated millions of people around the world about human trafficking.

Understanding the value of the partnership between government, NGOs, and civil society, The NGO Committee To Stop Trafficking In Persons (CSTIP) recently launched an initiative to bring GIFT Box to the U.S. ICJW led this effort for CSTIP, along with the U.N. Global Initiative to Stop Trafficking and STOP THE TRAFFIK, the NGO with headquarters in London, England and developers of the GIFT box.

The GIFT Box is a public installation that symbolizes the way in which traffickers entice their victims with false promises. The outside of the box offers the “gift” of a brighter future. Once inside, viewers realize the deception. They are confronted with images depicting human trafficking and the actual stories of trafficking victims. It is startling to confront the grim realities of slavery.

The GIFT Box was installed in New York City in January 2014 to coincide with Super Bowl 2014, the most popular sporting event in the U.S. Authorities are aware that there is the possibility of increased human trafficking before, during and after major sporting events.

Volunteers were trained by UNICEF to dialogue with visitors at the GIFT Box, sharing information and engaging them in conversation to help passers-by understand the issue.



It is hoped that by increasing awareness we will be recruiting potential advocates who recognize the signs of human trafficking and will help victims to contact the correct officials who can help them out of their situation.

The GIFT Box volunteers collected signatures on a petition that asks governments, the United Nations, business, civil society organizations and individuals around the world to make it a priority to end human trafficking, by increasing the resources for prevention-centered actions and services to victims and survivors. It goes on to ask governments, independently and collaboratively, to strengthen laws and systems that prosecute and punish persons perpetrating human trafficking, while expanding programs that protect victims and survivors.

CSTIP is developing a similar petition for its constituent NGOs to distribute, and we hope to distribute this to ICJW affiliates shortly. By presenting this petition to those in powerful offices around the globe, we will clearly show that the will of the people demands that greater efforts be made to end this horrendous violation of human rights.

If anyone is interested in bringing the GIFT Box advocacy installation to their country, please be in touch with Rita Fishman at ritafishman@gmail.com

Preventing Get Refusal with Pre-Nuptial Agreements

Sharon Shenhav, Director of ICJW's International Jewish Women's Rights Project, describes some positive recent developments in the fight to help agunot and to prevent Jewish women from getting trapped by get refusal.

Pre-nuptial agreements, considered the most effective tool for preventing the problem of *get* refusal, have received widespread support and publicity in recent months. Many Orthodox rabbis encourage couples to sign such agreements prior to their wedding, and some refuse to marry a couple who have not signed one. ICJW has long advocated that all Jewish couples sign a pre-nuptial agreement and has supported international campaigns to encourage all rabbis, parents and couples to utilize these agreements.

For the first time anywhere, the new Chief Rabbi of Uruguay proclaimed in January 2014 that only those couples who sign the locally approved pre-nuptial agreement can marry through the Uruguay Kehilla. Rabbi Spitz's courageous position is the result of many years of campaigning by former ICJW President Sarah Winkowski. Her success demonstrates how an ICJW affiliate can lead the fight and galvanize support within their community on behalf of *agunot* and successfully influence the religious establishment.



In February 2014, Israeli Minister of Justice Tzipi Livni announced that she was introducing legislation

which would require that all Jewish couples be presented with a pre-nuptial agreement prior to their weddings. Since all Jewish couples must register with the Orthodox rabbinate in order to marry in Israel, the registrars would be required to offer them the pre-nuptial agreement and explain why it is important to sign it.

Pre-nuptial agreements have been somewhat controversial among Israeli Orthodox rabbis; some have rejected them, some support them, and many remain silent. Minister Livni has decided to override their objections and impose these agreements by law. She said that if the Chief Rabbis and their colleagues do not draft a pre-nuptial agreement, the Ministry of Justice will produce a document for presentation to all couples planning to marry. If this legislation is passed, it will dramatically influence religious divorce in Israel and perhaps worldwide.

Another new and promising law in Israel requires that four women be elected or appointed to the 11-member Commission to Appoint Dayanim (religious court judges). While the number of women will not match the number of male members of the Commission, they will be able to have a significant impact on the selection of Dayanim.

Since the Agunah Summit held at New York University Law School in June 2013, there has been much discussion about establishing an independent, international Bet Din which will apply creative *halachic* solutions to free agunot whose cases have languished unresolved in rabbinical courts worldwide. A few months ago, a group of leading Orthodox rabbis from Israel and the U.S. announced that this new Jewish court will become active in the summer of 2014. We will be monitoring its progress in the hope that they will be able to free every Jewish woman who has been denied her freedom to remarry and start a new family.



Affiliate Profile: Australia

Women Working Together in Australia

By Dianne Hirsh OAM, National President



The National Council of Jewish Women was established by Dr. Fanny Reading in 1929 in Sydney at the first Conference of Jewish Women of Australasia. She aimed to establish a national organisation with branches in every city, and to open the hearts and minds of Jewish women around Australia to service in the community.

Dr. Fanny organised Jewish women in community service, education and fundraising for projects locally and in Israel, Jewish and non-Jewish. She also made the first international connections when she attended the International Council of Jewish Women Convention in Washington in 1925 and the NCJWA became an affiliate.

Today there are 7 Sections around Australia: in Brisbane, Gold Coast, NSW, Canberra, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. Each has their own flavor and their own emphases, yet all sections are involved in community service, empowering women and raising funds for both local causes and projects in Israel.

NCJWA's community service activities are very varied and include senior citizen clubs, reading to seniors, volunteering in communal facilities, packing birthing kits, and Mitzvah Day. Their program for new mums is run in two Sections and involves training volunteers to offer support to new mothers who are isolated from their own support system and referred by hospitals, health centres and doctors. The program is extremely successful, with many women wanting to volunteer and a large number of mothers from all backgrounds being helped, from the Jewish community and beyond.

Status of women issues are a key plank of NCJWA's platform. They are involved with the National Women's alliances that work closely with the Australian Federal Office for Women, Equality Rights Alliance, and Women Against Violence Alliance, as well as Stop the Traffik. For many years they have championed the status of Jewish women and the plight of agunot.

NCJWA's interfaith and intercultural involvement is strong. They believe that it is vital to reach out to people of other cultures and backgrounds in order to help them understand our customs and traditions and also to learn more about them.

NCJWA has very close connections with Jewish women around the world through their active involvement in ICJW, with 8 members currently serving on the international executive. They are proud that Robyn Lenn, a past national president, will become the next ICJW president in May 2014.

NCJWA projects in Israel include ILAN Tel Aviv for Children and Young Adults with Handicaps; the Haifa Rape Crisis Center; support for Ethiopian women students at Haifa University; MICHA, the Center for Children with Hearing Loss; and they have supported JNF/KKL projects for many years. During the 2013 Herczeg Seminar in Jerusalem, their delegation visited their Israel projects to strengthen their connection, meet their partners and recipients, and gain a clearer understanding of where their funding goes.

Many NCJWA leaders have been recognized by the Australian community for their outstanding contributions, which brings credit to the organisation. All 11 national presidents and another 9 members of the national executive have received national honors from the Australian government for their contributions to the community.

As NCJWA's founder Dr. Fanny Reading said: "Women Working Together Can Achieve Anything"



Visiting a Mosque in Sydney



Affiliate Profile: Mexico

Doing Magic in Mexico



Voluntarias Judeo Mexicanas (VJM) became ICJW's Mexico affiliate in 2013. They are a Jewish women's group based in Mexico City who help Mexican families with low incomes, working closely with a number of local educational and healthcare organizations. Currently the organization has 40 members.

Members of the VJM volunteer at the National Institute of Pediatrics, helping the child patients and their families. They do similar support work in Mexico's General Hospital and in the Naucalpan General Hospital, visiting the various wards and offering therapeutic support. They try to provide clothes, toys, medical equipment and furniture when needed. They also work alongside the Mexican Red Cross, raising funds and providing clothing and shoes for patients who are discharged from hospital. This partnership has been active for the past 40 years, and the women of the VJM have also helped them during a number of national and local disasters.



David Copperfield with the VJM and "Project Magic" logos

VJM has pioneered a unique program which provides therapeutic training for disabled people using the skills of magic and illusion. "Project Magic" was pioneered by the internationally renowned illusionist, David Copperfield, who has trained the VJM volunteers and various volunteer magicians and occupational therapists. This program has proven more effective than traditional rehabilitation techniques, and the idea has been exported to Panama and Australia, with VJM's help.

Voluntarias Judeo Mexicanas supports four schools for children with special needs, attending the students' graduations and performances at the schools. They run a large annual event on "Children's Day", preparing and serving breakfast to 500 children, and enjoying their smiles and thanks. Members of the Mexico City Jewish community provide the children with the strollers, wheelchairs, walkers and stabilizers that they need.

Lilian Grinberg, VJM's President for the past 3 years, explains what drives their organization: "As Mexican women, we are proud of our roots,



VJM presents wheelchairs to children with special needs

our history and cultural traditions, and we strive to create strong family bonds. We perform our voluntary work with a high level of enthusiasm and commitment, convinced that through comprehensive programs in areas such as health and education, based on ethical and work values, we can give disadvantaged people the tools to increase their living standards."



Lilian Grinberg (left) and a VJM volunteer donate equipment for children with walking problems



Meet ICJW's Six New Life Members

Becoming a Life Member of ICJW is a prestigious honor as only 15 women can hold the title of Participating Life Member at any time. It recognizes an extended period of leadership in the organization; to be eligible you must have served as an officer or Chair, and on the Executive Committee for a minimum of 12 years. These six Life Members were elected in May 2013 at the Executive Committee meeting held in Jerusalem.

Donna Gary



Donna has served as ICJW Vice-President for the USA, North American Regional Chair, Treasurer and Chair of the Constitution Committee. She has attended the UN Commission on the Status of Women every year for over a decade and also represents ICJW at the US State Department's quarterly meetings on combatting global anti-Semitism. In 2005 she chaired the ICJW Seminar on Anti-Semitism in New York City.

Donna came to ICJW from NCJW-USA, where she is Honorary Vice President and has previously served as National Vice-President, National Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and chaired the Washington Institute. She has represented NCJW at White House Briefings, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, Conference of Presidents, the White House Conference on Children, and the Martin Luther King Memorial Day Commission. Donna has testified before Congress on their behalf, and even testified before the Federal Drug Administration on the RU-486 "abortion pill". She was awarded the prestigious NCJW Hanna G. Solomon Award, and is

Honorary President of her local Northern Virginia Section.

Donna chaired the national board of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice and the board of City of Peace, a teen conflict resolution theater group. In addition to her lifelong volunteer work, Donna worked as the director of pension plans and services for a holding company and all of its subsidiaries.

Gillian Gold



Gillian's voluntary work career began in 1972 when she joined the League of Jewish Women. In 1977 she and a colleague set up a kosher meals-on-wheels service in North London, and then in 1981 they formed a steering committee to set up and run a local day centre for elderly and disabled people. Through her involvement in hands-on voluntary service Gillian became secretary and then chairman of her local League of Jewish Women group, which is the UK affiliate of ICJW.

In 1978 Gillian became National Honorary Secretary of the LJW and then chair of their public relations committee, following which she coordinated their national network of day centres. She became Chairman of the National Executive Committee in 1998, and served as National President from 1991-1994.

Gillian's involvement with ICJW began in 1981 as secretary of the Triennial Convention in London. 10 years later she became active on the international stage as a member of the European Conference Planning Committee and the ICJW European Committee. She became UK Vice-President of ICJW in 1996 and Chair of the European Region in 2006. She also co-chaired the Grants Committee and the Affiliate Training Grants Committee.

Gillian has represented LJW on the UK Women's National Commission, including helping to organize their residential conferences. She has also sat on the Domiciliary Care Committee of the UK's leading Jewish social services organization, Jewish Care, and helped as volunteer co-ordinator for their Jewish Emergency Response Team project.

For 30 years, Gillian served in a voluntary capacity as a Justice of the Peace or magistrate, which involves sitting as one of three judges in criminal court cases every week. She has specialized in youth and family court cases, and she was appointed to the main committee which advises the Lord Chancellor on the appointment and disciplining of other magistrates.



Mirta Goldflus



Mirta Wasser de Goldflus, to give her full name, was born and lives in Montevideo, Uruguay, with her husband Samuel. She graduated from the Center of Jewish Studies of the Tel Aviv University in Montevideo, Uruguay in 1980.

From 1984–1990 she was President of the Uruguayan Council of Jewish Women, and she continues to serve as their Vice-President. She served for 16 years as a member of the Board of Deputies of the Jewish community of Uruguay, and belongs to the board of the community's Zionist organization.

In 1990 and 1993 Mirta was elected Vice-President of ICJW for Uruguay, and she was a member of the ICJW delegation to the United Nations World Conference on the Environment, held in Rio de Janeiro. Since 1990, Mirta has been ICJW's representative to the Latin American Jewish Congress. She has co-chaired ICJW's Anti-Semitism committee, chaired the Latin-American Regional Committee, and served as Secretary of ICJW from 2002-2006.

In 1995, Mirta was a member of ICJW's delegation to Beijing for the UN World Conference of Women. She also joined the official delegation from the World Jewish Congress to Washington, attending Senate Chamber interviews at the United States Capitol, and meeting with former U.S. President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore at the White House.

Mirta has lectured in Spanish about leadership, ICJW and women's issues in Jewish community forums in Colombia, Panama, Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, Cuba, Costa Rica and Jamaica, and she has spoken about the Jewish communities of Latin America to groups in Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Sarajevo and Vienna.

Bunny Gurvey



Bunny has held numerous positions and portfolios in NCJW Canada, from Winnipeg Section President to National President, and ICJW Vice-President for Canada.

Positions held in ICJW include Chair of By-Laws and Constitution, Chair of Nominations, and Secretary.

She represented ICJW at the signing of the Global Banning Anti-Personnel Land Mines Treaty, hosted by the Government of Canada in 1997, at the Conference on War-Affected Children in 2000, and at the United Nations Decade for Women in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985.

Bunny has received numerous awards and recognition from the Canadian government, including the Premier's Volunteer Service Award for her role in the initiation, implementation and distribution of the Health Education and Learning Project (HELP). She chaired the Advisory Committee to the President of the Treasury Board of the Canadian Government on Employment Equity.

Bunny was captain of the Girl Guides of Canada, and later became International Commissioner of Girl Guides. She now lives in Toronto, Ontario, with her husband Gerald, after raising their family in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They have three daughters, five grandchildren and an adorable great-granddaughter!



New Life Members

Nadine Iarchy



Nadine Zucker was born in Antwerp, Belgium, and grew up in an open-minded orthodox Jewish family who helped to rebuild the Antwerp Jewish community after the War. She attended a municipality school where Jews, Christians and atheist girls learned together without any problems. After school she studied psychology at university and married her surgeon husband, Jean Iarchy, as a young bride. She worked at her husband's private clinic while bringing up two children and she is now the proud grandmother of twin girls.

For the last 25 years, Nadine has been trying to explain Judaism to non-Jews, lecturing in Belgian schools and universities, and to nurses, police officers and teachers. She built up a network of contacts with the representatives of various religions and became a member of the board of the Antwerp Jewish Associations' Forum and of the committee for interfaith dialogue between Christians and Jews.

For the last 12 years, Nadine has chaired ICJW's Interfaith & Intercultural Committee and represented ICJW as our delegate to World Religion for Peace, and as the Jewish partner in their European Network of Women of Faith. She co-founded the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding's successful twinning week activities between Jewish and Muslim women.

Nadine's objectives are to promote dialogue between Muslims and Jews, and particularly between women from these communities, and to fighting against discrimination against any person because of his or her skin color, faith or gender.

Irene Zuckerman



Irene joined the South African Union of Jewish Women's Port Elizabeth branch in 1976 and became its Chairman from 1981-1984. When she and her family moved to Johannesburg, she joined the National Executive Council of the Union of Jewish Women of South Africa. She served as President of the Union of Jewish Women of South Africa from 1994-1997.

In 1997 Irene became Vice-President of the ICJW for South Africa and also joined ICJW's Finance Committee. She became Chairman of ICJW's Africa Region in 2002, and Vice-Chairman in 2006, while remaining on the Finance Committee and co-chairing the Grants Committee. From 2010-2014, Irene served again as Chairman of ICJW's Africa Region.

Alongside her work for UJW and ICJW, Irene chairs a Jewish community awareness group called Shalom Bayit. This is a combined project by representatives of South Africa's five main Jewish women's organizations, working together with a professional social work to promote awareness of abuse of women in the Jewish community by organizing seminars and bringing in international speakers. Shalom Bayit was started 15 years ago, and because of its success with spousal abuse they are now becoming more involved in issues of child abuse.

Irene is married to Sam and has one son and daughter-in-law who live in Calgary, Canada. She works as a freelance sales representative for eight different companies selling baby-related products to retail stores all over South Africa.



2014 Events

CSW58: Challenges and Achievements



ICJW participated in three impressive events with several outstanding NGO partners. The Priority theme for 2014's Commission on the Status of Women

was "Challenges and Achievements in the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for Women and Girls." Two of our programs addressed this theme and one addressed the Review theme: "Access and Participation of Women and Girls to Education, Training, Science and Technology."

"Half the Sky is Not Enough! Propelling Women and Girls Upward from Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" highlighted three global initiatives that were created during the time of the MDGs and promise to catapult women and girls upward throughout the post-2015 development period. These initiatives are The Equal Futures Partnership, which encourages the economic empowerment of women and girls; Change.org which has made possible the surge of online petitions on human rights abuses against women and girls; and the Games for Change online technology game "Half the Sky Movement", which is designed to create social change.

ICJW partnered with the Armenian Relief Society and Soroptimist for this event.

Partnering with Solar Cookers International, ICJW sponsored a parallel event entitled **"Achieving Equal Access for Women to Technology and Employment"**. The event addressed solar cooking as a way for women to use technology to improve their quality of life and to be kind to the planet. This combination of modern engineering and the power of the sun has created a new technology with the potential to make a real difference in women and children's lives in less developed countries. Other speakers discussed novel ways in which women have pursued careers in science and technology in spite of the lack of equal access.



Solar Cooking

ICJW was one of a group of co-sponsors of a UN Watch-sponsored event **Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women Living in Traditional Societies**. This event emphasized aspects of MDG3 (To Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women) by giving voice to female victims of honor killings and abuse.

A delegation of 14 ICJW women participated in the CSW58 events and all the participants were impressed with the overall caliber of events offered and particularly ICJW's contributions.

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ICJW CALENDAR 2014

May 2 & 4	ICJW Executive Meeting in Prague
May 4-7	ICJW Quadrennial Convention, Prague
May 6	Israel's 66th Independence Day
May 8	ICJW Executive Meeting, Prague
August 17-20	UJW SA National Conference, Johannesburg
November 10-11	ICJW Executive Committee Meeting, New York
November 12	ICJW Executive UN Information Tour, New York

