

# Art of Living

at Jewish Home Family





## A Seamless Transition

Carol Silver Elliott, President & CEO, Jewish Home Family

Dear friends,

It's an exciting time at the Jewish Home Family as we enter our 110th year. Moving into a second century of existence is an achievement, that is for sure. But continuing to change, evolve and be relevant, well, that is truly an accomplishment. Throughout our history, change and evolution have been our watchwords. Driven by proactively anticipating and meeting community needs, we have made a seamless transition from our earliest days as an orphanage to our current role of providing the best possible care and services, both inpatient and outpatient, to older adults.

If you see photographs on elder care decades and decades ago, you see settings that were institutional and care that was primarily custodial. Over time, the environment changed, and the care changed as well. Long term went from being a "staff directed" model to one that was "elder-centered," reflecting the understanding that the individual being served had to be at the heart of what we do. Today, we have moved beyond "elder-centered" to a higher level, "elder-directed." Elder-directed care means that we recognize and understand that elders, regardless of age or stage, have both the right and ability to make choices. It is our job to ensure that those rights and abilities are maintained and protected.

We are honoring that commitment to being elder-directed through the changes we are making across our continuum. Our Memory Lane neighborhood at Jewish Home Assisted Living was converted into Green House model homes in 2024, focused on creating real home and meaningful life for our elders.

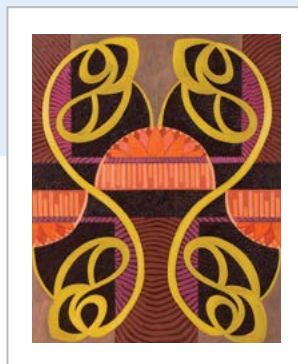
The first transition on the Jewish Home at Rockleigh campus is the Seiden unit, long our secure Memory Care unit. The reconfigured unit boasts two households, a bright, open floor plan and the elimination of the traditional trappings of nursing homes, including medication carts and the like. We are excited about the physical changes but even more excited about the positive impact it is already having on the lives of our elders. You can read more about it elsewhere in this newsletter.

We have many special events planned for our big birthday year and many ways you can join us in celebration. Thank you, as always, for your continued support of, and dedication to, the Jewish Home Family.

Be well,

Am Yisrael Chai,

*Carol*



Cover art —  
"It Would Have Been Enough"  
painting by Bonnie Morano

## Elders on the Go

Our Elders are on the move in the community, at Radio City to see the Rockettes, attending “Anne Frank The Exhibition,” and cruising the neighborhoods to enjoy the twinkle of holiday lights. Nothing stands in their way of a great time with friends.



Perfect weather for a visit to Demarest Farms



Good eats at the Northvale Diner



Attending the JCC Thurnauer School Gift of Music event



Bowling at Montvale Lanes



Enjoying the beautiful Holiday lights



At “Anne Frank The Exhibition” in New York City



That's entertainment at Radio City Music Hall



A reader's delight at the River Vale Library

## Green House Transformation Underway

When people hear the term “greenhouse,” they think of a place to nurture and cultivate plants. But when we use the term Green House, while nurturing and cultivating are definitely part of it, we are talking about a way to transform the care experience for older adults.

**The Green House Project** is the brainchild of Dr. Bill Thomas. Dr. Thomas was a geriatrician who has worked, and continues to work, to disrupt the world of aging services. Working in his first long-term care setting, Dr. Thomas quickly determined that change was necessary. He began to look at the three plagues of older adults, especially those in long-term care settings. Those plagues? Loneliness, helplessness and boredom. Dr. Thomas founded the Eden Alternative to change the way nursing homes provided care and to humanize the model. But in the early 2000’s, Dr. Thomas realized that the Eden Alternative was not enough, that there was a need to truly revolutionize elder care.

The Green House Project was developed to normalize aging environments, creating small home settings where multi-skilled staff look and feel like extended family, providing care and engagement. The three core values of Green House: real home; meaningful life; empowered staff, combining to truly make aging environments a place in which elders’ needs, choices and natural rhythms are honored.

Dr. Thomas has said “What we need is a radical reinterpretation of longevity that makes elders (and their needs) central to their collective pursuit of happiness and well-being.” At

the Jewish Home Family, we agree. The first major change we undertook was Memory Lane at Jewish Home Assisted Living, followed by the Seiden unit on the Jewish Home at Rockleigh campus.

When you look at the Seiden unit today, you see an area filled with natural light and open spaces. Elders and staff eat together in one of two dining rooms, just like a family. And activities are as varied as the desires of the elders. It is not unusual to see a music program, a news discussion and cookie baking all going on at the same time, activities which interest different elders and are facilitated by different staff.

You won’t see a big nursing station taking up the better part of the hallway. You won’t see medication carts dominating the scene or rows and rows of charts in binders. What you will see is life being lived, elders feeling engaged and that they are truly home.

“What we need is a radical reinterpretation of longevity that makes elders (and their needs) central to their collective pursuit of happiness and well-being.”

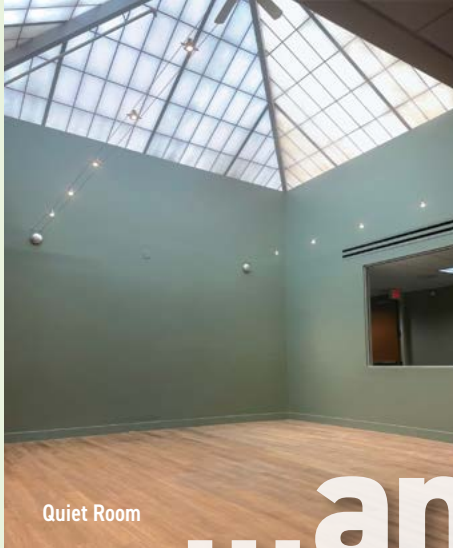
– Dr. Bill Thomas



before...



Construction completed March 2025.



Quiet Room



Charting Station

...and after



New Hearth Gathering Area



New Dining Rooms

The three core values of Green House:

- ◆ **real home**
- ◆ **meaningful life**
- ◆ **committed staff**



Want to learn more?

Here's a link to a video we've created about our Green House transition.

[www.jewishhomefamily.org/jhal/dementia-care/](http://www.jewishhomefamily.org/jhal/dementia-care/)

We'd love to show it to you and to answer your questions.

Contact us at [foundation@jewishhomefamily.org](mailto:foundation@jewishhomefamily.org)

## SPOTLIGHT

### BRETT HARWOOD

**More than 40 years ago, Brett Harwood** was at his desk in Jersey City, working in his family's parking garage business. He looked up to see Harold Krieger in his doorway. Harold was the firm's counselor and a family friend for many years. "What are you doing for lunch today?" Harold asked. Brett, a bit surprised by the question, responded "Eating a sandwich at my desk." "No, you're not," Harold said, "you are coming with me." Harold took Brett to a board meeting of the Jewish Home and Rehabilitation Center, the forerunner of today's Jewish Home Family. "We need new blood," Harold told him and then said, with great seriousness, "You are going to help them move into the future." Brett became a dedicated member of the board and played an active role in both the growth of JHRC in Jersey City and the transition to the Jewish Home and Bergen County.

An attorney by profession, Brett worked in a law firm for a number of years before joining his family's business. He was, and is, devoted to his Jersey City roots and the Jersey City Jewish community. As a board member of JHRC, Brett became involved in philanthropy for the first time, and he fondly recalls his years of raising money for the organization.



Brett and Margie Harwood



The Harwood Pavilion

When an additional property, adjacent to the JHRC campus, became available, it seemed like a perfect extension of the organization supported senior independent living apartments. Brett not only helped raise the money for the project, he also made the leadership gift, and the Harwood Pavilion opened its doors in 1995.

**Brett became a dedicated member of the board and played an active role in both the growth of JHRC in Jersey City and the transition to the Jewish Home and Bergen County.**

Times were not always easy for JHRC and Brett recalls being involved in many meetings to help the organization through tough financial times. Brett, as vice president of the board, joined Carl Epstein, and other community leaders, every Monday morning in a "financial work out" session, managing JHRC's challenging fiscal circumstances. When the opportunity came for the nursing home to move to Bergen County, Brett was a part of the decision to sell the existing Jersey City campus. He passionately, and successfully, lobbied for a portion of the sale proceeds to be earmarked for the support of the Jewish community in Jersey City.



Mayor Bret Schundler giving a citation in Jersey City for the Jewish Home Senior Residence. Brett Harwood, Carl Epstein and Annemarie Euebbing, Director of Housing and Urban Development of Jersey City



The Harwood Pavilion Dedication ceremony in 1995 was a very special occasion for friends and family.

As the Jewish Home became more centered in Bergen County, Brett was still involved but less directly active. He says "Lenny Rubin tried to talk me into moving to Bergen County, but I was not interested. My home is still my home." The Harwood's have been living in Maplewood for 47 years.

Brett and his family have experienced the Jewish Home as family members as well. Both his mother and mother-in-law were residents at the Jewish Home at Rockleigh. Their mothers were collegial but in separate wings. So, he and his wife would come to the Jewish Home together and each visit one of the mothers. Then they would switch, giving both moms separate and equal time!

Brett and his wife Margie have been married for over 50 years. They met in the high school band and began dating their senior year. At separate colleges, they stayed connected and married before their last year of college. They have two children and one grandchild. Margie recently spent some time at the Jewish Home at Rockleigh for short-term rehabilitation. "It could not have been a better experience," Brett says.

## Recognizing a Further Commitment to Jewish Home Family

The Jewish Home connection between Harold Krieger and Brett Harwood reached another level this year. Brett, as trustee for the Harold and Stephanie Krieger Trust, helped to secure a \$1 Million gift to the Jewish Home Family. Harold's long commitment to the organization was one Brett wanted to be permanently recognized by the organization.

The nationally recognized Parkinson's Center at the Jewish Home has been renamed as the Harold Krieger Center for Parkinson's. Under that umbrella are all of the programs and services that the Jewish Home Family currently provides for individuals living with Parkinson's disease, including Rock Steady Boxing, Dance for Parkinson's, LSVT Big and Loud, Loud Crowd and more.

Carol Silver Elliott, Jewish Home Family CEO and President said, "We are so grateful for this gift and to honor both the Kriegers, and Brett Harwood, for their lifelong contributions to the Jewish Home. Naming this important community program is truly a wonderful way to continue and grow our care for the community."



## SPOTLIGHT

## YVONNE AND HOWARD GEMEINER

**When Howard Gemeiner moved into Jewish Home Assisted Living (JHAL) in March 2022, he came for respite.**

Multiple medical issues had resulted in hospitalization and a need for more support. His wife, Yvonne, remained in their home of 50 years in Cheshire, Connecticut. But the challenges of his health, and then Yvonne's, brought them both to JHAL to live.

Howard and Yvonne met at a party at Orchard Beach. They were both in their teens, he was a 17-year-old college freshman, and she had just graduated from high school. He finished City College of New York and went on to the University of Connecticut's Law School. Howard's law practice began in New Haven as a legal assistance attorney. He found that his upbringing in the Bronx enabled him "not to judge anyone." "Not having a suburban perspective," helped him to work with these clients effectively and successfully.

But after a few years, Howard decided that private practice was a better option. Howard was a partner in a law firm, until he opened his own solo practice focusing on both criminal cases and civil litigation. Even after he moved into JHAL, Howard continued to practice law, aided by the "remote world" we all lived in during the pandemic.

Yvonne began her career as an elementary school teacher but found it limiting. She went back to school and received her master's degree in industrial psychology, going on to a long career in Human Resource Management.

### Life at Assisted Living

Yvonne and Howard acclimated quickly to life at Assisted Living and Howard became so involved that he served on the Resident Council. Howard especially enjoyed getting to know the staff at all levels of JHAL. "I made a living from working with people of different ethnic groups," and he is fascinated by people and their different backgrounds and life experience. His favorite way to connect? He plays music that they know, music, for many of them, from the country of their birth. "I have always loved all kinds of music," he said. "And I play



Howard and Yvonne Gemeiner



Howard and Yvonne on their honeymoon

“Yvonne is healthier now than she has been and that's a blessing.”

it all day long." As he learns about the employee, he uses his eclectic taste in music to find the music that will resonate with each person.

### A Higher Level of Care

Several months ago, Yvonne's health needed a higher level of care, and she was transferred to the Jewish Home at Rockleigh for long-term care. He shared that his father died when he was 17 and he lost his best friend, murdered in front of him, just eight months later, but this transition, he said, "was more painful." "To have your wife separated from you," he said, "it made me see the future." Howard calls her move "the saddest day of my life."

Howard and Yvonne FaceTime, every day at least four to five times. Three times a week, one of the JHAL drivers takes him to Rockleigh to spend time with Yvonne. "Yvonne is healthier than she has been," he said, "and that's a blessing." He went on, "I am closer to her now than I have been in 50 years."

Yvonne and Howard have three daughters, six granddaughters and one grandson. Howard has been able to attend basketball and soccer games and spend more time with his children since moving to JHAL. "I believe," he said, "that wherever you are, that's where you are." And he is grateful to be a part of the Jewish Home Family, for the support and the ability of the organization to meet both his and Yvonne's needs.

## Builders Circle – Major Gift Event

On March 6, 2025, the **Builders Circle** held their **inaugural event** at the One River School of Art + Design in Allendale, New Jersey.

This *thank you* event was attended by our Builders Circle donors, their family and friends. Featured artist Bonnie Morano curated her new collection to showcase for the first time at this event.



The Builders Circle recognizes major donors who give an annual cumulative donation of \$5,000 or more each year to the Jewish Home Foundation.

For more information about the Builders Circle, please contact Laurie Meltzer Bandremer at **201-750-4231** or [lbandremer@jewishhomefamily.org](mailto:lbandremer@jewishhomefamily.org)

**The Jewish Home Foundation of North Jersey, Inc. supports the vital work of the Jewish Home Family** through community engagement and fundraising. The Jewish Home Family's mission is to make aging a vital and meaningful experience, understanding and meeting the unique needs of each individual. Services include assisted living, long-term care, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, memory care, a nationally recognized Center for Parkinson's Care and SeniorHaven, the only shelter abuse center in the State of New Jersey. Your gifts will provide the Jewish Home with critical funds needed to deliver exceptional programs and services and ensure the best possible quality of life for our elders.



## Supporting the Jewish Home Family

### BUILDING TOGETHER

Our annual giving program invites you to participate in events like our golf classic and annual gala. In recognition of your gift, your name will be listed on the Building Together plaque and you will receive an invitation to the fall celebration.

### LEAVE A LEGACY

Create a legacy by planning a gift that guarantees the Jewish Home Family's mission will continue, providing the opportunity to commit a charitable gift now that will benefit the organization in the future. A legacy gift may be designated in your will, life insurance policy, retirement plan, or by creating an endowment, or charitable trust.

## WAYS TO GIVE

### GENERAL DONATION

Donations to the Jewish Home Family support our mission "to make aging a vital and meaningful experience by meeting each individual's unique needs." Contributions may be made in memory of or to honor a loved one, recognize exceptional staff, or commemorate milestones.

### CREATE A GIVING CAMPAIGN

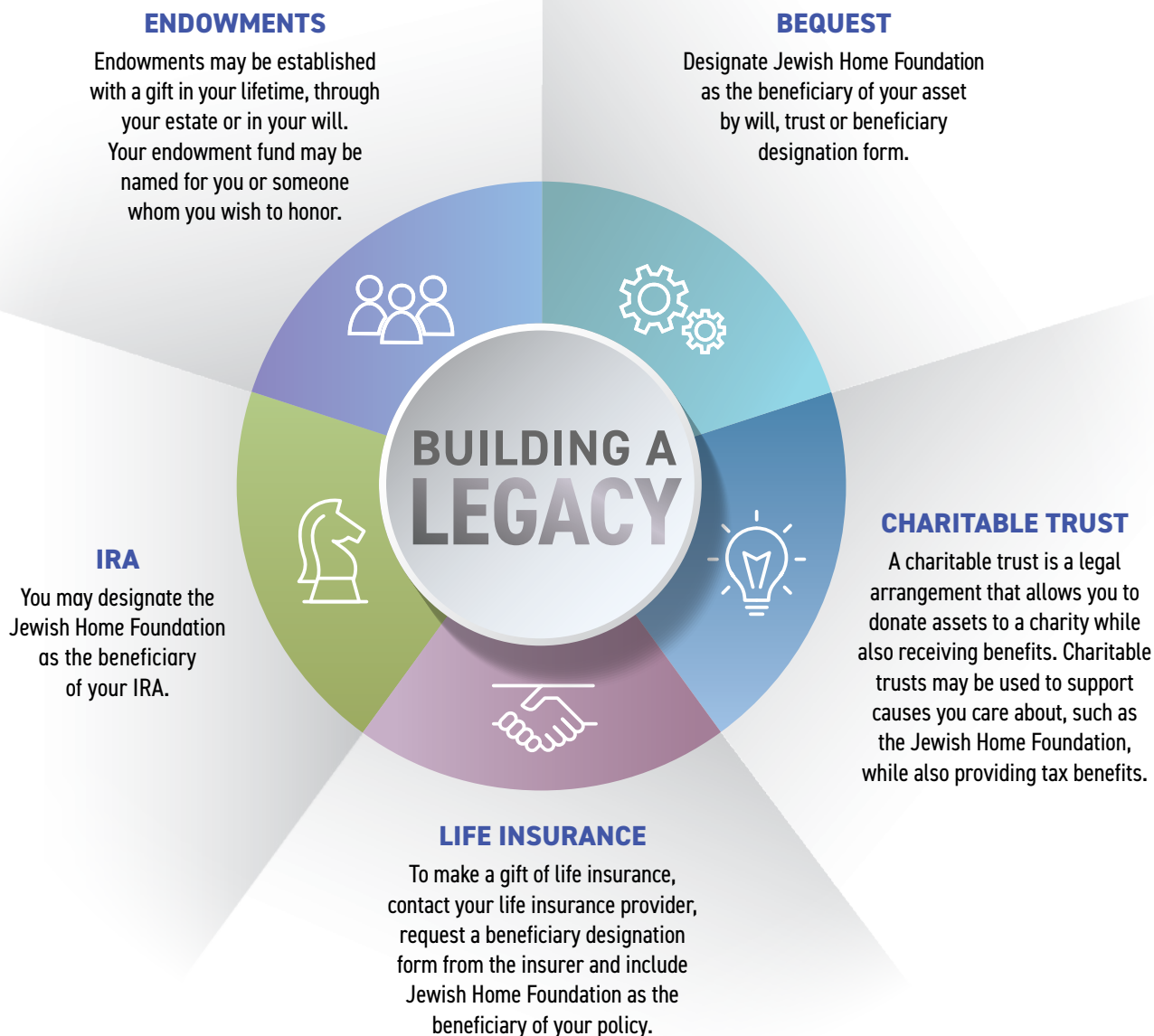
Those whose lives have been touched by the Jewish Home Family often seek meaningful ways to give back. Some volunteer their time, while others donate to the Jewish Home Family. We offer various options to start a personalized campaign.

For more information about making a gift to the Jewish Home Foundation of North Jersey, please contact Laurie Meltzer Bandremer, Executive Director at 201-750-4231 or email [lbandremer@jewishhomefamily.org](mailto:lbandremer@jewishhomefamily.org).

To make a donation online, visit [www.jewishhomefamily.org/donate](http://www.jewishhomefamily.org/donate).

## Building a LEGACY with the Jewish Home Foundation

Legacy gifts provide you with the opportunity to commit to a charitable gift now that will benefit the Jewish Home Family in the future. It goes beyond writing a check. A legacy gift may be designated in a will, a retirement plan, creating an endowment or through a life insurance policy.



To discuss your legacy gift, please contact  
Laurie Meltzer Bandremer, Executive Director, Jewish Home Foundation of North Jersey  
at **201-750-4231** or email [lbandremer@jewishhomefoundation.org](mailto:lbandremer@jewishhomefoundation.org)



10 Link Drive, Rockleigh, NJ 07647 JewishHomeFamily.org

Art of Living is published by Jewish Home Foundation

## SAVE THE DATE

Join Us for a Day of  
Golf, Tennis, & Card Games

**MONDAY 06·09·25**  
*Alpine Country Club*

HONORING  
*David Lazarus*



**Sign Up Today!** <http://birdease.com/JewishHomeGolf>

## SAVE THE DATE

for a Jewish Home Family Celebration!



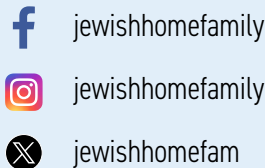
**Sunday, October 26, 2025**

Hilton Pearl River, Pearl River, NY

**Honoring** Taran and Howard Chernin

**Special Guest** Michael Richards

Follow us



Scan for  
Podcast



Charitable Solicitation Disclosure Statement: Jewish Home Foundation of North Jersey, Inc. ("JHFoundation") is a New Jersey non-profit corporation with its primary address and principle place of business at 10 Link Drive, Rockleigh, NJ 07647. **New Jersey:** Information filed with the Attorney General concerning this charitable solicitation and the percentage of contributions received by the charity during the last reporting period that were dedicated to the charitable purpose may be obtained from the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey by calling 973-504-6215 and is available on the Internet at [www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/charfrm.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/charfrm.htm). Registration with the Attorney General does not imply endorsement. **New York:** A copy of JHFoundation's latest annual report may be obtained, upon request, by writing to Jewish Home Foundation, 10 Link Drive, Rockleigh, NJ 07647 or from the New York State Attorney General Charity Bureau, Attn: FOIL Officer, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271. If you wish to unsubscribe to our mailing list, please contact us at [jbabcock@jewishhomefamily.org](mailto:jbabcock@jewishhomefamily.org).