



Why do we give? Because it matters. And because, as Jews, it is in our DNA.

Sometimes you hear someone speak who really “nails it.”

Addressing a conference of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in New York last month, Rabbi Peter Rubenstein of Central Synagogue in Manhattan did just that, when he told the assembled crowd:

“We tell our children and ourselves that our existence is to be a beacon, a light to the nations. To be a Jew means to not turn away from the pain of others, even when we ourselves hurt.

When someone is in pain, we Jews provide for their comfort.

When there is need to stand strong for principles of decency, we stand taller.

We envision a better world, and then work for it even harder.

We tell the truth when it is difficult and support the weak when it is uncomfortable.

Above all, we stand by our own people in their best and worst times because that is what family does.”

Indeed, our “Jewish family” – locally,

in Israel and around the world – has always been the focus of UJA/Federation efforts. In our community, blessed as we are to live in luxury, comfort and safety, we feel for those less fortunate. With your generous help to our campaign, UJA/Federation acts. Sometimes it is with direct grants of impactful aid to local agencies. Other times, we unite with the other 155 Jewish Federations in North America to gather the enormous sums required to meet enormous needs, a goal achieved only by joining forces.

For example: during the rocket assault on Israel from Gaza last fall, UJA/Federation dollars enabled the Jewish Agency for Israel to quickly move tens of thousands of Israeli children out of harm’s way and into areas of the country where they found safe haven. Educators and therapists received on-the-spot trauma training to support the children’s material and emotional needs during this stressful time.

Only an organization like UJA/Federation, with the ability to mobilize its members, can meet this kind of challenge.

Locally, when our Jewish family struggles, UJA/Federation provides the safety net through times of illness, job loss, economic hardship or old age. We embrace those with special needs, offering opportunities for socialization and friendship, and involving them fully in our Jewish community. We support Jewish education, Taglit-Birthright, and Jewish summer-camp scholarships, thereby ensuring and strengthening our Jewish future.

As Jewish communities emerge in post-Holocaust and post-Communist countries of Europe, our UJA/Federation dollars nourish the rebirth of Jewish life in communities from Kiev, Minsk and Odessa to Warsaw, Prague, Budapest and Vienna.

When the world hurts – after an earthquake in Haiti, or a tsunami and nuclear meltdown in Japan, or a hurricane on our country’s shores – your dollars and the Jewish communal infrastructure are there with efficient and effective help.



Linda Russ, UJA/Federation WWCN President

And in Israel, our homeland, our dollars support Jewish life in so many ways, by

- sheltering youth at risk and setting them on a positive life path
- offering support for victims of terrorism or rocket fire
- providing education for newcomers so that they can support their families
- creating programs like the Katz Family Breast Health Initiative at Emek Medical Center, conceived by UJA/Federation board members Amy and Neil Katz for under-served women in our sister region of Afula-Gilboa.

All of this is our collective responsibility and our mission, a mission that continues to both inspire and challenge us. With your help, we will continue to stand by our own people in their best and worst times.

Delia Ephron Keynotes at Women’s Education Symposium

World-renowned writer Delia Ephron will share her wit and wisdom with Fairfield County women when she keynotes at the Annual Women’s Education Symposium on Wednesday, March 6 at the Hyatt Regency Greenwich. The symposium is a collaboration between UJA/Federation WWCN, UJA/JCC Greenwich, and United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien.

A bestselling author, screenwriter, and playwright, Ephron’s movies include *You’ve Got Mail*, *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*, *Hanging Up*, and *Michael*. She writes novels for adults and teens and

her writing appears in many major national publications. She collaborated with her late sister, Nora, on the play, *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*, which ran on Broadway for two years and has been performed around the world.

Her talk, “The Lion Is In: Friendship, Courage & Love,” is based on her most recent novel about three women who learn to confront their complicated pasts, embrace new relationships, and ultimately navigate their way back to their own hearts. Three breakout sessions will follow the presentation.



Delia Ephron

“Our region has a long history of successful, collaborative Jewish women’s events,” says Steve Friedlander, UJA/Federation WWCN executive director. “The Women’s Education Symposium hopefully represents a new and exciting chapter in that proud history.”

Women’s Education Symposium: Wednesday, March 6, 9:15 a.m.-12 noon, Hyatt Regency Greenwich, 1800 East Putnam Ave., Old Greenwich | Couvert: \$60 by 3/1; \$72 @ door | Info/RSVP: Stacy Kamisar, UJA/Federation WWCN Program Coordinator, stacykamisar@optonline.net / (203) 226-8197