THANK YOU JUDY
A Virtual Retirement Tribute
December 20, 2020
As the members of the Board of Action for Post-Soviet Jewry we want to tell you what a pleasure it has been to work with you over these many years. We appreciate all that you have done as Executive Director of APSJ. It is an honor to welcome you as an Emerita member of the board. We wish you all the best in your retirement.

Members of the Board of Action for Post-Soviet Jewry
I first met Judy in the fall of 2000. I was helping my cousins who lived in St. Petersburg, Russia. They had just received notice that they had been granted an interview in Moscow. In my queries for help I had been told that Judy Patkin was the person to talk to about the interview process. I called Judy and she told me to come to the office. When I arrived, she handed me a two-page list of possible questions. She told me clearly that it was particularly important to able to answer the questions. With that list I was able to help my cousins prepare. Their interview was a success and they received refugee and parole status. Judy's help was invaluable in securing their visa status.

A year or so later I joined the Board of Action for Post-Soviet Jewry as Vice President and the following year became the President of the Board. My first trip with Judy was in October 2003. Four of us traveled to Ukraine and Belarus to visit with our community coordinators and clients. It was the first of 9 or 10 trips I made with Judy. We met with many elderly and occasionally young needy Jews. Sometimes their stories were uplifting, other times sad and depressing. But always the visits and Judy's personal attention lifted spirits. Our travels included long road trips over unbelievably poor roads in Ukraine, several van breakdowns on the highway, on one occasion an unheated hotel room in freezing temperatures, an overnight train trip from Kiev to Dnipro in a crowded sleeper car with no available lower bunks, and a few side trips to cities of our ancestors. We saw first-hand the revival of Jewish life where none had really existed during the Soviet years. Our adventures were many and fascinating.

It has been such a pleasure to work and travel with Judy.

Barbara Karchmer
President of the Board of Action for Post Soviet Jewry
Judy Patkin embodies what it means to live as a global Jewish citizen and care for the most vulnerable both here and around the world.

On behalf of CJP, I express deep gratitude to Judy for her many years of leadership at Action for Post-Soviet Jewry and for her pioneering work with our sister city of Dnipro. Both Adopt-a-Bubbe and the Warm Houses are critical initiatives that continue to provide social connection, clothing, food, and medicine to elderly Jews in need in Dnipro and the surrounding vicinity.

Judy's passion and commitment for Jews around the world is inspiring. On behalf of CJP, we thank you for paving the way and showing our community how to do more, give more, and care more for our Jewish brothers and sisters around the world.

Rabbi Marc Baker
President and CEO
Combined Jewish Philanthropies
Dear Judy,

All of us at Temple Isaiah join in saluting you for all of the extraordinary work that you have done throughout the years on behalf of those trapped by the oppression of Soviet Jews, and then, subsequently, supporting those trapped by the poverty that their circumstances in the former Soviet Union brought upon them. Your absolute dedication and leadership have made a material difference in the lives of countless individuals, not only those who have been the direct beneficiaries of these efforts, but everyone who is had the privilege to support these efforts. You have spearheaded, facilitated, and led the efforts to fulfill two critical mitzvot: pidyon shvuyim - the captives; and gemilut chasadim - acts of lovingkindness that make a material difference in the lives of those in need.

All of us who know you know how you have undertaken these efforts from a place of deep commitment, never seeking fanfare or recognition, always pressing forward simply for the reward of the work itself and the difference it made. You have been a blessing to us at Temple Isaiah, serving as our first woman president, and to our greater Jewish community, along with all those who have been and continue to be blessed by the efforts that you have initiated and carried forward.

Judy, may you continue to grow from strength to strength

Rabbi Howard L. Jaffe
and the entire Temple Isaiah family
Temple Beth Elohim is proud to support Action for Post-Soviet Jewry

TBE honors our dear friend, Judy Patkin as she enters retirement after decades of meaningful commitment.

*May you continue to inspire our community for years to come.*

Rabbi Joel Sisenwine  
Cantor Emerita Jodi Sufrin  
Rabbi Rachel Saphire  
Rabbi Philip Sherman  
Cantor Shanna Zell  
Neil Silverston, President  
And the entire TBE Congregation
Judy—You have done so much for so many, my family included. It’s an honor and a privilege to have you for a friend. Love

Ruth Karp

Judy Patkin for her many years of service to this important cause in helping Jews in the Soviet Union and post Soviet Union times.

Marjorie Minkin

Congratulations and thanks for all your hard work and dedication.

Fay & Julian Bussgang

Inspired by Judy and her dedication and action over these decades.

Shirley & Charles Hurwitz
I first met Judy Patkin in the 1990s, when I read that Dnepropetrovsk had become a sister city of Boston. Since both of my mother’s parents had emigrated from there in 1912, I had an intense interest in the city. I went down to the Action office in Waltham to see if they had any names of current residents. The answer was basically "no," but both Judy and the late Sheila Galland were so cordial, and the cause so compelling, that I ended up getting involved with their work. Over the years, I played a variety of roles and watched the organization struggle to reinvent itself after glasnost. The ultimate irony is that I put an ad in a Jewish paper that the local rabbi published, along the lines of "American cousin looking for descendants of...."—and heard from my mother's first cousin, who send a picture of their grandfather she had never seen!

But that is just a side note in the story of my relationship with Judy. I never got over being impressed with her energy, her compassion, her single-minded dedication to the underserved, almost forgotten Jews of Eastern Ukraine. I could never get over her ability to travel under arduous conditions and to use her time abroad to meet with as many people as possible. Her clients were the "pensioners," as she called them, and her pain at the straits they found themselves in was palpable. She kept up a remarkable schedule and wrote lengthy trip reports recording her activities and observations.

Back home, she worked tirelessly to build partnerships, establish relationships, and enlist both financial and other support for her pensioners. Her activities ranged from working with refuseniks/emigres and local rabbis to collecting left-over clothing from temple rummage sales. If no one else could help her, she did it herself.

I think it is not a secret to note that, when times were hard, she didn't take any salary. She could never stop, not even slow down, hardly ever even take time off. In every way, on every day, this was a labor of love.

Judy is one of the most incredible people I have ever met. She MADE Action for Soviet Jewry, kept it alive, and is the single person most responsible for its success. No tribute to her is sufficient, but I hope that she feels cherished and respected on this day devoted to her.

Carol Clingan
I admire her devotion to the cause.

Richard Pierce

In honor of Judy Patkin's 45 years at APSJ.

Michael Mirman

Judy Patkin and her many, many years of stubborn, focused, and creative work on behalf of Jews in the former Soviet Union. With deep respect and appreciation.

Joshua Rubenstein

Judy Patkin"s enduring work for Post-Soviet Jews.

Polly Slavet
In honor of Judy Patkin’s 45 years of service & dedication to PSJ.

Nancy Gold

In celebration of Judy Patkin.

Rabbi and Mrs. Henry Zoob

We remember the early days of meetings sitting on boxes in the basement of Store 24 and organizing protest rallies on the North Shore!
Mazel Tov for all these years of dedication.

Janice and Elliot Wyner
Thanks, Judy, for your focus of helping Refuseniks in the FSU and for your determination to continue the job once they were released to help those who remained. You are an inspiration to so many. You inspired us to travel in 1988 and briefed us on 30 individuals whose we met. We brought them medicine, jeans, tapes, cigarettes, etc. This experience was life altering to us! Thank you!

Wishing you good health and joy as you reach 85 and on your retirement from APSJ. Your spark will always be there to carry on! It was a pleasure to serve on the Board with you at the helm for many years.
With deep gratitude,

Susan and Michael Brown

Judy, kol hakavod for the inspirational work you have dedicated your life to doing. What an impact you have had on so many people and communities. You have really been an active participant in creating change and making Jewish history. Thank you for creating such a compassionate and generous community who supports the work of APSJ. Thank you, Judy, for your support and mentorship as I continue the sacred work of caring for the most vulnerable and isolated Jews and their families in Eastern Europe.

Debbie Kardon

Dear Judy,
We are so proud of your commitment to Action for Post-Soviet Jewry. Looking forward to celebrating you and all your accomplishments!
Much love,

Lisa and Mark
Our trip to the Soviet Union with Action to help refuseniks was one of the most satisfying events of our lives. We thank Judy Patkin for facilitating this experience so effectively for us.

Dan & Louise Tarsy

It's been inspiring to learn more about Judy's work and contributions. Thank you for including me!

Meg Cimino

Dear Judy, I consider myself very luck for having worked with you for the last 10 years. I have learned so much from you. We've been through a lot together and have shared some great times. Please be well, and thank you!

Marina Javits
Judy is perhaps the most remarkable and unselfish woman I have had the privilege of knowing and working with over many years. Her commitment and passion to the Jews of both the Soviet Union and the Former Soviet Union is unparalleled. Highly intelligent, pragmatic and determined, Judy was both Puach and Shifra to all Jews in need there. Undaunted in spirit, she is Action for Soviet and Post-Soviet Jewry! May Judy go from strength to strength in the years ahead, and rich in the knowledge that she has most definitely made a difference.

Barbara Palant

You are a quiet hero. I will always be grateful for the contact names for hook ups in 1990 and your eagerness to accept supplies over the decades that followed. I wish we could have traveled together. With best wishes always and thanks for your tremendous work. Sincerely,

Ann C B-H
In 1978 (many, many years ago), it was Judy's expert advice and coordination that made it possible for my colleague Rabbi Stanley Davids and I to undertake our mission to visit, teach and support Jews in the Soviet Union. Without Judy's wealth of knowledge and warm support, I do not know how we would have managed. That her work has continued and been reshaped with changing circumstances over all the intervening years bespeaks the heart, mind and utter dedication Judy has brought to this cause and the people it serves. There are people who perform mitzvot, and then there are people who turn their lives into an enduring mitzvah. Judy belongs in the latter category. Blessings, Judy, as you move toward retirement!

Rabbi Neil Kominsky

In honor of Judy Patkin’s 85th Birthday. Thank you Judy!!!

Sofya Mitelman
On this very special anniversary of your important work at the Action, I would like to congratulate you, Judy, and wish you years of active life in good health so that you can now accomplish all those things, which you always wanted to do, but never had enough time to actually get to doing them. I was very privileged to have known, worked and traveled with you. I will always remember and cherish our trips to Ukraine and Belorus.

I have come to know you as an extraordinarily wise and big-hearted woman.

Happy Anniversary and Happy Birthday! Wishing you to stay strong and enjoy life

Galina Z.

In honor of Judy—in Action!
Best wishes,

Carol S. Kaplan
Thank you, Judy, for your inspiration, dedication, and leadership. Through your work you have brought freedom, hope and sustenance to so many.

Michael Luckens & Sharon Schumack

Judy Patkin-We are happy to join the celebration to thank you for all your help and support of the Jewish people, especially mothers and grandmothers, over the years. We are proud to know you and look forward to your visits with us in Florida. Congratulations on your retirement! We wish you many healthy and fulfilling days! Much love from your cousin and friend.

Emily and Dana

Judy Patkin for the wonderful work she has done for 45 years at Action for (Post) Soviet Jewry.

Abby Brown
Judy and Boston Action for Soviet Jewry were an integral part of the community-based activist wing of the Soviet Jewry movement, tirelessly advocating for our brethren in the USSR, and helping to welcome them in their new homes in freedom. When almost all of us closed up our offices when the USSR collapsed, Action kept striding along. When the parade passed by and the cheering stopped, Judy and Action established critical and effective relationships with Jews in need in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. And they haven't been only friends from afar, but personally visiting cities and towns, many off the beaten path. This is chesed of the highest order. We, veterans of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry (and now a bit older than student age!) remained in awe of Judy's dedication and focus.

May Debbie and her team be blessed with similar success. 

Glenn Richter
Judy's courageous personality is something to admire. Few people would have ventured to places, and in most challenging times, to do the work she has continued to do to this day. Hundreds of people's lives have been changed by her programs and organization. Thank you Judy!

Laura and Ery Magasanik

We admire: Her persistence. How she continued to work on behalf of the Jews of the former Soviet Union for these many years. Our favorite memory: Traveling with Judy a few summers ago to Ukraine, visiting families with her, seeing the marvelous work she was doing, and how her elderly clients loved her.

Adele and Joel Sandberg

Thank you, Judy!

Rise Singer
Judy Patkin has been a valued, respected, and beloved colleague for more than thirty-five years. Our organization worked in the Caucasus and Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union and collaborated with Action for Soviet Jewry whenever Judy had cases in our area. Judy always could be relied upon to do whatever she had promised to do in a timely and professional manner. We stood in awe when she transitioned her organization into an on-the-ground charity and repeatedly traveled to Ukraine to facilitate hands-on work that undoubtedly eased – and even saved – the lives of elderly Jews, many of whom were Holocaust survivors. Yasher koach and a well-deserved rest to one of our favorite comrades in the Soviet Jewry movement.

Helene Kenvin, President
Goldie Ellman, Chairman of the Board
THE CAUCASUS NETWORK
My SSSJ colleague Henry Gerber Z”L and I shlepped for years on an almost annual basis to the Action office in Waltham in a rented van filled to the brim with quality clothing collected by my shulmates at Lincoln Square Synagogue in Manhattan. Judy and often her colleagues would be there to welcome us with delicious sandwiches from a kosher deli in Brookline. We’d marvel at the hundreds of clothing items Judy’s team were stuffing into boxes to be shipped to the Former Soviet Union, and feel like we entered a time capsule, being in the only community-based Soviet Jewry office still around, transitioning from advocacy to direct care.

Glenn Richter

Thank you, Judy, for everything you have done.

Stephen Jones
When I think about Judy it’s her quiet power and determination that I admire most. Doggedly focused on one goal, she will leap tall buildings herself to bring help to needy Jews. She is the personification of how one person, mobilizing just a small army of the willing, can be a force for good in the world.

Ann Levin

Dear Judy
Here are some memories of the big rally in Washington 1987. I will never forget the impact you had on me when I became a board member of AFSJ in 1978 and joined the fight for refuseniks.

I wish you a long enjoyable retirement. With admiration.

Galina Nizhnikov
In her letter to Zeya Krasko, Judy wrote: “Thank you for introducing me to Tarusa Hospital and Maxim Osipov. I hope we helped them a little”.

Maxim Osipov, a cardiologist and a writer, whose books were translated to 18 languages, including last year publication in English, lives and works in Tarusa, a small town 60 miles from Moscow. He established a charitable foundation to ensure the survival of Tarusa hospital and to improve its standard of care. Since I knew Maxim from his childhood years in Moscow and was aware of difficulties Tarusa hospital was experiencing, I told Judy about it.

Judy’s response was: “Sure, let’s help them”. Since that time we sent to Tarusa hospital many boxes with all kind of medical supplies - surgical, orthopedic, gloves. I told Maxim about forthcoming celebration and he emailed me the following greeting for Judy:

Dear Judy, Many happy returns of this day! Here in Tarusa we are very grateful for all you did to our small hospital throughout all these years. God bless you, and many, many thanks from all of us!

Maxim.

Judy is an angel on earth. The work she has done has kept so many people alive! I have always been in awe of her work and her dedication. I feel honored to have worked with her over these past 20 years. When I think of taking care of the elderly with dignity, I can only think of Adopt a Bubbe and Warm Houses- 2 of my most favorite programs. Wishing her good health in her retirement.

Beth & Michael Moskowitz
Greetings from UCSJ:
Judy is extremely effective in all her activities. Thou outwardly restrain, she is extremely sensitive to other people's hardships, responsive, responsible, reliable, generous and modest. Whenever we applied to her with problems of our Moscow refuseniks community, or with our own ones, she reacted immediately and always was helpful.

I will never forget how Judy, at one of her visits to Moscow, presented me with a beautiful, brand-new jacket. For refuseniks, it was the time of total deficit for everything. I was very pleased and grateful to her. But the best was ahead: in several days a meeting was appointed in the Great Britain Embassy in Moscow of several refuseniks with Prime-minister Margaret Thatcher. I have proudly put on Judy's jacket and feel quite confident. I have and save like a treasure a picture of the meeting. On it, I am just next to Margaret...my jacket was more elegant than her's!

Thank you, Judy!!!

Leonid and Natasha Stonov

Being good friends with Judy's daughter Ruth I got to witness her mother's commitment and dedication to help people first hand. Although I was young girl, I knew what she was doing was important. I have always admired her drive to make a difference at the same time being a great Mother to her daughters. Enjoy retirement! Love,

Rene
CONGRATULATIONS FROM “ADOPT A BUBBIE” CARE – COORDINATORS
Happy Birthday Judy!

All the best in everything you do!
Good Health, Happiness! You have a big, wonderful heart. All the pensioners always remember you, they always comment that you are a very nice, and pleasant person to be around.

Pavlograd. Nela Zatz
Judy, congratulations on your big birthday!

Your humanitarian work for our small Lubni’s community – is a breath of fresh air. Due to your loving care, our community gets help on regular bases. Please accept our warmest wishes!

Poem:
Let the years pass by, excluding all life challenges,
We wish you well, health, love, and happiness!

Lubni. Rudman Boris & Ludmila
I am wishing Judy Happy Birthday!
I am wishing you – health, happiness
from your kids, and grandkids.
I am very grateful, that I met such kindhearted
people like Judy, Tanya and Yakov.
These are the people with huge and kind
hearts/souls. I am grateful for all the help
and care our pensioners get.
I am expressing gratitude from them as well.
Kind regards

Cherkassi. Tamila Ganopolskaya
Good day!
From everyone in the Berdyansk Jewish community “Тхия”

Wishing you the happiest birthday!
Wishing you good health and longevity!
Mazal Tov till 120!!! Everyone remembers our wonderful meetings with Judy!
Everyone loves her high energy and optimism!
Health and happiness!

Berdyansk. Alexander Drozdov
Dearest, kindness Judy!
From me, and my clients -

I want to congratulate you with your 85 birthday!
Wishing you health for many years, peace, and nahes from your kids and grand kids!
Thank you for all the love and care, for your big heart! Cant wait to see you back in K-R
Координаатор Борисенко Марина.

Krivoy Rog. Marina Borisenko
Our dearest Judy! Happy Birthday!
Wishing you longevity, happy days and years, prosperity, nahes from your kids and grand kids!
More creative plans and ideas!
You are a wonderful person with the open heart and a huge soul! You help so many people during such difficult time! I am grateful to my destiny that I got to know you, Tanya and Yakov. All of you became our extended family!
It does not matter that geographically you are so far away from us! We feel your presence!
Dear Judy! Mazal Tov till 120!
When a woman has a kidness and warmth – age is just a number!
Kind regards from Luba and all the members of our community!

Uman. Bezprozvanaya Lubov
Poem:
Congratulations on your birthday!
You only have one life to live!
It flies away too fast.
You have to make all the decisions yourself.
Your skills are your secret power!
Please take good care of yourself!
We need you!
There is no one else like you! Till 120!

Melitopol. Zamchevskaya Ludmila
All of us from Z V wants to congratulate Judy!
Wonderful, beautiful, kind woman!
She gives so much warmth!

Wishing you health, to stay in good shape,
and keep your beauty for many years to come!
Huge thank you for your support
and attention to our community!

Zheltie Vodi. Margarita Lebedinskaya
Our dearest Judy!
The best wishes from the heart on your birthday!
You are our Judy! Number 85 is very important, it’s as significant as you are in our lives for all of us!
For hundreds of people across the world you became family!
Your life experience, wisdom, attention, and care, willingness to help – its priceless!
One can not count the number of mitsvots you did!
Thank you!
You are an example of positivity, willingness to live, tenacity!
Please accept our best birthday wishes!
Wishing you many more years of this beautiful, healthy live, surrounded by people who love you!
Please keep your fire/ sparkle going!
Wishing you well always, not just on your special day!
Please keep dreaming and making new plans! Till 120!
Mazal Tov!
Kind regards!

Kamenskoe. Elena Lyanguzova
Tatyana Markovna and myself want to wish Judy Happy, happy Birthday!
We wishing you great health, prosperity, longevity! All the best in everything you do!

Huge hug from all of us for your kindness and care! Huge thank you for the help that she provides!

Poltava. Tatyana Halimon
Adopt a Bubbie/Warm House Program
Care-Coordinatore team
with Coordinator in Ukraine of
A&B\WH Tatyana Sidelkovsky
and DKP-CJP Coordinator Yakov Sidelkovsky
in the center of the picture with Cake.

We are 20 years together for
and with APSJ – Judy Patkin
Chief of Rabbi Shmuel Kaminezki
(Dnepro & Dnepro Region)
Gives a Blessing to All APSJ Care Coordinators
and for their Blessing work for!
Strategic Planning and sharing experience on 20 years Jubilee Seminar (June, 2018. Dnepro)
Coordinator A&B\WH Program in Ukraine
Tatyana Sidelkovsky (from the right)
Thank you for honoring Judy and helping to continue her life’s work with your generous donation to Action for Post-Soviet Jewry.

Visionary
Up to $10,000 & beyond
Anonymous x2
Betsy Gidwitz
Robert and Doris Gordon +

Sustainer
Up to $5000
Shirley and Charles Hurwitz and
Hy and Greta Berkowitz Foundation+
Rabbi Michael Luckens
and Sharon Schumack
Polly Slavet
Dr A.W. and Barbara Karchmer*
Betty Dyer
Susan & Michael Brown +

Advocate
Up to $1800
Anonymous x2
Rosalind and Mark Kaplan +
Tatyana Goldwyn +
Boris & Natalya Katz +
Barbara Anatolev +
Lauren Gordon Fisher
Ena & Michael Feinberg
Mrs. Ruth Karp
Laura & Ery Magasanik
Temple Isaiah
Carol Clingan *
Emily Corbato
Beth & Michael Moskowitz
Melinda Harrison and family *
Karen & Bruce Rosner and family

Enthusiast
Up to $500
Anonymous

Glenn Richter
Arthur and Barbara Safran
Fay & Julian Bussgang
Stephanie Kent Flood
Joshua Rubenstein
Marjorie Minkin
Sharon and Elliot Rivo
Laura and Paul London
Debbie Kardon +
Inna Frankel
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Zale Anis +
Susan Shnidman
Rabbi Bernard Mehlman
Galina Zilberstein
Laurie Rosen
Jane Weingarten
David Stern
Lisa Nemeskal
Mary Hochman
Scott & Joanne Karchmer
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<td>Carrie Miner</td>
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Whoever saves a single life...

THEN / 1987
Judy (R) at Freedom Sunday in D.C.,
the largest Soviet Jewry march
in history (250,000)

...it is as if they saved an entire world.
— Talmud

NOW / 2012
Judy (L) visits 90-year-old
Adapt-a-Bubbe, Zelda (R),
in Kirov Rog, Ukraine