

## THE SIBLINK | October 2017

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### FROM THE DESK OF...

Beth K. Shapiro, LCSW-C, JFGH Director of Social Work

Fall is in the air! As the seasons change, we'd like to take a moment to reflect on some of the exciting things going on at JFGH.

Were you able to make it to Alan Silverberg Fun Day? Over 100 JFGH residents, friends and families joined together for an evening of fun, laughs, food and a movie in the park. Our very own JFGH sibling Marian DeAngelo brought her adorable pups Mario and Bella to perform; kosher food truck Brooklyn Sandwich Co. provided delicious edibles; and a dusk viewing of the Lego Batman movie was featured on the lawn. This is an annual event made possible by the generosity of the Silverberg family, and we hope to see you next summer! View our [photo album](#).



JFGH families play a critical role in our ability to support loved ones in independent living. However, the true facilitators of the dignified lives our residents enjoy are our direct support professionals (DSPs). Last month, we celebrated national DSP week with the culmination being a fun day for our most trusted employees. Field games and great food were the highlight of the day. Our DSPs are the heart of our organization. They are accountants, personal chefs, stylists, best friends, house keepers and more. Most importantly, they are dedicated to ensuring that our residents live fulfilling, independent lives to the best of their abilities. Saying thank you is not enough, but it's a start. View photos [here](#).

Finally, I'd like to personally invite you to join us at our 34th Annual Gala featuring Emmy-award winner Rachel Platten. She is sure to ignite the crowd's spirit with her Billboard Hot 100 hit "Fight Song," which has been embraced as an anthem by the disability community. We are honored to present awards to community leaders Chuck Short and Margie & Ronald Glancz. Tickets are available at [our website](#).

Sincerely,

## AGING WITH JFGH

JFGH is aware of the emerging challenge of how best to support individuals in our programs as they age. In 2015 we began exploring potential challenges around aging with the help of a task force. After over a year of dedicated effort, we recognize that this is a long-term effort and the task force became the JFGH Aging Committee. This important committee utilizes JFGH's unique mission to guide its perspective.



One goal of the Aging Committee is to strengthen JFGH's relationship with organizations that focus on aging. In the past year, the committee's activities included focus groups to learn about the needs and concerns of residents and families. We hosted four groups including residents, parents, staff and of course siblings. The committee collaborated with Suburban Hospital and Charles E. Smith Life Communities on a staff training focusing on hospital admissions; and it collected demographic data on residents (no names included) to learn about how many are currently over the age of 50 and the numbers of individuals with various disabilities and diagnoses. This information is helping to guide the committee's continued efforts. More information will be available in the coming months.

## SIBLING SCRIBBLINGS

### Perspective

By: Nick Cibel, brother of JFGH resident Ted

My name is Nicholas Cibel, born on March 10, 1964, exactly four years after my older brother Ted. Ted has been a resident in the Sondra and Howard Bender Home for the last thirty-four years and is an amazingly fit Down-Syndrome adult who has thrived his entire life. I credit much of his success not only to his JFGH support, but to my family for raising him in a loving, often humorous, and especially compassionate home.



Nick and Ted Cibel

Fortunately, Ted has been able to perform most of the basic daily routines of life, enabling us to include him in a plethora of physical activities. He played many different sports throughout his childhood, even competing in the Special Olympics. As with anyone, mental and physical health is critical to a long life span. And in Ted's case, his strong health in both aspects has allowed him to outlive many of his contemporaries.

From my earliest recollections, my parents always guided our family in regards to perspective. If I ever complained, they quickly reminded me of how fortunate and wonderful my life was. It wasn't always easy to see, especially after returning from a physical altercation with some of Ted's bullies, who I never tolerated. Throughout my childhood, I fought literally and figuratively to

protect my brother from all manners of ignorance, but these battles helped me become a more compassionate individual, for which I am eternally grateful.

During my young adult years, I was in charge of the community service club in my high school and volunteered for many events that further taught me invaluable life lessons. I am extremely proud to say that I have passed on these lessons to my children, giving them the perspective they need to appreciate their wonderful lives. All three of them in turn have volunteered throughout their youth and continue to do so as young adults.



Nick and Ted Gibel



Nick, Ted and Dean Gibel

My family is truly blessed to have Ted, and Ted is in turn blessed to be a part of JFGH. His involvement has prolonged his amazing life and given him the platform to continue to thrive. Thank you to all the volunteers, family members and contributors to this exemplary foundation.

*If you have a sibling story you'd like to share, please email [bshapiro@jfg.org](mailto:bshapiro@jfg.org).*

## SIB RESOURCES

Are you on Facebook? Our sibling-only group has had some great discourse around ABLE accounts. Visit the [group](#) and request to join for some great information shared among sibs!

## COMING UP

JEWISH FOUNDATION FOR GROUP HOMES  
34TH ANNUAL GALA

FEATURING

RACHEL PLATTEN

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2017

RECEPTION 5:30 PM PROGRAM & PERFORMANCE 7:00-9:00 PM

THE MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE  
NORTH BETHESDA, MARYLAND

S. ROBERT COHEN AWARDEE

CHUCK SHORT

MELVIN S. COHEN COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDEE

MARGIE AND RONALD GLANCZ

GALA CHAIRS

DEBORAH & STEPHEN ELICK

MARGO & MICHAEL SADOW

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TO REGISTER, VISIT [WWW.JFGH.ORG/EVENTS/GALA/](http://WWW.JFGH.ORG/EVENTS/GALA/)



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