

The Scribe



ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH
AGING SERVICES OF
NORTH AMERICA

SPRING 08

**RESIDENT ARTISTS
DISPLAY THEIR WORK**

Jewish Apartments & Services
RECOVERING FROM FIRE

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On the cover: Marga Kassimir began her work as a photographer in the 1940s, after immigrating to America from Europe. For extra income she would make portraits of children and families. Marga's favorite subjects to photograph are horses and people. She says that her husband also assisted her as a photographer, and they inspired each other's work.

Resident Artists Display Their Life Work

Fine Arts Showcase at Daughters of Sarah

Leiah Bowden, Director of Corporate Communications
Daughters of Sarah Senior Community, Albany, N.Y.

Eleven artists living at Daughters of Sarah Nursing Center exhibited their work at a Fine Arts Showcase and Reception in the Nursing Center on April 22 in Albany, N.Y. The public, as well as family and friends of the residents, was invited.

The artists comprised three fiber artists, one sculptor, one composer, one nationally syndicated cartoonist, one black-and-white photographer and four painters. Some produced their art professionally, some as skilled amateurs. Each artist sat beside the exhibit of his or her work and spoke to interested guests, staff and other residents about their art. Composer Rebecca Richter, 93, played several pieces on the piano, commenting, "I love the Viennese music."

Annette Cohen, 103, began painting in high school. She studied at the Albright Art Gallery in her native Buffalo, N.Y., and at the Albany Institute of History and Art. Bernie Abelson, 81, a retired aerospace technician, has been painting for almost 60 years. He says his sisters



Rebecca Richter, 93, began playing the piano at age 10 on her family's farm in Brainard, Mass. She said, "I was a lonely girl and I turned to music." As an adult, she began to compose, and has since written over 20 pieces for the violin, piano, cello and voice.

inspired him to paint because they made fun of his color blindness as children. Eve Wasser, 101, took up painting after retiring to Hollywood, Fla. in 1970. She has exhibited her oil and acrylic paintings, lithographs and silk screen prints at regional shows. Ruth Strait, 87, a retired mechanical draftsman and employee of the New York State Department of Education, has been sewing since she was six years old. She began making doll clothes and helped her mother with the family sewing. She started to quilt when she retired. John Belcastro, 70, used the name Johnny Bell as a comic book artist in the 1950s for Iger Studios. He specialized in horror comics and adventure strips and also worked on the syndicated strip, "Adventures of Captain Tov." Bill Simpson, who showed his wood, metal and clay works, learned his skill while on board a ship during World War II. A master carpenter on board taught him how to make piano boxes. He also displayed a figure out of ebony, two wooden canes and the piano on top of which he carved his wife's name. Marga Kassimir has been a photographer since immigrating to America in the 1940s.

Guests wandered from one exhibit to another, munching on fresh and steamed vegetables and fresh fruit with dips. Some inquired whether the works were for sale; they were not.

The exhibit was an activity of Daughters of Sarah Nursing Center's Recreation Department. The department develops programs to help the men and women who live in the Nursing Center maintain their sense of self and interest in life through continuing to be meaningfully creative and productive. Guests and staff commented that it was both moving and important that people see the work of those who are no longer able to be creatively productive.

Ernestine Rubin, Bill Simpson's sister-in-law, said, "The arts and crafts show at Daughters of Sarah turned out to be a wonderful revelation! I went out of loyalty to my brother-in-law. He is now unable to continue his art, and I know how much he appreciated the opportunity to share his interests and talent with others. I wasn't prepared for the many other beautiful arts on exhibit created by several other residents. It was such a treat to see their delight in letting others – residents, the staff and

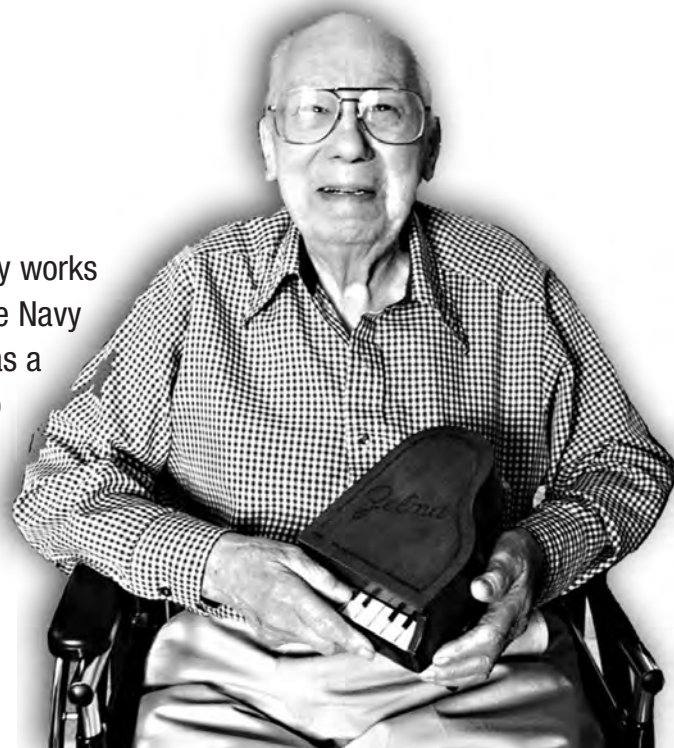
Bill Simpson, who showed his wood, metal and clay works said, "When we were on board (during his service in the Navy during World War II), there was a lot of time. There was a master carpenter on board, and he showed us how to make these piano boxes. I also made a figure out of ebony, and two wooden canes." Mr. Simpson holds the piano on top of which he carved his wife's name.

caregivers, family and friends – get a look into the whole person."

Bambi Kertzman, the daughter of fine artist Bernie Abelson, said, "We tend to forget that people now in a nursing home have had lives before this. I was really stunned at the level of talent that was there, and the diversity. And the way the art was presented was done with such dignity and class: the fabric draped on the display tables, the flowers, the fact that the artists had an opportunity to be there next to what they had created, and that the reception was just beautiful even with the dietary limitations of Passover. It was a way for families to interact with each other with pride in a very joyful situation – most of the time when you have a loved one in a nursing home it's very difficult to share some of the greater times."

“From diverse dining options, to personalized support programs, to creative social programs, we manifest our mission to facilitate moments that make life worth living...”

Mark Koblenz, CEO, said, "The Senior Community does everything it can to provide an environment in which individuals might experience encouragement to pursue, enjoy and shape the textures of their lives. From diverse dining options, to personalized support programs, to creative social programs, we manifest our mission to facilitate moments that make life worth living – and we



continue to challenge ourselves to find new and additional ways to do so within the capabilities of those who live here."

"Age makes us invisible to some extent, and the show made them come alive." Ms. Rubin said, "I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to witness, and talk to many of the participants. I could really feel a connection to them as people with vision with talent, and whose lives have meaning."

Ruth Strait, 87, a retired mechanical draftsman and employee of the New York State Department of Education, has been sewing since she was six years old when she began making doll clothes and helping her mother with the family sewing. She began to quilt when she retired.

Annette Cohen, 103, began painting in high school. She studied at the Albright Art Gallery in her native Buffalo, N.Y., and at the Albany Institute of History and Art.

Bernie Abelson, 81, a retired aerospace technician, has been painting for almost 60 years. He says his sisters inspired him to paint because they made fun of his color blindness as children.



It's an election year – a time when taking action and affecting change are in the hands of the people. Nowhere is that more evident than at Village Shalom in Overland Park, Kan., where assisted living residents have assumed responsibility for running the resident council.

Resident councils are a common feature in long-term care facilities. Much like city councils, they provide a forum for residents to have an active voice in many aspects of their quality-of-life as individuals and as a community. Until recently, the resident council was managed by Village Shalom's director of assisted living, who created the agendas and conducted the monthly meetings. According to Joe Dobson, regional long-term care ombudsman for Johnson County, Kan., more than 75 percent of the resident councils at nursing homes in Kansas are similarly structured, mainly because not

enough residents are able to assume leadership roles.

But at Village Shalom, that is changing. In November 2007, seven assisted living residents organized a meeting to form a self-governed group, says new resident council co-president *pro tempore* Mary Rosenberg. Neither she nor her co-president, Dr. John Kepes, attended that initial meeting, but even in their absence they were chosen to head the group until formal elections are held. It presented both an opportunity for them to shape the new direction of the resident council and a lesson in the importance of showing up at meetings! "I wasn't running for the job," Dr. Kepes admits.

Ms. Rosenberg says, though, that taking a leadership role was nothing new for her. "I'd had a lot of experience. I founded the Jewish Family Services in Ventura,

Calif., and was on the Ventura County Commission for Women. I was a guidance counselor and a sisterhood president."

Likewise, Dr. Kepes draws upon the experience of his career as a physician, which includes 47 years in the pathology department at the University of Kansas Medical Center. In that capacity, he says, "I know the factors that can lead to disease, and I want Village Shalom to be a healthy place for residents to live."

With little to go on besides their own intuition and the encouragement of fellow residents, says Ms. Rosenberg, "We have to figure out what we're doing and why. I brought in all the experience I'd had before." She and Dr. Kepes developed a mission statement for the council and devised an organizational structure to involve as many residents as possible.

They configured the council into two subgroups, Ms. Rosenberg explains: committees, which will handle resident complaints and areas of concern; and projects, which are intended to involve residents in "doing something useful."

The committees address issues such as food, programs and resident services. Having residents voice their opinions on their food choices or daily activities is not new, but expressing those concerns within a "committee" framework gives them added strength, both co-presidents believe.



Dr. John Kepes and Mary Rosenberg are co-presidents pro tempore of the Village Shalom resident council.

Residents Take Initiative in Self-Governing Council

Linda Salvay, Public Relations Coordinator, Village Shalom, Overland Park, Kan.

Power to the People



Dr. John Kepes, left, and Mary Rosenberg, center, preside at a recent resident council meeting, as Janet Shaw, secretary, takes minutes.

"You have to speak as a group," says Ms. Rosenberg. "If you go to complain as an individual, it may not be heard or acted on." Adds Dr. Kepes, "And if you combine rightful praise with the criticism, the administration is more likely to accept it."

Projects include collecting empty pill bottles and used clothing for charitable organizations, knitting afghan squares, writing letters to Israeli and American soldiers, and organizing a resident theatrical and orchestral group. Where did the project ideas come from? "I just made them up," laughs Ms. Rosenberg. "They had to be easy, like the pill bottle collection – it's for Doctors Without Borders. They use the bottles to distribute medicine to people in Third World countries. We certainly have a lot of empty pill bottles around here."

"The next step is to start working on the projects – like writing letters to Israeli soldiers," says Dr. Kepes. "I wrote one that people can use as a sample." The letters are included in care packages containing food, toi-

letries and other personal items. Ms. Rosenberg says that the letters are the things they open first and like the most.

The resident council has been operating in its new format only since the beginning of 2008, but attendance has doubled to nearly 30 residents at each monthly meeting. "We've had an unbelievable response from residents," Ms. Rosenberg remarks. But she hopes this is just the beginning: "People [residents] have to know that life is still going here. They need to get involved instead of just sitting and being an audience to everything. We have a lot of people at Village Shalom with unbelievable backgrounds – people who are able to lead, or develop and carry out a project."

"You have to change the outlook among the residents from being passive to being proactive," she said. The resident council may be just the ticket.



Jewish Apartments & Services Recovering After Fire



Photo courtesy of Larry Machlis, Jewish Apartments & Services

Marsha Goldsmith Kamin, Executive Director, and Peter Wurdock, Marketing Director, Jewish Apartments & Services, Oak Park, Mich.

Tragedy Averted

As I sit and sign 93 security deposit refund checks and look over the names of those who lived with us at Hechtman Jewish Apartments in West Bloomfield, Mich. for so many, many years, I am extremely saddened by the losses and trauma that they have had to endure. It pains me to know that these forwarding addresses are of all of our competitors in the area. Yet, I take solace in the fact that they all survived this ordeal and are now safe in their new homes. I can only hope that the staff in these places are taking good care of them. Yet, I know, it will never be with the amount of love, devotion, compassion and energy that our staff provided them. I wonder how many of them will come home, when the building is rebuilt, ready to welcome them back into the community that they loved so much.

While it was a tragic event in many ways, it was not a tragedy. There were no fatalities. Of the four seniors hospitalized, two were out of the hospital later that night and the other two by the next day. However, the fact that these elderly residents had condensed everything that they treasured in their lives into their one bedroom apartment, their home – where they hoped it would be “their last move” – is indeed sad beyond the reach of my words.

As we review the sequence of events on that challenging day [April 9, 2008], we evacuated our attached building (close to 200 in all) in addition to the one

on fire as a precaution. Carol Rosenberg’s facility, Fleischman Residence for the Elderly, was under a warning that they would also need to be evacuated. Luckily, this was avoided. Since the fire (which is still under investigation, but we know was not deliberate nor the fault of a careless resident) happened in the morning, many residents were still in bed or only half dressed. When we and the fire department got them out, they left literally with the clothes on their backs. Everyone was safely out in one hour! We could not have accomplished this task without the assistance from our sister agencies on the campus and across the street. I have never seen so many wheelchairs used by our staff to assist each and every resident safely to our other building.

Within an hour and a half we had fed them in one of our buildings next door and Carol Rosenberg was leading songs in the dining room with all 200 of the residents. Within a few short hours we had contacted their families (though most were watching it unfold on the news). By nightfall, because we were prepared, everyone had clothes and medication. Each resident was with their family or in another elderly housing facility in the area – nobody was sleeping on a cot next door in the JCC’s social hall. Ninety-one percent of the residents went home with family members that first evening. The others went to one senior living community, together,

with our staff to assist.

We were prepared and we had a great team. We had a disaster preparedness plan and emergency procedures in place that we followed closely. We were actually prepared years before. We had backed up our data off-site. We had taken copies of the resident emergency cards with us as we evacuated. Since this happened during the day, we were able to mobilize the entire staff from our other campus (16 miles away) to come out immediately to assist. Since the fire lasted five hours and was widely covered by the media, we were able to garner immediate community support of so many goods that we needed to obtain pods and two semi trucks to store all of it! Volunteers and staff have manned these pods continuously since the day of the fire to assist the residents in replenishing their households.

voice. The public safety officials kept complimenting our staff for remaining calm, focused and of great assistance, allowing them to do their jobs.

A lesson learned, passed on to the rest of the AJAS members, is that it is important, as part of your standard operating procedure, to have that plan in place. It doesn’t always happen to someone else. It is also important to talk to your residents about renters insurance; it’s very affordable. Out of 93 displaced residents, 60 had it. This has helped us tremendously in dealing with the aftermath. Those with insurance had another means of coping with their losses.

Between the smoke, ash and the crumbling walls, were the unseen and untold acts of bravery and team work both before and after the flames. This is why it’s so amazing to me that now, after the fire, so much

hope remains and the feelings of helplessness are disappearing. Our Federation has been phenomenal in assisting us in raising funds to help our residents move forward. To date, we have raised \$150,000 with another matching grant of \$50,000 in the making.

Our sister agencies from the local area and around the country have come out in support of us in many, many ways. Your words have been extremely comforting. Your encouragement to keep plowing forward, working long, hard hours has been reinforcing! It is gratifying to know that many of you are watching and coaching us to forge ahead, helping us to keep focused on our mission. We have been told by the “experts” that we have only just begun the process of dealing with the aftermath. The list of tasks is daunting and continuing “business as usual” for our other 700 residents living in the additional JAS buildings, is overwhelming.

However, as the days go by, the little catch phrase on our color brochures, as simple as it sounds, is as true of the spirit of our staff and residents; we are much more than a place to live... we are a community. And with all my heart, on behalf of JAS, we thank you all for being part of it. Only in this community and only because of this staff and the support of our network of agencies, could the healing have begun before the fire was even out.



Photo courtesy of Larry Machlis, Jewish Apartments & Services

The fire has affected our entire agency in many ways. However, because we had a plan in place, we managed to avert disaster. Our staff was prepared to do all of the things we hoped we’d never have to do and we achieved them, without a single panic or having to raise our



The Best

Harvey Tillipman, President/CEO

I was sitting with a long-time AJAS member during our 2008 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. when he turned to me and said: "Probably one of the best, if not the best AJAS Annual Conference ever!"

Was I impressed! Coming from a member who has always freely offered me "suggestions and comments," this was a real testament to the hard work of the Conference Planning Committee and our co-chairs, Beth Goldstein and Keith Myers. They planned a conference with many facets and many firsts. New to the conference this year was an awards dinner with entertainment – the famous Capital Steps. The entire evening was a big hit with the more than 300 attendees – the second highest attended conference in recent history.

Also unique to this conference was a focus on advocacy. The Planning Committee included a session on advocacy training and opportunities for attendees to visit their congressional representatives and staff on Capitol Hill in the schedule. Many members have said that the AJAS office was moved to Washington, D.C. for the opportunity to visit legislators. Having our Annual Conference in Washington this year is a fulfillment of that decision.

A new opportunity was created this year for AJAS

Sponsors. In addition to their annual support of the Association, Sponsors were invited to sponsor specific sessions and events during the conference. This gave much greater exposure to those companies and brought in additional revenue.

Another new facet at the conference this year was a display of artwork by residents at AJAS member organizations. Throughout the past year, we have been collecting artwork from residents to potentially display on the cover of the *Journal on Jewish Aging*. We have been so pleased with the number and quality of submissions of artwork that a public display seemed in order. Placed opposite the registration desk, attendees had an opportunity to see photos of the submissions. Each tells a story and reflects the talent and uniqueness of those residing in our AJAS member facilities. There are many talented people residing in our member facilities and a great need to share that talent with others – as they have done throughout their life. We will continue to find venues and outlets for the expression of those talents, particularly as we develop our program for next year's conference.

Wishing everyone a wonderful summer!



Mission Complete

2008 AJAS Annual Conference a Success!

The 2008 AJAS Annual Conference, last March in Washington, D.C. was a huge success. In keeping with the theme, *Capitolizing on Jewish Values: Mission to Action*, attendees took part in sessions that focused on advocacy, development, governance, finance and more. Many also took advantage of the conference's proximity to Capitol Hill and visited with members of congress and their staff. Other highlights included the annual AJAS Awards Dinner & Ceremony, followed by a performance by the Capital Steps, ample networking time and a visit to Charles E. Smith Life Communities, the local AJAS member organization. This conference would not have been possible without co-chairs Beth Goldstein and Keith Myers and the Conference Planning Committee.

Barbra Gold, right, presents the 2008 AJAS Professional Award to Phyllis Erlbaum-Zur, director of admissions and discharge services at Jewish Home and Hospital Life Care System in New York City.





From left: Keith Myers, conference co-chair; Molly Forrest, AJAS board chair; Mark Pelavin, keynote speaker and associate director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; and Beth Goldstein, conference co-chair.



From left: Janice Fleet, president of the River Garden Hebrew Home Board of Directors in Jacksonville, Fla.; Larry Minnix, president/CEO of AAHSA; and Harvey Tillipman, president/CEO of AJAS.



Attendees and exhibitors interact at the Exhibitors Showcase.



Kim Fuson Levy and Debbi Bodie of Cedar Sinai Park in Portland, Ore. mingle with an exhibitor at the Exhibitors Showcase.



CEOs of AJAS member organizations swap stories and ideas during the CEO roundtable session.



The Capital Steps perform at the 2008 AJAS Annual Conference.



Naomi Levine shares some of the tools and strategies she has used throughout her career in fundraising during a keynote presentation.



From left: Ellen Feingold, president/CEO of Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly in Brighton, Mass.; Molly Forrest, CEO of the Los Angeles Jewish Home for the Aging and AJAS board chair; Earl Greinetz, board member at the Los Angeles Jewish Home; Jeff Cohen, CEO of the Kline Galland Center in Seattle; and Ira Shulman, CEO of Kivel Care Center in Phoenix.

Barbra Giles, administrator at Jewish Home & Aging Services in West Bloomfield, Mich., visits with a vendor during the Exhibitors Showcase.



Steve Raichilson presents the 2008 AJAS Humanitarian Award to Richard Schwalberg, administrator at Menorah Park Center for Senior Living in Beachwood, Ohio.



Keynote speaker James E. Orlikoff leads a panel discussion about applying governance theory in real life. Carol Silver Elliott, Keith Myers and Stephen Neff were panelists.



Molly Forrest presents Frank Podietz, president emeritus of the Madlyn & Leonard Abramson Center for Jewish Life, with the Dr. Herbert Shore Award of Honor in recognition of an outstanding career in the field of Jewish aging services.

Photos courtesy of Marty Goetz, River Garden Hebrew Home

AJAS Annual Report

For Fiscal Year Ending October 2007

Association of Jewish Aging Services (AJAS) had another outstanding year with many major accomplishments. Most significant was the renewed enthusiasm for the Association that represents almost 120 Jewish sponsored, non-profit organizations throughout North America. The following are some of the major highlights:

2007 Annual Conference

The 2007 Conference, held in New Orleans, La., was highly successful. In addition to a number of wonderful presentations and speakers, a highlight was the visit to the local AJAS member organization Woldenberg Village. Attendees were riveted by the stories told by staff of their experience and bringing all the residents to safety during hurricane Katrina.

Regional Forums

Two Regional Forums were held. The first, "Governance of Non-Profit Organizations: Issues, Problems & Solutions," was at the Los Angeles Jewish Home for the Aging in Reseda, Calif. More than 30 people attended from across the U.S. and Canada. The second, "NewBridge on the Charles: Developing a Multigenerational Senior Campus," was held at Orchard Cove, Hebrew SeniorLife in Boston, Mass. and was attended by more than 25 AJAS members. Both events culminated with a tour of the facilities.

Symposium

More than 150 professionals from across North America attended the 2007 Spring Symposium on Aging called "Jewish Aging Services: Not the Same as They Used to be." Sessions and discussions focused on the changing expectations of the baby boomers as they age and require services. The symposium was held in New York City in partnership with UJA-Federation of New York.

Webinars

"Beyond the Gala: Creative Fundraising Events," was one of the most successful AJAS Webinars with participation at an all time high. This webinar featured the fundraising events held at Jewish Home & Aging Services in West Bloomfield, Mich.; Jewish Home of San

Francisco; Maimonides Geriatric Center in Montreal, Quebec; Charles T. Sitrin Center in New Harford, N.Y.; and Sholom Community Alliance in St. Louis Park, Minn.

The Scribe

In the past, *The Scribe* was a simple newsletter that brought AJAS members information about activities at member organizations; stories about intriguing staff and fascinating residents; AJAS events and publications; and other information pertinent to the field of Jewish aging services. During the past year *The Scribe* has evolved from a newsletter to a true magazine.

e-Update

The AJAS e-update, an electronic news bulletin to keep members abreast of AJAS events, happenings at member organizations and industry trends, has been transformed into a vibrant communications tool with news about members, programs and events.

Journal on Jewish Aging

Launched in May 2007 as the only peer-reviewed professional journal to focus on issues unique to the Jewish aging services community, the *Journal on Jewish Aging* is distributed to almost 200 professionals and libraries. Additionally, the *Journal on Jewish Aging* is cataloged in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. (ISSN 1938-4904).

Advertising

AJAS earned additional revenue through advertising for the first time in the Association's history which helped to offset the rising costs of printing and postage. In total, AJAS has raised more than \$27,000 through advertising sales, which exceeded printing and postage costs.

Groundbreaking

The newest AJAS publication, *Groundbreaking*, features descriptions of projects currently underway or recently completed at AJAS member organizations, including construction, renovations and strategic plans.

It was first published in winter 2007 as a supplement to *The Scribe*. Now an annual publication, *Groundbreaking* is highly regarded by members and the greater aging services community. It has a circulation of nearly 3,000.

Functional Expenses

Financially, AJAS was again able to end the year with a small but significant amount of income to add to the cash reserve fund. Through the effort of the Board of Directors and Finance Committee, AJAS continues to provide quality programs and services for members while maintaining a balance between income and expense. It is notable that when compared to income sources in 2005 – just two years ago – that membership dues, as a percentage of total income have decreased 9 percent, due to the increase in other revenue sources. During the course of the past year, the functional expenses of the Association were as follows:

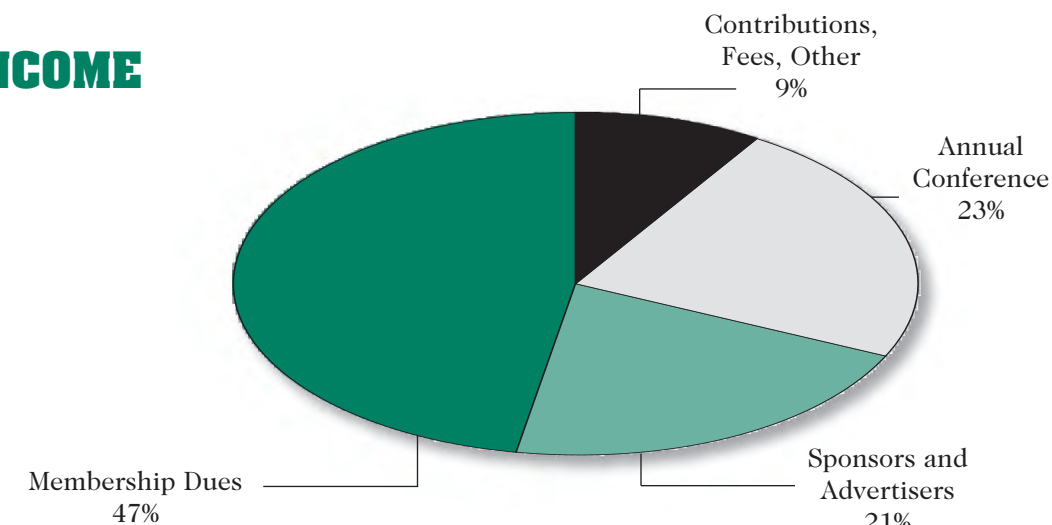
Income

- 47% in 2007 (56% in 2005) of AJAS income is derived from Membership Dues
- 23% in 2007 (22% in 2005) from the Annual Conference registration fees and exhibitors
- 21% in 2007 (20% in 2005) from the companies that sponsor AJAS
- 9% in 2007 (2% in 2005) from Contributions, Fees and other

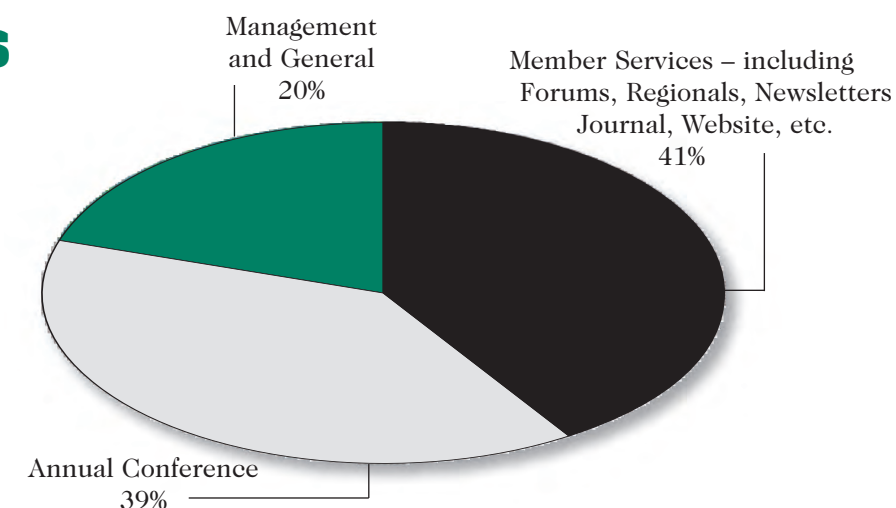
Expense

- 80% of AJAS' expenses are budgeted and expended on the membership of the Association through its programs and services, including:
 - 39% on the Annual Conference
 - 41% on other member services such as the Regional Forums, newsletters, website and others
- 20% is spent on management and general office expenses

2006-2007 INCOME



2006-2007 EXPENSES



Sponsors

Diamond Sponsors



Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors

- Advanced Risk Concepts – ARC
- Aegis Therapies
- Classic Hair Care
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