

The Coachella Valley Beacon

COMPLIMENTARY

IN FOCUS FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

VOL. 5, NO. 1

More than 40,000 readers throughout the Coachella Valley

JANUARY 2016

A long career helping others

By Judith Salkin

Maureen Forman's parents were university music professors and activists dedicated to social justice. They taught her solid principals about respecting the lives of others, and to do all she could to help those in need of compassion and assistance.

"It was inculcated in me from a very early age to take care others," says Forman, executive director of Jewish Family Service (JFS) of the Desert. She chose social work as the way to assist as many in need as possible.

"Most people don't really know what a social worker does," she says. "It's a term that is misused, and misunderstood, because we do so much. [Social workers] are there for every stage of life."

Whether that is counseling a family during a hospital or mental health crisis, helping with housing needs or guiding a family through the maze of assistance organizations, "We do it all," Forman says.

"When you see a scene in a movie when the doctor is talking to the family about end of life care or suicide, it's often a social worker who really is having that has that difficult conversation," she continues.

Understanding the need

Forman spent most of her career in hospital settings for the flexibility in schedule while her children were young. "I loved being a social worker," she says of her career. "Working in a hospital, I was able to be with my children while they needed me, and learned so much about the human condition and all the assistance agencies in the valley."

Forman joined the JFS clinical staff in 2011. "I was hired as a psychotherapist, but shortly after beginning the agency realized that there was a need for a clinical director," she says. With her hospital and management background, Forman became the JFS Clinical director in 2012, and was chosen executive director in 2014.

JFS is for everyone

What many who live in the desert don't realize, and Forman would like to change, is that JFS serves the whole valley and always has.

"Only about 20 percent of our clients are Jewish," she says of the full-service social agency. "Most of our clients are low income and many are bilingual. Our front office staff



Maureen Forman credits her parents for her devotion to social welfare matters.

and many of our therapists are bilingual. Nobody thinks that Catholic Charities only helps Catholics, why would they think JFS is only there for the Jewish community?"

Judaism has a long moral tradition of welcoming the stranger and healing the world and has always extended compassion to all who need it, she says.

Forman advocates for more than the hundreds of clients that come to JFS each month. In a recent *Desert Sun* editorial, Forman talked about a distressed, most likely homeless woman riding a bus who had recently been released from the hospital. What unnerved her was the lack of fulltime housing for the poor elderly. She called on

everyone to be more attentive to those in need. Not at all unusual for a woman who trained as an interfaith minister before converting to Judaism before her marriage.

But JFS has many other programs, such as camperships for kids, counseling services for the Palm Springs Unified School District, the Let's Do Lunch! Program serving more than 150 seniors once a month in five locations, a Holocaust survivors support group and long-term case management services.

"I like to think that JFS is a compassionate community service," she says. "Sometimes

See **HELPING OTHERS**, page 26

INSIDE ...



LEISURE & TRAVEL

Cozumel — beaches, diving, Mayan ruins and more; plus, budget travel to Russia, and how to bid online for hotel rooms

page 19



ARTS & STYLE

Catching up Jim Carter, "Downton Abbey's" consummate butler; plus, Lunafest presents a feast of short films for women.

page 24

FITNESS & HEALTH

4

- ▶ Growing 'organioids' for research
- ▶ How genes affect drug reactions

LAW & MONEY

13

- ▶ Organize your estate documents
- ▶ Best bonds for 2016

ADVERTISER INDEX

26

PLUS BEACON BITS & MORE

More about Maureen Forman

Age: 60

Education: Master's in social work, community mental health, UC Berkeley; Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Previous Positions: Director of Clinical Services, JFS 2012; Social Service Supervisor, Eisenhower Medical

Center, 5 years; Social Service Supervisor, John F Kennedy Hospital, 11 years

Personal: Husband: Married to Dean for 33 years, teaches 5th grade; daughter Nellie Forman is a fourth-year med student at Georgetown University; son Quinn Forman is an accountant at Ernst and Young

Helping others

From page 1

people just can't figure something out by themselves and need someone to walk alongside them until they find a solution."

Financial base

All of this is done on a budget of less than \$2 million a year, with about a third coming from contracts with insurance companies for mental health services, one-third from fundraisers such as One Night Only and the Patron Party and one-third from grantors such as the Jewish Federation of the Desert, Desert Healthcare District, An-

nenberg Foundation, United Way of the Desert, Auen Foundation, Fogelson family, Houston Family Foundation, Kaiser Permanente and SCAN.

"We have a wonderful patron base," she says of the community support of JFS' work. "And, thankfully, we have wonderful grant writers, too."

It is the spirit of "tikkun olam," the Jewish concept that is defined by acts of kindness to repair the world which drew Forman to JFS and continues to inspire her. "I want people to know that JFS is here for the entire valley and that we are here to stay."

JFS of the Desert: jfsdesert.org, (760) 325-4088

Downton Abbey

From page 25

is an unsought bonus, because I've never worked for money or celebrity."

Saying farewell

This "gypsy caravan" approach to his career spared him from dwelling on his imminent departure from "Downton," even while shooting a final scene with a swell of co-stars in the downstairs hall where servants take their meals.

"When we wrapped, the other actors were

getting weepy, and I thought, 'C'mon!' But then the producers came out and thanked them, and I thought, 'We've got to thank the crew, too, because they've been with us every inch of the way.' So I said, 'Guys, all your hard work, your artistry' and suddenly I couldn't speak. I began to weep along with the other actors and all these big tattooed guys on the crew with tears pouring down their faces."

"I genuinely hadn't anticipated that," Carter marvels thoughtfully.

But before this final season is done, "Downton" fans can expect to shed a few tears of their own. — AP

Is Your Roof Ready for the Next Rain?

El Niño is coming! DON'T WAIT TILL IT'S TOO LATE!



RELIABLE ROOFING

Best Quality!
Best Price!
Guaranteed!

Residential • HOAS • Mobile Homes • Commercial

- Shingles
- Torch Down
- Tile Roofs
- Flat Roofs
- Urethane Foam
- Waterproofing
- Sno Coats
- Leak Repairs
- Insurance Work

SINCE 1987

VOTED #1 IN QUALITY

ALL TYPES • NEW ROOFS • RE-ROOFS • REPAIRS

Coachella Valley Roof Specialist for 28 Years
An Established Company You Can Trust

760-568-1673

www.reliableroofingbytgy.com

SAVE \$500 OFF* SAVE

\$500 Off Any New Complete Roof Job using Urethane Foam or 30-40 Year Premium Shingles

\$500 Off Full Maintenance, Tune-ups, or Tile Repairs with Complete Tile Roof Job Offer Expires Soon

Expiration date 2/10/16

*Discounts for Coachella Valley Residents. Minimum job size 2000 sq. ft. Other restrictions apply. Ask for details.

CA Roofing Contractor C39 • Lic #764608

Please patronize our advertisers.

ADVERTISERS IN THIS ISSUE

Accountants

- Bean Counter
- Bookkeeping17

Auto

- Palm Springs Subaru
- Volvo3

Entertainment

- Money Talk Radio20

Events

- Coachella Valley Expo ..16
- Mission Hills at Rancho Mirage7
- Relay for Life12

Financial Services

- Cal Choice Investments
- Albert Boykin18
- Capital Growth Group ...15

Funerals

- Forest Lawn21

Golf

- The First Tee
- Coachella Valley18

Home Repair / Improvement / Services

- Affordable Storage
- Cabinets & Closets ...25
- All Desert4
- All Valley Deck Works ..10
- Reliable Roofing26

Housing

- Caliente Springs27
- Desert Cove Boutique
- Assisted Living8
- Sky Valley12
- K. Hovnanian's Four
- Seasons @Terra Lago ..22

Home Healthcare

- A & A Home Care5, 12
- API Home Care7

Insurance Services

- The Wright Group10

Legal Services

- Nordstrom, Steele, Nicolette & Blythe14

Medical/Health/ Dental

- Eisenhower Medical Center6
- McDonald
- Chiropractic5
- Natural Choice
- Hearing11
- Sunlife Dental7
- Tom Anderson15
- The Vein Doctor6

Nutrition

- Cactus Berry2

Personal Services

- Dan the Computer Man ..13
- Johnnie The Barber25

- Mentor Network11
- Tom the Barber5

Retail

- Desert Golf Car23
- Sen Fit Online Sports
- Apparel4
- Unique Coins13
- U Watch
- Your Back17

Sports

- Pickelball Channel9

Tour & Travel

- AMA Waterways/ Cruise One22
- Cardiff Limousine & Transportation21
- Fountain of Youth
- Spa RV25

Utilities

- Coachella Valley Water District14
- Renova Solar ...back page