

OUR COMMUNITY

Newsletter

February 2024 | Shevat-Adar | 5784

Finding Joy at Federation

Community members gather on Sunday Funday
for activities & programs for all ages.

See more on Page 5.

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF



Jewish Federation
of St. Joseph Valley

Minute With Moshe

Ahoy Matey!

The weekend I wrote this column, I was reading a book my mom of blessed memory gave me called *Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean*. The book is about how a generation of swashbuckling Jews carved out an empire in the New World in their quest for treasure, religious freedom, and revenge.

It was quite the read of an untold tale of Jewish valor and seafaring adventure during the Spanish Inquisition. The 17th century began with Jews outlawed in the New World and most of Europe, and it ended with our freedom.

Fast forward to today, I'm infused with a daring and adventurous buccaneering spirit to address the challenges in our New World. We are at a momentous time for our Jewish community. Our ability to plan our future will test both leadership and community in 2024. Sinai and Temple are discussing their respective futures—and in the coming weeks, I'm hopeful their conversation to discuss options and opportunities will expand to include the Federation.

In our efforts to plan for our future—what story will we tell our children? I hope to say that we ushered in the most significant transformation in our Jewish communal history. And that this achievement was possible by coming together around our shared values and goals.

Those who know me and read my OCN articles know my passion for community-building. I have not kept it a secret; the key to building a thriving ecosystem is to connect our community across all its social and religious boundaries. **That is the UNITY in CommUNITY.**

A common sentiment I frequently hear is that **as Sinai and Temple go, so goes the Federation**. Given that approximately 90% of Fed funding comes from the generous giving of Sinai and Temple members, I understand the basis of this thinking.

This highly concentrated source of donor funding makes the compelling economic case that the Federation needs the support of Sinai and Temple to survive. And by extension, some say Sinai and Temple need one another to survive.



Our three organizations are interconnected—at least from a donor-giving perspective. Organizationally intertwined, Sinai, Temple, and the Federation are mindful of this moment's importance in exploring how best to balance the risks and priorities in shaping our future.

The idea of the Federation and its congregational partners embracing a once-in-a-generation community-building opportunity has sparked my imagination. Over the last year, several tools were developed, from town halls, FED Talks, and a campus vision board, to stimulate needed community conversations.

Since we have the innate power to change things, we owe it to ourselves and our children to comprehensively explore all the options. In this article, I'll highlight three areas of innovation relative to developing a sustainable future characterized by unity, not uniformity.

Innovation One

The first innovation requires breaking old organizational models. New approaches are foundational to our ability to thrive

and survive. This article briefly explores an alternative organizing framework for our Jewish community. I'll use the working project title, the **Center for Jewish Life - South Bend**, to illustrate this new model.

This new collaborative model aims to create new scale and efficiency. In essence, the Center for Jewish Life would be the "Collective," a Jewish consortium with a community-serving focus. The Center model may offer the optimal platform to become a "resource powerhouse" for our diverse Jewish community. A decision on where to locate this Center needs discussion and community agreement. To more firmly root the ideas expressed in this essay, imagine this sanctuary of Jewish life conveniently located on the Federation's 28-acre campus.

A **Stronger Together** model offers several advantages to address the profound pressures mounting in and outside of our community. We're witnessing a dramatic rise in antisemitism which threatens our safety and security to live Jewishly. From a financial and leadership perspective, Sinai, Temple, and Federation are dealing with economic and leadership issues that hinder

our ability to chart a more independent course of action.

To this end, many say, "It's just common sense; today, more than ever, we need to gather, find common ground, and support each other." We would want to craft the Center's mission statement to communicate its multidimensional nature with its social, spiritual, cultural, and religious focus. An exemplary mission statement might be: **To strengthen Jewish life and identity in our community, provide for people in need, and promote, support, and intertwine with the broader Jewish world.**

Innovation Two

The second innovation is to support the Center's operation with a new membership model. This model entails pooling resources in support of this multipurpose Center for Jewish Life. The singular focus on supporting our Jewish diversity may mitigate donor fatigue. A bolder and more aspirational community plan to strengthen Jewish life may spur a greater propensity to give.

It's a given that capital investments will be needed to build the agreed-upon Center infrastructure. From an operations, budgeting, and sustainability perspective, we could see cost-saving benefits in critical areas such as clergy leadership, buildings and grounds, and professional staff. In addition, the Center may realize potential savings related to campus security, programming, insurance, office expenses, dues, and allocations.

Innovation Three

In thinking about this new model, I can't help but wonder what percentage of people in our community who identify as Jewish are not affiliated with a synagogue but have a strong desire for a meaningful connection to their Jewish culture. Therefore, our third innovation ripe for exploration is outreach and recruitment inside and outside our community.

This brings me to my next point. Given the current demographics of Sinai and Temple, donor giving will need a boost. This boost can come from other available supplemental funding sources. Tapping into these funding sources will require fresh thinking. Developing local and regional partnerships around opportunities to expand the playing field will be critical based on our shared values.

In summary, the Center for Jewish Life is a holistic community concept. It's designed to sustain our Jewish community as an oasis for spiritual nourishment, a learning incubator for arts and ideas, and a place to celebrate living Jewishly. The Center will move toward this vision by engaging in four key priority areas:

- Connecting Jews to all facets of Jewish life (spiritual, cultural, educational)
- Caring for the most vulnerable through Jewish Family Services
- Promoting a secure Jewish community and countering antisemitism

- Building bridges between South Bend, Israel, and Jews throughout the Diaspora

As Jews in South Bend, we're called to answer this moment in history with thoughtfulness, seriousness, resolve, creativity, and courage. Working together, we can draw on our deep reservoirs of wisdom, leadership, and community building to unlock our potential in a way never before possible. Our future to achieve unbelievable things will not be a failure of either imagination or the inability to act.

Research on organizational success reveals that **timing is the number one factor for success or failure**. After timing, the team, the execution, and adaptability may matter even more than the idea.

New adventures await! Maybe not on the high seas like the Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean, but right here in South Bend. The time to strengthen Jewish life to ensure a vibrant and sustainable Jewish community for today and the next generation is now.

L'dor V'dor.



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An advertisement for Mishloach Manot gift baskets. The background shows several gift baskets filled with various items like chocolates, nuts, and drinks, wrapped in clear plastic with colorful ribbons. On the right, there is a large blue circular logo with a white menorah symbol inside. The text "Mishloach Manot" is written in large, bold, white letters across the middle. Below the logo, there is a call to action in white text on a dark background: "Looking for the perfect gift basket for Purim? Judy Sassler & the Jewish Federation have you covered! Pre-order Mishloach Manot at TheJewishFed.org/Purim by March 17."

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June 17-July 5, 2024



Jewish Federation
3202 Shalom Way, South Bend



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574-233-1164

Sinai Synagogue

**Virtual Tour of the
Tower of David
Museum in Jerusalem**

**Sunday, February 11,
11:00 AM on Zoom**

RSVP to info@sinaisynagogue.org

Temple Beth-El Sisterhood & The Jewish Museum present

**MOOD OF THE MOMENT:
Gaby Aghion & the house of Chloé**

Sunday, March 10 at 4:00 PM, Zoom

Learn about the little-known Jewish fashion pioneer, Karl Lagerfeld, Stella McCartney, & more started with this brand which altered the course of the global fashion industry. RSVP via email to temple@tbe-sb.org or call (574) 234-4402.

Sunday Funday at the Jewish Federation



At January's Sunday Funday, kids & families encountered animals from Potawatomi Zoo & made beaded flowers.

SUNDAY FUNDAY

SUNDAY, MARCH 3RD, 10:30-2:00 PM AT THE JEWISH FEDERATION



Free to attend | \$15/adult, \$5/child, \$40/family for lunch | Register at TheJewishFed.org/Fun

The Case for Israel: the War of 1948 & the Issue of Refugees

Part 2 in a Multi-Part Series Exploring the Missing Context in the Discourse Around Israel

One of the most controversial aspects of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is the issue of refugees. The false accusation that the creation of Israel was accompanied by “ethnic cleansing” of the local Arab population is one of the pervasive myths that continues to fuel the fires of the conflict and undermines the hopes for peace.

It’s important to remember that in November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly (U.N.) voted to accept a plan for the partition of Palestine into two states: one for the Jews and one for the Arabs.

The Jews accepted the plan. Unfortunately, the Arabs of Palestine (known as the Palestinians) and the Arab countries of the Middle East refused to accept the plan. When Israel declared independence in May 1948, armies of five Arab nations attacked the new Jewish state with the goal of destroying it.

It was that attack that created the tragedy of the Palestinian refugees.

The situation of the Palestinian refugees was essentially a self-inflicted wound. As I wrote in my previous article, “Had the Arabs accepted the 1947 U.N. decision on the partition, there would have never been an Arab-Israeli conflict, and today, the Palestinians would have been celebrating 75 years of independence.”

During the war of 1948, about 700,000 Palestinian Arabs left their homes in what became Israel for three primary reasons;

some because they feared being caught in the middle of the fighting, and others because Arab leaders told them to leave so that they would not be in the way of invading Arab armies.

Finally, other Palestinian Arabs were evacuated by Israeli soldiers. This was especially true of Arab villagers who attacked Israelis traveling on the roads. The example of the battle for Jerusalem is a case study of this factor.

After the U.N. decision on partition in November 1947, the Jewish community of Jerusalem came under siege. In fact, the Jews of Jerusalem were literally on the verge of starvation. That is why the Palmach (a Jewish pre-state militia) had to fight to regain control of the road to Jerusalem so that the Jews in the city would not starve to death.

Unfortunately, to achieve this goal and save the Jews of Jerusalem, the Palmach had no alternative but to evacuate some Arab villages along the road. And all this happened even before Israel declared independence in May 1948.

Many Palestinian refugees moved a few miles to the east in what would become known as the West Bank. Others went to what is now Gaza. Other refugees went to Lebanon and Syria. According to the Armistice Agreement of 1949, after the war, Jordan took control of the West Bank, and Egypt over Gaza.

Here was yet another missed opportunity for peace.

During the 18 years that Egypt and Jordan controlled all of the West Bank and Gaza, a Palestinian state could have been created in those territories. Unfortunately, the Arabs were more interested in pursuing the destruction of Israel than in the creation of a Palestinian state. That deadly obsession led to the events of 1967 that I plan to discuss in Part III.

In the big picture, the accusation of “ethnic cleansing” resulting from the creation of Israel has no basis in reality.

The fact is that during Israel’s 1948 War of Independence, many Palestinian Arabs never left their homes in what soon became Israel. That is why today, the Arab population of Israel numbers over two million, accounting for about 20% of Israel’s population. They are full citizens of Israel and participate in every sector of Israeli society.

It’s also important to remember that the Arab attack on Israel in 1948 created two refugee problems.

Due to the rise of antisemitism in the Arab world that accompanied the creation of Israel, more than 850,000 Jews left their homes in the Middle East and North Africa. Most of them came to Israel.

One example is Iraq’s Jewish community, which numbered over 120,000 in 1948. This ancient Jewish community had lived in Iraq since the Babylonian exile.

The rise of Antisemitism in Iraq began in the 1940s due to the influence of Nazi propaganda. The situation reached a crisis point when the Jewish community of Baghdad became the target of the infamous pogrom called the “Farhud.”

In June 1941, more than 180 Iraqi Jews were murdered in this horrific massacre. After 1941, it became clear to the Jews of Iraq that they had no future in a place they had lived for 2,500 years. After Israel declared independence in 1948, the Jews of Iraq found a safe haven in the new Jewish state even though they had to leave behind all of their wealth and property.

It’s essential to recognize that today, more than half the Jewish population of Israel is comprised of Jews whose families left their homes in the Arab world due to the rise of antisemitism.



A plane filled with Iraqi Jews photographed on arrival at Lod Airport outside Tel Aviv in early 1951 (Teddy Brauner, GPO)



Immigrants from Iraq and Kurdistan exit their plane on arrival in Israel, having flown via Tehran. (Teddy Brauner, GPO)

Today, 75 years after the creation of Israel, false accusations about causes of the Palestinian refugee problem remain one of the main stumbling blocks to peace. These claims have created an unreasonable demand by the Palestinians for a “right of return” to their original homes in what is now Israel.

According to the United Nations, today, there are more than 5.6 million Palestinians who hold the status of refugees.

They include the original refugees of 1948 and their descendants. It’s important to understand that implementing Palestinian demand for the “right of return” would essentially mean the end of Israel as a Jewish state.

In previous plans for peace through the two-state solution (e.g., the Clinton Plan of 2000), the Palestinian refugees of 1948

and their descendants would be able to return to a new Palestinian state in the West Bank or Gaza, but not to Israel.

Most Western analysts typically ignore the fact that Palestinian leaders have rejected generous proposals for peace through the two-state solution because of their insistence on the implementation of the “right of return.”

That is why the Palestinian peace activist Dr. Sari Nusseibeh once famously said, “If we are ever to have peace through the two-state solution, then you can’t have one state for the Palestinians and the other also for the Palestinians.”

This conflict should have ended 75 years ago. Just as Jewish refugees from the Arab world built new lives for themselves in Israel, it’s time for the Palestinians to look to the future, not the past. If they begin to educate their people for peace through the two-state solution, they will create a better life for themselves and their children.



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We Need Everyone’s Participation

As you may be aware, our local Jewish Federation is in the midst of its 2024 Annual Fundraising Campaign, which revolves around the theme “It’s Moments Like This.” *Kehillah, Chesed, Tikkun Olam*—these values weave through our vibrant community.

Last year, our local Jewish Family Services made 1,473 wellness calls and visits, turning everyday moments into impactful connections. We provided \$21,700 in grocery and gasoline assistance, making a critical difference to those in need. Our local Community Relations Committee engaged both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities to create an environment of interfaith understanding and continues to fight antisemitism through its educational programming.

Thank you if you have already pledged to our 2024 Annual Fundraising Campaign! If you haven’t yet, we are reaching out to request your invaluable financial support. Your generous donations serve as the backbone of our mission. They enable us to continue being the central resource for embracing, connecting, and supporting Jews locally and globally.

Ready to cherish every moment? You can make your tax-deductible pledge today by calling (574) 233-1164 or visiting us online at TheJewishFed.org/2024.

2024 Annual Campaign Committee

Terry & Alan Feldbaum, Mona Medow,
Cristyne Porile & Allen Stenberg



The Melting Pot in Israel: Was it a Necessity?

At January's Sunday Funday, I led a discussion about the melting pot in Israel, one of the most controversial ideas in our nation's history. David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, said that different people coming to Israel will go through the melting pot. The question that comes up is: Why did Ben Gurion want to implement this cultural assimilation in Israel?

This metaphor for a diverse society of various peoples with different beliefs or cultural habits implies a goal for becoming a more united society by living side by side and adapting cultural customs together.



How is That Related to Israel?

In a speech presented by Ben Gurion, he said:

“When a Jewish person comes to Israel from Iraq, he comes as an Iraqi Jew, and the emphasis is on Iraq. And when an Iraqi Jew and a Romanian Jew are meeting in the immigrant camps, in the beginning, they can already feel the difference, the distance, and the wall between them.

They cannot talk to one another, and all their behaviors are completely different. For the Romanian Jew, his neighbor is an Iraqi Jew. and for the Iraqi Jew, his neighbor is Romanian. And it's the same for the Yemenite, Persian, or Moroccan Jews.

They are not just a rabble; this was a reunion of tribes that were far away from each other. And if I will be more precise, it's like a collection of tears (like in a shirt) that cannot reunite, unless by bringing them together in the Land of Israel.”

Ben Gurion faced some problems. After Israel declared independence in 1948,

between 650,000 and 1,300,000 people came to Israel in the first eighteen months of the country's existence.

Meanwhile, the country needed people to defend Israel requiring manual labor to build roads, schools, and houses. In addition, Israel also needed farmers and Hebrew teachers.

Were the Jewish People who Lived Outside of Israel Able to Deal with Certain Challenges?

The need for meeting those challenges gave birth to the idea of the *tzabar*, Jewish people born in Israel. “Sabra,” the English nickname came from the sabra cactus, implying that Israelis should be rough and prickly on the outside but sweet and soft on the inside.

The cartoon character, Srulik, became one of Israel's national symbols: a personification of the Israeli people. Created in 1956 by the Israeli cartoonist, Kariel Gardosh, he was a holocaust survivor who came to Israel from Hungary.

Srulik is portrayed as a young adult wearing a bucket hat, khaki pants, and biblical sandals. He was a true Zionist pioneer who loved the land and worked in the fields. He was shown as a brave farmer who, when the duty called, put on his uniform, and went to defend Israel. He was indeed a *tzabar* or sabra.

Characters connected to the personification of a nation are seen as part of the culture, parallel to Uncle Sam in the United States and Marian in France.

Gardosh created Srulik as an antithesis to the antisemitic caricatures always showing up in *Der Stürmer*—a famous Nazi newspaper promoted by Joseph Goebbels (head of Nazi propaganda.)

Srulik, opposed to being a stereotype of a defenseless Jew both evil and weak, was a proud, brave Jew who knew how to fight for his country.

How Does This Relate to Ben Gurion Trying to Implement the Melting pot?

Ben Gurion implemented mandatory military service for all. He developed the Ulpan system for new immigrants to learn Hebrew, and school became mandatory for ages 5 to 18.

How Did This Melting Pot Work Out?

The Israeli melting pot method had significant problems. The cultural past of most immigrants had to be erased as part of the “new model.” Idealistically, minorities in the group would want to become the “new model,” but oftentimes, it was forced upon them.

Israel is the JEWISH state, not just the “Israeli” state and Jewish people are different.

We know that Srulik was supposed to represent the perfect Israeli. But let's try to think who he is based on. Srulik was secular, and he was a pioneer. He liked to work in manual labor and was unafraid to show his Jewish identity. All those qualities are very similar to a specific type of Jewish people.

To understand who Srulik was based on, we must go back about 80 years before 1948. Before the British mandate, the Ottoman Empire ruled in the Land of Israel in 1516-1917.

Jewish people started to make Aliyah (the immigration of the Jews from the diaspora) in the late 1800s. The first Aliyah happened from 1882 to 1903, and the second from 1904 to 1914.

An article published by Dr. Judah Pinsker, “Auto Emancipation,” expressed the idea that the Jewish people could not continue to wait for the non-Jewish people to give them a country. They needed to establish a nation by actively working toward it, understanding that the Jewish people required a country, a Jewish congress that could engage with powerful countries. They needed to raise money to establish a country where everyone felt safe and equal. Pinsker also published articles and ideas after the pogroms in Russia in 1880.

What Were the Problems with This New Stereotype?

The first problem was that the Mizrachi/Sephardic/Yemenite Jews were pushed to the side. They didn't feel that they were expressed in the “new model” of the Israeli Jew, felt like their traditions were being ignored, and that the new Israeli Jew was not like them. They felt more European than Arab.

However, the Jews from the Arab countries weren't alone in that feeling.

For many years, the Jews that who were in Israel before the Holocaust accused the survivors of being sheep led to slaughter by the Nazis, and that they should have fought back.

The survivors were used as an example of “the old” Jew, weak and defenseless. The sabras often didn’t treat the Holocaust survivors as humans who had a story, as people who had been through horrible things. That was why it was believed that we needed to create a newer version of Jewish people.

All of this changed after 1961 with the Adolf Eichmann trial, as more Israelis started to listen to the stories of Holocaust

survivors. That’s when the narrative began to change.

As a result, the finger of blame turned against the Jewish leadership in Israel, suggesting they didn’t do enough to help their fellow brothers and sisters in the Holocaust. It was through the Eichman trial that Israelis learned of heroism and resistance, both inside and outside the concentration camps.

Was the Melting Pot in Israel Good or Bad?

It’s a complicated answer. We saw its good and bad sides. But we need to understand that we

cannot force the melting pot, and if we try to do so, people will resist. However, what I can say is that right now, Israel is a mosaic or a salad bowl if you will. Every piece is good as it is, and together—they are creating something better without canceling each other. We love our differences, and we love our similarities. None of that should disappear.



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New Kitchenette Coming Soon

Our Jewish Federation is incredibly proud to be a community resource for all. Over the 60 years I’ve been a part of the South Bend Jewish community, I’ve seen the Federation embrace our differences and emphasize inclusion, kindness, and respect.

To further this aim that our Federation is for everyone, the Jewish Federation Board of Directors, at their January 17th board meeting, voted to repurpose the art supply room into a non-kosher kitchenette.

The current folding door will separate the new kitchenette from the Youth Lounge located at the far west end of the building.

The purpose of creating this kitchenette is to allow community members to bring food for meetings and events and store cold items and warm food. The kitchenette will generally be open during the day when there are no Federation events and closed when the Federation holds community-wide events under the supervision of our mashgiach. South Bend Kosher will continue to supervise the Federation’s kosher kitchen, but it will not supervise the kitchenette.

The Youth Lounge will become a warm and inviting multipurpose room. This sun-filled area with large windows on three sides is well suited for a café, with tables and chairs. It can be used for small meetings, rentals for small parties, or a place to sit and schmooze. The space will continue to be used for our mahjong players, for Camp Ideal during the summer and winter breaks, and other Fed programming.

Items from the art supply room will be moved to the storage room (originally the coat room.) The new kitchenette will include a refrigerator, freezer, food warmer, microwave, toaster oven, and other appliances as needed. There are cabinets, shelves, and a sink readily available.

We anticipate new ideas for using this repurposed space and invite you to submit suggestions for names and ways to make the new kitchenette and adjacent café/multipurpose room into a friendly and welcoming space. Your donations to support this new initiative are welcomed.

Mara Boettcher

Community Contributor



Existing youth room/café space adjacent to the future kitchenette



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Volunteering at Galilee Medical Center

Dr. Jonathan Beyer, an emergency physician from Michiana, recently traveled to Israel to provide care

Watching the news on and after October 7th, I was struck by emotions that, I am sure, were shared by many who have a close emotional relationship with Israel but live far away. People wanted to help but felt helpless at the same time, watching the death toll rise and the worry about more violence to come.

At first, I did the only thing I figured I could do; I sent a donation to Magen David Adom. As an emergency physician and paramedic, this cause seemed to fit with what I had hoped, to help the injured. If I couldn't do it myself, I would enable those who could.

On October 17th, I received a text from a friend who works with the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley and has ties to Western Galilee. It was a screenshot of someone else's computer with a list of medical specialties. He asked, "Are you one of these?" Emergency medicine was on the list, and I said, "Yes." He asked if I wanted to go to Israel to volunteer as a physician. Without even thinking about it, I responded, "Yes."

By November 11th, I went from sitting at my home in Michigan to boarding a plane to Israel. Pacing of arrangements had been rather quick. In that time, I'd sent Galilee Medical Center (GMC) every ounce of paperwork that I could imagine, including proof of medical licensure, résumés, and my medical school diploma. I anxiously woke up in the middle of the night knowing the time difference in Israel, checking my email, and sending documents back and forth at 3 AM. Suddenly, one night, I received a temporary Israeli medical license—it was real—it was happening; what had I just agreed to?

I had to tell my boss. I'm grateful it was an easy conversation. He told me, "I know you need to do this. Take as much time as you need."

And with that, I was off. I landed at Ben Gurion in the evening. As I walked out of the terminal, the causeway was lined with pictures of the hostages held in Gaza. The reality of the situation hit home as I



Dr. Jonathan Beyer (left) with Asaf Shemesh, a Hungarian/Israeli ER volunteer, in the Galilee Medical Center trauma bay.

realized I was in a war zone. This wasn't like the trips to Israel I had taken in my twenties.

Volunteers from the Jewish Agency met me and got me onto the train to my hotel in Acre. In good Jewish-mother fashion, they produced multiple bags with sandwiches, snacks, and beverages. They asked me every fifteen minutes if I needed more food.

When I got to the hotel full of volunteer physicians, I listened to what I thought was a propeller plane overhead—that's when someone told me, "That's a drone, hopefully, IDF." I wasn't in Kansas anymore.

My first day was the most tense. While exiting the car at Galilee Medical Center, another volunteer ER doctor (an Israeli living in Hungary) pointed out distant rumbles—not thunder. Artillery. My Hebrew, decent as a teenager, apparently didn't age well like fine wine; it was atrocious. I did the world's more abbreviated hospital orientation, getting an ID badge and scrubs and learning where the ER was. In the first few hours, we had two IDF casualties—their truck was hit by a Hezbollah rocket. They were both badly injured, but they had ample help and I simply watched, figuring the next batch of casualties would be mine. Ironically, they never appeared.

Fighting in the north was sporadic and since the evacuations in Northern Israel, the number of patients that GMC saw was

lower than in peacetime. Weirdly quiet, everyone was poised for a catastrophe at any moment. However, people still needed normal medical care, so we all did our best to provide it. For me, this meant teaching ultrasound to the residents and other physicians and seeing patients.

What struck me most about the ER—I think this point needs to be emphasized more than any other—was the multicultural aspect of the staff. GMC's staff is made up of a mix of Jews, Arabs, both Christian and Muslim, and Russian emigres. Most of the residents I taught in the ER were Arab. They had gone to medical school in Europe where they'd learned in English. They took care of patients speaking Hebrew, Arabic, and Russian. The war swirled around us at the ER, and people from multiple religions and ethnicities worked together as a singular spot of light during an otherwise dark month. People in and outside of Israel said, "Jews and Arabs can't work together." While not ignorant of the violence and hatred, I always wanted to point out that I worked with Arabs every day, and we didn't fight; we worked together to teach, learn, and treat patients. Is this going to bring peace to the region? Maybe not, but I hope people can look at this as something that proves that working together is not only possible but happening.

My three weeks in Israel were spent mostly in the ER, but by the third week, we had found work teaching Israeli army

medics and some civilians combat first aid. I traveled as far as the Golan Heights to an evacuated Kibbutz the army had taken over. That was my only exposure to incoming artillery fire, which I think made me more nervous than the IDF medics we taught.

My experience in Israel ended quickly as those three weeks flew by. The generosity and the welcoming spirit of every Israeli I met was overwhelming. I was a visitor; I was going home in a few weeks, yet they always stopped and thanked me for what I was doing. I joked with them that all I was doing was eating (one of the themes of my trip was how aggressively people tried to feed me.)

Israelis felt abandoned by the world. They were attacked, and they seemed to have twenty-four hours of pity from the world before it was quickly followed by condemnation. That people took time

to volunteer is so important to them. I was not the only doctor—over 7,000 healthcare providers applied, and I was told 150 physicians went over. This includes Trauma Surgeons, Anesthesia specialists, and ER volunteers from around the globe who returned to Israel to help. I am very grateful to the Jewish Agency that paid for this, my flight, and my accommodations; without them, I would not have been able to go.

When we left, GMC told us they would be in touch and we're all still waiting. If things get bad up North, if a war with Hezbollah follows this war with Hamas, then we will go back to help again. It's not something any of us want, but it is good to know there is a global mechanism to help get assistance to GMC when they need it.

Dr. Jonathan Beyer

Community Contributor

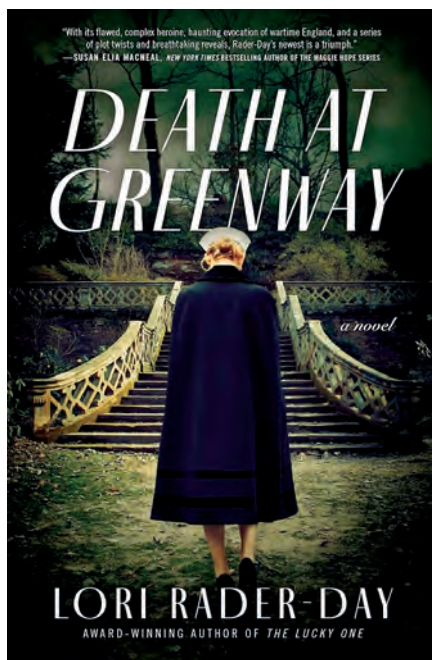
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2024 GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

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Download the application at TheJewishFed.org/Scholarship

Jewish Federation Book Club Reads Death at Greenway by Lori Rader-Day

I met the mystery/crime author Lori Rader-Day at the Midwest Writers Conference in Muncie, Indiana, in July 2023. She agreed to join the Jewish Federation Book Club's session on *Death at Greenway*, her novel that takes place at Agatha Christie's summer home during World War II. Despite its title, this book is not written in the style of a Christie murder mystery, rather, it's an interpretation of what it might have been like for two women hired to take care of ten children under the age of five who had to evacuate their homes without their parents during the London Blitz. Infused with fictional mystery, the novel's authenticity starts with the setting. Lori's three visits to Greenway House made this possible; her first two as a typical tourist got her thinking, and then her third took place during a stay for several nights with her husband. Lori was privy to the few remaining children's names carved inside a hidden cabinet. She became email buddies with "Doreen," now in her 80s, who makes several crucial appearances in the novel.

Prepared with stories and photographs, she explained how the book took ten years to complete and shared eye-opening details about how she came up with her use of "British English" throughout the text.

"I watch lots of British TV and read any British novel from that period. British baking shows, plus, friends who are British. Tapped two of them to look for problems, wrong words, etc. For instance: 'handbag' vs. 'purse.' One was Katrina McPherson from Scotland who trained as a linguist. The other was Anne Cleeves who read it for me and sent it all back! Even the audiobook narrator tweaked one of the sentences."

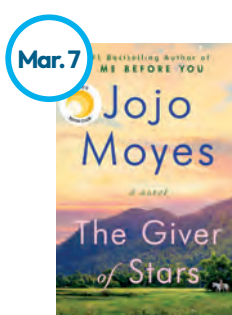
Some of you may know about Anne Cleeves, author of several novels on which the series "Vera," "Shetland," and "The Long Call" are based.

For more information on our discussion, and to read more about Lori's work, check her out at LoriRaderDay.com.

Beth Buechler

Community Contributor

The Jewish Federation Book Club meets via Zoom at 4 PM on the first Thursdays of every month. If you're interested in joining or learning more about future titles on our list, please visit TheJewishFed.org/Books.



Upcoming Books (subject to change)

February 1 - *Sailing at the Edge of Disaster*, by Elizabeth Garber, with author talk on Zoom

March 7 - *The Giver of Stars*, by Jojo Moyes

Our group put together a list of questions for Lori in advance, and she selected her favorites to address during our Zoom video chat. Lori was generous with her time, easy to talk with, and shared extra details about what she learned during her research years of creating *Death at Greenway*.

Community Connections

The Art of Listening

A significant component of Jewish Family Services is speaking with clients and understanding their concerns, worries, and needs. Sometimes, this part of the job requires some “digging” to uncover what has brought the person to our door. I don’t mean hiring an investigator, but instead really hearing what the person is saying.

As a Rabbi, I have understood that there are two types of questions. The first is the one that is seeking information. The second is a statement with a question mark at the end of the sentence. The first person will appreciate the concrete help that comes their way. The second is making a plea for someone to listen.

When I first began working at the Federation, I received a telephone call from someone who didn’t fit our criteria for financial help. But not wanting to leave the conversation there, I spoke with him about the options and possibilities for where he could find the help he needed. Near the end of the conversation, he told me, “Thank you for your help. Nobody has ever taken the time and effort to hear me out.” He emailed me 24 hours later to say he had found a job and thanked me for my time and guidance.

I’ve had clients who want to speak about what is happening in their lives. Some want a roadmap to solving problems, while others



want to be heard needing an understanding ear to listen to them. Once, when speaking with someone venting about something, I stopped the conversation and asked, “Do you want me to offer a solution or just listen?” The person thought and responded, “Just listen.” I was happy to give my full attention without any pressure to offer a solution; the person was delighted knowing I understood what he wanted. It was indeed a win-win situation.

The ability to listen well is only acquired with practice.

The first step to being a good listener is to leave your agenda at the door and be there for the client. While my background will surely inform me, it can’t dictate my answers to someone seeking to be heard. As a Rabbi, I am often expected to answer a particular problem in Jewish law. As the Director of JFS, I serve differently by simply being there with and for the other person. In so doing, I can often enable a client to work through and solve some of the issues that brought the client to me. While I may suggest things and ask questions that may help the person get to the root of the situation, it is never my role to solve the problem. That is for the client to do.

When a person feels “heard,” they feel valued. Imagine what could be accomplished if we could all learn to listen to others as they need to be listened to. For many people, it may be just what the doctor ordered.

Let me know if you agree. I look forward to hearing from you.



Rabbi Fred Nebel

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South Bend & Benton Harbor

If you are a Jewish person in need of help, or if you’d like to lend a hand as a volunteer or support JFS with a financial contribution, please visit

TheJewishFed.org/JFS

What we do -
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FOREVER  LEARNING
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People and Events That Have Influenced Jewish History
with Rabbi Fred Nebel

Explore how different Jewish personalities and world events influenced Jewish History.

Starts Thursday, March 7
10-10:50 AM, for 9 weeks
at the Jewish Federation
Registration opens Feb. 12
at TheJewishFed.org/FLI



Greetings, Our Community Table Readers

It's February—a month bursting with social opportunity: Chinese New Year, National Make-a-Friend Day, Super Bowl Sunday, Valentine's Day, and Mardi Gras—to name a few. And this lucky year, we even have Leap Day because don't we all need just one extra day for random acts of deliciousness?

Food boards are having a moment. We've watched them evolve from cheese boards to dessert boards and to butter boards (not too sure about that one), but one thing I am sure of is that most of us truly appreciate a well-done food board. Glorious mixes and matches of flavor, texture, and color are showcased on oversized plates, boards, or trays. Whether made for two, twenty, or two hundred—the numbers don't matter because, large or small, it always feels a little bit special to be served in such a way. So today, dear readers, I present the entertaining idea of the food board. In particular, for this most fabulous February, a Spanish-themed food board, filled with some of my favorite tried-and-true tapas, assembled board style.

Due to the nature of this column and its space limitations, I am only able to present one of the recipes used on the board at this time, the *Cabra Con Tomate*, a luscious smoked paprika-scented tomato sauce studded with large slices of creamy chevre, baked in the oven to a melty perfection then richly slathered onto a buttery, garlicky slice of toasted baguette. Doesn't that sound heavenly? It's a family favorite. Don't worry; future articles will feature the others until you have the complete set, like a chapter book, but with recipes!

The Spanish board created for this article, in case you wish to find recipes on your own, includes:

- Pan Blistered Shishito Peppers
- *Patatas Bravas* (crispy roasted potato slices with a spicy Bravas sauce and garlic aioli)
- *Queso de Cabra Con Tomate* (soft goat cheese baked in a flavorful tomato sauce served with garlic toast)
- Garlic Mushrooms
- Spanish Tortilla (a potato, onion, and egg torte)
- Marinated Spanish Olives
- Marcona Almonds (toasted and salted to perfection)
- Sangria—(make a big pitcher of cold, fruity, red wine.)

Today's recipe, *Cabra Con Tomate* (the goat cheese—or chèvre—and tomato sauce) is a version based on a tapa I used to love at the Chicago restaurant Emilios's—but a cheater's version. While you can make the base—a tomato sauce from scratch—for the purposes of time and effort, I usually do not. In my cheater's version, I use a bottled, good quality, marinara (without oregano or basil, or any dominant flavorings—simply a plain, basic tomato marinara) and I add some additional spice to make the flavor balance what I'm looking for. Watch for the rest of the recipes on this board in future articles.

I hope you will be inspired to use your imagination with your creations, adding foods you enjoy, removing those you do not, and perhaps changing the nature of the board from Spanish to Italian, or Middle Eastern. Or use a Valentine's, Luxury Picnic, or Movie Night theme.

If it's up to you and only you, you can't go wrong.

And you do not have to make absolutely everything yourself. Purchasing good quality foods to go along with those you prepare is a wonderful way to cut down on labor.

So, invite your neighbor to tea, throw that Super Bowl party, celebrate National Make-a-Friend Day, or do whatever makes you happy, and when you do, how about a board to get that party started? "All aboard" for a social and celebratory February!

Cristyne Porile
Community Contributor

Cabra Con Tomate

(Baked Goat Cheese in Spicy Tomato Sauce)

INGREDIENTS

1 jar (24 ounces) of marinara sauce (high quality like Rao's or Mario Batali)

½ slightly rounded teaspoon of smoked Spanish paprika (or more...do it to taste but start with that amount...you can always add it, but you can't take it out!)

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper or to taste...the sauce should have a slight hint of spice but not be "hot" or spicy in an aggressive way...just warm spice.

1 8-ounce log good quality goat cheese (Chevre)

DIRECTIONS

Place marinara sauce, smoked paprika, and cayenne pepper in a small saucepan. Heat on low and simmer for 20 minutes to cook the fresh tomato flavor out of the sauce and let the spice flavors develop.

Remove from heat and place in an attractive, oven-proof serving dish/ bowl. Place goat cheese in the dish on top of the sauce so that the sauce comes about ¾ of the way up the sides of the cheese but does not entirely cover it.

Cover dish with foil and place in a warm 325-350 degrees Fahrenheit oven and bake for 20-30 minutes until cheese is warm.

Serve warm with thin slices of garlic-flavored, buttered toasted baguettes.

Visit TheJewishFed.org/Recipes for my toasted french baguette recipe.

B'yachad—Togetherness

We can accomplish so much more together.

My vision for 2025 sets forth a renewal of our community as a welcoming, strong, stable, inclusive, and supportive ecosystem for Jewish life. The vision speaks to the idea that our Jewish community is knitted integrally together, where pluralism is a value rooted in Jewish ideas and tradition.

What do you think about the idea of an inviting and irresistible Center for Jewish Life described in my *Ahoy Matey* article? This concept is one of several options that may contribute to our local ability to **adapt and thrive** as a Jewish community in the 21st century. South Bend will be a Jewish community known for its scope and depth of programs—a magnet for young Jewish people and families as a model pluralistic community, a voice for Israel, a leader in interfaith work, and a community with a Jewish heart and soul.

From the beginning, humans have depended on community for survival. Today, the South Bend Jewish evolution continues as we forge new connections and embrace community. In examining viable future scenarios, the Center for Jewish Life offers a fresh and innovative paradigm to propel our community forward.

As a beacon of light, the Center's purpose will be to illuminate our future with nourishing, vibrant relationships, culture, art, music, **and personal and community spiritual rejuvenation**. After all, being Jewish is a team sport; you can't play it alone. When you think about it, every part of our structure, culture, and tradition requires **B'yachad—togetherness**. We pray in a minyan, a gathering of at least ten others. We mourn together in Shiva. We even come together to support each other in times of need, as we did at our recent Concert for Israel and Stand in Solidarity with Israel events.

As we envision our future, let's embody the Jewish and Midwestern values we hold in high esteem to guide our community transformation. The essential ingredients in our Midwest Jewish Michiana melting pot are: hard work, caring for the community, a sense of humility, close family ties, doing what is right.

Knowing that we are currently deeply enmeshed in our organizational silos, it

may be radical to say the transformation to a vibrant Center for Jewish Life requires rethinking the membership model. We're familiar with the old economic model of paying synagogue membership dues for services that became popular in the 20th century.

However, if we are to champion a new pluralistic community, a new, more eclectic funding model to support this campus concept for Jewish life will need to be developed. A creative, multifaceted revenue stream could encompass philanthropic giving, fees for service, programming revenue, special fundraising appeals, grants, and endowments.

In the final analysis, a more holistic Jewish community that sustains and encourages journeys that leave no one behind requires fresh and innovative thinking.

Our success in building this holistic model will drive the value creation of the Center. The measure of success of this joint enterprise is our ability to create points of access into Jewish life that effectively address individual needs and preferences.

I love the power of this idea because it enables us to reimagine our South Bend "Jewish" brand, its purpose, and how we deliver a personalized experience to cultivate community engagement.

The new thinking around the Center rekindles enduring and cherished values, such as the biblical account of supporting the community. ***Each shall give a half-shekel*** (Exodus 30.13). The beauty of the biblical model is that everyone in the community contributes.

With broad support and "skin in the game," the leadership team will be responsible for stretching our dollar through operating efficiencies.

Finally, the Center for Jewish Life - South Bend will need to attract and retain young Jewish people and families in the area by developing a comprehensive recruiting plan. We'd do well to take a page out of the recruiting playbook of our growing Torah-based community. To view the recruitment video ***Why South Bend***, please visit SBTorahLife.com.

The Center offers many amenities for engagement through its community room, picnic pavilion, playground, ball field, walking trails, low ropes course, and more. As always, confidential assistance from Jewish Family Services is available to all.

The importance of feeling welcome is rooted in a core value of Judaism expressed in the very first chapter of the Torah. The Center's heartbeat of kindness and hospitality is the mission's lifeblood. **Human empathy is vital to our goals and success** as it requires a mindful focus on the needs of others.

May we have the strength to create a community of welcome. The mitzvah of welcoming guests, or *hachnasat orchim*, is not just about inviting people in but also making everyone on our campus feel honored, relaxed, and at home.

Moshe Kruger

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Members of the Michiana Jewish community, alongside friends from the broader community, gather together to celebrate the first night of Chanukah on Dec. 7, 2023.

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**Did we miss your birthday? Or
mistakenly list your name?
Call us at (574) 233-1164.**

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BIRTHDAYS IN FEBRUARY

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**Happy belated birthday
to Lawrence Rosenberg
on November 5th**

FEBRUARY 2024

SHEVAT-ADAR I 5784

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SHA
				1 22 SHEVAT	2 23 SHEVAT 5:43 PM 	3 24 SHEVAT YITRO 6:45 PM 
4 25 SHEVAT SUNDAY FUNDAY 10:30 AM-2:00 PM	5 26 SHEVAT MAHJONG 1:00 PM	6 27 SHEVAT	7 28 SHEVAT MAHJONG 1:00 PM	8 29 SHEVAT	9 30 SHEVAT ROSH CHODESH 5:52 PM 	10 1 ADAR I MISHPATIM 6:54 PM 
11 2 ADAR I	12 3 ADAR I MAHJONG 1:00 PM	13 4 ADAR I	14 5 ADAR I MAHJONG 1:00 PM DATE NIGHT 6:00 PM	15 6 ADAR I	16 7 ADAR I 6:01 PM 	17 8 ADAR I TERUMAH 7:02 PM 
18 9 ADAR I SIMON FOUNDATION DINNER/MOVIE 3:00 PM	19 10 ADAR I MAHJONG 1:00 PM	20 11 ADAR I	21 12 ADAR I MAHJONG 1:00 PM CHALLAH BAKE 6:00 PM	22 13 ADAR I	23 14 ADAR I PURIM KATAN 6:09 PM 	24 15 ADAR I TETZAVEH 7:11 PM 
25 16 ADAR I	26 17 ADAR I MAHJONG 1:00 PM	27 18 ADAR I	28 19 ADAR I MAHJONG 1:00 PM	29 20 ADAR I		



Kosher Date Night
 A kosher fine dining experience meticulously crafted by Judy Sassler
Wednesday, February 14 at 6:00 PM
 at the Jewish Federation
 \$60/couple, w/ pareve/chalav yisrael options





Challah Bake
 Open to the entire community!
Wednesday, February 21, 6:00 PM
 \$8/adult, \$2/child (12 & under) - includes pasta dinner
 Register at TheJewishFed.org/Challah by Feb. 19

