

OUR COMMUNITY Newsletter

September 2023 | Elul 5783 - Tishri 5784



Jewish Federation
OF ST. JOSEPH VALLEY

Making waves in the New Year

Jews & Canoes ushered in the end of summer and now we're making a splash with new staff announcements and exciting new programs! Plus, we say *lehitraot* to Shirlee & Dan!



Minute With Moshe

The only constant is change

Here at the Federation, we're having our fair share of change and renewal.

To illustrate this point, many of you know that Dan Ravitch, Director of Camp Ideal & Programming, and Shirlee Greenwald, Director of Israel Programming, are leaving after what can only be called an amazing and almost magical three-year stint at the Federation. It's time for them to spread their wings and find that next opportunity for growth. We thank them for their dedication, passion, and ability to make a difference in people's lives. To this end, they were effective in their efforts to create new points of entry into Jewish life in Michiana. On behalf of our entire community, we wish Dan and Shirlee continued success in all their endeavors.

Jon Ravitch, Facilities Associate, also gave notice and his departure coincided with the conclusion of Camp Ideal. We thank Jon for his service and wish him well. With three teammates out of nine leaving our small but mighty professional staff, the Fed will leverage this opportunity to optimize our staffing and programming operations.

The mission impact and financial sustainability of the Federation brings three interrelated areas into sharp focus. These three areas include:

1. Reshuffling the talent deck to maximize our unique strengths and gifts
2. Focusing on what matters the most to effectively and efficiently use our limited resources; and
3. Leveraging community partnerships to create actionable opportunities within the Vision 2025 framework, a three-year community-building plan based on:
 - K'lal Yisrael – increasing commUNITY
 - Bayit Chazak – strengthening community impact and sustainability
 - Kehila Conversations – purposeful community talks

This article highlights the steps the Federation is undertaking in this season of change.

1. Our search for a Director of Programming continues as our efforts to date have not produced qualified

candidates we'd like to hire. In the meantime, I'll serve as the interim Programming Director.

2. Our new shaliach Omer Karavani is arriving in South Bend on September 14 to fill our Israel Program position.
3. Judy Sassler, best known for her "Ooh La La" culinary creations, has been promoted to Program Associate from her role as Administrative Assistant to assist in our programming efforts.
4. Elliot Marino was hired last month to fill the Administrative Assistant position. Please see his bio on page 7.
5. We also hired James Whitaker as our new Facilities Associate. James started August 10 and is doing a super job putting the Fed House back in order after a busy summer of Camp Ideal and disarray resulting from installing our new HVAC system.
6. Bob Feferman will continue in his indispensable and multifaceted outreach role as Director of Community Relations. The broad bandwidth of his duties also includes supervising the Shlichut Program, coordinating the Holocaust Education Speakers Bureau, assisting in community security matters, and working closely with our Partnership2Gether colleagues.
7. Steve Lotter, Director of Community Engagement, will continue to give his midas touch to everything we do at the Federation -- think OCN, Weekly Updates, website, tech & Zoom guru, photographer, program support, campaign support, and community building.
8. Rabbi Nebel will continue his duties as Director of Jewish Family Services and as a mashgiach for our Federation's kosher kitchen. In addition, Rabbi will continue with his successful adult education classes via Lunch & Learns and through Forever Learning.
9. Dan Cossman is our jack of all trades. Dan is a gentleman who works quietly behind the scenes—a fixer in the most positive sense who solves problems and takes care of everything. He was promoted to Manager of Operations in 2021. In this role, Dan's expanded responsibilities included a myriad of details in overseeing the dual

functions of facilities management and accounting. Dan tells me he is the future of the Federation and I see opportunities for his continued growth.



In short, I have an extraordinary team. Every day it is a great privilege to work with these remarkable individuals. We are team oriented. We care about the Federation and continue to promote a culture where we can do our best work. And we are passionate about our Jewish community and work mightily for its health and well-being.

You will not find a more dedicated group of individuals. We owe them a debt of gratitude. And in saying this, I encourage you to show these fine people our deep appreciation whenever possible.

Reshuffling the talent deck is only one of three ways the Fed will optimize staff and programming in the coming year. The second approach entails looking closely at where we can cost-effectively use contract hires as part of our extended team. A good example of a programming opportunity to harness the efficiencies of an independent contractor includes the Michiana Jewish Film Festival. In our 14th season of the festival, I'm excited to announce that Sheri Alpert will again serve as our festival director. Other potential programs where it would be advantageous to use contract hires include the annual Purim Carnival and our larger catered events.

The third element in the optimization plan is to work closely with our community partners both inside and outside of our Jewish community when it comes to programming. We have excellent resources in the community at our disposal. The goal in this third area of focus will be to tap into and promote these valued partnerships, and in doing so, raise the excellence of our programming bar.

Examples of recent programming partnerships include:

- Discovery Middle School: Yom Hashoah
- Fine Arts Committee: Out of the Narrows and Andy Sweet's South Beach Art Exhibitions
- Forever Learning: Bird's Eye View of Jewish History with Rabbi Nebel
- Michiana Jewish Historical Society: BBYO Reunion Kick-off
- NEXTGen: Dinner & a Movie @ Michiana Jewish Film Festival, South Bend Cubs Game, and Nature Hike at Potato Creek
- Temple's Sisterhood: Charles Troy presents "The Creation of West Side Story"
- Simon Foundation: A Conversation with Letty Cottin Pogrebin
- Sliding Dors: A Twist of Fate with Karen Perna
- South Bend Medical Foundation: Community Blood Drive
- South Bend Symphony-to-Go: Mother's Day Brunch & Concert
- Rabbi Kuppel Lindow: Ethics of Our Fathers
- Unity Garden: Garden Club

The Federation's overriding objective is to create Jewish spaces to offer more

relevant programs at the community level. In other words, can the Fed be a catalyst to develop Jewish spaces to support what is authentically meaningful. I call this personal meaning-making.

Jewish spaces with authentic, meaningful content connect us to the second objective in Vision 2025 of Bayit Chazak that I noted above. Programming content is the heartbeat of our Federation. Here is where we must excel. Our best efforts are needed to offer relatable information that entertains and educates our community in a way that helps individuals and families form strong and loyal connections with Jewish life.

I recently read an article by Betsy Stone, Ph.D. and Alan Halpern that caught my attention. They wrote, "We believe that modern American Jews choose Jewish identity, affiliation, and behaviors because they find meaning. In fact, meaning-making may be at the root of Jewish connection — knowing that our institutions must help individuals make meaning through Jewish thought and action to remain viable as organizations. This is what keeps Judaism compelling."

Another word for optimization is creative adaptation. Jewish practice is full of creative adaptations. We have seen Jewish practice and thought evolve over the centuries with the changes that followed the destruction of the Temple and

at other perilous or opportune moments throughout our history.

Now it's time for us to seize the moment to reimagine a vibrant and sustainable Jewish future. Do we have the will, the chutzpah, and creativity to come TOGETHER to create spaces where meaning-making can occur, whether it is:

- Affiliation-based with one of the mainstream platforms in Judaism
- Culturally-based because Jewish identity matters
- Or simply being a part of the power of the Jewish story and renewing it in our time

All three approaches have the power to connect us to something greater than ourselves. As we enter the new year may each of us hear our own personal clarion call wherever we are in our lives, whatever level our Jewish knowledge and sense of Jewish identity. Being committed to something greater than ourselves is the "Federation way." It means we have a purpose, mission, and a commitment to being partners in our communal prosperity.

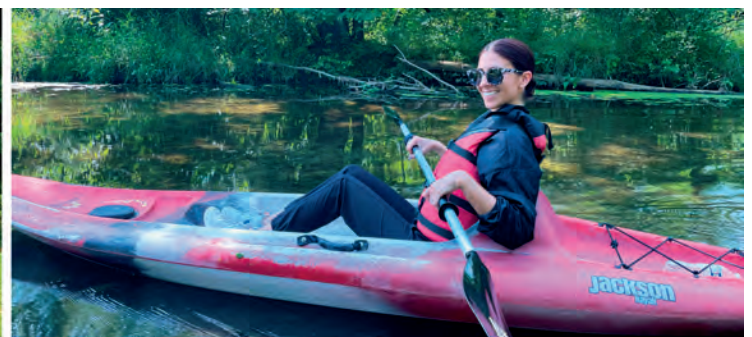


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JEWES
& Canoes



B'TZELEM Jewish Family Services

WHAT WE DO

We serve Jewish individuals and their families within the larger community by providing social services, referrals and educational programming.

WHAT WE CAN HELP WITH JFS FOOD PANTRY

Assistance through providing food and gas cards.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Limited funds for unexpected financial needs in the form of interest-free loans or gifts, following an application process.

ASSESSMENT & REFERRAL SERVICES

Jewish Family Service provides case management services to individuals experiencing life transitions, emergency situations, and more.

WELLNESS CHECKS & SENIOR SERVICES

To connect with older adults and assess basic needs as well as provide a friendly point of contact and assistance with necessities.

TRANSPORTATION

Individual rides to medical and social service appointments.

SHIP NAVIGATION FOR MEDICARE

Trained staff provide state health insurance program advice.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Volunteer to give back and help others in the community.

CONFIDENTIALITY WITHIN JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

The trust between our clients and JFS is the basis for our success. All transactions and discussions are protected by the highest professional ethical standards of client confidentiality.

COACHING

Community Connections

Changing the paradigm

Comedy acts must excel at many things to keep an audience's interest. Relevance, timing, intonation and edginess are all the moving pieces that decide whether the act will be a success. The only way for a comedian to find success is to constantly reinvent and readjust the act.

Truthfully, the same can be said for every profession and way of life. If we allow any part of our life to remain static, it falls into the trap of becoming stale. When it becomes stale, it is relegated to the trash heap of history.

Imagine being a teacher in the classroom. It is your 15th year, and you use the same lesson plan you used in year one. What happens? The students sense the teacher's lack of excitement and, like sharks sensing blood in the water, that the teacher is about to be eaten up. The teacher blames behavioral problems on the students, maintaining that these lesson plans are tried and true, and this cannot be at fault. Therefore, it must be the upbringing of the students and social media. While recycling lesson plans is much less time-consuming, I'm reminded of the Mishna in Pirkei Avot (Ethics of our Fathers) that states: "Be deliberate in judgment." The Rabbis explain that when a case is brought before you and it seems to be like a case that was adjudicated by you on multiple occasions, even so, view it as if it is the first time. The Mishna is teaching us that nothing stays the same and we must view everything as if it is new.

Throughout Deuteronomy, Moshe says, "Today you have received the Torah." In reality, the Jews received it 40 years earlier. How can Moshe say "Today?" It teaches us that in every generation and every day, we must view the Torah as if we are standing at Mt. Sinai and receiving Hashem's special gift. As opposed to seeing it as an ancient document, the Torah becomes much more special and valuable to us. It is not stale, but rather a vibrant living document.

Now, imagine, if we take this philosophy and let it permeate the rest of our life. As a teacher, I walk in energized to the classroom with a palatable excitement about what I'm about to teach. The students sense the energy and respond positively, feeling energized by the ambience. They know that what is about to be imparted is important and act accordingly.

GIVE THE GIFT OF A SWEET NEW YEAR



**HELP FILL OUR APPLE TREE
WITH YOUR DONATION TO
JFS VIRTUAL FOOD PANTRY**

Another scenario: I'm sitting in a meeting and hear the same problems and concerns that I heard last time. I feel that nothing has evolved. The paradigm is the same, time after time. The sense of frustration of feeling that all is lost is bubbling to the top. As Winnie the Pooh's friend Eeyore said, "Oh, what's the use?" Yet, start the meeting with the accomplishments since last time and the air is filled with hope of change and growth. It is filled with a crispness and understanding that problems and difficulties can be overcome when seen through a different lens.

Or, one is unemployed and has signed up for all of the job boards. Multiple applications have been submitted online. Nothing seems to work. You find the book, *What Color is your Parachute?* and you discover a whole new way to find gainful employment, which totally changes the paradigm that you presently use. You feel invigorated, knowing that the best is yet to come.

Really, it is all about changing the paradigm in one's mind. Whether looking for a job, profession, partner, community, etc., if one has a positive attitude and continues to see things as new and relevant, malleable, and solvable, nothing becomes impossible. It just becomes a matter of finding a solution. Should one fail in the first or even 15th attempt, it doesn't mean you should quit, but rather, move on with the same excitement as if this were the first time, just as Moshe instructed us as to how to view the Torah and its instructions!

Rosh Hashanah is nearly here. We are about to have our annual coronation of Hashem as our King. We can enter feeling "same old, same old," or enter like it is our first time and look forward to the pomp

and circumstance that this time of year demands. We can reflect on where we came from and how things have evolved and use that energy to accomplish even more.

Last month, I announced our annual Rosh Hashanah Appeal, in which we are trying to raise \$6000 for our Virtual Food Pantry. As stated, my dream is to have automatic monthly donations that will maintain the funding of the Pantry. I am excited by the generosity that I continually see and, with your continued desire to partner with me to ensure the



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financial stability of our Pantry Program continues, feel confident that we will hit our immediate goal and long-term dream.

On behalf of Jewish Family Services and myself, I pray that we all have a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. May we all be written and inscribed for a good and sweet year.



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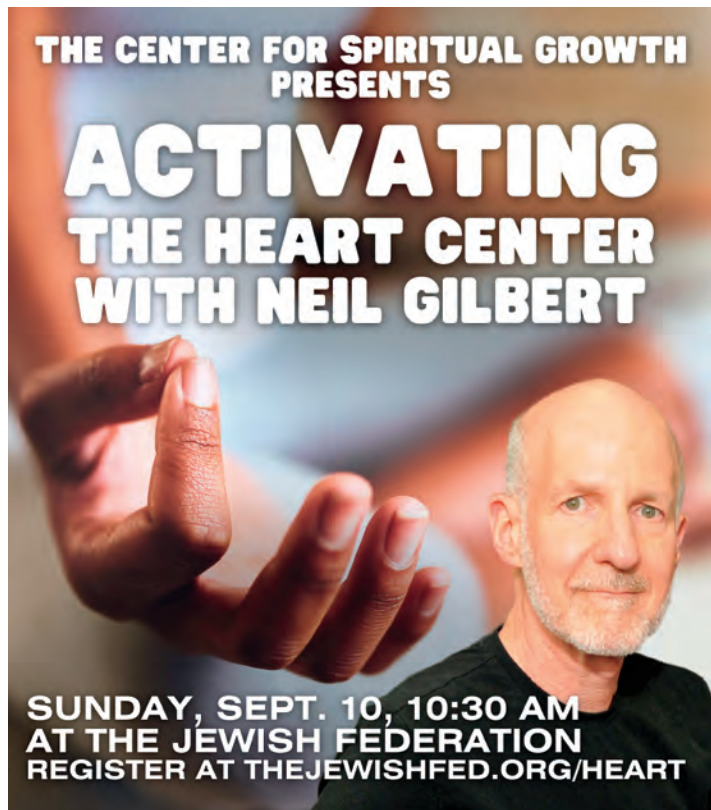
**FOREVER FLU LEARNING
INSTITUTE**

**BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF
JEWISH HISTORY**

SEPT. 14 - NOV. 16
10:00-10:50 AM
AT THE JEWISH FEDERATION
WITH RABBI FRED NEBEL

Continue our journey through Jewish history, beginning around the year 1000 C.E.
Suggested text - *Idiot's Guide to Jewish History* by Benjamin Blech

**REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 11
AT FLI.COURSESTORM.COM**



**THE CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH
PRESENTS**

**ACTIVATING
THE HEART CENTER
WITH NEIL GILBERT**

**SUNDAY, SEPT. 10, 10:30 AM
AT THE JEWISH FEDERATION
REGISTER AT THEJEWISHFED.ORG/HEART**

Dear Members of the Greater South Bend Jewish Community:

As we approach the High Holy Days, the Midwest Torah Center will be printing a Sefer HaZikaron, Book of Remembrance, for the upcoming Yizkor services. Please join us in honoring your late loved ones by inscribing their names in our Yizkor Pamphlet which will be printed and distributed for the Yizkor Services. We will be holding a special Yizkor service and all names submitted will be read out loud. We at the Midwest Torah Center, look forward to your attendance or participation in our new endeavor. Yizkor will be recited four times per year in conjunction with the appropriate times and holidays; Yom Kippur, Succos, Pesach, and Shavuot. The cost will be \$18/name to have the names of your loved ones included in the pamphlet. All submissions must be in and paid no later than SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2023 to enable printing.

Kesiva v'Chasima Tova!



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South Bend, IN 46614
Rabbi Elie Ginsparg

Make checks payable to
Midwest Torah Center
or email the following to
Office@MidwestTorah.org:

Your Name
E-Mail Address
Names to be printed

The Jewish Women's Endowment Fund makes an impact

The Jewish Women's Endowment Fund (JWEF) of the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley was founded in 2001 as a fund run by women interested in proactive and progressive philanthropy. We support programs and services of nonprofit organizations designed to improve the lives of women and children both locally and globally.

The attraction of a women's fund like the JWEF is that donors can make decisions about the allocation of their charitable dollars. Donating as a group often allows us to make a larger impact than an individual donation.

Since 2003, JWEF has awarded over 180 grants that have supported equipment for special needs children, skill training for underprivileged women, CPR training for grade schoolers, and gardens in poverty areas. Over the years, grants have been awarded to local congregations, the Federation, local Jewish organizations, many local non-profit organizations and to Israeli and global groups. For JWEF members, it is rewarding to be able to help to improve the lives of women and children around the world in the name of local Jewish women!

From a group of 15 founding members,

we grew to over 45 members. Annually, we solicit grant applications and select the grantees. We meet once annually to vote on our selections. It's simple, it is not time consuming, but it feels so good to provide direct help to those in need!

This year we will give grants for individuals with special needs, who need medical intervention, have experienced food insecurity, poverty, need protection from violence, need books, or are immigrants.

Contact Mara Boettcher, 574-360-1110 or mara.boettcher.18@gmail.com for more information.



Children from the 3 R's Summer Youth Academy of Kingdom Life Christian Cathedral South Bend were excited to receive new books donated by JWEF.



Pastor Tina Patton shares a thank you card with Mara Boettcher and Marzy Bauer of the JWEF.

ROSH HASHANAH
APPLE PICKING

SEPT. 10
10 AM

WITH A SPECIAL HOLIDAY SHI'SHUK FROM 3:30-4:30 PM

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Welcome new staff at the Jewish Federation

Elliot Marino joins the team as our Front Desk Administrative Assistant

Elliot was born and raised here in South Bend. After graduating high school, he worked for various locally owned businesses in the area. Elliot is 23, and a caretaker of his two beloved cats.

In his free time, Elliot enjoys spending time with friends, outdoor activities, playing retro video games, and listening to music. He also loves creating visual art such as photography, drawing, and sculpture.

Elliot is excited to join the team and get involved in the community.



James Whitaker is our Facilities Associate, maintaining our building & grounds

James is an expert craftsman and master of many skills.

He was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois and started his career as a machinist. After finding that the factory life wasn't for him, he became a general contractor in 1981 and has built homes and overseen construction projects ever since.

When he's not busy building and doing, James enjoys being outdoors, fishing and spending time with Peanut, his rescued Jack Russell Terrier.

James is eager to put his many talents to good use here at the Jewish Federation.

Please introduce yourself to Elliot & James the next time you're in!

The Jewish Federation Book Club reads *The Book of Lost Names* by Kristin Hamel

Despite excellent reviews, our group felt *The Book of Lost Names* is really a book of missed opportunities. The title gave us expectations for at least one child whose true identity might be revealed later in life. Instead, we got a YA (Young Adult) novel with the Holocaust as a backdrop for romance. Plus, we got a predictable traitor. Another grievance was that Eva, the main character, and her mother, forced readers to endure a repetitive family dynamic of ignorance and miscommunication that never satisfactorily changed.

However, in the novel's defense, we listed a few positive aspects: the endearing relationship between Eva and her father, the author's well-researched descriptions of French countryside setting, detailed information on performing forgery (including erasures), and admirable members of the French Resistance such as Rémy, Père Clément, and Genevieve.

If you're looking for a tame introduction to Nazi atrocities—*The Book of Lost Names* may do, and this story might have the power to make you cry. However, much of our discussion revolved around other WWII/Resistance literature more worthy of our time. These are examples we highly recommend and have covered here in earlier years: *All the Light We Cannot See*, by Anthony Doerr, *The Nightingale*, by Kristin Hannah, and *The Paris Architect*, by Charles Belfoure.

The Jewish Federation Book Club meets via Zoom at 4:00 PM on the first Thursdays of every month. Visit [OurCommunityNewsletter.org/s/book-club](https://www.jewishfederation.org/s/book-club) to see what's next!

September Programs

Lehitraot Dan & Shirlee (Farewell Party)
Thursday, September 7 at 7:00 PM

Rosh Hashanah Apple Picking
Sunday, September 10 at 10:00 AM

Activating the Heart Center w/ Neil Gilbert
Sunday, September 10 at 10:30 AM

Holiday Shi'Shuk Market
Sunday, September 10 from 3:30-4:30 PM

Bird's Eye View of Jewish History
Thursday, September 14 from 10-10:50 AM
continues for 10 weeks until November 16

Help Decorate the Federation Sukkah
Wednesday, September 27 at 5:30 PM

Get to know Omer

Omer Karavani, our new shaliach, arrives September 14

What is your favorite non-Israeli movie?

Interstellar - Christopher Nolan and Hans Zimmer, an amazing combination!



What is your favorite Israeli movie?

Waltz with Bashir - this an adult animated film about the first Lebanon war back in 1982.

Favorite band/musician right now?

Lord Huron.

What is your favorite food?

Steak with fries.

Speaking of food, in your opinion where can you get the best hummus in Israel?

Hummus of Tahini.

What is your favorite hobby?

To visit museums & art galleries.

Hidden talent?

Art, sculpturing and cooking.

Favorite sport to watch?

Soccer.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

In Diplomatic Service for Israel.

If you could invite 4 people dead/alive for dinner who would you invite?

Leonardo Da Vinci, King David, Adam & Genghis Khan.



Thank you Shirlee & Dan!

For the past three years, our community has been blessed to have Shirlee Greenwald and Dan Ravitch as staff members of the Federation and members of our community. Together, they represent the best hope for the future of the Jewish people.

As you know, both Shirlee and Dan served in the Israel Defense Forces. Shirlee served as a Field Observer on the Golan Heights and Dan served as a Lone Soldier in the Iron Dome unit. That was just the beginning of their service to the Jewish people.

In their work at our Jewish Federation, they have contributed so much to the Jewish life of our community. It is thanks to their enthusiasm, creativity and strong work ethic that they have many achievements to their credit.

To mention a few events and projects, we include: the Fall Festival, Kosher Date Night, the annual Chanukah Menorah Lighting, the Purim Carnival, the Holocaust Education Speaker's Bureau, Yom HaShoah, Yom Haazmaut and Shirlee's "My Israeli Story." Add to that list their key roles in hosting "Women Leading a Dialogue," projects with our teens, and last but certainly not least, reinvigorating and re-imagining Camp Ideal.

As Federation Board President Dr. Alon Shemesh said in his remarks at the Annual Meeting, "They have forever transformed Camp Ideal and created the Shi'Shuk Market, open every Friday afternoon in the summer to sell baked goods the campers made."

I have personally seen the enthusiasm that Shirlee and Dan brought to Camp Ideal. I have also seen the great pride the campers take in preparation for their innovative project, Shi'Shuk. What began three years ago with a few items has now expanded to almost 30 products. And the profits go to local charities chosen by the campers. This year the campers donated \$1,000 to South Bend's Center for the Homeless.

Federation Board Vice President Cristyne Porile wrote, "Shirlee and Dan have been such a gift to our community. Their programming excellence has been exemplary. In areas of visual appeal, the quality of programs, all the many beautiful tactile items Shirlee in particular designed to compliment the program experience, the concept of the Shi'Shuk, and all the many creative "extras" they personally sourced, designed, and created-- Dan and Shirlee have elevated our program and event experiences to exceptional levels. In addition, having Shirlee and Dan as active members of our community has been a joy. These two are very best in class, and we are going to miss them, and all the goodness they have brought to us, so very much."

The impact that Shirlee and Dan have made here has also gone beyond our Jewish community. Over the past three years, they have given dozens of presentations to local schools on behalf of the Federation's Holocaust Education Speaker's Bureau.

Together, they had a major

impact on hundreds of students in our local schools.

Patrick O'Malley, a teacher at Discovery Middle School wrote, "Eva's Story and The Righteous Among Nations presentations that Dan and Shirlee exposed my students to were both unique and insightful and generated rich discussions that deepened and personalized the students' understanding of the Holocaust. Dan's and Shirlee's enthusiasm for the material demonstrated their devotion to the topic and allowed the students to appreciate the importance of continuing to study the Holocaust and the need to confront all forms of prejudice."

On a personal note, I want to say that it has been an honor and privilege for me to work with Shirlee and Dan over these past three years.

In Israel, the highest compliment that one can give someone is to tell them that they are doing "Avodat Kodesh," sacred work. On behalf of all of us, we thank you Shirlee and Dan for the countless hours you have dedicated to doing "Avodat Kodesh" for our community. We will miss you.

Please join us at the Federation on September 7th at 7:00 PM to say "lehitraot" (see you again) to Shirlee and Dan. And please RSVP!



Bob Feferman

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A message from Dan Ravitch

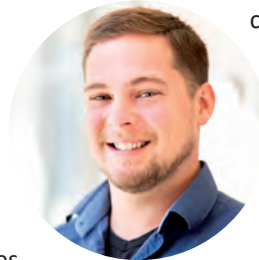
Lehitraot. A formal goodbye in Hebrew that translates to “until we see each other again.” Three summers later, and Shirlee and I can hardly believe where the time has gone. I struggled these past weeks to see the bigger picture of the impact we may have had while here, dwelling only on the ideas we had yet to implement in the community. Looking back, with the help of our friends and family at the Federation, a lot has been done to grow and engage our Jewish community since we began over two years ago.

From Camp to Lunch N’ Learns, I am filled with the images of warm smiles, delicious food, and shared Jewish experiences. My first program as Programming Director was apple picking and Shi’Shuk for Rosh Hashanah. The number of campers and families that joined was heartwarming, let alone the honey cakes shared with the community at the end. I still remember teaching campers about the Rosh Hashanah Seder held by many in Israel and around the world, and the faces kids made when we shared the appearance of a fish head on the table. Learning about our Jewish Identity through the understanding of other’s has always been central to what I tried to

accomplish with my time. Our final program will be a homage to this one with apple picking and a Rosh Hashanah Shi’Shuk on September 10th.

Without a doubt, I am most proud of what Camp Ideal has become these past three summers. A place where kids from such diverse backgrounds can come together to learn from one another, compete amongst each other, and grow as individuals. Camp Ideal is a place that Shirlee, Abbee, and I poured our hearts and souls into. Helping it grow and thrive, giving it a name in the greater community, and creating a place that nearly a hundred children wait all year to attend. My dream is to return to Camp Ideal and see it not only growing physically in attendance, but see the traditions continue to thrive, the passion for camp to grow, and shining smiles on the faces of campers.

So, what is next in the journey of Shirlee and Dan? While I believe that we will be moving back to Israel at some point in the future, my hope is to cultivate more experience and education while I’m capable here in the States. I intend to continue working in the field



Dan Ravitch

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A message from Shirlee Greenwald

It wasn’t love at first sight, this place I mean... It was a way to get on my feet. Unlike my husband who was born and raised here, I had no connection to the area, and it wasn’t what I had in mind when I heard ‘America.’ I found myself here, an ocean away from home and everything familiar, in the midst of a crisis, Covid. So, my welcome-hug was ‘6 feet apart,’ literally and figuratively. But on the ashes of what Covid burnt, we had the golden opportunity to rebuild and reimagine, and by nature of investing, in the end I got much more than I put in.

I look back at the last three years, and everything that I’ve considered to be hardships or failures became victories; I’ve learned so much. First and foremost, this community taught me a well-deserved Shiur B’Anva (רושיש הונטב - lesson in humility), like Yehuda Amichai says: “from the place where we are right, flowers will never grow in the spring” - this new perspective allowed me to open up to different ideas and different people. It paved my way to the Orthodox community, for example, a warm, wonderful

people that I would have missed had I been stuck with my prejudice coming from a secular Russian-Israeli context. I also had the privilege to revisit my taken-for-granted Jewish Identity and pour some content into it. I’ve learned from my wonderful colleagues that you catch more flies with honey than vinegar (even if I still struggle to implement this lesson). And finally, I’ve learned from my camp kids. I learned that we need each other to grow - what they know instinctively, I had allowed myself to forget. They put my leadership skills to the test, confronted me with my values and gave me a sense of purpose. Saying goodbye is hard in itself, but walking away from what we have created at Camp Ideal is heartbreaking.

With that said, I want to thank you for all that was done for us. This place has become a home, and as much as it is tempting to stay, sometimes you need to leave if you wish to come back. With Rosh Hashanah on our doorstep, I am reminded that even



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though goodbyes are hard, they hide the opportunity (G-d willing) for something new and improved. Whatever it will be, whatever is planned for us - this place, this road, is paved within our hearts.



Our Community Table

It's September—if you can believe it—and Rosh Hashana is only two weeks away. I have always loved this holiday, with its eternal promise of hope and new beginnings. Fond memories from my youth include taking days off school to go to the synagogue where I would see my Jewish friends and family, in a town where I was often the only Jewish student in my class, everyone dressed in their holiday best. And here's a fun little extra—I am a honey cake snob. Which makes little sense as I know with 1000% surety that any honey cake I ever had as a child was born in a Manischewitz box, or from the grocery store, ready-made in its tacky little tinfoil loaf pan, plastic wrap intact, labeled Manischewitz, and stamped with a suggested 12th of Never expiration

date. Like Twinkies. Or fruit cake. But Jewish. By all reason, I have absolutely no right to be a honey cake snob, yet, here we are. Memories. Honey Cake. Me. Snob!

So, what does an unjustifiably snobby girl from culinary skid row hope for in a holiday honey cake? Quite a lot. I like honey cake to be moist, not crumbly. And dense, but not too dense. And sweet—ish. And the color. For some reason color really matters. I like honey cakes that are dark in color and are rectangular loaves in shape —so they can be cut into nice, thick, satisfying slices. Is this all too much to ask?

Perhaps. But after a few years of trial and error, I have found what I think is a truly wonderful Honey Cake recipe for Rosh Hashana. And while I wouldn't go so far as to say it can compete with the nostalgic memories of my youth—because what could be better than a Manischewitz boxed mix from days of yore—I will say that it is wonderful, deeply satisfying, and a joy to bring to the family table. And of course, I am going to share it with you.

This excellent recipe is the Moist and Majestic Honey Cake, by well-known Jewish cookbook author, Marcy Goldman, and I think it is very nearly perfect. However, I do have a few significant “tweaks” to offer—as I'm sure you knew I would.

One is the choice of honey. I only and always use Buckwheat honey. It is considerably darker and much less sweet than the more typical clover, orange blossom, or wildflower varieties and in my opinion makes for a better cake in both flavor and color. Of course, you should choose whatever honey you like best because this is your honey cake!

Another thing that I sometimes do is brew a spiced tea blend instead of a plain black tea. Plain black tea works well, as does coffee if that is your preference, but the spiced tea adds a subtle dimension to the cake's flavor profile that I find interesting and doesn't change its basic nature.

And finally—prepare your baking pans well! And I cannot emphasize this enough. Use both shortening and flour to grease your baking pans because this cake likes to stick! If possible, lining the bottom of the pan with a parchment liner is wonderful, too.

Happy, Healthy Rosh Hashana wishes to you, dear readers. I hope the new year will be sweet, and meaningful, and will hold many, many wonderful future memories for you and your families. And possibly even the honey cake of your dreams!

Cristyne Porile

Community Contributor

Teen's Honey Cake

Adapted from Marcy Goldman's Moist and Majestic Honey Cake

Makes 3 standard size loaf pans, 2 9-inch square or round cake pans, one 9 or 10-inch tube or Bundt cake pan, or one 9 by 13-inch sheet cake.

Ingredients

- 3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon Kosher salt
- 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup honey (I prefer Buckwheat honey as it is not quite as sweet and is a bit darker in color)
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar (light or dark,

your choice)

- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup coffee or strong tea, warm but not boiling
- ½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice, at room temperature
- ¼ cup rye whisky, or bourbon
- ½ cup slivered or sliced almonds (optional—I never use these)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Generously grease the pans you plan to use with non-stick cooking spray. If using a tube pan or angel food cake pan, additionally line the bottom with some lightly greased parchment paper, cut to fit.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together all dry ingredients.
3. Make a well in the center and set aside.
4. In a medium bowl or large

measuring cup, combine the oil, honey, sugar, brown sugar, eggs, vanilla, coffee or tea, orange juice and whiskey, stirring until uniform looking.

5. Pour liquid ingredients into well in center of dry ingredients and stir together well to make a thick, well blended batter, making sure that no ingredients are stuck to the bottom of the bowl.
6. Spoon batter into prepared pan(s). If using, sprinkle top of cake(s) with almonds.
7. Place cake pan(s) onto 2 stacked baking sheet(s)
8. Bake until cake tests done, that is, it springs back when you gently touch the cake's center. For Tube cake pans, 60-75 minutes; loaf cakes, 45-55 minutes; sheet pans, 40-45 minutes.
9. When done, let cake(s) stand 15 minutes before removing from the pan(s), then cool completely.

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In Memory of:

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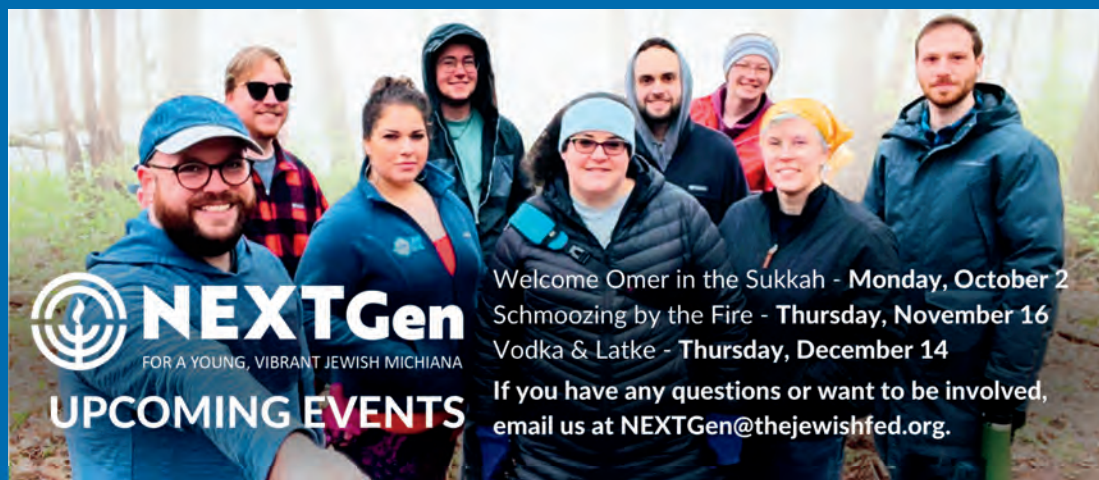
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EDITOR'S NOTE

I look back on this month of August as a period of transition. We transitioned from Camp Ideal and a campus full of kids to one of quiet calm, clean-up and the return of routine. And now, as we approach the end of the month, we again transition our team, welcoming in new staff eager to learn and put their own stamp on the variety of ways Federation touches our local Jewish community. But, perhaps, the biggest transition of all is the slow "see you again" to two talented individuals who have their sails set for life beyond our Michiana borders. To Dan & Shirlee, please know you will be missed, and we hope you'll be back, at least to see the spoils of your fruitful legacy here in South Bend, Indiana - forever your home away from home.

Steve Lotter

Director of Community Engagement





SEPTEMBER 2023 ELUL-TISHRI 5783-5784

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 15 ELUL 8:00 PM
						2 16 ELUL PARSHAT KI TAVO 8:59 PM
3 17 ELUL	4 18 ELUL LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	5 19 ELUL ZUMBA 9:15 AM	6 20 ELUL MAHJONG 1:00 PM	7 21 ELUL LEHITRAOT DAN & SHIRLEE 7:00 PM	8 22 ELUL 7:48 PM	9 23 ELUL PARSHAT NETZAVIM-VAYEILECH SELICHOT BEGINS 8:47 PM
10 24 ELUL APPLE PICKING/ SHI'SHUK 10AM/3:30 PM ACTIVATING THE HEART CENTER 10:30 AM	11 25 ELUL ZUMBA 9:15 AM MAHJONG 1:00 PM	12 26 ELUL ZUMBA 9:15 AM	13 27 ELUL MAHJONG 1:00 PM	14 28 ELUL BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF JEWISH HISTORY 2 10:00 AM	15 29 ELUL EREV ROSH HASHANAH 7:36 PM	16 1 TISHRI ROSH HASHANAH 8:34 PM
17 2 TISHRI ROSH HASHANAH 8:33 PM	18 3 TISHRI FAST OF GEDALIAH 6:05-8:31 PM ZUMBA 9:15 AM MAHJONG 1:00 PM	19 4 TISHRI ZUMBA 9:15 AM	20 5 TISHRI MAHJONG 1:00 PM	21 6 TISHRI BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF JEWISH HISTORY 2 10:00 AM	22 7 TISHRI 7:24 PM	23 8 TISHRI PARSHAT HA'AZINU/ SHABBAT SHUVAH 8:23 PM
24 9 TISHRI EREV YOM KIPPUR KOL NIDRE 7:21 PM	25 10 TISHRI YOM KIPPUR/ YIZKOR OFFICE CLOSED FAST ENDS 7:21 PM	26 11 TISHRI ZUMBA 9:15 AM	27 12 TISHRI MAHJONG 1:00 PM SUKKAH DECORATING 5:30 PM	28 13 TISHRI BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF JEWISH HISTORY 2 10:00 AM	29 14 TISHRI EREV SUKKOT 7:12 PM	30 15 TISHRI SUKKOT 8:10 PM