

# OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

December 2020/ Kislev 5781 – Tevet 5781  
Volume 15, Number 3



## Act I of the 11th Annual (2nd Virtual) Michiana Jewish Film Festival!!!

*December 27-30, 2020*

In the program for our 10th Annual (1st Virtual) Michiana Jewish Film Festival (MJFF), we said the following: "As we say at Passover "Next year in Jerusalem." For the 11th Michiana Jewish Film Festival, "Next year at DeBartolo." (That is, at Notre Dame, in our usual venue.)

Despite our high hopes, we will be holding the 11th MJFF virtually, as well. We have taken the lessons we learned from our May virtual film festival and are doing things a bit differently for the 11th MJFF. We are splitting our usual 8-film 4-day program into two 4-film programs. The first half (Act I) will be presented this December 27-30!! Act II will occur in our regular timeframe, May 10-13, 2021. Films will not be restricted to a specific show time but will be available to view during a specific 48-hour window of time.

In addition, we will be utilizing an online platform to handle ticket sales, film screening, and potential follow-up programming. Hopefully, this will simplify for us and for you. And, for those who have Roku or Apple TV, there is a channel you can add in order to stream the films on your TVs!

We will be mailing out two postcards over the next few weeks to provide more information about the festival, how to access it and purchase tickets, and the film titles. So, be on the lookout for those!

## A Minute With Moshe

Our team has continued to develop digital programming and thanks to you, our events have had great success. November was a busy month, and we look forward to continued success in December!

**Challah bake, Chopped Edition:** Four contestants competed for the title of Challah Bake Chopped Champion while over 350 people joined via Zoom and Facebook Live! (See page six for a full wrap up.)

**Sustainable Nations:** 30 participants joined in our discussion on Water Sustainability and an additional 300 people viewed our program via Facebook Live.

**P2G/CRC Meet the Emiratis:** We were proud to co-sponsor a conversation between the Israelis and Emiratis which was attended by 60 individual via zoom and had over 1000 views on Facebook Live

**P2G Sliding Doors:** 10 community members have joined in this monthly discussion group developed by Partnership2Gether to share their experiences as children of Holocaust Survivors.

**Lunch N' Learn with Dr. Bill Sarnat:** Over 50 members joined us for this discussion on how to stay safe from the cold and flu during a pandemic.

**Youth Programming:** A group of 8 teens from our federation and the Federation of Northwest Indiana had their first zoom meeting with Chen to begin planning joint teen programs in 2021.

**Leadership:** I had the privilege of hosting an Executive Briefing with 13 of our 14 past presidents in mid November to share ideas and discuss how to continue to make the Federation relevant and successful in our community.

### Looking Ahead to December

At close of registration on November 24, Chen had 102 participants signed up for our Camp Ideal Craft Hour. We are also looking forward to the community Menorah lighting, our Sufganiyot recipe swap led by young adults, a Chinese dinner campaign event and the 1st Act of the 11th Annual Michiana Jewish Film Festival.

**Keep Reading for details on all we have planned in December!!**

**Our Community News**

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Jewish Federation  
of St. Joseph Valley  
3202 Shalom Way  
South Bend, IN 46615  
Phone: 574-233-1164  
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**JFS News and Updates**

## **Lunch & Learn – Stay Active at Home! December 16th, 2020 at 12:00pm**

Please join us as Yolanda Suggs, certified zoom instructor, will show us the ways we can stay active at home this winter, no matter our physical limitations. Boxed lunches will be available for delivery from Midwest Kosher Deli. Please click here to RSVP for the zoom program, as well as a lunch! RSVP deadline for lunches is Friday, December 11th.

## **Coffee and Wellness Meets Sundays at 12:00pm**

In this group, we utilize the National Wellness Institute's model of the "Wellness Wheel" to guide discussion of the current times, and how we can make little changes in different areas to maintain and improve our own personal wellness and health. Interested in joining us? Email Rowan at [rkelley@thejewishfed.org](mailto:rkelley@thejewishfed.org) for more information or to join us!

## **Covid Kits for your household!**

Would a small kit, that includes masks, hand sanitizer and hand soap, be helpful for your household? Please call or email Sandy Levine at 574-233-1164 X 1806 to request a covid kit, and it will be delivered to your door!

## **Person-To-Person Calling**

Many of us, no matter our personal circumstance, are feeling lonely and isolated. Would a regular call from a community member, to say "hello, how are you?" and some conversation make the difference in your day? Our person-to-person callers are ready to bring a little conversation and connection to anyone in our community. For more information or to sign up, call or email Sandy at 574-233-1164 X 1806.



## **Supporting Our Community For Generations To Come**

Each year Jewish holidays provide opportunities to honor past generations while sharing traditions with the next. In 2020, our Jewish holidays have been less about honoring traditions, and more about adapting them to keep us connected in a time when we cannot be together.

Despite this, our community's commitment is strong, and we continue to value the tradition of L'dor V'dor. (From generation to generation) Jewish Family Services has been devoted to ensuring that our local families have what they need to push through these difficult times.

Thanks to the generosity of Dr. Doug Barton, the Jewish Federation has been raising money to help us continue that mission, while adding a work of art dedicated to the beauty of L'dor V'dor.

Doug's Indiana limestone sculpture, L'dor V'dor, is being purchased by the Jewish Federation with all proceeds being donated to Jewish Family Services. So far we have raised \$4,500 to support our local community and hope to reach \$6,000 before the end of the year.

We invite you to help support Jewish Family Services as it works to strength families for generations to come. You can donate by clicking [here](#), or sending payment to the Jewish Federation at 3202 Shalom Way, South Bend, IN 46615.



Jewish Federation  
OF ST. JOSEPH VALLEY



# OUR COMMUNITY MENORAH LIGHTING

Thursday, December 10th  
at 5:00 PM

This year we are bringing the community Menorah lighting into your homes via Zoom. Please join us for the first night of Chanukah so that we can share the experience of lighting candles together in the comfort and safety of our own homes.

After the ceremony, we'll play a Chanukah style bingo game, winner gets a \$25 Amazon gift card! Stay tuned for our email blast on how to nominate your local Chanukah Covid Champion. Winner to be chosen on the zoom menorah program!



Please note, due to Covid health concerns, the downtown South Bend ceremony will not be open to the public. We look forward to resuming it in the coming years.

The program will include live streaming of the Menorah lighting ceremony in downtown South Bend with the participation of Mayor Mueller of South Bend, Chanukah music, and messages from our local Rabbis.

To receive the Zoom link, please RSVP to [RSVP@thejewishfed.org](mailto:RSVP@thejewishfed.org).

## Todah Rabah! Over 200 Items donated!!!

Thank you, todah robah, for the generosity of our community during our Thanksgiving food drive! Thank you especially to our volunteer pick-up drivers from the JFS Food Pantry Committee, who put in the time to collect all of the donations. Our pantry will remain stocked to ensure that everyone in our community has access to food and household items, especially during this difficult season.



If your household is struggling with food or financial insecurity and need assistance, please contact our new JFS Director, Sandy Levine, at 574-233-1164 x 1806 or by email at [sandyl@thejewishfed.org](mailto:sandyl@thejewishfed.org), for a confidential consultation.





## Caring Connections *By Rowan Kelley*

### *Reflecting on Gratitude*

Jewish Michiana,

As this article finds you, we stand between two holidays intent on inspiring gratitude. Thanksgiving, officially recognized as a national holiday by Abraham Lincoln in 1864, usually offers us a chance to take a pause from the everyday. Many travel, spend time with family, eat a delicious meal together. Just ahead of us, Chanukah can serve as both a reminder of the power of determination to overcome tyranny, and to recognize the divine in miracles (even simple things). This year feels... different. Coronavirus, which most of us had never heard of or put any thought into before this year, has had a profound impact on our world in less than a year. Daily, I am reminded of this by clients describing instability in work and childcare, each day feeling indistinct from the next, etc. Recently, I have listened as many have made a small lament for one more loss: connecting with family and friends in person during this season of holidays. This loss came to my household, as we discussed our plans that include not traveling, not going to others homes, and not having close family members to our home for Thanksgiving. How does one overcome such an ongoing sense, as small regular losses add up to loneliness, isolation, depression?



One potential solution comes from the study of mindfulness. Mindfulness can be defined as a "state of nonjudgmental awareness of what is happening at the present moment, including awareness of one's own thoughts, feelings, and senses." While research has documented numerous benefits of the practice of mindfulness, including reducing anxiety and depression symptoms as well as increasing relationship satisfaction, it can be a difficult practice to begin. One mindfulness practice that I find easy to approach is taking about five minutes near the end of the day to reflect on what I am grateful for from that day. This can include seemingly larger events, like "that meeting went really well," to smaller events like "that cup of coffee I had this morning was really delicious" or "I appreciated the friend who called and checked in with me." One thing that I try to remind myself of on a regular basis, no matter how the day unfolded, is that "I got up today and did my best." For those who need an extra prompt, a gratitude journal can serve as a reminder to take the few minutes to recognize "what went well" daily.

As most of you know, I will be leaving the Federation at the end of December. While many of us remain uncomfortably apart, there are three things that I am grateful for, related to our JFS work, that I would like to share. First, I am grateful for all the kindness and generosity of our community in supporting JFS. Earlier this year, many calls or emails came from community members asking how they can help support others; as one community member said in an email, "I think you're going to need my help, please let me know what I can do." I am also grateful for the appreciation and consideration of our clients. Second, without betraying confidences, I can tell you that this year, more than others, I found myself having to "push" clients and community members to accept what our JFS department has to offer. Many more times than once, I heard "I do need it, but I think that maybe there are others who need it more." These two pieces fit together into what I believe is the essence of our community's strength: the willingness to serve without hope of reward, and the awareness that we all have areas of need, no matter our individual circumstances. Finally, I am grateful that during these strange (and recently cold) times, JFS continues to have what we need to be able to support our community. Our new JFS director, Sandy Levine, will have the support of our advisory board and volunteers to continue offering relevant programs and necessary services to our community members in need.

Until we meet again,

Rowan

## Meet Rabbi Froman-The “White Rabbi” *By Chen Nissan*



***Rabbi Menachem Froman and Yasser Arafat***

During these complicated times of uncertainty and social division, I'm searching for comfort and inspiration from spiritual leaders who can show our society the way towards recovery and healing. In this month's article, I would like to introduce you to a fascinating and also controversial Israeli figure - Rabbi Menachem Froman.

Rabbi Menachem Froman was born on June 1st 1945 and passed away on March 4th 2013. He was such a complicated figure since on the one hand he was one of the main founders of "Gush Emunim," a right-wing activist movement committed to establishing Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

On the other hand, he was a peacemaker and negotiator with close ties to Palestinian religious leaders. He served as the Chief Rabbi of Tekoa in the West Bank. He was well known for promoting and leading interfaith dialogue between Jews and Arabs, focusing on using religion as a tool and source for recognizing the humanity and dignity of all people.

Rabbi Froman believed we have to "talk with the enemy," and that some alchemy of respect and healing happens when we sit face-to-face with "the other." And he was 100% serious about "Talking with the enemy."

Froman had a long standing friendship with Yasser Arafat, who was the president of the Palestinian National Authority from 1994 to 2004. But perhaps Froman's most controversial relationship with a Palestinian was with Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual founder of the terror organization Hamas. Froman visited Yassin several times, including in Israeli prison.

He told the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, "Ahmed Yassin once told me: You and I could make peace in 'hamsa dakika' – five minutes. How so? Because we are both believers."

With his religious sensibility and commitment to peace, Rabbi Froman dedicated most of his life to promoting reconciliation between Jewish settlers and Palestinian residents in the West Bank and Gaza.

Here are his ideas his own words: "You have to love your neighbors, says the lord, and the Palestinians are my

neighbors, so love the Palestinians is the essence of my religion... Politics is the art of state, surely one must work through politics as well. I only think that politicians must be humble and consider the basic factor of the local conflict. And be attentive to religious scholars. Politics is their job, but they must take into consideration the nature of this conflict, which indeed, in my opinion, is a religious one."

When extremist settlers vandalized a mosque in the Palestinian village of Qusra in September 2011, Froman and a small group of settlers made a sympathy visit. The Shaikh of the mosque showed them around his burned and destroyed mosque and eventually he showed them the graffiti writing the extremist settlers wrote on one of the walls - "Mohamad is a pig".

Froman cemented his connection with the large crowd of villagers, beginning his speech by shouting "Allahu Akbar!" ("God is Great") in call and response with them three times.

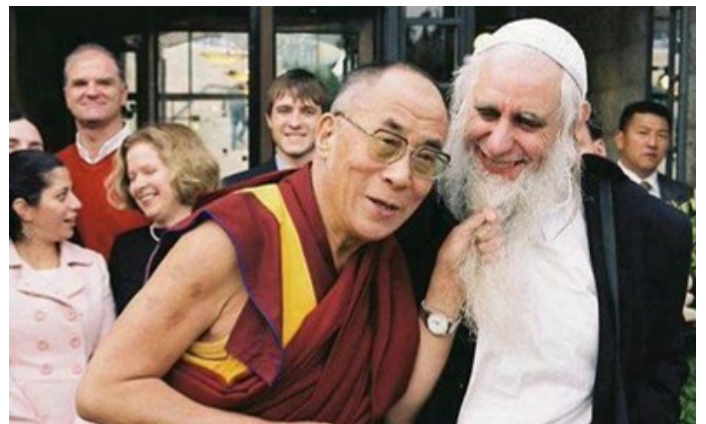
After that he said: "The one who did this writing against the Prophet, hurt the one who sent the prophet. And God, who sent the prophet, will punish him."

So what lessons can we take from Rabbi Froman for our life?

To be honest with you, I get so sad when I hear that there are people who can break friendships just because they found out their friend supports another political view. And I think we have so much to learn from this amazing Jewish person who's life mission was to try to become a friend and make peace with the actual enemy.

One of my favorite things is hearing other people's stories, listen to what they see as true. And I think my world would be very boring if I would surround myself only with people who hold the same opinions as me. Let me finish with this amazing poem of Rabbi Froman:

"The 'other' is my hell. And this is my only thing, is so simple and clear—that there is nothing to add on or interpret that the 'other' is also my shelter from my own hell."



***Rabbi Menachem Froman and the Dalai Lama***

## Thank You For Joining our virtual Challah Bake - "Chopped" Edition!

Thank you to our wonderful contestants, Paula Leece, Ruth Kremer, Sandy Levine and Stacy Rubin. They played a great "Chopped" game and we were truly awed by their creativity and technical skills.

Special shout-out to our judges, Posi Tucker, Simon Springer and Terry Feldbaum.

It was so difficult to choose a winner but congratulations to Paula Leece for scoring the winning trophy and mixer. We know you will put it to great use!

A big thank you goes to Dr. Ilana Kirsch for her clear and well-prepared demo on challah braiding. I know we were all wishing we were eating at her house for dinner that night!

Lastly, kudos to the entire community of South Bend. Though we could not be together in person, it felt wonderful to share this experience with you all.

Shani Kramer,

Program Director and sometimes Challah Bake

"Chopped" Edition Host



Bekki Lindow's Challah



Allen Stenberg's Challah



Janine Orenstein's Challah



We had a great time with "Perfect Flavors" cookbook author Naomi Nachman, who demonstrated her pumpkin challah recipe, just in time for the autumn weather.



Congratulations to Paula Leece,  
Our Challah Bake Champion



To say thank you, I've included a recipe that does not require four mystery ingredients but can help you finish up those challah leftovers easily and deliciously!

Challah Kugel Picture credit  
Ta'am @judaismonaplate

## Challah Kugel

*Challah Kugel Recipe from Ta'am  
@judaismonaplate*

- ◇ 500g (just over 1lb/1 medium challah) challah, including crusts, cut into 2cm (1 inch) cubes
- ◇ 6 tablespoons olive oil
- ◇ 2 large onion, peeled & finely chopped
- ◇ 3 celery ribs, finely chopped
- ◇ 25g (½ cup) minced parsley
- ◇ 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
- ◇ 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- ◇ 350ml (1 ½ cups) chicken broth
- ◇ Salt and Pepper to taste

Heat oven to 200 °C (400°F). Toast challah cubes on a large baking sheet, stirring several times, until golden brown, 5 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and reduce the oven temperature to 180°C (350°F).

Heat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat until hot, add the olive oil and heat until shimmering. Add the onions and celery, and cook, stirring, until soft and starting to turn golden, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and season with

salt and pepper, stir in parsley and rosemary. Add to the bread cubes and toss until well combined. Stir in eggs and chicken broth. Adjust the seasonings.

For a creamier kugel, allow the bread mixture to sit for 30 minutes, for a slightly drier consistency bake straight away. Transfer to a greased large baking dish, bake for 35-40 minutes until golden brown on top and creamy and set on the inside.

Can be made up ahead of time, stored in the fridge for up to 2 days, and in the freezer for up to a month. To reheat, (if frozen: defrost) and place uncovered in a preheated oven 180°C (350°F), and warm until heated through, about 20 minutes.

## Memorial & Tributes

**The Jewish Federation expresses its appreciation to these generous donors:**

### From the following contributors:

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Marsha Brook	Phyllis & Jerry Devorkin
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### To the following funds:

The Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley  
Lisa Lerman Community Bridge Endowment Fund  
Jewish Family Services Food Pantry

### In Memory of:

Alan Goldner	Blanche Rosenberg	Chuck Eder
Edith Isaacs	Evelyn Yachness	Joe Markley
Lisa Lerman		

### Mazel Tov to:

Ari Seligson's for his Bar Mitzvah  
Yaakov Wainhaus' for his Bar Mitzvah  
Yofi Sandock on her Bat Mitzvah  
Rabbi Michael Friedland and Lizzie Fagen on the birth of their grandson.  
Rabbi Karen Compane and Howard Steinberger on the birth of their granddaughter.  
David & Julie Ravitch on the marriage of their son Daniel to Shirlee Greenwald

### Wishing a speedy recovery to:

Sally Goloubow

*We welcome contributions to our various funds. Individual acknowledgment cards are sent for each contribution.*

## Purchase Your Mahjong Cards

Reggie Lowenhar is taking orders for new Mahjongg Cards! The cost is **\$9 for small print** and **\$10 for large print.**

Send your check payable to

Reggie Lowenhar,

51584 Buckingham Ct.,

Granger, IN 46530.

Deadline is **end of December.**

## Through Lisa's Lens *By Shani Kramer*



### *Remembering Lisa On Her First Yahrzeit.*

Mrs. Laurie Baron set up a Zoom call to remember Lisa's first yahrzeit. Family members were invited to share their personal stories and memories of Lisa. Also included, in Laurie's words, was a chance to send a personal care package to Lisa in the form of

reciting blessings over food that had been prepared. Below, are excerpts from this call, used with each speaker's permission.

Rabbi Bulman, Rabbi of Hebrew Orthodox Congregation in South Bend: It's hard to believe that a year has passed since so many of us came together in person to celebrate Lisa's life. Looking back on the year, I am struck by a strong parallel. Over these past long and strange months, we've learned how to assess our priorities properly, have gained mutual understanding of others and have rediscovered the treasure that is our families. We have also increased our connection with G-d, as we have found that we really don't know what will be. Overall, we have heightened our sense of awareness. All these things are really an embodiment of Lisa's values. Last year, I spoke about the ability of people to live forever through their values. If the values that someone lived with and for, are carried on by others, that's how a legacy lives on and that's how a person never really dies. So even though it's been a year since Lisa has departed from this physical world, Lisa is very much alive with us and within us. May her neshama have an aliyah (soul be uplifted).

Max, Lisa's son, sang a beautiful song that he wrote about a game that his Mom used to play with him as a child entitled "bus driver, bus driver, please open the door, but not too fast." I've included the lyrics here, with his permission.

Part of Lisa's legacy was her tremendous ability to give without the recipient feeling like they were taking. I want to encourage us all to keep Lisa's memory alive by going out of our way to look for others who may be in need of that extra something. Covid has stripped us of the ability for close physical connection but let's go into winter with a stronger emotional connection. The spirit of Lisa that is within us all is certainly cheering us on.

All the best,

Shani Kramer

Don't you worry now, you  
got your boys all home

I hear your voice in the stars  
at night

Always think of you as the  
one with the brightest light

Lately the stars have been  
covered up by the clouds

So I'm looking for the next  
ticket out of town

Bus driver, bus driver, open  
the door

(Not too fast)

Hey there mama you really  
taught me how to love

You'd hug me so tight even  
when I smelled like a hockey  
glove

Now my hockey days are  
over and I'm just a man sing-  
ing songs

I'm leaving town, but I won't  
be gone for too long

Bus driver, bus driver, open  
the door

(Not too fast)

*AS WE HONOR THE 1ST YAHARZEIT OF HER  
PASSING, LISA LERMAN'S MEMORY CON-  
TINUES TO INSPIRE OUR COMMUNITY AND  
BUILD BRIDGES TO CONNECT US ALL AS  
ONE JEWISH FAMILY. MAY LISA'S MEMORY  
BE A BLESSING FOR ALL WHO LOVED HER  
AND THOSE WHO WILL CONTINUE TO BE  
IMPACTED BY THE MOMENTS WE SHARED.*



# DOUGH-NOT LET THE LIGHT GO OUT

## Sufganiyot Making & Recipe Swap

Join the Federation Young Adults as they fry up a batch of sufganiyot for Hanukkah. Sure to be fun for all ages!

When: **December 13, 2-3 PM**

To register contact Chen Nissan at [Israel@thejewishfed.org](mailto:Israel@thejewishfed.org)



**Jewish Federation**  
OF ST. JOSEPH VALLEY

### Shopping List:

- 2 T Active Dry Yeast
- 1/2 C Warm Water
- 1/4 C Granulated Sugar
- 2 1/2 C All-Purpose Flour
- 2 Large Eggs
- 2 T Unsalted Butter  
at Room Temp.
- 1/2 t Ground Nutmeg
- 1 t Salt
- 3 C Vegetable Oil
- 1 C Seedless Jam or Jelly



**TO LISTEN TO EPISODE THREE, CLICK HERE**  
**WITH BLANCA SANCHEZ & EZEQUIEL ANDRES**

**TO LISTEN TO EPISODE FOUR, CLICK HERE**  
**WITH RACHEL NOVICK**

The podcast "**Bridging the Gap**" came about from our desire to unite the different parts of the community. We live in a beautifully diverse city, with Jews from all backgrounds. We believe that if we have a chance to get to know each other, on a personal level, we will see that there is more that connects us than sets us apart.

Join your hosts Shani Kramer, Program Director for the Jewish Federation and Chen Nissan, Israeli Shlichah, each month for 30 minutes of real talk! We may be physically socially distanced at the moment, but that doesn't mean we need to be distant from each other's hearts.

***Keep an eye on Facebook and our email blasts in the coming week for Episode Five!***

Zoom | Ages 2-5



Thursday, December 3  
10:30-11 am

Learn about Hanukkah with stories, songs,  
and a craft with special guest storyteller,  
Shani Kramer, Director of Programming  
for the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley.

Registration is required. Click [here](#) to register.



Jewish Federation  
OF ST. JOSEPH VALLEY



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## Federation Book Club *By Beth Buechler*

### The Marsh King's Daughter by Karen Dionne

Our group's choices have led us to a running theme of women being abused, to varying degrees, by men. We're looking forward to new topics and to the next novel, The Lost Man, by Jane Harper. We compared The Marsh King's Daughter to Where the Crawdads Sing, by Delia Owens in terms of effective world-building. Both books are engaging due to the characters living off nature and displaying their expertise at self-sufficiency. Dionne's description of the Upper Peninsula helped bring us into this natural world, which was especially enjoyable for those of us who've been able to spend any time there.

We questioned, then accepted the plausibility of these characters' situations, and the lack of development in the abusive father. He created for his two captives lives of social isolation, deprivation, and life-threatening physical abuse. We scratched our heads over his controlling behavior and the phenomenon of the daughter continually feeling a loyalty and love for him. One of us came to the conclusion that the damage of such victims can "never" be "entirely fixed," but perhaps "only managed."

### Upcoming Schedule of Books:

The only requirement for attending a session is to read the book as listed for that date.

- **December 3:** The Lost Man: a novel by Jane Harper
- **January 7:** Begin Again: non-fiction by Eddie S. Glaude, Jr.
- **February 4:** The Rosie Project: a novel by Graeme Simsion
- **March 4:** The Secrets We Kept: a novel by Lara Prescott
- **April 1:** American Dirt: a novel by Jeanine Cummins

The only requirement for attending a session is to read the book as listed for that date.

The Federation Book Club to meet via Zoom at 4 PM for an hour or more on the first Thursdays of the month. We choose books of either global or page-turning interest, and do not meet for the purpose of promoting our businesses, or those of our friends. Contact information to join is as follows: [info@thejewishfed.org](mailto:info@thejewishfed.org).

Sheri will forward your email address to the organizer who will invite you to join our sessions via Zoom.

## From Our Friends & Partners!



### P2G Communities Meet the Emiratis

Following the historic peace agreement between Israel and the U.A.E., on November 10th Partnership2gether (P2G) and our Federation co-sponsored a special segment of "Jewanced" with Dan Feferman and Benny Scholder moderating a fascinating conversation with four citizens of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). If you did not get a chance to watch the live event, you can click on this picture to watch a recording of the event.



## Our Community Table *By Cristyne Porile*

Hello, Our Community Table readers!

Sometime in early October, one of my oldest and dearest friends called and casually asked if I would co-host an online cooking show with her. No—and also, NO, I thought to myself as she continued to explain. My friend, Suzanne, is an active volunteer whose commitment and kindness are more than a bit contagious, and so, by the time she was done with her ask, how could I possibly say anything but yes? “The Show,” as it turns out, is a volunteer gig, run by the Council for Jewish Elderly (CJE), in Chicago, as part of their programming department, designed to provide a safe and social outlet for Chicago’s Jewish Seniors. On the show, Suzanne and I demonstrate healthful recipes as we discuss with the group every sort of kitchen gadget and cooking

tip. I do my best to channel my inner “Ina Garten,” wearing my most Ina-like blue chambray shirt and trying to seem like I actually know what I am doing! Our first class was all about the sweet potato, sweet potato hummus, sweet potatoes as part of a composed salad, and this recipe, found by Suzanne, for a roasted sweet potato salad with black beans and chili dressing, which turned out to be surprisingly, devastatingly delicious. The show is definitely not ready for prime time—I had to take my laptop out with me to the back yard last week because my dog was having a bit of a moment—but it is entertaining! And so, in the name of entertainment, and friendship, and all that is good, I am delighted to share with you this best-in-class sweet potato recipe, from the Pilot episode of the CJE’s “What’s Cooking”, here, at Our Community Table.

### Roasted Sweet Potato Salad with Black Beans and Chili Dressing

A Mark Bittman recipe (\*with a tiny bit of tweaking by me)

*Serves 4*

#### Ingredients:

- ◇ 4 medium sweet potatoes (about 1 ½ pounds), peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- ◇ 1 large onion, preferably red, chopped
- ◇ ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ◇ Salt (\*I used 1 teaspoon of sea salt)
- ◇ freshly ground black pepper (\*I used ½ teaspoon)
- ◇ 1 to 2 Tablespoons minced fresh hot chili, like jalapeño
- ◇ 1 large clove garlic, peeled
- ◇ Juice of 2 limes
- ◇ 2 cups cooked black beans, drained (canned are fine)
- ◇ 1 large red or yellow bell pepper, seeded and finely diced
- ◇ 1 cup chopped fresh cilantro



#### Preparation:

##### Step 1

Heat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Place cut sweet potatoes and chopped onions on a large baking sheet, drizzle with 2 Tablespoons of oil, toss to coat, and spread out into a single layer.

Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Place baking sheet into hot oven and roast, turning occasionally, until potatoes begin to brown on corners and are just tender inside, 30-40 minutes.

Remove from oven; keep on pan until ready to mix with dressing.

##### Step 2

Put chilis in a blender or mini food processor along with the garlic, lime juice, remaining 6 Tablespoons of olive oil, a generous pinch of salt and a few grinds of pepper. Process until blended.

##### Step 3

Put warm vegetables into a large bowl with beans and bell pepper; toss with dressing and cilantro. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.

Serve warm or at room temperature. Or refrigerate for up to a day.

\*I like to serve this over a bed of arugula with some feta or Cotija cheese sprinkled on top.

\*I also often substitute pre-cut butternut squash for the sweet potatoes. It is delicious either way.