

# OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley, Inc. 3202 Shalom Way, South Bend, IN 46615

Volume 14, Number 10

June 2020/ Sivan 5780—Tamuz 5780



In response to Covid-19, the Jewish Federation has had to adjust our programs and services. Faced with the challenges of the pandemic in our community, we decided that the safest and most reasonable option is to cancel the 2020 Camp Ideal season. Our decision is based on careful consideration of a range of information gath-

ered over the past two months from the Centers for Disease Control, the American Camping Association, and a number of Jewish summer camps throughout the country. In addition, we reached out to our campers' parents and guardians with a survey.

The Federation is continuing to look at ways to provide alternate engagements for our children. Virtually guided activities,

project kits for our families, and helping campers connect with opportunities from our partners are just a few of the options being considered for our campers during the summer months.

One of the goals of Camp Ideal is to engage youth and provide a safe and educational environment to strengthen relationships

with peers in the local Jewish community and beyond. Because Jewish summer camp is a foundation of our Jewish ecosystem, we are taking this COVID moment to reimagine the Camp Ideal experience. We welcome your input as we develop ideas for a vibrant, future Camp Ideal.

## Camp Ideal Cancelled for Summer 2020

## 10th Michiana Jewish Film Festival

*Our virtual event was a great success!*

*By Shani Kramer,  
Program Director*

As all beginnings are a little rough, we were very grateful for your patience and support as we maneuvered and emailed hundreds of links to our film festival fans.

We started film fest week with some light films and many of you expressed how enjoyable they were to watch. Tuesday brought some more

serious content, as we reflected on the Palestinian/Israeli conflict and how music can be a unifying factor in the peace process. Delving into the roots of a former terrorist turned Israeli Rabbi, was an interesting process to say the least. On Wednesday, we remembered the horrors of the Holocaust with a brave young woman named

*Continue to Page 4*

## Our Community Newsletter: An Important Announcement

We are excited to announce a plan that we can all support because it will save the Federation time and money. Starting in August, all newsletters will be sent digitally unless otherwise requested.

We are maintaining a current list of email addresses for all Federation members. If you are unsure whether we have your current email and phone numbers, please email Sheri Alpert at [sheria@thejewishfed.org](mailto:sheria@thejewishfed.org).

Communicating by email will save time and money and will allow the board and professional staff to communicate with you more expeditiously.

If you do not have an email address, please contact Sheri Alpert at 574-233-1164 x 1820, and we will continue to send the newsletter to you by regular mail. Please note that if you have unsubscribed from our emails in the past, you will need to sign up again by visiting [thejewishfed.org](http://thejewishfed.org) and clicking on the blue connect button on our home page.

**Our Community News**

Volume 14, Number 9

June, 2020

Sivan - Tamuz 5780

**Jewish Federation  
of St. Joseph Valley**

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Our Community News is published monthly by the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley for the Jewish community in Michiana.

# From Executive Director Moshe Kruger



### My Name is Moshe (משה)

Surrounded (virtually) by the members of the community in which I live, I come before my new Federation family with a name of Moshe. This is the name by which I am known to my family and good friends. Only in the secular world did I use the name Mark. (Full disclosure: My mom sometimes calls me Mosheluski).

In his famous work, The Star of Redemption, Franz Rosenzweig discusses the paradox of our given names. Our names are perhaps the most personal thing about us, yet para-

doxically, they were given to us by someone else, usually our parents. In their essence, names connect us to tradition, to community.

My namesake, the biblical Moshe, inspires me to reflect on the enduring strength of our community as we celebrate 75 years of Federation history. The dreams, concerns and insights that I have heard so far on my Listening Tour are framing and shaping my thoughts and plans for imagining the Federation's future. What kind of community do we wish for ourselves and our children? How do we imagine Michiana in another five years?

As I reflect on the last two months, I continue to be moved by the distinctive manner in which each of us chooses to enter our common ground and communal sanctuary called the Michiana Jewish Commu-

nity with her or his unique perspective. As I meet more and more members of the community, I continue to be inspired by the example of Lisa Lerman, may her memory be for a blessing:

***Building Bridges (A haiku in memory of Lisa)***  
*The journey begins  
One step into the future  
Build bridges. Lisa!*

What is the bridge that binds us as a people and as a community? It is our particular inspiration in the belief "Kol Yisrael arevim zeh bazeh — All of Israel are responsible for one another." (Talmud, Shavuot 39a).

May we in our common need and striving gain strength from one another, as we share our joys, lighten each other's burdens, and pray for the welfare of our community. With best wishes, Moshe

P.S. For more thoughts about the paradox of names, please see Zelda's poem,

*Each of Us Has A Name.*

Each of us has a name given by the Source of Life and given by our parents

Each of us has a name given by our stature and our smile and given by what we wear

Each of us has a name given by the mountains and given by our walls

Each of us has a name given by the stars and given by our neighbors

Each of us has a name given by our sins and given by our longings

Each of us has a name given by our enemies and given by our love

Each of us has a name given by our celebrations and given by our work

Each of us has a name given by the seasons and given by our blindness

Each of us has a name given by the sea and given by death.

by Zelda (adapted by Marcia Falk)

# Caring Connections



Throughout history humans have repeatedly shown our capacity to make the most of what we are given. Right now, in our history as humans, we have been given a lot to fear and no clear answers on how to relieve it.

Life is predictably unpredictable, and change is inevitable. Unless you acquire the power to see the future, knowing what is coming next with any certainty is nearly impossible. Whether we want to admit it or not, the truth is, we have minimal control over what happens to us. The more we believe we can control outcomes, the more often we are left disappointed.

Many of us are facing new economic uncertainty, home schooling pressures, working at home pressures, social isolation and more. However, as I look out the window and watch the world, I see how change can be beautiful and awe-inspiring. Just as spring has begun to bring us and our world new life, the COVID-19 pandemic can also bring us growth. It depends on how we

choose to view it and what we decide to do about it.

Our brains are hard-wired to recognize the negative. When the pandemic began, I was feverishly watching the news and deeply worried about my friends, family, and community. I felt drawn to the numbers and the stories of those we had lost to the virus. I noticed my own despair and feelings of hopelessness rose. I had to change how I was reacting to the things I could not control. I found somewhere to volunteer my time, and this helped me feel less powerless. I reduced my television consumption and most importantly, I got outside!

Research has shown that when we do something for others, attend to our own self-care, get out in nature, or create something new, our brains get a healthy dose of the happy chemicals. These chemicals naturally help our brains to recognize the good stuff instead. With time and practice, even a pandemic need not get you down! I like to look for stories of how people are finding

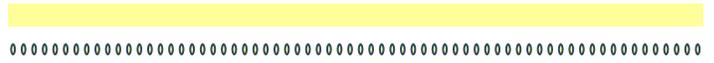
## Generating Positivity by Charmagne LaFortune

ways to overcome their fear and lack of control by doing something for others and themselves. Hearing the stories of hope and community unity inspired me to want to see how our community is overcoming quarantine funk.

If you have completed a home project to keep busy, volunteered in the community and snapped a picture, planted a garden, potted a new plant, did a fun activity with your family, or picked up a new hobby JFS WANTS TO SEE!

In next month's OCN, JFS will highlight our community members to share how we are finding hope, embracing change, and generating positivity.

Email your photos, including a brief description and names of individuals, to: [Clafortune@thejewishfed.org](mailto:Clafortune@thejewishfed.org) or [rkelly@thejewishfed.org](mailto:rkelly@thejewishfed.org). Also, please add a statement that you agree to having your photos in next month's JFS OCN article.



### A Message From Jewish Family Services Director, Rowan Kelley

As we continue to engage in social distancing to protect the community, Jewish Family Services volunteers are continuing to provide person-to-person calling to anyone in the community who is isolated or would like to receive a call, both for check-ins and socialization. Additionally, Jewish Family Services staff and volunteers continue to provide assistance with obtaining groceries, and our JFS Food Pantry continues to operate by providing Pick-Up and Delivery Options. For more information, please go to the Jewish Family Services page on the Federation website, or contact Rowan Kelley at [rkelly@thejewishfed.org](mailto:rkelly@thejewishfed.org).

# Thank You For Attending!

*Continued From Page 1*

Sara. On our final day, Thursday, we served up an amazing documentary on the shared experiences of African Americans and Jews during the civil rights movement. Our wonderful panel of seven community and religious leaders, led by the talented Ricky Herbst of DeBartolo, reminded us all that there is much to be done in pursuit of our goal to eliminate racism and anti-Semitism from the world we live in.

The Film Festival is so much more than just excellent films. Its goal is to educate and entertain; to enrich our Jewish roots with themes that will call for conversation and action. This year, more than ever, we hope that we touched your hearts with ideas and positive thoughts that will help us all get through this difficult time of physical separation.

Many thanks to our sponsors, who rode this year out with us, when no one was really sure what it would look like.

Many thanks to the Film Festival Committee, who spent hours watching and discussing hundreds of films, only to have to make the difficult decision of modifying the festival to a digital format.

Special thank you to

Sheri Alpert for her guidance and role in shaping this year's festival and to Emily Benedix for her countless hours of work on behalf of the festival, on top of all that she does. Thanks also to Leslie Marcum, for her beautifully designed emails and advertising and Bob Feferman for his role in bringing together our world class panel. Our new commander in chief, Moshe Kruger, though he started his role at a very trying time, showed unwavering support and enthusiasm for the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Michiana Jewish Film Festival.

It's never too early to join our 2021 Film Fest Committee! Email me at [skramer@thejewishfed.org](mailto:skramer@thejewishfed.org) if you are passionate about bringing amazing films to our area.

Can't wait to see you next year at DeBartolo!

## Thank you to our committee who shared their time and talent to plan the Michiana Jewish Film Festival



- Ben Finan
- Nana Fromm
- Mike Krueger
- Leslie Krueger
- Bill Lopatin
- Laurie Martin
- Hugh Metzger
- Sam Mirkin
- Helen Winer Muram
- Nanci Wilford

## Health Care Heros

### Thank you to Dr. Betsy Rossow and all our front line workers who are helping save lives in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you are a healthcare professional, first responder, or public health employee working in Michiana, we want to salute your commitment to our community. Please send us your name along with a photo, place of work, and any comments you would like to share about your COVID-19 experience to [info@thejewishfed.org](mailto:info@thejewishfed.org).

We would love the opportunity to feature our local heroes in our newsletter.

*Betsy Rossow, MD,  
Pediatric Hospital  
Medicine specialist at  
Beacon Children's Hospital*



## From Our Friends & Partners!

### How Does Breakfast and a Schmooze Sound?

You provide the breakfast and we provide the schmooze. On June 14th at 10:30 AM, join the Michiana Jewish Historical Society to look at photos, reminisce, and have breakfast or just a cup of coffee - all from the comfort of your own home via Zoom. We will limit this schmooze to 8 people, so sign up soon. If there is interest, we'll schedule more.

To Register, please email [Michianajewishhistorical@gmail.com](mailto:Michianajewishhistorical@gmail.com).

We hope to see you there!





# From the Desk of our Shlichah



*Education Corps in its first years*

Hello everyone! I hope you're all well and using this Corona time for the good, despite the challenges and difficulties. I'm writing to you from Israel and I wanted to tell you about my army service in the Education Corps as a teacher. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has the only Education Corps in the world. And the Soldier-Teachers Unit is one of its units.

### *So why does Israel have an Education Corps?*

In Israel's early years, it had to absorb millions of Jewish immigrants who came from all over the world to build their new home in this old-new country. Although they were Jewish, they spoke different languages and had different traditions.

In 1951, David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, assigned soldiers as teachers to teach the new immigrants Hebrew and help them integrate

into society. At its establishment, the unit numbered about thirty female teachers.

Through the years, the Education Corps took on a new mission to assist in reducing the social gaps in Israeli society by helping at-risk youth to enlist and integrate into the army. That was my job.

### *Working in a High School for At-Risk Youth*

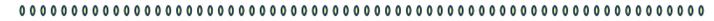
Even though Israeli Jewish citizens are required to serve in the army, many at-risk youths find reasons not to serve. They have issues of low self-esteem which makes it difficult for them to think they can do a meaningful service. And also many times they need to work after school to help to feed their family.

### *So why does the army bother with them and try to support them?*

It is widely known in Israel that successful service in the army can lead to success in life. At-risk

## My Army Service as a Teacher in Education Corps

By Chen Nissan



youth who don't serve in the army, run a much higher risk of ending up in jail and living a life of crime and poverty. My job was to motivate and to convince these young people to enlist in the army. During my army service, I worked in several high schools. There was one that was a totally inspiring experience. It is called the "Tomashin School" in Holon.

The Tomashin School is specifically for at-risk youth and for many, it's their last chance to graduate from high school. What amazed me was the love and dedication of the teachers for their students. They became not only teachers but sometimes more like parents. I saw how these tough young people were transformed by the love and care of their teachers. Through that, I learned of the power of the unconditional love

of a dedicated teacher. I learned that change is possible.

### *Things I Learned from my Army Experience*

As a 19-year-old, during my army service, I learned a lot about society and people who live in poverty. I learned that while I was talking to these kids about big ideas like patriotism, many of the teenagers who I was working with could not connect with these abstract ideas. I went to my work with idealism and high hopes and came away with insights into the complexity of solutions for tough issues like poverty. It was a very humbling experience.

Nevertheless, I am very proud of the fact that I served in an army that goes out of its way to provide equal opportunity for at-risk youth to realize their potential in the army and in life.



*Me as a teacher soldier*



### Memorial Contributions

*We welcome contributions to our various funds.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Sara & Milton Brook JFS Fund                            | Sherry Moses Holocaust Memorial Fund                 |
| Friends of the PJ Library                               | Bernard & Shirley Natkow Campership                  |
| Ron S. & Nancy P. Cohen JFS Fund                        | Bernard H. Natkow Lecture Fund                       |
| Karen Dwyer <i>Our Community News</i> Fund              | Okon Family Endowment for Holocaust Education        |
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| Jewish Family Services Food Pantry                      | Harvey & Lillian Roland Scholarship                  |
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### The Jewish Federation expresses its appreciation to these generous donors:

**From the following contributors:**

- |                          |                     |
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| Board & Staff of JFSJV   | Terry & Jeff Zelvy  |
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**To the following funds:**

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

**In Memory of:**

- Lisa Lerman
- Alice Schuster
- Marvin Talan

**In Honor of:**

- Leonard Weingarten's 65th Birthday

## Federation Book Club

by Beth Buechler

### People of the Book, by Geraldine Brooks

The convenience of using Zoom for our sessions during the pandemic made it possible to meet for a second session with a smaller group when a scheduling mistake had left someone out. This multi-layered historical novel about the multiple rescues of the Sarajevo Haggadah—going back in time from 1996 to 1940 to 1894 to 1609 to 1492 and then twelve more years to 1480, captured our imaginations and gave us a pleasant escape from living in quarantine.

Those dates, above, follow the life of the Sarajevo Haggadah include Serb shelling during the Bosnian war, WWII, the Spanish Inquisition, and earlier. We talked about getting immersed in these characters, wars, themes of diversity, oppression, patriarchy; and were all but one less enthused about the main character Hannah's story of her neglect-abusive narcissistic mother, and a lack-luster love interest. The novel ended with a thriller-type of mystery, and all of us agreed that history, unfortunately, repeats itself; that the human race goes through periods of thriving on arts, sciences, acceptance of culture diversity followed by the devastation of dictatorial men in power.

### Upcoming Schedule of Books:

- June 4: 'Tis, a Memoir by Frank McCourt
  - July 2: Kaddish.com, a novel by Nathan Englander
  - August 6: Fortitude: American Resilience in the Era of Outrage, a non-nonsense advice book by Dan Crenshaw
  - September 3: The Dutch House, a novel by Ann Patchett
  - October 1: Educated, a memoir by Tara Westover
  - November 5: The Marsh King's Daughter, a novel by Karen Dionne
  - December 3: The Lost Man, a novel by Jane Harper
  - January 7: The Rosie Project, a novel by Graeme Simsion
- The Federation Book Club will continue to meet via Zoom at 4 PM for about an hour on the first Thursday 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. The only requirement for attending a session is to read the book as listed for that date.

### OUR VISION. OUR MISSION. OUR VALUES. OUR GOALS.

The Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley is the central resource to embrace, connect and support Jews locally and globally through social services, coordinated fundraising, community outreach, and educational and recreational programs.



THE **STRENGTH** OF A PEOPLE.  
THE **POWER** OF COMMUNITY.

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*You're Invited!*  
**2020 Annual Meeting**  
**Thursday, June 11 at 7:00 PM**  
*Presented in a Virtual Format*



For the health and well-being of our members, staff, and guests, the Jewish Federation will be hosting our Annual Meeting in a virtual format this year. In order to adjust to this format we will be postponing our traditional lecture or entertainment and focus primarily on the business section of our meeting.

**Our evening will include:**

- Reports by the President & Executive Director
- Election and instillation for the 2020-2021 Board of Directors
- Recognition of President Lisa Lerman z"l, our outgoing board members and former Executive Director Ben Davis.
- Awarding of our College Scholarships
- Presentation of the Robert Simon Leadership Award
- Presentation of the Betty and Sam Schpok Spirit of Federation Award

Watch our digital marketing for more information. To RSVP please email [info@thejewishfed.org](mailto:info@thejewishfed.org). Participants who have given an RSVP will be sent a link via email for the meeting the morning of Thursday, June 11, 2020.