



L'ev el L'ev

HEART TO HEART
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY 2025
SHEVAT/ADAR 5785

A Message from Cheryl Stern and Marci Delson

Dear WRJ,

There's something truly special about being together in person. While virtual meetings and connections are useful and have their place, the energy, camaraderie, and sense of belonging that come from face-to-face interactions are irreplaceable. When we gather, we're reminded of the power of community and the joy of shared experiences.

After sending out our survey to the attendees of the Cincinnati gathering, the results spoke volumes: we all value and crave the personal connections that come with spending time together. Seeing a smile, hearing laughter, and engaging in heartfelt conversations in real-time fosters a deeper sense of connection. It's clear—prioritizing these moments of togetherness is essential.

That's why we're thrilled to announce our upcoming regional events, aptly titled "***We Belong Together***."

These gatherings are more than just dates on a calendar—they're opportunities to celebrate our shared values, build stronger bonds, and nurture the relationships that make our community thrive.

Mark your calendars and join us for these exciting regional events:

West Heartland
OSRUI, Oconomowoc, WI
March 21–23, 2025

East Heartland
Columbus, OH
June 28–29, 2025

Mid Heartland
Ann Arbor, MI
July 19–20, 2025

These weekends promise meaningful programming, joyful celebration, and the chance to strengthen the bonds that unite us. Whether you're reconnecting with old friends or meeting new ones, you'll leave each event with a renewed sense of purpose and belonging.

Because we truly do belong together.

Heartland News and Events

From Fedoras to Fascinators

February 6, 2025
8:00 pm ET / 7:00 pm CT
A Free Program on ZOOM



Join us for a delightful parade through the history of ladies hats with well known Chicago performer, Ellie of [Ellie Presents](#).

[Register here](#) by Monday, February 3. Space is limited to the first 100 to register. Once you register, you will receive the Zoom link.

[Click here](#) to download the flyer to share with your women's group.

Questions? Email Kathy Madura at
optsisterhood@gmail.com

Hillary's Book Club

Thursday, March 6, 8 pm EST / 7 pm CST

***The Wolf Hunt* by Ayelet Gundar-Goshen**

Ayelet Gundar-Goshen is a practicing clinical psychologist, has been a news editor with Israel's leading newspaper, and has worked for the Israeli civil rights movement. *The Wolf Hunt* is set in Palo Alto, CA, and explores the racial and religious fault lines of a local community from the perspective of an Israeli expat.

[Click here](#) for the flyer and registration.





HEARTLAND DISTRICT WEST REGION EVENT

"WE BELONG TOGETHER"

MARCH 21-23, 2025
FRIDAY, 5 PM CT - SUNDAY, 12 PM CT
AT OSRUI IN OCONOMOWOC, WI.



Join together as we learn, pray, sing, and have fun at WRJ Heartland District's West Region Event.

Enjoy workshops, activities, and Shabbat services that will help you to grow both personally and as a leader.



WHO IS THIS WEEKEND FOR:

We invite you to our special weekend for women (those who identify as female, non-binary, or gender fluid), whether you are new to WRJ and Heartland or have attended many previous events.



WHAT TO EXPECT?

Options for attendees will be available in various forms: attending all three days, two days, one day, a service, etc. Whatever your availability is, we welcome you and hope you will have a great time at Heartland District's West Region Event as "We Belong Together."



Heartland District West Region includes: Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. But **ALL** who **want to belong to our WRJ community are invited.**

[Click here](#) to register by March 5.

If you can't attend this event, you can still donate to the Heartland District by clicking [HERE](#).

Sisterhood News and Events

NY Times Best-Selling Author
The Goddess of Warsaw

Lisa Barr



In-Person at Temple Beth Israel
Monday, March 10, 2025 - 7:00pm

Temple Beth Israel,
3601 W Dempster St,
Skokie, IL 60076

[Click here](#) to register.

[Click here](#) for the flyer to share with your sisterhood/women's group.

CALLING ALL HEARTLAND WOMEN'S GROUPS!

Our communications team is here to help you get the word out about any of your group's big events and programs. Please email a completed flyer or feel free to contact [Karen Dillon](#) if you would like some help in creating a flyer for your event. *Materials must be received by the 25th of each month.*

Andi Blain and Karen Dillon

Co-VPs Marketing & Communications



WRJ Rabbi Marla J. Feldman Social Justice Conference April 4-7, 2025 in Washington, DC



Join your sisters from the Heartland District at WRJ's Social Justice Conference!

Spend time with like-minded women who share your passion for advancing our Reform Jewish values in a welcoming and encouraging environment, discussing the biggest, most important issues of our time.

[Click here](#) for more information about the conference and scholarship opportunities. And [click here](#) to register for this incredible event!

Announcing Social Justice Conference Scholarships

The Heartland District is pleased to offer limited scholarships to help defray expenses for district members attending the Rabbi Marla J. Feldman Social Justice Conference, being held in Washington, DC, April 4-7, 2025. You can [apply here](#). Deadline is Sunday, February 15.

WRJ Microgrant Applications Now Open

Is your women's group hesitant to plan an event because you don't have the

funding available to bring it to life? If you are a WRJ-affiliated group, you may be able to qualify for a microgrant ranging between \$500-\$2,500. This grant can be used to help you defray the costs for ANY program or project that relates to engagement or social justice/advocacy.

Put a plan together and submit your grant application by June 30, 2025. You have plenty of time to plan. So develop your proposal, apply for a grant, promote your event, implement your program... and then revel in your success!

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Good & Welfare



We send our deepest condolences to the Bayer Family on the passing of Barry Bayer. Notices of condolence can be sent to to: Susan Bayer, Mather Place 2801 Old Glenview Road, #214, Wilmette, IL 60091 and sbayer41@gmail.com.

We want to cheer for each other in the good times and support each other during difficult ones. Please keep me informed of your sisters' difficulties and celebrations by emailing me at shawnolds1967@gmail.com.

Be well,
Shawna Olds
Good & Welfare Chair

Heartland Products



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Speakers Bureau



Request a Speaker

The Heartland District's [Speakers Bureau](#) is a great tool to bring interesting and informative speakers to your organization. The speaker can address a specific problem or topics in general that can help your organization achieve its goals. Sisterhoods/women's groups in the Heartland District are entitled to a speaker every other year. There is no charge for a district speaker. WRJ also has a speaker's program. To learn about both programs, please visit the Heartland District's website [here](#).

Make a Gift to Heartland



A gift to the Heartland District is a wonderful way to recognize, remember, or honor the special people in your life: your sisterhood/women's group, your leadership, your clergy, your family and friends.

Make a gift to WRJ Heartland District to say "thank you," "happy birthday," or congratulations," or to send get well wishes or condolences. An acknowledgement will be emailed to each person whose email address is provided.

[Click here](#) to donate. The Heartland District appreciates your support!

Stay Connected



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[Heartland District Mighty Networks](#)
[WRJ Website](#)
[WRJ Facebook Page](#)



Mighty Networks: A Way to Stay Connected

Mighty Networks allows us to connect with our sisters throughout WRJ! Looking for someone to carpool with to OSRUI in March for the West Region event? Or find a roommate for your hotel stay at the upcoming Social Justice conference in DC? Mighty Networks is a great place for that!

To request access, just email us at leadership@wrj.org and we'll get you connected!

Heartland District Forms & WRJ Resources

Useful links ►

[Alumnae Association Form](#)
[Financial Deposit Form](#)
[Financial Expense Reimbursement Form](#)
[Financial Vendor Payment Request Form](#)
[Leadership Change Form](#)
[Speakers Bureau Request Form](#)
[Treasurer's Work Sheet](#)
[Zoom Meeting Request Form](#)

[WRJ's Brit Kehillah](#) (shared behavioral agreement)
[Policy on Harassment](#)
[WRJ's Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(REDI\) resources](#)
[Microaggression resource](#)

To receive our monthly *Lev el Lev* newsletter,
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Alison Miller, Newsletter Editor



WRJ strengthens the voice of women worldwide and empowers them to create caring communities, nurture congregations, cultivate personal and spiritual

growth, and advocate for and promote progressive Jewish values.

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