



Lev el Lev

HEART TO HEART
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



APRIL 2025
NISAN-IYYAR 5785
CHAG SAMEACH!



A Message from Rozan Anderson

Dear WRJ,

I'm recently home from the 2025 West Regional at OSRUI, the URJ retreat center in Oconomowoc, WI. What a wonderful weekend learning, praying, eating, and schmoozing with so many friends, new and long-time, similarly committed to our WRJ pillars of sisterhood, spirituality, and social justice. There's always something new to experience, and this weekend was no exception. Please make sure to save the dates for the upcoming East and Mid Regionals later this spring and summer. I hope to see you at one or both!



I was invited last week to a lunch where I had the opportunity to meet Israeli Rabbi Yael Katz, who is the Head of Congregational, Youth, Young Adult and Educational Activities for the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism. Her words replenished my confidence in a world in which we can and must move forward together towards our goals of peaceful and just societies, here in the US, in Israel, and around the world. Of course, this is also good grounding for Passover, where we'll retell the story of our time in the dark, narrow space, and how we found our way – *together* – towards better times. It's only one story, but really, it's the same story, as applicable to today as it's always been.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at WRJ's Rabbi Marla J. Feldman

Social Justice Conference (SJC) this week! We'll be lobbying our legislators and also bringing lots of great info and resolve back to the Heartland.

May we all continue to move forward *together* from strength to strength. *Chag Pesach sameach!*

Rozan



Rozan Anderson
WRJ Heartland District President

Heartland Upcoming Events

GUCI Women's Work Weekend

Help get our URJ camp ready for another summer!

**Thursday, May 1 - Sunday, May 4
Zionsville, IN**

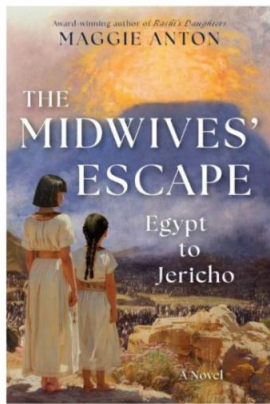


The WRJ Heartland District and GUCI are excited to invite you to our Women's Work Weekend. Together we'll paint, clean, organize, plant, and more to prepare GUCI for another fantastic summer... and have a great time doing it!

Dinner and welcome cocktails will begin at 6:00 pm on Thursday, and we will start work on Friday at 9:00 am. You are welcome to join anytime Thursday, Friday, or Saturday.

[Click here](#) for the flyer with more information.

[Click here](#) to register by **Friday, April 18.**



The Midwives' Escape: From Egypt to Jericho by Maggie Anton

**Thursday, May 15, 2025
8:00 pm ET / 7:00 pm CT
on Zoom**

Maggie Anton will be in the Zoom meeting to discuss her new historical novel bringing to life a new telling of the Exodus story through vivid descriptions of what daily life was like at this time, epic battlefield scenes, and a colorful cast of characters. Anton is well known for her books on Rashi's daughters.

[Click here](#) for more details and to register.

Questions? Contact Laura Cooper at cooper4449@gmail.com.



HILLARY'S HEARTLAND BOOK CLUB.



Leaving Lucy Pear by Anna Solomon

**Thursday, June 5, 2025
8:00 pm ET / 7:00 pm CT
on Zoom**

In mesmerizing prose, award-winning author Anna Solomon weaves together an unforgettable group of characters, as their lives collide on the New England coast. Set against one of America's most turbulent decades, *Leaving Lucy Pear* delves into questions of class, freedom, and the meaning of family, establishing Anna Solomon as one of our most captivating storytellers.

To register for the Zoom meeting, [click here](#).

Questions? Contact Jane Page at janepage67@gmail.com or Connie Silver at connieksilver@comcast.net.

Save the Date!



Registration Coming Soon!!

ILLINOIS AREA DAY

EMPOWERED
Women
EMPOWER
WOMEN

**Sunday, June 22, 2025
8:15am - 2:00pm (CT)
Temple Beth-El, Northbrook, IL**

Keynote Speaker: Rebecca Weininger

Anti-Defamation League Deputy Regional Director, Midwest Region

Join Heartland District for a day of empowerment, connection, and celebration as we come together with women from across Illinois and beyond. Reconnect with old friends and build new relationships, while celebrating the strength and power of women. Together, we will uplift each other all while gaining valuable leadership and personal development skills.

[Click here](#) for more details.

Questions? Contact Joanne Merritt at joannem9TBI@gmail.com.

We Belong Together!

Heartland East Regional

June 27-29, Congregation Beth Tikvah
Worthington, OH

Heartland Mid Regional

July 19-20, Temple Beth Emeth
Ann Arbor, MI

Join together as we learn, pray, sing, and have fun at WRJ Heartland District's East Regional and Mid Regional events. Enjoy workshops, activities, and Shabbat services that will help you to grow both personally and as a leader.



Registration coming soon!

Heartland District Convention

March 13-15, 2026

Indianapolis, IN



Social Justice



In some political circles, "DEI"—Diversity, Equality, Inclusion—has become a dirty word. We now have executive orders barring government agencies from engaging in DEI, state laws barring public universities from having DEI offices or even courses that discuss these topics, and efforts to scrub the internet, or at least government and school websites, of anything that could be considered DEI. WRJ and the URJ, however, remain committed to the

work of DEI.

In the Reform movement, we appreciate the wide diversity of our members. Jews come in all ethnicities, races, classes, sexual orientations, and gender identities. We welcome all Jews and want to make sure that we treat all Jews with equity. We all deserve to be treated fairly. If there is any doubt that this is a hallmark of Jewish law, just think about Hillel's summary of Judaism. *"What is hateful to you, do not do to any person. All the rest is commentary."* [Click here](#) for more information on WRJ's commitment to DEI. For additional statements on URJ's commitment, [click here](#) and [here](#).

Also, earlier this year the Department of Education sent a letter to all colleges and universities claiming that the DEI programs and the classes in Women's Studies, African American Studies, Jewish Studies, etc. constitute illegal discrimination. There is a law professor's letter that debunks these claims and shows none of this is illegal discrimination. You can find that letter [here](#). (I have signed onto the letter, as well.)

Last but certainly not least, if you haven't voted yet in the World Zionist Congress election, please do so now and vote for the VOTE REFORM slate. You can vote today by clicking [here](#).

Sally Frank

Heartland District VP, Social Justice

Women's Groups News and Events

Did you have an especially successful event in the past couple of months that other sisterhoods could replicate? Well, don't keep all that fun stuff to yourself! Share it with the rest of us! That's what this section is all about--sharing great event ideas with your sisters across the Heartland!

Send a write up on the event along with photos and contact info to [Andi Blain](#) or [Karen Dillon](#).

Good & Welfare

We send our deepest condolences to the following Heartland



District members:

Karen Sim, President of Women of Reform Judaism and a member of our Heartland District, on the passing of her beloved husband, John Sim. John passed away peacefully on Friday, March 28, with Karen by his side. John will also be missed by his children, Rabbi Caroline Sim and Alec Sim. John's obituary can be found [here](#). Condolences may be sent to Karen and her family at 5668 McCarthy Ct, West Chester, OH 45069 and karen.schiffer.sim@gmail.com.

Cherie Blazofsky on the passing of her mother. Notes of condolence may be mailed to Cherie at 6511 Legacy Woods Trl, West Bloomfield, MI 48322.

Brenda Altus on the passing of her sister, Vicki Socolof. Notes of condolence may be mailed to Brenda at 330 Knot Hole Cir, Chuluota, FL 32766.



We send a hearty Mazel Tov to Marcia Koester on the celebration of her first grandson, Ronen. Notes of congratulations may be mailed to Marcia at 5601 Bernard Pl, Edina, MN 55436.



We are sending lots of healing energy to Marilyn Weisberg for recent past surgeries and an upcoming shoulder surgery. Get well wishes may be mailed to Marilyn at 591 Theodore Wirth Pkwy #408, Golden Valley, MN 55422.



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



**What does the
Vote Reform slate
stand for?**

Vote to protect religious equality,
defend democracy, and promote
long-term peace & security in the
World Zionist Congress Elections.



VOTE REFORM TODAY!

Get involved and VOTE in the 2025 World Zionist Congress Election, March 10-May 4. Help build a democratic, pluralistic, secure Israel.

Democracy and Reform Judaism are under threat in Israel. Your vote matters!

[Click here](#) to cast your vote now!

Or Ami Awards: Submit Your

Program Before July 31!

Established in 1973, WRJ's **Or Ami "Light of My People" Award** for special achievement in programming recognizes exemplary events that can serve as models for other WRJ districts and women's groups. These awards honor those WRJ-affiliated groups undertaking replicable programs or projects of distinctive character and significance.



WRJ is proud to be a shining light, providing the path for outstanding programming. Now it is time to shine a light on our superstars in this area.

Applications are currently being accepted for programs occurring between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025. **Applications must be submitted by July 31, 2025.** To apply for the Or Ami Award, [click here](#). For more information, [click here](#).

Additional questions? Email Talia Blank, WRJ Program Associate, at TBlank@WRJ.org

WRJ Microgrants Can Help Fund Your Next Big Event!

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. **Don't hesitate--apply today!**

Heartland Products

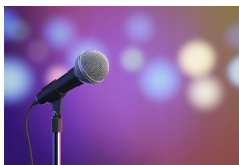


Get your Heartland District Pin!

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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!

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We want to share your stories - about great programs you are doing that others may want to copy. Please send us a short paragraph and a few pictures after your event and we will be happy to include it in upcoming newsletters.

Our communications team is here to help you get the word out about all Heartland District events and programs. Please email a completed flyer or contact Karen Dillon if you need help.

Materials must be received by the 25th of each month .

[Andi Blain](#) and [Karen Dillon](#), Co-VPs Marketing & Communications

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,
[click here](#) to join our mailing list

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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