

CONNECTIONS



WINTER
2019



Forging Life-Changing Connections at JSS

by Dawn Berney, JSS Executive Director

My personal life has spilled over into my professional life, and I couldn't be happier about it.

Let me explain. When my mother passed away over a decade ago, I felt like I had lost my close relationship with my elders. I wanted my children to experience the rich intergenerational connections that I had grown up with. In my search for ways to make that happen, I was lucky enough to connect with a JSS Case Manager. The JSS team invited me and my small children to help at monthly Shabbat celebrations at Oakwood Village. Over the years, my kids expanded their roles, helping lead songs as well as passing out challah, wine,

and song books. Those Shabbat celebrations have become a significant family tradition, and my youngest still helps today. My family gained more from that sense of connection than we ever could have given. And it all started with me reaching out to a JSS case manager as I looked to fill a void in our lives.

That first contact with a case manager exemplifies what we do best at JSS. We build connections that make people's lives better, whether they are volunteers, clients, or Jewish seniors living in continuing care communities. In this issue of **Connections**, you will get to know our current case managers, Caren and Maya, and learn

about the joys and challenges they encounter each day.

What is "Case Management?" In a nutshell, JSS case managers help people to become more self-sufficient and reduce their social isolation. What that looks like on a day to day basis varies widely, because our support is determined by each client's own goals. A case manager might find a falls prevention class to help a client stay safely living at home, assist a client who is job-hunting so they can support their children without relying on public benefits, or arrange transportation for a client to attend Lechayim where they can eat a healthy meal and stay connected to friends.



Also in this issue of **Connections**, you can learn from a former client about the challenges refugees face building a new life in America—and how JSS makes success possible. We have a rich selection of other community members and partners sharing their wisdom with us this issue.

You will also meet Rabbi Eric Weiss, long-time mentor to JSS Chaplaincy Director Rabbi Renée Bauer. He is a modern Jewish

sage whose wisdom guides our JSS chaplaincy program. Rabbi Weiss will be visiting Madison this month, and you will have a chance to join him for a brunch event on Sunday, Nov. 17th to experience the healing power of Jewish traditions and teachings.

Please visit jssmadison.org or call us at **608-442-4081** to learn more about upcoming programs and events.

B'Shalom, Dawn



Being part of a community is so important. You get so much, both from giving and from belonging.

Caren started in 2017. She is a Madison native, and worked for 10 years in Chicago as a school social worker before moving back to her hometown. In this photo, Caren shares a light moment at a Lechayim Lunch with JSS volunteer Pamela Phillips Olson, MSW.

“How may we help you?”

A Legacy of Caring at JSS by Christina Kantor

A big part of what we do at JSS is “Case Management.” We help clients access and use public and private resources, advocate on clients’ behalf with agencies and service providers, and support clients emotionally as they navigate life challenges. Case managers may work with a whole family; arranging rides for Mom to Lechayim while helping other

family members with employment services, housing assistance, benefits applications and referrals to community resources.

Community partnerships are a big part of the role of JSS case managers: developing relationships, networking, and staying up to date about community resources allows us to do our best for each client.

JSS case managers Maya Garbuz and Caren Minkoff have advanced degrees in Social Work and many years’ experience. Both admit they are “filling big shoes” here at JSS. Former JSS staff and social workers created a legacy of caring that is widely recognized in the larger community.

Meet Maya and Caren, and learn a bit about their holistic and heartfelt approach to helping community members:

What is a typical day for you?

CAREN: Every day is different!

MAYA: That's impossible to answer, sorry. You can plan out your whole day, but an emergency call comes in and you will spend your whole day dealing that.

What do you love about your job?

MAYA: The variety. And that we have the flexibility to take on new challenges. We also have funding to help clients overcome financial barriers they encounter that could derail their progress in reaching their goals. That is unusual for case managers. Also, I get to work with Russian-speaking seniors who are very grateful, as learning a new language can be a big challenge for seniors.

CAREN: We get to figure out how best to support each client's unique needs. Our work is not limited to a certain population, so we get to work with a wide variety of people.

What is hard about your job?

CAREN: I never really know what is coming. A lot of what I do I learn by doing it!

MAYA: I often need to make many phone calls just to schedule an appointment or get a clear answer for a client. One must be incredibly determined and persistent.

What jewels of wisdom can you offer readers?

CAREN: Being part of a community is so important. You get so much—both from giving and from belonging. And you can find support when you



Maya started at JSS in 2016 after over 10 years as a lead case manager for families with children who have disabilities. JSS resettled Maya's family from Russia in 2000.

need it. JSS strives to connect people to community, so they know themselves to be part of something bigger.

AND if you already know me from the community, know that I do separate what I learn from clients from my everyday life. And if you are concerned about the overlap of personal and professional, we still want you to reach out. Feel free to ask to work with Maya if that will make you feel more comfortable.

MAYA: Dane County has so many community resources. There may be help available, so ask for assistance when you need it! No need to struggle alone with challenges when there are programs or agencies out there that will support you.

Tell me about a memorable case (as you are allowed by confidentiality rules).

Caren: Staff from UW Hospital's Emergency Department called us about a woman who had been abandoned there by her partner.

She had no place to live, major health issues, and was afraid to return to her home country to face poverty, poor health care and natural disasters. I worked closely with a team of staff from several agencies to get her on her feet, and now she is in a leadership role advocating for others and giving back to the community. She tells me she owes us her life.

MAYA: A local hotel called because an older woman who seemed very confused was trying to take the hotel shuttle to an intercity bus station—in her nightgown. The hotel manager was very shaken because she did not know what to do. She called us because she knew the woman had come to town for a Bar Mitzvah. It was challenging because she was not our client and did not want our help, but I tried to do what I could for her under the circumstances. I was able to contact the woman's neighbor in New York and tried to make sure she had what she needed to get home safely.

My Rav is Visiting Madison in November

By Rabbi Renée Bauer



Rabbi Eric Weiss

“Take for yourself a Rav (a teacher)...” (Pirke Avot, 1:6)

The ancient rabbis tell us that everyone needs a rav (a teacher)—a trustworthy person with wisdom and experience—to help guide their steps. I was blessed to find my rav in 1998.

When I was working in the San Francisco Jewish community, I delayed my plan to apply to rabbinical school to attend a program through the Bay Area Jewish Healing Center. The program trained Jewish lay people in hospital chaplaincy (spiritual care). My experience with the program, and especially with its creator Rabbi Eric Weiss, opened new doors for me.

Rabbi Weiss, a chaplain, rabbi, author and Jewish educator, challenged me to move beyond an intellectual approach to Judaism, to think more deeply about my own spiritual life, and to listen to and trust the still

small voice within me. Rabbi Weiss became my trusted mentor and friend. He even flew to Philadelphia to attend my ordination in 2005.

When the opportunity arose to launch a chaplaincy program here in Madison I called upon my rav. His faith in my abilities—and his wisdom and experience—have helped shape community-based Jewish chaplaincy services for Dane County.

Everyone that breathes will experience illness and loss. These are universal human experiences that often foster spiritual reflection. Rabbi Weiss brings the tools of Jewish tradition and wisdom of the Jewish sages to help those facing these challenges. Jewish wisdom can help us to make sense of life’s challenges—and grow from them. He has co-edited two books on this topic, *Where Healing Resides* and *Where Grief Resides* from CCAR press. These collections of readings, poems, and meditations address the spiritual meaning we can find in difficult experiences: pregnancy loss, addiction, dementia, gender transition, end-of-life issues, and more.

It is my deep honor and privilege to welcome my rav to Madison on Sunday November 17, for an interactive community event focused on using Jewish wisdom to cope with difficult life

events. Whether you are a family caregiver, are facing illness, grief or other challenges yourself, support others as a Jewish professional, or are simply yearning for deeper spirituality, this brunch program will feed your body, mind and spirit. Attendees will also receive one of Rabbi Weiss’s books.

Please join us for what promises to be an inspiring exploration of Jewish spiritual wisdom. The event fee includes brunch, an interactive program with Rabbi Weiss, and a copy of one of his books. JSS extends gratitude to Tim and Kathy Mazur for their generous support of this event.

REGISTER NOW!

Where Healing Resides: Jewish Wisdom for Contemporary Challenges

An interactive brunch program

With Rabbi Eric Weiss, CEO of the Bay Area Jewish Healing Center.

WHEN: Sunday November 17,
11 AM – 1 PM

WHERE: Blackhawk Country Club,
3606 Blackhawk Drive, Madison

RSVP: To register by mail, send a check for \$12 per attendee to 6434 Enterprise Lane, Madison, WI 53719

OR register online at:
jssmadison.org/programs

Call 608-442-4060 about fee reductions, rides or other accommodations.

“From the religious to the secular, our natural spiritual hunger seeks nourishment.”

— Rabbi Eric Weiss, from *Mishkan R’fuah: Where Healing Resides* (2013, CCAR Press, New York)



“Working an exhausting job to support his family left him falling asleep in English class. Yet mastering English was the ticket to a more gratifying job...”

Coming “Home” to Madison—with New Resolve

After seventeen days in Kentucky, Ahmad had had enough. He packed up his family and moved back to Madison, abandoning a lease and job to return to a place where people were kind to him. When Ahmad and his family first arrived in Madison as refugees, strangers happily went out of their way to help him when he explained he was new to America and spoke little English. (In Kentucky, people occasionally responded to his requests for help with some new English “vocabulary” not fit for publication.)

He also had a team of allies at JSS and Open Doors for Refugees who were working to ease every step of his family’s integration.

He returned to his former job and apartment here, but with new resolve. He’d left Madison because he felt stuck—working an exhausting job left him falling asleep in English class and unable to enjoy his family’s company. But he knew that mastering English was the ticket

to a more gratifying job. Asylees and refugee who speak no English often find themselves in the same boat—eligible only to do hard physical labor that leaves little time and energy for attending class and studying.

Encouraged by JSS and Open Door for Refugees staff and volunteers’ unwavering faith in him, he promised himself that he would learn English on his own. He made fast progress. But the language barrier was not the only one he faced. When he applied for a job in his field, the employer told him they could not hire him even if they wanted to.

The federal government authorizes asylees and refugees to work in the US soon after arrival. Unfortunately, employers are sometimes confused about the law and hesitant to hire people like Ahmad. JSS case managers work directly with employers to help them understand the regulations. Employers are much more willing to hire JSS clients when they know the law is on their

side. JSS also helps clients with many aspects of the hiring process, which can be confusing. (PTO, I-9, W-4, W-2, SSN!) With case manager assistance and his own determination to teach himself English, Ahmad soon landed a job he loved: installing granite and tile kitchens (his specialty).

Ahmad has not seen outright public bigotry in the Madison area, but does occasionally meet someone who seems to mistrust people of Middle Eastern origin. Rather than taking it personally, he searches for a way to connect with them. And often, he wins them over with his warm open personality and sense of humor. A co-worker who initially mistrusted Ahmad and resisted his friendly overtures now waves him down regularly to share lunch breaks.

His life is much easier now. He is not sure he would have made it this far without the JSS resettlement team’s faith and encouragement. Having received so much help and support, he is now able to give back. Even though he works almost every day, he makes time to volunteer for both JSS and Open Doors for Refugees. He befriends others from his home country when they arrive in Madison feeling as overwhelmed and disoriented as he did. After only a few years in America, Ahmad is a hardworking and productive member of society—and a proud Wisconsin resident.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS: Lechayim Lunchtime Plus and Shabbat

Harry J. and Belle Goodman Lechayim Lunchtime Plus Program

Join us for great food, friends, fun and interesting programs.

We meet at Beth Israel Center, 1406 Mound Street, on the corner of Mound Street and Randall Avenue. To RSVP: see next page. A vegetarian option is available with a reservation. If you are 60 years or older, a minimum donation of \$4.00 is suggested, but please pay what is comfortable for you. The meal is \$9.73 for those under 60. If you cannot attend the meal, please join us for the free program at 1:00 pm.

MANY THANKS TO UW HILLEL ADAMAH
CATERING FOR OUR DELICIOUS KOSHER MEALS!

Schedule

- 11:30 am-12:00 pm: Yoga from a chair with Betsy Haimson or Estelle Katz
- 11:30 am -12:30 pm: (monthly) Blood pressure checks with nurse Lori Edelstein
- 12:00 pm-1:00 pm: Lunchtime
- 1:00 pm-2:00 pm: Program

November Programs and Menus:

- 11/11: A ship full of Jewish refugees lands in NY in 1944, with Dawn Berney
Moroccan Beef Stew (vegan Moroccan Stew)
- 11/18: Country Music with Bill & Bobbie Malone
Ropa Viejo: Cuban Shredded Beef (vegetarian Ropa Viejo with jackfruit)
- 11/25: Great Composers: Dan Barker on Piano
Thanksgiving feast (vegetarian stuffed peppers)

Upcoming Lechayim dates:

November 4, 11, 18, 25
 December 2, 9, 16
 January 6, 13, 27
 February 3, 10, 17, 24
 March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
 April 6, 20, 27
 May 4, 11

Find updates and schedules at jssmadison.org/programs

QUESTIONS? To set up rides, check for cancellations, or get more information, contact Paul Borowsky at [608-442-4083](tel:608-442-4083), paul@jssmadison.org.

Making Lechayim reservations

When you check-in at Lechayim, you can sign up for the following week.

Or call Jewish Social Services at [608-442-4081](tel:608-442-4081) or email office@jssmadison.org before 2:00 pm on the preceding Wednesday. If you did not make a reservation, contact Paul at [608-442-4083](tel:608-442-4083) or paul@jssmadison.org to see if there are any cancellations.

Jewish Social Services Brings Shabbat to Our Seniors

Our monthly Shabbat gatherings include candle-lighting, challah, singing and discussion. Residents, family and friends of residents, and rehab patients are welcome to attend.

Capitol Lakes: 3:00-4:00 pm, Grand Hall, 333 West Main Street

A program of Jewish Social Services and Capitol Lakes Retirement Community.

Led by Rabbi Andrea Steinberger with help from UW students through the Hillel Foundation.

December 6 (Chanukah)
No January Shabbat
February 7, 2020
March 6 (Purim)
May 1

Capital Lakes Passover Seder is on Monday, April 13, 2020, 11:30am - 2pm

Oakwood Village West: 3:30-4:30 pm, Oaks Community Room, 6225 Mineral Point Road

A program of Jewish Social Services and Oakwood Village University Woods.

Led by Rabbi Renée Bauer with help from JSS staff and volunteers. Music by Paul Grossberg.

November 15, 2019
December 20, 2019
January 17, 2020
February 21, 2020
March 20, 2020
May 15, 2020

Oakwood Passover Seder – Tuesday, April 14, 2020, 4:00 - 6:30 pm, Nakoma/Westmoreland room

Attic Angels: 2:30-3:30 pm, Garden Room, 8301 Old Sauk Road

A quarterly program of Jewish Social Services and the Attic Angel Association.

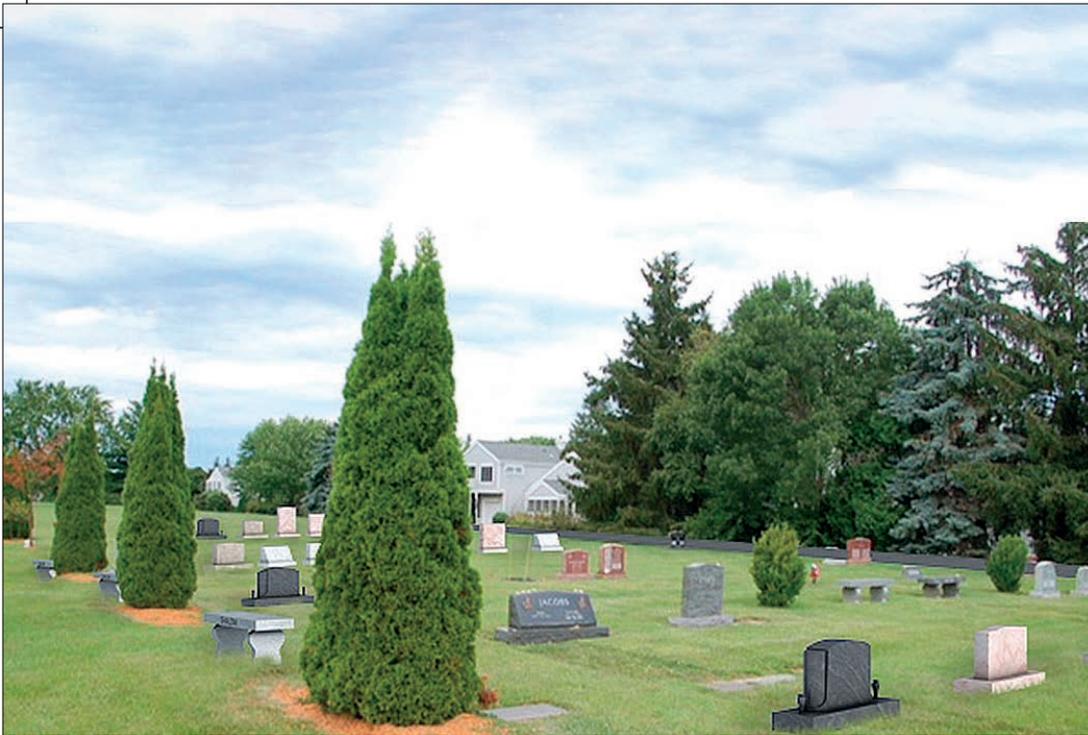
Led by Rabbi Renée Bauer. Music by Les Goldsmith.

December 13, 2019
March 13, 2020
May 22, 2020

JSS Board of Directors

October 2019 to October 2020

Brad Goldstein (President)	Carousel Bayrd
Barry Gidal (Past President)	Robert Breslow
Nathan Lipton (Treasurer)	Ariela Karasov
Rachel Rosenfeld (Secretary)	Amy Lessing
Betsy Abramson	Linda Reivitz
Livia Asher	Sarah Sherman



Get to Know Beit Olamim, Madison's Jewish Cemetery

By James Stein, MD, President, Jewish Burial Association of Madison (JBAM)



Dr. Jim Stein

Beit Olamim ("Eternal Home") is located at Sunset Memory Gardens cemetery at 7302 Mineral Point Road. It has two distinct yet equally beautiful and meaningful areas for burial:

Sha'ar HaRachamin (Gates of Compassion), which is for those who are Jewish. This section does not permit burial of cremains.

Sha'ar Shalom (Gates of Peace), which is for those who are Jewish, or a close relative of a Jewish person who was buried or expects to be buried here. In other words, a couple in which only one partner is Jewish may be buried near each other in this section. This section does permit burial of cremains.

Choosing a section can be a sensitive matter, so we encourage everyone to speak to their rabbi first. We also can help you find a rabbi. Please see

our website at jbamadison.org for more about our policies.

Many people ask about tattoos. Jewish law actually permits a Jewish burial if someone has a tattoo (and so do we). Those with tattoos may be buried in either section.

JBAM board and volunteers are grateful that Rabbi Renée Bauer, Director of Chaplaincy at Jewish Social Services of Madison, has been so involved with our work, and helps us serve our clients. JSS is an indispensable partner of JBAM.

For more information, please see jbamadison.org or call **608-467-3493**.

JSS is an indispensable partner of the Jewish Burial Association of Madison



Hilde and Julius Adler enjoy winter (and no longer have to shovel snow)!

Retirement Community?!? I Am NOT Old Enough!

by Hilde Adler, “retired” JSS volunteer

So, when is the right time to think about moving to a retirement community? Are you old enough? (of course not!) You can *absolutely* handle your house, your yard, the snow and ice, the leaking pipes, the creatures that somehow make it into the attic, and everything else that goes with home ownership. You like it where you are; you love the neighbors; you don’t want to live anywhere else. You do not want to live in an apartment and you certainly don’t want to downsize; what would you do with all that stuff?

I get it all! I’m not a psychologist or social worker, or anything that qualifies me for talking about retirement (or any other social issue for that matter) but I totally get it. How come? Because I’ve BTDT (been there, done that).

Almost five years ago (how did that happen—it feels like yesterday!?) my totally-unenthusiastic-about-the-idea

husband and I decided: it was time. (I admit, I had put our name on a waiting list several years before, just in case). And we DID it. But we’re old, mind you. You might be young. There’s a right window of time. *

I went through many stages on this journey. (Last I counted, there were twenty-seven.) Like everybody else, I started with “Don’t talk to me about this, I’m not moving, I love this house, I do not need to move,” and “I don’t want to live with all those ‘old’ people.” (Yes, I remember what age I turned on my last birthday—but I am not “old.”)

Eventually I got to stage 7: “I know I took this apartment, but I must have been crazy. I’m giving it back.” Then came #10: “OK, I’m here, but I’m never going to do any of those ‘social’ things they plan here. I have enough friends; I’m not interested in meeting a single new person.” (I have met so

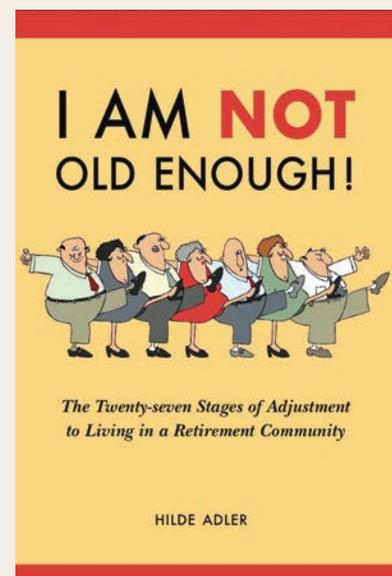


many cool new people!)

That fall I realized I was actually enjoying the season for the first time in years (no leaves to rake!) At stage twenty-seven I finally got to “I think I’m really glad I moved here.”

It’s been quite a journey. Good luck on yours!

* Sometimes a social worker is just the right person to help you figure this stuff out. (Once you get past stage 1, that is.) JSS case managers may be able to help.



Editors’ note: Hilde has written a very entertaining and thought-provoking little book about her journey: *I AM NOT OLD ENOUGH! The Twenty-seven Stages of Adjustment to Living in a Retirement Community*. It’s available on Amazon for \$7.99.

Tribute Donations

June 1 to September 30, 2019

In Honor of

Barbara Jacobson

Ben A. Jacobson

In Honor of Barbara Spierer

Kendall and Mary Rouse

In Honor of Dawn Berney

Corliss and Bill Karasov M.D.
Wendy Nelson
Sheryl Barrera-Disler
Harry and Karen Roth

In Honor of Dick Askey

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Harold and Shirley Blank

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In Memory of

Iver, Molly and Erin Karp

Norma D. Klagos

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In Memory of

Sylvia Kaufman

Jon and Becky G. Kaiser
James and Nancy Youngerman

In Memory of Trude Arm

Benjamin Arm

In Memory of Yetta Sokolow

Harvey Sokolow

Capitol Lakes Rosh HaShanah Tea, 2019

Yid Vicious performed with their usual joy and energy. Dr. Robert Factor blew Shofar.



photos by Christina Kantor

Jewish teens help local seniors celebrate Rosh Hashana

1) High school Jewish youth groups of Beth Israel Center, Temple Beth El, Congregation Shaarei Shamayim, and BBYO joined together with Jewish Social Services in the mitzvah of assembling and delivering Rosh Hashanah gift bags to Jewish seniors.

2) Kol HaKavod (kudos) to JSS and our Jewish teens for making the opportunity to mingle with old friends, make new friends, and visit with our community's delightful Jewish residents.

Photos by Deb Hoffman of Beth Israel Center



Jewish Social Services of Madison
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Madison, WI 53719-1117

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6434 Enterprise Lane
Madison, WI 53719
Phone: 608-442-4081
Fax: 608-278-7814
info@jssmadison.org

www.jssmadison.org

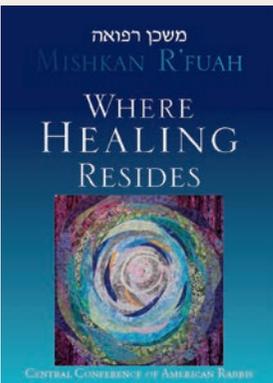


Rabbi Eric Weiss

Explore Timeless Jewish Wisdom for Modern Life with a Jewish Sage: Rabbi Eric Weiss

**Sunday November 17, 11 am - 1 pm
at Blackhawk Country Club**

3606 Blackhawk Dr., Madison



\$12* for full vegetarian brunch, interactive program and a copy of Rabbi Weiss's book *Mishkan R'fuah: Where Healing Resides*

TO RSVP: Call, mail a check, or go to jssmadison.org/programs

See page 4 for more information

*Everyone is welcome regardless of financial circumstances or physical needs. Please call 608-442-4060 for fee waivers, rides or other accommodations.



Blackhawk Country Club

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