



Winter/Spring 2026 Adult Programs

JANUARY – MARCH



In-Person Classes
Drop-In Activities
Author Talks
Health and Wellness
Jewish Arts and Culture

In-Person Classes

Creative Knitting Explorations

TUESDAYS, JANUARY 13 – FEBRUARY 17

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

This intermediate knitting class is designed for those who have mastered the basics and are looking to refine their skills, tackle more intricate patterns, and develop advanced techniques. In a relaxed, social setting, instructor Mollie Plotkin will shepherd you through the project of your choice. Get your questions answered, become inspired by others' work, and make friends in a creative, welcoming environment!

INSTRUCTOR: Mollie Plotkin is an experienced knitter and designer who has taught knitting at the Springfield JCC for many years.

COST: \$60 JCC members, \$75 general public



Telling Your Story through Writing

MONDAYS

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

SESSION I: FEBRUARY 2 – MARCH 23

SESSION II: MARCH 30 – MAY 18

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Do you have stories just waiting to be written, but you're not sure how to start? Join our supportive, low-pressure writing class which will help you get in touch with the writer inside of you. The idea is to explore with a writer's eye, gain confidence, and experiment with fiction and non-fiction. Sessions will include ideas to get your creative juices flowing, techniques to write clearly and effectively, and guidance from a professional.

INSTRUCTOR: Robert Chipkin has taught writing at Western New England University and other area colleges. Over the course of his career, he was a writer, editor, and columnist at the Springfield newspapers and MassLive. His columns have been featured on WFCR, the local public radio station.

COST: \$130 JCC members, \$150 general public



The American Revolution: Forging a Nation

MONDAYS, JANUARY 26 – FEBRUARY 23

3:00 – 5:00 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

This course will explore the factors that led to the separation of the American colonies from Great Britain. We will cover the events leading to the Revolutionary War, the problems faced by the revolutionary government in fighting the war, the war itself, and the postwar events leading to the adoption of the United States Constitution.

Pre-course requirement: Watch Ken Burns' six-part *American Revolution* series, available to stream on all PBS platforms including PBS.org.

INSTRUCTOR: Stuart Greene is a retired Captain of Artillery and received three Bronze Stars for heroism in combat and a Purple Heart for wounds received, among others. Most notably, his unit received a Presidential Unit Citation which is the highest award given in combat.

COST: \$130 JCC members, \$150 general public

Building Better Mental Health Series

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 and

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

1:00 – 2:00 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Join us for two engaging sessions designed to equip you with tools to boost mood, build resilience, and strengthen your mental and emotional well-being. Mental health trainer Chris Rich will focus on social connection, movement, nutrition, sleep, and an array of stress management tools.

INSTRUCTOR: Chris Rich is a Certified Life Coach who works with clients on a wide variety of topics, including self care, burnout, work life balance, mindfulness, resiliency, mental health, fitness, self esteem, and more.

COST: \$10 JCC members, \$12 general public (includes both sessions)



Mah Jongg Classes

Learn to play, meet new friends, refine your skills, and have fun mastering this timeless tile game. Now even more options to align with your schedule! All classes taught in-person at the JCC.

INSTRUCTOR: Adena Falk believes that Mah Jongg is a lifetime game where everything you need to know about life can be learned at the table with family and friends. She has been playing for many years and loves sharing the game, its wisdom, and the joy of connecting with new people.

Beginner Mah Jongg

DAYTIME CLASS: TUESDAYS, JANUARY 27 – FEBRUARY 17
1:00 – 2:30 PM

EVENING CLASS: WEDNESDAYS, JANUARY 28 – FEBRUARY 18
6:30 – 8:00 PM

A four-week introductory course designed for absolute beginners. Participants will learn the fundamentals of American Mah Jongg, including tile identification, gameplay structure, the National Mah Jongg League (NMJL) card, and basic strategies through guided play and practice hands.

Materials needed: Original 2025 NMJL Card

COST: \$135 JCC members, \$150 general public



Mah Jongg Refresher: Skills and Strategies Workshop

DAYTIME WORKSHOP: TUESDAY, MARCH 17
1:00 – 3:00 PM

EVENING WORKSHOP: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18
6:30 – 8:30 PM

This fun and friendly pop-up workshop is perfect for anyone who has completed a Beginner Mah Jongg class or for experienced players looking to brush up on their skills and strategies. You'll advance your understanding of the game while sharpening your play. Please remember to bring your 2025 NMJL Card.

COST: \$35 JCC members; \$45 general public

Health and Wellness

Hearing Health with Dr. Ted Mason

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9

1:00 – 2:30 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Are you or a loved one struggling with your hearing even when using hearing aids? You are not alone. Take the next step to address your hearing loss and join us for a free seminar to learn about hearing loss and implantable solutions. We will discuss hearing loss and implantable technology, how a hearing implant can benefit you in your everyday life, the surgical procedure and how to prepare, why hearing implant reliability matters, and steps you can take to address you or your loved one's hearing loss.

PRESENTERS: Ted Mason, MD, is an ENT-otolaryngologist affiliated with Baystate Medical Center, Mercy Medical Center, and Cooley Dickinson Hospital. He will be joined by Dr. Jeanne Coburn, Aud, Lexi Wilson, Aud, and Will Hendry, MS

COST: Free and open to the public



Nothing cancels a good class quicker than everyone waiting until the last minute to register! Please register at least one week prior to the class start date.

FREE

Brain-Healthy Habits and Reducing Your Risk of Dementia

FREE

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

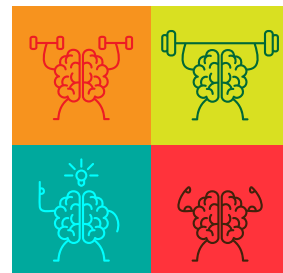
1:00 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Learn how everyday actions can impact brain health, including memory and thinking. Explore new tools and resources from the Alzheimer's Association to check your habits and discover positive steps you can take to protect your brain. It's never too early or too late to build brain-healthy habits.

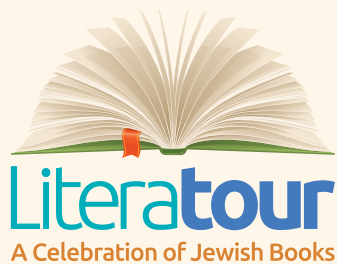
PRESENTER: Meghan Lemay, M.S., is the Regional Manager of the Western Massachusetts chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

COST: Free and open to the public



More Health and Wellness Opportunities

Yoga? Aqua aerobics? Pickleball? Balance? The JCC has a wealth of fitness and wellness offerings for adults. Visit SpringfieldJCC.org or contact Evan Pycko, Wellness and Recreation Director, at 413-739-4715.



Literatour, the Springfield JCC's community-wide celebration of Jewish books and authors, features an exciting lineup of exceptional writers and cultural influencers whose books represent fiction to nonfiction and everything in between. Through these author talks, fellow book lovers come together to listen and participate in author meet-and-greets, book signings, and more.



Pre-registration is required for all events, even those that are free.

Counting Backwards, Jacqueline Friedland

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 6:30 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Inspired by true events revealing America's troubling past involving pre-war eugenics practices, this emotionally riveting dual timeline novel brings together the lives of two inspiring women while exploring the timely and important themes of immigration, fertility, and motherhood. A revelatory tale of heartbreak and hope, *Counting Backwards* is an un-put-downable story that will stay with readers long after the final page. "Timely, perceptive, and inspiring...."

—Author Lynda Cohen Loigman

Jacqueline Friedland is the *USA Today* and Amazon bestselling author of both historical and contemporary women's fiction. A graduate of NYU Law School, she practiced as a commercial litigator for as long as she could stand it. Jackie then returned to school to earn her MFA in creative writing from Sarah Lawrence College and has been writing ever since. *Counting Backwards* is her fifth novel.

COST: Free for JCC members, \$10 general public



Yiddish: A Global Culture, David Mazower with Lisa Newman

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 6:30 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Join us for an evening celebrating *Yiddish: A Global Culture*, the landmark exhibition catalog from the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA—the first museum show to capture the extraordinary vibrancy of modern Yiddish culture. This large-format, 344-page volume, featuring essays and hundreds of stunning artwork reproductions, offers a panoramic look at Yiddish creativity across literature, theater, art, music, and politics, from the mid-19th century to the present day.

David Mazower is the research bibliographer at the Yiddish Book Center and chief curator and writer of the exhibition and catalog. He will be joined by **Lisa Newman**, the Center's director of publishing and public programs.

COST: Free for JCC members, \$10 general public



NEW DATE – DESSERT DEMO!

Plants for You, Diana Goldman

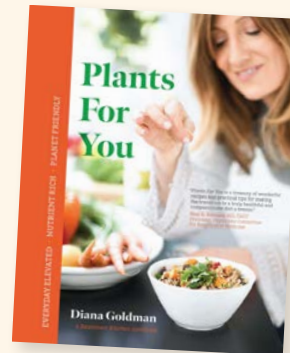
THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 6:30 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Award-winning cookbook author Diana Goldman treats us to a chocolate dessert demo and tasting. Her new book, *Plants For You*, features 80 mouth-watering, wow-the-crowd recipes designed for the discerning palate—whether you are fully plant-based, a meat eater, or anywhere in between. Learn about the benefits of plant-based cuisine and how easy it is to cook amazingly delicious dishes that not only nourish the body but are also planet-friendly and health-promoting.

Diana Goldman, M.Ed., is the Founder and President of Beantown Kitchen. She is a chef, certified plant-based culinary and nutrition educator, and member of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine.

COST: \$10 JCC members, \$12 general public



Reimagining a More Perfect Union, Richard Order with Stu Greene

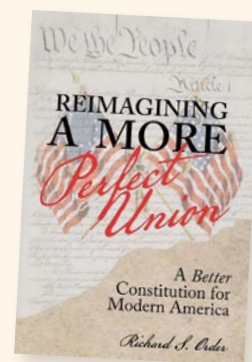
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 6:30 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Join us for an evening with attorney Richard Order in conversation with JCC history instructor Stu Greene. *Reimagining a More Perfect Union* is a bold call to replace the outdated U.S. Constitution with a modern framework fit for today's society. The book thoroughly describes the historical context of the Constitution, proposes a long overdue overhaul, explains its dramatic and disruptive changes, and presents an action plan for ratification.

Richard Order is a trial lawyer at Updike, Kelly & Spellacy, P.C. in Hartford and primarily handles business disputes in lawsuits, arbitrations, and mediations. He graduated from Columbia University School of Law where he was the Managing Editor of the Columbia Human Rights Law Review.

COST: Free for JCC members, \$10 general public



Special Event

College Recruiting 101 with UMass Men's Lacrosse Head Coach Kyle Smith

FREE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Join us for an informative seminar designed to help high school students understand the full college athletic recruiting process from start to finish. Topics include evaluating college options, communicating effectively with coaches and admissions representatives, and navigating timelines, eligibility requirements, and application steps. The presentation also covers building a strong student profile, including academics, activities, and personal branding. By the end of the session, students and parents will leave with practical tools, confidence, and a clear roadmap for pursuing college athletic recruiting opportunities.

PRESENTER: JCC member Kyle Smith was named head coach of the men's lacrosse team at UMass Amherst in August 2025, after serving as assistant coach for more than four years. Prior to that, Smith spent seven years coaching Merrimack College's men's lacrosse, where he helped that team win two Division II National Championships. During his time as a UMass player, Smith was a three-year starting attack over four seasons, earning an All-CAA Second Team recognition and CAA All Tournament nod.

COST: Free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required.



Jewish Arts and Culture



Israel: Ministers of Chaos Film Screening and Discussion

FREE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 7:00 PM

LOCATION: TEMPLE BETH EL, SPRINGFIELD

An investigation into the rise of Itamar Ben Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, two ministers driving Israel's government, as they push a controversial agenda to reshape the nation's democracy and expand its borders under a biblical vision.

Documentary | 58 minutes | Israel | English, Hebrew | 2025 | Directed by Jérôme Sesquin

COST: Free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required.

Co-sponsored by Temple Beth El, Sinai Temple, Springfield JCC, and Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival

Seder Sips! Passover Wine Tasting and Sale

FREE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 5:30 – 7:00 PM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Taste a variety of exquisite kosher wine, paired with delicious hors d'oeuvres, that will enhance your Passover experience. Led by representatives from Gordon's Fine Wines and Liquors, you'll learn about each wine and have the opportunity to custom order your favorites. Delivery will be available in time for the holidays. An additional, informal tasting will take place on Thursday, March 5 in the JCC lobby. For adults 21+



20th Annual Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival

APRIL 30 – MAY 6

We're thrilled to share that the Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival returns to theaters April 30 through May 6. Our 20th anniversary season is a tribute to the strength, passion, resilience, and dedication of our incredible community. The festival promises to be another unforgettable celebration of Jewish culture and cinematic storytelling.

Full lineup and details to come. But mark your calendars now!

**PIONEER
VALLEY
JEWISH
FILM
FESTIVAL**



NEW! Starts January 28

Prose and Cons: Nonfiction Book Discussion Group

FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

3:00 – 4:30 PM

FREE

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Are you a nonfiction reader who enjoys thought-provoking conversations? Participants may volunteer to prepare, in advance, a 10-minute review of a nonfiction book they have enjoyed. Wide-ranging subject areas such as biographies, U.S. and world history, science and nature, economics, and philosophy would be most welcome. Reviews will be followed by brief discussions. If you like to read substantive non-fiction books that spark discussion and challenge perspectives, this is the place for you!



FACILITATOR: Buntzie Churchill served for 23 years as President of the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, a public policy forum providing a prestigious platform for the discussion of national and international social, political, and economic issues. For a decade she hosted “WorldViews,” a daily radio show, interviewing experts on a variety of international issues.

COST: Free

Offered in partnership with the World Affairs Council of Western Massachusetts



HOW TO ENROLL

Register for a class or event online at springfieldjcc.org or in person at the JCC. All programs, other than “drop-in” activities, require pre-registration—even those that are free. If you need help navigating your JCC account portal through our website, please call or stop by the

Parkinson's Disease Support Group

FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

1:00 – 2:30 PM

FREE

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Looking for others who share your concerns and experiences? Are you interested in getting tips and resources while building comradery? Join our Parkinson's Disease Support Group for people with Parkinson's Disease and their care-partners. Sessions will start with everyone together before breaking out into two respective groups. Come for the information, stay for the companionship!

FACILITATORS: Corrie Trattner (OT, Ed.D, OTR) and Elizabeth Martin (M.A., SLP-CCC).

COST: Free

Sponsored by the American Parkinson's Disease Association

Adult Discussion Group

SECOND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

1:00 – 2:30 PM

FREE

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

Join us for friendly, stimulating conversations on a wide variety of topics. Come explore, connect, and make the most of this monthly group. All are welcome!

FACILITATOR: Saul Finestone, educator and community leader

COST: Free

Mah Jongg Open Play

EVERY THURSDAY

10:00 – 11:45 AM

LOCATION: SPRINGFIELD JCC

One bam, two dot, three crack! Drop in for open-play Mah Jongg, now offered every week! Advanced beginners and above are welcome to join, even if you have not had formal lessons. The JCC provides game sets and a comfortable, dedicated gathering space.

COST: Free for JCC members; \$5.00 general public

About Life Lessons

Life Lessons: The William & Margery Sadowsky Center for Adult Learning is the result of support from the Jewish Endowment Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts and a very generous donation to the JCC INFund from the Sadowsky family.



Jewish Federation
of Western Massachusetts



Registration is now open for Winter/Spring programs!

Visit springfieldjcc.org or scan the QR code.

