

Is Our Nation's Future In Jeopardy?

Many of us marvel at and are frustrated by the troubling economic problems of the era. Without question, these are serious problems and the prospect of a short-term solution is dim. We have suffered horrific losses to our net worth — by virtue of the real estate freefall and a recession that, for all intents and purposes, is starting its third year. We wonder and debate — what should we do as individuals and as a nation?

In recent weeks, I've pondered the

future of our nation as I witness a deplorable commitment to partisan politics and deadlock among our elected representatives. I say to myself, "As a nation we are only 235 years in existence. The Roman Empire lasted more than 2,000 years before its arrogance claimed its lifeline. What chance do we have?"

At first blush — my conclusion — "It's not looking good."

Last week, I happened to watch the newly released miniseries *The Kennedys* and gained a different perspective. I was

reminded of the turbulent '60s — the fight against communism, the battle over civil rights, the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam and our loss of cherished leaders who stood for principle beyond economics — Jack, Bobby and Dr. King.

I realized that other than the era beginning post-Vietnam and abruptly ending on Sept. 11, 2011, we have been at war, on its verge or just beyond its conclusion, or in the midst of some form of economic trauma or civil rights controversy for our entire history. Ultimately, we face and overcome these problems, and it is usually because leaders emerge that have the guts to stand for what is right and are able to overcome those who seek to perpetuate the mistakes of the past.

As we age, we gain the benefit of experience, as well as the knowledge that our insight and what we know is limited by our experience — which also applies to our elected representatives and proclaimed political leaders.

So what do these revelations mean and how to they bear upon the financial crisis?

Since controversy is part of our American way of life, we should embrace it rather than fear it. We must question those in authority that demonstrate an unwillingness to seek new solutions and simply continue to preach unsupported claims of the past. We need to take such action that we can improve our situation — and we need to take such action based upon the current times without regard to what others think is the right thing to do.

Individually, this means looking at opportunities to recoup the losses sustained as a result of the economic disaster that has ensued, by shedding debt and seizing opportunity. As a country, the time is now for leadership — for someone to emerge that fears not what to say because of political expediency — a leader who can reach to our nation's soul and carve a path that addresses what is best for our future. □



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Ken Gross is an attorney with Thav Gross and host of the Financial Crisis Talk Center, a radio program that airs weekly at 10 a.m. Saturdays on WXYT 1270 "Talk Radio."

Please join us as
we celebrate
the 21st anniversary
of Yad Ezra, the kosher food
pantry feeding vulnerable families



Jan and Mark Hauser
Honorees

Monday, October 24, 2011
Congregation Shaarey Zedek

Strolling Supper 6:00 pm
Brief Program 7:00 pm – 7:50 pm
Couvert \$180 per adult



Richard Simtob
President

Donna and Michael Maddin
Anita and Robert H. Naftaly
Dinner Co-Chairpersons

Michigan allows an income tax credit for individuals equal to 50% of the amount of the cash contribution (subject to certain limitations) to organizations such as Yad Ezra that provide food or shelter to the indigent (ends Dec. 31st). The fair market value of the dinner for tax purposes is \$60 per person. For information or reservations, call (248) 548-3663 or email lea@yadezra.org

Winning A Minivan

Prize lets JFS boost rides for seniors.

Jewish Family Service took possession Oct. 5 of a new Toyota Sienna at Serra Toyota in Farmington Hills.

JFS won the minivan by garnering enough votes in the Toyota 100 Cars for Good Program, a new national program awarding 100 vehicles over the course of 100 days to 100 deserving nonprofit organizations.

The new vehicle will be used for the JFS Escorted Transportation Department that provides affordable arm-in-arm and door-through-door transportation services to 1,100 individuals annually.

"Winning a Toyota is amazing for JFS," said Perry Ohren, JFS CEO. "There's nothing closer to our mission than driving older adults to doctors' appointments, helping them to age in place in their own homes. Thank you, Toyota, and thanks to all of our friends and colleagues around the country who voted for us."

"We had budgeted needing to buy a new vehicle and now, in these tough times, we can use those dollars on other



Perry Ohren, JFS CEO, receives keys for the new Sienna from Dave Yunker, Serra Toyota's Internet sales manager.

core needs."

With a new minivan, JFS will be able to provide 2,500-2,600 more rides each year to an additional 160 individuals.

More than 75 percent of JFS transportation clients are older than 70, and more than 94 percent of the 28,000 rides annually are for medical appointments.

For more information about JFS and its Escorted Transportation Department, visit www.jfsdetroit.org or call (248) 592-2313. □