

2009 Grand Rapids Community Mission to Israel Enjoy the journey of a lifetime!



8 days, 7 nights
6 lunches, 7 dinners
*Travel by luxury coach,
accompanied by
licensed English speaking guide
and youth counselor*

Brief Itinerary:

Monday: Arrive in Tel Aviv, welcome dinner

Tuesday: Breakfast briefing with guest speaker, walking tour of Tel Aviv and sights, dinner at an authentic Middle East restaurant

Wednesday: Depart to the north: museum tour, Moshav Nahalal, Partnership community visit

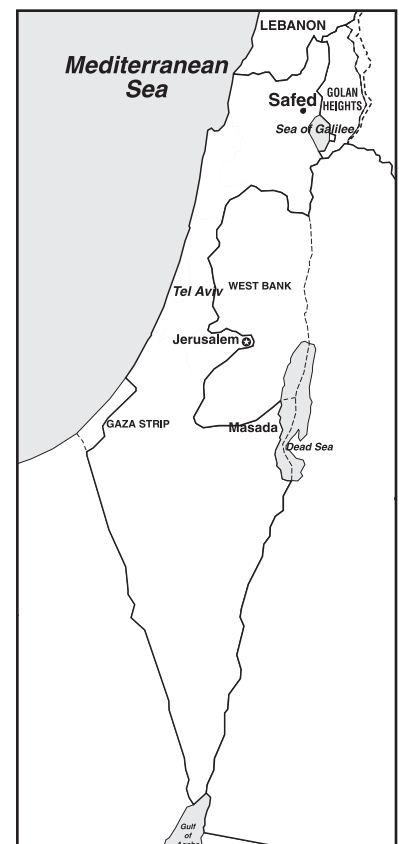
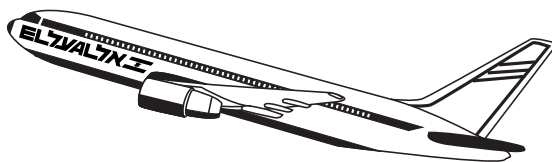
Thursday: Plant a tree, Jeep tour of Golan Heights, Katzrin's ancient synagogue, Safed

Friday: Depart for Jerusalem: walking tour of Old City, Shabbat dinner

Saturday: Enjoy Shabbat services and optional tours

Sunday: Visit Yad Vashem or Herzl Museum, Old City tour of the Jewish Quarter, Western Wall Tunnel

Monday: Depart to the south: Masada, "Float" in the Dead Sea, closing dinner



FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK . . .



As the year winds to a close and winter has returned to West Michigan it becomes easier for many in our community to relax and reflect on the events of the past year. But for many in our community and around the world a new economic reality has set in. For many, everyday needs are not being met. Families are going without basic necessities and lives are being irrevocably changed.

It is with this in mind that I remind you of the need to support our own people and community with your financial gift. A recent study of charitable giving by Jews throughout the country reported that of all the charitable giving by Jews, only 25% went to Jewish charities. This means that 75% went to non-Jewish organizations. If we are not there to participate in the lives

and needs of our fellow Jews, who will? Who will be there for each of us when we have a need?

I am reminded of a saying my grandfather, Hy Berkowitz, always told me. It was told to him by his mother, a widow raising four young children in the 1920's. "If you have two pennies in your pocket you have one for charity, because no matter how tough it is for us, someone has it worse."

It is with this spirit that I ask you to give generously this year. Whether it is through our annual campaign, helping to replenish the community food bank, or by adopting a family for Hannukah, it is our responsibility to help our own.

I am grateful for the many donations already given this year. For those who have not given yet, any donation made to the JFGR by December 31, 2008 is tax deductible on your 2008 tax return.

I wish you and your families the best for the coming year and thank you for your continued dedication to our global community of Jews.

Dan Hurwitz

OUR MISSION

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids supports cultural, social and financial needs of Jews locally, in the State of Israel, and around the world.

This mission is accomplished by providing services to the community and through fundraising and allocation efforts.



Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids

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Help Federation Go Green!!!

*We hope to save trees, save money and
send you our Shofar Newsletter . . . by e-mail.*

Please send us an e-mail to info@jfgr.org with your
name and e-mail address.

You will receive an electronic copy
of the Shofar soon . . .

New! SHOFAR ONLINE

Visit us at www.jfgr.org
click at Shofar newsletter (front page)

FACT of the week

United Jewish Communities

UJC/Federations support the "Two Tales-One Story" coexistence program funded by JAFI and the Abraham Fund. Through dialogue and informal activities involving school principals, teachers and children, more than 200 youngsters in six Jewish and Arab elementary schools in Acre are building bridges of mutual understanding and friendship in a city where Arab-Jewish tensions recently erupted. Since its 2006 launch, "Two Tales-One Story" has helped hundreds of children in ethnically diverse cities throughout the Galilee.

SENIOR PROGRAMMING . . .

LUNCH BUNCH

Thursday,
January 29th

11:30 a.m.

Cost: \$7.00



The Spinnaker Restaurant

at the Hilton Hotel

4747 28th Street S.E.
(28th St. and Patterson Ave.)

RSVP to Liz at 942-5553 ext. 206

Free transportation available!

The Annual JFGR Chanukah Luncheon

Wednesday, December 17th

12:00 p.m.

At Temple Emanuel

*Featuring a chicken lunch,
latkes, and storytelling!*

Cost: \$8.00

RSVP to Liz at 942-5553, ext. 206

CORRECTION!

Sunday, January 11th

Lunch at Restaurant Bloom – not Mangiamos!

and The Jewish Theatre performance of

Women's Minyan

*Meet in the Temple parking lot at 12:15 p.m.

*We will travel by taxi between Temple, the restaurant,
and Spectrum Theater.

*Transportation is free of charge.

Cost: \$7.00 for Lunch, \$8.00 for a Theatre Ticket

RSVP to Liz at 942-5553, ext. 206

SENIOR PROGRAMMING . . .

Mitzvah Specialists!

*Here is your schedule
through June 2009!*

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

January 13
February 10
March 10
April 14
May 12
June 9

Luncheon to honor Mitzvah
Specialists January 13
at Tuscan Express



*The Mitzvah Specialists of JFGR
recently celebrated Edith Rashewsky's
special birthday!*

It is important to...

REVIEW YOUR MEDICARE COVERAGE EVERY YEAR.

Between November 15 and December 31,
changes can be made to your Medicare coverage for 2009.

Most people need assistance when choosing the best coverage for them. Don't enroll in a Medicare plan based upon what your friend tells you is "the best"!

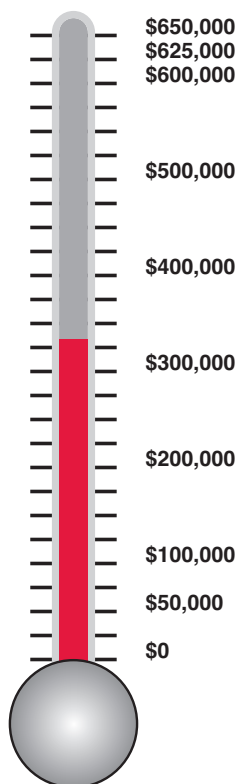
The best coverage is that which is chosen based upon the following:

- **Your medical history and current health concerns**
- **Prescribed medications**
- **Anticipated needs for hospitalization or skilled nursing care (rehabilitation)**

***Senior Neighbors* is an organization that can help you
choose the most appropriate plan for 2009.**

Consultation with *Senior Neighbors* can be provided by phone at 233-0295.

*Feel free to contact Liz Scheibe, Director of Social Services at JFGR, if you have additional questions or concerns. Liz can be reached at 942-5553.



With the Thanksgiving turkey behind us and the lights of Chanukah in the immediate future, the year is quickly coming to an end. And with the end of the year comes the ultimate effort in self-help: the New Year's Resolution. Part inward analysis, part outward proclamation, our resolutions help us set a goal for ourselves, to define who and what we want to be in the coming year.

Unfortunately, this year end also brings with it immense uncertainty. Our economic outlook is murky, and the world seems more unstable. The goals of weight loss and career advancement are being crowded out by a lot of financial belt tightening.

I'd like to offer you an alternative for this year; an alternative which promises to provide not only feelings of self respect and achievement, but one which could also help to maximize your money in 2009. I'd like your resolutions to include making a meaningful contribution to the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids.



What do I mean by meaningful contribution? Let's first start with a meaningful contribution of time. Time spent laughing, learning, and living with the other members of your community. A commitment to attend events every month, to build new and closer bonds of friendship. Not a difficult contribution, this one.

Next is your meaningful contribution of action. We are not a community until we begin to complete our mandate of *tikkun olam*, of healing the world. Make a commitment to participating in and leading a mitzvah project, to teaching at the United Jewish School, to visiting the sick members of our community. A bit more work here, but still reasonable.

Finally, make a meaningful financial contribution. Our community cannot continue to offer educational, social, and family services without your financial support. Thankfully, you define what is meaningful to you. Would you be proud to tell your mother how much you gave? Then you've probably made a meaningful financial contribution.

I'd said that not only would this resolution help you feel better about yourself, but could also maximize your money in 2009, and here's how. Your contribution of time and action will improve how you feel in the coming year, as you surround yourself with friends, all making a positive contribution to the community. As for your money, now is the time to ask your tax advisor if a year-end contribution to the Federation can help lower your tax bill in April. Review the checklist on the following page for ways you might be able to keep your money here in the community, and out of the tax man's hands!

I ask you again to join me in making a meaningful contribution to your home, your family, and your community. Give of yourself with time, action, and financial support. Give at a level that is right for you and your situation. But above all else, give because it is the right thing to do. And because when it comes to follow through, it is likely the easiest New Year's resolution you'll ever make!

Thank you and Happy Chanukah. Happy New Year and Shalom!

Andrew Samrick, Campaign 2008 Chairman

If you'd like to reduce next April's tax bill, you have until December 31, 2008 to complete tax-saving steps. The following considerations may be appropriate for you:

1. **Donate Equities** - You may donate shares of stock held longer than 12 months to an eligible charity. The entire market value qualifies as a tax deduction, regardless of your gain. However, adjusted gross income limits may apply, which carry the deduction or part of it into a future tax year.
2. **Qualified Charitable Distributions** were a provision of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA) that allow IRA owners age 70 1/2 and older to donate from their Traditional and Roth IRAs directly to a qualified charity tax-free. Other important details include:
 - Must be a direct IRA transfer to a qualified charity
 - \$100,000 per person maximum
 - Can satisfy Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)
 - This provision is available for distributions made from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2009.
3. **Offset capital gains with losses** - Selling an investment for less than what you paid (adjusted for splits, etc.) creates a capital loss that you can use to offset capital gains from other investments. You can subtract up to \$3000 in losses from income and carry the excess into future years.
4. **Sell your most advantageous positions** - An equity holding that you have added to over time may have more than one cost basis (how much you paid for shares). When deciding which shares to sell, consider how cost basis will affect the amount of gain or loss and the transaction's potential tax rate.

Before making any tax-related decisions, always consider your overall financial situation, not just taxes. Contact your tax professional, who can work with your financial advisor to help you achieve you long-term financial goals.

This information provided by Chad Zagel, Financial Advisor for Edward Jones.

Edward Jones does not provide tax or legal advice.

You should consult with your tax or legal advisor regarding your particular situation.



ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2008

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
 4127 Embassy Dr SE
 Grand Rapids, MI 49546
 (616) 942-5553 email: info@jfg.org
 www.jfgr.org

Live Generously.

Name _____

Address _____

Please cut out this pledge card, fill it in and send it to the Federation office.

I HEREBY PLEDGE TO THE FEDERATION ANNUAL CAMPAIGN THE SUM OF: \$ _____

 Donor's Signature

Method of Payment: Check Stock

Please charge my: Mastercard Visa

 Card Number

 Exp. Date

**The *Jewish Cultural Council*
invites you to attend...**

**UNITED STATES – ISRAEL
TWO NEW ADMINISTRATIONS**



An Insider's View
By Gil Tamary

**Saturday,
January 24, 2009
7:30 p.m.**

Congregation Ahavas Israel
2727 Michigan N.E.

Gil Tamary is a TV icon in Israel. Every Israeli recognizes him as one of the most reliable journalists in the business. For the last 8 years Gil has been the Washington Reporter and Washington Bureau Chief for the leading Israeli TV networks.

Mr. Tamary has been covering a wide range of Middle East issues from a U.S. and Israeli perspectives, including the Wye River summit with the Palestinians, the Shepherdstown talks with the Syrians and the Camp David summit of 2000.

He worked for several years as a commentator and a chief economic editor for Israel's national TV and for Army Radio. Currently, Mr. Tamary is also the International Editor of *Forbes - Israel* magazine.

Mr. Tamary has a M.B.A degree from Tel Aviv University and a bachelor's degree with a distinction in Economy and Management from Tel Aviv University.

Dessert reception following

Free child care available; please RSVP by January 20th to 942-5553

A BIT OF BOULDER COMES HOME TO GRAND RAPIDS

Friday, December 26:

Schuler Books
2660 28th Street S.E.
11:00 a.m.
Free 45-minute concert

Saturday, December 27:

Grand Rapids Children's Museum
11 Sheldon N.E.

11:00 a.m. • 1:00 p.m. • 2:00 p.m.

Each free concert runs approximately 20 minutes*

(* Requires paid admission to the museum)

BOULDER, CO – Fresh from an April release of “Rocky Mountain Tunes for Rocky Mountain Kids” and performing at 10 venues while hiking the entire 483-mile length of the Colorado Trail last summer, noted educator, musician and environmentalist Jeff Kagan returns to his Grand Rapids home to perform concerts at Schuler Books, on 28th St. S.E. and at the downtown Grand Rapids Children's Museum.



Jeff is the son of Dave and Bev Kagan, longtime Temple Emanuel members and residents of East Grand Rapids where Jeff also grew up. Jeff's grandmother is Malca Muskin, a longtime Ahavas Israel member and founder of the Shir Shalom choir. Malca now resides in Portland, OR.



Currently teaching environmental education with the Thorne Ecological Institute in Boulder, CO, Jeff regularly stages kids' concerts throughout the greater Boulder area. His summertime Meadow Music concerts have become a Boulder institution regularly attracting crowds of 400+. And last summer he opened the city's July 4th ceremonies at Folsom Field, home of the University of Colorado Buffaloes.

The common thread through his teaching is the use of music to enhance appreciation for and educate about the natural world including wildlife and ecological conservation. Commenting about music as a teaching tool, Kagan said, “It is the most genuine means I have found to express my appreciation for the life-changing landscapes of the mountains.” Regardless his music's Rocky Mountains focus, the themes are truly universal and are as applicable in many ways to environmental issues in west Michigan as they are to Colorado.

A Mom who attends Kagan's regular “Meadow Music” concerts in Boulder said, “I was singing your praises to a mom I met and I tried to think of a description for your music – which is really more than music... your Act. I said that you were a cross between: (1) John Denver – Almost Heaven, Rocky Mountain High, nature loving, feel-good, joyful music, (2) Dan Zanes – totally hip, fun, down-home, family music, hangin' out and singin' with the peeps, and (3) The Wiggles – silly, creative, super engaging for kids, wildly popular, and, well, wiggly! This is an amazing and totally unique combination, and I for one am truly grateful that it's right here in my backyard.”

A 1997 graduate of East Grand Rapids High School, Jeff holds a bachelor's degree in zoology from Michigan State University and a master's in environmental education from the Audubon Expedition Institute accredited through Lesley University in Cambridge, MA. Between undergrad and graduate schools Jeff spent a year in Americorps and also taught environmental education for Nature's Classroom in the northeast U.S. He has hiked extensively on the Appalachian Trail, the John Muir Trail, the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu and, of course, throughout Colorado.

Jeff's original environmental music for kids is age-appropriate for 3-8 year olds as well as adults of all ages who have a song in their heart and whimsy coursing through their veins.



Did you know...

that Michigan law does not recognize a "living-will"???

A Patient Advocate Designation (also referred to as a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care or Health Care Proxy) can further assure that your health care decisions are respected in the event that you are unable to communicate your wishes. It allows you to select a Patient Advocate who can have access to your medical records and act as an effective advocate on your behalf.

Adults of ALL ages should consider executing a Patient Advocate Designation. Even spouses should have this document naming each other as their Patient Advocate!

A Patient Advocate Designation can be executed by an attorney for about \$100.

Please contact Liz if you have further questions or would like referrals for local attorneys or low-cost/no-cost legal services.

942-5553, ext. 206 • liz@jfgr.org

In the unthinkable event of your hospitalization or death... Would a loved one be able to locate the following?

- Insurance documents, including health insurance policies
- Social security number
- Wishes regarding extraordinary medical measures
- Important documents, including birth certificate, power of attorney, physician's directive, vehicle title
- Names and phone numbers of relatives and friends
- A current Will/Living Trust
- Estate executor, attorney, accountant or financial planner
- Outstanding loans or debt owed
- Income sources
- Bank/investment accounts, valuable asset information
- Safety deposit box location and key
- Wishes regarding funeral arrangements

**Please contact Liz if you need assistance preparing for any of the above,
regardless of your financial resources to pay attorney fees.**

*This list was developed in collaboration with Chad Zagel of Edward Jones.

On the second Tuesday of every month, families depend on food donations from the **Food Bank at Temple Emanuel**

Drop off food donations between 10am - 2pm Monday through Friday
at Temple Emanuel

or mail checks to the Synagogue Food Bank
Make checks payable to Temple Emanuel and
specify the donation is for the Food Bank

Jewish Theatre Grand Rapids
presents



January 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17
at 8 p.m.

January 11, 18 at 3 p.m.

GRCC Spectrum 2nd Floor
Black Box Theater at
160 Fountain St. NE

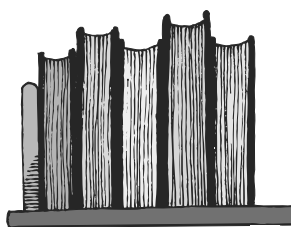
Call 616-234-3946

to reserve your seats beginning
December 15, 2008.

Based on a true story, this brilliant and powerful drama chronicles Hannah, a Haredi (ultra-orthodox) woman – wife of a rabbi, and mother of 12 – who leaves her abusive husband. Punished by a decision of a court of orthodox men in her community, she is never allowed to see her children again. Even her one remaining friend is vilified and abused. Desperate to regain access to her children, she convinces a reluctant group of fearful women to form a women's court and render their own judgment.

HADASSAH BOOK CLUB

Thank you to Flory Silverstein for opening her home to our Book Group and to Sue Remes for facilitating the book review on December 10th. Our read of the evening was *"The Man in the Sharkskin Suit"* by Lucette Lagnado.



Next Meeting:

February 11, 2009
at 7:15 p.m.

Book: *"Away"*
by Amy Bloom

Place and Facilitator to be announced

Books are available at
Schuler's Book Store
on 28th Street.

For more information contact:
Sue Remes – 949-3505
Flory Silverstein – 949-5766



On behalf of the entire Jewish community of Grand Rapids, the Federation would like to thank everyone who made a contribution to our 2008 Chanukah Adopt-A-Family Program!

Thanks to the generosity of the donors listed below, we were able to provide holiday gifts to children who would have gone without and gift certificates for families to use at local grocery stores. In total, we served over 40 individuals in our community!

2008 Donors:

Elyse & Frank Weiss
Lori Reineke & Larry Cieply
Eileen Enoch
Rita Glanz
Cindy Kogelschatz
Marilyn Titche
Lisa Rashewsky
Dorothy Berg
Shelley Padnos
Carol Sarosik

Karen & Ron Sigal
Judy & Buddy Joseph
Karen & Mitch Padnos
Rabbi David & Marisa Krishef
Lori & Mike Demeter
Irene & Bruce Konrad
Laura Konrad
Donna & Bill Boorstein
Roberta & Mike Jacobson
Myrna & Leon Kirschner

Attention Singles of All Ages!

Please contact the Federation if you are interested in joining a singles group! The community has not had an active singles group for many years, and we want to know if demand for such a group is growing!

Yes! I would like to participate in a singles group with the following age group:

Please circle one: **Young Adults** **Adults age 45-65** **Older Adults age 65+**

Name _____

Age _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Interests (please list as many as you like):

Participating in Athletic Activities (please specify)

Attending Athletic, Educational, or Entertaining Events

(please specify) _____

Sharing Hobbies or Interests (please specify) _____

*Please mail this form, call, or email Liz to indicate your interest. 942-5553 or liz@jfgt.org

*Liz Scheibe, Director of Social Services, JFGR, 4127 Embassy Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506



Beit Sefer B'yahad/ United Jewish School

Happy Chanukah to all!!!!

December 6 & 7 the 11th and 12th grades traveled to the windy city of Chicago. 19 students along with 3 chaperones took the commuter train to Chicago for a couple of fun filled days, which included a Chicago Bulls game and a visit to the Spertus museum. Look for pictures on the school bulletin boards at Ahavas and Temple.

December 14 found the entire school and many in our community at the Kentwood Fun Spot celebrating Chanukah (a little early). Thank you to Sari Cohen and Sarah Weingarten for organizing such a fun event. Everyone had a “rock and rollin” good time!!

Important Fundraiser for UJS

We are organizing a fundraiser outing to Jewish Theater’s production of Esther in June 2009. Tickets will be sold and ALL proceeds will go to United Jewish School. These funds will be used specifically for programming for the 2009-2010 school year. Please help us make this event a success. We are currently looking for underwriters for this project.

It’s hard to believe that the 2nd semester is underway. We are busy planning for Tu’b’shevat, Purim and Passover not to mention weekly classroom activities. Come by and visit. There are always bagels, coffee and a friendly conversation waiting. We have school open houses once a month for those that like to hang out during Sunday school. Come enjoy a “good” cup of coffee and a nosh. Kibbitz with friends, surf the internet (the building is wireless), visit the gift shop or just watch and relax.

Please take the time to remember the school in your contributions. We have a beautiful tribute card that can be sent in memory of someone, in honor of a special occasion or just for a simple “thank you”.

pam@templemanuelgr.org 459-5976 x3

www.unitedjewishschool.org

UJS Calendar

December 7	Parent Conferences – 11 th / 12 th grade trip to Chicago
December 14	Rock and Rolling Chanukah
December 21	No Sunday School – Winter Break
December 24	No Midweek – Winter Break
December 28	No Sunday School – Winter Break
December 31	No Midweek – Winter Break
January 4	No Sunday School – Winter Break

YOUNG ADULT DIVISION . . .



*Pictured at a recent YAD event
held at Olive's are . . .*

*Seated L-R: Evan Rossio, Julie Rossio,
Chad Zagel*

Standing: Ally Weiskopf and Ron Arnon

Hold this date:

Saturday, January 17, 2009

7:30 p.m.

Wine Tasting at Cascade Winery

*Watch upcoming
emails and
Shofars for
additional
information*



SAVE THE DATE!!!!!!



Tuesday, December 30, 2008



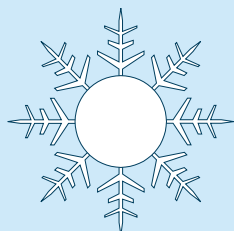
WINTER BREAK FUN DAY AT

Chuck E Cheese

11am Arrive - Lunch at 11:30

\$5.00 per person (over the age of 2)

max \$20.00 a family



Price includes: Lunch, Drink, Dessert and Tokens.

RSVP by December 27th to Ally at ally@jfgr.org

Congregation Ahavas Israel

Sunday Night Movies and Midrash

Come in from the winter cold and join us.

“What Dreams May Come”

December 14, 6:30 p.m.

At the home of Andrew Samrick and Liz Scheibe,
1717 Franklin SE

Sanctuary Shabbat Speakers

December 20 - Rescheduled from November! Joel Marcovitch, Assistant Director, University of Michigan Hillel, *“Doing Jewish. A modern day approach to being Jewish on Campus.”*

January 3, 2009 - Representative Vern Ehlers

Introduction to Judaism, Rabbi David Krishef

Monday nights, 7:00 p.m.
beginning January 5, 2009

\$50/members

(of Ahavas Israel or Temple Emanuel)

\$75/non-members

A basic introduction to Jewish history, beliefs, rituals, holidays, and life cycle celebrations.

Chabad House

Chanukah Winter Camp ***Warm up your winter with*** ***Camp Gan Israel***

For children ages 4-12

Winter camp days

Wednesday & Thursday,

December 24 & 25 10am-4pm

*Songs, Chanukah crafts & activities, dreidels,
baking, games, music, hot lunches & more!*

**For more information or to register
contact Chayale @ 616-706-8019**

Gan Yiladim Preschool ***Childrens Chanukah Fair***

Monday December 22nd

12-1 p.m

*Dreidel ride, Chanukah crafts, Story Telling,
Chanukah snacks and more!*

Come join the fun for children ages 1-6

For more info call Sara @ (616) 813-4827

Temple Emanuel

Sunday Night at the Movies

The entire community is invited to join us for our next Sunday Night at the Movies on January 11 at Temple.

We are showing the Academy Award winning film, "The Counterfeiters". This movie begins at 7:00 PM. There is no charge. Popcorn included.

Rabbi Lewis to Speak

The entire community is invited to join us at Temple for a Bagels and Lox Breakfast on Sunday morning, January 18 at 10:00 AM. Rabbi Albert Lewis will speak. His topic is entitled, "Einstein, Buber and Heschel Go Looking For God . . . Where Do They Look and What Do They Discover?"

The cost for the breakfast is \$5. Please RSVP to the Temple office at 459-5976 by Thursday January 15.

Temple to Offer Life Support Class

The entire community is invited to take part in a Basic Life Support (BLS) course that will be offered on Sunday, January 18 at 1:00 PM. The course will teach adult, child and infant CPR, rescue breathing and training for the automated external defibrillator. The BLS course will be taught by certified instructors. It will last 3 hours. The cost of the course is \$25. To register, please send a check to Temple Emanuel, payable to Health Education Associates.

The American Jewish
Joint Distribution
Committee



JDC-Supported Initiatives in Jeopardy



Once a highly regarded public health official, Aron, 87, today lives alone in a two-room apartment in Kiev. A hip fracture limits his mobility, and he suffers from heart problems and high blood pressure. His only income is a monthly pension of \$54 which, due to his status as a war veteran, is slightly above the average pension — but it is hardly enough to make ends meet.

For Aron and so many other senior citizens in the former Soviet Union, Hesed Centers, which are supported by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), a UJC-beneficiary agency, are their safety net, keeping them afloat with social activities and access to vital services, including food packages, home care, medical and psychological consultations, and medicine. For his part, Aron is especially grateful to Hesed for covering the cost of gas heat for his apartment, which is comfortably warm during Kiev's frosty winter months. A Holocaust survivor, Aron says, "I can't imagine my life without Hesed."

In the face of today's worldwide economic meltdown, JDC-supported services and programs, like the Hesed Centers, could be significantly curtailed, if not entirely cut, in the coming months. Rising inflation, most notably in Europe and the former Soviet Union, and the dollar's devaluation in the past two years have already resulted in increased costs for goods and services — which means that JDC's funds do not provide the same level of services they once did. As a result, JDC-supported initiatives have been forced to limit their outreach to only the neediest members of the community, with the number of people receiving loans of medical equipment down 39 percent and the number of people receiving medicine down by 9 percent.

Although the dollar's value has recently begun to inch upward, uncertainty abounds about how global economic trends will further impact JDC — and its 2009 budget.

"While no one can predict the future of the worldwide economy, JDC is working to ensure that it does everything in its power so that Jews in need around the globe continue to receive critical health, medical, and other essential services," says Steve Schwager, JDC's chief executive officer. "We know that the North American Jewish community and its local Jewish federations will continue to support this vital work so that we can provide critical programs and services including food, medicine, and blankets to those with no other lifeline."



Celebrating the Sigd Festival



December 3, 2008 / 6 Kislev 5769

The new Ethiopian immigrants residing at the Jewish Agency's Tzahal 9 Absorption Center in Safed, celebrated the Sigd Festival in glory and splendor.

The Sigd Festival is significant because it symbolizes the renewal of the link between the Torah and the Jewish people.

This year, the youth, together with the national service volunteers of Garin Tzameret, as well as the absorption center staff, decided to prepare the ceremonies in Safed.

All the immigrants - close to 350 people - as well as guests were invited to the ceremony. The ceremony featured a choir, a Darbuka drum performance, dancing, and

an amazing drama performance about aliyah that provoked tears.

A beautiful presentation about life in Ethiopia and cultural activity in the Safed absorption center capped a truly wonderful celebration.



Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids Endowments

Life cycle times, both happy and sad, are traditional times to make donations to Jewish causes. You can make a donation of \$5 or more to the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids in honor or in memory of members of our community. We then will acknowledge that donation with a card to that individual or family. This is a wonderful way to send your good wishes and be able to fulfill the mitzvah of tzedakah.

Please be sure to indicate what the occasion is and who is to receive the card. Please specify which of the following funds you would like your donation to be credited to:

- **The Woman of Valor Fund** - (\$10 minimum contribution). To honor the women in our lives who have made a difference personally, locally, or nationally.
- **The Federation General Endowment/L'Dor Vador Fund** - To help ensure the continued work of the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids for now and the future.
- **The Julian and Judith Joseph Fund** - To provide for local programming and events through the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids.
- **The David and Susan Samrick Youth Scholarship Fund** - To provide scholarships to Jewish sleep away camps and experiences.
- **The Chuck and Maxine Shapiro Fund** - To help ensure long-term aid to Israel and Jews around the world.
- **The Louis and Louise Weiner Fund** - To help ensure local programming for seniors in the Grand Rapids Jewish Community.
- **The Jerry and Judy Subar Fund** - To help ensure funding for overseas Jewish communities' needs.

*Thank you for supporting the
Grand Rapids Jewish Community*

See page 19 for Endowment Form

לדור ודור
L'Dor Vador
From Generation to Generation

The Louis and Louise Weiner Fund

To honor Edith Rashewsky
From Nancy Reider

The David and Susan Samrick Youth Scholarship Fund

To Rabbi Yosef and Sarah Weingarten in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Sholom Dovber Weingarten
From Julian and Judith Joseph

The Women of Valor Endowment Fund

To Edith Rashewsky in honor of her special birthday
From Bernice Weiner

To Malka Berman in memory of her Father
From the staff of the Jewish Federation

SELLING STOCK?

If you are selling stock to pay your pledge to the Federation, please notify our bookkeeper, Amy Noyes at 942-5553, ext. 203, to advise her of your transaction. This will aid us in making sure YOUR stock transaction is credited to YOUR pledge.

T

HE FUTURE

IS ALWAYS PRESENT

No matter where or when in the future, you can be there to provide for the Jewish community. Your will makes it possible. Leaving a bequest to the Jewish community enables you to create a permanent legacy that can help Jews in need forever. Learn how you can help preserve the Jewish community – for years to come.

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids Endowment Fund Donation Form

Donation From: Name _____
 Address _____
 City/Zip _____

In Honor Of: Name _____

In Memory Of: Name _____

Send Card To: Name _____
 Address _____
 City/Zip _____

Fund (please pick from list): _____

In Honor Of: Name _____

In Memory Of: Name _____

Send Card To: Name _____
 Address _____
 City/Zip _____

Fund (please pick from list): _____

Send your donation to:
The Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
4127 Embassy Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-2418

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids Reservation Form

NAME: _____ **PHONE** _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

# Attending Program	Date	Cost	Total
_____ Chanukah Lunch	December 17 th	\$ 8.00	_____
_____ Family Fun Day	December 30 th	\$ 5.00 per person	_____
		\$20.00 per family	_____
_____ Lunch & Jewish Theatre	January 11 th	\$ 7.00 Lunch	_____
		\$ 8.00 Theatre	_____
_____ Cultural Council - Gil Tamary	January 24 th	\$10.00	_____
_____ Lunch Bunch	January 29 th	\$ 7.00	_____
		Total Enclosed	_____

Mail this form and your check made out to the **Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids** to:
4127 Embassy Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-2418

Save these dates!

December

Sunday, December 14, 11:00am – 1:00pm Chanukah Rock and Roller Skating
Wednesday, December 17, 12:00pm Seniors' Chanukah Luncheon
Wednesday, December 17, 7:00pm JFGR Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 30, 11 am Family Fun Day

January

Sunday, January 11, 11:30am Seniors' Lunch and Jewish Theatre
Tuesday, January 13, 10:30am Mitzvah Specialists
Saturday, January 17, 7:30am YAD Wine Tasting Party
Saturday, January 24, 7:30pm Cultural Council Event
Thursday, January 29, 11:30am Lunch Bunch at The Spinnaker

The Shofar

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
4127 Embassy Drive SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546-2418

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Phone: (616) 942-5553

Fax: (616) 942-5780

E-Mail: Info@JFGR.org

www.jewishgrandrapids.org

Next Issue's Information Deadline: December 26, 2008