

Tevet/Shevat, 5769 • January/February, 2009
Volume 14, Number 5
JEWISH FEDERATION OF GRAND RAPIDS
www.jewishgrandrapids.org

THE SHOFAR
JFGR

The Jewish Cultural Council
invites you to attend...

UNITED STATES – ISRAEL
TWO NEW ADMINISTRATIONS
Update on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

**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 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

Advance Tickets \$10 • At the Door \$12 • Students \$5

**Free child care available; please RSVP by January 20th
to 616-942-5553**

FROM THE SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR . . .



Dear Grand Rapids Jewish Community,

Dan Hurwitz, Chairman of the Federation's board, traditionally uses this page in our Shofar to author a personal note to our community. This month, Dan graciously offered me the opportunity to advertise my role as the Social Services Director for the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids. Please help me to disseminate this information so that more community members can benefit from the support available! Communication with me is always strictly confidential. Thank you and take care.

Sincerely,
Liz Scheibe, LMSW
Director of Social Services
616-942-5553
liz@jfgr.org

Assessment and Referral Services

I can be available by phone to help families identify supportive services when the need arises. Needs might stem from major life transitions or long-term conditions, including unemployment, illness, aging, etc. I help to facilitate referrals through contact on an individual's behalf or by accompanying the person to an appointment if necessary.

Occasional Visits to Aged or Sick Community Members

Caring for an aged or ill relative can be very stressful—especially during periods when an individual's needs for care and concern are increasing. I am available to support a family's efforts to care for a family member during particularly difficult times, which might include social visits to that family member.

Emergency Loan Program

Jews in our community are eligible to receive an emergency loan if the circumstances for an individual's request are appropriate. Often loans are requested to pay utility bills, rent, or an unexpected expense. I conduct an interview with the individual requesting the loan, and present this information to a committee that determines eligibility. The loan is interest free, and the repayment schedule is very flexible.

Advocacy

I am available to support individuals and families when they navigate various complex systems, including special education programs in schools or the health care industry. Advocacy entails a joint-effort with the community member so that concerns related to the particular system or facility can be clarified and addressed.

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.*

To enroll, please send us an e-mail to info@jfgr.org
with your name and e-mail address.

New! SHOFAR ONLINE

Visit us at www.jfgr.org

Scroll down to view recent issues
of the Shofar Newsletter

FACT of the week

United Jewish Communities

UJC/Federation supports JDC's Center for Independent Living (CIL), which serves the unique needs of Israel's 400,000 disabled adults. Run by and for disabled adults ages 21-65, centers in Jerusalem and Beersheva, serving 2,500 residents, are designed to help them participate fully in Israeli society while living at home. The centers offer peer counseling, advocacy efforts and support. Five additional centers will be established throughout Israel.

Live Generously.™ It does a world of good.

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 616-942-5553 ext. 206

Let us know if you need free transportation!

Mitzvah Specialists!

*Here is your schedule
through June 2009!*

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

February 10

March 10

April 14

May 12

June 9

Our Chanukah Luncheon!

*Special thanks to Toby
Weiner Dolinka for
entertaining us with her
talented storytelling
and to Marla Tulett
for catering the event!*



Seniors' Camp!

My dear friends,

Given the cold, dangerous winter conditions, I have decided to organize the first annual Seniors' Camp. The series of events are intended to provide you with social opportunities to leave your home each week. I intend to provide transportation to and from your home for every event—thanks to the generosity of Leigh Rapaport who has agreed to help me as a driver! I hope you join us and enjoy what I have planned!

Liz

Monday, February 9th – Tu B'Shvat

- 11:30am Lunch at the **Taste of the Gardens Café**
1:00pm 30 Minute, Guided Tour of **Frederick Meijer Gardens** Indoor Exhibits

**Seating will be available during the course of the tour.*

COST: \$7

Thursday, February 19th

- 12:00pm Lunch at **Cascade Hills Country Club**
**Special thanks to the Federation's Board Chairman, Dan Hurwitz, for making this special occasion possible!*

COST: \$7

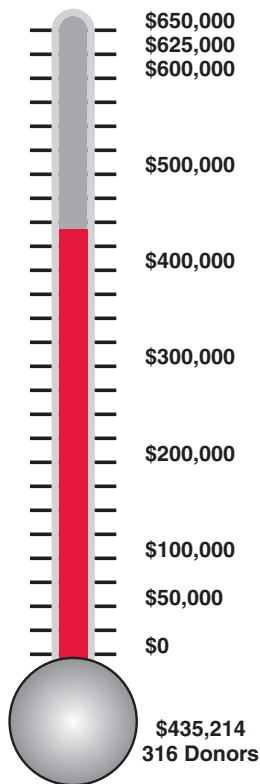
Monday, February 23rd

- 11:30am Lunch at the **Great Lakes Shipping Co.** at Breton Village
1:00pm Painting clay Tzadakah Boxes, Seder Plates, and Star of David Boxes at **Naked Plates** in Breton Village.

**After the pottery is fired in the kiln, I will deliver the pieces to you or someone you select to receive it as a gift!*

COST: \$12

CAMPAIGN NEWS . . .



Shalom and Happy New Year! This month's message will be brief – between grim economic news at home and turmoil in Israel, a long fundraising note seems out of place. Instead, I want to ask for your help ... and it won't cost you a cent.

At the most recent Federation board meeting, we discussed the status of JFGR's Social Services. What we learned surprised most of the board: in the past year, fewer families have been reaching out to the Federation for help with basic social services needs. This decreased demand is at odds with the economic realities here in Michigan, so we believe that we have work ahead in seeking out and offering services to individuals and families in need.

We do have some thoughts on how to achieve this end, and this is where I need your help. First, take the time to learn about the extensive assistance the Federation offers. And more importantly, if you, or someone you know, is going through a hard time due to financial, health, or other problems, please take the time to refer them to Liz Scheibe at the Federation office.

Now more than ever, our Jewish community must be ready to support those around us. Please help us to deliver vital services to our community and achieve *Tikkun Olam*. Thank you.

Andrew Samrick, *Campaign 2008 Chairman*

Double Your Gift!

- Any new gift and any increase to a previous gift will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000, thanks to the generosity of the Louis and Helen Padnos Foundation.
- And, if you are 40 years of age or under, any new gift or increase to last year's gift will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$10,000, by the Hurwitz and Thodey families through the Berkowitz Foundation.

Please consider increasing your gift or, if you haven't before donated, please consider making a gift this year. **Thanks to these matching grants, your money will go twice as far in helping Jews locally, nationally and abroad.**



ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2008

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

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

Live Generously.

Name _____

Address _____

FILM FESTIVAL . . .



PLEASE PLAN ON ARRIVING EARLY. That means even if you are holding a flex pass ticket, seats are not guaranteed later than thirty minutes prior to movie time. **Flex pass tickets are only available until May 1st.**

The Film Festival also offers members of the community an opportunity to become an individual sponsor of the Jewish Film Festival. Please read about the benefits of becoming a financial supporter below.

Individual Sponsors Get Great Benefits!

Director: (\$500.00) receive two flex passes (16 admissions), recognition in all publications, and four admissions to all private receptions, dinners and events.

Producers: (\$250.00) receive two flex passes (16 admissions), recognition in all publications and two admissions to all private receptions, dinners, and events.

Actor: (\$100.00) receive one season punch card (8 admissions) and recognition in the program booklet.

Film Fan: If you would like to financially support the Jewish Film Festival and do not see an amount that interests you, please feel free to send a contribution in any amount to the Federation office. You will be listed in the program booklet.

The 2009 Jewish Film Festival is once again bringing special movies to the Grand Rapids community. The committee has been previewing movies and planning special programs. As in previous years, the Film Festival will be held at Celebration! North Cinemas. Watch for more details about the festival events in our community mailings.

The Film Festival is offering special rates through a **flex pass** (eight admissions); the flex pass is **\$36.00**. Flex pass ticket holders will have seats reserved until **THIRTY MINUTES** prior to the movie beginning. At that time, tickets will be sold for all seats.

I would like to be a Film Festival Sponsor

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

_____ Film Festival Director (\$500.00)

_____ Film Festival Fan

_____ Film Festival Producer (\$250.00)

_____ Flex Pass (\$36.00)

_____ Film Festival Actor (\$100.00)

Mail this form and your check to:
Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
4127 Embassy Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546



Beit Sefer B'yahad/ United Jewish School

pam@templemanuelgr.org 616-459-5976 x3 www.unitedjewishschool.org

UJS Contest/Fundraiser

...Name Our Restaurant...

February 8, 2009 12 noon luncheon Temple Emanuel

The 10th grade will have a series of conversational Hebrew classes at the beginning of next semester. The culmination of all this will be to operate their own Israeli restaurant. We need a name for the restaurant. Submit your suggestions to Pam@templemanuelgr.org. The 10th grade will choose the name they like best and the winner will receive a free lunch at the restaurant and their name announced in the Temple, Ahavas and Federation bulletins. Please keep Sunday February 8 open on your calendars so you can all come. You will be conversing in Hebrew (with a little cheat sheet), enjoying a great Israeli luncheon, having a great time with your Jewish community and at the same time **raising money for the school**. More info to come.....



Midweek students celebrate the marriage of Binyamin Mehler and Caryn Smith

On Wednesday, January 7, 2009 UJS midweek students had the privilege of witnessing the marriage of Binyamin Mehler to Caryn Smith at Congregation Ahavas Israel. The ceremony was performed by Rabbi David Krishef. Thank you to the wonderful bride and groom for inviting our Hebrew students to share in their simchat. MAZEL TOV!!

Important Fundraiser for UJS

We are organizing a fundraiser outing to the Jewish Theatre'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.

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.

UJS Calendar

January 25	UJS Open House 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
February 8	UJS Israeli Restaurant Noon

UJS Contributions

Curtis and Patricia Linscott
Dennis and Machel Hammond
Dr. Jeff and Sheila Frank

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 Rieneke & Larry Cieply
Eileen Enoch
Rita Glanz
Cindy Kogelschatz
Marilyn Titcher

Dorothy Berg
Shelly 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
Claude & Sharyl Titcher
Lisa Rashewsky

United Jewish School

presents

ISRAELI MISA'ADA (RESTAURANT)

Sunday, February 8, 2009 • 12:30pm

Temple Emanuel

(Luncheon after Sunday School)

**Immerse yourself in this exciting Israeli experience
Taste the wonderful foods of Israel
Converse solely in Hebrew (with a little cheat sheet)
Use shekels • Israeli music • and more**

UJS students are waiters and waitresses

**Enjoy a great luncheon
with the Grand Rapids Jewish community**

We are currently holding a contest to name our restaurant

email pam@templemanuelgr.org to submit your entry.

Winner receives lunch free and their names announced in the Federation, Temple and Ahavas bulletins.

More info to come or contact Pam at 616-459-5976 x3 • pam@templemanuelgr.org



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



December 21-29, 2009
Departing Sunday, December 20

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

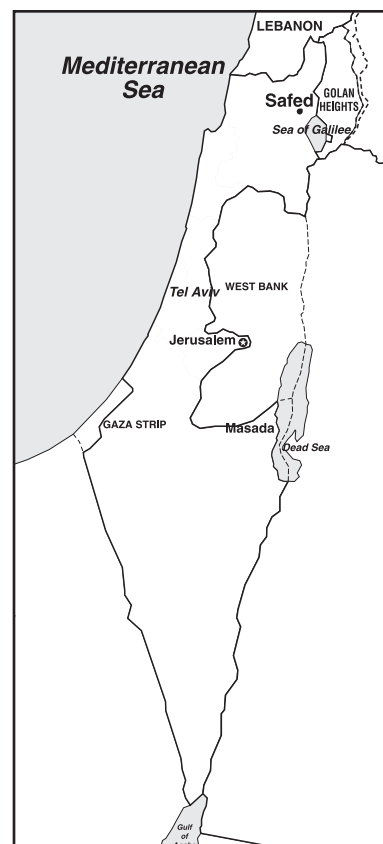
Thursday: Plant a tree, Jeep tour of Golan Heights, Katzrin's ancient synagogue, Safed

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

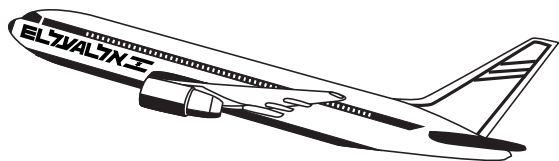
Saturday: Enjoy Shabbat services and optional tours

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



*For cost and
additional
information,
call 616-942-5553*



Grand Rapids rallies in support of Israel January 6, 2009

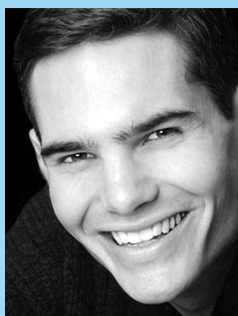


**Cultural Council of the
Jewish Federation
of Grand Rapids
invites you to attend . . .**

THE COMEDY OF JOEL CHASNOFF

**Sunday,
March 1, 2009
7:00 p.m.
Temple Emanuel
1715 East Fulton**

**Back by Popular
Demand...**



Joel Chasnoff brings creativity and imagination to comedy and an innovative look at the funnier aspects of Jewish life. Joel's stand-up comedy act focuses on what being Jewish in America means--such experiences as the Bar Mitzvah, tours of the Holy Land, and Yom Kippur services as well as Israeli humor through his service in the IDF. At the heart of Joel's act is a deep love for Judaism, a love that is communicated in every performance. In addition to performing comedy, Joel Chasnoff conducts seminars on Jewish Humor.

Dessert reception to follow.

HADASSAH BOOK CLUB

The winter winds and snow will blow us to Flory Silverstein's home for our next Book Club meeting.

Date: February 11, 2009

Time: 7:15 p.m.

Book: "Away" by Amy Bloom

Where: Flory Silverstein's Home
2930 Bonnell S.E.

616-949-5766

Please RSVP

April Meeting

Date: April 22nd

Time: 7:15 p.m.



Book & location to be announced

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

For more information contact:

Sue Remes – 616-949-3505

Flory Silverstein – 616-949-5766

ROCK AND ROLLING CHANUKAH EVENT

**Sponsored by the Jewish Federation, United Jewish School
and the Chabad House on December 14th.**

**It was a wonderful event with great food, music, arts
and crafts, olive oil demonstration, prizes, and a lot of rolling skating!**



Thank you to Sarah Weingarten and the Chabad House for the food preparation and arts and crafts; to Jon Subar for being the Master of Ceremony; to the United Jewish School teachers and aides for helping with the children; to Rabbi Shalom Ber Liberow for the wonderful Chanukah Menorah; and to all the participants who made this event a success.



Congregation Ahavas Israel

Tot Shabbat Service

Children ages 2 - 6 • January 10th, 10:45 a.m.

Sanctuary Shabbat Service: • February 7th

Fred Stella, Interfaith Dialogue Association president
"Hindu and Israel, Judaism and India"

Sunday Night Movies and Midrash • January 18th

at the home of Rabbi David and Cantor Marisa Krishef,
2021 Michigan St. N.E.

Come in from the winter cold to view and discuss a Jewish-themed movie.

"Keeping Up with the Steins"

This is a terrific movie to facilitate a discussion about the role of lavish celebrations (such as Bar Mitzvah parties) in Jewish life. Unfortunately, the **PG-13** rating for some crude language, nudity and brief drug references makes it questionable for pre-B'nai mitzvah age children.

Yishuv Hada'at – Settling the Mind: Jewish Contemplative Prayer and Yoga

Thursday evenings:

Jan. 22, Feb. 19, March 19, April 30

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

\$10/members (including Temple Emanuel),
\$15/non-members.

Connecting the mind, the body, and the spiritual self using Yoga and Hasidic text study. Accommodations will be made for people of any age and physical ability. Yoga will be led by Carolyn Heines owner of The Yoga Studio. Text study will be taught by Rabbi Krishef, based on materials from the Jewish Institute of Spirituality.

Temple Emanuel

Temple Emanuel invites the entire West Michigan community to join us for a portion of the, or entire upcoming **Winter Study Weekend, February 13-15, 2009**. We welcome Professor Marcie Lee, faculty member of the Jewish Studies Department at Arizona State University.

Friday February 13

Kabbalat Shabbat Services at 6:15 PM

Potluck Shabbat Dinner at 7:00 PM. (We will provide chicken, challah, and wine. We ask everyone to bring a non-dairy side dish to pass. The cost is \$4 for adults and \$2 for children. RSVP necessary.)

Professor Lee will speak at 8:00 PM. The topic of her presentation is, *"The Jewish American Princess: Myths and Realities That Affect Jewish Living and Jewish Loving"*.

Saturday February 14

Shabbat Morning Services at 9:30 AM

Professor Lee will speak at 11:00 AM. The topic of her presentation is, *"Dinah: The Tent of Meeting and a Meeting About the Red Tent"*.

Dairy lunch at 12:15 PM. (The cost is \$6 a person. RSVP necessary.)

Professor Lee will speak again at 1:00 PM. The topic of her presentation is, *"Purim: a Story in which Esther Outwits Evil"*.

Sunday February 15

Bagels and Lox Breakfast at 10:00 AM

(The cost is \$5 a person. RSVP necessary)

Professor Lee will speak at 10:30 AM. The topic of her presentation is *"A Woman of Valor: Would You Know Her If You Saw Her?"*

Please call the Temple office at 616-459-5976 to sign up.

HAS YOUR CHILD EVER BEEN TO A JEWISH OVERNIGHT SUMMER CAMP OR ON AN ISRAEL TRIP PROGRAM?

No?

WANT TO GIVE YOUR CHILD THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME THIS SUMMER?

Yes?

Apply to the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit's Ravitz Michigan Small Jewish Communities Initiative's **First-Time Jewish Experience Subsidy Fund*** and your child will receive a partial subsidy for an Approved** Jewish experience this summer!

But wait. There's more!

By applying you will automatically be put into a lottery for a FULL SCHOLARSHIP to a 10 day mini-session at an approved Jewish Overnight Camp for Summer 2009 or up to \$2000 towards an approved Israel program.

Apply for a subsidy and enter the lottery at jewishdetroit.org/statewide
All applications must be submitted by March 19, 2009; Lottery Drawing: March 23, 2009.

* This special opportunity is open to Michigan Residents **not** living in Oakland, Wayne or Macomb County or the parts of Washtenaw county served by the Jewish Federation of Washtenaw County. The subsidy is for Jewish youth who have not participated in an overnight Jewish Summer Camp or Israel program. Returning Campers with extenuating financial circumstances will also be considered for subsidies, but are not eligible for a free camping experience.

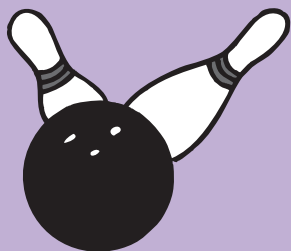
** Visit website for list of approved programs. For questions: email surowitz@jfm.org or call Jeff Surowitz at 248-642-4260 ext. 294.

YOUNG ADULT DIVISION . . .

~ Save the Date ~

Kids, Lets Go Bowling.

Grab your Dad or a special Male Friend and ask him to take you bowling.



**March 15, 2009
1:00 P.M.**

Eastbrook Lanes

*Lunch will be
provided*

Any questions call Ally at 616-942-5553
or ally@jfgr.org

Shalom Baby!!!

**This is a new program to
welcome our youngest
members to the community.**



If you or someone you
know is pregnant or
recently had a baby,
please contact Ally
at 616-942-5553 ext 208.

*We would like to extend
a warm Shalom
to your new addition.*



On December 30th 2008, over 35 kids and adults came in from the cold to attend Federation's Chuck E. Cheese day. We spent the day playing games, eating pizza and donuts, and chatting with old and new friends.



Amidst Falling Rockets Israelis with Disabilities Celebrate Hanukkah Together in Southern Israel



Immanuel, Chairman of the Volunteer Activities of the Accessible Community uses a wheelchair; but stands to make the blessing of the Hanukkah lights.

"I am very excited today following last night's Hanukkah celebration that included 60 members from JDC's Supportive Community for the Disabled and the Accessible Community Programs in Sderot, said Nitza Dinor, a program coordinator on behalf of the Unit for Disabilities in cooperation with Gvanim Association and the Social Welfare Division of the Sderot Municipality. Nitza is all too familiar with events being cancelled and rooms left empty because members of the local Supportive Community were too afraid to leave their homes due to a surge of Kassam rockets.

Nitza further expressed in a message to JDC-Israel, "I believe that our members are grasping for life and happiness, which they know they can find in togetherness. All of us understand that this is what keeps us strong in this situation."

JDC's Supportive Community for the Disabled and the Accessible Community Programs in Sderot provide per-

sonal and social support for people with disabilities and their families living in Sderot. The programs were established with funds from UJC/Federation Israel Emergency Campaign and from the Northern New Jersey Jewish Federation. Currently 100 people with disabilities participate in these activities and the aim is to increase the scope to all 500 people living with severe disabilities in Sderot.

These programs were created with a strong emphasis on emergency preparedness including: emergency contact lists, the recruiting and training of volunteers for home visits, preparations for respite or evacuations if needed, workshops for stress reduction and distribution of equipment specially designed for people with disabilities such as lighting and communication devices.

In addition, JDC completed upgrades on two public buildings—a social club and an employment center—in Sderot to ensure their safety from Kassam rockets. These facilities serve 150 community members with disabilities who attend these activities every day in spite of the attacks knowing that the facilities have the highest standards of protection, as approved by Israel's Homefront Command. JDC-ESHEL, the Association for the Planning and Development of Services for the Aged in Israel also consulted on this to ensure the buildings were fully accessible for elderly people living with disabilities.

JDC is committed to providing support and relief to members of the vulnerable populations—children, elderly, and people with disabilities—living in Sderot, the Gaza Border Region, and the Southern Conflict Zone. JDC works to secure the safety and well-being of these community members and works to create a positive and productive community environment. As Nitza remarked, "It is important not to give up on our events and to attend social evenings and celebrate holidays together. This togetherness creates a very powerful resilience as we felt at the Hanukkah celebration."

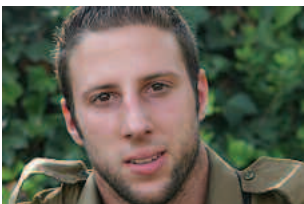
JDC programs that support the communities in the Southern Conflict Zone are funded by the UJC/Federation Israel Emergency Campaign and are run in full cooperation with UJC, JAFI, and the government of Israel.



Now, More Than Ever, your Support Counts



Moges Dinko and his family waited eight years in squalid conditions in the Ethiopian city of Gondar to come to the land of their dreams - Israel. Arriving at the age of 19, he was too old to attend high school and did not have any experience to enter the work force. The Jewish Agency's Kedma program put Moges on a path to higher education while providing him with a complete absorption framework.



Matan Elimelech

A lone soldier with no family or support system in Israel by providing Matan with a social network, Hebrew ulpan classes, and a home during his army service.

Every year, some 2 million people around the world depend on the services of the Jewish Agency. Youth and communities at risk in Israel – at risk from neglect, disadvantage or kassam rocket attacks – depend on our help. Vulnerable new immigrants look to us as they struggle to build new lives. So do young immigrant soldiers and students alone in Israel who count on the Jewish Agency as family.

Thanks to United Jewish Communities - Federations of North America and Keren Hayesod, thousands of lay leaders and professionals from North America and throughout the Jewish world recently visited Israel and met the people behind the Jewish Agency programs. And as the global economic crisis deepens, we need to ensure that these people who count on us do not fall through the cracks. Now, as always, our beneficiaries are our most important priority.

Beneficiaries like Michal Kakoon, a science teacher and mother of two young girls who was the victim of terrifying Kassam rocket attacks

in Sderot. Michal and her family stand firm in their resolve to remain in Sderot, but it is difficult. The support she received from the Jewish Agency's Fund for Victims of Terror, created by United Jewish Communities' Israel Emergency Campaign (IEC) and Keren Hayesod, helped the family tremendously.



Fund for Victim of Terror beneficiary Michal Kakoon with her two daughters in Sderot.

For Michal, and many other citizens of Sderot, the Jewish Agency has been a pillar of support for the beleaguered city. "Everywhere you turn the Jewish Agency is helping, from assisting terror victims, to providing our children with after school activities, vacation respites and summer camps." She told UJC's GA delegates, "It is heartwarming to know that Jews around the world care for us and will continue to stand beside us."

Delegates also met teenagers from the Jewish Agency's four-year Net@ program, an exciting after-school initiative that trains high school youth in the periphery of Israel to design, build and maintain computer networks. Diana Naftaliev told the group that she is so grateful for the people who support Net@. She cannot imagine the last four years of her life without the program and knows that it will give her an edge when she goes to college. "Because of people like you who care," said Diana, "we are able to advance."



Net@ student Diana Naftaliev shows her computer talent to GA participants.

Soldiers in the Jewish Agency's Nativ program, many from the former Soviet Union, shared their feelings on how Nativ changed their lives. The program was developed in order to ensure the full integration of new immigrants serving in the IDF into Israeli society, and to give IDF soldiers who are not halachically Jewish an opportunity to convert with like-minded peers in a friendly environment. To date, 7,000 soldiers have completed the program, including 3,100 who have converted since its inception seven years ago.

"Because of this program, I now feel 100% Jewish," said Igor Lermon from Ukraine.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY NEWS . . .



*Youth Futures Trustee
Avital Elimelech in action.*

During a visit to the Youth Futures program in Upper Nazareth, delegates learned how Youth Futures harnesses the talent of idealistic young activists (Trustees) to work with children at-risk through a holistic three-year program that fills critical gaps

and puts them on a level playing field. Youth Futures Trustees led the children and GA delegates in interactive, get-acquainted activities that included arts and crafts, sports and tree-planting to make the school grounds nicer.

Trustee Avital Elimelech thanked the people and communities that made Youth Futures happen. She said that in these difficult financial times it was wonderful to see people from North America and around the world coming to Israel to support kids who desperately need a program like Youth Futures.

"I have seen so much change in the children as a result of the program," said Avital. "Suddenly, they feel that they are able to achieve. Their increased confidence and growing self-image has created a snow-balleffect in their class, their school, their family and their community."

Israel Turgeman, 29, a young social activist and coordinator of the Partnership 2000 Lunch and Learn program in the southern desert city of Dimona expressed similar sentiments. Lunch and Learn, a critical program operating in all 14 elementary schools in Dimona, provides children in need with a hot lunch, afternoon enrichment and tutoring activities. "We are so lucky in Dimona to be working with UJC's Network of Independent Communities as our Partnership 2000 (P2K) community. The Lunch and Learn program that I direct, which is supported by the Partnership, keeps children off the street and gives them incredible emotional, social and educational support."

Americans Karin Frisch and Zachary Hughes, and Russian Ira Friedman, are all in Israel on a range of long-term programs as a result of the Jewish Agency's MASA program. Each young person receives a scholarship from MASA, and all told the visitors that they would not have been able to go to Israel without this support.



Karin Frisch gets down to business on MASA's Eco-Israel - Live the Land program.

Boston University graduate Karin was the first English language teacher in the cloud forest village of Mindo, before she turned her sights to Israel. But when she heard about MASA's new Eco-Israel - Live the Land program, she decided to head to Israel. "I am doing a permaculture apprenticeship now," explains Karin, "and I am learning so much, both personally and professionally."

"Israel is an experiment in nation-building and I treasure and value this," continues Karin. "I can't think of any other program I could have done in Israel that gave me everything I wanted."

Ira Friedman, 23, studied for six years to be a pediatrician in St. Petersburg. Months before she received her degree she realized this is not what she wanted to do. She wanted to use her artistic talent to help children.

At a crossroads in her life, professionally and religiously, Ira heard about MASA's Bezalel Academy for Arts and Design program in



Ira Friedman works on her art.

Jerusalem. "I feel very good in Israel, and I believe that I will make aliyah. Somehow, I know that this is the right decision for me. If the State of Israel needs me, I will join the army, and always be ready to help children, no matter what I do."

Ira is so appreciative of the Jewish people around the world who don't even know her, but with their support she has changed her life.

Gadi Ohayon, 19, Israel's long jump champion, also drastically turned his life around at the Jewish Agency's Hadassah Neurim Youth Aliyah Village. Growing up in Acre, one of four children, life was not filled with promising opportunity until Gadi exhibited exceptional sports ability in long jumping and went to live and train at Hadassah Neurim's outstanding National Athletics program.

Gadi thrived at Hadassah Neurim, competing in national and international competitions, including the European and World Championship games. He is now gearing up for the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

"The coaches, the teachers, everyone at Hadassah Neurim are pushing for us to succeed. It is an amazing feeling. I would never have been able to afford the training, and receive the support I get here," says Gadi.



Gadi Ohayon (top right) with other Hadassah Neurim champions.

Moges, Matan, Michal, Diana, Ira, Karin, Avital, Gadi and thousands of others benefit from the Jewish Agency's vital programs, which are made possible with the support of United Jewish Communities - Federations of North America, Keren Hayesod, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, foundations and donors in Israel and around the world.

We cannot afford to let these programs fall, as we gear up for difficult financial times. In the words of Moges Dinko, "If we Jews help each other, anything is possible."

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 JFGR General Endowment Fund

To Jeff Slotnick in memory of his Uncle
From Karen Padnos

To honor Jeff Slotnick on the marriage of his son
From the JFGR staff

The Louis and Louise Weiner Fund

In honor of Liz Scheibe
From Toby Weiner Dolinka

The David and Susan Samrick Youth Scholarship Fund

In honor of the engagement of Andrew Samrick and Liz Scheibe
From Jeanne Moss

To Rhonda Reider for her help at the Chanukah Luncheon
From Liz Scheibe

To Rabbi Yosef and Sarah Weingarten in honor of the birth of their grandchild
From Liz Scheibe and Andrew Samrick

The Women of Valor Endowment Fund

To Malka Berman in memory of her Father
From Karen Padnos

To David and Susan Samrick in honor of the birth of their granddaughter, Eden Ruderman
From Bob and Rosalie Stein

To Edith Rashewsky in honor of her special birthday
From Bob and Rosalie Stein

To Barbara Wepman for being honored by the EKHS Theatre department and the establishment of the Barbara Wepman Theatre Scholarship
From Bob and Rosalie Stein

To Margaret Frisch Klein and Dan Frisch in memory of their mother, Nelle Frisch
From Bob and Rosalie Stein

To Anne Wepman for her great recovery and special Birthday
From Barbara Wepman and Hermina Sikkema

SELLING STOCK?

If you are selling stock to pay your pledge to the Federation, please notify our bookkeeper, Amy Noyes at 616-942-5553, ext. 203, to advise her of your transaction. This will aid us in making sure YOUR stock transaction is credited to YOUR pledge.

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids Endowment Fund Donation Form

Donation From: Name _____
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 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 _____
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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
_____ Cultural Council - Gil Tamary	January 24 th	\$10.00	_____
_____ Lunch Bunch	January 29 th	\$ 7.00	_____
_____ Seniors' Camp - Meijer Gardens	February 9 th	\$ 7.00	_____
_____ Seniors' Camp - Cascade Hills Country Club	February 19 th	\$ 7.00	_____
_____ Seniors' Camp - Great Lakes Shipping/ Naked Plates	February 23 th	\$12.00	_____
	Total Enclosed		_____

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

Save these dates!

January

Saturday, January 24, 7:30pm Cultural Council Event
Thursday, January 29, 11:30am Lunch Bunch at The Spinnaker

February

Monday, February 9, 11:30am Seniors' Camp at Meijer Gardens
Tuesday, February 10, 10:30am Mitzvah Specialists
Thursday, February 19, 12:00pm Seniors' Camp at Cascade Country Club
Monday, February 23, 11:30am Seniors' Camp at Breton Village

March

Sunday, March 1, 7:00pm Cultural Council Event

The Shofar

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

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Next Issue's Information Deadline: January 23, 2009