



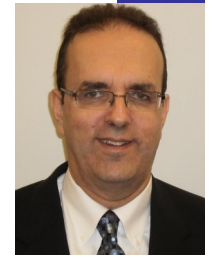
TEVET/SHEVAT, 5772
JANUARY 2012
WWW.JEWISHGRANDRAPIDS.ORG

JEWISH FEDERATION OF GRAND RAPIDS

The Shofar

Federation News

Executive Director's Letter



Dear Friends,

Well, now that the dust has settled, what was that all about?

'That' was the unusual dust-up a few weeks ago between the Israeli government and leaders of some major American Jewish organizations, including the Jewish Federations of North America, regarding an ad campaign the Israeli government directed at Israeli Jews living in the U.S.

The purpose of the ads (which you can find online by googling 'Israeli ad videos') was to encourage Israeli Jews to return home by highlighting some cultural challenges they encounter in America. These challenges include the difficulty for their children to differentiate between Hanukkah and Christmas, and the likelihood they will speak in English rather than Hebrew. Another ad raised the question of whether Americans dating or married to Israelis could understand the deep feelings associated with Yom HaZikaron, Israel's Memorial Day. In sum, the ads were about the topic of Israeli (and to some degree the more sensitive topic of Jewish) identity in America.

It is understandable why such an ad campaign, mainly delivered via websites popular with Israeli Jews, was initiated, since there are hundreds of thousands of Israelis living and working professionally in the U.S., a significant "brain drain" for a country of six million or so. It appears to me the American Jewish leadership reaction was caused primarily by the clumsiness of the ads, which suggested life in America is incompatible not only with living as an Israeli, but perhaps as a Jew as well. The Israeli Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, which signed off on the ads, apparently did not consult with people greatly familiar with American Jewish life. After the ads were brought to the attention of the Israeli Ambassador to the U.S., Michael Oren, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, both with extensive personal experience living in the U.S., the ad campaign was cancelled.

Continued on page 3 ...

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.

One Community

Federation is now on Facebook!

Become a fan of Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids

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Federation News

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
 2727 Michigan NE
 Grand Rapids, MI 49506
 616.942.5553
 616.942.5780 fax
 www.jfgr.org

Officers

Chair
 Greg Kaufman
Vice Chairs
 David Alfonso
 Judith Joseph
 Karen Padnos
 Andrew Samrick
Treasurer
 Claude Titcher III
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Executive Director
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Ex-Officio Members

Congregation Ahavas Israel
 Rabbi David Krishef
 Marni Vyn, President

 Temple Emanuel
 Rabbi Michael Schadick
 David Fishman, President

Chabad House
 Of Western Michigan
 Rabbi Yosef Weingarten



Campaign Update:

Our campaign is off and running, and we are more than half way to our goal!

Pledges to date total:
 299 Donors pledged
 \$350,000 as of
 December 21, 2011

Your donation is 100%
 Tax deductible.

You can pay by cash, check, credit card, stock or on an installment basis.

You can pay online at
www.jfgr.org.

Any new gift or increase is matched dollar for dollar by a challenge grant.



ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

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
 Discover Amex



Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
 2727 Michigan NE
 Grand Rapids, MI 49506
 (616) 942-5553
 www.jfgr.org

Live Generously.

Name _____

Address _____

Please consider a 10% increase

 Card Number
 Exp. Date: _____

Federation News

Continued from page 1

This episode should not be surprising. While we have much in common with our extended Jewish family in Israel, we also have different life experiences. Israeli Jews live in Israel as the majority; American Jews live in the U.S. as a minority. Both groups have weathered unique, albeit different, challenges to survive and thrive.

Perhaps only those Jews who have spent much time in the other's country can fully appreciate the ins and outs of these challenges. In light of this, what is most remarkable is that such disagreements between Israeli and American Jews occur as infrequently as they do.

This is also another example of how the Jewish people act like extended family. While we have much in common, we also have our differences. Coupled with our propensity to debate and the value we place in independent thinking, we should expect such disagreements. And why we argue is important to remember. We *care* about our fellow Jews. While our opinions may clash and our emotions may rise, we should not forget we've been *one community* for thousands of years, and will continue to be so.

After all, what we're talking about is an argument amongst Jews. So what else is new?

You may have noticed the word 'interim' has been dropped from my title. A year ago, when I began this work, I did not anticipate taking on this position permanently. However, as time passed, I came to realize I'm enjoying both the work and the people, including our wonderful staff, board and you, our community. I'm also excited about taking on the challenges that we face.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Greg and the JFGR Board of Directors for their support and confidence in me. I'd also like to express my gratitude to each of you for all of your help over the past year. On behalf of our board and staff, I look forward to being of service to you as we move forward – together – as one community.

With warmest regards,

Mike Present
mike@jfgr.org

UNIQUE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!!



2012 was declared the *Year of Interfaith Understanding* in a cooperative effort led by Grand Valley State University's Kaufman Interfaith Institute. It is a year-long effort "to cultivate community interest and engagement of all faith traditions in West Michigan."

Beginning in January, the Federation will have a GVSU intern for four months who will schedule visits with local civic groups or schools. A volunteer speaker will be scheduled to talk briefly about Judaism and our local Jewish community, with the goal to give people outside the Jewish community a little better understanding about their neighbors. If you are interested in volunteering for this program, or if you have a suggestion of a community group or club to visit, please email cathy@jfgr.org or call 616-942-5553.

Senior Programming

Lunch Bunch



Thursday
January 12, 2012
11:30 AM

Smokey Bones

4875 28th Street

Grand Rapids

Cost: \$8.00

Please Call Ann to RSVP
616-942-5553 ext. 206
By Tuesday, January 10, 2012
Transportation available!

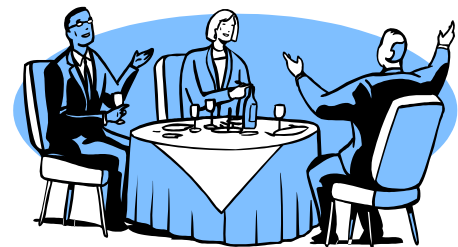
Save these Dates!

For Future Lunch Bunch

Thursday, February 16
PF Changs

Thursday, March 15
Olive Garden

Thursday, April 26
Location TBA



Mark your Calendar!
Passover Trip to Detroit
Thursday
March 22, 2012



Watch for more information in February.

ATTENTION: DO YOU NEED A RIDE? If you or someone you know would like to attend Jewish Federation events but do not have transportation, call the Federation office. Ann is willing to arrange rides for any Federation event.



Call 616-942-5553 or email
Ann@ifgr.org

Senior Mah Jongg

Anyone interested in learning and/or playing Mah Jongg, please contact **Aleta Katonak**, by email - alekastr4u@juno.com (preferable) or by phone - 616-281-5917

These are daytime lessons, and games are at no cost. Then, of course, if there is anyone looking for a game, join the fun!

Transportation
available.



Community News

GRAND RAPIDS SUMMER CAMP CAMP TAVOR



PARENTS MEETING

The Jewish Federation and Camp Tavor invite you to meet Brittany Abramowicz, Outreach Manager for Camp Tavor.



Sunday, January 15 at 11 AM
Temple Emanuel Social Hall

ONE WEEK CAMPING EXPERIENCE JULY 9-15

- July 9-11 Day Camp in Grand Rapids
(Congregation Ahavas Israel)**
- July 12-15 Mini Overnight at Camp Tavor
(Three Rivers, MI)**
- July 15 Pick up and family day at Camp Tavor**



Campers' ages: entering **Grades 1-5** in the fall of 2012. Children will have fun learning how to build community, participating in Tikkun Olam (Social Action) projects, and developing their Jewish identity. On Thursday, Campers will travel to beautiful Habonim Dror Camp Tavor. They will swim, boat, play sports, engage in arts and crafts, sing songs and have an exciting and meaningful Shabbat at Camp Tavor.

1st graders will participate in the day camp portion only.

Counselor in Training (CIT): Teenagers who will be in **9th or 10th grade** in the fall of 2012 are invited. CITs will help run the day camp activities and look after the children. At Camp Tavor, the CITs will be integrated with the teen campers. There will be a mandatory training day for CIT participants.

RSVP for parent meeting to 616-942-5553 or sari@jfg.org

For additional information about Camp Tavor visit www.campfavor.org

Community News



The Jewish Cultural Council presents
The Art of Being Jewish

On

“A Magical, Musical Trip around the World”



Temple Emanuel
 Sunday January 15, 2012
 6:30 PM



We invite the entire community and all their friends and relations to enjoy an evening of non-stop entertainment for the entire family in a coffee shop setting. Desserts, coffee, wine and finger foods available all evening.

The show includes performances by:

Dixie with the Hall Street 6, Rock and Roll with Jeremy and Friends, Classics with Sandy Freed, Klezmer with Burt Bach and Michelle Benjamin, Diane Hammerman, Jazz with the Hall Street 6 and Friends, The Magic of Jeff Olds, Lori Reineke, Kathy Osborn/Linda Spinella – Dance for Two Flutes, Philip Pletcher – Solo piano, Celtic Duets – Fred Willson and Christine Golden, The West Michigan Hebrew Academy Children’s Choir

Produced by Larry Broomberg on behalf of Jewish Cultural Council

Lighting and Sound by Matt Simms
 Assisted by a Production Crew of Thousands

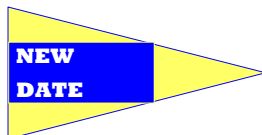


Tickets: Adults \$15.00
College Students: \$5.00
Children up to age 18: Free
RSVP: 616-942-5553 or sari@jfgr.org

Community News

2011-2012 Jewish Cultural Council

SAVE THE DATE!



***Saturday, February 11 - 7:30 PM**

REUVEN Y. HAZAN

“Where has Israel been and where is it going?”

Congregation Ahavas Israel

*** Monday, March 19 - 7:30 PM**

PAULA SHOYER

“Cooking Demonstration and Dessert Tasting”

Congregation Ahavas Israel

*** Monday, May 14 - 7:00 PM**

JAMEY TURNER

“Glass Harp Concert”

Congregation Ahavas Israel

Hadassah Book Club

Our Book Club met at Karen Haight's home on the 14th of December! *The Arc of Justice* was discussed. It was a very interesting and informative evening! Karen, thank you so much for opening your home to our group.

NEXT MEETINGS:

February 8, 7:15 PM

Flory Silverstein's home, 2930 Bonnell SE
Please RSVP 616-949-5766

Book to read: PALMYRA by Minrose Gwin

April 18, 7:15 PM

Sue Remes' home, 3403 Burton Ridge Road SE
Please RSVP 616-949-3505

**Book to read: THE HARE WITH THE AMBER EYES
By Edmund Dewall**

Books available for purchase at Schulers on 28th Street.



Your Book-Ends,
Flory Silverstein and Sue Remes

Business Forum

The Jewish Community Business Forum is a good networking opportunity to discuss business principles and to stay aware of resources available within our community.

Next meeting:

Thursday January 12,
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM



El Barrio
545 Michigan NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Everyone Welcome

Community News

LOCAL OUTREACH EVENT!

On Wednesday, December 14 Jewish Women International (formerly B'nai B'rith) in partnership with Verizon Wireless dedicated its 38th Children's Library at a Domestic Crisis Center. Safe Haven Ministry Ramoth House in Grand Rapids was the recipient of this latest library. Susan Jerison, JWI Director of Marketing and Communications from Washington D.C., Eileen Enoch, JWI local representative and Ann Berman, JFGR Director of Social Services Resources, were in attendance for this dedication.

JWI has pledged to open 100 libraries at women's domestic crisis centers throughout the country.

Domestic violence knows no religious or racial boundaries. Often the women that JWI assist escape with their children and only the clothes on their backs. The availability of these libraries is critical because it helps the children in these circumstances feel safe and provides a place to play without being fearful. The library is shelved with over 300 books, a computer, a table and chairs and various comfort items.

Donations of gently used children books are appreciated. Please contact either Kylene at Safe Haven Ministries (616-452-6664) or Eileen Enoch (616-949-6444).

AUDITION NOTICE



JTGR is presenting the play "Yentl" on April 19-29, 2012.

This play, based upon the

story by Isaac Bashevis Singer, requires a large cast. We will need eight males ages 18-35; six men 35-70; five females 18-35; and five females 35-70. Auditions will be held Sunday, Feb. 19, 2012 at 2:00 PM and Monday, Feb. 20, at 7:00 PM at Spectrum Theater on the GRCC campus, 160 Fountain Street NE.

Rehearsals begin March 4, 2012

Further information can be found on our website: www.jtgr.org, or by calling 616-234-3595.

Blood Drive Thank you

We had a good turnout and we reached our goal of collecting 13 pints of blood! There were:

- 16 People Registered to Donate
- 13 Pints of Blood Donated
- Two First-Time Donors

Michigan Blood is very grateful to all those that participated. The lives of as many as 39 patients in our local hospitals may potentially be saved through this event. Federation would like to extend Michigan Blood's appreciation to everyone who participated and helped make the blood drive a success. If you were unable to attend, and would still like to donate, please notify Ann. If there is interest, she will organize another drive in the spring. Contact Ann@ifgr.org or give her a call, 616-942-5553 ext. 206.

CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS!

Do you know a child who plans to attend a Jewish summer camp?

They may qualify to apply for a camp scholarship through the David and Susan Samrick Youth Scholarship Fund.

Applications are available upon request, and due by March 1st.

Please contact the Jewish Federation at 942-5553.

*All applications will be reviewed by a Scholarship Committee and held in the strictest confidence



Congregational News

Temple Emanuel

We invite the Jewish Community to Join us for a **Special Classical Concert at Temple on Sunday, January 22 at 10:30 AM.**

As We Welcome the Ann Arbor cello and piano duo of Stephan Koch and SunAh Lee.

They will share with us the Cello and Piano Music of Richard Stohr Four Fantasy Pieces Op.17 (1907) and the Cello Sonata Op. 49 (1915)

Richard Stohr was an accomplished composer and professor at the Vienna Academy of Music from 1901 -1938. Born into a prominent Jewish family, Stohr was eventually forced to leave the Academy and Vienna after the Nazi takeover of Austria. Eventually settling in Vermont, Stohr was unable to get any of his music published in the United States or to obtain more than a few performances of his music here.

This cello and piano music has never been heard in the US until now. In addition to a performance, Mr. Koch will speak about the life and career of Richard Stohr, who was a central figure in Viennese cultural life.

Coffee and danish will be served at 10:00 AM

Chabad House



Chabad Kids Club

Mini Chefs, January 17, 2012

Jewish Birthday Cupcake Decorating

For kids ages 5-12, \$8 cover charge

RSVP or for more information Call Chana 616-570-1742

Or email imnotsheina@gmail.com

Congregation Ahavas Israel

Learn@AhavasIsraelGR's Judaic Studies Institute:

Introduction to Judaism

The Introduction to Judaism course will begin on Monday, January 9, 2012, and meet ever Monday evening through May 14, 2012 8:00 - 9:00 PM
Taught by Rabbi David Krishef

Soul Journey

Are you looking for a life-changing experience? New Mussar classes are forming in Holland! Mussar practice creates the possibility of "making the heart feel what the intellect already understands."

Discover Your Soul Journey through "A Season of Mussar I" Tuesday evenings, 7:00 - 8:30 PM,

Led by Paula Bojsen

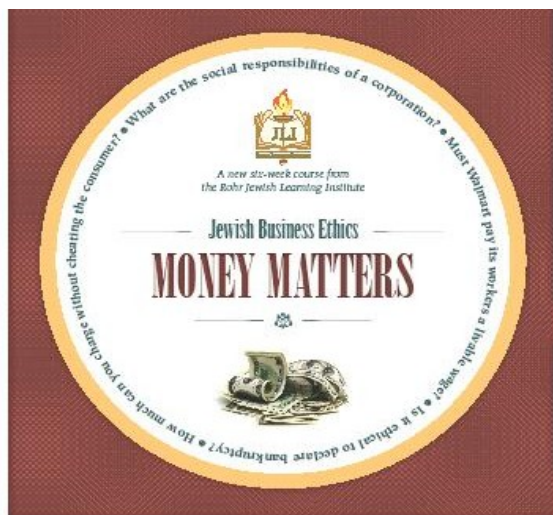
For more information, please contact pabojsen@att.net or 616-392-1138

Sanctuary Shabbat: 2012: The Year of Interfaith Understanding

We have filled every Sanctuary Shabbat in 2012 with a speaker on the general topic of Interfaith Understanding, and we are especially pleased to have Mayor George Heartwell to open the series on January 7.

January 7 - Mayor George Heartwell, Grand Rapids, "2012: The Year of Interfaith Understanding"

Havdalah Home Gathering: Please join us for Havdalah and food at the home of Esther and Isaac Katz, 247 Saddleback Dr NE, January 21, 7:00 PM.



The recent failures in the financial industry have changed the way we think about business altogether.

We deeply believe that business should be a force for good. Our newest course, Money Matters, challenges you to really question your assumptions about business at a very deep level, to understand what your values are, what you stand for, and how you are going to contribute to society and the world.

Join us for six weeks starting this January for a truly remarkable experience. Visit myJLI.com for more information or to register.

Six Weekdays 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Starting January 24 Fee: \$99

Location: Chabad House

2615 Michigan St

269-340-0770

United Jewish School



Beit Sefer B'yahad/United Jewish School

www.unitedjewishschool.org

UJS FUNdraiser

Let's eat SOUP at ZOUP!!! Sunday January 15

Come join the entire school community as we caravan to

Zoup! SOUP SALAD SANDWICHES

4021 Cascade Rd (East Paris and Cascade Rd)

We will caravan after Sunday School and 15% of the proceeds between 12:00 PM and 5:00 PM will be donated to UJS!

Plant Your Roots in Israel with trees for Tu B'shevat: On Tu'B'shevat we celebrate the New Year for trees. We eat wonderful fruits that grow in Israel and we pray for a fruitful year. Please join students all over the world by planting a tree in Israel through Jewish National Fund. Tzedakah monies at UJS for the month of January will be sent to Israel to plant trees. Go to www.jnf.org for more info.

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".



[PASSEOVER CANDY FUNDRAISER](#)

Help support the ongoing programs at UJS by purchasing delicious Barton's candy for this Passover season. Kosher for Passover.

For more info: Allyson Strauss at colestra@netscape.net

UJS Mitzvah Project:

UJS is collecting winter clothing, gently used boots, blankets, sweaters, etc.

Donations will be made to In the Image and Women's Domestic Crisis Center (no cost to recipients). Collection bins are located at Ahavas Israel and Temple Emanuel.

School Calendar

01-01-12 No school, winter break

01-15-12 UJS Open House

ZOUP FUNdraiser

01-25-12 UJS Board Meeting

01-29-12 No school, midwinter break

End of 1st semester

School closings: Please tune in to WZZM 13 and WOOD TV 8 for UJS closings. It will be listed as United Jewish School. You may also check their websites.

Jewish Federation 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.

The Leven Family Fund. To establish and provide Jewish facilities, and support for cooperative programming among the congregations that support Jewish education for our youth.

The Sam and Jane Kravitz Social Services Fund. To support Jewish social services in Grand Rapids.

*Thank you for supporting the
Grand Rapids Jewish Community*

The JFGR General Endowment Fund

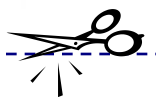
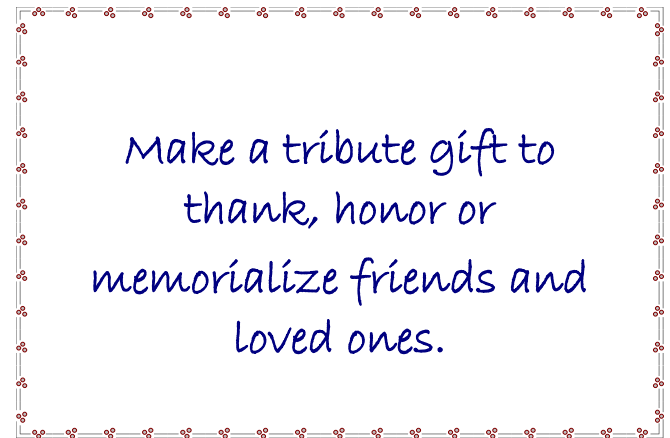
To Andrew and Liz Samrick in honor of Julian Samrick

From Karen and Mitch Padnos

The Sam and Jane Kravitz Social Services Fund

To Mrs. Nettie Beers in memory of Gert Perlman

From Mitzie and Monte Cohon



JFGR Endowment Fund Donation Form

Donation from: Name _____
 Donor Address _____
 Donor City/St/Zip _____
 Send card to: Name _____
 Send card to address _____
 Send card to City/St/Zip _____

Fund (pick from list) _____
 In honor of _____
 In memory of _____
 Notes: _____

Send your donation and this form to:
 2727 Michigan NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

The Shofar

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
2727 Michigan NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506-1240

Send article text to: Ann@jfgr.org

Phone: 616.942.5553

Fax: 616.942.5780

www.jewishgrandrapids.org

Email: info@jfgr.org

Next Issue's Information Deadline: January 16, 2012

We're on
Facebook!



One Community

TODAH RABAH!

To all who donated to our annual Chanukah gift bag program. We were able to give 20 families a little extra "gelt" to celebrate the festivities of Chanukah with their loved ones.



תודה