



Executive Director's Letter

January 2014

Dear Friends,

Last month I wrote to you about the importance of Federation since 'Judaism is worth keeping'. That message was in part a response to the angst caused by the results of the recent Pew Research Center study of American Jews. This month I'd like to talk about a significant subject of the study that used to be a taboo discussion in the organized American Jewish community – intermarriage.

Much of the apprehension about the Pew results has centered on the apparent decision of many American Jews, especially younger Jews, to become more secular and disengaged from traditional Jewish communal life. Trends beginning in the 1970s and '80s indicate a steadily increasing number of Jews marrying non-Jews. No more than one-third of those couples said they were raising their children Jewish, causing alarm about the future of American Jewry.

The Pew study seemed to confirm these fears. It also noted a growing intermarriage rate of 58% for those married since the year 2000. This 'doom and gloom' was widely reported in the media.

[Note: if you would like to review the Pew study or various reactions to it, please see the Federation website at www.jewishgrandrapids.org].

Another reaction caught my attention. It is an article by Theodore Sasson, a senior research scientist at Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies. Mr. Sasson's analysis in *Tablet Magazine* (also linked at the Federation website) took a look at what happened to those children of intermarried couples.

Mr. Sasson observed the study estimated the number of American Jews had significantly grown, from 5.5 million in 1990 to 6.7 million today. This figure was counterintuitive, i.e. hardly expected in view of the growing rates of assimilation. How could this be?

Mr. Sasson's analysis focuses on what happened to the children of intermarried couples. Now young or middle-aged adults, 59% identify themselves as Jewish, in contrast to the no more than 33% raised Jewish. In other words, the downfall of American Jews did not come to pass and, in fact, we may be in the process of reinventing ourselves.

Continues on page 2



Our Mission

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids unites the local Jewish community to sustain and strengthen Jews locally, in Israel, and around the world.

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

**Like Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
on Facebook!**

Inside this issue:

Federation News	1-5,9
Senior News	4
Community	6-8
United Jewish School	9
Congregational	10
Endowment	11

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids

2727 Michigan NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
616.942.5553
616.942.5780 fax
info@jfgr.org
www.jfgr.org

Officers

Chair
Claude Titche III
Vice Chairs
David Alfonso
Dan Hurwitz
Judith Joseph
Karen Padnos
Past Chair
Greg Kaufman
Executive Director
Michael Present

Board of Directors

Dauida Dennen
Machelle Hammond
Andrew Samrick
Audrey Sundstrom
Lanny Thodey
Marni Vyn
John Winestone
Chad Zagel

Ex-Officio Members

Congregation Ahavas Israel
Rabbi David Krishef
Bill Lewis, President

Temple Emanuel
Rabbi Michael Schadick
Mitchell Kahn, President

Chabad House
Of Western Michigan
Rabbi Yosef Weingarten



246 Gifts
\$286,824

Your donation to JFGR is 100% tax deductible. Payments can be made by cash, check, credit card or stock.

Pay in full or set up installments. You can even pay on line at www.jewishgrandrapids.org

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

*Total does not include matching grants.

Continued from page 1

There remains concern by many that if these younger American Jews are less religious, the future of American Jewry will still be at risk. However, as the noted American Jewish historian Jonathan Sarna observed in this month's *Hadassab Magazine*, when comparing the worries about the future of American Jewry back in the 1930s to the flourishing in the 1960s, "experience suggests that it is anything but predetermined".

What are the implications for our Grand Rapids Jewish community? In my view, our intermarried couples are now an integral part of our Jewish community. Their ideas, input and involvement are essential to the future of our community.

Therefore, as a Federation and community, we should look to get better at reaching out to our intermarried community members. By affirmatively welcoming intermarried couples into our communal life and encouraging their families to celebrate and enjoy Jewish life in a manner that works for them, our community will not only survive but thrive.

What are your thoughts? As always, I invite your feedback.

Best regards,

Mike Present

mike@jfgr.org



ANNUAL CAMPAIGN



Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids
2727 Michigan NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616) 942-5553
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
 Discover American Express

Card Number
Exp. Date: _____

Please consider a 10% increase

Farewell from our Financial Associate

Dear Community,

As I work my last few days as the Financial Associate for the Federation, I find it difficult to believe I have been here for nearly ten years. Through this job, I have been fortunate to meet many special people and to be part of a wonderfully supportive community. I have also been blessed to learn about not only the Jewish faith, but also about Jewish culture. For a Protestant girl, born and raised in rural Grand Rapids, this was a very new experience for me – and equally intriguing.



For those who do not already know, I have resigned my position here in order to pursue not only my real estate career, but also so I may help my new husband with his growing business. We were engaged one year ago, married in September and honeymooned in November. As you might imagine, this whole year has been quite a blur. With my new husband, I have also gained another son, making us a well rounded (and very busy) family of four.

Reflecting back to the person I was when I arrived, versus the individual I am today, I realize that I leave here as a better person. I have all of you to thank for this. I have been positively impacted by so many of you in so many ways. And, I have been grateful to receive moral support from this community during some very personally difficult years. And, I thank you for this.

It is because of each of you that I leave here grateful to be a part of your community. I look forward to seeing each of you in the future and it is my hope to continue to be an extended part of the Grand Rapids Jewish Community.

Respectfully,
Amy Noyes

Thank You Amy!!!

The JFGR Board and staff says “Thank You” to Amy Noyes for her nearly 10 years of service to Federation. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.



Year End, Campaign Continues!

As 2013 comes to a close, the Federation's 2013 Campaign does not. Pledges will continue to be accepted for our current campaign through April, 2014. If you have not already made your pledge, please consider doing so today to make sure your name is included in Federation's Annual Report. Please contact Cathy at 616-942-5553 or Cathy@jfgr.org.

LUNCH BUNCH**Thursday, January 23****Seoul Garden**

3321 28th St SE

11:30 AM**Cost \$8****RSVP by****Tuesday, January 21****to Ann at 616-942-5553**

**Transportation is also available
by calling Ann**


**Jewish Theatre of Grand Rapids
Presents**


Ann Berman is organizing a group to attend the **3 PM performance on Sunday January 19.** Call her at **616-942-5553** for discounted tickets and for transportation needs. We will have carpooling to the theater from Temple Emanuel's parking lot, meeting at 2:15. Please let her know if you would like to join the carpool or get in on the discounted tickets.

LUNCH BUNCH SAVE THESE DATES:

Thursdays, February 13 ~ March 20

April 10 ~ May 15 at 11:30 AM

SHALOM GRAND RAPIDS !!

A new program of the Jewish Federation

*** Would you like to become an ambassador to welcome people who are new to the Jewish community, or not currently involved?**

*** If you know about somebody new to the Grand Rapids community, please let us know. "Shalom Grand Rapids" would like to welcome them.**

To sign up or receive additional information about the program, contact Sari at the Federation office: 616-942-5553 or Sari@jfgr.org

WELCOME

Community Winter Fun Event!

Were you there?

It was a great time with family, friends, food, & bowling!



Job Opening

The Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids is seeking an experienced **Bookkeeper** on a part-time basis to work in a collaborative and flexible work environment. Familiarity with database management in a nonprofit environment is a plus. This position is responsible for all accounts payable and accounts receivable for the organization. You will also be completing journal entries, maintaining and updating QuickBooks records and other tasks as assigned.

The bookkeeper job duties include:

- Accounts payable and receivable
- Budgets and other financial reports
- Preparing and updating QuickBooks records
- General office duties and special projects as needed

Qualifications:

- Proven proficiency in QuickBooks
- Bookkeeping experience required
- Nonprofit experience and accounting education preferred
- Nonprofit database management experience a plus

Resumes may be emailed to mike@ifgr.org or sent to: Michael Presant, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids, 2727 Michigan NE, Grand Rapids MI 49506. Questions may be directed to mike@ifgr.org or by calling (616) 942-5553.

PJ Library is here!

Thank you! To the Ravitz Foundation and Rosenzweig-Coopersmith Foundation.

A GIFT for
JEWISH CHILDREN
and their families.



WHAT? The PJ Library ("PJ" for "pajamas") program offers the gift of free, high-quality Jewish books and music each month to children ages 6 months through 8 years all across North America. The program is also available to children ages 6 through 8 in some communities.

WHY? PJ Library books celebrate important aspects of Jewish culture, values and tradition, and become cherished bedtime stories.

HOW? Signing up is easy!
To sign up for PJ Library visit www.pjlibrary.org.

PJ Library is a gift from your Jewish community in partnership with local philanthropists and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.



www.PJLIBRARY.org

A PROGRAM OF THE
HAROLD GRINSPOON FOUNDATION



— STILL AVAILABLE —

The 2013-2014 Jewish Community Roster

Available (for \$9 each) at

Ahavas Israel or Temple Emanuel

or call

Lanny Thodey: 956-6161

Eileen Enoch: 949-6444



If you would like to receive this monthly newsletter via email, in color, before the mailed paper version, please email us your request to info@ifgr.org. If you would like to receive a printed paper copy in the mail instead, or in addition, we are happy to do that. Please let us know at 616-942-5553 or info@ifgr.org.



Jewish Cultural Council

You can still take advantage of a Cultural Council Membership Spectrum Series 2014 Membership form.

First Name _____	<u>Please send me season tickets for Spectrum 2014</u>
Last Name _____	<input type="checkbox"/> I/We would like to be an Underwriter: \$500+ (up to 5 tickets per event)
Address _____	<input type="checkbox"/> I/We would like to be a Patron: \$250 - \$499 (4 tickets per event)
City/State/Zip _____	<input type="checkbox"/> I/We would like to be a Sponsor: \$125 - \$249 (3 tickets per event)
Phone (____) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> I/We would like a Family membership: \$100 (2 tickets per event)
Enclosed is my Check for \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like a Single membership: \$50 (1 ticket per event)
Payable to The Jewish Cultural Council	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to be a Cultural Council Volunteer, please contact me.

Please mail this form with your check to:
Jewish Federation of Grand Rapid
2727 Michigan NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506



This series is sponsored by The Rosenzweig-Coopersmith Foundation and private donors

Save the Date

Sunday February 9, 2014 ~ 4:00 PM



Klezmer Music

A hybrid of Eastern European Jewish folk music, American swing, Yiddish theater tunes and Israeli horas. Yiddish Cup, formed in 1988, is one of the Top Ten Klezmer bands in America. The group has played throughout the United States at festivals, colleges and numerous Jewish gatherings.



www.yiddishecup.com/video

Congregation Ahavas Israel

2727 Michigan NE, Grand Rapids

For more info: contact Sari 616-942-5553 Sari@ifgr.org

www.jewishgrandrapids.org

DESSERT RECEPTION TO FOLLOW

Jewish Cultural Council ~ 2014 Spectrum Series
Presents:
**BREAD BAKING
DEMONSTRATION AND TASTING**
Sunday, January 12 - 4:00 p.m.

Downtown Market
435 Ionia Ave, Grand Rapids



Support the Cultural Council and enjoy the membership benefits and privileges!
www.jewishgrandrapids.org

Master Baker Shelby Kibler will teach us how to bake the most favorite Jewish breads: Challah and Rye.

Tickets are \$15 for adults
\$5 for college students and children up to age 18 are free.
For more information on this event see our website: www.jewishgrandrapids.org



2727 Michigan NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Phone: 616-942-5553
E-mail: info@jfg.org
www.jewishgrandrapids.org



January 8-19, 2014

Jewish Theatre Grand Rapids second production, "The Milliner," by Suzanne Glass will run January 8 - 19, 2014. Because this production is staged in the smaller, more intimate Black Box Theatre at Spectrum Theater, performances will be on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 3 p.m. Tickets go on sale beginning December 16, 2013, online and at the Box Office. Be aware, however, that the Box Office will be closed from December 21-January 2. Seating is limited so make your reservations early!

"The Milliner" is a touching, fragile portrait of a group rarely seen in traditional Holocaust literature – those unwilling to give up Germany as their home despite the horrors of the Nazi government. Wolfgang, a hat maker, is forced by others to flee Germany for England, leaving his mother behind, who refuses to go. His wife accepts their situation and adapts to life in England. Wolfgang is still filled with love for his homeland and staunchly refuses to give up his German identity in front of his new British neighbors. His struggle with adamant denial, particularly over the fate of his mother, sheds light on the agony of losing the only home one knows and loves. Love, art, music, complicated emotions, patriotism, and death abound in this painfully insightful and dramatic story of destruction of the most ruthless kind.

Please support YOUR Jewish Theatre. Grand Rapids is very blessed to have a vibrant theatre community, and doubly blessed to have a JEWISH Theatre that stages thought-provoking productions with Jewish themes having a universal appeal. Not many Jewish communities our size can say the same. **Attend a performance to show that you support them!**

Save the date

January 12, 2014

to celebrate



Anne Wepman's
100th Birthday

at Congregation Ahavas Israel

1:00 ~ 3:30 PM

Everyone Welcome!!

Jewish Community Business Forum

January 16

12:00 - 1:00 PM

El Barrio

545 Michigan NE

Everyone is Welcome!



A good networking opportunity to discuss business principles and to stay aware of resources available in our community.

Jewish Women's Professional Network

We meet monthly for networking. All women are invited - whether working outside the home, thinking of returning to the workforce, in career transition, or a community volunteer.

For more information, please email
marnivyn@yahoo.com or
phone 616-774-8644.



February 5

12:00 PM

Olive's

2162 Wealthy St. EGR

Hadassah Book Club

February 12 - 7:15 PM

The Children of Willesden Lane

by Mona Golabek & Lee Cohen

Host: Sue Remes

3403 Burton Ridge SE

RSVP to 616-949-3505

Books available at SCHULERS BOOKS,

28th Street

As always, your faithful bookends,

Sue Remes 616-949-3505

Flory Silverstein 616-949-5766



CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT IT IS ALREADY TIME TO THINK ABOUT SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS APPLICATIONS!

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 on line at www.jewishgrandrapids.org or upon request, and are due by March 3, 2014. Please contact the Jewish Federation at 616-942-5553.

-Ann Berman

Director of Social Service Resources

Note: All applications will be reviewed by a Scholarship Committee and held in the strictest confidence.



Camp Gan Israel was founded in 1956 by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory.
Today the Camp Gan Israel network serves the Jewish World with chapters in more than forty countries.



Beit Sefer B'yahad/United Jewish School

1715 East Fulton Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Pam Rush School Director 616-459-5976

pam@templemanuelgr.org www.unitedjewishschool.org

UJS Board:

The school board is comprised of representatives from Ahavas Israel and Temple Emanuel. Each congregation has seven representatives.

Erica Wikander, co-chair

Allyson Strauss, co-chair

Jean Barkin

Paula Bojsen

Wende Cook

Jan Fonger

Sharlena Lovy

Rhonda Pappas

Carey Potter

Lisa Rapoport

Elisabeth Rosewall

Amy Singer

Abby Sorota

Amy Winkelman

UJS Calendar

- 1-15-13 Midweek Tu'b'shevat program
- 1-19-14 UJS Open House
- 1-22-14 UJS Board Meeting 7pm Temple
- 2-16-14 No Sunday school mid-winter break
- 2-24-13 UJS/Federation Purim Program at Temple

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. 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".

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. There will also be a message on the school answering machine if classes are cancelled due to bad weather.
616-459-5976 x3

*Congregation Ahavas Israel***ADULT JEWISH LEARNING**

Monthly Adult Jewish Learning on Sunday mornings, co-sponsored by Ahavas Israel, Temple Emanuel, and the United Jewish School. All sessions begin with bagels and coffee at 10:00 AM.

January 12 - The Kabbalah and Tu B'shvat, the New Year for Trees.

February 9 - Jewish Sexuality - Marital Relations, Mikvah, and Homosexuality.

FAMILY PROMISE

We will be providing meals and support to our partner congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church, 2700 Fulton St. E, on Tuesday and Thursday, January 28 and 30. If you would like to bring part of a meal, participating in organizing activities, or stay overnight at the church - or if you have any questions about the program - please contact Mort Hoffman, 616-949-6088 or 616-361-2738.

GEMILUT HASADIM @ GOD'S KITCHEN

The Ahavas Israel group helps out at God's Kitchen, 303 South Division, every 2nd and 5th Sunday of the month. Contact Theresa De Jager, 616-929-8780 or guy3557@yahoo.com for more information.

*Chabad House***THE JEWISH WOMEN'S CIRCLE.**

Invite the all women in our community to our next exciting SIMPLY SALADS. In honor of Tu B'shvat have a taste of Israel's best as we plunge into the meaning behind the seven fruits of the Holy Land. Learn how to make a delicious salads that incorporate the seven kinds.

Tuesday - January 7 - 7:30 PM

Michelle Young's home,
4683 Oakwright Dr NE, Ada
Cover Charge \$10

For more info, to sponsor an event or to RSVP contact Nechamy at 616-828-2340 or nechamy8@gmail.com

*Temple Emanuel***January 12 - A Celebration of Spring and Renewal in Israel**

10:00 - The Kabbalah and Tu B'shvat

10:30 - The Fruits of Israel Brunch RSVP to Temple Office!

11:00 - Herbalist Lisa Rose Starner teaches us how to stay healthy and recover more quickly from winter colds and flu by using natural, local and easy herbal and food remedies. In this hands-on kitchen class participants will learn about and taste foods and herbal remedies that can help the body stay resilient during winter and recover more quickly when illness strikes.

January 15—Tu B'Shevat Seder dinner 6:00 PM RSVP to Temple Office.

January 19 – Caliente in January: Learn to make vegetarian tamales!

Maria Trujillo will teach tamale techniques in our kitchen. Learn the basics of flavors, wrapping and cooking these delicious treats from a warm climate!

January 26 - Can an Orthodox Rabbi Living in an Israeli Settlement be a Left-Wing Proponent of Peace?

Dr. Samuel Lebens, a post-doctoral research fellow at the Centre for Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, and PhD in Metaphysics and Logic from the University of London, joins us for a thought-provoking presentation and discussion. Sam was ordained an Orthodox rabbi in Israel and is a co-founder of the Association for the Philosophy of Judaism. RSVP to the Temple office

CHABAD KIDS CLUB

Tuesday January 14

Tu B'shvat in Israel

Travel around Israel, learn and collect all 7 of its fruit, with Israeli food and much more...

Boys & Girls ages 5-12 | Time: 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM \$10 per session (includes light dinner)

For more info or to RSVP call Chana 616-570-1742

CTEEN

Sunday, January 5

Discover it

Unearth your potential

Discover Judaism's take on the battle of the genders while digging up some Tu B'shvat treats. Offer warmth to orphaned children and help them unearth their potential

Time: 4:00 PM - 6:30 PM - \$10 per session

To join Cteen or more info call Chana: 616-570-1742

Life cycle times, both happy and sad, are traditional times to make donations to Jewish causes. You can make a donation of \$10 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:

Woman of Valor Fund (\$10 minimum contribution). To honor the women in our lives who have made a difference personally, locally or nationally.

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.

Julian and Judith Joseph Fund. To provide for local programming and events through the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids.

David and Susan Samrick Youth Scholarship Fund. To provide scholarships to Jewish sleep away camps and experiences.

Chuck and Maxine Shapiro Fund. To help ensure long-term aid to Israel and Jews around the world.

Louis and Louise Weiner Fund. To help ensure local programming for seniors in the Grand Rapids Jewish Community.

Jerry and Judy Subar Fund. To help ensure funding for overseas Jewish communities' needs.

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

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 Louis & Louise Weiner Fund

To Phyllis Horowitz for a happy Hanukkah
From Margit Sarne

To Dr. Alan & Marian Siegel for a happy Hanukkah

From Margit Sarne

The Women of Valor Endowment Fund

To Ann Berman in honor of her Birthday
From Anne Wepman

To Anne Wepman in honor of her 100th Birthday
From Barb Wepman and Hermina Sikkema

In honor of Arlene Berland
From Karen Padnos

In honor of Susan Cocchiano
From Karen Padnos

To Rosalie & Robert Stein in memory of Ida Radman

From Karen and Mitchell Padnos



JFGR Endowment Fund Donation Form

Donation from: Name _____ Fund (pick from list) _____
Donor Address _____ In honor of _____
Donor City/St/Zip _____ In memory of _____
Send card to: Name _____ Notes: _____
Send card to address _____ **Send your donation and this form to:**
Send card to City/St/Zip _____ **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 15, 2014



Jewish Federation[®]
OF GRAND RAPIDS

THE **STRENGTH** OF A PEOPLE.
THE **POWER** OF COMMUNITY.

TODAH RABAH!

To Meijer Corporation and all the individuals
who donated to our annual Hanukkah

Adopt -A-Family gift program.

Thanks to you, JFGR was able to assist 18
families a little extra “gelt” to celebrate the
festivities of Hanukkah with their loved ones.

