



## A Message from David Alfonso JFGR Board Chair

By David Alfonso, MD



David Alfonso, MD

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the later stages of summer. I wanted to highlight some of the exciting and important events that the Federation has planned for the upcoming year. We are pleased to be planning our events in person, starting with our Summer picnic being held August 12 at Manhattan Park. Please see the shofar for more details. This event is a fun opportunity to get together and hopefully enjoy some good weather and catch up with friends. Our highlight event is October 7, the Campaign Kickoff event. We are looking forward to gathering in person and listening to Cantor Randy Herman. This is the premier community event and we hope to have full attendance. The Kickoff event is designed to promote enthusiasm among the West Michigan Jewish Community and allow us an opportunity to remind everyone about all the great things that the Federation does for our community.

On another note, Nicole and I recently had the opportunity to sit down with our Congressman Peter Meijer to chat with him regarding our organization and issues that arise on the international level that involve Israel and can have effects here at home. We had a very good engaging conversation and he was eager to learn more about what the Jewish Federation does and some of its History. He has been a consistent supporter of Israel's right to self defense and we had a meaningful conversation about anti-Semitism and how we deal with that as a nation and as a community. It was a productive meeting and we all felt that we would like to have him come and speak to our Jewish Community in the future about what is going on in Washington D.C. and how it may affect us. I look forward to seeing many of you soon at our many events and I wish you health and happiness.

*David*

*Dr. Alfonso is a board-certified plastic surgeon specializing in cosmetic surgery and has an interest in nutrition, and its role in health, healing and recovery after surgery.*

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**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.

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# Campaign 2021



## Branches of Giving

### Ways to Say Goodbye, by Ariel Schlesinger

STAFF: Nicole Katzman, Executive Director, Nicole@JFGR.org ext. 207 | Evan Rossio, Campaign Director, Evan@jfgr.org, ext. 205  
Arad Okanin, Administrative Support & IT Consultant, Arad@JFGR.org ext. 204  
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## A Message from Linda Pestka, Campaign Chair 2021 and JFGR Board Member



*Linda is a native of Grand Rapids and a lifelong member of Ahavas Israel. She is a former teacher and counselor at the Grand Rapids Public Schools and the mother of two adult daughters and five adorable grandchildren. She is an avid dog lover, enjoys walking and traveling the world.*

We live in unprecedented times. We are still dealing with the aftermath of the pandemic. Incidents of anti-Semitism are at an all-time high, and many Jews feel less safe, even in countries like the United States. Economic insecurity is on the rise. Israel is in an ongoing state of existential threat. What does the future look like? The events of the past year have shown us that it's imperative that we take care of others in our community. Federation and campaign are more important than ever.

As a long-time resident of Grand Rapids and member of the Jewish community, I feel compelled to get involved. My family has donated the new Holocaust memorial, *Ways to Say Goodbye* by Ariel Schlesinger, to the Frederick Meijer Gardens. Inspired by this gift, Federation has chosen the theme for Campaign 2021 - *Branches of Giving*. Trees play a central role in Judaism, representing growth and stability, strength, development, wisdom and knowledge, planting roots, and nurturing and sustenance. These concepts mirror the focus and goals of Campaign 2021.

The Jewish community in Grand Rapids, in spite of its modest size, has always been active and generous when it comes to supporting Jewish life both here and abroad. Federation relies on this support to fund programs that enhance and preserve Jewish life, from PJ Library, Jewish Film Festival, and the Young Adult Division to the array of social services provided to assist local community members in need. In addition to supporting the local community, Federation is also tasked with building connections to Israel, which is more important than ever in light of recent events.

We still have much work to do. Please continue to support the work of Federation and, if possible, help us achieve our goal of \$500,000.00 by increasing your gift. As Rabbi Hillel famously said, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?" The time is now. We can build a flourishing Jewish community, but it depends upon generous donors like you. Help us guarantee a bright future for our Jewish community at the local level, and globally.

Sincerely,

*Linda*



# Campaign Kickoff 2021

Join us for a celebration  
of the Jewish community

Featuring Cantor  
Randy Herman



**Branches of  
Giving**

**Paddock Place**

1033 Lake Drive SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49506

**October 7, 2021**

**7:00pm**

**RSVP to [Evan@JFGR.org](mailto:Evan@JFGR.org)**



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## Community Collaboration Update

**Machelle Hammond**  
President  
Temple Emanuel

At our meeting on July 8th, the Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees approved the Collaboration Term Sheet. The Term Sheet is a nonbinding agreement that provides guidelines for a shared campus and allows us to move forward towards a Congregational vote. We are planning a Town Hall in August to discuss the Collaboration as well as answer any questions our congregants may have. We are excited for the opportunity of a shared campus which will allow for a stronger and more secure Jewish community in West Michigan

**Sandy Freed**  
President  
Congregation Ahavas Israel

In July, the Ahavas Israel Board of Trustees approved the Collaboration Term Sheet along with a motion to allow the Board to place the Michigan Street property for sale. These votes allow the Collaboration to proceed toward a congregational vote. Town Hall meetings were held in July and August (tentative) for further congregational discussion about the project. An Ahavas Israel congregational vote was expected to be held in August.

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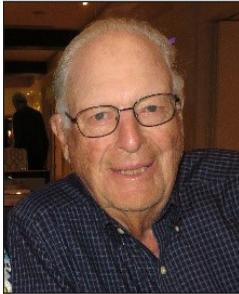
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## Renewed Beauty to Temple Emanuel's Oakhill Cemetery

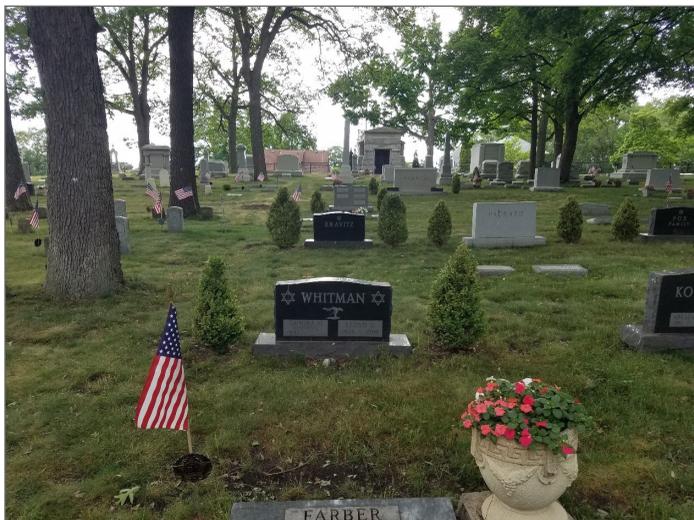
by *Mort Finkelstein*  
Cemetery Chairman and JFGR Board Member



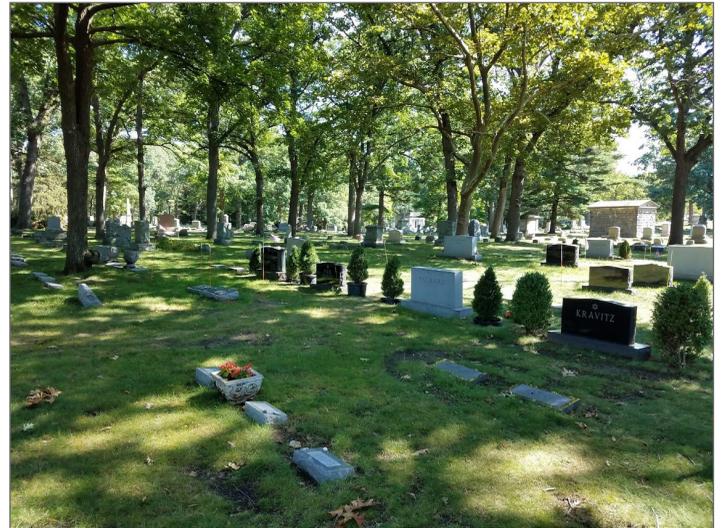
*Mort Finkelstein*

It is not totally known as to when the **First Hebrews or Israelites** arrived in the **Village of Grand Rapids**. But, what history that has been written, indicates the approximate date of **1852** as the arrival of the first immigrant coming from **Zeckendorf Bavaria, Germany**.

That **first permanent settler**, was 19 year old **Julius Houseman** who partnered with **Isaac Amberg** in March of 1852 to open a branch of a dry goods store, Amberg & Houseman in Battle Creek, MI. **In August of 1852 he moved to Grand Rapids**, and by 1854 became its sole proprietor. He adapted very quickly as a businessman and helped the fledgling Jewish community. He also became an active politician who served **Grand Rapids as Mayor for two terms, and a term as a Democrat in the Michigan State House and served in The Congress of the United States**.



**In 1857, a 27 year old French Hebrew fur trader**, by the name of **Jacob Levy died of tuberculosis**. The Hebrew community wanted to give him a proper **Hebrew burial**. So, a few of the families lead by **Joseph Housman**, (cousin of Julius), **funded the needed One hundred dollars**. They purchased a **½ acre of land**, at what is now **Hall and Union**. The group called themselves the **Benevolent & Burial Society** which became the first



organized Jewish group in Grand Rapids. Several years later **Temple Emanuel was formed and the cemetery became a wholly owned part of the temple**.

The cemetery is operated under its own by-laws and is financially separated from the temple. **The cemetery was placed in the charge of a Warden, now known as a chairperson** who was elected for a three year term at the annual meeting of the temple. **The Warden in turn works with the President and elected officers**.

**In a book written about early life in Grand Rapids the cemetery is described as “the beautiful Hebrew cemetery”**. The cemetery had a **white picket fence with a curved arch facing Hall Ave**. At a later period the surrounding land was purchased by a private cemetery company that called itself **Oakhill Cemetery Co**. They unfortunately only lasted for a short time before they became insolvent and were forced into bankruptcy. **The city acquired the bankrupted property which is now the 100 acre plus cemetery that is on the north and south sides of Hall St**.

As the Jewish population continued to prosper and grow there became a need to acquire more space at the cemetery. The cemetery committee worked out a perpetual care agreement with the city, which was a win-win for the temple as the city has a staff of six plus clerical staff in the office.

**Gus Wolf was the Cemetery Warden until his retirement in the early 1940s**. He held that job for forty years and



the cemetery was and looked well cared for. **Many of the families would visit weekly just because it was a peaceful and serene place to visit and remember their loved ones.**

**With Gus's retirement** there became a slow progression of change. **In reading old board minutes, one could begin to see noticeable changes** in how the **newly elected Wardens** interpreted the operating of the cemetery. The overall operation dealt with things on an issue by issue, whereas decisions were **made without following the by-laws.** By the 1960s it was determined that more land would be needed and acquired as the original cemetery had run out of room.

**In 1965 new land was acquired** in the northern part of the same cemetery as the original cemetery. The new part also was acquired with a perpetual agreement with the city. Once again, rereading old board minutes, **it is clear that the city and the temple were not on the same page as to what the agreement actually stated.**

**It is very clear though in regards to what the city agreed to do. Which was to cut the grass, trim and water.**



**Because the city had a permanent groundskeeping staff, they did care for more than was originally agreed upon. But as time went on the city started to cut back on funding for cemeteries, staffing was cut, the office closed. Contracts were subleased out to private contractors, and the irrigation system stopped working.**

**Other than cutting the grass nothing in the two sections was cared for. While shrubs and flowers were planted with good intentions, in most cases they were never cared for after the original planting. The cemetery became an unsightly overgrown place and people**



**dreaded going there.**

**In 2015, President Len Robinson** asked me as a personal favor to look at the two sections of the temple cemetery. **The current committee was petitioning the board to spend \$50,000 on new landscaping.** Although it was a basic plan it lacked a follow-up maintenance structure. Therefore within a few years it would have added more to the unsightly look that was already there.

**It has taken six years of TLC to bring back the beauty of what we once had in our 164 year old cemetery. We believe that the serene and peaceful look that they had attained is once again back.** Our two cemeteries have regained their former glory as **you will see in the attached pictures.** As to the look of our cemetery as compared to others **I will leave that up to you the readers.**

**In our small Jewish community there are three Jewish cemeteries, compared to the city, which owns six cemeteries.** Whereas, our overall Jewish population is less than 1% of that of the city's population.

Every year from **Memorial Day to Veterans Day** our cemetery has honored the Jewish men and women who served in the military of our nation, starting with the **Civil War.**

**It has been my honor to serve the Jewish community as the Cemetery Chairman.**

*Mort Finkelstein is a lifetime member of Temple Emanuel. He has been an active participant in every aspect of our Grand Rapids Jewish community his entire life! Mort has held state and national volunteer positions within the URJ. When Mort's not volunteering, he enjoys spending time with his family and golf.*



## “Hunting Howard, Fine, and Howard”

by Rob Franciosi



Rob Franciosi

Mel Brooks turned ninety-five recently and the occasion was much celebrated, with clips from his films and interviews flooding the internet for a few days. Ask your friends to name the five greatest Jewish comedians—Brooks, Groucho Marx, Lenny Bruce, Joan Rivers, and Jerry Seinfeld would be atop my Mount

Rushmore/Hebron—and you are likely to provoke the kind of intense debate usually reserved for other “bests.” Bagel shops in New York. Internists or buffets in Florida. Though by any measure, Mel Brooks would be among that group.

Most definitions of Jewish humor emphasize its linguistic qualities, especially the use of irony (“Marriage is the chief cause of divorce”—Groucho Marx) and wordplay (“People say that money is not the key to happiness, but I always figured if you have enough money, you can have a key made”—Joan Rivers). But a theme that seems even more central to this type of comedy is its anti-authoritarianism. After centuries of living as a minority group amidst a powerful and often violent majority, Jews from Europe often resorted to humor as a way both to lessen the pain of their circumstances and to assert their humanity.

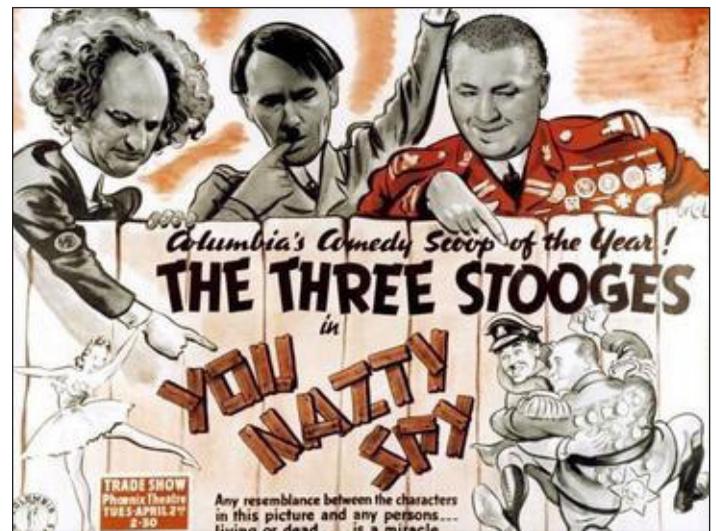


Brooks, while serving in the army during the Second World War, often entertained his buddies by putting a comb below

his nose and sputtering in a combination of German and Yiddish. To mock Hitler during the war was commonplace, even in Donald Duck cartoons, but before America entered the conflict there were self-imposed strictures in Hollywood, the so-called Hays Code, which warned against “picturizing in an unfavorable light another country’s religion, history, institutions, prominent people and citizenry.” What this meant in practical terms is that the mostly Jewish leaders of Hollywood avoided criticizing either Nazi Germany or its leader. Film aficionados will wax

eloquent about how ground-breaking was Charlie Chaplain’s *The Great Dictator* in its satire of Hitler and his regime, but how may know that the great silent star had been preceded six months earlier by the Three Stooges?

Though their faces are more memorable than my five comic icons, save Groucho’s, few discussions of Jewish humor get around to the brothers Howard and their frizzy-haired partner. Moe (Moses Horwitz), Larry (Louis Feinberg), and Curly (Jerome Horwitz) were all Jewish, as was brother Shemp (Samuel Horwitz), and regularly sprinkled Yiddish phrases in the midst of their antic episodes, but no one would associate the trio with the kind of subtle linguistic humor that seems central to the great Jewish- American comedians. Imagine Shemp on an episode of *Seinfeld*’s “Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee.” And while there are moments of irony in a typical Three Stooges episode, they most often involve metal tools being bent on Curly’s iron head.



But in the January 1940 short “You Nazy Spy!” the Stooges ventured where so many in Hollywood feared to tread. I won’t rehearse the classic episode, which you can easily find on YouTube, other than to note that Moe Hailstone is installed as the dictator of Moronica, with Curly and Larry serving as stand-ins for Hermann Göring and Joseph Goebbels. The episode includes a classic parody of “Deutschland den Deutschen” (Germany for Germans) with “Moronica for Morons,” as well as Moe’s version of a Hitler-like rant in which he adds lines of Yiddish. That image of Hitler spouting in the language of those he wished to destroy may have been one reason that he supposedly added the Stooges to a private list of famous people to be eliminated when



down a snooty elitist like a custard pie in the puss, offering laughs and comfort to all of the people in the audience, Jews and Gentiles, living through hard times.

Today, they may seem ripe for cultural cancelling, but the Stooges remain a guilty pleasure for millions, especially for those of us who heard our Jewish grandmothers warn, “Be careful, you’ll poke your eye out!”

*Rob Franciosi is a professor of English and Honors at GVSU where he teaches courses on the Holocaust and American Literature. Rob welcomes questions or comments about his article. You may contact him at [francior@gvsu.edu](mailto:francior@gvsu.edu)*

Germany had conquered their countries.

Moe would go on to mock Hitler in two other films and was so convincing that the bizarre History Channel series “Hunting Hitler” used a 1970s photo of him as evidence that the Nazi dictator was still alive.

As praiseworthy as their satirizing of the Third Reich was, the Three Stooges also deserve credit for emerging during the Great Depression as challengers to the very powers that had gotten the country into such a mess. They were especially adept at mocking rich people, intellectuals, and the self-important. Nothing takes

### CORRECTION

#### Cantor David Fair



It was reported in the last Shofar that Cantor David Fair would be sharing his voice at Ahavas one Shabbat per month. Per Ahavas, “Cantor Fair will be leading services weekly at Ahavas, unless there is a conflict with Temple’s schedule.”

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## Women Unite - Hiking Club



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Hiking Group

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Hike duration: 2 hours

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Location to meet:  
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What to bring: water bottle, a good pair of sneakers, camera (if that's your thing)

Please RSVP to Sandi Simms by August 5th.  
Email: [sandi@simmselectronics](mailto:sandi@simmselectronics)  
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## Women Hiking Together can be a Catalyst for Positive Change

by Sandi Simms  
JFGR Board Member

The idea to start a hiking group here in Grand Rapids came to me during the alone days of Covid-before-the-vaccine. I was surfing Instagram and came across an organization in Georgia called Chasing Waterfalls that organizes and leads hikes for black women in the Smoky Mountain area to actual waterfalls. The founding members realized that taking black women into untamed nature was a catalyst for the personal growth necessary to start the process of healing trauma. Both their own and the generational trauma they inherited from their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents due to their legacy of slavery. I started looking at their photos from different hikes and I was awestruck by the sheer joy radiating from the faces of these women. There were women of all ages and physiques, some of them experiencing nature as a force for healing for the first time in their lives. I was transported and inspired, and I wanted so badly to go hiking with them in their gorgeous green mountains and be part of such a powerful group of women who are just starting to discover who they really are and what they really want to do. So, I thought to myself, "Why can't we have that here?" And the idea to start a hiking group for Jewish women in Grand Rapids was born.

I shared my idea with Nicole Katzman, Director of the Grand Rapids Federation, and three weeks later we had our inaugural hike at Knapp Forest Trails. I was utterly thrilled by the turnout. We had 15 women, our ages ranged from 16 to ageless, and we had women from the three major Jewish congregations: Ahavas Israel, Temple Emanuel, and the Chabad House! It was truly

heartening and energizing! Also, it was the very first day after the no-mask mandate was passed by Governor Whitmer; A day for the books.

Since then, we've hiked twice more and have hikes planned into the fall and even winter for the truly brave at heart! The group has already expressed interest in spreading our wings and traveling to other places and communities where we can join with other women in their journeys towards more satisfying and rightful lives. We are dreaming of meeting women from different backgrounds, religions, and ethnicities to hike united and change our worlds towards acceptance and peace, one new friendship at a time.

In the short term, please join us for a hike! All women ages 16 and older for now. There has been talk of a group for moms and daughters, and a group for dog owners. Hopefully, those will be coming soon. Please text Sandi Simms at (616) 437-5165. Looking forward to meeting you on the trail!



Sandi Simms

*Sandi is the co-owner of an electrical engineering and product development firm in Grand Rapids with her husband. Sandi has two sons who are 18 and 21. Both are pursuing science degrees at Grand Valley State University and Michigan State University respectively. In her free time, Sandi enjoys writing and being outdoors as much as possible whether it's gardening, hiking or walking her dog.*



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## Financial Focus

# How does Social Security fit into retirement?

By Chad Zagel, CFP®, AAMS®, JFGR Board Member

Here's something to think about: You could spend two, or even three, decades in retirement. To meet your income needs for all those years, you'll generally need a sizable amount of retirement assets. How will Social Security fit into the picture?

For most people, Social Security won't be enough to cover the cost of living in retirement. Nonetheless, Social Security benefits are still valuable, so you'll want to do whatever you can to maximize them.

Your first move is to determine when you should start taking Social Security. You can begin collecting benefits when you reach 62 – but should you? If you were to turn 62 this year, your payments would only be about 71% of what you'd get if you waited until your full retirement age, which is 66 years and 10 months. ("Full retirement age" varies, depending on when you were born, but for most people today, it will be between 66 and 67.) Every month you wait between now and your full retirement age, your benefits will increase. If you still want to delay taking benefits beyond your full retirement age, your payments will increase by 8% each year, until you're 70, when they "max out." Regardless of when you file, you'll also receive an annual cost-of-living adjustment.

So, when should you start claiming your benefits? There's no one "right" answer for everyone. If you turn 62 and you need the money, your choice might be made for you. But if you have sufficient income from other

sources, you're in good health and you have longevity in your family, or you're still working, it might be worthwhile to wait until your full retirement age, or perhaps even longer, to start collecting.

Another key consideration is spousal benefits. If your own full retirement benefit is less than 50% of your spouse's full retirement benefit, you would generally be eligible to claim spousal benefits, provided you're at least 62 and your spouse has filed for Social Security benefits.

Survivor benefits are another important consideration. When you pass away, your spouse would be able to receive up to 100% of your benefit or his/her own retirement benefit, whichever is higher. Thus, delaying Social Security could not only increase your own benefit, but also the benefit for your surviving spouse.

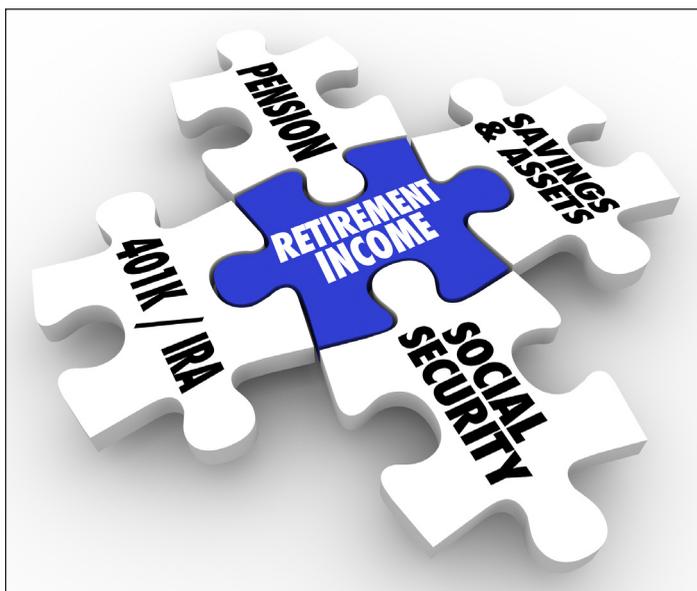
An additional issue to think about, when planning for how Social Security fits into your retirement, is your earned income. If you're younger than full retirement age, your benefit will be reduced by \$1 for each \$2 you earn above a certain amount, which, in 2021, is \$18,960. During the year you reach full retirement age, your benefit will be reduced by \$1 for each \$3 you earn above a set amount (\$50,520 in 2021). But once you hit the month at which you attain full retirement age, and from that point on, you can keep all of your benefits, no matter how much you earn (although your benefits could still be taxed).

One final point to keep in mind: The more you accumulate in your other retirement accounts, such as your IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored plan, the more flexibility you'll have in managing your Social Security benefits. So, throughout your working years, try to contribute as much as you can afford to these plans.

*Chad Zagel, CFP®, AAMS®, is a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones, a University of Michigan graduate, and in his free time, Chad enjoys spending time with his family and volunteering.*



Chad Zagel  
JFGR Board Member





## Get to Know Michal Ravid, an Interview with Kris Siegel

by Kris Siegel



Kris Siegel

When I arrive every week for my Hebrew lesson at Michal Ravid's home, the aromas from her kitchen always make me ravenous. Israeli TV is usually on in the background. On the day of our Hebrew lesson and Shofar interview, I was treated with a homemade spread: pita with hummus,

baba ghanoush, schug (a spicy green sauce), and a fresh tomato-basil salad, followed by babka, chocolate chip cookies, and tahini cookies for dessert—oh my! Michal shared her fascinating life story with me, from her childhood in Jerusalem, through her work in TV and film production, to her current catering business.

Enjoy our interview!

### Tell Me About Yourself, Michal.

*"I am a Jewish-Israeli-American. I was born and raised in the German Colony in Jerusalem in a loving Sephardic family that traces its origins to Tunisia. I learned my Sephardic cooking style from my mother and grandmother."*

Michal's life changed while walking to high school in July of 1975, when she was severely injured in a terrorist bombing that killed 24 people. *"This event influenced me in many ways and I could write a whole book about it. But there is one thing I carry with me from that moment: I was targeted because I was Jewish."*

From that moment on, her mission in life became to promote unity and inclusion in the Jewish community. She says, *"The worldwide Jewish population is very small. We don't have the luxury of fighting with each other."*

Michal has Reform, Conservative and Orthodox friends, and everything in between, and she feels blessed to learn from them all. In everything she does, she tries to bring people together. If you're lucky enough to be invited to a Shabbat or holiday meal at Michal's home, you'll always meet interesting people!

After her Israeli National Service and graduating from Hebrew University, Michal worked as a film producer in Israel. Her productions include an award-winning documentary about Israeli Orthodox youth and ABC's

"Nightline with Ted Koppel" episodes, to name a few.

### With more than 200 diverse productions, could you point out the most memorable ones?

*"I remember most of my productions, but I am most proud of the multimedia show I created for the IDF's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and 'Be a Tourist in Your Own Country.'"*

In 2001, an Intifada halted tourism. Michal came up with an idea to create a campaign shown weekly during prime-time TV, encouraging Israelis to "Be a Tourist in Your Own Country." This series turned out to be a huge success, and Michal received an award from the Israeli Ministry of Tourism. This recognition is primarily given to foreign presidents and prime ministers.

Michal was married and she has a daughter, Efrat, who is currently completing her PhD studies in cybersecurity. *"I am very excited for my daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren to visit during the fall holidays,"* Michal said.

### From the Land of Milk and Honey to the Land of Opportunity

Michal met her husband, Ben, on JDate, moved to the U.S. in 2003, and got married. They have a son, Avner, who is 16 years old.

*"It was obvious that I won't be a TV producer in the U.S., and it was clear that I will occupy myself with the Jewish Community and Israel. These were my thoughts and plan when I landed in Houston, TX."*

Michal was a Hebrew coordinator and Hebrew specialist at reform congregation Beth Israel in Houston. At the same time, she also created a very successful preschool Hebrew Immersion program at the Houston JCC. Michal is quoted in a newspaper article about the program: *"The Hebrew language is one of the connections between American Jews and Israel. Deep in my heart, I wish that more and more people would try to understand that."*

### A Language, Culture and Food

*"It hurts to witness the way the State of Israel is portrayed in the media as an unsafe place."* She has always tried to educate people about Israel by promoting the Hebrew language and its delicious, diverse foods.



Immersion Hebrew - check. Community Religious School - check. Now it was time for a new mission, Israeli cultural food. For her next step, Michal showcased her cooking skills and opened Aroma Classique, an Israeli-Middle-Eastern restaurant.

### A Move to the Mitten State

The Ravid's relocated to Grand Rapids four years ago, and Michal got busy making her mark in West Michigan by participating in the Jewish Film Festival committee and teaching conversational Hebrew. She recently started a catering company, Tahyeem (meaning tasty in Hebrew). Michal's recipes are based on her North African and Israeli heritage, and use premium, fresh, organic ingredients. Michal cooks kosher food even though many of her customers are non-Jews. She dreams of cooking in a kosher commercial kitchen in Grand Rapids to allow our entire Jewish community to eat together.

In work and in life, Michal is a loyal and dedicated person who does everything whole-heartedly. Judaism, Israel, Hebrew, and food have been the connection points for Michal to make friends wherever she lives. I hope you have enjoyed getting to know my Morah and Haverah (teacher and friend).



Michal, Kris and tasty food

*Kris Siegel is the Librarian at Temple Emanuel. Even at her very advanced age, she loves reading beautiful picture books.*



## Stephanie Hurwitz Realtor®

stephanie.hurwitz@gmail.com

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Call Stephanie today and let her help you make your real estate goals a reality.



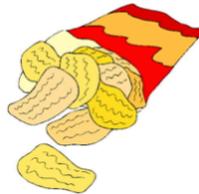
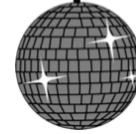
# Save the Date!

## Reunited & It Feels So Good Community Picnic



**Where:** Manhattan Park Pavilion,  
750 Lakeside Dr. SE  
East Grand Rapids, MI 49506

**When:** August 12, 6pm - 9pm



Join us at for a 70s themed community picnic sponsored by the Finkelstein and Leven Families! There will be food, face painting, PJ Library stories, and a live musical performance by Marc Rossio. RSVP to [julianna@ifgr.org](mailto:julianna@ifgr.org)

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# Introducing JFGRs New App

by Arad Okanin, Administrative Support & IT Assistant

The Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids is excited to introduce our new app. Now you can stay connected and up-to-date on everything Federation from your iPhone or iPad. Programming, news, social services, and volunteering opportunities are now just a click away.

The app is currently available on iOS (iPhone & iPad Devices) but will be available for Android devices later this year. We look forward to hearing your feedback and updating bugs as we work on making the app experience the best it can be.

### Instructions to Download (iOS) via App Store:

1. On your iPhone/iPad device, open "App Store".
2. Search "Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids".
3. Click on the app "Jewish Federation Grand Rapids"
4. Press "Get" and enter Face ID/ Touch ID credentials.
5. The app will now be downloaded. Once completed, you will be able to find it on your iPhone/iPad's home screen (iOS 14) or in the App Library (iOS 15).

### Secondary Option: Instructions to Download (iOS) via Link:

1. On your iPhone/iPad device, open "Safari".
2. In the URL box, type in "jfgr.org".
3. On the home page, scroll down to the section where our App is displayed.
4. Click the Download Now button. You will be directed to the App Store to complete the download.

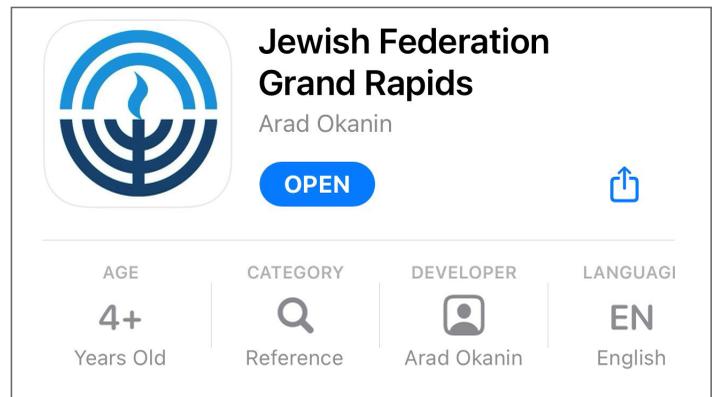
5. Press "Get" and enter Face ID/ Touch ID credentials.
6. The app will now be downloaded. Once completed, you will be able to find it on your iPhone/iPad's home screen (iOS 14) or in the App Library (iOS 15).



Arad Okanin  
Administrative Support  
& IT Assistant

NOTE: We recommend turning on automatic app updates so you could receive the latest and greatest version of the app.

*The app was developed by Arad Okanin and Lucas Buhl-Neilson. It will be distributed on the App Store and later on the Google Play store. Privacy Policy & Terms of Conditions are under The Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids.*



The PJ Library, a program of the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids now has 120 children enrolled with 83 families. To enroll in PJ Library call or email.

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Judith Joseph's great granddaughter, Beverly, playing with her new Torah toy.



## Beit Sefer B'yahad United Jewish School

1715 Fulton St E | Grand Rapids MI 49503  
616.459.5976

### Update for UJS/Beit Sefer B'yahad 2021-2022 School Year

**Mission Statement:** *"To give the children of Congregation Ahavas Israel and Temple Emanuel the best possible Jewish education we can envision."*

**Goal:** *To provide a supportive, energetic, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic Jewish teaching/learning environment for children and adolescents in Gan Katan - grade 12.*

Some exciting changes are coming this year to UJS/Beit Sefer B'yahad! We welcome our NEW Cantor-Educator, David Fair, newly ordained from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Cantor Fair has vast experience teaching Jewish school, specializing in Hebrew, Biblical & Israel education, and music! Also NEW this year is his Administrative Assistant, Ms. Kreenah Dunsmore, member of Temple Emanuel and active in the Grand Rapids community as a musician and music teacher.

Classes at the United Jewish School will take place in person in the Temple Emanuel building, beginning September 19th. We will have a NEW TIME, beginning at **9:00am and ending at 11:30am**. Supplemental Hebrew classes are continuing with Elisabeth Rosewall (3rd & 4th grade) and Shoshana Jackson (5th & 6th grade) as online classes scheduled at the convenience of the teachers and families.

We are still searching for teachers for our youngest students. If you are interested in teaching this year, please contact Cantor David Fair, with questions or availability.

We welcome NEW students as well. We want to create a diverse, inclusive, and equitable learning environment. We strive to create an environment where all students feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued. We recognize that every single student has a different learning need and aim to provide equal access to education for all. Diversity is a core-value at UJS. We welcome students, parents, volunteers, and staff of every race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, family arrangement, and physical ability.

For more information, feel free to contact the Cantor-Educator, Cantor Fair, at [cantor@unitedjewishschool.org](mailto:cantor@unitedjewishschool.org) or his assistant, Kreenah Dunsmore at [kreenah@unitedjewishschool.org](mailto:kreenah@unitedjewishschool.org) or access our website at <https://www.unitedjewishschool.org/>

Registration opens August 1, 2021 via website.

## CHABAD OF WESTERN MICHIGAN

**WEBSITE:** [WWW.CHABADWM.COM](http://WWW.CHABADWM.COM) | **FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM:** @CHABADWM | **PHONE:** 616-957-0770 | **EMAIL:** [CHABADWESTERNMICHIGAN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:CHABADWESTERNMICHIGAN@GMAIL.COM)  
All events are subject to change. Please stay safe and reach out if there is anything we can do for you.  
**CHECK FACEBOOK @CHABADWM FOR VIRTUAL ZOOM LINKS AND PASSWORDS OR TEXT RIVKA AT 616.206.9654!**

### WEEKLY VIRTUAL TORAH & TEA

For the connection we all need right now.

A Torah Study for ladies with Nechamy.

### **MONDAY EVENINGS ON ZOOM AT 8:00PM**

Meeting ID: **966 6623 3600**

Password: **jwc**

### JLI CLASSES

Experience Jewish learning like never before. JLI makes Jewish learning accessible & personally meaningful to every Jew, regardless of background or affiliation.

### **TUESDAY EVENINGS ON ZOOM AT 8:00PM**

For more Info or for zoom information, please contact Rabbi Mordechai at [269.903.2770](tel:269.903.2770) or [Rabbihaller@chabadwm.com](mailto:Rabbihaller@chabadwm.com)

### GAN YILADIM PRESCHOOL – KINDERGARTEN

Gan Yiladim is a licensed preschool for Jewish children ages 2-5 open to the entire Jewish community, regardless of background or affiliation.

Gan Yiladim has been serving the Grand Rapids and nearby Jewish communities, offering a joyful and enriching educational experience to our students while fostering a love for their Jewish heritage.

We take the best of both worlds – secular and Judaic – and blend them into a program that is at once rich, fulfilling, and stimulating.

The Gan believes in nurturing children with the SPICES of life - focusing on their Social, Physical, Intellectual, Creative, Emotional and Spiritual development.

Our students are given tools to find expression in art, music, dance and drama. Through teamwork and friendship-building, the children learn skills for life as they explore and play in a loving and nurturing environment, guided by experienced and dedicated staff.

**For more information or to schedule a tour call Sarah at [616.375.9404](tel:616.375.9404).**

### CTEEN KICKOFF EVENT!

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18<sup>th</sup> 2021 | 7PM

Come get involved & meet new Jewish friends at the awesome Kickoff party!!

At the Chabad House | For Jewish High School Teens RSVP to Rivka @ 616.206.9654



**ROSH HASHANAH EXPERIENCE**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7<sup>th</sup> 2021 | 7:30PM  
Chabad House of Western Michigan warmly invites the entire Jewish community to join us for *Shofar Blowing Service and Rosh Hashanah Dinner*. Enjoy the tastes and traditions with family and friends.  
Our delicious Rosh Hashanah dinner is spiced with great food, song and meaningful holiday insights.  
Kindly RSVP by September 1st | 616-206-9654

**CTEEN & CTEEN JUNIOR SUKKOT DINNER**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20<sup>th</sup> 2021 | 8:00PM  
You're invited to our annual "Sukkot Under the Stars" dinner in the Weingarten's Sukkah.  
Celebrate this beautiful Holiday in style, along with our family and friends!  
It all takes place at the largest Sukkah in town! RSVP to Rivka at 616.206.9654.

**SUKKOT CARNIVAL WITH THE KOSHER FALAFEL TRUCK!**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26<sup>th</sup> 2021 | 1:00-3:00PM  
Falafel Lunch • shake the lulav & etrog • exciting booths • crafts • moonwalk • face painting • lively music • Grand raffle!  
A fun Sukkot celebration for the whole family! At Chabad House: 2615 Michigan St NE

**SIMCHAT TORAH CELEBRATION**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 | 8:00PM  
Dance the night away with L'chaim, flags for the kids, and a delicious Dinner! Celebrate the completion of the Torah reading! Come receive a free dosage of Jewish Pride and joy that will last you the rest of the year!



**Selichot, Saturday, August 28, 9:30 p.m.**

It's been an intense year. Please join us to unwind and relax and get ready for Rosh Hashanah with a light comedy.  
Multiplicity (rated PG-13)  
A man who never has enough time for the things he wants to do is offered the opportunity to have himself duplicated. Sometimes to get more out of life, you have to make more of yourself. Starring Michael Keaton and Andie MacDowell, directed by Harold Ramis.

The movie will be followed by a Selichot service led by Cantor Stuart Rapaport along with Cantor David Fair. The service will begin at approximately 11:30 p.m.



**August Service Schedule**

- Friday, August 6  
Shabbat Services at 6:00 PM
- Friday, August 13  
Shabbat Services at 6:00 PM  
Special Readings and Music to Welcome the Month of Elul  
Jackson Remes Participates  
Oneg Shabbat Sponsored by the Remes Family
- Friday, August 20  
Shabbat Services at 6:00 PM  
Special Readings and Music for Elul  
Oneg Shabbat Sponsored by Peg and Mort Finkelstein
- Saturday, August 21  
Bar Mitzvah of Jackson Remes at 10:00 AM  
Jackson is the son of Danielle & Nick Remes
- Friday, August 27  
Shabbat Services at 6:00 PM  
Special Music for Selichot Included  
Hearty Oneg Shabbat Following

**Celebrating Selichot**

Please join us for a first taste of the upcoming holidays as we include some of the most beautiful music of the season on Friday, August 27 at 6:00 PM. This year we are combining the beauty of Shabbat and tradition of a Selichot Service into one worship opportunity.  
Selichot means forgiveness. We will include special prayers for forgiveness into our Shabbat Service 10 days before Rosh Hashanah. We will be using Miskan Halev Siddur. This book is published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and is designed for the month of Elul and for Selichot. A hearty Oneg Shabbat will follow the service. Come and celebrate both occasions with us.

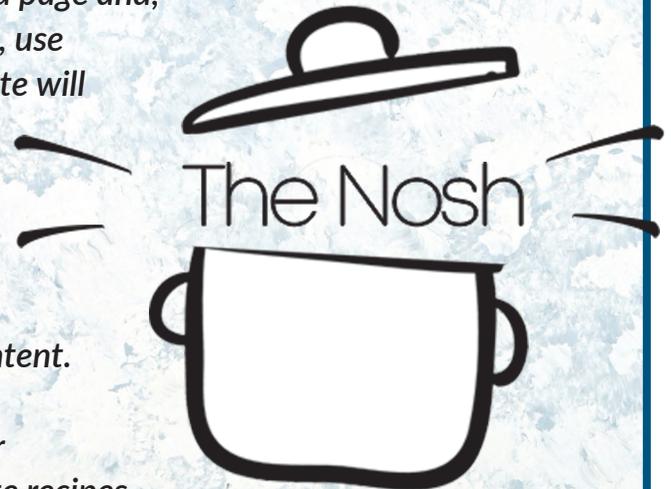
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## Collaborative Cookbook News

*JFGR is proud to announce the creation of “The Nosh”, our community’s first online cooking site. After much deliberation, we have decided to go in a new direction. Instead of a physical cookbook, we are creating a robust food site; a living cooking site that can grow with the community. We won’t be constrained by the printed page and, as a result, we can tell stories behind family recipes, use photography, instructional videos, and more. The site will be interactive, searchable, and we are making it easy to print recipes for those who prefer a hard copy. Once the site is up and running, we’ll have an app to use on mobile devices.*

*As the site is being built, we still need help with content. We are accepting recipes and content via [www.jfgr.org](http://www.jfgr.org), by mailing to the Federation office, or by email: [evan@jfgr.org](mailto:evan@jfgr.org). Please send us your favorite recipes.*



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*Thank you for supporting the  
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- Donna G. Boorstein Memorial Fund**
- Sam and Jane Kravitz Social Services Fund**
- Fox Family Fund**
- The Finkelstein Brothers Fund**

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** 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.

**Charles 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.

**Donna G. Boorstein Memorial Fund** To help ensure funding for Jewish arts, culture and history in Greater Grand Rapids.

**Lois and Sheldon Kahn Health Help Fund** To support health services for Jewish community members not covered by other financial resources.

**Fox Family Fund** To ensure that the PJ Library, a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, for children ages 6 weeks- 12 years old, remains in the Western Michigan community and to provide high-quality educational children's programs.

**The Finkelstein Brothers Fund** Mort, Raleigh and Edward's commitment to educate the residents of Michigan about the Jewish families that settled in West Michigan during the mid 1800s through community events and educational programs.

Make a tribute gift to  
Thank, Honor, Memorialize  
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**JFGR Endowment Fund Donation Form**

Donation from: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Fund (pick from list) \_\_\_\_\_

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Donor City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Send card to: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Send card to address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Send card to City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## The Shofar

A monthly publication issued 12 times a year.

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

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**August 15, 2021**

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**Ways to Say Goodbye**  
by Ariel Schlesinger

## COMING SOON

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*"Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is highly honored and very pleased to receive this significant and meaningful gift to acquire Ariel Schlesinger's monumental sculpture Ways to Say Goodbye. The sculpture will be dedicated in memory of Henry Pestka and the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust and serve to promote peace. We are deeply grateful for this gift adding such an important work of art to our Permanent Collection. Our members and guests will forever benefit from this extraordinary gift."*



- David Hooker, President & CEO  
Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park