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# Jewish legacy donors honored in Western Massachusetts

By Jeanette DeForge, The Republican

Theodore Ingis makes donations to community organizations he wants to see thrive, but some of his largest donations will be made after his death.

Ingis and his wife are among about 800 people who have made legacy gifts to a variety of organizations through the Jewish Endowment Foundation. Some of those donors were honored Sunday night in an event that also unveiled the "Book

of Life," a collection of donor stories.

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—Jason Franklin  
Executive Director,  
Bolder Giving

"I want to give back to the community that has been good to me," Ingis said, adding the Jewish Federation of Greater Springfield, Temple Beth El, Rachel's Table, the Jewish Community Center and Springfield Council for Jewish Women are all listed in his and his wife's will.

The Jewish Endowment Foundation has been working with 19 different local organizations to help build legacy gifts. While the organization does not dole out legal or tax advice, it holds the accounts for different groups and can be the first stop for people interested in making a legacy gift, said Scott Kaplan, endowment director for the Jewish Endowment Foundation.

The Book of Life is a way to thank people who will not actually see their gift go to good use, as well as to encourage others to consider a legacy gift, he said.

"It is not about amounts; it is about supporting the community," he



The Jewish Endowment Foundation's Book of Life Event was held Sunday at Mill1 Open Square in Holyoke. Left to right are staff and committee members Meredith Dragon, Susan Kline, Scott Kaplan, Marcy Eisenberg, Sara Weinberger, Jason Franklin, Evie Glickman and Dr. Ben Falk. (Michael Beswick/ The Republican photo)

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

said.

Keynote speaker at the event was Jason Franklin, executive director of Bolder Giving in New York. The book of stories of different people who have made gifts is important because it thanks people and encourages others.

"It is saying what people have done is significant and people forget that," he said.

Simply talking about making a legacy donation also plants the idea in the minds of others and shows them it is possible.

"We see ourselves in our friends," he said.

Adena and Ben Falk, of Longmeadow, are among the people whose stories are included in the book. They brought their children, Aleza, 11, and Avi, 10, to show them a little about giving to others.

Their gifts will go to the Jewish Federation of Greater Springfield, which is an umbrella organization that takes donations and helps a variety of local Jewish charities, as well as supporting those in Israel. They also are giving to the Heritage Academy, a Jewish day school which is especially important to the family.

Ben Falk said his father worked there, he and his sisters attended the school, and his children attended the academy, so it is important to help the school continue for generations to come

and plan long term.

"Our family is trying to be part of it," he said.

Amy Fagin, of 20th Century Illuminations who did the artwork for the "Book of Life," said the legacy program has encouraged her to consider getting involved.

A genocide scholar as well as an artist, Fagin said she would like to donate to the University of Massachusetts' Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Memory Studies, but the organization is not under the umbrella of the Jewish Endowment Foundation yet.

"It is relatively new, and it is important to support it," she said.

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