



# EDMONTON Jewish NEWS

Publication Mail Agreement Number: 40050628

Volume 30, No. 10

Visit us online at [edmontonjewishnews.com](http://edmontonjewishnews.com)

December, 2019



*Happy  
Chanukah*

Cover: U.S. Air Force photo  
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# Menorah Lighting at the Ledge: December 22

(EJNews) - Chabad of Edmonton will once again, be hosting their 28th annual Candle Lighting Ceremony at the Alberta legislature on Sunday night December 22, 2019 at 4:30 pm.

December 22 is the first night of Chanukah, so in addition to the Shamash, one candle of the giant Menorah will be lit.

“Everyone is welcome to attend,” said Chabad Lubavich of Edmonton Rabbi Ari Drelich. “As in the past, we are looking forward to a large cross section of the community in attendance with representation from all 3 levels of government including Premier Jason Kenney (subject to verification).”

“This beautiful event is open to all and includes live music, holiday treats, entertainment for both young and old and of course the ceremonial lighting of Alberta’s largest Menorah standing at 21 feet and weighing 5000lbs.”

A free park and ride service will be provided with pickup at Beth Israel at 3:45 pm, pickup at Beth Shalom at 4 pm. The bus will depart the legislature following the program at 6:45 pm.

Chanukah, the festival of lights, celebrates the victory of the few against the many, the weak against the mighty and the righteous against the wicked. The festival also commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, during which only one day’s supply of oil for the Temple Menorah miraculously lasted eight full days.



Join the community in celebrating the first night of Chanukah at the Alberta Legislature Grounds on December 22 at 4:30 pm.

Traditional foods of this holiday are potato pancakes called “Latkes,” they are served with applesauce or sour cream and “sufganiot” or jelly doughnuts. Both of these delicacies will be served at the menorah lighting.

Chanukah is celebrated for eight consecutive nights with the lighting of a nine-candled menorah. Eight of the candles are the same height; the ninth stands taller, and is called the “Shamash,” or the leader candle. The Shamash is used to light the rest of the candles. On the first night

the Shamash lights one candle, on the second night two, etc. until all eight candles are lit on the last night of the holiday.

“The Menorah represents the light and strength that we need to overcome the challenges we encounter in our everyday lives. Every person is like a candle, we each have the ability to brighten the world.”

For more information about the Giant Menorah Lighting call (780) 993-1818.

## Germany will donate \$66 million to Auschwitz museum

OSWIECIM (Poland) – On December 6, World Jewish Congress President Ronald S. Lauder met German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the site of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp and thanked her for announcing that Germany is committing 60 million euros to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation to support preservation of the memorial site.

Her visit is just the third time a German chancellor/head of government has visited since World War II. The visit comes in advance of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau

and amid rising levels of antisemitism in Europe and around the world.

Chancellor Merkel entered through the camp’s notorious gate marked “Arbeit Macht Frei” (Work Sets You Free), and lit a candle in memory of the more than 1.1 million people killed there. She was accompanied by Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki; Piotr M.A. Cywinski, Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and President of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation; and Dr. Josef Schuster, head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany.

WJC President Lauder accompanied Chancellor Merkel during her visit at the museum’s Conservation Laboratories, which preserve every shoe, every document, and every building that remain at the site. Amb. Lauder has been involved in the preservation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau site for decades, raising tens of millions of dollars internationally to fund conservation efforts, including the establishment in 2003 of the laboratories. Chancellor Merkel also visited the Central Sauna building

Continued on page 8

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# BHC hosts highly successful Courage in Motion 2019

A former NHL player, a championship cyclist, and over 100 injured Israeli veterans were along for the ride in Beit Halochem Canada's 12th annual fundraiser.

The 12th annual Courage in Motion, an initiative of Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel, was an outstanding success. This year's ride welcomed cyclists from across Canada, joined by some Americans and Israelis. From October 27-31, these international cyclists rode alongside Israel's disabled veterans on five fully supported routes through northern Israel's extraordinary archaeological sites and remarkable landscapes.

Fundraising is open until December 31, 2019 and it is expected that the ride will raise approximately \$750,000 (CDN). Our sponsors' generous support and the dedicated fundraising of our cyclists facilitated the participation of more than 100 injured Beit Halochem Israel members in Courage in Motion 2019. Money raised also funds programming at Beit Halochem Centres in Beer She'eva, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Tel Aviv. Thanks to the ongoing success of the ride, cycling has steadily grown in popularity at the state-of-art Centres.

Lisa Levy, National Executive Director of Beit Halochem Canada, is the ride's founder. An avid cyclist herself, she says, "Cycling in Courage in Motion means visiting Israel, supporting an incredible cause, and connecting directly with our members. Beyond the ride's huge fundraising component, I never fail to be excited by witnessing lifelong friendships taking shape. It is truly a life-altering experience that you never forget and one that participants want to repeat!"

Annually, the ride welcomes both new and repeat participants. This year, returning cyclists included Torontoborn Keith Primeau, who rode in last year's CIM for the first time. Primeau enjoyed the experience so much that his daughter Kylie accompanied him this time! Primeau played 15 seasons in the National Hockey League (NHL), most notably with the Philadelphia Flyers, prior to his career being cut short due to multiple concussions. He cowrote a well-received book, "Concussed! Sports-Related Head Injuries: Prevention, Coping and Real Stories" (2012) detailing life after concussion.

Other international returnees included former cycling champion Eon D'Ornellas, who competed throughout the 1970s and 1980s on behalf of both Canada and his native

Guyana. The proprietor of Toronto's D'Ornellas Bike Shop, he started a cycling club over 25 years ago. In 2011, D'Ornellas, then 59-years old, suffered a stroke during a club training ride. Like Beit Halochem members, these two star athletes know intimately the challenges in reclaiming their lives following serious medical trauma.

Among the Beit Halochem members participating in Courage in Motion 2019 was Asi Mekonen. In 2012, just prior to his release from the Givati Brigade, Asi suffered severe head injuries, with resulting brain damage, vision and hearing impairment, and memory loss. Following five years of physical and cognitive rehabilitation at Beit Halochem, Asi is now a Jerusalem-based musician. Besides experiencing several Courage in Motion rides, he has completed two marathons. Asi was already known to many of the ride's Canadian riders through his on-stage appearances in this year's Beit Halochem Canada Celebration of Life Concerts.

The CIM cyclists may have ridden alongside a future Paralympics hand-bike medallist. Critically wounded in 2002 in a military operation while serving in the Artillery Corps, Amit Hasdai was left with paralysis on the right side of his body. During rehabilitation, he benefitted from equestrian therapy, later competing internationally. Since turning to hand-bike racing at Beit Halochem Tel Aviv, Amit has enjoyed participating in Courage in Motion. Amit's natural talent, enhanced by Beit Halochem's support of his training and coaching, has resulted in his current ranking of 8th in the world. He is training hard to qualify for the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo.

Courage in Motion's participants enjoyed group activities including a cycling tour of the famed, beautiful



Courage in Motion 2019. Photos by Idan Peled


agriculture region of the Hula Valley and an extraordinary evening with Israel's Heroes - all Beit Halochem members - who shared their remarkable personal stories of tragedy and resilience.

The next Courage in Motion takes place in Israel from October 18-22, 2020. Registration is expected to open in March 2020.

Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel is committed to rehabilitating, rebuilding, and enhancing the lives of over 51,000 Israelis who have become disabled in the line of duty or through acts of terror. Leading-edge Beit Halochem Centres in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Nahariya, and Beer Sheva, and the future Ashdod (scheduled to open in 2021), provide individualized therapies, specialized sports rehabilitation training, and cultural arts and family-oriented programming. Academic scholarships are available as the veterans endeavour to be productive members of Israeli society. Beit Halochem is the sole organization to take care of Israel's wounded heroes from the time they are injured and for the rest of their lives. BHC assists them on the long and difficult journey to regain their health and independence, empowering them as they strive to reclaim their lives.

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**Beit Halochem Canada, Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel** is committed to **rehabilitating, rebuilding, and enhancing the lives of Israelis who have become disabled in the line of duty** or through terrorism. Beit Halochem Centres across Israel provide specialized sports, recreational, and therapeutic programs.


"Thank you for allowing me and my friends at Beit Halochem to not only dream, but win. I salute you."

– Ran Ben Atia




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– Ofir Anidjar




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– Achiya Klein




"I had nightmares for a long time after my world changed forever. Now, thanks to Beit Halochem, I have good dreams."

– Dana Pinhasov



Beit Halochem takes care of Israel's disabled Heroes including Ran, Ofir, Achiya, and Dana from the time they are injured and for the rest of their lives.



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Publication Mail Agreement No. 40050628  
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Circulation Department:  
102, 10155 114 Street NW, Edmonton AB T5K 1R8  
E-mail: edmjnews@shaw.ca  
Tel: (780) 421-7966

**Volume 30, Number 10, December 2019**

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For change of address, please send both old and new addresses. We welcome your stories, pictures, artwork and opinions. Please send submissions to our office at the address above.

**Next Deadline: January 24, 2020**

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# Celebrating the miracle



**Rabbi Steven Schwarzman**

**By Rabbi Steven Schwarzman**

We all know the story of Hanukkah. That little jar of pure olive oil miraculously stayed lit for eight days, far past its printed expiration date, and so we get to eat latkes and sufganiyot (both made with oil) to celebrate the victory of light over darkness.

How do we know this story? In the Talmud's tractate Shabbat, there is the briefest of mentions of the holiday. No, there isn't a tractate devoted to Hanukkah among the 63 volumes that make up the Talmud. Twenty pages into the tractate about Shabbat, there is a discussion about what sorts of wicks and oils are kosher for use in Shabbat lights, and only then, in the Talmud's associative way, the rabbis turn to a similar discussion with regard to Hanukkah lights. After covering the fuels, they turn to the teachings of Hillel and Shammai about whether we should start with one and go up to eight, or the reverse. Hillel's view prevailed, because we want to add holiness and not subtract as we go along.

And only after all this does the Talmud pose a strange question: what is Hanukkah, anyway? If we all know the story about the oil, how could the rabbis of the Talmud not

have known it? As it happens, the Talmud is the first source that mentions this story about the lamp staying lit. And this telling of the story is seven centuries after the historical events it relates.

In fact, the story of the Hasmonean revolt, told in the Books of Maccabees (which made it into Christian Bibles, but not the Jewish one), was not about the oil. It was about the Jews of the day deciding to stand up for their history, their tradition, their religion, and their people. They fought against the Seleucid king and his decrees making the practice of Judaism illegal. And they also fought against those Jews of the day who wanted to be like everyone else culturally.

We think of the Hasmoneans as the good guys for standing up for freedom, but they were a rough bunch. And the Hasmonean dynasty was both imperfect and not long-lived.

Perhaps the rabbis of the Talmud chose to focus on the story of the oil to redirect our attention from the violent events of that revolt. If we look at the history of the world over the fourteen centuries since the Talmud reached its final form, we can see the rabbis' point. There is a time to stand up for freedom and for Judaism. And there is also a

## The Great YEG Challah Bake



Edmonton Na'amat participated in the 2019 Great Challah Bake.

time to go a step further and reflect on why we need to do that. What is Jewish life really about? What does it mean in our lives?

Standing up against antisemitism, and defending Israel and Jews everywhere from those who seek to destroy or malign us, is always necessary. But it is only the first step. The next step is to create vibrant Jewish life, in Israel and in the Diaspora, full of rich content that we actively learn and live.

So as we light the Hanukkah lights this year, let's give thought to what we can do not only to stand up for our right to be Jews, but to learn more about our own tradition and how we can apply it in our lives. Enjoy the latkes and sufganiyot, and celebrate the real miracle, that Jews and Judaism are still here, long after those who would have preferred otherwise are gone.

Chag Chanukah Sameach



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# Too much light: Contemplating Earth-focused Judaism (Part 1)



Rabbi Gila Caine

By Rabbi Gila Caine

The primeval fight between Light and Darkness is played out in Jewish mythology through the semi-historical story of the Maccabees fighting off Hellenistic culture. And, like so many other Mid-winter stories, we find in our story forces of darkness and pain sweeping across the land, set

on extinguishing any trace of warmth. Any trace of civilization. Any trace of stability.

In this story, the shadow on the land is the shadow of idolatry, while light comes from Adonai. And like so many other sacred myths, the forces of good prevail and our story ends with the miracle of light returning to the Temple, through the lighting of the Menorah for eight days. The light in our story symbolizes truth, pure belief and justice - all of them admirable qualities in our world. We glorify them every year when adding a candle to the Channukiah each night.

It makes so much sense to love light. But our culture has turned our love and hunger for light, into gluttony, I would go as far as saying that we

have turned it into a form of idol worship. We all know about Climate change, about land pollution and air pollution. Some of us are even aware of the mess we're making at sea. Then, there is light pollution (to say nothing of sound pollution, and many others, but we'll keep those for another time).

What is light pollution? *The International Dark-Sky Association* reminds us that "Less than 100 years ago, everyone could look up and see a spectacular starry night sky. Now, millions of children across the globe will never experience the Milky Way where they live." ([darksky.org/light-pollution/](https://darksky.org/light-pollution/)). That organization explains that light pollution stems from the inappropriate or excessive use of artificial light. It's that simple, and the consequences of never having enough darkness are dire for life on earth.

So, how do we celebrate the festival of lights at a time when we never experience true darkness?

Here are two very practical ideas to take back into our homes, as we must now learn to sanctify beneficial darkness, while sanctifying light.

Channukah candles are supposed to bring light into darkness, but not only is the outside too bright, also our indoors are flooded with artificial lighting. Take these days of Channukah to connect with the natural order of things. Let Dusk and Night fill our houses by putting on dimmer lights, lighting only those areas where we actually need light to work. Imagine you had to work hard for every bit of light in your home - where would you use it? What does the Channukiah look like now that the rest of our house is dim? Do we find ourselves sitting closer to other people around us? What does our home look like?

How many candles do we light? We all know the traditional custom of starting with one candle and then adding one every night, ending with eight candles at the

end. But, do you know that initially there was an interesting debate among the rabbis relating to this?

Some said all we need to do is light one candle per household every evening for eight nights. Another idea was that each person in the home light one candle for eight nights (so, if we have a home of five family members, we light five separate candles every evening for the duration of the holiday). And then there was the famous debate between the house of Hillel and the house of Shamai. It comes as no surprise that the prevailing custom is that of Hillel, and we all add a candle every night.

Beit Shamai suggested we begin with eight candles on the first night and then subtract one every night thereby ending the festival with one candle, thus echoing the diminishing amount of oil left in the Mikdash. I learned from my teacher rabbi Shlomo Fox to light at least one channukiah in the custom of Beit Shamai - as a sign of respect for both majority and minority opinions on this festival of the battle between "right" and "wrong." And in my home, we make sure to follow this tradition every year; I might have even written about it before.

Over the years I've learned to appreciate Shamai's way of lighting candles, perhaps not for the reasons they found compelling. For myself, living in an over-lit world where I can't see the night sky, there is something peaceful in this process of diminishing light. It is a practice and a process of learning to need less light, like a form of ritual detox from brightness.

Nowadays when we forget the natural rhythm of the world, it is important to use our festivals and holy-days to reconnect to life as it should be lived on Earth. In these times, by diminishing light, we are allowing a much larger truth to shine through.

May we all enjoy a happy, relaxed and peaceful Channukah with family and friends.

# Supreme Court refuses former Nazi's appeal

(Toronto) – The Supreme Court of Canada has denied a former Nazi's request to appeal the revocation of his citizenship.

Helmut Oberlander was a member of a gruesome Nazi death squad unit that murdered more than 90,000 Jewish men, women and children during the Second World War.

Oberlander - now 95 years old - is a retired real estate developer who has been living in Waterloo, Ontario. Efforts have been under way for more than two decades to strip him of his Canadian citizenship because he lied about his past and gained entry to Canada illegally.

Since before the first court decision in 2001, B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights has been heavily involved in this case. As recently as 2018, B'nai Brith was the sole group granted intervener status to speak on behalf of the Jewish community and the victims of the Holocaust before the court.

"Oberlander has been given opportunity after opportunity to present his case, but it has finally come to an end," said Ran Ukashi, National Director of B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights. "Now that Oberlander's leave has been denied, albeit after much

delay, it is imperative that he be deported from Canada immediately so that all Canadians - but especially the victims and their descendants of the mobile death squad Oberlander served in - can have their justice.

"There are no more excuses for having him remain in Canada. Oberlander must go immediately."

"This is a critical moment in the case of Oberlander because the Canadian government is now one step closer to being able to deport an individual who not only lied about his wartime activities to enter Canada but was also a member of a Nazi death squad responsible for the deaths of innocent men, women and children in Eastern Europe," said FSWC president and CEO Avi Benlolo.

"Far too many Nazis have managed to get away with murder, live relatively normal lives and enjoy the freedom their victims were robbed of during the Holocaust. While justice in this case is long overdue, it is not too late for justice to be served."

"We commend the Supreme Court of Canada for today's decision and call on the Federal Government

to delay no further in finally deporting this man from our country, as the law demands," said Michael Mostyn, Chief Executive Officer of B'nai Brith Canada. "There is now no excuse whatsoever for Mr. Oberlander to remain in Canada, and B'nai Brith will be loudly and consistently demanding his removal until justice is served.

"No matter how many years have passed since the Holocaust, what happened to the victims can never be forgotten or let go. As a beacon of human rights and morality in the world, Canada must demonstrate in no uncertain terms that Nazis are still not welcome here."

B'nai Brith recently sent a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau outlining several priorities for the new session of Parliament, including the immediate deportation of Oberlander.

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# Jewish student wins fight with McGill’s Student Society

(Montreal) - A Jewish student leader at McGill University in Montreal spent the first week of December, fighting efforts to oust her from the student union for accepting a trip to Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

On December 4, Edmontonian Jordyn Wright won that fight when the Student’s Society of McGill University’s (SSMU) Board of Directors rejected the discriminatory motion by the SSMU’s Legislative Council that called for her resignation because she had agreed to participate in an organized trip to Israel.

Wright, a member of the Student Society of McGill University’s legislative council and board of directors, said she was “outraged and disgusted” by the student society’s call on November 28 for her to resign for agreeing to the trip sponsored by Hillel.

She refused to resign or quit the trip, despite the threat of impeachment upon return.

The trip, called Face to Face, leaves at the end of the month and includes visiting Palestinian areas of the West Bank.

“As a Jew, my connection to Israel is one core aspect of my identity, and I hoped that the trip would help me experience Israel through a new lens,” Wright explained in a post on Facebook.

The SSMU Board of Directors’ decision came after widespread condemnation of the motion. Perhaps the most damning statement came from the McGill administration. In a formal statement, Deputy Provost for Student Life and Learning, Mr. Fabrice Labeau, expressed the university administration’s serious concerns and warned that the university would not tolerate “a culture of ostracization.”

In his statement, Mr. Labeau urged SSMU’s Board of Directors not to ratify the motion. He also added that students should never be targeted for their identity or political and religious beliefs.

The administration joined a chorus of voices that included hundreds of SSMU councillors and constituents who published an open letter on December 3, sharply criticizing the motion.

In response to these developments, Rabbi Reuben Poupko, Co-Chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs-Québec (CIJA-Québec) stated, “CIJA applauds the SSMU Board of Directors for unequivocally rejecting the Legislative Council’s discriminatory motion targeting a

Jewish student leader. Since last November 28, hundreds of students have denounced the motion, while McGill University’s Deputy Provost for Student Life and Learning, Fabrice Labeau, took an exemplary stand in a message to the McGill community by stating that the motion was “contrary to the University’s values of inclusion, diversity and respect” and that it “represents a very serious breach of trust.” He called on the student government to “take proper action.”

“CIJA commends the McGill administration for clearly articulating its opposition to attempts to ostracize a Jewish student on the basis of her identity.”

CIJA is pleased that the Deputy Provost’s statement had its intended effect and that the student body firmly rejected the harassment, intimidation, and exclusion of its members and will henceforth refrain from raising obstacles to students’ freedom to pursue new and formative experiences.

“The unjust treatment experienced by Ms. Wright is clearly not a reflection of the broader McGill community, as evidenced by the open letter published by multiple SSMU councillors and constituents.

“Discrimination, racism, and any attempt to ostracize students based on their identity have no place on campus, or anywhere else for that matter. CIJA will proudly continue to provide support to our partners at Hillel and the courageous students who are addressing these instances of discrimination from the front line.”

Wright called the effort to have her resign anti-Semitic.

“The SSMU president singled me out and actively encouraged others to attack me,” she said in the post, adding that “a non-Jewish councillor also planning to be on the trip did not receive the same treatment.”

She wrote, “I am proud to be Jewish. Israel is the country with which I identify my heritage and culture, and

## HeAtBaGs learn new moves



Niv Goffman from Krav Maga Maleh in Israel was in Edmonton recently. He showed some new moves to EJHL HeAtBaG team members.

I am lucky to call it a second home. My personal views do not preclude my sympathy for the continued suffering of the Palestinian people. I never hid my identity when I ran for my position. I am an open book, and Judaism is an integral part of who I am.”

“McGill’s student leaders consider themselves to be champions of equity, inclusivity, and diversity,” she continued. “I am appalled that McGill politics continues to exclude and discriminate against Jewish students.

“It is time to end this pattern of anti-Semitism deeply embedded in the SSMU that continually targets Jewish or Zionist students year after year. We must demand better of the people we elected to serve us.

“Science demanded that I resign as a Councillor. SSMU demanded that I resign as a Director.”

Wright refused to resign, and her efforts have been met with positive results.

Rabbi Poupko noted that this is not the first time that this type of behavior has been exhibited at McGill. He said, “[W]e are once again witnessing misuse of the student government platform to exclude a Jewish student. The SSMU’s persistent abuse of power and displays of hostility toward Jewish and pro-Israel students are clearly not representative of McGill’s mainstream student population.

“We call on McGill students to reclaim the SSMU from the ideological fringes and rebuild an open, tolerant and inclusive campus environment,” he said.

In 2017, the SSMU failed in an effort to impeach a Jewish councillor for being pro-Israel. The same year, an ex-SSMU member tweeted to “punch a Zionist.”

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*Happy Chanukah to the  
Jewish community*

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# NCJWC Triennial Convention is a success

By Dr. Regan Treewater-Lipes

The atmosphere was festive and exuberant to say the least as members of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada converged on the West Edmonton Mall's Fantasyland Hotel from November 16 to 18 for this year's Triennial Convention. Lifelong members and new devotees to the Jewish women's social action organization flocked to the chilly northern City of Champions from across the country, representing Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, and the newly formed NCJWC chapter in Barrie.

Debbie Wasserman, NCJWC's National President commented following the weekend's packed program, "Our annual meeting is always a time to reconnect and come up with new National initiatives."

Since 1897 NCJWC has showcased the best qualities of community and social outreach. The organization engages in many endeavors to improve the lives of Canada's most vulnerable inhabitants. Long-term projects continue to include genetic testing awareness and outreach, public education on the dangers of human trafficking, supporting women's shelters, and efforts to eliminate child poverty. This year's meeting brought with it a flood of new ideas, and promising reports from local sections reflecting on their initiatives and organized events from the past year.

"The 2019 NCJWC Triennial Convention was superb," elaborated Wasserman. "We all felt the positive collective energy of the group and came away invigorated, ready to continue on the positive track that together we had developed."

The weekend kicked off with delegates from all sections boarding a yellow school-bus bound for the Jewish Seniors' Drop-In Centre. Maya Feldman, from the center, welcomed guests with warm opening remarks and a beautiful spread of kosher dairy delicacies prepared by Bozena. After schmoozing and plenty of noshing, agendas were distributed, and it was straight down to business before loading back onto the yellow school-bus to be shuttled back to WEM.

Bright and early on Sunday delegates reconvened for more meetings and lively conversation before local guests arrived for the Community Luncheon hosted by NCJWC's Edmonton Section. "The NCJWC Community lunch was all that the Organizing Committee envisioned,"

commented Edmonton Section President Jodi Zabłudowski following the event. Over 150 people were in attendance on that crisp November Sunday, and Conference Room 6 of the Fantasyland Hotel was a buzz with excitement and celebration.

"It was wonderful having different parts of the community come together to honor three outstanding individuals: Christina Tsipora Reboh, Francie Nobleman and Ruth Nolan," Zabłudowski continued.

For their tireless dedication to the greater Edmonton Jewish community and years of devoted volunteering these three pillars of the community found themselves in the spotlight as the distinguished honorees of the day.

While attendees dined on a mouth watering three course kosher meal, each honoree was invited to ascend the podium. Christina Tsipora Reboh was recognized for her leadership with Edmonton's Jewish young people, Francie Nobleman for her decades of community engagement, and NCJWC's life member Ruth Nolan was bestowed with a lifetime achievement award. Nolan, who has been a proud NCJWC member since 1947 accepted the honour to a standing ovation.

"To be introduced to three special women who were honoured for their tremendous commitment to volunteerism was inspiring," noted Wasserman.

Hands were clapping to the beat as Sari Uretsky's Aviv



NCJW's luncheon honoured Christina Reboh, Ruth Nolan and Francie Nobleman. Below: NCJWC conference delegates enjoyed lunch at Chabad House with Chaya Sarah Blachman.

Dancers took to the stage in a whirl of sparkle and color. The lively performance was an explosion of spectacular energy and captivating movement that mesmerized the audience. "Of course, seeing the Aviv dancers perform was a special highlight at the lunch, as their dancing and music make our hearts sing," concluded Zabłudowski.

Other highlights of the afternoon included a keynote address by the Province of Alberta's Right Honourable

Continued on page 12



NCJWC  
Edmonton

Thank you Edmonton  
for making our NCJW luncheon a success!



Photos by Marcia Bercov



# Reflecting on Chanukah



Rabbi Zolly Claman

By Rabbi Zolly Claman

Our physical world reflects our personal world in so many ways. Sometimes we can learn about ourselves by looking outwards.

I'd like to offer an example. In the morning the sun rises and in the evening the sun sets; our physical environment is sometimes filled with light and sometimes filled with darkness.

In our personal lives we see the same phenomenon. We have periods of time that are similar to daytime. Things are looking good, clear and wonderful. Other times are not as peachy - parallel to nighttime. We all go through times during which we are introduced to uncertainty, confusion, self-doubt and pessimism.

Chanukah falls during the winter solstice, as we know very well here in Edmonton, the darkest time of the year. But just as the darkness hits full capacity, the nights start getting shorter and the days longer. This teaches us that darkness is never a destination, but rather something else.

To reveal what that 'something else' is, I'd like to first pose a basic question about one of our beloved Chanukah rituals. One of the reasons that we light the Menorah is to commemorate the lighting of the Menorah that was done in the Bet HaMikdash. This is appropriate because we are

celebrating the victory the Chashmonaim had over the big and strong Greek army which resulted in us being able to re-dedicate the Bet HaMikdash for our service of G-d.

The funny thing is, the Torah is so clear that the Menorah was kindled in the Bet HaMikdash twice per day, once in the morning and once before sunset - both during the day. So why then, when we commemorate this, does Jewish tradition have us light our Chanukah Menorah after sunset - during the night?!

The story line of Chanukah is the victory of the underdog. It is the small army beating the large army, the weak overcoming the strong. It was the intense place of darkness, uncertainty, and bleakness being taken over by the light. The lesson of this story is that all darkness is an invitation to enter into that space and kindle a flame. To kindle a flame of love, hope and optimism.

To experience this lesson we need to kindle that flame after darkness so we can see that even a small flame can illuminate so much light.



Rabbi Claman and the NCSYers had a very meaningful experience viewing the Anne Frank House exhibit at Louis St. Laurent School in Edmonton.

Chanukah is a reminder that each and every one of us is an ambassador of that light and that darkness is not a destination but rather an invitation. May we all have the courage to face our own nights or the nights of our loved ones as an invitation to light a little candle there.

On behalf of Penina and our newly expanded clan, we would like to wish you a happy, beautiful and uplifting Chanukah.

## \$66 million to museum

Cont. from page 2

at the former Birkenau camp, where prisoners were subjected to "disinfection" before being forced into slave labor.

"Antisemitism remains a vile, pervasive and resurgent force in the world today, making Holocaust education more vital than ever," said WJC President Lauder. "Chancellor Merkel has been a valued and reliable ally in the fight against this oldest of hatreds. Preserving and conserving the remains of the Holocaust are critical to maintaining an accurate record of the atrocities committed, especially as the number of living, first-hand witnesses inevitably dwindles. Only by knowing the past can we protect our future, and we are deeply grateful to Chancellor Merkel for her commitment to the preservation of the site where almost 1 million Jews were brutally murdered by the Nazis only and exclusively because they were Jews."

Chancellor Merkel acknowledged the conservation work and thanked "that care was taken with great commitment so the site can bear testimony." Merkel stated: "This history has to be told, again and again."

In her remarks at the Central Sauna, Chancellor Merkel said of Auschwitz-Birkenau, "It was a German extermination camp operated by Germans. I place value on stressing this fact. It is important that we clearly identify the perpetrators. We Germans owe this to the victims, and we owe it to our ourselves. To keep alive the memory of the crimes committed, to identify the perpetrators and to commemorate the victims in a dignified manner, that is our enduring responsibility. It is not open to any negotiation, and is and will forever be an integral part of our country."

She added, "Once again, Jewish life is flourishing in Germany. We are linked to Israel through manifold and friendly ties, that is anything but to be taken for granted. It is a great gift, akin to a miracle, but it cannot undo the horrors that happened, it cannot bring back to life the Jews that were murdered. There will forever be an empty space in our society."

In October 2019, the World Jewish Congress honored Chancellor Merkel with the WJC Theodor Herzl Award for her efforts to protect and foster Jewish life in Germany and her support for Israel.

The Auschwitz-Birkenau site is one of the most

important remaining physical remnants of the Holocaust and a crucial reminder of the evil that can stem from bigotry and hatred. Chancellor Merkel's visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial comes at a time when antisemitism and white nationalism are on the rise across Europe and the United States, and global understanding of the Holocaust is on the decline. In the United States today, 41% of adults cannot identify what Auschwitz was or is, and 11% of adults - and over one-fifth of millennials - have not heard, or are not sure if they have heard, of the Holocaust.

The WJC and Amb. Lauder are preparing to return to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial on January 27, 2020, International Holocaust Remembrance Day, for the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Amb. Lauder will join close to 200 survivors as well as heads of state and representatives of Jewish communities from around the world to mark the anniversary.

In the lead-up to International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the WJC will also launch its fourth annual global #WeRemember campaign aimed at promoting education about the horrors of the Holocaust.

**Happy HANNUKAH**

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**It's a Boy!**

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JNF Edmonton Executive Director Jay Cairns and Ruth Berkovich present ex Mossad member Yola Reitman with an Oilers jersey to commemorate her trip to Edmonton and thank her for her fascinating presentation.

# Edmonton JNF hosts Ex Mossad Agent Yola Reitman

How does an El Al flight attendant and self described “beach bum” come to be a Mossad operative involved in rescuing 12,000 Ethiopian Jews? That question and many others were answered when the Edmonton Community had the opportunity to hear directly from Yola Reitman - a key member of the rescue operation.

Many in the audience had viewed the recently released Netflix movie “Red Sea Diving Resort” - based on the rescue operation that took place over a period of 3 years in the early 1980s. Yola, who could not disclose her activities on this mission for over 30 years, began her presentation by saying “Now let me tell you the real story!”

Yola described the predicament at that time of the Ethiopian Jewish community known as Beta Israel. To escape persecution and famine, thousands trekked over 600 kilometers through difficult and dangerous terrain to reach refugee camps in Sudan. Over 1700 died en-route. The mission of the Mossad was to smuggle the Ethiopians from these in-land refugee camps by bringing them to the Red Sea coastline by truck and then ferrying them on Zodiac boats to an Israeli navy operated “commercial ship” that would then take them to Eilat, Israel.

To facilitate this clandestine operation, Israeli operatives, posing as European businessmen, purchased the abandoned Arous Vacation Resort on the Sudanese Red Sea coast. Arous would provide the cover needed for the mission to operate from. Owing to her ability to speak German and her proclivity for scuba diving, Yola was recruited by the Mossad to manage the Resort while assisting in the operation. Ensuring locals and tourists were unaware of their real identities and purpose was critical.

Yola described the dangers of transporting the Ethiopians by truck at night past army checkpoints on the long journey from refugee camps to the coast. She explained how the people remained so quiet while being packed into trucks and then onto boats in the middle of the night. When transporting the Ethiopians by truck all the way to the coast proved to be too dangerous, the operatives switched to landing Hercules aircraft in the Sudanese desert and flying the people to Israel. Yola described a journey she made to a Sudanese army base to verify whether their

radar was inoperative and thereby would not have the capability to detect Israel transport aircraft.

Yola related how the mission ended abruptly when they were informed that their cover may have been compromised and had to abandon the Resort in the middle of the night. Nevertheless “Operation Brothers” as it was called, was an overwhelming success and set the stage for subsequent missions aimed at rescuing Ethiopian Jews.

Yola’s visit to Edmonton served as a means to raise awareness and support for Ethiopian and other immigrant communities in Israel. In hosting Yola, Edmonton JNF is raising funds for expansion of the Jaffa Daled After-School Educational Enrichment Center. This Centre provides educational, nutritional, recreational and therapeutic support to at-risk children, of whom 70% are of Ethiopian descent.

To donate to this project please visit [JNF.CA/JAFFA-DALED](http://JNF.CA/JAFFA-DALED) or call 780-481-7881.

and The Kollél families extend our sincere wishes for a happy and healthy Chanukah to each and every member of the Edmonton Jewish Community.

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# Making Hanukkah with children meaningful

By Sarah Gershman

(My Jewish Learning via JTA) -- Hanukkah’s proximity to Christmas can complicate the holiday. For those who try to make Hanukkah more like Christmas, it inevitably seems to fall short.

Yet while Hanukkah was traditionally not one of the most central holidays of the Jewish calendar, it can offer many opportunities for fun and joyous celebration. Here are some suggestions for how you can make this Hanukkah memorable while staying true to the essential meaning of the holiday.

**Bring light out of darkness**

There are many ways to make this year’s Hanukkah a real “Festival of Lights.” As Rabbi Arthur Waskow writes in his book “Seasons of Joy,” “Hanukkah is the moment when light is born from darkness, hope from despair.” Historically, this was reflected in the unlikely victory of the Maccabees over the Greeks, in the oil that brought light for eight days instead of one, and in the very act of lighting candles during the darkest time of the year.

Before lighting candles, try taking your family on a night walk. Go outside together and feel how dark it is. Even in the city, the month of December has a special darkness to it. Then come in from the cold and light the menorah. Feel the contrast between the darkness outside and the light inside.

The oil in the Temple menorah can be understood as an early example of energy conservation. In keeping with that theme, try using environmentally sustainable candles in your menorah this year. According to Hazon, a Jewish environmental organization, “beeswax, soy, and palm oil provide more natural alternatives to the traditional paraffin Hanukah candles.” Several vendors sell beeswax Hanukkah candles, and GoodLight Natural Candles’ Hanukkah candles not only claim to be “clean burning and non-toxic,” but the company “contributes to sustainable palm farming.”

Hanukkah is also a wonderful time to bring light into the lives of those around us. The winter months can be

especially difficult for those who need help. Why not volunteer as a family at a local soup kitchen, shelter or any place that is meaningful to you? Jewish homes for the aged often have Hanukkah parties or communal menorah lightings. These are opportunities to connect your children with the older generation and help make the celebration more festive for the residents.

**Get creative**

Hanukkah can be a great time for simple and fun family art projects. There is a custom for each member of the family to have his/her own menorah. This year, why not make your own? You can buy lots of small votive candles (yahrtzeit candles are an inexpensive way to do this) and decorate the glass with a collage of colorful pieces of tissue paper. When the votives are lit, light shines through the tissue paper like stained glass. This is a great hanukkiyah for the Friday night of the holiday, when the candles are supposed to burn for at least two hours— as long as Shabbat candles burn. No matter what kind of hanukkiyah you use, try to place it in as visible a spot as possible to fulfill the mitzvah of “pirsumei nisa” (publicizing the miracle).

And don’t forget the decorations. Judaica stores sell lots of colorful Hanukkah decorations that make the house feel more festive. You may want to choose your own theme. I know one family that decorates their house with homemade pictures of Jewish holiday objects, which symbolize to them the uniqueness of Judaism — definitely

Chanukah at Talmud Torah



Chanukah is always a joyful time at Talmud Torah School. All of the Talmud Torah students are busy decorating the walls with Chanukah arts and crafts and learning the holiday songs, traditional foods and the story of Judah and the Maccabees.

a theme of the holiday.

Hanukkah is also an ideal time to do fun activities like playing music, taking pictures or making home movies documenting the year’s celebration. One family I know drips Hanukkah candle wax each night on their family album. Then, the following year, they take out the album, look at the wax and try to remember where they were and what they did on each night.

**Celebrate our uniqueness as Jews**

One of the miracles of Hanukkah is that the Jewish people were able to reconsecrate the Temple — our spiritual center and a powerful symbol of our uniqueness. Hanukkah today presents us with the opportunity to reconsecrate our own uniqueness as a religion, a people and a culture.

Hanukkah is a time to discuss as a family some of the blessings and challenges of being Jewish in a predominantly Christian country. One way to spark discussion on this subject is to watch a movie that in some way tackles the subject of assimilation. Some suggestions include “My Big Fat Greek Wedding,” “Avalon,” “Keeping the Faith,” “The Jazz Singer,” “Monsoon Wedding” and “American Desi.”

Snowflakes could be a wonderful seasonal Hanukkah symbol, as no two are alike. You can even make “Hanukkah snowflakes” out of colorful paper and use them to decorate the house. And if Hanukkah happens to fall on a snowy day, take a walk outside and really look at the snowflakes that fall on your hand and try to see the differences between them.

Have a joyous and meaningful Hanukkah!

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## Jewish Community serves up Thanksgiving lunch at the Bissell Centre



Members of 10 groups within the Jewish Community came together to serve 241 lunch guests at the Bissell Centre's Thanksgiving Lunch.

## Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu indicted for corruption

By Mary Oster

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Benjamin Netanyahu has been charged in three corruption cases, marking the first time a sitting Israeli prime minister has been indicted.

The charges, announced on November 21, 2019 by the Justice Ministry and Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit, include bribery and breach of public trust.

Netanyahu has denied the charges and called the investigations against him a “witch hunt.”

In a televised address after the indictments were announced, he asserted that the charges are an “attempted coup against a prime minister.”

He has 30 days to request that the Knesset grant him parliamentary immunity in order to avoid a criminal trial. Government ministers are required to resign if faced with a criminal charge, but not the prime minister.

The most serious charge is for bribery in what is known as Case 4000, which alleges that Shaul Elovitch, majority shareholder of Bezeq, received political favors for the Israeli telecommunications giant in return for favorable coverage of Netanyahu on the Walla! news website owned by the company. Conviction on the charge carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

Netanyahu was indicted for breach of public trust in two separate cases.

In Case 1000, he is accused of accepting illegal gifts from Hollywood producer Arnon Milchan, including Cuban cigars and pink champagne. The gifts totaled about \$200,000. In return, Netanyahu allegedly helped secure a U.S. visa for Milchan and supported a law that would give tax breaks to the billionaire if he moved back to Israel.

In Case 2000, the prime minister allegedly advanced a law that would have hurt the free daily newspaper *Israel*

*Hayom*, funded by the U.S. casino magnate Sheldon Adelson, in exchange for positive coverage from the popular general circulation *Yediot Acharonot*.

Netanyahu defended himself against the charges during a four-day pre-indictment hearing in October.

The Justice Ministry also announced that *Yediot's* publisher, Arnon Mozes, as well as Elovitch and his wife, Iris, will be charged with bribery.

The announcement came a day after Blue and White party head Benny Gantz said he had failed to form a government coalition. Gantz had worked for about a month to join with Netanyahu and his Likud party in a unity government in which they would alternate serving as prime minister.

One of the sticking points involved whether Netanyahu would step down as prime minister in favor of Gantz if he were indicted.

Blue and White said in a statement: “A prime minister up to his neck in corruption allegations has no public or moral mandate to make fateful decisions for the State of Israel. Because there is concern, whether or not the charges prove to be true or without merit, that Netanyahu will make decisions in his own personal interest and for his political survival and not in the national interest.”

After the charges were announced, the party tweeted a video of Netanyahu from 11 years ago calling on then-Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who was facing corruption allegations, to step down. Netanyahu’s statement is nearly identical to the one issued by Blue and White.

Mandelblit in a televised statement about an hour after the charges were released said that “today is a

hard and sad day.” He said he made the decision to indict Netanyahu “with a heavy heart, but wholeheartedly.”

His statement responded to accusations that he made the charges public in order to help lawmakers form a government.

“It is not an issue of right or left,” Mandelblit said. “It is not an issue of politics, it is required.”

The attorney general called the lengthy process of investigation and leveling of charges “serious and responsible,” and said the decision was made “only for legal considerations and based on evidence. No other consideration influenced me.” He added that “at the end of the day, the decision was mine.”

Netanyahu in his TV address said he has “given my life for my country.” He echoed that this is “a very hard day.”

He called the investigation “contaminated,” and criticized the attorney general, saying that “To my sorrow, Mandelblit could not stand up to pressure from [state prosecutor] Shai Nitzan.”

Netanyahu suggested that the timing of the announcement was suspicious, noting that it came on the “most sensitive time politically since the establishment of the state.”

“I won’t let them win, I will continue to lead the country,” he said.

Following his address, Netanyahu tweeted “Investigate the investigators.”



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## NCJWC Triennial Convention *Cont. from page 7*

Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and the Status of Women - Leela Aheer. Minister Aheer expressed her deep admiration of the work being pursued by NCJWC in Alberta and nationally. She confided with the packed room that she personally continues to be profoundly moved by the Jewish value of *Tikkun Olam* and aspires to remember this teaching while pursuing her work as both Minister and MLA.

Other speakers included moving speeches from Christie Lavan, the Leading Change Program Developer for the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters. NCJWC has long been committed to supporting women's emergency facilities across the country, and Lavan's report of the work being undertaken in Alberta gave delegates a valuable perspective to bring back to their local outreach projects.

Many in the Edmonton Jewish community may remember NCJWC's children's book drive during the summer of 2018. The books collected went directly to children being supported by WIN House, a local non-for-profit providing assistance and safety to women and children. Chair of the WIN House Ambassador Program, Jocelyn Davison, was also in attendance and spoke about the valuable outreach being completed within the city.

Both organizations were presented with cheques by NCJWC Edmonton in order to continue providing their impactful work. "Hearing about women's issues from Minister Leela Aheer, Christie from the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, and Jocelyn from WIN House also added greatly to the event," reflected Zabludowski. All in attendance were in agreement that the afternoon's festivities were a roaring success!

NCJWC delegates again loaded onto the yellow school-bus, this time accepting a kind invitation to dinner at the Chabad House. Rebbetzin Chaya Sara Blachman was the keynote speaker of the evening and delivered a moving reading of the week's parsha while everyone enjoyed a scrumptious spread prepared by volunteers Raisa Ostrovsky and Fira Kezhis. The more intimate setting provided the opportunity for robust discussion and reflection.

Wrapping up final business on Monday morning before departing for the airport, visiting members found that they had experienced so much within the span of 36 hours



The Aviv Dancers brought fabulous energy and joy to their performance at the NCJW lunch event.



Jodi Zabludowski



Jocelyn Davison



Minister Leela Aheer



Christi Lavan

hosted by NCJWC Edmonton. "This event was a wonderful treat for the NCJWC delegates to experience," expressed Wasserman.

So much goes into planning and orchestrating an event as successful as this. Jodi Zabludowski and her organizing

committee wish to extend a sincere and "special thanks to the Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation (EJCCF) and the Dianne and Irving Kipnes Foundation for their generous support."

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# KKL-JNF inaugurates new Stephen Harper Bird Sanctuary

After years of planning and building, and investments totaling about 130 million shekels, on November 6, 2019 KKL-JNF inaugurated the new Stephen J. Harper Hula Valley Bird Sanctuary Visitors and Education Centre.

The center was dedicated by KKL-JNF World Chairman Daniel Atar and former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen J. Harper, for whom the centre is named. During his term as Prime Minister, Harper took part in promoting the project and donated to it personally. Together, they cut the ribbon and formerly inaugurated the new centre. The Hula Lake Park is the largest birdwatching site in Israel, and is considered one of the most important birdwatching sites in the world.

Hula Lake Park is also one of Israel's largest tourist attractions, serving as a tourism and economic anchor for the entire northern region. The site attracts about 420,000 visitors each year from Israel and abroad. The opening of the new visitors' center is an important development for the State of Israel in general and for the residents of northern Israel in particular, since it is expected to increase the number of visitors to the region, bringing a myriad of benefits that will positively affect local residents' lives.

The new centre will offer a variety of attractions utilizing cutting-edge technology so that visitors can experience Hula Lake Park and the world of birds in an interesting and engaging manner. Attractions will include: An accessible virtual reality station that will make visitors fly among migrating cranes; the largest bird information wall in the Middle East; an LED light-up globe depicting the world's bird migration routes; a conference hall that will also host nature photography exhibitions; an interactive 'mini-Hula-Lake' model; and a multi-media KKL-JNF corner.

In addition, there is also a magnificent 220-seat movie auditorium for screening movies about the Hula Valley. The auditorium, named after Mrs. Laureen Harper, will also serve as a regular cinema for residents from surrounding locales, who until now had to travel for over an hour just to watch a movie.

The Visitors Centre will be open for the first two months as a pilot period. During this time, entry will be free of charge. Afterwards, the centre will charge a token fee, half of which will help support local farmers while the other half will be reinvested in the maintenance and development of the centre.

In his address, KKL-JNF World Chairman Daniel Atar said, "The new Visitors Centre we are dedicating today, at an investment of 130 million shekels, will develop regional tourism and will have a significant effect on employment

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A Day of Advocacy at the Alberta Legislature



On November 25, CIJA joined Calgary and Edmonton Federations for a day of advocacy at the Alberta legislature. They had very productive meetings with Alberta's Minister of Health, Minister of Justice, Minister of Service Alberta and Leader of the Official Opposition, Rachel Notley. Topics raised included mandatory Holocaust Education in schools, protecting Albertans from genetic discrimination, the IHRA definition of antisemitism, community security and a variety of other local issues. The day wrapped up with the annual Alberta wine and cheese event in partnership with CJPAC, which brought local community members together with political staff and over a dozen MLAs and Ministers.

and income in the entire northern region. One additional percent of the world's millions of birdwatchers coming to the centre will be a huge contribution to the Galilee's economy. For those of us who grew up on the stories of Israel's pioneers and KKL-JNF's heroic swamp draining project in the 1950s, this is a very moving closing of a circle."

At a gala dinner in Jerusalem on the night before the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Harper and his wife, Laureen were joined by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife, Sara. A delegation of hundreds of Canadian KKL-JNF donors and JNF supporters from around the world joined in a standing ovation as Netanyahu awarded a citation to Harper for his commitment to JNF-KKL and the State of Israel.

"Israel has had no better friend than Stephen Harper," said Netanyahu.

Sen. Linda Frum, a Conservative member of the Senate of Canada since 2009, and her husband, Toronto Argonauts owner Howard Sokolowski, headed the Canadian delegation. Frum explained that the project grew out of a 2013 JNF gala that was a tribute to Harper when he was still in office. Since that event, more than \$5.7 million has been raised for the Visitor Centre.

Harper, known as a strong supporter of Israel, recounted

the history of the Hula Valley, which was inappropriately drained in the 1950s in an attempt to clear out the swampy marshlands and create fertile farmland. Many natural species were wiped out, and JNF-KKL subsequently spent millions of dollars to restore the valley and return the land to productive farming.

Harper, who was raised in the United Church of Canada, is a longtime member of the evangelical Christian and Missionary Alliance. He compared the Hula Valley project to the return of the Jewish people to its native land.

He said: "This park is one of the greatest restoration stories, just as the country of Israel has been for the Jewish people. It is a great honour that this center is named for me, and I am grateful for this beautiful occasion and will never forget this visit."

The opening of the new Visitors Centre is an example of KKL-JNF's extensive work for Israel's peripheral regions and is part of the framework of the Israel 2040: Moving to the Land of Tomorrow project launched by KKL-JNF two months ago, with the goal of increasing the Negev and Galilee regions by 1.5 million more residents.

KKL-JNF sees the economic, social, tourism and cultural strengthening of Israel's outlying regions as a value of supreme importance and works unceasingly to achieve this goal.

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This month's update from Talmud Torah School



It has been a very busy month at Talmud Torah School. In addition to their regular studies, the students have been getting ready for Chanukah. Grades 2 and 3 students completed some beautiful mosaic art. Niv Goffman from Krav Maga Maleh in Israel showed the students how to peacefully do self-defense. The Grade 4 students are doing a Tzedakah project collecting food to donate to Edmonton's Food Bank. and the Muslim Community of Edmonton Child Care Centre visited the Early Learning Centre, in celebration of National Child Day.



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Correction notice: In our November 2019 edition, the page 1 article included a spelling mistake in journalist Paula Kirman's name. We apologize for the error.



# ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF CHANUKAH

Happy Chanukah!  
from Jane, Hersh, Derek,  
Corey and Annie Sobel



חנוכה שמח  
from Forrest, Anna, Adina  
and Naomi Ziesler

Happy Chanukah!  
from Fred, Libby, Josh  
and Jacob Katz

חג שמח  
from the  
Rosenblum Family



Happy Chanukah to our friends,  
family and the entire community  
from Farrel, Cara, Wyatt  
and Grace Greenspan

Happy Chanukah!  
from Mindy Jacobs and  
Eoin Kenny



חג שמח  
from  
Megan & Gabriel Mandel



Wishing the Jewish community  
a happy and healthy Chanukah  
from the Dance Family

Wishing the Jewish community a  
happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Gary, Mira, Noah, Nathan  
and Leah Campbell

Happy Chanukah!  
from Robert, Krista, Aliya  
and Daniel Brick

חג שמח  
from Nili Talmor  
and Michael Handman

Happy Chanukah!  
from Laurie, Chuck, Jamie, Jonah  
and Ben Mozeson

Best wishes to our friends and family  
for a happy Chanukah  
from Susan & Bruce Mintz

The Aviv Israeli Folk Dance Association thanks  
the Edmonton Jewish Community and the  
Edmonton Jewish News for supporting this  
fundraising project. Chag Sameach to everyone!

Happy Chanukah!  
from  
Faith & Stan Greenspan



Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from Rosemary & Stan  
Kitay and Family



Wishing the Jewish community a  
happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Sharon Bookhalter  
& Jerry Glasser

ברכות לחג שמח  
from Faren, Ari and  
Noam Sniderman

Wishing the Jewish community  
a happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Stacey, Erin, Jordyn, Abby & Zoe Wright

Wishing the Jewish community a  
and healthy Chanukah  
from  
Tobey Freedman and family

חג שמח  
from Jane & Randy Soifer  
and family



Happy Chanukah!  
from Yuliya, Alexey, Zachary  
& Elizabeth Massarsky



Happy Chanukah!  
from Raffi, Devra, Noah, Eva,  
Maya, Zac, Max & Lucky

Happy Chanukah!  
from  
Barb Mandel



Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from Lauren Kruper and Aubrey  
Uretsky & Family

Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from the  
Bass-Haines Family



Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from Nora & Lawrie Lyman  
and family



Wishing the Jewish community a  
happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Judi Card

Happy Chanukah!  
from Boris Sukalsky



Happy Chanukah!  
from Nina & Tom Hardin

Happy Chanukah!  
from the Cogan - Grahn Family

Happy Chanukah!  
from the  
Silver - Bowron Family



Best wishes to our friends  
and family for a happy  
Chanukah  
from the Eisenstat Family

Best wishes to our friends and family  
for a happy Chanukah  
from Angela, Lonnie, Zoe, Emma,  
Ethan and Jonah Zwaigenbaum

Wishing the Jewish community  
a happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Cindi Lister-Thompson

Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from  
Netta & Frank Phillet

Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from Jeff, Erica, Liam  
and Annie Solomon

Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a Happy Chanukah,  
from Karen Leibovici  
and Stephen Zepp

Wishing the Jewish community a  
happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Daniel & Becky Shafran





Happy Chanukah!  
from  
Carol & Ron Ritch

Chag שמח  
from  
the Goldsand Family

Happy Chanukah!  
from Jay, Deb, Jake  
and Will Hatch

Wishing the Jewish community  
a happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Molly Shugarman and family

Chag Sameach  
to the entire community!  
from Nikki Hayden and Jared,  
Naomi and Stephanie Lazar

ברכות לחג שמח  
from Darlene & Gordon Bushewsky  
and family

חג שמח  
from Riva & Howard Shein  
and family

Happy Chanukah!  
from Dylan, Leah, Carter  
and Ayla Muscat

Wishing the Jewish community  
a happy, healthy Chanukah  
from  
Debbie & Howie Sniderman

Wishing the Jewish community a  
happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Ron Sorokin, Lisa Redmond,  
Jaime and Jack

Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from Natalie, Ken, Marlee and  
Jenna Soroka

Wishing the Jewish community  
a happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Jay, Dia, Rena, Jon and Zachary Silver

Chag Sameach  
to the entire community!  
from Mona & Dan Rosenberg

Best wishes to our friends and family  
for a happy Chanukah  
from Clive, Heidi, Max and Sam Oshry

Wishing the Jewish community a  
happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Francie & Jon Nobleman

Wishing the Jewish community a  
happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Cindy & Thom Jarvis

ברכות לחג שמח  
from Jodi, Michael and  
Rebecca Zabłudowski

Wishing the Jewish community  
a happy and healthy Chanukah  
from Connie & Danny Zalmanowitz

Best wishes to our friends and  
family for a happy Chanukah  
from Sue & Alvin Winestock

Best wishes to everyone  
for a Happy Chanukah  
from Dan & Helen Conroy

Spin your dreidels  
and eat sufganiot,  
from the HeAtBaGs

Our very best wishes to our readers and advertisers for a wonderful Chanukah celebration, from the Edmonton Jewish News

# Golden Globes 2020: The Jewish nominees

By Gabe Friedman

(JTA) — The 2019 Golden Globe nominees were announced Monday morning, and the film “Marriage Story,” written and directed by Noah Baumbach, leads the pack with several nominations. Here are the other Jews and Jewish productions that were nominated:

## “Marriage Story”

The movie is up for best drama film, and Baumbach also scored a nomination for best screenplay. Jewish co-star Scarlett Johansson is nominated for best actress in a drama (her co-star Adam Driver, who isn’t Jewish but often plays Jewish characters, is nominated as well, for actor in a drama).

The film draws on Baumbach’s own divorce from Jewish actress Jennifer Jason Leigh. He has called it a “love story about divorce.”

Randy Newman, the Academy Award- and Grammy-winning Jewish songwriter, is also nominated for his score.

## “Jojo Rabbit”

Taika Waititi’s anti-hate satire about a German boy who wants to be a Nazi toward the end of World War II is up for best musical or comedy film. Waititi, who wrote and directed the film — and also co-starred as an imaginary version of Hitler dreamed up by the protagonist — is Jewish and a New Zealand Maori.

“I experienced a certain level of prejudice growing up as a Maori Jew,” he wrote in the film’s production notes. Making the film in 2019 “has been a reminder, especially now, that we need to educate our kids about tolerance and continue to remind ourselves that there’s no place in this world for hate.”

## “1917”

Jewish director Sam Mendes got a nod in his category for helming this World War I drama, which is also up for best film.

## “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”

Everyone’s favorite show set in late 1950s Upper West Side New York is up for best TV comedy series. Lead Rachel Brosnahan (who is not Jewish, but plays the very Jewish Midge Maisel) is up for best actress in the TV comedy category.

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency spoke recently with one of the show’s stars, Tony Shalhoub, before the debut of season 3.

## Sacha Baron Cohen

The Jewish actor, known for his comic roles, is nominated for best actor in a miniseries or TV movie for his dramatic turn in “The Spy,” a six-episode Netflix series on the Israeli spy Eli Cohen. Cohen — the real spy — embedded himself in the upper echelons of Syrian society in the 1960s to provide Israel with crucial intelligence before being discovered and killed.

## Beanie Feldstein

The Jewish actress and sister of Jonah Hill is up for best actress in a comedy film for her scene-stealing performance in “Booksmart.”

## Ben Platt

The Jewish Broadway star, best known for his lead role in the musical “Dear Evan Hansen,” is up for best actor in



“Marriage Story” is nominated for several Golden Globe Awards. (Alberto Pizzoli/AFP via Getty Images)

a TV comedy for his performance in Netflix’s “The Politician.”

## Paul Rudd

Paul Rudd is nominated in the same category for playing two versions of the same character in “Living With Yourself,” which was created by “Daily Show with Jon Stewart” alumnus Timothy Greenberg.

## Michael Douglas and Alan Arkin

The Jewish pair earned nominations for their performances in “The Kominsky Method,” Douglas for lead actor in a TV comedy series and Arkin for supporting actor in “a series, limited series or motion picture made for television.” They play an aging Jewish acting coach and his aging Jewish agent, respectively.

## Henry Winkler

Winkler, the winner of two Golden Globes for playing The Fonz on “Happy Days,” is nominated in the same category as Arkin for his role in the HBO series “Barry.”

The 2020 Golden Globes airs on Jan. 5 on NBC.



# January 27 proclaimed Calgary’s Holocaust Remembrance Day

By Judy Shapiro, Jewish Free Press

With close to 200 members of Calgary’s Jewish community as witnesses, Calgary City Council unanimously passed an historic motion on November 18, to “formally recognize, commemorate and proclaim January 27th as our annual city-wide International Holocaust Remembrance Day.”

January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, was recognized by the United Nations as International Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2005.

Those observing the emotional proceedings included Holocaust survivors, their children and grandchildren, 58 students from the Calgary Jewish Academy, and community leadership.

Calgary is among the first municipalities to officially adopt January 27 as a day of Holocaust remembrance. Jared Shore, Community Relations Chair of Calgary Jewish Federation, was very pleased with the passage of the motion.

“This is affirmation that our city leadership understands the concern about growing antisemitism,” he said.

The motion was introduced by Councillor Diane Colley-Urquhart, who has been working for a year with Calgary Jewish Federation and CIJA on drafting the motion and confirming the support of her colleagues on City Council.

“In an era of irresponsible, harmful and hurtful rhetoric, leaders cannot remain silent,” Councillor Colley-Urquhart told the *Jewish Free Press*.

In a way, this motion is her own personal response to the Pittsburg synagogue bombing and other acts of antisemitism.

“When a synagogue is bombed in another part of the world,” she told Council, “we have to speak up here.”

In her opening remarks to City Council, Councillor Colley-Urquhart mentioned some of the “whereas” points preceding the motion, including the distressing statistic that “one in five Canadian youth are unaware of the events that occurred during the Holocaust, while 62% of Canadians aged 18-34 are unaware of how many Jews were killed during the Holocaust.” This, in addition to the fact that “Statistics Canada reports that Jewish people are the most frequently targeted ethno-cultural group when it comes to police-reported hate crimes.”

The motion was sponsored by 13 of the 14 City Councillors and Mayor Nenshi, who spoke in support of the motion at the November 18 meeting.

Citing the increase in hate crimes and the lack of awareness of the Holocaust, Mayor Nenshi stressed that elected officials must “use our voices and power in order to fight against hatred.”

Originally, the motion, which is titled “Combatting Antisemitism in the City of Calgary” included adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance



Close to 200 members of the Calgary Jewish community attended the historic session at Calgary City Hall on November 18 as council voted unanimously to declare January 27 as Holocaust Remembrance Day in the City of Calgary. Those who attended included members of Calgary Jewish Federation, which has been working with city council on this issue, Holocaust survivors and second-generation, and students from the Calgary Jewish Academy. (Photo courtesy JFP)

definition of antisemitism, which has been adopted by countries around the world, including Canada. The definition includes examples of antisemitism, including some examples which attempt to define where demonization of Israel becomes antisemitic. When the first draft of the motion was made public, Councillor Colley-Urquhart and other Councillors received over 100 e-mails objecting to the inclusion of the IHRA definition. Some of the opposition came from an organization called Independent Jewish Voices.

It was important to Councillor Colley-Urquhart that the motion pass unanimously, and with no controversial debate in council, so she decided to remove the definition from the motion. However, mention of the IRHA definition is included in whereas #8 of the motion, which states: “Antisemitism can only be overcome by education, increased awareness, strong political condemnation, and enforcement of relevant laws anchored in the IHRA definition as a clear means of identifying hatred toward Jews.”

Although disappointed that the IHRA definition was not adopted as part of the final motion, Shore recognizes that “by including the IHRA definition in whereas, City Council highlights the importance and necessity of the definition in identifying antisemitism.”

For her part, Councillor Colley-Urquhart has not given up on official recognition of the IHRA definition. To that end, she introduced an Administrative Inquiry to City Council, which includes the full definition and the examples adopted by the Federal Government of Canada, and requests that administration research and consult

with various stakeholders on the “merits and value of the City of Calgary adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism.” Administration is asked to report back to Council in 2020.

For many in the Jewish community, the City’s recognition of January 27 as an annual day of Holocaust Remembrance is an important and memorable event.

“This connects our past to our future, right here in our local environment, in our Calgary community,” concluded Jared Shore.

And when January 27th rolls around in 2020, it will be commemorated as a city-wide day of remembrance, acknowledging the Holocaust and renewing our commitment to learn the lessons of this dark period of human history.

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# ‘Uncut Gems’ is Adam Sandler’s Oscar moment

By Gabe Friedman

NEW YORK (JTA) — As soon as I got out of a recent screening of “Uncut Gems,” I had to share the feelings of sheer cinematic bliss I had just experienced nonstop for two hours.

“Just got out of ‘Uncut Gems,’ the new Adam Sandler movie coming out. He is soooooo good in it,” I texted my friend.

“Oh cool! What’s it about?” she responded.

“He plays a sleazy diamond dealer,” I said, adding a laughing emoji.

“Wow! So he does dramatic movies? Pulling a Steve Carell!”

She wasn’t exactly living under a rock: Sandler is obviously best known for his many potty humor comedies that pimply teenagers love and their parents hate. Some film fans are aware that he’s also come into his own as a dramatic actor over the past couple of decades. His foray into that world started around 2002 with Paul Thomas Anderson’s bizarre “Punch-Drunk Love,” and continued most recently in Noah Baumbach’s “The Meyerowitz Stories (New and Selected)” in 2017.

But the name Adam Sandler in pop culture still evokes that feeling one might experience after lighting a bag of poop on fire on your nemesis’ doorstep: I’m laughing at this, but I feel dirty doing so, and I shouldn’t be. Or perhaps, especially for Jews, his name brings to mind the lovable Hanukkah song.

That could be about to change. His performance in “Uncut Gems” might just bring him an Oscar.

“Uncut Gems” is the sixth film by Josh and Benny Safdie, a pair of thirtysomething Jewish brothers who have earned serious acclaim for their gritty indie works that probe the New York City underworld — like “Heaven Knows What” (2014), about a homeless heroin addict, and “Good Time” (2017), which stars Robert Pattinson as a bank robber.

In “Uncut Gems,” Sandler plays Howard Ratner, an unscrupulous jeweler in New York’s extremely Jewish Diamond District. Howard’s marriage (to Dinah, played with steely resolve by Idina Menzel) is in tatters after he has had an affair with a young employee in his shop, and he has a debilitating gambling problem. He pools money he

makes from sales and under-the-table deals to bet impulsively on NBA games, and is in debt to the kinds of characters whom no one wants to be indebted to.

But there’s so much more going on here above and below the surface that words on a page won’t do the visceral experience of watching the film justice. It’s a frantically paced freight train of suspense and emotion capped off with a bombshell ending. It’s full of nuanced underlying commentary on consumerism, the downsides of international trade, addiction, family life and even basketball — former NBA star Kevin Garnett portrays himself in a slightly alternate universe in which he believes a rare stone that Howard lends him improves his play on the court.

The film also deeply explores modern Jewish identity. Like the Safdies, who are distant relatives of the famed architect Moshe Safdie, Howard is part of a tight-knit Syrian Jewish clan rooted in New York City. While he fits in comfortably among the other Jews of the Diamond District, he is still a proud outsider to the wider world of wealth with which he regularly interacts. His Jewishness defines him to that world — to Garnett and his posse, he’s a “crazy Jew,” not a crazy jeweler.

The Garnett role was actually written with Amar’e Stoudemire — the fellow former NBA star who has converted to Judaism and played pro ball in Israel — in mind. A large part of the plot revolves around an opal from Ethiopia that takes on a mystical significance for everyone who comes in contact with it. Howard believes it’s a kind of gem coveted by Ethiopian Jews, which endears it to him even more.

Through it all, Sandler is uncannily good. He deploys a subtle but idiosyncratic ethnic New York accent. He oozes an eagerness to please his many clients and the many people he owes money to. He explodes with frustration when conflict caves in on him. Sandler not only keeps up with the film’s frenetic, disorienting pace — he pushes it forward.

The now 53-year-old actor has been great in dramatic form before, perhaps most notably in “The Meyerowitz



Adam Sandler plays Howard Ratner in "Uncut Gems." (Courtesy of A24)

Stories.” But this is a new level for Sandler, an intense character study that ranks alongside other Oscar-winning performances from years past.

In fact, Sandler just beat out the likes of Joaquin Phoenix, Robert De Niro and Adam Driver to win the National Board of Review’s award for best actor, an early indicator of Oscar success.

The Safdies originally wrote the lead role for Sandler, but he didn’t see the script for years. As he told sports radio host Dan Patrick in a recent interview, Sandler’s manager kept it from him at first, thinking it wasn’t a good fit.

“Maybe he was right, I was a little young for that movie 10 years ago,” Sandler said.

Years later, after seeing some of the Safdies’ other films (and after Jewish actors like Jonah Hill and Sacha Baron Cohen were considered for the part), Sandler grabbed the role. But he went on in the Patrick interview to describe how scared he was at tackling the dark character.

“I read the script and I was terrified ... I said, ‘I’m terrified to do this, it’s two months of being this guy,’” he said.

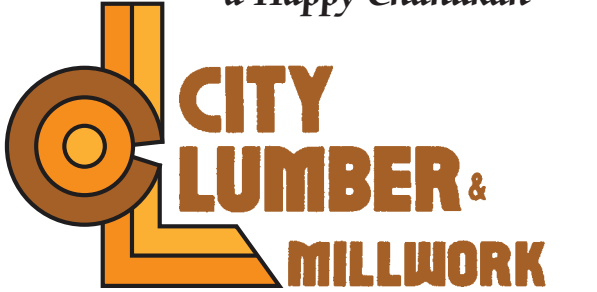
Sandler would call his wife at times while filming, asking for her help to prepare for an emotional scene. But eventually it clicked.

“I grew to love being the guy,” he said.

Well, it shows.

“Uncut Gems” gets a limited release Dec. 13 before a nationwide release on Christmas.

Wishing all the Jewish community  
a Happy Chanukah



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# Apple Potato Latkes Recipe with Tahini Silan

By Vicky Cohen and Ruth

(Nosher via JTA) - Can you think of a better marriage between two traditions?

An Ashkenazi Hanukkah favorite paired with the Middle Eastern Sephardic flavors of dates and tahini. Talk about a match made in heaven!

But the truth is, everyone loves latkes, regardless of their background. There's something about the crispy, shredded potatoes that no one can resist. And even though we didn't grow up eating them (it was all about sufganiyot for us), we make them for our family every year...and not only during Hanukkah!

This year we wanted to go the sweet route, since we've always made savory latkes. We added Gala apples, cinnamon and cardamom to the batter. The simple yet delicious dipping sauce combines tahini and silan, a sweet, dark amber-colored syrup made from dates and water.

The inspiration for this sauce comes from a tahini-silan spread our parents used to eat when we were kids. They would serve it on a plate with big pieces of pita or French baguette. Consider it the Middle Eastern PB&J!



- Ingredients**
- For the Latkes:*
- 2 large Gala apples, shredded
  - 2 large Yukon Gold potatoes, shredded
  - 1 1/2 tsp salt divided
  - 1/2 tsp cinnamon
  - 1/8 tsp cardamom
  - 1 egg, lightly beaten
  - 1/4 cup cornstarch
  - 1/4 cup grapeseed or avocado oil
- For the Tahini Silan Sauce:*
- 3 Tbsp tahini paste
  - 3 Tbsp silan (100% date syrup)



- Directions**
- Preheat the oven to 350F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Place shredded potatoes and apples in a colander, with a bowl underneath. Sprinkle 3/4 teaspoon of salt and mix well. Let stand for 10 minutes (the potatoes and apples will release some liquid).
- Using a cheesecloth or a clean kitchen towel, ring out excess moisture from the grated potatoes and apples (make sure to squeeze out as much liquid as possible).
- Add the rest of the salt, cinnamon, cardamom, egg and cornstarch and mix well. Using your hands, form 12-15 small latkes.
- Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet and drop about 5 latkes at a time. Cook over medium heat, 3-4 minutes per side or until golden brown. Place them on a plate lined with paper towels to absorb excess oil. Repeat the process with the remaining latkes, adding more oil if necessary.
- Transfer the cooked latkes to the lined baking sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes or until crispy.

To prepare the tahini silan sauce, combine both in a small bowl and whisk well. Serve alongside the latkes.

# Bake your latkes this Hanukkah. You won't regret it.

By Paula Shoyer

(The Nosher via JTA) -- Everyone loves potato latkes, but no one likes the mess of frying them or the guilt associated with eating them. These latkes are baked in the oven and easily won over my kids.

You do need to watch them so they don't burn; they were done at different times in different ovens. And my pickled applesauce is basically a tangy-spicy applesauce, which we also eat like eating with schnitzel.

Note: Latkes may be made 2 days in advance and reheated in the oven or frozen; applesauce may be made 4 days in advance. You can also serve this with classic applesauce.

(Reprinted with permission from "The Healthy Jewish Kitchen" © 2017 by Paula Shoyer, Sterling Epicure.)

- Ingredients:**
- 2 tablespoons sunflower or safflower oil, or more if needed
  - 1/2 medium onion, quartered
  - 3 scallions, ends trimmed, cut into thin slices or chopped into small pieces
  - 3 medium potatoes (about 1 1/2 pounds), scrubbed clean and unpeeled
  - 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
  - 2 large eggs
  - 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
  - 2 tablespoons potato starch
  - 1/2 teaspoon salt
  - 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

- For the Pickled Applesauce:**
- 1 teaspoon sunflower or safflower oil
  - 1/3 cup red onions, chopped into 1/4-inch pieces
  - 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
  - 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
  - 2 apples, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
  - 1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
  - 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
  - 1 cinnamon stick
  - 1/4 teaspoon salt
  - Pinch black pepper

- Directions:**
- To make the latkes, preheat the oven to 450 F. When the oven is hot, pour 2 tablespoons of oil onto 2 jelly roll pans and turn them in every direction so that the oil coats the pans. Heat the pans in the oven for 5 minutes.
- Place the onions and scallions in the bowl of a food processor and chop them into small pieces. Place them in a medium bowl. Shred the potatoes by hand on the large holes of a box grater or in a food processor with the shredding blade, and place in the bowl. Add the lemon juice, eggs, baking powder, potato starch, salt and pepper and mix well.
- Very carefully (I mean really carefully; move very slowly) remove one of the pans and use your hands or a spoon to scoop up and drop clumps of the potato



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from

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