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Happy Passover



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Camp BB-Riback, located on the beautiful shores of Pine Lake Alberta is looking forward to an exciting new relationship with JCamp 180 - both for mentorship and fundraising.

Camp BB-Riback inks new deal with JCamp 180

By Jeremy Appel

There is big news coming out of Camp BB-Riback, and it's coming in the form of JCamp 180. The Alberta Jewish summer camp, which recently celebrated its 65th anniversary has announced it has entered into a partnership with the JCamp 180 program, which will help improve what is already considered a top-notch experience for campers.

JCamp 180's mission is to significantly enhance the long-term effectiveness of non-profit Jewish camps and other organizations that engage young people in meaningful Jewish culture and educational experiences. This is provided through incentives and consulting services that help foster Jewish philanthropy and create a positive and abundant culture.

It's a group that Camp Director Stacy Shaikin has wanted to join for some time now, and it's an achievement he's very proud of. It's not just mentorship, goal-setting, and engagement that JCamp 180 helps out with though, the fundraising aspect is a huge benefit. "The cherry on top is that there's grants for all the camps, and currently there's one from February to the end of December, which is a 2-1 match, so... for every \$2 we raise, we are matched with \$1," Shaikin says.

"We're going to revamp all our initiatives to highlight that there's never been more value for your dollar to invest in Alberta's Jewish cultural experience."

This partnership also allows Camp BB-Riback to retain its independence, he added.

"I think the culture's always been, 'We can take care of ourselves and we're good,' and I still believe as an independent cultural experience we are unique, even relative to (other) Jewish camps," Shaikin said, admitting that it's hard to explain.

"There's something about Camp BB-Riback that, for the campers who go there, there's some nuance in the personality."

The 2020 summer was a lost one for Camp, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but Shaikin says he's optimistic they'll be able to open fully this summer.

Once camp does open, there will be exciting new opportunities that Shaikin has used this time to develop and implement. For instance, campers will be able to make movies in their brand-new filmmaking program.

"I'm kind of a movie guy myself, and I always felt like making a movie was a process that taught people all kinds of different skills, one of them being working together and collaborating together, and sharing ideas," he said.

Some of the more enthusiastic campers are "writing scripts as we speak," Shaikin added.

He said he recruited talent from the U.K. — a film student who happened to want to spend a summer at camp in Canada — to run the program, which is intended for campers of all ages.

"I have no idea how we're going to do it. We might be using cellphones and 8-millitres. We might guerilla this whole thing around camp, but kids are going to make a movie. And it's a way to beef up our arts and culture programming, which is something I'm pretty passionate about."

While Camp is an opportunity for kids to leave their modern comforts behind, Shaikin acknowledges this is a greater challenge in the 21st century.

"Kids today often mistake homesickness for missing their phones," he said. "It's way harder to grow up in this sensory world than it was for us ... Our campers and staff might be challenged by that and have to get over that hump, but when they do it's like the best thing ever, man. They never want to leave. And that's the trick."

For more information on Summer 2021, registration and employment visit www.campbb.com

Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.



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The antidote to chaos is creation



Cantor Russ Jayne

By Cantor Russell Jayne

Another Passover is upon us, and we are still living our daily lives in a world that we never could have imagined. Many are still gripped by fear, anxiety, and disbelief. The unknown retains its power to frighten, and we must continue to cope with physical, financial, and emotional worries. Every time the phone dings with a news update, there is another dent in our mental armor. We are depleted, we are distressed, and the questions on everyone's lips seem to be, "How long can we go on like this? How can we find the strength and positivity to overcome our challenges?"

Though we no longer have prophets to speak to us, we do have Jewish wisdom to guide us.

In a world filled with chaos we yearn for the return of security and stability. We are now preparing for and anticipating *Seder* night. The definition of *Seder* is order, exactly the safety net we crave. First, we must hear the message of our *Seder*. Know without a doubt that we are not alone in this world. Just as our people wondered in Egypt if they would ever get out of the awful darkness they were suffering, we too are wondering, "Are we spiraling out of control? Will we ever see the light again?"

Seder night comes to give us some much-needed perspective. There is *marror* (bitter herbs), it is true. Our ancestors had many moments of grief. There were times that they were anguished and felt as if they had lost their spirit, but they did not allow the *marror* moments to overcome them. They were not stripped of their faith. We dip the *marror* into charoset, a delicious mixture of apples, nuts, wine and honey, to teach us that even in the most difficult of times we must see the sweetness that imbues our life. The friendships, the love, the resilience, the kindness that surrounds us. G-d took us out of Egypt and we will get out of this darkness too.

At our *Seder* we make a sandwich of *matzah* and *marror* with a bit of *charoset*, for such is life. Sandwiched between the hardships are the flashes of joy. It is these very moments that we must grab onto with all our might. With quarantines and social distancing, take this time to build a bridge. Call or email someone you've lost touch with. Think of others who are feeling isolated right now and send them a mental hug with every fiber of your being.

This one germ has spread throughout the world and created havoc. Imagine how one good word, one good deed could spread throughout the world and counter the devastation. Your light could spread from one person to another, and on and on. The antidote to chaos is creation. On this Passover, when our G-d opened up a whole new world for us, let us each resolve to create goodness. Let us resolve to be a blessing.

May you celebrate the Passover in happiness, health, wellness, and peace!

Russell Jayne is the Cantor at Beth Tzedec Congregation, an egalitarian Conservative Synagogue in Calgary.

Switzer Foundation provides tablets for seniors

By Maxine Fischbein

During his long and remarkable life, the late Sam "Ousher" Switzer generously supported those in need; initiatives geared toward the most vulnerable, including seniors, were a priority for the larger-than-life and fondly-remembered Calgary entrepreneur and philanthropist who passed away in June, 2018 at the age of 92.

In keeping with his track record as a community builder – and an avid Beth Tzedec "regular" – the Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation has been helping seniors at Calgary's Beth Tzedec Synagogue tune in to Shabbat and Holiday live streaming prayer services with the push of a button on customized, user-friendly Microsoft Surface tablets.

The project is the brainchild of Calgary lawyer Joshua Switzer, one of Ousher's grandchildren. As the COVID-19 pandemic spread last spring, making in-person attendance at Shul services a risky choice for older adults and those with underlying health conditions, Joshua Switzer wanted to find a way to keep seniors connected with their congregational family.

The tablets purchased by Beth Tzedec, with the generous support of the Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation, are lent to congregants on a temporary basis. For now, the devices are pre-loaded with an app that takes them to live streaming Shabbat and Holiday prayer services only, though the foundation and Beth Tzedec are contemplating future value-adds, including access to synagogue classes and cultural programs.

Even when the COVID-19 pandemic becomes a thing of

the past, congregants with mobility or other health issues can benefit from the tablets says Ousher Switzer's daughter, Darlene Switzer Foster, who chairs her father's eponymous foundation with the assistance of her daughter, Edmonton-based pediatrician Dr. Sarah Foster, and her nephew, Joshua Switzer.

"It is important as our elderly age that they can continue to participate meaningfully in our Synagogue and community while staying safe," Joshua Switzer told *Alberta Jewish News*.

Beth Tzedec Executive Director Max Lipsman had previously envisioned the funding of big-screen smart TVs in dedicated spaces at local seniors facilities with Jewish residents. That way, Jewish seniors could maintain their sense of community by coming together to celebrate Shabbat and Holidays face-to-face while participating in the live streaming services.

That vision had to morph as COVID-19 outbreaks in seniors homes led to lockdowns, leaving residents isolated in their own living spaces.

Beth Tzedec pivoted quickly to the use of technology shortly after the declaration of the pandemic in March 2020. It got the Switzer family wondering how they could help make the technology accessible for seniors so they could remain safe while attending Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services virtually if they were unable, or unwilling, to risk in-person shul attendance.

Lipsman began to work with a tech firm to come up with a tablet that would be simple to use, eliminating potential frustration for first-time users. An initial three tablets were purchased and ready for lending prior to Rosh Hashanah 5781.

"I'm so proud of the congregation for embracing the technology that allows us to do this," says Darlene Switzer Foster.

"Seniors and others who are shut in due to illness or convalescence can also benefit from the lending program," Switzer Foster said.

It is her hope that, whenever possible, family members will join seniors living at home or in independent living and care facilities, so that they can enjoy the live streaming services together and break down the isolation so many have felt due to intermittent COVID-19 outbreaks and lockdowns.

Right now, the tablets can only be used to access live streaming Synagogue services on Shabbat and Holidays; users cannot access the internet or apps other than the one that is pre-loaded by Beth Tzedec.

"We wanted to keep it simple and avoid viruses," Switzer-Foster said.

Amen to that, in more ways than one!

The lending of tablets is administered by Beth Tzedec, which recently ordered four more devices. There is potential for future expansion as demand grows.

"Anyone who is housebound and wants to borrow one of these tablets should contact us at Beth Tzedec," says Max

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Passover: What's with all the Strange Rituals?
A Teen Learning and Games Night
Sunday March 21 5:00-6:00pm via Zoom
Jews do peculiar things at the Seder table. We eat gefilte fish. We lean. We play hide and seek with a cracker. We fill four cups of grape juice to the brim. We beckon invisible strangers into our homes. What's with all the strange rituals? Join Lara Rodin in an exploration of these questions, and more, in a game-filled, teens-only Zoom learning session. Register by Tuesday, March 16 at www.cutt.ly/teenpassover.

Live Streamed Community Seder
Sunday March 28 7:00pm
Join Beth Tzedec's second night Community Passover Seder. Cantor Russ will guide you through the rituals, sharing teachings and insight into the Hagaddah while adding meaning and fun to your evening.
<https://stream.bethtzedec.ca/Sunday>

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Coping with COVID through the Spring and beyond

By Maxine Fischbein

We turn the pages of barren calendars as COVID-19 continues to threaten and disrupt our lives and those of billions worldwide.

Even as shots are going into arms, health restrictions are expected to continue for some time. Almost everyone is coping with grief and loss – often on multiple levels – and the horizon is full of unknowns.

If you aren’t feeling great right now, you’ve got good reasons. And you are not alone.

“Research in Canada and internationally shows a significant decline in wellbeing,” says Calgary Psychiatrist Allan Donsky.

But there are things we can do to ensure we are doing more than merely surviving or coping, he adds.

“The first step involves recognition that this is a long haul,” says Donsky.

Another is accepting – and not resisting – what is.

“There is so much we want to be in control over, but we’re not,” he notes.

When we resist what is, it is a problem, because “we are trying to negotiate non-negotiables,” Donsky adds.

Instead, he urges everyone to “...recognize, accept and investigate what we have control over and what we don’t.”

“We always want to put our energies into getting a return on emotional and spiritual investment, which is our relationship to those things we can’t change,” he says.

“What we *can* change is our relationship to what is.”

“When we recognize we have choice, we can set an intention,” Donsky says, based on the simple question: “What’s called for now?”

“What’s called for might be stopping what’s not working or what’s not helpful, nourishing or productive. Because until we stop what’s not working, or what’s making us miserable, there’s no room for something else to emerge.”

Donsky likens the process to shivering in a blizzard.

“I can complain how cold it is, I can talk about my fear of frostbite, I can be angry I’ve chosen to live in Canada . . . but that’s not going to get me warm,” he added.

“Hidden inside every concern, complaint, problem or issue is the solution, says Donsky.

“If I’m shivering, get warm. If I’m hungry, eat. If I’m sad, look for joy. If I’m worried, I need to calm down. If I’m angry, I need to be patient.”

It is not about ignoring or denying very real feelings or sucking it up and getting on with things, says Donsky. It is about recognizing and working with those feelings, seeing what arises and, often, leaning into the very things we think we’d rather avoid . . . like the grief we’ve all experienced on some level during the pandemic.

“For things we’ve lost, we should sanction grief,” says Donsky. This would most obviously include the loss of loved ones, but we also grieve COVID’s collateral damage, including job losses and isolation from family.

One year into the pandemic, many are also feeling a lot of unsanctioned grief – those things we had looked forward to that did not come to pass, Donsky adds.

“There is also the distress and the pain of isolation. Even though we have ways of optimizing connection through technology, there is a real sense of isolation.”

What has settled in, for many, says Donsky, is “ennui,” a weariness or listlessness that is hard to shake.

“There is no complete health without mental health. And it’s certainly true that there is no mental health without spiritual health,” adds Donsky. “To feel spiritually healthy requires spirit, heart and energy.”

As Jews, we are hardwired “...to be a light unto the nations,” says Donsky, who likes the way Carl Jung extends the metaphor:

“As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being.”

The easily-remembered acronyms SPK (slow, patient, kind) and PBJ (peace, beauty, joy) can guide us through the process of finding the light in the darkness, Donsky says.

Often when we are irritated and stressed, we speed things up, he explains. We try to leap into the future so we can fix it. In the process, we run away from what is. Unfortunately, however, it can’t be outrun.

“When we speed it up, we don’t do a good job of navigating anything,” Donsky says. In such situations, we are likely to skid out of control, doing things that are rash, impulsive and even harmful. That is why we need to slow it all down,” he adds.

As we slow it down, it is easier to be patient.



Calgary Psychiatrist Dr. Allan Donsky

“Impatience makes me miserable and it doesn’t help,” says Donsky. “Once I’m slower and patient, I’m automatically kinder to myself.”

Once we have achieved the SPK part of the equation, the PBJ can emerge.

Seeking peace when we are irritable or annoyed, beauty when we see ugliness in ourselves and the world, and joy when we are sad can help us to navigate challenges like COVID.

“We mustn’t forget PBJ in our lives,” says Donsky, most of all because they work.

“You don’t deny that things are difficult or try to make the ugly pretty, but there is a way to navigate this that is gentle, human, kind, forgiving, passionate and loving,” Donsky adds.

On that road, it helps to remember that we are human

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A new twist on Passover Freedom

By Rabbi Binyomin Halpern



Rabbi Binyomin Halpern

Two years ago, we sat together around the seder table. With great fervor and anticipation, we reverently recited the immortal words of the *Hagada*: “Hashata hacha, leshana haba’a beara de yisrael.”

This year we are here, next year may we be in the land of Israel! (With the redemption.)

“Hashata avdei, leshana haba’ah benei chorin.” *This year we are slaves, next year may we be free!*

As we gather around the table again this year, we have a bit more of insight into the meaning of this statement. Sadly, this year we were slaves in many ways. Imprisoned in our homes, we were locked away from family, friends and perhaps even our shul. We have been pinned back with fear for our physical well-being, financial uncertainty and personal loss. We have been barred from celebrating milestones, and from gathering to learn and share together.

But we have begun to taste freedom. As I write these words, every day I hear how more and more of us are getting access to vaccines and can begin to plan accordingly.

Perhaps then we can have a sliver of imagination of

what it must have been like for the Jewish people to march triumphantly out of Egypt.

But where did they march to? At least for us, we have destinations to get to. (The barber, dentist and the gym to name a few!) But what destination did the children of Israel have to direct their newfound freedom? Ultimately, they went straight into the wilderness and stayed there (in quarantine!) for the next 40 years. Most of them, including Moshe, were no longer alive by the time the Jewish people entered the Land of Israel.

So how do we understand this freedom?

Perhaps we can gain a perspective from a Mishna in Pirkei Avot.

Seven weeks after the Exodus, the Jewish people received the luchot, (tablets) and indeed the entirety of the Torah, at Mt. Sinai.

In Parshat Ki Tisa, which we read recently, a brief description is given for the Luchot.

“Vehaluchot maaseh elokim heima, vehamichtav michtav elokim hu, charut al haluchot.”

The tablets were G-d’s handiwork, and the script was the script of Hashem, engraved on the tablets.” (Exodus 32:16)

It is striking that the word “charut,” or engraved, is spelled with exactly the same letters as the word “cheirut” which means freedom. Says the Mishna in Pirkei Avot, there is a deeper lesson here. A message of freedom, and about who truly is free and in fact has ultimate freedom.

The tablets represented the ultimate Divine directive and therefore says the Mishna

“Ein lecha ben chorin ela mi she’osaik betalmud torah.”

No one is as free as the one who learns Torah.

So learning about Hashem, His Torah and command-

ments is freedom. But why should this be? What exactly is the connection between freedom and Torah learning? (In fact, I suspect that a number of schoolchildren will tell you that they wouldn’t mind a break from this ‘freedom’ every once in a while!)

The meaning is as follows. Yes, I can be free to leave my house, and go anywhere I want. But at the same time, I can be very much enslaved. Enslaved to my habits, my wants and needs, and in general to *myself*. But there is another part of me as well. A noble soul that yearns for an elevated life, a life of purpose and generosity. That is where Torah comes in. By providing a plan, direction, and a calling to live beyond ourselves, we can truly empower our inner selves and our truer selves.

With Hashem’s help, we will be less restricted in the coming months. There are going to be ‘firsts.’ Things we can do again for the first time in a long time. But which part of us is going to get the first serving? Is it going to be an indulgence that is ‘just for me,’ that we have had to forgo for over a year? Or is it going to be something a little bit bigger. Something for family, for a neighbour, for Torah or for G-d?

We have many questions already in the Seder text. But perhaps this year, as we celebrate our freedoms both ancient and modern, we should ponder the following: “Yes, I am Jewish and yes I am free. Now what am I going to do about it, and how soon?”

Malka and I wish everyone a Chag Kasher Vesameach, a joyous and meaningful Passover.

Rabbi Binyomin Halpern is the spiritual leader of House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel. He welcomes any feedback on this article and is passionate about any Jewish discussion. He can be reached at rabbi.hojmi@gmail.com

Join JNF Edmonton in honouring Gayle Tallman

By AJNews staff

Gayle Tallman is the honouree of the 2021 Edmonton Negev Gala which will be held virtually this summer on June 22, 2021. The JNF team is issuing a call out to everyone - from coast to coast - whose life was impacted by Gayle’s amazing work.

“Gayle is a most deserving JNF honouree and we are thrilled to announce and invite you to join us in celebrating such a special member of our community,” stated Edmonton JNF Executive Director Jay Cairns, along with Negev Gala campaign team leaders Michael Schayer, Heather Vickar and Jack Schwartzberg.

Gayle exemplifies what it means to be a true community builder within the Jewish Community of Edmonton. She has contributed in a significant way to the Jewish education of a generation of community members, sharing with them her love of Israel, and her commitment to community service and human rights.

“JNF is honouring Gayle Tallman this year in a virtual gala that allows for everyone, ‘Coast to Coast,’ to participate and gather together to pay tribute to an outstanding member of the Edmonton community who dedicated her life to teaching compassion and inclusivity,” explained Cairns.

“We need your help gathering photos and videos to honour her. Send in your favourite photo/video clip of you with Gayle when you were in a BBYO program, at Camp BB, in the JCC or from a March of the Living trip.”

Tributes should be sent by email to edm@jnf.ca or they can be posted on the JNF Edmonton Facebook page.

Negev Gala Co-Chair: Michael Schayer offered this testimonial: “Gayle means the world to me and my family. Speaking for myself personally, she was instrumental in me being able to cope with the many emotions I had prior to, during and after the March of the Living – a very difficult and troubling experience for myself. Aside from that, whenever I used to visit the old JCC, Gayle’s door was

always open and inviting for me to come in and chat about whatever. I always enjoyed those conversations and Gayle’s silly grin and infectious laugh. I personally am so happy that JNF is honouring Gayle this year as the Negev honouree, I can’t think of anyone in our community more deserving. I love you Gayle.”

Howie Sniderman wrote: “I just read the article today about the upcoming Negev event honouring our friend Gayle Tallman – we are delighted to see her so very appropriately honoured for her many years of dedication to our community. She accompanied our daughter Liz on her ‘March of the Living’ and I think there are a generation or two of young adults (and their parents) in our community who owe Gayle a great debt of gratitude for the time, effort and expertise she put into everything she did – especially taking on the annual role of playing ‘parent in situ’ for teenagers dealing with one of the most difficult but meaningful experiences in their lives.”

If you have any questions or would like more information about the Negev Gala, please leave a voice-mail for Executive Director, Jay Cairns at the office: 780.481.7881. Messages will be returned

within 24 hours and for more timely responses email edm@jnf.ca.

In the interest of safety and compliance with provincial regulations, the JNF Edmonton office has transitioned to a phone message system and office visits are by appointment only.





Hojmi would like to wish the entire community a

Happy Passover!





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JNF Calgary honouring Diane Colley-Urquhart

By Cheryl Gurevitch and Elliott Steinberg

The Jewish National Fund of Calgary is proud to announce that Councillor Diane Colley-Urquhart is the 2021 Negev Gala Honouree. Diane is being recognized for her steadfast support of the Calgary Jewish Community. With this honour, Diane has chosen to support the Trauma Resilience Centre in Sderot, Israel, which will provide therapy for children and adults suffering from PTSD and other mental health issues. The Centre is located in a building that is neither reinforced for rocket attacks, nor accessible for those with disabilities, and is too small to accommodate the growing number of clients. This project connects with Diane’s values of caring for those in need and her commitment to human rights, and gives us all the opportunity to work with her to help build the foundations of Israel’s future.

Diane is a 21-year member of Calgary City Council, and has time and time again been a voice for Jewish Calgary. Diane recently put her words into action, by bringing forth a motion to Council to recognize International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The motion was unanimously supported by all of her Council colleagues and was observed for the first time in Calgary on January 27, 2020. Diane has continued to demonstrate her dedication to the Jewish community by striving to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, as well as to the larger

community, by recommending a motion to address acts and symbols of racism, hatred, intolerance and violence, all on display at a recent anti-mask rally outside of city hall. This was immediately embraced by the mayor and resolved by Council in a March 1, 2021 resolution. Diane gained significant insight and understanding into racism and antisemitism as a Calgary Police Commissioner for 13 years and as a Human Rights Commissioner in the Province of Alberta for 10. She feels very strongly about educating youth so they understand how antisemitism manifests in our community – in both acts and words of hatred toward Jews.

Prior to her work on City Council, Diane was deeply impacted by her extensive nursing career, spanning areas such as emergency, trauma and long-term care. “My 50 years of nursing experience brings with it a strong sense of service, compassion and fairness in helping to do what is right, and, to do everything I can to improve the quality of life of our citizens.” Diane’s relationship with the Jewish Community also dates back to her early nursing days at the Foothills Hospital, where she worked with a number of notable Jewish doctors. During this time, she joined the JCC, where her son Bruce was enrolled in



Councillor Diane Colley-Urquhart at City Hall with members of the community.

‘Jean’s’ Daycare. Later, Bruce attended the Calgary Jewish Academy, where Diane developed many lasting friendships. At about the same time, she was hired by the Martin Family as the Director of Operations at the Beverly Nursing Home. As the Councillor for Ward 13 for the last 20 years, Diane has represented the core of Calgary’s Jewish Community with distinction.

The JNF Gala honouring Diane Colley –Urquhart, will be a virtual event, taking place on Sunday, May 2, 2021. For information on tickets, donations, advertising and sponsorship opportunities, please visit us at jnfcalgary.ca, or contact us at either (403) 255-0295 or calgary@jnf.ca. Watch for more information in the Alberta Jewish News and JNF Facebook (@calgaryjnf).

Cheryl Gurevitch is currently serving as president of the JNF Calgary Board of Directors. Elliott Steinberg is the Executive Director of JNF Calgary.

“I Believe”

By Joe Spier

It was the summer of 1942, the Nazis “Final Solution to the Jewish Question” was rampaging towards its zenith. The German fascists who had established the Warsaw Ghetto some 18 months earlier to warehouse Polish Jewry before sending them on to their final destination, were in the process over the course of the summer of shipping a quarter million of the Ghetto’s inhabitants by rail to the Treblinka extermination camp. They were sent to die and they knew it.

The Jews were ordered to gather, and to bring with them only a few possessions. Brutally crammed into congested, closed cattle cars unable to move, lacking ventilation, water, food or sanitary facilities other than a bucket, they were sealed in the cars for days, the stench of urine and excrement pervasive, the heat overwhelming. Upon arriving at Treblinka, most of the wretched men, women and children were led directly and terrifyingly into the gas chambers by guards screaming orders, their dogs snarling and nipping and families torn apart. Some never arrived at the camp, dying instead in the crowded, windowless cattle cars.

Reb Azriel David Fastag was a Modzitzer Hasid from Warsaw. Over the past 200 years, the Modzitzer sect of Hassidic Jews has become known for beautiful melodies — thousands of them. Modzitz is the name of the town in Poland where the sect eventually settled before the Shoah. Reb Azriel David lived simply, earning his livelihood from a small clothing store, his happiness and fulfillment however came from another source — the world of Chassidic music. Reb Azriel David was a singer and composer of niggunim, a traditional group of cantorial melodies. Noted throughout Warsaw for his exceptional voice, many came to the shul where Reb Azriel David davened to hear him sing. His rich, pure and expressive voice had a powerful effect on all who heard him. That all ended on a summer day in 1942, when Reb Azriel David

Fastag was among the many forced into those overcrowded, airless cattle cars, where people were crushed, some near or at the point of death.

In the cramped car, amidst the sounds of people panting, groaning, crying and dying, stood Reb Azriel David Fastag wrapped in his tallit with eyes closed visualising that he was back on the bimah of his shul. He could not shake from his mind the 12th of Moses Maimonides’ 13 Principles of Jewish Faith which Maimonides, the Rambam considered binding on every Jew. Written in Hebrew in the 12th century, each Principle begins with the words Ani Ma’amin

(I believe). Presently, Reb Azriel David composed a slow, somber, haunting melody for the words of the 12th Principle and began singing the melody at first quietly and then stronger, the lyrics rolling from his mouth like honey; *Ani ma’amin b’emuna shelei-ma, b’viat hamoshiach; v’afal pi she’yismamaya, im kol zeh, achakeh lo b’chol yom she’yavo* (I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Moshiach; and even though he may tarry, nevertheless, I wait each day for his coming.) The rest of the car went silent.

Soon the full cattle car was singing with Reb Azriel

Continued on page 17

The family of the late
Ann (Fridhandler) Gorber z"l
mother, mother-in-law and bubbe,
respectfully and graciously
thank you for your kind
expressions of sympathy.

Daryl, Ellen, Arnie (and Rachael)
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The Passover story isn't over yet

By Rabbi Mark S. Glickman



Rabbi Mark Glickman

The story isn't over. Of all the many messages bursting forth from our Passover *Haggadah*, that's one of the most important of all.

The *Haggadah*, as we know, is a magnificent work of rabbinic literature, a seder-table liturgy that allows us to recount and relive our ancestors' experience of leaving slavery. The story begins with our people's forced servitude in Egypt. Over the course of the evening, it moves to the

plagues, the Red Sea, and our forty-year journey through the desert. But where does it end? When does the story conclude?

When is it time for the credits to roll?

The answer is, that it doesn't. Yes, the story *began* in Egypt, but it has continued to unfold ever since then, even today.

Consider *Dayyeinu*, the popular Pesach song whose one-word Hebrew refrain takes seven words to translate into

English: It would have been enough for us. "Had G-d brought us out of Egypt and not parted the sea for us," the song begins, "*Dayyeinu* – it would have been enough for us."

"Had G-d parted the sea, and not allowed us to cross to dry land," it continues, "*Dayyeinu* – that would have been enough for us." Had G-d only sustained us for forty years, fed us manna, or performed any of the individual miracles to lead us toward redemption, each of those would have been enough.

And the last stanza of the song? The ending? The great conclusion? "Had G-d given us prophets of truth and not made us a holy people, *Dayyeinu*, it would have been enough for us." The conclusion of the song, in other words, brings us to the time when we are a people called to holiness, and that time is today. The story continues to unfold even now, millennia after it began in ancient Egypt. Consider *Chad Gadya*, the story of the little goat that "my father bought for two zuzim."

The goat in this song, of course, is much more than just a goat. It represents the Jewish people. And just as our people has repeatedly been oppressed in the past, so too does a cat come along in this song and devour the goat. But the cat, in turn, just like all our oppressors, gets its due when, in the next verse, it gets bitten by a dog. The dog then gets beaten by a stick, the stick burned by a fire, the fire quenched with water, and the water consumed by an ox. Then the song takes a darker turn, as the ox gets slaughtered by a butcher, the butcher slain by the Angel of Death, and the Angel of Death vanquished by none other than G-d Him-Her-Itself.

We have enemies, the song reminds us. But those enemies will fall to enemies of their own. And eventually,

in times to come, death itself will fall prey to the G-d of Life.

Those who cause us pain, in other words, won't be around forever. And soon the ultimate cause of pain – death – will itself come to an end. We may be suffering now, but the story is far from over.

Consider the final line of the *Haggadah* – "Next year in Jerusalem!" Jerusalem, of course, represents the world as it can be, the world redeemed. We might be suffering now, the *Haggadah* reminds us, but next year (or maybe the year after), life itself will be transformed for the better. If things aren't perfect yet, that's only because we haven't waited long enough. The story isn't over.

The fact that our story hasn't yet ended is important for us to remember in this imperfect world, for it can remind us that better times are yet to come. Life might be difficult now, but next year, things may be better. Next year, life will have improved.

So, as you sit down to your Passover seder this year you may want to keep this in mind. Yes, the economy is in the tank; yes, most of us are still waiting for our vaccines; yes, our kids may not have launched, and the roof may have a leak, and the boss might be mean. But the story's not over yet. New chapters have yet to unfold.

New sunrises have yet to shine. New opportunities have yet to open. We haven't yet reached the Promised Land, but just wait – amazing things still can happen.

The story, you see, is still far from over.

Rabbi Mark Glickman is the spiritual leader at Temple B'nai Tikvah, Calgary's Reform Congregation.

Temple B'nai Tikvah hosts *Waste Not, A Jewish Environmental Ethic*: Mar. 22

Because the pandemic preoccupies us, it's a challenge to prioritize other problems we simultaneously juggle. Autumn of 2020, members of Temple B'nai Tikvah, Calgary, approached the synagogue's Board of Directors with the idea that human health and environmental health co-exist. Nor can financial sustainability and the planet's sustainability be separated. Often, reducing waste saves money as well as natural resources. They suggested establishing an Environment Committee to help Temple reduce its environmental impacts.

At the Board meeting considering this request, Rabbi Glickman said that an Environment Committee is important, and a way to live our values as a Jewish family,

environmentally conscious and responsible. The Board agreed and created an Environment Committee.

The new Environment Committee, in conjunction with the Adult Education and Social Action Committees, is very pleased to announce its inaugural Zoom talk by Dr. Tanhum Yoreh on March 22, 2021, at 6:30 PM.

Tanhum is assistant professor at the School of Environment at the University of Toronto, and author of *Waste Not: A Jewish Environmental Ethic* (2019), which won the 2020 Canadian Jewish Literary Award in the category of Jewish Thought and Culture. His book explores traditional histories, rabbinic literature, commentaries, and modern environmentalism to identify pivotal moments in the development of *bal tashhit*, the Jewish prohibition against wastefulness and destruction.

Tanhum said that his talk will focus on what it means to have a Jewish

lens on environmental action. "My research aims to be a bridge to the next step, which is the practical applications of the knowledge to make a positive impact. I'm connected to American and Israeli environmental organizations that are tackling environmental issues from a Jewish lens.

"I found during my research that too many environmental groups were reinventing the same wheels. But recently a broader conversation is emerging among environmental entrepreneurs and activists from a wide range of Jewish expressions and other religions that are saying, 'let's meet and learn from each other' and cooperate to optimize resources and share initiatives so we build collaboratively. Faith groups can come together from a place of shared values and work towards shaping the world we want to live in."

Tanhum's talk will generate discussion about the intended cumulative impacts arising from the Environment Committee's mandate: (1) to show leadership for positive change in the climate crisis, (2) environmental awareness, education, and action (3) engagement to live our values as a Jewish family of environmentally conscious and responsible community members.

Those who attend the talk will be entered in a random draw to win a copy of Tanhum's book. A link to the talk is on Temple B'nai Tikvah's website, in the calendar of events, or, email Michael, Chair of the Environment Committee, at michael.t.clarke@ucalgary.ca.




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Temple B'nai Tikvah: Calgary's Reform Jewish Congregation

Please join us for...
The Everyone Seder
March 21, 2021 at 4 p.m.

Community 2nd Night Zoom Seder
March 28, 2021 at 6 p.m.

For more information, visit bnaitikvah.ca

Chag Sameach!

Wishing you and your family a Happy Passover!
–Rabbi Mark Glickman and the Board of Trustees

CJA to Launch a New Naming Initiative

By Joseph Tappenden

The Calgary Jewish Academy is launching a campaign where you could be recognized in our hallways and leave a lasting impact on our school community. Is there a physical space at the CJA that has significant meaning to you? Your old kindergarten classroom, where you met your lifelong friends? The music room, in which you discovered your love for the arts? The stage in the gymnasium, where you watched so many of your children's performances?

A gift to the *Adopt a Room Campaign* is an opportunity to help shape and elevate the learning environment for students. With an aging building that has been serving students for more than fifty years, the wear and tear has been significant. Over many years of generous community support we have been able to make several improvements, however with the *Adopt a Room Campaign* a significant impact could be made right away and would leave a lasting

impact for nearly a decade or longer.

The *Adopt a Room Campaign* is an initiative where families can adopt a physical space in the CJA facility. Adopting a space is a 10-year partnership, either with an outright gift or through one that is pledged for up to five years. By making a gift you are highlighting your commitment to the excellence and success at the CJA. Some examples of areas around the school that you could name are: classrooms, a wing of the school and the building itself.

When you take part in this campaign, you can name a space in honour of loved ones, in recognition for an achievement, or even get a group of people together to make a gift collectively (ie. Graduating Class of 1978). All gifts toward naming a specific space will have signage recognizing your dedication within the building. If you would like more information about the *Adopt a Room Campaign*, please contact Joseph Tappenden at: tappendenj@cja.ab.ca or (403) 253-3992.



Registration at CJA for students preschool-aged to Grade 9 is now open for the 21-22 school year. For information visit calgaryjewishacademy.com

New MacEwan U Award is a tribute to Bobby and Sharon Cairns z”l

Bobby Cairns was a giant of Alberta music. When both he and his wife Sharon died in November of COVID-19 complications, it was impossible for the family and the community to gather for a memorial. However, a brand new MacEwan University scholarship honours their memory, and will help to foster the growth of music students in the future.

The Bobby and Sharon Cairns Memorial Award has been created to honour Bobby and Sharon Cairns. Bobby's lifelong commitment to music and education and Sharon's community engagement and activities will be remembered by supporting students enrolled in the Music Program at MacEwan University's Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications.

As head of Guitar at the MacEwan Music program, Bobby dedicated 36 years, helping to shape the future of young musicians. Cairns' own career kicked off when he was only 15 years old with an invitation to play with the legendary Tommy Banks.

His career as an educator, which spanned four decades, saw him create and oversee the program's guitar curriculum, teach countless courses and direct music ensembles, including the Guitar Ensemble, unique among North American university and college music programs.

“Bobby fully engaged in teaching and brought all of his energy, imagination, expertise and musicianship to the enterprise of teaching and learning,” says Dr. William Richards, chair of the Department of Music. “He was a true pedagogue, a master of the instrument and found many innovative and fruitful approaches to teaching.”

Sharon began her professional career as an Executive Assistant at Edmonton's ITV station, but later decided to stay home and raise two children while taking on various volunteer leadership positions in the Jewish Community. She went on to work as the Executive Director of the

Jewish National Fund Edmonton for over 20 years.

Sharon was Bobby's biggest fan and vice versa. She had an incredible sense of humour and was social by nature. She was the backbone of the Cairns family and a relationship builder; she was dearly loved by her many friends.

“Thank you to the Royal Alex Hospital Staff for your care, for your compassion, for your sacrifice so that people like our parents are treated with respect and the dignity they deserved in their final days,” said brothers Jay and Matt Cairns.

“Our mother instilled in us a strong Jewish identity, a love for Israel, a commitment to community and to love your kids like no other. We loved her so much. To say that we are heartbroken is the understatement of a lifetime.

“We do find comfort in that Mom and Dad are reunited, soul mates that continue their love affair seamlessly, and for all eternity.”

This award honours Bobby's vision and Sharon's passion, providing a legacy to others to build their own careers in music.

“We are pleased to share with you the launch of the Bobby and Sharon Cairns Scholarship,” said Jay and Matt & Tami Cairns.

"Thank you in advance for your support and generosity towards this living legacy honouring our parents."

All donations are 100% tax deductible and online donation receive an immediate tax receipt.



Bobby and Sharon Cairns OBM

For more information, contact the MacEwan Alumni and Development Office at giving@macewan.ca or 780-497-5410.

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JFSC online Speaker Series offers a message of hope

Over the past year of living biblically, we've experienced floods, fires, plague. We've been forced to recognize that what we thought was important may not really be so critical. We've learned the difference between "wants" and "needs" (think toilet paper...) We've learned to slow down and enjoy the small stuff. We've learned how important social connection is to our well-being. We've learned that struggles come in all shapes and sizes, and that nobody is immune. We've started to talk about mental health. And we've learned that everybody has a story...

As we head into our second Passover without our extended families, we think about the themes of freedom from oppression, hope, renewal. It is fitting that this year, for our annual fundraiser, JFSC brings a series of talks from three individuals with real life stories about facing adversity, demonstrating grit, perseverance and the power of resilience to get through their circumstances. They bring us hope when we learn how they use their experiences to "Make a Difference" in the lives of others.

Tom Jackson. Karen Gosbee. Dr. Ruth Westheimer. "These three presenters speak the story of JFSC," says Roxanne Droppo, JFSC Executive Director. "In addition to highlighting the necessity for our programs and services in the Community, their messages relate to the Passover themes of hope, renewal and community support."

An enthusiastic supporter of JFSC, Tom Jackson entertained us, inspired us and brought us to tears during our 2018 Lil's Legacy fundraiser. He's back on April 11, 2021, treating us to an evening of "Dancing, Dogs, Laughing, and Love" – his message is about creating mental well-being versus managing disease. Let's consider social prescriptions versus medical prescriptions. And then let's just sing...

We are thrilled to have Tom return to JFSC, lending us positive energy during these difficult times, inspiring us with his passion for mental health, the importance of philan-thropy and showcasing his enormous talents. He has the gift to motivate us to be active members of our communities. Special thank you to our sponsor Jenny Belzberg.

Karen Gosbee had it all – a successful husband, three beautiful children, the homes, the cars, the jewelry, the A-list invitations. Her life looked perfect, and as her husband George liked to say, "appearances are everything." But they're not.

Having been exposed to mental health and substance abuse both in her childhood and adult life, Karen has extensive lived experience.

We are honoured to have Karen Gosbee join us on May 6, 2021 to speak about mental health, reducing stigmas and building community resiliency. Karen took her challenging high-profile life experiences and made a personal commitment to improve the quality of life for those directly and indirectly affected by mental illness and addiction. Special thank you to sponsors Raechelle and Lorne Paperny and Rose Zivot.

Dr. Ruth Westheimer may best be known for having pioneered talking explicitly about sex on radio and television, but as it turns out, that is only a small part of her rich and diversified life.

An Alzheimer's Caregiving Authority, Dr. Ruth has done extensive work on developing effective coping strategies

for Alzheimer's care. She provides health-guided advice and coping strategies for caregivers looking after loved ones with this devastating illness.

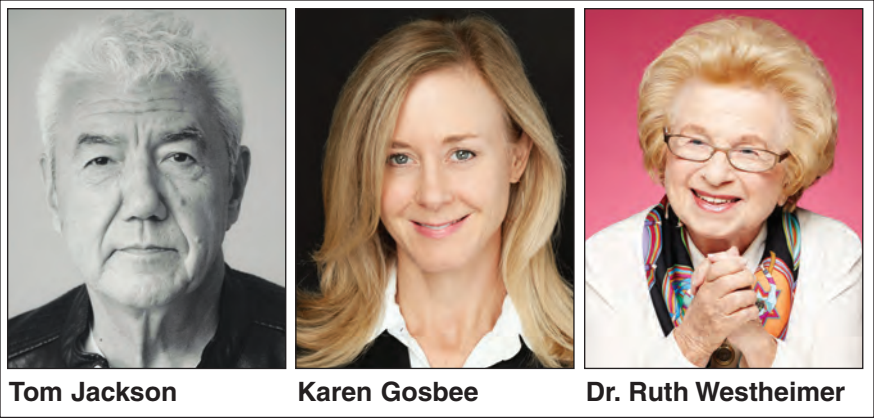
With our new Memory Care Program in place, we are excited to hear Dr. Ruth's sage advice on October 17, 2021 in this growing social service area. Special thank you to our Anonymous Donor.

We are grateful for the support from the Sam Ousher Switzer z"l Charitable Foundation. Proceeds from "Making a Difference" will support JFSC's Family Enrichment Program, which provides a wide variety of services for individuals and families, with the goal of strengthening skills and connections while decreasing risk factors.

Although our Passover Seders will look a lot different again this year, we have the opportunity to look at the silver linings from our Covid experiences and we see hope for our future.

בירושלים לשנה הבאה Next year in Jerusalem!

To Purchase Tickets for "Making a Difference", or for more information on our programs and services www.jfsc.org, or contact Peta at petag@jfsc.org, 403-692-6389.



Halpern Akiva Academy partners with JFSC for Purim

This year at Halpern Akiva Academy has been very different, and Purim was no exception.

On the one hand, we felt a certain sense of loss over not seeing our friends and community supporters in school for our annual Purim carnival and megillah reading. On the other hand we could re-focus on what truly mattered in

ensuring our Purim spirit was not dulled -- from the wonderfully creative costumes for Crazy Adar Days to the special feeling of Purim cheer in the hallways, our students and staff truly connected with this year's Purim and appreciated the freedom to celebrate together in-person, even during trying times.

This point was brought home on a more personal level this year, as we decided to partner with Jewish Family Services Calgary and change our Purim Mishloach Manot program to better help the

most vulnerable members of our community. Our students embraced this act of chessed by creating beautiful bags and cards for seniors and families in our community. They packed the bags with pantry staples and with *hamantaschen* and treats to ensure that everyone could enjoy their Purim this year. It is one thing to give a needy person a gift of food, but when the gift truly comes from the heart, it is especially wonderful!

Jewish Family Services Calgary and Halpern Akiva Academy received amazing feedback from seniors and families. A quote from one of the seniors: "Thank you for providing me with the spirit of Purim!". The smiles on bobbies' faces say it all.



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Meraki Cuisine: It’s good to be home

By Debbie Lambert

The best journeys always bring you home. Over the past several years there has been a massive shift in women entrepreneurs in the food industry. More than ever, women are taking their culinary skills to the highest levels and combining those talents with their business vision to make them leaders in local and international food scenes.

A graduate of the SAIT Culinary program, Amanda Lambert left Calgary a decade ago to develop her skills in the kitchen with the best of the best. In London, she worked at the prestigious Savoy Hotel in the same kitchen as the legendary “Father of Modern Cuisine” Georges Auguste Escoffier. “The experience and the knowledge I gained was a dream come true,” says Lambert.

From London it was on to the famed St. Andrews Golf Course in Scotland, where she served as chef de partie at the Fairmont St. Andrews hotel.

Back to Canadian soil, Amanda found herself in Toronto, where, for the next five years she worked at the upscale ‘North 44’, owned by celebrity Chef Mark McEwan and under watchful eye of Executive Chef Sash Simpson. She eventually moved with Simpson to his new restaurant, Sash Restaurant and Wine Bar. Along the way, Amanda became one of Canada’s top 10 Finalists in the coveted ‘San Pellegrino Young Chef Award’ competition. The youngest and only female chef that year to achieve such an honour.

“My time in Toronto was invaluable and so satisfying, but I always knew in my heart that I would one day return to Calgary to be close to my mom and much of my family.” When her 87 year-old Grandma Miriam decided to move to Calgary this year, that cinched the deal and Amanda made the decision to come with her. After all, it was Bubbie Miriam who was responsible for the love and passion for all things culinary Amanda has had since the age of 3.

Who knew at the time that watching and helping Grandma prepare both family style comfort meals and upscale dinner parties was the start of something big!

Chef Lambert had the dream of one day opening her own restaurant. “Calgary is the land of opportunity for me now. Even with the pandemic surrounding us, I see a bright future here. I feel that there’s a market and a need for some unique offerings that we’ll be focusing on in the months and years to come.”

Enter, Meraki Cuisine. (May-rah-kee - Greek) often used to describe doing something with soul, creativity, or love —when you put “something of yourself” into what you’re doing.

Amanda and her partner, Miltos Chiotelis have created Meraki Cuisine, a catering and personal chef services company, from a ghost kitchen, providing upscale, high-end catering to various niche markets. “I see an opportunity within the Jewish community to provide a choice in Jewish-style, non-kosher catering with an upscale flair.”

Delivery, pick-up and In-home chef services for Shabbat dinners, Shiva meals, High Holidays and Passover options are available as well as catering (2 to 50 guests) for any *simcha* you may be celebrating.

In addition to their Jewish Lifestyle services, Meraki has created international themed dinners for pick up on weekends. One truly unique package they offer is a ‘Traditional English Afternoon Tea’ box and for the little



Amanda Lambert and her partner Miltos Chiotelis have a delicious Passover selection at Meraki Cuisine, in Calgary.

girls in the crowd, they have a ‘Little Girls Afternoon Tea’ for birthday parties.

Amanda explains that more than ever, “this is a business that requires ‘thinking outside the box’ and staying relevant by offering a variety of unique services, but at the end of the day, the most important key to success is the food quality and taste.” The attention to detail makes for a memorable culinary experience which results in clients coming back for more.

“Our food is prepared and served with love and passion. We use the freshest and finest ingredients available. We believe that a happy customer is our best recommendation and we already have a loyal following of clients ordering on a regular basis.” Now accepting orders for Passover, the options include traditional meals, classics with a new twist and some innovative new dishes to satisfy the “foodies” in the crowd.

It’s good to be home!

For more information visit merakicuisine.ca.

Roasted chicken with crispy golden potatoes

Nothing beats a home cooked roast chicken for a Seder dinner. This dish is made with garlic, butter, sage, rosemary, parsley, lemon, and a hint of white wine for an unbeatable flavor accompanied by beautifully golden potatoes. (Prep. time is 20 minutes and cook time is 1 hour and 15 minutes).

Garlic herb roasted chicken

Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 1 lemon (cut in half)
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh sage chopped
- 3 tablespoons fresh chopped parsley
- 1 tsp paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

Preheat oven to 425° F. Lightly grease a roasting pan with 1 tbsp of olive oil.

Pat dry with paper towel to remove any excess moisture.

In a food processor combine the paprika, sage, rosemary, parsley, garlic, juice from half the lemon and the remaining olive oil. Blitz until the mixture is finely chopped.

Rub the herb mixture evenly all over the chicken, including the cavity.

Stuff the other half of the lemon and the cubes of butter inside the cavity.

Season chicken liberally on the outside and inside the cavity with salt and pepper.



- Pour the wine into the roasting pan.
- Place the chicken breast-side up into roasting pan. Roast for 1 hour basting every 20 minutes until juices run clear when chicken thigh is pierced with a skewer.
- Baste again, then turn on broiler and allow 2-3 minutes, until golden.
- Internal temperature should read 165°F
- Remove from the oven. Serve with pan juices. Enjoy!

Crispy golden potatoes

Ingredients

- 2 lbs Yukon gold potatoes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2tbsp unsalted butter
- Salt and pepper to taste



- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary

Method

Preheat the oven to 425 ° F

Peel the potatoes, make sure they are uniform in size. About the size of a large egg.

Wash the potatoes in cold water, then add them to a large pot and cover with cold water. Parboil for 7 minutes or until a knife comes out easily when inserted, then drain in a strainer and leave dry.

In a large bowl add the oil, thyme, rosemary and gently toss to a baking sheet.

Roast in the hot oven for about 40 minutes. Add the butter halfway through cooking. Cook until crispy and golden brown.

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Wishing a happy
and kosher Passover
to Alberta's Jewish
community!

Our cover artist: Lori Loebelsohn



Lori Loebelsohn

The beautiful art on the cover of this month's Alberta Jewish News is by Judaic artist Lori Loebelsohn and it is entitled "Plagues." Loebelsohn is also being featured in presentation and conversation by Art and Scroll Studio on Zoom, on March 17, at 7 pm MST.

Lori Loebelsohn's art can be seen as storytelling through the careful application of color and form; with the use of symbols and details it becomes a "life story map"

that features significant moments and events fashioning the portrait of a life. Although her paintings are complex, she keeps the composition flowing by preparing several preliminary sketches until she achieves an overall harmony in the design. When completed the finished work reads as a tenderly created whole that tells a delicate story.

Lori is a professional artist who specializes in creating Ketubot and other Judaic art. She enjoys working collaboratively with her clients to achieve unique painterly designs that blend ritual with important personal symbols. These works include a personalized Haggadah, home blessings, and many unique pieces for major life cycle events such as weddings, b'nai mitzvot, births, and milestone birthdays and anniversaries. Lori received her BFA from the Cooper Union School of Art.

"I was fortunate to have had wonderful and encouraging art teachers not only in art school, but also in public school. They exposed me to the Old Masters, Modern art and the importance of art in society. I watched my mother work painstakingly in her studio creating beautiful fashion

illustrations for Vogue and Bergdorf Goodman. I could feel the love of art in my blood. The idea of creating something brand new that has never existed before, especially when so many things are now mass produced, has always been extremely satisfying."

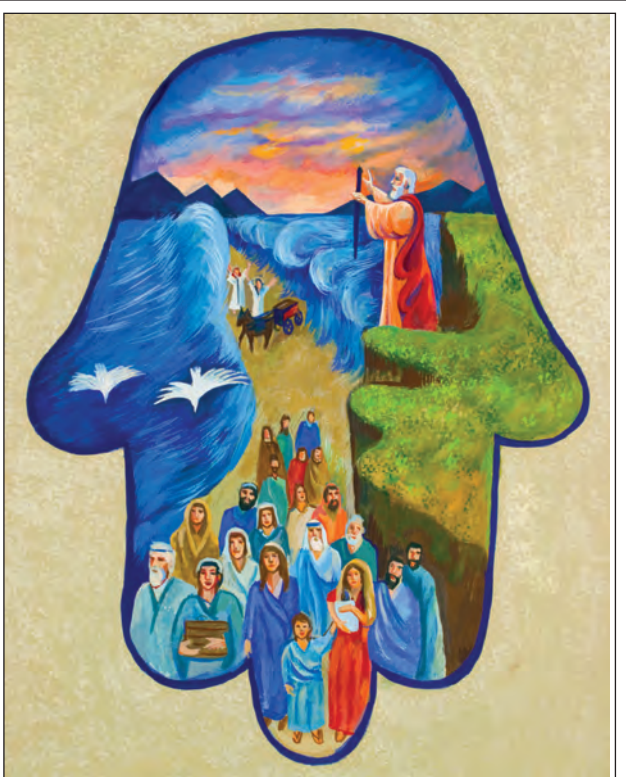
Since 2005, she has focused on creating symbolic portraits that she calls, "Life Cycle Portraits". These paintings include stories, memories and images that are symbolic representations of a person's life or an important life cycle event. Her work has been greatly influenced by early American quilts, medieval Ketubot, stained glass and illuminated manuscripts. This body of work has evolved to include both religious and secular themes, as well as personal symbols.

Lori thoroughly contemplates the "family" of colors and the kind of mood she wants to create, with the main goal of maintaining a sense of color harmony in the overall painting. Her palette is determined by the subject matter and the feeling that she wants to achieve.

She views it as an honor that her work is being used as part of many life-cycle celebrations. Long after the celebration is over, her painting remains as a reminder of that special time.

"My wish is that when people look at their painting through the years it brings back the feeling they had of that happy occasion," says Lori. "I am glad that my work is accessible to so many people. Also, I enjoy integrating seemingly disparate influences like stained glass and illuminated manuscripts into a painting and still have the painting feel whole. I plan to continue working in this way, but I hope to continue to evolve by experimenting with new techniques and materials in the future."

Art and Scroll Studio is a monthly live Zoom series that celebrates the makers and creators of Judaica Arts. Each episode features an outstanding artist as they "show and tell" the arc of their career and their work. The artist



"Hamsa - Red Sea" by Lori Loebelsohn

answers questions about their passion, their history and their craft. The backstory of the work accompanies presentation of the images with interesting and engaging dialogue.

Lori Loebelsohn is the featured guest artist on Art and Scroll Studio March 17,2021 at 7:00 pm MST. For free tickets please register at <http://bit.ly/Getticketshere>

On Wednesday April 21 at 7 pm MST, Art and Scroll Studio will feature California Judaic artist Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan.

Tablets for seniors

Cont. from page 3

Lipsman, who provides the necessary siddurim and chumashim with each tablet. The entire service is provided to congregants free of charge.

What would Ousher Switzer think of the program?

"My Dad was Mr. Plug and Play," said Darlene Switzer Foster. "He loved what a computer could do and he would have loved this."

"He would be proud of it," says Josh Switzer. "Seniors were always top of his mind and he really focussed his efforts on protection of the community."

The Sam Ousher Switzer Foundation actively supports a diverse range of charitable good works with specific focus on advancement of religion and spirituality, poverty relief, and education.

Some initiatives recently funded by the foundation have included the purchase of COVID-19 related equipment and supplies for Jewish day schools in Calgary, Edmonton and Montreal. According to Dr. Sarah Foster, the foundation provided grants of \$100 per student to the Edmonton Talmud Torah School, the Edmonton Talmud Torah Early Learning Centre, Calgary's Halpern Akiva Academy, The Calgary Jewish Academy and Montreal's JPPS-Bialik School toward the purchase of COVID-19-related supplies and equipment.

"At the Talmud Torah Day School, we funded

touchless water stations and air purifiers," Foster told *Alberta Jewish News*.

Other schools chose to invest in such safety items as Plexiglas barriers, touchless taps and doors, and hand sanitizer.

The Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation recently gifted Camp BB Riback with significant funds earmarked toward the building of a new dock on the shores of Pine Lake.

In Edmonton, the foundation presented the Jewish Seniors Drop-in Centre with a donation prior to the High Holidays.

Active in both Jewish and civic charitable initiatives, the Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation has also supported the Edmonton Food Bank and Kids Cottage, Foster said, adding that while the previous focus of her

grandfather's philanthropy was in Calgary, the foundation wants to also play an active role in supporting the Edmonton community.

Charitable organizations wishing to submit grant applications are encouraged to go to the foundation website at www.samousherswitzercharitablefoundation.com.

Individuals interested in finding out more about virtual synagogue services and the tablet lending program can contact the Beth Tzedec office at info@bethtzedec.ca or 403-255-8688.

Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.

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Online Hate Has Gone Viral During COVID



Judy Zelikovitz

By Judy Zelikovitz

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have been confronted by two viruses: COVID-19 and, in its wake, the rampant spread of online hate.

As much of the world has been forced indoors, our time on the Internet using social media has increased, which has advantages. We have found news ways to engage, stay in touch with our loved

ones, and maintain and transform our connections to our workplaces and the world.

But the same technologies that have allowed us keep connected have also served as springboards for the spread of online hate and conspiracy theories, which form the perfect Venn diagram of antisemitism. Since the pandemic broke, we have witnessed the emergence of ludicrous conspiracy theories accusing Jews of being responsible for the spread of COVID-19 or of profiting from the havoc. As a community that has consistently encouraged compliance with public health measures, we may be tempted to dismiss these outlandish conspiracy theories as nonsense. It is a type of nonsense, however, that spreads quickly and remains a cause for great concern.

Recent history has taught us that what begins online as the absurd mutterings of a few haters can, and too often does, turn into real-world violence.

What we witnessed in Pittsburgh, Christchurch, and Halle can certainly happen again. The threat is even greater today because people are spending more time online while also under considerable financial and emotional stress, a combination that makes people even more susceptible to messages online hate-mongers are peddling.

Curbing online hate has been a priority for our

community – and therefore for CIJA – for nearly a decade. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have remain-ed on high alert, monitoring the emergence of anti-semitic and hateful activity and bringing it to the attention of law enforcement and social media platforms.

Recently, we launched *Stop the Transmission!* a campaign powered by CIJA and funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage through the Anti-Racism Action Program. The campaign has provided practical tools and tips to hundreds of thousands of Canadians to identify and slow the spread of conspiracy theories, misinformation, and deliberate disinformation.

We have also engaged directly with social media giants and are proud to have collaborated with our colleagues at the World Jewish Congress to urge Facebook to ban Holocaust denial, one of the most pernicious forms of Jew-hatred, from their platform, an action they took earlier this year.

We continue to call on social media companies to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism, the most widely accepted definition in use today, including by the Government of Canada who adopted it as formal policy in its 2019 Anti-Racism Strategy. In response to the global collective effort of our community, Facebook’s COO Sheryl Sandberg said that “the IHRA’s working definition of anti-Semitism has been invaluable – both in informing our own approach” and that Facebook would “continue to refine” its “policy lines as speech and society evolve.”

A continuing aspect of our work is advocating for governments to advance policies to address online hate directly. Federally, we continue our call for a national strategy on online hate that includes clear, harmonized, and uniform regulations that apply to platforms and providers operating in Canada as well as an independent

Mishloach Manot for Purim



Halpern Akiva Academy students partnered with Jewish Family Services Calgary to create beautiful Mishloach Manot food bags to deliver to seniors in the community.

regulator to enforce them.
You can help by visiting www.notonmyfeed.ca and Taking Action!

CIJA is also working with the Department of Canadian Heritage to host the *Action Summit to Combat Online Hate*, scheduled for April 14-15.

The Action Summit will feature discussions with renowned experts, law enforcement, industry leaders, and community groups like ours. The goals are to create greater understanding of the issue and develop concrete actions to address it. You can pre-register at cija.ca.

Even once the pandemic is over, our migration to the digital world will endure. We therefore must stay committed and united in our efforts to combat antisemitism and other forms of hatred online.

Judy Zelikovitz is the Vice President, University and Local Partner Services at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

Our community is grateful to these donors who have been giving for 25 YEARS OR MORE – keeping Jewish Calgary strong and vibrant – Thank YOU!

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*These donors made arrangements for their gifts to continue after their passing.

We apologize for any errors or omissions.

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A MESSAGE FROM DIANA KALEF



What a crazy year!?! When this issue of Alberta Jewish News lands in homes, it will be one year since Alberta went into lockdown and our lives changed. I know that one of the most difficult aspects, in the beginning, was the unknown – how long would the lockdown last? How will we get through Pesach without our families? Little did anyone realize that a year later, we would be looking to celebrate another Pesach via Zoom! I was amazed at how Jewish Calgary immediately set to work to ensure that our students at Halpern Akiva Academy and The Calgary Jewish Academy were able to continue learning; the Paperny Family JCC kept its members virtually active, and JFSC continued to provide support to their clients.

Federation pivoted to offer online programming for PJ Library® families, Keshet members, and our Holocaust Education department delivered virtual commemorations and offered the Annual Holocaust Symposium via pre-recorded videos and Zoom. None of these organizations can do what they do without the support of loyal donors and funds raised through the annual UJA Campaign. Going into my 16th UJA Campaign during COVID was a little nerve wracking to say the least.

You may think that COVID is Jewish Calgary's biggest challenge, but in fact, the changing face of Jewish philanthropy is an obstacle that we are going to continually navigate now, and into the future. Historically, an expectation to give to the communal *kuppah* was without question. As far back as Exodus, the annual Half-Shekel Campaign provided for the community's needs. It was an obligation and a *mitzvah* where the rich were not to give more than a half *shekel* and the poor were not to give less. Everyone had an equal responsibility for the community's needs.

Today, there are many important causes, Jewish and secular, all competing for our *tzedakah*. We need to ensure that Jewish Calgary remains relevant so that our community can continue to thrive. Thankfully, there are donors who consistently maintain their annual giving knowing that they are supporting something important and necessary.

So, did I need to be worried about the 2020 campaign? Not at all! Jewish Calgary stepped up and made it happen by not only renewing annual gifts but for those who could, increased donations were made enabling Federation to provide extra COVID resilience support to our agencies through the Jewish Together Fund.

Federation was also a partner in the Shaw Birdies for Kids program in support of IBP, and we received matching dollars from Jewish Federations of North America as part of the Human Services Relief Fund to support COVID-related financial challenges.

I am grateful to not only work in a generous community, but I'm proud to be part of the *kehillah* that works to make a difference year after year. To say thank you to our donors, you will see a series of donor honor rolls being published over the next few months, starting with those who have given for 25+ years consistently. These donors are giving at all levels, from \$18 and up. This is a reminder that EVERY GIFT COUNTS and that **Together WE CAN** continue making an impact now and into the future.

Wishing you and yours, *Chag Pesach Kasher V'sameach*.

Diana
Diana Kalef
Director of Development
Calgary Jewish Federation

Building an inclusive community is a priority. Contact us and we will make every effort to meet your needs.



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All activities on this page are made possible by your gifts to Federation's annual UJA Campaign.

SHOAH PROGRAMS



The Book Smugglers: Partisans, Poets, and the Race to Save Jewish Treasures from the Nazis

Thursday, April 1 | 7PM

Join historian Dr. David E. Fishman as he recounts the true story of Vilna ghetto residents who rescued thousands of rare books and manuscripts – from the Nazis and the Soviets. It is an epic tale of heroism and resistance, and of unwavering devotion – including the readiness to risk one's own life – to literature and art.

The Light of Days: The Untold Stories of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos

Wednesday, April 7 | 7PM

Do not miss an unforgettable conversation with author Judy Batalion and Belle Jarniewski as they discuss Judy's highly anticipated book. One of the most important stories of World War II that brings to light the extraordinary accomplishments of brave Jewish women who became resistance fighters – a group of unknown heroes whose exploits have never been chronicled in full, until now

Surviving the Holocaust: The Return to Life in the Displaced Persons Camps Commemorative Yom HaShoah Ceremony

Thursday, April 8 | 7PM

Join us for a virtual commemorative ceremony as we honour and remember the victims of the Holocaust and pay tribute to the Survivors, and their remarkable journey to freedom and a return to life. We invite you to visit the Holocaust Memorial at the JCC on April 8 or 9 to say *kaddish* and lay a rock in memory of those murdered in the Shoah. Rocks will be available on site.

Holocaust Survivor Testimony Hear from Fanny Wedro

Sunday, April 18 | 2PM

As the number of living Holocaust survivors decreases, it is a rare opportunity to hear directly from a Survivor. Fanny was 14 years old when Nazis invaded her hometown of Korsec, Poland and conditions for the Jews quickly deteriorated. Listen as Fanny recounts her harrowing experiences from the Holocaust.

Holocaust Survivor Testimony Hear from Ann Dancyger

Sunday, May 2 | 2PM

Ann recounts the horrors of her Holocaust experience from her early days in Ratno, Ukraine – spent in hiding with her mother, to her two-year walking trek to West Germany.

For more details and registration info for these virtual programs, go to:
jewishcalgary.org

CMDA Passover Bulletin

An Interview with Mr. Lenny Shapiro, Supporter and Honourary Chair, CMDA Calgary

Mr. Lenny Shapiro and his wife Faigel have supported CMDA for almost 50 years. Recently they donated an emergency medical scooter and an emergency ambulance.

CMDA interviewed Mr. Shapiro for the Passover edition of Lifeline. Their conversation appears below.

CMDA: Thank you to you and Faigel for your many years of support for CMDA. Why did you pick CMDA?

Shapiro: It is a remarkable organization, founded 90 years with the mandate to save the lives of all citizens of Israel, regardless of race, colour or social-economic group. CMDA is there for all Israelis.

CMDA: The organization relies on the work and efforts of volunteers like yourself.

Shapiro: There are dozens of Canadians doing their part for CMDA but what is amazing is the story in Israel. Most people do not realize that MDA has more than 25,000 volunteers helping to run the organization. Without these volunteers, MDA could not function.

CMDA: While Israel has been, a world leader in getting its citizens vaccinated against COVID-19, for MDA the challenge continues.

Shapiro: That's right. MDA has been on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19 in Israel from the very beginning. Of course as first responders to most emergency medical incidents, our staff and volunteers are coming face to face with many COVID patients

every day. That does take a toll on the staff both mentally and physically.

CMDA: Why is the work of CMDA so vital?

Shapiro: Let us remember that MDA is Israeli's national emergency medical service but it is funded through donations and the generosity of supporters. The money we raise in Canada is used to purchase ambulances, emergency medical scooters, and countless other pieces of essential medical equipment.

CMDA: What is the focus for you this Passover?

Shapiro: The need is always growing, but this Pesach we're asking people to support CMDA by contributing to the purchase of life saving portable defibrillators. We know how effective these devices are at saving lives. Unfortunately, there is a shortage in Israel so we are asking Canadians for help end that shortage.

CMDA: What other things are CMDA doing in Western Canada?

Shapiro: We are reaching out to the community as often as we can. In fact, I am so proud of the efforts of Sharon Fraiman, CMDA Director, Western Canada and Don Sharp, Alberta Health Services Paramedic for their dedication in pre-senting our "First 7 Minutes" program to community leaders and supporters through the west. While COVID has slowed things down in 2020, the program has been presented



to leaders in dozens of communities.

CMDA: is there anything you would like to add "Mr. Shapiro?"

Shapiro: On behalf of Faigel and myself, I want to wish everyone a very happy Pesach. It looks like this will be another year of virtual Seders but things are looking better. I would also like to encourage both past and new donors to find out more about CMDA and to support our efforts in Israel.

CMDA: Thank you and Chag Pesach samaiach to you as well.

The Half-full Glass

By Rabbi Ilana Krygier Lapidès



My father, *alev hashalom*, used to tell a story about two brothers: one was a complete optimist, the other, a cynical pessimist, always able to find a problem for every solution.

The two brothers were so polarized that their father decided to balance them out by designing a special room for each. For the pessimist, the father created a child's paradise filled with music, games, and toys. For the optimist, the father set up a shed outside and filled it with manure, a pair of rubber boots, and a shovel.

A few hours went by and the father, pleased with his handiwork, went to check on his sons. He first looked in on the pessimist and was stunned to see the toys were untouched and his son crouched in a corner of the room looking around nervously; suspicious and angry.

The bemused father then went to the shed to find his other son whistling a cheery tune with a big smile on his face, happily shovelling manure. When the son glanced up

at his speechless father in the doorway, he shouted, 'Father, isn't it wonderful? With all this manure, there has to be a pony!'

My father told this story with a twinkle in his eye to explain his unwavering and often unwarranted optimism. For him, it was a victory of hope over cynicism and helped him explain that a positive attitude is the key to living meaningful, joyful, and peaceful lives.

His tale reminds me of the story of Pesach: the story of downtrodden slaves, denied their freedom, their dignity, and one would assume, even a smattering of hope for redemption. Their brutal existence is in the hands of a sadistic Pharaoh with no respite in sight. And yet, into this dark and horrendous circumstance comes tiny sparks of light: two midwives refuse to kill the babies they deliver, a baby boy is placed in a basket and rescued, Moses is chosen by G-d to redeem his people.

Rabbi Jonathan Saks, of blessed memory, said, "Pesach is the oldest and most transformative story of hope ever told. It tells of how an otherwise undistinguished group of slaves found their way to freedom from the greatest and longest-lived empire of their time, indeed of any time. It tells the revolutionary story of how the supreme Power intervened in history to liberate the supremely powerless. It is a story of the defeat of probability by the force of possibility. It defines what it is to be a Jew: a living symbol of hope."

When Pharaoh's hard heart cannot bear another hit and he finally lets the Hebrews go, they flee so quickly that they don't have time to let their bread rise. This matzah,

referred to as the 'bread of affliction' is actually the bread of hope; a symbol of the transition from slavery to freedom, from futility to faith.

For us today, experiencing another Pesach in the Pandemic, the annual reading of the miraculous story feels a little bittersweet. For those of us who have had our hearts broken this past year by loss, grief, loneliness, illness, isolation, financial devastation, hope is especially hard to come by, and who can blame us? And yet. Spring is coming, the vaccine is coming, respite is coming, if we can just hang on.

As we again Zoom our Seders and long for our friends and families, we see hope on the horizon – so close and yet still far away. We pray for this anxious and fearful time to be over (quietly, so we don't give it an *ahora*) and that our loved ones will stay safe just a little longer.

The story of Pesach tells us that even in desperate, dark circumstances that hope can lead to miracles, that courage is rewarded, and that faith can bring us freedom.

For those of us optimists who see the glass as half-full or the pessimists who see it as half-empty, maybe we are all missing the point: like the proverbial four cups at our Pesach Seders, glasses are refillable.

Chag Pesach Kasher V'Sameach.

Ilana Krygier Lapidès is an independent, non-denominational Rabbi and Jewish educator in Calgary, AB who focuses on crafting inclusive and creative Jewish learning opportunities and life-cycle events. She can be contacted at RockyMountainRabbi@gmail.com.





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Chag Sameach!

Happy Passover to all our donors, supporters and friends



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Calgary Chapter Chairman



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Wishing everyone a happy Passover!

McLeod Law is proud to support the Jewish Community of Calgary and we would like to wish everyone a healthy and joyful Passover.



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Reel Mensch Studio pivots creatively to meet new needs

By Jared Paull

Reel Mensch Studio celebrated our tenth year in business by involuntarily conducting an experiment: What would happen if we went a full year without being able to gather to film anything. Until the pandemic, we had made our living filming at businesses, weddings, sporting events and the likes. Having that portion of work swiftly taken away was scary. What we didn't anticipate last March was that the shutdown would introduce great opportunity to offer different services that wouldn't have otherwise happened. The Edmonton Jewish Community was integral to this adjustment, just as it had been in helping us get through our very first years in business.

Last March we quickly began to turn some of the community gatherings into virtual events. Along with the highly creative Jay Cairns, we created a very enjoyable JNF Edmonton Virtual Negev Gala. The forum allowed us to have even more fun with certain characters like honorees Jacob and Odette Masliyah, and also learn more about their history than we could have at a traditional dinner. This event set the framework for the rest of the year. We decided to use the medium of video and the covid restrictions to offer unique privileged experiences.

This was certainly the year of the live stream. Just within our community, we were proud to offer live streams for JNF, Yom Hashoah, Chabad Chanukah, TBO's high holidays, Aviv's Festival Hatzafon, Bar mitzvahs and weddings. We were proud to be involved with setting up Beth Shalom with their own internal streaming equipment in the sanctuary where my grandparents were married in 1950.

The shutdown also saw many people organizing their homes and many video tapes ended up at our Studio for digitization. So now many more families are enjoying scenes from a time when family could get together. Media digitization was a market I was very hesitant to enter, especially since our competition is Costco. My partner Mike Kravetsky was insistent we do, and without this market, the year would have been very difficult. We are now one of Western Canada's highest volume media digitization stores. We transfer everything from VHS and camcorder tapes, to 8mm silent film and photo slides so you can share them with family via email or memory stick. Many families told me they spent their holidays watching home movies on zoom together.

As we look forward to better times, and it feels as though they are coming, we are very grateful to the community



who has patronized and supported our biz especially this year, but for the entire decade. The support began for me personally when Deb Shatz (founder of this newspaper) gave me my first paid videography gig when I was 9 years old. The support from the Jewish institutions and individuals has been consistent since then, and is immensely appreciated.

Jared Paull is President and Head Producer at Reel Mensch Studio, reelmensch.com.

“I Believe” *Cont. from page 7*

David and then the entire train, broken and battered Jews on the way to their deaths, all singing Reb Azriel David's "Ani Ma'amin", his doleful yet inspirational song of the eternity of the Jewish people. Not one who arrived from the train at Treblinka survived. They died with the words of "Ani Ma'amin" on their lips. Reb Azriel David would not live to learn the prominence that his cantorial melody would attain.

"Ani Ma'amin" condensed to its essence is a song of affirmation and of promise, the affirmation of our faith at a time when everything appears lost and the promise that even from the depths of hopelessness a better future can arise.

Reb Azriel David's "Ani Ma'amin" would have vanished with the poor souls on the train if it was not for two young men who, one climbing upon the shoulders of the other,

found a crack in the roof of the cattle car which they enlarged and jumped from the top to the ground. One was killed in the fall but the other survived and escaped taking the words and music to "Ani Ma'amin" in his head with him. Upon hearing "Ani Ma'amin" sung to him, the Modzitzer Rebbe who had escaped Nazi occupied Europe to America, proclaimed; "When they sang Ani Ma'amin on the death train, the pillars of the world were shaking. The Almighty said, 'Whenever the Jews will sing Ani Ma'amin, I will remember the six million victims and have mercy on the rest of My People.'" The refrain spread all through world Jewry.

And so once again, as occurs every year, at twilight on April 7, the first evening of Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, as we mourn and shed tears for those who disappeared, the lingering melody of "Ani Ma'amin" will reverberate from the halls of synagogues on every continent all over the world.

We yet await the coming of the Moshiach but we are still here while Hitler's "thousand-year Reich" lasted but eleven years. We have survived and we have prospered. We have freedom and we have independence. Our ancestral and aboriginal home in the land of Israel that was taken from us some two thousand years ago has been returned. Those who have participated in a "March of the Living" perceive that the trip begins at the Auschwitz death camp and ends at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, a journey from chilling darkness into restorative light.

We the fortunate, the living, are obligated to the others. They died as Jews – we are charged to live as Jews. If not we will have survived the horror of the Holocaust only to wither in the affluence of North America.

"Ani Ma'amin – I Believe"

Joe Spier is a retired lawyer and sometime writer based in Calgary, with a keen interest in Jewish history.





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Mathewson Brothers fix AHS software bugs so vaccine sign up can proceed

By AJNews staff

Yasher Koach to Kory Mathewson (Edmonton Talmud Torah alum) and his brothers Kyle and Keyfer (also Talmud Torah alumni) for discovering a flaw with the Alberta Government's electronic form for 75-year-olds + to book vaccination appointments in Alberta – and for fixing it. And thank you for then making the fix available to everyone.

The AHS sign up system for COVID vaccinations for people born in 1946 or earlier, was released on Feb. 24. It immediately flooded and jammed and resulted in hours of frustration and stress for thousands of seniors and their family members who were trying to book appointments.

Luckily, one of the people attempting to sign up was Kyle Mathewson, trying to book the lifesaving vaccination for his grandparents. Kyle, who has a Ph.D in Cognitive Neuroscience recognized that there must be a problem with the AHS software and contacted his brother in Montreal – Kory Mathewson – who has a Ph.D. in Computing Science and his brother Keyfer Mathewson, who is a Software Engineer in Ottawa, and described the problem to them.

Kory, a research scientist with Deep Minds AI, said he looked at the form and the hair on the back of his neck stood up. He tweeted, "I think to myself, hmm I wonder which part of the tool is slow."

Alright, he said to himself, "let's try opening the form

and seeing if I can book this life saving vaccine for my nearly ancient grandparents. That would be good, right? Try to help them live as long and happy as possible?"

Kory found that a broken barker was the source of the problem.

He tweeted – "Well there seems to be a CSS class called .startHidden (much like the virus)...but I can find it and track it down, thank you to the fact that (when I was a kid) my grandparents bought me a computer and let me play videogames and use the internet."

Within minutes, the brothers determined the fix, tested it and were able to book their grandparents for a COVID vaccination.

That is amazing in itself, but the story gets better!

They then sent easy to follow directions out on twitter so that thousands of others could do the same, and like magic, people were able to book their appointments.

Kory received a flood of "likes" and thank you's from appreciative seniors and their families – many of them describing the frustration they had been feeling with the



Edmonton Talmud Torah and Camp BB-Riback alum Kory Mathewson with his grandparents.

AHS form and the relief they felt with being able to get an appointment for the vaccination.

"I feel uplifted by the whole Twitter community that was able to jump on board and make this happen," said Kory. "All the credit doesn't go to me; it goes to them and it goes to my older brother and my younger brother."

He tweeted, "Thank you to Kyle for raising the alarm on this one and to Keyfer for being the best developer, advocate and manager that I know. Now, get that vaccine gran and gramps and let's hug again."

Kol Hakavod to the Mathewson brothers and while we're grateful that the vaccine rollout is well underway in Alberta, let's hope that it goes a little more seamlessly for the rest of the age groups.

Coping with COVID

Cont. from page 4

beings and not human doings, despite the many jobs, tasks and chores we must do in order to live.

An important question we need to ask ourselves, says Donsky, is "How am I being while I'm doing my doing?"

There are ways of bringing being and doing into harmony, says Donsky. However, problems can arise when one over-dominates the other. The undulating symbol of the yin and yang underscores the importance of maintaining a balance between the two, he adds.

"This is an ongoing conversation ...I don't know anyone who doesn't want to improve the quality of their being, emotionally, mentally, spiritually."

Donsky suggests that we use the disruption created by the pandemic to re-evaluate our lives and zero in on what is valuable and important, what is working and what is not, thus taking "...an intra-psyche dive" into where we are at.

"Of course some people are having a hard time because if they don't have a healthy enough ego, if they don't have enough connections, if they're really isolated, depressed or addicted, then they've had another three straws that have broken their back."

Given the challenges of the pandemic, it important to monitor ourselves and our loved ones for warning signs that help is needed. These could include:

- Suicidal thoughts
- Significant changes in sleep and appetite
- Low energy
- Sustained feelings of emptiness, hopelessness and helplessness

- Irritability, confusion and anger (beyond one's typical baseline)
- Changes in function (neglecting self-care, absence of routine)
- Absence of desire to connect with family and friends
- Noticeable slide in the quality of work
- Repeated expressions of worry from loved ones
- Substance abuse

While some of us are getting by with a little help from our friends, others may benefit from the many mental health resources available in Alberta.

"I always recommend that people start with their family doc," says Donsky. "They know what's available locally."

In addition to seeking the guidance of mental health professionals, Donsky points out that spiritual advice and support is also beneficial.

"In both Edmonton and Calgary there is a tremendous range of spiritual guidance," Donsky says.

"A lot of what people are going through right now relates to deep existential questions, including the meaning of life and fundamental questions about identity."

"The good news is we are actually called creatures, which comes from the same root as creation, so we have the capacity to create ourselves again ...moving from order through chaos to reorder.

Donsky likens the experiences to walking from one room to another.

"We've got this mix of feelings, of leaving and arriving but being in neither place at the same time, and not being quite sure what is coming."

"Analyzing that experience is important," says Donsky, adding that the journey requires compassion. "Co means to be together. Passion's root is pathos, or suffering," adds Donsky, an avid student of etymology.

Thus, compassion literally means being with suffering. Why do that?

"Because it's here," says Donsky. "We must come together in our suffering. The question is, how do we do that in a life-affirming or healing way?"

Doing for others is a helpful path, Donsky says, because when we engage in tikkun olam – healing the world – we also heal ourselves.

As always, though, charity begins at home.

"Self-care is sometimes misperceived as selfish," Donsky adds, "but we need to put our oxygen masks on first to be of help to others."

Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News

Some Alberta mental health resources

In Emergency/life-threatening situations, call 911
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/amh.aspx>
Access Mental Health (Calgary): 403-944-1500
Canada Suicide Prevention Service: 1-833-456-4566 or text 45645
Distress Centre (Calgary): 403-266-HELP (4357)
Jewish Family Service Calgary:
<https://www.jfsc.org/> 403-287-3510
Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868
Wellness Together Canada: Mental Health and Substance Use Support: <https://ca.portal.gs>

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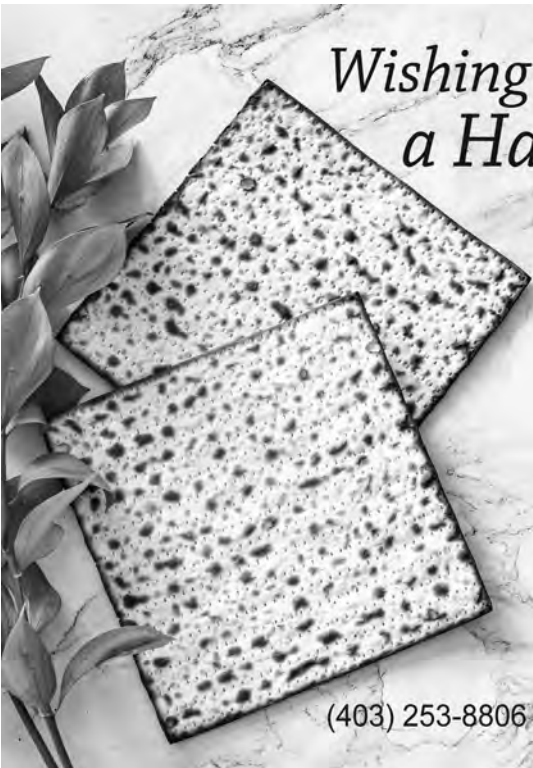
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Did Moshe have to pay tax to Pharoh?

By Michael Sadovnick

I was reviewing the story of Passover when I thought about a taxpayer who I spoke to a number of years ago, who lived in Canada for 170 days, another country for 170 days and travelled for 25 days a year. According to him, this means he is not resident of any country and does not have to pay taxes in Canada or the other country. He thought he was a genius (I disagreed). This story got me thinking that it may be fun to write about tax residency – so let’s apply the tests to our Passover hero Moshe who was born and raised in Egypt (he likely had citizenship as he was adopted by the daughter of the Pharaoh). Moshe fled Egypt in his youth, returning when he was around 80, only to come back and free a good chunk of the slave population. While he may have been banished for this, immigration rules and tax rules do not always match up.

Let’s also assume that Canadian tax rules apply to Egypt and the Sinai desert 2500 years ago.

The reason residency is so important for tax is because countries generally like to tax people on their worldwide income, regardless of where they earned the income. However, that privilege is only available to the country in which you are tax resident. The other country, gets to tax the income you earn in their country but not your worldwide income. (Of course the US is an exemption as they tax worldwide income of US persons, but I am pretty sure Moshe was not a US person).

To determine where Moshe has to pay tax, we first have to look at the domestic tax rules. We will assume that 2500 years ago the rules mirrored Canada’s current rules - but of course that may not be true.

We know that Moshe has been living in Sinai since he fled Egypt after killing a fellow Egyptian. Moshe left behind his sister (Miriam) and brother (Aaron). While he was gone though, he did marry Tzipora and had two sons. While living away from Egypt, one could argue that Moshe never really left Egypt (he never severed his ties), as he would return to free his relatives from slavery - although maybe this was not something he intended to do when he left, the fact he did return though would likely be an important factor to consider.

One way to be resident is to be “ordinarily resident” which CRA interprets as “the place where in the settled routine of [one’s] life [one] regularly, normally or customarily lives.” Given that Moshe was gone long enough from Egypt for them to forget that he killed an Egyptian and a new Pharaoh rose to power, this should indicate that Moshe was resident in Sinai. However, CRA also states that “ordinary residence can best be appreciated by considering its antithesis, occasional or casual or deviatory residence. The latter would seem clearly to be not only temporary in time and exceptional in circumstances, but also accompanied by a sense of transitoriness and of return.” [Common issue for students abroad]. Moshe’s time in Sinai was likely transitory for not just him but the entire world; he was really just on his way to Israel was he not? Maybe Egypt does have a case that he is still taxable in that country – after all he is a citizen and lives a temporary nomadic lifestyle in the desert.

Also working against Moshe is the fact that he probably maintains residential ties to Egypt given that his siblings are still there and of course he is the one who is going to deliver the slaves from Egypt. A downside of a tax audit is that the auditor often has the benefit of hindsight. But, then again, the fact that Moshe’s wife and kids are outside of Egypt probably counteracts this issue.

However, Moshe may actually want to argue he is taxable in Egypt as the clerics have been exempt from tax since the time of Joseph. OK – let’s say that it is not quite clear. He could be resident of either. The next test is normally where does he have a permanent home?

Well, he has a home in the Sinai, but does he not also have a home in Egypt (perhaps even a palace) or a place he can stay with his siblings? Likely the argument would point to Sinai based on the permanent home

test – but for fun let’s say it is inconclusive.

Next big test is generally where is the center of Moshe’s vital interests. In this test we look at his personal and economic ties. While his wife and children are in Sinai, he is also employed by G-d, to free his family and relatives from slavery and lead them to get the Torah and take them to Israel – was that job based in Egypt, Sinai or Israel? Maybe he only left Egypt temporarily because he was away for training for his job? Ok – let’s hope the third test helps.

Where are you a National? Wow – what a loaded a question for Jews. While Moshe is likely a national and citizen of Egypt, maybe his nationality is more tied to the Jews in slavery (who are in Egypt).

Final test? If agreement cannot be reached, then it is up to the two countries to mutually decide. In this case, after the plagues, I assume Pharaoh will abide by G-d’s decision, and I expect G-d will determine Moshe only has to pay taxes to the temple not a foreign power.







Seniors were delighted to receive decorated Purim gift bags from JFSC and Halpern Akiva Academy.

With that, I want to wish everyone a Happy Passover and a Chag Purim Sameach!

Michael Sadovnick CPA, CA, CPA(AZ), TEP, FEA is a Tax Partner at Sadovnick Morgan LLP serving BC and Alberta clients and can be reached at michael@smllp.ca

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Former Calgarian's Michelin Star shines brightly in Hong Kong

By Maxine Fischbein

Alas, there are no Michelin Star restaurants in Alberta. But we can kvell at the fact that former Calgarian Matt Abergel's restaurant, Yardbird Hong Kong, has garnered its first.

It came as a surprise to Abergel, who modestly says that the Yardbird Hong Kong team was just doing what they've always done when they got the unanticipated but happy news. It is a shot in the arm during a pandemic that has decimated many restaurants, leaving even highly successful ventures like Yardbird Hong Kong struggling to stay afloat in a sea of ever-changing public health restrictions.

No stranger to accolades, Abergel and his business partner, Lindsay Jang, formerly of Sherwood Park, Alberta, opened Yardbird Hong Kong nearly a decade ago. It is a foodie paradise where a Japanese favourite, chicken yakitori, reigns supreme. Abergel and Jang opened their second restaurant, Ronin – named for their son – eight years ago. Their own whiskey brand, Sundays, is named for their daughter.

While talk of Michelin Stars usually conjures visions of white tablecloths and multiple dollar signs, Yardbird Hong Kong is a casual, friendly Izakaya with a cool vibe that, prior to the pandemic, saw long lines of people waiting to be seated. Ronin – which, like Yardbird Hong Kong, has appeared on San Pellegrino's list of Asia's 50 Best Restaurants – specializes in seafood and whiskey.

How did a Jewish kid from Calgary with no formal training become a chef's chef in Hong Kong? That is a recipe with multiple ingredients. The chicken soup and crispy-skinned Cornish game hens lovingly cooked by his late grandmother, Bertha Gold, were early influences, says Abergel, as were family dinners over Chinese and Vietnamese food and episodes of the Iron Chef. On his paternal side, Abergel is the inheritor of culinary traditions from Morocco and Israel, where a grill's a thrill.

Abergel worked in restaurants as a teen in order to earn pocket money, says his mother, Bonny Gold-Babins, but she never imagined he would end up in the food industry.

"Matt is an amazing artist." Gold-Babins told *Alberta Jewish News*. "We encouraged him to study art."

That talent is apparent in many details at Yardbird Hong Kong, says Gold-Babins, adding that Abergel designed the tables and chairs that tie together the industrial décor of the restaurant.

Abergel – who attended The Calgary Jewish Academy and spent some summers at Camp Hatikvah and Camp BB Riback (the latter as staff) – credits his years of skateboarding as formative when it comes to his philosophy and management style. While working at The Source, a Calgary snowboard and skateboard shop, he learned that it was possible to run a business, while at the same time forming a community.

"It was a place where you could be yourself while sharing a common interest and sense of purpose," Abergel recalled.

The Source was where Abergel and Jang first met. While they are no longer romantically involved, they remain business partners and best friends as they continue to co-parent their growing children, Abergel said.

Following his graduation from Henry Wise Wood High School, Abergel traveled extensively in Japan and Korea. Later, he moved to Vancouver, where he cut his teeth working at Japanese restaurants.

Then it was onward to New York City where Jang was already living.

"That's where I found my master," says Abergel, who apprenticed with Masa (Masayoshi Takayama), an acclaimed Japanese Chef and restaurateur.

Twelve years ago, Abergel and Jang moved to Hong Kong where he worked in a corporate restaurant for a couple of years before he and Jang decided it was time to open a restaurant of their own. Yardbird Hong Kong was born with Abergel bringing his talents to the kitchen and Jang focusing hers on management.

Earning favourable buzz from the start, Yardbird Hong Kong received a major boost with an effusive 2019 review in the *New York Times* that referred to the restaurant as " ...one of the most popular and influential restaurants in Hong Kong." Abergel told *Alberta Jewish News* that the review was a "game changer" for his restaurant, distinguishing it from thousands of others in a culinary crossroads that knows from good food.

"Hong Kong is quite a revolving door of people," says Abergel. "There's all sorts of good stuff happening. It's a great city."

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in nearby Wuhan, China, and its subsequent spread, the restaurant industry suffered a downward spiral that began during what would have typically been a peak period in Hong Kong – the lunar New Year in 2020.

The pandemic hit while Abergel and Jang were looking



Chef Matt Abergel

forward to the opening of a third restaurant, this time in Los Angeles, for which they had already leased space.

It didn't come to pass, says Abergel, as they focused on "...trying to keep our current businesses alive and kicking."

"[COVID] almost destroyed us multiple times, but it's up and down," says Abergel. "Rolling open and close has been the hardest part."

For a while, Yardbird Hong Kong and Ronin were closed for in-person dining but open for takeout. Both restaurants recently re-opened for dinner after a hiatus of nearly two and a half months, while bars and nightclubs remain shuttered.

Despite the slings and arrows of public health measures and intermittent closures, Abergel expresses feelings of gratitude.

"We are lucky. We feel blessed for sure."

What does the future hold for Matt Abergel?

"It is a waste of energy to think of next," says Abergel. "We don't know where the world is going."

This June will mark the 10th anniversary of Yardbird Hong Kong and, according to the restaurant's website, there will be special collaborations and drops.

Ever humble in the face of his accomplishments (even Abergel's mother usually hears about her son's achievements second-hand), Abergel acknowledges that the Michelin Star is good for business; it puts Yardbird Hong Kong on the radar of a new demographic of diners that might not, otherwise, find their way to Wing Lok Street. This bodes well for a resurgence of business as the pandemic recedes.

Another thing Abergel looks forward to is some badly needed R & R. He'd like to return to Japan for a vacation and to Calgary to visit family.

Bonny Gold-Babins and her husband, Eric Babins, look forward to that visit, having missed their usual routine of frequent visits with their children and grandchildren in Calgary and in Hong Kong. At the moment, they are eagerly awaiting the return from Hong Kong of their daughter, Tara, and son-in-law, Tyler Huang-Bobrowski. The recently-wed couple met while Tara was working for her big brother, managing front of house and communications at Yardbird Hong Kong and Ronin.

Now that Albertans are getting COVID immunizations, those who have been craving travel – and have a yen for Yakitori – may soon be able to add Hong Kong and Yardbird Hong Kong to their itinerary.

If you plan to travel only as far as your kitchen, the next best thing is to check out Abergel's cookbook, *Chicken and Charcoal: Yakitori, Yardbird, Hong Kong*, winner of a 2019 James Beard Foundation Book Award. It may not contain the secret to Bubbie Bertha's Cornish game hens, but her legacy lives on in the culinary art of her grandson – Hong Kong's toast of the town – Chef Matt Abergel.

Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.



Chag Pesach Sameach

Once again this Passover is going to be different than all the rest.

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Eli Oliver Broyde

was born in Calgary on February 26, 2021 to parents Jackie Bass & Gregory Broyde - a brother for Benjamin.



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It's a girl!

Ellie Miriam Men was born in Calgary on February 12, 2021.

Parents are Danielle Broyde and Michael Men - a fabulous baby sister for Mikayla.

Delighted grandparents are Zhanna Alman and Alex Broyde and Ellen & Arkady Men

EJFF celebrates 25 years: May 2 - 11

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

Hey film lovers, it's that time again. You can start getting excited, and mark your calendars for May 2 - 11, because the Edmonton Jewish Film Festival is gearing up for its 25th anniversary – and the 2021 lineup promises to be a smash hit.

The films selected for this momentous year are as diverse as they are gripping; seven full-length features, four shorts, and two Earl Parker Award winning short-films. Festivalgoers will be able to take in this audio-visual voyage from the comfort of their own sofas and participate in virtual discussions – and all this, entirely free of charge!

Sam Koplowicz, the Festival's Chair explained that because of last year's free virtual delivery, attendees were not limited to Edmontonians.

"We had viewers from across Canada, the US, and some from Israel. We didn't anticipate another online year, but we have adapted," remarked Koplowicz. "I'm focused on the fact that we have seven really interesting full-length films, and some compelling shorts. We've achieved an amazing balance of narratives and documentaries."

"Last year, to ensure that the Festival happened we needed to make an eleventh-hour pivot," commented Susan Schiffman, the Director of Development at the Edmonton Jewish Federation.

"Many other festivals were forced to cancel in 2020, while we had our most well attended year to date," Schiffman attributes some of this success to last year's completely virtual festival format, which she believes, was



'Shared Legacies' will be one of the featured films.

able to engage wider demographic.

"Parents didn't need to schedule babysitters, they could pause the films if they needed to, while seniors who preferred not to drive downtown were able to attend from home. So, we had people participating who normally may not have. Not to mention that we provided all of this for free in order to uplift our community."

"The Landmark Cinema, the theatre we usually rent, seats 200 people, and with our virtual delivery last year we had something around 5,000 attendees," explained Koplowicz.

The Jewish Federation is committed to supporting those in need of positive experiences during this tumultuous time.

"People just need to register once," he noted, "and then they will be able to access all of the films we are featuring, each during a designated ten-hour window. We will host, what we are calling, Virtual Lobby sessions so that after the film they can still chat about their impressions, just as we would have if we were at the Downtown theatre."

Schiffman explained that even in isolation people will still be able to experience the robustness of the Edmonton Jewish Film Festival – just with some small adaptations. "It is our 25th anniversary, so it is disappointing to have some very obvious limitations, but with the success of last year, we are anticipating some record-breaking attendance."

"We are so lucky, because we have an extremely enthusiastic community," said Koplowicz with pride. "The Edmonton Jewish Film Festival is the second most attended community event of the year (after Heritage Festival)."

The Federation will be approaching other community-based groups that may share interest in some of the themes dealt with in this year's lineup.

"The film we will be showing on the first night of the Festival is called *Shared Legacies: The African-American Jewish Civil Rights Alliance*," continued Schiffman. "When we were previewing films, everyone was especially enthusiastic about this one."

Koplowicz added that: "Some of us are old enough to remember the Civil Rights Movement, and seeing what an impact American Jews had on supporting these efforts was truly inspiring – this film is a timely addition to this year's Festival."



Festival Chair Sam Koplowicz

The Federation hopes that their efforts will allow community members to feel a sense of togetherness through a shared, enriching online experience. Schiffman believes that even when it is possible to organize an in-person festival again, that they may still choose to schedule some virtual content.

"People have asked me if we might consider a hybrid delivery in the future."

Those who wish to offer their sponsorship to the Edmonton Jewish Film Festival are still encouraged to contribute if possible. "We hope to cover the costs of delivery, but we are also collecting for the Federation's COVID Resiliency and Recovery Program." The Program would support those from the community adversely impacted by the pandemic and suffering financial strain. This year's milestone Edmonton Jewish Film Festival may be free, but those who would like to give, are invited to contact Susan Schiffman at susans@edjfed.org.

To register to watch the Festival, visit JewishEdmonton.org.

Alberta Jewish News extends a hearty mazel tov to the Edmonton Jewish Film Festival on 25 amazing years, and many more to come. Stay tuned for more updates and announcements from the Festival's team of dedicated organizers.

Regan Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative reporter for Alberta Jewish News.



Wishing the
members of the
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Sources

Who turned out the lights?

by Eliezer Segal

When interpreting the many wonders related in the Bible, classical Jewish commentators can often be divided into two opposing schools. At one extreme stand those who wish to enhance the supernatural dimensions in order to magnify the power of a deity who transcends the limitations of nature. Ranged against them are those who insist that our knowledge of G-d is rooted principally in the recognition that his universe is governed by eternally unchanging laws of nature and rationality; and hence any suspension of those laws would weaken the theological foundations of religious belief.

It is to the latter group that I wish to direct my attention in this article. Over the centuries many distinguished Jewish exegetes and thinkers tried to understand the ten Egyptian plagues in ways that did not demand naive credulity or denials of observable experience. This was particularly difficult to do in the case of the ninth plague, that of darkness, concerning which the Torah states that it was tangible (according to the standard translations), that it lasted three days and that it affected only the Egyptians but not the Hebrews. The Torah also states, “neither rose any [Egyptian] from his place for three days,” implying that it somehow prevented the victims from moving. All this is very hard to explain in terms of any normal optical or meteorological process.

Perhaps the earliest formulation of a scientific approach to the question was that of the philosopher Philo Judaeus of Alexandria. He ascribed the plague to a combination of known scientific phenomena: a total solar eclipse that completely blocked out the sunlight, and extremely thick clouds.

Rabbi Moses Nahmanides would later stress that this darkness was not merely an absence of light such as we normally experience at nighttime, but a supernaturally palpable mist that descended from the heavens. Rabbi Obadiah Sforno would develop this idea, insisting on a fundamental difference between normal night air that is capable of absorbing sunlight at daybreak, and the darkness of the ninth plague that consisted of a dense substance whose texture is entirely impermeable to light. Abravanel explained that the Egyptian darkness consisted of the same dense hot winds that had blown away the

locusts of the previous plague and now continued to hover over Egypt in the form of thick impenetrable clouds that blocked out sunlight. In a somewhat similar vein Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks preferred to ascribe the darkness to one of those seasonal sandstorms that blow into Egypt from the Sahara blocking out light and air for several days.

As regards the Torah’s statement that the Egyptians were unable to stand up during the three days of the plague, a well-known midrashic tradition understood this to mean that they were encased in a cement-like substance that physically prevented them from moving their bodies. Gersonides and Don Isaac Abravanel imagined it as a kind of toxic smog.

Several interpreters argued that the Egyptians’ inability to move during the plague was really a psychological symptom of their plight. Thus, Josephus Flavius wrote that the extreme density of the air caused people to perish not only due to respiratory difficulties, but also because they were shocked into immobility by terror at their predicament. This was also the view of the Apocryphal work “Wisdom of Solomon.” Abravanel illustrated this thesis by providing a thorough diagnosis of personalities who are overcome by a hysterical blindness after being traumatized repeatedly by intense suffering. This, he proposed, is what happened to the Egyptians on a mass scale.

Many commentators posed the question: why didn’t the Egyptians just turn on the lights, or at least light lamps or torches in order to overcome the darkness? Josephus suggested that this option was not really available to them, either because the darkness was so thick as to overcome any puny man-made illumination, or because it was accompanied by a violent storm whose winds extinguished flame. Nahmanides compared the phenomenon to the way a fire subsides at the bottom of a deep pit or in “mountains of darkness.” (He did not relate this process to the presence or absence of oxygen, nor did he suggest that the Egyptians had difficulty breathing during the plague.)

The fact that the Israelites were immune to the darkness and “had light in their dwellings” would also appear to be inconsistent with any naturalistic reading of

the story. Nevertheless, some interpreters, like Abravanel, took it to mean that the darkness did not extend to the territory of Goshen where the Jews had their residence. Philo, on the other hand, suggested that this detail might reflect a fundamental difference in moral psychology between crude heathens and enlightened monotheists. The former are stricken helpless when deprived of their faculty of physical sight, whereas the latter continue to maintain their moral compass as “beams of virtue” give continual direction to the “eyes of the soul.”

Deflecting the question of how the plague’s three-day duration could be measured if there were no intervals of light to differentiate between the days, Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra wrote that he personally had experienced such prolonged periods of utter blackness - up to five days - during his oceanic travels. Presumably he was describing dense maritime fog. Ibn Ezra travelled widely during his itinerant career, including some stopovers in northern France and perhaps England, so his mention of the “ocean” might literally allude to the Atlantic.


Some traditional commentators took a similar approach of locating the darkness not in the atmosphere or geography of Egypt, but in the physiology of the Egyptians’ eyes. Thus, Rabbi Jacob Meklenburg in his *Ha-Ketav ve-h-Kabbalah* dismissed all the ingenious theories involving miraculous mists, uninterrupted nights or extinguished lamps; arguing instead that the Egyptians were afflicted with a kind of cataracts that grew as an opaque membrane that covered their eyes and filtered out light.

The last word has not been said on the question, and perhaps the lively discussion at your Passover seder will provide an opportunity to shed new light on this venerable puzzle.

Eliezer Segal is a Local Journalism Initiative reporter for Alberta Jewish News.

‘From the Sources’ by Eliezer Segal is sponsored by the Zeisler Families of Edmonton, Calgary and New York City

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Saturday, March 13, 2021 – 10:00 AM - Calgary JCC Auditorium

It is our privilege to announce the resumption of in-person Shabbat morning services, with thanks to the Calgary Jewish Community Centre. Services will take place in the JCC Auditorium.

Advance registration for each week’s Shabbat service is now required, in order to track participants and adhere to legislation regarding attendance limits.

For information or to register, email info@kscalgary.org

Wishing the whole Community a Happy and Healthy Passover



ALBERTA

Jewish News

Next print date is


April 22, 2021

Next Deadline:

April 19, 2021

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In new Passover children's book, a lion reads the Haggadah

By Penny Schwartz

BOSTON (JTA) — On the eve of Passover during the Depression, a juggler in ragged clothes is invited into the home of a poor family that has a bare Seder table. It's a poignant scene in "The Passover Guest," the captivating debut picture book by author Susan Kusel, a longtime Judaica librarian who was inspired by a classic Yiddish tale, "The Magician," by I.L. Peretz.

By lovely coincidence, readers have that rare opportunity to enjoy another retelling of the beloved story in a new publication of "The Magician's Visit," adapted by Barbara Diamond Goldin, with new illustrations by Eva Sanchez Gomez. The original 1993 edition was among the earliest books by Goldin, now one of the country's most acclaimed writers of Jewish children's books.

A different Seder table takes center stage in "The Four Questions," where a bespectacled lion reads from a Haggadah at a lavish ceremonial meal with guests that include a zebra, a young monkey and other whimsical animals. The gloriously illustrated book is a new edition of the 1989 classic by the late artist Ori Sherman with text by the acclaimed novelist and poet Lynne Sharon Schwartz.

These are some of the standouts in this spring's crop of engaging new children's books for Passover, the eight-day Festival of Freedom that begins this year on the evening of March 27.

Other titles feature lighthearted humorous stories and a lively interactive family Hagaddah with tips for this COVID-19 era, when many Seder guests may be joining remotely.

"Baby Moses in a Basket"
By Caryn Yacowitz; illustrated by Julie Downing
Candlewick; ages 3 to 7

In simple rhyming verse, Yacowitz reimagines the biblical story of baby Moses as his mother sets him adrift in a basket on the Nile to save him from harm from the Egyptian Pharaoh. The river's creatures protect baby Moses until he is discovered by Pharaoh's daughter. Downing's beautifully colored double-page illustrations of a wide-winged ibis, a hippo, crocodile and an escort of butterflies bring the story to life.

"Meet the Matzah: A Passover Story"
By Alan Silberberg
Viking; ages 3 to 5

In this playful and zany story, the award-winning cartoonist Silberberg sets the humorous action in an imaginary classroom where the "students" are types of breads. Alfie Koman, a shy matzah, tries to retell the story of Passover, but the school sourdough, Loaf, takes over and stirs trouble. Alfie must decide whether to leave his hiding place to confront the mean-spirited Loaf. Expect lots of laughs from Loaf's made-up version of the Ten Plagues (among them no WiFi and broccoli for dessert).

"The Great Passover Escape"
Pamela Moritz; illustrated by Florence Weiser
By Kar-Ben; ages 4-9

It's the eve of Passover at the Biblical Zoo in Jerusalem, and Elle the elephant and Kang the kangaroo are eager to find a way to escape and find a Seder. Their friend Chimp answers their Passover questions and joins the adventure. Will the trio get past the locked zoo gate and find a ritual meal? Pamela Moritz's humor-filled story is embellished with Florence Weiser's brightly colored illustrations.

"Matzah Craze"
Jamie Kiffel-Alchek; illustrated by Lauren Gallegos
Kar-Ben; ages 4-9

At Noa's multicultural school, the kids like to swap what's in their lunch boxes. But during Passover, when Noa has an unusual looking cracker – her matzah – she explains to her friends that she can't swap. In Kiffel-Alchek's delightful rhyming story, the spunky Noa, with copper-toned skin and frizzy red hair, figures out how to share her favorite ways to eat matzah.

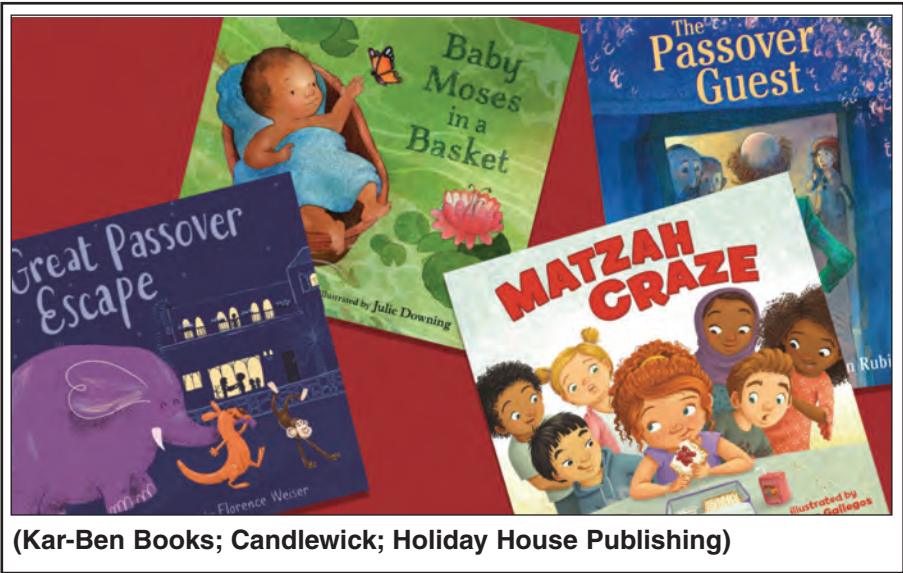
"The Passover Guest"
By Susan Kusel; illustrated by Sean Rubin
Neal Porter Books/Holiday House; ages 4 to 8

Set in Washington, D.C., in 1933, during the Depression, Kusel's warmhearted story takes its inspiration from Uri Shulevitz's version of Peretz's Yiddish tale "The Magician," which she loved as a child. On the eve of Passover, a young girl named Muriel wanders around her favorite sites in the nation's capital. She's in no hurry to go home because her family does not have enough money for a Seder.

At the Lincoln Memorial, Muriel is enchanted by a juggling magician dressed in rags. When the stranger turns up at her family's door and is invited in for Passover, their bare table miraculously fills with an abundance of food for the Seder. Could the mysterious guest have been Elijah? Sean Rubin's vibrant, expressive illustrations pay tribute to Marc Chagall, Rubin writes in an artist's note.

"The Magician's Visit"
Based on a story by I.L. Peretz; adapted by Barbara Diamond Goldin; illustrations by Eva Sanchez Gomez
Green Bean Books; ages 4-8

In this masterful retelling of Peretz's Yiddish tale, Goldin takes readers back to an old world shtetl. In the days before Passover, a stranger dressed in rags mesmerizes the villagers with his spellbinding magic. When he turns up at the door of a couple who have become



too poor to make their own Seder, the magician produces a wondrous and full table. May they partake in this Seder? the couple asks. And who is the stranger, who has disappeared when they return. Gomez's colorful illustrations capture the era and the magic of the story.

"Moses Could Have Been Selfish"
By MJ Wexler
MJ Wexler Books; ages 3 to 7

In this simply told rhyming story, Wexler retells the story of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt in an accessible style for young kids, emphasizing standing up against injustice. Questions at the end encourage discussion.

"The Four Questions"
Illustrated by Ori Sherman;
text by Lynne Sharon Schwartz
By Levine Querido; ages 8 and up

In this exquisite pairing of text and art, Sherman and Schwartz captivate readers – kids and adults – with the Four Questions traditionally recited by the youngest child at the beginning of the Seder. The lavishly illustrated book is a new printing of the original first published in 1989.

Like the Seder itself, the book has the air of mystery and intrigue. Schwartz answers the Four Questions with a lyrical narrative of the Passover story and its rituals. Sherman fills the bordered pages with gloriously colored illustrations of whimsical elephants, monkeys, fish, goats and birds. Turn the book upside down for a view of the Four Questions written in Hebrew calligraphy and other illustrations.

A back page note by Ori Z. Soltes, a scholar of Jewish art, explains that Sherman's dazzling art carries forth traditions from hieroglyphics to illuminated Jewish manuscripts and the centuries-old painted murals of Eastern Europe's wooden synagogues.

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from Jackie & David
Busbeikin and family




Best wishes to our friends
& family for a happy and
healthy Passover
from Lorie Abernathy
& Gie Roberts




Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love & good health
from Karen & Brian
Abrams and family



Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love
& good health from
Linda & John Barron & family




Best wishes to my family &
friends for a happy, healthy
Passover from
Annie Brodsky and family




Best wishes to our family
& friends for a happy
and healthy Passover from
Marni Besser & Steve Lipton


Wishing everyone
a Passover
filled with love
& good health
from Judy & Lionel




Best wishes to everyone for a
healthy and happy Passover
from Alexandra &
Harvey Cyngiser and family



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friends for a happy and healthy
Passover from
Jeanette & Rudy Berger




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& family for a
happy and healthy Passover
from
Val & Lou Bracey and family




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& friends for a happy
and healthy Passover
from Renée & Milt Bogosh

Best wishes to our family &
friends for a happy and
healthy Passover from
Faye & Warren Book & family




Best wishes to my friends & family
for a happy and healthy Passover
from Sheila Bermack & family




Best wishes to our family
& friends for a happy
and healthy Passover
from Shirley & Al Chafetz

Best wishes to our family & friends
for a happy, healthy Passover
from the Carson Family

Best wishes to everyone for a
healthy and happy Passover
from Bronia & Sid Cyngiser




Best wishes to our family
& friends for a happy,
healthy Passover
from Lauren & Sam Bell



Best wishes to our friends & family
for a happy and healthy Passover

from
Kim, Alex, Adam
&
Zach Chulsky



Pesach Sameach
from Robbie Babins-Wagner,
Neil Wagner and family


חג פסח שמח

Wishing everyone
a Passover filled with
love & good health
from
Marnie, Darren,
Jonah and
Chloe Bondar



Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love
and good health

from
Jenny Belzberg
and family



Passover Greetings

from
the Cohos,
Carson & Bouma
family



Wishing everyone a Pesach Sameach
filled with love and good health




from the
Balaban
family

פסח שמח!

Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love
& good health

from
Alvin Libin, Bobby Libin
and family






Wishing the entire community
a healthy & happy Passover
from
Phyllis D'Aguiar

Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love & good health
from Michele Doctoroff,
Ted and Sydney Switzer


**Best wishes to our friends
& family for a happy and healthy
Passover**




from
**Steve, Tracey
and
Oscar Eichler**

Best wishes to our family & friends
for a happy and healthy Passover
from Steve, Ben, Sophie and Rhonda Kaganov

Wishing everyone a Passover filled
with love & good health
from **Lea Kohn**






Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love & good health
from Susan & David Inhaber
and family

Pesach Sameach
from Cheryl, Jason, Jacob
and Gabrielle Gurevitch

חג פסח שמח


Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love and good health

from
Louise Kirshner



Pesach Sameach
from Maxine & Milt Fischbein
and family

חג פסח חם



Best wishes to our family &
friends for a happy and healthy
Passover from Therese & Charles
Groner and family


Wishing everyone
a Passover filled with love
and good health




from
**Gail & Mel
Ksienski &
family**

Pesach Sameach
from Dr. Caron & Rabbi Mark Glickman

חג פסח שמח





Best wishes to our friends
& family for a happy
and healthy Passover
from Faith & Jerry Dubisky



Wishing the
entire community a
healthy & happy Passover
from
**Janis & Brian Kowell
and family**

Wishing everyone
a Passover filled with love
and good health
from Sandra Fayerman







Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love
& good health from
Jackie Halpern & Glenn Solomon

Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love and good health

from
**Louise Glin
and family**






Wishing everyone a
Passover filled with love
& good health
from
**Arlein Hoffman Chetner
& family**




**Wishing a happy, healthy Passover
to the entire community**

**From all of us at Alberta Jewish News:
Deb Shatz, Dan Moser,
Sandy Fayerman and Maxine Fischbein**




Wishing everyone
a Passover
filled with love
and good health
from
**Ruth Dvorkin, Susan Dvorkin,
Dara, Spencer and Josh**




Best wishes to our family & friends
for a happy and healthy Passover
from Helen, Jeff, Emma, Jacob,
Hannah and Juan Faber

Best wishes to our family & friends
for a happy and healthy Passover
from Halley & Bruce
Girwitz and family




We want to wish everyone
a Happy, Healthy
& Prosperous Passover
Be Well, from Sam, Cindy,
Rebekah & Josh Feldman

חג פסח שמח



Wishing everyone
a
Happy Passover!
from
Eva & Gordy Hoffman

Wishing everyone a Passover
filled with love & good health
from
**Cantor Russel G. Jayne
and
Mr. Russ Janiger**



Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from the Krygier Lapides Family



Pesach Sameach from Diana Kalef, Elliott, Jonah and Micah Steinberg
חג פסח שמח

Pesach Sameach from Helena Barker & Israel Lachovsky
חג פסח שמח

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health
from
Miriam Milavsky and family



Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from
Roslyn Mendelson & David Hodgins



Best wishes to my family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from
Frances Pearlman



Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from
Ron Plucer & family



Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Irene & Dr. Stuart Ross and family



Pesach Sameach from Darlene Switzer Foster, Bill Foster and family
פסח כשר ושמח



Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Barb and Ron Krell and family



Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy, healthy Passover from Sandra & Harold Lipton and family



Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Walter Moscovitz



פסח כשר ושמח
Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Therese Nagler and family



Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health from
Roz & Danny Oppenheim

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Al Osten



Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Cynthia & David Prasow and family



Pesach Sameach from Beth & Lorne Price and family
חג פסח שמח

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy, healthy Passover from
Carol Ryder



Happy Passover to everyone!
from Medina Shatz, Randy Best and Scout

Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from
Phil & Harriet Libin, Michael & Matthew Ackman, Stuart, Sierra & Thea Libin



Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from
Marily Libin & Jed Gaines and family



Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from Charlene & Gerry Molotsky and family



Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Cheryl, Rob, Danielle, and Jarret Milner

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health from Michele Moss & Allan Donsky and family



Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from
Raechelle, Lorne, Shoshana & Leo Paperny



Pesach Sameach from Marina Paperny & Shep Sector
חג פסח שמח

Best wishes to our family & friends for a Happy, Healthy Passover from
the Plucer Families



Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Betty Sherwood & Jim Casquenette

Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from Cheryl & Morley Shore & family

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Carole Stoffman & family

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health from Hilda & Lennie Smith & family

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Evelyn Sheftel-Shapiro and family

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health from Deborah & Adam, Hannah, Lilah, and Benji Silver

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy, healthy Passover from Helmi & Ron Switzer & Family

Best wishes to my friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from Minnie Zuckier

Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from the Zivot Family

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health from Esther & Gary Silberg

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Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy, healthy Passover from Marg Semel, Adam Singer, Rachel and Hanna

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Linda & Gary Wolf

Pesach Sameach from Mary & Ken Taub and family

Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from Wynne & Harvey Thal

Pesach Sameach from Judy Shapiro & Richard Bronstein and family

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Dalia, Allan, Tammy and Mark Wolinsky

ПОРЯДОК СЕЙДЕРА

קדש

КАДДЕШ

Произносит Кидауш над бокалом вина.

ורחץ

УРХАЦ

Омывают руки, но не произносят при этом обычного при омовении рук благословения.

כרפס

КАРПАС

Обмакивают «карпас» в соленую воду, произносят благословение над овощами и кушают.

יחץ

ЯХАЦ

Среднюю мацу, из трех находящихся на «кеаре», делят на две части; большую часть прячут для «Афикоман».

מגיד

МАГГИД

Начинается чтение Агады. До того, как младший в семье задаст вопросы «Ма ништа-на» наполняют второй бокал.

רחצה

РАХЦА

Омывают руки для еды, но на этот раз с обычным благословением.

מוציא מצה

МОЦИ, МАЦА

Произносят благословения «Хамоши» и «Ал ахилас мацо», и кушают кусок мацы, величиной с «казант».

מרור

МАРОР

Произносят благословение «Ал ахилас морор» и съедают горькую зелень, величиной с «казант», предварительно обмакнув в «хазерет».

כורס

КОРЕХ

Делают своеобразный сэндвич из двух кусков мацы, прокладывая между ними «хазерет»

שלחן עורר

ШУЛХАН ОРЕХ

Праздничная трапеза.

ברך

БЕРАХ

Наполняют третий бокал вина и произносят застольную молитву.

צפון

ЦАФУН

Съедают «Афикоман», величиной с «казант».

הלל

ХАЛЛЕЛ

Наполняют четвертый бокал вина и произносят специальную хвалебную молитву «Халле́л».

נרצה

НИРЦА

После окончания правильно проведенного Сейдера можно быть уверенным, что он был любим Всевышним





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Happy Passover
to the entire Jewish
community of Calgary



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