



# ALBERTA Jewish NEWS

Publication Mail Agreement Number: 40050628

Volume 32, No. 5

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May 19, 2021

## B'nai Brith Calgary presents Dr. Allan Donsky: June 6

By Jeremy Appel

Tikkun Olam – repairing the world – is one of the core values of Judaism. The work needed to heal the world must include at its foundation, the work to heal ourselves, says Calgary Psychiatrist and Mindfulness Teacher, Dr. Allan Donsky.

This statement is the starting point for a very special zoom webinar presentation by Dr. Donsky, on Sunday June 6, 2021 as part of the Calgary B'nai Brith Speaker Series. The theme of the presentation is “Tikkun Olam: Healing yourself as essential for healing the world.”

The topic is particularly relevant in these times of turmoil, including the necessity of navigating the global pandemic, the climate crisis, and fears for our economic future. Our own mental, spiritual and physical health is paramount in the work of Tikkun Olam.

“As a therapist, a lot of the work I do is to guide people to healing themselves,” Donsky, who’s been a therapist for 26 years, told AJNews.

“People often feel fractured or disconnected from themselves, or they don’t feel integrated in some way, and this can present in various ways. It can present as depression or anxiety. Trauma can do this to people. It can present in the form of secondary problems, like addictions and eating disorders.”

The words ‘heal,’ ‘healthy’ and ‘wholeness’ come from the same root word, he added, underscoring how the concepts are connected.

“When we heal ourselves, we will automatically have healthier, more nourishing connections to the world out there, and those connections can be with partners, our families, our kids, our communities and the world at large,” says Donsky.

“Healing yourself is not selfish, or self-indulgent, or arrogant. It’s essential.”

Within each individual is an “inner garden waiting to blossom” that needs to be taken care of by uprooting its weeds, rocks and clay, so it can flourish, he says.

“Tikkun Olam is about development. It’s not about chasing away evils. It’s not about trying to fix every

## Innovative Grade 6 Novel Study at CJA



Grade six classes at the Calgary Jewish Academy participated in an interactive and integrative novel study program that explored Holocaust themes using both Hebrew and English language skills.

problem. It’s about healing (and) integration, both inwardly and outwardly.”

He says there’s a major spiritual component to emotional and mental health, which is not necessarily religious, although it can be.

His presentation will incorporate kabbalistic concepts of healing, Donsky says, but he has also studied various other faiths to inform his spiritual practice.

“I have faith in the human capacity to transcend our baser behaviour and activities. We can transcend the immediate and become creatures of the material plane,” he said. “There’s no mental health without spiritual health.”

Lodge member Irena Karshenbaum, who’s co-chairing the event with Joel Zimmerman, says the event was originally supposed to occur in-person last year, but it had to be postponed due to COVID. They decided it would make the most sense to do it online this year.

She said that Dr. Donsky’s message is very inspiring and thought provoking and that she hopes this event will get more people involved with the Calgary lodge.

“Dr. Donsky is a very talented therapist and I think he

has a wonderful message and a lot to offer our community,” she said. “We have so many talented people in our community, and we need to be promoting our own talent, and giving voice to the special things they’re doing.”

B’nai Brith Calgary Chapter 816 President Darren Bondar is encouraging the whole community to participate in this virtual event. “Dr. Allan Donsky is a compelling speaker and he has insightful information about Tikkun Olam and our health as individuals and as a community to share with us,” stated Bondar. “With the postponement of our annual dinner, which is our key fundraiser and with the needs of the organizations that we support as great as ever during this Covid-19 pandemic, we greatly appreciate your generosity and support.”

The event is happening on Sunday, June 6 at 10 a.m. To register visit [bnaibrithcalgary.org](http://bnaibrithcalgary.org).

Admission is by donation which can be made before or after you register at [bnaibrithcalgary.org/donation](http://bnaibrithcalgary.org/donation). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

## Camp Gan Izzy is ready for Summer 2021 – in Calgary and in Edmonton

By Rochel Matusof

As the summer season is fast approaching, some families find themselves thinking about what form of entertainment and fun they are going to need to organize for their children. Do we send our children to a camp according to their ever-changing interests? Do we send them to a program able to stimulate their learning while not being physically in the classroom? All these thoughts can be answered with Camp Gan Israel – both in Calgary and in Edmonton.

Camp Gan Israel is ready to be your summer camp of choice for 2021. The camp is a leader in providing the most exhilarating, educationally stimulating, safe, activity driven, and caring camp experience for ALL children. Camp Gan Israel is a truly exciting program instilling Jewish values that live in your children’s

memories for many years to come. With six weeks full of fun both indoors and outdoors, you are ensured that sending a child to Camp Gan Israel is setting your child up for a summer of success.

This is a camp like no other - providing all snacks, all lunches, and so much more at NO additional cost! There is no longer a concern about scrambling in the morning in preparation for the day. Camp Gan Israel has you covered, not only providing an incredible experience for the children but also a very warm and welcoming atmosphere for parents and families.

The Covid Pandemic has left families not knowing what might be when summer arrives, and ultimately what that will look like for your family. Camp Gan Israel is dedicated to allowing you the option to plan - with affordable rates as well as a refundable policy (due to Covid-19). In addition, the Chabad Campus has made it our number one priority to ensure your children are



Camp Gan Izzy is held in both Calgary and Edmonton.

having a safe summer, in following Covid-19 protocols while simultaneously, providing our campers with tons

*Continued on page 16*



# The spiritual journey of Cantor Russell Jayne

By Maxine Fischbein

“I don’t understand how my goyishe Anglican boy-friend became my Jewish Chazzan husband,” Russell Janiger used to say.

Cantor Russell Jayne, spiritual leader at Calgary Beth Tzedec Congregation, addressed his husband’s bewilderment during recent talks about his path to Judaism.

Born and raised as a Roman Catholic in Boonton, New Jersey, Russell Jayne made a spiritual journey that took him through Anglicanism to Judaism, transforming the former altar boy into an engaged Jew, a talented and skilled Cantor, and a soon-to-be Rabbi.

Having recently celebrated his 19th anniversary as a member of the tribe, Cantor Jayne describes his long and winding road as a “marvellous journey.” His story – which he shared during online talks for Beth Tzedec congregants and Limmud Winnipeg participants – inspires those who were born Jewish and those who have chosen Judaism.

“In 21st century North America, we are all Jews by choice, because every morning we have to wake up and make a definite choice to say I am going to live my Jewish identity,” Cantor Jayne told his Limmud audience in March.

Russell Jayne was born and raised in a town of about 7,000. It was a place where everyone knew each other, not unlike the tightly-knit Calgary Jewish community he now serves.

While his father was nominally Anglican, Jayne’s mother and grandmother were devout Roman Catholics, steeped in Slovakian tradition.

“They made religion beautiful for me,” recalled Cantor Jayne, who reminisced about the beautiful rituals in his family’s home, especially around the major holidays. “Church was just something we did. It was never questioned. Sunday morning you just got up and you went to church.”

“For me, that was probably one of the most beautiful and meaningful experiences in terms of shaping my early life... Ritualism spoke very, very deeply to me,” Cantor Jayne said.

It was inevitable that Russell Jayne would become an altar boy. “The priests would always request my presence when it was time for a specific service... because I really was exacting in my ritual and I knew everything like the

back of my hand,” said Jayne.

While his peers focused on sports, Russell Jayne was on speed dial at the parish.

“I think one of the reasons that I was originally drawn to the cantorate is because of that love of ritual. The chazzan, the cantor, is the keeper of the traditions of our people and I really see it as a natural extension of my life as an altar boy... Now, as a Jew, I get to learn and experience and understand all of the beautiful ritual foundation that we have, and I get to teach it to the next generation.”

Cantor Jayne noted that people are often uncomfortable with ritual because they don’t understand it. Yet ritual, when properly explained, can help people become more connected to their Judaism.

Russell Jayne remained a devout Catholic until he went to university. His discovery that he was gay would, however, soon lead to profound changes.

“I could only come out if I could justify it with my faith at that time,” recalled Jayne, who worked hard to reconcile his spiritual life with his desire to live proudly and openly as a gay man.

“I just couldn’t give up my faith because of the foundation that my mother and grandmother laid out for me. They made faith such a beautiful and integral part of my life that for me to come out of the closet necessitated that I should be able to be a person of faith and still be able to express who I was as a homosexual.”

Delighted when he had worked things out for himself, Jayne went to speak with the priest at his home parish. What ensued was an “extraordinarily disappointing conversation.”

“It didn’t mean I wasn’t going to be a person of faith anymore, but what it meant was that I could no longer be Roman Catholic,” Cantor Jayne recalled.

After some exploration and study, Jayne was received into the Anglican Church when he was 21. He jumped in with two feet, joining the choir and the altar guild. “Anglicanism was something that really helped and sustained me,” said Jayne, relieved that he didn’t have to give up mainly familiar rituals and tenets.

After graduating from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, where he earned Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Pharmacy degrees, Jayne met his future husband, Russell Janiger, who was Jewish but only marginally engaged.

Janiger had attended Hebrew school but “remembered nothing.” Although his family celebrated Passover and the High Holidays, the ritual that most stood out for him was the annual argument with his mother about whether he had to take time off from work on both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

“That bothered me,” recalled Cantor Jayne, who said he was frustrated and sad that his boyfriend related to his own religion “at arm’s length.”

Russell Jayne decided he would learn about Judaism and teach his soon-to-be fiancé about his heritage while, at the same time, exploring the roots of his own Christianity.



Russell Jayne is the cantor and spiritual leader at Beth Tzedec Congregation in Calgary.

Jayne encouraged Janiger to affix a mezuzah to his front door. He studied the Haggadah with him so as to make Passover more meaningful and suggested that they buy and light a menorah on Chanukah. “He humored me,” said Jayne, who began to suspect that he was gaining more from the effort than his fiancé was.

As Jayne continued to explore Judaism, he found that it was affecting his practice of Anglicanism. “I began to become very critical of the Christian interpretation, especially of the Jewish bible,” said Jayne.

He was going to church and singing in the choir but, more and more, Russell Jayne was discovering that he had a problem with Christian theology.

Ironically, Jayne found himself back in a closet, of sorts. He kept his struggle from Janiger, fearful that the pull he felt toward Judaism might negatively impact their relationship. Jayne continued to delve into Jewish ritual while leading a Christian life. Russell Janiger sometimes accompanied him to church, much to the consternation of his mother.

One December night, everything changed for Russell Jayne. Returning with Janiger after an evening on Broadway, he remembered they hadn’t yet lit the Menorah. “You light the menorah,” said his Jewish partner. “I’m going to bed.”

Jayne lit the menorah and began to wonder whether he had encouraged the ritual for his fiancé or for himself. He pondered whether he was truly Christian anymore. Suspecting that he had moved on, Jayne began to “edit” from his personal theology all the aspects of Christianity that no longer worked for him. A friend told him that what was left looked a whole lot more like Judaism.

After some more thought, Jayne realized he had been drawn to Jewish ritual for his own sake more than his

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# A true caring leader: JNF Edmonton honours Gayle Tallman

By AJNews staff

Community members from Alberta and Coast to Coast are sending in donations as a tribute to Edmonton Negev Gala honouree Gayle Tallman.

They are also submitting heartfelt testimonials about the incredible impact that Gayle had on their lives from when they were in a BBYO program, at Camp BB, in the Edmonton JCC or on a March of the Living trip.

The material is being compiled to help paint a picture of the amazing legacy that Gayle has left on a generation of Jewish community leaders. It will form part of the virtual tribute that will be celebrated on June 22 in Gayle's honour.

While honouring a special member of Jewish community, JNF Edmonton is also raising money to build the Gayle Tallman "Ninja Fitness" Park, a uniquely designed outdoor fitness & training park at Kibbutz Sde Nehemia situated in the Jewish Edmonton Partnership Region in Israel's Northern periphery.

Visit [jnfedmonton.ca](http://jnfedmonton.ca) to register for the Negev Gala and donate to the Gayle Tallman Ninja Fitness Park.

Meanwhile, heartwarming testimonials are being submitted.

Lorne Klemensberg wrote, "There are not many special

people that one meets in life who have a true heart of gold. A person who truly cares to their core and has immense compassion and devotion to education, leadership, and community. There are even fewer people in the world that have all of these amazing attributes (and many more) wrapped up in a crazy, no holds barred body! Shalom Gayle Tallman...JNF Negev Gala 2021 Honouree!

Lorne explained that his relationship with Gayle started when he was a surly teen in Edmonton and evolved into a professional relationship after his army and college training when with Gayle's (very) strong recommendation he became the Israeli tour guide for the MOL Canadian trips.

"This was the start of our professional relationship, and we ended up working together for many years. Her single act of kindness and solidarity set me on my professional path and lifelong connection to the Canadian Jewish Community in Israel," wrote Lorne.

"Gayle taught us a great many important life lessons. Through her actions, words, commitment, and tireless work for her community, she has shown us what it means to be a true caring leader (she also taught us how to swear like sailors).

"Thank you Gayle! You most certainly deserve this honour, and many more."

Gillian Horwitz wrote that Gayle's "quiet unassuming



personality is in effect one of her greatest strengths; she has the ability to inspire young and old, see their potential and involve them in programs and projects that reflected their specific interests. Her years as a community leader produced innovative programming with a specific focus on Holocaust education.

"This important program thrived under her guidance; she formed and created a program that became the envy of all those who worked in this vital area. Gayle involved practically every high school in the greater Edmonton area. She inspired students and teachers alike. The Edmonton Holocaust Symposium attracted thousands of students whose first introduction to The Holocaust, was

Continued on page 13

# Suitcases of Hope for CJA's Sixth Grade Sojourners

By Orit Baruch

Grade six classes at the Calgary Jewish Academy participated in a multi-faceted novel study, exploring stories of the Holocaust using Hebrew language

skills as well as English ones. Their process was integrative, interactive, and deeply moving for students and teachers alike.

In Mrs. Morgan's English Language Arts class, students each chose a novel with a Holocaust theme for an independent study. They read their individual stories, delving into thematic content and writing letters. Next, they brought the letters to Mrs. Baruch's Hebrew class, and switched languages to further unpack themes and draft translations.

Afterwards, students came together to read *Hana's Suitcase*. The story is about a group of Japanese children and a museum director in Tokyo who explore the mysterious circumstances surrounding a Jewish child named Hana Brady, who died in the Holocaust. As students read, Hana's history emerged more clearly from clues left behind in her suitcase. Her face came into focus and students recognized her as a unique individual among the six million murdered. Studying specific Holocaust stories in this way is important because it reminds us that each human who died was cherished by family, had dreams for their future, and danced in entire universes, just like each of us.



way this anchored her language and novel study. In her words, "Seeing a child's suitcase just made what we were learning more real and powerful."

Afterwards, students made their own suitcase boxes, and filled them with items that represented poignant memories. Each box was filled with family photos, handwritten cards and notes from loved ones, and symbolic items. As a scientific community, we know that connecting emotion (personal memories and feelings) and cognition (new concepts and learning) helps the brain with focus, attention, engagement and long-term retention of material. By connecting their own past with the greater arc of history, students also bolstered their ability to draw parallels between themselves and the world at large.

Next, students drew a scene from the novel that they found particularly moving, and wrote a letter to Hana –the main character—in Hebrew. This was important because forming bonds with fictional characters is an important empathy-building exercise. Connecting with characters helps readers develop deeper understanding and compassion through the skill of perspective taking.

In addition, students participated in a program called *Memories in a Box*, also provided by the Holocaust Education and Human Rights Department of the Calgary Jewish Federation. The interactive virtual program is designed to introduce Calgary's youth to stories of children their age who experienced the Holocaust. Participants follow the lives and experiences of four separate children, by examining the contents of a virtual suitcase. The items found within tell the stories of children whose Holocaust experiences are as varied as their fates.

To culminate this multi-layered project, students will meet via Zoom with Hana's niece Lara Brady. Lara is an activist and educator who tells Hana's story to young people around the world. Together with her father, who escaped the Holocaust by fleeing from Czechoslovakia to Canada, Lara has helped Hana's story become a bestselling children's book, a film, a children's play, a radio documentary and a CBC television feature. Meeting with Lara after reading the novel will be an incredible project capstone, and provide students with a place to unpack their remaining questions and reflections.

Ms. Orit Baruch teaches Judaic Studies at the CJA.

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# Camp BB-Riback will not be operating as a camp this summer

By AJN Staff

It is with great heart break that Camp BB-Riback Executive Director Stacy Shaikin has announced that Camp, in its traditional state, will not be operating this summer.

The circumstances involving Covid-19, including the extreme negative trend in the spread of the virus in Alberta, has led Camp leadership to this difficult decision, explained Shaikin.

“The Board and I do not feel that it is safe or manageable to plan for having 300 people on camp this summer, even if things start to improve.

“While we remain hopeful that circumstances will get better in the coming months, we are getting very close to the summer and the financial implications of preparing for a full opening, with little to no revenue expected, would be catastrophic.”

Shaikin has spent every free moment over the last several months trying to find a way to operate camp safely this summer. He’s been told by the Alberta Camping Association that Camp BB-Riback is the most prepared camp in Alberta in terms of addressing the challenges presented by Covid-19 “but unfortunately, even with all the plans we have in place, we are restricted from opening right now and feel that this is the right decision to make for this summer.”

In a letter to parents dated May 6, Shaikin described the next steps moving forward. “If you have already paid fees for this summer (Credit 2020 included), you may request a full refund or donate all or some of your fees,” he wrote. “If you choose to donate any or all of your fees, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation will match the donation one-for-one to help the camp through this incredibly difficult time.”

With all of that said, Shaikin and the Camp Board are still hopeful that Camp will be able to operate in some capacity. They are preparing for two possible options.

Option 1: This plan includes a four-week leadership training and staff engagement program for a limited number of campers, as well as family rentals, on the following schedule:

July 4 to 13: Camp available for family camp bookings. The hope assuming there are no delays in project completion, is that the Ropes, The Pool and The Boat will be running.

July 15 to August 15: Leadership Training and Staff Engagement Program

This program would be offered to campers currently in grades 7 through 11.

Preferred registration will be given to campers and staff who are currently registered or hired for the 2021 summer.

Fees and details will be provided shortly.

August 17 to 22: Camp available for family camp bookings. The hope assuming there are no delays in project completion, is that the Ropes, The Pool and The Boat will be running.

Shaikin and the Camp Board are holding this plan until May 31, 2021. If the circumstances in Alberta haven’t changed sufficiently by that time, they will have to cancel this plan and go forward with Option 2.

Option 2: Family camp rentals available from July 4 to August 22.

“We are still working on the details of each of these options and will communicate those details to you as decisions are made,” noted Shaikin.

“As I said, we plan to make our next big decision at the end of this month.

“I am devastated for everyone impacted by these decisions and had truly hoped it wouldn’t come to this. There would be no greater pleasure than to give you all a proper summer at camp, and we can’t wait until we are able to do so safely.

“Until then, we will do whatever we can to operate camp in some capacity this summer. I have been working tirelessly to find ways to get as many of you out to camp this summer as I can, and I won’t stop until I am out of time.”

Shaikin also reached out to his recently hired staff. With a heavy heart he informed them of the Camp Board’s decision and described how they will be impacted.

All Junior Counselors will be furloughed. An opportunity for a leadership and staff training session is developed and ready to unroll for mid-July. The cost and arrangements will be announced in the coming days.

Internationals hired as counselors, Horse-back riding, Arts and Crafts or Dish-pit will not be kept on either. The ropes team is also cut in half.

Senior Counselors will be given preferred opportunity for the Leadership and staff training program as counselors and specialists and for possible volunteer

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opportunities if that conference is not possible.

Specialists’ positions in sports, performing art/film, mindfulness, waterfront and the pool are still being held; the decisions will be made closer to June on how to proceed.

“It’s a horrible feeling giving camp staff members this news,” stated Shaikin, “but I’m sure it’s not as awful as learning that for the second time in a row you’re being robbed of the joy we share together every July and August.”

“I really hope many of you will apply to come back next summer,” wrote Shaikin. “I hired you because I believe all of you would makeup a terrific staff. There is so much talent and it’s a shame you aren’t getting the opportunity to practice your chops this summer. You are the next leaders of camp and our community, and you have a lot to share with both entities. Please stay safe, stay in touch and give everyone in your families my best. As always, I am around to talk, just drop me an email or a text.”

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Calgary B'nai Brith Speaker Series  
Sunday, June 6th, 2021 at 10am – 11:30am

Tikkun Olam: Healing yourself as essential for healing the world

Dr. Allan Donsky, MB ChB, FRCPC Psychiatry, FRCPC Pediatrics  
Psychiatrist & Mindfulness Teacher University of Calgary

Dr. Allan Donsky will discuss how the injunction to heal the world must include, at its foundation, the work to heal ourselves. This talk includes Mussar and Kabbalistic perspectives.

Event Co-Chairs: Irena Karshenbaum & Joel Zimmerman  
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Maya Adina Sniderman,  
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Faren, Ari, Noam,  
and Maya



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# JFED: Planning for the future

By Doug Wolch and Stacey Leavitt-Wright

Once upon a time, over one hundred years ago, a small Jewish community was established deep within the Prairies. They built all that was needed to ensure lifecycle needs were taken care of. Over time, more people arrived, more needs were established, and this community grew.

Edmonton – we are that community. With the recent census we will be finding out just how large this community has grown to become. What the census does not tell us is where we are headed and what is at the top of your mind! It is time for us to look ahead, to determine what our priorities should be as we emerge from this pandemic with a new CEO in place. The Jewish Federation Board has struck a Strategic Planning committee this winter and while we have been laying the groundwork, it is now time for us to hear from you.

To date, we have commissioned a consultant, Linda

# Antisemitism reported in YEG

By AJNews Staff

Violence has been escalating between Israel and Hamas since May 10 with thousands of rockets fired from Gaza into Israel and targeted air strikes into Gaza from Israel. Civil unrest is also evident on the streets of Israel in once peaceful communities where Arabs and Jews live side by side.

Tensions are also rising around the world on social media and at rallies, in solidarity with both sides. In Edmonton, a peaceful Palestinian Solidarity car rally was held on May 15 but on May 16 several young men were seen driving a vehicle in West Edmonton neighbourhoods shouting ‘Free Palestine’ and then yelling ‘Are there any Jews here?’

Community member Adam Zepp told media that he was walking down his parents’ driveway Sunday night at around 9 p.m. when a car drove by. Several young men inside yelled: ‘Free Palestine,’ he said. The car then looped around the cul de sac and when they drove by the second time, they yelled out ‘Are there any Jews here? Any Jews live here? Where do the Jews live?’

Zepp said that his mother, whose parents were Holocaust survivors yelled back ‘No’ and the car drove away. “I was dumbstruck to hear something like that in Edmonton in 2021. It was shocking to me and saddening,” he said.

Zepp doesn’t know if they were just making noise or if they were looking to do something more nefarious. But he seriously thinks that people should calm down and take a breath before spreading hate on the streets or on social media. “We should be able to disagree without spreading hatred,” he said.

“Canada is a multi-cultural society. There are going to be diverse people, diverse religions, diverse opinions, and I think that’s great. But when you have this type of rhetoric that just targets hate towards a particular group, that’s not OK.”

Zepp says that he did not tell the men that he was Jewish but he can’t help but wonder what might have happened if he had. How sad is it that in 2021, a grandson of Holocaust survivors has to hide his Judaism in Edmonton.

In choosing not to engage, Zepp did the right thing, according to the Jewish Federation of Edmonton. He reported the incident to Federation, and he called the police.

On May 17, Jewish Federation CEO Stacey Leavitt-Wright and President Steve Shafir issued a Security Alert to the community, stating, “On the evening of May 16 there were some incidents in the west end involving a vehicle driving through the neighborhood ‘seeking Jews,’ confronting people and making threats.

“Edmonton Police Service and RCMP have been informed and are investigating. We are working with the EPS and they have confirmed that there will be increased police presence in the area to continue to ensure our security and safety. Additionally, the Jewish Federation has commissioned further security to patrol the area.

“Incidents like this are occurring in many Canadian cities. We take this matter very seriously and are appreciative of the swift response of our law enforcement partners.”

Continued on page 10

Kislowicz, former CEO of JFC -UIA to guide us through this process. Linda has held interviews and a few focus groups with the board and community leaders. We will be hosting two more focus groups in June with newcomers (who moved here within the last 3 years) and young adults from 22-30 years old. If you are interested in joining one (for which you will be receiving a thank you of a \$10 Starbucks gift card) email us at [info@edjfed.org](mailto:info@edjfed.org) or visit our website [www.jewishedmonton.org](http://www.jewishedmonton.org).


A broad reaching survey will be sent shortly. While originally intended for a launch on May 19, this has been delayed by the crisis in Israel. Watch your email inbox and our facebook and Instagram for the link. Please share widely! An added bonus is the draw for a \$50 Amazon or \$50 Starbucks gift card! Help us spread the word.

What will we do with all this data? Once combined and analyzed, the Board and Strategic Planning committee will have a retreat this Fall where priorities are determined and a report will be presented at the next Annual General Meeting in December.

While the past year has proven to be challenging, this pandemic has given us time to think about what truly matters to us as individuals. Now, it is time to consider what matters as a community and chart a path forward, beyachad, together.


*Doug Wolch is the Strategic Planning Chair for the Jewish Federation of Edmonton and Stacey Leavitt Wright is CEO.*

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STRATEGIC PLANNING ROAD MAP



The Jewish Federation of Edmonton is embarking on a strategic planning process to develop our priorities for the next 3-5 years. We need your input in order to ensure that we are aware, informed and responsive. Watch for the survey coming this spring. **Heed the call! We want to hear what is important to you!**




WE ARE HERE




INFORM

INFORMING THE COMMUNITY OF THE PROCESS




ENGAGE

INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUPS AND A SURVEY TO ENSURE BROAD INPUT AND REPRESENTATION FROM ACROSS THE COMMUNITY




REPORT

GENERATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE COMMUNITY AT THE AGM IN DECEMBER




ANALYZE

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA TO DETERMINE KEY THEMES ALIGNED WITH THE FEDERATION MISSION, VISION AND VALUES



STRATEGIC PLANNING









community calendar

Want to know what's going on in Jewish Calgary?  
Check out the Community Calendar at [jewishcalgary.org](http://jewishcalgary.org)

Have an event?  
Click on "Suggest an Event" to add it to the calendar



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A MESSAGE FROM BETH PRICE AND KATHIE WAINER

Anyone who reads these messages has heard of PJ Library® in Calgary, but perhaps not everyone understands why Calgary Jewish Federation places such value on this program, which empowers families to engage with Jewish life. PJ Library (as in “pajamas”) was established in 2005 by Harold Grinspoon, a prominent US Jewish philanthropist, to instill Jewish values, traditions, and culture in young children by creating Jewish moments and memories through the simple act of reading bedtime stories (hence the name).

We were privileged to launch PJ Library in Calgary in 2009 with a modest goal of reaching 120 children. PJ Library books are always free to families with children from birth to eight years old, offering them a barrier-free entry into our community. Matching grants from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, with support from local donors and UJA, cover our expenses. Demand for this gift of Jewish books was overwhelming and within a short time, our waiting list grew to over 200 children.

When a very committed local donor heard that Calgary children had to wait to receive these books simply because funding was not available, he provided the necessary funds and promised that there would never be a waiting list for PJ Library in Calgary. We are grateful that our devoted and generous Calgary donors have kept

this promise and, unlike many communities, our families never have to wait to receive PJ Library books.

PJ Library is flourishing in Calgary. In addition to receiving monthly books, families enjoy a weekly PJ Tot Shabbat program, our popular PJ Chag Sameach holiday programs, a PJ Grandparents program, and in 2021 we joined PJ Our Way (PJOW), the next step in PJ Library for children 8½ to 12 years old.

With PJOW, children take ownership of their reading by choosing their own books every month. Age appropriate and often child-driven programming provides this underserved demographic with the opportunity to connect with peers locally and nationally. We see PJOW as an invaluable tool in engaging pre-teens in their formative years – a first step to becoming active participants in Jewish Calgary.

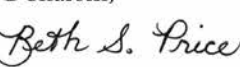
This year – our 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary – 550 Calgary children are receiving the gift of PJ Library books every month, and 120 children receive PJOW books.


Calgary Jewish Federation prioritizes community outreach, inclusivity, diversity, affiliation, and engagement of families. For some families, PJ Library is an enhancement of their Jewish experience, while for others PJ Library is the sole provider of the Jewish experience, their only point of contact with our Jewish community. We have

seen families enter our community through PJ Library and go on to participate in other aspects of Jewish communal life from joining the JCC to enrolling in one of our Jewish preschools.

As we celebrate 12 years of PJ library in Calgary, we are excited to announce that the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, in partnership with Calgary Jewish Federation, has launched the PJ Library® Legacy Fund ensuring that Calgary families will have the gift of PJ Library books for generations to come. The Harold Grinspoon Foundation is offering matching funds for cash legacy gifts for the next two years, with no minimum amount to participate (see ad below for additional information).

Please consider making a gift so that our children's children will always have the great experience and joy of reading a PJ Library book.

B'Shalom,  
  
Beth Price  
Founding Chair  
PJ Library Calgary

  
Kathie Wainer  
PJ Library Manager  
Calgary Jewish Federation



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



invites you to join us  
for our community-wide

# SHAKSHUKA SUNDAY

Sunday, June 13 | 10AM | Zoom

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We invite all Calgary families to enjoy an Israeli-inspired breakfast of your own creation.

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REGISTER at [jewishcalgary.org](http://jewishcalgary.org) for the recipe, Israeli breakfast ideas, and Zoom link.

For info contact Kathie: [kwainer@jewishcalgary.org](mailto:kwainer@jewishcalgary.org) or 403-537-8592.





## Judaism has a deep and rich tradition of storytelling, of passing down stories from one generation to the next.

PJ Library® Calgary has become an integral part of Jewish Calgary, delivering books and programs to children from birth to age 12, making it easy for families to share Jewish values and traditions with their children and grandchildren.

### How will you ensure our Jewish story continues in Calgary?

Calgary Jewish Federation has launched the PJ Library® Legacy Fund in partnership with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) ensuring families will have the gift of books for generations to come.

For the next 2 years, HGF is offering a 25% match for cash legacy gifts to support PJ Library Calgary in perpetuity. There is no minimum amount to participate.

For more information, please contact:

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## NICE JEWISH PETS

### Calendar



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Is your fur baby especially photogenic? JAC (Jewish Adult Calgary) is looking for animals of all kinds for our upcoming calendar campaign. Apply by **Monday, June 7** at [jewishcalgary.org](http://jewishcalgary.org) and show the world what makes your pet so special. Winners and their paw-rents will be notified by June 14 to schedule their professional photoshoot. Advertising and sponsorship opportunities also available.



## Home and Garden Feature

### It’s time to work on self-care

By Jenna Davis, RSW

Self-care is a term that has become part of our vocabulary these days, particularly through the challenging past fifteen months. When thinking of self-care, my mind used to resort to bubble baths, candles and a good book. I have since realized the depths of what self-care means, and how important it is to our well-being.

Self-care for you, me, and for others can look vastly different. As a social worker on the JFSC Senior’s Mental Health and Addiction Response Team, I work with clients to identify and implement self-care tactics for their individual circumstances. I have learned how important this is for all of us to be able to face our struggles and live our best lives.

During this isolating and lengthy global pandemic, the majority of my clients have faced numerous stressors and challenges that have been initiated and/or heightened across multiple aspects of their lives - emotional, mental, physical, financial and others.

I ask them ‘How have you handled your stress to this point? What keeps you going?’ Clients are often not able to readily answer these questions, but from what I can see, many times it is their resilience, strength, and perseverance that helps them cope with difficult life circumstances. Some clients require support in identifying, exploring and/or implementing self-care strategies into their lives, others are often already enacting their own

practices that they may not recognize because these tactics do not fit their own definitions of typical “self-care”. The conversations surrounding self-care can differ greatly when working with my senior clients. One individual ensures they have access to a family doctor, are going to appointments and have built natural and professional support networks. Self-care for another client is in the act of challenging a fellow resident to a walker race with what they call their ‘new 2021 set of wheels’, determined to cross the finish line first. Another client sees self-care as using their new specialized safety equipment to engage in regular showers to ensure good hygiene. I have a client that now has access to healthy and nutritious food and is working to achieve a healthy body weight to fit back into the clothing that reminds them of a positive time in their life. Self-care for others can be making the difficult decision to seek shelter and safety to flee an abusive situation at home.

What can you do to work on your own personal self-care? Through my pro-fessional experiences, I have come to recognize that there is always room to choose and implement self-care, even through challenging circumstances. I believe the term “self-care” is fluid, attainable, and promotes well-being.

I encourage you to reflect on what you are currently doing for yourself, and the little things that make you feel happy, relaxed, grateful, fulfilled. We often undermine what we are already doing because we do not consider them as typical self-care practices. Perhaps there are more ways you could be introducing practices into your life that you never considered to be categorized as self-care. We are often more resilient and possess more strength that we realize.



Some self-care strategies include:

- Practice gratitude - express your gratitude to yourself, write it down, thank someone in your life
- Incorporate mindfulness – take time to be fully present, be aware of where you are, what you are feeling.
- Slow down and look at the small things
- Don’t sweat the small stuff

Although self-care is vital in promoting well-being, the reality is it does not create a destructible barrier for mental, emotional, physical and financial struggles. What self-care practices can do, is provide a way to help us cope with our struggles and they can help guide us to take the necessary steps to admit the need for external support if we need it.

I feel privileged to have the opportunity to support my clients in identifying their unique strengths as a form of empowerment and recognition, and collaboratively utilizing them in promoting well-being.

Jenna Davis is a member of the JFSC Seniors Mental Health and Addictions Response Team. For information visit [jfsc.org](http://jfsc.org).

### Cantor Russell Jayne

Cont. from page 2

partner’s. One night, unable to sleep, he made a 3 am decision that would alter the former altar boy.

When he softly expressed aloud his intention to convert, a strange thing happened. The stained glass image of a cross that hung in his living room window – next to Janiger’s stained glass chai – fell to the floor.

“I am not a superstitious man but sometimes the universe does, I think, send a very clear message when you make the right decision,” said Cantor Jayne. “And I do like to think that at that moment, I made the right decision.”

The next morning, when Jayne told his fiancé what had transpired, he nearly had to pick him up off the floor.

Jayne studied toward his conversion for nine months, guided by Reform Rabbi Melinda Pankin, who helped him to find his place on the Jewish spectrum. It is a good thing she insisted on having both Reform and Conservative Rabbis as part of the Beit Din that participated in his conversion, because Jayne found his spiritual home in Conservative Judaism.

After he converted in the spring of 2002, Jayne found a friend and mentor in Rabbi Ruth Gais, also a Reform Rabbi, who encouraged him to study Judaism further and

to learn the nusach – distinctive melodies for each of the prayer services – so that he could lead their small, independent congregation, Chavurat Lamdeinu, in prayer. “She saw my passion,” recalled Jayne, adding that Rabbi Gais urged him to consider the cantorate.

Although he saw himself as a Conservative Jew, the movement’s Jewish Theo-logical Seminary (JTS) wasn’t yet accepting openly gay students. Jayne therefor applied to the Reform-affiliated Hebrew Union College. Rejected there, he was later told by a selection committee member that he had been deemed “too pious.”

Unwilling to return to the closet, Jayne honed his davening and nusach skills and patiently waited for the inevitable. In 2008, JTS passed a resolution allowing openly gay Jewish men and women to enroll. He spent five years at the H. L. Miller Cantorial School and Jewish Music College, one of them in Israel and four at the JTS Campus on Manhattan’s Upper West Side.

Following his graduation and ordination in 2013, Cantor Russell Jayne discovered that while the seminary had become more progressive, many congregations had not. Some openly expressed a preference for male cantors who had wives and not husbands. Some more liberal-leaning congregations already had male Rabbis but, in the interest of diversity, wanted to hire female Cantors.

After filling some interim positions, Cantor Jayne was hired by Calgary’s Beth Tzedec Congregation in 2014. He had been told by friends that he would never find a job in Canada where Conservative Judaism was more traditional than in the United States.

“I didn’t realize that, really, what they were talking about was Eastern

Canada, and that Western Canada is truly a very, very different atmosphere,” said Jayne. “Here in the wild west we do seem to have just a slightly more liberal, progressive viewpoint.”

Cantor Jayne characterizes Beth Tzedec congregation as “...loving, nurturing, warm and supportive.”

While leading the congregation as Kol Bo – an increasingly popular position that combines cantorial and rabbinical responsibilities – Cantor Jayne has been studying online toward rabbinical ordination through the Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary. He anticipates achieving Smicha by the end of this calendar year.

“I’ve come a long way from the altar boy in New Jersey, but yet in some ways I really haven’t. I’ve really just deepened the foundation that my mother and my grandmother gave me,” said Cantor Jayne.

In recognition of their profound influence on his life, the Cantor honoured his late mother and grandmother by taking Hebrew names based on their monikers. Thus he became Yochanan Yosef, for his mother, Anna, and his grandmother, Josephine.

While the matriarchs in his life had passed away before he embarked on his Jewish Odyssey, Cantor Jayne credits them for the religious affinities that led him to Judaism. He continues to feel supported by his father – whose name is also Russell.

The Cantor’s mother-in-law – who had initially worried that Russell Jayne was going to turn her son into a Christian – didn’t kvell at Jayne’s conversion to Judaism because he was now too religious.

“It was all about choice,” Cantor Jayne says.

“I still wake up every day and choose to be Jewish, but it’s one of the best choices I ever made in my life.”

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

### Antisemitism Cont. from page 7

Police Chief Dale McFee stated that EPS has called on its Hate Crimes and Violent Extremism Unit to investigate after “two homes were approached, and anti-Semitic rhetoric was used.”

“At this time, it is unknown if these incidents are related to the rallies for Palestine that occurred around Edmonton this weekend,” he added.

“The EPS denounces any and all acts of hate; incidents such as these have no place in our city, and we do not tolerate acts of intimidation or violence. We understand these acts create feelings of fear within our communities, and as an organization, we are committed to keeping people safe, and fostering a sense of safety for all Edmontonians.”

Leavitt-Wright and Shafir said they “appreciate the restraint our community has shown over the past week. We urge you not to engage should you encounter any similar situations.

“In the event of an emergency or if you are witnessing suspicious activity, please call 911. For all non-emergency reporting please email our Director of Security, Tal Toubiana, at [talt@edjfed.org](mailto:talt@edjfed.org).”

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Home and Garden Feature

Has the Pandemic affected real estate in Calgary?

By Gizella Davis

Having been in real estate as long as I have, you would think I had seen it all, the mass exodus in the early 80's had me shovelling snow from 40+ abandoned listings; the 90's brought the World Wide Web and a revolutionary way of marketing and looking for properties. I remember riding the boom of the oil patch in the early 2000's with competing offers thousands over list price and then surviving the bust less than a decade later. It has been a tumultuous ride providing me with many tools and the experience to handle anything, however I was thrown for a loop when Covid-19 took hold.

In early 2020 we were hit with news that it would not be business as usual for the foreseeable future, no more open houses, visits were limited to 3 adults including the agent, all parties had to answer health questionnaires and masks and sanitizer were mandatory. These changes led to Realtors® having to quickly move to embrace technology, changing the way we market a home and how we help our buyers find one. Many of us invested in 3D virtual tours, crash courses in Social Media Marketing, previewed homes for our clients while on Facetime with them and moved to conducting our meetings and negotiations via Zoom.

"Necessity is the mother of invention," and one especially fun and innovative tool we came up with was to invite our colleagues to participate in online virtual tour scavenger hunts. We could no longer host our renowned catered lunch tours so instead we enticed Realtors® to

virtually tour the house while asking them to answer a few questions based on items in the photos and be entered to win a gift certificate. We got rave reviews for this idea and many have implemented their own version in efforts to provide greater exposure for their client.

Calgary is seeing an incredible rebound, sales volume is up, sale prices are up and there is a sense of positivity that I haven't felt for a few years now, a feeling of optimism for when we do come out on the other side and the economy reopens. So far 2021 has surpassed all expectations for the resale market in Calgary and in the surrounding communities. We saw record high sales in April; while I can't say the exact cause, it is likely fueled by potential buyers looking to get into the market while taking advantage of record low interest rates and trying to avoid the new stress test coming in June. With inventory staying low it is definitely a sellers' market at the moment.

As a buyer it still is a great time to consider making that move you've been thinking about but be prepared to decide quickly. Find yourself a trusted Realtor® to have in your corner that knows the market you are looking at and is experienced in negotiations, make sure you are pre-approved for your mortgage, read over a blank offer document so you know what to expect and have your questions answered before you go looking. We are seeing many homes selling the day they hit the market and more and more are getting offers over list price or without conditions. While we don't recommend this, be prepared that it may be necessary to get the house you want.



Realtor Gizella Davis and Desmond can be reached at 403-680-9093.

While all good things do eventually come to an end, I'm not sure that will be anytime soon. I remain thankful that I am still able to be busy as a beaver and well enough to keep serving my clients, come what may. If you have any questions about the market, the house down the street or my puppy Desmond I would be thrilled to chat with you anytime and my cell phone is always on 403-680-9093.

The Social Distancing of Grief

By Susan Dvorkin and Harold Lipton

It is almost inconceivable to imagine that we are in the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic. The virus that most assumed would be a serious but short-term medical issue has evolved into a life changing pandemic that has had a profound impact on many, too often in cruel and unthinkable ways. We have all been made to adjust and adapt our personal lives. Many businesses have been lost while others have been forced to pivot in order to remain open.

Many of us have not been able to visit with family and friends, nor gather to celebrate Yom Tovim. Some have lost loved ones and have not been able to mourn in our traditional Jewish ways that help the grieving process. Restrictions on funerals, sitting shiva or saying Kaddish in shul with others have all added to feelings of isolation for mourners.

At the Calgary Chevra Kadisha, we have always been aware of our vital role to the Calgary Jewish community in its time of need and we take pride in the service we provide. At the onset of the pandemic when restrictions were implemented, we adopted various new protocols to protect the safety of our volunteers and mourning families. In addition, we strive to be current with government and AHS restrictions and guidelines as we realize that we must all do what we can to preserve the safety of the community.

The challenge is ongoing at the Chevra Kadisha to continue to provide service while keeping attendees safe at funerals and unveilings. The emergence of new variants of the COVID virus that are more contagious and dangerous compounds the risk. So we remain in compliance with AHS regulations to restrict attendance at funerals and unveilings. We recognize how difficult it must

be for a bereaved family to pick and choose who can attend their loved one's funeral. Nonetheless we implore the community to please respect this limitation and refrain from attending funerals and unveilings unless asked by the family.

We also ask that all attendees be masked and gloved. There is a natural tendency at funerals to gather close together to be able to hear the service and provide comfort. The usual practice of giving consolation to the bereaved with a hug or handshake must be avoided for now. It is vital to maintain a safe distance between those who do not normally live together. And while we desire to personally participate in the mitzvah of burial, we ask that people keep a safe distance until it is your turn to shovel. While many businesses have placed physical barriers or circles on the ground to aid in social distancing, this is not practical at a cemetery. Nor do we want to interrupt a service to remind people about maintaining safe distancing.

It is a relief to report that we believe there have been no cases of Covid-19 transmission as a result of funerals, but we must continue to do all we need in order to keep everyone safe. We encourage everyone to get vaccinated as this will be the best strategy to defeat the pandemic. Yet we remind the community that vacci-

nations are not a 100% guarantee against transmission.


So, we implore our community and those that are attending funerals and unveilings... please, please respect the rules of social distancing to the best of your ability. Protect yourselves, the mourners and all in attendance from transmitting this virus to each other so that we can continue to fulfill the mitzvah of burial.

Finally, let us pray for an end to these difficult times and a return to our usual ways of honouring the deceased and comforting the bereaved.

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Publication Mail Agreement No. 40050628  
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:  
102, 10155 114 Street NW, Edmonton AB T5K 1R8  
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Volume 32, Number 5, May 2021

PUBLISHER: Deborah Shatz  
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Judy Shapiro, Richard Bronstein

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## Home and Garden Feature

### How to make your kitchen kosher

(My Jewish Learning) - Ask an average person to describe kosher food and they might say it is food “blessed by a rabbi.” The word “kosher,” however, is Hebrew for “fit” or “appropriate” and describes the food that is suitable for a Jewish person to eat. With its roots in the Hebrew Bible, the system of defining which foods are kosher was developed by the rabbis of late antiquity. Its application to changing realities has been the work of subsequent generations, including our own.

All questions, problems or issues about keeping kosher ultimately revolve around the basic principles of kashrut described in the Bible. Usually, the questions have to do with the last basic element, the complete separation of milk and meat products. The use of different sets of dishes and pots and pans, developed in order to ensure a greater separation between milk and meat foods. This is also the basis of waiting several hours after eating a meat dish before eating a dairy product, so that the two types of food shouldn't even mix together in our stomachs!

Whether a particular food is considered kosher or not usually has to do with whether any substance or product used in its manufacture was derived from a non-kosher animal or even an animal that is kosher but was not slaughtered in the prescribed manner. Rabbinic supervision of the production of food (a practice

called *hashgacha*) enables it to carry a “seal of approval” (but no, it is not “blessed by a rabbi”).

How to make your kitchen kosher is described in detail by Lisa Stern in her book “How to keep kosher” published by Harper Collins. Her directions are reprinted here:

Kashering your kitchen is at least a two-day process. You will need to clean all the elements and then wait 24 hours before kashering them. This goes back to the rule [known as] *eino ben yomo*, “not of the day”—a full 24-hour day must pass in order for the various parts of your kitchen to lose any unkosher flavor they might have absorbed. After 24 hours, those flavors are considered *ta'am lifgam*, having a bad taste. This minimizes the chance that traces of *treif* [unkosher food] could still contaminate the kitchen while it is being kashered.

The basic rule of kosherizing is *k'volo kakh polto*, an expression that means, literally, “as it is absorbed, so is it purged.” (Interestingly, the same expression means “easy come, easy go”; not necessarily the case when it comes to kashering.) In other words, the way a potentially kosher item became unkosher determines how you can make it kosher.

There are four methods of kashering. Because a heat source is what caused various items to become unkosher (an oven, a pot, a pan), heat is used to remove unkosher

substances from these items. And some items cannot, by nature, be purged.

The methods of kashering include *Libun*, *Hag'alah* and *Iru'i*.

*Libun* is used for items heated directly on a fire, such as a grill, baking pans used in an oven, or frying pans used to heat oil. The word *libun* means “purify” and comes from the same Hebrew root word for “white.” There are two types of *libun*:

*Libun Gamur*, “complete purification.” When the term *libun* is used by itself, this is the kind of *libun* being referred to. *Libun* means heating a pan or grill until it is red hot. To heat pans until they are red hot usually requires a blowtorch, as your standard oven does not reach temperatures that are hot enough, and this is a procedure most often performed by a rabbi.

*Libun Kal*, “simple purification.” Heating metal hot enough that paper (traditionally, a broom straw) touching it scorches. When an oven goes through a self-cleaning cycle, it gets this hot. This is a method you might use on a frying pan.

*Hag'alah*: which means “scouring” or “scalding,” is used for items such as pots or flatware that have become *treif* through contact with hot liquids. *Hag'alah* means kashering the item in a large pot of boiling water.

*Iru'i*: which means “infusion,” is kashering by pouring boiling water over something, a method used for countertops and sinks.

### Talmud Torah expands program

By AJNews staff

There is exciting news to announce in the Edmonton Jewish Community. The Talmud Torah Society (TTS) has extended its program offerings to meet the needs of the Kadima Foundation which includes families that are currently attending Menorah Academy (which is closing its doors this fall).

This is a wonderful opportunity to facilitate inclusivity within the community.

TTS President Leeor Eliyahu and Kadima Foundation President Shane Asbell explained that the Kadima Foundation approached the Talmud Torah Society a few months ago with the intention of partnering together. The new partnership has been developed to create a before and after school modern orthodox educational program. The new program is called the Ancillary Judaic Program @ Talmud Torah (AJP).

The two societies have worked collaboratively, efficiently and smoothly to reach an agreement that

unifies Jewish Education in Edmonton under one roof.

New offerings will include daily prayers before the start of Talmud Torah's regular school day and after school activities will include Chumash, Parsha, and Mishna.

The collaboration is guided by an agreement and there will be regular communication between TTS and the AJP parent committee to ensure smooth operations and the delivery of a high-quality educational program.

The extended program should attract 20 to 30 new students to Talmud Torah School, explained Asbell. Many are excited at the prospects of combining Talmud Torah's Hebrew Language and Judaic curricula with additional Orthodox education.

Existing Talmud Torah families are welcome and encouraged to send their kids to AJP and prospective families will be encouraged to enroll in both TT and AJP as the program has been created for current Talmud Torah students, added Eliyahu.

The program will be for students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 and an annual cost will be approximately \$2,000 in addition to TT tuition. The program will be held



Teacher Marlee Soroka recently subbed for Moreh Ari's grade 3 class while he was on paternity leave. She is a Grade 9 TT class of 2008 alumnus who was taught by Ari in Jr. High.

in the morning from 8 to 8:25 am for tefilla and after school for 1.25 - 1.5 hours. There will also be a recess break after school to allow the students a break.

For information contact [leeyoreliyah@gmail.com](mailto:leeyoreliyah@gmail.com) or [azizaeitan@gmail.com](mailto:azizaeitan@gmail.com).



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# Home and Garden Feature

## Maximize the hot real estate market

By Seth and Murray Glick

Everyone is talking about the HOT Real Estate Market. Is it true? What is happening? Well Virginia, it is true in most cases. What we are experiencing in North America in general is also happening here in Edmonton albeit not as crazy as Toronto.

We are finding that there is a lot of consumer demand and not enough properties to satisfy everyone and that is causing multiple offers and higher prices than we have seen for some time. When we talk about going over the asking price here in Edmonton that can mean a few thousand dollars or maybe even \$5000 - though not usually more.

So how do you navigate this? With your Realtor helping you understand the values of the property, it's value to you and what to do if you really want to win the deal. If the property ticks off all your boxes and you can afford it then you may be well advised to pay a little more than you thought; trying to find the same thing again at the very least can take a lot of time or it might not happen. So, your peace of mind also has a price. Make sure you have your financing underway with at the very least a mortgage preapproval. Get your paperwork into your

Mortgage Broker so you are ready to make an offer knowing you can do it.

If you are looking to sell then how do you get the best price? Again, by listening to your Realtor's advice on how to prepare the property. Fix as many little things as you see; even though they were not important for you they will look glaring to a buyer's fresh eyes. All the things you have watched on the listing shows, paint the really unusually coloured rooms, touch up base boards, clean the bathroom exhaust fan, make sure there are no burnt-out bulbs, clean in the corners and wipe away any cobwebs. All pretty easy things to do. Don't forget the outside too! Cut back shrubs and trees, clean up flower beds, clean the gutters, wash the sidewalk and driveway if muddy, and add a few flowers when you can. If your home is empty, you might also consider a Staging Company to decorate some of the home with new furniture and accessories to really captivate a buyer's desire by making the property look like an appealing magazine cover. This is an average cost of about

## JNF Calgary hosts successful gala



Kol Hakavod to JNF Calgary and honouree Diane Colley-Urquhart for a very successful Negev Gala - pictured above with moderator Dave Kelly.

\$2000 for the first month. It really helps with the excitement!

Everything you do to make your home look more presentable takes away any doubt or worry from the buyer's naturally worried mind. This is usually your biggest asset and you deserve the help and experience of a Real Estate Professional. It is well worth asking for it!

Now make your move!

## Gayle Tallman *Cont. from page 4*

when they attended this annual event.

"She counselled and supported 'March of the Living' students as well as adults at all hours of the day and night when issues arose that required a sensitive and caring response...Gayle stepped up to the plate at every turn when the need arose.

"Nothing was ever too much for Gayle; no 9-5 for her! Her commitment to our community & its membership went beyond the call of duty. Under her leadership and guidance, Edmonton's Jewish community thrived.

"She is indeed an outstanding honouree who gave of herself in the true spirit of Tzedaka with Tikun Olam as her raison d'etre. An outstanding honouree who I am proud to endorse."

Jack Schwarzman wrote, "As Executive Director of the Edmonton Jewish Community Center Gayle was a true leader and mentor to young and old no matter their background.

"Holocaust education was always Gayle's passion. Her goal was to guide young people through the horrors of the Holocaust, to ensure that future generations would bear witness, and honour the memory of the six million Jews that perished.

"In her understated and unassuming manner she worked tirelessly on behalf of the Jewish Community. She touched many lives and made a huge impact. That is why I am delighted that Gayle Tallman has been chosen as the 2021 JNF Negev Honouree. A most well-

deserved recognition."

Chloe Soibelman wrote: One year, in the 2000's, I worked part time at the JCC as City Supervisor for BBYO. Gayle Tallman was the Executive Director of the JCC/JFed at the time. She was not only the "boss" at the JCC, she was also a magnet. She was wise and full of great stories. She made epic fun of most of us. She could be very tough, but everyone knew, that if you did right by Gayle, she would always have your back.

"I learned some very valuable lessons in my time working at the JCC. So many teens and young adults are better people and better community members and probably better parents because of her, myself included. I'm so thrilled to support the Negev Gala this year in honour of Gayle Tallman."

Sharon Marcus wrote: "Inspiring the leaders of the day, along with those of the future, is a noble task for any community professional. Without a doubt Gayle Tallman exemplified both and her contribution to the Edmonton Jewish community will be felt for decades to come. Through decades of being a Jewish community professional myself it was a privilege to work beside someone who exemplified all that is best in a leader, as witnessed through her commitment to Jewish life and inviting others to take the journey with her.



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Memorial Tribute

Obituary: Dr. David Lertzman OBM



It is with great sorrow the Lertzman Family announces the tragic and sudden loss of Dr. David Lertzman, age 59, on May 5, 2021. David Lertzman lost his life in an encounter with a Grizzly bear while out on his twice-daily run along a trail in the village of Waiparous, Alberta.

A well-known and well-beloved professor in the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business, Dr. Lertzman's research had a focus on sustainable economic development and leadership with indigenous peoples. His most recent work was dedicated to better understanding and improving the social, ecological, and

cross-cultural performance of the Indigenous community and energy sector. He taught graduate and undergraduate courses on leadership and sustainable development with Indigenous Elders, and ran wilderness (nature) retreat courses in Kananaskis.

"He was really a beautiful, unique, marvelous human being," said Jim Dewald, dean of the U of C's Haskayne School of Business. "Professors will spend their entire career in the hopes that one day a student or graduate will come and say, 'what you taught me changed my life.' That happened every single time he ran his course."

Born in Winnipeg, David's love for the outdoors began with backpacking vacations with his family during their 10 year stay in the San Francisco Bay Area where David attended elementary school. A precocious, enthusiastic and gifted child, he returned with his family to Winnipeg, where he attended high school, followed by graduating from the University of Manitoba with a degree in political science and a minor in World Religions.

Dr. Lertzman's sense of social and political justice led him to a Masters in Political Economy from York University and a PhD in Regional Planning from the University of British Columbia. Later he joined the Rediscovery International team, where he worked with Indigenous youth for 25 years. David had a special gift for languages (including Indigenous languages) and music, playing the drum, guitar, mandolin, ukulele, flutes, blues harmonica and composed songs that will continue to be sung around the campfire by communities in many parts of North America.

David is survived by his wife, Sarah Lertzman and two small children, Glen (age 9) and Mela (age 5), father and mother Morley and Joy Lertzman, older brothers and their wives, John Lertzman and Susan Caro; Ken Lertzman and Dana Lepofsky, and his beloved six nieces and nephews.

Donations can be made to a Fundraiser by Kari Woo: Loving Support for Sarah, Glen & Mela (gofundme.com).

Holocaust Education Symposium *Cont. from page 8*

their own graves. Fortuitously, a fog rolled in and Dancyger's mother crawled to safety in the woods. Mother and daughter heard the shots as the massacre unfolded behind them. The only survivors from their family, Ann and her mother managed to survive the rest of the Shoah in hiding.

Calgary Jewish Federation brought a unique virtual program to an Israeli Scout group in Toronto on April 4. Speaker Don Shapira, who was born in Israel and raised in Red Deer and Calgary, spoke in Hebrew to Scouts in grades three through eight. His presentation focused on the antisemitism he experienced while growing up in Canada and his grandfather's experiences during the Shoah when he was forced into slave labour in Romania. Shapira's empowering talk is geared toward helping kids learn how to speak up during times of adversity, said Bondar and Libin, adding that they will continue to tap Shapira's expertise as they support 2G and 3G volunteers in sharing their parents' and grandparents' stories.

Bondar shared her late grandmother Freda Plucer's story at an April 7 virtual presentation to 65 students at Calgary French and International School Students from Calgary, Peru, Romania, Colombia and the United States. Participants viewed Bondar's pre-recorded presentation and then engaged with her in a live Q and A session. Similar sessions took place on April 8 – Yom Hashoah – when Bondar spoke to Israeli Scouts in Toronto and on April 21st when she addressed students at Ecole Secondaire Highwood High School.

Calgary Jewish Federation teamed up with Winnipeg March of the Living and Jewish Federation of Edmonton on April 7 for a virtual talk by author Judy Batalion on her newly-released book *The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos*.

On Yom Hashoah Bondar joined Edmonton Jewish Federation CEO Stacey Leavitt-Wright and Holocaust Education Committee Chair Colin Muscat on the Ryan Jespersion Show in Edmonton.

For a second consecutive year, Calgary Jewish Federation's Yom Hashoah commemoration was held virtually. The April 8 event included prayers and readings at the Holocaust Memorial adjacent to the Calgary JCC followed by the program *Surviving the Holocaust*:

*The Return to Life in the Displaced Persons Camps*, featuring images of survivors who subsequently settled in Calgary. The YouTube presentation has been viewed more than 700 times.

The Jewish Federation of Edmonton produced a very different but equally compelling virtual Yom Hashoah commemoration in conjunction with Reel Mensch Studio. Alberta Minister of Culture Leela Aheer began the evening by reading the proclamation of Holocaust Memorial Day and Genocide Remembrance Act unanimously passed by the Alberta Legislature in 2000. In keeping with Holocaust Education Chair Colin Muscat's observation that "Every story of Holocaust survival is a miracle, and every descendant of a survivor is truly a gift," the Yom Hashoah program focused on COVID-era Zoom conversations of Holocaust survivors Clara Kagan, Ann Davis and Helen Markovich with their children, grandchildren and – in Kagan's case – a boisterous great-granddaughter.

"I'm still here," exclaimed Helen Markovich several times, capturing the triumph of survivors who rebuilt their lives in Edmonton, proudly contributing to Jewish communal life and Holocaust education there.

"You can't really learn about the Holocaust from a book," said Leon Kagan, quoting his late father, Paul. Kagan and his children spoke of their dedication to sharing their father and grandfather's story, a bittersweet passing of the torch.

Since Yom Hashoah, Holocaust education programs have continued to abound. Calgary Jewish Academy recently piloted an interactive virtual program led by experts at Yad Vashem – Israel's Holocaust museum in Jerusalem. Grade six students explored the lives of four Jewish children by unpacking virtual suitcases that provided insight into their lives prior to and during the Holocaust.

West Island College (WIC) students participated in an interactive Yad Vashem program on May 12 during which they explored "Last Letters" of individuals murdered during the Holocaust, including handwritten letter and postcards and even desperate last words carved into the walls of hiding places.

"The exploration vivifies and humanizes those who fell victim to the Nazis," Dahlia Libin said.

"The experience was outstanding," commented John Davidson, Learning Leader of Social Studies and Director of Student Leadership at WIC.

"The guide was excellent and the letters were very moving. I would highly recommend it as a way to 'put a face' to those affected and personalize the plight of the victims," Davidson said.

Similar Yad Vashem programs will soon be offered by the Calgary Public Library to teens

between the ages of 15 and 18. On May 23, CPL will offer a virtual tour of Yad Vashem. On May 30, teens participating in *Lost Letters* will explore postcards and letters from the Yad Vashem archives, revealing the inner worlds and fates of several Jews who perished during the Holocaust.

A third virtual CPL program for teens, *How was it Humanly Possible*, will take place on Sunday, June 6. This interactive program explores how human choices and actions led to the murder of six million Jews and millions of others during World War II, emphasizing the roles played by both perpetrators' and bystanders.

Given recent and alarming escalations of violence in Israel and Gaza, Marnie Bondar and Dahlia Libin are amazed at the resilience and resolve of staff at Yad Vashem who have continued with previously scheduled virtual events despite the growing threat from Hamas bombs and increasing violence in the streets of Jerusalem.

"We often speak about the intergenerational trauma caused by the Holocaust," mused Bondar. "This is the flip side. Our friends at Yad Vashem once again demonstrated the resiliency of the Jewish people. This is extraordinary."

The sentiment was echoed by WIC teacher John Davidson who called the Yad Vashem program "truly amazing... most notably when coupled with the events that are occurring in both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv at the moment."

Bondar and Libin continue to develop long-term relationships with educators like Davidson.

While such partnerships have always been important, they seem even more urgent at a time when Israel is once again in the headlines. The abundance of misinformation – especially on social media – is often fueled by the world's oldest hatred: antisemitism.

"I learned that friendly people can turn into hateful individuals with enough exposure to propaganda," commented one teacher following Calgary's virtual Holocaust Symposium.

A testament to the impact of Holocaust education can be found in the words of a student participant at Symposium 2021:

"I learned to always do my own research, it is important to never rely on one news outlet. It is important to value diversity and learn from the mistakes of the past. I have a newfound empathy towards people who have faced adversity. Further, it has encouraged me to inform others of what I have learned."

For more information on the work of the Holocaust and Human Rights Remembrance and Education Department, go to [www.jewishcalgary.org/our-community/federation-programs/holocaust-and-human-rights-remembrance-and-education](http://www.jewishcalgary.org/our-community/federation-programs/holocaust-and-human-rights-remembrance-and-education).

Teens with CPL cards can register for upcoming Holocaust programs online or by calling the CPL at 403-260-2600. To register for your free library card, go to <https://reg.calgaryllibrary.ca/>

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This month's update from Edmonton Talmud Torah School



Talmud Torah School was closed for two weeks due to Covid, but staff and students were busy with virtual learning, Pictured above students celebrated Shabbat virtually. One student is eating challah and another is drinking grape juice as they celebrate Shabbat while also singing Shabbat songs.

Nazi flags on display in rural Alberta

There were two incidents of Nazi flags displayed outside at rural properties in Alberta this month – one near Breton, Alberta another near the village of Boyle.

The Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) reached out to Breton RCMP to file a criminal complaint after being alerted to a Hitler Youth flag and a Confederate flag flying on a private property by a local resident. RCMP confirmed they then spoke with the property owner who initially refused to take down the flags. FSWC is urging police to launch a hate crime investigation.

“It is extremely disturbing and quite disheartening to once again see a Hitler Youth flag, as well as the Confederate flag, on display,” said Jaime Kirzner-Roberts,

FSWC’s Director of Policy. “These displays of hate go against the values that Canada stands for and are an attack on not only the Jewish and Black communities, but also on our veterans and fallen soldiers who made unspeakable sacrifices to defeat the Nazis and preserve our freedoms.”

The flags have now been taken down at both sites.

It is illegal in Canada to engage in the willful promotion of hatred.

FSWC has also written to the local county council, alerting them to the problem and asking that they work with law enforcement to ensure the flags are removed.

“We urge police to investigate this incident as a hate crime and for community leaders to send a message loud

and clear that hate will not be tolerated in their community,” Kirzner-Roberts added.

Steve Shafir, president of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, told the Edmonton Journal that the flags are proof that “antisemitism, unfortunately, is alive and well in Canada.”

“It’s disgusting,” he said. “It’s disconcerting, and it is downright scary.”

Shafir added that the outpouring of support from the general community was most assuring. “We know that the vast majority of Canadians are disgusted with the views that come with a symbol like that.”

County Reeve Bart Guyon called the flags “disturbing” in a phone interview with the Edmonton Journal.

In a followup statement, he added: “There is no place in Brazeau County for symbols of hatred and racism. These flags are disturbing, inappropriate, and do not represent the values of the people of Brazeau County.”

NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society shall be held virtually through Zoom on Thursday, June 17, 2021, commencing at 7:00 pm.

The Agenda for the Meeting shall include the following:

- 1. President's Report
- 2. Principal's Report
- 3. ELC Director's Report
- 4. Financial Report
- 5. Bylaw Amendments
- 6. Election of Board Members

Any parent or guardian of a child who attends the school, or any person 18 years of age or older, and who has contributed, or on whose behalf a contribution was made to the United Jewish Appeal or Edmonton Talmud Torah, is eligible to vote at the meeting. There are three (3) board positions open for election, at least one (1) of which must be filled by a parent of a child who attends the Edmonton Talmud Torah School or Early Learning Centre. The other two (2) positions may be filled by parent or non-parent Society members. A person is not eligible to be elected if they are engaged as an employee of the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society or if they have an outstanding debt or obligation to the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society, and have not put in place an approved payment proposal.

Any person who is eligible to run for the Board must cause the Nomination form to be properly completed and delivered to the Secretary not later than one week prior to the Annual General Meeting. Nomination forms may be obtained from Natalie in the Society office. Please contact Natalie at 780-481-3377 or nataliesoroka@talmudtorahsociety.com to make arrangements to access and drop off the forms.

There will be no ability to nominate from the floor. You are encouraged to attend the Annual General Meeting in order to become more fully informed about the affairs and activities of the Society. Please see [www.talmudtorahsociety.com](http://www.talmudtorahsociety.com) for more details.

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File photo of staff and campers at Camp Gan Izzy in Calgary.

Camp Gan Izzy *Cont. from page 1*

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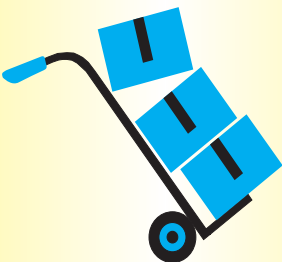
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