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Ben Freeman on antisemitism, yellow stars and moving forward

By Maxine Fischbein

Acclaimed author, Holocaust educator and diversity, equity and inclusion specialist Ben M. Freeman reserves the right to define himself as a proud gay man and as a proud Jew. While he works to educate allies and potential allies, the Hong Kong-based author of *Jewish Pride: Rebuilding a People* acknowledges it is difficult to break through to haters. He urges the Jewish community to make headway with those who are ill-informed - and therefore more likely to be influenced by Jew-hate, which continues to be ubiquitous, even in the aftermath of the Shoah. He advocates for Holocaust education that does not merely focus on the events of World War II, but contextualizes the long history of Jew-hatred while at the same time exploring the richness and diversity of a culture thousands of years in the making.

Freeman brought his live virtual message to an audience of more than 1,000 on January 27 - International Holocaust Remembrance Day - thanks to the partnership of Calgary Jewish Federation, Jewish Federation of Edmonton, Calgary Public Library and Edmonton Public Library. The event was generously supported by the Isadore and Florence Burstyn Fund for Human Rights and Holocaust Education, the KSW Calgary Holocaust Education and Commemoration Fund, and donors to the Human Rights and Holocaust Education Fund at the Calgary Public Library Foundation and the Viewpoint Foundation.

Fittingly, Freeman's talk began with comments by CPL CEO Sarah Meilleur and EPL CEO Pilar Martinez. Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek and Edmonton Mayor Amarjeet Sohi read their respective cities' proclamations of International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Notably, Gondek said she made the decision to run for Calgary mayor "... after seeing the steps of City Hall

Purim is just around the corner!



Purim is just around the corner - a time for parties, masquerade, noisemakers, eating hamantaschen, feasting, drinking and reading the megillah. Check your local listings to see what Purim activities are happening near you - both virtually and in-person. Purim starts on March 16 so activities will be held all week. Enjoy! (This photo is from the Chabad Edmonton Purim Party in March 2020, right before the onset of the pandemic.)

occupied by white supremacists in a 2020 protest."

"We must be ever-vigilant of the consequences of hate-filled division," Gondek said.

Sohi, who immigrated to Canada from Punjab, said he learned to speak English in the public libraries of Edmonton.

"When we join together to learn from the past, to celebrate the things that make us unique, and to stand up to hate, we can make and help build a great city for today and for future generations," Sohi said.

Moderated by Calgary Jewish Federation Co-President Jared Shore and Edmontonian Jordyn Wright, who currently studies at McGill University, Freeman's talk was attended by dignitaries including Calgary and Edmonton City councilors and MLA Whitney Issik.

Freeman was preceded by Canada's former Minister of Justice and Attorney General, the Honourable Irwin Cotler, a well-known international human rights lawyer,

emeritus professor of law at McGill University and founder and chair of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

Canada's Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, Cotler referred to Auschwitz as "...the most brutal extermination camp of the 20th Century, a laboratory for mass murder, for which there are no graves, a reminder of horrors too terrible to be believed but not too terrible to have happened."

Directly addressing Holocaust survivors, Cotler said, "...you have endured the worst in humanity, yet you have somehow found in the resources of your own humanity the will to go on, to form families, to build relationships and to make endearing contributions to Calgary, to Edmonton, to our Canadian mosaic, and so, may this international day of remembrance... be also a remembrance to act, which it

Continued on page 16

Jewish Studies Week at UAlberta: March 7-13

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

Jewish Studies Week at the University of Alberta in Edmonton will be held from March 7 - 13, 2022 with an exceptional roster of programs.

The Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies is presenting a very special exhibition featuring stories of the *Kindertransport* in collaboration with the Austrian Embassy, the British High Commission and the Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship in Ottawa. The photography project *Für das Kind /For the Child* by curators Rosie Potter and Patricia Ayre presents and revisits the moving and dramatic history of the *Kindertransport* to Great Britain, which saved the lives of thousands of Jewish children from Germany, Austria and former Czechoslovakia from Nazi persecution.

Potter and Ayre asked survivors to share the personal belongings that accompanied them as children on the *Kindertransport*. Very often these objects represent the last physical contact the children had with their

parents. The photographs presented in the exhibition convey the deep emotions and trauma of the separation but also the hope of survival and start of a new future.

The exhibit will be on display from **March 1 - 15** at the Tory/Business Atrium. Entry to the exhibit is free and open to the public during regular building hours.

On March 7, a special conversation will take place via Zoom at 4 pm. The topic is Metis and Jews in Canada and features Metis scholar Paul Gareau, an associate professor in the Faculty of Native Studies at U of A and David Kauffman, Richard Schiff Chair for the Study of Canadian Jewry in the Department of History at York University.



Dr. David Kauffman



Derek Penslar



Paul Gareau

This dialogue between the scholars begins by unpacking the strange results of the 2016 Canadian Census, which mistakenly showed that the number of Métis people doubled since the previous census, while the number of Jews in Canada fell by half during the same time. Gareau and Kauffman will then move to ask questions of one another about the nature of difference, identity, and racialization in Canada using these two groups as case studies, about what Métis Studies and

Continued on page 14

Helping a senior is just what I do. Am I a caregiver?

By Samantha Norberg, MSW, RSW

"It's just something I do." Many people do not realize or identify they are in a caregiving role – sometimes it is because it is part of their culture or family dynamic, or it has slowly come into their lives.

If you have not already been there, chances are that caregiving for a senior will be a part of your life at some point. Caregiving roles can be rewarding but can also be isolating and emotionally and financially stressful. Supports are available for individuals caring for seniors – resource navigation, emotional support, education and respite opportunities. It is important for caregivers to be able to identify their roles and to know that they are not alone in their journey.

Caregivers for seniors are spouses, partners, parents, children, family or friends who perform responsibilities outside of their relational role, including assistance with daily tasks like medication administration, meal preparation, and appointment management. They can also be providing emotional support, behavioural intervention and advocacy. Care can be provided in-person or at a distance, some caregivers do not even reside in the same city as the person they care for, but they are the first call

in challenging moments.

Feeling that no one could understand, or not wanting to burden others with your struggles are normal reactions to the caregiver experience. However, caregiving is not meant to be done alone. Though more and more people are entering caregiving roles, caregiving is often referred to as an invisible role. Many do not realize or identify they are caregiving for their senior – it is just something they do as family and friends. It is a role that we do not prepare for, nor receive recognition for. Becoming a caregiver also means that someone is unwell and marks the beginning of a new reality. New responsibilities combined with old responsibilities (that do not go away with caregiving) can create isolation.

Understanding your caregiver identity can positively influence your experiences and the care you can provide to your loved one. In doing so you can explore supports specifically created for you, whether that be through accessing counselling, resource support, or connecting with other caregivers navigating a similar journey. The opportunity to nurture both your relational role and caregiver role becomes available. You may be a caregiver of a senior, but you are always someone else.

JFSC is offering *It's Just Something I Do. Am I a Caregiver? Navigating the Caregiver Label*, a free virtual workshop on Tuesday, March 15th, 10:00 –11:30 am. This workshop will explore identifying who is a caregiver, the impacts of caregiving, and provide coping tools and access to supports. To register contact samanthan@jfsc.org or call 403-692-6392.

JFSC's Caregiver Support Program provides free social work services for caregivers of seniors (55+) in Calgary.



JFSC is offering a free virtual workshop for caregivers and other people who provide care on Tuesday, March 15th, 10 –11:30 am.

Caregivers can access individual counselling, group sessions, education, and resources in the areas of aging and memory, dementia (such as Alzheimer's Disease), chronic illness, coping and self-care strategies, grief and loss, and resiliency. To learn more, go to our website at www.jfsc.org, contact Samantha at 403-692-6392 or samanthan@jfsc.org. Outside of Calgary? Explore local caregiver support services through 2-1-1.

Samantha Norberg, MSW, RSW is with the JFSC Caregiver Support Program and Memory Care Program.

Nazi symbols displayed at anti-vaccine protest in Ottawa

By AJNews staff

Swastikas and other symbols of hate were on display at the Canadian "Freedom Convoy" protests against vaccination mandates in Ottawa this past month. For three weeks there was an occupation of trucks and protesters that filled the streets and refused to disperse. On February 21, the Federal government passed the Emergencies Measures Act and over the previous two days, police and RCMP were able to disperse the protest – towing the large vehicles and arresting people who refused to leave.

The protests, which were said to be organized by Canadian truckers in response to a vaccination mandate

placed on truckers returning to Canada from the United States, attracted thousands to Canada's capital. A range of groups compared vaccine mandates to fascism and displayed Canadian flags, some of them, upside down. Many signs contained profanity-filled messages for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Among the symbols displayed at the protests were the upside down Canadian flag, some with swastikas, yellow star of Davids, in at least one instance, the Confederate flag and in another a swastika flag.

A Conservative member of parliament, Michael Cooper, MP for St. Albert – Edmonton attended the protests to show his support. While he was being interviewed by the CBC Canadian news channel, a protester with a Canadian flag covered in swastikas walked behind him.

Cooper later released a statement saying he did not know that the symbol was behind him and that if he had, he would have condemned it.

"He or she does not represent the thousands of peaceful

protesters who waved Canadian flags and acted responsibly. I stand with them and will continue to fight with them," he wrote in a statement posted to Twitter.

Edmonton Mayor Amarjeet Sohi and St. Albert Mayor Cathy Heron said they were "troubled" by the image of Cooper with protesters behind him carrying a Canadian flag defaced with a swastika.

"This type of symbolism is never okay, but it is even more troubling as we just marked the anniversary of the Holocaust and today we remember the victims who lost their lives in the hate-based Quebec City Mosque attack five years ago," the joint statement read.


"We want the rest of the country to know that MP Cooper's presence at this rally in no way reflects the values of Edmontonians and St. Albertans," the mayors said. "Our communities are diverse, inclusive and welcoming, and hate has absolutely no place here."

Edmonton city councillors Michael Janz, Ward and Andrew Knack called for Cooper's resignation.

Coun. Knack told CTV news that Cooper should have known the type of audience it would attract — especially after looking at the rhetoric of organizers.


"An elected representative knows better," Knack said.

Continued on page 23



BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION


Purim at BTZ




Virtual Services
Wednesday, March 16
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Thursday, March 17
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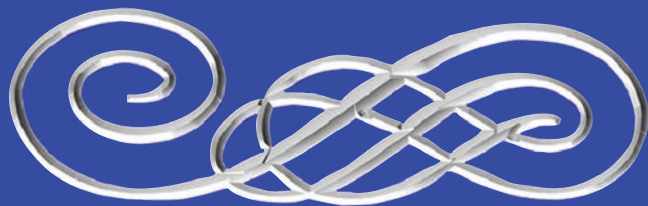


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Team Canada: All eyes are on Paralympian Mollie Jepsen

There were four Jewish athletes on Team Canada to cheer for in Beijing this winter: three members of the Men's hockey team and para alpine skier Mollie Jepsen who has close ties to the Alberta Jewish Community. The Beijing games began Feb. 4 and ran through Feb. 20 with Team Canada placing fourth overall with 26 medals.

The Paralympics will be held March 4 through March 13 and all eyes are on West Vancouver B.C.'s Mollie Jepsen - a phenom with strong ties to the Jewish Community of Calgary. The Milavsky, Molotsky and Brody families and friends are kvelling - especially Bubbie Miriam Milavsky. Mollie has high praise and gratitude for the support of her mom, Calgarian Abbie Milavsky.

Mollie began skiing at age two and hasn't stopped since. She owes her career to her tenacity and her family, she says, which has helped Feed the Dream for her along the way - from midnight drives with her mom up to Whistler after gymnastics practice so she could race early the next day, to constantly pushing herself to do better. Her mom has always been there for her and her brother Curtis, she said. That love and support continues to fuel her relentless passion for her sport. "My mom is at the top of the food chain for me," said Mollie. "She has made everything possible."

Mollie was an all-star skier in her age group with the Whistler Mountain Ski Club. She carried her success to the Para-Alpine World Cup and the Paralympics. She joined the team at just 15-years-old in 2016 after a successful season on the Europa Cup circuit. However, it was a trio of medals at the 2018 World Championships that vaulted her into the world's elite and qualified her for her first Paralympic Games.

In her first Games, she won four medals, including gold in the super-combined, silver in slalom and bronze in each of downhill and super-G. She grew up racing in able-bodied skiing and continues to do so today while also racing Para-Alpine. She has battled injuries and illness throughout her young career, but nothing is slowing down the now 21-year-old as she continues to be one of the best in the world.

Jepsen was born missing fingers on her left hand, and competes under the LW6/8-2 classification, for skiers with an upper extremity issue. This means she skis with only

one pole.

Since her Paralympic debut, she was also diagnosed with Crohn's disease, and missed an entire season. But she has had a remarkable comeback season ahead of the 2022 Paralympics, so don't be surprised to see Jepsen on the podium in Beijing.

Hockey, Canada

This season, Canadian Jewish hockey player Josh Ho-Sang had an impressive debut with the Toronto Marlies, the top affiliate team of the Toronto Maple Leafs. Ho-Sang, 26, is Jamaican and Chinese on his father's side and Russian-Jewish and Swedish on his mother's side. "I've grown up Jewish," Josh once said in an interview. "I have always celebrated the Jewish holidays like Hanukkah and the High Holidays with family and friends."

Since the NHL announced that its players would not participate in the Games, it left Olympic roster spots open for rising stars like Ho-Sang. According to one analysis, "It's entirely possible that following his Olympic appearance the Leafs will get him under contract." Could Beijing be the start of Ho-Sang's NHL career?

Joining Josh Ho-Sang on the Canadian men's hockey team was Devon Levi, a 20-year-old goalie from the Jewish Montreal suburb of Dollard-Des-Ormeaux, where he attended Hebrew Foundation School, a Modern Orthodox Jewish day school. He currently plays for Northeastern University Huskies, and his spot on the Olympic squad makes him the first men's hockey Olympian from the Boston school.

In the words of the Northeastern Hockey blog, "Levi is in the midst of the greatest goaltending season in



The Alberta Jewish Community is cheering especially loud for para-alpine skier Mollie Jepsen. The Milavsky, Molotsky and Brody families are kvelling and Bubbie Miriam Milavsky couldn't be prouder of her granddaughter Mollie. The Paralympic Games will be held from March 4 - 13 in Beijing, China. (Maddie Meyer/Getty Images)

Northeastern program history, and one of the greatest seasons in NCAA history. He has played every minute of every game for the Huskies." He has notched nine shutouts so far this season, helping the Huskies achieve a 16-5-1 record.

This isn't Levi's first time representing Canada - most recently, he played in the 2021 World Junior Championship.

The third Jewish player on Canada's hockey team was Jason Demers, a 33-year-old defenseman who spent time in the NHL but currently plays in Russia's Kontinental Hockey League. He discovered his Jewish roots later in life on his father's side of the family.

Demers made his NHL debut back in 2009, playing for the San Jose Sharks, and represented Team Canada for the first time in 2013 during an NHL lockout.

Thanks to Demers, Ho-Sang and Levi, Canada men's hockey team was the most Jewish team in Beijing.

With files from the JTA by Emily Burack.

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Adult education enriches congregants at Beth Shalom

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

It wasn't long after arriving in Edmonton that Rabbi Steven Schwarzman and his congregation at Beth Shalom Synagogue were confronted with the challenge of adapting to the uncertainty of COVID, and the uncharted territory of virtual worship and community engagement. With two years of living-with-COVID now in the rear-view mirror of the global collective consciousness, there is an acquired ability to look back at all that has been achieved; at Beth Shalom there is much to be proud of.

For the past seven years, long-time Beth Shalom congregant Anna Linetsky has been at the helm of the Adult Education Committee.

"In 2015 the shul's president called me, I was on vacation in Florida at the time, and he asked if I would take on the job. I told him I would think about it, but then he called me again and said he needed a 'yes' or a 'no' – I said yes! For the rest of the time, until we returned to Edmonton, I was thinking always of what I would do in this position," explained Linetsky in a recent phone interview, again from sunny Florida.

Education has always been at the forefront of Linetsky's priorities. As a school principal in former Soviet Ukraine, Linetsky knows what it takes to inspire curiosity and implement strategies for pedagogical success. And after a long career at the University of Alberta Library, she knows just how to encourage and promote constructive learning experiences for adults as well.

"I started to approach different people from the shul and from my social circle: doctors, lawyers, people from the University. For the adult education programming I wanted diverse speakers to present on their areas of expertise from a Jewish perspective," Linetsky elaborated.

"Our first speaker, this was in 2015, was Cantor David Mannes. He talked about variations in music and how tunes are changed. To that talk, twenty people came."

Linetsky and her team of organizers have since hosted up to 120 people for their monthly lectures. "We have had speakers talk about Jewish art through the centuries, medical advancements coming from Israel, food – absolutely different topics all connected by being Jewish. I ask people to speak about what is closest to them."

Since moving online, with a brief interlude during the summer months, the Adult Education Committee at Beth Shalom continues to organize monthly enriching lectures grounded in Jewish themes. Recently, they welcomed Professor Joseph Patrouch from the University of Alberta's Department of History, Classics, and Religion for his second such lecture at the shul, titled: *Monuments and Museums: How Austrians Are Dealing with the Past Today*. On that particularly snowy Edmonton Sunday, nobody had to trudge out to their car to warm up the engine in order to

attend. The virtual format allowed for attendees from across the Jewish community to join.

'Zoom-fatigue' has been a topic around many a dinner table of late, but the virtual crowd at Professor Patrouch's lecture showed no indication of this virtual weariness. Those gathered were eager and excited for his presentation and came out in good numbers for the event. The talk allowed attendees to be momentarily transported to Vienna, with fantastic description and socially relevant examination. Important topics surrounding contemporary Jewish life in Austria were elaborated upon, providing insightful scholarly criticism and inspiration for further analysis and debate. With astonishing precision there was not a single cyber-hiccup, and the discussion following the lecture was both dynamic and thought provoking.

"I think it is very important to connect the worlds of academic research and teaching to broader audiences, and I spend significant effort trying to do so," commented Professor Patrouch. In fact, the former Director of the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies was recently recognized by the Austrian Canadian Council and the Government of the Republic of Austria for his contributions to academia and engagement with the greater community.

"Now that I am back in my role as a full-time History professor, I'm pleased to be able to talk about my research and field with various audiences," he added. Professor Patrouch even delivered a virtual presentation to a group of fifth grade students in Edmonton not too long ago and was also a guest-speaker at the 2021 Edmonton Jewish Film Festival.

"I have very much enjoyed my interactions and involvement with the Jewish community," Professor Patrouch concluded by saying.

Expert guest-speakers are not the only adult enrichment offered at Beth Shalom. Rabbi Schwarzman teaches weekly scripture-based classes on Monday evenings. His twelve-week examination of Kohelet fused textual analysis with contemporary contextualization of Judaic influences and themes.

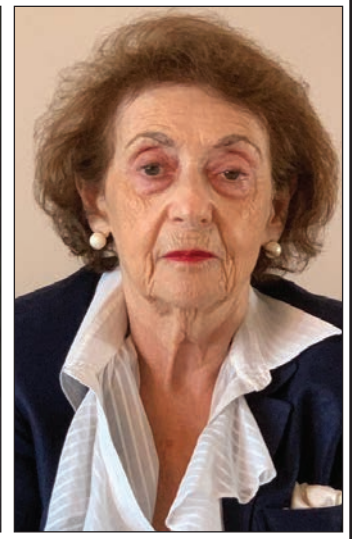
"All those who are interested are welcome," he commented in a phone interview. "When we explored



Rabbi Steven Schwarzman



Professor Joseph Patrouch



Anna Linetsky

Kohelet the discussion obviously built and expanded on what was covered the previous week, but we tape our sessions, so if somebody missed an evening, they could catch up and then rejoin the next meeting."

Rabbi Schwarzman encourages participation from those Zooming-in. "Sometimes I'll ask one of our native Hebrew-speakers to do a reading of text and this can bring up additional layers of discussion where we can look at questions around language," he explained. This is one way that Rabbi Schwarzman tries to keep adult education interactive. In some ways people may even be more willing to participate with our current Zoom format, he commented.

"People have the choice of switching on their cameras if they wish or keeping them off if they're having a bad hair day. I do make my bar and bat mitzvah students turn on their cameras for their lessons though," he added jovially. "But with Zoom, adult participants can type in their questions which provides a bit of anonymity for those who might be a bit more hesitant to speak up." Rabbi Schwarzman said that he does still call on people from time-to-time to solicit their participation, "especially when I know that they have something vital to contribute."

All this core Beth Shalom programming for adult enrichment is free of charge, and open to the greater Edmonton Jewish community. With the professional diversity of Linetsky's guest-speakers, and the depth and nuance of Rabbi Schwarzman's analysis of Judaic teachings, there is so much to be learned and discovered at Beth Shalom. For the full line-up of presentations and classes, please visit: edmontonbethshalom.org, and sign up for their newsletter – you will be happy you did!

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.



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Simchas and Celebrations Feature

Their guests helped craft a creative Covid wedding they'll never forget

By Alix Wall

(JTA) — Julie Plaut Warwick and Ben Schreiber faced the same dilemma as many other couples planning a wedding during the pandemic: How to create a feeling of togetherness when guests may not feel safe attending?

“We wanted to be surrounded by our family and friends and have their blessings, as we had no idea who would actually come,” said Plaut Warwick, of Issaquah, Washington.

The “Jewish creatives” they tasked to help them had ideas. And collaboratively, they figured out a way for the couple to be surrounded by the blessings of those important to them, whether they were there physically or not.

Invited guests were instructed to write down their blessings for the couple. A wedding co-officiant then collected the blessings and hung them from the poles of the huppah, the traditional Jewish wedding canopy, while the themes from those blessings were then inscribed on the border of the couple’s ketubah, or marriage contract. They were also chanted by all the guests during their ceremony.

The couple had some idea of what was in store for them — but they didn’t know everything.

“The news about the ketubah and a song coordinated with our huppah blessings trickled down to us slowly,” said Schreiber. “By the time we saw and heard the song, we knew it was happening, but it was like a step-by-step leak.”

Plaut Warwick, 56, is a laughter yoga instructor, mental health professional and Jewish educator. Divorced since 2006 and the mother of two adult children, she thought she would never again marry.

Schreiber, 52, is a senior software engineer at the biotech company Adaptive Biotechnologies, as well as a widower; his wife died of cancer in 2019.

They first met through the Reform Congregation Kol

Ami in Kirkland, Washington, where Plaut Warwick was a longtime member and Schreiber was a newcomer. It was only months after they friended each other on Facebook that she commented on something he shared. They began online chatting the day after Thanksgiving, 2020.

Their chats continued over several days. Schreiber suggested a visit (he was living at his beach house three hours away from her during the pandemic). But Plaut Warwick was about to visit her elderly parents for a month in Florida, and didn’t want to take any chances. Yet she soon changed her mind.

“The second he walked in and we embraced, I knew I was going to marry him,” she said.

Schreiber felt similarly, adding that his late wife had given him her blessing to find love again. “I fully acknowledged that I’m in a broken state, but I knew I needed companionship, and the pandemic left me with a vacuum of not being with anybody that was good to help me recenter,” he said.

He didn’t leave until he drove her to the airport a few days later.

After quarantining for two weeks in Florida, Plaut Warwick stayed with her parents. Noticing she was always on the phone, her father began asking how late she was up the night before.

“I felt like I was 17 again,” she said.

Judaism and Jewish ritual both play a large role in their lives. The first time the two showed up to Zoom services together was like a coming-out party, they said. Now, they sometimes lead services together.

As for their collaborative wedding, it started with Plaut Warwick’s decision to commission Rhode Island-based artist Nancy Katz, principal artist of Nancy Katz/Wilmark Studios — which specializes in stained glass windows for synagogues — to make the couple’s huppah.

Plaut Warwick knew Katz, co-officiant Marge Eiseman



Ben and Julie Schreiber, under the huppah. (JennyGG Photography)

and ketubah artist Jennifer Judelsohn from connections in the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE and its successor organization NewCAJE). Their connections allowed them to collaborate on the wedding in unexpected ways.

Plaut Warwick had a tallit made by Katz, who is mostly known for her painting on silk. But Katz had to give that up in recent years due to arthritis in her thumb. She found she can still paint on canvas, and used a lightweight one so it would drape properly.

Her design is bold and bright.

“The huppah was about celebration and joy and connection, but it also acknowledges this crazy time we’re living in,” said Katz. “They talked about their love of water and the sea, so the design has that fluid feel to it; the design just sort of came.”

For the guests, Katz sent out kits she had assembled herself for writing down and decorating their blessings. She led a Zoom workshop for those who wanted guidance in decorating them.

The couple joined the Zoom session to greet everyone, and then left. Then, inspiration struck Judelsohn: “While we were creating the blessings with Nancy, I saw

Continued on page 21

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Simchas and Celebrations

JNF Calgary's Negev Gala: A mosaic of peacemakers

By Lesley Machon

The Calgary regional office of Jewish National Fund (JNF) of Canada will host their annual gala on May 1, 2022. This event is JNF Calgary's most important fundraiser of the year, with proceeds directed to social-service infrastructure projects in Israel. The gala is typically a formal evening with 300-400 guests who gather to share a meal and entertainment, however, due to Covid this event will be hosted online for the second year.

Each year, JNF dedicates the celebration to an individual or couple that is serving the Jewish community and Israel. This year, the event will honour Christian friends of Israel for their support. In light of increased anti-Zionism and antisemitism around the world, JNF believes in the importance of expressing gratitude to those outside the Jewish community who also work to ensure Israel is a strong, stable, and secure nation.

This year was particularly painful for Israel and Jews around the globe. As the conflict in Gaza raged on in the Middle East, antisemitic violence and anti-Zionist hate crimes in North America reached record highs. A rabbi was held hostage in Texas. Bricks shattered a window of a kosher pizzeria on Manhattan's Upper East Side. Jewish diners outside a sushi restaurant in Los Angeles were physically attacked. Vandalism desecrated synagogues in Arizona, Illinois, Salt Lake City, and New York. Anti-Jewish hate incidents in Canada included the vandalism of a Jewish daycare centre in Victoria, anti-Zionist movements on college campuses across the country, and countless incidences of verbal abuse via social media. In the UK, the Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 2,255 anti-Jewish hate incidents during 2021, which is a 34% increase from 2020. The recent advancement of hate is disturbing. These occurrences highlight the importance of pausing to recognize those who stand in solidarity with the Jewish people.

"I think we in the Jewish community take for granted that there are others who support the State of Israel wholeheartedly," says Elliott Steinberg, Executive Director of JNF Calgary. "Given the rise in antisemitism and anti-Zionism, and the continued attacks on Israel on the ground, in world forums, and in the media, I think we're overdue in thanking those outside the Jewish community who stand with us. Our Christian friends are second-to-none in that regard."

The beneficiary project this year is the Clore Centre for Performing Arts in the Galilee. This is the only conservatory offering formal training in music and dance in northern Israel, and it plays a crucial role in creating harmony in the community. The Centre is open to students from all backgrounds in the region, with the goal of facilitating peaceful coexistence and understanding through dance, music, and theater. Artistic expression transcends cultures, and people from all walks of life are united through listening, playing, and moving together.

The Centre's growing student body (1000+) needs more space to practice and host events, and construction is soon to be underway. JNF Canada will fund the creation of a rehearsal studio for their orchestra and smaller ensembles.

This project aligns beautifully with the theme for the gala's online presentation: "A Mosaic of Peacemakers." The program is a multimedia narrative, telling stories of the many grassroots peacemakers in Israel who build bridges between Jews and Arabs, generally under the radar of the media and public awareness. These are not official representatives in suits at Camp David, but brave advocates spread out in high-conflict zones throughout Israel, working towards nonviolent political resolution, and creating space for peaceful dialogue.

"This year's Negev Gala theme is about hope," explains Steinberg. "We're celebrating all kinds of grassroots peacemakers in Israel, who build bridges with their neighbours in an effort to find common ground, and ultimately, peace. There are many who think this is the only way forward, instead of formal negotiations between leaders that have proven to be mostly fruitless."

The hostess and story-teller for this event, Laura Shuler, brings her extensive professional background in leadership, education, and program development and a longstanding involvement with the arts, especially drama and music. Laura will facilitate the evening in the spirit of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world). For her, this work is all about building connections, and bringing people together in a unifying and harmonious way.

The program includes several esteemed keynote speakers and music by trilingual Canadian-Israeli actress



Clor Centre for Performing Arts in Kfar Bloom. Israel is the beneficiary project for this year's JNF Calgary Virtual Negev Gala.

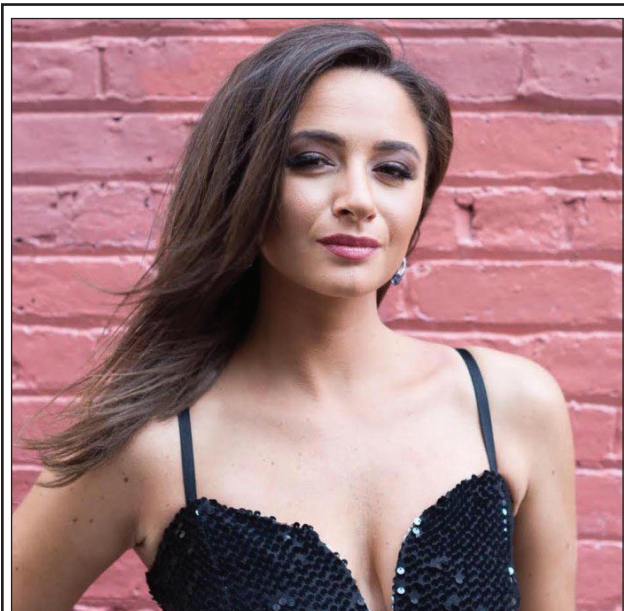
and singer Nicole Raviv, with members of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Raviv has performed globally in English, French and Hebrew, and works with Grammy-award winning musicians and producers from around the world.

Gala attendees have the option of receiving a gift basket of Israeli treats, and are invited to enjoy this heartfelt, meaningful program, dressed in their finest gala attire or fanciest pajamas - whichever is preferred - from the comfort of home.

Accessing the program requires a minimum donation of \$180 which can be made online at jnfcalgary.ca, by phone at 403-255-0295, or by email to calgary@jnf.ca. Sponsorships and advertising in the commemorative book are also available. A link to the program will be provided after registration, and the program can be viewed for an additional 48 hours after the launch on Sunday, May 1, 2022 at 7 PM MST.

For more information please reach out to Elliott Steinberg, Executive Director, JNF Calgary (Southern Alberta) at 403-255-0297, or elliott.steinberg@jnf.ca.

Lesley Machon is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.



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Simchas and Celebrations

Edmonton Talmud Torah Society shares its 2021-26 Strategic Plan

By the TT Society Board

An incredible amount of work has gone into the Edmonton Talmud Torah (TT) Society Strategic Plan, a process that began during the 2019-20 school year. While our priorities were shared with you at our June 2021 AGM last year, we have spent the last few months orienting our new board members, approving the final plan details and beginning our action plan (which you may have seen updates from in our newly redesigned Talmud Torah Times newsletter).

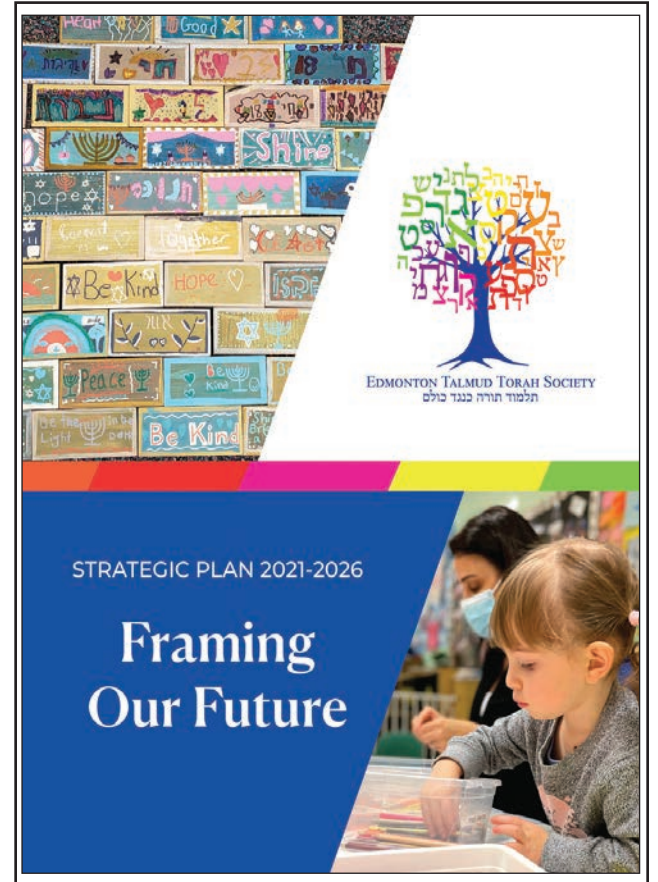
In line with TT's rich history of support from community-minded individuals, the development of this strategic plan was the culmination of many hours of volunteer work from a diverse group of committed community members and TT parents.

Our strategic plan areas of focus are: 1. Ensuring and promoting high pedagogical and academic standards in Judaic and Hebrew studies; 2. Meeting the needs of individual students; 3. Creating and implementing a comprehensive communication plan that integrates Talmud Torah Society (TTS), School Council (SC) and Early Learning Centre (ELC) communications; 4.

Ensuring the Society's financial viability; 5. Establishing a fundraising program and; 6. Ensuring the Board follows governance best practices.

We would like to recognize the following community members who invested their time to create this plan, many of whom are now working to bring these goals to life: Laurence Abbott, Melissa Benjamin, Ben Coppens, Jennifer Coppens, Ruth Coppens, Leor Eliyahu, Lisa Hering, Michelle Huberman, Doug Kondor, Jennifer Magalnick, Megan Mandel, Sharon Marcus, Rebecca Mello, Christina Reboh, Mona Rosenberg, Debbie Sniderman, Randy Soifer, Arielle Whitham, Gary Wolch, Noga Vaisblat, Ben Yovel. Additional thanks to Talmud Torah Society and Edmonton Public School Board staff, consultant George Rutherford, and all the other community members and parents who engaged with us along the way. Thank you all!

We are thrilled to see both this plan and its actions come to life and look forward to continuing to connect with you in meaningful ways in the future. You can find the Strategic Plan on our website at www.talmudtorahsociety.com. Please direct any questions or comments to nataliesoroka@talmudtorahsociety.com.



Limmud Winnipeg Festival of Jewish Learning is virtual: March 6

By Florencia Katz

The Limmud Winnipeg family is proud to be presenting its 12th annual Festival on March 6, 2022 with 20 virtual sessions on Zoom throughout the day.

The Limmud movement reflects the diversity of the Jewish community and our various interests. Jewish education is at the core of enriching our community and increasing understanding of what Judaism is all about.

Our presenters reflect that diversity. They are rabbis, artists, authors and individuals with powerful stories to tell. They cover a wide range of topics: Israel, Jewish history, archeology, Jewish pride, arts and culture, fighting antisemitism, Torah study, and more.

The scope and range is remarkable for such an event, with presenters from the Jewish Book Council, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Stand With Us, Jewish scholars, four local Winnipeg synagogues, and the University of Manitoba, reflecting a tremendous diversity of topics.

We would all rather be in person, where we could share the buzz and excitement of lunching together and trading experiences, but one more time our Limmud festival will be online.

Here is list of our amazing presentations from across the globe:

Rena Altman, the ultimate Eurovision fan: *Israel in the Eurovision Song Contest: 48 Years of Music*

Yosef Benarroch, multilingual, Sephardic born in Tangiers, Morocco, and commuter from Israel to Winnipeg,

where he is a rabbi and educator: *The Real Reason David Did Not Build the Temple*

Marnie Bondar, Mediation Coordinator for the Alberta Mediation Project for the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta and committed to bring her Babi's history to today's youth: *My Babi Freda and her Story of Surviving Auschwitz*

Stephen Borys, Director and CEO of the Winnipeg Art Gallery and Qaumajuq, and an adjunct professor at the University of Winnipeg: *Finding Nazi-Looted Art in North American's Museums and Collections*

Allan Cheskes, whose passion is a course on Jewish American Influence on American Popular Music: *When Klezmer Met Jazz*

Kosha Dillz, a NYC-based hip-hop artist who toured with Matisyahu: *Going Viral for Good*

Yaffa Epstein, Director of the Wexner Heritage Program and renowned teacher of Jewish text: *Be Flexible Like the Reed: A Talmudic Story of Rethinking*

Continued on page 10

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Simchas and Celebrations

Ethos Bridal makes your wedding day a wonderful experience

"Making your wedding day a wonderful experience is our main objective," said Haya Stein, matriarch of Calgary's Ethos Bridal Boutique.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made celebrations complicated so visiting Ethos is a breath of fresh air. The talented and knowledgeable team are simply there to help the bride and her party look and feel their very best, at a price within their budget.

Fashion trends have come and gone, but the classic elegance of Ethos Bridal Boutique has withstood the test of time and flourished. They are proudly celebrating over fifty years of dressing Alberta's brides and bridal parties.

Every special occasion begins with the dress and that is the specialty of Ethos Bridal Boutique. From flower girl to prom, bridesmaid to bride, evening gown to mother-of-the-bride, it's no wonder that visiting Ethos has become such a sentimental family tradition.

Stan and Haya Stein, along with Haya's brothers, Sam and Hayim Hamborger, founded Ethos in 1970 in Alberta and they have worked together for over 50 years to bring the finest quality gowns to Canadian brides and their wedding parties.

Hayim manages the day to day operations with precision and dedication to the bridal fashion industry. Haya has a passion for all things bridal and a natural talent for designing extraordinary wedding gowns and evening wear. You will find her designs at Ethos under the Anna Rose Label, lovingly named after her mother.

"In our bridal salon you will find a wide range of dresses including exquisite couture designer wedding gowns, bridesmaid dresses, mother of the bride dresses, mother of the groom dresses, flower girl dresses and a large selection of elegant evening gowns, special occasion dresses, graduation/prom dresses and unique bridal accessories," explains Haya.

With 50 years' experience in the wedding industry, Haya has cultivated close relationships with the world's most celebrated fashion houses and fills her store with their finest collections. She inspires her professional bridal consultants to graciously serve every bride and help her find the perfect dress... at the very best price!

"We have an assortment of dresses that flatter every figure and offer styles for any taste or special occasion," remarked Haya.

Bridal collections include Haute Couture Naama Anat, Mon Cheri, Paloma Blanca, Madeline Gardner Prom, Sophia Tolli, Julietta, Atelier Pronovias Barcelona, Calla Blanche, SKY Collection, ellie wilde mon cheri, Mikaella by Paloma Blanca, Angela & Alison and others.

Originally based out of both Edmonton and Calgary, the Edmonton store, located in West Edmonton Mall was a favorite destination shopping experience for brides for many years. Now Edmonton shoppers make the special trip to Calgary to sample the unique Ethos bridal selection.



Ethos Bridal Boutique offers an assortment of fabulous dresses that flatter every figure.

"Our beautiful dresses bring the customers into the shop," noted Haya, "but it is our amazing customer service that brings customers back year after year and across generations of friends and family members."

Visit Ethos Bridal at Calgary's historic Devenish Building on 17 Avenue for the latest bridal, bridesmaid, mother-of-the-bride, flower girl, prom and evening wear collections. Book an appointment online at ethosbridal.com or call 403-245-4188.

NDP Bill would ban hate symbols

(OTTAWA) – This month, NDP House Leader Peter Julian (New Westminster-Burnaby) tabled Bill C-229, a private member's bill that would prevent anyone from selling and displaying symbols that promote hatred and violence. Among the symbols that would be banned are Swastikas and other Nazi emblems, Klu Klux Klan symbols and Confederate flags. Bill C-229 is a tool designed to address the growing violence and hatred in

Canadian communities.

"Everyone has the right to feel welcomed, secure and respected in their community. Allowing these symbols of hatred to be sold in stores or publicly displayed is retraumatizing for people who have been, and continue to be, targets of violence and oppression," said Julian. "Symbols that have been used to incite violence against people have no place in our society. I hope the federal government will support this bill and work with us to ensure symbols of hate aren't normalized or tolerated in any way and to make our communities better for everyone."

Heather McPherson, MP for Edmonton Strathcona seconded the Bill. She said, "Overt hate, racism, and

antisemitism has become a feature of recent protests in Ottawa and elsewhere. Jewish people in particular have been targeted by this group through the distribution of yellow stars and the display of swastikas and other hateful imagery. I condemn hate in all forms and I will continue to work in Parliament to counter hate. New Democrats have called for white supremacist and neo-Nazi organizations to be added to the terrorist list and my colleague, Peter Julian, has tabled Bill C-229 – An Act to amend the Criminal Code (banning symbols of hate). I was honoured to second this bill as an important step to countering hate, but there is much more work to be done including ending the online radicalization of Canadians.

Continued on page 18



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EDITOR: Daniel Moser
PAST PUBLISHERS: Barry Slawsky, David Moser, Judy Shapiro, Richard Bronstein

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Simchas and Celebrations

An event planner is a great investment for every gathering

By AT Events Design

Event planning on a good day is a challenging course to navigate. In the COVID-era it may seem at times overwhelming. As restrictions lift and the world begins to open up, now is the time to build an event planner into your budget. A planner will ensure all details and precautionary measures are taken into consideration, add tasteful elements that protect guests but don't encroach on your celebration, and handle all the bumps along the way.

No one knows the challenges of planning an event during COVID-19 better than Calgary native, Alicia Thompson, nee Silver, who has been working in the event industry for over 20 years in Calgary, New York and Toronto. Alicia has planned everything from simple and elegant intimate parties to extravagant affairs. She believes that no matter how big or small, all occasions deserve to be thoughtfully designed and executed to perfection. Alicia gets the same joy designing and planning intimate dinner parties, weddings and mitzvahs, as award shows and non-profit galas.

One thing Alicia always stresses to friends, family and prospective clients is: invest in hiring a planner. Event planners live and breathe events, offering clients an abundance of resources to ensure their event is unique and goes off without a hitch. If you've been toying with the idea of hiring an event planner, but are unsure about what this person can do for you, review the following perks of hiring an event planner.

Find Vendors with Ease

Planners are responsible for finding the best vendors out there for you. Your planner often gets discounts and extras due to their working relationships, and is able to negotiate on your behalf. They will also be on-site on your big day to ensure contracted services are executed to perfection.

Differentiate Your Event from Others

Imagine if all you did day-in and day-out was design events for people with varying tastes, visions and budgets. Event planners have seen everything, and it is their business to know what is trending when it comes to entertaining. When hiring a planner you get access to all the great things they've spent years researching and refining, and are guaranteed that your event will be unique to you and your family.

Save Time, Money and Energy

A good planner knows the ins and outs of the hospitality industry. They will inform you of things that may have never crossed your mind such as: hidden costs on liquor, electrical requirements, event flow and site logistics to name a few. Having a planner throughout the planning process, and most importantly day of, will ensure money is saved and that things run smoothly.

As the owner and lead designer at Alicia Thompson



Event planners help elevate intimate occasions such as Ali's Bat Mitzvah. Photo courtesy Alicia Thompson Events and Design.

Events and Design, Alicia wants her clients to enjoy their events. She knows how much thought, time and money goes into hosting a memorable affair and believes that her clients should enjoy the celebration as much as their guests. Whether it is your wedding, your child's Bar Mitzvah or a large family seder, Alicia hopes to bring her experience and industry expertise to your family's simcha, and let you enjoy the event with your loved ones.

Alicia can be reached at alicia@ateventsdesign.com or call (647) 884 8528. For more information visit www.ateventsdesign.com

Limmud *Cont. from page 8*

Allan Finkel, Rabbi and spiritual leader of Temple Shalom, the only Reform congregation in Winnipeg: *The Origins of Rabbinic Judaism: Ancient Israel and the Life and Times of Hillel and Shammai*

Ben M. Freeman, a gay Jewish author, born in Scotland and DE&I (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) specialist: *Jewish Pride: The Jewish Future*

Haskel Greenfield, distinguished Professor of Anthropology, Co-Director of the Near Eastern and Biblical Archaeology Lab, and Coordinator of the Judaic Studies Program at the University of Manitoba: *Canaanite Household Rituals in the Early Bronze Age of*

the Southern Levant

John Hample, Mussar practitioner and facilitator: *New Mussar Pathways to Bring Your 'Spiritual Curriculum' Up Close & (Inter)Personal*

Charlotte Korchak, Senior Educator at StandWithUs, working with over 10,000 students: *Concepts & Misconceptions about Israel, Zionism, and the Jews*

Merissa Nathan Gerson, an intergenerational trauma consultant whose work focuses on grief and grieving: *Forget Prayers, Bring Cake: Grief and Grieving in 2022*

Avi Posen, Jewish Winnipeg's own favourite young educator, providing resources to other educators around the world (and Limmud Winnipeg's first coordinator): *Engaging the Next Generation of Jews Through Media*

Naomi Ragen, the author of 13 internationally best-selling novels full of familiar Jewish women's stories: *My First Sequel*

Halley Ritter, an artist and curator living and working on Treaty 1 Territory whose work is informed by her Jewish identity: *Tracing Memory: A Process Art Workshop*

Kliel Rose, spiritual leader of Congregation Etz Chayim, ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary: *Shabbat Zachor—The Way of Entering into Purim*

Moshe Saks, Eliana Saks, Ugochukwi Nnaji, and Moshe Nwafor telling a family story that includes an unusual Jewish community: *Finding Love and Jewish Community in Nigeria*

Jerry Scherer, amateur genealogist and personal genealogical researcher as well as VP, Communications of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto: *L'dor V'dor (From Generation to Generation)*

Rena Secter Elbaze, Director of Engagement and Education at Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Winnipeg: *Gossip, That Dirty Little Word!*

Take this opportunity to join Winnipeggers and other participants from around the world on March 6 and you will want to visit Winnipeg in 2023, for our 13th annual Limmud when we hope to return the joys of gathering in person.

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Simchas and Celebrations

One thing we need to stop saying at Bnei Mitzvot

By Seth Goldstein

(My Jewish Learning via JTA) - Celebrating a bar or bat mitzvah is a unique and special time in the life of a child, family and community. Having experienced it personally (30 years ago!), as a father and as a congregational rabbi, I can attest to the transformative power of the ritual. The ability to recognize and celebrate a child as they enter into their teenage years, the ability for parents to see their child growing and maturing, and the ability of a community to see one whom they have nurtured come into their own, is very powerful.

We naturally want to praise our kids at these sacred occasions, and one of the most moving parts of the bar or bat mitzvah ceremony to me is when we—congregational leaders, teachers, parents—are able to speak publicly about and to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

There is one phrase that we commonly use, however, that gives me pause, and one that I think we should refrain from using when speaking to our youth at these times: “you did a great job.”

While bar or bat mitzvah requirements will vary from congregation to congregation, community to community, the ceremony usually takes place in the context of a Shabbat service and will usually involve the Bar or Bat Mitzvah demonstrating a combination of Torah and/or haftarah reading, prayer leading, community service and delivering a d’var Torah (a teaching on the Torah portion.) And while these are learned skills, when we say “you did a great job” we are reinforcing the idea that the bar or bat mitzvah ceremony is primarily a performative act, and that the meaning of the day comes from how well the child was able to master the particular skills we ask them to do. (And that we judge our students against an objective standard and against each other.)

While we want our kids to have the skills they need to be able to live fully Jewish lives, does the quality of their Jewish life depend on how well they master those skills? Skills are measurable, but when does a spiritual life only embody measurable skills? With secular education we

push back when students are ranked and rated solely on standardized assessment tests, arguing that they don’t represent the whole child. Why should Jewish life be any different?

Or even more so: spirituality is perhaps by definition immeasurable. How do we measure a sense of awe at the power and scope of the universe and the natural world surrounding us? How do we measure deep feelings of gratitude? How do we measure the ability to be inspired and challenged by sacred text and to formulate new thoughts and ideas in response to it? How do we measure compassion or generosity of spirit? How do we measure having a sense of the divine, that we are part of something greater than ourselves?

Indeed, these are the ideas we want to cultivate in our youth in order to live full Jewish adult lives, so maybe the traditional “skills” we focus on are the wrong ones, or at least we give too much attention to them.

There are lots of things we can say to our kids at the moment of their bar or bat mitzvah ceremony without focusing on how well they may have chanted their Torah portion. We can say, “I’m proud of your accomplishment” - recognizing that setting out and completing a task is in and of itself worthy of praise. We can say, “Thank you for your dedication and commitment” - recognizing that the growth comes in the process, not just in the end result. We

can focus on who they are, rather than what they did.

All this is to say as well that we may need to reassess what bar or bat mitzvah means. We may need to reassess what we expect of our children in celebrating this milestone, so that we can focus on developing our children’s whole spiritual lives. And in that way they will know, and we will know, that, in their own way, they all do a good job.

Reprinted from Rabbis Without Borders (2016) - a project of Clal - The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership.

JFSC presents its Jubilee Chairs



JFSC is thrilled to present Wynne and Harvey Thal as the Honourary Chairs for their 60th Diamond Jubilee - which will be held at the Carriage House Inn and Conference Centre on April 26, 2022.

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Best hamantaschen

By Shannon Sarna

(JTA) - Hamantaschen weren't always my favorite cookie to enjoy. The ones I grew up with were dry. My grandma would bring them home from her synagogue's sisterhood each year and I would do my best to smile and take a bite. Fast forward, and the quality and variety of hamantaschen have come a very long way.

These triangle treats are enjoyed for the Jewish holiday of Purim, when the wicked king Haman (BOO!) was defeated through the brilliant intellect of a Jewish woman, Queen Esther. There's a bit more to the story, of course. But we were blessed with hamantaschen cookies as one of the many ways we are encouraged to celebrate the holiday. My other favorite part about Purim is that you are commanded to "drink until you cannot tell good from evil." Consider it done.

However, hamantaschen do not actually date back to Queen Esther; they are a far more recent addition to Jewish cuisine. Triangle-shaped, yeasted dough pastries filled with poppy seed (known as mohn) were common in

Germany during the 18th century, and that's when Jews started adopting them and enjoying them for Purim, the shape a nod to the hat worn by Haman.

My recipe below (which, yes, is one of the best you will ever try) is inspired by my dear friend Rachel Korycan and her mom Susan who took me under their wing to show me their recipe, which yields a far more delicate and delicious hamantaschen than many other old-school recipes. It is not made with a yeasted dough, but rather a sugar-cookie like dough which bakes up sweet and tender.

My favorite fillings include raspberry jam with mini chocolate chips, cookie butter, chocolate hazelnut spread and store-bought poppy seed filling (you can find it in the baking aisle near the cherry pie filling). But really, the sky is the limit, and the most important thing is to have fun.

Hamantaschen can be tricky to make sometimes - they are notorious for leaking or losing their shape - so make sure to follow my genius hamantaschen trick to ensure you have picture perfect cookies every time. Chill the dough for at least one hour before rolling it out, and pinch the corners very well to ensure the cookies keep their shape.

Ingredients

1 stick (1/2 cup) unsalted butter (or margarine), at room temperature, 3/4 cup granulated sugar, 1 egg, 1 Tbsp milk (or other non-dairy milk), 1 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp grated lemon zest (optional), 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour plus more flour for rolling, 1/4 tsp baking powder, 1/4 tsp salt

Directions

Beat the butter and sugar together until smooth. Add egg, milk, vanilla and lemon zest until mixed thoroughly.

Sift together the flour, baking powder and salt.

Add dry mixture to wet mixture until incorporated.

Note: if the dough is too soft, increase flour amount by a few Tbsp at a time until firmer.

Form dough into a disk and cover with plastic wrap.

Chill dough for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.

Dust surface with flour to keep from sticking.

Roll the dough to about 1/4 inch thick.

Using a round cookie cutter, cut out and place onto cookie sheet. To keep the dough from sticking to your cutter, dip in flour before each cut.

Fill each round with 1/2 tsp of your favorite filling. Using your favorite method, pinch corners together tightly.

Pop into the fridge for 10 minutes, or freezer for 5 minutes, to ensure hamantaschen hold their shape.

Bake at 400° for about 7-9 minutes.

Your wedding videographer should be a Reel Mensch

By Jared Paull

Never let a wedding videographer's confidence fool you. The service itself is relatively very young, and we are constantly inventing the medium as we go. Furthermore, folks don't always know what they are seeking from this type of service. One thing is certain, the expectations are high. Couples want the events properly documented, and with the accessibility of expensive HD equipment, there is no reason why it can't have the look of a Hollywood movie. I can tell you one thing, there is no tougher Executive Producer than a Bride, and no tougher shoot than a wedding. The exciting thing from an artistic perspective is that before the videographers even arrive,

there has been tens of thousands of budget dollars put towards set design, props, makeup and wardrobe to create a sensational world to capture. Also, there is no need for contrived emotion, because all of our key players are experiencing something genuine and exciting.

When our company began creating wedding videos, we needed a way to separate ourselves stylistically, so that potential shoppers would see our work, and need to have it. Our company is very versatile. In a normal week, it is very possible that we will be working on a television commercial at the same time as a safety and orientation video, or a music video, or webcasting events around the world.

Style has always been a derivative of the function of our work. So when creating a style for our product `wedding

video`, we created the term `romantic, cinematic, documentary.` This term has driven the style of our wedding videos for the past 5 years. The `romance` is derived from the subject matter, so that our narrative is always about love. Our `look` is cinematic, meaning the shots are always carefully composed, with broadcast quality cameras, and movement tools such as stabilizers and dollies - the very same equipment used in our TV commercials. The `documentary` aspect is our capture style. Our shooters act as flies on the wall, not interfering with the event, but documenting it. We don't create beautiful moments, we skillfully capture them, and present them romantically and cinematically.

The biggest trick to succeeding in this industry is right there in our company name - You've got to be a Mensch.

I often remind couples when choosing photographers and videographers that the most important thing is to pick somebody you wouldn't mind having around you on the most important day of your life.

We are almost 12 years into this business, which has taken on a life of its own by now, but it wouldn't have without a lot of support from our community, many of whom gave us a shot before we had much professional experience. I had my first videography gig at the age of 9 and I haven't put the camera down since. To keep tabs of the work we are doing, go to reelensch.com or like Reel Mensch on Facebook.

PJ Library

Purim Story Walk

Sunday, March 13
10 - 11:30 a.m.
Lessard Community Hall
17404 - 57 Avenue

Register at jewishedmonton.org

Enjoy an outdoor walk through the pages of a Purim story and make mishloach manot (gift baskets) to give to others.

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community calendar

Want to know what's going on in Jewish Calgary?
Check out the Community Calendar at jewishcalgary.org

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



A MESSAGE FROM ADAM SILVER

For this month's POM message, I am inspired to highlight our community's focus on accessibility, inclusion, and the removal of barriers to participation. It has been said, one can tell a lot about a community by examining how it treats its most vulnerable members. While we still have much to do to become a model community, we also have quite a lot of which to be proud. I'll begin my message with a focus on **Jewish Disabilities Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM)**, and then will transition to some highlights of our Integrated Bursary Program, where Beth Price and Debbie Ryder, volunteer co-chairs, will share a few words.

Over the years, Calgary Jewish Federation and its community partners have placed increasing focus and resources on making programs, services, and physical buildings more inclusive. To be clear, inclusion is not simply about accommodation or segregated programming. True inclusion requires us to see things from different perspectives, to integrate various programs and people more fully, and to apply a strengths-based approach to all we do, viewing everyone's contributions as special and enhancing, rather than things to be modified or managed. While our efforts aim to keep this in mind all year long, the month of February and JDAIM each year help us renew our commitment to inclusion and provide us with opportunities to shine a light on the amazing potential in front of us.

From fully integrated programs to facilities that enhance their physical spaces in beneficial ways for all, Jewish Calgary is continuing in its efforts to remove barriers to participation and enable even more people to live the Jewish lives they want for themselves and

those close to them. Federation's Inclusion Manager, Karina Szulc, brings expertise and passion to her work, and in addition to providing programs and services, she is a fountain of knowledge for families in need of support, and also provides guidance and training for our community's organizations and schools. She works with a volunteer committee chaired by the equally committed Sandra Weizman. If you would like to learn more about our inclusion efforts or want to support our work in this area by volunteering or donating, please reach out to Karina directly at karinas@jewishcalgary.org.

Jewish Calgary continues to operate its innovative **Integrated Bursary Program (IBP)**, an initiative intended to remove financial barriers to participating in formative Jewish experiences, including formal and informal education. IBP provides the opportunity for families to apply for a single, reduced contribution amount for The Calgary Jewish Academy, Halpern Akiva Academy, JCC day camp and membership, and Camp BB Riback summer registration – entirely through one streamlined process. All sensitive information is shared only once and is held with the utmost confidence, and there are opportunities to share subjective information through one-to-one meetings with volunteer counselors, including loss of job, family health expenses, and more. IBP is a dignified way to enable participation.

The program has been led since its inception by IBP Co-Chair, Beth Price, who notes that: "Jewish Calgary is a community that cares. It is our duty to ensure that our children experience Jewish education and community activities while mitigating financial barriers. IBP is a dignified way to partner with families and community organizations to allow children to live up to their

potential. I am very proud of IBP and I know it is making a meaningful difference for many community members."

Recently, Beth was joined by Debbie Ryder as co-chair, with Debbie serving as a volunteer counselor, and developing into a leadership role alongside Beth. Debbie values the program in that: "It provides a chance for community participation for those who would otherwise fall through the cracks or opt-out of our schools, camps, and JCC. I have sat with families who have shared details of their financial and other challenges with me, and who have inspired me with their unwavering commitment to instilling Jewish experiences and values in their children, even though the cost is prohibitive for them. IBP helps our community achieve something very special." Learn more about IBP by visiting jewishcalgary.org/ibp-making-jewish-life-more-affordable or emailing ibp@jewishcalgary.org.

I am so proud of our community's efforts in inclusion and accessibility. While we are not yet fully barrier-free, we are certainly improving each and every year. I hope you will join us in viewing things from a different perspective from time to time, and see the immense value we derive when we include others. Let's imagine together a Jewish Calgary that sets the standard for other communities and lives and breathes what it preaches. I am confident we are well on our way, and I ask all of you to join us in our aspirations.

B'Shalom,

Adam Silver, CEO, 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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JDAIM FEBRUARY 2022
Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance & Inclusion Month

INCLUSION
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FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S JDAIM PROGRAMS AT JEWISHCALGARY.ORG

BEST WISHES KATHIE!

After 13+ years of dedicated and talented service to our community, Kathie Wainer has stepped away from her role as PJ Library® and PJ Our Way® Manager. Kathie built PJ and PJOW into integral parts of the lives of our community's young families. Her efforts have provided countless opportunities for parents and grandparents to engage Jewishly with their children and grandchildren. Our community will deeply miss Kathie's energy, creativity, and partnership. We are very grateful for all Kathie has given to our community, and look forward to hearing about her joy and success in her next chapter. We hope to recognize and celebrate Kathie in the not-too-distant future, at a time when we can gather in-person. Until then, we don't say goodbye, but say *I'hitraot* (see you, soon).

Community members who wish to honour Kathie's incredible work are asked to consider supporting our PJ Library Endowment Fund to ensure this critical program continues for future generations. For a limited time, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation is matching all donations to this fund at 25%. Kathie, we will miss you and wish you only good things ahead.
Todah Rabah and B'Hatzlacha!

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2022

IBP opens doors

Calgary Jewish Federation's Integrated Bursary Program can help you, if you find it's a financial struggle to participate fully in Jewish life in our community.

With a single application followed by a discreet, personalized session with a Federation volunteer, you can access subsidies for day schools, summer camp, and recreational activities – depending on your need.

More information and application form available online at: jewishcalgary.org or by email to: ibp@jewishcalgary.org

TOGETHER WE ARE A COMMUNITY
UJA 2021

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

Medicine Hat man who promoted hate against Jews is back at it

By Jeremy Appel

A Medicine Hat man who was handed a conditional sentence for promoting hatred against Jews is back in court after continuing to publish anti-Semitic materials online in violation of his release conditions.

Loki Hulgaard was sentenced to four months house arrest and two years probation in October 2020 after pleading guilty to promoting hatred in relation to a 2018 incident where he attempted to circulate currency with anti-Semitic slogans, such as "Zionist Occupied Government," printed on it at a local grocery store.

As a condition of his sentence, Hulgaard had to undergo intensive counselling and remove troves of anti-Semitic literature he had posted online.

The Medicine Hat Police Service was tipped off in July 2021 that Hulgaard was still writing anti-Semitic content, the *Medicine Hat News* reported.

After executing a new search warrant on his residence, police found 3,000 pages of material circulated online that could be in violation of his court order, which led to him being charged with a breach, the *News* reported.

Kurt Phillips, a researcher with the Canadian Anti-Hate Network, told *AJNews* he was skeptical of the relatively lenient sentence Hulgaard received to begin with.

Phillips said Hulgaard has gone so far down the

far-right rabbit role that "it would take something incredibly intensive to get him out, because that became his world."

"He believed every single thing he was saying," said Phillips. "It doesn't surprise me that he's back to writing."

If the breach ends up going to trial, Phillips predicts Hulgaard will "try to pull in every crank theory and idea you can imagine" in an effort to justify his anti-Semitism.

Hulgaard attempted to reverse his guilty plea a month after his sentencing, but that effort was vacated in May, officials from the Court of Appeal confirmed to the *News*.

Titles of his recent diatribes include *Jewish White Genocide*, *Who Is the Jew?: The Jew Identifier Document and How ((They)) Ruined My Life: Autobiography of Loki Hulgaard*.

In a statement, B'nai Brith CEO Michael Mostyn said Hulgaard must face incarceration.

"We appreciate the diligent work of Medicine Hat Police on the Loki Hulgaard file," said Mostyn.

"However, this is not a case about breaching a conditional sentence order. This is one of the worst cases of antisemitic propaganda we have ever seen in Canada.



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Next print date is March 30, 2022
Next Deadline: March 24, 2022

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or call 780-421-7966**

"If the Canadian justice system cannot deliver real consequences for committed hatemongers, then it will fail to deter acts of violence against Jews and other communities."

In addition to his conviction for promoting hatred, which carries a maximum sentence of two years, Hulgaard was initially charged with 13 firearms offenses after police searched his home in August 2018 and found four firearms — two which had their serial numbers removed — three over-capacity magazines and 2,000 rounds of ammunition.

In exchange for his guilty plea, Hulgaard's firearms-related charges were reduced to a single non-criminal count of improperly registering his guns after he changed his name from Brendan Dell in 2012 and failed to update his registration.

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

Jewish Studies Week

Cont. from page 1

Jewish Studies have to offer one another, and about how the two communities speak both to and past one another.

On March 10, at 4 pm MST, the University of Alberta presents the 2022 Tova Yedlin Lecture, a live Zoom webinar and Q&A with Professor of Jewish History at Harvard University Derek Penslar.

Professor Penslar takes a comparative and transnational approach to Jewish history, which he

studies within the contexts of modern capitalism, nationalism, and colonialism. He recognizes that there are more biographies of Theodor Herzl than of any other political leader in Jewish history. A combination of Herzl's status in Israeli consciousness as the father of political Zionism, his personality and actions, and the time and places of his life — the culturally rich fin de siècle, in western and central Europe's great capitals — have made him into a magnet for biographers.

However he believes that every generation looks at the past in new ways and evaluates leaders in new light. Only now, more than a century after Herzl's death, are we emerging from the cycle of hagiography and deconstruction, myth and counter-myth, that has characterized most of the writing on Herzl's life. Penslar notes, "In keeping with recent trends in cultural history, which interrogate the relationship between affect and intellect, reflection and action, subjectivity and interaction, I have aspired to write a holistic biography of Herzl — holistic in terms of not only Herzl's persona, but also in terms of how he was perceived by others, and how others' perceptions of Herzl shaped Herzl's own

sense of self and agency. All being is social being, and political leadership depends upon, and responds to, its following. These truisms are especially relevant for Herzl, a man possessed of an extraordinarily frail ego and labile selfhood. My biography of Herzl shuns a "great man theory of history" precisely because such an approach does not allow access to the secrets of Herzl's greatness."

Register at ualberta.ca/wirth-institute/ online-programming for these two free Zoom webinar presentations.

On March 13 at 7 pm Dr. David Koffman returns for a webinar presentation that will examine what Jewish and Indigenous peoples' interactions have looked like in Canada, exploring how this connects with Canada's history of colonialism. This is certainly a timely discussion, when an increasing number of unmarked graves near former Indian Residential Schools are being uncovered and more attention is being paid to the brutal treatment suffered by the Indigenous survivors of the schools.

In addition to being a professor at York University, David S. Koffman is the author of *The Jews' Indian: Colonialism, Pluralism, and Belonging in America* (Rutgers University Press, 2019), *No Better Home? Jews, Canada, and the Sense of Belonging* (University of Toronto Press, 2021) and serves as the editor-in-chief of the journal *Canadian Jewish Studies / Études juives canadiennes*.

This webinar is being jointly sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, Temple Beth Ora and the University of Alberta. Register at jewishedmonton.org.

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

JEWISH AND INDIGENOUS ENCOUNTERS IN CANADA

WITH DR. DAVID S. KOFFMAN

MARCH 13, 2022

7 p.m. MST
via Zoom

REGISTER NOW

www.jewishedmonton.org

This community talk will examine what Jewish and Indigenous peoples' interactions have looked like in Canada, exploring how this connects with Canada's history of colonialism.



Métis and Jews in Canada

A Conversation

Monday, March 7 @ 4:00 pm MST
Live Zoom Presentation and Q&A

David S. Koffman is the J. Richard Shiff Chair for the Study of Canadian Jewry in the Department of History at York University.

Paul L. Gareau is Métis and is an associate professor in the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta.

This dialogue - between a scholar of Métis life and a scholar of Jewish history - begins by unpacking the strange results of the 2016 Canadian Census, which mistakenly showed that the number of Métis people doubled since the previous census, while the number of Jews in Canada fell by half during the same time. The two scholars will then move to ask questions of one another about the nature of difference, identity, and racialization in Canada using these two groups as case studies, about what Métis Studies and Jewish Studies have to offer one another, and about how the two communities speak both to and past one another.



REGISTER NOW!
E-mail psabo@ualberta.ca

Part of
Jewish Studies Week 2022

from the Sources

by Eliezer Segal

It sounds better in Tarsian

Among the leaders who accompanied the Jewish governor Zerubbabel in the return to Zion after the Babylonian captivity, as told in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, is a person named Mordecai. That list contains ten names, which would seem to indicate ten separate persons. However, the absence of conjunctions allows for the possibility that one or more of the cases involves an individual with two names.

This is a possibility that might apply to Mordecai whose name is followed by an otherwise unknown "Bilshan."

As far as I am aware, academic scholarship has not reached a consensus regarding the meaning of "Bilshan." Some derive it from a Hebrew word for "inquire" or "investigate." Others connect it to a Babylonian word connoting "their lord." In the Apocryphal Greek work known as "1Esdras" the name appears as "Beelsarus" which might incorporate a blessing for the deity Bel [= Marduk].

The prevailing view of the sages in the Talmud and Midrash was that Bilshan is a descriptive epithet attached to the name Mordecai. "Mordecai" was a common Babylonian name, and it was customary for Babylonian and Persian Jews to go by both Hebrew and non-Jewish monikers (as we learn from the case of the double-named Hadassah-Esther). Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra conceded that the Hebrew syntax allows for both possibilities: that "Bilshan" is attached to the name Mordecai, or that it refers to a separate person. He preferred the latter option.

In fact, the book of Esther speaks of Mordecai as one "who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah." Jeconiah's exile took place in 597 B.C.E., and Zerubbabel's return is estimated at around 530 B.C.E. The events of the Megillah occurred during the decade following 483 B.C.E.—when Mordecai would have been more than a century old. Some have suggested therefore that the person who is being linked to Jeconiah's exile is not Mordecai himself but his ancestor Kish, a possibility that is quite possible from a grammatical standpoint.

The book of Esther contains not the slightest hint of Mordecai's traveling to Judea at any point in his life. Ibn Ezra declared categorically that the Mordecai of Ezra was

one and the same as Mordecai the Jew in Esther. In taking this position he was allying himself with the predominant view of the talmudic sages.

The plot thickens considerably when we take note of a passage in the Mishnah that enumerates various officials who served in the second Jerusalem Temple. The text in the standard printed editions reads, "Pethahiah presided over the nests [that is, the distribution of doves for sacrificial offerings]. Pethahiah was Mordecai. Why was he designated by the name Pethahiah [from the Hebrew root for opening or uncovering]? Because he would 'open' matters and expound them; and he understood seventy languages."

Ascribing such impressive linguistic expertise to Mordecai dovetails neatly with the view that equates him with "Bilshan," which contains the Semitic root for tongue or language, *LShN*. Commentators have interpreted the term in the sense of "master of tongues," "mixer of tongues," and so forth. Indeed, "*balshan*" has been adopted as the modern Hebrew term for a linguist.

However, the words "Pethahiah was Mordecai" are not attested in any reliable text of the Mishnah.

Furthermore, Mordecai was not of priestly lineage and therefore was ineligible to hold office in the Temple.

Nevertheless, the Talmud connects Pethahiah's / Mordecai's mastery of languages with the premise that he was a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court. Rabbi Yoḥanan stipulated as a necessary qualification for that position that a judge must be proficient in seventy languages, in keeping with the rabbinic conception about the total number of nations in the world. The rationale for this requirement was to preclude the need to hear testimony through translators or interpreters.

That assumption reflects the legendary aura that surrounded the memory of the Temple era for later generations. Some medieval authorities tried to ease this language requirement for judges. Thus, Maimonides speaks about their understanding "most" languages and only recommends it as a desirable ideal rather than a mandatory prerequisite. At any rate, this ideal does not appear to be influencing appointments to rabbinical courts today.

Without mentioning Mordecai's name, the Jerusalem Talmud relates several tales that illustrate the linguistic acumen of Pethahiah - albeit not so much in mastering foreign tongues (which, after all, was a skill supposedly shared by all qualified judges), as in his cleverness at deciphering non-verbal hints and gestures.

For instance, once, during a drought, it was impossible to locate barley in time to perform the "Omer" rite, and a certain mute was the only person who knew about an available supply in a place called Gaggot Serifin [= "roofs of sheds"]. Pethahiah was able to correctly interpret the mute's charade of placing one hand on a roof and the other on a shed.

A similar problem arose with respect to the wheat necessary for the two loaves offered on Shavuot, which could only be found in a place called 'Eyn Sokher. When the mute pointed to his eye and to a door-lock, Pethahiah figured out that he was indicating that locality; since 'Eyn in Hebrew can designate an eye or a spring, and *sokher* means "shut" or "dam." The Babylonian Talmud tells these same stories, but identifies the hero as Mordecai.

According to the Talmud, it was Mordecai's polyglot skills that equipped him to eavesdrop on the conversations between Bigthan and Teresh when they were plotting to assassinate Ahasuerus. They were natives of Tarsus and were confident that their exotic vernacular would not be understood by outsiders.

If nothing else, all this serves as a powerful argument for a broad liberal education that promotes the acquisition of foreign tongues.

Whether interrogating witnesses, snooping on conspirators or enjoying foreign literature, there are always some things that are best appreciated in their original languages.

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

Upcoming events with the CPL and EPL

By Maxine Fischbein

The Jewish Federations in Calgary and Edmonton are continuing their amazing partnerships with the Calgary and Edmonton public libraries. During the month of February, library and community members were invited to explore the topic of spiritual resistance during the Holocaust in a second virtual tour of Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust museum.

On March 22, Rebecca Donner, author of *All the Frequent Troubles of our Days: The True Story of the American Woman at the Heart of the German Resistance to Hitler*, will speak about the remarkable deeds of her great-great-aunt, Mildred Harnack, a resistance leader during World War II. Library members in Calgary and Edmonton can register online on the CPL and EPL websites, or rsvp to holocaustedu@jewishcalgary.org.

Increasingly, the programs organized by Calgary Jewish Federation's Holocaust Remembrance and Education Co-Chairs Marnie Bondar and Dahlia Libin and shared throughout Alberta—and beyond—are striking a chord with younger community members.

"I'm 14, and I live in Saskatoon where there are very few Jewish people," said one respondent on the online survey following the virtual conversation with Ben M. Freeman. "Judaism is so little discussed, that I have barely learned anything about the Holocaust in school. But this discussion was so beautiful and really moving to witness, as it was a reminder that I'm not alone in this and there are so many people who can relate to me in this way."

To view the January 27 conversation with Ben M. Freeman, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8DuyOq-BOQ.

Theodor Herzl

A Biography for Our Time

Thursday, March 10 @ 4:00 pm MST
Live Zoom Presentation and Q&A

There are more biographies of Theodor Herzl than of any other political leader in Jewish history. A combination of Herzl's status in Israeli consciousness as the father of political Zionism, his personality and actions, and the time and places of his life – the culturally rich fin de siècle, in western and central Europe's great capitals – have made him into a magnet for biographers. Why did we need another one? Every generation looks at the past in new ways and evaluates leaders in new light. Only now, more than a century after Herzl's death, are we emerging from the cycle of hagiography and deconstruction, myth and counter-myth, that has characterized most of the writing on Herzl's life.

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Derek Penslar is the William Lee Frost Professor of Jewish History at Harvard University. He previously taught at Indiana University, the University of Toronto, and Oxford University, where he was the inaugural holder of the Stanley Lewis Chair in Modern Israel Studies. Penslar takes a comparative and transnational approach to Jewish history, which he studies within the contexts of modern capitalism, nationalism, and colonialism. He is President of the American Academy for Jewish Research, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and an Honorary Fellow of St. Anne's College, Oxford.



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Focus on Real Estate

YEG spring real estate update

By Glick and Glick

Spring is peaking around the corner and the Edmonton Real Estate Market continues the record run over from 2021. We have started the year with about 15% less inventory than last year and posted sales 13% higher in January 2022 than 2021! As well the prices were 3-5% higher than the January before.

If you are looking to sell your single-family home and head for warmer climates or the grandkids then you may have a tinge of a smile on your face as you are selling at a good time. If you are staying in the city and swapping homes, then it is not as noticeable as buying and selling in the same market still has a similar money spread.

However, if you are selling your house and buying a condo you should be in a better position as condos are not appreciating nor selling as fast.

What about if you are looking for a house? Then you must have all your ducks in a row and be able to decide quite quickly. Buyers are finding it a little harder with the decreased selection to “shop” around and the time to go from seeing a house you like to making an offer is very short and you have to expect the possibility of another buyer also offering and the best offer wins. You really need the guidance and help of a seasoned Realtor to help you navigate this market to be able to find and keep what you want.

For the selling of your property, it is still very desirable to polish it up and present it in the very best light and again a Professional Realtor will be your best friend in this endeavor. Some advice may be for you to declutter and stage your property. Or perform some repairs and upgrades. A Realtor can help you figure what will get the best return in dollars and less time on the market.

The biggest challenge on the horizon aside from lower inventory are the impending rise of interest rates. This is expected as soon as March so if you are going to require financing you should be talking to a Mortgage Broker and locking in a rate for as long as is possible so you can search with confidence. If you need a recommendation for a Mortgage Broker, we can also help with that.

What is different now than ever before is that information is available to the consumer from many venues and the role of a Realtor has changed from primarily providing information to helping you make sense of it and applying it to your move. You may only make one or two moves while your Realtor has helped in hundreds or a thousand or more.

Buying and selling is a process that can take time so give us a call and we can help you on your way.

Seth Glick and Murray Glick can be reached at glickandglick.com or by calling 780-909-4313.

Ben Freeman *Cont. from page 1*

must be, on behalf our common humanity.”

Born and raised in Glasgow, Freeman shared a quote that likened growing up Jewish in Scotland to “...growing up a wizard in a muggle world.”

“I was always proud of being Jewish,” Freeman said, though his relationship to Judaism “changed somewhat” when he entered university and, for the first time, encountered left wing Jew-hate.

Around the same time, Freeman came to terms with his sexuality, coming out as a proud, gay man.

“I saw the non-Jewish world ...embrace me for being gay...but I saw the complete double standard with which my Jewishness was treated,” said Freeman.

When he spoke about the Holocaust, Israel and other Jewish topics, Freeman was “met with scorn” and “shamed for it.” He was branded a white supremacist, colonizer and racist because he supported Israel’s right to exist.

Instead of buckling to the onslaught, Freeman dug deep to access his reservoir of Jewish pride.

“We are not going to allow [ourselves] to be defined by the non-Jewish world,” said Freeman. “Just as I don’t tolerate heterosexual society defining what it means to be gay, Jews are no longer permitting the non-Jewish world to define our identity.”

Freeman addressed a wide range of topics including the effects of intergenerational trauma that affects all Jews, whether or not they were personally impacted by the Holocaust or the millennia of Jew-hate preceding it.

“What does that do to a young person? I grew up knowing that in living memory, the world conspired either through action or inaction, to destroy the entire Jewish people,” said Freeman, whose grandfather immigrated to Scotland when his family fled pogroms in Lithuania.

Asked about the future of Holocaust education in a world without living survivors, Freeman stressed the importance of capturing as many survivors’ stories as possible.

“You cannot tell their stories better than they can,” he said, adding the caveat that the stories must take into account the richness of survivors’ whole lives before, during and after the Holocaust.

Likewise, it is critical to tell the whole story when it comes to Jew-hate, Freeman said.

“The story of the Holocaust did not begin in 1933. It began thousands of years ago, and it is still being written today.”

It is imperative to pour resources into teacher training to ensure that Holocaust education is delivered with deep understanding, Freeman said, adding that we must all bear witness going forward.

Freeman says that Jews are often gaslit by those who deny that Jews experience racism.

“It is very important for us to be validated in our own experiences and it is very important for our non-Jewish allies to have a guideline that helps them work out what is and what isn’t Jew-hate,” Freeman said.

Crucial to this is an understanding of anti-Zionism or “the belief that Jews do not have the right to self-determination in their indigenous land,” added Freeman.

“Israel is treated as the collective Jew, the Jew among nations, and it is targeted in the same ways that individual Jews and Jewish communities were targeted for thousands of years.”

“We are allowed to advocate for ourselves. We are allowed to defend ourselves,” Freeman says.

While he says he no longer feels a part of the progressive world, he stresses that his values remain the same.

Employing a highly visual metaphor, Freeman characterized Jew-hate as a “cloud” that “constantly drizzles over society.”

“For most people, it stays on the surface of their skin,” Freeman elaborated, adding, “...to stay dry, we have to develop umbrellas.”

These include education, conversation and critical thinking, Freeman said.

He encouraged everyone to bring empowerment, empathy, education and a non-judgmental perspective to the task of encouraging others to open their umbrellas.

Freeman urges us to take a long view.

“Judaism and Jewishness do not belong to us. We are



Jared Shore and Jordyn Wright with Ben Freeman

custodians. We take care of it for the next generations.”

He finds inspiration in the pride exhibited by Jews during the Holocaust, pointing out that resistance has always been part of the Jewish experience, even in the midst of the Shoah.

Freeman eschews the term antisemitism, saying it was coined to legitimize hatred against Jews by elevating it to an “ideology.”

“We should not be using a word that attempted to destroy us to explain what we are experiencing today,” Freeman elaborated.

“Many people do not understand that Jew-hate is a form of racism,” stated Freeman. (As an aside, this point was well illustrated by celebrity Whoopi Goldberg’s ill-advised remarks on *The View* following International Holocaust Remembrance Day.)

Referencing current manifestations of ignorance, insensitivity and Jew-hate, Freeman called out the recent misappropriation of the yellow star by anti-vax demonstrators in Canada.

“The yellow star is the symbol [Jews] were forced to wear before they were herded into ghettos, before they were deported to death camps and murdered en masse in gas chambers,” said Freeman, adding “It is an appropriation of Jewish pain and Jewish trauma” that “trivializes our experiences.”

Freeman says Holocaust education must be tackled through a lens that views Jews not as victims but as resisters and as inheritors of a glorious and diverse heritage.

He urged members of the Jewish community and their allies toward dialogue driven by a sincere desire to learn and to keep on learning.

To view the January 27 conversation with Ben M. Freeman, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8DuyOq-BOQ

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



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Focus on Real Estate

Serving generations, now serving you!

By Gizella Davis

Starting Real Estate in 1976, I have literally been through thousands of homes and estates and have mastered all types of market conditions and challenges. I have served my clients residential real estate needs throughout the City of Calgary and surrounding areas for the past 46 years, and I believe there is no substitute for experience of this depth and variety.

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Gizella Davis and Jemma Stephenson specialize in residential real estate sales throughout the City of Calgary and area. For more information visit www.gizelladavis.com or call 403-680-9083.

Honouring lessons learned during the pandemic

By Efreim Epstein and Rabbi Eric Woodward

(JTA) — The beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in North America can be dated in many ways. The first confirmed case was Jan. 21, 2020. In Jewish communities, the Purim holiday, that year observed starting March 9, was a dividing line between our old lives and our new ones. For many, everything became real on March 11, when travel shut down, Tom Hanks tested positive and the NBA suspended its season.

But there's another marker baked into Jewish tradition that hasn't been discussed — and it provides a perfect opportunity for commemorating the earth-shattering change that we have all experienced.

On that first Shabbat after everything shut down, as synagogues switched to Zoom or held no services at all, we read Parashat Ki Tisa, the Torah portion in which G-d gives Moses the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai, while down below the Israelites, fearing that he will not return, turn to idol worship. In the seventh and final section of the Torah portion, Moses dons a masveh — a veil or mask — to ease the anxiety felt by peers awed by his "radiant" visage.

This month, we read Ki Tisa again, marking the liturgical two-year anniversary of the shutdowns.

Liturgy gives Jews a framework for processing and recalling our shared experiences. During the last two years, we have celebrated and grieved; we have moved and settled; we have had good moments and others perhaps we wish could take back. And we know that even as the pandemic appears to wind down, its long-term social effects are here to stay.

So last spring, the two of us — a layperson and a rabbi — came together to discuss an idea brought by a close reading of the seventh aliyah of Ki Tisa. We saw that Moses' decision to don a mask had obvious resonance with pandemic life.

It still does, perhaps even more than ever. We have worn masks to protect ourselves, but also to protect others around us. We know that by wearing a mask, we create a climate in which we can safely and comfortably constitute a community.

We realized that our communities could remember the start of the pandemic — and all that it brought with it — through the resonant image of the mask that Moses wears. And we realized that the annual repetition of the Torah could make that commemoration a yearly event.

We call our ritual Aliyat ha-Masveh, the aliyah of the mask, in which a person who has displayed courage, compassion and care — the attributes of Moses and the frontline worker — could be honoured.

For now, it probably makes sense for communities to honour pandemic heroes: health care workers, educators, policy makers. But over time, communities that adopt Aliyat ha-Masveh might find themselves recognizing other ways that their members take on responsibilities to ease the pain and anxiety of others. This would be a powerful result of the last two years of pain and fear.

This ritual doesn't have to take place inside synagogues. This Shabbat is a perfect moment — one of several opportunities we will have together in the coming weeks — for Jews to take some time to reflect on the changes of the last two years. Where have we been surprised by our growth? Where have we become more ourselves? Where are we stronger? As we reflect, we can practice holding ourselves tenderly, with care, courage, and compassion — something that may have felt out of reach during this difficult time.

In the Torah's telling, Moses puts the mask over his own face to show humility and concern for others. Although we will (hopefully) eventually set aside physical masks, we will always have chances to show our concern and care for others. Honouring this section of the Torah with a special aliyah can help us to do that.

Efreim Epstein is a tech industry marketing profession in New York City who is also on the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention's Faith Communities Task Force and the founder of S'fatai Tiftach: The Baalei Tefilah Forum. Rabbi Eric Woodward is the rabbi of Beth El - Keser Israel Synagogue in New Haven, Connecticut.

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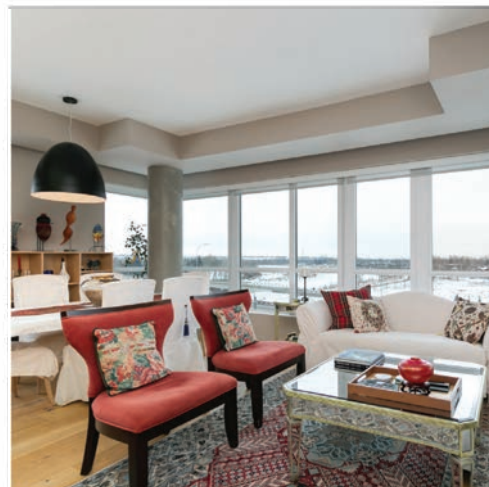
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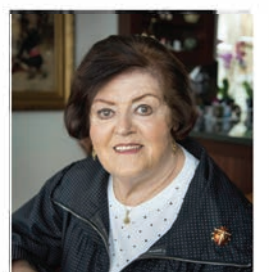
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Focus on Real Estate

Why Jews hang a mezuzah on the doorpost

By Blu Greenberg

A Jewish household is created by the people who live in it – by the way they act, the things they do and don't do, the beliefs they hold. To a great extent, a Jewish way of life is a portable faith: you can take it with you anywhere you go. This is true for *Shabbat*, *kashrut*, *Taharat Hamishpachah* [family purity laws], daily prayer, and study of Torah.

It is generally accepted that Judaism as a religion is more oriented to holiness of time than holiness of place. There are many occasions we sanctify, but very few places we call holy.

Is that the whole truth? Not at all, for the very place in which we live, our permanent residence, is sanctified. This is achieved through a very concrete ritual, through the mitzvah of mezuzah.

Mezuzah is of biblical origin and therefore carries great weight. "And you shall inscribe them on the doorposts (*mezuzot*) of our house and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:9, 11:20). What is to be inscribed? Divine instruction is very clear: "The words that I shall tell you this day": that you shall love your G-d, believe only in Him, keep His commandments, and pass all of this on to your children.

Thus, a mezuzah has come to refer also to the parchment, or *klaf*, on which the verses of the Torah are inscribed (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21). Mezuzah refers as well to the case or container in which the parchment is enclosed. A mezuzah serves two functions: Every time you enter or leave, the mezuzah reminds you that you have a covenant with G-d; second, the mezuzah serves as a symbol to everyone else that this particular dwelling is constituted as a Jewish household, operating by a special set of rules, rituals, and beliefs.

A mezuzah should be fixed to the doorpost of every living space in the house, not just the entrance door. Any room that has two doorposts and an overhead lintel requires a

mezuzah, so one should check with a rabbi. Bathrooms, closets, laundry room, boiler room, and so forth, however, do not require a mezuzah.

The mezuzah should be put up as soon as possible after moving in, and not later than thirty days. A temporary residence, that is, a place we reside in for less than thirty days, doesn't require a mezuzah; nor does an office or place of business. A dormitory room, which a student considers a home away from home, should have a mezuzah.

When a family moves it should not remove its mezuzot from the doorpost if it knows that another Jewish family will be moving in subsequently. (If the case is a valuable one, one can substitute another case, but the *klaf* should remain.) If one knows that a Gentile family is to follow in that place of abode, the mezuzot should be removed, lest they be considered useless and thrown away.

In Israel, the 30-day rule for affixing a mezuzah does not apply. There, one should affix a mezuzah to the door when moving in.

The mezuzah is affixed to the right side of the door as one enters a room. In other words, if your door swings open from hallway into bedroom, the mezuzah would be nailed to the right-hand doorpost as your face the bedroom from the hall. This is so no matter whether the doorknob is on the right- or left-hand side. It should be placed at the lower part of the top third of the doorpost, which is generally about eyeball height for a six-foot-tall person. It is affixed at a slant, with the lower part of the container toward you as you face the right doorpost.









A mezuzah contains G-d's name and therefore great pains are taken to see that it doesn't fall. The case must be securely attached at top and bottom rather than hanging by a nail from the top of the mezuzah. If the doorpost is too narrow to affix the mezuzah on a slant, it can be attached vertically, but still must be nailed or glued at top and bottom.

The ritual for affixing a mezuzah is very brief and very simple, especially so considering its enduring nature. Mezuzah in one hand, one recites this blessing: Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, Ruler of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to affix a mezuzah.

After reciting the blessing, all those standing about answer "Amen." Immediately the mezuzah is nailed or glued to the right doorpost. That's it - a 30-second ritual

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 <p>poppyseed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has hosted Shabbat dinner - in bed by 10pm - will be the Abbi to your Ilana 	 <p>apricot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - loves leftovers - total yenta - returned to camp to be a counselor 	 <p>prune</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mom of the friend group - loves to discuss "staying regular" - has a 401k 	 <p>nutella</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - eats snacks in bed - loves camping - studied in Israel
 <p>raspberry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - had an over the top bat mitzvah party - calls everyone "bb" - reads daily horoscope 	 <p>sprinkle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IG influencer wannabe - will remind you "it's a mitzvah" to be drunk on Purim 	 <p>chocolate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - doesn't know when Purim is - uses airpods - wears yoga pants, doesn't do yoga 	 <p>pizza</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - begins tweets with "actually..." - celebrates a birthday month - was in a Jewish greek house

that lasts the lifetime of tenure in that place...

One final word about the symbolic status of a mezuzah. The parchment is inscribed on only one side. On its reverse side, only one word appears: one of the names used for G-d. When the scroll is rolled properly, the letters face the eye. The Hebrew letters *shin*, *dalet*, *yod* are also the initials of the phrase *shomer daltot yisrael*, the Guardian of the doors of Israel.

Partly as a result of this lettering, partly because some people naturally tend toward superstition, the mezuzah sometimes has been accorded the status of amulet, a magical charm. Not only in medieval cultures but even in our day, some would attribute or explain misfortune as linked to the lack of kosher mezuzot.

A mezuzah is not meant to be a protective device, nor lack thereof a source of direct punishment. A mezuzah is a sign and reminder of the Covenant, of our love and commitment and our willingness to create a Jewish household. That, in itself, is sufficient!

Reprinted via My Jewish Learning from *How to Run a Traditional Jewish Household*, published by Simon & Schuster.

NDP Bill *Cont. from page 9*

"It's time to stand up for the rest of Canada. It's time to laud the Canadians who are doing the right thing, our

healthcare workers and everyone else who is caring for one another. And it's time to condemn the racists and extremists who threaten our values and our democracy and arrest those who are breaking the law."

During the recent protest in Ottawa, Canadians witnessed hate symbols at the very centre of Canadian democracy. But, long before the protest, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed deep socio-economic inequalities experienced by the most vulnerable populations in Canada. Islamophobia,

anti-Semitism, racism, homophobia, transphobia and misogyny continue to be a problem in our society. Hateful and violent crimes against Indigenous people, Black, Asian and other racially marginalized communities rose and the number of hate groups in Canada increased during the pandemic. Yet, symbols of hate are freely displayed and sold across our country.

"Canadians are tired of symbolic gestures. The time for rhetoric is over: the government needs to act. Banning symbols of hatred like swastikas or Klu Klux Klan insignia is more important now than ever for all Canadians to feel safe," said Julian. "It is up to all of us to stop the spread of hate in our communities. And this bill is a step in the right direction."

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Focus on Real Estate

Are you planning a move in 2022?

By Daniel Starkman

I am pleased to share some thoughts on Edmonton's housing market. For the month of January 2022, the average selling price for a single-family home was \$445,932.00. This is a 4.3% year over year increase. The median sales for the greater Edmonton area were \$420,000.00. This is still well below the national average. The average sale price for condominiums was \$225,000.00. The average days on market decreased from 65 days to 59 days. The MLS home price index (HPI) composite benchmark price in the Greater Edmonton Area came in at \$416,000.00, a 6.1 increase from January 2021 and up 1.2 per cent from December 2021.

Speculators and investors from other parts of Canada have added to the demand for houses. Many of them have their eye on Alberta and are acquiring property in hopes of taking advantage of equity growth and positive cash flow.

That should speak volumes to locals - to newly marrieds (the demographics in Edmonton indicate lots of young people who may be ready to buy homes), to people who wish to downsize or to those seeking new homes to accommodate changes in lifestyle. This is a great time to buy or sell!!

How fortunate we are to live in a community with abundant services and affordable housing despite the challenges of the global pandemic and other external environmental and political issues impacting on housing prices in other areas. Edmonton, with its ample sunshine, blue skies, superior educational institutions, great community leagues, outdoor sporting activities are all favorable factors for those seeking affordable housing to support their lifestyle. There is great value in Edmonton's housing market now and in the future. As never before, people are utilizing their homes for living, work and recreational purposes. People from other parts of Canada have been encouraged to come here recognizing the affordability of home ownership. Interest rates continue to remain low.

Alberta is working to diversify its economy. It facilitates opportunities in technology such as investment into alternate energies like hydrogen fuel cells and lithium

battery production. Oil and gas continue to recover. Transportation opportunities may open here having regard to the extreme environmental challenges in British Columbia. I believe all these factors will spark new and exciting opportunities.

Condos are not seeing similar increases in value now as compared to single family homes; likely because Edmonton has an excess of supply. An increase could come later depending again on supply of new construction, and of course, demand. Townhouses may be an exception and may increase in value more than apartment condos as there is more demand relative to supply.

If you are planning a move in 2022, you would be well advised to find a licenced REALTOR whose pulse is on the Edmonton & area market. Your REALTOR can make your move less stressful and suggest effective strategies to assist you in buying or selling amid a shifting market. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me at 780 863 0778.

Daniel Starkman is a seasoned Agent / Broker at Starkman Realty Agency in Edmonton and he can be contacted at www.StarkmanRealty.com.

Does inner city living make you happier

By The Tanya Eklund Group

Can living in the inner city make people happier and healthier? According to a joint study conducted by Oxford University and The University of Hong Kong* well-designed, bustling urban centres encourage residents to be more active and socially engaged.

There are benefits to both urban and suburban living, but living inner city offers Calgarians a unique lifestyle that encourages active living, social interactions, and an easier way to find work/life balance.

If you are interested in exploring inner-city real estate opportunities in Calgary's core neighbourhoods, The Eklund Group is an expert team of inner-city Realtors®. Contact us for our skilled and knowledgeable insight into Calgary's unique living opportunities in the heart of the city. (403) 863-7434.

Living Better Downtown

More Active: Inner-city neighbourhoods are infinitely walkable. Many downtown residents find they only need a vehicle when they travel out of the core and many forgo car ownership altogether. Calgary's downtown has an abundance of fitness facilities packed into its streets. Try yoga, spin, cross-fit, outdoor boot camps, cycling on the paths, and swimming. And Repsol, a world-class facility

offers all of these activities plus tracks, pools and saunas, and high-performance training. Access to pathways and green spaces, recreation centres, and opportunities to train to make choosing an active life easy. And when you can access groceries and dining, work, and services easily, choosing a quick walk over a drive is a simple choice.

More Socially Engaged: People often choose suburban living for increased space and a sense of privacy. It really is possible to take a walk through a suburban neighbourhood and not encounter another soul. Not so when living inner city. Dense and diverse neighbourhoods enhance the opportunities and even the necessity to engage with the people in your neighbourhood. This creates a strong sense of belonging and encourages residents to feel like an important part of the lifeblood of their community.

Better Work/Life Balance: The ability to find a harmonious work/life balance is automatically easier when you live downtown. With over 4000 of the city's employers based in the core, long commutes, traffic jams, and transit delays aren't a factor. Of course, not every Calgarian works downtown, but the city centre is also a great hub for those commuting to one of the city's outer quadrants, reducing travel time by eliminating the need to travel from one corner of the city to another for work.

Attractive Destinations/ A Variety Of Services: The



compact nature of downtown communities inevitably means easier access to a wider array of amenities. Condensed into several blocks you will find shops, restaurants, arts and culture, retail, fitness centers, and every service possible. Life satisfaction can increase for many when they have access to an abundance of options for recreation and socialization. Another consideration is this; lack of access to certain service providers is a barrier for many people. Inner-city living makes health and wellness services more easily available to residents for whom transportation may be an obstacle.

We Are Inner City

Inner city living is not the choice for everyone, but growing research shows that well-planned, thoughtful, and dynamic downtown neighbourhoods can help residents feel happier and healthier.

If you are interested in exploring homes for sale in the vibrant and exciting core of the city, contact The Eklund Group. Tanya Eklund and her team of inner city Realtors® can guide you with a comprehensive understanding of the unique communities, demographics, opportunities, and challenges of buying and selling in the inner city. Their knowledge and experience is cultivated with real-life insight; they work, live, and play in the inner city. Let them help you find your place in Calgary.



She's been one of Calgary's top selling Real Estate Agents for years. She has valuable experience working within Calgary's Inner City Real Estate market, and she understands every client is as unique as their home.

Tanya takes the time to listen; to understand your wants and needs. She doesn't expect your trust, Tanya earns it by consistently remaining honest, accessible and tenacious. That's what sets Tanya apart.

The Tanya Eklund Group was founded on Tanya's principles. The professionals within her group don't work for Tanya - they work for you, the client. They provide unparalleled expertise, skill and service to Calgary's inner city.

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Why students and teachers love Calgary Jewish Academy

By Lesley Machon

Registration is now open for the 2022-2023 school year at Calgary Jewish Academy (CJA), where students pursue academia, athleticism, Yiddishkeit, and unique extracurricular activities under the guidance and support of an incredible Jewish Day School community.

The school serves students from nursery to grade 9 and keeps class sizes in each grade intentionally small. This results in a greater sense of cohesion in the classroom, more learner engagement, less sensory overwhelm, and more one-on-one teacher assistance. Additional support for navigating stress and challenges is also available through the GAIN team, who actively promote mental health and inclusive education. The team is composed of two compassionate professionals whose intention is to help students cultivate mental and emotional wellbeing, access calm, and build strategies to improve focus and regulation.

"I like having the school counsellor because I feel I have someone to talk to when I am feeling anxious. This is very important for me during the pandemic. Mrs. Rooke is always willing to listen and is patient." – Caleb Hornstein, Grade 8

CJA's teaching staff is full of inspiring and passionate individuals who bring their creativity and expertise to the classroom. The school offers Hebrew and French in addition to English, which means some of our staff members are trilingual (we even have some polyglots). We have teachers with international and IB-level teaching experience from London to Kenya, scribbling algebraic expressions on the whiteboard, and making math tangible. We have teachers who sport the Mechanical Engineering pinky ring, leading explorations into robotics, math, and science. We have teachers who act as virtual Israeli travel guides, as they connect ancient texts to the Land of Milk and Honey which they hold dear to their hearts. Teachers who are published internationally, swap lesson plans with teachers who scale mountains switching fluently between English and French as they tie butterfly knots. Some of our staff are distinguished artists whose work has been

displayed in galleries, some lead fitness classes, play banjo, and have lived in Israel. All teachers here are experts in their fields, constantly pursuing new opportunities for professional development, and bringing their unique experiences to the classroom to keep learning engaging for a wide range of students. This is especially important because research demonstrates a key factor in student engagement, is a teacher's passion for the subject at hand, and ability to connect with kids.

"We are coding a game through Scratch. I like the process. It's cool to learn how to code actions and decisions and to animate the sprites on the screen. Mr. Warner really knows his stuff!" – Jesse Hansen, Grade 6

Connection and community are incredibly important to us at CJA. Serving students from nursery to grade 9 provides a sense of belonging and secure attachment to a community during the critical developmental period of childhood and early adolescence. Cohesion and support are central to healthy maturation, and the development of independence. At the CJA, the Principal knows each student by name, teaches when needed, attends events, and coaches sports teams. Teachers watch students walk the same halls a little taller each year, and are available to support their transition to each new grade. Many members of staff are alumni, and have dedicated their careers to teaching here, and enrolling their own children. Generations continue to stay at the school, in some cases the legacy passing from grandparents, to parents, to children; showing our commitment to *M'Dor LDor*.

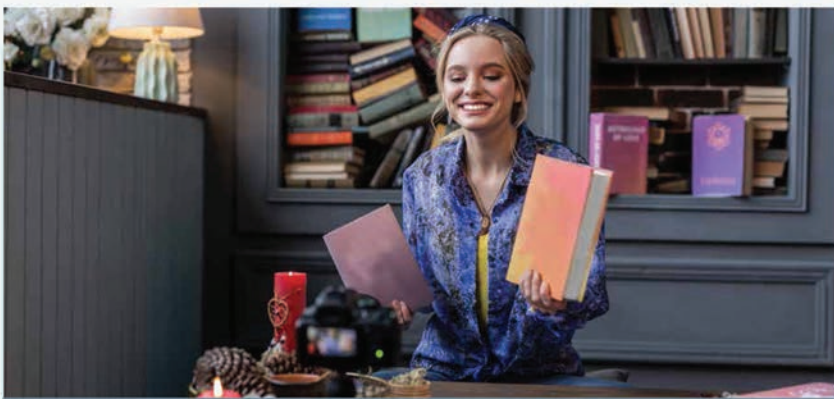
"At the CJA we are really able to get to know the teachers, and they get to know us, which makes me feel safe and seen and heard. As a teenager, this is very important to me. I was able to invite my teachers to my Bat Mitzvah and it was so meaningful to have them there because they helped guide me to this significant stage of my life." – Makena Kolman, grade 7

We value athletics, knowing that sports offer an important arena for children to take risks, set goals,



CJA offers opportunities for students to learn in a safe and inclusive environment from teachers who are experts in their fields.

Continued on page 21



ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

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Calgary Jewish Academy

Cont. from page 20

practice leadership, and move their bodies in ways that promote fitness and fun. CJA facilitates extracurricular team sports as early as grade 6. In many schools across the city, students must wait an extra year to play, and there aren't enough spaces available for students to play on all teams. With a smaller school and many eager coaches, students at the CJA are able to play on as many teams as they like, giving them access to technical and team building skills early on.

"I have been playing all of the sports the school offers since grade 6. Volleyball this year was the best because we worked hard to earn gold. I've emerged as a leader through sports, and I am friends with kids across all of the JH grades." - Sam Oppenheim, Grade 9

In addition to being a pillar of consistency, the CJA continues to evolve each year. Unique extracurriculars are always being added, and current options include Innovation, Robotics, and STTEAM Club (Science, Technology, Torah, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) where students coded the first part of the second chapter of *Sefer Shmuel*. We also have crochet clubs where students make scarfs and dishcloths, creative writing clubs, and a running club. Projects done at school have been published in local and international journals - from poetry cafes, to Holocaust novel study units.

"We are the presidents of the student council. It's a bit different with COVID, but we have planned events for Pink and Orange shirt day for all of the students, and had the opportunity to fundraise and choose new books to diversify the library. We are learning leadership skills and contributing to the school community in a lasting way, which we are both proud of." - Annie Sztabyz and Tova Rodin, Grade 9

In the past, junior high students formed debate teams and practiced public speaking and diplomacy through participation in Model UN trips to Boston and San Francisco (grade 7, 8, 9). It was incredible to watch their self-confidence emerge as they triumphed over discomfort, accepted new growth opportunities, and made international friends. Class trips have been to Salt Spring Island (grade 7 outdoor Indigenous and eco-justice focused), Washington (grade 8, human rights related), and Israel (grade 9s, the culmination of their Jewish learning). Each student in the grade has the opportunity to



Registration is now open for the 2022-2023 school year at Calgary Jewish Academy (CJA). For information or to book an appointment visit cja.ab.ca or call (403) 253 3992.

participate in travel, and the chance to practice life skills and build strong, supportive bonds between classmates and with teachers.

We also have an incredible sense of community here. We have cried together and celebrated together, sat *shiva* as a community and *kvelled* with pride during bar/bat mitzvahs, honouring the end of life and the largest coming-of-age moment for Jewish kids. When able, we have visited the local Jewish hospices and elderly homes, holding hands, singing for the holidays, making cards, leading crafts. Our community strength became especially evident as we navigated the upheaval associated with COVID. The depth of support, structure, and safety provided by the Jewish community got us through some especially rough times. When restrictions allow, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles attend holiday events. During lockdown we managed to have our community pray and celebrate together online through teacher-created videos. Eating and praying together is important because it grounds us in a sense of purpose and belonging, and reminds us that we are not alone, but deeply held and cared for.

"I liked doing the Grandparent's Day Havdalah. I made candles at school which I used with my grandparents as we watched the service." - Elliott Yanofsky, Grade 3

"On Friday I sing my favourite song, Adon Olam. I sing it with my classmates, and I like how it sounds with us together." - Grade 2 Student

At the CJA we go beyond the provincial curriculum, and layer in a culture of Judaism.

Our Jewish history, faith, and community are invaluable to staff and students alike. Through Judaism we have a framework for engaging with the world, we have the lens of culture to facilitate self-understanding, a perspective on life that includes a rich spiritual dimension, stories to remind us of what truly matters, and we have common ground and shared language with others.

Administration and teachers at the CJA are so proud of the space we create, and we're honoured to watch students flourish inside of it. We want this same experience for you as parents. For more information regarding registration or general questions about the school please visit the CJA website (<https://www.cja.ab.ca/>) or call 403-253-3992, and prepare to witness your child bloom in a Jewish Day school atmosphere.

Lesley Machon is a humanities teacher at Calgary Jewish Academy.

COVID wedding

Cont. from page 6

the blessings around the ketubah," she said. "In my original design, it was going to be a floral or leaf pattern." Instead, Judelsohn decided to incorporate themes from the huppah blessings into the design of the ketubah.

"I started by pulling out the words that were used the most," said Judelsohn, which is how words like "joy" and "laughter" ended up along the ketubah's borders.

Meanwhile, since Eiseman, who is a songleader and Jewish educator, was to co-officiate the wedding with Kol Ami's Rabbi Yohanna Kinberg, she began thinking what her unique contribution could be.

The end result, in which Kinberg and the wedding guests sang their blessings collectively, was "less a song than a 'sound bath' using the words everyone had offered," she said. "This was not just me singing to them, but we engaged everyone in the singing."

The wedding took place October 10 at the Woodmark Hotel in Kirkland, Washington, in front of approximately 100 guests, all of whom had been tested for COVID-19.

"A lot of it was meant to be tongue and cheek because COVID has just robbed people of their joy," said Plaut Warwick, explaining why the wedding party consisted of two 50-something women, dubbed "flowerchicks," who threw petals from felt jack-o-lanterns and groomsmen called "Ring Security Dudes" who carried lockboxes for the rings.

As for the huppah and ketubah? They are now both displayed next to each other in their home.

"They just make me smile every time I walk by them," said Plaut Warwick, who has since taken the name Schreiber. "They are both so colourful and meaningful. When we buy a house, we need one with large walls."

This story is part of JTA's Mazels series, which profiles unique and noteworthy Jewish life events from births to b'nai mitzvot to weddings and everything in-between.

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Cantor Russell Jayne was born and raised in Boonton, New Jersey and has been singing in both religious and secular choirs since he was a child. Before arriving at Beth Tzedec, Cantor Jayne served Congregation B'nai Israel of the Somerset Hills in Basking Ridge, NJ. He was also an instructor in the Lifelong Learning Program of the Joint Chaplaincy Committee for the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest, NJ.

GUEST SPEAKER
CHIEF LEE CROWCHILD
Chief Lee Crowchild is a third generation Chief of Tsuut'ina and a lifelong learner of Tsuut'ina's cultural worldview. Chief Crowchild was the sitting Chief from 2016-2019 and worked diligently building bridges between other first Nations and the rest of Canada. A passionate advocate for the environment and sustainable energy practices, he led the charge in finding ways to protect the water that runs through Tsuut'ina and on into Calgary.

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RECEPTION VIOLINIST
STEVEN KLEVSKY
Steven (Slava) Klevisky was born in the city of Gomel, Belarus. He began to learn music at the age of six. He wanted to play the piano but, because his hands were too small, he began to study violin at the city's prestigious music school. The following year, he began piano and, at a later age, he learned to play the guitar. At 14, he began his studies at the State Music College, majoring in classical violin. In addition, for four years, he played with the State College Youth Orchestra.

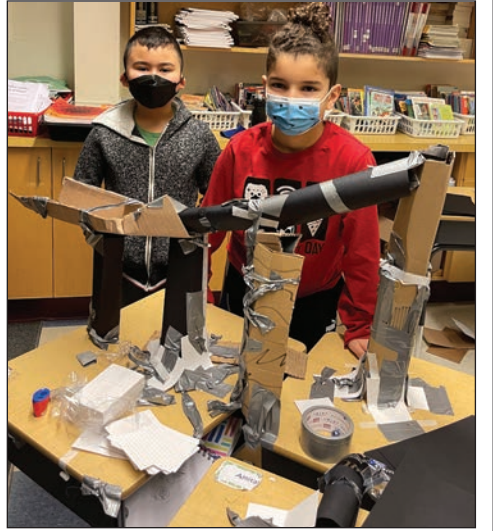
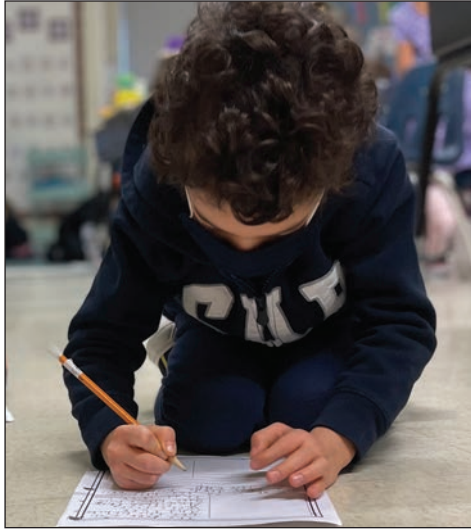
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Leonard Shapiro
Chair, Calgary Chapter

This month's update from Edmonton Talmud Torah School



It's been a busy month at Talmud Torah School in Edmonton. Here is a look at some of the students in Grade 5, Grade 3, Grade 2 and Kindergarten. Registration is open for the 2022-23 school year. A Kindergarten Virtual Open House will be held on March 15 from 6-7pm. For information about the school, call 780-481-3377 or email information@talmudtorahsociety.com.

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The Talmud



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Building an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem for Alberta Women

Work is underway to build a more inclusive and efficient entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in Alberta.

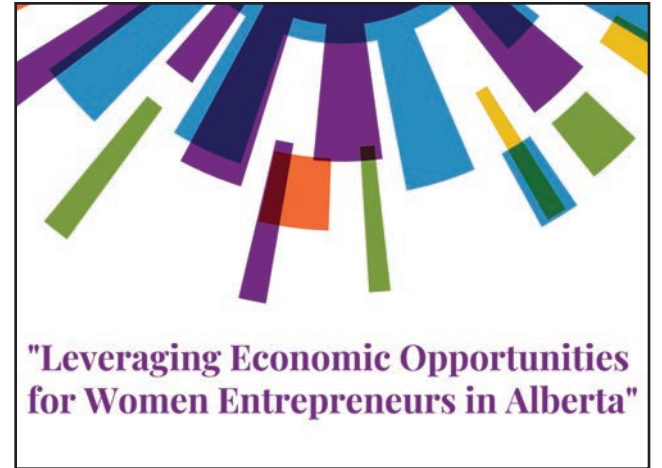
Recognizing the opportunity to leverage the combined strength of entrepreneurial services, resources, and expertise across Alberta, Alberta Women Entrepreneurs, and 68 entrepreneurial service organizations took a collective impact approach to better address the barriers and opportunities for women entrepreneurs through the Strengthening Partnerships Initiative. The initiative recently released an Impact Report – outlining the work done and the recommendations to move forward.

Launched in January 2020, the individuals and organizations involved in Strengthening Partnerships shared the common agenda of identifying the challenges for women entrepreneurs and solving them using a structured form of collaboration. After consulting with diverse stakeholders, including women entrepreneurs

across Alberta, a steering committee from diverse organizations was formed to undertake high-level visioning, set the strategic direction, and provide the leadership required to ensure success.

“With the work done, we have the opportunity to fully address the barriers and unlock the full potential of women entrepreneurs,” said Marcela Mandeville, CEO of Alberta Women Entrepreneurs (AWE). “We know we are on the right path, and we will continue to work together to build a powerful future with the support of leaders from across Alberta.”

Along with the Strengthening Partnerships initiative, AWE has worked with thousands of entrepreneurs through coaching, mentorship, leadership development, business advising, access to capital, and access to networks over the last 26 years.



To learn more about the work done by AWE and read the entire Impact Report, visit www.awebusiness.com. The work done by Strengthening Partnerships was made possible because of the funding support from the Department of Women and Gender Equality Canada.

Nazi symbols *Cont. from page 2*

“They would’ve known who has been involved in organizing this.

“I think someone who is a sitting elective representative would be able to do their due diligence,” he added. “Had there been one person who happened to walk by with a flag with a swastika on it, you could say that’s a fluke. But that’s not what happened.”

“The responsibility of elected representatives is to call out the actions of and the words — like some of the ones who are organizers (of that rally) who’ve called for bullets to be used — it’s not to get into the same crowd with them.”

Journalists who reported on the protests said they were subjected to hate speech and violence themselves. One CBC reporter recalled being called a “slave blooded traitor” after asking for an interview with those organizing the protest.

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC), disturbed by the appearance of Holocaust symbols at the rally issued a statement that the “use of Nazi symbols as a means to compare anything in our lives today here in Canada to the experience of Jews living under Nazi rule is a heinous form of Holocaust distortion. FSWC is also sickened by the

appearance of Confederate flags and the desecration and vandalism of national monuments that was witnessed yesterday. These actions are unacceptable.”

“The swastika, yellow star or any Nazi symbol have absolutely no place at protests in Ottawa or anywhere in Canada. It’s unconscionable and an affront to the memory of each and every man, woman and child who perished during the Holocaust,” said Michael Levitt, President and CEO of FSWC.

“It is shameful that in 2022 we are still seeing these vile symbols of hate and genocide with no regard for their impact on the Jewish community and other groups victimized by the Nazis, particularly the Holocaust survivor population that suffered unfathomable pain.”

Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) also commented on the “small minority that are shamefully using Nazi symbols, the Confederate flag, and misappropriating the Star of David to advance their political objectives.”

CIJA CEO Shimon Koffler Fogel stated, “Twenty-four hours after International Holocaust Remembrance Day and on The National Day of Remembrance of the Québec City Mosque Attack and Action against Islamophobia, there are Nazi flags being flown in public, in

Canada, on Parliament Hill. This should be horrifying to all Canadians.”

Added Andrea Freedman, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa: “The only way to get these toxic ideologies to crawl back under the rock they slipped out from is for all Canadians to roundly and unambiguously reject and condemn these symbols of hatred. The pernicious nature of antisemitism is that it morphs and becomes a convenient hook for all manner of grievance, real or imagined.”

“While we are concerned with the small group of agitators displaying the swastika, we are mortified that other protesters allowed it to continue. Good people remaining silent is a necessary precursor to evil taking root.”

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated that “Canadians were shocked and frankly disgusted by the behavior displayed by some people protesting in our nation’s capital.”

“I want to be very clear: We are not intimidated by those who hurl insults and abuse at small business workers and steal food from the homeless,” he said. “We won’t give in to those who fly racist flags.”

With files from the Jewish Telegraph Agency



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