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Cover art: "The Song of Hope - Shir Tikvah" by © Josh Winer. See story page 17
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Purim Carnival, Megillah and Fest at Beth Israel



Edmonton revellers enjoyed a fabulous Purim Party at Beth Israel Synagogue on March 17. Both kids and adults came in costumes and enjoyed the carnival, the delicious feast and the great atmosphere of family and friendship.



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ALBERTA
Jewish News

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Tu Bi' Shevat Tigers win the JNF AB Cup

By Jenna Soroka

The 2022 JNF Alberta Cup brought the community together for a highly anticipated hockey tournament which took place at the West Edmonton Mall Ice Palace on Feb. 26 & 27. Camaraderie, joy, and fun were common themes throughout the tournament, with friends, families, and colleagues reconnecting after a long pause on social gatherings. JNF Edmonton Director, Jay Cairns, hosted this incredible event for the fourth time. He expressed his sincere appreciation of team captains Mario Morin, Dan Moser, Lee Tappenden, and Stacy Shaikin, the players and the generous sponsors who brought the event to life.

"The 2022 JNF Alberta Cup was a sign that more good things are coming!" remarked Cairns. "It was a pleasure to host such a great event with such a positive group of people. It's more than just a hockey tournament when you see the people and the relationships that deeply connect. It's such a warm atmosphere of friendship – whether you saw each other yesterday, last year or several years ago."

This year, the Fighting Yids, Chai Shticks, Charlestown Ribacks, and Tu Bi' Shevat Tigers were the four teams competing for the prized Cup.

Players hit the ice beginning Saturday, February 26 at night, with games picking up again bright and early Sunday morning. The play-offs featured Fighting Yids and Tu Bi' Shevat Tigers, with the Tigers taking home the Cup in the championship game.

The puck drop for the final game was led by presenting sponsor Barry Slawsky and his son James, who also awarded the Alberta Cup to Lee Tappenden, captain of the Tu Bi' Shevat Tigers, at the end of the tournament.

After the final game, an awards ceremony was held to honour the memories of Nathan Reboh z"l and Stevie Schwartzberg z"l, two young men who made a meaningful contribution and impact in our community. Members of both play-off teams wore NR patches on their jerseys to pay tribute to Nathan, who played goalie with the league for several years.

"The tournament has become an opportunity to honour and remember these two outstanding community members who are gone, but not forgotten, and their legacies live on through their friends, families and the JNF



JNF Alberta Cup brought players from Calgary and Edmonton together to compete in an action packed hockey tournament on Feb. 26 and 27. Yasher Koach to JNF Director Jay Cairns, to all the players and to the Alberta Cup Champions Tu Bi' Shevat Tigers.

Alberta Cup," said Cairns.

Michael Schayer and Josh Schayer presented the Stevie Schwartzberg z"l Most Valuable Player Award to Tu Bi' Shevat Tiger star, Adam Porretta. Selina Taylor presented the "Mensch" Valuable Player Award to Jasen Reboh in honour and memory of Nathan Reboh z"l.

"I am very honoured that the JNF memorialized my brother Nathan with this award and the teams that wore a patch in his memory this year throughout the tournament recognizing his intense love of hockey," said Jasen Reboh. "I was so excited to play in my 1st JNF tournament, then I broke my hand the week before and, although the surgeon at the Kaye Clinic said no sports for 3 months, there was no way I wasn't going to participate (I hope she doesn't read the Jewish News!). I am so grateful to share this 1st honour with Nathan, and my family really appreciated the gesture."

A highlight from this year's event was a free skate with BBYO leadership, Regional Director Stacy Shaikin, City Supervisor Eliyanna Forbes, and BBYOers. Family and friends also joined the players for an hour of fun skating at the Ice Palace. "It was really nice to see the BBYO kids come out for the skate," said Cairns.

He also expressed his appreciation to the following sponsors: Presenting Sponsor: Barry & Cristine Slawsky; Hospitality Sponsor: The David and Stacey Cynamon

Family Foundation; Commentators Booth: Asbell Family. Trophies: Uri Heilik; Swag: Camp BB; Media: Alberta Jewish News; Ice: WEM. Snacks: Blindman Brewing; Old Dutch.

Proceeds from the tournament went to a Mobile Technology Lab project for Jerusalem's vulnerable population. "JNF Canada is proud to partner with the Jerusalem Foundation in support of this important project aimed at strengthening the social fabric and enhancing community support systems."

Several weeks after the tournament, Cairns reflected on how it is important for different Jewish organizations to contribute to the community calendar in a healthy way. "It provides different opportunities to connect, all under the umbrella of supporting Israel and the JNF."

Events like these have a positive impact on the community as demonstrated by emails and comments sent to Cairns by community members. They expressed how the hockey tournament has become a multigenerational opportunity, and further congratulated the JNF for anchoring this event in the community calendar.

So, sharpen your skates and practice your puck handling, because the fifth 2022 Alberta Cup will be back in town before you know it!

Jenna Soroka is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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Purim Shpielers at the Seniors Drop In Centre



Photos by Tammy Vineberg

In Ukraine, Israeli medical staff and volunteers help thousands cope

By Cnaan Lipshiz

(JTA) — Israeli physicians and Jewish groups are assisting thousands of non-Jews across Ukraine deal with the effects of the Russian invasion into that country.

Near Lviv in Ukraine's west, a field hospital set up this week by the Israeli government with physicians and nurses from the Schneider Children's Medical Center near Tel Aviv has treated at least 160 patients, most of them children, since it opened on March 22, according to the Jewish News website on Ukrainian Jewry.

There are 66 beds and dozens of staff and volunteers working alongside the medical staff from the Schneider Center at Israel's Kohav Meir hospital — a name that means "shining star" in Hebrew but is also a reference to Golda Meir, an former Israeli prime minister who was born in Kyiv and is seen as an inspiration by many Ukrainians.

Israel and the United States are among a handful of countries that have set up field hospitals in Ukraine. The Israeli one is set up to treat about 150 patients daily, according to Israel Hayom.

Most of the patients have issues unrelated to the fighting but have lost access to medical treatment because of it.

The hospital's first patient was a 12-year-old girl with a heart problem who fled with her mother from Mariupol, a city devastated by Russian bombing. She arrived with a rapid pulse and chest pains and her condition was stabilized at the field hospital, which operates outside of a school and partly under a sturdy white tent opposite a church in a town near Lviv, Yedioth Acharonoth reported March 23.

Another, a 2-year-old girl named Alisa, came in with a chronic skin condition that had worsened following weeks in which it was not treated. The physicians at the field hospital consulted experts at the Schneider Center in Israel, using telemedicine video equipment, to arrive at a diagnosis and treatment. The inspection was interrupted by sirens that sent the patients and medical staff running toward the nearest shelter, the Israeli paper reported.

In Dnipro, a city in eastern Ukraine with many Jews, the Jewish Medical Center clinic, which was set up with the primary goal of treating members of that community, has shifted its focus, dispatching its staff of about 10 medical professionals across centers for internally displaced persons in Ukraine, the Jewish community of Dnipro wrote on its website Thursday.

The Russian invasion, which began on Feb. 24, has



An Israeli field hospital near Lviv, Ukraine, March 23, 2022. (Schneider Children's Medical Center)

resulted in thousands of casualties and a wave of refugees — about 3.5 million Ukrainians are estimated to have moved into the European Union alone — and many more internally displaced.

In Uman, a city in central Ukraine, local Jews set up an aid center near the grave of Rabbi Nachman, an 18th-century luminary who inspired the Breslov Hasidic movement. Several hundred Jews, most of them Israeli, had moved to Uman in recent years amid an annual pilgrimage of about 30,000 Jews from all over the world to the gravesite.

The center offers clothing and other assistance as well free tea and coffee and shelter to internally-displaced persons, the Jewish News of Ukraine website also reported.

In Bila Tserkva, a small city near Kyiv, the small Jewish community pooled their resources to buy and donate diapers, wet wipes and hygiene products for mothers and children, as well as blankets and detergent, according to the Jewish News of Ukraine.

The Jewish community of Zaporizhzhia near Dnipro is also collecting products and medicines from its members for the general population.

Before the invasion, Ukraine, which has a population of about 40 million people, had about 43,000 people who self-identified as Jews, according to a 2020 demographic study of European Jewry, and up to 200,000 people who are eligible to immigrate to Israel under its law of return for Jews and their relatives. At least 4,000 of that group have immigrated to Israel over the past month.

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Did the pandemic usher in a baby boom?

By Maxine Fischbein

Prognosticators predicted a pandemic baby boom. Right on trend, our daughter and son-in-law called us some 16 months ago to share the happy news that my husband and I were about to be promoted to Baba and Grandpa.

BEST! JOB! EVER!—despite the limitations that have been caused by geographical distance, contagion, government mandates and plain, old-fashioned common sense.

All the frustrations of co-existing with COVID pale next to the joy of welcoming our granddot, who instantly became the centre of our universe. The joy has multiplied as many friends and acquaintances have recently enjoyed similar promotions or are expecting to soon join “the club.”

Edmontonians Colleen and Michael Paull became members last May with the birth of their first grandchild, a girl.

“We were still in the throes of the pandemic and many people did not have their second shots yet,” recalled Colleen.

The Pauls received their second shots and isolated prior to the arrival of their granddaughter. Even then, they did not kiss her for the first few months. Fortunate enough to live in the same city, they delighted in holding their little one and taking her for walks.

Grandparents like us, who live at a geographical distance from their expanding families—and those who must isolate due to weakened immune systems and/or underlying conditions—are doing the best they can to safely navigate COVID in order to be there, often virtually, for their kids and grandkids.

It is a source of comfort knowing that the Jewish Federations in Edmonton, Calgary (and so many other places our kids and grandkids live) are also there, making sure young families get a running start at Jewish engagement and literacy through programs like PJ Library and Shalom Baby.

“It’s the priority in a way,” says Jenn Magalnick, Associate Director, Holocaust Education and Community Engagement at Jewish Federation of Edmonton. The simple purpose is helping to connect people with one another and with the organized Jewish community as well.”

It was on Kathie Wainer’s watch as the inaugural Manager of PJ Library at Calgary Jewish Federation that the internationally acclaimed program and its spin-off, Shalom Baby, were launched in Calgary in 2009 and 2010 respectively. PJ Library made its debut in Edmonton in 2013; Shalom Baby was introduced this past summer due, in large part, to the efforts of Faren Hochman and Sarah Troster.

Hochman serves as VP for Outreach and Programming

on the Executive of Jewish Federation of Edmonton. Troster, a physician and JFE board member, co-chairs the outreach committee with Hochman while overseeing another JFE initiative, the Jewish Medical Students’ Association. These two women have one other important credential. As young moms they know first-hand the importance of networking with peers who are raising Jewish children and feeling the support of local Jewish organizations.

“It’s really been such a nice type of outreach for our committee,” says Faren Hochman. “We’re laying foundations for our kids that will continue to school and camp and throughout their Jewish lives.”

Anika Zepp—whose son was also born during the pandemic—is Edmonton’s Shalom Baby parent connector, a position funded, in part, by a grant from PJ Library. Zepp helps to connect some 40 young Edmonton families, 25 of whom actively participate in Shalom Baby activities and communicate with one another through a WhatsApp group including parents and parents-to-be.

Edmonton’s inaugural Shalom Baby gathering was held outdoors in July 2021. Most of the parents had babies clustered around the same ages, between one and four months old, Zepp said.

As Zepp grew into her role, more programming was introduced, including a Chanukah party, three virtual Tot Shabbat programs and, most recently, a Purim party. Other activities have included outdoor walks as well as fitness sessions focused on pre- and post-partum exercise.

The majority of Edmonton Shalom Baby programming has been done in person with organizers pivoting, to online activities as necessary.

“Being on leave and having new babies can be isolating,” says Zepp. It’s hard sometimes to find others going through the same experience, and so it’s nice to bring together a local Jewish community and forge connections between parents and kiddos that can continue for the rest of their lives.”

Connecting with other parents is not only her work but an important part of her own self-care as a new mom, Zepp says.



YEG PJ Library. Photos by Tammy Vineberg

“I probably would have found ways to connect with the people I already know, but connecting with people I didn’t know or didn’t know as well has been great.”

Forming community is important to Zepp on a number of levels.

“I converted to Judaism, so I didn’t grow up in the community. My husband is very involved, so that I’ve always felt included through him, but this is my first time being part of it myself, independent of him. It has been really quite cool to be a part of that and see that this is where our family belongs...and that I am able to help create a network our son will enjoy as he grows older.”

In both Edmonton and Calgary, Shalom Baby organizes gift bags filled with presents for new arrivals and information for parents including an introduction to the magic of PJ Library.

Developed by the Massachusetts-based Harold Grinspoon Foundation—which partners with Jewish communities and philanthropists around the world—PJ Library shares the gift of Jewish literacy with young families, delivering beautifully written and illustrated, age-appropriate books (and sometimes music) directly to their mailboxes each month.

When PJ Library programming was first introduced in

Continued on page 12



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Pesach is for both adults and children

By Rabbi Steven Schwarzman



Rabbi Steven Schwarzman

In North America, some Jewish holidays have become focused on children. Hanukkah and Purim come to mind. If you've been in Israel for those holidays, you know that, while kids also enjoy them, they're primarily for adults. (I once organized a Purim party for the adult members of my synagogue, and we realized that we needed to rename it from the original draft of "Adult Purim Party," which

suggested something a bit different from what we had in mind.) In Israel, adults dress up for Purim almost as much as the kids do, and the partying is taken seriously. For Hanukkah, everyone, but everyone, lights candles, and there aren't presents to be given or received - those are more likely to appear for Pesach. Not only do the kids negotiate for a serious Passover present if the adults want to get that afikoman back, but the grownups, too, are likely to receive a Pesach holiday bonus at work.

But while Jews in North America may have made Hanukkah and Purim child-centered (and what a pity that only a smaller number of grownups take part in those great holidays), it is entirely appropriate to make the Pesach seders focused at least in part on the children. This might be surprising: after all, freedom and redemption are weighty concepts that probably speak most to adult minds. And while the midrash adds a rather fanciful interpretation to exaggerate the number of plagues visited upon the Egyptians, adults are better able to appreciate why the midrash takes that route: to emphasize the power and magnitude of G-d's redemption.

Yet our tradition teaches explicitly that the grownups leading the seder should intentionally do things to keep

the children engaged, from changing the normal order of things so that the kids naturally ask what's different about this night to singing the kid-friendly songs at the end, and in the middle, doing everything we can to get the kids and the adults to ask probing questions about the exodus from Egypt, about the seder, and anything related. *This* is why the rabbis teach that the more of this that we do, the better, because it is prompting this discussion that is the essence of the seder.

So if your seders need a little spicing up, try switching to a different haggadah this year. Or give everyone at your table a different haggadah so that they all have to figure out where they are in the seder. Or dress up as one or more of the characters in the story so that everyone else can interview you. (Miriam the Prophetess appeared at our second seder last year.) Make this night different from all other seder nights, and you'll keep the kids and the grownups fully engaged. That's what the seder is all about.

Chag kasher vesameach to all!

Rabbi Steven Schwarzman is the spiritual leader of Beth Shalom Congregation in Edmonton.

The Transformative Daf - Tractate Megillah

By Rabbi Daniel Friedman

Reviewed by Shane Asbell

I had the pleasure recently of reading Rabbi Daniel Friedman's book, *The Transformative Daf, Tractate Megillah* and it was truly transformative. Rabbi Friedman's style of writing is very informative, engaging, and inspirational. The way Rabbi Friedman elucidates the Gemara is innovative. Gemara in Aramaic means "to study and to know" and through Rabbi Friedman's writings one gains a deep appreciation of learning and understands the underlying teachings of each daf, page, of the Tractate. I really appreciated how Rabbi Friedman describes each page and each of the 32 chapters is well organized with a section of the daf in Hebrew and then translated into English accompanied with the Rabbi's unique perspective, teachings, and views on that particular page of Gemara.

As the current President of Beth Israel Synagogue in Edmonton where Rabbi Friedman was my Rabbi for 16 years I certainly schleppe (received) lots of nachus (joy) in seeing his work come to life in the pages of the *Transformative Daf*. Rabbi Friedman is a great teacher and writer. His words shed light on ancient teachings, are relevant, moving, and truly transformative.

In chapter 10, Don't Look Back for instance, Rabbi Friedman exhorts us to stop living in the past. As the classic cliché goes, "Yesterday is history, tomorrow's a mystery. Today's a gift - that's why it's called the present!"

Or how in chapter 16, *Your life* could go either way, we learn how the wicked Haman prior to being King Ashahveirosh's advisor was a good guy, a trustworthy and diligent individual who worked as a barber in the village of Kartzum for 22 years. Who knew??

I look forward to reading more of Rabbi Friedman's *Transformative Daf* series, learning and being inspired to make positive change in my life.

About Rabbi Friedman

Born in UK, raised in Australia, and now living in New Jersey, Rabbi Friedman is author of *The Transformative Daf*. His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society*, *YU Lamdan*, the *Jewish Press*, the *Jerusalem Post*, *Aish.com*, and numerous other outlets. He was the inaugural chair of the National Holocaust Monument of Canada and is a world-renowned expert on the intersection of halachah and international relations. He has a PhD in International Relations, specializing in American Christian attitudes towards Israel. Rabbi Friedman was formerly rabbi of a 1200



Rabbi Daniel Friedman

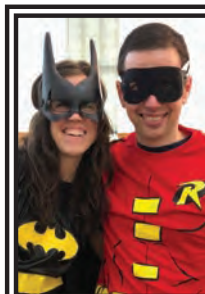
family synagogue in London, UK and served as the spiritual leader of Beth Israel Synagogue in Edmonton for sixteen years. He is married to Rabbanit Batya with 5 daughters.

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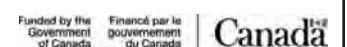
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Tova Yedlin Lecture presented a dynamic look at Theodor Herzl

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

This year's Tova Yedlin Lecture, part of the University of Alberta Jewish Studies Week at the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, was given by noted scholar Dr. Derek J. Penslar, of Harvard University. Penslar holds Harvard's prestigious distinction as the William Lee Frost Professor of Jewish History, he is the President of the American Academy of Jewish Research, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and an Honorary Fellow at Saint Anne's College at Oxford University.

His recent Tova Yedlin Lecture presentation via Zoom, a not to be missed finale to the Jewish Studies Week lineup, "Theodor Herzl: A Biography for our time" summarized the major themes and discussions from his newest book: Theodor Herzl: A Charismatic Leader (2020). The book, released in early March 2022 in German translation, has been turning heads and presents a much-needed critical examination of one of contemporary Jewish history's most mythologized figures.

"Herzl's charisma depended on the needs and desires of his followers. A leader, especially of a grass-roots movement like early Zionism, is dependent upon his following for legitimacy. Charismatic leadership is therefore dialogic – a constant interaction between leader and followers," commented Penslar in a recent interview. Perhaps it is this very relationship between this leader and his followers that has led to the challenging of the moniker 'Father of Zionism' – a title Penslar has examined with great fastidiousness.

The obstacles of COVID have changed the landscape of academic public discourse. Disseminating one's research is no longer a matter of out-of-town conference mingling, but technically choreographed meetings in virtual spaces. This trend has been met with harsh criticism from the academic community but has presented the indisputable benefit of allowing more accessible engagement and scholarly community building on a global scale. Across professional disciplines Zoom meetings have become routine, and academia is certainly no exception. Despite this acclimation to the virtual platform, Penslar's talk was certainly one that would have been a sensational in-person event.

The lecture was dynamic, relevant, and pushed the envelope, scrutinizing shared preconceptions. Anyone who has visited Jerusalem has made the pilgrimage to Herzl's final resting place – Mount Herzl. Herzl's biography, as Penslar's findings attest, has been mythologized by decades of memorialization, and seldom re-examined.

"Herzl was a troubled, complicated man. Rather than yield to his inner demons, Herzl drove them away by committing himself to a grand and seemingly impossible cause. Had Herzl been a placid soul, he almost certainly

would not have become a great leader," explained Penslar.

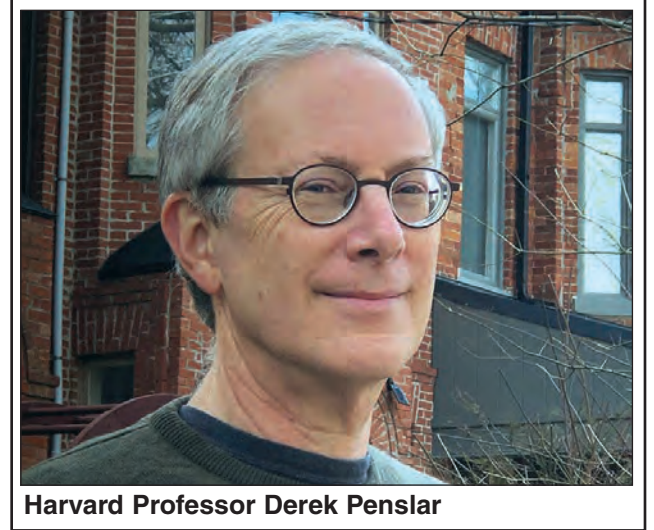
Theodor Herzl is a name known in any Jewish household; but how much is really known about the man himself? Like so many stories, those chronicling Herzl's life and legacy have been passed down over more than a century, often after consultation with second-hand biographical material rather than original documentation. Penslar's initial research of Herzl's biography took into consideration the sheer volume of scholarship available but endeavoured to pursue an examination that would celebrate the figure based on facts and hard-evidence gathered through an unforgiving objective lens. The archival hunting that went into this project spanned several continents, and unequivocally illustrated an intensely nuanced knowledge of all things Herzl.

Penslar commented on the inception of his investigative journey stating: "I was approached by the editors of the *Jewish Lives* series at Yale University Press. They wanted a biography of Herzl in their series and asked me to do it. I figured that given how many books had already been written on Herzl, it would be easy enough to read what's out there and synthesize it into a book. But once I got into the sources – Herzl's journalism, political writings, and correspondence, as well as the writings of his colleagues and contemporaries – I realized that a lot was missing from other biographies. Some biographers mythologized him, and others were so busy deconstructing him that they missed the secrets of his greatness. Some did not know Hebrew or Yiddish and could not trace the impact Herzl had on the Jewish public. Last but not least, I wanted to write a biography that conveyed Herzl's enormous energy, his audacity, and his troubled yet noble soul."

It was this "troubled yet noble soul" that Penslar's talk brought into vivid focus. He described Herzl's relationship with his wife, noting that despite their attraction to one another they were as suited to be partners as "chalk and cheese." The lecture revealed Herzl's lifelong battle with mental health issues noting that had he lived in modern society, there would have been a much more sympathetic understanding of his struggle.

"We have a natural need for heroes. But idealizing a person, transforming her/him into a tissue of myth, deprives us of understanding the deeply human qualities, the flaws and failings, that often lie at the source of greatness."

In past years there has been a move to de-mythologize heroic historical figures within the societal consciousness, not to detract from their significant achievements, but to appreciate their contributions more authentically. Like the efforts of Nobuki Sugihara to shed light on his Righteous Among Nations recipient father, Chiune Sugihara's widely celebrated narrative, Penslar took on a monumental task of exploring the multifaceted identity of one of Jewish society's most beloved figures with a nuanced approach.



Harvard Professor Derek Penslar

"Historians tell stories. Sometimes those stories are told in a complicated way accessible to only other scholars, just as scholars' fields like medicine or physics communicate with each other via specialized language. But historians can also tell their stories in a way that engages broad audiences. Biography is a perfect medium for reaching out to the general public. In a biography, the details of a person's life – the struggles, the triumphs, and tragedies – are intertwined with the political, economic, and social context of an era. It is enormously rewarding to write for the public and to show that academia is not separated from the world, but is rather an essential part of it," Penslar elaborated.

Securing Dr. Penslar as this year's Tova Yedlin Lecture presenter created a great deal of excitement and anticipation throughout the academic circuit and Jewish community – he did not disappoint!

"Herzl was a leader that came when his people needed him most," said Penslar during his lecture. If anything, attendees did not come away feeling disillusioned about Herzl, but with a sense of the legend humanized – and thus gaining greater appreciation for the man and his place in history.

Penslar concluded his interview comments noting: "A biographer of Herzl needs to not only delve into only the sources from Herzl's life but also immerse into the world of fin de siècle Europe and the Middle East. I am grateful for the decades I have spent teaching world as well as Jewish history so that I could fit Herzl's story into that of the international community of his day."

If his lecture was any indication, Penslar's book promises to be just as fascinating, intriguing, and revealing. Perhaps at a future date, when the Tova Yedlin Lecture can once again be delivered in-person, Penslar will be invited to speak again so that the academic and Jewish communities can meet the man who captivated their attention by revealing the many layers of a historical icon so well known to all.

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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Judy Zelikovitz

By Judy Zelikovitz

Traditional celebrations of recent Passover seasons were certainly curtailed, or even canceled, by the pandemic. For those of us fortunate enough to have emerged from COVID-19 with our families intact, we now – finally – will have an opportunity to come together to celebrate the holiday as it should be – among extended family and old friends.

The limits placed on us by the pandemic, however, have not curtailed CIJA's work. Ensuring increased COVID funding for frontline charitable organizations helping the elderly, ill, and all others among our most vulnerable was paramount in our advocacy to governments at all levels. Supplemental funds are never quite sufficient, but these extra funds were realized in federation agencies across the country.

The disturbing surge in antisemitism that ensued became another focus of our work. Last summer, as a founding member of the Canadian Coalition to Combat Online Hate, we organized a federal government-sponsored Emergency Summit on Antisemitism that brought together government, media, academic, and other experts in combating online hate that so often leads to real-life violence.

Connected to pervasive hate online is spreading distortion and even outright denial of the Holocaust. A poll commissioned by the Canadian charity Liberation75 showed that, of 3600 students in grades 6 to 12, a shocking 33 percent were either uncertain about the Holocaust, thought the death toll exaggerated, or questioned whether the Holocaust even happened. In Ontario's largest school board – and in others from the West to the Maritimes – incidents of antisemitism have begun to be reported almost weekly.

Tu Bi' Shevat Tigers win JNF Cup




Tu Bi' Shevat Tigers pose with their JNF Alberta Cup and media sponsor Alberta Jewish News. The MVP Stevie Schwartzberg Memorial Trophy was presented to Adam Porretta by Mike and Josh Schayer.

This kind of disturbing trend requires focused, strategic action. CIJA has received a grant to leverage the expertise of historians, teachers, and Jewish scholars to create a curriculum for Ontario middle-school students that will teach them about the Holocaust – and about modern-day antisemitism. Most recently, we have urged support for MP Kevin Waugh's Private Member's Bill that proposes Canada follow the example of other countries – including France and Germany – to make Holocaust denial an offense under Canada's *Criminal Code*.

To spur discussion about what such legislation could do, CIJA hosted a national webinar about reasons to criminalize Holocaust denial, challenges posed, and what we can learn from jurisdictions where similar laws were enacted. With experts from Canada, France, and Israel espousing various perspectives, the discussion was informed, civil, and productive.

Discussion. Now that's an area where Jews tend to feel both comfortable and motivated. And that brings me to the Pesach celebration awaiting us this year. Of course, we will delight in visits with our loved ones. Some of us will see children – or grandchildren – newly arrived or grown significantly since our last Passover Seder together. Many will have questions – not only the traditional four we ask annually, harking back to our historic connections to Israel, but also questions about being Jewish today, in Canada.

We think Jews in communities large and small have lots to talk about, and we want to facilitate engaged, thoughtful discussions res-

ponding to four *more* questions we've proposed for this Passover. We propose, this Passover Seder, that Jewish families and friends think about the issues CIJA, as the advocacy agent of the Jewish Federations across Canada, has been prioritizing.

More background – and suggested responses are available at cija.ca/4morequestions. Looking at increased denial and distortion of the Holocaust, our most recent enslavement, how can we stop Holocaust denial and distortion? In the realm of online hate and antisemitism, we remember numerous historic efforts to destroy the Jewish people. What can Canadians do to combat online hate and antisemitism today? Turning to community security, as a once-enslaved people, we ask, what does a safe space for Jewish Canadians look like? And, as we solemnly intone 'Next year in Jerusalem,' how can we express the significance of the land of Israel in our Jewish Canadian identity?


That's a lot. But that's what we are up against, even living in Canada, one of the safest places for Jews anywhere.

As we gather this year, whether part of a small family, an extended clan of young and old, or among friends, let us celebrate the joy of our survival and how, together, we can work to shape our future.

May your Passover be a peaceful, thoughtful, and happy one. Chag Pesach Sameach!



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

How can we protect Canada's Jewish community?



Download 4 More Questions: Protecting and Preserving Jewish Life in Canada

download at cija.ca/4morequestions

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs is the advocacy agent for the Jewish Federations of Canada

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Chag Sameach!

Happy Passover to all our donors, supporters and friends

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Our very best wishes to the Jewish community for a happy, healthy Passover






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Talmud Torah Society is reviewing its bus service

By Ken Lister

Last year was the first year for my children at Talmud Torah. I applied for bus service, but the application was denied due to being outside of the service area for TT. I didn't consider it further as COVID kept changing and I was unsure if I even wanted bus service. However, I am now sure I do want bus service for my children. So, I looked into bus service further and what I found out disappointed me.

Edmonton Public Schools offers busing to Talmud Torah students that is far less than offered to most bilingual schools throughout the city. Bus service is available for those in the west end, north of the river and west of 116 Street, but what about current students and potential students outside of this boundary? For comparison, below is a look at other bilingual programs offered in Edmonton:

1. Prince Charles is the only Awasis program at EPSB and offers the Cree Language and culture education and has a bus service area that is half of the entire City of Edmonton and is far larger than the entire Talmud Torah bus service area.
2. Rio Terrace is one of three elementary German Bilingual programs at EPSB and has a bus service area that overlaps the entire Talmud Torah bus service area, plus includes a bit more area.
3. Mill Creek is one of three elementary Spanish Bilingual programs at EPSB and has a bus service area around twice the size of Talmud Torah bus service area.
4. Malmo is one of four elementary Arabic Bilingual programs at EPSB and has a bus service area around twice the size of Talmud Torah bus service area.

I find this coverage inadequate for the only Hebrew Bilingual program in the city, which serves students from many neighborhoods. So, along with Talmud Torah School Council (TTSC), I have initiated a discussion about equitable bus service. At the March TTSC meeting, parents agreed that the TT bus service should be reviewed. The TTSC will begin with a short survey for current and prospective TT students to gauge interest in bus service for their child(ren) and determine areas requiring service. The TTSC will then make a proposal to Edmonton Public School Board to review and work with TTSC to create a bus service area that is equitable and meets the needs of Talmud Torah families, current and future.

We need to hear from current Talmud Torah parents and parents who might send their children to Talmud Torah should EPSB bus service to TT be made available in their neighborhood. We need to demonstrate a need for expanded service and illustrate that it may improve enrolment length and/or increase student enrolment at TT. The survey can be answered at <https://forms.gle/bfD8z>



Purim was a lot of fun at Talmud Torah. The teachers dressed up as scrabble pieces!

B9jtgyYHUQM9. The survey will only take you about 2 minutes and will help make Talmud Torah vibrant and accessible to every student wants to enroll. Please tell your family and friends to complete their short survey.

For more information on this issue, please email talmudtorahschoolcouncil@partner.epsb.ca

Ken Lister is a parent of two children at Talmud Torah. He is also a proud TT graduate and a former TT teacher.

Jewish and Metis academics compare census issues

By Jeremy Appel

Two errors in the most recent Canadian census were the starting point for a discussion between a Jewish and a Metis academic about the commonalities and distinctions between their peoples.

On March 7, York University historian David Koffman and University of Alberta Native Studies Professor Paul Gareau engaged in a dialogue over Zoom as part of Jewish Studies Week 2022.

They began by discussing the 2016 census results, which erroneously said Canada's Jewish population had decreased by 50 per cent while the Metis population doubled. This was the subject of a paper Gareau and Koffman collaborated on.

"We have this interesting situation where the state has developed tools that are meant to just count people and reflect reality as it is out there and capture the numbers. But instead, what we get is a kind of messy process through which the state creates categories of people that don't necessarily reflect the people that are out there," explained Koffman.

The census results have material impacts on the communities it counts, he added.

"Jewish community leaders have always been interested in encouraging as many Jewish people as they can to identify themselves [as Jewish], because resources from the state flow depending on the size of your communities," said Koffman.

Continued on page 16

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Finding inspiration



Rabbi Zolly Claman

By Rabbi Zolly Claman

I wonder what would emerge from a social survey amongst Jews of all backgrounds and demographics to ascertain at which time during the Jewish calendar they feel most Jewish. Lightening the Chanukah candles, hearing the Shofar and dressing up on Purim definitely would be honourable mentions – but in all likelihood I think sitting with family for the Pesach seder would prove to be the winner.

It is not a coincidence that during the evening that we are instructed to not just recap the history but to experience the exodus that is the most multi-sensory design of them all. The late night, the crunch of the matza, the musicality of the songs alongside family and friends

reconnects us to our roots like no other experience and inspires us to reinvigorate our heritage within ourselves.

The experience, as beautiful as it is, is not immune from the shortcoming that most inspirational moments have. They usually are so pure in the moment, but more often than not, they do not leave us with an everlasting impact. So how do we adapt in order to have the seder influence our internal selves for a longer period of time? – or maybe even forever?

What it boils down to is what do we do when we are inspired? And I think a general guidance from the hero of the Pesach story can send us in the right direction.

Moses was the greatest Jewish leader in our rich history. The moment that he was promoted from layman to leader was the moment that the exodus really started; "Let me turn now and see this great spectacle - why does the thorn bush not burn up?" (Shemot, 3:3). According to the *Midrash*, the burning bush had been there for a long time and was well known to the locals. What set Moshe apart from everyone else was that he actually left the path he was on to investigate this unusual sight.

He put insight and inspiration into action. He stepped out of the hectic rush of life to look into something that could provide him with more meaning. Everyone else in the town saw that bush and said "Wow, that's cool!" and

then went on their merry way. Only after this self-provoked action of "let me turn," did G-d call upon Moses as the first and greatest leader of the Jewish people.

When we sit down for the seder this year, we can all take a chapter out of Moses' book and see past the veil of the sing-song nature of the Haggadah. Within the tunes there are texts which illicit questions, and conversations which often lead to insights about our history that can deepen our present.

If we read the Haggadah with a keen eye and look for those moments that make us feel "hey, that's kind of out of place or curious," and verbalize these with others around the table – you'd be surprised what you can excavate! Taking that very same approach with our lives through Pesach and beyond of not being passive and waiting for meaning to come but to actively mining for meaning can be nothing short of life changing.

Succinctly put, truly engage yourself with the Haggadah - don't sit back relax and enjoy the show. Allowing that approach to continue with our post-Pesach daily lives can help guide us to making the most of each day and experience.

Rabbi Zolly Claman is the spiritual leader of Beth Israel Congregation in Edmonton.

Beth Israel presents world premiere of "Girl from Treblinka"

Edmonton's Beth Israel Synagogue is pleased to announce its presentation of a world premiere performance of "Girl from Treblinka," a play recently written by Leonard Stone dealing with the struggle between good and evil, the horrors of the Holocaust and the deep unknown of the afterlife.

The singular evening performance will take place in the synagogue's sanctuary at 131 Wolf Willow Road in Edmonton on Monday May 23, 2022 at 7:15 pm (sharp). With creative support from Betty Schaffel, the play will feature actors from New York City, Denver, and a couple of Alberta's finest performers, including Hunter Cardinal, Director of Story with Nehayawin, an Indigenous organization that helps Canadians with diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation goals through education. The performance will also be live streamed, and tickets will be available for online as well as for in-person viewing.

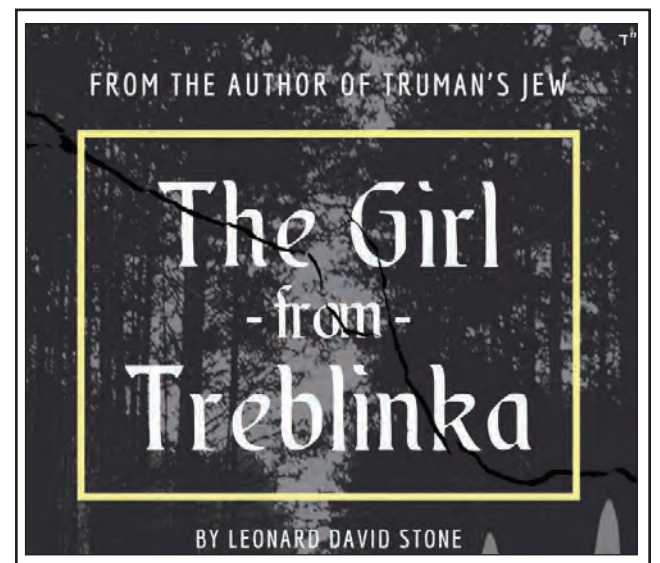
"We are thrilled to be staging this world premiere performance at Beth Israel Synagogue and are pleased to be teaming up with the Edmonton Jewish Federation's Holocaust Education Committee, and the Nehayawin Organization," said Shane Asbell, President of Beth Israel Synagogue.

"Our goal is to sell hundreds and hundreds of tickets, raise important funds for Beth Israel, support Holocaust Education, and promote the Nehayawin organization."

"Girl from Treblinka" tells the story of Frida Blume, a German Jewish woman who was slaughtered at the Treblinka concentration camp, and Karl Blix, a Nazi soldier harbouring an unthinkable secret and responsible for the elimination of hundreds of Jews. The two find themselves forced to share the same space after their deaths, where transformation from life to spirit occurs.

"Girl from Treblinka" was written by Winnipeg native Leonard David Stone, a fifty-year internationally recognized administrator in the cultural arts, and the author of "Truman's Jew" which premiered at Beth Israel Synagogue in 2017.

Please join Stone, Beth Israel the Family Shul, Jewish Federation of Edmonton, and the Naheyawin organization on May 23, 2022. In person tickets cost \$100 and online tickets cost \$50 and are available at familyshul.org/Treblinka or by calling the Beth Israel office at (780) 488-2840.



FROM THE AUTHOR OF TRUMAN'S JEW

The Girl - from - Treblinka

BY LEONARD DAVID STONE
WITH CREATIVE SUPPORT FROM BETTY SCHAFFEL

Frida Blume, a German Jew slaughtered at the Treblinka concentration camp, and Karl Blix, a Nazi soldier harbouring an unthinkable secret and responsible for the termination of hundreds of Jews, find themselves forced to share the same space after their deaths, where transformation from life to spirit occurs...

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Baby boom *Cont. from page 5*

Calgary, it quickly grew in popularity with significant demand coming from parents with very young children. It became evident that a different format was needed for children under the ages of two, recalls Kathie Wainer, who recently retired after 14 years welcoming Jewish Calgary's youngest members.

Calgary Jewish Federation responded by launching Shalom Baby.

"Shalom Baby was a natural extension of our outreach and we began delivering Shalom Baby gift bags to new parents," recalls Wainer, who also established Calgary's first Shalom Baby playgroup.

"Many of the moms were new to Calgary, or new to Judaism, or reconnecting to the community after having been away," said Wainer on whose watch other programs for young families, including PJ Chag Sameach (educational programming for Jewish holidays) and, before that, PJ Tot Shabbat, which brought parents, tots, grandparents and other caregivers together for songs, blessings and treats on alternate Friday mornings.

On alternate Thursday mornings, the Shalom Baby playgroup would meet in a quieter atmosphere that was more conducive for babies.

When COVID closed doors, the Jewish Federations in Calgary and Edmonton opened virtual windows for young families who were hunkering down at home.

"We went to weekly Zoom meetings, by popular demand," Wainer told *AJNews* adding that there was a significant upside to the virtual gatherings. More moms and kids were able to join in on the fun. "...because distance to the JCC was no longer a factor."

"Through this we found Jewish families who lived outside of Calgary who were wanting to access Jewish programs," said Wainer, adding that the virtual PJ programs expanded to include families in Airdrie, Cochrane, Banff and Lethbridge.

The pandemic opened doors for former Calgarians too, says Danielle Braitman, director of engagement programming at Calgary Jewish Federation.

"For Tot Shabbat we're getting people from BC, from Ontario. People can join us while vacationing down in the States. Grandparents can Zoom in if they are snowbirding in Arizona or down in Florida. It's been an amazing opportunity to connect with those who wouldn't ordinarily be able to connect with our programming."

And, of course, the often erratic schedules of babies

disrupt the best laid plans of their parents.

"It's nice to have the virtual option if you're running late or naptime got skewed a little bit," Braitman adds.

Notwithstanding the success of virtual programming in Calgary, in-person events have recently and cautiously been reintroduced, including an Intergenerational Hamentaschen bake in partnership with Beth Tzedec Synagogue and a Purim Tot Shabbat program, the first in-person gatherings since the start of the pandemic.

Families who prefer it are still able to participate virtually. In fact the *Chag Sameach* program became *Chagim @ Home* as organizers created holiday bags filled with resources and crafts that families could use in the comfort of their own homes while participating in holiday-themed Zoom programs.

"COVID is still very much around and people are nervous to gather in large groups and so certainly on the JCC and Federation side, we're going to be continuing hybrid programming for quite a while. ...We have to gauge by people's comfort levels, Braitman said.

While Edmonton parents and babes-in-arms have enjoyed in-person Shalom Baby gatherings between spikes in the pandemic, Shalom Baby is on temporary hiatus in Calgary. Braitman says that by and large Calgary parents expressed reluctance to meet in person during COVID and felt that the virtual option was not ideal for socializing infants.

Calgary Jewish Federation is currently in the midst of hiring a new PJ Library manager who will be tasked with reintroducing Shalom Baby programming as COVID recedes, Braitman said.

More than three decades ago, as I grew round with our first daughter, it felt to me like the whole world was pregnant. Now it feels that most of our friends are becoming bobbies and zaidies. Is this merely a stage of life, or is there actually a baby boom going on in the Alberta Jewish community?



Shalom Babies enjoying Purim. Photos by Tammy Vineberg

boom, though numbers are holding steady and more babes are expected shortly.

"A boom is definitely on in Calgary," says Danielle Braitman. "In 2020 we distributed 20 baby bags, and in 2021 we distributed 36. So far in 2022 we have distributed five bags with at least five more set to be distributed in the next two months. We are well on our way to high numbers for the year."

But the real story is not found in the numbers.

"COVID strengthened our sense of community," says Kathie Wainer. "We found what community really meant...and that we needed it more than ever."

As I visit on the coast with my kids and six-month-old granddaughter, I am reminded of the power of community. Though I am saddened we will not be together for baby's first Passover, I am comforted by the family-friendly Haggadahs, and Passover-themed books and activities PJ Library recently delivered here.

One of the books is a delightful riff on the Passover song *Dayenu* (It would have sufficed!). I wrap my arms around my granddaughter and sing.

It takes a shtetl to raise a Jewish child. And I am filled with gratitude knowing that the local Jewish community is helping our kids to raise theirs.

For more information about PJ Library and Shalom Baby programs go to www.jewishcalgary.org or www.jewishedmonton.org or contact your local Jewish Federation.


Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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Share your Passover stories with the community

By Tammy Vineberg

My sister and I keep glancing out the window, anxiously waiting for our favourite visitors to arrive from Gaithersburg, Maryland. As we see the car approach down the one-way street, we screech, "They are here! They are here!"

We run to the front door of our house, swing it open and watch the car to park. My aunt, uncle and two cousins tumble out after a long 12-hour drive and don't even take the chance to bring their luggage inside. Our Passover Seder can begin.

We gather around a lengthy table with my two uncles, two aunts, four cousins, my great aunt and uncle, and my parents. The smell of brisket waffles through the air, but savouring a bite has to wait as we tell the story of the exodus of Jews out of Egypt. I flip the pages of the Haggadah to see which page tells us we can start supper. My stomach rumbles. My cousins and I quietly place bets on who will spill the first glass of wine and stain the tablecloth.

When it comes time to hide the Afikoman, my uncles and father go wash their hands while the youngest at the table find a place to stash the matzah. Then the bidding war begins when my uncle offers \$5 to learn about the secret hiding place. One year, we got my uncle up to \$20 per child!

These are my favourite memories from previous Passovers as a child. When I moved from Montreal to Alberta, it was a tough first Pesach away from my family

because our family Seder had become so engrained in my life. As years passed, our extended family grew as we all had children and it was difficult to reunite and have a Seder as we did in my childhood. We did attempt to have an online Seder as an extended family during the pandemic. Although it was chaotic, it brought back so many happy reflections of Seders' past.

Passover is quickly approaching as March draws to a close. We're asking you to share your Passover stories, memories, and photos by Monday, April 11 to info@edjfed.org so we can connect as a Jewish community through storytelling. Over the next few weeks, Federation staff will share their Passover stories in our Shabbat messages so you can get to know us a little better and hopefully, it will encourage you to do the same. Through my years as a journalist and a public relations practitioner, I've experienced the power of story.

"Storytelling forges connections among people, and between people and ideas. Stories convey the culture, history, and values that unite people," writes Vanessa Boris in a Harvard Business article.

Let's share our stories and strengthen our Edmonton Jewish community.

Speaking of storytelling, I hope you will read about Eden Rosenblum's experience in Israel as a gap year student. Another way to experience the power of story is by attending online events at the National Library of Israel such as the one held earlier this month where we were able to view and hear the background behind the library's



extraordinary and significant pieces from Yoel Finkelman, curator of the Judaica Collection.

Tammy Vineberg is Associate Director, Marketing and Communications for Jewish Federation of Edmonton.

Community groups launch a new food forest

By Jenna Soroka

Temple Beth Ora (TBO) is collaborating with Edmonton Talmud Torah Society and Talmud Torah School to create a small, edible, community-run landscape next to the Talmud Torah School building. In addition, Jewish National Fund – Edmonton (JNF), along with Beth Shalom and Beth Israel synagogues, have joined this project and are helping with community outreach. Rabbi Gila Caine of Temple Beth Ora has been in communication with farming experts at Sustainable Food Edmonton (SFE) to help with the project. According to its website, SFE is a non-profit charitable organization that initiates and supports projects and programs to encourage the building of community through urban agriculture.

The impetus for the project is timing. This past Rosh Hashanah marked the beginning of a *Shmita* (sabbatical) year. In the Torah, Leviticus 25:4 describes the

commandment of letting the land rest every seven years. This project is launching in honour of this year's Shmita.

The community's Food Forest project is currently in the early planning stages, and on Sunday, March 20, Rabbi Caine, as well as Talmud Torah Society's Natalie Soroka, held a meeting at Talmud Torah School for community members and organizations to help develop the blueprint for the Food Forest.

TT parents and students, JNF Executive Director Jay Cairns, along with TBO community members, were among those who attended this initial meeting. The conversation revolved around vision-planning, idea-sharing, and outlining logistical needs for the project. It was particularly encouraging to listen to the ideas and feedback of the students in attendance and to hear how passionate they are to be part of this initiative.

Think of [the Food Forest] as a modular project," Rabbi Caine explained. "Start off the first year with something small and sustainable and slowly grow it." She emphasized that it should be easy for people in the community to take part in and be accessible.

Many ideas were explored at the meeting, such as incorporating the space into community Jewish holiday celebrations and even starting a school-wide compost program to fertilize the plants. Participants agreed that this space could also be used for community gatherings

and donor recognition. Food forests and edible landscapes, such as in Edmonton's river valley, have been a way for people to connect with nature for the purpose of nurturing and caring for the environment. It is evident that this Food Forest can provide an abundance of opportunities, including curriculum enrichment for Talmud Torah students, as well as community involvement and engagement.

As planning continues, plant selection will be critical to ensure the current ecosystem is compatible and the upkeep aligns with community goals/needs. One idea that was popular among meeting attendees was to plant perennials that are grown in Israel that can also thrive in our climate, bringing Judaic deeper meaning and connection to the Food Forest.

The possibilities for this project are exciting and will flourish with the help of volunteers, donors, and partnerships with related organizations. If you would like to learn more about this Food Forest initiative, get involved as a volunteer, or become a donor, please contact rabbi@templebethora.org or natalie.soroka@partner.epsb.ca. The committee is looking for lots of community input and have many opportunities to volunteer.

Jenna Soroka is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

BBYO brings teens together again – in person

By Maxine Fischbein

The BBYO Regional Convention held Friday, March 11 through Sunday, March 13 brought a mixture of excitement and relief to Jewish teens from Saskatchewan, Calgary and Edmonton gathered for the first in-person convention since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It was an amazing weekend...powerful to watch,” said NWC BBYO Director Stacy Shaikin, who characterized the event as “the tonic they needed,” following two years of isolation.

Veteran BBYO members, most of whom are now in Grade 12, enjoyed about a half a year together before the pandemic changed everything. For the vast majority of the teens who belong to BBYO’s constituent organizations, BBG (B’nai Brith Girls) and AZA (Aleph Zadik Aleph), the convention marked the first non-virtual gathering during the course of their membership.

Held at the Delta Marriott Hotel in Edmonton, the convention was high energy as organizers made up for lost time rolling missed milestones into one mighty weekend filled with song, work and play.

By all accounts, it was sheer excitement as youth and Northwest Canada Region BBYO staffers - themselves BBYO alumni - arrived in time for Shabbat Dinner.

“It was so much fun,” said Edmontonian Leah Campbell, who currently serves as Regional Nesiah (president) for the BBG Northwest Canada (NWC) Region.

“After these years of not being able to congregate, we’ve been waiting for convention. It was postponed a few times so it was so nice to finally be with everyone,” Campbell said, adding that she and her fellow organizers were thrilled that 60 teens joined in the fun. Unfortunately, half a dozen kids who had planned to attend were forced to isolate instead when they tested positive for COVID-19.

In the interest of keeping convention participants and their families healthy, all participants had to provide proof of full immunization, take rapid antigen tests immediately prior to the convention, and wear masks except during meals and when they were in their rooms.

Campbell expressed great pleasure in the active participation of a nine-person contingent from Saskatoon.

“It was awesome because, at least in my time at BBYO, we haven’t really been able to connect with them, so that was super special,” Campbell said.

When you bring Saskatoon, Calgary and Edmonton together for these weekends, it really drives the bus,” said Shaikin. “It propels the whole lifecycle structure of a teen participating in Jewish life and the Jewish community.”

The convention itinerary featured festive Shabbat meals and services and a wide variety of programming including icebreakers, games, team building activities, regional business, social action and the mass induction of first, second, third and fourth year members.

“We just thought that would be really special because so many people haven’t gotten the opportunity yet,” Campbell said.

In an organization run largely by the teens themselves, much emphasis is put on leadership training and the handing down from generation to generation of BBYO traditions that have stood the test of time.

Since most important business had been accomplished online during the pandemic, there were not any formal motions to pass at the convention, said Campbell, but they still held a business meeting with all the formalities, so as to prepare younger members for their future leadership roles.

On the lighter side, during Spirit and Film, teens generated videos, wrote and performed songs and participated in oratories.

“We give everyone two different topics, one for serious oratory and one for a funny oratory,” Campbell told *AJNews*. -“The best one is given an award.”

There were a couple of special guests at the convention, including International Nesiah Emma Zentner, who lives in Winnipeg.

“It was very special that she came to spend the weekend with us for our first in-person convention,” Campbell said. “That was really cool.”

Also on hand was a comedian who entertained prior to dinner on the Saturday evening.

Paintball was one of the convention highlights according to Stacy Shaikin, who added that the event was generously sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Edmonton.

Under ordinary circumstances, the Sweetheart and Beau dance - a BBYO classic - is held as a stand-alone event, but organizers decided to add it to the convention. Before the dance, typically during a meal, members of the AZA leadership will ask their BBG peers to the dance in



Havdalah Service at the 2022 NWC Regional BBYO Convention. (Photo supplied)

publically performed poems or songs.

“This year we decided to switch the roles and have the girls ask the guys,” said Leah Campbell. She and Ben Magalnick were voted this year’s Sweetheart and Beau and fittingly crowned with tiaras.

“It was really fun,” Campbell said.

Campbell, who served last year as an intern with Stand with Us - an organization devoted to Israel advocacy and the fight against antisemitism - spoke highly of a program run by this year’s interns, Zoe Wright and Amy Shlomovitch, during which convention attendees wrote letters that will be inserted in the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

One teambuilding session featured a scavenger hunt in which teams had to search for letters and determine the spelling of a mystery word.

“It was a really fun way to get to know people you didn’t know before,” Campbell said, adding that the activity was “good for cooperation, leadership and bonding.”

“My favourite part of convention is usually Havdalah,” said Campbell of the candlelit service that marks the separation between Shabbat and the new week.

“It was so nice when everyone sang together with our arms around each other. It was just so special since we haven’t been able to do that for so long.”

In the position of honour, at the centre of the circle were fourth year members like Campbell who are marking their final year in BBYO.”

“Another thing that was my favourite, because I can’t pick just one, was Good and Welfare,” said Campbell. “We all sit in a circle and each person is given about a

Continued on page 17



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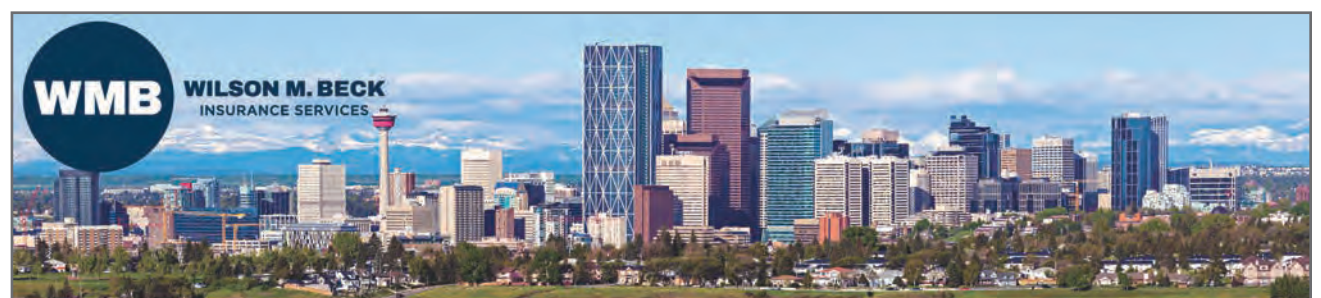
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Gan Chaim offers a pre-school option in Edmonton

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

Mama Roza's Garden Childcare is one of Edmonton's newest innovative early-learning facilities. When dynamic sister-duo, Frida Pesin and Esta Karpulis, first envisioned their new daycare business, they dreamed of a nurturing oasis of early childhood learning; now this dream has expanded to include a program to serve the needs of Edmonton's Jewish community!

"We have built a daycare that emphasizes the importance of early development through guided play," commented CEO, Frida Pesin in a recent interview. "Collectively, our team has decades of combined experience under their belts, so there is a great deal of practical knowledge that we have to offer."

When Edmonton's religious institution of pre-school, elementary, and secondary Jewish learning, Menorah Academy, closed its doors in 2021, the community lost a school governed by immersive and observant Jewish values for their children's educations.

There are other options, but we knew that with Menorah's closure, that there would be a void for many people that would need to be addressed," elaborated Pesin, whose son Moshe was a student in the school's final high school graduating cohort. This left many families exploring options for how to provide their pre-school-aged children with a meaningful and robust environment of religious Jewish learning.

"I was approached by parents from the community who were brainstorming and exploring options to address this need," explained Pesin. After much planning and discussion, it was decided that a Jewish daycare could be founded as part of the Mama Roza's Garden facility. Located in the core of Downtown Edmonton, close to major public and commuter transport arteries, Gan Chaim daycare offers Jewish families a pre-school option steeped in Jewish values and religious teachings.

"In addition to helping our children reach regular pre-school milestones, we also incorporate into our activities Hebrew letter recognition, learning about the weekly Torah portion, and Jewish holidays. We try to instill in them a pride in their heritage and love of who they are," said Rebbetzin Devorah Pinson, one of the Gan Chaim educators.

"Gan Chaim has a very high staff-to-child ratio and is extremely warm and friendly. We love each child for who they are and do our best to help them grow while fostering their own talents and interests and allowing them to choose fun activities in a way that interests them," she elaborated.

The Gan Chaim room is bright and colorful with an impressive variety of engaging toys geared toward the development of key pre-school skills. A charming

loft-style treehouse provides children with cozy spaces for reading and make-believe that even an adult would appreciate. When speaking about her daughter Chana's experience at Gan Chaim, Rebbetzin Pinson said: "One of her favorite activities is watching vegetables and herbs grow in our Tower Garden and dressing up in our drama corner. She really enjoys putting on all the costumes and acting out the different roles from what we are learning – or just enjoying playtime with her friends."

Overwhelmingly, parents are thrilled with the programming provided at Gan Chaim. When asked what she thinks makes this experience special, Tanya Ghermezian commented: "The hallmark of a positive school climate is that both the students and teachers are excited to go in each day. Gan Chaim is the embodiment of this principle."

It is true; those who work at Gan Chaim do so out of a dedication and love for Jewish education. "The teachers have so much love and passion for what they do and really tailor their initiatives to the individual needs of each child," she explained. "I am so grateful that my daughter is part of this unique preschool."

From 9am to 3pm Monday through Thursday, and 9am till noon on Fridays, the Gan Chaim team works to cultivate an enriching atmosphere of growth and discovery guided by the teachings of Jewish culture, values, and faith.

"For parents that need extended childcare hours, there are options," explained Pesin. "Children can spend pre-Gan Chaim time, or stay afterhours in the regular, age-appropriate Mama Roza rooms. This would be outside of the Jewish program's operating hours. Our regular facility operates from 6:30am to 8pm. This way families can offer their children meaningful Jewish learning experiences, and still work their regular employment hours." It is a win-win situation for Edmonton's Jewish families looking to provide their children with the best in focused Jewish fundamentals while still keeping professional workhours.

As a fully licensed and accredited daycare facility, Mama Roza's Garden Childcare, and Gan Chaim as an extension



Gan Chaim celebrated Purim with costumes and special snacks. (Photos supplied)

of this, is eligible for government grants and bursaries. Those who qualify for the government childcare subsidy could pay as little as \$367.33 a month. Not only does this make a pre-school Jewish education logistically accessible, but affordable as well. And as the Gan Chaim community grows, the potential for self-organized carpooling cuts down on the frequency of driving adventures downtown.

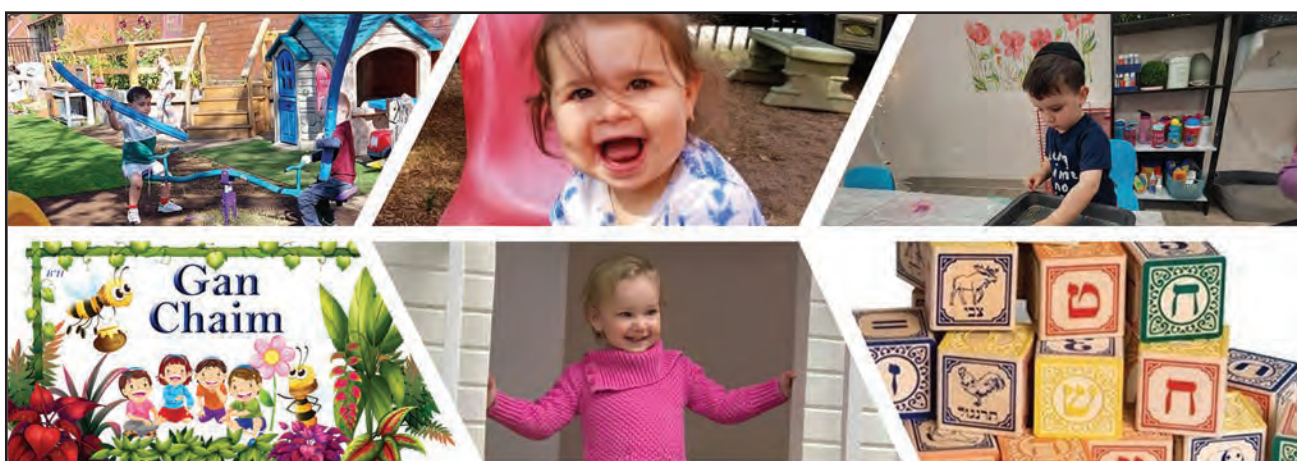
"There is a chance that we might explore options for moving the Gan Chaim section of the daycare to the West End in the future," explained Pesin. "But there's nothing definite at this point."

For now, each day, Gan Chaim welcomes an enthusiastic group of eager Jewish children. They vary in age, but the trained Jewish educators tasked with inspiring their young minds, know exactly how to nurture each child. From weekly challah baking, to acting out the story of Purim, complete with dazzling costumes, the Gan Chaim team does it all – and with an innately loving Jewish flare.

"Chana is absolutely loving the Gan Chaim experience. She came home from school and told me that she wants to do school twice a day," commented Rebbetzin Pinson.

The little ones are guided and nurtured as they reach all their developmental milestones, just in a Jewish way. Space is still available in the Gan Chaim program and interested families should contact Mama Roza's Garden Childcare at: 825-797-0545.

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.



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Knowing how to question

By Rabbi Gila Caine



Rabbi Gila Caine

Why? is the most important three letter word in Jewish tradition. It is so unique that very often when people explain to me why they decided to join or reconnect with their Jewish heritage, it is because we know how to ask: why.

And the moment we celebrate the art of asking why, is on the Seder night, a ritual which was structured

millenia ago specifically in order to teach our children and ourselves that being Jewish is being free, and being free is about knowing how to question.

The Pesach Haggadah has many editions and prints; it is probably the most wildly versatile Jewish text. But in case you don't know it, I'd like to specifically recommend Noam Zion and David Dishon's "The family participation Haggadah: A different night" (1997). On the cover page for this edition we find a wonderful question posed by Ira Steingroot: "The real question is not why do we keep Passover but how do we continue to keep Passover year

after year and keep it from becoming stultified! How can we be privileged to plan it so that, as Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook said, *the old may become new and the new may become holy.*"

Here is the question of questions: how do we make the old new (and so enable ourselves to reconnect to our roots and ancestors) but at the same time, create a newness which is sacred?

The Seder wants to teach us how to overcome two fears - the fear from tradition and rules, but also the fear of renewal and doubt. It reminds us that one of the great gifts we are given as Jews is the ability to live at once in both places - in the old which becomes new, and in the new which turns sacred.

But in order for that to happen, we are taught, we must learn how to ask questions, because the art of asking takes practice and is very complex.

Much of the society in which we live today professes to know about questioning, but for the most part, doesn't do a very good job at it and questioning is either forbidden or used as a weapon. Just look at the complete break-down in social discourse around the Covid-19 pandemic, and ask yourselves - do we still know how to ask questions in a constructive way?

The Passover Haggadah teaches us that asking questions is sacred work, but it also reminds us that not all questioning is sacred or useful, and that we need to be cognizant of our inner intention when asking. The preliminary question I need to ask before asking "Why," is why am I asking a question? Sorry, that was a confusing sentence. But it is also a confusing feeling, and one we

need to get used to noticing in ourselves. The feeling of questioning ourselves, our beliefs and our ideas.

You'll notice in the Haggadah that just before going into the story of our ancestors, we have a short interlude known as "The four sons/children," and you might recall they are: Chacham (smart), Rasha (wicked), Tam (simple child) and She'eino yodeia lish'ol (the one who doesn't know how to ask). Each one of them personifies a way of being in the world of questions - on this night, but in our daily life as well. It asks us to ask questions, but wisely and to promote connection and kindness in the world (hint: this is the wise child), and not in order to foment deconstruction and hate between people (sadly, the wicked child). To be clear, all "four children" exist within each of us and represent our reaction to reality, and we need to learn how to recognize them in our behavior.

If I go back to the quote by Rabbi Kook, I think our biggest challenge now is how to make "the old become new and the new become holy." How do we choose our words and questions to uphold and reconnect to our past, with love and respect? And how do we create a newness that is sacred, that truly helps us sanctify our lives and our connection to the lives of those around us?

I wish all of you with your families a night of delightful questions, of deep questioning and of full and compassionate listening to each other.

May we, with all of Am Yisrael, have a happy and kosher Pesach.

Rabbi Gila Caine is the spiritual leader of Temple Beth Ora in Edmonton.

Jewish, Metis census

Cont. from page 10

"This is certainly more true during multiculturalism, but it continues to be significant for all kinds of issues about charitable donations, about access to resources, about education, about health outcomes, aging, lots of things."

But the problem is the opposite for the Metis Nation, since the more people who identify as Metis outside the Metis Nation, the more thinly spread resources will be, Gareau explained.

"When it comes to resources, then those resources don't go to the Metis Nation of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario or B.C. It goes outside, so it really is

important to have some sort of nation representation of numbers," Gareau said.

"They're not there. They're just everywhere... It undermines our sovereignty as a nation."

Gareau, interestingly, took Jewish Studies for his undergraduate degree. When he started in 2002 at Concordia University in Montreal, he had initially studied cultural anthropology, but didn't find it compelling so he switched to Religious Studies, which paved the path to his Jewish Studies major.

He was drawn to religious studies because as a Metis person from Saskatchewan, many of the "social relations" within his community occurred in religious, namely Catholic, spaces.

"It's the same thing that Metis Studies is doing. We're not defined by language or history, we're all doing

this around the table, talking about these experiences. It's pluralistic and engaging," said Gareau.

By contrast, Koffman got into Jewish Studies via anthropology, which he also studied in Montreal, but at McGill University.

"When I started my academic work, I wanted nothing to do with Jewish-anything, as a young Jewish boy who had left Toronto and went to McGill, I was learning about all kinds of things that were exploding my world and it seemed incredibly parochial, so I didn't take a single Jewish Studies course in my undergrad," said Koffman.

"But, ironically, I internalized one of the core ideas of anthropology... which is that you're shaped by your culture and history in ways you can't really see, and it's a fool's errand to try to deny the way culture's second skin helps you breathe and be in the world."

After his undergrad, he realized it was time for a "confrontation with my Jewishness," he added.

"I was born and will be identified by others as a Jew and I will probably be identified as a Jew when I die no matter what I do in the middle. It's up to me to learn to engage with my Jewishness in a serious intellectual way," Koffman said.

He ended up researching encounters between Jewish and Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and Canada, which he published as a book entitled *The Jews' Indian: Colonialism, Pluralism and Belonging*.

Koffman acknowledged the limits of this approach. "In a sense, Jews are always the subject of my study and, somewhat awkwardly, Indigenous people are the objects of the study," he said. "What did the Jews in my study think about, do with and interact with Indigenous people?"

Gareau said a major component of Indigenous Studies is the way Indigenous peoples interacted with various settler communities.

"Colonialism has a hard time advocating or recognizing Indigenous sovereignty as something that is OK, natural and important to do the intellectual and community-based engagement," he said.

"In terms of relations between Indigenous Studies and communities that we're from and that we study, and Jewish Studies, it's about nation-to-nation relations. How do we engage in epistemological and diplomatic study where our communities come together... and come to recognize each other without coercion while really affirming self-determination in that work."

Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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About our cover artist: Joshua Winer

By Shelley Werner

On April 20, 2022 at 7 pm MDT Art and Scroll Studio will celebrate their 16th episode and season finale.

Art and Scroll Studio is proud to have hosted over 1,000 viewers since their inception. They are happy to close out their second season with Mosaic artist Joshua Winer.

A visionary for public spaces that enhance the experience of passing by art of a large scale, Joshua Winer is enthusiastic on the impact of colour and texture on a community scale.

"I am passionate about art. I love the process of creating art and experiencing art. My specialization is the creation of visual art that is integrated into an architectural setting. I believe that site specific art plays a significant role in enriching human experience as it makes meaningful connections to context and use. I also believe that public and community art is made more meaningful by following art-making processes that include the sharing of ideas and knowledge. This aesthetic value system is the foundation for my work as a commissioned artist and as an educator."

Over the last twenty years he has created more

than 100 murals, mosaics and works of public art in cities across the United States. This work spans a broad range of project types, from monumental exterior public art for urban centers to very personalized interior art for home and everything in between: murals and mosaics in hotels, restaurants, hospitals, senior-living homes, mansions, museums, castles, bathrooms, office buildings, parking garages, malls, theaters and schools. He works in many media, including paint, mosaic, ceramic, brick, metal, and wood. He has also created several large mobiles and collaborated with other artists, as well as work hands-on with community groups and schools to make the finished artwork.



Join Art & Scroll Studio on April 20 at 7 pm for an in depth conversation with mosaic artist Joshua Winer.

Email artandscrollstudio@gmail.com for free tickets to the event on April 20 at 7 pm.

Shelley Werner is the host of Art and Scroll Studio zoom series that celebrates the makers and creators of Judaica Art.

BBYO *Cont. from page 14*

minute to talk about the weekend and anything they want to say about it."

"It almost brought me to tears listening to what everybody had to say," added Campbell. "First-years especially loved the weekend and they're going to come more after that."

They won't have to wait too long with planning well under way toward the BBYO Spring Convention which will be held at Camp BB Riback during the first weekend of June.

"It's where we do life speeches," said Leah Campbell, adding that she is already working on hers.

Life speeches allow veteran BBYO members to reflect upon their experiences, speak about what the organization and their peers have meant to them, and share their wisdom and encouragement with younger members.

Also coming up at Spring Convention will be the election of the next Northwest Council Regional Board, Campbell said.

Stacy Shaikin - who also serves as director of Camp BB Riback - says that the positive influence of senior BBYO members on their younger peers is magic.

"The opportunity to hang out with some of the leaders really jazzed them up," Shaikin told AJNews.

BBYO also benefits from the synergy of community partners that support the organization and their quarterly conventions.

"The BBYO Parents' Society, Calgary Jewish Federation, Jewish Federation of Edmonton, Edmonton Jewish

Community Charitable Foundation, B'nai Brith Lodge #816 and BBYO International are the major stakeholders who made this happen," said Shaikin of the enormously successful weekend.

"The power of bringing all these people in the community together still exists."

Shaikin also has high praise for the small group of professionals who assist BBYO teens in steering the work of AZA and BBG.

"The staff have been incredible," Shaikin told AJNews, lauding the work of Dani Uretsky (in Edmonton) and then Barry Pechet (BBYO City Supervisor in Calgary) who had overseen the work of the region prior to Shaikin's appointment as Director of the NWC BBYO Region.

Pechet took things over during the pandemic and had no easy task in keeping everything together virtually, Shaikin said.

"He was such a rock for Northwest Canada BBYO," added Shaikin who also praised the work of Eliyanna Forbes, BBYO City Supervisor in Edmonton.

Shaikin credits Saskatoon BBYO City Supervisor Malvina Rapko with "starting a rebirth of BBYO in Saskatoon."

"Five years ago they had one person from Saskatoon coming to convention," said Shaikin. "She brought nine with her and two advisors who were just invaluable to the weekend, keeping the teens safe and happy, on time and organized."

"We had a blast together working the weekend," said Shaikin of his dream team.

BBYO Spring Convention takes place June 3 - 5 at



Northwest Canada Region BBYOers enjoy an indoor paintball adventure as part of their convention. (Photo supplied).

Camp BB Riback in Pine Lake, Alberta. For more information, please contact sshaikin@bbyo.org

Maxine Fischbein is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.


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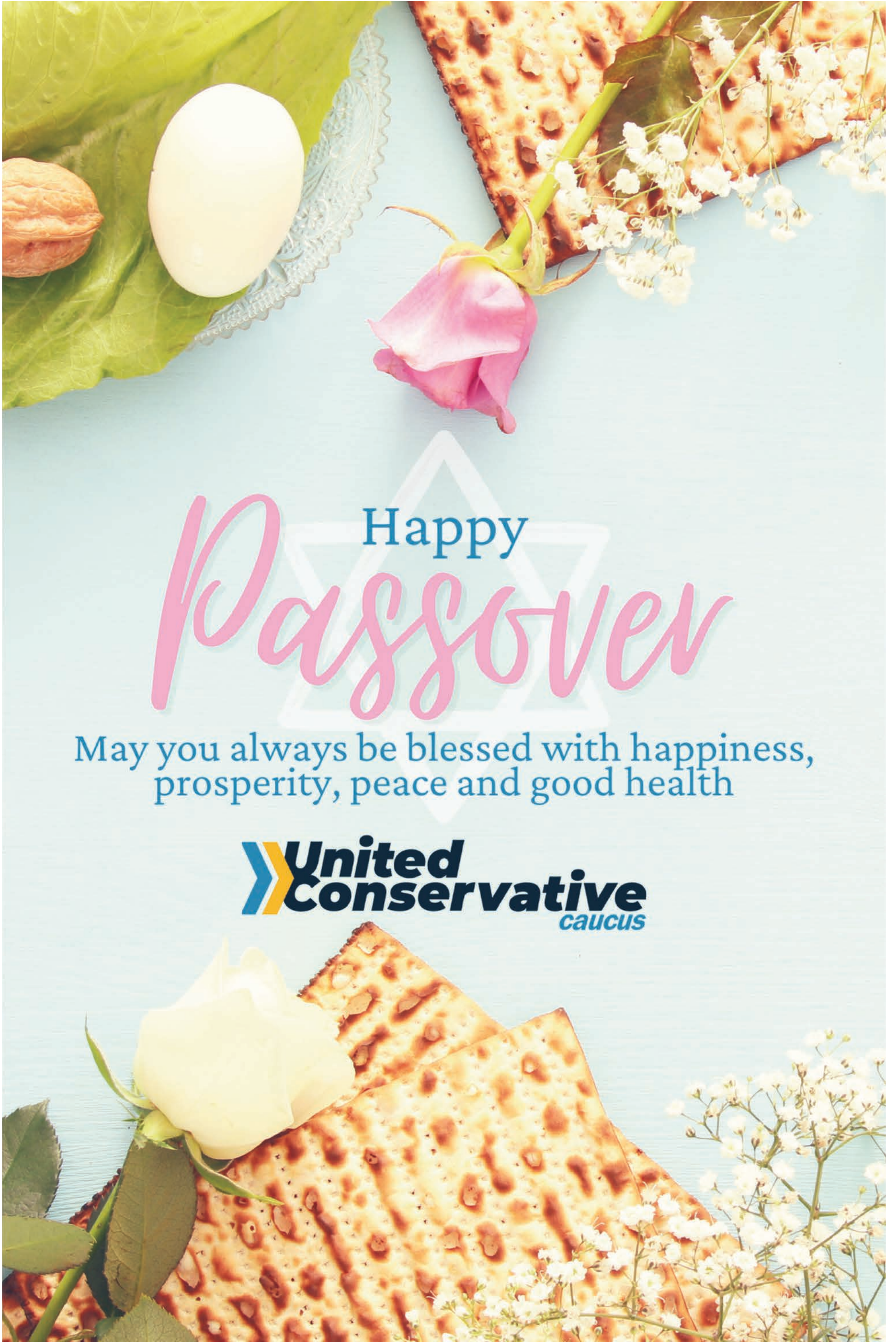
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Chabad's Purim party felt like a community re-united

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

Like so many people in the Edmonton Jewish community, the last two years of turbulent COVID adaptation have challenged me to maintain a sense of community connection despite the obvious barriers. Each year our oldest son, Benji, looks forward to the Chabad Purim celebration. He plans out his costume meticulously, coordinates with his friends, and shakes his grogger with such enthusiasm that he nearly takes flight! In 2020, mere days before the first lockdown, we were able to take our then, two-month-old Jacob, to his very first Chabad Purim party – proudly dressed in the same bat costume Benji once wore.

The lockdown resulted in some creative innovations in youth programming at Chabad Lubavitch of Edmonton. As a parent, I can attest that moving to a socially-distanced virtual format for youth engagement actually enhanced the focus on individualized learning – a huge plus! Despite these fantastic efforts to adapt to ever changing regulations, the lack of the ability to celebrate Purim as a wider united community was profoundly felt in our household.

That is why when Chabad announced that the annual Purim festivities would kick back into action for 2022 the news was met with immense enthusiasm throughout the community! Once again children began to ready themselves for the occasion, but this year there was yet one more creative innovation. With many people still a bit wary of venturing out, let alone for larger social gatherings, it was decided that this year children's activities, and the always much anticipated Chabad Edmonton Purim banquet, would be held separately. But how would this work?

At first Benji was wary of this arrangement, and we all found ourselves longing for things to be as they always had been. These desires dissipated instantaneously once we arrived at the Chabad Edmonton children's Purim party! With my three kiddos, aged 11, 2, and four-months, in tow, my good friend Ruti and her adult daughter along as backup, we arrived at the Chabad House to a flurry of dazzling taffeta, brightly colored polyester, and even elaborate cosplay anime costumes. Little toddlers, like our Jacob, dressed in fuzzy felt and flannel animal costumes, composed a diverse menagerie of cuddly creatures.

The walls were adorned with sparkling streamers, and each table was equipped with crafts and Purim-themed word-searches. Adults, who watched each other's kids

grow up through Facebook posts, greeted one another with overwhelming joy, after years of conversing electronically. This was the epitome of a community reunited!

The children were regaled by the endearing ventriloquism of 'The Joe Show.' The spectacle was so endearing that toddlers sat transfixed, and older kids laughed along with hearty jubilation. Many children whose early years were under the oppressive shadow of COVID, like our Jacob, had never seen anything so mesmerizing. Parents and grandparents marveled on, overjoyed at the unrestrained happiness of the little ones.

Rabbi Mendy Blachman facilitated the mitzvah of hearing the Megillah read aloud, and children and adults exploded with a chorus of chaotic cacophonous groggers and yelps. Rebbetzin Devorah Pinson, surrounded by gaggles of bouncing costumed kiddos coordinated a raffle for much coveted Galaxyland Tickets. And of course, what Purim would be complete without Rabbi Dovid Pinson igniting the energy of the crowd!

The mitzvah of exchanging mishloah manot was fulfilled as bags of kosher goodies changed hand and were quickly opened by eager children. The punctuated plunk of coins clinked in tzedakah jars, and once again the spirit of the Edmonton Jewish community could be felt in our sharing of Purim's mitzvot.

This year it was our newborn daughter Tamara's turn to follow in her brothers' footsteps and wear the tiny bat

costume for her first Purim. We were overjoyed that we could create these warm memories for our children after so long kept physically distanced from the community. Certainly, we all long for the return of large Chabad Purim festivities at the Fantastland Hotel, complete with elegant fine-dining and bouncy castles. But even when, G-d willing, this is all possible again, if there is a separate children's celebration offered, the Lipes children will be there without fail.

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.



Chabad Edmonton hosted two Purim parties this year - one for kids and another for grown-ups. They both were a lot of fun and delicious too.

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HAPPY PASSOVER

 Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Tamara Aronov and family

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Joel and Melany Allen and family 


Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health

 from Rebecca & Shane Asbell and Family


Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Mira, Gary, Noah, Nathan, and Leah Campbell 


Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Gabe & Sonia Goldberg and family


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

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Regan, Dmitriy, Benji, Jacob & Tamara Lipis 


Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy, healthy and peaceful Passover from Lena & Victor Linetsky and family


Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Anat, Brian, Noah, Eva and Maya 


 Best wishes to my family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Dr. Bernie Adler

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Krista, Robert, Aliya, and Daniel Brick 


Pesach Sameach from Sharon Bookhalter & Jerry Glasser חַסַּד פֶּסַח שָׂמֵחַ


Pesach Sameach from Mark Dolgoy & Francie Ratner and Family 

Pesach Sameach - Happy Passover from Lesley Jacobson 


Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Samuel Koplowitz 


Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Sandy & Moe Litman and family


 Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Gail & Kevin Milner and Helen Markovich


 Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from Brian, Terri and Adina Mann

חַג פֶּסַח שָׂמֵחַ from Gabe, Megan, Dani & Nesi Mandel

 Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy, healthy Passover from The Lerner Families


 Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Marina, Gary, and Matthew Marcus and Luba Kolominsky


 Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Freda & Marvin Abugov and family

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from The Buck Family 


ברכות לחג הפסח from Leeor, Ohad, Noa, & Shai Eliyahu


Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Nikki, Naomi, Jared & Stephanie


Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Shirley Goldberg, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren 


Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Mindy Jacobs & Eoin Kenny 


Pesach Sameach - Happy Passover from Karen Leibovici, Steve Zepp and Adam, Anika & Levi Zepp חַסַּד פֶּסַח שָׂמֵחַ


Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Diana & Aube Levine 

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Michele & Josh Miller 

 Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Robin & David Marcus, Max & Eliana, Annie, Corey & Rayna

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Yuliya, Alexey, Zach, and Lisa Massarsky 

Pesach Sameach from Barbara Mandel 

Wishing the entire community a Passover filled with love & good health from Dylan, Leah, Carter, and Ayla Muscat 

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

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Jen, Colin, Asher, and Nooni Muscat

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Beryl Nahornick and family

חג פסח חנוּהּ
from Paul Polushin

Pesach Sameach from Susan & Bruce Mintz
חג פסח שניח

Best wishes to our friends & family for a happy and healthy Passover from Aubrey & Draytin Rogerville

חג פסח שמח
from Mona & Dan Rosenberg

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Francie & Jon Nobleman

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Sarah, Josh and Jonah Raizman

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Dr. Wynne Rigal

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Renee & Errol Raff and family

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Faren, Ari, Noam and Maya Sniderman

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Carol & Ron Ritch

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Anita Sky, Howard Davidow & family

Pesach Sameach from Jane & Herzl Sobel and family
חג פסח חנוּהּ

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Reisa & Murray Scheckter

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from The Rebohs

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Lauren & Keith Tankel and family

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Jane & Randy Soifer and family

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health from Jessica Starkman & Jamie Churchward and family

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from The Uritsky Family

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from The Alima Vogel Family

Best wishes to our family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Ella, Lola, Eva & Jessie Turuk

Pesach Sameach from Lewis & Freya Wasel
חג פסח שמח

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

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Allen, Steven, and Syma Uram

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Sue & Alvin Winestock

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Dr. Sam & Eva Weisz

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Jodi, Michael, and Rebecca Zabudowski

Best wishes to my family & friends for a happy and healthy Passover from Naomi Wolfman

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love and good health from Lonnie, Angela, Zoe, Fraser, Ethan, Jordan, Emma and Jonah Zwaigenbaum

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Riva & Howard Shein and family

פסח שמח לכולם
from Anna, Forrest, Adina and Naomi Zeisler

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Stacey, Erin, Jordyn, Abby & Zoe Wright

Wishing everyone a Passover filled with love & good health from Hal Zalmanowitz

Wishing a happy, healthy Passover to the entire community from Connie & Danny Zalmanowitz

JNF Alberta Cup was held in Edmonton Feb. 26 & 27



Edmonton JNF Director Jay Cairns, presenting sponsor Barry Slawsky and his son James congratulate Lee Tappenden and Dylan Muscat on a successful tournament. Selina Taylor presented Jasen Reboh with the 'Mensch' Valuable Player Award in honour of Nathan Reboh z"l, pictured here with his parents, Emile and Gisella.

A tribute to Rebecca Fayerman z"l



Rebecca Fayerman

Rebecca Fayerman (nee Shtabsky), was born on September 19th, 1934 in Edmonton, Alberta. She was the oldest of four children to Sam and Sonia Shtabsky. She cherished a lot of memories of growing up in a relatively small western Canadian Jewish community. Her father, Sam, was the owner of a small delivery and moving business. To assist other families, he regularly transported other children to

Talmud Torah along with his daughter. The children were tightly packed in to allow for as many families to be helped with getting their children to school.

Rebecca obtained her education degree at the University of Alberta and later taught at The Talmud Torah, known to her students as Ms. Shtabsky. When she cut down her hours after marriage, she continued at TT as a substitute teacher and many will remember her spelling bees, dividing the class into two groups standing on each side of the classroom. If you mis-spelled the word you would go sit down. Her children, Sandra and Richard, remember receiving the most difficult words to spell so other students would not perceive her to be favouring her children in the classroom.

Rebecca's upbringing in the Edmonton community and her close ties with her brothers, Aaron, Eli and Manuel Shtabsky, formed the basis for her love of community. Tragedy struck the night of her prom, when her father had a massive heart attack in their home and died. Sonia, left with four children, managed to support her large family and three of the four even pursued their university education.

Rebecca, along with her husband Harold eventually became involved as a volunteer and served on many Jewish boards, chaired events and conventions, was involved in Hadassah Wizo. She was President of the parent's association while Harold was President of the board of the Talmud Torah. Together they served for many years as leaders of the Edmonton Jewish Community, even hosting Yigal Allon, acting Prime Minister of Israel at a community reception in their home. Her life was busy, but she never complained about things being too difficult or too much for her and made herself available to everyone.

Family was always important to Rebecca as well as keeping a Jewish home which included keeping kosher and observing the Jewish holidays. Friday nights were spent at the Shabbat table and she hosted years of big festive meals with the extended Shtabsky families.

She was always thinking of others before herself and she kept an open and Hamish home. She loved to entertain and socialize with her wide circle of friends in the Edmonton community and single-handedly prepared lovely dinner parties, even hosting famous volleyball and

barbeque parties in the backyard.

Rebecca was a masters-level bridge player. She travelled the world, and loved cruising with her husband. She was intelligent and had a curious mind, wanting to learn everything from history to art in every location. Rebecca was liked by almost everyone who knew her and she made countless new friends upon moving to Vancouver after her husband Harold's passing in 2007.

Rebecca was a master level bridge player and was sought after by various groups of women wanting her guidance. She loved to combine her love of teaching with the game she knew so well. She even taught herself how to use apps to continue to play mahjong and bridge online during the pandemic.

She enjoyed daily phone calls and zoom calls with her daughter Sandra and beloved granddaughter Melissa, (who flew in to spend as much time as possible the last few weeks with her, which meant the world to both of them), as well as having in person visits with her son Richard and her other two grandchildren, David and Katherine. She cherished time spent with her family and friends. She maintained a very close bond with her brothers and was devastated when they all passed before her.

People characterized her as a kind, gentle and caring individual and a "true lady." Even random people have commented since her passing how kind she was to them. Her diagnosis and passing within only six weeks caught everyone by surprise. She never complained during her illness or wanted to burden anyone, as that was just the kind of special person she was. Rebecca Fayerman will be deeply missed by so many that knew and loved her and will always be remembered as one of the dedicated contributors to the flourishing of the Edmonton Jewish community.

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This month's update from Edmonton Talmud Torah School



All the students and teachers had a blast celebrating Purim at Talmud Torah School. The costumes were fun and creative and the students learned about Mishloach Manot and the importance of giving to charity at the same time. The teachers dressed up as scrabble pieces and had some fun spelling out their instructions.

HAPPY PASSOVER

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Happy Passover



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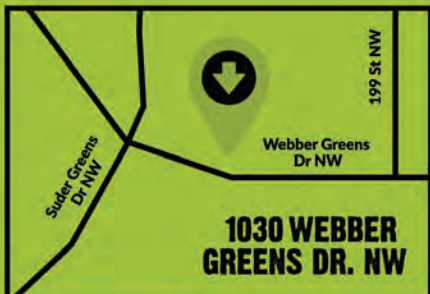


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