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May 25, 2022

## Sunday afternoons soccer in the park

#### By Jenna Soroka

Over the May long weekend, you could find Jewish youth and parents gathered at the Westridge fields in Edmonton for a Sunday afternoon of soccer. Born from a desire for a sports program that worked with her family's schedule and religious needs, Dr. Shoshi Aziza established an 8-week Jewish Soccer program for Jewish youth.

"There must be other parents that are like me that have multiple kids and/or are shomer shabbos that can't do the games that are on Saturdays," Shoshi shared in an interview when discussing how the soccer program came to fruition. Having grown up in Toronto and seeing the local shuls do different leagues together, she thought it was something that could be done in Edmonton too.

Prior to the formation of the program, Shoshi reached out to Talmud Torah parents and connected with various synagogue youth departments to see if there would be interest. Based on the positive responses she received, she proceeded to confirm the soccer fields with the city, get coaches, and put out registration.

"I was blown away," Shoshi expressed. "It took off way more than I could imagine." Around 50 kids are officially signed up for the program. She went on to say that "it was a really good collaborative community sign-up."

Soccer groups are split into kids under grade one, boys from grades 1-3, and then girls from grades 1-3. Coaches guide them through soccer drills for the first half, then the kids take a snack break with kosher snacks provided, and finally they split up within their groups to play a soccer game for the last half. Dr. Eitan Aziza, Shoshi's husband, is one of the coaches and shared how it is the highlight of his week. "I love coaching and getting out there. It's great to be outside and be with the kids, and it's such a positive experience."

There is a rotating schedule of parent volunteers to



A new Jewish Soccer League was launched in Edmonton this month that plays on Sunday afternoons. "Kids are loving it and parents are loving it," said organizer Shoshi Aziza. (Photo by Jenna Soroka)

help with assistant coaching which allows the program to have more kids involved, especially with the younger ones. Shoshi explained "some parents just naturally got involved until we officially brought them up, but it's just nice to have an extra pair of hands."

Through Beth Israel's youth department, Shul Director Moshe Siderson applied for a Jewish Federation grant which allowed for the program fees to remain low and affordable. The grant also provided the opportunity for t-shirts to be made by a local mom. The players were excited to put on their team jerseys. Each t-shirt depicts a Jewish star incorporated into a soccer ball logo. Around the image is the text that reads "Edmonton Jewish Soccer League."

Shoshi described the soccer program as a one-stop shop for parents with multiple kids looking to enroll them in an extracurricular activity. Coordinating schedules and juggling various activities in a household can be challenging and is what inspired Shoshi to pursue this endeavour.

"Kids are loving it and parents are loving it," Shoshi

shared enthusiastically. Smiles and laughter were all around as parents watched their kids enjoy the outdoors with friends. It is a great opportunity for parents to meet and get to know other parents within the community as well.

Knowing that the soccer program garnered a great amount of support from families and the community, Shoshi hopes to collaborate more with the Federation going forward to expand and develop the program further.

"For the kids to get out on a Sunday afternoon to play, parents to hang out and socialize, this is exactly what I envisioned it being like," added Eitan, and he hopes that "we can run this for years to come."

The program runs every Sunday in May and June, excluding Shavuot, for a total of 8 weeks. If anyone has any questions or wants to join, reach out to Dr. Shoshi Aziza at shoshiaziza@gmail.com or the Beth Israel youth department.

 ${\it Jenna~Soroka~is~a~Local~Journalism~Initiative} \\ {\it Reporter~for~Alberta~Jewish~News}.$ 

## Soil to Soul: CJA students experience eco-spirituality

#### By Lesley Machon

Calgary Jewish Academy students spent a week on Salt Spring Island, soaking up the wisdom of Indigenous artists and elders, local guides, and the land itself. We arrived eager and open, and left humbled, salt-brined, and deeply connected despite minimal cell service.

Our adventure was led by the most knowledgeable guides – Jack Rosen and Jasper Snow Rosen - from Coastal Current Adventures, a hub for eco-tourism and environmental education on the island. We hiked and kayaked, held starfish and sea cucumbers, and learned the nuances of intertidal work. We sang sea shanties, built tarps, and studied the leaves of edible and medicinal plants. We worked with a Cowichan artist on a totem pole, receiving instruction

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CJA students spent a week on Salt Spring Island learning about eco-spirituality and environmental stewardship. Photo supplied.



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## Come back to your local shul in person if you can

By Rabbi Gila Caine

Rabbi Gila Caine

If you've never been to a Zoom prayer service, you might not realize what a honey - trap it is. I know that over the past two years we were compelled to move into online prayer for pikuach nefesh reasons (issues pertaining to life and death), but the comfort of

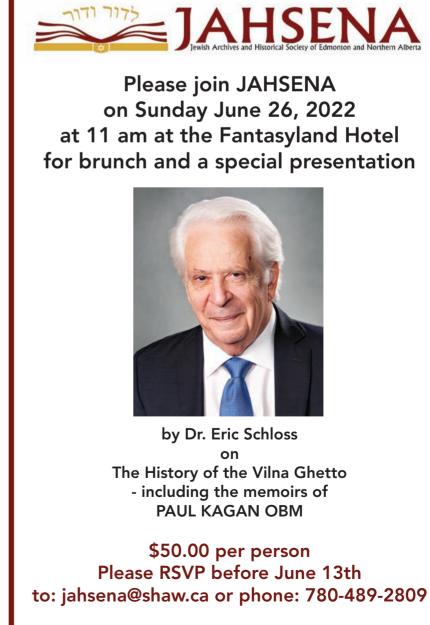
in front of a screen and not with our family and friends next to us, is more than a crack in the structure and viability of Jewish life. For the past few millennia our life has revolved around the triple combination of sacred space - sacred time - sacred peoplehood, we can find a strong reference to that in this week's parsha: אַנָּא ואר יִת יְּנָא ואר יִת יַּנְא ואר יִת 2 ווֹ בְּשִׁדְּקְמוּ ווֹמְשִׁת ְיַנָּא ואר יִת 2 ווֹ בַע ארקיון : הַוֹּהְיֹּיְנָא ואר יִת 2 l. My Shabbatot you shall keep, and my sanctuary you shall revere. (Vayikra / Leviticus 26:2)

For us to be a holy people connected to what makes life liveable, we must maintain the sacred rhythm of time as it has been developed in our ancient culture, and we must revere our sacred places of gathering. In case you think I'm reading "sanctuary" as pointing towards the ruined Temple in Jerusalem, I'll clarify that no. I'm talking about our local shuls, schools and any other Jewish place of gathering. I learned this from a commentary on our verse written by Sforno, a 16th-century Italian rabbi and physician. Sforno reminds us that during our time in exile, the said sacred place is wherever Jews live and create houses

of worship and study. Studying can happen very nicely online, especially when we are dealing with adults (much less so with children and teens), but prayer can't. Not real prayer. Real prayer is not about passive enjoyment of music and a good D'var Torah (sermon). Real prayer is about gathering with our community, this is why we pray in a minyan. Being with other people IS the act of being in sacred space, it's not what happens after and next to speaking with G-d. I think studying online is here to stay, and it makes a lot of sense to keep it that way since most studying is a meeting of our minds. And, I assume my synagogue, like many others, will continue to create online prayer opportunities for those who must not, or can't, come out in person. Having said that, I want to call out to people - come back in person if you can! You might not be used to it at first, you might think you've forgotten how to be with others, but believe me it's like riding a bike. You never really forget.

Rabbi Gila Caine is the spiritual leader at Temple Beth Ora, Edmonton's Reform Jewish Congregation.





#### Shoah Week highlights diversity of themes and stories

#### By Maxine Fischbein

Those engaged in Holocaust education and remembrance have seen it coming for years now, a sea change that is painful yet promising. With only a dwindling number of Holocaust survivors able to share their testimonies with live audiences, Holocaust programming has morphed.

"Things will never again be quite the same," say Holocaust and Human Rights: Remembrance and Education Co-Chairs Marnie Bondar and Dahlia Libin, who add that nothing will ever be quite as powerful as face-to-face encounters with Holocaust survivors.

Nonetheless, the duo is doubling down on programs and initiatives that keep the emphasis on survivors while increasing the hands-on participation of next generation descendants and other volunteers and professionals who share a keen interest in Holocaust remembrance and education.

Recent Shoah Week programs highlighted the remarkable diversity of themes and stories that inform and inspire.

In the lead up to Yom Hashoah, Calgary Jewish Federation and the Calgary Public Library, together with the Jewish Federation of Edmonton and the Edmonton Public Library, completed their four-part 2022 Holocaust Series with a talk by former Mossad agent Avner Avraham. He took his audience behind the scenes with a spy's eye view of *Operation Finale*, which resulted in the capture of Adolf Eichmann, a major architect of the destruction of European Jewry. Eichmann was nabbed in Argentina in 1960 and taken to Israel to stand trial for his crimes against Jews and humanity.

Avraham, now retired from the Mossad, has launched a second career as a museologist and curator which began with his own fascination for preserving artifacts from various Mossad operations, including *Operation Finale*.

While it is counterintuitive to think that a secret service agency would have mounted an exhibit that reveals the tricks of the spy trade, Avraham did just that with an exhibit about the daring capture of Eichmann in the Mossad's first major international operation.

On a visit to Mossad headquarters, former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was impressed enough to invite Avraham to take the exhibit to the Knesset. Expanded and customized for each audience, the exhibit was subsequently mounted in the United States and will travel to Germany at the end of this year.

Although Avraham was born in Iraq, he told his audience he considers himself a second generation survivor and a Holocaust educator.

"This is the mission for my generation...and to the next generations, to make sure that the story will not happen again," Avraham said.

The founder of the Spy Legends Agency, Avraham who served as a consultant on the Hollywood film *Operation Finale* - told his Alberta audience that the exhibits and the film have reignited interest in the events of the Holocaust.

The capture of Eichmann began with a love story, Avraham said.

Eichmann had escaped from post-war Europe to Argentina - with the assistance of the Vatican - under the alias Ricardo Klement. Inexplicably, the rest of his family retained the Eichmann surname, immigrating to Argentina two years later.

Eichmann's son Klaus met and began to date a young woman named Sylvia Hermann. When her father - a Dachau survivor of part-Jewish heritage - met Klaus and heard him speaking against Jews, he put two and two together and sent the information to Dr. Fritz Bauer, a Jewish prosecutor and Holocaust survivor in Frankfurt. Bauer opted to share the information with the Mossad. Plucking Eichmann's soldier file from the archives, Bauer left it on his desk, where it was surreptitiously photographed by a Mossad operative.

Details including Eichmann's wedding date and photos helped the Mossad to verify that "Ricardo Klement" was their man. The shape of Klement's ear matched the photo in Eichmann's soldier file, convincing Mossad operatives they were on the right track.

Eleven agents - 10 men and one woman, among them Holocaust survivors - were sent to Argentina to

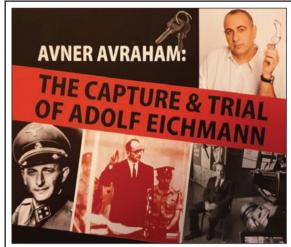
apprehend Eichmann.

The State of Israel - only 12 years young at the time - had some advantages when it came to espionage, Avraham said. The diversity of cultures and languages in the newly formed state made it relatively easy to recruit agents from a variety of different backgrounds who could navigate undercover with fake European passports.

Ironically, the capture was a success despite the fact that not a single one of the operatives could speak Spanish.

"We call it the Israeli Chutzpah," quipped Avraham who led the audience through the various steps agents took to nab Eichmann and transfer him, undetected, to an El Al flight on a route that was created only for that purpose and populated by ticketed travellers from around the world each of whom was connected with the Mossad.

Continued on page 13



"We capture their interest with the spy stuff and teach them about the Holocaust," said former Mossad agent Avner Avraham.



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#### A/C needed for TTELC - In time for summer

#### By Natalie Soroka

Summers, even in Alberta, can really heat up a building and the Talmud Torah Early Learning Centre (TTELC), located inside the Talmud Torah School building, is not immune to the effects of summer heat. Each summer, educators do their very best to keep the classrooms comfortable for the children. Last summer, temperatures increased to the point where some families chose to keep their children home out of concern for their well being.

ELC administration and the ELC committee don't want another summer to go by without dealing with this health and safety issue. This is why the ELC is hoping to install air conditioners in all 6 classrooms this summer! With help from ELC families, and the broader Jewish community, we want to create rooms with regulated temperatures which allows for optimal learning and participation in daily activities.

"As we enhance our learning environment, we continue to create safe spaces for our children, families, and educators," expressed Irene St. Savard, Director of the TTELC.

The cost of the A/C project is ambitious, with \$42,000 needed to complete 6 rooftop mounted A/C units in the classrooms, including construction and wiring. The A/C fundraiser runs for 6 weeks from mid May to the end of June. Irene and the ELC Committee have brainstormed some great fundraising ideas, such as a bottle drive, carnival, car wash, fun run, family movie night, Mabel's Labels, t-shirts sales, etc. Irene is hoping that the broader Jewish community will support the initiative as well.

"We expect that this project will succeed with the

support of the broader Jewish community, with everyone coming together to make a difference in the lives of our youngest citizens," Irene suggested.

Talmud Torah Society's recent strategic plan initiative outlines "Community," "Safe Spaces" and "Stewardship" as some of its values. Noga Vaisblat, Chair of the ELC Committee, as well as the TT Society's Communications and Marketing Chair, commented that these values directly relate to the A/C enhancement project for the TT Early Learning Centre.

Community: coming together to make a difference in the lives of our youngest citizens. Safe Spaces: enhancing the physical space will also benefit the emotional and learning spaces for the children who attend the program. Stewardship: By investing into our building, we are providing the opportunity for future generations to enjoy the space.

From our humble beginnings as a morning preschool program about 17 years ago, we have grown into a full-time early learning program, and more recently a full-time out of school care program. The ELC's reputation of offering quality childcare and learning, in a Jewish themed environment, is well known. Families often register their child before they are even born, and there are few spaces each year available to new families. Knowing that families will be sending their children, during the hotter days of summer, to a healthy learning environment is a very comforting notion.

"The TT ELC is such a kind, supportive and caring place to send our children," said TTELC parent Arielle S. "I love that they are prioritizing my children's health, safety and comfort, along with



Pesach at the Edmonton TTELC.

their learning and development needs. Last year the school's temperature reached over 30 degrees and there were days I had to keep my 2-year-old home. I am so happy to see the A/C initiative move forward and I know it will improve the children's care experience, thank you for making our little ones a priority in our Jewish community!"

Irene and Noga are appealing to the community to help them create an optimal learning environment for our young ones and their educators. You can feel pride in knowing your contributions will leave an indelible impact for years to come.

For more information, visit talmudtorahsociety.com.

Natalie Soroka is Executive Assistant of the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society.

## Criminalization of Holocaust Denial helps fight antisemitism

#### By Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs

As part of Bill C-19, the Budget Implementation Act, the federal government has taken a stand against antisemitism in Canada by criminalizing Holocaust denial. This is an important development for Canadians, including the Jewish community who, spearheaded by organizations such as the Centre for

Israel and Jewish Affairs and B'nai Brith Canada, have long been advocating for this change to the criminal code. The cross-party support for criminalizing Holocaust denial demonstrates the understanding among all parties that antisemitism is an insidious threat, and more tools are needed to fight it.

Antisemitic hate crimes, the use of symbols of hate, and incidents of Holocaust denial and distortion are on

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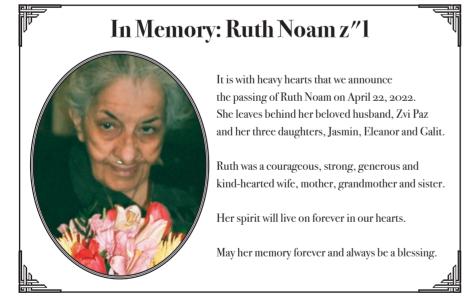
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the rise in Canada. Making Holocaust denial a criminal offence will raise public awareness of these dangers and provide the necessary legal tools to prosecute those who peddle this pernicious form of antisemitism.

"Denying the Holocaust is a reliable predictor of radicalization and an indication that antisemitism is on the rise," said Gail Adelson-Marcovitz, Chair of the National Board of Directors of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA). "Rising antisemitism should be a concern for all Canadians because we know that what starts with the Jews never ends with the Jews. When antisemitism is allowed to flourish, it tears at the fabric of society to the detriment of all citizens."

Countries in Europe, including France and Germany, have either enacted Holocaust denial laws or have banned elements associated with Nazism, such as the display of Nazi symbols. The purposes of those laws are to slow the spread of antisemitism and reduce

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Judy Shapiro, Richard Bronstein

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

Next Deadline: June 17, 2022





Summers in the ELC are wonderful, with amazing programming and warm and caring educators.....BUT building temperatures can climb to unhealthy levels, even with fans running non-stop. This summer, we are doing something about this, and we need the support of both the **local and broader community** to make it happen!

We are running some fun activities to help raise much needed funds to install rooftop mounted air conditioning units into all 6 ELC classrooms. This ambitious project can only be successful with **YOUR** support. www.talmudtorahsociety.com



#### Edmonton Negev Gala will be held August 18

By AJNews staff

Edmonton Jewish community builders Robin and David Marcus are the 2022 JNF Edmonton Negev Dinner honourees and will be celebrated at a virtual gala on August 18. They are highly regarded members of the community who are dedicated to building and maintaining a strong Jewish kehila, for everyone – providing nurturing and caring for the very youngest up to the most senior members. Their dedicated efforts have built a strong foundation for generations of Edmontonians, the rewards of which will be felt for generations to come.

Robin and David have chosen the Clore Centre for Performing Arts in the Galilee as the beneficiary project for this year's gala. This is the only conservatory offering formal training in music and dance in northern Israel, and it plays a crucial role in creating harmony in the community. The Centre is open to students from all backgrounds in the region, with the goal of facilitating peaceful coexistence and understanding through dance, music, and theater. Artistic expression transcends cultures, and people



'Lucky Mrs. Clore' will be performing virtually at the Edmonton JNF Negev Gala on Aug. 18. Register now to experience these incredible young musicians for yourself!

from all walks of life are united through listening, playing, and moving together.

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

Lucky Mrs. Clore is the premiere music ensemble that showcases the high level of musicianship that is created at the Clore Centre for Performing Arts. They are talented, joyful, collaborative and

appreciative of the opportunities that they've had at the centre and they will performing for the JNF audience as part of the virtual gala.

"Join us on August 18 and experience these incredible young musicians for yourself!" say event co-chairs Gaylene Soifer and Jeff Rubin.

Global TV's Mike Sobel will emcee the gala.

There are still opportunities available for event sponsorships and donations. Contact edm@jnf.ca for more information and to purchase your tickets.

#### Beth Israel presents "Girl from Treblinka"

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

On the evening of May 23, Beth Israel Synagogue's bimah was transformed into a theatrical stage for a one-night-only staged-reading of Leonard David Stone's newest play, *The Girl from Treblinka*. The 'stage' was set in a sparce fashion reminiscent of a black-box theatre, with minimalistic furniture befitting the play's abstract approach to conventional setting. As attendees filed down the centre aisle of the shul, it almost felt as though one truly was entering a

modest playhouse.

Beth Israel Synagogue's Board President, Shane Asbell, welcomed the audience and introduced the man of the hour, long-time performing arts careerman, Leonard David Stone. Stone explained that the initial seed of inspiration for his work was planted thirty-eight years ago in West German Berlin. His creative vision solidified and evolved further after watching the Polish government's official ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, live on late-night television.

The concept of a staged-reading exists to allow playwrights a platform from which to workshop in-progress material and preview new content. Actors have minimal time for traditional rehearsals and appear on stage armed with scripts in hand. Blocking is typically only for essential movements, and notes are scribbled hastily in margins and between lines of text. The director has the opportunity to provide only the most vital guidance and instruction. By nature, a staged-reading presents differently from conventional dramatic performances.

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#### Soil to Soul Cont. from page 1

on the creative process and sacred practice. We made bannock and cedar ropes, and roasted vegetables in a cook pit. We visited the ocean at night to witness the bioluminescent glow.

Slowly, an eco-spiritual consciousness seeped into our group through the seams of our windbreakers. One by one and all together, we became present to the spiritual connection between human beings and the environment. We watched our exhales mingle with the mist as we paddled, and felt the intuitive and embodied awareness of so many different life forms.

We kayaked past a salmon farm, and learned how aquaculture harms the environment and how infected the fish become. "Friends don't let friends eat farmed fish," our guide nodded, reflecting a common epithet in these parts.

Through our guided hikes and paddles, our leaders taught us about the many ways Land allies with humans in healing, and offered us land-based healing practices to address our mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. Within an Indigenous pedagogy, Land is understood as an active partner to the person or people engaged in the healing process (Redvers, 2020). The notion requires us to see land through a relational lens, to recognize we are in relationship with Land.

Experiencing deep connection with, and non-separation between, human beings and the natural world has been demonstrated to increase health and social outcomes related to self-esteem, physical fitness, interpersonal relationships, educational goals, feelings of wellbeing, positive behavioural changes, clarity of identity, and interest in environmental stewardship (Dobson, C., & Brazzoni, 2016; Wildcat et al., 2014).

Spending time in nature, experiencing ourselves as part of nature, is crucial to our wellbeing as human beings. One of our leaders shared about his decade of work with youth criminals, and revealed the ways nature can offer true healing, even to those battling addictions and complex trauma.

Land-based healing is connected to the field of epigenetics, which studies the way our genes can be turned on, or off, by our environment. On the island we





CJA students learn about land based healing. (Photo supplied)

felt this truth in our bones, the way humans are interconnected with the world at large.

We visited an 800-year-old tree, standing in awe at its base as our guides told stories of activists who chained themselves to trees to protect the old growth forests. We learned about mycelium and how trees truly communicate with one another, and the importance of humans taking protective action on behalf of our home.

Slowly, the shape of our group shifted, to reflect the cohesion and interconnectedness we observed in nature. We worked together: cleaning gear, and lifting waterlogged kayaks. We cooked meals to share: digging the cook pit, foraging leaves and rocks, and dropping handfuls.

handfuls of potatoes

There we were, engaged in a relational perspective: person to planet, inner to outer, soul to soil. Cultivating, tending, dwelling. In reverence, and present to sentience. Intermingling

Jewish environmental ethics, with Indigenous ecospirituality.

These are the kinds of experiences CJA is invested in cultivating for our students: educational experiences that reflect our values of healthy relationships, spiritual living, and environmental responsibility. Our adventure was cross-cultural, interfaith, inclusive, and deeply powerful. Offline and plugged in, each of us tapped into an awareness of anima mundi, the soul of the world.

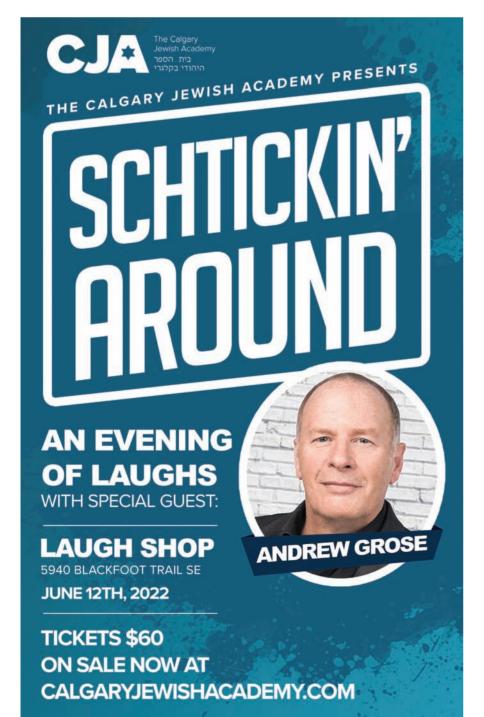
Lesley Machon is a humanities teacher at Calgary Jewish Academy.

#### YYC Golden Age Group





On May 10, the Golden Age Group enjoyed a delicious meal at Karen's Cafe and Catering at the Calgary JCC with musical entertainment by Steven Klevsky. (Facebook photo).





The Assistant Executive Director (AED) is a key role within the Senior Leadership Team. This is an advanced management position responsible for overseeing major segments of operations and management within the Paperny Family JCC. The AED will lead and develop specific management staff in the different departments to provide a sustainable level of excellence in character, customer service, execution of job duties, and quality programming. The AED will ensure that the correct systems are in place to execute the JCC's mission and vision. Application deadline date is Friday, June 10, 2022.

CALGARYJCC.COM/EMPLOYMENT

#### Calgary B'nai Brith Lodge honours Max Lipsman: Sept 22

By Maxine Fischbein

Calgary B'nai Brith Lodge #816 is pulling out the stops for the return of its signature annual dinner following a hiatus due to COVID-19.

Keeping with the organization's tradition of highprofile and worthy honourees, BB Calgary will roll out the red carpet for Mayor Jyoti Gondek, who was sworn in as Calgary Mayor in October 2021, and Ambassador David L. Cohen, who assumed his post as US Ambassador to Canada in December.

Also being honoured at the dinner is Max Lipsman, a long-serving and much-admired Jewish communal professional and volunteer, who will receive the 2022 Ben Docktor Award of Excellence for his outstanding contributions to Jewish life in Calgary.

The dinner, which will be hosted by local media celebrity, philanthropist and former United Way Co-Chair Dave Kelly, takes place at Beth Tzedec Synagogue on September 22. The event is expected to attract a big crowd, says BB Calgary President Darren Bondar, adding that the organization is offering a hybrid event so that those who are not quite ready to attend in person are able to participate online.

The dinner has typically attracted some 600 attendees, among them members of the Jewish community and the Calgary community at large including a who's who of generous corporate sponsors.

In addition to fine dining, the festivities will include a live auction, silent auction and  $50/50~\mathrm{draw}$ .

Funds raised at the dinner typically range between \$100,000 and \$150,000, says Bondar. This year's major recipients are the Calgary Food Bank and Miriam's Well/Wynne's Pantry at Jewish Family Service Calgary. Calgary BB Lodge #816 has an historical track record of supporting organizations that serve the elderly, ill and disadvantaged, children and youth, and initiatives devoted to strengthening and sustaining Jewish culture and identity in Calgary.

Consistent with those goals - and the anticipated generosity of individual, family and corporate sponsors - funds from the dinner will be disbursed to other organizations including previous and new beneficiary agencies within and beyond the Jewish community, Bondar says.

This continues the tradition of "benevolence, brotherly love and harmony," the words enshrined on the original charter of B'nai Brith Lodge #816, granted on June 17, 1917. CONGREGATION Sunday, June 5 Featuring interactive learning with: **Rabbi Cantor Russ**  info@bethtzedec.ca Dr. Angy Cohen **Community Members** and kids arts and crafts! 5:15pm Dinner 6:00pm Mincha services & children's story 6:45pm Dessert, crafts and learning Congregants Guests RSVP \$10 adults \$18 adults 403-255-8688 or \$5 kids 6-12 \$10 kids 6-12 info@bethtzedec.ca 5 & under free 5 & under free

Much has changed since B'nai Brith was established as an all-male fraternity. The organization is now egalitarian, points out Bondar, who says he is particularly proud to honour Jyoti Gondek - Calgary's first female mayor. Bondar also salutes the woman power behind the dinner, including BB Calgary **Executive Director Polina** Brener and volunteers Michelle Jacobson and Cali Oppenheim.

While B'nai Brith has increasingly embraced

diversity, its time-honoured traditions of community service and advocacy remain the same.

It is in that spirit that Max Lipsman is the "obvious choice" as the 2022 Ben Docktor Award recipient, Bondar says.

Lipsman says he feels honoured to receive the award given his deep respect for the Calgary lodge, where he has been a proud member for approximately 18 years.

At first, Lipsman was taken aback at the suggestion that he would be honoured.

"I was stunned," said Lipsman who typically avoids the spotlight.

"I am just a worker bee and call it a day," says Lipsman who nonetheless feels "choked up" when reminded of the impact of his decades of service within the Jewish community and beyond it.

"It puts things in perspective," said Lipsman. "I did what I needed to do."

Lipsman also did what a grateful community needed him to do.

Born and raised in Montreal, Lipsman - a son of Holocaust survivors - moved to Calgary in 1981 to settle in the hometown of his wife, Rochelle, with whom he raised two daughters and now shleps naches from

Max and Reshalls Lineman (Photo augustical)

Max and Rochelle Lipsman. (Photo supplied)

two grandchildren.

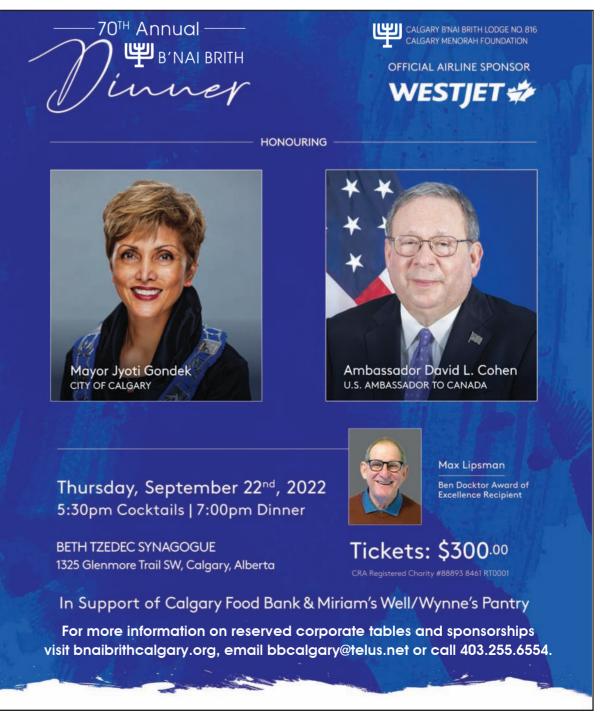
A graduate of Montreal's Loyola College (now Concordia University), where he earned a degree in political science and sociology, and McGill University, where he earned his degree in social work, Lipsman subsequently served as program director, teens and adults, at the YM-YWHA in Montreal. In Calgary, he worked for Alberta Family and Social Services in foster care and then at the Calgary Correctional Centre (Spy Hill) and the Calgary Remand Centre where, among other responsibilities, he counselled inmates.

With the exception of a subsequent stint as director of recreation and leisure services at the Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute (VRRI) during the 1990s, Lipsman has continuously served as a professional - and often as a volunteer - within the Jewish community.

Most recently, Lipsman served Beth Tzedec Congregation as Executive Director (2010-2021) and then as Manager of the Beth Tzedec Memorial Park, a position he continues to hold.

As director of health, physical education, recreation and aquatics and, later, assistant director of the Calgary Jewish Centre (now JCC) from the mid-1980s

Continued on page 19



#### Talmud Torah welcomes new principal

By Jenna Soroka

For the upcoming 2022-2023 school year, staff, students, and parents at Talmud Torah (TT) can expect a new face walking the halls. Darin Johnson M. Ed, will be stepping into the principal role this September. He has been teaching with Edmonton Public Schools since 1997 and has taught at five elementary schools in the school division. These career opportunities have led him on the path of leadership, formally beginning in 2009 as a teacher mentor and consultant for Edmonton Public Schools. He was also the assistant principal at Minchau School and Michael A. Kostek School and is currently the acting principal at Michael A. Kostek School.

Principal Sandra Marianicz has been assigned to Patricia Heights School and spoke with deep appreciation for her time at TT. Marianicz has spent the past four years connecting with the TT family and building relationships during her first principalship. In reflection, she describes this next chapter as "bitter-sweet" because Talmud Torah has a special place in her heart. She is excited for the new adventure but will miss the connections, relationships, and conversations at TT the most.

"It is always the people that give the school its vibrancy," Marianicz stated. For many Talmud Torah families, their stories exist as a multi-generational experience with the school, she noted. It's this rich history from grandparent to parent to child to grandchild that makes it a unique environment.

When asked to consider what Marianicz will bring with her moving forward from her time at TT, she explained that she will bring a greater understanding of Jewish culture, history, and the tradition of excellence. She added that "I will treasure the commitment and love that families have for the school." Marianicz acknowledged the significant role TT plays in the Jewish community as well, and she knows the incoming principal will "come to appreciate what a really special place TT is."

This past fall, Johnson spent a week as acting principal at TT. He values connection building and shared his excitement getting to know people and them getting to know him. Talmud Torah Society's Executive Assistant, Natalie Soroka, expressed how he left a positive, meaningful impression on staff and students during the short time he was there. "Darin was eager and willing to learn about the Society as well as the school's unique alternative program and culture."

In a phone interview with Johnson, he reaffirmed this desire and the importance of taking time to listen, observe, and learn about a school's established community and culture. He went on by sharing how he intends to "find out what people are valuing and curious about" and then offer his own experiences to enhance and retain current, supportive education for students, as needed.

He shared a similar sentiment in his introduction letter to the Talmud Torah community along with a personal blurb about his family. He has two sons, one

"We are grateful for MP Waugh's leadership on this



Darin Johnson will join the Edmonton Talmud Torah staff as Principal in Aug. 2022.

in grade 12 and the other is an apprentice carpenter. He values leading an active lifestyle and enjoys spending time with his wife exploring the river valley and fixing up their home.

Johnson shared that he will miss the current school he is working at for all the relationships he has built. However, he is enthusiastic to establish new relationships with Talmud Torah's community and partners. "I already feel invited into the community," said Johnson.

He is looking forward to working with the TT Society board, school staff, students, and parents heading into the new school year. A strategic transition plan is in place to assist with Darin Johnson's switch to the role of principal at Talmud Torah.

Jenna Soroka is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

#### **Holocaust Denial**

Cont. from page 4

violence against Jewish communities. While Canada remains one of the best countries in the world in which to be Jewish, Canadian Jews are not immune to this threat.

Originally proposed by MP Kevin Waugh in Bill C-250, the criminalization of Holocaust denial will be a significant tool to fight antisemitism.

issue. His determination to put this issue on the agenda spurred action and led to the inclusion of the Bill directly into the budget. We thank all MPs who spoke to this legislation and who, through cross-party collaboration, made the criminalization of Holocaust denial a reality," said Adelson-Marcovitz.

"Though criminalizing Holocaust denial in Canada is a new and effective teel to combat this dengarous."

"Though criminalizing Holocaust denial in Canada is a new and effective tool to combat this dangerous form of hate, it is only one step in the fight against antisemitism," added Richard Marceau, Vice-President of External Affairs and General Counsel, CIJA.

"Education is critical to combating hate and antisemitism. Governments at all levels must also focus on Holocaust education, remembrance, and research to stem the tide of disinformation and overt hate that threatens the Jewish community and other vulnerable minorities."

CIJA advocates for the following additional strategies to combat antisemitism:

Create an effective online hate strategy that would establish an independent regulatory regime and compel social media companies to be frontline first responders to hate on their platforms.

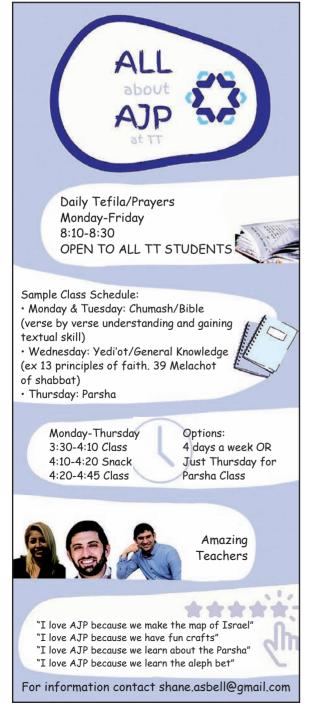
Support the creation of a Community Security Trust, based on the UK model, to complement the existing Security Infrastructure Program.

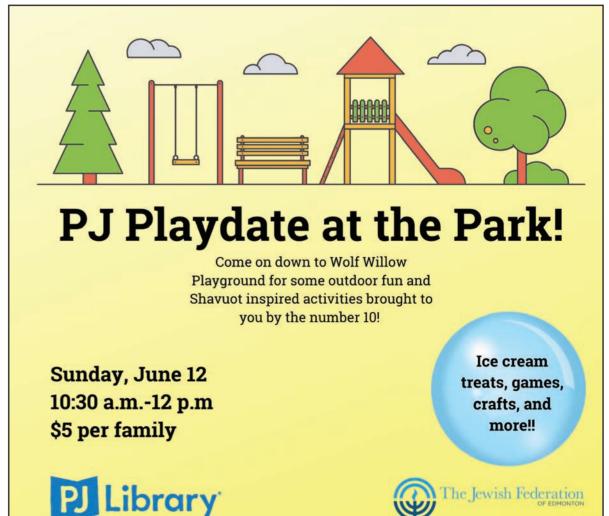
Establish a community institution security rebate to offset part of the financial costs incurred by communities at risk.

Enhance training for judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement in hate crimes to ensure they recognize and address them effectively.

Increase resources to educate Canadians about the Holocaust and antisemitism.

For 2020 (the latest data available), Statistics Canada found police-reported hate crimes against Jewish people accounted for the highest number of religious-based hate crimes in Canada (62 percent); there were 321 incidents, a five-percent increase, meaning that, on average, an antisemitic hate crime was reported in Canada nearly every day. For perspective, Jews are only one percent of the Canadian population.





## Audit reveals an increase in antisemitism in Canada

Canada experienced another highly disturbing year for antisemitism in 2021.

For the sixth consecutive year, records were set for antisemitic incidents in the country. There was a 7.2% increase from 2020.

This is one of several troublesome facts revealed in the 40th Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, released on April 25 by B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights.

Nearly eight antisemitic incidents occurred every day in Canada in 2021.

The actual number of antisemitic incidents recorded in 2021 was 2,799. This marked the fourth successive year in which the 2,000 plateau was exceeded.

There was a 733% increase of violent antisemitic incidents in comparison to 2020.

Online hate has become the preferred method of targeting Jews. B'nai Brith logged 2,093 incidents of online hate, or an increase of 12.3% over 2020.

On a provincial level, the geographical distribution of hate aimed at Jews changed in 2021. Ontario, Canada's most populous province, experienced a large decline of reported incidents of 27.3% from 2020. Ontario represents 38.5% of Canada's population (2021 census figures) but logged only 29.3% of all reported incidents aimed at Jews. On the other hand, Quebec logged 828 antisemitic incidents – a jump of 20.7% from 2020.

There was also a major increase in reports from Western Canada. British Columbia recorded 409 incidents in 2021, up from 194 in 2020, or a 110.8% increase. Alberta's cases of antisemitic incidents rose by 55.8% while Manitoba and Saskatchewan collectively had increases from 101 to 228 incidents or a 125.7% annual increase.

During the Hamas – Israeli conflict in May, there were several large anti-Israel rallies held in Canada, leading to a record number of attacks on Jews, with 250 recorded incidents in the month. In some cases, individuals displaying Israeli flags were beaten in plain view of police officers. Individuals ended up in the hospital with serious injuries. Property was damaged, stolen and vandalized. Some reported having feared for their lives at these events when they realized the severity of the situation. In one case, two men were arrested after driving around Côte Saint-Luc, a suburb of Montreal with a Jewish majority population, making threats that they would harm Jews.

Among other examples of antisemitic incidents in Canada in 2021:

A man was arrested outside the Shaar Hashomayim synagogue in Westmount, Que., after being allegedly caught in the act of spray-painting Nazi symbols on its doors, while also possessing incendiary devices;

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Storefront windows in downtown London, Ont., were vandalized with antisemitic graffiti and swastikas and other symbols were spraypainted onto windows and doors;

The Chabad Centre for Jewish Life and Learning in Victoria, B.C., was vandalized with antisemitic graffiti;

A Jewish employee of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario was physically assaulted by a customer who noticed his Jewish name on his name tag, and told him "Saul, you're a Jew, a dirty f—ing Jew";

Heil Hitler 88 and swastika sticky notes were posted in a Winnipeg area school, including on lockers and in the school's washroom;

A man allegedly performed a Nazi salute before assaulting a woman on the subway platform at a Toronto subway station.

In Alberta, a sample incident included the inclusion of a document on the Alberta Education Ministry's website that suggested that the school curriculum should highlight the Nazis' economic achievements and positive qualities.

In response to complaints, Education Minister Adriana LaGrange stated she removed the proposal because it "contains extremely concerning and completely unacceptable views." She added that "the wrongheaded views outlined have no place in our society and I categorically denounce what is written. There is not a "positive" side to tell of the murderous Nazi regime, as this document wrongfully suggests."

The Minister's response was hailed by the public which was shocked to learn that someone at the Education Ministry thought Alberta schools needed to

be even handed and balance Nazi atrocities with statements claiming that the regime, the epitome of evil, had a positive record.

GAINS

The Minister's action however was attacked by the online journal "Christians for Truth" which claims WWII Germany was a tolerant society and that Jews are annihilating Canada and every other White western Christian nation. The online article praised James Sears, Arthur Topham, and Travis Patron, all of whom have been charged and/or convicted with hate crimes. The article was posted to Facebook by Holocaust denier Monika Schaefer who was previously convicted for incitement to hatred in Germany.

Another example of an Alberta incident resulted in the Medicine Hat police charging Loki Hulgaard with violating the terms of his 2018 probation, accusing him of publishing new antisemitic and racist material through a far-right U.S. website. These documents carry titles such as Jewish White Genocide, Who Is the Jew?: The Jew Identifier Document and an autobiography entitled How (((They))) Ruined My Life: Autobiography of Loki Hulgaard.

B'nai Brith calls the Hulgaard case "one of the vilest examples of antisemitism to surface in Canada in years, meriting hate crimes charges to be laid, so that a strong signal will be sent that Canada will not tolerate calls for genocide against Jews."

"Despite the dismal numbers posted in 2021, there

Continued on page 10



#### Halpern Akiva Academy has your Father's Day covered!

With Father's Day only a few weeks away, you might be looking for a creative gift idea. Neckties are so 2019 and who needs more BBQ tools? Halpern Akiva Academy has got you covered!

Treat your dad to a delicious roast beef dinner, cocktails, entertainment, and more! Halpern Akiva Academy is pleased to present "Start-Up School" as the theme for their in-person Gala Dinner which will take place on Sunday, June 19, 2022 at 5:30 pm at the Carriage House Inn.

This year's theme recognizes both the technological success of Halpern Akiva Academy students and alumni, and also speaks to how the school has embraced Israel's Start-Up Nation ethos. From the Akiva Broadcasting Network (ABN), to the Len and Faigel Shapiro STEAM Lab, to pivoting to online schooling and back again, the school has embraced innovation in learning, bringing together Torah and Technology!

The evening will feature the following distinguished alumni, who have made their mark both in technology and in community leadership:

Jordan Balaban, President of Greengate Power Corporation, a leading wind energy project developer. Jordan is also Co-President of Calgary Jewish Federation. In November 2021 Jordan was selected as "Top 40 under 40" by *Avenue Calgary Magazine* for being a leader of one of the largest producers of renewable energy in the country.

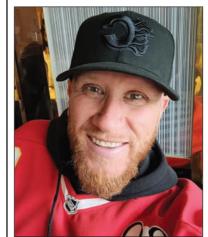
Daniel Feldman, Founder of Goats for Weeds. Daniel identified a disconnect between progressive energy

solutions and the use of harmful chemicals to manage the land. The idea was very simple: use animals instead of chemicals, just the way it's been done for thousands of years.

Yannai Segal, Co-Founder of GeologicAI, which is using machine vision to improve the science and practice of resource recovery. Yannai is former President of Calgary Jewish Federation and former President of Halpern Akiva Academy.

Joanna Halpern, Software Engineer at Indeed. Joanna has vast experience in creating and implementing successful software, providing creative solutions to her clients' needs. She comes from a long line of community builders.

Halpern Akiva Academy is also excited to see what the future holds for current students who get to learn, play and create in the Len and Faigel Shapiro STEAM Lab. There will be an opportunity to see what the students are working on this year!









Halpern Akiva Academy alumni (top row) Daniel Feldman and Joanna Halpern; (bottom row) Jordan Balaban and Yannai Segal.

To order your tickets please email to office@akiva.ca. or call 403-258-1312. Donations can also be made at https://charitableimpact.com/groups/halpern-akiva-academy-2022-fundraiser

#### Antisemitism increase

Cont. from page 9

is always hope for improvement," said Michael Mostyn, Chief Executive Officer of B'nai Brith Canada. "Better reporting of hate crimes and incidents, better training and resources for police departments to recognize and combat antisemitism, may all make a difference, if achieved."

Marvin Rotrand, National Director of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights, added: "Giving higher profile to cases where perpetrators are charged and sentenced, the propagation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition as well as more funding and resources to combat hatred will also help us turn the tide against antisemitism and help build an inclusive country for all."

The Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, which tracks and monitors trends in antisemitic hatred, is the authoritative document on anti-Jewish bigotry in Canada, cited regularly by law-enforcement agencies, government bodies and human-rights agencies worldwide.

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Akiva James Rubensohn was born in Calgary on May 19, 2022.



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#### 2022 Holocaust Education Symposium across Alberta

Second Generation volunteer Francie Cyngiser, of Edmonton, addresses students and teachers in virtual attendance at the Calgary annual spring Holocaust Education Symposium. Cyngiser, together with a growing number of descendants of Holocaust survivors, is playing an active role in sharing the testimony of survivors like her parents, Calgarians Bronia and Sid Cyngiser, thanks to Calgary Jewish Federation's Second Voices Project.

A record-breaking 4,510 students from 99 classrooms at 54 schools took part in this year's virtual spring Symposium, said Holocaust and Human Rights: Remembrance and Education co-chairs Marnie Bondar and Dahlia Libin.

"We are thrilled that the online format we

adopted due to COVID has led to increased participation, especially by students living in rural areas throughout Alberta who might not otherwise have an opportunity to meet Jewish people and hear the testimony of Holocaust survivors," said Bondar.

"In addition to participation by students in the Calgary and

Edmonton areas, we reached students all over the province, including Leduc, Hinton, Mayerthorpe, Medicine Hat and Slave Lake," said Libin.

The Calgary Holocaust Education Symposium





Bronia Cyngiser and her daughter Francie. (Photo by Dahlia Libin, part of the "Here to Tell" photo exhibit on display.)

expanded this year to include a fall semester virtual option. As a result, the Symposium now reaches an annual audience of some 10,000 Alberta students.

#### JNF Calgary's Negev Gala: A Mosaic of Peacemakers

#### By AJNews staff

On May 1, Jewish National Fund (JNF) Calgary hosted a very special virtual Negev Gala honouring Christian and other friends of Israel for their support and friendship. The past few years have been turbulent and with the rise in anti-Zionism and antisemitism in Canada and around the world, JNF Calgary decided that it was an important time to express gratitude to those outside the Jewish community who stand in solidarity with the Jewish people to ensure that Israel is thriving.

"Tonight's broadcast highlights stories and visuals about grassroots peacemakers in Israel who are building trust with their neighbours, nurturing understanding and respect, typically under the radar of the public and the media," stated JNF Calgary Executive Director Elliott Steinberg and Cheryl Gurevitch JNF Calgary President of the Board. "Their endeavours go hand in hand with the ongoing support of our Christian friends in a world that is increasingly antisemitic and anti-Zionist and amid continuing attacks in Israel both on the ground and in world forums."

"I'm delighted that we can come together as a community to honour our Christian Friends of Israel," added JNF Canada President Beth Price. "With rising antisemitism it is gratifying to know that Jewish people have the support of many Christian communities. JNF builds the foundation for Israel's future. This means we identify pressing needs and help raise the funds to build social service or environmental infrastructure that is needed on the ground. Thanks to your support JNF will help in the expansion of the Clore Centre for Performing Arts in the Galilee.

This project aligned beautifully with the theme for Calgary JNF Gala: "A Mosaic of Peacemakers." The Gala, expertly guided by hostess Laura Shuler was a multimedia narrative, that told the stories of the many grassroots peacemakers in Israel who are building bridges between Jews and Arabs. In many cases these are brave advocates spread out in high-conflict zones throughout Israel, working towards nonviolent political resolution, and creating space for peaceful dialogue.

For Shuler the journey "is in the spirit of *Tikkun Olam*; it's all about building connections, and bringing people together in a unifying and harmonious way."

The program featured several beautiful performances by trilingual Canadian-Israeli actress

and singer Nicole Raviv, with members of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. There were also some wonderful performances by musicians from the Clore Centre of the Performing Arts in the Galilee. The talent demonstrated by those students was mind-blowing!

Shuler spoke passionately about the importance of music and peace. She said that "music is a powerful tool for bringing people together. It can express universal desires like love and peace despite differences in language and culture. It's the language of the soul."

The Clore Centre is the only facility in Northern Israel whose mandate includes promoting co-existence by bringing children together from all backgrounds to create and make music together. "How beautiful is that?" declared Shuler. "This is a wonderful approach to build peace. Young people learning to respect their neighbours and find common ground."

At the outset of the Gala, Shuler paused to pay tribute to Phil Libin, the longest serving board member of JNF Calgary who is stepping down this year from the board of directors. "Phil has

demonstrated a passionate, lifelong commitment to JNF through years and years of dedicated volunteerism," said Shuler. "He is an icon of community service and philanthropy. Thank you Phil – you've made JNF Canada a kinder, better and stronger organization."

Guest speakers at the gala included Avi Benlolo, founder of Abraham Global Peace Initiative, Colonel Richard Kemp, former commander of British forces in Afghanistan and Colonel Richard

Robert Nicholson,
President and Founder of
the Philos Project. Guests
also heard from
Dumisani Washington,
Founder of Institute for
Black Solidarity with
Israel and the former
Diversity Outreach

Coordinator for the over 10-million-member Christians United for Israel (CUFI).

The message of the Gala was the importance of friends and neighbours working together for peaceful co-existence.

"JNF Canada is dedicated to building the foundation of Israel's future by planting trees, conserving water, supporting agricultural research and building social infrastructure that benefits all citizens of Israel and even others outside of Israel," concluded Shuler. "This year's Negev Gala is a perfect example of grassroots peacemaking."

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



The 2022 JNF Calgary Negev Gala was a success because of our generous donors. Thank you in particular to our top donors, advertisers, and sponsors:

Jenny Belzberg The Alvin and Mona Libin Foundation Ronmor Holdings Michael and Rita Levy (Vancouver) Phil and Harriet Libin Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation Arlein Chetner **David Lyons** Bill and Randi Aaron Bickman Family Shawn Burstyn James Cohen Sidney and Bronia Cyngiser Highfield Development Bruce and Carolyn Libin

William, Lily and Rose Lister Murray Robins Eric and Cheryl Cameron Morris and Ann Dancyger Jason and Cheryl Gurevitch Dr. Ralph and Sheila Gurevitch Joe and Maureen Katchen Helen and Leonard Zenith B'nai Brith Lodge Calgary Jewish Federation CJF/Life and Legacy **Network Recycling** Myron Family Endowment Fund Temple B'nai Tikvah The Calgary Jewish Academy Wynne and Harvey Thal

Thank you for helping build the foundations of Israel's future! May we meet in person for the 2023 Negev Gala!







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#### community calendar

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

Have an event?

Click on "Suggest an Event" to add it to the calendar





jewishcalgary.org





#### A MESSAGE FROM **MARNIE BONDAR** AND **DAHLIA LIBIN**

't is our honour to serve as co-chairs of Calgary Jewish Federation's Holocaust and Human Rights: Remembrance and Education (HHRRE) department, providing world-class Holocaust and human rights programming that is made in Calgary and proudly shared with our community partners in Edmonton, Winnipeg, and elsewhere.

While the COVID-19 pandemic certainly created programming challenges, it also afforded some unanticipated and positive new opportunities. We successfully delivered the Holocaust Education Symposium online for two years, adding a fall semester option for the first time ever. With the support of our many partners in the public and separate school districts, as well as charter and private schools, our annual symposia inform and empower over 10,000 Alberta students and teachers each year.

Dedicated professionals and volunteers have been active in our Second Voices project. In addition to five previously available presentations, second and third generation volunteers are now making school and community presentations where they share the survivor testimonies of Bronia Cyngiser, Sid Cyngiser, Eva Davis, Oscar Kirschner, Benek Herman, and Sonia Kravitz. As well, our valued partners at Yad Vashem are providing meaningful and insightful tours and programs to school and community audiences.

We are devoted to building and maintaining partnerships with other impressive organizations and individuals. One example is the phenomenally

successful Holocaust Education Series we have organized in partnership with the Calgary Public Library over the past two years. With the support of the library and philanthropists including The KSW Calgary Holocaust Education & Commemoration Endowment Fund, and the participation of various professionals and community volunteers, we have had the thrill of bringing world-class authors and scholars to huge audiences in Calgary, Edmonton, and beyond.

Meanwhile, the HHRRE department now proudly provides corporate presentations about the Holocaust, antisemitism, and racism. None of our work could have happened without the support of our community and - in particular - the skilled staff at Calgary Jewish Federation and the micro-community of talented and dedicated volunteers who inspire and energize us each and every day.

Lastly, these ever-helping hands and hearts breathed life into our amazing project, Here to Tell: Faces of Holocaust Survivors - even in the midst of a health crisis. This extraordinary photographic exhibit opens at the Glenbow at The Edison on May 27, thanks to the enthusiasm and support of B'Shalom, Nicholas Bell, Glenbow CEO and Melanie Kjorlien, VP Engagement and COO. Copies of the beautiful Here to Tell book are literally flying out the door, Mondon so be sure to purchase your copy at the Glenbow. Marnie Bondar and Dahlia Libin We look forward to seeing you at the exhibit which runs through to July 3, and will later travel to other cities nationally and internationally.

We are grateful to everyone who has played a role in Holocaust education and remembrance, especially the brave and inspiring survivors who are the beating hearts of EVERYTHING we do.

Our community has really come together to bear witness - from generation to generation - ensuring that those who perished at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators are never forgotten. Let us move ahead and continue to liberally plant seeds of hope, humanity, and responsible citizenship at every opportunity. We owe no less to our survivors, and to our children - the fourth generation in whom we have a sacred duty to cultivate the Jewish pride and resiliency that is their birthright.

There are exciting things to look forward to, including a third season of programs in conjunction with the Calgary Public Library and some incredible surprises – stay tuned!

Todah rabah to everyone who is taking part in this community-building and life-changing journey. We feel your love and send it back to you a hundredfold.

Co-Chairs, Holocaust and Human Rights: Remembrance and Education

Calgary Jewish Federation

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



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#### Shoah Week Cont. from page 3

Members of the Argentinian Jewish community assisted, some loaning cars in support of the effort.

Avraham shared insights into surveillance techniques, falsified photos and documents, safe houses, a body double for Eichmann and even the construction of a fake wall on the airplane in case Eichmann had to be hidden during fueling stops.

Attention was even paid to symbolism, Avraham told the audience. The Shin Bet officer who was disguised as Eichmann's double traveled under the alias of Zeev (Wolf) Zichroni (memory).

When told by the chief of Mossad that Eichmann was on Israeli soil, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion wanted corroboration and instructed Mossad to find four witnesses that would confirm directly with him that the captive was in fact Eichmann.

Two days later, Ben Gurion announced the capture to a stunned world.

"It took almost a year to prepare the trial," said Avner Avraham. In the meantime, the protection of Eichmann was of paramount importance. A special police unit was created for his purpose, and throughout his trial, Eichmann sat behind a bullet-proof glass booth.

The rest, as they say, is history. Eichmann was tried on 15 counts including crimes against the Jewish people and crimes against humanity. He was hanged and cremated and his ashes tossed into international waters.

Avraham says that although the Mossad also had a lead on the infamous Dr. Josef Mengele, Ben Gurion did not want any further risks taken to apprehend the physician who was known at Auschwitz as the angel of death.

According to Avraham, Ben Gurion said, "I want [Eichmann's] trial to write the story of the Holocaust. I want to finish with this."

Although Avraham's presentation dealt mainly with Eichmann's capture, it was the trial that proved a turning point in the history of the Holocaust. According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, survivors who had not previously opened up about their Holocaust experiences began to do so and the trial "generated interest in Jewish resistance."

The theme of Jewish resistance permeates much of the work done by Holocaust and Human Rights: Remembrance and Education co-chairs Dahlia Libin and Marnie Bondar, and the topic was once again front and centre during the April 27 Yom Hashoah program, *The Power of Love*.

Calgary Jewish Federation CEO Adam Silver set the stage by referring to the full title of Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah (bravery), acknowledging not only the suffering but also the incredible courage of Holocaust survivors.

The highly emotional ceremony at the Holocaust memorial adjacent to the Calgary JCC was followed by a poignant presentation by Cheryl Silver Ochayon, the program director for Echoes and Reflections at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem.

"The best way to teach about the Holocaust is to tell stories," Silver Ochayon said.

"Love can be a form of resistance," added Silver Ochayon, who shared five stories about individuals who dared to hope and to act lovingly, even while mired in hopeless circumstances.

Jerzy Bielicki, a Pole who was among the first prisoners transported to Auschwitz, and Cyla Cybulska, a Jew who was transported to the death camp three years later, fell in love with one another while exchanging glances. Speaking was forbidden, but they managed to bribe guards for the opportunity to do so

Knowing that Cyla's odds of surviving at Auschwitz were slim - and at great personal risk - Jerzy planned a daring escape.

Fritzie Fritzshall's family was to have joined her father who had preceded them to the United States. World War II put an end to the plan and Fritzie and the rest of her family were deported to Auschwitz. Only 13 years old, she lied and said she was 15 so that she would be sent to hard labour instead of the gas chambers.

Decades later, in her testimony to the USC Shoah Foundation, Fritzie recalled the overarching need of the women with whom she had laboured to ensure someone would survive.

"Someone needs to live to let the world know what happened," Fritzshall said.



CJF Holocaust and Human Rights Remembrance and Education Co-Chairs Dahlia Libin and Marnie Bondar. Photo by Aliza Rosenberg.

Remarkably, despite the fact that the prisoners were being worked and starved to death, 599 women shared their meagre rations with Fritzshall, the youngest among them, in order to maximize her possibility of survival.

"In turn, I had to make a promise, that if I survived, I would carry the message of all of them," Fritzshall recalled.

Gerhard (Gad) Beck and Manfred Low were idealistic young men who joined a group devoted to settling endangered Jewish youth in Palestine. During a field trip, they met and fell in love. Low wrote a book, Do you Remember When, for Gad which can today be found in the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. When Manfred was detained by the Nazis, Gad donned a Hitler Youth uniform and, risking his own life, set about trying to free his first love.

When slave labourer Aliza Tzarfati chanced to be

Continued on page 16



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#### - Home and Garden Feature

## How a Prepaid Contractor Licence protects homeowners

#### **Submitted by Blue Jay Exterior Renovations**

Is your siding contractor licensed to operate as a prepaid contractor by the Government of Alberta? You can probably count in single digits the number of siding contractors that have bothered to maintain this license, but in most cases, it's absolutely required.

In Alberta, contractors must be properly licensed to accept any deposits before work is completed. And no, a municipal business license isn't the same thing.

#### What is a Prepaid Contractor?

According to Service Alberta, "contractors who accept money before work is complete and discuss or finalize a contract away from their normal place of business" are considered prepaid contractors under Alberta's *Consumer Protection Act*.

This means that if a contractor presents, picks up, or even talks about a contract in your home, they need to be licensed as a prepaid contractor. Also, if a contractor is requiring you to pay for work in advance (even a partial deposit for materials) they need to be licensed as a prepaid contractor.

If a contractor is operating a prepaid contracting business but doesn't have the correct license, they are breaking the law.

#### What is the point of a Prepaid Contractor License?

Consumers are particularly vulnerable to contractors that take deposits, and putting these companies through a few extra steps of verification is key to protect Albertans. So, how does the prepaid contractor license actually protect consumers?

Licensed prepaid contractors are bonded by the Government of Alberta. If the contractor fails to perform the scope of work outlined in a customer's contract, the bond is revoked. The bond can be used to compensate customers who have been left high and dry, and serves as a stiff penalty to the contractor.

All directors of the company are subject to a background check. If an owner or other high-ranking person at the company has a checkered past, the license won't be granted. This means that a company with a valid prepaid contractor license definitely doesn't have a convicted fraudster running the business!

Our contract must follow specific rules laid out by Service Alberta. This includes a buyer's right to cancel clause, a defined scope of work, and a clear payment schedule. A representative of the government had to actually read our contract template and approve it to make sure it was correct.

#### How to tell if a company has a Prepaid Contractor License

Luckily, it's really easy to check if a company has the license. Visit servicealberta.ca/find-if-business-is-licenced.cfm. Type in the company's name and select "prepaid contractor" from the dropdown menu. If the company you are searching has the prepaid license, you'll see their listing, including the business type and their location.

If the company you are searching doesn't have the



Blue Jay Exterior Renovations are siding specialists in Edmonton and the surrounding area.

license, your search won't return any records.

As you can imagine, most of the "horror stories" that involve a contractor taking a deposit and then turning into a ghost are with companies that are not licensed as prepaid contractors. That's the whole reason that the prepaid contractor license in Alberta exists: to protect consumers from contractor fraud. Take advantage of this program by making sure you hire a contractor with the right license.

For more helpful renovation tips, exterior design ideas, and a contractor selection checklist, request your free Siding Idea and Inspiration guide at https://www.bluejayrenos.ca/info-guide. The guide is a FREE 36-page glossy magazine available to anyone in the Edmonton area.

For information about your exterior renovation project in the Edmonton and nearby areas visit bluejayrenos.ca or contact Blue Jay Exterior Renovations at 780-850-2602.

## Sacha Baron Cohen to helm 'Chelm,' an HBO cartoon about the shtetl of fools

#### By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – Imagine a village full of Borats, and you're close to realizing the absurdity of Chelm.

The real-life Polish shtetl, a popular subject of Jewish folklore and Yiddish authors including Isaac Bachevis Singer, took on a mythic identity as a village of fools: a land populated and governed entirely by idiots, who solve problems in hilarious counterintuitive fashion.

Now Chelm is getting the screen treatment, headlined by an appropriate figure: the British Jewish comedian Sacha Baron Cohen, whose Borat character may be the closest thing modern popular culture has to a Chelm-like figure.

Cohen will develop the animated special "Chelm:

The Smartest Place on Earth" for HBO Max (Crave in Canada) alongside Mike Judge and Greg Daniels, known for "King of the Hill," and Michael Koman, a former writer on "Nathan For You" and "Late Night with Conan O'Brien." Cohen will also narrate the special.

The HBO Max press release indicates that the show will be geared towards younger audiences, marking a departure from most of Cohen's adult-oriented humor.

"This unique project will breathe new, hysterical life into the nonsensical Chelmic wisdom that originated from this imaginary city of folks who aren't quite the sharpest tools in the shed," Amy Friedman, head of kids and family programming at HBO parent company Warner Bros., said in the release.

The shtetl special does not have a release date yet.



Sacha Baron Cohen at a screening of the Oscars in Sydney, April 26, 2021. (Rick Rycroft-Pool/Getty Images)



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#### Home and Garden Feature

## Are you a new empty nester?

#### By The Tanya Eklund Group

You put in your time. You built a nest, made a family, attended soccer games, ballet recitals, and parent council meetings. You mowed the lawn and shoveled the snow. You reshingled the roof and replaced the windows. And now that nest is feeling empty. Your littles have grown and are off making their own way in the world. Being an empty nester is a moment in time when you are looking both backward and forward. What does your family home mean to you? And what lies ahead? The common belief is that it is now time to downsize, but that may not be the right move for you. Here are some questions to consider as you plan what the next phase of life looks like for you.

If you are looking for the perfect home base for your empty nest adventures, The Eklund Group is an expert real estate team with extensive experience buying and selling all home types in Calgary and area. Contact our Realtors® for skilled and knowledgeable insight specific to empty nesters. Call 1-403-863-7434.

#### What's Next?

Some call it downsizing, scaling back, or right-sizing. But whatever you call it, it means shifting your focus away from raising a family and onto realizing how and where you want to spend the next stage of life. Selecting the right home for your later years is an important decision. Consider these questions as you plan for what lies ahead.

#### How do I want to live?

Now that the responsibility of raising children is passed, you can focus on how you want to spend your time. Do you picture days spent puttering in a large backyard garden? Are you looking for a low-maintenance home where someone else handles the landscaping and snow removal? Are you planning to

travel and considering home security if you are gone for weeks or months at a time? Are you looking forward to hosting groups of friends for dinner parties and karaoke nights? Are you looking for a project home to finally live out your HGTV dreams? And you might even have to consider the reality that you will need to accommodate aging parents or maybe you have discussed merging households with your grown children in the years to come. Picture the way you will spend your time and let your lifestyle choices direct you to the right type of home for you.

#### Where do I want to live?

Your options for location are much more varied now that school districts and team boundaries don't dictate the best neighbourhood for you. So the question is; where can you find the perfect home base for your next adventures? Do you still love your family home and envision grandchildren celebrating holidays in the same place your children did? Are you still working and looking to keep commuting times to a minimum? Are you ready to put on your dancing shoes and hit the town for dining, shopping, and cultural events in the dynamic city centre? Do you want to live in a home where you can walk to everything you need? Is the quiet, peaceful pace of country living what you dreamed of for your later years?

#### Is downsizing the right financial decision?

You have likely owned your family home for some time and built some equity. As you move towards retirement, finances are a big factor when deciding if it is time to downsize. The current market conditions favour sellers and you might be surprised at the increased value of your home since you bought it many years ago. Selling and purchasing something smaller can free up some of your investment for living expenses, travel, hobbies, and more. You might even be able to buy a new home without a mortgage and ease your cost of living as you age.

#### How far ahead should I plan?

As you consider the factors that will make your next home ideal for you, you may also want to consider what will keep your home ideal a bit further down the road.



Is gardening part of your five year plan? (Photo: Sandra Edwards)

Will you still want a single-family home as you continue to age? Will a single-story condo provide greater accessibility if mobility becomes an issue? Consider walkability and access to public transit in case driving becomes a challenge for you. Does the community of multi-family living provide a security and comfort that appeals to you?

#### Helping Empty Nesters Find The Perfect Home Base

Regardless of the vision you have for your empty nester years, partnering with a Calgary Realtor® who can provide the tools and insight you need to make the most informed decisions is key. With options for single-family homes, townhouse and apartment condos, urban estates, and rural acreages, The Tanya Eklund Group can guide you to find the perfect home for this stage of life. When you are ready to right-size your home and move on to your next adventure, connect with our team by calling 1-403-863-7434 or through our online contact form and let's find the perfect empty nester home together.





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#### - Home and Garden Feature

#### My grandma's perfect cheesecake blintz recipe

#### By Micah Siva

(Nosher via JTA) - Although Shavuot technically celebrates the wheat harvest, it is known as a holiday where our plates are bursting with dairy. The custom of eating dairy is thought to have originated from the hope for a promised land of milk and honey when we were given the Torah on Mount Sinai. Between mouthfuls of cheesecake and blintzes, I'm happy to oblige

My grandmother, Eva, was a fabulous host and cook, with a fridge and freezer overflowing with delicious treats. She was known across the community for her love of baking; especially her cinnamon buns, New York Style-Cheesecakes and blintz casseroles.

Blintzes are a traditional Eastern European dish made with a thin pancake, similar to French-style crepes, that can be filled with a variety of sweet or savory ingredients such as farmer's cheese, fruit, potatoes or vegetables. The sweet variety is often topped with a fruit compote or sauce and lightly fried in butter.

Instead of serving blintzes individually on a plate, my grandmother would neatly line up her rolled blintzes and bake them into a buttered casserole dish before topping them with strawberry sauce, similar to the sauce she would serve on top of her cheesecake. This recipe pays homage to these two iconic, dairy-laden dishes, giving us a reason to eat cheesecake for breakfast.

Notes: Blintzes can be made in advance. You can

make the crepes up to three days ahead of time and stack between pieces of wax or parchment paper. Store in an airtight container in the fridge. When you are ready to assemble, remove from the fridge and follow the directions below to make the filling and roll.

#### Ingredients

For the crepes: ¾ cup all-purpose flour

 $^{1}\!\!/_{4}$  cup graham cracker crumbs, plus more for serving 1 Tbsp sugar, 1 tsp cinnamon, 4 large eggs, 1 cup

1 tsp vanilla extract, 2 Tbsp vegetable oil ¼ cup unsalted butter, for cooking

#### For the filling:

1 cup ricotta cheese, 8 oz cream cheese, 1 large egg yolk, 1 tsp lemon zest, 1 tbsp vanilla extract ¼ cup powdered sugar

#### For the strawberry compote:

2 cups fresh strawberries, chopped, Juice of 1 lemon ¼ cup sugar, 1 Tbsp water

#### **Directions**

To make the crepes: In a blender, combine the flour, graham cracker crumbs, sugar, cinnamon, eggs, milk, vanilla, and oil until smooth. Let sit for 20-30 minutes or covered in the fridge overnight.

Lightly grease a 9-inch nonstick fry pan with butter over medium heat.

Pour ¼ cup of the batter into the center of the pan and swirl the pan to evenly coat.

Cook for 2-3 minutes, or until the top is fully dry.



Flip, and cook for an additional minute. Set aside and repeat with the remaining batter.

To make the filling: Combine the ricotta cheese, cream cheese, egg yolk, lemon zest, vanilla and powdered sugar until smooth.

To make the strawberry compote: Combine strawberries, lemon juice, sugar and water in a saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil and simmer for 10 minutes, or until the strawberries have broken down. Set aside.

Lay one crepe on a work surface and place 2 Tbsp of the filling in the bottom third of the crepe. Fold bottom edge over top of the cheese filling. Fold the sides towards the center. Roll as if you are rolling a burrito, tucking the edges in as you go.

Heat the butter in a frying pan over medium heat. Carefully place the blintzes, seam side down into the pan, cooking for 2-3 minutes, or until golden and crispy, flip, and cook for an additional 1-2 minutes.

Remove from heat. Serve blintzes warm with strawberry compote.

#### Shoah Week Cont. from page 13

passing by in the company of a Kapo, she heard fellow Auschwitz prisoner and slave labourer Ovadia Baruch - who had just been severely whipped - crying out for his mother in his native Greek. Also hailing from Salonika, Aliza begged the Kapo to arrange for them to meet.

"She was so pretty, it drove me insane," recalled Ovadia, who was smitten to the point that he forgot the enormous pain he was in.

As they were not allowed to converse, Aliza and Ovadia smuggled notes to one another. In one of his notes Ovadia wrote, "If we survive this hell, I want to marry you."

Gerda Weissman, who later wrote the acclaimed memoir *All but my Life* survived ghettos, six concentration and work camps and a 350 mile death march to Volary, Czechoslovakia that began with 4,000 women and ended with only 118 survivors.

On May 7, 1945, the day before she turned 24, Gerda was liberated.

"Her hair was white and matted.... She had not bathed in three years," said Silver Ochayon, adding that Gerda weighed only 68 pounds.

When a truck approached the factory where the Nazis had abandoned Gerda and her ill and dying friends, she realized that her freedom was finally at hand.

"We are Jewish," she told her liberator, Kurt Klein. "So am I," was his reply.

Klein was shocked when Gerda recited the words, "Noble be man, merciful and good."

"I could hardly believe she was able to summon a poem by the German poet Goethe, which is called 'The Divine,' at such a moment," Klein said.

This and the other four stories shared with Calgarians by Cheryl Silver Ochayon have surprising twists. Collectively they attest to love as the ultimate act of resistance.

AJNews readers who missed The Power of Love can still see it by going to youtube.com/watch?v =N2ssAyMBiJ4.

Stories of love and resistance abound in the highly anticipated made-in-Calgary exhibit *Here to Tell: Faces of Holocaust Survivors*, which opens at the Glenbow at the Edison (150 – 9 Ave SW) on May 27 and runs through July 3. For viewing hours and to book your timed ticket, go to glenbow.org/exhibitions/here-to-tell/. To order copies of the hardcover book, go to heretotell.com.

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



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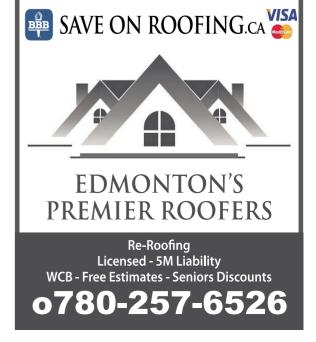
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### -People in the News

#### CJA student performs on 'Canada's Got Talent'

By Jenna Soroka

Calgary Jewish Academy (CJA) student Kinsley Oykhman was born to be seen, and the world got to watch her shine on April 26, 2022 on the Canada's Got Talent (CGT) stage.

Eleven-year-old Kinsley represented YYC Dance Project back in 2021 with her 4Dance teammates after auditioning for the show. The dance group got voted by the judges to move on to the semi-finals but were later cut from the show.

According to their website, "YYC Dance Project is an elite dance team that is partnered with Alberta Ballet School. Under the direction of Tanja Rosner it was formed in September 2014 and currently has 50 members ranging in ages 8 to 17. Dancers train in ballet, modern, contemporary, jazz and hip hop."

Kinsley joined YYC Dance Project in 2020 and was invited to join the Alberta Ballet School artistic program in 2021. She would train from 8 am to 10:30 am every day and then attend CJA for her academics. Jordana, Kinsley's mom, expressed how grateful both she and Kinsley are for the accommodations staff have provided at CJA to help Kinsley pursue her passion.

"CJA has been so supportive - doing whatever they can to make sure she can continue her dancing and not



Kinsley Oykhman and her mom Jordana.

miss out on being a part of the Jewish school,"

In the spring of 2021, Kinsley trained in California to prepare for nationals happening in July, The Dance Awards Las Vegas. The Dance Awards is a prestigious awards ceremony held in the United States that recognizes excellence in dance. Kinsley got top 3 in the mini female best dancers' category out of 100s of dancers, validating her many vears of hard work, dedication, and talent. You can watch the improv she performed at the competition on YouTube, The Dance Awards Las Vegas 2021 - Mini Female Best Dancer *Dance Off*, that awarded her top 3.

After nationals, Jordana found out about the opportunity to audition for *Canada's Got* Talent. Derek Piquette, former contestant on So You Think You Can Dance, choreographed the CGT number for 4Dance. Due to public health restrictions during the summer of 2021, Kinsley was unable to attend practices in-person and was sent a video to learn her part. The dance group only had one day to practice together before the audition was filmed the following day, which is a testament to the professionalism of these dancers.

"She was born to dance, but she was also born to perform," Jordana expressed. Kinsley's mom went on to share how before her daughter could even dance, she would be waving at people and talking to people at the mall. At 18 months old, Kinsley was already enrolled in Mommy and Me dance classes.

"I was dancing around the house, moving my body," Kinsley added. "Whenever music came on, I always would just move or kick or do cartwheels. Then [my mom] just put me in dance and I loved it."

With Kinsley's continued growth and success, more hours are being poured into training and performing. She is getting to travel around the world and Jordana explains how "the bar keeps getting higher and higher for what we're going to do.'

Her time on CGT is not the end of Kinsley's journey, as she was recently accepted into a training program in California for next year that gets students industry-ready to be in dance, music videos, auditions,



Kinsley and YYC Dance Project competing on CGT.

acting, singing, and more. She shared that she wants to get into acting, be on shows, and express her personality in various ways. If CGT renews, Kinsley said that she wants to audition again as a soloist.

"It's not just this little girl from Canada. It's this little girl from the Calgary Jewish community on national television, and she's worked so hard for it," Jordana said with pride.

As soon as you meet Kinsley, it is evident that she eats, sleeps, and breathes dance. Her undeniable talent combined with her kind heart makes her a special member of the Calgary Jewish community.

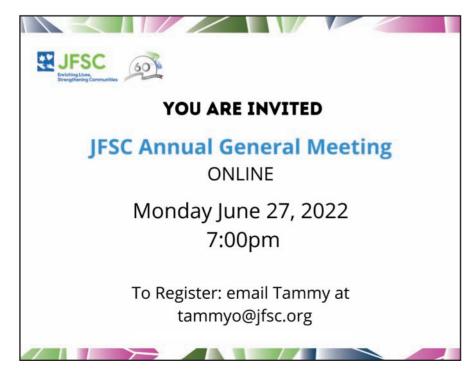
Mazel Tov, Kinsley, for all your accomplishments and the exciting future that lays ahead!

Watch her perform on Canada's Got Talent's YouTube Channel by searching 4Dance CGT. You can leave her your well wishes in the comments section and share the video with friends and family.

Jenna Soroka is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Alberta Jewish News.



The Calgary Jewish community gathered on Yom Hazikaron to pay tribute to fallen soldiers and victims of violence.





## -People in the News

## Islet transplant program celebrates 20 years of life-changing treatment

By Gillian Rutherford, UAlberta

Yasher Koach to 2016 Edmonton Negev Gala Honouree Dr. James Shapiro, for his amazing contribution to global health.

(ualberta.ca) - After 20 years of perfecting their technique, the team behind the largest islet transplant program in the world reports the procedure is a safe, reliable and life-changing treatment for people with hard-to-control diabetes.

In results published this month in *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*, the researchers report on patient survival, graft survival, insulin independence and protection from life-threatening low blood sugars for 255 patients who have received a total of more than 700 infusions of islets at the University of Alberta Hospital over the past two decades.

"We've shown very clearly that islet transplantation is an effective therapy for patients with difficult-to-control Type 1 diabetes," says James Shapiro, professor of surgery in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, Canada Research Chair in regenerative medicine and transplant surgery, and lead of the team that developed what has become known as the Edmonton Protocol. "This long-term safety data gives us confidence that we are doing the right thing."

Canada's Stem Cell Network recently announced nearly \$3 million in funding for the next step in the research — a project to manufacture and transplant insulin-producing cells from a patient's own blood.

"This 20-year data shows really strong proof that cell-based therapies can deliver a meaningful and transformative impact for people with diabetes," says Peter Senior, professor of endocrinology and metabolism, Charles A. Allard Chair in Diabetes Research and director of the Alberta Diabetes Institute.

"We are delivering something which all other treatments for diabetes don't deliver — there's a comfort, a predictability, a stability to blood sugar levels that don't exist with anything else."

#### **Transformational stability**

Islets are clusters of cells that produce insulin, a hormone that allows the body to control the flow of energy from food, storing the excess after meals and releasing it to allow the body to function between meals. In Type 1 diabetes, the immune system mistakenly destroys the cells within islets so patients have to take insulin by injection. Patients with hard-to-control or "brittle" diabetes face life-threatening low or high blood sugars and long-term complications.

Between March 1999 and October 2019, 255 patients received islet transplants by infusion into their livers. Seventy per cent of the grafts survived for a median time of nearly six years. The researchers reported that a combination of two anti-inflammatory medications given during the first two weeks following transplant significantly increased long-term islet function.

The transplant recipients have to take lifelong immunosuppression drugs, which in some cases lead to skin cancer or infection, but most such complications were not fatal during the study period. Twenty-five of the patients died due to heart or kidney failure, suicide or unknown causes. While the researchers did not have a direct control group for comparison, they report this is a similar survival rate to that seen in people with complicated Type 1 diabetes.

Seventy-nine per cent of the transplant recipients were able to stop taking insulin after two or more islet infusions and a median time of 95 days following the first transplant. Sixty-one per cent were still insulin-

independent a year later, 32 per cent at five years and eight per cent after 20 years, the researchers reported. While most patients had to resume taking insulin injections, the doses were usually much smaller than their original needs and their diabetes control was better.

"Being completely free of insulin is not the main goal," says Shapiro. "It's a big bonus, obviously, but the biggest goal for the patient — when their life has been incapacitated by wild, inadequate control of blood sugar and dangerous lows and highs — is being able to stabilize. It is transformational."

#### A worldwide example

Edmonton's is the world's largest islet transplant program, but such transplants are now also carried out in other Canadian cities, Switzer-



James Shapiro in the lab. (Photo by John Ulan, UAlberta)

land, France, Australia and the United Kingdom. Shapiro hopes the results will build confidence in the procedure in places where it is only available on an experimental basis, such as the United States.

"I think looking at this kind of data will encourage scientists, clinical communities and governments to support and explore the possibility of broader availability of islet transplantation," he says.

Braulio Marfil-Garza, first author of the paper and a PhD candidate under Shapiro's supervision, will continue the research through a clinical fellowship in Type 1 diabetes and islet transplantation. Originally from Mexico, he hopes to one day bring the treatment to patients in his home country.

"My dream would be to work together with Dr. Shapiro and the team in the future to replicate what they have achieved here in Edmonton," he says. "There's no one doing islet transplantation or this type of research in Mexico. I am confident that we can change the lives of many patients."

Marfil-Garza will try to identify predictors for which patients are most likely to have successful transplants. The key is likely the autoimmune system that causes Type 1 diabetes in the first place, according to Senior.

"With better technologies, we may be able to look at people's immune system more precisely and say, 'Is there something about your genetics and your T cells which are just more aggressive?" Senior explains. "That might give us clues as to ways to mitigate those risks as well."

Shapiro credits the patients, organ donors, Alberta Health Services, a large team of clinicians, radiologists, scientists and experts in islet cell extraction, along with support from the governments of Alberta and Canada, for the success of the program.

"I'm exceedingly proud of the team that's accomplished this," Shapiro says. "We couldn't have achieved all of that without this big team working together, hand in hand."

Shapiro will continue to focus on finding a more plentiful supply of islet cells to replace the current reliance on deceased donors. Human trials have already shown success using stem cells programmed to produce insulin. Trials have just started to transplant cells that have been gene edited to make them invisible to the immune system.

"Islet transplant as it exists today isn't suitable for everybody, but it shows very clear proof of concept that if we can fix the supply problem and minimize or eliminate the anti-rejection drugs, we will be able to move this treatment forward and make it far more available for children and adults with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes in the future," Shapiro says.

 $This\ article\ was\ originally\ printed\ in\ Folio.$ 



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### -People in the News

#### Menachem Siderson installed as Aish of the Rockies Rabbi

#### By Steve Mark, Intermountain Jewish News

One of Denver's newest rabbis, Edmonton Menorah Academy alum Menachem Siderson, joined Aish of the Rockies in August, 2020, as the rabbi of its synagogue. Even now, he admits, he is still learning the ins and outs of leading his congregational community in Greenwood Village, though he doesn't have to go far when in need of a 411.

Rabbi Siderson's wife of six years, Nechama, grew up as a congregant at Aish. Her parents, Rabbi Yaakov and Chaya Meyer, founded Aish, which means Siderson's boss is his father-in-law.

"I had the blessing of coming to a community that knew me, that I was familiar with, in a new capacity," says Siderson. "I have Rabbi Meyer nearby as a role model, as a mentor."

"I'm only too happy to give him what I can," Rabbi Meyer says.

Siderson grew up in Edmonton. His parents are Moshe and Dr. Miriam Siderson. He began studying at Yeshiva of Staten Island, NY, when he was 16.

"I knew I was interested in pursuing a career in some sort of klai kodesh, or community service, when I entered yeshiva. I didn't necessarily plan on becoming a rabbi," Siderson says. "I could have become a teacher. There were a lot of different avenues to consider.'

Siderson's progression then took him to Yeshiva Ner Moshe in Jerusalem and Yeshiva BMG in Lakewood, where he met Nechama. They were married in 2015; by then Menachem had decided to focus on becoming a congregational rabbi.

In 2016, five weeks after the birth of their first child, Elisheva, they packed up and headed for Israel, where Menachem studied at the Center for Kehilla Development in Jerusalem, a five-year program to prepare him for the congregational rabbinate.

"We had our first baby here in Denver, and then we took off to Israel for four years," says Siderson. "It was a total immersion in the world of rabbinical training."

When the decision came in 2020 that Siderson would be the next pulpit rabbi at Aish, Siderson, then 28, was in the midst of the final stages in the CKD program.

So, Menachem and Nechama returned to the U.S. in August, 2020, with their three kids in tow: Elisheva, now 5; Shalva, 3; and Yissochor, 2.

Shalva and Yissochor were both born in Jerusalem; and Yissochor was six weeks old when the family moved back to the U.S.

Already being a member of the Meyer family provided a built-in familiarity with Aish of the Rockies, aiding Siderson's learning curve as the new rabbi of its

"My role is to provide rabbinic guidance, and be very involved in the actual day to day running of the shul, in the minyan, giving sermons, and providing classes to different age groups.

"It is also the idea of really working on being a rabbinic figure that the community can turn to."

At 30, Siderson has a youthful look about him. He is thoughtful beyond his years, and is often measured as he chooses his words carefully when referring to Aish's recruitment and the resulting family dynamic.

"It's a tightrope," Siderson remembers feeling when the position was offered to him. "We were confident that we would be able to navigate everything.

"Thank G-d we have a fantastic relationship at Aish. Rabbi Meyer is so loving, so warm, so caring, so able to nurture."

Officially, Meyer, 60, is Aish of the Rockies' senior rabbi and CEO. Siderson's exact title is Rabbi of The Shul. Rabbi Meyer is quick to address the "N" word. Nepotism.

"The board knew that I really liked him, but he did it on his own merit," says Meyer.

"There are a lot of rabbis who come back to the States, thinking that they're equipped, but they're like deer in the headlights for the first couple of years,' continues Rabbi Meyer. "Although Rabbi Siderson clearly still has a lot to learn and had a lot to learn when he first came here, he was much better equipped than the overwhelming majority of people who do come from Israel to take positions in the States."

Meyer himself had intimate knowledge of the rabbinic "all in the family" system. His father-in-law was Rabbi Dr. Stanley Wagner, longtime rabbi at BMH-BJ. Wagner's daughter Chaya is Aish's events coordinator.

"He (Rabbi Wagner) would say to me, 'I am so happy to share with you and know that you're going to put it to good use," Meyer recalls. "And that's how I feel about my son-in-law."

Aish's membership serves 225 households. 65% of the congregation is over the age 65, but in recent years



Aish of the Rockies Rabbi Menachem Siderson.

there has been an infusion of more than 30 "young" families. A typical Shabbos morning service attracts about 150 congregants.

To accommodate the demographic range of Aish's membership, Siderson leads a wide range of programs. He meets with "young dads" once a month. He also leads a "Deep Dive into the Aggadah" class.

What leader in our times doesn't have a podcast? Siderson's podcast is called "What's a Jew to Do?"

As if Aish duties don't keep him busy enough, Siderson is positioned to become a familiar face in the entire Denver Jewish community as somewhat of a rabbinic jack-of-all trades. Have a newborn son or grandson?

The rabbi is a trained *mohel*. In need of a custom mezuzzah or a Torah scroll? Siderson writes them; he trained in Israel to be a scribe.

'There are areas I had no idea I'd be involved in, that just took off," says Siderson. "I get to help a lot of people."

Being a mohel is especially rewarding. "It's an awe-inspiring moment," says Siderson. "It's a huge blessing to be able to do this mitzvah for a family. It's a beautiful thing."

Next on the schedule: Siderson's official installation at Aish on May 22. It would have been sooner if not for COVID.

"Although he's a young man and he's only 30, he really is very, very decorated with all his accomplishments," says Zev Jacobs, Aish's COO.

Nearing the "commemorative event, Rabbi Meyer says: "He has many skills that I don't have and did not have at his age. I love working with him."

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#### Bnai Brith Cont. from page 7

through the early 1990s, Lipsman helped to raise the generation of community leaders who today run many of Jewish Calgary's core Jewish institutions. He mentored Bondar and Stacy Shaikin - the current Camp BB-Riback Director - in basketball and in life,

For 12 years between 1999 and 2010, Lipsman helped to raise another generation of Jewish kids as a respected and much-loved director of Camp B'nai Brith which, on his watch, was reborn as Camp BB-Riback. Notably, things came full circle when Lipsman succeeded Bondar as camp director.

Lipsman's tenure at the camp was a period of tremendous growth. He helped to raise more than \$1.5 million toward facility expansion and replacement while giving kids the summers of their lives.

All camp directors face challenges, but Lipsman literally weathered the camp's most dramatic storm when a tornado hit Pine Lake in July of 2000. He will never forget the sight of the twister as it appeared to head directly toward the camp. Always a stickler for safety and security, Lipsman - with the assistance of his well-trained frontline leadership team - guided staff and campers with remarkable calm, at least to outside appearances. Fortunately, the deadly twister veered away from the camp. There were numerous casualties and 12 fatalities on that black Friday, but the camp community was blessedly spared.

Lipsman subsequently oversaw the construction of a tornado-proof multi-purpose building generously supported by the camp's late namesake Ted Riback and designed by the late Jack Abugov. The building has become a hub of camp life and can provide refuge for the entire camp population.

In addition to this and other camp infrastructure improvements - including the replacement of the leadership village, the camp's mortgage was paid off during Lipsman's tenure and the budget balanced.

"As camp director, I established a great relationship with B'nai Brith. They were incredibly supportive of the camp," Lipsman recalls.

"They made a five year commitment of \$75,000 to improve outdoor experiences for campers and \$15,000 to help kids who could not afford to attend the camp or didn't have what they needed to enjoy their experience once they were there," added Lipsman. "It was a tremendous commitment."

Lipsman knows all about commitment. In addition to his professional roles, he has been an avid volunteer. He led six cohorts of high school students to Poland and Israel on the March of the Living and spent three decades sensitively and discretely assisting individuals and families applying for bursaries so that they could participate fully in Jewish life. He is currently taking a course in preparation for a volunteer role with the Calgary Youth Justice Program.

Lipsman and BB share a common passion when it comes to supporting those who need it most. That is reason enough to generously support the 70th Annual BB Dinner and to join in the celebration either in

The 70th Annual B'nai Brith Dinner takes place at Beth Tzedec Synagogue on Thursday, September 22, beginning with cocktails at 5:30 pm followed by dinner at 7 pm. Tickets are \$300 per person for dinner attendees or \$180 per person for online access. A wide variety of sponsorship and program advertising opportunities are available. For more information or to purchase tickets, go to the B'nai Brith Calgary website at bnaibrithcalgary.org



#### Beth Israel hosts a Pre-Shavuot Night of Insight

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

As the weather in Edmonton is heating up for summer, so is the programming at Beth Israel Synagogue! Recently, over Passover, congregants were able to gather together for the first time in two years for the holiday's First Seder meal.

"Beth Israel has hosted Pesach Seders annually since the early 1900s," explained Shul Director, Moshe Siderson. "This is why it was so important for everyone to be back in person again." In past years Beth Israel Seders have welcomed upwards of 120 people, and although this year was more modest in turnout, around 80 attendees, the occasion marked a significant milestone in the community's move toward a 'new normal.'

Weekly Shabbat kiddish lunches are taking place after services again, and according to Siderson, activity in the kitchens is back into full swing with food preparation as busy as ever. "People can once again sponsor a kiddish by visiting the website," he added.

Siderson and the BI team have made the process as easy as a few clicks of a mouse – those wanting to commemorate an occasion with a kiddush for the community should visit familyshul.org for more details. "We've recently celebrated three bar mitzvahs as well," said Siderson with evident jubilation.

With Shavuot right around the corner, the BI team has not a moment to spare.

"Everyone is very happy to have the option to worship together and celebrate holidays as a community," commented Siderson. "So much of Shavuot is about learning together."

This year the celebration kicks off with a Mincha on the evening of June 4, followed by a Se'udat Shishi sushi extravaganza, and AlleyKat beer tasting event. "We are really fortunate to be able to partner with



A wonderful Lag Baomer celebration was hosted by Chabad of Edmonton with participation from all the community organizations.

AlleyKat Beer, a local brewery, to offer a self-guided tasting of four of their beers," noted Siderson.

After two years of pandemic living, there are very few people who can say that they have not been impacted by mental health battles – either their own, or of a loved one. In recognition of the struggles that so many have faced, Beth Israel organizers have made the theme of this year's learning events: 'Mental Health and Judaism.'

"There will be five learning sessions throughout the evening," explained Siderson. "We have arranged for very engaging guest speakers to offer thoughts and insights about mental health and Jewish teachings," including Melany Allen, Rabbi Claman, Rabbi Blachman, Howard Glass, and Gabe Mandel.

"We will also have late-night pulled beef sandwiches for those attending the Shavuot event," said Siderson. "Since we do know that there are many people who are still not entirely comfortable meeting in person, we will also be offering sushi and pulled beef sandwich pickup options in advance of Shabbat."

There will be an assortment of snacks and beverages throughout the evening in addition to the scrumptious two meals. Registration is now open through the BI website, and admission includes food and lectures for the entire evening.

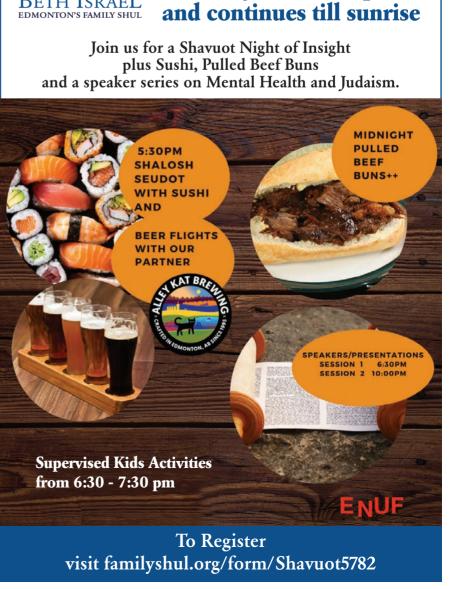
'Outdoor Torah Adventures' continues for the summer of 2022. Organizers have been busy brain storming. "This year things are evolving. Summer camps are opening back up, but we have had huge success with our programs, so we will continue to take Torah learning outside," commented Siderson. Possible programming may include: wine and cheese tasting, biking, boating, walking tours, and much more. "We are finagling the details, but our aim is to continue to provide people with options that suit their comfort levels."

The community is encouraged to stay tuned for updates and developments as Beth Israel's summer schedule takes shape.

Pre-Shavuot at Edmonton's Beth Israel starts June 4 at 5 pm

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





#### Canadian author tells a true story of resistance

By AJNews staff

Earlier this year, thanks to a collaboration between Calgary Public Library, Calgary Jewish Federation, Edmonton Public Library and the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, the Alberta Jewish community had the privilege of attending a virtual presentation by award winning Canadian author, Rebecca Donner.

The BC author gave a personal and spellbinding presentation of her book "All the Frequent Troubles of our Days: The true story of the American woman at the heart of the German resistance to Hitler."

In her presentation, moderated by Alberta Jewish News reporter Maxine Fischbein, Donner chronicled the extraordinary life and ruthless death of Mildred Harnack, the leader of one of the largest underground resistance groups in Germany during WWII. She described the painstaking research that went into her book - fusing letters, testimony and declassified intelligence documents, to tell what Pulitzer prize winning author Kai Bird refers to as a "page-turner story of espionage, love and betrayal."

For Donner, the story was deeply personal and profoundly relevant. It is the story of the extraordinary life and brutal death of her great-great-aunt Mildred Harnack, the American leader of one of the largest underground resistance groups in Germany during WWII.

Donner described the events that initially led to her interest in Mildred. When she was young, there was an air of secrecy about Mildred but when Rebecca was 16 years old her grandmother Jane, (who was Mildred's niece) gave her some letters that outlined Mildred's resistance to Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Jane had spent time with Mildred in Berlin in the early 1930s and she encouraged Rebecca to tell her story.

Through her research, Donner became familiar with the stories of a network of brave people in Germany who opposed Hitler and tried to preserve democracy against the rise of the Nazi party. The current polarized political landscape in the U.S. and around the world prompted Donner to put her other projects on hold and concentrate on completing this book.

"These were brave men and women who risked

[everything] and nearly all of them lost their lives in opposing the Nazi regime. I think it's tremendously important for people today to know that these people existed," said Donner.

"I think we need a history lesson right now. It's important to hear the stories of those who stood up to bullies and who basically tried to preserve the democracy that Germany very much enjoyed until Hitler became chancellor."

Born and raised in Milwaukee, Mildred Harnack was twenty-six when she enrolled in a PhD program in Germany and witnessed the meteoric rise of the Nazi party. In 1932, she began holding secret meetings in her apartment - a small band of political activists that by 1940 had grown into the largest underground resistance group in Berlin.

She recruited working-class Germans into the resistance, helped Jews escape, plotted acts of sabotage, and collaborated in writing leaflets that denounced Hitler and called for revolution. Her co-conspirators circulated through Berlin under the cover of night, slipping the leaflets into mailboxes, public restrooms, phone booths. When the first shots of the Second World War were fired, she became a spy, couriering top-secret intelligence to the Allies.

On the eve of her escape to Sweden, she was ambushed by the Gestapo. At a Nazi military court, a panel of five judges sentenced her to six years at a prison camp, but Hitler overruled the decision and ordered her execution. On February 16, 1943, she was strapped to a guillotine and beheaded.

Historians identify Mildred Harnack as the only American in the leadership of the German resistance, yet her remarkable story has remained almost unknown until now.



REBECCA DONNER Canadian author Rebecca Donner. In writing this book, Harnack's great-great-niece Rebecca Donner drew on her extensive archival research in Germany, Russia, England, and the U.S. as well as uncovered documents in her family archive to produce this astonishing work of narrative nonfiction. Fusing elements of biography, real-life political thriller, and scholarly detective story, Donner brilliantly interwove letters, diary entries, notes smuggled out of a Berlin prison, survivors' testimony, and a trove of declassified intelligence documents into a powerful, epic story, reconstructing the moral courage of an

ALL THE FREQUENT

TROUBLES OF OUR

DAYS

"All the Frequent Troubles of our Days: The true story of the American woman at the heart of the German resistance to Hitler" by Rebecca Donner was awarded the 2021 National Book Critics Circle Award in the category of Biography. On Twitter, Donner said she was "elated, humbled and tremendously grateful" to receive the award. She previously won the 2022 PEN /Jacqueline Bograd Weld Award for Biography and is currently a finalist for the L.A. Times Prize.

enigmatic woman nearly erased by history.

"All the Frequent Troubles of our Days" is a fascinating read by a talented Canadian author. It was published by Little, Brown in the U.S. and Canongate in the U.K. A Hebrew translation is forthcoming from Matar Publishing in Israel.

#### "Girl from Treblinka" Cont. from page 5

Despite only having had mere hours to rehearse the emotionally and historically poignant script, the actors who brought life and voice to Stones characters were captivating. Most notably, the play's Narrator, Reed McColm, resonated both in performance and lasting impression. Serving a tour-guide through an ethereal plane between existences, his role provided the structure and essential commentary needed for the audience to accurately interpret the malleability of time and space within the work. His biography boasts a lifelong passion for, and success within the performing arts. Many in the community may remember him as Harry Truman in Stone's debut work, Truman's Jew. The sincerity with which McColm existed within every moment of the performance showcased his natural affinity for creative transformation and honesty of portrayal. Kayla Asbell portrayed the leading role of a young Jewish woman from Berlin murdered at the Treblinka death camp. Her performance was filled with passion and theatricality.

Stone's script inhabited a realm outside of conventional settings and was self aware. Actors routinely broke the fourth wall, directly engaging the audience. The play's acknowledgement of itself as a work of theatrical invention, and not a simulation of reality, helped to present the work as one intended to provoke discussion and further reflection. The bending of temporal and physical boundaries in Stone's avant-garde abstraction of time and space was an excellent platform from which to explore greater concepts of morality, culpability, and guilt.

Vergangenheitsbewaltigung, the process of reconciling with the past, is a term that bares great significance when dealing with any examination of accountability or generational responsibility. Stone's play presented a number of ideological questions - none with simple answers. Approaching any creative endeavor with the Holocaust as backdrop is a monumental undertaking. The focus on the chilling efficiency of the Treblinka death camp served as a haunting reminder of how sinister the Nazi agenda was, and how vital it remains to amplify the message – never again!





"Girl from Treblinka" Playwright Leonard Stone with the cast and producers of the world premiere table read, held at Beth Israel



## SOUICES by Eliezer Segal

#### A Grain of Truth

Each of the biblical pilgrimage festivals has both an agricultural and a historical significance. Thus, Passover is situated in the season of the "aviv," the ripening of the grain. Sukkot celebrates the ingathering of the winter crops, and Shavuot the grain harvest and first fruits. The Torah endowed these days with their more prominent themes as commemorations of central events in Israel's sacred history: Passover for the Exodus, Sukkot for the sojourn in the desert, and Shavuot for the revelation of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

Well, not exactly.

The identification of Shavuot as the anniversary of the giving of the Torah is not stated in the Torah. In fact, the holiday is not assigned an actual date in the calendar, but rather—at least according to the Pharisaic/Rabbinic calendar reckoning—is arrived at by counting seven weeks from the beginning of Passover.

In interpreting its main theme, many traditional Jewish commentators, including Nahmanides, took their cue from the Torah's statements that stressed its distinctive grain offerings: the 'omer of barley at the start of the count, and the two loaves of wheat bread offered on Shavuot itself.

The thirteenth-century author of the Sefer ha-hinnukh explained these offerings as consistent with the Rabbis' teaching that "anyone who benefits from this world without a blessing is guilty of stealing." To be sure, before enjoying the benefits of basic foodstuffs like barley and grain it is appropriate to acknowledge the generosity of their divine provider, whether by reciting blessings or by setting aside portions as offerings. Only after such gestures of gratitude is it fitting to partake of the new produce for personal consumption or as sacrificial offerings. Consistent with his general theory about the function of mitzvot, the Sefer ha-hinnukh held that the practical performance of these rituals will effectively habituate our minds and spirits to proper religious sensibilities.

He noted as well that there are meaningful differences in the respective natures of the two offerings, the 'omer and the two loaves. The former consists of raw barley, a crop that was generally regarded as fit only for animals; whereas the latter is a distinctly human food, wheat, that has undergone all the complex processing necessary to prepare baked loaves of bread. This serves as a model for the soul's evolution from basic physical activities to subtle spiritual ideas.

In his legal compendia, Maimonides laid out the procedures for the offerings without explaining their purposes. However, in his *Guide of the Perplexed* he expounded that the act of counting the days between the anniversaries of the exodus and of the Sinai revelation recreates our ancestors' emotional experience, as one would eagerly count days in anticipation of a meeting with a beloved friend. This teaches us that the liberation from slavery was not the ultimate goal, but only a means to the paramount objective of receiving God's Torah on Shavuot.

Thus, the agricultural and historical understandings of Shavuot and its preludes tended to exist in separate parallel realms. There were, however, several interpreters who could not resist the challenge of blending those themes into a unified exposition.

We find this challenge taken up by two illustrious exegetes who flourished in fifteenth-century Spain. The main idea makes its initial appearance in Rabbi Isaac Arama's *Akedat Yitzhak*, an expansive philosophical exposition of the Torah. Shortly afterwards it was stated in very similar terms by Don Isaac Abravanel. (In fact, Arama's son Meir composed an angry letter in which he expressed his displeasure at Abravanel's tendency to copy his father's ideas without crediting them). While acknowledging the thanksgiving aspect of the grain offerings (analogous to the obligation to offer up the first fruits), they also interpreted them (as had Maimonides) as the lead-up to the Torah's revelation.

Abravanel explained specific rules governing the seasonal offerings in connection with Israel's receiving the Torah. Thus, the two loaves of Shavuot represent the two Torahs: the written and the oral. The greater complexity of the later Shavuot offering over the initial 'omer symbolizes the progress that was made in the people's understanding of the holy teachings.

True, the exodus set the Israelites apart from heathen nations who are depicted metaphorically as hay, straw or thorns. And yet (as had been observed by the *hinnukh*) the chosen people at that stage were like the lowest grade of cultivated grain, analogous to barley. It was still necessary to count a symbolic interval of fifty days to complete the process of spiritual refining that qualified them to receive the Torah.

The Mishnah describes how the flour for the 'omer offering was subjected to thirteen stages of filtering through sieves. Rabbi Arama proposed a symbolic reading of those thirteen stages: they evoke the thirteen generations from Noah through to Jacob.



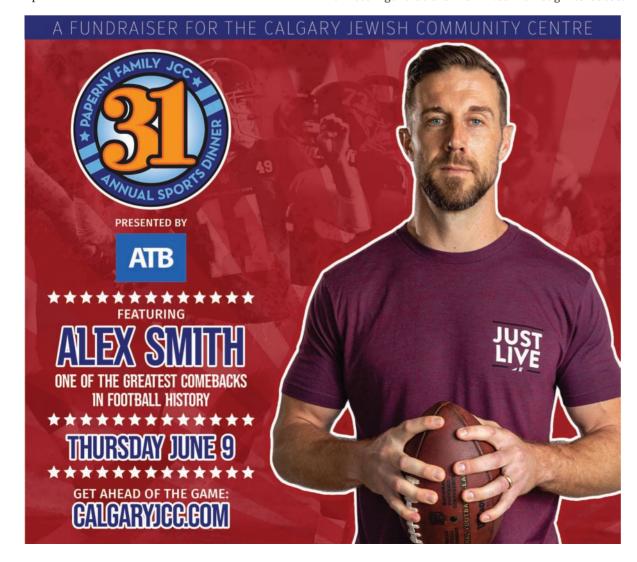
The first ten generations were an era of depraved idolatry. Then, with Abraham's appearance on the scene, commenced a period of purification until the patriarch Jacob produced progeny untainted by idolatry. Thus the thirteen stages of purification were built into the ritual of the 'omer in order to define it as the commencement of a process designed to produce a similar state of religious enlightenment.

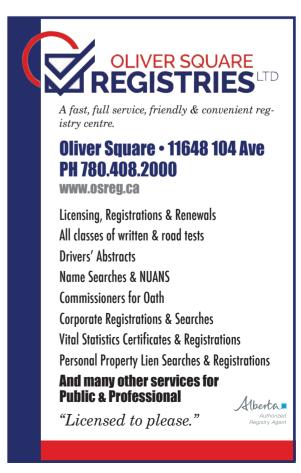
Abravanel extended that idea to the animal sacrifices that were offered with the loaves. Lest the humble grain be dismissed as an inconsequential rite, the Torah commanded that it be accompanied by loaves of fine flour, and by sheep representing the "scattered sheep" of Israel who are destined to receive the Torah.

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch took this a step further. The counting is to begin "from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain" —that is, when Israelite farmers are farming their own crops in their homeland. The real culmination of the process is neither the exodus nor the Sinai revelation, but the actual implementation of Torah laws and ethics in a living, labouring human society.

As Rabbi Hirsch declared, "From the point where others cease their counting, there does yours commence!"

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





#### This month's update from Edmonton Talmud Torah School











It was a very busy month at Edmonton Talmud Torah. In addition to their regular studies, the students performed beautifully at the community wide Yom HaShoah service - singing and playing the ukulele. Students also attended the community wide Yom Ha'atzmaut program and performed songs and a fabulous flag march. Students and school staff also enjoyed finally being able to participate in an in-person school wide assembly for Yom Haatzmaut. For registration information call Natalie at (780) 481-3377.

13¢

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#### Gan Izzy Campers having fun





#### NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society shall be held virtually on Thursday, June 16, 2022, commencing at 7:00

The Agenda for the Meeting shall include the following:

- President's Report
- 2. Principal's Report3. ELC Director's Report
- 4. Financial Report
- Bylaw Amendments
- Election of Board Members

Relevant documents will be posted to: <a href="https://www.talmudtorahsociety.com">www.talmudtorahsociety.com</a>

Any parent or guardian of a child who attends the school, or any person 18 years of age or older who has contributed a minimum of \$18 to the United Jewish Appeal or Edmonton Talmud Torah between June 17, 2021 and May 17, 2022 is eligible to vote at the meeting. There are eight (8) board positions open for election, at least four (4) of which must be filled by a parent of a child who attends the Edmonton Talmud Torah School or Early Learning Centre. The other four (4) positions may be filled by parent or non-parent Society members. A person is not eligible to be elected if they are engaged as an employee of the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society or if they have an outstanding debt or obligation to the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society, and have not put in place an approved payment proposal.

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

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

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