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CMDA Calgary Gala: A night to remember!

By AJNews staff

On May 29, at the Carriage House Inn in Calgary, friends and supporters of Canadian Magen David Adom (CMDA) gathered to celebrate Magen David Adom's 92 years as Israel's national emergency response organization. It was a truly gala celebration. In less than a century, Israel has turned a tiny piece of land into one of the most remarkable achievements in modern history. MDA has been there all along the way as Israel's only EMS and blood services organization, made up of paramedics, nurses, technicians, and thousands upon thousands of volunteers, playing a vital role in ensuring the continuity and prosperity of the country. CMDA has been there with a helping hand, and Calgary's support has been inspirational.

"Our main mission is to save lives in Israel," said Sharon Fraiman, Western Region Director of CMDA. "Prepare yourself to be challenged, excited and inspired as we gather here today to celebrate CMDA's wonderful activities in Israel and around the world."

Over 340 people came to celebrate and support the incredible achievements of Magen David Adom in the gorgeous ballroom at the Carriage House Inn. The recently renovated ballroom was magnificent; it was decorated for royalty and the kosher food, musical entertainment and overall ambience was exceptional.

Proudly on display was an ambulance that was jointly donated in memory of Sam Ousher Switzer by the Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation and by Fania and Leo z"l Wedro in memory of their parents who died in the Holocaust. The unwavering love



At the CMDA Gala on May 29: National Exec. Director of CMDA Sidney Benizri, Alberta Premier Jason Kenney, CMDA Calgary Region co-founder Fania Wedro, CMDA Western Region Director Sharon Fraiman, and CMDA Calgary Chairman Lenny Shapiro.

and support provided by Lenny and Faigel Shapiro, Darlene Switzer and the Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation, and by Fanny Wedro has been phenomenal, said Fraiman.

She presented a plaque to Lenny Shapiro in recognition of his many years of dedication to CMDA and the leadership role that he has taken on for the Calgary Division. He and Faigel recently donated a state-of-the-art CMDA boat that will be used to save lives at the Kinneret. A plaque was also presented to Fania Wedro who donated a standard ambulance in addition to a special first responder's vehicle, and to Darlene Switzer who accepted the plaque on behalf of the Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation for their generous donation of an ambulance. These donations are so appreciated, noted Fraiman and they demonstrate the huge impact and commitment of the Calgary community.

Special guest speaker at the gala was Dr. Shafir Botner, Director of Magen David Adom's Paramedic School. Dr. Botner has been a veteran MDA paramedic

for nearly 20 years. He is one of only a handful of first responders serving in MDA's Helicopter Service. Dr. Botner oversees a comprehensive program that trains more than 90,000 people annually, including members of the general public, institutions, physicians and nurses, as well as MDA first responders.

"Do you recognize this ambulance?" asked Dr. Botner, gratefully acknowledging the generous donations. "Have you noticed that it's here?"

There is no doubt about the efficacy of Magen David Adom, he added. It is saving lives in record time. "So you hear about terror attacks in Tel Aviv, in Jerusalem and elsewhere, and over 90 years of Magen David Adom," said Dr. Botner. "The average time of answering the call at an MDA Dispatch Centre is 2 seconds and the average time for someone with MDA application to reach you at each point is less than 2 minutes." Simply put - MDA saves lives.

Fraiman also presented a plaque to Alberta Premier Jason Kenney. He offered these words to those in

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Yaron Bob turns Rockets to Roses

By Jenna Soroka

Art tells a story. It also has the magical effect of drawing in its audience with shapes, sounds, smells, and textures. When the story an artist tells is one of transforming pain into beauty, you cannot help but be moved by this magic.

Israeli artist, Yaron Bob, is a metal sculptor who does exactly this.

Yaron lives in Moshav Yated, a small Israeli community that borders the Gaza strip and Egypt, and his experiences under the threat of rockets helped guide his current path in life. He is a full-time blacksmith who uses metal from Kassam rockets launched from Hamas that have landed in Israel to create one-of-a-kind, custom, hand-made pieces of art.

Lance Davis, CEO of Jewish National Fund (JNF) Canada met Yaron in Israel when he was touring these periphery communities. "His story of living in a rocket reality and how he has turned darkness to light was something that we really wanted to bring to Canada," Jay Cairns, Executive Director at JNF

Edmonton explained.

JNF Canada supports communities in Israel, such as an animal assisted therapy facility for children and PTSD resilience centre in Sderot.

The Calgary Jewish Academy and Edmonton's Talmud Torah School both welcomed Yaron Bob to speak. Elliott Steinberg, Executive Director at JNF Calgary, lauded the Calgary event at CJA on June 1, saying that "everyone who met Yaron and heard his story was enthralled."

In Edmonton, Cairns brought Yaron Bob to speak with Talmud Torah's grade 5/6 class. Additionally, JNF and Talmud Torah Society partnered in hosting Yaron for an evening event. On June 2 at Talmud Torah School, Yaron displayed his art pieces and captivated attendees during the evening event.

When Yaron was young, his passion for working with metal came from accidentally sitting on a fork in his back pocket. He began playing with the bent fork, manipulating the metal to create something else entirely. As he described this story, Yaron almost effortlessly took a fork he brought and, after a minute, presented one of the attendees with the fork...only



Yaron Bob (centre), with TTS Executive Assistant Natalie Soroka, and JNF Edmonton Executive Director Jay Cairns.

now it had been transformed into the shape of a cat.

"The kids absolutely loved his fork sculptures and magic tricks. Well, the adults really liked those too," Steinberg commented on the Calgary event. In Yaron's spare time, he volunteers at hospitals and

Continued on page 8

CMDA Gala *Cont. from page 1*

attendance. "I just want to say thank you to all of you who continue to contribute to important charities here, showing the Alberta spirit throughout the Covid era but also for our generosity to important causes in the rest of the world – and central to those is the Magen David Adom.

"Of course, running an emergency management agency and service like the MDA is difficult anywhere at the best of times but we all know that MDA plays a central role and fills a uniquely important need in the State of Israel."

The gala featured wonderful musical entertainment from jazz and swing singer Barry Shaw, as well as performances by Indigenous dancers from Tsuu'tina Nation.

CMDA recognizes the importance of inclusivity and respecting our neighbours, said Fraiman. "We are working with our Indigenous neighbours as part of our Reconciliation Project," she said while presenting a plaque to Chief Lee Crowchild. The Tsuu'tina Nation participated in the CMDA lifesaving program "First 7 minutes" taught by paramedic Don Sharpe.

Chief Crowchild, a third generation Chief of Tsuu'tina Nation also addressed the audience. A passionate advocate for the environment and sustainable energy practices, he led the charge to protect the water that runs through his nation and on into Calgary. He spoke about racism and the need for respect and understanding.

He said, "I do care how you teach your children, your grandchildren to become good people, how to live with my grandsons and great grandsons, so that they don't know what hate is, they don't know what it means to be prejudiced. They only know that we have to survive [together] as human beings. Why? Because the frogs are still singing to us."

Calgary Chairman of CMDA Lenny Shapiro wrapped up the evening event by encouraging everyone to continue donating to MDA and supporting Israel. "We can feel confident tonight that we are helping Magen David Adom," said Shapiro. "You are all doing a great job. Please continue; see yourselves as trailblazers and you can save lives. Enjoy the evening and thank you all for coming."



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Robin and Dave Marcus: Community builders from top to bottom



Jay Cairns

By Jay Cairns

The Jewish National Fund's Annual Negev Gala is a campaign designed to pay tribute and recognize excellence in community leadership and dedication to Israel. Each year the honourees choose a project that is near and dear to them and the Edmonton Jewish community rallies behind the campaign

with the common goal of enhancing the lives of those

living in Israel and strengthening community. It was in that spirit that Robin and Dave Marcus accepted this year's honour. To quote Dave: "If you think this will help build Israel, then yes!"

Judaism celebrates different rites of passage and various milestones that we experience in life, and Robin and David are involved in some of the most important aspects of Jewish life in Edmonton. Over the years, I have had the pleasure of visiting Robin's classrooms in Talmud Torah, always a room full of smiling children reading Aleph Beit or singing a song in Hebrew. Some of the most important people we will ever encounter in life are those that teach us and our children; the imprint of a good teacher lasts a lifetime.

Dave is the definition of a Mensch, a kind and gentle soul who works behind the scenes to ensure dignity

and respect for all community members. When there is a need in the community, you will often find him there, volunteering his services with a reassuring smile on his face.

Robin and Dave are extremely caring people with incredible patience and a genuine love of Judaism and Israel. Building community takes time, effort, and passion. The Marcus' are an incredible example of Jewish continuity at its best, their children Max and Annie are a testament to just how special the Marcus' are.

RSVP before June 30th to have your name acknowledged in the Edmonton JNF Gala Tribute Book and the online production accessible anywhere with a WIFI connection on August 18, 2022. All donations are 100% tax deductible thanks to our sponsors, please join us in celebrating Robin and David and help build the foundations for Israel's future!

Jay Cairns is the Executive Director of JNF Edmonton.

Beth Shalom Yedlin Library book sale: September 11

By the Yedlin Library staff

The Moshe Yedlin Memorial Library, Edmonton's largest dedicated Jewish library, is having a book sale on September 11.

The library, located at Beth Shalom Synagogue, is accessible as a research and reference resource to all members of Edmonton's Jewish community, and many non-community members access it as well. It is diverse and serves an important educational role, promoting a wider understanding of Judaism.

Volunteers staff the library and over the last two years have been converting the entire collection to an inexpensive online system. The synagogue donated a computer connected to the synagogue's network to enable cataloguing on an internet-based platform. We received a grant from the Edmonton Jewish Federation to purchase much needed new shelving.

The library's history dates back to the mid-1980's

when discussions began about collecting, classifying and cataloguing the books that were to be found in many corners of Beth Shalom Synagogue. The stars aligned when Moshe Yedlin z"l retired from 32 years of teaching at Talmud Torah, and Professor Bruce Elman, then Dean of Law at the U of A, both well-versed in Judaic studies, began the work. After the death of Mr. Yedlin in November 1991, his wife Dr. Tova Yedlin became the chairperson.

In 1998 the Beth Shalom Board Executive announced the synagogue library was to be named for Moshe Yedlin as The Moshe Yedlin Memorial Library. The formal dedication took place on January 11, 1998.

The library's holdings continue to grow through donations of money and books as well as the purchase of new ones. As we continue to grow, update, and modernize our equipment and resources we are culling duplicate titles and those that do not fit the collection policy. This resulted in a large number of books that are not needed so we are having a sale on Sunday,

September 11 from 1 – 6 pm at the shul. All proceeds will go to the purchase of new books.

The sale will include Jewish themed books and Jewish adjacent books from a variety of genres including fiction, poetry, history/religion, autobiography and memoir, art and coffee table books, Hebrew and Yiddish books, children's book and LPs.

"We've been collecting amazing titles since the 1980s and are excited to share them with the community and other interested readers," said Netta Phillet.

"Our prices are very reasonable, and we are looking forward to culling the collection so we can purchase new books."

The sale will be at Beth Shalom Synagogue (11916 Jasper Avenue) in Edmonton. There is parking and entrance at the rear. Sales can be made by cash and credit cards only and please bring your own bags.

For more information contact nettaphillet@gmail.ca.

RSVP Deadline: June 30th
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CHW launching social impact investing in Israel

(AJNews) - Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) is excited to launch its first round of social impact investing in Israel on October 27, 2022, as part of the *Journey 4 Impact* trip of a lifetime. Not only will the journey support CHW projects for education, healthcare, and social services, but it will also be the start of an innovative and sustainable impact initiative geared at empowering women, taking philanthropy to the next level.

CHW is thrilled to be the first Canadian Jewish women's organization to launch a gender-lens impact investment strategy that ensures better outcomes in areas such as gender disparities, social mobility, and economic opportunities for women and girls; all closely aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"Every CHW investment will enable women entrepreneurs to advance socially conscious businesses that create impact in Israel and change lives. This investment not only empowers the start-up community, but it also creates a sustainable future for the next generation of small businesses in Israel," said Lisa Colt-Kotler, CHW Chief Executive Officer.

At the culmination of the *Journey 4 Impact* trip, participating investors (donors) become judges at the hybrid launch event, also live streamed in Canada, and empowered with the ability to evaluate a pre-vetted selection of women-led, social enterprises. The purpose is to enable women entrepreneurs to launch socially conscious businesses that create impact in Israel. The entrepreneurs will secure critical capital from CHW investors through the pooled impact investment funds.

Participants on *Journey 4 Impact*, and donors in Canada, can become judges with a minimum investment of \$5,000 donated to CHW's impact pool of funds. A new pipeline of pooled funds for social impact investing is also grown using pre-Journey 4 Impact crowdfunding.

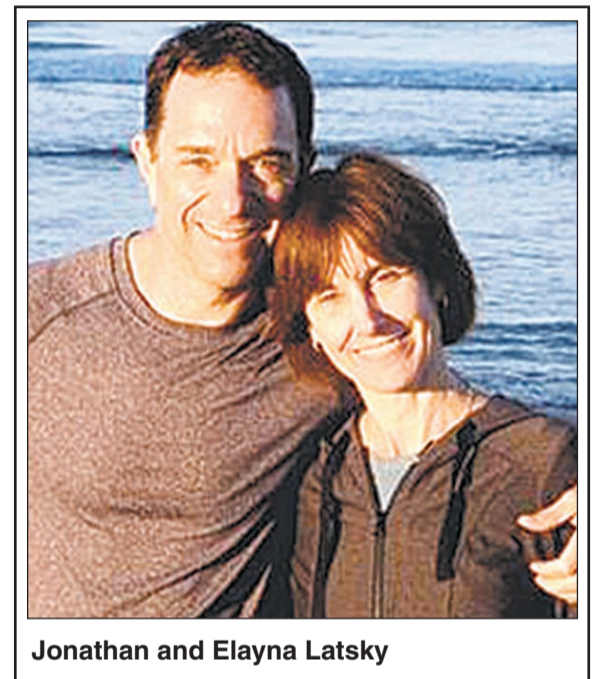
The goal is to secure a minimum of \$300,000 for the first round of investments. CHW is proud to announce a very generous gift of \$100,000 from Elayna and Jonathan Latsky (pictured right), Journey Co-chairs, to ensure the success of this launch initiative and create the Latsky Impact Investment Fund in Israel.

"Jonathan and I are so excited about this new initiative for CHW and the ability to provide sustainable investment and impact in Israel for women who need a hand-up, not a handout," said Elayna Latsky CHW National President and *Journey 4 Impact* Co-chair.

Every dollar invested by CHW will generate a clear and measurable social and financial return on investment. All funds will be invested into ventures led by and benefiting women. At the end of the term of investment, CHW will reinvest the funds through an innovative funding model that amplifies impact. CHW will grow its impact investment portfolio on an annual basis as part of *Journey 4 Impact*.

To join CHW in Israel and learn more about *Journey 4 Impact*, visit chw.ca/journey-4-impact. To become an impact investor, visit chw.ca/impactinvesting.

CHW is a non-political, nonpartisan national network of dedicated volunteers and professionals who strongly believe that the advancement of education,



Jonathan and Elayna Latsky

healthcare, and social services transcends politics, religion, and national boundaries. For over a century, CHW has passionately supported women, children, and families in Israel and Canada. Learn more about CHW at chw.ca.

Hillel at Camp BB-Riback

Calgary and Edmonton Hillel members enjoyed an amazing weekend at Camp BB-Riback.

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CJA student council purchases fresh reads for teens

By Lesley Machon

Each year, Calgary Jewish Academy's student council raises money for a project that supports the school's values of community, sustainability and inclusivity. This year, they decided to upgrade the library.

Student council raised \$1,500 dollars, and compiled a list of diverse content titles to take book shopping. Their selections include picture books, graphic novels, novels in verse, and chapter books—all with intentionally varied representation. The colourful stack of paperbacks features characters who are deaf or in a wheelchair, some who are LGBTQ, and some who are navigating mental health challenges including anxiety, depression, or an eating disorder. Protagonists have different cultural backgrounds, skin colours, body types, and challenges.

Having a wide range and diverse selection of books is important for two main reasons. First it invites students' cultures, voices, and stories into the classroom by giving language to their experiences. Secondly, it introduces students to a range of different perspectives and experiences, completely unlike their own. This concept is often referred to as "mirrors and windows," and was introduced by Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop in her iconic essay, "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors." The main idea is that diverse books are important because they help students feel a sense of belonging, while also expanding their capacity for empathy and compassion.



CJA student council raised funds to upgrade their school library.

Libraries are the heart of many schools and communities, and it's especially important in the digital age to invest in shared spaces that aren't oriented around technology. Spaces of calm and quiet, where we can slow down and engage our imaginations, and connect with one another in real time.

Research shows that free reading of all kinds, including that of marginalised genres, brings readers five distinct kinds of enjoyment: i) the immersive pleasure of play, ii) intellectual engagement, iii) social fulfilment, iv) the pleasure of functional work, and v) the pleasure of inner work (Wilhelm 2016). In other words, when students are engaged in free reading, not only are they gaining new knowledge and enjoying it, but they are also finding ways to connect and regulate.

Play and pleasure signal our nervous systems to relax, allowing us to be more receptive to learning, and facilitating better connections with ourselves and each other. Students learn best across all subjects when they are able to have these kinds of experiences in and out of school.

It's as if student council intuitively sensed this. Students were so excited about this project, and raced to sneak peeks as new books came in, clambering and calling "dibs" on who got to read which one first. A summer of reading lays ahead!

Lesley Machon is the Jr. High Humanities teacher at Calgary Jewish Academy.

Raffle helps provide backpacks and school supplies for kids in need

By Stephanie Sacks

Purchase a 50/50 raffle ticket today and help Na'amat Canada Calgary provide backpacks and school supplies for kids in need. This raffle will be ending on Thursday, June 30th at 11:59 pm MT and the winning ticket will be drawn on Canada Day, Friday, July 1st at 11 am.

Since the inception of the Na'amat Canada Calgary

School Supplies for Kids program in 1998, more than 24,000 backpacks filled with grade appropriate school supplies have been given to the children taking refuge in Calgary and Southern Alberta's domestic violence and homeless shelters. Typically, these traumatized children arrive at the shelters with little more than the clothes on their backs. Adding to their obvious distress is the anxiety of attending a new school without so much as a simple pencil case or backpack. Our program fully equips these youngsters with

the items they need to resume their education with dignity and pride.

With the support of generous 50/50 Raffle sponsors and individuals that purchase raffle tickets, Na'amat Canada Calgary's School Supplies for Kids program will continue to provide for these vulnerable children and help make a meaningful difference in their lives. In addition, the Shaw Birdies for Kids presented by AltaLink, a non-profit program run under the Calgary Shaw Charity Classic Foundation will match the proceeds from this raffle up to 50%, so your support will go even further!

Visit rafflebox.ca/raffle/naamatcanada-calgary-yachad and buy your tickets today.

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Billy Crystal performs 'Yiddish scat' at the Tony Awards

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – “Ella Fitzgerald, wherever you are, I apologize in advance.”

Billy Crystal gave this year's Tonys a jolt of Jewish shtick when he coaxed the audience into a call-and-response “Yiddish scat” routine, as part of a live performance to promote his Broadway musical, “Mr. Saturday Night.”

In a good-faith mockery of Fitzgerald's own famous “scat” routine, Crystal, in character as his show's fading comedian star Buddy Young Jr., let loose on the Sunday night telecast with a series of nonsensical guttural sounds vaguely approximating Yiddish.

He then gleefully entered the audience for a bit of crowd work, messing with attendees Samuel L. Jackson and Lin-Manuel Miranda — who unwittingly became a Jewish “Hamilton” alter ego: “I'm Alexander

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Billy Crystal at the Tony's

Talmud Torah School Year: That's a wrap!

By Natalie Soroka

Well, that's just about a wrap for the 2021-22 school year at Edmonton Talmud Torah! After nearly two school years under COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, we are hopefully seeing the light at the end of a long tunnel. As the school year winds down, we reflect on the challenges, tenacity and achievements of our students, staff, and families. Talmud Torah collectively rose to the challenge with strength, humour and resilience. Oftentimes it does take a village and the Talmud Torah Society's board of directors would like to thank those who have and those who continue to support us in so many ways:

TT families, teachers, staff and administration, TT School Council, volunteer librarians Michelle Huberman and Karen Hering, TT Early Learning Centre families, educators and administration, Jewish Federation of Edmonton, United Jewish Appeal Edmonton's UJA campaign and Integrated

Bursary Program, Jewish Federation of Edmonton's Covid-19 FCSS grant from the Government of Alberta, Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation, Jewish National Fund-Edmonton, Jewish Family Services- Edmonton, Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation, Myrna and Don Silverberg, Hering Library Fund, Soroka Library Fund, and basketball coach Samantha Hanson.

While many wonderful activities occurred throughout the school year, highlights of June include: Yaron Bob's Rockets to Roses' JNF Edmonton event and discussion with Gr. 5/6, Grade 1 Siddur celebration, Grade 2 Torah Ora celebration, Kindergarten and Kinder-arts Shabbat celebration, Grade 3 recorder performance, Grade 5/6 virtual meet with sister school Lev Ha'Emek in Israel, Grade 6 celebration, Teachers vs. Gr. 5/6 kickball, TT School Council Fit You June 2022, and Maccabi Games. Our families were overjoyed at being able to attend the end of year celebrations in person, and their happiness at seeing their children perform was unmatched.

The TT Early Learning Centre Air Conditioning Fundraiser is still running, and we are looking to our friends of TT to help support this important initiative. To date we have raised

\$15,000 towards our \$42,000 goal, and we thank all those who have supported us so far! You are amazing! As the saying goes, IT TAKES A VILLAGE! Please consider going to our website at www.talmudtorahsociety.com. We would truly appreciate your support in any way you are able.

The Society's Annual General Meeting on June 16th said farewell to and thanked board members Melissa Benjamin, Arielle Whitham and Ben Yovel for their hard work and dedication, and welcomed new members Jessica Hogan, Stacie Perlmutter, Barry Slawsky and Nomi Steen. The board is energized and motivated to continue working on its strategic plan priorities, and building on its partnership with Edmonton Public Schools and new principal, Darin Johnson.

As our Grade 6 graduates look to new challenges in Jr. High, the 2022-23 board of directors wishes them Mazel Tov and much success. Wishing all of our students and families a healthy, fun and energized summer!



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Monday



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Jewish Federation
OF EDMONTON



The TT Grade Six graduating class of 2022.



Beth Israel's Family Favorite Recipes
The Family Shul Cook Book
- A collection of recipes with family notes

As we moved through Covid, and travel and sharing meals with family and friends was on hold, we all had a lot more time for home cooking. We noticed an invigorated love of sharing recipes for Yom Tov, Shabbat, and weekday meals. Be it sourdough bread, slow cooked meats, sushi, and many other types of dishes - lots of sharing of recipes was going on!

We also sadly noted the passing of so many people and were touched by one community member who, not long before their passing, had shared a description of some of their Yom Tov cooking being prepared to “drop-off” at a family member's. So, to mark this moment in time, and in the tradition of some fantastic Jewish Edmonton Community Cookbooks over the years, Beth Israel began to collect family favorites, once a month for Shabbat Mevarchim, the Shabbat that precedes each new Jewish month. This active collection of recipes will be going on until Rosh Hashanah with the target production/distribution of the “The Family Shul Cook Book” for Chanukah 2022.

Each recipe will feature the Family name, full recipe and special notes, and full color picture.

Send your Family Favorite Recipe
to shuldiretor@familyshul.org
and share the love of great kosher home cooking!

YEG Jewish Soccer League plays on Sundays



A group of parents and Jewish organizations in Edmonton have formed a Jewish Soccer League for kids that practices and plays their games on Sundays. Photos by Jenna Soroka

Neuberger Centre for Holocaust Education unveils Hatepedia

By Jeremy Appel

The Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Centre for Holocaust Education has released a new database of modern hate symbols and terminology dubbed 'Hatepedia,' which is intended as a resource for parents and educators.

On June 16, the Neuberger Centre, which is run by Toronto's United Jewish Appeal, hosted a webinar introducing participants to Hatepedia and its features, including a list of Canadian hate symbols, a forthcoming database of hate memes, and educational resources.

Daniel Panneton, manager of the Neuberger Centre's Online Hate Research and Education Project, told *Alberta Jewish News* the project was born out of concern about the proliferation of far-right extremism online over the past several years.

This relatively new online form of hate symbology has two interrelated aspects Panneton said he wanted to explore: plausible deniability and irony poisoning.

"Irony poisoning is basically how people today

are able to shroud what are often explicitly hateful declarations in layers of humour, which plausible deniability plays into," Panneton explained. "The way we sum it up is we say that it's all just a joke until it's not."

While white supremacists have traditionally used explicit symbols such as the swastika or Confederate flag to represent their views, online far-right extremists are more inclined to use the innocuous-looking Pepe the Frog meme, which has been appropriated by the far right.

These modern hate symbols "come wrapped in mirth in a very transgressive sense of humour," allowing those who use them to say they're just joking while communicating explicit white supremacist messages to those who know the memes' meanings, Panneton added.

A major way this is manifested is how Holocaust denial plays out online. Gone are the days of the "pseudo-scholar guru denier," such as Ernest Zundel or David Irving, with their baseless claims that key aspects of the Holocaust didn't occur, he said.

The modern Holocaust denier doesn't so much deny

as ridicule it, "which can serve as sort of an entryway into hardcore denialism in the existing literature and pseudoscholarship."

Hatepedia isn't just looking at anti-Semitism. Its scope is any group that is protected under Canadian human rights legislation — race, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.

The impetus for Hatepedia, which has been in the works since October 2021, came from an escalation of parents and educators reporting hate incidents to the Neuberger Centre during the pandemic.

While traditional Holocaust education is important, it doesn't adequately address the proliferation of far-right online subcultures, said Panneton.

"A lot of traditional approaches to Holocaust education are very survivor and testimony based. And while that will always have its place, that doesn't do a lot for addressing, say, what to do when your kid is suddenly using a bunch of Pepe the Frog avis online and is starting to use vocabulary that you might identify or not identify as at least adjacent to hatred," he said.

The project, which can be found at hatepedia.ca, is funded through a grant from Canadian Government's Anti-Racism Action Program and will be continuously updated until March 2023, pending future funding.

Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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Calgary PJ Library enjoys their Teddy Bear Picnic at CJA



Yaron Bob *Cont. from page 1*

teaches children to make artwork just like this from forks. In fact, a company that manufactures cutlery created special forks named after Yaron, "Bob's Forks," specifically designed for the kids to play with and have fun.

Many years ago, Yaron was teaching at a high school and, on his way to work, the "Code Red" sirens went off which indicated he had roughly 10-12 seconds to find shelter from an incoming rocket. He was only able to take cover behind a wall at that time, and the rocket ended up landing approximately 15 meters from him. He walked away from the incident, alive, shaken, but determined.

"I wanted to take away its power," Yaron said as he referred to the rocket. When he made his first metal rose out of the Kassam remains, he described it as a "waterfall of cleansing energy from all the anger." He had transformed darkness into light. This was the beginning of Rockets to Roses which he hopes remains a very limited-edition collection.

A metal map of Israel serves as the base for each rose with the flower secured to the spot that marks

Sderot - a place where many rockets have landed. A portion of the proceeds from the metal roses goes towards building above-ground, portable bomb shelters in the city of Ashkelon. Through the organization Operation Lifeshield, the contributions from Rockets to Roses helps fund these crucial shelters to protect citizens of Ashkelon. "I think a big part of Yaron's message is to take adversity and turn it around into something positive - for your own benefit and for those around you," Steinberg shared.

Yaron has traveled all over the world to present roses and sculptures to dignitaries, including former United States Secretary of States Hillary Clinton and John Kerry, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, United States ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley, and many others. In 2014 former President US Barack Obama received a chanukiah sculpted by Yaron with the words "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares" on the base.

In addition to commissioned work for world leaders, Yaron has created menorahs for schools such as a giant menorah constructed from rockets that resides on the front lawn of Hebrew Academy of the Five Towns and Rockaway high school in New York. It was

commissioned by a local family after seeing a similar one in Sderot, Israel. Yaron had the opportunity to share his story in 2013 after being invited to speak at a TEDx event in Hong Kong.

He also has an Iron Dome collection where he uses metal remains from Iron Dome missiles to create mezuzahs and necklaces. He expressed that he "did not want to kiss something that tried to kill [the Kassam rockets]." However, when he started receiving metal remains from Iron Dome missiles, it felt more aligned with creating the mezuzahs.

Yaron works with the Jewish National Fund, social workers, and resiliency centers around Israel such as No Soldier Left Behind, which is a non-profit organization that treats and escorts PTSD and CSR (combat stress reaction) veteran soldiers in Israel. A recent addition to Yaron's creations is a sculpture named "The Sound of Peace." It is designed after the ancient Hebrew lyre, kinnor David. The sculpture was donated to a centre in Ashkelon to help kids overcome their PTSD. Yaron designed the sculpture to perform Israel's national anthem, Hatikvah. The Lillian and Jack Soroka Fund recently donated a smaller version that Yaron brought to Talmud Torah to be used by students at the school. Music teacher Ben Ragosin is thrilled this piece of art will have a permanent home at TT to be part of the music program.

"The Grade 5/6 students were mesmerized during Yaron's presentation and the amazing artwork he created," said Ragosin.

"I know this is what I'm supposed to do," Yaron articulated. He knows the serious implications living under the threat of rockets has on an individual, and he wants to "change darkness into light, and make the world a better place."

You can visit www.yaroniron.co.il to learn more about Yaron Bob and how to purchase his art.

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Yaron Bob has created a beautiful chanukiah from a Kassam Rocket that was shot into Israel by Hamas.

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 ADAM SILVER

Preparation, dedication, and final outcomes. Many things in our community seem to appear out of thin air, or are often so entrenched as part of our community fabric, we just assume they have always been and will always be. The truth is that Jewish Calgary is built on the unwavering dedication and talents of many, many volunteers who, mostly behind the scenes, give countless hours and significant social capital. Programs, services, and the fundraising successes in our community are only possible due to the value we place on those things in ensuring a Jewish future, and the hard and strategic work that goes into bringing them from concept to reality. This dedication is supported and underpinned by an equally committed pool of Jewish communal professionals.

In Judaism, we embrace the key concept of preparation. Not in the sense of contingency, but more so in terms of cultivation and the mindful approach to signature days and events. For example, leading into the *Yamim Noraim*, the High Holidays, we prepare ourselves for the entire preceding month of Elul by sounding the shofar to awaken us from our slumber, and we reflect on all that has occurred over the year, so that we are able to acknowledge our transgressions and ask for forgiveness. In another example, as young adults prepare to join the adult community as *B'nai Mitzvah*, they learn about their *Torah* portion, conduct social action projects, consider their place in the Jewish and broader world, and embrace the

responsibilities of the *mitzvot*, commandments. Even in our daily prayer services, we begin each day with *Pesukei D'Zimra*, prayers that serve as a warm-up for the full *Shacharit* (morning) service.

Lately, I have been thinking about the concept of preparation along two lines. The first line includes the unseen work, the mistakes made and corrected, and the grace with which the final product, event, or service is shared. The second line is our inclination to be intentional and mindful in our efforts, our way of approaching a task, a special day, or a desired outcome with focus and energy. When these two lines of preparation intersect, we arguably experience the most successful, most gratifying outcomes. We cultivate the conditions for success by investing the necessary work to accomplish the goal, and we do so with an appreciation for not only the outcome, but the process and journey along the way.

Jewish Calgary continued to benefit from the preparation and dedication of many volunteers and Jewish communal professionals throughout this last year, ultimately ensuring the strength, safety, and future of our community. I have been blessed to work with and be supported by an outstanding volunteer board of directors, and a remarkable extended staff team. In particular, I would like to express deep gratitude to Jared Shore and Jordan Balaban who, as co-presidents of the board, provided infinite hours and exceptional talent for the betterment of our community. As they complete their term as co-

presidents, I am confident we will continue to benefit from their leadership, as well as all of the foundational groundwork they put into place during their tenure. On behalf of our community, I wish to thank you and acknowledge the incredible partnership you both provided during two very challenging and unique years. You have shared a mantra of being prepared, being dedicated, and striving for excellence. You have also been present in the moment, and focused on the process of the journey.

As we approach the summer, I would like to acknowledge all of our community's volunteers and professionals for the critical and generous work they do. It is because of them that Jewish Calgary has a bright and bold future. *Todah Rabah* – Thank You!

Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable summer,

Adam Silver
CEO, Calgary Jewish Federation



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PJ Library
On June 12, PJ Library® Calgary held our first **Popsicles in the Park** event since 2019! The weather was perfect and over 150 people enjoyed a petting zoo, bouncy castles, face painting, and of course delicious popsicles! There was a craft station, bubbles, games, books and so many fun things for the kids to see and do.
For more information about PJ or to get involved, contact Sydney Truax at 403-537-8592 or struax@jewishcalgary.org.

Hillel CALGARY **Hillel Edmonton**
Hillel students from Calgary and Edmonton joined together for a fun-filled weekend at Camp BB for our annual **Jews, Schmooze and Canoes** event!
In between canoeing and bonfires the students participated in meaningful programming that engaged them in conversations about Israel activism and antisemitism on campus.

TOGETHER WE ARE A COMMUNITY
All activities on this page are made possible by your gifts to Federation's annual UJA Campaign.

People in the News

Diana Kalef completes Masters in Jewish Professional Development

By AJNews Staff

Lifelong learning is a hallowed Jewish tradition because it expands our knowledge, roots us, and builds bonds. It makes our lives richer and our communities stronger.

The recent graduates of Spertus Institute's acclaimed graduate programs embody this tradition, including Alberta resident Diana Kalef, Calgary Jewish Federation Director of Development.

Diana recently received her Master of Arts in Jewish Professional Studies, part of an accelerated cohort specifically for Jewish communal executives. This 18-month-long part-time degree program draws students from organizations across North America. Together, they learn to leverage opportunity, inspire excellence in staff and trustees, and lead through times of change.

Diana joins thousands of other Spertus alumni who advance Jewish organizations and communities around the world with Spertus-acquired knowledge and skills. About the creative capacity-building program, she said, "I learned exciting new leadership and management concepts - and gained an inspirational new support system."

The journey was not linear for Diana and she is very appreciative of the support she had from her family and the Calgary Jewish community.

"I had the opportunity to apply for this Master's program years ago," she explained, "but my boys were young and their cross-country ski training was taking up a lot of time with driving etc. A few years ago, thinking of being an empty nester, I looked at the program again. After almost 20 years of Jewish communal work, I thought it was time to add some tools to my kit and dive deeper into learning

more about management, leadership and best practices from professors who have a deep understanding of the workings of Jewish community and beyond."

"My mother, Sandy Kalef, has always been my inspiration," added Diana. "She was a lifelong learner and earned 3 degrees after she became a mother of 3. She passed away over 7 years ago - but she was with me every step of the way."

Although the COVID pandemic curtailed the in-person component of the program, the virtual sessions were invaluable and made the in-person session all the more precious.

"I couldn't have imagined that I would end up in a cohort of 8 phenomenal women," said Diana. "We had to study virtually for all but one session because of COVID, but when we did get together, it was as if we were long-lost friends. Sharing best practices and learning together not only from renowned professors, but from each other, has made me a better professional."

Diana continued, "I'm so thankful for the support of Adam Silver and Calgary Jewish Federation for giving me the space I needed to study and work on my Capstone project which I hope to integrate into the work we do to ensure a secure, vibrant Jewish Calgary."

The graduation ceremony was held at Spertus Institute in downtown Chicago.



Graduate Diana Kalef stands with her guests, Simon Chivers, Abbe Chivers, and Elliott Steinberg. Photo by Maggie Russo.

"It is wonderful to gather together for this special occasion, with guests joining us in person and tuning in from around the world," said Spertus President and CEO Dr. Dean P. Bell as he opened the event. "Graduation provides an opportunity to celebrate graduates' academic and professional achievements - and also to recognize the proud colleagues, fans, friends, and loved ones who supported them along the way."

Representing the graduates, student speaker Sarah Cohn of Hillel International said, "Each of us has experienced rich learning, rooted in Jewish wisdom and tradition. While the last few years have been difficult ones, we know we can lean on our traditions and one another. My Spertus experience far exceeded my expectations, offering me exceptional learning and a community of like-minded colleagues who are leveraging their education to light the way for others."

Those interested in joining these graduates should visit spertus.edu for program and application information or contact Assistant Director of Recruitment Amie Barrish at abarrish@spertus.edu.



Exciting youth education opportunities in 2022-2023!



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Israel headed to 5th elections since 2019 after leaders concede collapse of governing coalition

By Cnaan Liphshiz

(JTA) — After weeks of fending off threats to their governing coalition, Israel's top leaders have announced that they will instead seek to dissolve the Knesset, Israel's parliament, and hold new elections.

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid announced their decision

Monday June 20, setting Israel on a path toward a fifth round of elections since 2019 and potentially allowing Benjamin Netanyahu, Bennett's predecessor, to regain power.

Lapid will become interim prime minister until the formation of a new coalition, assuming that lawmakers sign off on the bill to dissolve the government. An election could take place Oct. 25, according to Israeli media.

"Attempts to stabilize the coalition have been exhausted, leading to this decision," Bennett and Lapid said in a statement, which they followed with a press conference Monday night in Jerusalem.

The announcement follows several months of political uncertainty following the defection of at least two coalition lawmakers, Nir Orbach and Idit Silman, from the razor-thin coalition headed by Bennett, a right-wing, pro-settler politician, and Lapid, a centrist candidate favored by secular, middle-class voters.

Their coalition, formed a year ago after years of repeat elections, was held together primarily by a

Continued on page 11



Mazel Tov!

Phil and Harriet Libin

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5th elections *Cont. from page 10*

desire to prevent Netanyahu, who had been prime minister since 2009 and was facing trial on corruption charges, from holding onto power. (The trial is now underway; Netanyahu has denied the charges against him.) The left-wing, right-wing and, notably, Arab lawmakers whose parties formed the coalition agreed on little else.

The coalition's ability to act withered as each lawmaker defected, and the situation reached crisis levels earlier this month when lawmakers failed to renew regulations extending Israeli law to Jewish settlers living in the West Bank. Netanyahu had urged members of his party, Likud, to vote against the bill and force a governance crisis, even though Likud and other right-wing parties have long supported extending the regulations.

Netanyahu's gambit succeeded. Bennett said the looming expiration of the so-called "Judea and Samaria" law was the reason that he and Lapid decided to dissolve the government.

"In talks with security officials I understood that in 10 days, the State of Israel will enter a deadlock," he said. "Our efforts unfortunately did not succeed and my friend Yair and I decided to have elections at an agreed-upon time."

Netanyahu welcomed the decision to go to elections in a statement Monday, as did other opposition lawmakers who believe that right-wing parties will prevail in the next election.

"This evening means very important news to Israelis," Netanyahu said. "After a determined fight by the opposition in the Knesset and much sufferings by the Israeli public, it is clear to everyone that the most incompetent government in Israeli history has come to the end of the road."

In a statement, Lapid thanked Bennett for "putting the country before his personal interest" and said that he would push lawmakers to tackle tough issues, including the high cost of living and security threats from Iran and Hamas, during the limbo period before the next government is formed.

"What we need to do today is go back to the concept of Israeli unity. Not to let dark forces tear us apart from within. To remind ourselves that we love one another, love our country, and that only together will we prevail," Lapid said.




Yair Lapid and PM Naftali Bennett

Edmonton celebrates Pride Shabbat



Temple Beth Ora, Beth Shalom and the Jewish Federation of Edmonton joined together to celebrate Pride Shabbat this month. MLAs Lorne Dach and Whitney Issik, MPs Randy Boissonnault and Matt Jeneroux, Mayor Amarjeet Sohi and Counc. Sarah Hamilton joined the celebration which also included staff members from Camp BB-Riback. Photos by James Woods.



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Memorial Tribute

In Memory of Louise Rose Kirshner z"l

March 17, 1941 – June 18, 2022

It is with broken hearts and great sadness that the family of Louise Kirshner announces her passing on June 18, 2022. The funeral was held on June 21, 2022 at the Jewish Memorial Chapel in Calgary. The interment followed at Chevra Kadisha cemetery.

Louise was 81 years old and was married to her beloved Oscar Kirshner, a Holocaust survivor, for 48 years before Oscar's passing on March 22, 2012. Louise was also pre-deceased by her parents Jacob and Esther Dashevsky, older sisters: Helen Spevakow (Abe), Lillian Milner (Johnny) and Miriam Adler (wife of Dr. Bernie Adler of Edmonton, may he live to be 120 in good health), her sister-in-law, Rachel Krebs (Israel), her nephews, Clayton Stockford and Ryan Lobb, and her niece, Nettie Silver (wife of Earl Silver, may he also live to be 120 in good health).

While Oscar and Louise did not have children of their own, Louise would always say how blessed she was to have so many wonderful nieces and nephews as well as many great nieces and great nephews, all of whom she loved as if they were her own children. Louise will be sadly missed by her entire large family, including the Adlers, Barads, Brands, Dashevskys,

Hectors, Krebs, Silvers and Milners, as well as her many friends.

Louise was born March 17, 1941 in Grande Prairie, Alberta. She grew up on a farm near Hythe Alberta in the Peace River country with her parents and 3 older sisters. Auntie Louise met her beloved Oscar and got married in Edmonton on December 19, 1963 and shortly thereafter made Calgary their home, where they lived out their joyful and loving lives together.

Louise will always be remembered for her love of life and her incredible ability to make everyone laugh. Our Auntie Louise was the life of every party and always had a funny story to share. She would lift our spirits and make us laugh so hard that tears would flow. Auntie Louise treated everyone with love, kindness and compassion. Her generosity and love for others was unsurpassed.

Thank you to the entire staff at the Manor Village Retirement Home at Fish Creek Park and especially to Louise's nephew Jerry Spevakow and his wife Judith, who were Auntie Louise's loving and dutiful caregivers the past few years. The entire family is forever grateful to them.

Also, a heartfelt thank you to all our family, friends and community members for your outpouring of love and support in memory of Louise. All your phone calls, emails, text and WhatsApp messages were gratefully appreciated and a comfort to us all.

Donations can be made in memory of Louise to the Holocaust and Human Rights: Remembrance



Louise Rose Kirshner OBM

and Education Department of the Calgary Jewish Federation, c/o 1607 - 90 Avenue S.W., Calgary, AB T2V 4V7 (Telephone: 403-444-3152) Email: holocaustedu@jewishcalgary.org). Arrangements in care of the Chevra Kadisha of Calgary, Telephone: 403-244-4717.

We love you forever Auntie Louise. May you now rest in peace.

B'nai Brith Canada makes recommendations on new Holocaust-Denial Bill

Recommendations on how to improve Canada's proposed law on the criminalization of Holocaust denial have been made by B'nai Brith Canada.

Sam Goldstein, B'nai Brith's Director of Legal Affairs, was invited by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs to suggest ways to strengthen the framework of the Government's proposed Amendment to Bill C-19.

While B'nai Brith respects and promotes the freedom of speech and is highly sensitive to limitations on it, Goldstein said it was an unfortunate necessity to add an Amendment to the Criminal Code on Holocaust distortion and denial specifically.

"Antisemitism may take many forms, but as this legislation recognizes, Holocaust denial and distortion remain go-to staples for antisemites," Goldstein said. "We are grateful for the Committee's invitation to address it on new Holocaust denial legislation, particularly in light of a poll showing fewer than half of Canadians knew of the annihilation of much of European Jewry during WWII."

To prevent impinging on basic freedom of speech rights, Goldstein recommended to the Committee that it ought to allow discretion to the prosecuting attorney in terms of how to apply charges under the proposed Bill. He also advised using the greatest precision in drafting the Amendment's wording. He suggested using the word "distortion" since it is more precise and detailed than the previously proposed "downplaying" (...the Holocaust) and is more likely to safeguard freedom of expression.

Goldstein also suggested removing the ability for anyone to use the "defence of truth" against charges of Holocaust denial since, as illustrated in the Ernst Zundel case, it can be used to repeatedly litigate whether the Holocaust happened, or that it even happened at all. Since the facts around the Holocaust are well-established and well-documented and in Zundel's retrial the court took judicial notice that the Holocaust existed, allowing a 'defence of truth' would represent a step backwards.

The Bill C-19 Amendment, coming in the wake of a rise of antisemitism, hate speech and Holocaust denial

in Canada, would add a new criminal offence for the denial, downplaying or distortion of the Holocaust.

More than 25 European countries have laws that address Holocaust denial. Some are connected to efforts to combat neo-Nazism, while others relate closer to hate speech regulations.

Meanwhile, public awareness and participation in the fifth, annual Canadian Jewish Heritage Month 2022 has never been higher, according to a review carried out by B'nai Brith Canada.

A concerted effort by B'nai Brith this year led to 36 municipalities, four school boards and two provinces, issuing proclamations or adopting council motions to celebrate Jewish Heritage Month, with most using text proposed by B'nai Brith. The organization is delighted with the uptake – the highest since 2018, when Parliament officially proclaimed each May as Jewish Heritage Month.

Parliament declared that the Month was created as an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the inspirational role that Jewish Canadians have played and continue to play in communities across the country.

"Jewish Heritage Month provides important recognition of the contributions that Jews have made to the success of their local communities and Canada as a whole and promotes solidarity in the struggle against antisemitism," said Michael Mostyn, B'nai Brith's CEO.

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Torah Ora celebration at TT

By Jenna Soroka

“It is lovely to be gathered today for our first ever in-person celebration with families in over two years.” These were opening remarks from Principal Sandra Marianicz on June 10 at the Edmonton Talmud Torah’s grade two Torah Ora ceremony. “I cannot think of a more worthy milestone to bring us together.”

The afternoon event showcased the students’ skills, accomplishments and successes in music, art, English language arts (ELA), Hebrew language arts (HLA), and Judaic studies. Bianna Kuksin is the grade two class HLA, Judaic studies, and art teacher. She helped prepare the students for their Torah Ora celebration, in addition to decorating and organizing the event.

MLA Lorne Dach was in attendance, alongside family and friends, showing his support for these students’ Jewish education and hard work. Grade six students also took part in the celebration to support the grade twos throughout the event.

The Torah Ora is a milestone in Jewish life and education where each student receives the Torah, the first division of the Hebrew Bible. “The Torah is the history of our nation, and the basis of our existence,” Bianna expressed. The Torah Ora is also a celebration that marks a continued learning and understanding of Jewish culture, language and traditions.

Homeroom teacher Marlee Soroka and social studies teacher Jessica Holtzman both shared kind words with the students’ families and friends who came to watch. Ms. Soroka expressed her gratitude and pride towards her students during her first full year teaching as well as appreciation for the parents, family members, and friends for supporting the kids’ learning and education. Ms. Jessica shared how “over the school year, I have watched you grade twos blossom into curious learners and compassionate friends with unique personalities.”

Throughout the celebration, the students excitedly performed songs in Hebrew and English, skits, a fun



Talmud Torah Grade 2 students celebrated their Torah Ora with their classmates, friends and families. Photo by Jenna Soroka

dance to the song *Adama v’ Shamayim* choreographed by Marlee Soroka, and completed the ceremony with a Kabbalat Shabbat which was sponsored by Ken and Natalie Soroka. Family members and friends beamed with pride as they took pictures and videos during the event and while the students received their Torah.

A notable moment was music teacher Ben Ragosin’s performance on guitar with all the grade two students and teachers. It was heartwarming to witness as the singing filled the school gym with joy and community.

As the event neared its ending, Bianna thanked the following people who contributed to a successful school year and special Torah Ora ceremony, including Principal Sandra Marianicz, School Administrator Jo Barta, Executive Assistant of the Talmud Torah Society Natalie Soroka, MLA Lorne Dach, Division Two Education Assistant Elena, teachers Marlee

Soroka, Ben Ragosin, and Jessica Holtzman, and the Talmud Torah Society. Bianna also gave a special thanks to Noah, a grade nine student at another local school who used his art skills to draw caricatures of the grade two students as a gift. “That is amazing!” One parent exclaimed after looking at the creative drawing of their child.

Finally, Bianna thanked the parents for their support and the grade two students. “Continue the hard work, it pays off. Mazel tov!”

Congratulations to the grade two students at Talmud Torah school for this milestone in their Jewish education.

Jenna Soroka is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

‘Yiddish scat’ *Cont. from page 6*

Rabinowitz.” (Miranda has proven his Jewish-theater bona fides before: He sang “To Life” from “Fiddler on the Roof” at his own wedding, and also performed in Hebrew in a college a cappella group.)

After briefly cursing “an old Jew’s worst nightmare: stairs,” Crystal ended his routine by leading Radio City Music Hall in a giant “Oy vey” chant. It was surely a nice consolation prize, given that “Mr. Saturday Night,” based on Crystal’s 1992 movie of the same name, left the evening with none of the five awards it had been nominated for (the top prize for Best Musical instead

went to Pulitzer Prize winner “A Strange Loop”).

Some other Jewish-adjacent nominees were more successful. “The Lehman Trilogy,” an expansive play about multiple generations of the Jewish banking family, took home Best Play and four other Tonys. “Company,” a gender-swapped revival of the classic Stephen Sondheim show that premiered shortly after the Broadway titan’s death, won five awards including Best Musical Revival. And “Take Me Out,” a restaging of Jewish playwright Richard Greenberg’s 2002 play about a professional baseball player who comes out as gay to his teammates, won for Best Revival of a Play, as well as for its lead actor Jesse Tyler Ferguson.

“Girl From the North Country,” a jukebox musical that reimagines Bob Dylan’s songbook for a Depression-era story about American hardship, also won a Tony for Best Orchestrations. During the broadcast, “North Country” star Jeannette Bayardelle delivered a showstopping live medley of Dylan’s “Like a Rolling Stone” and “Pressing On” (the latter from the raised-Jewish rocker’s Christian conversion phase in the 1970s and ’80s).

And there was one more Jewish appearance at the Tonys, as “Spring Awakening” star Lea Michele reunited with that 2006 show’s cast for an anniversary performance.



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from the

Sources

by Eliezer Segal

The Flying Nuns

There is a brief passage in the book of *Numbers* that is uniquely enclosed by special symbols, backward versions of the Hebrew letter “nun.” The words chosen for this treatment are familiar ones: “Whenever the ark set out, Moses said: Rise up, Lord! Let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you. And when it rested, he said: Return, Lord, to the many thousands of Israel.” These same words are chanted during the synagogue service as the Torah scrolls are removed from and returned to their ark.

But why did Jewish tradition decide that those *nuns* should be inserted here?

Historical scholarship has pointed out their similarity to marks that were used by Alexandrian Greek textual editors when redacting older literary works. They employed arcane signs and abbreviations to indicate problematic readings and possible emendations. The ancient philologist Aristarchus of Samothrace introduced a symbol called the “antisigma,” resembling a backward “c,” to indicate lines that were in the wrong order and should be transposed. This dovetails with an opinion cited in several rabbinic sources, to the effect that the “Rise up, Lord!” verses are not in their proper place, but really belong in an earlier passage that describes the order of the Israelite tribes arrayed during their treks through the wilderness—including the Levitical families charged with transporting the ark of the covenant. Indeed, such a context would provide a logical setting for Moses’s words.

But why were those verses relocated to their current place in the Torah?

The Talmud suggested that this was intended to provide some breathing space between two episodes with negative and incriminating associations for the people of Israel. The chapter immediately following tells how the Israelites’ griping provoked a divine conflagration that consumed many of the people.

Regarding the preceding section, which tells of the people’s departure from the mountain of the Lord, the unfavourable connotations are not as obvious. By means of some Hebrew wordplay, the sages interpreted that verse as if it was saying that “they

turned from after G-d and hurriedly fled Mount Sinai.” Commentators invoked a striking image from the *Jerusalem Talmud*: “like a child who takes flight after leaving school, so did they flee from Mount Sinai for three days after learning much Torah there”!

Presumably, in an ideal future world when such accusations will no longer be relevant, the verses will be restored to their proper place.

Another function of the editorial marks employed by ancient philological scholars was to indicate divisions between textual units. Rabbi Judah the Prince read the Torah’s *nuns* in that spirit, as implying that the enclosed passage constitutes a separate book. The Talmud adduced support for that odd statement in the words of Proverbs: “With wisdom she built her house, she carved its seven pillars”; which was expounded as an allusion to the division of Numbers into three volumes, producing a total of seven books in the Torah!

The notion of a two-verse biblical book fascinated commentators and they expanded the idea in numerous ways. A late midrashic compendium paraphrased that “it is a distinct book and *nignaz*.” The Hebrew *nignaz* can mean that the book “was hidden away,” because it was deemed heretical. It was understood in that sense by the author of a text discovered in the *Cairo Genizah*: “The sages declared: The entire Torah is devoted to the prophecy of Moses except for these two verses that originated in the prophecy of Eldad and Medad. For that reason they were designated with a curved *nun* and appended to the Torah.” Scholars understood this as an allusion to an apocryphal work, otherwise unknown, ascribed to the two figures who were temporarily inspired to prophesy in the wilderness. Some discussed its implication that there might be verses in the Torah that did not originate from Moses.

As it happens, the translation of *nignaz* in terms of suppression or censorship is questionable. A simpler understanding of the talmudic quote is that the brief passage, consisting of eighty-five letters, is deemed substantial enough to require burial like any sacred text that has fallen into disuse. Thus, 85 letters defines the minimum size of “book” that must be treated with reverence.

The concept of compressing meaning into 85 characters proved fascinating to a Canadian Jewish poet who initiated the “85 project” in which passages from a variety of works are transformed into 85-letter blocks of text.

As noted previously, the signs that surround the special verses in current Torah scrolls take the form of inverted *nuns*. However, mediaeval authorities on the biblical text (Masorah) and on talmudic literature pointed out that *nuns* are barely mentioned in classic sources. This point was argued most famously by the sixteenth-century scholar Rabbi Solomon Luria [Maharshal]. He observed that the main discussion in the Talmud mentions only undefined signs [*simaniyyot*]; and that some scribes inverted *nuns* inside words rather than embedding paragraphs between them. He argued that the Talmud was merely stating that the verses should be placed between spaces and line breaks, in keeping with the normal convention for separating sections of the Bible. In Maharshal’s view, the reference to *nuns* had probably resulted from misreadings by later students. On those grounds, he would have disqualified for ritual use all of our Torahs, were it not for the fact that the *nuns* were expounded in the kabbalistic classic the *Zohar*, which he believed was of ancient provenance.

Though Rabbi Luria’s position did not gain wide acceptance, it set the tone for intensive discussion among prominent authorities such as Rabbis Jedidiah Norzi, Ezekiel Landau, Meir of Lublin and many others.

Maharshal noted that some ancient rabbinic works made references to dots, horns, spaces, “isolated *nuns*” and other alternatives to the *nuns*. Furthermore, Rabbi Luria counted at least a dozen different ways he had found of drawing the *nuns*.

Of course we all realize now that Moses could have achieved his purpose more effectively by inserting an appropriate emoji.

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

JCC Annual Sports Dinner makes a great comeback!

By JCC staff

After postponing their main fundraising event the past two years, the Paperny Family Calgary JCC was thrilled to have their 31st Annual Sports Dinner happen on June 9.

Former NFL quarterback Alex Smith shared his incredible story of resilience and determination in what has been called the greatest comeback in sports history. MC duties were conducted by the wonderful Jon Cornish, former CFL running back and the University of Calgary’s chancellor-elect. Everyone attending the event enjoyed an evening filled with reunions, good conversations, laughter, food, and drink.

Special thanks to Harrison Zivot, Louis Libin, and the Sports Dinner Committee, along with presenting sponsor, ATB Financial. Funds raised from this event will ensure the Paperny Family JCC can continue to provide meaningful health and wellness services and community-building programs for Calgarians of all ages and needs.

Finally, a very special thank you to the Paperny Family for their continued support and dedication to Calgary’s Jewish community centre for the past 40-plus years.

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This month's update from Edmonton Talmud Torah School



It has been a busy month at Edmonton Talmud Torah School. Pictured above are Shabbat celebrations for the Kindergarten class and the KinderArts students as well as the very special Grade 2 Torah Ora celebration that took place with assistance from the Grade six students. For more information about Talmud Torah call Natalie at 780.481.3377.



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Summer recipes that you'll enjoy

Pashtida with zucchini, corn, and tomatoes

By Emanuelle Lee

(Noshers via JTA) - Pashtida (a crustless quiche) is beloved and common in Israel, where it is enjoyed at everything from potlucks, school events, shivas, and everything in between. It's also commonly prepared for Shavuot and Sukkot. The versatile dish transports well, and there is no right or wrong way to make one.

Israelis make pashtida all year long, but it's a dish especially perfect for warmer climates and seasons, when it's just too hot to spend hours in an overheated kitchen. Plus, during warmer months, there are so many incredible seasonal ingredients available to include in the pashtida, making it extra delicious.

You should feel free to use this recipe as a base and add the vegetables and cheese that speak most to your tastes. Alongside a fresh salad at brunch or a pasta at dinner, this pashtida with zucchini, grilled corn, tomatoes, and basil completes a perfect meal.

Ingredients

2 Tbsp + 1 tsp olive oil, 6 scallions, roughly chopped
2 zucchinis, cut into ¼ cm thick half-rounds, 2 ears of corn, kernels removed from cob, 2.5 cups cherry or grape tomatoes, half of them cut in half, 4 eggs, 3 Tbsp plain flour, 1/3 cup ricotta, 3.5 oz fresh mozzarella, 2 oz cheddar cheese, grated, 1 Tbsp butter, 1 large handful of fresh basil, Sea salt and black pepper.

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Stand the ears of corn up on a plate and carefully remove the kernels, cutting downwards with a sharp knife.

Heat a medium-large pan on high heat and add the corn kernels to the dry pan. Stir occasionally, allowing them to become more bright yellow in color and a little

bit charred. Transfer the corn to another plate, season with a pinch of sea salt, and allow half of the butter to melt over it.

Let the pan cool for a few minutes and then place it back onto medium heat. Add 1 Tbsp olive oil and then add the zucchini slices. Stir occasionally, until they become slightly softened and begin to brown. Transfer to the plate with the corn and add the remaining butter and a pinch of sea salt.

Wipe the pan with a paper towel. On medium heat, heat 1 tsp olive oil and add the scallions. They should sizzle and become charred within a few minutes. Stir them occasionally, then remove them from the pan.

Add the last tablespoon of olive oil to the pan and add the tomatoes. Let them blister and soften slightly. Season with a pinch of salt and remove them from the heat.

Allow all of the cooked vegetables to cool down.

In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs until slightly frothy. Slowly add the flour and mix continuously. Then add the ricotta and mix well. Season with a pinch of salt and black pepper.

Add the vegetables into the egg mixture, reserving a little bit of each vegetable for the top. Mix well. Shred half of the mozzarella into small pieces and add to the mixture.

Lightly grease an 8-inch round cake tin or pie dish with butter or olive oil. Sprinkle half of the grated cheddar around the bottom and sides of the tin or dish. Pour the mixture into the tin or dish. Shred the remainder of the mozzarella over the top of the mixture and then top with the remaining grated cheddar. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and top with the reserved vegetables.

Bake the pashtida for 30-35 minutes, or until it's fluffy and cooked through.

Poppy seed cakes

By Vered Guttman

(Noshers via JTA) - Poppy seed cakes are popular throughout Eastern Europe and Israel. The cake is even better to enjoy the next day after you make it, and is delicious with an afternoon cup of tea or coffee.

Some important notes about this recipe: You need to grind the poppy seeds. You can do this with either an electric coffee grinder or with a blender, preferably a powerful one, such as Vitamix. Try to grind the poppy seed right before you are going to bake with them, as they become rancid pretty quickly, especially when ground. If you have to grind in advance, keep it in a sealed container in the freezer until you're ready to use. Poppy seeds are available in bulk online, and at most Eastern European and Middle Eastern supermarkets. Alternately, you can buy a few jars of poppy seeds from the spice rack at any chain supermarket.

Ingredients

Cooking spray, 4 large eggs, at room temperature, 1½ cups sugar, 1 cup all-purpose flour, 2 tsp baking powder, ½ tsp kosher salt, 1 tsp (1 ½ sticks) unsalted butter, melted, 6 oz finely ground poppy seeds, 6 oz apple sauce, 1 tsp vanilla extract, zest of 1 lemon, 2 medium-sized apples, peeled and diced into 1/4 inch pieces.

Directions

Preheat oven to 325 F degrees. Line 2 loaf pans (8½" x 4½" x 2½") with parchment paper and spray with oil. Set aside.

Put eggs in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk and start whipping on medium speed. With mixer running, slowly add sugar in a steady stream, increase speed to medium-high and whip eggs for 6 minutes until they become thick, pale yellow and quadruple in volume.

In a medium bowl, mix flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

Reduce mixer speed to medium and pour butter in. Remove bowl from mixer and fold in flour mixture, ground poppy seed, apple sauce, vanilla extract and lemon zest. Lastly, fold in diced apple.

Divide batter between 2 loaf pans, shaking them a little to straighten the top.

Bake for about 40 minutes or until a tester in the center of the cake comes out with crumbs.

Transfer cake to a cooling rack and cool completely. Keep the cake covered in the fridge up to 5 days.