



ALBERTA

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Cover image: Detail of 'Mizrach' © by Carol Neiger. See article page 18.  
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# One mitzvah leads to another mitzvah

By Rabbi Guy Tal

The days of Elul, Rosh Hashana, Aseret Yemei Teshuva (the 10 days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur) and Yom Kippur are days of hope.



Rabbi Guy Tal

Hope for a change, for an improved situation in all aspects of our lives. We say in the *Avinu Malkenu*: “our Father, our King, inscribe us in the book of good life... book of redemption and salvation... substance and support... merits, forgiveness, and pardon.” One cycle has ended and a new fresh one begins, and we wish ourselves to have a better year.

We know that to make

it a better year, we must first work hard internally in order to improve our ways and our behavior. This process of self-improvement is called “teshuva” – making the decision to change for the better, commencing a new path that will elevate us, and helping us meet our spiritual goals.

That is why the period of Rosh Hashana is full of good decisions, new beginnings, and a sense of optimism. The problem is that many times (or most of the time?) these decisions do not survive too long. After some weeks, some days, or even a couple of hours we go back to the old habits and forget all the solemn decisions we have just made. Why does it happen and what can we do to avoid this phenomenon?

*The Mishna* (Pirkei Avot 4,2) recites: “Ben Azzai says: Run to perform even a “minor” mitzvah, and flee from sin, for one mitzvah leads to another mitzvah, and one sin leads to another sin.”

Why does one mitzvah lead to another and one sin to another one? Do we lose our free will after one good action or one mistake and are now obligated to make another?

The truth is that one mitzvah does not necessarily bring another, but it does create in our souls a new tendency towards the good: a spirit of pureness. In the same way, a sin scars our soul and imprints in it a bad quality. So, at the next opportunity when we must make a decision between good and bad, we are

influenced by our former decisions. The more time we have gone in a certain way the harder is to change it because of the internal effect on our spirit. That is why it is so hard to break the cycle and truly change old habits.

The idea of making a real teshuva is to be at a level where for sure “forever he will not turn to repeat that sin” (Rambam, Teshuva, 2, 2). So, we must break this cycle and start creating a new tendency in our souls. To do that we must focus on achievable goals and start from there: a “minor” mitzvah. It can be a small first step, but the change must be solid, sustainable, and very specific. Not a general decision “to be good” or “not to do evil” but some single issue on which each person knows he or she can and should improve.

The first success that will surely come will encourage us to keep going on the path of change and make a bigger decision next time. Also, the spiritual influence of the good deed we have decided upon will bring a new atmosphere to our soul, spirit, and mind, and will lead to another mitzvah, because one mitzvah leads to another one.

I wish you all Shana tova umetuka and that Hashem will inscribe us all in the book of life.

*Rabbi Guy Tal is the spiritual leader of Beth Israel Congregation in Edmonton.*

# An Israeli comic book hero is appearing in a Marvel movie

By Jackie Hajdenberg

(JTA) — In a move that is already thrilling some Jewish audiences and stirring controversy among other international fans and activists, Marvel Studios announced that an Israeli comic book hero will appear in the next installment of its Captain America movie franchise.

“Captain America: New World Order,” which is set for release in 2024, will feature Israeli actress Shira Haas as Sabra, a hero who debuted with a cameo in a 1980 “Incredible Hulk” comic and appeared as a full character the following year in a strip set in Israel titled “Incredible Hulk: Power in the Promised Land!”

Since the details of Marvel projects are kept under tight wraps until their release, it is not known how prominent Haas’ character, the first Israeli to appear

in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, will be in the film. Between 1980 and 2019, Sabra appeared in 50 issues, according to a Marvel fandom page.

Sabra (also the word for an Israeli prickly pear, which has a bristly outside and soft and sweet inside, and is used as a nickname for an Israeli person) is a Mossad agent and police officer with superhuman speed and strength. The 1981 comic that first prominently features her involves multiple quotes and plot points that would be seen as taboo in a contemporary Hollywood blockbuster.

In the comic, the Incredible Hulk mistakenly ends up in Tel Aviv, where he befriends an Arab boy who gets killed in an attack by identifiably Arab terrorists. Sabra — real name Ruth Bat-Seraph — witnesses the attack and assumes Hulk is in cahoots with the terrorists. She attacks Hulk with “energy quills,” weakening him, but the Hulk explains that the boy was his friend — and references the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“Boy died because boy’s people and yours want to own land!” the Hulk tells Sabra. “Boy died because you wouldn’t share. Boy died because of two old books that say his people and yours must fight and kill for land!”

The introduction of the character first announced last week at the Disney D23 expo in Anaheim has already received backlash online. Some on social media have argued that the character is an example of Israeli military propaganda or used it to criticize the Israeli government’s treatment of the Palestinians.

Several others have taken issue with the name of the character, which they argue is painful for Palestinians, who associate the word “sabra” with the former Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in west Beirut. During the

1982 Lebanese civil war, right-wing Lebanese forces murdered up to thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese Muslims in the camps, while Israeli military forces surrounded the areas; an Israeli inquiry found that Ariel Sharon, in his capacity as defense minister, bore “personal responsibility” for not taking action to prevent the massacre.

Others are pushing back against the critique and arguing that the character debuted two years before the killings at Sabra and Shatila.

One fan tweeted: “Something I never thought I’d tweet, but Marvel calling an Israeli superhero “Sabra” is because Jews born in the region have been referred to as “Sabras” (a local fruit, prickly on the outside, soft on the inside) since the 30s. It’s not referencing the Sabra & Shatila massacre.”

An Israeli cartoonist who a few years before Marvel created a character called Sabraman, who like Sabra sports a blue and white Israeli-themed outfit, has accused the comic book giant of plagiarism.

The cartoonist, Uri Fink, had words of warning for Haas in a recent interview with the Israeli site Ynet.

“I don’t predict her portrayal in Marvel will be positive in woke days such as these,” he said, according to the Times of Israel. “Those who work at Marvel today are all sorts of progressives. I have nothing against them, but we won’t get the most accurate depiction of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”

“I suggest that Shira carefully read [the script], so that the character won’t be portrayed in a way that is too problematic,” he added.

Israeli producer Avi Arad, the co-founder and former

*Continued on page 4*

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Edmonton Jewish Baseball League wraps up another successful season



The EJBL wrapped up another great season. Team RE/MAX Excellence played a rematch of last year's final with GLS. They won again for the first back to back repeat champions in 20 years. The game was very tight with the last 2 innings ending in a tie and ultimately Remax won with a walkoff in the bottom of the final inning. It was a very exciting way to end the season. Yasher Koach to everyone who participated! Photos by Jasen Reboh and Murray Glick.

Shana Tova!

Best wishes to the Edmonton Jewish Community  
for a New Year filled with love, happiness,  
good health, peace and security.

**The Hon. Kaycee Madu, QC, ECA**  
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# Play an active role in your community

By Rabbi Schwarzman



Rabbi Steven Schwarzman

*Berosh hashanah yikateivun...uvyom tzom kippur yeihateimun.* On Rosh Hashanah, we are inscribed in the Book of Life. On Yom Kippur, we are sealed in that book.

This prayer in the machzor is ancient, going back to the Land of Israel in the first few centuries of the common era. It's part of the moving *Unetaneh Tokef* prayer, in which we consider, and ask, what will be the fate

of each of us in the coming year - one of the most powerful moments in the High Holiday services. Who will live? And who will die? Who will be born? Who will become enriched, and who impoverished?

The timelessness of these questions, as we consider our very existence and yes, even our mortality, is why this prayer has been part of the High Holiday liturgy for so very long. We may not think of these existential questions much during the year, but during this season, we do.

This year, it seems to me, as our synagogues are again open, this prayer is no longer only a personal one. After months of enforced staying at home for work and school, many of us have gotten used to the idea of remoteness. So many things that used to be done in person - well, we've gotten used to doing them online or not at all. The Great Resignation that we read about is just one indication that people have thought about the jobs they used to have and are opting out of them.

And the same is true for participation in other aspects of life. Things we used to leave the house for we now tend not to, and few are the times that we miss the old way of doing things. Instead of a gym membership, my wife and I have a treadmill at home, and neither of us misses the gym much. It's also a lot cheaper to have bought a second-hand treadmill than to pay every month for a gym membership. (The good news is that we actually use the treadmill. It's not the proverbial place to hang laundry.)

Yet it is possible to apply this new wisdom in areas where it doesn't do us good. Synagogues everywhere report members dropping out. Staying away from shul during those months of isolation has led many Jews to wonder why they needed to be part of a synagogue in the first place. Can't we get the same benefits - maybe a bar or bat mitzvah for the kids, or in some cities, a burial plot - à la carte when we want or need them, instead of paying every year to be members?

I can skip the gym and get the same exercise on the treadmill at home. But being part of a synagogue community isn't just about the transactions we have with our shuls. It's joining a group of people dedicated, as we are, to building and maintaining a *kehillah kedoshah*, a holy community. That's what synagogues are traditionally called - holy communities.

And this is what makes synagogue membership different from gym membership. In shul, we all say hello to each other, to the people we've known for years and to the newcomers. We're there not to get something, but to give our best to add to the holy community we belong to. We're there for each other, when new babies are born and when people leave this world, when times are good and when they're hard. In synagogues, we're working together on this amazing and complex project of life, uniting as Jews to do our best in applying our understanding of what G-d wants us to do in this world. There's no better way to find meaning than to be an active part of a group of people engaged in the meaningful work of a holy community.

So, join the synagogue of your choice if you're not a member now. If you've let your membership expire, renew it. And if you are a member, take a more active role in your shul and in your Judaism. Just as the treadmill in our home only works when we use it, not just because we paid for it, synagogue membership doesn't work just by paying dues, necessary as they are. Synagogue membership works when we see it not as a fee to get what we want, but as an entry into a holy community that we want to be a part of and work for and support. And by joining, or rejoining, or renewing, we can all make sure that our synagogues will remain vibrant and truly alive this year and for many years to come. May we all be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life, and may we all help make that happen by working to keep our synagogues alive and flourishing and growing, too.

*Shanah tovah.*

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

## Comic book *Cont. from page 2*

head of Marvel Studios, the filmmaking branch of the comic book company that has grossed over \$25 billion dollars in box office revenue, said in 2012 that he did not expect to see Sabra on the big screen anytime soon.

"We are now in a time when the name 'Sabra'... it is not so good for selling a film in international markets," he told the Times of Israel.

Haas was the first Israeli to be nominated for an Emmy, for her role in "Unorthodox," the Netflix miniseries based on Deborah Feldman's autobiography about leaving the Satmar haredi Orthodox community in Brooklyn. The diminutive Haas — who stands about 5-foot-2, after surviving an early bout of cancer that stunted her growth — also appeared in the series "Shtisel" and was recently tapped to play a detective in a new Netflix murder mystery series.

This will not mark the first time a Jewish character has appeared

in a Marvel onscreen product. "Moon Knight," the Disney+ miniseries that premiered in March, stars Oscar Isaac as the protagonist, who is Jewish.

But several fans are also expressing surprise and excitement about the choice to resurrect a clearly Israeli hero for a mainstream film.

One fan tweeted: "Wow. Marvel actually got a Jewish actress to play a Jewish character. Gotta admit, I didn't see Sabra coming. I'm excited and worried at the same time. Here's hoping they do it right."

# Beth Shalom Synagogue

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## Rosh Hashanah

**Sunday, September 25th**  
Erev Rosh Hashanah 6:00 p.m.

**Monday, September 26th**  
1st Day Rosh Hashanah  
Shacharit 8:30 a.m.  
Torah Reading 9:30 a.m.

**Tuesday, September 27th**  
2nd Day Rosh Hashanah  
Shacharit 8:30 a.m.  
Torah Reading 9:30 a.m.

## Yom Kippur

**Tuesday, October 4th**  
Erev Yom Kippur  
Kol Nidre 6:45 p.m.

**Wednesday, October 5th**  
Yom Kippur Shacharit 8:30 a.m.  
Torah Reading 9:45 a.m.  
Yizkor  
Following Torah Service  
Mincha 5:00 p.m.  
Neila 6:15 p.m.  
Maariv 7:30 p.m.  
Havdalah/Fast Ends 7:52 p.m.

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Do you ever wonder what it is that makes some Doctors so incredibly compassionate while others have a bedside manner better suited for Tim Horton's?

In the case of Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. of Accessible Acupuncture, it is a case of true empathy. "I suffered from migraines in my twenties." Migraine Headaches are named such for their debilitating pain which is a step above the normal headache. "I had migraine headaches that were so intense I was bedridden and would become physically sick."

Since migraines are one of those complicated conditions not fully understood, Dr. Morrill Ac.'s options were prescription medications that often did not work and lifestyle changes to limit triggers that often cause migraine. "It was no way to live," she shares "I was young and should've been living a bright, vibrant life. Instead, I was monitoring long exposure to fluorescent lights and doing my best to prepare for changing weather conditions. As you can imagine, Spring and Fall were especially rough. We lived in Alberta, it was Winter in the morning and Summer by the afternoon!"

It wasn't until her family doctor sent her to an acupuncturist that she found real relief.

"This is why I often refer to my practice as 'The Last Resort With The Best Results.' You've been everywhere else and been given the same disheartening prognosis, prescribed the same medications and told 'this is just something you're going to have to learn to live.'" Soon after her incredible experience with the healing arts she made the life-changing decision to study acupuncture, "acupuncture quite literally saved my life and I wanted to share that with the world," she proclaims.

## Your Golden Years Should Be Golden

While in school she watched as her grandmother began to suffer from peripheral neuropathy. "Your golden years should be golden, not plagued with insufferable pain while doctors and specialists tell you there is nothing they can do."



"Melanie is just wonderful, you mention what is bothering you and before you know it, it is gone"

Understanding that Eastern Medicine excels where Western Medicine fails, Dr. Morrill Ac. set forth to develop treatment protocols for all variations of Peripheral Neuropathy (including diabetic and chemotherapy-induced) and now has a 90% success rate in treating this once difficult-to-manage condition.

"I was tired of seeing the older generation suffer unnecessarily," shares Dr. Morrill Ac. "Diagnosing them as 'just getting older' and giving them a treatment plan of 'you're just going to have to get used to it' has never sat well with me so I wanted to offer them a real option for treatment and care."

Dr. Morrill Ac. has designed similar treatment protocols for other complicated, chronic conditions including fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, and post-shingles pain. While each patient plan is tailored specifically to that patient's concerns and goals, all of her treatments are based on a framework that's years in the making.

In addition, Dr. Morrill Ac. isn't opposed to more modern medical solutions. "It's in blending the time-tested science of acupuncture with recent innovations in medicine that get me the best results." One of those advancements is ATP Resonance BioTherapy, originally developed by NASA it aids nerves in regeneration by providing them with the nutrients they need to repair and renew, "very similar to what water does for a plant!"

## The Magic of Compassionate Care

And what do those in her care have to say?

"Dr. Morrill Ac. looked me in my eyes and wanted to know about me, not just my condition. I feel like a person, not just a patient," shares Barb. "In fact, I don't think she ever used the word patient." Others proclaim "she saved my life", "her neuropathy treatments gave me my life back," and "it's a miracle she treated my fibromyalgia, I don't know how else to explain it."

Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. has a long personal history of complicated, difficult to understand conditions and understands how tragic it can be if left untreated.

"I have sat where my patients sit. I've experienced their pain in a very real way. I know the frustration of feeling hopeless on an intimate level. It's why I practice the brand of medicine I do and why I've made it my life's mission to treat the 'untreatable'. It brings me such incredible joy when I get to say 'I can help you!'"

Furthermore, Dr. Morrill Ac. has surrounded herself with staff that embraces this same approach to patient care. "You can ask any one of my patients and they will tell you that their favourite part about Accessible Acupuncture is my staff."

"I just love everyone here" shares Barb, "The girls are always so kind, it's like going to the doctor with my girlfriends."

Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. and her staff specialize in treating chronic pain, complicated neurological conditions, and autoimmune diseases that leave other professionals scratching their heads. Ready to schedule? Call 587-879-7122 for a comprehensive consultation today. For more information about Dr. Melanie Morrill Ac. and what she treats, visit [accessibleacupuncture.ca](https://accessibleacupuncture.ca)

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# The essence of t’shuva



Rabbi Gila Caine

By Rabbah Gila Caine

An ancient Jewish tradition holds that the arc of the High Holidays, from Rosh Hashanah to Sh’mini Atzert, tells of our soul’s growth. This movement describes the pilgrimage our neshamah (soul) undertakes on the New Year, as it goes out to explore life and the awesome glory of Creation. We then move through Yom Kippur as our neshamah encounters the reality of death. And our journey ends (for this year) at the source of all joy, at meaningful connections and sacred relationships as they are symbolised through the Rain rituals of Sh’mini Atzeret.

There is so much to learn from the cyclical path we undertake every year, but for now, let’s focus on one crucial moment at the end of Yom Kippur. The final prayer of the day is “Ne’ilah” - locking. But locking what? Liturgy places these words in our mouth “Open for us the gate at the time of closing the gate, for the day has declined. The day declines, the sun goes down and declines, let us enter Your gates.”

What are these gates and why are we standing there? The basic explanation suggests this is a reference to the historic gates of the Mikdash/Temple, as they closed at the end of the sacred day. We could delve deeper and find meaning in these gates as a

metaphor for the old year closing as the new one opens. Going one step deeper (in a stairwell of many many steps) we understand these might be the inner gates of our soul.

So, what does it mean that we call out for our soul to open up as we end a day of contemplation and purification?

Midrash tells us how critical it is to have cracks in Creation, and it brings us back to the moment when G-d decided to make the world: “...He began to trace (the foundations of) the world before Himself, but it would not stand [*that is, the world kept destroying itself*]. They told a parable, what is this like? To a king who wishes to build a palace for himself. If he had not traced in the earth its foundations, its exits and its entrances, he could not begin to build. Likewise the Holy One, blessed be He, was tracing (the plans of) the world before Himself, but it did not remain standing until He created repentance.” (*Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer* 3).

In this story, G-d realises that in order to create a world, he must first create gates, tools for opening and closing the world. The interesting thing is that our ancient rabbis understood those gateways to be the place of t’shuvah. Perhaps even, those gates themselves were the essence of t’shuvah/ repentance, and what makes creation viable.

The same goes for the viability of our soul, in that it too needs space to open and close in order that we may live. Our assignment is to learn and open up our soul at the right times and lock it up on others.

*Sefer Yetzirah* is an ancient book of Jewish mysticism that teaches us, amongst other things, that the human body is a microcosm of the universe. In that book there is a moment where we read: “...and the Seven Gateways of the Soul of Man—the two eyes, the two ears, the mouth and the two nostrils.” (*Sefer Yetzirah* 4:12). Our senses are the gateways to

our soul. Isn’t that lovely? Notice yourself for a moment and focus on your sense of smell, taste, hearing, seeing. Close your eyes and open them, focus on listening as intently as you can. Not only is our body the pathway leading deep into our soul, but it is also under our control in many ways. Through the practice of controlling to some degree what enters our body, we learn the art of guarding our soul. Of noticing what, in the things we hear, taste, smell, see, might harm our soul.

We learn not to fill our ears with rumours, not to let our eyes indulge in harmful scenes, not to taste cruelty. And so on and so forth. As we pray every morning, our soul is pure, and it is up to us to shut the gates and keep invading armies out. But it is also up to us to learn how to open up our senses so our inner soul might touch the world.

After a day of prayer and fasting we might be tempted to imagine the purity of our soul and the sanctity of Creation is best kept locked and guarded. We might imagine that by cleansing everything and shutting all gates to mistakes and cracks, we are upholding the world of G-d.

But no. The very tail end of Yom Kippur reminds us that after all the work of purification, we must leave open spaces to breathe. Make mistakes. Repent. We must develop enough compassion to see the beauty of open gates and cracks in the souls of those around us and closest to us. This is what allows our souls to touch each other and allows the world to exist.

I would like to wish all of Am Yisrael a happy and healthy New Year and may this truly be a year of healing.

Shana Tovah.

Rabbah Gila Caine is the spiritual leader of Temple Beth Ora, Edmonton’s Reform Congregation.

# The best foods to eat before fasting on Yom Kippur

By Shannon Sarna

(JTA) - Fasting on Yom Kippur is not easy, nor is it for everyone — some people cannot fast because they are pregnant, breastfeeding or have a medical condition. Some simply do not function well while

abstaining from water and food for a 25-hour period. But for those who do choose to fast as a meaningful way to engage in Yom Kippur, there are actually foods to eat beforehand that can set you up for a more successful, less onerous fast. Most people stick to a menu that is classic and

delicious but not too crazy or spicy: chicken soup, chicken, rice or pasta, a vegetable, some challah and water.

### 1. Avoid foods that are hard to digest

Now this might be different for everyone, but in general stay away from heavy meat dishes, fried foods, or lots of dairy. Because you know, Jewish stomachs.

### 2. Eat foods that have fiber and water

Foods with lots of fiber will keep you fuller longer, and foods with water, like fruits and vegetables, will keep you hydrated. Chickpeas or lentils are a great vegetarian protein source to eat, especially a dish like mujaderra. A hearty chicken soup with noodles or rice and lots of veggies is another safe bet.

### 3. Avoid salt

Salty foods like olives, pickles, chips, canned soup, or dishes made with those bouillon cubes will bloat you and make you even more thirsty. So stick to something a little more bland for that pre-fast meal.

### 4. Avoid sugar

Too much dessert before fasting may cause your blood sugar to spike up and then come crashing down, which can be unpleasant at its least and cause a headache or moodiness at its worst. Too much sugar will also make you thirsty, like salt, and will have you craving more sweets during your fast.

### 5. Drink water

This is pretty obvious, but make sure to drink plenty of water, not only at the meal right before the fast begins, but during the days preceding as well.

### 6. Avoid eating too much

Eat a moderate sized meal that leaves you satisfied, but not unbuttoning your pants. You will feel uncomfortable and it will be more difficult to digest a monstrous-sized meal.



May The New Year brings you Health, Hope, Peace, and Joy!

Shanah Tovah U'metukah!

שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתֻקָּה



Happy New Year to the Jewish Community

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# The strength of kindness

By Rabbi Ilana Krygier Lapidès

"When I was young, I admired clever people. Now that I am old, I admire kind people".  
*Abraham Joshua Heschel*

There is a wonderful, ancient story from the Hindu tradition told by the spiritual teacher, Mark Nepo, in his "Book of Awakening." It tells of an old, holy man who doesn't know he is holy – much like one of the thirty-six *Tzaddikim* (holy souls) from our tradition. Every day, this old, holy man would go to the river Ganges to pray.

One day, the old man was reciting his prayers when he noticed a spider struggling on its back in the water. The old man reached out, turned the spider over, and cupped the spider gently in his hands to place the spider back on shore. But the spider was a poisonous spider and it bit the old man. Since the man was holy, the poison didn't penetrate, although the bite still stung.

The next day, the old man went back to the river and saw the same spider, struggling again. The holy man did the same thing; reached out to gently take the spider to safety, but the spider bit him again.

This happened again and again until one day, the spider finally spoke to the old man, 'Don't you understand? I will bite you every time because I am a poisonous spider and that is what I do!'

The holy man looked kindly at the spider and said, "Oh, I do. It is you, my friend, who does not understand. You see, I will save you every time because that is what I do."

Our Jewish tradition speaks often about kindness. In fact, the concept of *Chesed* appears more than 190 times in the Torah, leading many Jewish thinkers to hold that the value of *Chesed* is Judaism's primary ethical virtue. But *Chesed* is hard to properly translate – there is no direct correlation. English versions usually try to represent it with such words as "loving-kindness," "mercy," even "loyalty," but the full meaning of the word cannot be conveyed without context. Contemporary Jewish scholar and teacher, Avivah Zornberg, has said *Chesed* is "not just loving-kindness as it's usually translated, but is also courage and imagination."

In one of our tradition's most important books, *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of our Fathers), Shimon the Righteous is quoted as saying, "The world is based on three things - on the *Torah*, on the service of G-d, and upon acts of loving-kindness." Dr. Yvette Alt Miller adds this commentary, "Kindness isn't optional in Judaism: reaching out to others is a key part of working to make the world a better place. Being kind is integral to what it means to be a Jew."

I don't know about you but coming back into the world in the post-Covid-age has not been easy. We've had to relearn how to socialize and be polite in company. Interactions are awkward, people are stressed and maybe a little crabby. For the past few years, we've kept our masks on and our heads down – just trying to survive. Now that we are out and about,

YEG Food Forest Project



Together with Talmud Torah Society and JNF Edmonton, TBO has created a small, edible, community-run Food Forest for everyone to enjoy. (Photos by Natalie Soroka)

we must relearn small civilities and kindnesses. If we don't need to leave 6-feet between us anymore, can we hold the door for the person behind us? Now that our masks are off, can we smile at the customer service person at the check-out counter? If we can be in one another's company, can we visit our isolated Uncle at the Home? Bring him a coffee? Have a chat?

With Rosh Hashanah around the corner, as we take part in the 'reckoning of our soul' or *Cheshbon Hanefesh*, it is tempting to strive for a completely clean slate to begin our Jewish New Year. We look back on how we behaved and look forward to how we can do better. But let us not forget, we rarely regret kindness. We don't have to leave that behind – that aspect of the past can be, and should be, kept. It is kindness that is the balm for our souls, that carries us through the hard times, and bathes us in the sweetness that the New Year promises. As Rabbi Jonathan Sacks wrote in his book *From Optimism to Hope*: "Acts of kindness never die. They linger in the memory, giving life to other acts in return."

The story about the holy man and the spider comes from a chapter in Mark Nepo's book called, "I'd rather be a fool than not believe." It speaks not just to the beauty of kindness, but to its power. As the author says, "This story tells that the strength of our kindness dilutes the sting of the world."

My wish for all of us as we approach these Days of Awe is that we risk looking foolish in the pursuit of kindness. Yes, the world can sting. But we have the power, all of us together, to make our world less painful, less bitter, and more sweet, one gentle cupful at a time.

From my family to yours, *Shana Tova, Good Yontef and Goot Yor!*

Rabbi Ilana Krygier Lapidès is the Assistant Rabbi at the Beth Tzedec Congregation, the Jewish Community Chaplain for Jewish Family Service Calgary, and stewards her own small Rabbinic Practice. Please visit [RockyMountainRabbi.com](http://RockyMountainRabbi.com) for more information.

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# Graphic novel recalls days of Keegstra affair

By Jeremy Appel

Edmonton-born Jewish writer and filmmaker Hart Snider has released a graphic novelization of a short film he made set at a Jewish summer camp in the midst of the James Keegstra scandal.

“The Basketball Game” takes place in 1983 at our very own Camp BB (now called Camp BB-Riback) located at Pine Lake, just outside of Red Deer, which Snider was attending for the first time as a nine-year-old.

In nearby Eckville, Alta., Keegstra — a teacher and the small town’s mayor — had been charged with promoting hatred for teaching his students Holocaust denial and other antisemitic conspiracy theories.

The title comes from a basketball match that Jewish and Eckville community leaders organized between Keegstra’s former students and the Jewish campers to show the students that Jewish people weren’t anything like Keegstra had taught them.

Snider, who now lives in Vancouver and is a documentary filmmaker, told AJNews that animation was the best format for telling this story in both film and print form.

“What I thought was so interesting was that with animation, we could go inside Hart’s imagination in the story and bring all these feelings to do with the Eckville students’ visit to life,” he explained.

He said he still vividly recalls aspects of the Keegstra affair, even though it occurred at such a young age, because he came from a household that would have “spirited discussions” about what was in the news.

“There was a point where it kind of hit a peak after it wasn’t just Keegstra, but there was also other Holocaust denial in the news and I felt like there needed to be a community response,” Snider said. “I remember that feeling even as an adult.”

While the story is autobiographical, the writer took some degree of creative licence with particular details. For instance, the story includes a young version of his wife, Galit. Although she also went to Jewish summer

camp, it wasn’t Camp BB.

The book, which contains translations of Yiddish and Hebrew words, such as ‘tsuris’, ‘Shabbat’ and ‘challah’, is intended for a broader audience than just Jewish kids.

Snider said the book’s message is especially important in the modern age, with a resurgence of antisemitic rhetoric that wasn’t as prevalent when he made the movie in 2011. He recalls hearing terms like ‘New World Order’ and ‘globalists’ for the first time during the Keegstra trial.

“I think people, unfortunately, are running into these terms either on social media, or all sorts of places online, and I think it’s something that needs to be talked about and addressed to hopefully give a little context for those people when they see those words,” said Snider.

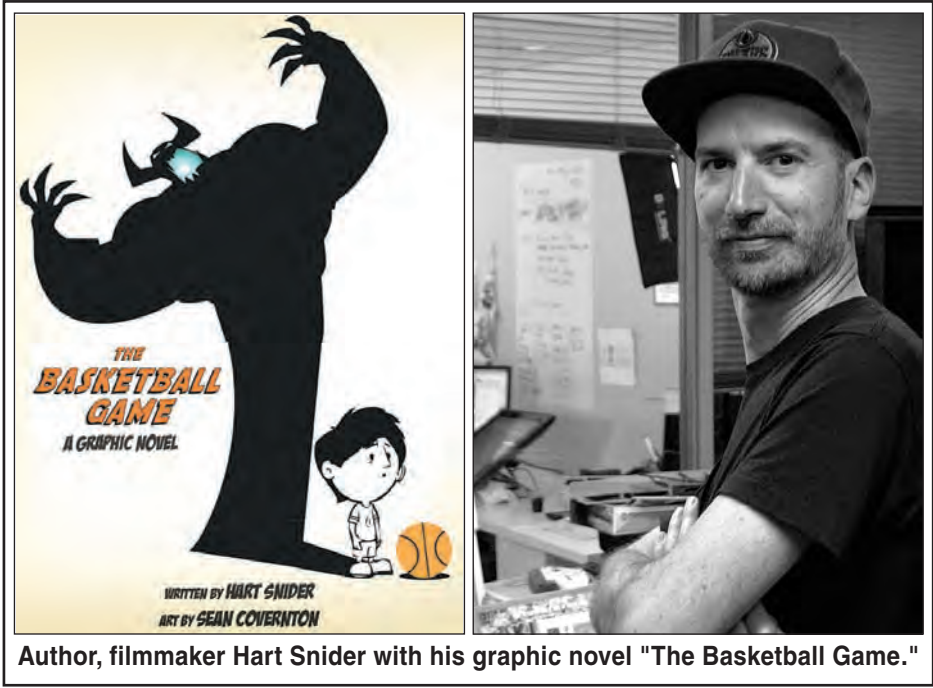
He said, ultimately, he hopes readers come away from the story appreciating the importance of a robust Holocaust education.

“Instead of it just being this negative story, it might be a way to hopefully spur some conversations about hate speech, about the classroom, and about teaching, about students and parents talking to each other. Because I think that’s what led to stopping Jim Keegstra,” Snider said.

The book, whose art is drawn by Sean Covernton, is recommended for kids over the age of 12.

**Who was James Keegstra**

James Keegstra was a high school teacher and mayor of the Town of Eckville, with a population of



Author, filmmaker Hart Snider with his graphic novel "The Basketball Game."

760. He was also an unrepentant Holocaust denier and antisemite.

In December 1982, he was fired from his teaching job, where he had spread antisemitic conspiracy theories to his students, and was charged with wilfully promoting hatred about a year later.

According to reporting in the *Red Deer Advocate*, the school principal ignored Keegstra’s hateful views until parents brought it to the attention of the local school board and the Advocate reported it. He was criminally charged on January 11, 1984.

In July 1985, a jury found him guilty, and Keegstra was fined \$5,000. His lawyer Doug Christie appealed the sentence, which was quashed in 1988 by the Alberta Court of Appeal, arguing hate speech laws were an infringement on his client’s right to free expression.

But upon further appeal the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that hate speech laws were a justifiable infringement on free expression, ordering a new trial. After another series of appeals, Keegstra was sentenced to a one-year suspended prison term and 200 hours of community service, in addition to a \$3,000 fine.

Continued on page 11



# Happy Rosh Hashanah!

## Best wishes this Jewish New Year

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This month's update from Edmonton Talmud Torah School



It has been a busy month at Talmud Torah School transitioning from the summer vacation to the routines of school. Pictured above are students on the first day of school and parents with teachers at the first Meet the Teacher event. And of course getting ready for Rosh Hashana.

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# TT cuts the ribbon to their new lunchroom

By Jenna Soroka

As students, parents, and staff geared up for another school year, Edmonton's Talmud Torah (TT) School held its ribbon cutting ceremony for a brand-new lunchroom on August 30, 2022. Dr. Don and Myrna Silverberg made the project possible with their generous donation to help enhance the socialization experiences among students – today and into the future.

Attending the event were President of the TT Society Leeor Eliyahu, members of the TT board, Principal Darin Johnson, MLA Lorne Dach, and more. Family members, Kayla and Naomi Shoctor, were in attendance in honour of Don and Myrna who could not participate due to being in Israel at the time.

Earlier in the summer, Sharon Marcus, TT Society Fundraising Chair, took the donors on an advance tour of the lunchroom. She described the experience as “the

most joyous walk-through” she has done with a donor for a project over her 22 years of fundraising. After Don and Myrna reached out to the Talmud Torah around a year and a half ago, numerous options were given to them on what their donation could be used towards. Sharon described how the lunchroom idea resonated with them.

“In their years here, they had such a fondness for the lunchroom, what it meant to their kids, and how it brought everyone together.” Sharon added that this project will help build a greater sense of community for the kids. Different grades will get an opportunity to develop relationships daily in an inviting environment. Sharon described this lunchroom as “more than just four walls,” and a legacy project that will serve the Jewish community in Edmonton for generations to come.

Talmud Torah Society's Executive Assistant, Natalie Soroka, thanked the Jewish Federation of Edmonton for the generous grant from surplus UJA funds to purchase nine brand new microwaves for the lunchroom. Stacey Leavitt-Wright, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, was unfortunately unable to attend due to a conflict with the Back to School/Shul Security Training event happening at Beth Israel Synagogue the same evening.

Esther and Howard Starkman, long-time friends of the Silverbergs, were asked by

Don and Myrna to represent them at the ceremony. “Myrna and Don Silverberg's large donation exemplifies everything that the Edmonton Talmud Torah was and is – a Jewish Community School in



Thanks to a generous donation from Myrna and Don Silverberg, Talmud Torah now has a school lunchroom. The official ribbon-cutting took place with a L'chaim on Aug. 30. (Photos by Natalie Soroka)




The new lunch room got full marks on the first day of school.

Edmonton,” Esther said during her opening remarks. She spoke passionately about the Silverberg family's journey to Edmonton, community involvement, and their contributions to the Edmonton Talmud Torah School throughout the years. The Silverberg family, which included two young children, called Edmonton home from 1968 to 1976, where they joined Myrna's sister, Kayla Shoctor, who already lived in Edmonton.

Esther recalled Howard and Don's time on the Talmud Torah board together and the journey towards TT becoming a program of the Edmonton Public School system. She also spoke warmly about her personal appreciation of their friendship which has “transcended the decades with visits in Israel and Edmonton.”

In Starkman's closing statement, she expressed admiration for the enormous impact that Myrna and Don made on the Jewish community throughout their 8 years in Edmonton. “Now as longtime Israelis, you have again impacted our community in a most generous, significant, and sustaining way,” she concluded.

Jenna Soroka is a local Journalism Initiative reporter.




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# JNF 7th Annual Pitch for Israel

By Jeremy Appel

On August 28, over 100 players and supporters enjoyed a beautiful day at Glenmore Park in Calgary for the JNF 7th annual Pitch for Israel. Proceeds from the event went to JNF social infrastructure projects in Israel.

This was a return to a full-scale “Pitch for Israel” after the event was cancelled in 2020 and scaled back in 2021 due to the pandemic.

The Hebrew Nationals — led by captain Tevie Lipton — won the day-long tournament against five other teams — the Moteks, Shekelball, Matzah Ballers, Dead Precedents v6 and, making the trip down from Edmonton, Shvitz and Shout. The teams had anywhere from 12 to 15 players, with two female players required on each team.

This year, proceeds went towards Beit Shulamit Cancer Centre in Afula, which is looking to build an “adventure playground” so children with cancer can play with their family and friends in between rounds of treatment, allowing them to “feel a little bit of normalcy,” explained Elliott Steinberg, executive director of JNF Calgary.

Athletic fundraisers for the JNF in Alberta aren’t exclusive to Calgary. JNF Edmonton hosts an annual “Alberta Cup” hockey tournament, which a Calgary team participates in.

Funds are raised first through a minimum \$36 donation from participants, and then the players ask their family and friends to sponsor them.

Steinberg called the event a success, especially considering it was the first year back in full force.

“We had fantastic weather and people are very happy to be out there,” he said. “I got a lot of great feedback and everyone had a good time and played fair, and it was just a great day overall. And we had some volunteer umpires from the community who helped quite a bit. It just went very smoothly as it always has.”

It’s important to raise funds for social infrastructure



The Hebrew Nationals won the fun filled, action packed, day long, JNF Pitch for Israel tournament. A great time was had by everyone who participated!

in Israel, because the country spends such a disproportionate amount of its budget on defence, Steinberg said.

“As a percentage of GDP, Israel spent four times as much as Canada on defense and security, and yet it’s smaller than Vancouver Island, and their GDP is quite a bit smaller, so that doesn’t leave a lot of funds for social infrastructure,” he explained. “That’s what JNF Canada specializes in now — social infrastructure, meaning hospitals, clinics, therapy centres, cultural arts, senior support, supporting immigrants and children at risk, all those kinds of things.”

While many associate the JNF with planting trees in Israel, Steinberg said the country’s needs have evolved beyond that and so too has the JNF’s mandate.

“There is kind of a natural evolution, because when JNF-KKL was founded, what did we need? We needed to buy land, so that’s what the blue box is for, to help

us buy land. And once we bought the land, what did we need? We needed to turn the land into productive and beautiful territory, so we planted trees and created water, reservoirs, and irrigation so we could start to revive the land,” he explained.

“And as time has evolved, things change. You realize, ‘well, there’s only so many trees you can plant’ — and we do still plant trees, but just not in the volume that we did before. Purchasing land is not the issue anymore. They’ve got desalination now, so water is less of an issue.

“We do what Israel needs, and what Israel needs is social infrastructure, so we’re adapting to Israel’s needs.”

For more information visit [jnfcalgary.ca](http://jnfcalgary.ca).

Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

## Graphic novel *Cont. from page 8*

As a teacher, Keegstra taught students that Jews were “money grubbers” and “gutter rats” who sought to control the world, according to the *Globe and Mail*.

He taught them that Jews were responsible for human sacrifices during the French Revolution, that women’s liberation, atheism and abortion were part of a Jewish conspiracy, that the Jews had orchestrated the Vietnam War and Watergate, and that then-prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau was secretly controlled by a Jewish cabal. He also claimed the gas chambers

at Auschwitz were a fabrication made up by Jews to “gain sympathy,”

Keegstra graded students on their ability to regurgitate his antisemitic theories.

Born in Vulcan, Alberta, in 1934 to a family of dairy farmers, Keegstra moved to Eckville in 1968 after earning an education degree. Although he was trained as an industrial arts teacher, a teacher shortage had him teaching social studies.

It was around his move to Eckville that he reportedly came to harbour antisemitic views. “Here was a people who denied everything about Christ, yet they were

called the chosen people. That is a contradiction,” he said in an interview with *Saturday Night Magazine*.

Keegstra died in June 2014 at the age of 80.

Jeremy Appel is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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# The path forward for our community

By Stacey Leavitt-Wright



Stacey Leavitt-Wright

While our ‘new year holiday’ often includes joyful meals and gatherings with relatives and friends, the preparations for the celebration begin long before Erev Rosh Hashanah arrives.

I am not just referring to the brisket and honey cake, or the security awareness sessions we recently held for Back to

School and Back to Shul. In Jewish tradition, the month of Elul is a time of repentance to plan for the High Holy Days. Elul is a time to search one’s heart and draw close to God to prepare for the coming Day of Judgement, Rosh Hashanah, and Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.

Many Jews also visit the graves of loved ones throughout the month in order to remember and honour those people in our past who inspire us to live more fully in the future. As we enter Tishrei, the month of beginning, it is a fitting occasion to consider where we are headed, considering where we have been.

*Now We Go Forward* is the theme of the United Jewish Appeal (UJA) campaign this year. Like every North American Jewish community, we faced challenges throughout the pandemic. The challenges kept coming—from lockdown to reopening. From peace to war. From certainty to uncertainty. But we kept going and are emerging strong.

Through the pandemic, we found ways for nearly everybody to take part in Jewish life virtually. We are

striving to create a culture of belonging for all who are Jewish and our loved ones by building bridges with inclusive programming and events.

Thanks to your input, we developed a new strategic plan for the Federation. Our strategic plan focuses on inclusion, advocacy, and leader development, anchored through capacity building and enhanced communications. We need you to help us chart the path forward for our community.

The strategic plan has framed our path for action, and now is the time. New initiatives outlined in this plan and additional considerations require your support. That one crucial component that brings our community forward is you. Because now, WE go forward with you at our side.

On behalf of my family, Erin, Jordyn, Abby and Zoe, the Jewish Federation of Edmonton board and staff, I want to wish everyone a L’Shanah Tovah U’Metukah, a happy and sweet New Year.

*Stacey Leavitt-Wright is the CEO of Jewish Federation of Edmonton.*

# Helping Ukrainian refugees in YEG

By Tammy Vineberg

When Yuliya Massarsky first heard about the attack on Ukraine by Russia she was shocked. There was the shelling of military bases in Kharkiv. She texted her friends in Ukraine to confirm that it was true. As the crisis developed into a war, Yuliya received updates from family and friends who were living the experience. She knew she had to help once refugees started arriving in Edmonton.

Yuliya has strong ties with Ukraine; she was born in the country and lived there with her five siblings until she was 12. Her parents moved the family to Israel, where they stayed for a few years before moving to Canada.

“When the war began, it felt closer to me because it’s the country of my birth and I helped Ukrainians. I know the language and the way of life, and as an immigrant myself, I recognize what the new immigrants are going through,” says Yuliya.

As of June 22, there were approximately 190,000 Ukrainians with pending applications to come to Canada, up from 140,000 about one month earlier. Many of the refugees are women and children because the men had to stay behind to defend their country. More than 3,800 have arrived in Alberta, according to news sources.

Social media was the source of the news about the influx of Ukrainians to Edmonton for Yuliya. She and her husband discussed becoming a host family, but

they thought they could have more of an impact by aiding Ukrainians with translation, being a guide around the city, and connecting them to resources.

Starting in March, Yuliya reached out to host families and to Ukrainians arriving in Edmonton, offering her support. Yuliya helped the new arrivals navigate the health care system, register children for school, connect them to landlords and rental companies, and explain the local culture and customs. She also started collecting donation items, such as clothing for families. At one point, furniture and bags of clothes filled her garage. They hosted one family for a few weeks until they could find somewhere to settle. Yuliya and her family supported over 14 families to settle in Edmonton.


Yuliya is one of several members of our Jewish community who have hosted families from Ukraine and who are helping those who arrived in Edmonton in other ways. Jewish community members have also aided her drive to help Ukrainians, and she appreciates this. “I am very thankful for every single family from our community that helped. When I brought donations, I always mentioned it was from the Jewish community so that the Ukrainians and their hosts were aware,” says Yuliya. “Thank you very much to everyone who stepped up.”

*Tammy Vineberg is Associate Director of Marketing and Communications at Jewish Federation of Edmonton.*



Yuliya Massarsky is a dedicated volunteer, working to help ease the transition for Ukrainian refugees.

What will you make happen in the new year?



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With TTS board member Sharon Marcus, Myrna Silverberg was delighted to see plans for the new lunchroom. TTS Executive Assistant Natalie Soroka poses with the generous JFED donation of 12 microwaves.



# Rosh Hashanah: A time to look ahead



Judy Zelikovitz

By Judy Zelikovitz

As we look toward a new year, one with renewed opportunities to connect with loved ones and colleagues, we must reflect on the past to appreciate what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.

5782 continued to be a year of unprecedented times, one that imposed and rescinded lockdown rules and where science brought hope, but that also saw dark times with the war in Ukraine, continued violence in Israel, and a disturbing uptick in antisemitism and other hate here at home.

Through it all, the CIJA team pivoted and came together to continue our important work protecting the quality of Jewish life in Canada. After more than two years of isolation and working from home, the CIJA team across Canada and in Israel returned to full operation with a hybrid model of work from home and office that has allowed us to meet in person with partners, stakeholders, and political leaders once again, helped us to move key priorities forward, and energized our agenda advocating for issues of greatest concern to our community.

Among these many tasks were finding support for bills to ban Holocaust denial and symbols of hate, as well as to combat online hate. We secured funding to support important Jewish community priorities including \$20 million for the Montreal Holocaust Museum; \$2.5 million for the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre in Toronto; \$5.6 million for the Office of the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism; \$30 million for the Centre for Aging and Brain Health Innovation, established by Baycrest Health Sciences in Toronto; and \$25 million for the Vancouver JCC redevelopment project.

We are tackling antisemitism head on: We promoted the use of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism to guide the policies of governments and provincial agencies and educated law enforcement services across the country about antisemitism, providing advice and guidance on the development of effective hate crime units. We are working with school boards to develop educational curriculums, for various levels of learning, to teach students about antisemitism, how to identify it, and how to reject it.

We are extending our hands to partners: We led a multi-partner coalition to eliminate the discriminatory policy limiting blood and plasma donations from members of the LGBTQ2+ community. We sought funding for Jewish immigrant agencies, other Federation-sponsored charities, synagogues, and individual Canadians to welcome Ukrainians, find them supplies, and support them in their new homes.

We celebrated Judaism and Zionism: Working alongside Federations across the country, we helped ensure that holidays and events, including, among others, Yom HaShoah, Pride, Walk with Israel, Calgary

Stampede, and Edmonton Heritage Days were commemorated and celebrated by our community.

We are delighted to have restarted our phenomenally effective Missions program, where we show (mostly non-Jewish) Canadian cultural, business, political, academic leaders, students, and various influencers the reality of life experienced by diverse Israelis so they can appreciate first-hand the only liberal democracy of the Middle East and the world's 'start-up nation.'

And, as always, we spent last year, as we will this one, advocating for Canada's vibrant Jewish community.

Feedback is central to ensuring that we are effective in our advocacy, so CIJA has undertaken a new set of public polling to measure Canadians' response to our priorities and our messaging. The results are both intriguing and helpful as we assemble a plan to address the issues that most affect our community – one that will carry us into the next year and beyond.

But, we need to hear from you too! Your feedback guides us in all that we do. Please visit [cija.ca/you](http://cija.ca/you) and tell us what matters to you. As we step into the new year, reflecting on the progress made, we are committed to bringing projects to completion and advocating for new priorities based on issues of concern to you, our community.

We look forward to continuing to work for Canadian Jewry and wish you and your families a sweet, healthy, and happy 5783.

L'Shana Tova!

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

# Julia Garner and Brett Goldstein repeat as Jewish Emmy winners

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – Julia Garner and Brett Goldstein were the big Jewish Emmy winners September 12, as both actors took home statuettes on television's starriest night.

Garner scored her third win for best supporting actress in a drama for her role on Netflix's crime show "Ozark," which concluded its run this year. She previously won in 2019 and 2020 for the same show and was additionally nominated this year in the limited-series category for "Inventing Anna" but lost that category to Amanda Seyfried in "The Dropout."

During her acceptance speech, Garner thanked the "Ozark" writers for crafting her character, whom the actor said "has changed my life."

Goldstein, also a repeat winner, scored his second award in a row for best supporting actor in a comedy for his role in Apple TV+'s sports sitcom "Ted Lasso." Thanking his Jewish family back home in Britain, the famously foul-mouthed Goldstein promised not to swear — before dropping an f-bomb on live television.

NBC's "Saturday Night Live," whose creator and longtime showrunner Lorne Michaels is Jewish, extended two of its records in the outstanding variety/sketch series category: the most wins and the most consecutive wins (which now stands at six). The

show only had one other competitor in the category.

During his acceptance speech, Michaels thanked his cast for "showing up" in the midst of a pandemic, which had resulted in one live broadcast of "SNL" airing without an audience. The series' longest serving cast member, Kenan Thompson, also hosted the evening's awards ceremony.

Two of the most visibly Jewish shows on TV, Amazon's "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" and HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm," were both blanked out of the big categories this year. Both were nominated for best comedy but lost to "Ted Lasso," while "Maisel" also lost every acting award its stars were nominated for. Other Jewish stars who came away from the night empty-handed included Seth Rogen, Henry Winkler and Andrew Garfield.

Zendaya won best lead actress in a drama for "Euphoria," the popular HBO teen drama based on an Israeli show.



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# SHANA TOVA!

As we look ahead to the New Year, we want to know the issues that matter most to you.

Tell us at [cija.ca/you](http://cija.ca/you)


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




Best wishes for a Happy New Year,  
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# CMDA: Saving Lives in The Sea of Galilee

By Shael Gelfand

An Advanced Life Support Boat donated by CMDA Calgary supporters Leonard and Faigel Shapiro is making waves in Israel.

Leonard and Faigel Shapiro’s generous support for Canadian Magen David Adom over many years, has helped saved countless lives. The Shapiros have donated standard ambulances, advanced life support vehicles and emergency medi-scooters that are in service throughout Israel. And now, their latest gift is helping to protect and save lives on the waters of the Sea of Galilee.

The Shapiros recently donated a \$240 thousand Advanced Life Support Boat that is on-call to respond to emergencies on the beaches and communities on Lake Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) in Tiberias. It’s one of the world’s most advanced emergency response vessels. Equipped with two powerful outboard motors and with a speed of 35 knots, regardless of conditions, the boat can reach most incident scenes in eight minutes or less. It can carry up to 1,000 kg. (2,205 lbs.), as well as eight crew members and/or patients.

In just the first month in operation the Shapiro Advanced Life Support Boat successfully responded to many calls including a two-month-old baby who was burned by hot water at the beach and a 12-year-old boy who became dehydrated during a cruise and lost consciousness, hitting his head on the pier.



Lenny Shapiro with Sharon Fraiman, CMDA Western Regional Director.



Lenny and Faigel Shapiro recently donated a \$240 thousand Advanced Life Support Boat that is responding to emergencies and saving lives on the beaches and communities on Lake Kinneret in Tiberias. (Photos supplied).

“Faigel and I are gratified that the boat is having such a significant impact on MDA’s ability to respond to emergencies on the water,” says Mr. Shapiro. “It has quickly become a vital piece of equipment and is already saving lives.”

The boat is equipped with advanced life support medical tools including a defibrillator, respirator and vital signs monitors and is staffed by a specially trained team of MDA paramedics and EMTs. Its unique design gives the boat the ability to moor close to the shore, and the bow opens to allow responders to easily load patients from both in the water and on the beaches. It’s a real game-changer in MDA’s ability to respond to water emergencies.

“This is another wonderful gift from the Shapiros to the people of Israel,” says Sharon Fraiman, Western Region Director for CMDA. “We are so thankful for their on-going support for CMDA.”

The new Advanced Life Support will be stationed at Lido Beach in Tiberias. The central location provides quick access to all the beaches and allows the crew to assist in road accidents on two major highways that run along the lake.

“MDA’s Advanced Life Support Boat will allow us to



Lenny and Faigel Shapiro

significantly improve our capabilities and reach all patients,” said Eli Bin, MDA director-general. “I thank our dear donors from Canada, Leonard and Faigel Shapiro and their families, for making this possible.”



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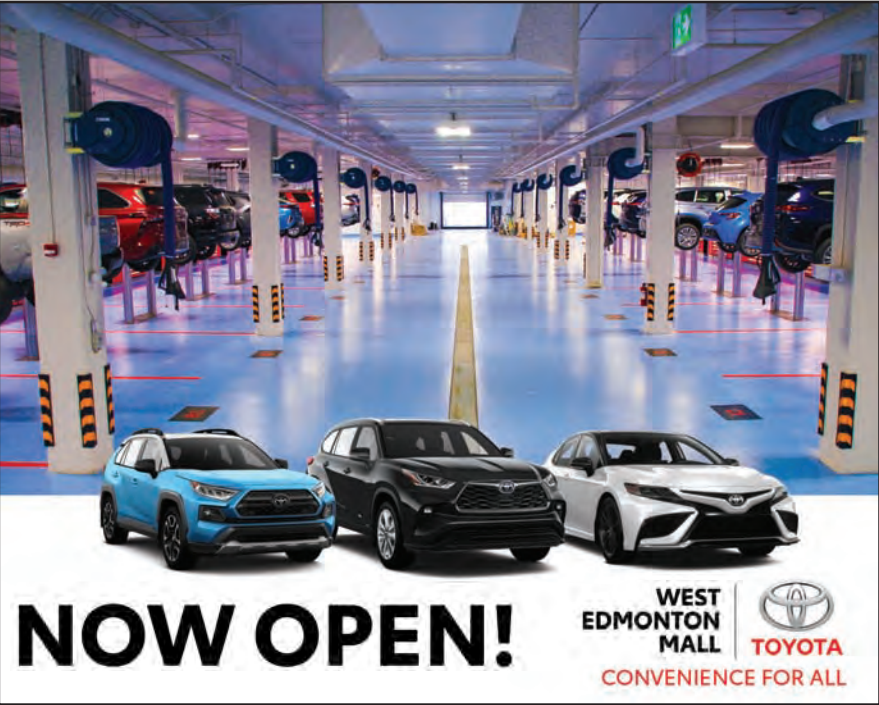
## Shana Tova

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# Steven Spielberg portrays his Jewish identity in 'The Fabelmans'

By Stephen Silver

TORONTO (JTA) — It would be difficult to debate what Steven Spielberg’s “most Jewish” film has been, after a career with highlights such as “Schindler’s List” and “Munich.” But it’s now clear what the famed director’s most personal film is.

On September 10, Spielberg introduced “The Fabelmans,” his upcoming semi-autobiographical movie about his Jewish upbringing and his formative early years as an aspiring filmmaker, at a post-screening Q&A at the Toronto International Film Festival, where its debut earned a two-minute standing ovation and subsequent Oscar buzz in early critic reviews. Spielberg made no attempt to disguise the fact that the story is based on his life.

“It’s not complicated,” he said. “This is something, obviously, that I’ve been thinking about for a long time.”

The moderator of the Q&A, the festival’s CEO Cameron Bailey, noted that Spielberg grew up in a Jewish family “in mostly non-Jewish environments.” He asked the director about his “growing engagement with your Jewish identity” throughout his career, and what it was like to “weave that into the film.” Jewish audiences have been highly anticipating how the film

would incorporate Spielberg’s Jewishness since the official announcement that production was underway last year. The three-time Oscar winner co-wrote the script with his frequent collaborator Tony Kushner, right after the duo finished their work together on the recent “West Side Story” remake.

“I like very much the sort of easy way that Jewishness lives in this movie. It’s a very profound part of Steven’s identity, and of the Fablemans’ identity,” Kushner said at the talk. “But it’s a movie that’s about Jewish people, rather than entirely or exclusively about Jewishness or antisemitism or something. So it’s not a problem, it’s who they are.”

The film, which follows protagonist Sammy Fabelman as he falls in love with filmmaking from early childhood through high school, quickly establishes the family’s Jewishness. As the film begins, the Fabelman family (whose surname sounds like Jewish wordplay on the idea of fables, or storytelling) is based in New Jersey, and Sammy notes that he knows which house is his by the absence of Christmas lights. The family at one point sings Hanukkah blessings, and later there’s a Shabbat dinner with challah, kugel and brisket on the table.

The family then relocates to Arizona, and then



Screenshot from The Trailer of 'The Fabelmans' an autobiographical movie about Steven Spielberg's life.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux9505OHdU8>

Northern California, where it’s made clear there are far fewer other Jews around. In Phoenix, they are visited by Sammy’s old-world immigrant great uncle (Judd Hirsch) who tells tales of dealing with “Jew-haters” when he was in the circus, before darkly warning Sammy of how he may one day have to choose between his family and his art. These words are proven prophetic at a key moment later in the film.

Hirsch, who is Jewish, said in the Q&A that when he asked Spielberg about “the real guy” his

*Continued on page 20*

# Helping families enrich their High Holiday celebrations and more

PJ Library is an internationally recognized, \$40M global cultural literacy venture that partners with philanthropists and Jewish communities around the world to provide families raising Jewish children with the gift of free, high-quality children's books and other resources that foster a deeper connection with Jewish life.

The Jewish Federation of Edmonton has partnered with PJ Library for many years providing books and fun filled family activities throughout the year. For more information about exciting PJ Library programs in Edmonton contact Jenn Magalnick at [magaj@edjfed.org](mailto:magaj@edjfed.org).

The three-week Jewish holiday season that begins with Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) is an annual celebration of growth – an autumn journey that Jewish

tradition invites us to take year after year. This holiday season, PJ Library invites families to enrich and enliven their celebrations and traditions with *A Time to Grow: A PJ Library Family Guide for Starting the Jewish New Year*. The beautifully illustrated guide, which PJ Library is shipping to subscriber families in paperback version for the first time this month, will also be available for anyone to download for free at [pjlibrary.org/grow](http://pjlibrary.org/grow).

Whether at synagogue or celebrating at home, *A Time to Grow* offers families myriad creative ways to connect with the High Holidays: Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Sukkot (Festival of Small Huts) and Simchat Torah (Rejoicing with the Torah). In 2022, the newly expanded guide offers such engaging activities as “Make Your Own Shofar,” “Round Challah-Braiding,”

and “Crafting a Torah.”

Parents and kids can learn how to cast away mistakes with the cleansing ceremony of Tashlich, create a “kindness wheel” for the New Year, make a mini play sukkah, learn step-by-step celebrations – including blessings all aimed at making the High Holidays meaningful, memorable and fun. Though a free download is available, families interested in adding to their home library can get the paperback version of *A Time to Grow* at [amazon.com/pjlibrary](http://amazon.com/pjlibrary) soon.


This High Holiday season, PJ Library sweetens the celebration with audio treats for the whole family. The second season of the NAPPA and Parents’ Choice Award-winning podcast, *Afternoons with Mimi* (for kids 2 to 5) launches on Sept. 13 with holiday wisdom in “Kiddo Learns About Forgiveness.” Listeners are certain to love Mimi’s retelling of the salty story of Jonah, a Yom Kippur tradition. In addition, families can find curated playlists and music videos perfect for the high holidays, Sukkot and Simchat Torah at [pjlibrary.org/listen](http://pjlibrary.org/listen).

PJ Library has also recently launched a podcast to help Jewish 12 year olds quell their B’nai Mitzvah nerves and help pave the way to success with the new limited series podcast called *B’Mitzvah Bites*, that provides b’nai mitzvah advice for kids, by kids.

With all episodes dropping last month *B’Mitzvah Bites* offers real kids asking the hard-hitting questions about how to prepare for the ceremony – and more. The best part? They’ll be receiving answers and real-life examples from older kids who recently took the bima and successfully navigated their special day.

Tune in to hear everything from who to invite, how far in advance preparations need to begin, tips for memorizing the Torah portion, how to deal with a bad case of day-of nerves, how to handle all that attention,

*Continued on page 18*



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-The Talmud

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# Understanding the truth about Residential Schools

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

*Editor’s note: As we approach the High Holidays, we take pause to reflect the past year and seek forgiveness for our knowing and unknowing transgressions. As a country, we need to acknowledge the harms that were inflicted on the Indigenous people of Canada in Residential Schools; we need to acknowledge the truth first before there can be reconciliation. Readers are encouraged to read ‘21things you may not know about the Indian Act’ and the ‘Calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’ and listen to the podcast ‘Kuper Island.’*

Indigenous journalist, CBC correspondent, and author of *Decolonizing Journalism: A Guide to Reporting in Indigenous Communities*, Duncan McCue has made a career of giving voice to stories that, although often excruciating, must be brought to light. Kuper Island, his new eight-part podcast, is a chilling exploration of the history, lifelong suffering, and societal aftermath caused by the Kuper Island Indian Residential School. Nestled among the picturesque Gulf Islands of British Columbia is Penelakut Island, now known as Kuper Island. From 1889 to 1975 this oppressive and appalling institution of government sanctioned psychological and physical violence was operated first by the Roman Catholic Church and then by the Canadian Federal Government. It would come to be known by the sinister moniker: ‘The Alcatraz of Canada’.

McCue’s series documents the stories and voices that remain after decades of systematic dehumanization. “They called it a school, but what sort of school has a graveyard?” commented one interviewee. “It was an institution designed to erase identity.” Each episode of McCue’s podcast begins with a trigger-warning because of the graphic and profoundly disturbing nature of the content being discussed – but no disclaimer can prepare the listener for the horrific realities being detailed. McCue explains that although Canadians are presented with news coverage of the discoveries of unmarked graves across the country, mainstream media, unfortunately,

is still often sanitized – his podcast pulls no punches. The voices on the recordings are those of former ‘students’ of the Kuper Island Indian Residential School, but as McCue so correctly points out, most of the staff were not trained educators, so the term ‘school’ was highly erroneous. The podcast traces the journeys of two brothers who survived, and the tragic story of a well-loved young man named Richard, who was found hung to death in the school gym. The violence recounted is the stuff of nightmares: molestation, rape, beatings, torture, and the burning of babies. Indeed, some testimonies recount babies being murdered. Facts that are corroborated by the discoveries of unmarked mass graves in recent years. McCue’s work is disturbing, but courageous in its unapologetic honesty.

The buildings that once imprisoned so many young innocents no longer stand. McCue’s archival searches revealed photographs mainly of staged events, but those who were there remember the stately red brick building with meticulously manicured grounds. What remains is a set of concrete stairs that McCue describes as being overgrown with moss. Although there are no visible monuments to testify to the existence of the school and the atrocities committed on the land, locals have clear memories, and the physical space is scarred by the crimes perpetrated there. Those who survived now bare witness for all those who lie anonymously beneath the earth.

McCue’s investigation is haunting not only in topic and content, but also in narrative – quite literally. Survivors describe pageant-like spectacles where they were forced to adorn Hollywood-style costumes, not their own traditional regalia, in order to portray the ‘Indian’ image for public consumption. It was, however, the crimes that took place behind closed doors, and silently in the night that have indelibly scarred survivors and their families. For decades upon decades residents of the area have reported strange and unexplainable apparitions, temperature anomalies, and eerie sounds where once the school stood. Although those interviewed agree that ‘haunted’ is not the right term for it, there is an overwhelming sense of loss and injustice that cannot be



paved over. There is a community long-house for celebrations situated just past the former residential school site, and yet, gatherings are sparsely attended because so many do not want to walk on the tainted ground. Healing will last for generations to come.

Kuper Island is a poignant podcast that all Canadians should feel compelled to experience. Yes, the subject matter is excruciating, and after listening to all eight episodes one cannot help but be haunted by echoes of the voices from the podcast that continue to resonate. These are stories that are shared to help survivors to heal, to teach others about what really happened, and those interviewed bravely bare their most vulnerable selves for the listener. The podcast is a valuable contribution to Canadian history, to future endeavors for cultural healing, to fostering greater mutual understanding, and to promoting reconciliation through respectfully confronting truth. McCue presents a masterful piece of journalism that is sincerely moving.

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

**Our very best wishes  
to the Jewish community  
for a happy, healthy New Year**




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Ward sipiwiyniwak



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**They didn't know we were seeds**






**Carol Wylie**



**ABOUT THE EXHIBIT**  
They didn't know we were seeds is a series of portraits of nine Holocaust survivors and nine Residential School survivors. It is intended to acknowledge these extraordinary people who endured and survived unbelievable mistreatment and to find a way to preserve the personal nature of these memories. Through portraits of individual survivors, the series aims to create a silent dialogue between Jewish survivors and Indigenous survivors.

**ABOUT THE ARTIST**  
Carol is a painter whose work focuses on portraiture and figuration. Themes of identity, consciousness, and human interconnectedness run through her work. She holds an MFA from the Vermont College of Fine Arts and BFA and BA (Psychology) from the University of Saskatchewan. Carol resides in Saskatoon, SK and works in art education at Remai Modern in addition to teaching drawing and painting privately. She was a finalist in the Kingston Portrait Prize 2015 and the Salt Spring National Art Prize 2021 and is a member of the Studio on 20th art collective.

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# Our cover artist: Carol Neiger

By Shelley Werner

The beautiful image on the cover of this month's Edmonton edition of Alberta Jewish News is entitled Mizrach, by Carol Neiger, a painter and printmaker living near Chicago, Illinois. She will be featured on the November 2 show of Art and Scroll Studio at 7 pm MDT. Advance tickets are available at [artandscrollstudio@gmail.com](mailto:artandscrollstudio@gmail.com).

Carol loves nature and being outdoors, so she works in her sketchbook as a catalyst for her paintings, often painting on location and creating the final works in the studio. Her painting style is somewhere between representational and abstract. She sees colours where others do not and finds patterns everywhere - in both nature and human creations.

"I am interested in how our past experiences influence how we see," says Carol. "Memories are fuzzy and jumbled together in our minds, but they leave an impression that marks us forever and impacts how we see. As we move through spaces we sense familiarity even in places we have never been before. Our memories reinforce our visual impressions and carry meaning with them. My landscapes strive to trigger the viewer's memories of lived experience."

Carol Neiger graduated with a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1980. She is a painter and printmaker primarily focused on exploring the connection of memory and place. Individuals bring their own experiences — both known and buried memories as they experience place. Each work is created with the hope of connecting to individuals through her art, and evoking meaning in the viewer's own memories.

Carol's style is characterized by the use of layers, split plane composition, patterns, a vibrant color palette, and a painterly style. She paints in oils and watercolor and has worked with various methods of printmaking. Most of Carol's prints are mono-types; painting, rolling and/or removing ink directly on printing plates which are transferred to paper to achieve layers of translucency that create a quality of light very different from a painting on paper.

She has been led to wonder about how Judaism survived and how we as Jews, relate to "place" and "home." After the destruction of the Second Temple, Judaism became a "portable" religion as the Torah replaced the Temple as a sacred center. European Jews have been exiled from 109 locations since 250 CE. Since there were periods when Jews lived in harmony with neighbors, each of these expulsions led to intense learning and writing in order to understand the catastrophes.

Her never-ending love affair with water is an attraction to color, surface, pattern, reflection, and movement. A lifelong lover of swimming, kayaking, walking and even just sitting by water brings her back to myself. Whether observing a solo kayaker at dusk or an endless horizon of lily pads forming patterns, She is drawn to it.

"Walking in the woods brings fascination along with some fear of the unknown. Painting this endless complexity of texture, depth, pattern, builds into mystery with its distraction and dimension. There is beauty in finding the big picture, and there is a sort of random structure, but underlying it all there are countless tiny chaotic or ordered permutations."

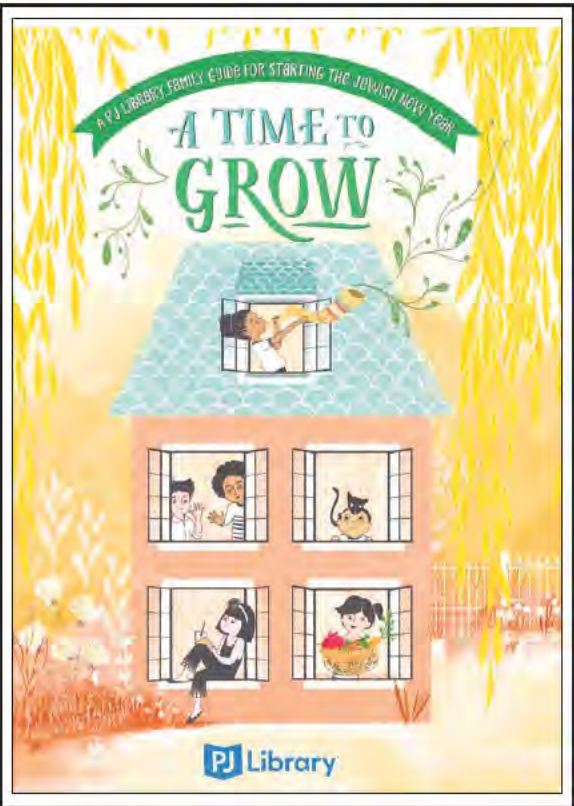
Carol is enchanted by gardens as places of healing, refuge, and peace of mind. She sees it as a haven, an



Artist Carol Neiger

island of space separate from life filled with work, schedules, and deadlines. She sees a seed in her hand imagines the life that will emerge from it. Holding a seed and burying it in the soil, then checking with anticipation as the first glimpse of green emerges from the rich earth reminds us of the power within each of us to make, create, build and mold—and how, even with that power, we have to accept the imperfection and accidents that happen through nature and learn to embrace them. Nature is both beautiful and scary, ordered and chaotic, but one thing is certain—we cannot control it.

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



## High Holidays

Cont. from page 16

writing a meaningful speech, book recommendations and much more

B'Mitzvah Bites is available on [pjlibrary.org/podcast](http://pjlibrary.org/podcast) and all leading podcast platforms.

The podcast network PJ LIBRARY PRESENTS, led by producer Alli Thresher, is also the home to two award-winning podcasts, both about to launch their second seasons: *Afternoons with Mimi*, for kids 2 to 5 and *Beyond the Bookcase*, for kids ages 6 to 12,

which both offer fresh, creative ways to share Jewish culture and values with children through screen-free entertainment at its best.



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Shana Tova  
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from the

Sources

by Eliezer Segal

An order of fast food

After outlining the laws for observing a day of atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Torah reiterates: “ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening until evening, shall you observe your sabbath.” In its original context, the text can perhaps be most simply understood as saying that the day-long fast (“affliction”) goes into effect on the evening immediately following the ninth day of the month.

In the Talmud, however, Hiyya bar Rav of Difti subjected the verse to a different interpretation. He was responding to his colleague Rav Bebai bar Abayé who had fallen behind in his study schedule and was determined to make up the missing material, even if it required foregoing a proper meal before the onset of the fast.

Hiyya confronted Bebai with the scriptural passage about afflicting our souls on the ninth day of the month and noted that it seems to require fasting on the ninth day as well as the tenth. If that were correct, though, then it would run counter to the Torah’s explicit assertions that the Yom Kippur fast is restricted to the tenth day. To resolve this incongruity Hiyya concluded: “This verse comes to teach you that if a person eats and drinks on the ninth day, scripture counts it as if he were fasting on both the ninth and the tenth days.” That is to say: the meal that you eat before Yom Kippur is as indispensable as the fast itself.

This interpretation was considered valid enough to override even Rav Bebai’s resolve to catch up on his Torah studies.

Why is a pre-fast meal required? Most commentators adopt the obvious explanation, that it is to prevent people from endangering their health by starving themselves.

Rabbi Asher ben Jehiel [the Rosh, 13th century] depicted this as an instance of the Almighty’s doting concern for his people. “It is analogous to a man whose beloved child was ordered to refrain from eating [presumably for medical reasons]. The father issued instructions to provide the lad with ample food and drink on the preceding day to enable him to withstand the fast. In the same manner, the Holy One

commanded Israel to fast on only one day of the year for their spiritual benefit, to provide atonement for their sins. However, to mitigate the hardship, he admonished them to eat and drink on the eve of the fast.” This explanation was cited by the Rosh’s son Jacob ben Asher in his authoritative compendium of Jewish law, the *Tur*.

A very different explanation was propounded by Rabbi Asher’s Italian contemporary, Rabbi Zedekiah Anav of Rome in his compendium of ritual practice *Shibbolei ha-Leket*. He argued that filling one’s belly before Yom Kippur would turn the fast into a more arduous affliction, thereby strengthening its atoning power.

Rabbis Zedekiah and Jacob ben Asher both adduced texts to demonstrate that Jews in Talmudic times regarded a lavish pre-Yom Kippur meal as an important mitzvah that gave rise to intense commerce in meat and fish, equivalent to the major scriptural festivals—and even a readiness to purchase holiday food at exorbitant prices.

Rabbi Zedekiah cited in the name of his brother Rabbi Benjamin that the rabbis’ insistence on a conspicuous repast on the ninth of the month was intended to demonstrate their rejection of the “Sadducees” who interpreted the scriptural text as calling for a two-day fast. I am not aware of any other evidence for the observance of a two-day Yom Kippur fast by either the ancient Sadducees or the medieval Karaites.

The sixteenth-century Kabbalist Rabbi Moses Cordovero explained the importance of the pre-festival repast as a solution to a dilemma created by contradictory themes inherent to the Day of Atonement. In principle, a joyous mood is an essential component in the observance of all positive commandments - including that of repentance. This seems to clash with the mood of submission and trepidation appropriate to penitents. However, by enjoying a fine meal before the festival’s onset we can fulfil the obligation to rejoice on a holy day. Indeed, Rabbi Jonah of Gerona observed that the meal attests to our joy at the prospect of achieving

atonement for our misdeeds. Rabbi Judah Alter of Ger noted that hunger gives rise to irritability and thereby undermines the forgiving mindset appropriate to the season. The feast on the ninth and the fast on the tenth thus become equally necessary ingredients in the procedure for atonement.

In a similar spirit, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook distinguished between two complementary dimensions of the repentance process. The self-affliction on the tenth of Tishrei is designed to restore the loving and reverent spiritual relationship that ought ideally to prevail between humans and their creator. However, to counteract the damage caused by specific misdeeds, it is necessary to perform concrete mitzvahs. For this reason, it was ordained that prior to the Yom Kippur fast we are granted an opportunity to restore the virtuous relationship that was impaired by our sins. However, because there are so few activities that can be performed on the holy day itself, it does not provide a convenient mechanism for scoring bonus points by performing deeds that can compensate for our transgressions.

This, concluded Rabbi Kook, is why we make a point of eating and drinking prior to Yom Kippur. It allows us to acknowledge the Creator and accumulate merit by performing some practical mitzvot like reciting the appropriate blessings and observing the dietary laws.

Viewed this way, we may better appreciate why eating on the ninth day is deemed equivalent to fasting for both days. In the end, this combination provides us with the opportunity to make reparations and seek forgiveness for our moral failings during the previous year.

It’s an opportunity not to be missed. Don’t be late for dinner.

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



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Book Review

# Young adult book brings a golem to Alberta

Reviewed by Regan Treewater-Lipes



Nikki Vogel

The folktale of the Golem of Prague is by now an international legend both inside and outside of Jewish circles. But who has heard of the Golem of Edmonton?

Nikki Vogel, an Edmonton author has brought the mythologized Golem story to Alberta – with a twenty-first century twist. In her debut young adult fiction novel, Vogel explores themes of cultural identity, coming-of-age, the pursuit for belonging, and self agency.

“This manuscript is a product of work I did on my

master’s thesis,” explained Vogel in a recent phone interview. From the Bay Area originally, Vogel and her family have long called Edmonton home. Through remote matriculation she earned her MFA from the University of British Columbia and has been published in literary journals and anthologies. Her first book, *Silencing Rebecca* (ISBN: 9781771872263) may be within the young adult genre, but covers some universal concepts and themes and will most certainly resonate with wider audiences.

Rebecca’s initial story is one typical of a youthful coming-of-age narrative, but with the very inventive shocker that she transforms into a golem. The inclusion of the Golem legend serves the dual purpose of emphasizing Rebecca’s feelings of social and cultural alienation after moving to a public school in Edmonton from an observant Jewish community and education in Toronto, and also shines a light on how society as a whole has silenced the voices of young women for far too long.

“I was at a writer’s conference and there was a guest speaker, a publishing agent, who proposed the challenge of taking existing, well established literary tropes, and completely inverting them,” said Vogel. “I guess the Golem story is not exactly a literary trope, but I was still quite intrigued by the possibility of rediscovering the character in a contemporary way.”

And rediscover she has! The book is exhilarating for those new to the story of the Golem, and an entertaining innovative journey for those long familiar with the legend. Vogel quite elegantly weaves in an

examination of social and emotional isolation as her protagonist experiences the challenges of transitioning to womanhood and negotiating her relationship with her body’s unfamiliar metamorphosis.

Vogel’s treatment of adolescence is thoughtful and compassionate making *Silencing Rebecca* a potentially great read for teens on the verge of their own self-discovery.

In a scene vaguely reminiscent of the 1976 adaptation of Stephen King’s *Carrie*, Rebecca must learn to manoeuvre her way through the uncertainties of puberty, and her own pending womanhood and all it entails. Her transformation into a golem is a supernatural literary emphasis of her corporeal alienation from her psychological self.

“I hope that the story of Rebecca speaks to wider audiences,” commented Vogel. “Yes, it’s rooted to Jewish identity, especially because of the Golem, but I had always intended it to appeal to both Jews and non-Jews. With my writing I really try to transcend cultural and social barriers, or to at least challenge them,” Vogel elaborated.

Like so many stories that have withstood the passage of time, the story of the Golem included, Rebecca’s journey is a universally relatable one – one of self discovery. *Silencing Rebecca* is a fun and engaging read that fuses contemporary narratives with pious tradition and stirring folklore.

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

## Spielberg *Cont. from page 16*

character was based on, the director responded that he “never understood a word he said.” The director added that this was due to the Eastern European relative’s “thick accent.”

In the California part of the story, when he’s a high school senior, Sammy is bullied by antisemitic jock classmates who call him “Bagelman.” Sammy later dates a Christian girlfriend who tries to get him Ointo Jesus.

Spielberg said that the antisemitic bullying he faced was “only a small aspect of my life... it isn’t any kind of governing force in my life. But I was made very, very aware of being an outsider, early on.” He added that it was only two kids who did the bullying and that he doesn’t blame the school for the incidents.

“I think in proportion of the film, it’s an aspect of his experience in that moment,” Kushner said of that scene. “It’s part of his arc, Sammy’s arc, towards reclaiming film and figuring out things that film can do.”

The broader storylines of the film, which hits North American theaters in November, are also true

to the details of Spielberg’s own life story. He was born shortly after World War II in Cincinnati, to a father who was a pioneering computing engineer and a mother who played the piano. Arnold Spielberg came from a family of Orthodox Jews; Steven attended Hebrew school as a child and had a bar mitzvah in Arizona. The family really did move from New Jersey to Arizona to California, he really had three younger sisters, and his parents really did split in the mid-1960s. As Spielberg grew into his filmmaking, divorce, absentee fatherhood and strained parent-child relations emerged as key themes in many of his movies.

Spielberg also did make amateur 8 mm films throughout his childhood before heading to Hollywood in the late 1960s and beginning his career as one of the most successful directors in history.

The film stars Paul Dano and Michelle Williams, neither of whom are Jewish, as Sammy’s parents. Seth Rogen — who as a character in his 2007 movie “Knocked Up” famously praised Spielberg’s “Munich” as a movie about “Jews kicking ass” — plays the father’s best friend who looms large in the family’s marital struggles.

Spielberg and Kushner had discussed the director’s early life and a project about it for years — as early as 2005, when they were working on “Munich,” Kushner said. (Spielberg claimed in the Q&A that they began speaking about it while working on “Lincoln” in 2012.)

“Tony kind of performed the function of a therapist,” Spielberg said about their writing process. “I was his patient, and we’d talk, and I talked for a long time, and Tony fed me and helped me through this. But when COVID hit... we all had a lot of time, and we all had a lot of fear. And I don’t think anybody quite knew in March or April of 2020 what was going to be the state of the art, and the state of life, even a year from then. And I think in that sense I felt... if I was going to leave anything behind, what is the thing that I really need to resolve and unpack? My mom, my dad, and my sisters... it wasn’t now or never, but it almost felt that way.”

But don’t take this film as a sign that the 75-year-old Spielberg is slowing down, he said.

“It is not because I have decided to retire and this is my swan song,” Spielberg said.

שנה טובה

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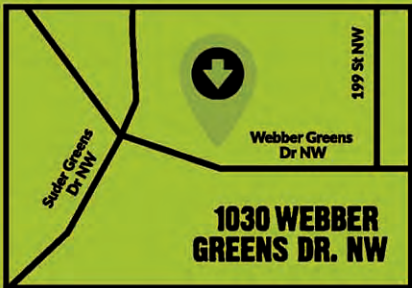
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and all the children*




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Year to all! from **Karen  
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New Year and Shana  
Tova Umetukah*  
from the **Ghermezian  
Family**





To family, friends & the whole community, have a happy, healthy Rosh Hashana from Hinda Lipshitz

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from Robin & David Marcus and family

Wishing friends & family all the best for this New Year!

from Susan and Bruce Mintz


A Happy and Sweet New Year to all!

from Jennifer, Colin, Asher, and Nooní Muscat

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Shana Tova from Dmitriy, Regan, Benji, Jacob, and Tamara

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Wishing friends & family all the best for this New Year!

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from Eva, Jesse, Lola, & Ella Turuk

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Best wishes to everyone for a year filled with good health, peace and happiness


from Dalia, Allan, Tammy and Mark Wolinsky


Best wishes for a year filled with good health, peace & happiness

from Connie & Danny Zalmanowitz

Best wishes for a year filled with health, peace & happiness

from Ed, Kim, Naomi, Georgia, and Gabby



Shana Tova - Happy New Year from Shira & Jeff Scheckter and family


Wishing the entire community a Happy New Year

Shana Tova Umetukah!

from Gigi Soros

שנה טובה

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Shana Tova Happy New Year from Jane & Hersh Sobel and family


שנה טובה

Wishing the entire community a Happy New Year

from the Sadovnick Family


Shana Tovah - Happy New Year from Lauren & Keith Tankel and family


Shana Tova - Happy New Year from Stacey, Erin, Jordyn, Abby, and Zoe Wright

Shana Tova - Happy New Year from Jodi, Michael and Rebecca Zabłudowski

May your New Year be filled with love and good health!


from Sue and Alvin Winestock




Shana Tovah from Dan, Deb and Sandra at Alberta Jewish News

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from Stacie & Hartley Perlmutter and family

Wishing family & friends all the best for this New Year!

from Tulane Rolinger

A happy and sweet New Year to all!


from Aubrey and Draytin Rogerville

לשנה טובה תכתבו

from Mona & Dan Rosenberg

Wishing friends & family all the best for this New Year!


from Lisa Redmond, Ron Sorokin and family

Wishing friends & family all the best for this new year!

from Natalie & Ken Soroka

A happy and sweet New Year to all!


from Esther & Howard Starkman and family



שנה טובה ואכילת

Wishing family & friends all the best for this new year!

from the Soifer Family

Wishing family & friends all the best for this new year!

from Esther Sklofsky



Wishing the entire community a Happy New Year and Shana Tova Umetukah!

from Rebecca, Shane, Aliza, Daniella & Caleb Asbell



# Extremely rare 2000-year-old coin returned to Israel in an official ceremony

Following a transcontinental intelligence operation by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) and the Antiquities Trafficking Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney's office in New York, the US has returned to Israel an extremely rare coin, the fourth of its kind known in the world, which was stolen and smuggled out of Israel years ago. It is a quarter shekel coin made of silver, from the fourth year of the Jewish Great Revolt (66-73 CE).

The ceremony took place on September 12, at the office of the Manhattan District Attorney, in the presence of the director of the Israel Antiquities Authority Eli Eskozido, Consul General of Israel in New York Asaf Zamir, The Israeli Ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, The Manhattan District Attorney, Mr. Alvin Bragg, and Homeland Security Deputy Special Agent in Charge, Mr. Mike Alfoso.

The Roman Empire had granted local rulers limited permission to mint bronze coins, according to the client rulers' respective degrees of importance and how close they were to the central government. Minting silver coins was a much more limited privilege granted to lesser number of more important and central cities.

"Because of this, the minting of silver coins by the leaders of the Great Revolt was in fact a declaration of independence by the Jews in the land of Israel, a statement against the mighty empire that stood before them. Many of the rebels' silver coins were struck over imperial silver coins, covering the emperor's face with Jewish motifs. This gave the coin a much greater symbolic value than the monetary value of the coin itself," explained Ilan Hadad, archaeologist and inspector in charge of commerce at the Antiquities Theft Prevention Unit (ATPU) of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Quarter Shekel coins from the fourth year of the revolt have not previously been found in situ in archaeological excavations. One similar coin was acquired in the 1930s by the British Museum, and about three more unofficially "circulate" in the antiquities black market and among various collectors.

In 2002, Palestinian antiquities looters unearthed a hoard of coins from the period of the Great Revolt, in the Elah Valley area. Among the coins in the hoard was a quarter shekel made of silver from 69 CE — a year before the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

The Israel Antiquities Authority spent the next two decades attempting to locate the coin, during which time it passed through illicit antiquities markets in Israel, Jordan and the United Kingdom. In London, false provenance papers were prepared to export the Quarter Shekel from the UK to the US, where it was offered for sale at the Heritage Auction's World Coins & Ancient Coins Signature Auction scheduled for August 3, 2017, in Denver, Colorado.

Earlier this year, the case was passed to Colonel Matthew Bogdanos, Chief of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's Antiquities Trafficking Unit (ATU). Working closely together, the Israeli Antiquities Authority and the ATPU developed sufficient evidence to execute a seizure warrant for the coin and received a court order repatriating the coin to Israel.

The investigation was conducted by Supervising Investigative Analyst Apsara Iyer, Investigative Analysts Daniel Healey and Hillary Chassé, and Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent Megan Buckley, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Matthew Bogdanos, Chief of the Antiquities Trafficking Unit and Senior Trial Counsel. Investigative support was provided by Ilan Hadad and Eitan Klein of the Israel Antiquities Authority, Shaaban Abdel Gawad of Egypt's Ministry of Antiquities, Detective Constable Sophie Hayes of New Scotland Yard, Aktham Oweidi of Jordan's Department of Antiquities, and Homeland Security Investigations in both Tel Aviv and Denver. Afeef Herzalla also provided assistance and cooperation with this investigation.

According to Bogdanos: "Today's repatriation to Israel of this extraordinary coin represents a cherished piece of history finally going home. But it also represents an equally extraordinary partnership between New York's Antiquities Trafficking Unit and the Israeli Antiquities Authority. It is a partnership that should be used as a model in recovering pillaged cultural heritage around the world."

At an official and state restitution ceremony held

today at the Manhattan District Attorney's office in New York, Israel Antiquities Authority Director Eli Eskosido said, "This is a historic achievement for the State of Israel and for the preservation of its cultural heritage assets, as this is only the second time they were ever looted and smuggled out of Israel that they were returned to the state. This is the beginning of a very positive and important trend for the restoration of cultural heritage assets."

Ambassador Asaf Zamir, Consul General of Israel in New York, expressed that "this singular artifact is a stark reminder of the Jewish people's millennia-old connection to the land of Israel. We

thank the IAA and the DA's office for restoring this priceless coin to its rightful home."

Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, said in his speech: "As Israel's Ambassador to the UN, this event is especially important to me because the Palestinians are working at the UN to hide the history of our people and erase our connection to the Land of Israel. But no matter how many lies are spread, the truth cannot be erased and the truth is laid out here this evening for all to see. This coin is evidence of the eternal bond between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel, and as Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, I can also utilize it in my mission to fight the lies of our enemies."



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