



ALBERTA

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## Stay informed and stay connected

By Judy Zelkowitz



Judy Zelkowitz

When we look at our calendars – especially that darkest of recent days, Saturday, October 7, 2023 – it's hard to imagine that that now-infamous date is part of a millennia-long continuum.

About 2,200 years ago, the Maccabean Revolt against the Greeks controlling Judea succeeded in the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. From this ancient victory, we celebrate Chanukah, lighting candles over eight nights to honour our brave ancestors then and those who have followed.

Now, more than two millennia later, we call on the Israeli Defence Force to protect Israel from Hamas who, on October 7, murdered 1,400 (mostly) civilians, injured 5,400, and abducted 230+ elderly women, men, children, and other civilians. Since that day, 170,000

Israelis have had to flee their homes and all in the entire country are living under constant threat of thousands of indiscriminately fired rockets launched by Hamas from Gaza.

Operation Iron Swords is the Israeli response fighting for the safety of its people and, in fact, for its very existence. Is it Israel's right to defend itself? Yes. But it's much more than that. It is Israel's *obligation* to its citizens, as it would be any country's that wants to call itself a state.

This operation, so necessary and yet so treacherous both on the ground and in the world of public opinion, has been used as an excuse for a disgusting surge in anti-Israel and – let's be truthful – *anti-Jewish* rhetoric, threats, anarchy, and vandalism. We've seen this before, in the May 2021 Gaza War and its aftermath, and we are seeing it again, only now the campaigns are emboldened and expanded by years of online Jew-hate that has made its way from the fringes to the centre.

What can we do? As descendants of the Maccabees – and generations more of intrepid survivors – we can rally, finding strength and comfort in our collective calls for civility, tolerance, and bedrock Canadian values.

We can stay informed and stay connected.

We can, as thousands young and old across Canada have done already, donate to our local federation's emergency campaigns supporting Israelis. How proud we can be that Canada's diaspora has already raised

more than \$100 million in response to the emergency. Federations have already sent millions to support victims of terror, evacuees, and those in need.

We can say something if we see something. CIJA tracks hate-based incidents at [cija.ca/report\\_hate](http://cija.ca/report_hate). If you witness an antisemitic incident, report as many details as you can remember and, if it's safe to do so, take pictures. If there is a threat or a crime, contact your local police. Many have officers specializing in this kind of report.

Just as we honour our forebears who protected our lives, our culture, and our values, we will honour those who were injured or died on October 7. We will keep the Canadians who lost their lives in our hearts and remember their bravery in saving the lives of others.

At our *Antisemitism: Face It, Fight It* conference in mid-October, most among the 1,000+ attendees were Jewish. But hundreds were not. We are not alone in fighting antisemitism.

As we light our *Chanukiah* candles this year, let us celebrate the courage of those who went before us, of those who served us in sacrifice over thousands of years and let's ensure that those protecting Israel now feel our support and our gratitude. Let us be the light!

Wishing you and yours a joyful, meaningful Chanukah.

*Judy Zelkowitz is CIJA, Vice President, University and Local Partner Services*

## Op/ed: Social media has become unhinged

By Lior Zaltzman

(JTA) — It was a slow trickle, each long press of the finger and ensuing quick tap was days and sometimes weeks apart (it's hard to comprehend that a whole month has passed since Oct. 7), but I am here to tell you that I — a former social media manager — have removed each and every social media app from my phone.

In fact, as I was writing this very essay, I realized I still had Threads downloaded, opened it for a minute, saw a Thread that said "Zionism is antisemitism," and promptly deleted that, too.

I have zero desire to restore a single one of them.

What happened to me has probably happened to you, too. I saw a Tweet, a TikTok, an Instagram Story that filled me with such fury and indignation that I spent hours — sometimes days — formulating and

reformulating an epic, fact-based, emotionally charged, imagined response. Imagined, of course, because I knew I'd never post it. I've seen so many celebrities and random acquaintances do such utterly embarrassing and harmful and reputation-destroying things in the last weeks to even dare to try.

And to be clear: I would try if I thought I could change someone's mind and force them to see my

*Continued on page 4*



FANTASYLAND  
HOTEL



# It's official: Israel approves deal with Hamas to free at least 50 hostages in exchange for pause in fighting

By Philissa Cramer and Ben Sales

(JTA) — When it attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing 1,200 people and wounding thousands, Hamas also took an estimated 240 people hostage. Following weeks of breathless advocacy, protest and anxiety that spread across the world, some of those captives are about to be released in a deal between Israel and Hamas.

The hostages range from Israeli soldiers to the elderly to small children. The deal announced on Nov. 21 will free children, women and some of the oldest hostages in exchange for women and youths held by Israel on national security charges and would trigger a pause in the war between Israel and Hamas. It would be Israel's first prisoner exchange with Hamas in more than a decade and by far the largest in history.

The agreement is a milestone in what has become a worldwide campaign, led by the captives' relatives, to raise awareness of their plight and push for their release. The movement has seen cities across the globe papered with posters bearing the hostages' faces and names (many of which have been taken down) and empty Shabbat dinner tables set up from Tel Aviv to New York City's Times Square to represent the captives. A call to release the hostages was a central demand of the rally that brought more than 200,000 Jews to a rally in Washington, D.C. last week.

And the deal may be just the first stage in ongoing negotiations to bring the six-week-old war to an end. Here's what you need to know about the impending agreement, what it might mean and what we still don't know.

## How many hostages will be released and who are they?

Under the reported deal, 10 to 12 hostages will be released each day during the initial pause, likely starting on Friday. Afterward, Hamas can extend the truce by releasing an additional 10 hostages a day. Up to 80 hostages could be released.

The first tranche of hostages to be released will include children held by Hamas — a number Israel



On Oct 25, Edmontonians rallied for the safe return of the hostages. Photo Jewish Federation of Edmonton.

estimates at 40. They include a 10-month-old baby and his 4-year-old sister, Kfir and Ariel Bibas; Abigail Mor Idan, 3, a U.S. citizen who is being held without anyone else in her family; Emily Hand, whose parents first believed her to be dead and who just turned 9 in captivity; Erez and Sahar Kalderon, whose grandmother and cousin were murdered; and Yigal Yaakov, 13, who appeared in a hostage video released earlier this month.

Israel reportedly pressed hard for mothers to be released with their children, and Israeli reports suggest that demand is being met. Elderly women who are held hostage are also expected to be released as part of the deal.

## What about the rest of the hostages?

About a month ago, Hamas released two women, ages 79 and 85; the husband of one of them is still being held by Hamas. Hamas also released an American mother and daughter last month. Neither of those releases was subject to an agreement with Israel. Israel rescued one hostage, a soldier, on Oct. 30.

In addition, some of the hostages are known to have died after being taken captive. Others were severely

injured before being abducted to Gaza. The condition and location of the remaining hostages may not easily be known. Even those who are alive could be hard to find, in a region where the vast majority of people have been displaced since Oct. 7.

Some of the hostages are soldiers and do not appear to be represented in the deal at all. It also appears that adult men who are not soldiers are not set for imminent release.

Notably, the deal applies only to Israeli hostages. Perhaps dozens of the hostages are foreign nationals who were in Israel as guest workers, including Thai and Filipino citizens and students from Tanzania. (One of them, Clemence Matanga, died in Gaza.) Hamas also took about a dozen U.S. citizens hostage, though most if not all hold Israeli citizenship as well.

Some hostages are not in Hamas' control. Hostages were held by three different terrorist groups in Gaza: Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and a smaller militia. Negotiations have involved only Hamas, which controls Gaza. According to Israeli reports, only 30 of the estimated 40 child hostages are being held by Hamas.

*Continued on page 22*

## What is the meaning of Am Yisrael Chai? עם ישראל חי

By My Jewish Learning

Am Yisrael Chai, literally “the people of Israel live,” is a slogan of Jewish continuity and resilience frequently invoked in moments of communal hardship. The phrase is said to have originated with a British Jewish army chaplain who reportedly called it out at the liberation of Bergen-Belsen after World War II. But the phrase is widely known today thanks to a song composed by Shlomo Carlebach with that title, which became an anthem of the fight to liberate Soviet Jewry.

The story of the song's origin is reportedly found in a 2003 letter from Jacob Birnbaum, who founded the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry in 1964. Birnbaum was seeking a song to inspire activists at a major rally scheduled for April 1965 opposite the Soviet mission

to the United Nations and reached out to Carlebach, who was by then developing an international reputation as a composer and recording artist. Carlebach wound up writing the song and performing it for the first time while on a trip to Prague.

After the New York demonstration, the song became an anthem and the words themselves a rallying cry, chanted at virtually every major Jewish political gathering in the decades that followed. News reports record it being shouted at rallies in 1975 protesting the U.N. vote to equate Zionism with racism and to allow the Palestinian Liberation Organization to participate in a U.N. debate. It was chanted when then Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir received an honorary degree from Yeshiva University in 1973 and when Israeli and Soviet basketball teams faced off in Moscow in 1989. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wrote it in the visitors book

during his 2009 visit to the Wannsee Villa in Berlin where the leaders of the Third Reich planned the Holocaust.

The words themselves appear nowhere in Jewish scriptural sources. But the second half of Carlebach's song, *od avinu chai* (“our father still lives”), is derived from a story in Genesis in which Joseph, having revealed himself to his brothers, asks if their father is still alive (*ha'od avi chai*). In Carlebach's rendering, that question is turned into a statement.

The words have also been associated with the reprisal attacks against Palestinians known as “price tag attacks,” with the phrase scrawled on property and buildings in Palestinian towns in response to attacks on Jews. But for most Jews, the words are an affirmation of Jewish endurance in the face of oppression.

  
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# A meditation for Chanukah 5784



Rabbah Gila Caine

By Rabbah Gila Caine

Chanukka's fire turns our mind back to the Menorah in the depths of the Mikdash (temple in Jerusalem). That fire was extinguished by the Romans almost two thousand years ago, but we discovered that sacred fire isn't tied to place. It is tied to peoplehood - and

we carried that sacred fire into every synagogue we built, into every Jewish family as women became priestesses of their homes and lit the Shabbat candles. And we proclaim this sacred fire every year at Chanukah as our Chanukkiyot echo the long lost Menorah. With this fire we are reminded that even though the *Mikdash* was physically destroyed, the fire within it was saved and spread with us across the world and over many generations.

Fire is energy and therefore power, which is why Shabbat candles are considered to bring so much strength and resilience. So too the candles we light at Chanukah.

But, the Chanukah candles contain an additional layer to the story of resilience, they add the understanding that we can rededicate that which has been destroyed. They hold within them the powerful magic of rebuilding from ruins, of containing the fires

of war and hate and transforming them into flames of light and joy. And so, the essential miracle of Chanukah is the potential for transforming war into peace, sacrilege into the sacred, and pain into healing.

The question this year is, how do we go about harnessing the power of this fire and performing the miracle and moving away from sadness to celebration?

Here is a short meditation I wrote which you are welcome to use after lighting your candles during the festival nights, or at any time you feel powerless to bring about a change for good in our society.

## A meditation on the Power of the Chanukah candles

Look into a flame of the *Shamash* (the one candle we light on all nights)

You can close your eyes or keep them open and focused on the flame

Notice your breathing

Inhale and imagine as oxygen moves into your lungs and from there around your body

Exhale and imagine as CO2 leaves your body to mingle back with the air around you

Imagine a place that is sacred for you.

Walk towards that place, enter and move into its deepest part

You will find a small table in the darkest corner of that place

On the small table you will see a clay bowl

Within the bowl you see a small, strong flame burning.

Watch the flame

Listen to the flame

Feel the heat of the flame

This is the soul of Creation



Look around and notice a Firekeeper: the person or creature who keeps this fire alive.

The Firekeeper touches the fire and hands you a flame

The flame moves into you.

You feel the flame in your body

Notice where you feel energised

The Firekeeper hands you two Hebrew words:

*Zachor* (remember) - remember you carry the sacred fire of creation

*Shamor* (guard) - use the sacred fire to protect creation

You thank the Firekeeper and move out of the space

Notice your breathing while you exhale and inhale

Open your eyes (if they are shut) and notice the *Shamash* candle.

Breathe out.

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

## Op/ed *Cont. from page 2*

humanity, but beyond the small, intimate, personal conversations that I can have off the apps, I feel like these enraged indignant responses only seem to silo people further.

I've worked in social media since 2014 — in the Jewish realm of social media, specifically. That means I've seen a lot of awfulness, gas chamber memes, overt antisemitism and Islamophobia. I've personally been told many times to go back where I came from (which, yes, is Israel, and that feels grimly funny now). Yet I've also believed in its power to heal, to make people feel seen, to energize activism, to educate.

I still believe that — kind of? But I've also never seen it this awful, this polarizing, this ... honestly, unhinged. An unscientific poll of people I know seems to indicate the same thing: Social media is the worst it's ever been, maybe because the Israel/Palestine conversation has always been so impossibly polarizing.

People are so stuck in their "side" and binary that they're willing to share anything — without fact-checking, without making sure they're not getting in bed with people whose worldview is dangerous, without asking themselves for a small second, wait, is this Islamophobic? Antisemitic? Completely detached from reality? Without wondering if they sound like a

conspiracy theorist, or if they're just being cruel for cruelty's sake.

And the amount of words wasted on misinformation and meanness doesn't even compare to the number of words some people insist on putting into other people's mouths (or keyboards, rather) when their statement doesn't 100% pass whatever standards they've arbitrarily decided it must. Beyond Israel and Palestine, we've been tearing ourselves apart inside our Jewish community, and that also breaks my heart.

I understand the deep grief and rage behind most posts. I've been enraged and grieving myself. I've been scared too: Of the growing antisemitism. Of the people who tell me that I and my family, because we were born in Israel, can't be innocent civilians, that we all deserve the horrors of Oct. 7 to befall on us.

I've also been scared for the life of every innocent person lost and about to be lost. Around 1,200 Israelis killed, 300 kidnapped, over 10,000 Palestinian lives believed to have been taken, all unfathomable numbers. And I've been scared about the cycle of rage and violence and siloed indignation that removes the humanity of a whole swath of people. Because I do believe that that's part of what got us here. And I keep seeing it evinced, over and over again, on social media.

I am — unlike many "experts" newly minted by numbers of followers or magnitude of chutzpah — not an expert of Middle Eastern politics, despite being

Israeli and working in Jewish media for almost a decade. I know a lot, but I am not a politician or historian. And yet, to the extent I believe that there is a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I believe that it has to be one that takes into account the inherent humanity of all those involved. I believe that it will be human and imperfect.

I'm awed by the people who are still managing to use social media for good right now, the little spots of light — people who parse through history and reality with wisdom and empathy, well-educated veteran observers of Israel and Palestine, academics, journalists, fierce activists, who, through immense pain, still manage to retain their humanity.

Yet for me, I've realized being on social media is doing more harm than good. It's keeping me further away from solutions and useful action, and closer to rage and fear. So for now, I can't stay there.

This essay originally appeared in Kveller.

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of JTA or its parent company, 70 Faces Media.*

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from Temple Beth Ora*



# Parents & teens: When Jewish families fight over Israel

By Rabbi Daniel S. Brenner

(JTA) — Most of my friends in Jewish circles are parents of teens or college students. We are liberal, tolerant, open-hearted folks, who jokingly call ourselves “NPR Jews.” We have Israeli friends, and we are watching in horror at a world in which it is once again fashionable, in liberal circles and on college campuses, to justify the murder and kidnapping of Jewish children — this time, because they were born in Israel. This new wave joins the rise of Jew-hate/Israel-hate in MAGA circles and the white supremacist anti-Jewish tropes parroted by celebrities like Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Elon Musk.

While we lament the bloodshed of all people, we sympathize instinctually with our fellow Jews in Israel. We continue to advocate for a peaceful, long-term solution for both Israelis and Palestinians, but we know that Israel sometimes has to fight for its security. And while we ourselves have been critical of the Israeli government, at times deeply, we see too many others crossing the line from harsh criticism to double standards to outright demonization and antisemitism.

Our kids, meanwhile, are absorbing other messages. Yes, they see bad actors spreading misinformation and influencers fawning over the words of Osama bin Laden. But they also see images that activate the very values we helped instill in them: tolerance, inclusion and compassion. Daily footage of Palestinians, often children, who are caught in the crossfire of this war, demands their compassion. Clips of Israeli leaders who speak about Palestinians as “animals” or “Amalekites” provoke their outrage. Their parents’ laments about Jewish vulnerability are hard to square with hourly evidence of Israeli military power.

So, these last weeks have brought new questions:

When a teen tells us that we should stop worrying about antisemitism, how should we react? Should we push back and criticize them for not taking this seriously, or let them blissfully pretend that we are not living during a surge of hate?

What if teens are actively promoting, from a place of compassion and solidarity, only arguments that are anti-Israel or pro-Palestinian? How do we make sure that they are hearing Israeli voices on these issues and that they balance their critique with some clarity about the challenge of taking sides with those who wish to destroy us?

And what if our teens are justifying the terror of Hamas as a righteous form of armed resistance, as some Jewish students are doing on college campuses?

Just as the Passover seder calls on us to differentiate how we are to answer four types of children, these questions present us with a multi-layered pedagogic

challenge.

I had the opportunity last week to speak with a New York-based therapist and parent coach, Dr. Julie Hirschfeld, about these questions in preparation for a webinar we hosted for parents of teens at Moving Traditions. Here are five of her insights (in bold) and my own reflections on why these insights are important right now for parents of teens.

## 1. “Be aware of how the war is putting a strain on your relationships.”

This may seem obvious, but as a parent, I know that it is easy to overlook how stress outside of the home manifests as stress in the home. The more time I take reading and watching coverage of the war and the antisemitism perpetrated in its wake, the less present I am to my family. If your teen resists talking with you about the war, it may be because they feel that the crisis is a threat to your ability to care for, nurture and protect them. To counter this, parents can pay attention to their teen’s well-being and find time to do things that they enjoy doing together. Hirschfeld talked about “finding time for normalcy” and connecting through Shabbat rituals or other ways that you can slow down together. Even if this is an obvious point, it is worth repeating.

## 2. “Don’t assume that your teen understands your connection to Israel.”

This is something that I am learning every day. When I think of my own connection to Israel, I recall the personal stories of those who found refuge in Israel after the displacement of millions of Jews after World War II and after the rise of Arab nationalist movements. I remember my first trip to Israel as a teen, connecting with my extended family there, and



studying and living there during my college years. I met incredible Israelis and Palestinians working side by side to build a future based on coexistence and respect. And I remember former Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres and their visions of peace. Indeed, many of the hostages being held in Hamas tunnels are people who devoted their lives to those visions.

But our teens and young adults have come of age at a very different time. Israel has been labeled by their peers as a colonizer and white-supremacist oppressor. And since Rabin’s assassination, openly racist political and religious leaders within Israel have energized a Jewish supremacist vision, one that has a platform within the current government.

Since we cannot assume that our teens understand our connection to Israel, this crisis is a good moment to make time for you and your teen to share a walk, a

*Continued on page 18*

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# The dual spirit of Hanukka in our days



By Rabbi Guy Tal

The grandeur of the Maccabees infuses the magnificent days of Hanukka. These tales continue to inspire generations of Jews, embodying the miraculous dual nature of this beautiful holiday – the victory of the few and the

weak, and the miracle of the little curse of oil. In our mind's eye, we envision those holy priests emerging from the temple, armed with swords and faith, fighting for the freedom of their people. Additionally, the power of Divinity is revealed through the overt miracle of the unceasing flame of burning oil. In dark days of exile, hardship, and suffering, in the heart of the gloomiest days of winter, Hanukkah became a source of light “and hope.

Now, we have returned to our ancient beloved land, and the valor of the Maccabees is rediscovered in the battle fields and in the heroisms of the underground resistance (“Machtarot”), the Israel Defense Forces and the other security forces, as well as the determination and dedication of the pioneers and the rest of the Jewish people. Once again, Israel has regained its independence and the Maccabean spirit lives within us. The overt miracle, breaking the laws of nature, is yet to be witnessed, but we believe it will come in due time, as the prophet has promised: “I will show him wondrous deeds, as in the days when you sallied forth from the land of Egypt.” (Micha 7:15). Very soon in our days, we hope and pray to see the lights burning in the courtyards of G-d’s sacred temple, witnessing the restoration of worship in G-d’s Holy Beit Mikdash in Jerusalem.

Yet, like every Jewish holiday, we celebrate not only

the past but also the present. The spiritual power that led to the Exodus from Egypt is renewed each year on the 15th of Nissan, as we gather around the Passover table, internalizing the value of the creation of the Jewish people and the essence of freedom. Each year, on Rosh Hashanah, we are reborn with renewed powers for creation and progress, given to us because we were all made in the image of G-d, He, who created the entirety and gave us that power. The same principle goes for other holidays and festivals.

Similarly, on Hanukkah, the spirit of the Maccabees is rekindled, and we draw from the energy that appeared in the world at that moment. This energy divides into two, just as the miracle is twofold, with values doubled. Two that are one, “G-d has spoken once, twice have I heard this.” (Psalms 62:12), connected and bound to each other.

The miracle of victory instills in the nation the spirit of “Gevura” - strength and heroism. After years of long exile where bravery manifested in the miraculous ability to survive, starting anew after another destruction and persecution, and the victory of existence and life emerging from difficulties and hate, our time has come to display the “Gevura” in the strength of battle and the defeat of the enemy. For too long, we allowed our enemies to harm us with our honest and relentless persecution after peace, but when the time comes, the old blessing of our ancient father emerges again: “Yehuda is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up? (Genesis 49:9) and as the psalmist has declared “I have pursued my enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn back till they were consumed” (Psalms 18:38).

The miracle of the oil pot reveals in the world the energy of “Tahara”, purity. What does purity mean? Our great teacher, Maimonides, explained: “It is a clear and apparent matter that the concepts of purity and impurity are Scriptural decrees and they are not matters determined by a person’s understanding and they are included in the category of “chukim” (Divine decrees without explanation). Similarly, immersion in a mikveh to ascend from impurity is included in the category of chukim, because impurity is not mud or filth that can be washed away with water...”

Although it is a Scriptural decree, there is an allusion involved: One who focuses his heart on purifying himself becomes purified once he immerses, even though there was no change in his body. Similarly, one who focuses his heart on



purifying his soul from the impurities of the soul, which are wicked thoughts and bad character traits, becomes purified when he resolves within his heart to distance himself from such counsel and immerse his soul in the waters of knowledge. As Ezekiel 36:25 states: “I will pour over you pure water and you will be purified from all your impurities and from all your false deities, I will purify you.” “

The spirit of purity blows in the world during the days of Hanukkah, and we receive from it a fresh and purified energy, cleansing ourselves from wicked thoughts, bad character traits, lowly inclinations, discord, and baseless hatred, reconnecting to our essence and our values.

And the Tahara gives us the Gevura. Strength and heroism come from our faith in the righteousness of our path, which becomes clear as crystal when the “Tahara” overlaps us. Then we can overcome our enemies with one hand and build ourselves, our state, and our redemption with the other, like in the days of Nehemiah: “They who built the wall, and they who bore burdens, loaded themselves in such a way that with one of his hands each laboured in the work, and with the other hand he held a weapon (Nehemiah 4:11).”

May it be that in these Hanukkah days, we will witness great salvations and redemptions and the spirit of strength and purity will prevail over us and all of Israel. Amen.

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

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Alberta Minister of Education Demetrios Nicolaides and MLA Shane Getson, with members of the Alberta Jewish community. Holocaust Education is mandated into the province's new curriculum.

## Alberta announces mandatory Holocaust Education in new curriculum

Surrounded by members of the Edmonton Jewish community and leadership from both the Edmonton and Calgary Jewish Federations, Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaides announced that the Alberta government has mandated Holocaust education as part of the province's new social studies curriculum.

Minister Nicolaides made the announcement on November 9 prior to the Kristallnacht commemoration at Beth Israel Synagogue in Edmonton. Kristallnacht, also called Night of Broken Glass or November Pogroms, refers to the night of November 9–10, 1938, when the Nazi parties in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia spurred violent mobs to attack Jews and Jewish property including synagogues, Jewish businesses and homes.

"This announcement comes at a time when antisemitism has spiked across Canada and around the world. It is crucial that the next generations learn about how hate surfaces. Whether it's distortion of Holocaust history or misinformation about Hamas' terrorist attacks, both are rooted in antisemitism, and today's announcement demonstrates that the Alberta government is dedicated to fight hate in all its forms," says Stacey Leavitt-Wright, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton.

"Creating an antiracist society starts at the school age level and Holocaust education is an important tool in helping our students learn about the underlying ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping. What is happening in our society today is an important warning around the need to teach the universal lessons of the Holocaust, and the consequences of bigotry and hate. We applaud the province for helping to ensure that our youth will not only learn from, but keep the memory of the Holocaust alive," says Adam Silver, CEO of Calgary Jewish Federation.

"I firmly believe we must do everything possible to combat rising antisemitism and educate young Albertans about the horrors of the Holocaust. Ensuring all students learn from one of history's darkest chapters will help us confront hate and prevent similar atrocities from occurring," says Minister Nicolaides.

Alberta Education is in the process of engaging with education partners, curriculum specialists and teachers on the development of new K-12 social studies curriculum. As part of this process, Alberta Education will engage with the Calgary Jewish Federation, Jewish Federation of Edmonton and other Jewish organizations. Feedback from these engagement activities will be used to solidify when and where students learn about the Holocaust in draft social studies curriculum before it is released for further engagement.

"Education is crucial to ensuring our children learn the lessons of the past and are ready to stand up against hate today. Implementing mandatory Holocaust education will create a safer Alberta for all. We want to thank Premier Danielle Smith, Minister Nicolaides, and the Alberta Government for supporting the Jewish community and fighting antisemitism and hate," says Shimon Koffler Fogel, CEO, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

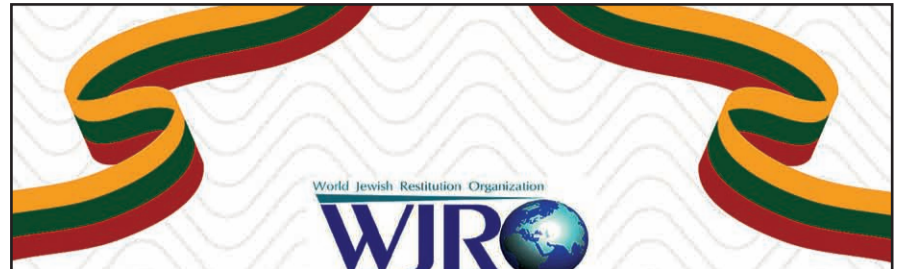
"The Official Opposition supports the confirmation that Holocaust education will be part of the social studies curriculum review and that Jewish community groups will be part of that process, stated Rakhi Pancholi, Edmonton-Whitemud MLA and opposition critic for Alberta NDP.

"The history of the Holocaust is mandatory in the current senior high school social studies curriculum. In 2018, the Alberta NDP began a process to expand Holocaust education in the curriculum, and we continue to support that expansion. The persecution and murder of 6 million Jews by Adolph Hitler and the Nazis is a singular evil in world history. We must always guard against attempts to deny or distort this history. Young people must be educated about these terrible crimes to ensure they never happen again."

Alberta is one of the foremost leaders in Canada to stepping up against hate, especially antisemitism. The adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism in September 2022 was the first step. A firm commitment to action is being demonstrated by having Holocaust Education be mandated as part of the curricula and ensures this history will never be forgotten.

Calgary Jewish Federation and the Jewish Federation of Edmonton have been providing educational opportunities and programs for over 20 years and look forward to contributing to the development and implementation of these new curricula.

The decision makes Alberta the third province in Canada to announce mandatory Holocaust education. Last month British Columbia's Minister of Education announced the inclusion of mandatory Holocaust education in the province's K-12 curriculum. Ontario took this step in September for its Grade 6 curriculum and supported the development of Unlearn It, a free, bilingual online resource hub for educators and parents to support children in grades 6-8 in learning about antisemitism, how to identify it, and act to address it.



Announcement by the  
**World Jewish Restitution  
Organization (WJRO)**

— regarding —  
**Compensation for Immovable  
Private Property in Lithuania  
Program**

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The exact amount to be distributed to each individual will be determined when the total number of approved applicants is known.



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**— December 31st, 2023 —**



For additional details, criteria, and application forms, please visit:  
**gvf.lt/en/payments**

WJRO is not involved in the implementation, administration, or application processing of these payments. For information or assistance please contact the Good Will Foundation directly.

# Talmud Torah educational update

By: Natalie Soroka

We are now beginning the third of our five-year year strategic plan, and we are excited to share the progress that has been made by Talmud Torah Society's (the Society) Education Committee in meeting two of our areas of focus: 1) ensuring and promoting high pedagogical and academic standards in Judaic and Hebrew Studies, and 2) meeting the needs of individual students.

In year one (2021-22), the Education Committee began the process of reviewing the current Hebrew Language Arts (HLA) and Judaic Studies (JS) program, by surveying other Hebrew day schools in Canada to determine what they were doing in this area. Information was gathered and it quickly became apparent that we needed some expertise in curriculum development to assist us with our review and revision process. We hired Judaic consultant Nurit Reshef, a former teacher and consultant with Edmonton Public Schools. Nurit was instrumental in writing the original HLA and JS curriculum.

During our program review it was determined that in order to provide consistency and continuity from one grade to the next, a common resource to teach Hebrew throughout the school was needed. In consultation with teachers, the Society purchased new HLA material for the 2022-2023 school year to be used school wide, and chose the iTaLAM program as its core resource. iTaLAM is a digital blended Hebrew language and Jewish heritage curriculum that is used in many day schools across the country.

In order to meet the needs of a broad spectrum of learners, the Society also provided critical funds for English literacy intervention and recruited volunteers to help students in grades 1 and 3 English Language Arts (ELA). This allowed one teacher to work with small groups of students to target their individual learning needs. The literacy intervention teacher was also able to work with students who benefited from extra academic challenges. The positive feedback we received from this program was overwhelming!

Progress continued into year two (2022-2023) with on average twice monthly meetings with teachers to discuss relevant topics and to collaborate as a team. A substitute teacher was hired (and paid for by the Society) to have one-on-one meetings with individual Hebrew teachers, which allowed the Education committee to gather information on what was being taught in each class.

Nurit worked on aligning the iTaLAM resources with the EPSB HLA Curriculum to add, details, topics

covered and a scope and sequence document based on the iTaLAM program. Scope and Sequence documents are a summary of what is taught, and include outcomes, objectives, and concepts that are being addressed, along with the order in which these will be taught. What has resulted from this work is a draft HLA Implementation Guide for K-2. Teachers in these early grades now have a manual available to help them determine specific content to teach, along with illustrative examples, suggestions and resources

Recognizing the success that the school had with the English intervention program the previous year, the Society continued to support this program while also providing critical funds for the school's Hebrew support program. Hebrew support started with a push-in model of instruction in the classroom, where two teachers were present in the class at the same time working with small groups of students. This was especially useful as the teachers had varying degrees of experience with the iTaLAM program, and this scenario allowed them to learn from each other. Over the course of the year, the support provided in each classroom varied and in some instances a pullout program was better suited due to the needs of the students.

To further supplement the Hebrew Program, Hebrew speaking volunteers were recruited to provide Hebrew enrichment activities to native Hebrew speakers, while other volunteers helped in Division 1 ELA. In March 2023, the Society provided funds for an additional teacher for English literacy in grades K-3. It was determined by the principal that the most effective use of these funds was to split the large grade 1 class for designated subjects.

The need for a more robust Kindergarten Hebrew program was also a committee priority, and the Education committee recommended that a Hebrew specialist be assigned to the KG program. As a result, Bianna Kuskin, who has an early childhood education degree and a great deal of experience with this age group was asked to teach the Hebrew portion of the program. Throughout the year, Bianna developed a program that introduced the *Alef Bet* to students using various learning activities, she used best early literacy practices to teach the students aspects about Hebrew phonological and phonemic awareness. Bianna created emergent booklets for the children



TT Society mascot Ari delighted the students by joining the kindergarten class for Shabbat. Photo TT Society.

to read and practice vocabulary words, as well as focusing on various concepts of print. All this information was compiled into a Kindergarten Implementation Guide, and is ready to be used in subsequent years. This program will give our students a great early foundation in Hebrew.


The Education Committee began the prayer review process by collecting resources on this topic. Important questions were discussed, such as *What are our goals and expected Learning Outcomes?* (i.e., Do we see prayer as an educational tool for connecting students with the Jewish people and tradition, or do we focus on prayer as a vehicle for forging a personal connection with God?).

One of the main goals of looking at the topic of prayer was to address the issue of spirituality and making prayer meaningful for all levels of observances. In constructing our draft Prayer Implementation Guide we adopted 3 approaches to *Tefillah* -- as character education; as a way to strengthen one's relationship with God; and as a way to connect to community and the Jewish People. This document reflects outcomes from the EPSB Judaic Studies Curriculum, along with a number of guiding questions. We included lists of the prayers in Hebrew for each grade and suggested resources and lesson plans for teaching each of the prayers. The teachers were eager to participate in this process, as it provided them with specific directions while also allowing them latitude in how the material could be presented. The Society also replaced the aging *Siddur Meforash* siddurim with new class sets of Koren Youth *siddurim* for grades 1-6. At the end of Grade 1, students receive this same siddur as a gift to take home.


Throughout the year, we met with Early Learning Centre administrative staff to discuss ways to create a foundational and robust Hebrew program in early childhood programs, as well as coordinate activities in order to maximize learning between the Kinderarts and Kindergarten programs.

To round off the year, grant money was secured in the amount of \$5,000, generously donated by the


*Continued on page 17*




## HAPPY HANUKKAH!



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light, love and a safe  
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Check out our community calendar at [jewishedmonton.org](http://jewishedmonton.org)

# The Hub

Your bridge to Jewish Edmonton



## A MESSAGE FROM BOARD MEMBER LISA MILLER

Having lived in Edmonton my entire life, I recall wonderful memories in community centres that go back to the old Talmud Torah site and the Hillcrest Jewish Community Centre (JCC). It's where friendships were formed, newcomers welcomed, and was teeming with activities and programs.

I have always believed in the importance of youth and teen programming, which is why I joined the board nine years ago. We decided to close the JCC with the promise to the community that we would find a new home and come back to the community to approve any new option.

The Jewish Federation of Edmonton has invested the proceeds, which has Canada Revenue Agency's approval for the sole purpose of a new JCC. Previous rounds of consultations and

negotiations culminated in an option at Talmud Torah that did not come to fruition. For the volunteers and leaders who spent copious hours on this process, it was decided to take a step back—and then COVID-19 was upon us. We continuously hear the clarion call for a new community space, a central address for "Jewish Edmonton" that meets the needs of a secular gathering space. While hearing from the community to develop our 2022-25 strategic plan, it was also a prominent issue.

I am proud of the diligent process the Facilities and Space Committee took in seeking a solution and recommendation to the board. The former Boy Scouts building on 109 Avenue and 142 Street is an exciting opportunity for our community. It is down to studs, so we have an open slate to work with

when we enter the design phase.

A bright and airy multipurpose room can easily be used for programming from movie nights, teen conventions, speaker series, drop-in play time and more. Jewish teens and young adults are facing increasing antisemitism, and having a space to strengthen their identity and connection is becoming increasingly important.

A space to welcome newcomers, connect the community and to even possibly have a Holocaust museum and resource centre are all possible with this new building. While the next phase will involve a design team and tendered process, we first have to decide that we want to have a community centre. Please come out on December 6 to have your say and to place your vote on this building.

Reach out to us on social media or by emailing [info@edjfed.org](mailto:info@edjfed.org).



### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND GENERAL MEETING OF THE FEDERATION

The Annual General Meeting of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, The Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton, and The Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation

Will be held on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 Commencing at 7 p.m.

Beth Shalom Synagogue 11916 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta

For the purpose of:

1. Reviewing the financial results for the fiscal year just ended.
2. Receiving an update on past activity.
3. Elections of slates of Directors for the organizations.
4. Amendment to the Society's bylaws.
5. To approve the purchase and acquire lands and buildings for the purpose of a Jewish Community Centre.

On behalf of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, the Nominating Committee and Board of Directors propose the following slate for election to the Board of

Directors:

- Benaron Gleiberman – Three-year term
- Ellery Law – Three-year term
- Lisa Miller – Three-year term
- Annika Zepp – Three-year term

Additional nominations must be made by three nominating Members and include the signature of the proposed nominee, who must also be a Member. Additional nominations may be made in writing and delivered to the Chief Executive Officer (in person) up to and including November 23, 2023. Please note that the bylaws do not allow for nominations from the floor. All nominations are as set out above.

Any Member who would like to add any additional business to be conducted at the Annual General Meeting may do so in writing to the Chief Executive Officer up to and including November 23, 2023. Any request must be endorsed by signature of 20 Members.

## Chanukah Together in Solidarity

Lighting menorahs for hostages



Save the date  
Thursday, December 14  
More details to come



DEADLINE EXTENDED

### Seeking young adults for Genesis Leadership Program

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Contact Jacqueline at [jmedalye@edjfed.org](mailto:jmedalye@edjfed.org) for more information.

Funded by the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund



## I Believe...

Please join us in supporting the 2023/24 UJA campaign to sustain thriving and secure Jewish life in Edmonton, Israel, and around the world.



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Co-Chair, United Jewish Appeal Campaign  
Clinical Biochemist  
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# Join TBO for an evening of theatre & klezmer: Dec. 2

Temple Beth Ora's special gala evening of theatre, live klezmer music and silent auction is around the corner! Join the community on December 2nd as TBO co-hosts with the UofA Drama department a celebration of theatre and music performance of Paula Vogel's Pulitzer award-winning play *INDECENT*, starring Edmonton's own Dov Mickelson and Elena Porter.

Against a canvas of historical upheaval, *INDECENT* unfurls the gripping narrative of Sholem Asch's audacious work, *GOD OF VENGEANCE*, a groundbreaking Broadway sensation that sent shockwaves a century ago in 1923.

Embark on a mesmerizing journey through the heart of Paula Vogel's *INDECENT*, an award-winning theatrical tour de force presented by Studio Theatre. Against a canvas of historical upheaval, *INDECENT* unfurls the gripping narrative of Sholem Asch's audacious work, *GOD OF VENGEANCE*, a groundbreaking Broadway sensation that sent shockwaves a century ago in 1923.

"*INDECENT*, Paula Vogel's remarkable play about a seminal work of Yiddish theatre, is many things: a portrait of a lesser known artist; a love story; a timely

look at homophobia, artistic freedom and censorship, including self-censorship; a tale of the Jewish diaspora and the Holocaust," writes reviewer Glenn Sumi, in *Toronto Now*. "But at its aching, beautiful heart it's a play about the transformative power of theatre itself."

Asch's play ignited a conflagration of passion among artists and audiences, shattering societal norms and artistic confines. With eloquence, Vogel's script weaves a rich tapestry of history, embracing themes of love, tradition, censorship, religious hypocrisy, and the unwavering quest for truth. In this timeless odyssey, audiences witness the unwavering strength of the human spirit. *INDECENT* stands as an indispensable experience that promises to uplift, challenge, and deeply resonate. Don't miss this profound exploration of art's eternal



Edmonton's own Elena Porter and Dov Mickelson are starring in "Indecent" playing at the Timm's Centre until Dec. 9.

resonance, a testament to its enduring ability to stir hearts and minds alike.

This special performance and gala event will be held on December 2 at the Timms Centre for the Arts at the University of Alberta. It includes a post-show celebration with live klezmer music, dessert, and a silent auction to benefit Temple Beth Ora.

Tickets are available now at [showpass.com/indecent](http://showpass.com/indecent). Use the code BETHORA to let them know you're a part of the gala.

# The miracle of Hanukkah

By Rabbi Russell Jayne



Rabbi Russell Jayne

This year, as we gather to celebrate the Festival of Lights, we find ourselves standing at the intersection of history, faith, and the many challenges that continue to confront us as a people. For us Jews of this modern era, grappling and struggling with the challenges of living and thriving in this world, Hanukkah has in many ways served as a guiding

star illuminating our path toward hope, resilience, and freedom. Yet, beyond the flickering flames and the warm glow of family and community, lies a profound wisdom that speaks to the essence of our faith and our connection with Divinity itself.

In our mystical tradition, the Hanukkah lights are seen as a metaphor for the *Aur Ein Sof*, the infinite divine light that pervades the whole universe, and is the source and energy that sustains and permeates every aspect of existence. Each candle we kindle represents a step in our journey toward understanding and connecting with that infinite light of the Divine. It is a reminder that even in times of darkness, we can be bearers of light, agents of hope, and instruments of divine love for all creation. When you kindle your Hanukkah lights, you are not merely commemorating a historical event but tapping into this eternal and boundless wellspring.

Our world, at the moment, seems overwhelmed by challenges and uncertainties. Yet, the Hanukkah lights beckon us to reflect on those miraculous moments in our lives when the divine light has shone brightly, dispelling the shadows of doubt and despair; and to be

beacons of compassion, justice, and kindness not just for our people, but still, for the whole world. They challenge us to confront both the darkness within ourselves and within society so that we may bring about a moment of positive change and healing that we all so desperately need.

My beloved community, I deeply pray that by embracing a mystical understanding of Hanukkah we may be guided on a path of both spiritual enlightenment and social responsibility. In the glow of our festival lights, may we be inspired to advocate for the release of those held hostage by oppressive forces, remembering that our commitment to justice and freedom is an integral part of our spiritual journey. May our hearts open to the infinite light of the Divine, allowing it to illuminate both our lives and the lives of those around us. In doing so, may we contribute to the ongoing miracle of Hanukkah, bringing warmth, hope, and healing to a world in need.

Rabbi Cantor Russell Jayne is the spiritual leader and Kol Bo at Calgary's Beth Tzedec congregation.

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# May Jewish peace activist Vivian Silver's memory be for a revolution

By Lior Zaltzman

(Kveller) - After 38 days of the most tenuous but persistent hope, Vivian Silver's family got the news that they would not be reunited with their loved one. The tenacious Canadian-Israeli peace activist was not being held hostage, as they believed, but instead, had been killed on that dreadful October 7 in which she spent hours hiding in her safe room in Kibbutz Be'eri.

In the past five weeks, many faces and stories have haunted me day in and day out; one of them was that of Vivian and her smile: in a field of anemones with her AJEEC (Negev Institute for Peace & Economic Development) co-founder Amal Elsana, smiling brightly; in a photo taken by the talented documentarian of Israeli history, Alex Faruri; marching with the grassroots peace organization she co-founded, Women Wage Peace, her eyes crinkling with a smile, draped in a symbolic scarf of light blue. In every picture I saw of Silver, she was fighting and smiling at the same time.

Aside from that smile, the reason Vivian Silver's story captured so many people who didn't know her during these past few weeks was that she was, through and through, a woman of peace. For many who have never lived through war, peace may be a word misconstrued for something naive or facile, but for activists fighting for peace on the ground, it is all about the fierce, Sisyphean, constant labor of the body and the mind. It is not popular or easy to keep fighting for peace in a land of constant conflict. Many have died on its altar, and in recent years, as political turmoil roils Israel from within, the word peace often feels like an endangered species. Yet to her final days, it kept falling and falling from Silver's lips.

Silver was born in Winnipeg, Canada, but her home was Israel. She moved there in 1974, helping to found the American-Israeli Kibbutz Gezer. Then she moved to Kibbutz Be'eri in the 1990s. She had two boys,

Yonatan and Chen, and four grandchildren. Her life was one of advocacy for human rights — aside from her work with AJEEC and Women Wage Peace, she was a board member at the human rights group B'Tselem; she fought for gender equality in kibbutzim; and she volunteered at Road to Recovery, driving patients in Gaza to hospitals in Israel.

While Silver was presumed a hostage, her son Yonatan Zeigen reminded the public of her desire to end the cycle of bloodshed and wars, and called for the ceasefire he believed she, too, would be fighting for.

On the morning of October 7, Zeigen was woken up by sirens. He was supposed to be in Be'eri for Simchat Torah with his mother, but instead, his family stayed back in their home in the center of the country. When he called his mother, she was in her safe room. Her bright spirit shone through as ever as she joked with him, even as the messages from Be'eri's WhatsApp group painted a dark picture of the massacre taking place. "She stayed with a sense of humor, and at the end there was a sharp drop of the understanding that this is the end," Zeigen told *Rishon Bet*.

"I'm telling everyone how much I love you and how I'm blessed to have you in my life," she told him that day.

"I'm with you," he texted her, and she responded with, "I feel you." A little before 11 a.m., the messages stopped. Silver's house had been completely incinerated. Barely a trace of it remained but for some old pottery on ashen ground. Her phone was still in the



Israeli-Canadian Peace Activist Vivian Silver was one of over 1200 people murdered by Hamas terrorists on October 7.

kibbutz. Zeigen was sure, after that text exchange, that it was all over — and yet, there was still no trace of her body. Since she was a foreign citizen, she was believed to be captured. Now we know that she never left Be'eri, and that the kibbutz she loved was her final resting place. Her remains had been recovered in that first week after the massacre, and yet it took this long for them to be identified. It is an ever present reminder of the fact that Israelis are still, literally, counting their dead, and of how the horrors of October 7 continue to reverberate, and probably always will.

Even in the days and hours before her death, Silver's work did not cease. On October 4, she marched in a rally with Women Wage Peace. On the day of the attack, she even got on air to talk about peace. "We'll talk more if I survive this," she told a radio host who she felt antagonized by.

So many words have been said about Vivian in the hours since her death was discovered. Yet I think we must give as much space for her own words as we can.

In an interview for the *Free Press* last year, in front of an idyllic background of dotted red flowers, Silver beseeched that "the violence, no matter what, it has

*Continued on page 26*

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# Jake Soifer uses his carpentry skills to help keep Israelis safe

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

Edmonton-born Israeli, Jacob (Jake) Soifer, his wife Yael, and their three children, Geshem, Elul, and Kerem, went to sleep on October 6 just as they normally would; they intended to spend a quiet Shabbat together. Jake and Elul would go to shul, just as they had done each week since he began preparing for his bar mitzvah. Jake, a professional carpenter, and business-owner in Kiryat Tivon, had been working hard all week on several large-scale construction projects, and the rest of the family eagerly awaited the arrival of loved ones from the Edmonton-based Soifer family travelling to Israel for the upcoming simcha in a few weeks' time. On the morning of October 7, Jake and Elul left for Shabbat services.

"We are accustomed to instability and upheaval," explained Jake in a recent phone interview with *Alberta Jewish News*. "When we left for shul, we knew that something had happened, but the scale of it wasn't really clear till after we got home. Then we started learning more about what was happening in real-time, and it was horrible. Everyone remembers where they were on 9/11. Our entire country stopped except for the security side of things," Jake explained somberly.

The family's discussions in the weeks leading up to October 7 were about caterers for Elul's bar mitzvah, and plans for excursions with the fifteen or so family members flying in from Canada. Now, the family found itself frozen with shock and horror. "Actually, we had been talking about the bar mitzvah so much, and then, all of a sudden, it didn't come up at all," remembered Jake.

Understandably, with so much destruction and uncertainty, grief and catastrophe, celebrations were not on anyone's mind. The family, Jake, Yael, and the children sheltered in place and tried to create a sense of calm and safety for the Soifer kids, the youngest only three.

Jake, who had earlier in the week been working to

build elegant cathedral ceilings and fancy pergolas, now found himself thinking about what he could do with the skills and resources available to him, to support his community and country. "There is always something happening here – it's life," Jake began, thoughtfully. "Then the stories started coming out. We started to hear about people who had gone into their saferooms..." Jake proceeded to explain that although buildings constructed after the 1990s in Israel are mandated to have a safe room (MAMAD), these were conceived with chemical warfare in mind. "These saferooms have been outfitted with proper ventilation, but they don't lock from the inside. They are actually designed to be opened from the outside in case a rescue team needs to release a family that has been incapacitated."

After a long pause, Jake continued: "We started to hear about people, families, that were under attack. They would try to find safety in their MAMAD, only to have to struggle to hold the door closed while Hamas aggressors continued to try to get in from outside. Some people were doing this for hours; some people weren't successful."

Jake knew of a way to easily make a MAMAD lockable from the interior. Those familiar with 'The Club,' a vehicle theft prevention device from a past generation, will understand the concept well. Jake was quick to clarify that the apparatus, which does not have an official name yet, is not his invention. However, as a carpenter, he is the ideal person to measure and outfit any MAMAD door with one of these custom-made boards to prevent the door from being opened from the exterior.

"It really is just a board," Jake emphasized humbly. "It's a piece of wood that is cut to fit the specific door, and it holds the handle firmly in place so that the MAMAD can be locked from the inside."

Upon returning to work, Jake posted on social media offering these security boards to anybody wishing to obtain one. "I wanted people to know that if they wanted one, all they needed to do was call." Jake hoped

to be clear, that these would be free of charge, and customized to fit each individual door.

"I've heard of these boards being sold," explained Jake. "But the sold ones are standard sizes, and so they aren't necessarily going to fit each door the way they are supposed to. Just a few millimeters of variation can mean the



Jake Soifer with his son at Elul's bar mitzvah in Israel on Oct. 19.

difference between the system working or not working, and we don't want to take that chance."

Initially, Jake thought that maybe a couple of dozen families in the area would contact him, but the outpour of requests was staggering. For ten days straight, two teams drove from house to house, measuring, custom fitting, and showing families how to install these boards. "I would tell everyone – I hope you never have to use this, hopefully one day you'll be able to throw it in the trash. But for now, there are older people, women at home with children while their husbands are away defending the country – these people need to be able to keep themselves safe."

To date, Jake and his team have outfitted over three hundred homes with these MAMAD security boards. He still gets some calls now, although the volume has slowed down. "We even fit some of these boards for public shelters in the area," said Jake. "It was interesting to see such differences in the saferooms we outfitted though. Some were extremely well stocked and prepared, and for other families, over time, the MAMAD had just turned into another room of the house. The government has a list of things that every MAMAD should be stocked with. Even though these boards aren't officially on the list, no home should be without one."

Providing this service free of cost was no small matter. It was not just the supplies that were needed, but the manhours, the transportation, the additional resources. Jake's siblings, who were already enroute to Israel at the time the attacks broke out started up a GoFundMe campaign while in Europe trying to figure out what to do. This made all the difference. "We could not have possibly accomplished the number of installations we did if it hadn't been for the generosity of donors," Jake emphasized.

*Continued on page 20*

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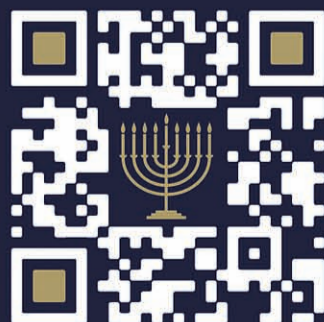
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# The Hanukkah merch market has exploded. Is that a good thing?

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) — Last November, Nicholas Wymer-Santiago walked into his local Target in Austin, Texas, and realized it was beginning to feel a lot like Hanukkah.

Instead of an endcap with a limited array of Hanukkah basics, as he had seen in past years, there stretched out a whole aisle of holiday products: pillows; dreidel-shaped pet toys; window decals; menorahs in the shape of lions, corgis and whales; and so much more. Even the \$5-and-under impulse-buys section filled with seasonal products had a supply of Hanukkah goods, including a Star of David-shaped bowl and a set of dishes labeled “sour cream” and “applesauce.”

“In a good way, it was overwhelming at first, because there’s so much and I kind of want to buy it all,” Wymer-Santiago recalled feeling as he stood in the holiday section, looking up at a large photograph of a Hanukkah celebration alongside others showcasing Christmas.

The higher education administrator at the University of Texas decided to limit himself, at first taking home just a tea towel and a matching mug printed with a Hanukkah motif.

“And then I came back twice, maybe three times and each time I bought more and more items that I know I probably don’t need,” he said. “I think I’ve just had so much excitement about the novelty of it all, and having the ability to purchase these items, many of which I’ve never seen before.”

Wymer-Santiago is hardly alone in loading his cart with Hanukkah merchandise. Across the United States, big-box stores appear to be stocking more Hanukkah products than ever — and while off-color items such as Hanukkah gnomes and “Oy to the World” dish towels have raised eyebrows, the real story might be that American retailers have decked their shelves with menorahs, tableware and other items that are appropriate, affordable and often downright tasteful.

For many American Jews, the result is a sense of inclusion at a time of unease — although some are wrestling with what it means to have access to a fast-fashion form of Judaica.

“It is very exciting to go into Target or Michaels or a Walmart and to see Hanukkah merchandise,” said Ariel Stein, an influencer who shares crafting and holiday content for Jewish families on Instagram, where she has more than 20,000 followers.

“The feeling is almost like pride and like we’re being seen and represented,” Stein added. “In a sea of Christmas ... it feels really great, even if it’s a much smaller representation, that the Jewish holiday is there also, and the Jewish community is being acknowledged and represented.”

The idea that retailers have stocked up on Hanukkah goods to make Jews feel represented is tempting, but it’s probably not the only reason for a shift in the market, according to Russell Winer, deputy chair of the marketing department at New York University’s Stern School of Business. He said that while an endcap — the small set of shelves at the end of an aisle — might sometimes be given over for symbolic purposes, the devotion of an entire aisle at the busiest time of the year is purely a business decision.

“These stores are very sophisticated in what they put in them,” Winer said. “They’re not going to put stuff on the shelves, especially at the holidays, if they don’t think they’re going to sell.”

There are signs that the Hanukkah market might be much wider than the proportion of Americans who identify as Jewish, 2.5%, would suggest. Numerator, a respected consumer trends polling firm, found in a survey of 11,000 consumers conducted in January 2022

that 14% of respondents said they were “definitely” or “probably” celebrating Hanukkah this year, compared to 96% for Christmas. More than half of the Hanukkah celebrants said they expected to spend more than \$50 on the holiday — suggesting that retailers can expect hundreds of millions of dollars in Hanukkah spending this year.

Part of that marketplace is the growing number of families in which Hanukkah is celebrated alongside other holidays, usually Christmas. Most American Jews who have married in the last decade have done so to people who are not Jewish, according to the 2020 Pew study of American Jews; most of them say they are raising their children exclusively or partly as Jews. They may want to have products that allow Hanukkah to share the stage equitably with the other celebrations in their family.

“I’m not terribly surprised from a cultural standpoint that there’s more merchandise,” said Winer, who is Jewish. He said he and his wife had purchased Hanukkah stockings for their grandchildren, who are being raised in two faith traditions.

Stein offered another theory to explain the uptick in interest in Hanukkah products: the fact that social media and Zoom meetings have made home lives more transparent than ever.

“The communal sharing of lives, whether you’re an influencer or even my friends on Facebook showing what their display is this year or taking a picture of a recipe they were really proud of, making latkes from scratch — there’s just more visibility than there has been in the past,” she said. “And that’s probably a factor.”

Whatever the reasons, shoppers are noticing. Like Stein and countless other Jewish influencers, Rabbi Yael Buechler, a devoted observer of Jewish consumer trends, has offered tours of Hanukkah merchandise to her social media followers. Wearing Hanukkah pajamas that she designed and sells, Buechler has posted videos to TikTok showcasing the Hanukkah collections of national retailers and assigns each store a “yay” or “nay” based on several metrics, including whether items display accurate Hebrew or appear to be generic blue-and-white items being passed off as made for the holiday. The videos, which have been viewed hundreds of thousands of times, have given her a broad view of what’s available to the Hanukkah consumer.

“I see a lot more products this year than any other year,” said Buechler, who works at a Jewish school outside New York City. “I see a lot of new prints. I see more creativity in the market. I see more humor in the market.”

Like Wymer-Santiago, Buechler said Target, which has 2,000 locations across the United States, stood out as offering the widest array of products and the lowest proportion of “fails,” or products that miss the mark religiously, culturally or aesthetically.

“They have really stepped it up,” Buechler said. “Target also carries the Nickelodeon ‘Rugrats’ Hanukkah sweatshirts that are just brilliant. ... I would definitely say they get the biggest ‘yay’ for this year.”

Target, which has a track record of using inclusive imagery in its advertisements and in-store promotions, declined to answer questions about its offerings, including how much bigger its Hanukkah collection is this year than in the past and how widely the products for Jewish buyers have been distributed. But a spokesperson said the feeling Wymer-Santiago and Stein described after visiting their local stores is

exactly what the company is trying to cultivate.

“Target is committed to creating an inclusive guest experience in which all guests feel represented,” the spokesperson wrote in an email. The spokesperson noted that Target’s Hanukkah assortment “was developed in collaboration with Jewish team members and input from our Jewish employee resource group” and crosses several of the retailer’s in-house brands.

One of those lines, Opalhouse by Jungalow, was created by a Jewish artist, Justina Blakeney. Last year, Blakeney’s first Hanukkah collection included plates and pillows, as well as a gold menorah shaped like a dove. This year, Blakeney added new pillow designs and a clay menorah.

“If I could go back in time and tell elementary-school-aged Justina (or ‘Tina’ as I was called back then) that I would have a chance to design a Hanukkah collection for Target, I would have lost my mind,” she wrote in an October blog post revealing the collection.

Hanukkah goods have always been widely available through Jewish merchandisers and at synagogue bazaars — but those products have been available only to people who already engaged in Jewish communities. Amazon and other online retailers have increased access, but only for people who are hunting for Hanukkah supplies. A Hanukkah aisle at Target, in contrast, reaches the many Jews who may not already have robust holiday traditions.

Stein, who said she particularly regretted not snapping up a marble dreidel sculpture that quickly sold out at Target, said she saw only benefits in promoting major retailers’ Hanukkah offerings, even if doing so has made her something of an unpaid advertiser at times.

“Right now, especially with the rise of antisemitism, if there are ways that we can spur Jewish joy — and for me, that’s by sharing and inspiring people with different kinds of Hanukkah merch and home decor and jewelry — I think that’s great,” she said.

Not everyone is thrilled by the shift in the marketplace. The sweeping Hanukkah displays are drawing criticism from those who have long lamented that the American primacy of Christmas has caused Jews to focus too much on a minor holiday, while leaving holidays with more religious significance relatively uncelebrated.

“I think: What would it feel like to see a giant Shavuot display?” Wymer-Santiago said.

The fast-fashion aspect of the big-box retailers’ offerings, many of which are imported from China, also raises concerns about whether easy access to trendy Judaica comes at environmental and cultural costs.

“How about we don’t extract fossil fuels to make crap that no one needs and that makes Jewish communities less distinctive?” asked Dan Friedman, a writer and longtime climate activist, though he emphasized that systemic change, rather than tweaks to purchasing decisions by Jewish consumers, is needed to avert climate catastrophe.

For Buechler and others, the benefits of a mass-market Hanukkah merchandise boom outweigh any possible drawbacks.

“As a rabbi, I am all for anything that will make Hanukkah celebrations more engaging and potentially lengthen a family celebration,” said Buechler. One of her favorite purchases was of a Hanukkah sweater for lizards that she bought for a friend’s guinea pig.

“I really do believe that owning different kinds of Hanukkah merch, whether apparel or otherwise, will increase the likelihood that a family will celebrate with friends with family for more nights than they would have last year,” she added.



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# Japanese-Style Latkes for Hanukkah

By Sonya Sanford

(The Noshers via JTA) - The Japanese word "okonomiyaki" is derived from two words: okonomi (how you like it) and yaki (grill). Okonomiyaki is a customizable Japanese savory vegetable pancake. Like a latke, it gets cooked in oil in a fritter formation. Unlike a latke, it's usually made into a large plate-sized pancake comprising mainly cabbage.

Food historians have linked the rise in popularity of okonomiyaki in Japan to World War II, when rice was more scarce and this recipe offered a filling meal or snack with a wheat-based starch. Throughout Japan there are regional differences and countless variations of okonomiyaki, but the most common form of the dish involves a batter made of flour, a variety of mountain yam, eggs, shredded cabbage, green onion, dashi and often the addition of pork belly. It gets topped with its own tangy sweet sauce, Japanese mayonnaise and bonito flakes (katsuobushi).

I first fell in love with okonomiyaki on a trip to Japan. You can find it there in restaurants that specialize in the dish, but it's also something that is prepared in home kitchens. The cabbage gets slightly crisp, tender and sweet when seared in oil on a flattop or skillet, and then it gets generously slathered with an umami-rich sauce, along with a welcome drizzle of creamy mayo. The richness, sweetness and tanginess of these components all work perfectly together.

A few months after I got back from Japan, I ended up eating at Brooklyn's Japanese Jewish restaurant, Shalom Japan. I didn't hesitate to order their Jewish-influenced spin on okonomiyaki. They're known to top it with pastrami or corned lamb tongue and sauerkraut. It became clear there that okonomiyaki, with its base of humble cabbage and onion, is a perfect fit on a Jewish table. The fried pancake part of it all called out "Hanukkah."

I am a fan of all pancakes and fritters, and I set out to modify the classic Japanese version for a recipe that didn't require access to a specialty food store, and that could be made with kosher ingredients. Full disclosure: My version lacks authenticity. If you're going for the real deal, you'll need a batter made with an okonomiyaki flour mix, or nagaimo yam; this special kind of yam is added in powdered form to the flour mix, or gets grated fresh into the batter. The toppings

should include bonito flakes, and the batter should be made with dashi. These ingredients can be found at most Japanese markets. Instead of nagaimo yam, my version uses a batter of flour and potato starch, and instead of dashi I use water.

I've also included a recipe for homemade traditional okonomiyaki sauce that can be made simply with easy-to-find ingredients, but you can also buy a pre-made bottled sauce. You can make these pancakes large-sized and cut into wedges like the Japanese do, or slightly smaller à la a large latke. I wouldn't go too small with this, as the vegetables tend to hold together better en masse. This recipe doesn't need to be too exact, and it works as a blank canvas for additional vegetables like kale, mushrooms and/or daikon.

In the spirit of Hanukkah, these okonomiyaki get cooked in oil, but they're not heavily fried. The oil used to fry the okonomiyaki gives a loving nod to the miracle of the oil glowing in the Temple for eight days instead of one, but the heap of vegetables and addictive sauce make this a nutritious and satisfying addition to any Hanukkah meal.

## Ingredients

### For the pancakes:

- ¾ cup all-purpose flour or gluten-free all-purpose mix
- ¼ cup potato starch or cornstarch
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 2 large eggs
- ½-¾ cup water
- ½ shredded green cabbage, about 4 ½ packed cups
- 3 green onions, sliced thin, plus more for garnish if desired
- 1 carrot, peeled and shredded
- 4-5 inches daikon, peeled and shredded (optional)
- oil, as needed (sunflower, canola or peanut)
- sesame seeds, for topping (optional)
- mayonnaise, for topping (optional)

### For the okonomiyaki sauce:

- ½ cup ketchup
- ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tbsp soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp honey or agave syrup, or to taste

## Instructions

Start by making the batter. Whisk together the flour, starch, baking powder and salt in a large bowl.

In a separate bowl, beat the eggs. Add the eggs and ½ cup of water to the flour mixture. Whisk until



smooth. You want a fairly thin, crepe batter-like consistency. If you find it too thick, add another ¼ cup of water. Try not to over-mix; you do not want to overdevelop the gluten. Allow the batter to rest in the fridge for 30 minutes to an hour.

While the batter is resting, prepare the vegetables. Remove the thick core from the cabbage half, then cut the

halved cabbage in two. Thinly slice or shred the cabbage. Thinly slice the green onions. Grate the carrot and daikon if using.

Make the okonomiyaki sauce: Combine the ketchup, Worcestershire, soy sauce and honey/agave in a bowl. Taste and adjust to your liking. The sauce should be tangy, savory and a little sweet.

Combine the batter with the vegetable mixture.

Heat a cast-iron skillet or a nonstick skillet with about 3 Tbsp oil over high heat. Once the oil is glistening and hot, lower the heat to medium low and add some of the cabbage mixture to the pan, gently nudging it into a circle shape. I like to make each pancake with about 2 cups of the mixture. For me, that makes an ideal-sized pancake that isn't too hard to flip, and one that will hold together. Cover the skillet with a lid for 3-4 minutes. Carefully flip over the pancake, and cover it with a lid for an additional 3-4 minutes, or until browned on both sides and cooked through. Make sure not to cook on too high of a heat or the pancake might burn on the outside while remaining raw in the center.

Serve hot topped with a generous spread of the okonomiyaki sauce, mayo if desired, sliced green onions and sesame seeds. Slice and serve!

*This recipe was first published on The Noshers.*

# Birthright cancels Israel trips for December

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) — Birthright Israel has canceled its trips that had been scheduled for December due to safety concerns from the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, reportedly the first time in its history the group has pulled programs due to war in the region.

A Birthright spokesperson told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency the group expects to resume trips soon. The nonprofit's CEO Gidi Mark told eJewishPhilanthropy that the trips could resume before the end of the year if the situation in Israel becomes "more stable."

Launched in 1999, the organization's free trips to Israel for Jewish young adults have become a staple of many Jews' college or post-college experiences, though participation in the program has waned in recent years. Funding for the organization has also been jeopardized after losing some major donors in recent years. The only previous time the organization has canceled trips was at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During previous periods of violence in the region, in

2014, 2015, 2018 and 2019, Birthright continued trips as scheduled but altered them to avoid violent areas, according to eJewishPhilanthropy. That meant, in 2019, that trips briefly avoided visiting the same Gaza border communities that were massacred on Oct. 7 of this year. The Kibbutz Movement, which represents some of those communities, criticized Birthright at the time for its decision, saying the move ran contrary to Zionist values.

Last month the organization had denied rumors of the December trips' cancellations to JTA, saying that they were still on schedule. Birthright typically schedules many winter tours to Israel for college students starting in mid-December.

In the meantime, Birthright is getting hands-on with the current conflict in other ways. The organization is now running a program to bring alumni back to Israel to volunteer in agriculture and dona-tion

centers while the country's workforce is being redirected to the war. Those joining in are part of a wave of volunteers looking to fill in the gaps in the country's agriculture and other industries. Unlike its regular Israel trips, participants in this program are required to buy their own flights and travel insurance.

Though the organization normally bills itself as not political, Birthright also launched a social media campaign to encourage alumni to share positive posts about Israel to combat anti-Israel sentiment on social platforms in the wake of Oct. 7. Noa Bauer, a marketing executive for Birthright based in Israel, told JTA last month, "I think this is the time for Birthright to make sure that every alumni stands up for Israel."



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# Community to vote on a new facility: Dec. 6

By Matthew Levine

Since the sale of the Edmonton JCC in 2012, we have been missing an important gathering place that can unite and bring new members to our Jewish community in Edmonton. As a community, we now have an opportunity to purchase and renovate a new Jewish home away from home. A facility committee has spent months searching listings, assessing criteria such as building conditions, on and off-site attributes, ease of implementation, property consideration, and community benefits. They also did their diligence studying similar sized Jewish communities and believe that a building located at 14205 - 109 Avenue will fit ours well.

On November 14th, the Jewish Federation of Edmonton held a town hall meeting at Beth Shalom, inviting all Jewish community members to attend. Committee members explained their selection process and described the building, its location, and how long it would take to make it JCC ready. They then allowed members of the Jewish community to express questions and concerns in a Q and A format.

An offer has been made and accepted on this building, with conditions; nothing is finalized yet. They are currently still assessing renovation costs as the building is completely stripped down, but strongly believe that it is within their budget. A final vote on the sale of this building will take place at the AGM on December 6, where anyone over the age of eighteen who has made a minimum \$18 contribution to the United Jewish Appeal Campaign prior to the last day of the fiscal year can vote.

The Q and A resulted in numerous important questions and thoughts surrounding the chosen location. We were told that it is a safe location on a direct bus line, that there will be 30 parking spots (not including a next-door school whose parkade would be available on weekends), and that the building has approximately 19,300 square feet of space (including

the basement). The main multipurpose room can seat somewhere around 200 people. The committee believes the location is fairly central in terms of where Jewish people live. They expect that the new JCC would be self-sustaining through renting office space, renting out rooms for events, and endowments. Surrounding the location are pickleball courts, a baseball diamond, and a public playground/park.

One of the best discussions of the evening came during the posed question: How will the JCC attract younger Jewish families, interfaith families, and Jewish people who have not shown interest in community events and gatherings. Only a handful of people under 40 were in attendance at the town hall; it seemed that their voices were missing. The committee stressed the importance of having a JCC that is non-denominational, and that serves as a secular inclusive space where everyone is welcome.

Another question coming from the audience was whether the committee had approached Talmud Torah or Beth Israel to build the new JCC on their property as these are locations that already have established Jewish communities surrounding them. The committee said that they researched and discussed both these institutions, but after approaching them, could not work anything out.

Questions also focused on projected costs of renovations and operations, with a concern that funds from an endowment might not cover operating expenses. Other questions were centred on the age of the building, while others wanted to know exactly what



PJ Library and Shalom Babies could potentially hold their programs and activities at the proposed JCC. Photos Jewish Federation of Edmonton.

programs and services besides office space would be offered.

Some of the attendees spoke passionately that we have been without a gathering place long enough and it is time to act.

At the townhall, event organizers posted informative billboards; one of which listed frequently asked questions.

**Q1: We have existing space in the Jewish community. Why do we need a JCC?**

Answer: Our community has been missing and has expressed desire for a non-denominational gathering space. The current lease on JFED office space ends in August 2024 so the timing is good, and our 2021-25 strategic plan includes a JCC.

**Q2: Why this location?**

Answer: There are Jews living across the city of Edmonton. There is no available space south of the Whitemud, and this area is becoming a major corridor.

*Continued on page 23*



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# Shopping for Collectables and Memorabilia?

By Matthew Levine

Froggers House of Cards and Autograph Gallery is a local sports memorabilia business founded by Michael Schayer and his longtime friend Chris Plouf. They share a lifetime passion of collecting memorabilia and opened their first store in northwest Edmonton. This location - on 155 Street and 118 Avenue - was open for about a year when they approached Edmonton entrepreneur Amir Isackson to join their business.

To say Amir and Mike are longtime friends would be an understatement. They met for the first time in kindergarten at Talmud Torah School in 1984 and the two have been inseparable ever since.

"It's a tough question when asked to describe someone who has been with you through all your stages in life," said Amir reflecting back on their years of friendship.

Amir had been involved in retail for a long time but noted that this was a little different and more outside of his comfort zone. He admits that there is a lot to learn and that balancing work and family is tough, but that having an amazing network of partners and staff has made it easily adaptable for him.

In early December 2022, the three partners opened a second location in the West Edmonton Mall called Icons and Heroes. For the past year, they have been successfully operating in both locations.

"It has been nothing but a pleasure working with Mike and Chris," said Amir. "I am grateful to both for their knowledge and experience."

With the holiday season right around the corner, Edmonton consumers are looking for unique and interesting gift ideas. Both Froggers and Icons and Heroes are filled to the brim with interesting collectibles and memorabilia. They have friendly staff, and endless gift ideas for all budgets.

Froggers House of Cards offers its customers one of the most extensive single and sealed box trading card inventories available. They have been a major player in the Edmonton sports memorabilia scene for over 20 years and are one of eBay's most longstanding sports and celebrity autograph and memorabilia dealers. Their affiliation with Centre Ice Autographs expands their catalogue to include many celebrity and sports autographs, as well as other collectibles.

Icons & Heroes boasts a large and unique inventory of autographed sports and celebrity memorabilia. It contains numerous interesting gift ideas for the holidays. Apart from the vast selection of unique memorabilia, Icons and Heroes are also dealers in sports cards and carry all the current and major trading card games such as Pokémon, Magic the Gathering and Yu-Gi-Oh.

If you want to surprise a family member or friend this holiday season, look no further than these two local businesses. Whether a collector, sports fan, or



**For a great selection of collectables and sports memorabilia visit Icons & Heroes in West Edmonton Mall and Froggers in the north end.**

trading card game player, there will be a unique and fun gift that the recipient will cherish.

"It's a new world when it comes to collectibles," noted Amir. "it's definitely worth the trip!"

*Matthew Levine is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.*

## Talmud Torah *Cont. from page 8*

Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation, for Hebrew classroom readers. It is our hope that these additional books will provide extra practice for the students, both in the classroom and at home, in order for them to improve their decoding, comprehension and fluency skills when reading Hebrew.

The 2023-24 school year is now underway and the Education Committee is once again working towards achieving several goals. The Society was fortunate to

secure a very generous donor that provided funds for customized school kippot. As Talmud Torah is an inclusive community school where students are welcomed from all Jewish backgrounds, kippot were given to all students. Talmud Torah has a long-standing tradition of wearing a kippah during the day, particularly during the Judaic studies program. There are many reasons for wearing a kippah, and we believe that this custom creates a special atmosphere, and that wearing a kippah proudly unites us with Jews around the world.

This year, we will be building upon our work and piloting both the K-6 draft Prayer and the K-2 HLA implementation guides. The committee also expects to begin developing the Scope and Sequence document for grades 3 and 4 HLA, as well as begin a review of the K-6 Bible program. Finally, the committee anticipates being involved in EPSB's Judaic and Hebrew curriculum review. This is a process that EPSB undertakes every few years with all their locally developed courses.

It's a busy year ahead!

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## Parents *Cont. from page 5*

meal or a drive — a time when you can give your teen some context that will help them understand why you care. Note: This is not the same as telling them why they should care. But it is important to share why you care, and what it means to you right now as you absorb the news and think about your connection to it. Even if your teen has a different set of feelings than you right now about Israel, you can ask your teen to have empathy for the emotions that you are feeling.

**3. “Keep in mind that this is an unsettling time for teens because they are seeing some of their peers sharing anti-Israel, and in some cases, anti-Jewish hate, and this is disrupting their social connections.”**

Even well-educated, college-bound teens are more likely to read the political opinions of a select group of models, athletes, actors and cultural commentators than they are to follow journalists, political scientists or writers. Some people in your teens’ network are likely sharing propaganda and conspiracy theories posted by their favorite influencers. But while teens today are seeing vehemently anti-Israel posts and anti-Jewish posts, most do not want to make waves about them. Whether these posts are shared by someone in their class, on their sports team, or from their summer camp, most teens would rather not confront the person or comment on the post. Also, when teens see posts that call for peace, a ceasefire or humanitarian aid, they don’t necessarily view them as anti-Israel or antisemitic, but simply as “pro-peace.”

If your teen is willing to talk with you about what

they are seeing on social media, you can help support their decision-making as they navigate what posts to ignore, when to reach out and when to speak up. You can help them find information about the crisis that they can trust, help them understand the continued threats that Hamas and Islamic Jihad pose in Gaza and in the region, and help them figure out what role they can play in challenging hate of any kind.

**4. “If your teen is truly obsessed with the war, seeing everything through the lens of this crisis, and using this issue as a way to distance themselves from you, then you may need to speak with someone who can mediate the situation.”**

There are times when a teen will latch on to an extreme political position because it sends a message to the parent that they seek independence or detachment. In more extreme cases, the teen can begin to see the world through the lens of a political battle and place the parents as the enemy. If that is your case right now, you may want to seek support from a friend, clergy person or therapist.

**5. “It is natural for teens to differentiate their views from parents, and they often use their peers as a reference group.”**

If your teens are in a school where peers are one-sided in their solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, and indifferent when it comes to the continued attacks on Israeli citizens by Hamas rockets, the welfare of the hostages being held by Hamas or acts of antisemitism here and around the world, then your teens may feel that fitting into their peer group requires that they

express only pro-Palestinian sentiment or suppress their pro-Israel leanings. They might need to hear from parents the message that their hearts can have room for both the Palestinians suffering in Gaza and for the millions of Israelis who are in mourning, displaced, hiding in bomb shelters or awaiting news about the captives.

To help your teen expand their circle of empathy, you might share the various ways that Israelis are working with Palestinians to express solidarity, or tell them about joint efforts to provide humanitarian relief, like World Central Kitchen, which seek to help all non-combatants evacuees and families impacted by the escalating conflict in the region. Help your teens to see that there are dozens of ways to care for Israelis, for the Jewish people as a whole, and for Palestinians. Share the story of the late Vivian Silver, the Israeli peace activist murdered by Hamas. Give them hope that coexistence is still possible.

I deeply appreciated Hirschfeld’s insights, and since hearing them I, as a parent and a rabbi, have been trying my best to be in dialogue across the generations, which includes my children and their peers. I know that for some of my own peers, this has been one of the most challenging times in their parenting journey. The arguments that they are having with their teens are enormously difficult and require a great deal of patience.

I hope that in the coming months, we as a Jewish community can support all parents of teens as we navigate through this crisis and help bridge some of the generational and other divides that are tearing us apart.

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from the

# Sources

by Eliezer Segal

## “When the wicked Greek Empire arose...”

The familiar Hanukkah story begins with the emperor Antiochus IV “Epiphanes” outlawing the practice of the Jewish religion and compelling the Jews of his domain to observe heathen rites devoted to Greek deities.

This narrative is found in the most detailed chronicle of the events, the works known as the Books of Maccabees, and in its general outlines it is consistent with other ancient versions.

And yet it is precisely that aspect of the story that historians have found baffling.

Why should Antiochus have wanted to tamper with Judaism in the first place?

If you learned about Hanukkah in a traditional Jewish setting, then this question might strike you as superfluous. Isn't it obvious that disdain for Jews and Judaism is built into the fabric of gentile culture? Haven't idolatrous nations always felt threatened by the ethical monotheism that challenges their immoral lifestyles? In these respects there is no difference between Antiochus and all the other malevolent oppressors of history.

In reality, however, the historical context of Hanukkah is quite distinct. The hellenistic régimes that ruled the Mediterranean basin had an admirable record for respecting their subjects' religious traditions. This was true of the Ptolemaic dynasty centred in Egypt, which governed Judea in the third and second centuries B.C.E.; and more so of the Seleucids, based in Syria, who dominated from the early second century. Antiochus III, father of the Hanukkah villain, actively supported Jewish religious institutions (as a reward for their backing him against his Ptolemaic rivals); he channelled resources for the upkeep of Jerusalem and its temple, and granted the Jews a large measure of political and cultic autonomy.

At any rate, Antiochus IV's aggressive religious persecution marked a radical departure from any previous imperial policy, and it is not explained satisfactorily by the ancient historians.

It has been suggested that Antiochus's eccentric personality is enough to account for his anti-Jewish policies without having to seek any deeper reasons. In ways that call to mind the bizarre antics of Roman emperors like Caligula or Nero, he had a reputation for mingling among the commoners and bestowing elaborate gifts on complete strangers.

There are some scholars who see Antiochus's persecution of Judaism as a natural outgrowth of the

ideology of hellenism which was driven by a missionary urge to civilize the barbarian peoples. Unlike other subject nations, the Jews did not possess a pantheon of gods that could be conveniently grafted onto the Greek pantheon. That fact would have vexed Antiochus.

Some scholars have proposed that economics furnished the main motive for Antiochus' strange policy. Pressures on the royal treasury were exacerbated by debts to Rome, by a lengthy military campaign by the Seleucids against their Ptolemaic rivals, and by Antiochus' own extravagant lifestyle. This impelled him to support factions in the Jewish community who were ready to tolerate his pilfering of sacred treasures of the Jerusalem temple, and to ruthlessly suppress traditionalists who resisted such sacrilege.

Antiochus might even have absorbed some of his attitudes during a period that he spent as a political hostage in Rome, where he could have observed Roman policies like the outlawing of certain religious cults or the forcing of hellenism on some ethnic minorities.

One hypothesis goes so far as to suggest that the whole story of Antiochus's persecutions should be treated with skepticism, because the Hasmonian propagandists who composed the books of Maccabees might simply have been recycling a standard motif of Babylonian royal propaganda that liked to depict the current monarch as the restorers of the ancestral religion that had been suppressed by their predecessors.

One of the most popular theories was formulated eloquently by the eminent twentieth-century historian Elias Bickerman. He insisted that the impetus for Antiochus' suppression of traditional Judaism is not to be sought in Seleucid ideological or political interests, but rather, the king was drawn into the sectarian infighting of Jewish factions in Jerusalem. There were influential groups, led by prominent members of the priesthood, who were determined to modernize their religion so as to integrate better with the cosmopolitan hellenistic culture that defined civilization for much of the world. Their radical ideology aroused so much opposition among the Jewish traditionalists that its proponents had to solicit support from the Seleucid government.

The preceding scenario finds strong support in the narratives of the books of Maccabees and in the biblical book of Daniel, which reflects the concerns of traditionalists on the eve of the Hasmonian revolt.

Howsoever we might choose to assess the merits of Bickerman's theory, it has been called into question for another reason: the historian was accused of anachronistically imposing his personal perspectives on the historical facts. In particular, his descriptions of the assimilationist forces in ancient Jerusalem seemed significantly shaped by the experiences of the radical Jewish reformers in Germany (as well as of Jewish communists in Russia) who had sought futilely to gain acceptance by abandoning Jewish beliefs and practices. The fragmented Jewish communities were therefore unable to offer effective resistance to the rising Nazi party.

It did not help Bickerman's credibility that a very similar equation of ancient hellenists with modern reformers had been proposed by a prominent nineteenth-century theological apologist for Jewish orthodoxy, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch.

Academic scholars tend to be very suspicious of attempts to view the events of the past through contemporary lenses. Nevertheless, there is no denying that human nature remains constant over the ages; so it does not seem inherently implausible that internal communal discord could render us vulnerable to attacks from our enemies. Recent experiences confirm, of course, that irrational hatred of Jews and Judaism is indeed a persistent historical phenomenon.

Bickerman's enthusiastic praises for the Maccabean resistance to oppression, in a work published in 1937, offered encouragement to Jews suffering under the Nazi persecutions.

So too, we might find legitimate encouragement in the historical lesson of a united Jewish nation successfully combating the onslaughts of our haters and oppressors.

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

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# The lessons of Chanukah

By Rabbi Ilana Krygier Lapidés



Rabbi Ilana Krygier Lapidés

“A Jew is asked to take a leap of action rather than a leap of faith.”- Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel.

Our sages ask an interesting question about Chanukah: We light candles for eight nights to acknowledge the miracle of the oil burning for eight nights. But technically (and let's be honest, our Rabbis were very concerned with these kinds of

technicalities) the actual miracle only happened on nights two through eight. The oil was always going to last at least one night – so that first night isn't a miracle so much as an experiential reality. So, why do we light for eight nights instead of just seven? Seven would make sense: Seven days in a week, seven days to create the world, we wouldn't even have to make new menorahs! But, no, the miracle is eight days. Why?

Rabbi Jonathan Saks z"l postulates: “There was no reason to suppose that anything would have survived the systematic desecration the Greeks and their supporters did to the Temple, yet the Maccabees searched and found that one jar. Why did they search?

Because they had faith that from the worst tragedy something would survive. The miracle of the first night was that of faith itself, the faith that something would remain with which to begin again.”

For Rabbi Saks, the miracle begins not when the Jews found the oil and lit it that first day, but well before that when they demonstrated the faith to even look. To then go ahead and light the oil knowing that it could not possibly last, is an additional expression of faith that is reflected in our partnership with Hashem and with hope.

One of our central blessings during this holiday is *Al Hanisim*: “For the miracles and for the redemption and for the mighty deeds and for the victories and for the battles that You performed for our fathers in those days at this time.” It is a bittersweet prayer that expresses our reluctance to have to fight but understands that it's sometimes vital for our survival. As Rabbi Elisha Friedman says: “Winning a war against those bent on destroying one's way of life demands gratitude, but it is not a celebration. War is always unpleasant, even if one wins. It involves the loss of life and inflicting suffering on others. It is a moment to soberly reflect on the tremendous blessings surrounding us — including the painful and difficult victory over our enemies.”

This Chanukah brings many challenges amidst its usual blessings. We walk with heavy hearts, grief clutches at our throats when we wake in the mornings, our anxiety propels us through the day. We are traumatized and exhausted. Should we put a Chanukah in the window this year? Do we leave up our Mezuzah for all to see? Should I tuck-in my Magen David necklace? No one can answer these questions for you – it's a personal question that must be faced by each of us; there are those of us who will be bold and brazen, there will be others who are more discreet. We

must all do what we feel is best to stay safe, to survive, to see another day, to make sure our legacy and our light continues.

As we support our brothers and sisters in Israel, we pray and help bolster their spirits with our messages and songs. We also send resources and money, call out antisemitism when we see it, and attend community events to say, “we are here.” As Jews we must acknowledge that freedom is not free, and the cost is always much more than our hearts can pay. But it must be paid.

As per the quote from Rabbi Heschel z"l above, it is faith plus action that makes us who we are. One without the other leaves us powerless and without hope. Rabbi Rachel Barenblat says: “We are partners with God in making space for the miraculous. We must not expect God to perform miracles to redeem us while we sit back and wait.”

Chanukah teaches us that the miracle of the oil couldn't have happened without the military victory, and a military victory doesn't mean anything unless we stay true to who we are: Am Israel Chai.

From my family to yours, Chag Chanukah Sameach!

Rabbi Ilana Krygier Lapidés is the Assistant Rabbi at the Beth Tzedec Congregation, the Jewish Community Chaplain through Jewish Family Service Calgary, and has a small, independent Rabbinic practice through RockyMountainRabbi.com.



Happy Hannukah

## Jake Soifer *Cont. from page 12*

As Israel began to find what Jake refers to as “war-time normal” the bar mitzvah plans began to evolve. Elul - thus far Edmonton community members Randy and Jane Soifer's, only male grandchild - needed to be recognized for his achievements and ushered into adulthood as dictated by tradition.

“My father, during his last visit to Israel, helped us pick the synagogue where Elul would have his bar mitzvah, it was so important that my mom and dad be able to share in this,” offered Jake earnestly. “We started thinking about going to Europe and meeting there. Our Rabbi was supportive of whatever decision we made, but he pointed out that Elul's bar mitzvah during Thursday shacharit would make the service more festive and make it possible to film everything,” said Jake. “A man can be called to the Torah on a Thursday, so that is how we did it. Elul made his Aliyah to the Torah on a Thursday, and my family was able to join us by video call. It was very important that this took place in Israel.”

Elul Soifer also was able to observe a traditional bar mitzvah with a maftir and haftarah on Saturday accompanied by his parents, siblings, and Yael's family. The local family members gathered on Saturday evening for a celebratory dinner, although Jake admits that current circumstances still loomed in everyone's minds despite the simcha at hand.

“We have to mark these occasions,” Jake emphasized with conviction. “This is what we must do as Jews. If we stop our celebrations, if we don't observe the traditions that define us as Jews, then we are weaker. This is the time to stand up for ourselves, and for everything that is important to us, because we are fighting for survival,” he paused for a moment of contemplation. “Everywhere else in the world Jews are a minority, a smaller piece of a bigger population. Here, in Israel, that isn't the case, but there is a very real desire to destroy all we have built.”

The Soifer family is proud of their newest bar mitzvah boy, and following the small local gathering, Jake was very pleased to be able to send Yael and the children to meet up with two of his brothers in Greece for a few days of respite.

“It was the first time they got to meet our little daughter; she was born during COVID. My wife and kids returned to Israel to continue helping on the homefront - my wife, as a teacher, helping with schooling the more than 150000 displaced peoples from the bordering Gaza neighborhoods and the far north. And my eldest daughter, along with her high school class, has been helping out in the agriculture industry with picking or harvesting - once a week since the second week of the war. Everyone is doing what they can.”

Jake is still happy to lend a hand and install security boards free of charge. “I've heard of some of these things being sold for up to 450 shekels. I want to make sure people have them no matter what. And thanks to all the donors, we can make sure that keeps happening.”

Edmonton's Jewish community should be infinitely proud of Talmud Torah alum Jacob Soifer, and the GoFundMe efforts of his siblings. What he has done is a noble mitzvah. Humble through and through, he would be the first to bashfully downplay his impact, but Edmontonians should ponder for a moment, how many Jewish lives he has helped to protect, and how many people are sleeping more soundly and peacefully tonight because of Jacob Soifer. Yasher Koach!

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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# Second Voices Project: An impactful tool for Holocaust Education

By Regan Treewater-Lipes

On November 9, the Jewish community of Edmonton gathered at Beth Israel Synagogue to remember the horrors of Kristallnacht and to show solidarity in the face of current trends against the world's Jewry. Individuals were greeted with a sobering display of empty chairs in the foyer – each with a poster of one of the 240 people that were taken as hostages during the brutal massacre in southern Israel by Hamas terrorists on October 7. Blue ribbons were available at the door as a sign of support for the safe return of the hostages.

The event opened with an emotional announcement from the provincial government that Holocaust education will be part of the new Alberta curriculum and that resources from the Jewish community will be utilized in the development of these pedagogical approaches. The announcement was met with cheers, applause and a standing ovation.

One of the valuable resources introduced to the local Jewish community by Rabbi Ilana Krygier Lapides in 2013 is The Second Voices Project which preserves witness testimony of Holocaust survivors while harnessing the voices of first- and second-generation survivors to help make the material relatable and accessible to students. The project has expanded over the years with heartfelt support and expert guidance and input from many Calgary Jewish Federation volunteers.

The Second Voices Project is a series of testimonials narrating stories of Holocaust survival brought into Alberta schools by second and third-generation descendants. With help from a generous grant from The Government of Alberta and support from the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, Calgary Jewish Federation's Holocaust and Human Rights: Remembrance and Education Department has created a series of multi-media presentations in which children and grandchildren bring their parents' or grandparents' survival testimonies to life for young people, grades four through twelve. Students are able to engage meaningfully with this painful history by learning a survivor's story, and the texture provided by the first- and second-generation perspectives, helps to create a more tangible link between younger audiences

and those bearing witness.

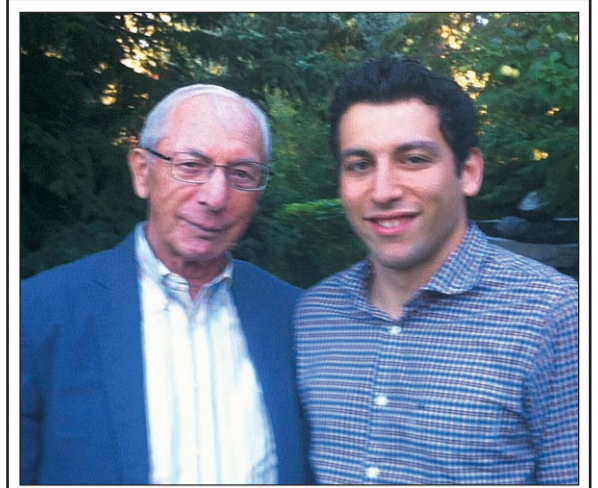
Dr. Frances Cyngiser is an active member of the Federation's Holocaust Education Department, and a supporter of the Second Voices Project. She has long been a passionate advocate for educating Alberta students about the Holocaust. As part of the Kristallnacht program, she introduced an impactful forty-five-minute Second Voices Project film that integrates testimony from her late father Sidney Cyngiser OBM, with narration by her son and nephew.

The recordings of Sidney Cyngiser's story are excerpts from his Shoah Foundation interview of over five hours. In her speech to the audience at Beth Israel Synagogue, Dr. Cyngiser commented, "In the face of Holocaust denial, my father made a tireless commitment to bear witness – believing that hope for the future begins with truth about the past. It became a way for him to give his survival meaning. Guided by integrity, humility, quiet generosity, and a firm belief in doing the right thing, he brought his story to thousands."

Born in Lodz, Poland, Sidney Cyngiser never returned to the country of his birth after liberation. "In 2005 he and my mother attended a commemoration in Germany, but my father never did go back to Poland. The idea of it was too painful for him. To see the void left by the world he once knew no longer being there was too excruciating," Dr. Cyngiser explained in a recent interview with *Alberta Jewish News*. "Our parents never sat us down to explain what the Holocaust was; they wanted to protect us. We knew that our parents had lost their families, and so they surrounded themselves with other survivors. As a child, I was barely conscious of the fact that my parents had accents because everyone in their circle had accents," she continued. "Things would be presented to us as they came up. Like my mother telling us not to throw away bread – she would say that food should never be thrown away. What if we didn't have food? Or being told not to talk back to my mother because I'm lucky to have a mother."

For a couple who lived through such atrocities, raising a family in Calgary was a welcomed opportunity to rebuild, until the insidious threat of Holocaust-denial compounded their lived trauma by allowing hate-speech to masquerade as pseudo-scholarship. Bronia Cyngiser used to answer when asked about her tattooed number: "Oh it's my phone number; I'm just forgetful."

In the face of Holocaust-denial she vowed never to stay silent again. Together, Sidney and Bronia Cyngiser took upon themselves the duty of giving voice to the millions lost in Europe, by telling their stories. How fitting that Sidney Cyngiser's very voice, and the voices of two of his grandsons



Jonathan Livergant and his Zayde Sid Cyngiser OBM

now are being used to safeguard the sanctity of history for junior high and high school students throughout Alberta.

"When we were first approached by the Second Voices Project, we knew that we wanted it to be the grandchildren lending their voices to support their grandparents' stories," noted Dr. Cyngiser. "There's a certain relatability for a younger generation this way, I think." Her son and nephew narrate along with their grandfather, while another nephew and Cyngiser's daughter narrate for her mother, Bronia Cyngiser's video.

Dr. Cyngiser has accompanied her father's video to be screened at two schools to date, and she has been pleased by the thoughtfulness of the students' questions. "It isn't easy for me to watch the film on these occasions; it is very emotional for me."

As Maxine Fischbein noted in the *Alberta Jewish News*' obituary for Sidney Cyngiser: "Sid found much solace in memories of his happy childhood, though he was robbed of most of his youth after." Films, like Sidney and Bronia Cyngiser's, that archive Holocaust history through the Second Voices Project focus not only on the horrors of the Second World War, but also on life before and after.

"When my father would go and speak to students, they would always ask 'So, what is your life like now?' That's why I think it's critical to explain the lives that people had before the Holocaust, and what people managed to become and achieve afterwards," Dr. Cyngiser elaborated.

Her father had a good life before the Second World War, and because of his strength and fortitude, he built a good life after. "I don't know if he was compelled to write before the War," commented Dr. Cyngiser. "But he was certainly driven to write after the War. He would write bits and pieces of his story on everything – any scrap of paper. When I began going through his things after his passing, there were so many notes everywhere."

Although Sidney Cyngiser questioned where G-d was during his harrowing struggle to survive, he also maintained a strong sense of his identity. "My father was forced to do slave labor in a quarry. He worked twelve hours straight breaking apart and moving rocks. They would give out a small ration of bread for the day. One Yom Kippur, my father, who was seventy-four pounds by the end of the War, fasted." Dr. Cyngiser

Continued on page 24



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# Hostage deal *Cont. from page 3*

## What is Israel giving up to get the hostages back?

According to the contours of the deal reported by Israeli media, Israel will release three Palestinian prisoners for every hostage released, meaning that up to 240 Palestinians will go free. That represents only a tiny fraction of the approximately 5,000 Palestinians held in Israeli prisons prior to Oct. 7.

It's also a much smaller number than the 1,000 prisoners Israel released in 2011 in exchange for Gilad Shalit, a soldier who Hamas had taken hostage five years earlier. As opposed to the 2011 exchange, this time Israel says it has agreed only to release women and minors who did not kill anyone.

Israel is also agreeing to pause its offensive in Gaza for at least four days and to suspend aerial surveillance for six hours a day during that time, in part so Hamas can locate additional hostages. Israeli soldiers will remain in northern Gaza, which they invaded last month, during the pause.

The number of trucks bringing in humanitarian aid during the pause will increase under the terms of the deal. Two weeks ago, Israel began allowing 100 trucks a day into Gaza, a goal the United States had laid out. Under the deal, that number will increase to 200 a day.

## How will this affect Israel's war against Hamas?

A big question is whether and to what extent Israel's war in Gaza will continue after this group of hostages are released. Israel says it plans to resume fighting as soon as the truce expires. But a provision in the reported terms of the deal allows for an extension of the truce if Hamas releases more hostages — 10 freed captives for each additional day of calm.

A lot can happen during a pause in fighting: Both sides can regroup, but there could also be continued talks that would lay the groundwork for a more lasting cessation of hostilities — something protesters around the world and a small but growing group of Democratic lawmakers in the United States support. Israel has so far rejected calls for a permanent ceasefire because its stated goal is to depose Hamas.

Previous Israel-Hamas humanitarian pauses have also been broken — plunging both sides back into the fighting.

Plus, international sentiment that has been firmly on Israel's side up to now could shift. Some, though not all, of Israel's goals have been met, and a pause in the fighting may allow humanitarian groups to assess the devastation. Already, the United States is signaling that it may not support an expansion of Israel's military campaign in southern Gaza without stronger assurances from Israel that it will protect civilians.

According to the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry, more than 12,000 Palestinians have been killed in the fighting, though the number does not distinguish between civilians and combatants, and does not say how many have been killed by misfired Palestinian rockets.

## Who helped broker the deal?

Both the United States and Qatar acted as go-



Close to 300 members of the Edmonton Jewish Community and their friends and allies braved the cold to attend a sombre vigil at the Alberta Legislature Grounds on October 25. The purpose of the vigil was to raise awareness of over 220 hostages that are being held in Gaza by Hamas terrorists following the brutal October 7 massacre in Southern Israel. "We are asking for the 222 hostages to be returned to their families safely," stated Jewish Federation of Edmonton CEO Stacey Leavitt-Wright. Prayers were recited for the safety of the hostages and a silence fell over the crowd as one by one, the names of the hostages were read aloud by people representing the various Jewish organizations in Edmonton. It was both emotional and heartbreaking. Almost everyone in the community has a personal connection to someone who was murdered, wounded or abducted that day. Community leaders as well as rabbis from Beth Israel, Beth Shalom and Temple Beth Ora were in attendance as well as several politicians and dignitaries including Edmonton Mayor Amarjeet Sohi. Printed images of the hostages were distributed to the first 200 people who arrived at the vigil and people were welcome to bring Israeli flags to show their solidarity. The evening concluded with the singing of a few Hebrew songs and Israel's National Anthem "Hatikvah" (Hope). The vigil was co-sponsored by Jewish Federation of Edmonton and JNF Edmonton Region. Photo by Paula E. Kirman.

between for Israel and Hamas, which refuse to negotiate directly. Both are already involved in the fighting: The United States has stood firmly behind Israel's military campaign in Gaza and provides it with aid, while Qatar is the home base of Hamas' political leadership.

This is far from the first time Israel and Hamas have conducted indirect negotiations. During their last major round of conflict, in 2021, Egypt brokered a ceasefire with the support of Jordan and the United States.

## Does everyone in Israel support the deal?

No. Members of the far-right bloc in the government said they oppose a deal, calling it short-sighted. The Religious Zionist party, led by Bezael Smotrich, issued a statement calling it "bad for Israel's security, bad for

the hostages, and bad for the soldiers of the IDF."

Their argument is that sending Palestinian prisoners back into Gaza lays the groundwork for future attacks. Yahya Sinwar, the mastermind of Oct. 7, was released from an Israeli prison in the 2011 prisoner exchange. The far-right lawmakers also say Israel will be demonstrating that it is willing to make compromises to win back hostages, potentially raising the cost to get the rest of the hostages out.

Family members of the hostages have clashed with the far right in calling for their relatives' release. At a meeting in Israel's parliament this week, far-right legislators yelled at family members of the hostages and one accused them of supporting Hamas.

Other right-wing parties have said they will support the deal, giving it far more than enough support to clear a government vote.

May this Festival of Lights be a beacon for blessings upon you and all your loved ones for happiness & health

Happy Hanukkah!

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May your lives be as happy and bright as the eight burning candles of the Menorah

Happy Chanukah from The Slawsky Family

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



Students and staff in both the Talmud Torah K-6 and Early Learning Centre programs honoured Remembrance Day with an all school assembly led by Grade 5 students, as well as participating in a variety of learning opportunities focused on remembrance. The No Stone Left Alone ceremony at the Edmonton Jewish Cemetery, with our grades 5/6 students, was particularly meaningful.

### New facility *Cont. from page 16*

#### Q3: What is the JCC's purpose?

Answer: The next committee will plan the JCC's facilities. Possible considerations include community tenants, a Holocaust resource/information center, play area for children and a teen lounge. (The possibility of a coffee shop was also discussed.)

#### Q4: How will costs be covered?

Answer: Proceeds from the sale of the last JCC have been set aside and cannot be used for any other purposes. The funds are adequate to purchase this building and pay for renovations. An endowment will

need to be established for operational funds.

There is a two-year window where funds from the sale of the old JCC will remain tax free. That being said, the sentiment at the town hall was that people must ask themselves if this is the right time and location for our Jewish community. Concerns were voiced that more information about hard costs should be available prior to a vote. And that more people under the age of forty should be hearing this information and considering the implications for their demographic. Meanwhile, Edmonton has been missing a secular Jewish community centre for years now, and if this facility is voted through, it is estimated to be fully renovated and ready for use in 3-4 years.

In a message to the Edmonton Jewish community, Stacey Leavitt-Wright wrote, "While there is still work to be done to determine the exact floor plan and tenants, the possibilities this building provides are endless.

"It is time that we established a facility so that our youth and teens can thrive and future generations in Edmonton can have a community hub. The Federation has diligently gone through the steps to find land and a facility to suit our community's needs. The opportunity is here. Let's seize this chance and move forward together to build a stronger future."

*Matthew Levine is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.*

**HAPPY Chanukah**

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# 8 ways to celebrate Hanukkah that aren't about the presents

By Rebecca Rosenthal

(Kveller via JTA) -- We love Hanukkah. The message that the rabbis in the Talmud give about the holiday is that we light candles each night in order to increase the holiness in the world.

What a beautiful idea -- one that can be completely lost on children.

We don't expect them to be immune to the culture in which we live, but we want to help them understand that the miracle of Hanukkah is about bringing more light into the world, not filling their rooms with more stuff.

So here are some ideas for celebrating Hanukkah with kids that aren't just about the presents that have worked for our families.

## 1. Decorate.

The mitzvah of Hanukkah is to publicize the miracle, both that the small Jewish army defeated the large Greek army and that the small jar of oil lasted for eight days. Get the message out by decorating your house. Turn it into a family project by making your own decorations.

## 2. Do something for others.

The best way to publicize the miracle is to help others see the light in the world. Find a project that you can do as a family that helps others in your community or in the world.

## 3. Donate your tzedakah.

Search your house for those coins that have been

hiding in the couch all year. Find a cause that your family is passionate about and donate all that loose change. You'd be surprised how much it can add up to. Instead of presents every night, ask your family and friends to make a donation in your child's honour.

## 4. Carve out time together.

Commit to turning off your phones and being present. Sing as many silly Hanukkah songs as you know, play competitive dreidel, and eat some latkes and jelly doughnuts.

## 5. Read Hanukkah books.

There are so many fun children's stories about Hanukkah. Both PJ Library and Amazon are great sources for finding books that will appeal to your child and the whole family.

## 6. Invite friends over.

Bonus points for inviting those friends who have never celebrated Hanukkah. Make sure you brush up on the story before they arrive.

## 7. Watch lots of Hanukkah parody videos.

This is a personal favorite in my family, where we watch videos from groups like the Maccabeats to Six13 to videos people made in their own homes (or offices, like we did). Feeling brave? Make your own.

## 8. Make a new family tradition.

Are there things you always wanted to do in your city? Make a Hanukkah bucket list and do one each night. Or have a latke contest to see who can add the most creative ingredients to the traditional potato



pancakes. Add something fun that you can do together as a family and share it with others.

And since we know that kids (and grown-ups!) still love to get presents, you can participate in a "get one, give one" plan so that each time your child is given a toy, they have to choose a gently used one to donate. Make it even more meaningful by taking your child to deliver his/her donation to a shelter or a hospital.

Happy Hanukkah!

Rabbi Rebecca Rosenthal is the director of youth and family education at Central Synagogue in New York City. This piece was written in conjunction with Erin Bouchard, the family engagement project director at Central Synagogue.

## Second Voices Project

Cont. from page 21

characterizes this as an act of resistance, and not faith, but the message could not be clearer: am Israel chai!

Dr. Cyngiser noted also that her father, although not shomer Shabbos, never missed services at Beth Tzedec

Congregation in Calgary. "He davened daily in the final months of his life." She paints the portrait of a man who was dragged through the depths of Hell and survived, finding that the only connection to his former life and family was through embracing his Jewish identity. Sidney Cyngiser wrote: "Religion to me is teaching how to deal kindly and honestly with my fellow man. Religion is working towards a better tomorrow, and a kinder world – a world without wars, hatred, and revenge." Dr. Cyngiser noted: "He was proud to be Jewish, and we were raised with these values."

As Jews around the globe and their allies collectively pray for the safe return of the hostages imprisoned in Gaza, one cannot help but acknowledge the halting revelation that only eighty-five years after Kristallnacht, pogrom-style violence is again being orchestrated against the Jewish people on a mass scale. More than ever the lessons of the Holocaust are imminently relevant, and it is critical that younger generations understand the magnitude of what took

place in the name of a perverse vision of 'social progress' not so long ago.

Sidney Cyngiser's film was exceptionally well received by the Edmonton Jewish community, many of whom knew him well. His film, that of his wife, and many others are readily available to schools in Alberta wishing to provide quality education to their students. Through efforts like the Second Voices Project, and others, the global community can work to ensure that 'never again' means 'NOW!' As Sidney Cyngiser would say: "To not speak out is to be an accomplice."

For more information on accessing the SVP or other resources contact [holocaustedu@jewishcalgary.org](mailto:holocaustedu@jewishcalgary.org) to determine which testimonial would work best for your classroom needs. These free presentations generally run 90 minutes in length and allow for questions at the end. The presentations are offered in person as well as virtually.

Regan Treewater-Lipes is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

HAPPY CHANUKAH TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF EDMONTON

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### Challah Bake brings women and girls together in ritual



About 150 women and girls from the Edmonton Jewish community gathered on Oct. 30 for the annual challah bake. Connecting over a Shabbat ritual was more meaningful with the thoughts of the hostages held by Hamas and the war in Israel in the back of everyone's minds. Photos by Tammy Vineberg.

# חנוכה



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**5:30 pm- Hannukah Candle Lighting**  
**Following by Hannukah Dinner**  
**\$18.00 per adult; free for kids**

Please RSVP  
[info@e-bethshalom.org](mailto:info@e-bethshalom.org) or 780.4886333/301

# New stamp commemorates Hanukkah

Canada Post's latest stamp honours the eight-day festival of Hanukkah, featuring an illustration of a *hanukkiyah* (an eight-branched menorah) surrounded by flowers and various elements associated with Hanukkah celebrations. Also called the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah takes place this year, from nightfall December 7 to nightfall December 15.

This important holiday commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem, Judaism's holiest site, after the Jewish people reclaimed it around 165 BCE.

It is said that the Temple menorah burned for eight days on a single day's worth of olive oil. This miracle of light and faith is commemorated each year through the kindling of a Hanukkah menorah – a candelabrum bearing a row of eight candles or oil holders.

The nightly lighting of a menorah is a central element of Hanukkah celebrations. Fried foods, such as latkes and jelly doughnuts, are also strongly

associated with the festival, while olives, olive branches and cruses of oil are sometimes used to represent the miracle at the heart of the Hanukkah story.

Giving small amounts of Hanukkah gelt, in the form of money or chocolate coins, has become a common practice. The Hebrew letters on the four sides of the dreidel, a spinning top that children play with during the holiday, stand for the phrase *Nes gadol haya sham*, which means "A great miracle happened there."

Designed by H el ene L'Heureux, illustrated by Stephanie Carter and printed by Colour Innovations, the stamp issue includes a booklet of six Permanent™



A new colourful Canada Post stamp has been issued to commemorate Hanukkah, which falls this year from from the evening of December 7 to the evening of December 15.

domestic rate stamps and an Official First Day Cover cancelled in Winnipeg.

Stamps and collectibles are available at canadapost.ca and at postal outlets across Canada.

## Vivian Silver *Cont. from page 11*

to stop, and we have to start talking... I spent a lot of time in Gaza... like-minded Palestinian organizations, all of those people want to live in dignity and in recognition of a national people."

"I call myself a conditional Zionist," she explained. "I believe in the right of the Jewish people to have a state, as long as we give the same right to the Palestinian people. This could be such a haven to both of our people here. I know what life could be like if we put down our arms." She said that she dreams of a different reality for her grandchildren, to whom she was so devoted, "one in peace and security, one where they have Arab friends, where they have Palestinian friends."

Women Wage Peace shared these words from Silver, spoken a few years ago, in their moving eulogy for her: "We cannot go on without a political horizon.... We

cannot accept operations and acts of war that bring only death, destruction and pain, and inflict mental and physical harm, as a daily occurrence... We call upon the Prime Minister, the Defense Minister, and the Cabinet to find the necessary courage to promote political alternatives, which will bring us peace and security. We call upon our sisters in Gaza: join us and call upon your leaders, enough. Terror benefits no one. You, too, deserve peace and security."

On Israel's Reshet Bet, Zeigen talked about his mother, each word breathlessly uttered through an impossible struggle.

He described his mother as an amazing grandmother and mother, and a woman of contradictions. "She was small, fragile, very sensitive, and also a force of nature. She had an amazing spirit, she was very assertive, she had a strong moral core when it came to the things she believed in the world and life." He shared what he believed would have been her heartbreak at the horrors of October 7 as well as

the deaths in Gaza. "She worked all her life," he said, "to steer us off this course... In the end, it shattered on her."

He also shared how, for years and years, she had told him that peace could come tomorrow, and he kept telling her that she was beating a dead horse. Yet now, her hope is alive in him, the seed of peace she kept trying to sow growing roots in all the pain.

"I now have her optimism. It feels like a relay race; she passed something onto me," he said. "I don't know what [I'm going to do with it] but I think we can't go back [to how things were]. We need to create something new — more in the direction of what she was looking for."

May Vivian Silver's memory be a blessing, and for a revolution. May her memory be the foundation that one days brings us to the realization of her dream of peace.

*This article originally ran on Kveller.*



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If you are experiencing an immediate safety concern, please call 911

If you have experienced an incident motivated by hate, please call the non urgent incident reporting line at EPS to report it: (780) 423-5467 or #377

If your child experiences an issue at an Edmonton Public School, please report to your principal.

With any of the above, we appreciate that you also inform Jewish Federation by emailing to [info@edjfed.org](mailto:info@edjfed.org)

# Advocating for Israeli-Palestinian coexistence: We're still in this together

By Haviva Ner-David

(Kibbutz Hannaton, Israel JTA) — One of my son's close friends was fatally wounded fighting Hamas in Gaza this week. Yair Nafusi was his name. He would have been 21 next month. He was born on Hanukkah, thus his parents chose the name Yair, to "light up." Indeed, he lit up many lives.

As we said goodbye to Yair's physical presence and buried his body, I felt deep reverence and gratitude to this young man who gave his life to protect me and the more than 1,000 people standing around his grave, as well as the diversity of people living in this country and Jews around the world. They count on Israel to be a safe haven. Especially in times like these. Violent anti-Jew hatred is very much alive.

The Oct. 7 "Black Sabbath" Hamas massacre triggered a deep fear for our survival as Jews — and justifiably so. What reinforced our fear was the hailing of that massacre by much of the world, including the progressive (even Jewish) left, as a necessary step towards "freeing Palestine."

Like many of the thousands of victims of this massacre (some who died, some who were wounded, and some who will suffer trauma for the rest of their lives) and of the almost 250 hostages taken by Hamas, I am an activist who believes in a vision of Jews and Palestinians living on this land in partnership and peace. I devote much time and energy towards building a shared society among Palestinian and Jewish Israelis, especially in the Galilee, where I live. And I continue to believe in this vision.

I also believe terror and war are not the solution to the ongoing conflict. Only once we all (Palestinians and Jews) recognize one another's suffering, acknowledge the truth in both our narratives, and take responsibility for the conflict and its solution, will we be able to have a true and lasting peace. I recognize Israel's contribution to this conflict, and I hold our current government partly responsible for the "success" of Hamas' attack, although certainly not for its brutality.

The events that have unfolded since Oct. 7 have been eye-opening. My work building Palestinian-Jewish coexistence has always assumed partnership: a belief in the humanity and rights of both the Palestinian and Jewish peoples. That is why my novel, "Hope Valley," about the friendship between a Palestinian and a Jewish Israeli woman, is told from their alternating points of view.

And yet, when I watch the pro-Palestinian protests by "progressives" from London to New York to Washington, I see activists crossing a line from

struggling for peace and Palestinian rights into promoting a hateful, terrifying, dangerous anti-Jewish agenda.

It is a line crossed when they blame the conflict on Israel and Jews alone; when they call Hamas "freedom fighters" who were justified in using barbaric violence to achieve their goals; when they distort the complicated history and present reality of Israel-Palestine into a black-and-white story of white colonialist Jews invading Palestine to commit genocide on an indigenous Palestinian population.

It's the same dangerous line crossed by those who say innocent Israeli citizens deserve to be butchered, burned, raped, maimed; who glorify Hamas as a progressive humanitarian group when its covenant specifically calls for wiping Israel and the Jewish people off the earth; who call Israel's retaliation against Hamas "genocide" — as if the IDF's intention is to wipe out the entire Palestinian nation.

Hamas is no good for Palestinians and no good for Jews. It wants a fundamentalist Muslim dictatorship on the land from the river to the sea, devoid of all Jews. And Christians. And LGBTQ folk. It is no good for anyone who believes in democracy. It is simply no good for humanity. What Israel faces now in Gaza is a moral dilemma. Hamas wanted the IDF to retaliate so it could make Israel look bad. It worked. What Israel is doing is bad — killing thousands of innocent people, including children. But not evil. Hamas is evil. And while so many across the globe who promote Palestinian rights don't want to see the difference, I do.

I do spiritual companion work for clients around the world, including liberal rabbinical students and rabbis. They report among some of their peers a lack of knowledge of historical and political facts about Israel-Palestine, as well as about anti-Jewish tropes and their underlying theories, that concerns me immensely. I grew up Orthodox Jewish Zionist in New York, where the Palestinian narrative was omitted from my education. That was highly problematic. But so is teaching *only* the Palestinian narrative, or not balancing the progressive world's bias towards the Palestinian narrative with the Jewish one. Future Jewish leaders especially need to understand both narratives, and not simply go with the tide of the times.

Human rights include Jewish human rights. It is possible to believe in human rights for both Jews and Palestinians. It is possible to cry for the innocent Palestinian lives lost in this war (from Israeli bombs, Hamas and Islamic Jihad missiles and Hamas using their own citizens to protect their terrorist cells) while believing in Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas' attempt at the annihilation of Israel



and all Jews.

It is even possible to demand from Palestinians truthful examination of their leaders' culpability.

Devoting time and energy towards building Palestinian-Jewish partnership and fighting for equality, justice and peace, I have had to hold many truths. I have had to find a way to deal with feelings of guilt over Jewish Israelis' part in the injustices inflicted upon innocent Palestinians (blame that must also be shared with Arab countries and Palestinian leaders) without losing my sense of self, self-respect and a belief in my right to live here, and even exist.

It has not been simple, but it is possible. I expect my Palestinian and progressive Jewish counterparts to go through a similar process. Some have, but not all, and unfortunately the voices of those who have not are reverberating loudly throughout the world (ironically, less so in Israel, where advocates for Palestinian rights and a lasting peace more often hear and heed the voices of the "other" side).

I do believe if we remove Hamas and replace our leaders — the Palestinian and Israeli leaders who stand in the way — with worthy ones who will talk and be willing to compromise, we can build a lasting peace. Then no more soldiers like Yair, or victims of terror, or casualties of war, will have to pay the price for our inability to do so.

*Haviva Ner-David is rabbinic founder of Shmaya: A Mikveh for Mind, Body, and Soul, on Kibbutz Hannaton. She is a certified spiritual companion with a specialty in dreamwork, working with couples and individuals. She is the author of "Dreaming Against the Current: A Rabbi's Soul Journey," the novel "Hope Valley" and "Getting (and Staying) Married Jewishly: Preparing for Your Life Together with Ancient and Modern Wisdom."*

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of JTA or its parent company, 70 Faces Media.

## Sfenj: Moroccan Hanukkah Donuts Recipe

By Carine Goren

(Noshers via JTA) - I was never able to pronounce the name of this pastry correctly. Sfenj actually means "sponge," and these are indeed spongy, springy and full of air bubbles. I learned this recipe from my friend and pastry chef Ruta, and here it is, with a few minor adjustments. In my family, sfenj are consumed in three different ways: mom likes them plain; most of the family (including yours truly) prefer them sugar-coated; and my own private chef heats up some honey in the microwave oven and dips them between bites.

Allow for at least two sfenj per person; I am yet to meet anybody who can stop at one.

### Ingredients

7 cups (1kg) all-purpose flour  
2 Tbsp (17g) active dry yeast  
½ cup (100g) sugar, plus more for rolling  
½ tsp salt  
3⅓ cups (800ml) lukewarm water, divided  
1 ½ qt (1.5L) vegetable oil, for deep-frying

### Directions

In the largest bowl you have, mix the flour and yeast. Add the sugar and salt, and mix with the flour. Pour in about half the water, and begin kneading with your hands—fingers spread open, using lifting motions from the bottom of the bowl to the surface of the dough. Gradually add (all!) the remaining water, and knead for another minute, and no more! This dough must not be over-kneaded. It is very loose, and that's okay.

Cover in plastic wrap and set aside to rise, until doubled in bulk. With very wet (dripping with water) hands, work the dough to let out the air (it will return to its original volume). Cover, and let rise again until doubled in bulk. This second rising will be a lot shorter, so you may begin heating up your oil. In a wide pot, heat the oil to 325°F (160°C) on a deep-frying thermometer.

Dip your hands in a bowl of cold oil or water. Pinch a ball of dough (tangerine size) and pull it up. With your other hand, pinch under it to cut it off the rest of the dough. Holding the ball of dough with both hands, insert your finger in its center to create a hole, and stretch until the hole is about 1 inch (3.8cm) in diameter. Carefully place the bagel shape into the hot oil. Repeat with the rest of the dough (not forgetting to dip your hands in cold oil or water occasionally).

Deep-fry until sfenj are golden, 2–3 minutes on each side. Put the fried sfenj on a paper towel to soak up the excess oil. Dip each sfenj in a bowl of sugar to



coat, and serve immediately.

\*Grandma Knows Best: Sfenj must be prepared and fried when they are meant to be served. Don't prepare this dough ahead of time, and don't put it in the refrigerator. When cold, it is hard to work with, and it goes sour very quickly (within 4 hours).

*This story and recipe come from the book Traditional Jewish Baking by Carine Goren. It was first published on The Noshers.*

# A Jewish Convert's Guide to Enjoying the Winter Holiday Jumble

By Leah Grisham

(Kveller via JTA) - Jewish kids and Christmas: For some parents, this combination can seem like a proverbial minefield of challenges presented to us each winter. The secular world, it seems, becomes infinitely less so as Christmas decorations, commercials and episodes of beloved kids shows proliferate.

For interfaith families like mine, which celebrate both Hanukkah and Christmas, this time can be especially fraught. My own 3-year-old Jewish daughter, for instance, is obsessed with the Grinch, loves Santa Claus, and has been singing "Jingle Bells" since July. No matter how much I try to hype up Hanukkah, she still asks me if it's Christmas every time she sees snow (which happens early in our part of the country). Whether it's the constant Christmas messaging or her own hazy memories of past Christmas celebrations, it seems like Hanukkah plays second fiddle to the other December holiday.

My holiday anxiety was especially strong last year, which was my first winter holiday season as an official Jew after converting earlier in the year. I'd breezed through Passover and the High Holidays content in my Jewishness, but after Thanksgiving I felt a huge amount of pressure to make Hanukkah more fun, festive and memorable for my daughter — and, if I'm being honest — for myself, someone who spent decades of her pre-conversion life loving Christmas.

I'm not alone in these feelings. According to posts made in a Facebook group called Jewish Converts (Converts to Judaism), an online support group of sorts for Jewish converts that is over 2,500 members strong, this time of year sees lots of people asking for advice and venting their uncertainties toward navigating the winter holidays. Is it OK to still have a tree in my interfaith home? Is it OK to attend extended-family Christmas gatherings? What do I tell my kid when all their friends are talking about gifts from Santa? How can I get my mother-in-law to stop trying to proselytize my kids? What if I still love Christmas music? These

questions are not totally unique to converts, but for those of us who grew up celebrating Christmas (no matter how un-religious our families' traditions were), it can be hard — and very confusing — when it comes to the winter holidays, which can cause feelings of resentment and competition.

In my mind, the competition I was imagining between Christmas and Hanukkah became greater than the holidays themselves. Looking back, I can see now that my need to make Hanukkah "better" than Christmas became conflated with my very Jewishness: Bigger and better Hanukkah celebrations came to represent (in my mind) being Jewish "enough." Accordingly, I spent December going crazy buying Hanukkah gifts, planning what had to be the perfect Hanukkah party and decorating every inch of our home in blue and white decorations. I don't know what the world record for most Stars of David in one house is, but my home in December 2021 would be in the running. I was also filled with angst over the Christmas hoopla that my daughter would experience when we travelled to see our extended families over the holiday. I wanted her to feel joy and excitement over Jewish celebrations, but that felt impossible in a sea of red, green and Santa Claus.

After so much fretting, things came to an anti-climactic end with the introduction of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, which kept my small family at home alone. Weeks of feeling resentful toward extended family Christmas parties faded into disappointment that these gatherings — which would have been our first extended-family celebrations since 2018 — didn't happen at all. In fact, as my daughter and husband enjoyed Christmas afternoon naps, I had quite a pity party for myself as I guzzled champagne and chocolates on the couch, watching "The Holiday" by myself (Jack Black and Eli Wallach make it Jewish enough for me!).

My unexpected sense of disappointment over cancelled Christmas plans made it clear: After so many quarantined holidays and life events celebrated over



Scout is decked out for Chanukah.

Zoom, the mental capacity I spent being angry at Christmas would be better spent embracing the opportunity to gather with family and friends, no matter what the occasion.

Navigating the Christmas season as a convert to Judaism is not easy — and it would be a lie to say that I've totally let go of the fact that, to my 3-year-old, Christmas is more exciting than Hanukkah — but this year I am going to do my best to stop fretting over details.

Our world has seen so much grief and upheaval over the last few years; maybe it is OK to let our guards down a little bit and embrace joy wherever it can be found. I'll pack our menorah and Hanukkah pajamas and do my best to just let my daughter enjoy the fun of this year's holiday jumble.

*This essay was first published on Kveller.*

## Edmonton Chabad hosts regular Lunch N Learns for teens and young adults



Rabbi Ari Drelich and the team at Chabad Edmonton are hosting regular Lunch and Learn programs with teens at area high schools including Ross Sheppard and Jasper Place and with young adults at the University of Alberta. Photos supplied.

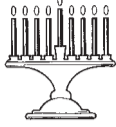
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# ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF CHANUKAH

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community from  
Freda and Marvin Abugov, Cera  
and Andrew Dixon and family



Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Hanan, Oksana, Yahli  
and Noa Aizic



חג חנוכה שמח  
from Grant, Lemore, Ellie,  
and Nathaniel

Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
from Luba Allen



Happy Chanukah to the entire community  
from Dr. Michael Alpern  
and Sylvia Alpern

Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Tamara Aronov and Family

Wishing family & friends all the  
best this Chanukah from Robert,  
Krista, Aliya, and Daniel Brick

Let the light shine this Chanukah  
and every day. Am Yisrael Chai.

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from  
the Bass-Haines Family

Happy Chanukah  
from Jim and Maita



from Stuart, Sandy,  
Etta, Arlo  
and Bruno Brown



Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Gary, Mira, Noah,  
Nathan, and Leah Campbell

Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Colin, Jennifer, Asher,  
and Noonie Muscat



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Anita Sky,  
Howard Davidow



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Judi Card



Chag Sameach  
from Ben, Brittany, Bria,  
and Blake Feldman

Chag Chanukah Sameach  
from Shulamit Gil  
and Keith Dannacker



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Leor, Ohad, Shai, Noa,  
and Daniella Eliyahu

Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Mitchell, Kelly, Talia, Charlotte,  
and Chloe Goldford

חנוכה שמח  
From the Goldsand family

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Gabe & Sonia Goldberg  
and family



Happy Chanukah  
from Jerry Grobman



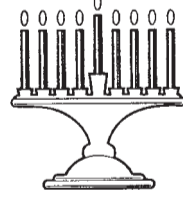
Wishing everyone  
a Chanukah filled with love,  
light, health & hope

Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Farrel, Cara, Wyatt,  
and Grace Greenspan



חג חנוכה שמח  
from Ari, Faren, Noam,  
and Maya Sniderman

from  
Deb, Jay, Jacob,  
and Will Hatch



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Nikki, Naomi, Jared,  
and Stephanie



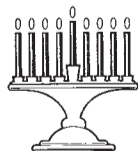
Happy Chanukah  
from  
Mindy Jacobs & Eoin Kenny

Happy Chanukah to the entire community  
from Jacqui Katzeff, David  
Bookhalter and families

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from The Huberman family



Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from  
Thom and Cindy Jarvis



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Samuel Koplowicz



Let the light shine this Chanukah  
and every day. Am Yisrael Chai.

Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
from  
the Lerner  
Families



Happy Chanukah  
from Jen, Jackson, Josh,  
Slapshot & Sunspot



from  
Arlein Hoffman  
Chetner & family

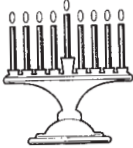


Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Karen Leibovici  
and Steve Zepp



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Rosemary and Stan Kitay


Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Valda Levin



קייל מאת'יוסון  
קלייר סקאבוצו  
ומשפחתם  
חג שמח




Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
from Jenn, Joel,  
Ben and Oscar




Happy Chanukah to the entire  
community from Yuliya, Alexey,  
Zach, and Lisa Massarsky

Happy Chanukah  
from  
Terri Mann & Family

Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Robin, David Marcus  
And Family



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Fred and Sherry Muscat



Wishing family & friends all the best this  
Chanukah from EJHL  
World Champions, the HeAtBaGs

Happy Chanukah  
from Dylan, Léah, Carter,  
Ayla and Arielle Muscat



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Francie & Jon Nobleman and Family

חג חנוכה שמח  
from Meirav and Doron Or

Wishing everyone a  
Chanukah filled with love, light,  
health & hope

Wishing family & friends all the  
best this Chanukah  
from The Phillet Family


Happy Chanukah  
from Nomi, Greg,  
and Maya



from  
Michele &  
Josh Miller




Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Aubrey Rogerville




חג חנוכה שמח  
from  
Mona & Dan Rosenberg

Wishing family & friends all the  
best this Chanukah! from  
Ellery Lew and Karen Oshry




Chag Chnukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Shannon, Nicolas, and Erin Sabbah  
& Jeremi, Aisley, and Nova Proulx

Happy Chanukah  
from Beverly and  
Stephen Shafran



Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
from Josh, Sarah, and Jonah Raizman


Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
from Zev, Micah, Becky  
and Daniel Shafran



חנוכה שמח  
From  
Riva and  
Howard Shein



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Carol and Ron Ritch




עם ישראל חי  
from Jane & Randy Soifer  
חג חנוכה שמח

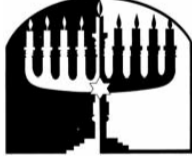
Happy Chanukah  
from  
Ron Sorokin  
and Lisa Redmond



Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
from  
Howie & Debbie Sniderman




Let the light shine this Chanukah  
and every day. Am Yisrael Chai.  
from Howard and  
Esther Starkman  
and family




Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
from Boris Sukalsky and Family

Happy Chanukah  
from Hersh and  
Jane Sobel and family

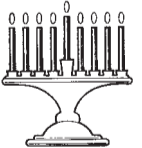


Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Jesse, Eva, Lola,  
and Ella



Wishing family and friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
From Jason, Dani, Iyla


Chag Chanukah Sameach.  
We stand with Israel.  
Shira Spring, Rena Uretsky,  
Noah Uretsky



**Happy Chanukah to the entire community**

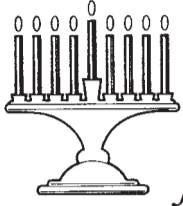
From all of us at Alberta Jewish News:  
Deb Shatz, Dan Moser, Sandra Edwards,  
Sandy Fayerman and Maxine Fischbein.

Thank you to everyone who participated with a  
Chanukah greeting this month. We appreciate you!



# ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF CHANUKAH

Wishing everyone a Chanukah filled with love, light, health & hope.



from  
Rick, Nikki,  
Zach, Amanda,  
Jordan, and Kayla



Happy Chanukah  
from  
Lewis and Freya Wasel

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Regan & Dmitriy, Benji,  
Jacob and Tamara Lipes

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Sari, Jayden,  
Aliya and Ethyn



Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah!  
from Naomi Wolfman



from  
Dr. Sam & Eva Weisz  
and Joel Weisz



Wishing family & friends  
all the best this Chanukah!  
from  
Syma, Allan and Steven Uram

Wishing everyone a Chanukah filled with love, light, health & hope



from  
Dalia, Allan,  
Tammy and  
Mark Wolinsky

חג חנוכה שמח

from  
Anna, Forrest, Adina  
and Naomi

חג חנוכה שמח  
from The Wine Family

Happy Chanukah  
from  
Sue & Alvin Winestock



Chag Sameach  
Happy Chanukah  
from

Megan, Gabriel, Daniella,  
Elliana and Nes Mandel

חג חנוכה שמח

Wishing everyone a  
Chanukah filled with love,  
light, health and hope.  
We stand with Israel.  
from Lena & Victor  
Linetsky and family

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Jodi, Michael  
and Rebecca Zabudowski



חנוכה שמח

Happy Chanukah  
to the entire community  
from Connie &  
Danny Zalmanowitz



Wishing good health and  
happiness this Chanukah  
from  
Marey & Wally McCall

Wishing everyone a Chanukah filled  
with love, light, health & hope



from  
The Rebohs

Chag Sameach  
Am Yisrael Chai  
from the Cairns Families



Wishing family and friends  
all the best this Chanukah  
from  
Natalie and Ken Soroka  
and family



Todah Rabah: BBYO thanks the Edmonton Jewish Community for participating in the Holiday Greeting pages of the Alberta Jewish News Chanukah edition.

Proceeds from these pages will help provide programming for Jewish teens in our city.

Chag Chanukah Sameach and Am Israel Chai.

## DEAR READERS:

We're sure by now that you've noticed that as a Canadian news outlet, we can no longer use Facebook to distribute our community news and photos.

Please visit our website at [albertajewishnews.com](http://albertajewishnews.com) frequently to keep up to date on community happenings and news from an Alberta Jewish perspective. Or sign up to include us in your RSS feeds.

We also encourage everyone who liked us on Facebook to sign up for the Alberta Jewish Schmooze - our weekly newsletter - that is sent directly to your inbox. Sign up right on our website: [albertajewishnews.com](http://albertajewishnews.com).

We are also posting more articles on twitter - so visit us there too. Thanks again for welcoming us into your homes each month and online on a regular basis.

Wishing a Happy and Healthy Chanukah to the whole community, Dan Moser, Editor Alberta Jewish News

B”H

Chabad of Edmonton invites you to join us for our 32nd annual

# Chanukah Celebration!

## PUBLIC MENORAH LIGHTING!

Sunday, December 10  
 4:30-5:30pm  
 At the Alberta Legislature  
 Dignitaries in attendance!

Free park & ride  
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