



ALBERTA Jewish NEWS

Publication Mail Agreement Number: 40050628

Volume 37, No. 5 \$3.00

Visit us online at albertajewishnews.com

May, 2026

Inspiring Negev Galas will be held in both Calgary and Edmonton

The Alberta Jewish Community will be welcoming some extraordinary visitors in the coming weeks at the 2026 Negev Gala Celebrations hosted by Friends of JNF Canada.

On Sunday May 24 the 22nd Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper will be featured at the 2026 Edmonton Negev Gala in celebration of friendship, leadership and legacy.

The former Prime Minister has been lauded by many as a brilliant leader and economist who embodies Canadian virtues and values. He served as Canadian PM from 2006 to 2015, winning three successive national elections and representing Calgary electoral districts. During his time in office, he was a steadfast friend of the Jewish community, a strong ally of Israel and an outspoken critic of antisemitism – and he has remained so over the past decade.

Stephen Harper has visited Israel many times. In 2014, he became the first Canadian Prime Minister to address the Knesset plenum and he spoke about the important friendship between Israel and Canada.

In 2019 the Stephen J. Harper Hula Valley Bird Sanctuary Visitor and Education Centre south of Qiryat Shmona was officially opened. The facility has transformed the experience of ornithologists and bird watchers who come to the Hula Valley, a breathtaking nature reserve located in the shadow of Mount Hermon. There, they can watch the twice-a-year seasonal migration of 500 million birds from more than 500 species, from Europe and Central Asia to Africa, and back.

At the official opening Harper said in a statement,

Aviv Dancers celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut in YEG



The Aviv Israeli Dancers were featured at the community wide Edmonton Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration and they performed beautifully! Photo by Tammy Vineberg

“This park is one of the greatest restoration stories, just like this country is to the Jewish people. It is a magnificent honour to have this centre named after my name, and I am grateful for this beautiful occasion.”

The former Prime Minister was a mentor to Calgary MP Shuvaloy Mujamdar who is also a great friend and ally to the Alberta Jewish Community and is committed to combatting antisemitism in Canada today. The two will sit down for an engaging fireside conversation as the 22nd Prime Minister shares his insights on leadership, antisemitism and the enduring relationship between Canada and Israel.

This is a rare opportunity to hear from one of Canada's most influential leaders in an intimate community setting. VIP tickets are sold out but tickets to the main program followed by a light reception are still available. They can be purchased at

friendsofjnfca.org/EDMnegev2026

On June 9, security expert Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Conricus will be the featured guest speaker at the Calgary Negev Gala, interviewed by Calgary's own Kevin Libin, Executive Director of Post Media News. See article on page 5.

At the heart of this year's Calgary and Edmonton Negev Galas is a meaningful project in Tzfat - a new Child and Family Rehabilitation Home near Ziv Medical Centre that will allow families to stay together while their children receive critical care. It's important, because no family should have to choose between being together and getting treatment.

The Edmonton Negev Gala will be held on May 24. Purchase tickets at friendsofjnfca.org/EDMnegev2026

The Calgary Negev Gala will be held on June 9. Purchase tickets at friendsofjnfca.org/CALnegev2026.

Chai There! launches in Alberta and beyond

By Jennifer Kovacs, LJI Reporter

The Alberta Jewish Community is welcoming a new social platform this month, and editor Daniel Moser is pleased to be launching the inclusive forum. “The primary driver of the platform is the podcast – Chai There! a culturally Jewish Podcast powered by AJN,” said Moser.

“Episode 1 featured Bar Lavy from the Edmonton Jewish Film Festival, Episode 2 featured *Chai Life Productions* out of Calgary. We have more interesting and thought-provoking guests lined up too including Jewish comedy writers, Jewish scientists, authors, influencers, and more!”

The new platform steers away from politics and issues that divide us and focuses on culture, he explained, to engage an inclusive demographic and provide an umbrella for people of all ages, genders and all levels of affiliation ranging from very much to not at all. From the Jewish to the Jew “ish” to the Jew curious and right, left and/or centre.

The ChaiThere.ca blog features all the topics that are near and dear to your heart, and all culturally Jewish. Literature, movies, television, streaming, music, sports, and obviously food.

But the star of the platform is the Chai There! Podcast.

“Hosts Addison Borhaven, a university student based in Edmonton, and David Sklar, an actor/playwright living in Calgary welcome guests in a relaxed setting to discuss the cultural aspects of Judaism – sports, culture, film, theatre, literature, science, and more,” said Moser.

The Alberta Jewish community is full of vibrant culture, he adds, and it shouldn't be kept a secret. “We'll look for the hidden gems in both Edmonton and Calgary and we'll celebrate them. We'll highlight the things that bring us together.”

This is also our way of sharing our Jewish culture with ourselves and our neighbours, he says. “Most of all, this is a podcast about community.”

Continued on page 18

Chai There!



a culturally Jewish podcast
powered by ajn

chaithere.ca



More than a model: How a ship building club connects seniors

By Jana Zalmanowitz

Monday mornings are hard. But at the Calgary Paperny Family JCC, they come with coffee, conversation and the slow construction of a 105-cannon ship.

I'd heard that seniors' programming at the JCC was expanding its offerings. It's not my demographic, but as a daytime JCC-user, I can't ignore the robust role seniors have in keeping the building buzzing during work hours. One program sounded particularly charming: the Monday morning Model Ship Building Club.

On a recent visit, I stopped by the seniors' lounge. A fresh pot of coffee brewed, snacks were laid out and "coffee talk" hummed around the table. At the helm is Seniors Program Manager, Jackie Herman. She politely interrupts the conversation, which she acknowledges will continue indefinitely if she does not, and half the participants filter into another room.

This room also offers an array of wares on the table, but they aren't refreshments.

With that, I'm welcomed into the JCC's weekly Model Ship Building Club. An activity I know nothing about, but as its members assure me, experience is not a prerequisite for participation.

The idea began with member, Bill Levy, who, while downsizing, discovered an unbuilt model HMS Victory he hadn't gotten around to. For those new to model ship building, this is a massive undertaking. The instructions are lengthy and assume prior knowledge. Roughly 2300 miniature pieces, wait to be held together with glue, adorned by pinpricks of paint and strung intricately with tiny lines and delicately sewn sails.

Levy illustrates the complexity, describing the ship's cannons.

"To make a cannon on a ship of 105 cannons, each one requires the assembly of two sides, a bottom, a front," he explains. "Then the cannon sits on top, which is made of two halves with a cork and a string. You have to paint the wheels and the little metal bars

that hold it together. Different colors for each carriage."

Levy has done this before. It took him three years and this time he decided not to go it alone.

A relative newcomer to Calgary, Levy offered up his model to the JCC this January. He wanted to build it, but also to create something more meaningful. In retirement, he says, connection can be harder to come by, especially for men.

"Women are social people and [men] are isolationists in our little caves," Levy jokes. "I thought it would be a great activity for the guys."

Herman had also noticed the same pattern. While many programs naturally attracted women, she was looking for ways to engage more men. Every successful program must include food, so she secured an anonymous donor to fund the refreshments and gave the club a place in the schedule.

On the day I visit, Levy and two other members are at work representing their fellow builders. They estimate there are about eight regulars who cycle through, each one bringing something to the table.

Ed Smith says he joined as a way to "meet allegedly nice people." Within moments of meeting him, his dry humour confirms his role as comic relief. He asks me, deadpan, if I'd like him to spell his name for my record. Smith downplays his contribution, saying he's simply there, "to put A together with B," but does admit that the work reconnects him with a hobby he enjoyed as a child.

Klas Ohman had a similar motivation. "I'm moving very slowly into retirement," he says, and recalled advice from a lecture he once attended. "One of the things they said was when you start going into retirement, look at the things you liked to do before you started working and think about doing that. One of the things I did a lot of was build models as a kid."

The group also feels lucky to have recruited a few members of Rimon Calgary, a local needlework guild dedicated to Judaic textile art. Having worked on multiple projects in the Jewish community, the women



Smith (second from left, top), Levy (third from left, top) and Ohman (far left, bottom) pose with fellow members of the ship building club and the HMS Victory model. Seniors Program Manger Jackie Herman (far right) facilitates but takes no credit for the "cannon assembly line" laid out on the table.

of Rimon were well poised to bring the sails to life, taking care to adapt the design and fabric to ensure historical accuracy.

No one here is taking credit for being the leader and they make it clear they're always looking for new talent (all genders and all ages), excited to see who might join the crew.

When I ask about timelines for completion. This is when the real purpose of the Monday Morning Ship Building Club is revealed.

"It's more of a social coffee thing than it is a model thing," Smith says.

Levy reinforces this message. "We drink coffee and hopefully someday this is going to be finished," he shrugs.

Ohman nods in agreement. "I think we're actually a social coffee club with a ship problem now," he says, referring to the group's penchant for coffee and resulting slow progress.

There's pride in their work. There's satisfaction in returning to a forgotten hobby. But really, they just like getting together. The banter, the ease, and the connection between people who were once strangers.

Herman notices the ship has done its job. "Many women will socialize for the sake of socializing and men like to have a task to bond over," she says. The club is almost like a gateway and they start coming more often to attend other programs.

The ship is simply the vehicle.

The HMS Victory may one day be finished, but that's not really the point. On Monday mornings, seniors come to the JCC for coffee, and under the guise of building a ship, it's friendships that take shape.

Jana Zalmanowitz is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION

BROADCAST

FROM SINAI

EREV SHAVUOT DINNER & TIKKUN LEIL

THURSDAY, MAY 21
5:15PM TO 10:00PM

WWW.BETHTZEDEC.CA

May is Canadian Jewish Heritage Month

Celebrate your history!

Share your family's story in southern Alberta by contributing it to the

Southern Alberta Jewish Family Histories Online Exhibit

Scan the QR code to see the exhibit

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

JHSSA contact:
403-444-3171
jhssa@shaw.ca
www.jhssa.org

First Call Cemetery Monuments Ltd.
Chevra Kadisha Approved Supplier

Serving: 37th Street Cemetery - Beth Tzedec Memorial Park
- Erlton Cemetery - Queens Park Cemetery

We Guarantee The Lowest Granite Gravestone Prices

Brad Westwell Business Owner Ann Westwell Business Manager

5010 1st Street SE, Calgary • firstcallcalgary@gmail.com
firstcallmonuments.com **403-723-0800**

— We Stand in Solidarity with Israel —

Let us spread the word for you and celebrate

YOUR SIMCHAS

WITH ALBERTA JEWISH NEWS

We welcome notices about Weddings, Births, Bar Mitzvahs and other milestone events, and offer reduced rates to help spread the word to the community! We are happy to be part of the celebration! For information contact Deb at 780-421-7966 or albertajewishnews@gmail.com.

CMDA Stampede Gala: The purpose is coming together and saving lives

Canadian Magen David Adom's annual Calgary Gala will be held on May 31, and it is one you definitely won't want to miss. The theme for the evening is Stampede with a Purpose. The décor, the entertainment and the cuisine will all be Western inspired - under strict kosher supervision. So it's Cocktail Western, says Sharon Fraiman, CMDA's dynamic Western Regional Director, Major Gifts.

Like all CMDA galas, this one is sure to impress. Fraiman and her dedicated volunteers are planning a fabulous evening – but the purpose is serious, she

explains. "It's to come together and save lives."

The event will feature top-flight country music by Tyler Two Guns, a renowned Tsuut'ina Nation entertainer as well as Palladio Music, a Calgary-based electric and acoustic violin duo featuring Manon Mitchell and Steven (Slava) Klevsky.

Joining the evening as a guest speaker will be Uri Shacham, MDA's Deputy Director and Chief of Staff, who will travel from Tel Aviv to provide an update on Magen David Adom's life-saving work.

The keynote speaker is Loay Alshareef, an Arab Muslim peace advocate, historian and social media influencer with a mission to champion peace in the Middle East.

Saving lives takes strong community support, notes Fraiman. "Here in Calgary, we've played a huge role. Our community has donated ambulances, emergency scooters, and vital supplies that save lives every single day. I can't say thank you enough."

We are so grateful to our donors and supporters," says Fraiman. "Am Israel Chai!"

Sponsorships, table sales, and tickets are now available.

To learn more, contact Sharon at 587-435-5808 or sfraiman@cmdai.org. Or book online at cmdai.crowdchange.ca/128479



Canadian
MAGEN DAVID ADOM
Canadien

CALGARY CHAPTER

**TICKETS
\$190**

TICKETS ON SALE

cmdai.crowdchange.ca/128479

CMDA Calgary Annual Event STAMPEDE WITH PURPOSE

From Desert Roots to Prairie Boots

May 31, 2026

The Carriage House Hotel & Conference Center

ENTERTAINMENT

Tyler Two Guns

Tyler Two Guns is a country rock and blues artist from The Tsuut'ina Nation.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Loay Alshareef

Peace-with-Israel Arab advocate, historian and social media influencer

Sharon Fraiman

Western Region Director, Major Gifts

C: 587-435-5808

E: sfraiman@cmdai.org

GUEST SPEAKER

Uri Shacham

Deputy Director and Chief of Staff MDA

JAHSENA publishes new book that features notable Jewish Edmontonians

By Debby Shoctor

The Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta (JAHSENA) is pleased to announce the publication of a new book, entitled, “Leadership & Legacy: Notable Jewish Edmontonians,” that profiles members of our community who have made outstanding contributions to both Jewish and non-Jewish life in Edmonton, helping to make it the vibrant city it is today. Thanks to generous grant funding for its publication from the Jewish Federation of Edmonton, JAHSENA was able to engage Debby Shoctor to conduct extensive research and to complete the manuscript for this project, as well as to publish it. This publication will help to demonstrate to our own community, as well as to the outside world, the important contributions our members have made to life in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and the world.

We want to ensure that we reach as broad an audience as possible with these inspiring stories, of some of the community’s best and brightest stars. The articles include portraits of businesspeople, politicians, doctors, lawyers, educators, scientists, volunteers and others who have made contributions to the community through *tzedakah* (philanthropy), *tikun olam* (healing the world) and in building *kehila* (community). Profiles include Irving and Dr. Dianne Kipnes, Mayor Stephen & Lynn Mandel, Senator Paula Simons, Oilers owner Daryl Katz, the Ghermezian family and more. We are excited to be able to tell the stories of our community and highlight the leadership and legacy which our community members have shown and given to our city. This book will be launched in May 2026 during Jewish Heritage Month. We hope to use the stories in online, and in-person exhibits and in other publications.

In these pages, you will find stories of leaders in our community who have left lasting legacies in this city, for both the Jewish and non-Jewish people who live here. These are stories of men and women, religious and not, born Jewish and not, whose Jewish identity,

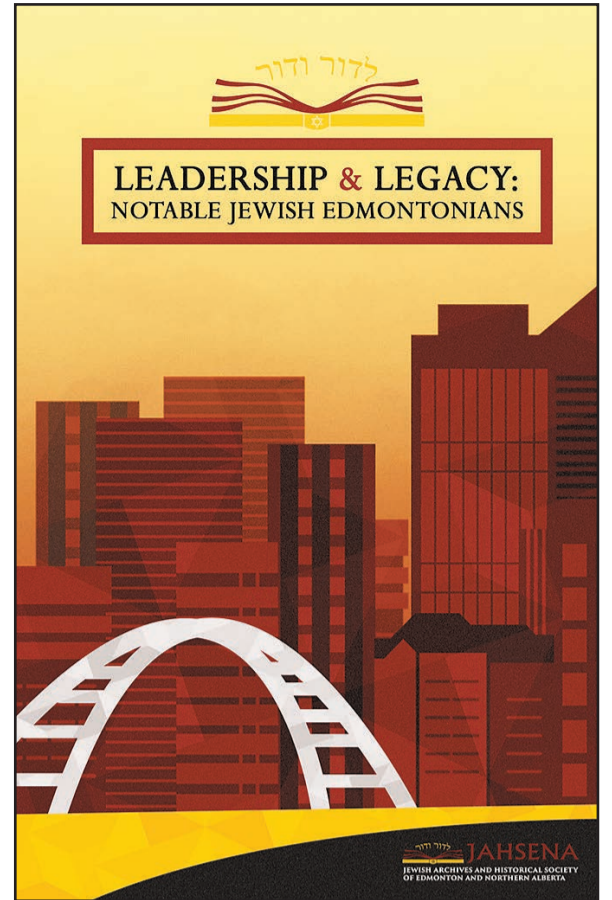
either inherited or gained by lived experience, has informed their lives, and therefore their legacy to us.

Their stories reflect the history of Edmonton’s Jewish community, and other Jewish communities in Canada. They reflect the broader trajectory of Jewish settlement in Alberta and Western Canada.

The journeys detailed here – from Yiddish, Hebrew or foreign-language-speaking homes to leadership in Canadian municipal life; and from Jewish community leadership to becoming namesakes of organizations, buildings, schools, and parks – show us that values and compassion, or *gemilut hasadim*, are keys to building a city that honours heritage and hope. Together, the people profiled in these pages represent a model of public engagement rooted in responsibility, lifetimes of service, community building, and bridge-building across cultures, faiths, and landscapes.

Yet perhaps their greatest legacy is less tangible: an ethic of *avodah* -- service rooted in Jewish tradition; a belief in the power of dialogue over division; a persistent optimism that even the most intractable social problems – whether environmental neglect, religious bigotry, or institutional inertia – can be addressed through cooperation, respect, and hard work. They embody a model of volunteerism that bridges cultural and social boundaries, reinforcing the notion that community service enriches both giver and recipient. They have lived lives that bridge older traditions – ritual, language, community, and shared identity – within the sensibilities of a contemporary, pluralistic Jewish community in Edmonton.

Although some of these individuals have never made their Jewish identity the most visible part of their public personas, their heritage quietly informs their worldview, especially their sense of community, belonging, and ethical purpose. Their Jewish roots, while not always the headline of their biography, are woven into their identity: the immigrant narrative, and the emphasis on community, philanthropy, and the responsibility to leave the world better than they found it.



Previous publications by JAHSENA include: “The First 100 Years: Edmonton’s Jewish Community from 1893 to 1993”, (1999); “From Generation to Generation: Jewish Edmontonians as Heritage Builders,” (2015;) and the documentary films: “From Pedlars to Patriarchs: A Legacy Remembered,” (2004) and “Bittersweet Memories: The War Years,” (2010).

Author Debby Shoctor is the current President and former Archivist of JAHSENA. She has been preserving and telling the stories of Jewish Edmonton for over 35 years.

The book launch will take place on May 27th at Audrey’s Books at 7:30 pm. Books will be available for sale at that time, or afterwards from the JAHSENA office. Please RSVP to the JAHSENA office if you plan to attend (780) 489-2809 or jahsena@shaw.ca.

BECAUSE SOMETIMES THE MOST POWERFUL STATEMENT FOR ISRAEL IS THE ONE ON YOUR FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

PORTFOLIOS | RRSP/TFSA | GIFTS

Strong Rates Available in Canadian & U.S. Dollars

See All Rates Here

israelbonds.ca

ISRAEL BONDS US TOGETHER

Canada-Israel Securities, Limited is registered as an Exempt Market Dealer. E/OE 2026

JAHSENA
JEWISH ARCHIVES AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EDMONTON AND NORTHERN ALBERTA

Invites You to Join Us for the Launch of Our Latest Publication:

“Leadership & Legacy: Notable Jewish Edmontonians”

BOOK LAUNCH

Audrey’s Books
10702 Jasper Ave., downstairs

Wednesday
May 27, 2026 **7:30 PM**

Space is limited! Please **RSVP** by **Wednesday, May 20** to:
 | jahsena@shaw.ca
 | (780) 489-2809

Book available for purchase | Refreshments will be served

Funded by **Jewish Federation OF EDMONTON**
Powered by United Jewish Appeal

Jonathan Conricus: The October 7th dilemma of Israel's Colonel of the Airwaves. Coming to Calgary on June 9.

By Mark Cooper, LJI Reporter

On that Shabbat morning of October 7, 2023, the sirens did more than signal a rocket attack. For Jonathan Conricus, they sounded a warning that his life was about to take a lightning-quick pivot.

As the first alarms echoed, the retired IDF Lieutenant Colonel stood at a crossroads that would soon demand a definitive, high-stakes decision between two very different ways to serve his country.

As he and his wife, Revital, and their four children hurried toward their bomb shelter, the grim reality of the reports from southern Israel began to settle in. Jonathan looked at Revital and voiced what was becoming undeniable when he saw the first clips of Hamas death squads in white pickup trucks: Israel was at war.

For Conricus the morning presented a stark choice. He could return to the front lines, leveraging 20 years of combat experience — many of those as a battlefield commander — to shield civilians from the brutal terrorist onslaught. Or, he could take up a different weapon—the communication skills he'd honed in his last four years of service as the IDF's international spokesperson—to navigate the coming storm of global scrutiny.

Ultimately, the decision was made for him.

"I didn't have a weapon at home," said the 46-year-old Conricus, who will headline the June 9, Friends of JNF Canada Calgary Negev event at Beth Tzedec Congregation and titled *Truth and Security in an Uncertain World*.

"I had left it at the local police station for safekeeping."

So by the end of the day, Conricus found himself in active reserve duty, working the 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. night shift as a spokesperson, handling between 30 and 40 media calls from journalists around the world and going live on major news networks each shift.

When he had a little time between interviews, often between four and five in the morning, he would craft posts on the IDF social media platforms, helping to inform hundreds of thousands of followers around the world.

It was an emotionally draining, but highly meaningful routine he repeated daily for three solid months.

"In hindsight I know how important those updates were because people tell me, still to this day how comforting, how informative and important they were and that was something that I didn't think of at the moment."

He knows things could have been very different had his weapon been close at hand.

"Yeah, I could have taken my motorcycle and ridden down to Gaza and God only knows how that could have ended.

"A lot of good people, better fighters than me, did the same thing and unfortunately didn't come back," he

said, noting commanders he served with previously were killed in the fighting in Gaza, one, whose body was taken and held by Hamas.

Diaspora Jews galvanized by poise under pressure

Conricus is the first to admit his sacrifices don't match the heavy price paid by his peers in combat. Yet, he knew his contribution was needed: for Israel, the IDF and the Jewish community around the world, who have been galvanized by his calm, steely-eyed interview demeanor.

So he put his grief aside and focused at the task at hand.

"I sensed that this was a transformative time, a really important strategic moment in history. So I set emotions aside and you know, family, kids, wife and everything else aside and I focused on the job that I had to do and that was to be sharp in interviews and represent the IDF on TV."

Conricus may no longer wear the uniform, but he remains a commanding fixture in the global discourse on Middle Eastern security.

Transitioning from military spokesperson to high-stakes analyst, he has appeared on dozens of

international networks like CNN, the BBC, and Sky News, while holding his own in panels on shows such as *Piers Morgan Uncensored*.

His trademark is a tactical calm. Even under the heat of aggressive interrogation, Conricus remains unflappable — a composure he traces back to his formative years in Malmö, Sweden. Raised there from infancy until age 13 by his Swedish father and Israeli mother, he absorbed the quiet discipline of his surroundings.

"There are a lot of good things about Swedish culture," he says. "It's a society that appreciates how you hold yourself."

For Conricus, this poise is a professional necessity. "If an interviewee loses his composure, he loses the audience," he explains, noting that such a lapse "undermines the very goal he is trying to achieve." He is keenly aware that for some outlets, baiting an Israeli official makes for lucrative television. Some networks, he claims, have even stopped inviting him because he refuses to take the bait.

"I know there are quite a few networks that won't

Continued on page 6

FRIENDS OF JNF CANADA

— CALGARY —

NEGEV GALA 2026

TRUTH & SECURITY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

<p>VIP RECEPTION 5:30pm</p> <p>PROGRAM 7:00pm</p>	<p>TUESDAY</p> <h2>09</h2> <h2>JUNE</h2>	<p>BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION</p> <p>1325 Glenmore Trail SW</p>
---	--	---

FEATURING

LT. COL. (RET.) JONATHAN CONRICUS

Middle East Security Expert

in conversation with **Kevin Libin**
Executive Editor, Postmedia Network Inc.



RECOGNIZING
Postmedia Network Inc.
for their commitment
to journalistic
integrity

**FRIENDS
OF
JNF
— CANADA**

In support of the
Tzfat Child & Family Rehab Centre

Registration open at
friendsofjnfca.org/calgarynegev2026

Scan
Here



Margarita's dishes

at the Calgary Farmers Market

Everyone is welcome!
from Dora & Danny Korduner

403-667-7567 • 510 77 Ave SE Calgary



ADAM SINGER, M.A., LL.B.
Divorce & Family Law



(403) 476-0153
asinger@wilcraft.com
www.wilcraft.com

650, 211 - 11 Avenue SW, Calgary, AB, T2R 0C6

WILSON LAYCRAFT

Jonathan Conricus

Cont. from page 5

have me on because they don't like the fact that I hold my ground," he says. "They prefer people they can bully and rattle."

Reminder of Hamas atrocities helps keep resolve

Despite the relentless pressure since October 7, Conricus rejects the suggestion of exhaustion. Instead, he speaks with a defiant gratitude.

"I actually am not exhausted at all," he insists. "As Israelis and Jews living in our ancestral homeland, free and independent, we have so much to cherish. That should give us strength."

Yet, even his steel has been tested. As the brief window of international empathy following the October 7 attacks began to close, Conricus felt his resolve tested by a barrage of questions aimed at delegitimizing Israel's war efforts. In those moments of mounting frustration, he found a grim way to recalibrate.

To regain his bearings, he would force himself to watch footage of the Hamas atrocities.

"I found myself needing to watch that for a few minutes to focus on why we're doing what we're doing," he says. "To remember the danger on the other side, what will happen to Israelis if we don't defeat these terrorists, and why it is necessary to do whatever it is we are doing – whatever the consequences."

Conricus, who will be making his first visit to Calgary at June's Negev event, will be interviewed by Kevin Libin, executive editor of Postmedia Network, Inc.

The event will also recognize Postmedia (publisher of the *National Post* and several other Canadian newspapers) for their commitment to journalistic integrity, particularly in regards to reporting on the Middle East.

Speaking humbly about the fundamentals of objective reporting, Libin said he is eager to sit down with Conricus for their upcoming fireside chat.

"Now is a vital time to hear from somebody like Jonathan who brings such a clear-eyed perspective and deep knowledge and analysis of what the reality is in the Middle East," said Libin.

"We suffer from a real dearth of intelligent, well-informed analysis here in Canada ... that Jonathan can give us a perspective that sees past a lot of the simplistic narratives that we are typically fed ... and tend to be recycled by pundits."

Opportunity to change Middle East trajectory

Conricus, who also attended the JNF Negev event in Edmonton in 2024, offers a candid evaluation of Middle Eastern security. While he sees an historic opening for peace with Lebanon – predicated on the fall of the Iranian regime – he is far more pessimistic regarding Gaza.

"I think we have an opportunity to change the trajectory of the Middle East," he noted, though he believes Gaza will remain a "festering wound" where



Middle East Security Expert Jonathan Conricus will be in Calgary on June 9 at the Negev Gala. Tickets are on sale now.

Hamas retains its grip on power. It is a grim forecast he takes personally; with his own children now of military age, the prospect of inevitable future conflict is one he doesn't relish.

On the war on propaganda, Conricus knows antisemitism is a unique hatred that is "shapeshifting" always finding a way to continue to exist but that Israel – and the Jewish people – "don't have the luxury of not trying."

He is critical of the current Israeli government's underinvestment in the "soft power" of communications and diplomacy.

He offers a blunt assessment of their poor international communication, citing this failure as the catalyst for his transition from the battlefield to a media-focused military career, where he felt his skills were at that time most needed.

Drawing on the cautionary tale of his childhood home in Malmö, Sweden, he brings a stark warning to Calgary: Jewish communities must organize and protect themselves against rising intolerance. Malmö's once-thriving community has been hollowed out by unchecked immigration and surging hostility, rendering the city virtually uninhabitable for Jews.

With many fleeing to Israel, the UK, or elsewhere in Europe, his message is clear: "I call on people to heed the sad tale of Malmö and tell them the story of what can happen to a Jewish community that is afraid to act, that is paralyzed by fright and that doesn't take political or financial action in order to defend itself, its community, its way of life and its institutions."

Conricus sees beyond the immediate horizon, remaining deeply optimistic about the enduring spirit of Israel and the diaspora.

"At the end of the day, I'm very positive looking forward. I'm positive about Israel's future and positive about our ability to defeat our enemies and continuing, working, thriving as we are and have been in Israel."

"I consider myself very fortunate to have a voice, to be able to fight on behalf of the Jewish people and to have the ability to communicate and sometimes make a difference."

The Negev gala event begins with a VIP reception at 5:30, followed by the program at 7.

Participants can register for the gala at friendsofjnfca.org/calgarynegev2026/register.asp

FRIENDS OF JNF CANADA

EDMONTON

NEGEV GALA 2026

LEADERSHIP & LEGACY

SUNDAY, MAY 24, 2026

FEATURING THE 22ND PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

**The Right Honourable
Stephen J. Harper**

in conversation with
Shuvaloy Majumdar,
MP Calgary Heritage



VIP event is sold out.
General Program tickets
are still available. Register today!



**FRIENDS
OF
JNF
CANADA**

In support of the
Tzfat Child & Family Rehab Centre

Registration open at
friendsofjnfca.org/edmnegev2026

Scan Here



SADOVNIK MORGAN LLP
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

- * Full Service Accounting
- * Legacy Planning
- * Tax & Audit Services
- * Specializing in High Net Worth Families

Happy
Shavuot!

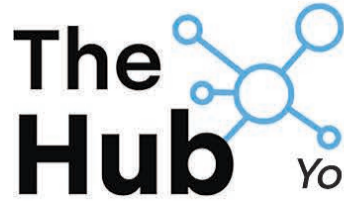
Call for a free consultation:
(587) 401-4900
www.smlp.ca • michael@smlp.ca

**Sign up for the Alberta Jewish
Schmooze e-news today!**

Keep up to date on a weekly basis -
delivered right to your inbox.

Visit albertajewishnews.com to sign up

Check out our community calendar at jewishedmonton.org.



Your bridge to Jewish Edmonton



A MESSAGE FROM CEO STACEY LEAVITT-WRIGHT

Shavuot reminds us that values are not something we inherit automatically—they are something each generation must choose. The ancient story of standing at Sinai is less about a moment frozen in time and more about an ongoing decision: what teachings, responsibilities, and commitments will guide our communal life today?

This theme of choosing values has been vividly alive in our community over the past weeks. The recent 30th Jewish Film Festival was a celebration of Jewish joy and cultural expression. Film has the unique power to invite empathy, spark conversation, and reflect the complexity of lived experience. By gathering to watch, discuss, and celebrate these stories, our community chose curiosity over indifference and connection over isolation.

At the same time, we were called to a different, equally vital responsibility

through the two-day Dianne z'l and Irving Kipnes Holocaust Symposium. Shavuot teaches that receiving values comes with obligation, and among the most solemn is the duty to remember and to teach. Our staff and Holocaust Education Committee provided high school students with the opportunity to engage with testimony and dialogue, recognizing that bearing witness is not solely about the past—it is about shaping the moral boundaries of the future, ensuring that knowledge, empathy, and accountability endure over time.

May, recognized as Jewish Heritage Month, offers an additional lens for reflection. It is a time to honour the enduring contributions Jewish Canadians have made to the development of our country—across business, philanthropy, education, science, public service, and the arts. These contributions did not emerge by accident; they grew from a shared commitment to

resilience, communal responsibility, and service to the greater good.

In that same spirit, we are proud to support the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta's new book, *Leadership & Legacy: Notable Jewish Edmontonians*, which documents the lives, leadership, and impact of notable Jewish Edmontonians. Preserving these stories ensures that our community's principles are not abstract ideals, but lived examples of leadership and civic engagement—ones that can inspire future generations to step forward.

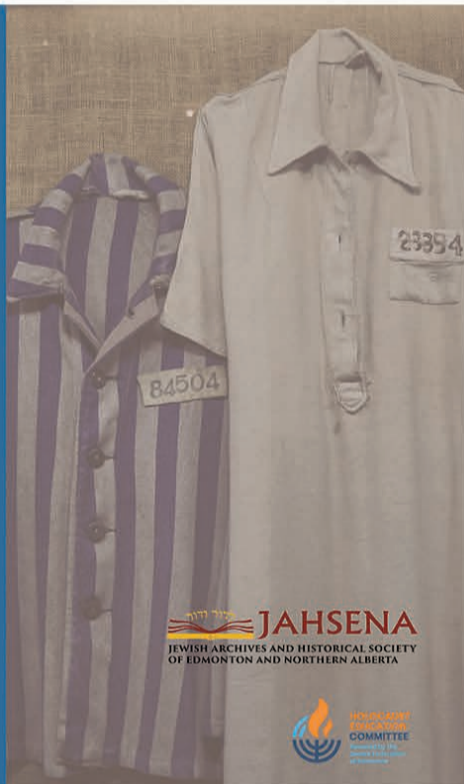
Shavuot asks us to see values as living commitments. Through celebration and remembrance, education and storytelling, we continue to choose what kind of community we are building—and what wisdom we will pass on.

Register for our upcoming events at jewishedmonton.org.

We are collecting artifacts of Holocaust survivors

Please contact us if:

- You haven't been interviewed by the Shoah Foundation and would like to give an interview.
- You have items related to the Holocaust that you wish to donate.



JAHSENA
JEWISH ARCHIVES AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EDMONTON AND NORTHERN ALBERTA



To learn more, contact: holocaustedu@edjfed.org

Strengthen your family's connection to Israel

Seeking host families for the 2026-27 ShinShinim program

We are looking for host families to help welcome our Shinshinim to our community. Families provide a spare bedroom, meals, and a welcoming and inclusive home. In return, they form incredible relationships that will endure for a lifetime.

Interested in learning how to become a host family?

Email Chloe at chloes@edjfed.org



EXPLORE
Israel Pavilion
2026 Heritage Festival

Be part of the summer festival scene by volunteering as part of the Israel Pavilion team.



Sign up now

Set up
Thursday, July 30
Friday, July 31



Shifts during the festival
Sunday, August 2
Monday, August 3

Volunteers will be vetted for security purposes. Please note the Federation reserves the right to refuse.



SHALOM BABY

Welcoming new babies to the Jewish community, connecting, and supporting their parents!

Contact Jenn at shalombaby@edjfed.org for more information.



REPORT ANTISEMITISM WHEN YOU SEE IT.

jewishedmonton.org/reportantisemitism





Halpern Akiva Academy students have wonderful opportunities to work with children from different grade levels.



Halpern Akiva Academy's 80's GALA celebrates 45 years in Calgary

The world today has changed significantly since Joe Clark, Pierre Trudeau, John Turner, and Brian Mulroney were at the helm of the Canadian government, though Donkey Kong players and Bob Marley fans are still out there.

Founded in 1981, Halpern Akiva Academy will be celebrating its 45th anniversary, at this year's school gala to be held at the Carriage House Hotel on Sunday evening, June 7, 2026. The theme of the evening is Back to the Future and everyone is invited to wear their most awesome 80s outfits to commemorate the milestone.

Halpern Akiva Academy is proud of its history and commitment to Jewish education over the last 45 years. While the classrooms now contain interactive boards and projectors instead of chalk boards and messy erasers, the students' excitement to learn and the excellent education they receive in both Judaic and General Studies remain as vibrant as ever. The teachers' approach to differentiated learning, appropriate use of technology in the classrooms, and

hands-on learning across all the grades are the hallmark of a Halpern Akiva Academy education throughout the years.

It is a distinct honour to be recognizing Yannai and Marina Segal for their several decades of service to the school and the broader Calgary Jewish community. Marina can always be counted on behind the scenes working casinos, designing advertisements, sitting on the school board, and organizing the school gala – this year included! Yannai is a kidney donor, past-president of both the Calgary Jewish Federation and Halpern Akiva Academy, a HOJMI board member and president, and local entrepreneur.

Alumni, supporters, family and friends are invited to join the celebration on June 7. For tickets and donations, call the school office at 403-258-1312 or email office@akiva.ca. To purchase tickets online, go to <https://halpernakiva.ca/gala/>. The party will be totally rad!

HALPERN AKIVA ACADEMY
80's RETRO
GALA DINNER
JUNE 7, 2026

HONOURING MARINA AND YANNAI SEGAL

WEAR YOUR TOTALLY AWESOME 80's ATTIRE!

5:30PM COCKTAILS
 6:00PM DINNER
 CARRIAGE HOUSE INN

AKIVA ROCKS
 JUNE 7, 2026

Celebrating 45 Years of Jewish Education

For Tickets, Donations and Sponsorships:

403-258-1312
 office@akiva.ca
 halpernakiva.ca



Halpern Akiva Academy students enjoyed a special farm education field trip to Aggie Days at the Calgary Stampede. Students enjoyed the family-friendly interactive exhibits, live animal demonstrations, and learning more about Alberta agriculture.

UNVEILING NOTICE

Please join our family for the unveiling of our beloved wife, mother and oma.
Irene Ross z"l

On Sunday, June 14, 2026 at 11 AM.
 Beth Tzedec Cemetery, Calgary

Followed by a light luncheon at the Carriage House.



Join us on June 7 for the Bagel Loop: Walk/Run/Roll 2026

By Svetlana Pavlenko

Sunday, June 7, 2026 • Victoria Park in Edmonton (12030 River Valley Rd NW)

What if you could experience the joy of travel without airport lineups, enjoy international cuisine without leaving Edmonton, learn something new without homework, and build meaningful friendships along the way?

That place exists right here in our city – at the Edmonton Jewish Senior Citizens' Centre.

The Centre is much more than a gathering place for seniors. It is a vibrant community hub for intellectually curious people, lifelong learners, active adults, and anyone looking for connection, culture, wellness, and fun.

Throughout the year, the Centre hosts lively brunches featuring performances by Nuova Vocal Arts, fascinating presentations from professors at the University of Alberta and other universities, appearances by talented local writers and musicians, and engaging talks by professionals from our own community.

And of course – there is the food!

The Centre is famous for its delicious kosher homemade lunches and take-out frozen meals. Guests rave about favourites such as Moroccan Peanut Soup, Pickle Soup, Lemon Lentil Soup, and the beloved “No-Chicken” Chicken Soup with Matza Balls. Have you tried them all yet?

Need to work off a few extra calories or simply stay active and healthy? The Centre offers something for everyone:

Relaxing yoga classes with Sandy on Mondays at

10 a.m. Fitness classes with Bonnie on Tuesdays at 10:45a.m. Tai Chi with Ben Ma on Wednesdays at 11a.m. Dynamic bodywork sessions with Anna on Thursdays at 11a.m.

Can't decide? Try them all!

The Centre also proudly connects generations. Students from the University of Alberta regularly organize interactive presentations and one-on-one learning sessions on everything from smartphones and iPads to crocheting and creative hobbies.

Jewish traditions are celebrated with tremendous pride and enthusiasm. Every year, our chef Daniella and our amazing volunteers prepare more than 5,000 latkes for Hanukkah and over 2,500 hamantaschen for Purim. The Centre brings the community together to celebrate every Jewish holiday with warmth, joy, and delicious food.

To continue offering these meaningful programs and services, the Centre relies on grants, community partnerships, and generous supporters. Community members can help by purchasing tribute cards starting at \$10, ordering a Shalom Wall plaque as a lasting tribute to loved ones, or becoming monthly donors.

And now, the Centre invites everyone to participate in one of Edmonton's most heartwarming community events:

Sixth Annual Bagel Loop: Walk/Run/Roll 2026

Created in 2018, the Bagel Loop has become a beloved “friendraiser-fundraiser” – proudly organized by seniors, for seniors and their families.

This special event brings together people of all ages and abilities for a fun-filled day at beautiful Victoria Park. Participants will walk, run, or roll along the park trail before enjoying games, prizes, and a family-

friendly international BBQ celebration.

Our seniors will proudly gear up their canes, walkers, and wheelchairs and show the community that age is never a barrier to participation, friendship, and fun.

Bring your family, friends, neighbours, and coworkers! Gather pledges from family members, doctors, pharmacists, hairdressers, mechanics, favourite shop owners – everyone can help support this incredible community initiative.

Last year's oldest participant was an inspiring 96 years old – and he is returning again this year! The youngest participant was just one year old. We are expecting approximately 200 participants in 2026.

Event Schedule

- 10:00 a.m. – Registration and morning snacks
- 10:30 a.m. – Games and warm-up session led by the Centre's fitness instructors & our friends from the Kyrgyz Association in Canada
- 11:30 a.m. – Walk/Run/Roll begins
- 12:00 p.m. – International cuisine family BBQ

Registration Fees

- Family (up to 4 members): \$50
- Adult: \$20
- Children over 10: \$15
- Children under 10: Free

Pledge forms are available through the Centre office, the Centre newsletter, and jdic seniors.ca. Come walk, run, roll, celebrate, and be an active part of our community!

Svetlana Pavlenko is Executive Director of the Edmonton Jewish Senior Citizen's Centre.

6th Annual BAGEL LOOP

WALK / RUN / ROLL

Sunday, June 7, 2026 — Victoria Park

Registration @ 10:00am

“On Your Feet or On Your Seat”

SUPPORT YOUR SENIORS

Bring cash – win amazing Raffle prizes!
Pre Race Munchies & BBQ Included

Seniors' Centre
All Seniors Welcome

780-488-4241 jdic seniors.ca

Registration: Family \$50 | Adults \$20 | Kids over 10 \$15 | Kids under 10 FREE (any 4 members)

WITH THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

ENTER TO WIN ONE OF TWO AMAZING RAFFLE PRIZES

Own a Piece of Oilers' Hockey History

The Jewish Senior Citizen's Centre is bringing you an incredible chance to score some seriously cool hockey memorabilia — while supporting an amazing cause!

GRAND PRIZE

A #18 Zach Hyman Oiler jersey!

Signed in English and Hebrew. A truly one-of-a-kind collectible!

SECOND PRIZE

Two Signed Photos & Oilers Puck

Signed colour photos of Zach Hyman & Jake Walman + Oilers Puck signed by J. Walman

This Isn't Just About Winning It's About Giving Back!

All proceeds support the Centre's **Bagel Loop: Walk. Run. Roll. 2026**, helping fund vital programs for seniors in our community.

GET YOUR TICKETS

At the Jewish Senior Citizen's Centre 10052 – 117 Street

or At the Bagel Loop on Sunday, June 7th Victoria Park, Site #2

1 ticket \$36 or 3 tickets \$88

Draw date: Sunday, June 7th at 1p.m. Victoria Park, Site #2

Winners do not have to be present, but we would be happy to see you at our event!

GOOD LUCK TO EVERYONE WHO BUYS A TICKET

Questions: call 780-488-4241 or email programmer@jdic seniors.ca

AGLC License #779767 jdic seniors.ca

Exceptional honourees warmly welcomed at the B'nai Brith Calgary Dinner

By Irena Karshenbaum, LJI Reporter

If readers are looking for proof about the popularity of Canada's 22nd prime minister, The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, they need only to have attended the 73rd Annual B'nai Brith Calgary Dinner on April 23 and witnessed the number of people circling the head table looking for a photograph with the former prime minister.

The gala was not only sold out six weeks in advance, an unprecedented occurrence for B'nai Brith Calgary Lodge #816. It was also the first time in the charity's long history that an honouree was invited back as an honouree, with Stephen Harper having been honoured in 2017, the other sold-out dinner in recent memory the success of which was attributed to his presence.

The lead honourees of the 73rd annual dinner were Conrad Black, historian, biographer and frequent columnist for the *National Post*, a newspaper he founded in 1998, and his wife, Barbara Amiel, author of numerous books and a columnist for *Maclean's*, and other top-tier publications, with a reputation for being a staunch supporter of Israel.

Black and Amiel continue to shape the public discourse in Canada and their presence at the 2026 B'nai Brith Calgary dinner was greatly anticipated, as reflected by the brisk early ticket sales. Then with the relatively late-stage announcement that Stephen Harper would attend, and also be honoured as Special Moderator, the dinner was quickly sold out.

Former Federal Minister of Defence and Premier of Alberta, Jason Kenney, known for his sense of humour, introduced the "extraordinary Canadians" by beginning with, "Imagine Barbara Amiel, Conrad Black and Stephen Harper walk into a *shul*."

Kenney described Amiel as, "One sparkling exception to the rule" of the "boring and grey, predictable, a monolithic opinion" of the Canadian

media he encountered in his formative years, and Black as, "One of the most compelling figures in Canadian commerce, but really more responsible than anyone for creating diverse voices in Canadian media." He noted that a recent poll measuring "the most popular and effective modern Canadian prime minister" showed that Harper was "ranked first."

Amiel responded to Harper's opening question about what worries her most and what she would do about it by explaining that she currently sees everything, "Through the lens of Israel."

She continued saying she, "Fears the end of our tribe, of the Jews, not through the outside world, throwing bombs or bullets, but what we are doing to ourselves." She explained that there is social exclusion and Jews become frightened, "They want to be liked, and I think we should stop wanting to be liked. We should look after ourselves for a change. It's very nice to give a lot of money to hospitals, to universities, except if you give them to universities, at the moment, you'll find it in the faculty of English as well as Middle East studies, where they are teaching people how to dislike Jews. So stop giving to those sort of philanthropism and start looking after your own as B'nai Brith does with all its trips to Israel. And stop worrying about anti-Semitism. It's not Israel's fault. There's been anti-Semitism for three thousand years, with the most ghastly being the Holocaust. But somehow we've managed to come back, and that may be one of the reasons we are disliked, because we do always come back."



Seated: Stephen Harper, Conrad Black, Barbara Amiel. Standing: Shuvaloy Majumdar, Simon Wolle, Stacy Shaikin, Deputy Chief Cory Dayley and Crystal Dayley, Howard Silver.

Black opened his thinking, "The crisis in the West, of our determination as a society and as a civilization to continue, is the failure to control our borders." He confirmed that he does not oppose legitimate immigration, "I am talking about people swarming into our countries as in the southern border of the US, until recently, and parts of Europe."

He stated that a country that has, "Devoted itself in public policy terms to commercially self-destruct with a dedication to an irrational notion of ecology that if we didn't abandon – and no jurisdiction has been a greater victim of it than Alberta – if we didn't abandon fossil fuels, we would all die. This is what charlatans in the academic world have been telling us."

Black continued, "All of these trends were aggravated in the U.S., when its only surviving rival, the Soviet Union, fell like a soufflé, and all the forces of self-hate that had been cowed prior to that by the consensus of the ethos of America as a great civilization promoting liberty and its advance from strength to strength in record time to a level of influence unequal by any jurisdiction in history, since the Roman Empire."

He observed that the US was, "Flagellating itself, and this is stopped. And it is caught up in the complexities of the vagaries of the personality of the present president, but he is repulsing those forces."

Black concluded, "My fear is that the progress he [Trump] has made, stopping this nonsense that we have 227 genders and stopping biological men from destroying women's athletics, stopping this hysterical madness about the environment, the open borders, and asserting America's rightful place in the world. That because of objections to him as a person, the sound policy he is executing could be rejected because what happens in the United States influences incomparably the whole world. And if the United States isn't going to lead the West, the West could actually lose its pre-eminence in the world to a civilization that has no respect for democracy, no respect for human rights and no sympathy at all for what we in the West, including the Jews prominently among us, have been struggling to establish unevenly, but unceasingly, for thousands of years."

Mayor of Calgary, Jeromy Farkas, received a standing ovation for his powerful speech that acknowledged that Jews are living in the most dangerous moment in history beyond the Holocaust stating, "Anti-Semitism is loud, it is no longer hidden, it is organized and it is spreading." Farkas said that anti-Semitism is now seen in the streets, students are intimidated, and slogans like "Globalize the Intifada" are regularly chanted. He stated that this is, "Not a call for peace or for co-existence. It is a call that is tied to the violence against Jews," repeating twice to emphasize his point, "It has no place in our city, none."

Darren Bondar, immediate past president of B'nai Brith Calgary Lodge #816, served as emcee. Bill Lister, who was introduced by his wife, Lily Lister, brought levity to the gala through personal storytelling prior to receiving the Ben Docket Award of Excellence for his contributions to the growth and development of Calgary's Jewish and broader community.

Dinner co-chair, Joel Grotsky – working with co-chairs, Bev Sklar and Howard Silver – attributed the evening's success to the troika combination, "Aside from all the hard work from the volunteers, the exceptional honourees that were kind enough to accept our invitation and attend our dinner, and the continued support of our wonderful community."

Irena Karshenbaum writes in Calgary.

Thank You

On Thursday, April 23rd, 2026, a sold-out audience of 700 guests gathered for B'nai Brith Calgary Lodge's 73rd annual Dinner.

The evening featured an engaging lineup of speakers, including the Rt. Hon. Stephen J. Harper, Barbara Amiel, Conrad Black, the Hon. Jason Kenney, and Mayor Jeromy Farkas. Guests were treated to a thoughtful discussion on today's geopolitical landscape, including the rise of antisemitism and reasons for optimism amid increasing political polarization.

The 2026 Ben Docket Award of Excellence was presented to Bill Lister in recognition of his outstanding contributions to Calgary's Jewish and business communities.

Thank you for being part of this meaningful philanthropic tradition. Your continued commitment since 1917 enables us to serve our community with purpose and pride.



The Right Honourable
Stephen J. Harper



Barbara Amiel
Conrad Black

Ψ B'NAI BRITH
CALGARY LODGE #816
& CALGARY LODGE MENORAH FOUNDATION

1607 90 Avenue SW | Calgary, AB | T2V 4V7 | 403.255.6554
bbcalgary@telus.net | bnaibrithcalgary.org | f



Grade 6 students at Talmud Torah School hosted a delightful Grandparents Tea on Yom Ha'atzmaut.

Grade 6 students welcome beloved Bubbies and Zaidies for a heartwarming Yom Ha'atzmaut Tea

By Natalie Soroka

Gr. 6 students at Talmud Torah School welcomed more than 35 beloved Bubbies and Zaidies from the school and broader community for a warm, lively, and deeply meaningful Yom Ha'atzmaut tea; a celebration that blended joy, tradition, and intergenerational connection. Now in its second year, the event, organized by the Talmud Torah Society, has already become a cherished tradition, eagerly anticipated by students, grandparents and community members alike.

The afternoon opened with Grade 6 students welcoming their guests, guiding them to beautifully arranged tables, and offering tea, pastries, and plenty of enthusiastic conversation. For many students, this was a chance to practice their social and serving skills in a real, meaningful setting. They poured tea, carried trays, and, most importantly, engaged in genuine

intergenerational conversations that brought stories, memories, and laughter to the room. You could see the pride on our guests faces in seeing the next generation celebrate Jewish identity with such spirit.


The schmoozing was lively, the smiles were constant, and the sense of community was unmistakable. Students not only learned how to host, but they also learned how to listen, how to connect, and how to honour the people who helped shape the community they are part of today.

After tea, guests were escorted to front-row seats for the school-wide Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration. The energy in the room was electric as TT students and families gathered to mark Israel's 78th birthday with pride, joy, and cultural connection. Performances by students highlighted themes of Israel's independence, resilience, and vibrant spirit. Through song, dance, and spoken word, students expressed their love for Israel and their understanding of its

significance in Jewish history and identity.

The celebration was more than a performance; it was a moment of shared purpose. Families, students, Bubbies and Zaidies and community members came together to honour the traditions and values that continue to inspire the Jewish community. The event strengthened bonds across generations, deepened the sense of belonging, and reminded everyone present of the power of shared heritage.

Events like this do more than fill a calendar; they strengthen community. They nurture identity. They create memories that students will carry with them long after they leave the halls of TT. They remind us that the strongest communities honour those who come before them and celebrate our shared legacy. Founded in 1912, Edmonton Talmud Torah has been a cornerstone of Jewish education for over a century, and Talmud Torah Society continues to honour and build upon that legacy today.



NOTICE OF AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society shall be held in person, Thursday, June 18, 2026, commencing at 7:00 pm in the TT gymnasium.

The agenda for the meeting shall include the following:

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 2025 AGM
3. Security Update
4. Principal's Report
5. Financial Report
6. By-law amendment
7. Election of Board Members

Relevant documents will be posted to: www.talmudtorahsociety.com

There are multiple board positions open for election, each for a three-year term. A person is not eligible to be elected if they are engaged as an employee of the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society or if they have an outstanding debt or obligation to the Edmonton Talmud Torah Society, and have not put in place an approved payment proposal. Any person who is eligible to run for the Board must complete the nomination form and submit it to the Secretary not later than one week prior to the Annual General Meeting. There will be no ability to nominate anyone during the AGM. Nomination forms may be obtained from Natalie in the Society office. Please contact Natalie at 780-481-3377 or nataliesoroka@talmudtorahsociety.com to make arrangements to access and drop off the forms. **The deadline for nominations is Wednesday, June 10, 2026.**

Per the Society bylaws, each Society member in good standing is entitled to one (1) vote.

Society members in good standing can sign up to speak at the Annual General Meeting. Members wishing to speak must register as a speaker by contacting Natalie in advance or upon arrival at the AGM.

You are encouraged to attend the Annual General Meeting in order to become more fully informed about the affairs and activities of the Society. To register, please email information@talmudtorahsociety.com

FRIEDMAN FUND ISRAEL TRIP SCHOLARSHIPS

Are you 15-25?

Interested in visiting Israel this summer to learn Hebrew or to participate in a Zionist program of your choice?





Multiple \$1000 scholarships available

APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN!

Contact Natalie at (780) 481-3377 or nataliesoroka@talmudtorahsociety.com



Managed by Edmonton Talmud Torah Society

community calendar

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

Have an event? Click on "Suggest an Event" to add it to the calendar



jewishcalgary.org



A MESSAGE FROM ROB NAGUS

Shalom Chaverim, As we move further into 2026, I want to share an update on the continued momentum and growth taking place at Calgary Jewish Federation and across our community.

A key development is our new partnership with the Western Security Network (WSN), through which we are pleased to welcome Vladi Kats as our new Regional Security Director. Vladi will play a central role in strengthening and streamlining security coordination across Alberta's Jewish community.

We are also deep into an important strategic planning process, led by Finley & Associates. Over the past several months, our board and staff have engaged in a series of thoughtful and collaborative

sessions, analyzing your feedback from community surveys and individual interviews, aimed at shaping a shared vision for the next three years. This work is helping us clarify priorities, strengthen alignment, and ensure we are positioned to meet both the needs and aspirations of Jewish Calgary in a rapidly evolving environment.

In our PJ Library® program, we are thrilled to welcome our new coordinator, Shirel Barlev. Shirel brings energy and commitment to this important role and will build on the outstanding work of our previous coordinator, Sydney Truax, who has transitioned into an elevated position on our development team.

Looking ahead, we are also excited to roll out our

new campaign, "That's Federation."

This initiative will highlight the breadth and depth of the work we do every day, from security and social services to education, culture, and community building. It reflects what many already know, that Federation is not a single program or function, but a coordinated system of care, leadership, and support that touches every part of Jewish life in Calgary.

Momentum is high as we head into the summer months. Across our organization and community, there is a shared sense of purpose and forward movement. We are looking forward to continuing this work together and to solidifying a clear and compelling vision for the future of Jewish Calgary.

B'Shalom,

Rob Nagus CEO, Calgary Jewish Federation

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

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM



From May 4 to 15, Calgary Jewish Federation, in partnership with Calgary Public Library, welcomed more than 2,400 high school students from Calgary and surrounding areas to the annual Holocaust Education Symposium.



Alongside survivor and descendant testimonies, this year's program featured interactive keynote presentations on the Holocaust and antisemitism by Dr. George Dalbo and Logan Greene of Echoes & Reflections, a leading Holocaust education initiative supported by Yad Vashem, USC Shoah Foundation, and the ADL.

Students also explored the exhibit One Thread, Six Million Lives and connected with creators Samantha Kassel and Brandon Hearty during daily intermissions. We are grateful to Calgary Public Library, Echoes & Reflections, our volunteers, and educators who continue to make this meaningful flagship program possible each year.



JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!

Stay up-to-date on action alerts, events, programming, and services offered through Calgary Jewish Federation and around our community.

Join our email list by scanning the QR code or go to jewishcalgary.org



AGM AND COMMUNITY SHEM TOV AWARDS Monday, June 22 7:00-9:00PM Paperny Family JCC We will provide an annual update, present the financials, elect our board of directors, and celebrate Jewish Calgary's amazing volunteers.

THE MOMENTS THAT MAKE JEWISH CALGARY FEEL LIKE HOME

- You've read Jewish bedtime stories. You've watched your family find their place in Jewish Calgary. You've gathered with friends and family in the Community living room. You've shown up in moments of pride, and in moments that mattered most.

These moments don't happen by accident. They are created, nurtured, and sustained through a shared commitment to strengthening Jewish life in Calgary.

...THAT'S FEDERATION STAY TUNED!



All events on this page are made possible by your gifts to Calgary Jewish Federation's annual UJA Campaign.



LIFE & LEGACY[®] HONOUR ROLL



CELEBRATING A TOTAL OF

\$20.36 million

ESTIMATED VALUE AS OF APRIL 2026











Jewish Calgary has now completed six years of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's (HGF) Life & Legacy program. Legacy giving supports our community and ensures donors' values, experiences, and priorities are passed on from generation to generation.

We are proud to be participating in the Life & Legacy PLUS initiative. We continue to work on bringing our community closer together and promoting a more unified and sustainable vision for the future of Jewish Calgary.

AS OF APRIL 2026, THESE MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY HAVE MADE A PROMISE TO ENSURE THE FUTURE OF JEWISH CALGARY

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Anonymous (42)</p> <p>The Abrams Family Legacy Fund</p> <p>Alice^{z"l} & Jacob^{z"l} Adler</p> <p>Batyah Yiscah Aguinaldo</p> <p>Bonny Gold-Babins & Eric Babins</p> <p>Dan Balaban & Family</p> <p>Michael Balaban</p> <p>Judith & Christopher Baron-Bown</p> <p>Jaclyn Mann & Jonny Barrett</p> <p>Gerry Barron</p> <p>Cathy Basskin</p> <p>Sharon Batshaw</p> <p>Debbie & Steve^{z"l} Baylin</p> <p>Ben Zion Be'erli</p> <p>Jenny Belzberg</p> <p>Rebecca Berlin</p> <p>Marni Besser</p> <p>Judy & Ron Bing</p> <p>Rachel & Jerrad Blanchard</p> <p>Melissa & Dan Blitt</p> <p>Renee & Milton Bogoch</p> <p>Amy Bondar</p> <p>Marnie & Darren Bondar</p> <p>Val & Lou Bracey</p> <p>Annie Brodsky^{z"l}</p> <p>Judy Shapiro & Richard Bronstein</p> <p>Jackie & David Busheikin</p> <p>The Charbonneau Family</p> <p>Judy Chetner</p> <p>Michael Tavel Clarke</p> <p>Gertrude Cohos</p> <p>Kim & Peter Cohos</p> <p>Marty Cole</p> <p>Bonnie Kaplan & Richard Conte</p> <p>Debbie & Cam Cousins</p> <p>Batyah Rivkah Cristobal</p> <p>Kaye Booth & Joel Dauter</p> <p>Alana & Shane Devlin & family</p> <p>Michele Doctoroff</p> <p>Abigail Draper</p> <p>Nadine & David Drexler</p> <p>Tracey Rumig & Steve Eichler</p> <p>Jennifer Eiserman</p> <p>Dan Eisner</p> <p>Ayala Roudstein & Marc Ereshefsky</p> <p>Jeff Faber</p> <p>Reva Faber</p> <p>Carol Feldman</p> <p>Cindy, Sam, Rebekah & Josh Feldman</p> <p>Jennifer & Tevy Feldman</p> <p>Joy Feldman</p> <p>Max Feldman</p> | <p>Stephanie Feldman</p> <p>Barry Finkelman</p> <p>Maxine & Milt Fischbein</p> <p>Jana & Bryant Frydberg</p> <p>Evan Gelman</p> <p>Sarah & Ben Ginzberg</p> <p>Bruce Givritz</p> <p>Halley Givritz</p> <p>Peta Glezerson</p> <p>Dr. Caron & Rabbi Mark Glickman</p> <p>Yael & Rabbi Chaim Greenwald</p> <p>Dr. Benjamin Grintuch</p> <p>Cheryl & Jason Gurevitch</p> <p>Sheila & Dr. Ralph Gurevitch</p> <p>Debbie & Nelson Halpern</p> <p>Malka & Rabbi Binyomin Halpern</p> <p>Jackie & Hayim Hamborger</p> <p>Annette Hanson</p> <p>Candice Hanson</p> <p>Lucille Hanson^{z"l}</p> <p>Elaine & Jerry Hashman</p> <p>Sara Hastings-Simon</p> <p>Vivian & Benjamin Herman</p> <p>Josh Hesslein</p> <p>Roz Mendelson & David Hodgins</p> <p>Sidney Horovitz</p> <p>Josh Inhaber</p> <p>Susan & David Inhaber</p> <p>Betsy Jameson</p> <p>D. Adam Jamieson</p> <p>Rabbi Cantor Russell Jayne</p> <p>Barbara Joffe</p> <p>Naomi Johansen</p> <p>Sharla Stoffman & Malcolm Jubinville</p> <p>Megan Macfarland & Tibor Kaldor</p> <p>Irena Karshenbaum</p> <p>Maureen^{z"l} & Joe^{z"l} Katchen</p> <p>William Katz</p> <p>Rabbi Rick Kline</p> <p>Anna Lourie Kostousov</p> <p>Barb & Ron Krell</p> <p>Gail & Mel Ksienski</p> <p>Jeff Kushner</p> <p>Eddy Lang</p> <p>Tamar Zenith & Blair Laven</p> <p>Carolyn & Bruce Libin</p> <p>Harriet & Philip Libin</p> <p>Susan Light</p> <p>Caroline & Alex Linetsky</p> <p>Sally Sprague-Lipkind & Joel Lipkind</p> <p>Saundra & Harold Lipton</p> <p>Steven Lipton</p> | <p>Monica & Gustavo Lis</p> <p>The Lister Family</p> <p>Sheryl Livergant</p> <p>Margie Sills-Maerov & Adam Maerov</p> <p>Ellen Magidson</p> <p>Amalia & Mark Mandel</p> <p>Sandy Mann</p> <p>Sharon Marcus</p> <p>Sahbra Markus</p> <p>Sheila & David Martin</p> <p>Ralph Maybaum</p> <p>Daniel Merson</p> <p>Leah Moldofsky</p> <p>Deborah Yedlin & Martin Molyneaux</p> <p>Kathleen Moncrieff</p> <p>Lila & Jacques^{z"l} Mydlarski</p> <p>Elaine & Stuart Myron</p> <p>Kimberly & Richard Nagan</p> <p>Therese Nagler</p> <p>Donna & Jack Newton</p> <p>Claude Oppenheim</p> <p>Robyn & Joe Oppenheim</p> <p>Roslyn & Daniel Oppenheim</p> <p>Beth & Rob Ordman</p> <p>Shifra & Yehuda Ortega</p> <p>Joshua Orzech</p> <p>Alex Osten^{z"l}</p> <p>Ashley Runka Owens & Dustin Owens</p> <p>Lisa Wellkovitch & Mark Paidra</p> <p>Jane Paterson</p> <p>Hindy & Izak Paul</p> <p>Lorne Pearl</p> <p>Victoria Perkins</p> <p>Rick Phillips</p> <p>Ron Plucer</p> <p>Susan & Myron^{z"l} Podlog</p> <p>Cynthia & David Prasow</p> <p>Beth & Lorne Price</p> <p>Saul Prince</p> <p>Debora Prussick</p> <p>Dr. Earl Raber</p> <p>Eugene Ragolsky</p> <p>Betsy Ritter</p> <p>Gayla & Brian Rogers</p> <p>Susan Rose</p> <p>Gloria Ross</p> <p>Stephen Ross</p> <p>Irene^{z"l} & Dr. Stuart Ross</p> <p>Jane & Phil Rotman</p> <p>Linda & Isaac^{z"l} Rotstein</p> <p>Pnina & Mark Rubensohn</p> <p>Harry Sanders</p> | <p>Brenda & Garry Sapoznikow</p> <p>Kathy & Norman Schachar Family Legacy Fund</p> <p>Elka Schrijver</p> <p>Agnes Romer Segal & Eliezer Segal</p> <p>Marina & Yannai Segal</p> <p>Kimberly Rothenberg & Leonard Seidman</p> <p>Dorothy Hanson & Sheldon Shagal</p> <p>Debbie Shaikin</p> <p>The Shaikin Family</p> <p>Daniel Shapiro^{z"l}</p> <p>Gayle Sherman</p> <p>Betty Sherwood</p> <p>Cheryl Baron & Robert Shiell</p> <p>The Shilling Family</p> <p>Deborah Shnay</p> <p>Cheryl & Morley Shore</p> <p>Christina Ellerbeck & Jared Shore</p> <p>Judith Shriar</p> <p>Laura Shuler</p> <p>Sandy Shuler</p> <p>Esther Allman Silberg & Gary Silberg</p> <p>Deborah & Adam Silver</p> <p>Jemmie & Neil Silver</p> <p>Jennifer & David Silver</p> <p>Rebecca Silverberg</p> <p>David Sklar</p> <p>Jerry Snukal</p> <p>Lorraine Spector</p> <p>Becky & Brad Spier</p> <p>Sondra & Joe Spier</p> <p>Tina & Larry Stanleigh</p> <p>Beth & Craig Steinberg</p> <p>Diana Kalef & Elliott Steinberg</p> <p>Paula Steinberg</p> <p>Helen^{z"l} & Mark Swartz</p> <p>Ida & Sam Switzer</p> <p>Sasha & Ruben Switzer</p> <p>Shauna Switzer</p> <p>Ted Switzer</p> <p>Darlene Switzer-Foster</p> <p>Mira & Joseph Tappenden</p> <p>The Truax Family</p> <p>Ruth & Phil Ullman</p> <p>Loredana Della Vedova</p> <p>Thorn Walden</p> <p>Nadine & Hartley Waldman</p> <p>Sandra Morton Weizman</p> <p>Shelley Werner</p> <p>Linda & Gary Wolf</p> <p>Helen & Leonard Zenith</p> <p>Susan Klassen & Jonathan Zyto</p> |
|--|---|---|--|

Names in bold have formalized their commitment to leaving a legacy gift.

 <p>LOI received 59</p> <p>% formalized 78</p>	 <p>LOI received 58</p> <p>% formalized 91</p>	 <p>LOI received 44</p> <p>% formalized 77</p>	 <p>LOI received 83</p> <p>% formalized 92</p>	 <p>LOI received 56</p> <p>% formalized 80</p>	 <p>LOI received 50</p> <p>% formalized 78</p>	 <p>LOI received 81</p> <p>% formalized 90</p>	 <p>LOI received 60</p> <p>% formalized 85</p>	 <p>LOI received 85</p> <p>% formalized 76</p>	 <p>LOI received 78</p> <p>% formalized 87</p>
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



For more information on how you can ensure our Jewish tomorrows today, contact Director of Development, Diana Kalef at dkalef@jewishcalgary.org 403-444-3154.

ALBERTA REAL ESTATE LISTINGS



Wihkwêntôwin \$1,395,000
11833 102 Ave NW, Edmonton
 Triplex - 2049 sqft
 Annie Toeg
 587-597-1697
 annietoeg@gmail.com
 MLS® Number: E4467302



Edmonton Oleskiw \$725,000
176 Waygood Road NW
 2 storey 2385 sqft
 Backs onto green space behind
 Beth Israel Synagogue.
 Jasen Reboh - RE/MAX Excellence
 780-965-7332 rebohrealty.ca
 jreboh@rebohrealty.ca



Netanya Ir Yamim \$4,900,000
 5 room Apartment
 (4 bedrooms)
 1,453 sqft
 Marina Shear
 +1-872-873-1011
 marinashear12@gmail.com



Attention Realtors and Owners:
 To submit a real estate listing for Residential or Commercial for Sale or Rent (house, condo, vacation home, timeshare, or short or long-term rental), visit albertajewishnews.com/realestate or call Dan at 780-421-7966.

HAVE YOUR AD APPEAR ON OUR MONTHLY ALBERTA REAL ESTATE LISTINGS PAGE!
 CALL DAN AT 780-421-7966 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Alberta Jewish News now has a new Real Estate Page

that features listings and ads from agents who want to work within and for our Jewish communities and who want to make sure that their listings are seen by you!



This is something our readers and agents have been asking for, and we are excited to have listings for residential and commercial opportunities delivered right to our readers' fingertips.

Through our online portal, or through contact with one of our salespeople, agents and owners are able to book their listings to appear in the newspaper, and online.

We will feature residential and commercial listings, short-and long-term rental opportunities, vacation property rentals, timeshare rentals, and more.

Submissions will be accepted for both properties in Canada, and internationally.

Visit our Real Estate Page online at albertajewishnews.com/realestate/

STEPHANIE Freedman Real Estate Agent
RE/MAX First

☎ 403.519.9929
 ✉ stephaniefreedman@shaw.ca
 🌐 www.stephaniefreedman.com

Follow me on social: @stephaniesellsyc











Are you looking to sell or rent out property?

HAVE YOUR AD APPEAR ON OUR MONTHLY ALBERTA REAL ESTATE LISTINGS PAGE!

Serving



West Edmonton

Trusted. Proven. Results.



I am grateful to have earned the trust of so many neighbours in our community. With multiple recent sales and outstanding results, I'm proud to continue serving West Edmonton with dedication and expertise.

As your trusted agent I bring:

- ✓ Deep knowledge of the neighborhoods
- ✓ Committed to getting the best results
- ✓ Proven track record of successful sales

If you're considering selling, let's chat and make a plan that works for you!

What is your home worth in today's market?
Call for a free home evaluation!



Jasen Reboh, REALTOR®

☎ 780-965-7332
 ✉ jreboh@rebohrealty.ca
 🌐 rebohrealty.ca



RE/MAX Excellence
 #201, 5607 - 199 Street, Edmonton, AB, T6M 0M8. 780-481-2950.
 Each Office Is Independently Owned & Operated

Sign up for the Alberta Jewish News e-schmooze today!

Keep up to date on a weekly basis delivered right to your inbox.
 Visit albertajewishnews.com to sign up



5 things to know about Camp BB Riback's new Director

By Jana Zalmanowitz, LJI Reporter

Camp BB Riback has a new Executive Director preparing to guide staff and campers into a memorable 71st summer on Pine Lake. On March 20, the Board of Directors announced Cecil Horwitz will step into the role, succeeding outgoing director Stacy Shaiken.

For Alberta's only Jewish overnight camp, each leadership transition brings a mix of excitement and uncertainty. Horwitz hopes to ease the transition with his deep community roots, clear vision for the future, and an understanding of what Camp BB means to the community.

Deep roots in Alberta's Jewish community

Horwitz grew up in Calgary and his connection to Jewish life was nurtured by his family and upbringing. His grandfather was a founding member of the Beth Tzedec Synagogue, his father chaired the Camp BB board for years, and his sisters have also held community leadership roles.

Horwitz's own formative years were spent immersed in Jewish education, BBYO, and summers at Camp BB. He later worked as Edmonton's BBYO city supervisor in the 1990s. Now based in Edmonton, he has watched that camp experience shape the next generation as his son prepares for his eighth summer on Pine Lake.

"Most of my friends are people I went to camp and BBYO with," he says. "Those were really formative years of my life that kept me connected to Judaism."

Participation in Jewish life is so ingrained that it's no surprise that after Camp BB announced their search for a new director, the opportunity started seeping into his subconscious. "I was literally waking up at three a.m. dreaming about camp all the time," he says, foreshadowing his commitment to camp.

Building leaders, community and culture

Horwitz comes to the position with a background in building businesses, a skill set that supports the operational side of running a nonprofit organization. He's quick to point out that financial and logistical aspects are only part of the job.

"There's the business of operating and trying to make the dollars so that we have money to create the best experience," he says. "To me, that stuff is the easy part."

What really motivates him is less tangible. Horwitz plans to continue Camp BB's legacy of a meaningful camp experience. "One of my strong suits throughout my career is helping to mentor and develop leaders, and build culture," he explains.

Horwitz takes a hands-on approach, looking forward to spending time as part of day-to-day life at camp. You'll find him connecting directly with campers and staff, building and strengthening that culture in real time.

A collaborative leadership approach

Horwitz is clear about both his strengths and the importance of a strong team. He brings experience and a parental perspective that many families will value, while also recognizing the importance of staying connected to younger generations.

Supporting him is a team that includes newly hired associate director Adar Latak, along with returning assistant directors who provide continuity from previous summers. Together, they bring a range of

perspectives and an understanding of what resonates with today's campers.

It's a balance Horwitz sees as essential. He also notes that the combination of an executive and associate director is common amongst other summer camps so he feels it's a practiced recipe that sets them up for success.

Prioritizing Jewish identity and allyship

In a time of rising antisemitism, Horwitz sees the role camp plays in helping young people develop strong, proud Jewish identities. Camp BB, he says, will deliver a richness in Jewish programming with values of kindness, gratitude, zionism and *tikkun olam* "woven into the fabric of camp."

It will also encourage curiosity and connection with the broader world, fostering Jewish allyship.

That experience is possible through the organization's partnership with Camp Canada, which facilitates the hiring of international students to work at Canadian camps.

"We get all of these people that are interested in learning about Judaism and coming to a Jewish camp," Horwitz explains. The result is a diverse staff of local Jewish leaders, Israelis and other international team members, creating an environment where Jewish identity is both shared and celebrated.

"There's never been a more important time to have a safe place for Jewish youth to go that will help them identify and educate them about their own culture," he says. "We need our community to stick together."

Creating the magic of camp

While Jewish identity is a central theme of Camp BB, Horwitz recognizes there is something about a summer camp experience that becomes a defining childhood experience. As a former camper, Horwitz knows how that magic is created.

"Camp is a place where kids get to try things they might never try anywhere else," he says, reminiscing about his own experience. "That might be getting on stage, stepping into leadership, or simply becoming a more confident version of themselves."

Horwitz remembers camp as his first taste of independence. It was a chance to enjoy the simplicity of being surrounded by nature. He recalls strong friendships formed by campfire, shared inside jokes, and a deep sense of belonging.

While his professional background gives him the tools to run camp, he also knows that "camp feeling" firsthand and can't wait to create it for others. That's what campers will remember most.

For more information on spending summer at Camp BB Riback, visit campbb.com.



Cecil Horwitz spent childhood summers at Camp BB and looks forward to updating his camp shirt this year. He brings both business and camp experience to his new role as Executive Director.

REGISTER NOW FOR THE SUMMER OF 2026

Open House
June 21 - 11:00 am to 3:30 pm

Activities include: Sports, Waterskiing, High Ropes, Zip Line, Horseback Riding, Swimming Pool, Jewish Culture, Leadership Training, Inclusion, Filmmaking and so much more!

Visit www.campbb.com
or email info@campbb.com

aQUALITY

PLUMBING & HEATING INC.

Best wishes to the Jewish Community
From our Team @ Aquality

www.aqualityplumber.com
Phone: 403-205-2782

A celebration of connection and pride: Yom Ha'atzmaut at CJA

By Krista Wilson

Our CJA school community came together in a truly special way to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut, a day that was filled with joy, pride, and a deep sense of connection. From the very beginning, there was an unmistakable energy in the air, as students, families, and staff joined in our annual parade of flags. It was a beautiful reflection of our shared identity and the

strong bonds that unite us.

Throughout the day, students experienced Israel in memorable ways. Our Early Years students embarked on their own "journey" to Israel, where they explored the sights and sounds of the country through play. They spent time "at the beach," enjoyed falafel and fresh orange juice, and engaged their senses in ways that brought their learning to life with excitement and curiosity.

One of the highlights of the day was a wonderful assembly led by our Grade 5 students. They were joined by students in Grades 1, 2, and 4, who filled the gym with song and dance. Their enthusiasm and spirit were contagious, and it was clear how much pride they felt as we celebrated together.

We ended the assembly gathered as a community to share a delicious falafel lunch, generously supported by our Parents' Association. This time together was about so much more than food, it was an opportunity to pause, connect, and reflect. Sharing a meal rooted in Israeli culture created a meaningful link to the land, its traditions, and to one another. It was a reminder of the importance of community, and of how moments like these help strengthen our collective sense of belonging.



One of the highlights of Yom Ha'atzmaut at CJA was a wonderful assembly led by the Grade 5 students.

Na'amat presents "Marathon Mom" in Calgary on June 4

Na'amat Canada Calgary is presenting an exclusive screening of the documentary *Marathon Mom* on June 4 at 6:45 pm at the Cardel Theatre. Proceeds from the event will go toward the School Supplies for Kids program.

Na'amat Canada Calgary's Yachad chapter recently volunteered with Basically Babies as its project for Good Deeds Day. Good Deeds Day began in Israel in

2007 and is now marked in more than 100 countries worldwide, with each city taking on a local community initiative.

Basically Babies supports the most vulnerable mothers in Calgary and Edmonton by providing layettes that cover a baby's first year of life. Each layette includes 110 to 120 carefully donated items, ensuring that families have the essentials they need during a critical time.

This experience was

deeply satisfying for our members. The commitment to providing new or gently used items closely reflects the values of Na'amat Canada's School Supplies for Kids program, where all items are provided new to ensure dignity for every child. While Basically Babies does not meet the recipients directly – and neither do we as we pack our backpacks – the impact is profound. In this quiet, meaningful way, we live the value of *tikkun olam*, helping to repair the world one small act of kindness at a time.

Volunteering on Good Deeds Day

Members of Na'amat Calgary's Yachad chapter recently volunteered with Basically Babies as a Good Deeds Day project.

Na'amat Canada Calgary presents an exclusive screening of the documentary

Marathon Mom

A story of courage, commitment and resilience

In support of
School Supplies for Kids

Thursday, June 4 at 6:45 pm | Dessert reception to follow
Cardel Theatre 180 Quarry Park Boulevard SE
Tickets \$36.00 | Sold only in advance
Limited seating

SCAN HERE FOR TICKETS OR TO DONATE
or call 1-888-278-0792
or go to www.naamat.com/Calgary/

School Supplies for Kids provides backpacks filled with school supplies to children taking refuge in Calgary area domestic violence and homeless shelters.

Donations will be matched up to 50% by Rogers Birdies for Kids presented by AltaLink.

Questions? calgary.info@naamat.com

Shabbat in the Heights – Mishpucha-style

By Regan Lipes, LJI Reporter

On his 2018 album, *Stronger Closer*, Benny Friedman's catchy remix "My Shtetl's Calling" extolls the inspiring ambiance of Crown Heights (CH), the headquarters of Chabad Lubavitch. CH was indeed calling, and over 500 Jews from around the globe answered that call, spending a moving and memorable Shabbat together beginning May 1.

This marked the 11th year that Shabbat in the Heights (SITH) offered family programming like their legendary annual CTeens and Young Professionals Shabbatot. What distinguishes SITH as unique is that it is an experience to be shared by singles, groups, couples, and families. This was their largest turnout yet, and attracted a sizeable contingent of attendees from Germany, and as far away as Hungary.

I had the privilege of taking my youngest son, Jacob, with me this year. Jacob is six, so everything is exciting and new to him. We arrived one day early to acclimate and sample the fine-dining culinary delights at Ren, a kosher, Brooklyn-based, Michelin-style restaurant I scoped out in gluttonous anticipation of our visit. The team at the Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) organized a host family for us, and we were welcomed into a comfortable and warm household full of children, grandchildren, and nachas.

On Friday, May 1, we began a packed schedule, and Jacob was delighted to find that a kosher pizzeria was open for breakfast. He marveled at the number of tzedakah boxes at the register to put his change in. We continued with a walking tour of Kingston Avenue led by a guide from @JewishBrooklynNYC. We visited a scribe's shop; Jacob was able to touch a Torah scroll that was being re-koshered, handle the quill used for writing, and hear about all the care, learning, and dedication that goes into working on a Torah, tefillin, or mezuzah parchment.

Our guide pointed out some fascinating street art along our stroll, highlighting the Hasidic core of CH. A colorful and vibrant mural on the side of a brick building, depicting the portrait of the Alter Rebbe, highlighted the unmistakably Jewish heartbeat of the neighborhood. CH, as he emphasized, is not just a neighborhood where Jews live, but where Yiddishkeit thrives. While shopping, Jacob was delighted by the varieties of Jewish toys available and set his sights on a Lego replica of the 770 Eastern Parkway. As it was Erev Shabbat, there were flower stands on every corner, and the fragrance of fresh aromatic bouquets wafted dreamily along each city block. People rushed to-and-fro, and the atmosphere was alive with life and anticipation. Jacob and I made sure to do a full photo session in front of 770 Eastern Parkway, the address of the seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson's synagogue and the heartbeat of Chabad Lubavitch, before dropping off our shopping bags at our host family's home and powering down our mobile devices for Shabbat. We, along with 500 other visitors converged upon the courtyard of 770.

This is when the marathon-of-eating began. Organizers laid out a full spread of finger foods and hors d'oeuvres to get everyone in the celebratory spirit and ready to welcome the Shabbos Queen. Opening remarks were delivered inside 770 by Rabbi Yitzchak Schochet, a Canadian-born celebrity rabbi based in England. It was a unique opportunity for women to come into the main part of the shul. Following some moving stories from Rabbi Schochet, a born orator, groups visited the Rebbe's study, an auspicious and well-preserved room full of history and knowledge. When I think of the number of global high profile decision-makers and inspiring leaders, both Jews and non-Jews, who sought the Rebbe's counsel within those walls, it is staggering to ponder the expanse of his influence.

We walked the short distance to Oholei Torah to light candles and bring in the radiance of Shabbat

together. The two Edmonton families and Calgarian in attendance tagged along with Rabbi Ronnie Fine and Rebbetzin Simcha Fine of Montreal for some fast-paced questions and answers. This is when the children's programming began, and Jacob ran off happily to make new friends with fun facilitated by CH local, Esty Kaplan. We were later hosted at the home of Rabbi Baruch Jacobson, and his wife Leah, the principal of the local girl's school. Before leaving Oholei Torah, Esty happily announced: "You're going to Mrs. Jacobson's house for Shabbos dinner? That's amazing; she was my teacher!" CH may be a bustling epicenter of Jewish life, but Benny Friedman might be right: "Everyone's your friend in this cobblestone land. Everyone seems to know your Bubbe."

This Shabbat coincided with Pesach Sheni, one month after Passover. This meant that matzoh brei was served along with gefilte fish, baked salmon, zesty Moroccan fish, and salads. Of course, this was followed by matzoh ball soup, and a main course of brisket, and all the fixings. When I say it was a marathon-of-eating, I meant it!

I was stunned that the twenty-minute walk back to our host family's home elicited no complaints about tired feet, and Jacob was still full of questions and observations even after the shade of the shabbat lamp had been spun around. The next morning, stuffed with every kind of cake and breakfast sweet known to man, Jacob ran off to more children's programming: board games, circle-times, and jungle gym play. Shacharit was robust and lively with Cantor Shmuly Hurwitz. Kiddish boasted seared ahi tuna, lox, sushi, salads, and a full bar. Jacob hardly noticed when I left to go listen to the morning's lectures. Just to be clear: the Kiddish smorgasbord was only a prelude to a decadent lunch of individual challahs, cholent, brisket, grilled chicken, and roasted vegetables that was served in the Oholei Torah ballroom, the venue for many wedding receptions including that of Edmonton's Rabbi Mendy Blachman and Rebbetzin Chaya Sarah Blachman.

As a procession moved to visit 1304 President Street, the site of the Rebbe's home, Jacob ran ahead with his new friends as if he had already known them for ages. When we entered the Rebbe's home, Jacob instantly grasped the importance of the place we were in. I was struck by his meaningful and insightful questions: what makes a place holy, how do prayers reach G-d, and why do we speak our prayers if G-d already knows what is in our hearts?

Many continued on to visit local celebrity personalities from the neighborhood, Rabbi Manis Friedman, Benny Friedman's father, and celebrated international journalist, newswoman, and producer Mrs. Molly Resnick among them. Jacob, after an afternoon full of children's activities needed a shabbos schluf. A Farbrengen was hosted for men and another for women, then it was back to Oholei Torah for Havdalah, more uplifting stories of unity and community, and even more eating. This also meant more dedicated children's time.



Jacob Lipes enjoyed sightseeing with his mom during the 'Shabbat in the Heights' Shabbaton in New York City.

As sushi appetizers, that seemed more like a full-blown main course, were served, Rabbi Aaron Spiro and Rebbetzin Amanda Spiro shared pictures to accompany their stories of spiritual discovery. They spoke candidly about their paths through travel and tumultuous trials of tribulation, and how their stories eventually became intertwined after meeting at a wedding in Montreal. They, through many twists of divine provenance, are now the shlichim (emissaries) in Trois-Rivieres, Quebec.

This was followed by a full buffet of fish tacos with every elaborate culinary garnish, piping hot pizzas, pasta, cannelloni, and an ice cream sundae station. Jacob was on cloud nine, and yet again we arrived back at our host family's home after midnight. We switched on our mobile devices to check-in at home, and only then it hit me that even though our Shabbat had been busier than I could have ever imagined, the silence of not being bothered by the noise of the outside was refreshing and transformative; I wanted in that moment more than anything to share such an experience with my husband and all our children. Shabbat may have been a packed agenda, but the focus was always on the importance of the moment.

The next morning furnished more eating with a shakshouka egg station at the Jewish Children's Museum. The museum was what Jacob had been

Continued on page 22

**PERSAUD
WEALTH
MANAGEMENT**

**CUTLINE
DEVELOPMENTS INC.**

**LANDSCAPING &
INTERIOR & EXTERIOR
RENOVATIONS**

Custom Outdoor Spaces • Interior Transformations

OUR SERVICES

- ✓ Landscape Construction
- ✓ Custom Patios & Outdoor Living
- ✓ Design & Consultation
- ✓ Interior Renovations

CONTACT JJ HOFFMAN

☎ **587-999-4104**

✉ cutlinedevelopments@gmail.com

🌐 cutlinedevelopments.ca

✓ Free Consultations ✓ Fully Insured
✓ Calgary & Surrounding Area

**OLIVER SQUARE
REGISTRIES LTD**

A fast, full service, friendly & convenient registry centre.

**Oliver Square • 11648 104 Ave
PH 780.408.2000
www.osreg.ca**

Licensing, Registrations & Renewals
All classes of written & road tests
Drivers' Abstracts
Name Searches & NUANS
Commissioners for Oath
Corporate Registrations & Searches
Vital Statistics Certificates & Registrations
Personal Property Lien Searches & Registrations

**And many other services for
Public & Professional**

"Licensed to please."

Alberta
Authorized
Registry Agent

65 years of showing up: Why Community Care still matters

By Roxanne Droppo, Executive Director, JFSC

This year, JFSC celebrates 65 years of serving our community.

Milestones invite reflection. They prompt us to look back at where we began and forward to where we are headed. But most importantly, they remind us why we exist in the first place.

For 65 years, JFSC has stood beside individuals and families during some of life's most vulnerable moments, when a job is lost, when food is scarce, when mental health feels overwhelming, when a senior is navigating aging alone, or when a Holocaust Survivor needs support delivered with dignity and remembrance.

While programs and services evolve over time, the heart of our mission has remained constant: meet people where they are, respond with compassion, and strengthen the fabric of our community.

In today's world, that mission feels more urgent than ever.

Economic pressures continue to strain families. Mental health challenges affect individuals across every age group. Older adults face increasing isolation. Healthcare systems recognize that well-being extends beyond clinical treatment and into the social determinants of health, connection, stability,

and support.

Community-based organizations like JFSC play a critical role in addressing these interconnected needs. When we provide basic needs, we prevent food insecurity. When we offer mental health and wellness support, we strengthen individuals and families and build resilience. When we support older adults and Holocaust Survivors, we honour both dignity and history. When we help someone regain hope, we restore confidence and long-term stability.

The impact may appear incremental, one appointment, one check-in call, one resource connection at a time. But over 65 years, those moments accumulate into generational change.

This milestone is not simply about longevity. It is about trust. Trust built over decades. Trust that when crisis strikes, someone will answer the call. Trust that services will be delivered with respect. Trust that community care still matters.

As we celebrate 65 years, we are also looking ahead. The needs of our community are evolving, and so must we. Innovation, collaboration, and accessibility will define the next chapter of our work.

The first 65 years built a foundation. The next 65 will focus on strengthening that foundation for future generations.

Community resilience does not happen by accident.



Roxanne Droppo speaking at JFSC's Notes & Jokes fundraiser.

It is built through partnership, compassion, and the willingness to show up, every day and every time.

For 65 years, JFSC has shown up. And we remain committed to doing so for decades to come.

Roxanne Droppo is the Executive Director of JFSC



Attendees enjoy an evening of music, laughter, and community at JFSC's Notes & Jokes fundraiser, celebrating 65 years of impact.

Chai There!



a culturally Jewish podcast powered by ajn
 chaithere.ca

Chai There! *Cont. from page 1*

David introduces the podcast by saying, "Chai There! Hello, bonjour, shalom, and welcome to Chai There! – our culturally Jewish podcast powered by AJN. That's right, Chai There. Like, hi there, but with a little more life in it."

"18 times more life, technically," quips Addison.

Between the two of them, they cover a wide range of Jewish experience. Different generations, different perspectives. "But the same neuroses," adds Addison.

"This podcast is really about culture, identity, and the conversations that will come out of that. The ones that are thoughtful, occasionally uncomfortable. And ideally, a little bit of fun."

Chai There! Podcast Episode 2 features a conversation with Zelda Dean and Laura Schuler from the Calgary Theatre group, *Chai Life Productions* to discuss the upcoming performances of *The Last Yiddish Speaker*. David and Addison sat down with Zelda and Laura and discussed the details of the theatre company, and the play, with its vital message to the community.


You can listen to the podcast at Chaithere.ca or visit their socials at Chai There Pod on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube or wherever you listen to podcasts (Spotify, Youtube, IHeartRadio, Amazon, Apple, etc). Email ideas for topics to chaitherepod@gmail.com.

Chai There is a culturally Jewish platform powered by AJN with production by Reel Mensch Studios. Enjoy! And don't forget to call your mother!



You are invited to our
ANNUAL MEETING
 MONDAY JUNE 22, 2026
 7:00 PM
 TEMPLE B'NAI TIKVAH 900 47TH AVE SW

To register, email Tammy at tammyo@jfsc.org
 or call 403-692-6391



albertajewishnews.com
 Subscriptions in Canada: \$37.80 per year
 Subscriptions outside Canada: \$72 USD per year

Funded by the Government of Canada / Financé par le gouvernement du Canada | **Canada**

Publication Mail Agreement No. 40050628
 Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
 #206, 8944 182 Street, Edmonton AB T5T 2E3
 E-mail: albertajewishnews@gmail.com
 Tel: (780) 421-7966

Volume 37, Number 5, May 2026

PUBLISHER: Deborah Shatz
EDITOR: Daniel Moser
PAST PUBLISHERS: Barry Slawsky, David Moser, Judy Shapiro, Richard Bronstein

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

Next Deadline: May 29, 2026

All rights reserved. No part of this newspaper may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Editor. Alberta Jewish News is published by 320754 Alberta Ltd.

Senate committee recommends education and enforcement to stem rise of antisemitism

By AJNews staff

The Senate human rights committee is calling for a renewed commitment to education and enforcement, better digital literacy and a federal interdepartmental task force on hate to fight a spike in anti-Jewish hate crimes and acts of intimidation in many parts of Canada. In a report tabled on April 21, the committee also recommended reestablishing the role of Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism. The position was abolished in February 2026.

“Canadians must stand united against antisemitism,” said Senator Paulette Senior, chair of the committee. “It is only by coming together to celebrate our shared values that we can thrive as a country. Antisemitism is a clear and present danger to our free and democratic society.”

The committee recommended that the federal government immediately strike a task force to, among other things, determine the nature and impact of antisemitism in Canada, create a framework of initiatives to combat antisemitism in Canada and to improve co-operation among federal institutions responsible for public safety and social cohesion.

The committee makes a number of recommendations aimed at bringing more awareness to the problem of antisemitism in Canada and the great harm it is doing to Canadian Jews and the country’s social cohesion.

“Everyone in Canada deserves to feel safe,” stated Senator Mary Jane McCallum, member of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure. The increase in antisemitic rhetoric and attacks at places of worship and education is beyond troubling — it is a cry or action.”

To help the Jewish community feel safe and protected, the committee recommends that the federal government work with provincial and territorial governments to fund specialized hate crime units and increase training for police and prosecutors to identify and respond to hate crimes across Canada.

The committee’s report follows a rise in gunfire, arson and vandalism attacks on synagogues and Jewish schools since October 2023, when Hamas militants attacked Israel, prompting Israel to bomb the Gaza Strip and triggering massive political shifts from Iran to Syria.

According to evidence from Public Safety Canada, hate crimes targeting religious groups have increased over the years, peaking at 1,345 incidents in 2023 — a 75% increase from the previous year. The majority of religion-based hate crimes in Canada — 69% in 2024 and 71% in 2023 — targeted the Jewish community.

According to Deborah Lyons, the former Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, the Jewish community comprises only 1% of the population but endures 70% of all religiously motivated hate crimes. Jewish people are also the number one target for overall hate crimes.

Antisemitism is also prevalent online, particularly in social media. According to Imran Ahmed, CEO of the Center for Countering Digital Hate, this is due in part to financial incentives that reward toxic communication.

“Social media has been a conduit for antisemitic ideas, exposing young people, who may lack an understanding of history, to an unregulated and unverified source of information. Education, by ensuring students know how to critically evaluate online content, is a powerful inoculant against the cheap pull of hatred,” stated Senator Mary Robinson.

“The rise in antisemitism and hate is a concerning trend that demands real-world solutions to make communities safer and more inclusive. This report provides comprehensive recommendations that call for immediate action to protect all Canadians from hate,” added Senator Kristopher Wells, member of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure.

Noah Shack, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs welcomed the Senate’s report, saying that it comes “at a moment of crisis. As Jewish institutions face violent attacks and Jewish Canadians experience unparalleled levels of hate crimes, antisemitism is no longer confined to the margins — it has spread across our society and institutions. In fact, the Committee’s report and the

Yom Hazikaron commemorated in Alberta



A sombre Yom Hazikaron service was commemorated both in Edmonton (left) and in Calgary (right) to honour fallen soldiers in Israel and victims of violence.

hearings platform extremist voices calling for the destruction of those who support Israel.”

Shack said that CiJA welcomes in particular the orientation of the report towards action and outcomes, including: “the rooting of recommendations in agencies dedicated to law enforcement and intelligence, as this is crucial to combat antisemitism and the growth of radicalism both at our borders and inside our country”

CiJA also praised “the echoing of our continuing

calls to invest in the Canada Community Security Program (CCSP)...and the calls for the federal government to use its voice and convening power to provide leadership on this crisis to other levels of government.”

“We underscore the urgent nature of the crisis of antisemitism as the government considers the report’s recommendations,” concluded Shack.

FRIENDS OF JNF CANADA

PROTECTING LIVES IN ISRAEL

SHIELD A FAMILY. SECONDS TO SAFETY.

Visit us at: friendsofjnfca.org | 780.481.7881 | edmonton@friendsofjnfca.org

JOIN IN THIS LIFE SAVING CAMPAIGN TODAY!

ALL DONATIONS ARE 100% TAX DEDUCTIBLE

GOAL: We need to protect **275** Israelis who currently have nowhere safe to run.

Every gift—no matter the size—brings someone closer to safety. Thank you for standing with Israel.

YOUR IMPACT	GIFT LEVEL (CAD)	HOW MANY?	SUBTOTAL (CAD)
Bottles of water for shelter users	\$5	x _____	= \$ _____
Flashlights for shelter users	\$18	x _____	= \$ _____
Emergency supplies for shelter users	\$180	x _____	= \$ _____
Communications support	\$540	x _____	= \$ _____
Air filtration system	\$1,000	x _____	= \$ _____
Protection for an adult couple	\$1,800	x _____	= \$ _____
Protect a family of 4	\$3,600	x _____	= \$ _____
Protect a family of 5	\$5,400	x _____	= \$ _____
Protect a family of 6	\$7,200	x _____	= \$ _____
Protect a larger household	\$10,000	x _____	= \$ _____
Other amount	\$ _____	x _____	= \$ _____
TOTAL GIFT			\$ _____

TOGETHER, WE CAN BRING LIGHT TO DARKNESS AND PROTECT 275 LIVES.

SCAN TO GIVE NOW AND HELP PROTECT LIVES IN ISRAEL.

Friends of JNF Canada is a Canadian Registered Charity No. 762236461RR0001

From the Promised Land to the Prairies

Breaking the Ice in a New Country

By Jana Zalmanowitz, LJI Reporter

There aren't many people who say playing hockey is the key to becoming an engineer in Canada, but Michael Gurevich is one of them.

Michael's path to professional success in Calgary wasn't straightforward. There were roadblocks, but he overcame them with the kind of grit and determination familiar to many shaped by life in Israel.

Born in the Soviet Union, Michael moved with his parents to Israel as a child. He completed high school there, then served three years in the army before earning an engineering degree from the Technion in Haifa.

He began a successful career with an international company where he managed projects all over the world including Africa, Ukraine and Mexico. At the same time, he continued his service in Israel through the *miluim* (army reserves).

During these years, Michael married and started a family. After their third child was born, Michael's wife expressed she wanted to raise their family in a place with greater peace and stability. Michael, too, was ready for something new.

"I love Israel. It's my country," he says, "But it's a small country with too many people around and there's too much tension."

With a smile he adds another motivation: "And I saw there's snowboarding in Canada. I wanted to try snowboarding,"

At 37 years old, Michael moved with his wife and children to Canada. Their first stop was Saskatchewan.

Despite more than a decade in engineering starting over was not easy. Michael approached companies in Saskatoon, confident in his skills, but realized there were cultural differences.

"I was overqualified and maybe too confident because I am from Israel," he says. "I speak what I think and here it's a different mentality. But I am who I am. I'm Israeli."

To work as an engineer in Canada, Michael needed to requalify. It was a demanding process requiring him to demonstrate proficiency in 22 competencies under the supervision of a validator.

Setting his sights on an Alberta engineering designation through APEGA, Michael started looking for someone who could serve as his validator. He reached out to an engineer on LinkedIn and they went for coffee. During this meeting, Michael learned a key piece of information he needed. This contact liked hockey.

With the tenacity he attributes to growing up in Israel, Michael learned to ice skate. "It took several weeks," he says, but then he bought a hockey stick and took the coffee connection to the ice.

"I went to play hockey with him. Not very good, but I played hockey."

Three months later, that same engineer offered Michael some project work, eventually hiring him and becoming the validator he needed. Two years later, Michael earned his P.Eng designation in Alberta.

Michael and his wife bought a house in Calgary. They spent some time in Abbotsford and then returned to Calgary. Interestingly Michael found that because Abbotsford is so small, there was a stronger sense of Jewish community there for him.

In Calgary, Michael stays connected to his roots mostly through a community of fellow Israelis. "We understand each other," he says. "Especially if they served in the army. We know Israeli life and can understand each other much better."

Today, Michael has achieved what he set out to build. He has a peaceful place to raise a family, a Canadian engineering career and even some respect-



Michael Gurevich and his family have been in Canada for eight years and feel very much a part of both Israeli and Canadian culture. Photo supplied.

able hockey skills. But what about snowboarding?

While he jokes that it brought him to Canada, it has become more symbolic. A reflection of how he approaches challenges. He taught himself the same way he rebuilt his career: by committing fully. Michael bought a used snowboard, took a lesson, watched videos and after a year of practicing and falling down, he got the hang of it. Now he free rides, climbing up the mountain on his own and riding down.

When his persistence is pointed out, Michael shrugs. "What can I do? I'm from Israel," he says. "If we don't do it like this, it's very difficult to survive."

That mindset, he notes, is one of the cultural differences between Israelis and Canadian-born Jews. Growing up in a country where military service is a shared experience fosters a particular kind of resilience and determination and is one that has shaped his journey and identity.

What about his children's identities? "Canadian and Israeli," he says. "The best parts of both."

Edmonton Jewish Film Festival has something for everyone!



The Edmonton community has been enjoying a very successful EJFF. The Festival wraps up on May 13. Photos by Tammy Vineberg.

Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell – The Untold Love Story

A Groundbreaking Live Production Explores the Romance That Shaped Music History

Stars and Stories Live is proud to announce that *Leonard and Joni: The Untold Love Story* is coming to Alberta's Jubilee Auditoriums this May, bringing to the stage a passionate chapter of music history that has never before been explored in a live production.

The show plays the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium in Calgary on May 30 and the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium in Edmonton on May 31.

It was 1967 at the Newport Folk Festival when Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell began an intense love affair. It lasted only a few months, but the relationship became a creative catalyst for both artists, inspiring some of the most celebrated songs ever written. *Leonard and Joni: The Untold Love Story* immerses audiences in that passionate but brief romance, exploring how it shaped their songs, their lives, and the course of music history. Through stunning multimedia, live storytelling, and powerhouse performances of iconic songs including "Hallelujah," "Both Sides Now," "Big Yellow Taxi," and "I'm Your Man," the production reveals the mutual influence these two legends had on each other's work.

The production features singer, songwriter, musician, and actress Dana Wylie, whom the renowned folk music magazine *Penguin Eggs* called the only artist they have "felt comfortable comparing to Joni Mitchell in the scope of her talent EVER." Joining her is singer, songwriter, and poet Joe Nolan, named by *The Globe and Mail* as "an Americana wunderkind to look out for."

"This is a love story that changed music forever, and it's never been told on stage until now," said Graham Neil, Co-Founder of Stars and Stories Live. "Dana and Joe bring an authenticity and depth to these roles that audiences are going to find absolutely captivating."

Stars and Stories Live is an Alberta based entertainment company specializing in biographical storytelling concerts that blend live music, narration, and multimedia for theatre audiences. The company's growing catalogue of productions also includes *The Story of Linda Ronstadt*, *The Story of Merle Haggard*, and *Folsom Prison Revisited*.

PERFORMANCE DATES:

May 30, 2026 – Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium, Calgary



Musicians Dana Wylie and Joe Nolan as Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell.

May 31, 2026 – Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium, Edmonton

CALGARY TICKETS: [ticketmaster.ca](https://www.ticketmaster.ca)

EDMONTON TICKETS: [ticketmaster.ca](https://www.ticketmaster.ca)

TRAILER: [youtube.com/watch?v=vTWcuET2oQU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTWcuET2oQU)

Alberta Jewish News offers reduced rates for Obituaries, Appreciation and Simcha notices.



Contact Deb for details at 780-421-7966

or albertajewishnews@gmail.com

Soapstone Carving for Sale



"Eternal Flame"

original soapstone carving by Leo Arcand. Measures 14" tall, 8" wide and weighs 13 lbs.

Available for purchase at [wakinagallery.com](https://www.wakinagallery.com).

STARS & STORIES
LIVE

Leonard COHEN & Joni MITCHELL
The Untold Love Story

MAY 30TH & 31ST
7:30 PM
Southern & Northern Jubilee Auditorium
Tickets at [ticketmaster.ca](https://www.ticketmaster.ca)

Yes, I'm worried that giving to Gaza could benefit Hamas. But Zionism today demands hope.

By Rabbi Daniel Greyber

(JTA) — “Rabbi Greyber, you can't hide — we charge you with genocide.”

Those were the words shouted at me in front of Hebrew school students outside my synagogue two years ago. In the months and years since Oct. 7, I have stood with my community in grief, in fear and in a fierce commitment to Israel's right to defend itself despite the vitriol thrown my way.

And yet, after our synagogue supported a recent fundraiser for the Gaza Children's Village, I have been asked — sometimes with genuine concern, sometimes with anger — how such a decision could possibly align with that commitment. Some of those questions have come from within my own community.

Let me begin here: My Zionism is not theoretical. It is existential.

Just a month after Oct. 7, I visited Israel with local leaders. I've returned three times since to express solidarity and see beleaguered family and friends. Our mid-size synagogue in Durham, North Carolina, raised \$175,000 for Magen David Adom, Israel's emergency response service. We advocated for the hostages, prayed for them week after week, and, after they were freed, brought Keith and Aviva Siegel — who have ties to our community — to share their story.

We raised tens of thousands of dollars to support the rebuilding of Kfar Aza, a kibbutz in southern Israel. And like so many Jewish communities, we have carried the ongoing pain of a war whose reverberations have not ceased — whether in the trauma of Oct. 7, the anguish of hostage families or the continued threat of Hezbollah rocket fire in Israel's north.

That commitment has not wavered.

So when people ask whether I am concerned that money raised for Gaza could end up in the hands of Hamas, my answer is simple: Of course I am.

Hamas has systematically corrupted Gaza's humanitarian infrastructure, diverting vast sums of aid to build tunnels, stockpile weapons and entrench its control. Anyone who cares about Palestinian life must reckon honestly with that reality.

But here is the deeper truth: If we only know how to say “no” to what is dangerous, and not “yes” to what is hopeful, we will forfeit the future we claim to seek.

The Gaza Children's Village is one of those hopeful efforts. Guarded by the clans of southern Gaza, who are playing a security role following Israel's battle against Hamas, it is leading a high-risk, high-reward initiative working to usher 19,000 children into a future shaped not by hatred, but by the possibility of peace with their neighbors. Rooted in Palestinian heritage, its Academies of Hope teach a new, unique curriculum aligned with the long-term security of the region — including the stated goals of Israel's own

security establishment.

For that very reason, its teachers, staff and leadership live under constant threat. They are not aligned with Hamas, and because they are not, they risk intimidation and even fear for their lives. And yet they remain committed to a simple principle: a better life for both sides.

Beyond the Jewish moral imperative articulated by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (z”l) that “your enemy is also a human being,” supporting this project is not naïve. It is a way of strengthening those who are quietly, courageously building a different Palestinian future.

Dr. David Hasan, the organization's founder and our neighbor in Durham, is one such person.

The Gaza Children's Village has been approved by the Israeli unit responsible for implementing civilian policy in Gaza, COGAT, and recognized by Israel's Ministry for Diaspora Affairs. Dr. Hasan has been personally targeted by Hamas, in part because he sought to provide information that contributed to the rescue of Israeli hostages. And he has built an educational environment that teaches peace and does not demonize Israel — an almost unthinkable act in today's Gaza.

At the fundraiser, Dr. Hasan made a remarkable commitment: that the funds raised would support both Israeli and Palestinian orphans. In the days that followed, he traveled to Israel to meet with families from the kibbutzes attacked on Oct. 7. He is now working to create a short experience that will bring Israeli and Palestinian children together in Italy — not to debate politics, but to encounter one another as human beings.

We should not only support people like Dr. Hasan. We should celebrate them.

Because if there is to be a different future, it will be built by people who are already risking everything to create it.

Some have asked me: When have Palestinians raised money for Israelis?

The honest answer is: not often enough. But in this case, it happened.

And when something rare and good emerges in a broken system, our responsibility is not to stand back in suspicion, but to step forward in support.

It is also important to be clear about what this event was. It was not a Jewish-led initiative. It was a Palestinian fundraiser, hosted at Mediterranean Deli, Bakery & Catering by Jamil Kadoura, who is from Qalqilya, in the West Bank. Our synagogue was honored to stand with a trusted, longtime friend and support a Palestinian effort to build something better from within Palestinian society itself.

For me, this decision was not in tension with my Zionism. It was an expression of it.



Rabbi Daniel Greyber and Jamil Kadoura, pose at the Gaza Children's Village fundraiser in Chapel Hill, NC on April 28, 2026. (Courtesy of Rabbi Greyber)

If we are serious about Israel's future — not only its survival, but the kind of future it will have — then we must be serious about strengthening those who stand against Hamas and everything it represents.

The large-scale fighting in Gaza may have ebbed, but the deeper struggle has not ended. Hamas remains committed to Israel's destruction. Israelis continue to live under threat. Military strength is necessary for Israel's survival. But it is not sufficient for Israel's future.

Israel can defend itself. It cannot, on its own, create the partners it will need for peace.

Those partners — Palestinian leaders and institutions capable of choosing life over death, coexistence over annihilation — are fragile. They are rare. When they appear, they must be strengthened, encouraged and yes, celebrated. And when they do not present themselves as readily as we are lucky to have had happen in Durham, they must be cultivated wherever possible.

The Gaza Children's Village is not a solution to the conflict. It is something smaller — and, in its own way, more important.

It is a fragile seed of a different future, planted in extraordinarily difficult soil.

We did not support this effort because we are indifferent to Israel's suffering. We supported it because we are committed to Israel's flourishing.

To be a Zionist today is to hold more than one truth at once: to stand firmly with Israel in its need for security, and to actively seek out and lift up those on the other side who are trying to build something different.

Our task is not to pretend those people are everywhere.

Our task is to find them, to strengthen them — and to help ensure that they are not alone.

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.

Shabbat *Cont. from page 17*

waiting for, with three floors of immersive and interactive exhibitions for kids. The rooms and activities explained different Jewish values or the origins and meanings of holidays. There were games, displays, and so many things to touch and play with, all illuminating information about Jewish life and learning. It may have been geared to a younger demographic, but plenty of adults were undeterred from indulging in the playfulness of the activities and interactive exhibits.

Our final official stop was to the Rebbe's Ohel: his final resting place. Jacob and I sat together and after I wrote my own prayers to leave at the Rebbe's grave,

I helped Jacob write his own prayers. He then asked me why we write prayers to G-d and leave them at the Ohel. I explained to him that the prayers would be carried to Hashem on our behalf to ask for Divine blessings. He put money into the tzedakah box, and I showed him how to knock on the Ohel door three times before entering and helped him tear his prayer into five pieces.

Jacob and I took a small detour after this to a kosher spot in Times Square, Miznon, for some schnitzel and pita. Then, since he had most definitely grasped the importance of everything that 770 Eastern Parkway symbolizes, after returning to CH, Jacob got his Lego replica. For the final chapter of our stay, we took the recommendation of Rabbi Blachman and dined at a

kosher CH hot spot, Meat.

SITH was a rich and inspiring experience, but unlike programming for young people, this was a set up with something to offer any age group. Edmonton families should consider next year's Shabbaton as an illuminating adventure for the entire mishpuchah. JLI offers thought provoking and inquisitive courses throughout the year, and those Edmontonians interested should contact Rabbi Blachman; Calgarians should contact Chabad Lubavitch of Alberta. The 12th Shabbat in the Heights promises even more Jewish unity and inspirational Yiddishkeit, and G-d willing Rabbi Blachman will be able to accompany an even larger delegation of Edmonton families next year.



from the **Sources**
by Eliezer Segal

To boldly go...

Jewish religious thinkers have proposed many reasons for God's choice of the people of Israel to be the recipients of the special gift that is the Torah. The second-century C.E. teacher Rabbi Meir suggested that it was "because they are 'azzim, a Hebrew word [singular = 'az] that can be translated as: strong, bold or even brazen.

As some of the commentators pointed out, Rabbi Meir's comment seems to have been inspired by the verse in Psalms "The Lord will give strength ['oz] unto his people." which was expounded as an allusion to the giving of the Torah. Hence it is appropriate that the gift of 'oz should be bestowed upon a community of 'azzim.

The implication of Rabbi Meir's statement is that Israel's boldness was a praiseworthy quality that rendered them worthy of a special reward. This is consistent with a similar teaching that the Talmud ascribed to the academy of Rabbi Ishmael, who expounded Moses's words in Deuteronomy "from his right hand went a fiery law for them," as if the Almighty were saying: "these people are worthy to be given a fiery law."

Rashi, however, had a surprisingly different understanding of the passage. According to his reading, Israel's boldness was a negative and dangerous trait that had to be restrained. They would have remained ungovernable and unruly had the law of the Torah not been imposed upon them to temper their strength and subdue their passions.

So why did Rashi propose an interpretation that seems to be at odds with the simple message of the talmudic sages?

One possibility that comes to mind is that the Israelites do not come across as particularly bold in the scriptural narrative. They had to be pushed to follow Moses's leadership and accept their liberation from Egypt; and their conduct was marked by unceasing griping, whining and backsliding.

In the seventeenth century, Rabbi Loewe of Prague (the Maharal) diagnosed this boldness as an inclination to disobey rules and indulge in evil behaviour. The nineteenth-century scholar Rabbi

Naftali Zvi Berlin also observed how the Israelites displayed a continual unwillingness to subject themselves to divine providence and to the commandments.

In a similar spirit, Rabbi Ephraim Luntshits expounded Jacob's admonition to his hotheaded sons Simeon and Levi "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce ['az]." Their boldness, if allowed to increase in isolation, would lead to acts of violent evil. For that reason the patriarch prophesied, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel," thereby diluting the threat by not assigning them separate tribal territories in the holy land.

More specifically, the Talmud inserted a comment that "had the Torah not been given to Israel, no people or nationality would be able to withstand them." This supports the idea that the Torah was intended, at least in part, to rein in their physical or military strength. This theme of a trade-off between religious study and physical prowess is found elsewhere in rabbinic tradition, as in the legend about Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish who was depicted as a reformed gladiator whose conversion to the life of Torah scholarship transformed him into a weakling. At any rate, this might have persuaded Rashi that receiving the Torah at Sinai was also designed to enfeeble the people physically.

This view also required Rashi to give a rather unconvincing explanation of the "fiery law" text, so that it was not the Torah that was fiery, but the volatile behaviour ("law") of the people.

Rabbi Jacob Reischer argued that Rabbi Meir was not really asking about the main reason God gave the Torah to Israel. Obviously it was in order to provide an opportunity to accumulate merit by performing the 613 commandments! Rather, the question related to the intense study of the Torah's theological foundations over which Jews are required to meditate day and night, and not confine themselves to a passive observance. This regimen has the effect of diminishing their physical strength and boldness, making them more vulnerable to their enemies. The only solution to

this dilemma is to endow them with peace. Thus there is a trade-off between: "the Lord will give strength ['oz] unto his people," and "the Lord will bless his people with peace [shalom]."

Several commentators expressed a more approving perspective on Israel's boldness.

Rabbi Jacob Falk in his *Penei Yehoshua* observed how the rabbis generally praised the biblical Israelites for their valiant readiness to accept the Torah although it had been refused by the other nations: "In my humble opinion it appears that Rabbi Meir concluded for that very reason that it was on account of their boldness. For it is not a pejorative expression (God forbid!) intended to cast aspersions on Israel who are the holy seed, the tribes of Jeshurun, the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Like some other commentators Rabbi Falk invoked the famous words of Rabbi Judah ben Tema "Be bold ['az] as a leopard to carry out the will of your father in heaven."

He explained that this was particularly true about learning Torah, concerning which the rabbis had stated that a person who is overly timid and lacking in intellectual boldness makes a poor student. This leopard-like courage set Israel apart from the superficiality of the other nations who were not bold enough to seek out the deepest truths of the Torah.

Rabbi Luntshits as well could not resist arguing an alternative viewpoint to Rashi's. Whatever negative issues might arise with respect to the qualities of boldness or stubbornness, we cannot disregard their positive aspects, as exemplified in Judah ben Tema's maxim.

For obstinacy can also be a laudable quality for Israel, when it inspires us to stand up for our traditions, and to resist pressures to repudiate our values and identity.

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

Community wide Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration in Calgary



The Calgary Jewish Community celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut with music, dance, fun, food and festivities. Photos from Facebook JCC.

Gan Israel DAY CAMP
Edmonton, Alberta

Activities, Jewish Pride, Caring Staff, and Lots of FUN!

REGISTER NOW www.chabadedmonton.org

Dedicated in loving memory of Reb Avrohom (Bernie) Hoffman

Mon-Fri 9am-3:30pm

Boys & Girls ages 3-13
Older Boys Division ages 10-13

Summer 2026/5786
June 29- August 7

Kosher Lunches & Snacks ✓
Arts n' Crafts ✓
Sports ✓
Connection with Friends and Offsite Trips ✓

Early Bird Register before March 31. You will both receive a \$50 tuition credit.
Refer a Friend
Early/After Care Available upon request. Call Rabbi Ari 780-993-1818

SCAN ME

Proud to support Camp Gan Izzy. Hope everyone has a wonderful summer.

KELLY McCAULEY
MP | EDMONTON WEST

kelly.mccauley@parl.gc.ca
780-392-2515

MHP YES KOSHER FRIENDSHIP
The **Kiddush Kup**

OUR JOURNEY FROM PESACH TO SHAVUOT!
WE EXPLORE JEWISH HISTORY AND HOLIDAYS

SERIES 1 LIVE IT. ♥ LOVE IT. ♥ CONNECT. ♥

1 PESACH

From Pesach we start, we're free and we grow, With Hashem's strong hand, Moses led us to go. Out from Mitzrayim, no longer confined, To serve Him with joy, with heart and with mind.

♥ We remember and thank Hashem for everything.

2 COUNTING THE OMER

Each day that we count, one step and then more, We're growing inside like never before. Preparing our hearts, becoming more true, To receive the Torah, fresh and anew.

♥ We count 49 days, preparing for the Torah.

3 LAG B'OMER

Lag B'Omer shines with fire and light, We gather with joy as day turns to night. With friends all around, our spirits feel higher, Celebrating together by song and by fire.

♥ We remember Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.

4 SHAVUOT

Then Shavuot comes, so special and bright, Hashem gave the Torah—our guiding light. We listen, we learn, we choose what is right, And grow every day with His guiding light.

♥ At Har Sinai we received the Torah.

AGES 6-24 | STARTS SEPTEMBER TO JUNE MONTHLY SESSIONS | ENROLL BY JUNE 21, 2026 | 4:00 - 5:30 PM INCLUDES ACTIVITIES, MENTORSHIP & A SHARED MEAL

Guided activities • Supportive mentorship • Building confidence & connection ♥

BUILD FRIENDSHIPS | GROW SKILLS | SUPPORTIVE MENTORS | FEEL INCLUDED

YES KOSHER FRIENDSHIP
PASTA WITH MEAT SAUCE | VEGGY STICKS WITH DIP | ICE CREAM CUPS

YesKosherFriendship@gmail.com

Good Times at Camp Gan Izzy

Registration for Camp Gan Izzy is now open. For details visit chabadedmonton.org