



## Double take

Photos of Israel and Macau P14

## Jewish Hamilton memories

Haimish exhibit celebrates the past P17



# Hamilton Jewish News

THE JEWISH VOICE OF HAMILTON

DECEMBER 2012 VOL 27:2/ KISLEV - CHESVAN 5773

AGREEMENT #40007180

## Meet Barb Babij Federation's new CEO

Her first official appearance at the UJA Cabaret campaign kickoff communicated much more than words. Standing at the podium before the large audience gathered at Beth Jacob Synagogue for UJA Cabaret, Barb Babij promised that her remarks would be brief as she simultaneously unravelled a scroll that cascaded towards the floor.



Barb Babij

Keeping a straight face, Federation's new CEO proceeded to read a poem she'd written for the occasion, that both charmed and amused her audience.

That self-deprecating sense of humour will no doubt serve Babij well as she takes on the challenge of facilitating Federation's new strategic direction. To read about Babij's impressions of our community and the role she hopes to play in our future, see page 11.

## A community of hearts

UJA OPENING A REMINDER OF EVERYTHING THAT'S GOOD ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY



Amy Back surrounded by the cast of UJA Cabaret

Photo by Wendy Schneider

For anyone who was in doubt about the vibrancy and singular qualities that distinguish Hamilton's Jewish community, UJA Cabaret, the UJA Campaign opening, that was held on October 18, was an affirmation of what our community can achieve when we all work towards a common goal.

The event, which attracted more than 400 people of all ages and affiliation, showcased the considerable talent of a cast of enthusiastic individuals for whom the night was a culmination of months of hard, collaborative work. As the cast sang and danced their hearts out, it was impossible not to be caught up in the spirit of the evening, articulated so beautifully by Amy Back's stirring lyrics.

Together, we *do* do extraordinary things. And if we're too close to see it, just ask Perry Romberg, who was acting Federation executive director until the recent hiring of new CEO,

Barb Babij.

"This would never have been possible in Toronto," he said, "having people from different affiliations working together for a common cause."

Babij, too, was deeply moved by the performance.

"I saw tremendous energy and ability to work together to create something ... People were buzzed. There was excitement."

### When all is said and done we are a community of hearts.

In short, UJA Cabaret served as a reminder to those of us in attendance, that, when all is said and done, we are a community of hearts. And that when our hearts are united towards making sure no one in our community is denied a hot meal, a sympathetic ear, a supportive environment or a Jewish education, there is nothing we can't achieve. When your UJA canvasser calls you over the next few weeks, please dig deep and give generously.

For more about UJA Cabaret, see page 10

## A year of celebrations



Jack and Barbara Katz with their son Teddy at his Bar Mitzvah, 1978

Oh, what a year this is. The Adas Israel Congregation, Beth Jacob Synagogue and Temple Anshe Sholom are all celebrating big anniversaries in the Hebrew calendar year 5773. To mark the occasion, the HJN will devote a page in each of the next three issues, to each of the shuls. Our tribute to Adas Israel in honour of its centennial year can be found on page 12.



## Cycling in Israel

Mixing fun with a good cause

P15



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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**LARRY SZPIRGLAS**  
PRESIDENT,  
UJA FEDERATION OF HAMILTON



We are without question a community that demonstrates again and again, our belief that together we do extraordinary things. Through all of our current communal endeavors it's clear we are a very progressive, innovative and positive enterprise. Examine this issue of the HJN and you will see the examples – everything from celebrating our communal history (the Working Family Stories and Treasures community art exhibit “Meet me at the Haimish”) the smashing Cabaret celebration that opened this year's UJA campaign, and the exemplary week-long Holocaust education programs created by Federation's Holocaust Education Committee, which brought out thousands of Hamiltonians to films and exhibits that bore witness to the tragedies of the Holocaust and other genocides. We can see it as well in the centennial celebration of the Adas Israel Synagogue, in The Hamilton Spectator's tribute to Rabbi Emeritus Bernard Baskin, and in the stellar actions of our Public Relations Committee, which dealt most effectively with some abhorrent anti-Israel propaganda facilitated by a group calling itself Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) – a misnomer to say the least – that was on display at the Hamilton Public Library in September.

All of the above is referenced in the articles that you will read in this issue. What those stories do not necessarily reveal is that behind every successful endeavour, lie the efforts of an untold number of volunteers, Jewish communal professionals, our synagogue clergy and many others in the Jewish and non-Jewish community. So let's be sure to celebrate all the positive moments throughout our community's history that make up a rich and diverse communal tapestry.

It is regrettable that some among us choose to minimize the positive aspects of community, and instead, focus on the negative, even going so far as to belittle and insult our communal achievements in the public domain. Such was the case in a recent issue of the Canadian Jewish News (CJN) in which a column appeared that was harshly critical of Hamilton Jewish Federation's handling of the CJPME display at the library. That no attempt was made by the CJN to seek out the actual facts or provide equal space in the same issue to our Federation was, in our view, a grave error of judgment. The opinion expressed in that column, in fact, stood in stark contrast to the strong community support communicated to our Public Relations Committee for their strategic handling of a distressing event. (see page 13)

Let us be clear that we are a diverse community with varying opinions on almost all issues that confront Canadian and World Jewry and Israeli society. Such is the case in a democratic society and we should expect no less. We at Federation believe that we express the sentiments of the majority of our community members on many issues, and we strive to be both strategic and transparent by informing you about the decisions we make and the rationale behind those decisions.

Above all, we choose to celebrate that which is uplifting, positive and unifying because we know that together WE do extraordinary things.

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Celebrating memories of a bygone era



### Hold the Date COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Monday, Jan. 28**  
**B'nai Brith Sports Dinner**  
Hamilton Convention Centre  
Reception 5:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m.  
bbsportsdinner.com
- Wednesday, Jan. 16**  
**Tribute to Raoul Wallenberg**  
Marking the 100th birthday of Raoul Wallenberg  
Sponsored by the Holocaust Education Committee  
Guest Speaker: Ernie Mason  
Adas Israel @7:30 p.m.
- Saturday & Sunday, March 9 & 10**  
**Beth Jacob Israeli Film Festival**  
www.bethjacobsynagogue.ca
- Monday, April 22**  
**Celebrity Author Lunch with Vincent Lamm**  
Sponsored by Na'amat Hamilton  
Adas Israel @ noon  
annashkolnik@hotmail.com

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### COMING UP

- PASSOVER ISSUE**
- Deadline for booking ad space  
Jan. 28, 2013
  - Deadline for receiving editorial copy  
Feb. 4, 2013
  - Deadline for receiving ad copy  
Feb. 20, 2013
  - Estimated date of arrival  
Mar. 4, 2013

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Dec. 4 @8 p.m.  
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Adas Israel Congregation

Dec. 6 @8 p.m.  
**DOC POMUS**  
Temple Anshe Sholom

**COMMUNITY CHANUKAH CELEBRATION**  
Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m.

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## JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES



Hamilton Jewish Social Services Chai Choir is successfully starting its 18th year. The choir meets at 30 King St. E. in Dundas, every Tuesday from 10 a.m. until noon.

Under the leadership of Leon Karan, they are enjoying learning tricks of expressive singing, healthy breathing and simply enjoying the company of good friends. They sing English, Yiddish, Hebrew and popular songs. No musical training or great voice is required to join the JSS choir, so please consider coming out for an enriching experience of live music making. For more information call Carol Krames 905-627-9922 ex 21 or email carolkramesjss@hotmail.com or email leon\_karan@hotmail.com.

## TEMPLE ANSHE SHOLOM

PAULA BARUCH

Rabbi Rick Jacobs, the newly installed President of the Union for Reform Judaism, delivered an inspiring sermon at Temple Anshe Sholom on Nov. 3 about the future of Reform Judaism. Rabbi Jacobs' talk was part of his first visit to Canada as URJ president to meet with leadership and learn about the distinctiveness of the Canadian Reform movement. Jacobs made a point of coming to Anshe Sholom not only to visit Canada's oldest Reform congregation but also because of his relationship with Anshe Sholom's Rabbi Jordan Cohen, who served as Jacobs' rabbinic intern and educator in Brooklyn in the late 1980s.

Jacobs described Judaism as being at a crossroads and emphasized the need to be an open tent that welcomes all who wish to join us. He highlighted Reform Judaism's inclusiveness of all members of interfaith families, the new focus on youth engagement and the importance of reaching out to young adults who are increasingly on the fringes of synagogue and Jewish life. Jacobs praised Anshe Sholom's leadership in outreach efforts to potential converts and Jews by choice and success in post Bar/Bat Mitzvah retention.

Rabbi Jacobs' visit to Anshe Sholom attracted many communal leaders, including president of the Canadian Council for Reform Judaism, board members from the Reform Zionist Association of Canada, Camp George and the URJ, as well as full representation from the Temple board, the JNF and the Jewish Federation of Hamilton. Key leadership was hosted for a Shabbat luncheon with Rabbi Jacobs following the service at the home of Lorraine and Marvin Cohen.



Rabbi Rick Jacobs  
Union for Reform Judaism

## BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE



A watershed moment: Beth Jacob teens, with Rabbi Eugene Weiner (third from left, front row) and David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel.

"Whatever became of..." is a phrase that's going around Beth Jacob these days as we prepare for a series of events marking our 125th anniversary. Our goal is to bring together anyone and everyone who has ever had a connection to our shul throughout the decades. Watershed moments, like two consecutive teenager trips to Israel that were led by Rabbi Eugene Weiner in the early 1960s, will be highlighted. Hold the dates Sunday, Jan. 20 for a Writing Your Memories workshop and Sunday, April 28 for a broad based event designed to capture the memories of our members and former members on video. Also in the works: Our Chanukah dinner on Tuesday, Dec. 11; our lottery on Jan. 17, our Israeli Film Festival on March 9 and 10; a Scholar-in-Residence weekend with Rabbi Shawn Fields-Meyer on Feb. 1-3, who will speak on topics such as "Texting, Technology and Torah: Spirituality and the Digital Age." Details about all of these and other programs can be found on our website at bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

Beth Jacob has a wide-open-door policy. Drop in anytime for a Shabbat service, a Talmud class or one of our stimulating Sunday morning Soul, Body and Mind programs. For more information call the shul office at 905-522-1351 or email office@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.



Rabbi Shawn Fields-Meyer

## NA'AMAT HAMILTON



Na'amat Hamilton members pose with new Na'amat Israel president, Galia Wolloch (centre, back row) at a recent gathering. Photo by Wendy Schneider

Na'amat Hamilton recently hosted a visit by Na'amat Canada president, Orit Tobe (who succeeded the late Rivka Shaffir in the position) and the newly-elected president of Na'amat Israel, Galia Wolloch. In a meeting with the Na'amat Hamilton membership, Wolloch highlighted the following points:

Na'amat is the largest women's organization in Israel. There are 18,000 children that attend 233 day care centres throughout the country. Every centre is filled to capacity and has a waiting list. 18,000 children in Na'amat day care means that 18,000 mothers can be part of the workforce, a necessity for many families in Israel. There are 23 day care centres that cater to 2,000 at-risk children, who arrive at 7 a.m. and leave at 7 p.m. If not for these facilities these children run the risk of being removed from their family homes. Na'amat also operates 14 technological and two agricultural high schools for at-risk teenagers. Its award-winning Glickman Centre for Family Violence Prevention houses up to 50 women annually with an average stay of four to six months.

Na'amat Hamilton welcomes new members to our group. Please contact Dena and Gilda at naamathamilton@gmail.com.

## JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton and Area (JGSH) has had a strong start to its season. We continue our list of great speakers on Wednesday, Jan. 23 with Beth Jacob's Rabbi Dan Selsberg.

On Wednesday, Feb. 13 Ralph Bloch will share his memories and impressions of the 2012 International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies conference at which he presented twice. Bloch, very well respected in the genealogical community, is a frequent presenter at JGSH and we are proud to have him as a member. We will also host

a research roundtable that has proven to be a big hit with our members. If you've started to research your family history this will be a chance to ask questions. If not, perhaps listening to the experiences of others will inspire you to start or to continue.

JGSH meets at 7:30 p.m. at Temple Anshe Sholom, 215 Cline Ave. N, Hamilton. Non-members are welcome, but \$5 is requested to help cover costs; your first meeting is on the house! Please check out www.jgsh.org or contact Hazel Boon at jgshamilton@gmail.com or 905-524-3345.

## Hamilton Hebrew High



Midrasa, otherwise known as, Hamilton Hebrew High (H3), recently chartered a bus to take 40 students to a Toronto Raptors game at the Air Canada Centre. H3 is also planning a Chanukah Niagara Falls extravaganza for students in grades 9-12 on Dec. 15. Classes have already started with four amazing courses taught by our dynamic educators Rabbi David Teller and Yaakov Morel (pictured above). For more info on our programs or classes contact yaakov@hhmidrasa.ca.

## Canadian Magen David Adom



HILDA ROSEN

As ambassador of Canadian Magen David Adom for Israel in Hamilton, I would like to announce our new fundraising goal of \$25,000 for the purchase of a third emergency scooter ambulance for Magen David Adom in Israel. To donate by credit card call Susan at 1-800-731-2848 or mail your cheque to Canadian Magen Adom for Israel, c/o Hilda Rosen, 27 Haddon Ave. S. Hamilton, ON L8S 1X5.

My sincerest and heartfelt appreciation to all our friends and donors and may your loved ones be blessed with a Happy Chanukah.

## HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY

Hamilton Hebrew Academy and Hamilton Jewish Middle School students participated in the Terry Fox National School Run Day in September, alongside teaching and administrative staff.

The goal of 100-percent participation was announced in an opening assembly when the school's student council representatives, Zev Weisenthal and Ronnie Vaknin, shared a brief overview of Terry Fox's achievements and the legacy of the Marathon of Hope.

At the closing assembly in November, students were praised for raising \$540 for the Terry Fox Foundation. They were also treated to seeing their teachers and school leaders performing outlandish feats, such as singing karaoke, doing push-ups and seeing their Head of School 'sporting a new look' with assistance from student council representatives.

Special thanks to the event organizing committee, and to the Kindergarten students for treating the runners and walkers to well-deserved refreshments at the finish line.



HJMS students Sari Horwood, Abby Shore and Idaliah Snajdman share a moment during the Terry Fox National School Run Day. Photo courtesy of Hamilton Hebrew Academy

## TEMPLE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

LAURA WOLFSON

Our school's open house is on Dec. 12 and our students have been hard at work preparing a spectacular set, background and props for a Chanukah-themed variety show featuring songs, dances, stand-up comedy and even some magic tricks that will wow parents and guests!

Our B'Yachad (high school) students will be on hand to help this event run smoothly and to serve delicious snacks afterwards. Please contact the Temple office to get your tickets.

This fall our students have been busy with many community-building projects. B'yachad students sewed cute sock monkeys for our Family Shabbat services. The students have started a new way of engaging even the youngest children during the service by placing a book rack with a wonderful selection of PJ Library books at the back of the

sanctuary, draped with the sock monkeys. Young children can take a book and a monkey to cuddle and read to at their seats. Artist Tracey Kornblum hosted a Youth Art Day, when students created beautiful works of art that will be entered into an



Making sock monkeys for Family Shabbat

Photo by Laura Wolfson

art contest to benefit the new children's respiratory wing at the Herzog Hospital in Jerusalem. Many of our grade 3, 4, and 5 students participated in a shab-

baton at Camp George. They came home tired and happy, and excited about spending a weekend in a wonderful Jewish setting with their friends.

For information about Temple Anshe Sholom Religious School, please visit www.anshesholom.ca and click on "Learning".



Kehila students get a taste of pioneer life at the Jordan School House.

Photo by Rina Rodak

## KEHILA JCDS

PETER GREENBERG

My former role as a public school principal has enabled me to develop a sense of how Kehila differs positively from many other schools. To begin with, we have an enriched physical education program involving elite McMaster athletes, coaches and graduate students. This provides our students with a wide range of both athletic and fitness skills.

With smaller class sizes and dedicated teachers comes the ability to identify and provide integrated interventions for individual learning challenges at an earlier stage than other schools.

Our kindergarten - grade 2 students

participate in an immersion-type French program in physical education, music and visual arts classes. Our grade 3-4 teachers are involved in the development of a chalutzim (pioneer) project, which will integrate many subjects as well as providing a comparison of the experiences of early Israeli chalutzim with our Canadian pioneers. Monthly visits from local rabbis and cantors reinforce our Judaic programs and values.

Please drop in at our Chanukah open house on Dec. 13 to say hello and to check out what we have to offer. For more information email office@kehilashool.ca.

## BETH JACOB'S KESHER SCHOOL

MILENA ROMALIS

Beth Jacob's family programming has been bustling with action and renewed energy these

past months. In response to all of the little faces in our community, we have introduced three new programs: an after-school Gan program, Torah for Tots on Shabbat mornings (ages 2-6); and a Wednesday morning baby group.


In September, David Gershon's Rosh Hashana service was a huge hit, and we look forward to welcoming him back next year. In October, our families gathered for a scavenger hunt in the Beth Jacob Cemetery. Both the turnout and the attitude were tremendous, in spite of the most

blustery, rainy day imaginable. We all paid our respects and learned LOTS.

In November, we enjoyed Havdalah, an Italian dinner and a sundae bar, along with the musical stylings of Mark Weinstock. On Dec. 11, your family won't want to miss Dreidels and Drums - a drum circle led by Ora Schwartz at the congregational Chanukah dinner. Teasers for winter include a Shtetl wedding celebration with food, live klezmer, as well as a chocolate seder. All are welcome to attend family programs at Beth Jacob. For more information, or to be included on our family program email list call 905-522-1351 or email school@bethjacobsynagogue.ca



Photo by Jason Leizer



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## LEADING THE WAY

Israel's Successes in Water Management  
Featuring Dr. Avri Kadmon




Join us for a lively discussion with Israel's chief water expert, Dr. Avri Kadmon. He will be talking about the impact of chronic water shortages and JNF Israel's solutions.

**Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> - 7:15 pm**  
Council Chambers at Dundas Town Hall,  
60 Main Street, Dundas, ON

Israel continues to have dire water problems due to the lack of water sources and drought. The Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael - Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) is involved in activity regarding river rehabilitation, reservoirs and other water-related projects.

Dr. Kadmon is in charge of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Mapping and River Rehabilitation and all KKL-JNF involvement in river rehabilitation. Dr. Kadmon has received numerous awards in recognition of his significant contributions to solving Israel's water problem.

The lecture is free but we encourage people to make a donation to JNF as a gesture of support.

Please RSVP to JNF at 905-527-5516 or email us at [hamilton@jnf.ca](mailto:hamilton@jnf.ca). Connect with us online at [ontario.jnf.ca](http://ontario.jnf.ca). Follow us on Facebook @ JNFHamilton



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ABOVE: From l to r, Cindy Kam, Danna and David Horwood, Ollie and Laura Laengerer and Christina and Peter Smith.

RIGHT: Deborah Kerbel and Danna Horwood with 'Mentalist' Haim Goldenberg

## A "TASTE OF ISRAEL" IN HAMILTON

Stories and photos by FRANK SIMKEVITZ

The King George Ballroom at Liuna Station was the fitting venue for a fantastic soiree of gourmet Israeli hors d'oeuvres and fine Israeli wine on Sunday, Nov. 4. More than 120 people were entertained by Israeli 'mentalist' Haim Goldenberg of Goldmine fame. The reception also featured a silent auction. Good things don't happen by themselves. Danna Horwood and Deborah Kerbel, the event's co-chairs worked really hard along with their committee, including Augustina Gershkovitch. The results were nothing short of outstanding.

## Tu Bi'Shevat - the JNF holiday

Tu Bi'Shevat is just around the corner. Just like last year, this year's focus will be on a family activity. Since Tu Bi'Shevat is all about nature and the importance of the environment, the Jewish National Fund will host another major family event on Sunday, Jan. 27, 2013.

It's a great opportunity for families to spend the afternoon together in a natural setting, learning and having fun at the same time.

According to Suzy Polgar, Regional coordinator of programming and education, "This is the JNF holiday! We want young people to associate JNF with Tu Bi'Shevat and to develop a healthy

understanding of the importance of being respectful of our environment."



Last year's Tu Bi'Shevat community event was at the Royal Botanical Gardens Arboretum. Families celebrated by playing games, making bookmarks, planting avocado pits, listening to stories

and warming themselves around a bonfire.

Co-chairs for this year's family Tu Bi'Shevat program will be Rebecca Shapiro and Zavi Wolman. Both are very keen to create a "nature" event in the middle of the winter, especially focused on the "holiday of trees."

The program will take place on Sunday afternoon to accommodate the children who attend Hebrew school on Sunday morning.

It will be a fun-filled afternoon with NATURE activities as well as arts and crafts, and, of course FOOD.

Watch for details in the next few weeks.

The Hamilton chapter wishes all our Donors, Families and Friends a Warm and Festive

## Chag Ha'Chanukah

Let us pray for peace in our beloved Israel - Am Y'Israel Chai



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Temple Anshe Sholom volunteers participate in docent training for the Anne Frank exhibit

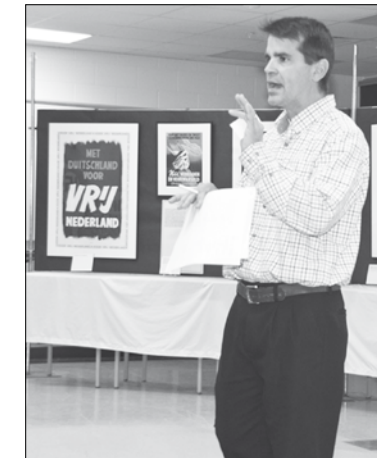
## HOLOCAUST EXHIBITS COME TO HAMILTON

Story and photos by ELAINE LEVINE

Two Holocaust related travelling exhibits were on display during the month of November at two local high schools and at Temple Anshe Sholom. Anne Frank: A History for Today and Art and Propaganda in Nazi Occupied Holland were curated by the Anne Frank Centre USA, (AFC) a not-for-profit organization that promotes the universal message of tolerance by developing and disseminating a variety of educational programs, exhibitions, workshops and special events.

Decent training workshops took place at the Waterdown District High School and at St. Jean de Brebeuf Catholic Secondary School. Waterdown District had the additional honour of being both the location for the exhibit's Canadian premiere and the first high school to host the art and propaganda exhibit. The workshops were facilitated by AFC director of outreach and exhibitions, Hilary Eddy Stipelman.

"We were honored to be working with the Hamilton Jewish Federation Holocaust Education Committee and with Madeleine Levy to bring our travelling exhibits to the Hamilton community," said Eddy Stipelman. "Peer education



Assistant head of history, Rob Flosman organized the exhibit at Waterdown District High School.



Anne Frank Centre's Hilary Eddy Stipelman (left) with Paula Baruch (centre) and St. Jean de Brebeuf head of religious studies, Grace Centritto.

is an essential component of the success of AFC traveling exhibits and I was so excited to see what well-prepared and engaged students participated in the docent training workshops," said Eddy Stipelman.

Eddy Stipelman singled out teachers Rob Flosman from Waterdown District and Grace Centritto from St. Jean de Brebeuf Secondary School for their dedication to Holocaust education.

"Rob Flosman's wonderful installation at Waterdown District High School and the initiative he took in preparing his students will certainly be an inspiration for us in encouraging other schools to consider hosting this exhibit," she said. "Both Rob and Grace did an outstanding job preparing their students and engaging their schools and communities in helping to share the story of Anne Frank. The legacy of Anne's diary is an empowering

story for students of all ages, but to see her words impacting high school students, who will in turn share their commitment to ending racism and discrimination with their fellows, is vital to the Anne



Holocaust Education Committee executive members, Ira Rosen (left) and Madeleine Levy (far right) with Hilary Eddy Stipelman.

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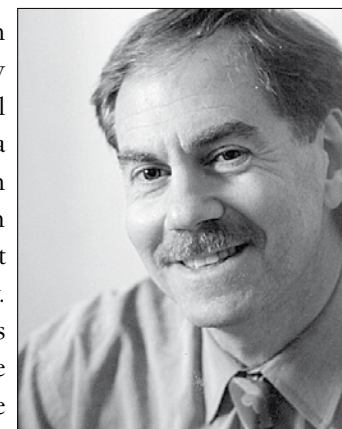


## Guest Voices

### Guest Voices

#### Helping the most vulnerable in our community

I've been working in Hamilton since 1997 and I thought I knew all about our community. All that changed when I became a volunteer with the Beth Tikvah Foundation. I've learned much about people whom I didn't know were in our community. By the time you finish reading this article I hope YOU will become more enlightened and recognize the challenges that some of our families face.



Franklin Simkevitz  
Chair, Beth Tikvah Foundation

In the early 1990s, Stan Tick, a respected Hamiltonian, was faced with a dilemma. His two older brothers were developmentally delayed and there was no suitable place for them to reside. Stan wanted them to reach their potential and to enjoy their life within a Jewish environment. This was the catalyst for the creation of the Beth Tikvah Foundation – a house on Arkell Street where Bernie and Ted lived with other residents for many years, in a caring Jewish atmosphere, able to celebrate all the holidays and so much more.

Beth Tikvah's mission is to help people with a developmental disability maximize their potential within a Jewish environment. We are the only organization in Ontario west of Toronto to offer this resource. In addition to our residential setting, Beth Tikvah provides Support for Independent Living (SIL) resources to several Jewish individuals who require a little extra help with their everyday needs.

We have recently become aware that there are a significant number of Jewish families in our catchment area with a developmentally challenged young adult at home, and these parents are shouldering the responsibility by themselves. As a result, we're beginning a new initiative, focusing on assisting these families with a "socializing" program for young adults who live with them. The program, which will start up soon, will at first be centered around Jewish events and holidays.

This new program is designed to give families with a developmentally delayed young adult some support and to let them know that there is a local Jewish organization to meet their needs. Beth Tikvah will also help family members negotiate their way through the social service system, thus ensuring their child will receive the support they require and deserve.

To learn more about our organization or to avail yourself of our resources, please call Debra Waring at our residence at 905 523-0411. If you prefer, you can send a confidential email to: info@bethtikvahhamilton.org. One of our professional resource people will be happy to assist you.

### Letter to the Editor

Kudos for focusing the last edition of the newspaper on the stories of individuals who strengthen our lives through their support of activities of the Jewish community. The Hamilton Hebrew Academy and the Hamilton Jewish Middle School are proud constituent agencies with graduates who are involved in a wide variety of civic activities.

The suggestion has been made that we serve only a segment of the community, namely those who seek an Orthodox Jewish education, and that we are parochial in nature. Nothing can be further from the truth! For more than 50 years, our schools have been catering to all denominations of our community by focusing on issues that unite but don't divide.

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Rabbi Eliot Feldman  
Head of School  
Hamilton Hebrew Academy/Hamilton Jewish Middle School



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# UJA CABARET THANK YOU

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Producer, director  
**Amy Back**

Dessert reception coordinator  
**Cynthia Mintz**

Dessert reception volunteers  
**Marlene Gains, Flora Rosenblatt, Fern Szpirglas, Allyson Brown, Geraldine Katz-Rose**

Make-up volunteers  
**Ginny Levine, Lori Lofchick, Clareta Schoenberg, Darlene Shapiro**

Delicious desserts donated by our fabulous caterers  
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New Federation CEO Barb Babij (centre) with Amy Back (left) and Elaine Levine at the UJA Cabaret  
Photo by Wendy Schneider

## AN EXTRAORDINARY EVENING!

By any definition, it was an extraordinary evening. UJA Cabaret, held at Beth Jacob Synagogue on Oct. 18 was a showcase of our community's talent that demonstrated the truth of this year's UJA Campaign tagline: Together WE do extraordinary things.

The cast of 37 ranging in age from 4 years old to almost 80 years young sang and danced to a standing ovation. Special thanks to Amy Back, who produced and directed the show and whose clever lyric adaptations brought smiles and laughter.

To Cynthia Mintz, special events coordinator extraordinaire, our sincere thanks for her attention to detail, her exquisite taste and her generosity making the dessert reception look absolutely beautiful. Thanks to Paula Baruch for her help as youth vocal coach.

Thank you to the cast, the parents, the program book sponsors and the behind-the-scene volunteers. A very special thank you to Federation's Elaine Levine, for the many hours she devoted towards making this one of the best UJA Campaign openings in recent memory.

And finally, thanks to our dedicated UJA Cabinet and canvassers.



## SIGN UP TODAY

Only 30 spots left!



Photo by Elaine Levine

Michelle Collier and her daughter, Julia, received a special gift package at last summer's JCC barbeque to mark the family's becoming the 100th enrollee in our community's PJ Library Program. PJ Library is a Jewish literary program that delivers books and music with Jewish content to your doorstep. It's a wonderful way to transmit Jewish culture, values and tradition through the closeness of parents and children reading together. PJ Library in Hamilton was made possible through the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the generosity of the Shirley and Morris Waxman family and the UJA Hamilton Lion of Judah division. To register your child, aged 6 months through five years, visit [jewishhamilton.org](http://jewishhamilton.org), [pjlibrary.org](http://pjlibrary.org) or call Elaine Levine at 905-627-9922, ext. 24 or email [elevine@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:elevine@jewishhamilton.org).

Pictured above are Julia, with mom, Michelle Collier and grandparents Brian and Laurie Katz.

# New Federation CEO outlines her vision for the future

Barb Babij's priorities include making Federation a meaningful part of people's lives

by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

### Can you say a little about your professional background?

I have a background in organizational development and finance. I am a CPA in the State of New York, a former CA in the province of Ontario. I have an MBA and a Masters in creativity and innovation.

### What appealed to you about this position and why do you think you're a good match for this community?

While I have lived in Fort Erie for the last several years, I've been interested in coming back to a larger Jewish community, where I could have easy access to adult education and give something back. When three different friends of mine sent me the job description advertising the position, I sat on it for awhile to really think it through. After I made the decision to apply, I did a lot of preparation. I looked at the three congregations online, and the more I prepared, the more I wanted to do this. It felt like a good fit.

### In what way?

It was complex. It was community building, intellectually

*"The campaign is a means to an end... it's not the end in itself. The end is being able to help the people in need in this community."*

challenging. I tend to go with my intuition and it felt right. One of the things that really attracted me when I saw the strategic plan was the vision to create a vibrant community. As mundane as it may sound, that's amazing.

### Why did that excite you?

Because community-wide change is the sense that I got people wanted. Being able to implement that kind of change is an exciting process. Change can be messy but it can also be exciting and vibrant. The evidence that this was possible was at the UJA Cabaret event. It was an extraordinary event, filled with enthusiasm and energy and the good will of the community. We have a great foundation and a great platform from which to catapult forward.

### How does Federation need to change? We need to be transparent.

If we're expecting beneficiary agencies to be transparent it's got to start with us. We need to do a better job on educating people about what our organization is all about by making connections. We have to be part of people's lives. Unless the Federation is seen as part

of the community, it's not going to grow and it's not going to do what it needs to do. The campaign is the means to the end. It's not the end in itself.

### What is the end?

The end is being able to help the people in need in this community. That's what the Federation is all about, not only in Hamilton but in Israel, and to some extent, the larger Jewish world. But it starts here in Hamilton. Without that you might as well just pack up and go home.

### What are the greatest challenges we face and what role will you play in helping us meet those challenges?

First and foremost are the financial constraints. You can only do as much as your resources will allow. All the good will in the world won't take you where you want to go if you're constrained by finances. We need to examine all we do against the yardstick of sustainability. Many of the people I've spoken with speak in terms of the need to build a sense of unity in the community as the basis on which to go forward. I really want

to develop a shared understanding of what it means to be a vibrant and sustainable community. The answers will come from the folks who are here and understand the community. I'm coming in as an outsider and I can take those ideas and help shape them within the context of Hamilton. I'm a lot about communication and dialogue and keeping those lines of communication open. My approach is to listen and understand first, and then try to fit the pieces together in a collaborative way.

### What do you think we have going for us?

First and foremost the people. You are an extraordinarily dedicated group. I found enormous good will in the community going through the interview process and I think that flows over into other areas. People have good intentions and it's a question of taking those good intentions and creating that shared direction.

**You've been on the job just over a week. How's it going so far?** I'm pretty convinced that I have the best job in the world.

## UJA NEWS



Lorne and Rita Richter hosted a cocktail reception for major donors at their home last fall, featuring special guest, David Engel, chair, UJA Federation of Toronto. The purpose of the evening was to brief attendees on issues of concern to Canadian Jewry and to help strategize ways to make this year's UJA Campaign the most successful ever.

## KOL HAKAVOD

The Hamilton Jewish Federation congratulates Madeleine Levy and former Hamiltonian, Stephen Adler, for being recently awarded with Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals. The medal serves to honour significant contributions and achievements by Canadians in their communities. Adler is the associate director of Ontario Government Relations at The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs and Levy's efforts on behalf of Holocaust Education has received national acclaim.

## A lesson in community partnerships

Local political activist and blogger, Jim Davis, approached Temple Anshe Sholom's Rabbi Jordan Cohen last summer with an idea. He wanted to create an event that would generate a discussion in the community on a topic about which he feels passionately: political correctness in the media.

With the enthusiastic support of Rabbi Cohen and the Jewish Federation's public relations committee, Davis organized a panel of speakers that included Michael Coren, Raheed Raza, Andy Bannister, Paul Berton and Paul Michaels each of whom weighed in on the topic at an event held at the Temple last August.

"Jim gets full credit not only for the idea but for the execution of the program," said Rabbi Cohen, who said that Davis initially wanted proceeds from the event to be directed towards the Temple. But Rabbi Cohen believed that such a broad reaching program should have a wider reach. "We discussed it and decided that, given the content of the program, the proceeds should benefit the community at large."

The event, held just days before the onset of the High Holiday season, attracted a crowd of 100. A few weeks later, Rabbi Cohen and Davis presented a cheque of \$800 to Federation president Larry Szpirglas and UJA Campaign



Jim Davis (second from right) and Rabbi Jordan Cohen (far right) present a cheque to UJA Campaign chair, Jay State while Federation president, Larry Szpirglas, looks on.  
Photo by Wendy Schneider

chair, Jay State, both of whom were extremely appreciative.

"It was an extremely well prepared and thought provoking event," said State, "and Jim's contribution to the UJA will assist us in meeting the needs of our community."

"It was a great event from the perspective of creating community partnerships," said Szpirglas, "and the fact that Jim and the rabbi made sure the proceeds were directed towards the United Jewish Appeal is a very significant message to everyone in our community about how necessary it is to support our capability to fund our organizations."

## WHAT HE DID FOR LOVE



Yashar Koach to Rabbi Stephen Wise of Oakville's Shaarei Beth-El, who was so eager to promote his new book, *Israel: Repairing the World*, that he jumped out of an airplane. "I felt I wanted to send a message about all the wonderful things that Israel is doing in the world and doing it in a way that is easy and accessible for kids," said Rabbi Wise. The book highlights the many innovations that Israel has brought to the world. While Wise wrote it with elementary school-aged children in mind, the book has been snapped up by people of all ages who appreciate the fact that it has so much information at their fingertips. "The response has been fantastic," said Wise, who reports that MP's, John Baird, Jason Kenney and Tom Mulcair have purchased copies. The book has also been distributed to Israeli Consulates around the world.



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**M**y Bar Mitzvah portion was Bereshit, and I chanted it during Simchat Torah. It's a very exciting time and there was a lot going on. When I got to the final paragraph of my parsha, I suddenly got hoisted up on top of Rabbi Shmuel Bloom's shoulders and I just kept going and finished my parsha from there.

Jonah Leibtag

**I** was 11 years old when Rabbi Green first came to Hamilton, and I remember that every Shabbat, he would sing a new niggun or melody for different parts of the service. That was a big difference from what we were used to at the Cannon Street Shul. I remember that I loved it, because I love singing. Even today, listening to so many voices singing in beautiful harmony makes my heart feel full. It's a very strong feeling of community.

Joanne Raphael (née Hoffman)

**O**ne of my favourite memories is when the Hamilton Supporters of Israel purchased an ambulance through Magen David Adom to be shipped to Israel. The ambulance was brought to the Adas for a gala event that they were holding. It was an amazing event because they had the ambulance parked right in front of the synagogue.

**I**n many ways the Adas has been a second home to my family since we extracted ourselves from the clutches of Winnipeg winters 12 years ago. The fact is that we spend a significant part of weekly life there, not just on Shabbat but also during the week. Our fellow congregants are our family here in Hamilton and have been with us through the many life events that we have encountered since moving here. Recently we celebrated my son Zev's Bar Mitzvah at the Adas. As with any life-cycle event my wife, Moleigh, and I found ourselves facing the dilemma of who to invite and who to exclude. We realized that we really had to invite everybody as really everybody has touched our lives in some way and really were our family here in Hamilton.

Alain Wiesenthal

## ADAS ISRAEL CONGREGATION 100 YEARS 1912-2012

### Memories to last a lifetime

**F**or me the Adas is all about THE SEAT. The first seat at what has been the Katz row since I was a child. That location to me is like a holy place where my family and its close ties come to life. Even today, the seat isn't often used — as if in reverence to all the greats who have sat there before. I still walk in today and picture my zaide Sam Katz (ah) leading the way. I'll never forget him with his smelling salts during the Yom Kippur service to keep him alert or pre-service lathering our hair with Brylcreem at his house so we looked stylish before we even got to Shul. Later, Uncle Nate sat in THE seat acting as his father's proxy. More recently, his son Howard and my father Jack have sat there and carried on the tradition. I can still almost hear Zaide singing along!

Teddy Katz

**W**ould it be convenient for Rabbi Green to visit you today?" This was Eileen phoning from the Adas office a few days after the death of my husband, Henry. And so I met the head and spiritual leader of the Adas Israel Synagogue and found out that his early years were on St. Urbain Street in Montreal, on the same block as my grandparents' home where my mother spent her early years. From being unaware that a synagogue was situated on Cline Street South, I spent some Saturday mornings at services, often arriving to locked doors, but kindly ushered in through the social hall, a back door and the men's side of the sanctuary. I became a fortunate recipient of Rabbi Green's kindness and astute understanding of people and of a similar warmth from Adas congregants at their Shabbat dinner tables, something I still marvel at. Life around the Adas has become an ongoing pleasure for me.

Sandra Witelson

**H**aving recently moved to "The Hammer" from London, Ontario, our family was understandably apprehensive at the notion of joining a significantly larger community than we were part of back home. However, from Rabbi Danny Green's heartwarming welcome announcement in Shul our first Shabbat morning, to the constant warmth, friendliness and support that permeates the walls of the Adas, we can say with total conviction and belief that we have not only joined a Shul, but a community in the true sense of the word... The beauty and palpable spirituality with which Shabbat is brought in and escorted out weekly with the help of the Chazan Yakov Morel, is something that everyone, regardless of their geographical or ideological background, should add to their bucket list. We eagerly look forward to being part of its surely promising future.

Avi and Baila Vaturi

**W**hen my father, Berish Gold, was getting ready to leave the small town of Ozarow in Poland for Hamilton, in October 1930, my maternal grandfather gave his future son-in-law the family Torah to take to Canada. He told him that if money was needed for my parents' wedding, the Torah could be sold. Fortunately the Torah was never sold and continues to be used every Monday and Thursday. The wedding, the first at the new Adas Israel on Cannon Street took place on December 25, 1930. When my father passed away, I continued in the family tradition of carrying the Torah at Kol Nidre. When my grandson, Joel Meyerson, was old enough to carry the Torah he started to follow in the family tradition. At the recent 100th anniversary celebration I passed the Torah to Joel who carried it up onto the Bimah.

Moishe Gold

**W**hen I walk through these doors I feel connected, I feel something unique and special. I don't exactly know why I have these feelings. I suspect it has a lot to do with the special character of those who join us each Shabbat. But, more importantly, I think it has to do with those people that aren't here. Those who came long before me and started the special energy 100 years ago."

Rivky Zians,  
Third generation Adas member

**I**t is hard to come up with just one moment that is memorable for me at the Adas. I have spent my whole life there. I have had my Bar Mitzvah, my wedding, my children's Bar Mitzvahs all there. But the best time, that still brings a tear to my eye is when we brought my twin boys to shul on Rosh Hashana for the first time. They were only a few weeks old and you could still really hold both of them in one arm. My father sat there beaming as he held on to his two new grandsons and took in all the naches from the congregation. He was the proudest man ever born, for that evening.

Joel Yellin

**M**y Bubba was old beyond her years, even when she was young. At the Cannon Street Shul, the women sat upstairs in the balcony. Her hearing wasn't the greatest, and when she couldn't hear, she thought nothing of yelling down at the Cantor at the top of her voice, 'Ich ken nisht hern, macht hecher.' — 'I can't hear, speak up.' Everyone knew what she was like and they just took it on the chin. As years went on she couldn't make the stairs anymore and so she was allowed to sit on the back bench down with the men. Everyone in the synagogue knew her.

Jack Katz



## Library exhibit arouses ire, anguish

Federation representatives share their concerns with library staff

by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

The Hamilton Public Library's hosting of an anti-Israel exhibit over a two-week period last fall, aroused the anger and anguish of the local Jewish community.

"A Child's view from Gaza", sponsored by a group called Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) consisted of 26 drawings, purportedly drawn by children in Gaza. Hamilton Jewish Federation first learned about the drawings, that depicted Israel and the IDF as brutal occupiers, days before the onset of the High Holy Days by a distraught member of the community.

Immediately upon learning of the exhibit, Federation Public Relations Committee (PRC) chair, Dr. Lorne Finkelstein, lodged a formal complaint with Chief librarian Paul Takala. While unwilling to break its contract with CJPME out of concern for possible negative repercussions, Takala said that the exhibit would be moved from the library's main entrance to the less-travelled fourth floor.

Following his conversation with Takala, Finkelstein convened a meeting with the PRC to decide what further action should be taken. "After much discussion, our six committee members reached a consensus that we would deal directly with the library rather than engage in a letter writing campaign to The Spectator, which could have the unintended impact of attracting more attention to the abhorrent display," said Finkelstein. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), the advocacy agency of Jewish Federations across Canada, was in complete agreement with the committee's strategy, said Finkelstein.

After sending out an e-broadcast that explained PRC stance, Federation received an outpouring of support, said Finkelstein.

"We received 26 emails from business people, professionals, academics and leaders of two major Jewish organizations, congratulating and thanking our committee for taking a diplomatic approach.

Two negative emails that strongly condemned the PR committee and its actions were also received, said Finkelstein. In addition, a regular columnist for the Canadian Jewish News wrote a particularly scathing criticism of Federation.

In early November, following a meeting between members of the PRC and library staff, another email broadcast was sent to the community in which Finkelstein wrote,

*"I want to assure you that your concerns have been heard"*

Paul Takala  
Chief Librarian  
Hamilton Public Library

"It was obvious to us that the library staff had no previous knowledge of CJPME, and they seemed genuinely surprised when we presented them with a document prepared by CIJA, that outlined CJPME's persistent focus on Israel and pointed disregard of atrocities committed in Libya, Syria and elsewhere in the region."

While committee members expressed their surprise that library staff had not done due diligence before accepting the exhibit, said Finkelstein, "we do not believe that there was any intentional anti-Israeli motivation on the library's part, and they told us that steps have been taken to ensure that this will not happen again."

The PRC concluded the meeting by requesting that Takala write a letter of apology to the Jewish community; that the library staff should contact Federation's CEO to obtain background information about the applicants of similar future exhibits; and that the library honour its previous promise to give equal time and space to a pro-Israeli exhibit portraying the humanitarian aspect of Israel.

Takala subsequently sent an email confirming that "a letter reaching out to the Hamilton Jewish community" would be forthcoming. "I want to assure you that your concerns have been heard," he wrote. "However I will need to give careful consideration to what I can commit to on behalf of the Library".

## "It's no way to live"

In weeks leading up to latest IDF operation life in southern Negev had become intolerable

WENDY SCHNEIDER

Imagine going about your daily household tasks when, without warning, a siren goes off. You have 15 seconds to grab your children and get to the safe room before a Grad Missile descends on its target somewhere in your neighbourhood. Imagine the same scenario occurring three or four times a day for several days in a row. Miriam Goodman doesn't need to imagine any of the above, because she lives it. The former pre-school teacher at the Hamilton Hebrew Academy, who made aliyah with her family 18 years ago, lives in Ma'agalim, a small religious community nine kilometres from the Gaza border. In a telephone conversation with the HJN on Nov. 13, Goodman described the conditions under which she and a million residents throughout the southern Negev have been subjected to over the last 12 years, but that intensified exponentially in the weeks leading up to Israel's launching of Operation Pillar of Defense on Nov. 14.

"You never know when or where a rocket is going to fall," she said. "You get up in the morning and you plan ... I have to go to work and I'm going to shopping and I'm going to do this or that and then the sirens come and your day is upside down and totally changed."

The situation is taking its toll on people of all ages, said Goodman, but the effect on the region's children is of particular concern. Goodman's seven grandchildren "are afraid to go outside," she said and, even when school is not cancelled, "they're not allowed to go outside for recess."

Furthermore, school cancellations mean that mothers are not able to go to their places of employment.

"I can't even tell you how many people have lost jobs because they've missed so many days. It's no way to live," said Goodman.

A day after the interview with Goodman the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) abruptly ended its long period of restraint by launching the largest military operation against Hamas since Operation Cast Lead four years ago. As terrifying as was the prospect of an all-out war, for Israel's battered southern residents, the IDF move brought a level of comfort, that at last something was being done to try and stop the terror.

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Mina Ao's photography exhibit Here or There examines similarities between Macau and Israel.

Photography by Mina Ao

# Double take

EXHIBIT REFLECTS SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ARTIST'S BIRTHPLACE

By WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

What does a former Portuguese colony that is now a part of the People's Republic of China have in common with Israel? That question is at the centre of Here or There, a photography exhibit created by local photographer Mina Ao, that opened in Macau last month.

Ao, a native of Macau and her Israeli husband moved to Hamilton in September, 2011 when he was hired by McMaster University as an assistant professor of physics and astronomy. A self-taught photographer who has visited Israel on several occasions, Ao has

built up an impressive archive of photographs through her many excursions through the streets and neighbourhoods of a country she has grown to love.

An unexpected side effect of Ao's discovery of a foreign place was a renewed interest in her own place of birth.

"Somehow in the process of learning about Israel ... I got more interested in my own culture ... something that I never thought was very important at all," she said.

Ao started to spend her days during her visits to Macau, in much the same way she was spending

them on her trips to Israel, her camera focusing on the mundane scenes of everyday life that say so much about a place and a culture.

Ao said that the fact that many of her photographs ended up depicting similar scenes in Israel and Macau was unintentional. In fact, the idea for the show arose spontaneously one day when she was looking through her archives. Flipping back and forth between pictures of both places, she started to become aware of a pattern. A man selling eggs in a market in Macau. A man selling eggs in Tel Aviv's Carmel market. But for the

fact that their prices were advertised in different languages, the photographs were remarkably similar. So, too, were many other images that, when paired, highlight the similarities between two very different cultures.

Here or There opened in Macau on Nov. 22. Ao hopes that the show will provoke viewers to ask the same questions she asks herself regarding identity, difference and similarity.

"I want to show that things that you think are far away are actually not that far away."

## Mina Ao



Mina Ao Photo by Wendy Schneider

*"Macau is the city I was born and grew up, and Israel is the land that my journey through Judaism has brought me to. When I started photographing these two places, I was living in a third country, I was a visitor to these two places that are so close to my heart. I am always interested in culture, and my first trip to Israel was the beginning of an adventure that leads to these photographs. I started to be more interested in my home city Macau and became very curious in people and things that I was so used to. Over the years I traveled between these two places, bouncing off questions and answers about the cultures, and about who I am."*

From israelmacau.com

### Need to know

A portion of Mina Ao's Here or There will be featured at Beth Jacob Synagogue's Israeli Film Festival on the weekend of March 9,10, 2013. For more information visit [www.bethjacobsynagogue.ca](http://www.bethjacobsynagogue.ca).

# For the love of cycling

Israeli charity rides challenge and inspire

Story and photos by WENDY SCHNEIDER, The Hamilton Jewish News

Some call it the new golf. Given the ubiquity of spandex-clad middle-aged cyclists on Hamilton area roads, there's no question that the global phenomenon that is road-biking has taken off in Southern Ontario. Canadian charities have been quick to capitalize on the sport's popularity, none more so than the wildly successful Ride to Conquer Cancer, a two-day, 200 km ride from Niagara Falls to Toronto that attracts thousands of riders and raises millions of dollars for cancer research.

Steve Cohen, 53, has been an eager participant in the Cancer ride since 2008, when, reeling from the news that seven among his close friends, relatives or colleagues had been diagnosed with cancer, he heard about Toronto's Princess Margaret Hospital's plans to launch an epic bicycling event. Asked to recruit five riders, Cohen promised 10 and delivered 20. He has since built up his team, Steve's Cyclepaths, to 225 riders, who have collectively raised millions of dollars for the cause.

Cohen's passion has rubbed off on many of his colleagues, none more so than on Hamilton businessman, Ken Rochweg, who is both member and Hamilton recruiter for the Cyclepaths. Rochweg was also instrumental in recruiting Hamilton riders for Cohen's next big idea — a five-day 500 km charity bike ride in Israel in which a group of 10 participated last month. Among the 10 were friends and colleagues of Cohen's, Hamilton brothers Allen and Ira Greenspoon and former Hamiltonian Rob Miller.

One might think that a small country like Israel wouldn't have much to offer the international cyclist, but one would be mistaken. An Internet search reveals at least five charity rides to choose from. Cohen chose Beit HaLochem's Courage in Motion, based on its size (50 riders), its mostly Canadian make-up and its mandate to raise funds towards the support and rehabilitation of disabled Israeli veterans.

Just weeks after the Courage in Motion ride, another Hamiltonian was in Israel riding on behalf of a different Israeli charity. In November, Evelyn DiFrancesco, 28, took part in Wheels of Love, a 500 km



Ken Rochweg and Steven Cohen rode 500 km for Beit HaLochem.

*"You're riding for a cause .. and sharing an adventure with people you want to be with."*

Ken Rochweg

ride in support of the Alyn Pediatric Hospital. This was the occupational therapist's third trip to Israel, fulfilling a promise she made to herself seven years ago while on an Israel advocacy mission for non-Jewish campus leaders.

Now in its thirteenth year, Wheels of Love, with 250 registrants, is promoted as Israel's largest charity cycling event. While this year's Courage in Motion ride took riders through the Golan Heights and Wheels of Love was mostly based in the Negev, both rides offer the same multi-route five-day experience with the final day featuring a dramatic ascent into Jerusalem.

What motivates a person to take off time from work, spend the money to fly overseas, fundraise for the cause and spend months preparing his or her body and mind for a challenge like no other? The answer depends on who you ask. For DiFrancesco, it's a chance to



Evelyn DiFrancesco rode for the Alyn Hospital.

do something both physically challenging and spiritually meaningful. For Cohen, it's all about inspiring others "to get off the couch and do something meaningful."

For Ken Rochweg it comes down to the basic human desire to share a peak experience. "You're riding for a cause," he said, "but you're also riding for the camaraderie. It's the experience, and sharing an adventure with people you want to be with."

### Need to Know

**Charity Bike Rides in Israel:**

**Beit HaLochem:** [courageinmotion.ca](http://courageinmotion.ca)

**Alyn Pediatric Hospital** [alynride.org](http://alynride.org)

**The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies** [hazon.org/programs/israel-ride](http://hazon.org/programs/israel-ride)

**Camp Ramah:** [ramahbikeride.org](http://ramahbikeride.org)

The end of the year will be here before you know it!



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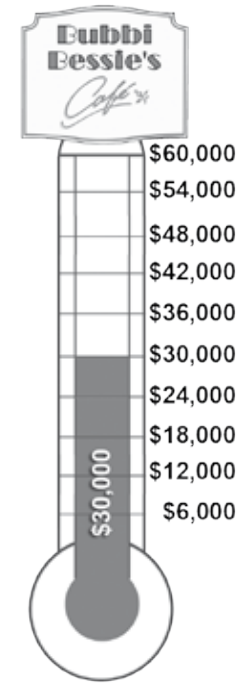
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**Bubbi Bessie's is halfway home!**



Thanks to your support, more than half the funds needed to move *Bubbi Bessie's Café* to its beautiful new home have been raised.

Since first opening its doors seven years ago, *Bubbi Bessie's Café* has become the go-to place for food, fun and friendship at Shalom Village. More than just a place for a quick lunch or cup of coffee, it is where our residents meet to share a laugh or catch up with friends.

**New Quarters**  
Bubbi Bessie's has become so popular that it is running out of space. A move to larger quarters nearby will help us provide our residents and their guests with a better experience. But first, extensive renovations are required and we have looked to our community for help. You have not let us down!

**We're on our way - you can help bring us home**  
Your help is needed to bring *Bubbi Bessie's Café* the rest of the way to its new home. You can help by making your donation today!

Donations over \$500 will appear on a special recognition board. Why not consider making a multi-year commitment to spread the payments over time? Call Kathleen at 905-529-1613 ext. 264 for details.

**Bucovestky Bronfman Award for Aaron Shiffman**

Shalom Village Mashgiach and community leader Aaron Shiffman was recently presented with the Bucovestky Bronfman Award by the Adas Israel Congregation.

Aaron is highly regarded at Shalom Village, where an award named in his honour is presented each year to the team member who best exemplifies the qualities of a mensch.

Congratulation to Aaron for this well-deserved acknowledgement of his contributions to the community.



**Chanukah Cards**

You can send Hannukah greetings to your family and friends and help support Shalom Village resident possibilities at the same time!

Just send us your list and we will take care of the rest for only \$10 per card.

All proceeds from card donations support the Resident Possibilities Fund at Shalom Village.

Just send us your list and we'll take care of the rest!

**Feature**



Max Mintz with his Chicken Roost memorabilia. Photo by Steve Arnold



Richard and Doris Popper share farming stories with Henry Muller. Photo by Wendy Schneider

**The way we were**

**THE GOLDEN YEARS OF JEWISH HAMILTON**

by Steve Arnold, Special to the Hamilton Jewish News

Whether it was good corned beef, a new pair of shoes, tires for the family car, a mink stole or printed invitations for that special family event, everything a family could want was once available from a Jewish merchant in downtown Hamilton.

And the shopping trip to get all those necessities could always be topped off with dinner at the Chicken Roost.

That world has been gone for almost half a century now, but the memory of those days lives on with the children and grandchildren of the Hamilton Jews who started those stores and brought life both to the city core and the Jewish community.

A collection of those descendants gathered recently to record some of their memories as part of the Working Families Project.

Bella Muller (née Zucker), for example, remembered the days when her mother and aunt operated competing delicatessens on opposite sides of York Street and the tantalizing aroma of corned beef wafted up and down the roadway.

"York Street smelled like corned beef because there were so many Jewish delis," Muller recalled. "Downtown was fabulous then. You could go for a walk there for hours. The shops were individual and beautiful, it was someplace special."

In the days before a faceless brick mall and a steel tower erased much of downtown Hamilton in the name of "urban renewal," Jewish businesses were scattered throughout the city's core. For many of the merchants, operating a small family-owned business

was one of the few employment options open to them.

"It was what they knew, and there weren't a lot of jobs for Jews in those days," recalled Gerry Bromstein while furrier Alan Livingston remembered his father stayed in the fur business because Jewish quotas kept him out of medical school.

Bromstein's father, Frank Dorsen, operated a shoe store on King Street for many years, taking son-in-law Larry into the business as well.

"In that era people came from all over the region to shop down-

place a few bets on the horses or a football game."

Those bets weren't the only action going on – Muller remembers the back rooms of most of the city's delis had a card table or two that were seldom out of use. The deli owner, course, got a piece of the action.

"They did very nicely in the back too. If you were looking for somebody's husband you could usually find them in the back of one of the delis," she recalled.

Of the entire cast of downtown characters, however, few were more colourful than Max Mintz,

West and Liberace and political stars including Pierre Trudeau.

Many of the Jewish-owned firms vanished during the urban renewal wave of the 1960s and 1970s. That added to a loss of interest in a family business as old barriers to employment and education fell.

"When Jackson Square came in (Frank Dorsen) said it was going to kill downtown," Larry Bromstein recalled. "In 1980 I went into real estate because I finally saw the writing on the wall for an independent retailer."

A few firms found a new life out of the core – the Richter family, for example, moved its car businesses out of downtown to a new life in the farm east end of the city.

"My father ran Ricks Auto Service from 1947 until 1953 and then moved to Hess and Main to start Hamilton Motor Car," Lorne Richter recalled. "His father was a blacksmith at McNab and Cannon and my great-grandfather was a carriage maker on Cathcart in same area."

"We're sitting with my great-grandfather, grandfather's father, myself and my children being the fifth generation in the wheels business."

Jordan Livingston Furs is another example. The firm was acquired by the Livingston family in 1940 and when its downtown home was expropriated for Jackson Square its store moved to Burlington and its factory and storage vaults moved east.

The loss of Hamilton's class of independent Jewish merchants has come at a cost for the community as a whole.

"One of the big issues with the Jewish community today is the lack of Jewish business. There isn't a lot of Jewish business out there," Lorne Richter said. "Jewish businesses are the ones that financed and supported all the Jewish infrastructure and all of our infrastructure today is suffering because largely we have professionals and they don't have the disposable income to be able to give to our community. We struggle because of that today."

**At home at the Haimish**



Lyn Center, Melinda Richter and Kathryn Petersen. Photo by Wendy Schneider

"Meet Me At The Haimish," a community arts exhibit that was on display at James Street North's You Me Gallery during the month of October, was designed to make visitors feel like they had just crossed a threshold into someone's home. The couch, the comfortable chair, the old-fashioned television, the framed photos, the artwork, were just some of the elements that invited a closer look, or questions about who was in the photograph and where it had been taken.

"It's meant to represent the collective living room of the Jewish community of Hamilton," said Richter, the project coordinator of Working Family Stories and Treasures, an initiative undertaken to capture the work-related stories of the Hamilton Jewish Community. Initially conceived by Lyn Center and Kathryn Petersen, it evolved into a broad-based partnership with Shalom Village, the community's Jewish schools, local artists, and a core group of volunteers. The collection of artwork, stories, photographs and interviews from a bygone era's scrap families, downtown merchants and farming community, drew hundreds of visitors during its three week run.

For those who missed the exhibit, a website is in the works with a tentative launch date of January, 2013.

"The website will have a section where people can submit stories and photos," said Richter. "There will be a how-to section, lesson plans and workshop plans so if other people want to do this they can."

For more information email workingfamilystories@gmail.com.

**Tax year winding down**

The end of the tax year is fast approaching. Donations received by December 31<sup>st</sup> are eligible for a 2012 charitable tax receipt.



**Thank you Hustlers!**

Thank you to everyone who supported the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Hannukah Hustle on November 18<sup>th</sup>. You help make active living a reality for our residents and community members over the age of 70 who rely on The Club fitness centre at Shalom Village every day.



**Wedding Bells**

Team members and residents recently presented a Bridal Fashion Show at Shalom Village. Some of the beautiful gowns were provided by the participants, while a number of vintage wedding dresses were on loan from the collection of the Hamilton Players Guild, thanks to volunteer Enid Aron. In the photo above, Kathy Lawrence assists Shirley Levine with her veil.

**Pennies for Possibilities**

There's still time; penny drive extended until February

Did you know...

...it takes 16 people 45 minutes to count and roll 298 rolls of pennies?

That's 14,900 pennies!

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**Keep bringing in those pennies!**  
You can help! Why not donate that stash of pennies that is just taking up space?

Drop your pennies (or any other change!) in any of our Penny Jars to support our Resident Possibilities Fund.



Our friends from Columbia International College counted and rolled more than 14,000 pennies

**Shalom Village wins Spectator Readers' Choice Award**

Readers of *The Hamilton Spectator* have recognized Shalom Village with a Diamond Award in the Nursing Home/Long Term Care Centre Category of the 2012 Readers' Choice Awards.

Thanks to everyone who voted for Shalom Village!



**Thank you**

Grateful thanks to the families of Kenneth Beatty, Gerald Quitt, Leon Price, Helen Yellin, Reva Gelber, Catherine Powell, Harry Korman, and Edythe Feldman for requesting donations to Shalom Village in lieu of flowers.

Memorial donations support the Resident Possibilities Fund at Shalom Village, making many special programs and services possible for our residents.

**What they're saying about Shalom Village**

*"I wanted to let you know personally how impressed I am with your very caring staff."*

*In particular, Thea Em has been consistently responsive, efficient, and highly supportive of my mother, and of me, especially over the past several months while my Mother has been recovering from an acute health episode.*

*Your staff is obviously happy in their environment and that creates a general sense of caring and well-being that inspires confidence. Living in Toronto and making trips to see my mom once or twice a week, I have every confidence knowing that my mother is in exactly the right place...that she is in an excellent living situation, surrounded by caring individuals who make a positive difference."*

~Resident's daughter



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**Making possibilities possible**

# FAMILY JEWELS: Meet the Thorogood family from Simcoe

Story and photo by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

**The cast:** Bill (44), Dana (40), Nigel (9), Natalia (8) and Evan (6), Layla, the dog, a black lab and two cats, Sheldon and JJ.

**The Home:** a sprawling ranch house in Simcoe, Ontario.

**Occupations:** Bill is a physician with a family practice in Delhi and an anesthesiologist at the Norfolk General Hospital in Simcoe. Dana, a teacher by profession, is a stay-at-home mom.

**Dana's bio:** Dana was raised in Simcoe to a non-practicing father and a Catholic mother. At the age of 15 she began reading about Judaism and Jewish history. At university, where she majored in history, "I ended up reading a lot about Europe and the Jews." Over the years, Dana continued her independent study, that included taking an online Hebrew course. Two years ago she contacted Temple Anshe Sholom's Rabbi Jordan Cohen, and asked if it were possible for her to attend a Shabbat service. "I ended up going to a Saturday morning children's service and it was amazing. I saw all the kids asking questions in the middle of the service and they were answered truthfully and with respect and I just thought, 'OK, I'm here. I finally found where I'm supposed to be.'"

**Bill's bio:** Bill was raised in Brantford, to non-practicing Protestant parents. "My parents believed religion was something my brother and I should come to on our own as adults ... They introduced us to the Christian denomination ... but they didn't push anything." After meeting Dana, and curious about her passion for the subject, he started to read about Judaism as well.

"We were learning in parallel ... it appealed to me that in Judaism, there's a requirement to keep learning. What I really wanted for



The Thorogood Family (from l to r): Bill, Natalia, Dana, Evan and Nigel.

myself and my family was something I could learn and continue learning through my life."

**The Meeting:** They were set up on a blind date in 2000, by Dana's aunt, who worked in the lab where Bill was a physician. Dana said the minute she saw him, she knew he was the one. As they were shaking hands, she said to herself, "Yep, that's him."

**The Children:** Nigel was born 10 months after their wedding. In 2004 they travelled to China to adopt Natalia, then 12 months old. In 2007 they returned to China and came home with Evan, then 15 months of age.

**The conversion:** In September 2011, the Thorogoods enrolled in a program, co-sponsored by Temple Anshe Sholom, Temple Sha'arei Beth El in Oakville and Mississauga's Solel Congregation, for people considering conversion to Judaism. They

had their Beit Din last May followed by a mikvah for the entire family.

**Family reaction:** Every week throughout the year-long conversion process, the Thorogoods would stop in Brantford on their way to Hamilton to drop off their three children at Bill's father's home. Several hours later they would pick up their sleeping children and carry them into the car. "My father was very supportive," said Bill. "My mother had warning," said Dana. "Since I was 12 I didn't feel I was Catholic." That her mother has come around to accept her daughter's decision was made quite clear when she presented her daughter with a Chanukah menorah for Christmas last year.

**Daily routine:** Dana leaves the house every morning at 8 a.m. to make the 40 minute drive to Brantford, where her children attend a small, independent school. Then she turns around, drives home, puts

some food in the crockpot and is back on the road at 2:30 p.m. to be back in time for dismissal. By the time they get home, it's an early dinner, followed by dance or swimming classes. Then home, bath and bed for the children by 8 or 9 p.m. Dana is awake reading most nights until 2 a.m. "I can read three or four books a week."

Bill wakes up at 6 a.m., feeds the animals, wakes and feeds the children and gets them ready for school. "I try to have them ready to go by the time I leave to go to work." Some days he arrives home by 4 p.m. Others, at 6 p.m. Seven nights out of the month he's on call.

**Community:** The Thorogoods make the hour-long journey to Hamilton monthly on Friday nights for the Temple's Family Shabbat with the Jam Band, as well as every Saturday morning, when their three children attend religious school. Bill: "Getting the kids up on Saturday morning and dressed and ready so that I can drive them for an hour to do Saturday morning school is a challenge ... but when we get them there they enjoy it. At the same time, Bill attends a Torah study class. "It's a real commitment," said Dana. "We can't just pick up and go to Hamilton. We have to make a plan."

**Dreams:** Bill: "to travel to Israel early next year." Dana: "for my kids to be happy."

**God:** Bill: "Intuitively yes, but my relationship with God is evolving." Dana: "Yes. It's always been there."

**Happiness quotient:** On a scale of one to 10, Bill says he's at a nine. Dana said she's at a six. What would it take to push that number up? "To move out of Simcoe and to be more involved in the Jewish community because I can physically be there."

## Lives Remembered HELEN YELLIN

Born August 7, 1922 in Hamilton. Died September 15, 2012 in Hamilton.

It's September 1926. The streets of many major cities in North America are swelling with immigrants, mostly from Europe. Those who have come to Canada have two things in common: they want a better life for their families – and most don't speak English.

My mother, born Helen Annie Zucker, has just turned four the month before. Her five-year-old friends are already in kindergarten and for whatever reason, she wants to go too.

So she marches down to the school and tells them she wants to enrol. They ask: What's your name? (Easy) Where do you live? (Also easy). What are your parents' names? (Not a problem). Then the big one: How old are you? Without missing a beat, she looks them straight in the eye and says: I'm five. And where are your parents? They don't speak English. That's enough for the school. She's enrolled.

So began what I believe is a lifelong love of learning. She enjoyed reading so much that by 11 she had read every single book in the children's section of the Hamilton Public Library. But nothing came close to the movies, sneaking out of school on Thursday afternoons in favour of the latest flick – preferably a love story.

Maybe it was because of her love of reading or the movies or a combination of the two that my mother became a fabulous storyteller. She could talk about anything – a story she heard on her beloved CBC, a recipe she had used for the first time or a book she had just read.

She used to tell stories of my grandparents growing up in Poland – having never set foot there – but describing them and their surroundings as if she had lived there all her life.

Each member of our family has his or her own favourite story that she used to tell – many of which revolved around growing up on York Street or my grandmother's delicatessen.

She told me she learned how to tell these stories at the home of her uncle Sirlka – the other Zuckers. It was there, she said, that each child was told to stand up and talk before eating dinner. This storytelling ability may have been the reason why she was chosen to host the Yiddish Hour on CHML when she was 15 and many years later was featured in the Jewish Hamilton Project.

She told us that when she was growing up, it was in a home that was freilach and warm and full of love – where they had many discussions on history and current events, listened to music and talked about the movies. It was this kind of renaissance upbringing that she brought to the Yellin household.

My mother lived life to the fullest – but she also had extreme heartbreak. The death of my sister Louise at age six had a profound effect on my mother. No matter what kind of unhappy event took place in my life, she told me nothing was worse than losing a child. But it did get worse when my brother Paul died 12 years ago. At that time, she stood up and gave a eulogy about her two children and a heart-felt analogy about their loss as jewels – without a note in her hand or a tear in her eye. People sat in awe listening to her story and feeling her strength.

Growing up, my mother always told us she had the best kids – or at least most of the time. She loved her daughters-in-law and her new son-in-law. She was crazy about her grandchildren and their spouses and adored her great-grandson Aaron. Her sisters, Esther Alexander and Bella Muller, were her closest friends.

When I think of my mother's passing I think of that last beautiful scene in the Ghost and Mrs. Muir. It's at the end when an aging Mrs. Muir dies and is greeted by the hand of the captain that she reverts to her young self. When I think of this scene, I think of my mother being greeted by the hand of my father and turning into that beautiful couple in their wedding picture. And I think: it's just the kind of love story my mother would have liked.

Susan Yellin is a writer living in Toronto.



Helen and Reuben Yellin at their engagement party

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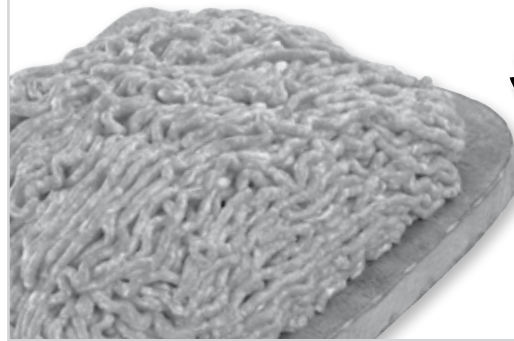
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# Happy Chanukah



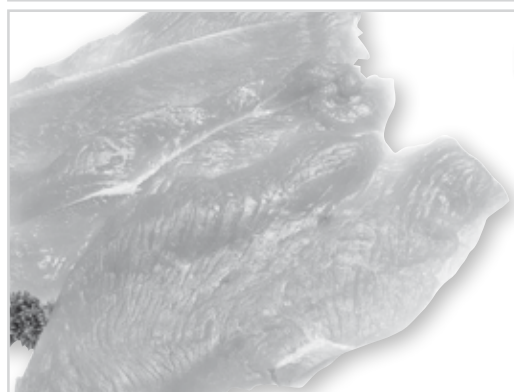
**2<sup>99</sup>** <sup>lb</sup> **save**  
6.59/kg **.50** <sup>lb</sup>  
fresh Kosher  
whole chicken  
cut up



**5<sup>49</sup>** <sup>lb</sup> **save**  
12.10/kg **\$1** <sup>lb</sup>  
lean ground beef  
fresh Kosher



**6<sup>99</sup>** **save**  
**\$2**  
Foodfest salmon  
Gravlox, Steelhead or Sockeye  
200 g



**7<sup>99</sup>** <sup>lb</sup> **save**  
17.61/kg **\$1<sup>77</sup>** <sup>lb</sup>  
chicken scallopini  
fresh Kosher poultry



**save** **1<sup>99</sup>**  
**.50** Montreal Kosher bread  
selected varieties, frozen



**save** **2<sup>99</sup>**  
**.50** Montreal Kosher bakery  
danish or strudel  
selected varieties, 312 g



**save** **2<sup>99</sup>**  
**\$2** Kedem sparkling juice  
selected varieties  
750 mL



**save** **2<sup>79</sup>**  
**\$1<sup>70</sup>** Golden pancakes  
selected varieties, frozen  
301 g



**save** **2<sup>49</sup>**  
**.50** Schmerling's chocolate bars  
selected varieties  
100 g



**save** **1<sup>69</sup>**  
**.60** Manischewitz soup mix  
selected varieties  
170 g



**save** **2<sup>99</sup>**  
**\$2** Manischewitz  
Tam Tams  
crackers  
selected varieties, 272 g



**save** **2<sup>49</sup>**  
**\$1<sup>50</sup>** Manischewitz Matzo  
Ball mix or Matzo  
Ball soup mix  
125-140 g



**save** **.79**  
**.20** My Hanukkah  
shortbread  
cookies  
57 g



**save** **.99**  
**.30** Tradition soup  
instant noodle  
selected varieties  
70 g

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