



UJA Campaign Opening

presents Ezra Levant

P13

Hamilton to Halifax

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Hamilton Jewish News

THE JEWISH VOICE OF HAMILTON

SEPTEMBER 2011 VOL 26:1/ TISHREI 5772

AGREEMENT #40007180

What makes a committed volunteer?

Jay State is an ordinary guy with an extraordinary amount of commitment to this community. A long time member of the UJA Campaign Cabinet, State didn't hesitate when asked to chair this year's Annual Campaign.

State's trademark warmth, enthusiasm and energy are certain to positively impact this year's UJA Campaign. The question that arises is why? Many have

served before him. And many have served as long as him. Still, the question of what have been the determining factors for his tireless efforts on behalf of this community is worth asking. The answer may help our village raise a community of children who will do future generations proud. Read the HJN interview with Jay State on page 11.

Hamiltonians in Israel



Former Hamiltonians now living in Israel. From l to r, Susan Fisch (nee Yaffe), Shayna Duker (nee Eisenstein), Yvette Shumacher (nee Sternberg) and Beth Cohen (nee Eisenberg.)

Photo by Wendy Schneider

Rumour has it that the aliyah rate of former Hamiltonians is higher, per capita, than any other North American city. True or not, the HJN did manage to track down a number of former Hamiltonians living in Israel this summer, seeking to gain insight into the reasons for their aliyah and catch a glimpse of the day-to-day joys and challenges of living in the Jewish State. Over the next several issues you will discover who they are, why they came, why they stay and how their years in Hamilton contributed to their Zionism. Read more at hamiltonjewishnews.com and in this issue beginning on page 14.

Keep our community strong

2012 UJA CAMPAIGN GOAL SET AT \$1.2 MILLION



Encouraged by UJA Campaign chair, Jay State, (centre), community members and representatives from UJA beneficiary agencies posed for a group photograph on the night of the JCC community barbeque in late August.

Photo by Wendy Schneider

Hamilton Jewish Federation President Larry Szpirglas is delighted to announce that veteran UJA leader Jay State will chair the UJA 2012 campaign.

"Jay has played a very prominent and successful leadership role with both the UJA Legal Division and with the Campaign Cabinet for several years. He is thoroughly familiar with both the UJA operation and the message. We couldn't be in finer hands."

State thanked Szpirglas for his vote of confidence and with characteristic humility, acknowledged that the UJA Campaign is a team effort.

"The Campaign Cabinet is really the heart and soul of the operation, and we owe our achievements to them, the dedicated

canvassers, a devoted staff and a caring community."

Members of this year's Campaign Cabinet include Federation president, Larry Szpirglas, past co-chairs Danna Horwood and Lisa Morris, Women's Major Gift co-chairs Sandy Fuss and Liz Tick, Medical Division co-chairs Joel Yellin and Rick Black, Lion of Judah co-chairs Gayle Kepecs and Michele Finkelstein, Sharon Lax, Vice President of Financial Resource Development, past "Lions" co-chairs Shirley Molot and Sasha Weisz, Legal Division Chair Harvey Katz, past Hamilton Jewish Federation presidents Larry Levin and David Somer, and David Loewith, playing the role of special advisor.

The dollar goal for the UJA 2012

See page 10, Keep our community strong



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LARRY SZPIRGLAS,
PRESIDENT,
UJA FEDERATION OF HAMILTON



Serving as president of Hamilton Jewish Federation has been exciting and challenging. I want to extend my gratitude to everyone who has helped to make this leadership transition so seamless. First and foremost, Past-President Larry Levin has been extremely helpful in this regard and I want to thank him for his advice and support. I also want to thank the Federation staff, whose professionalism and commitment is such a valuable asset to the community.

The overarching priority of our new administration is to ensure the sustainability of our community. This has significant implications for the manner in which we generate revenues, how we govern ourselves and our ability to identify and develop future leadership.

This year's board of directors is a committed and motivated group. As well, executive members of the board have hit the ground running and have provided the kind of new perspective and energy that ensures a high level of achievement for the community. Here is a quick rundown of their roles:

Financial resources development

Headed by Sharon Lax, vice president for Financial Resources Development, this committee is responsible for fundraising, in all its aspects, including the UJA annual campaign. The committee will provide oversight to Federation's four main sources of funding: the annual UJA Campaign, the Legacy Endowment Fund, corporate sponsorships and grants.

Financial management

Treasurer Alex Kepecs has asked the auditors to develop a new program to simplify our standard book keeping procedures. He has also established a working group to recommend a standing investment policy that we hope to have in place by the end of September.

Allocations

Jacki Levin continues in her role as Vice President for Budgets and Allocations. In that regard she is working with her committee to establish a more collaborative relationship between Federation and all its partner agencies. The committee is also working on a special initiative to review and recommend changes regarding the approach to funding Jewish education.

Administration

Vice president for administration, Cindy Mark has commissioned the updating of all staff job descriptions, letters of employment and the personnel code. The group is also re-organizing the approach to professional evaluations to reflect achievements within the framework of stated Federation goals and objectives. Cindy is also leading an initiative to totally re-vamp the by-laws.

Public relations

Vice president for public relations, Lorne Finkelstein has spearheaded a renewed communication strategy at the heart of the Federation's new public relations committee. Continue to look for regular updates in Federation's broadcast emails or in the pages of The Hamilton Spectator. Lorne is also one of 24 leaders from across the county appointed to our national advocacy organization CIJA's leadership group.

Human resources development

A relative newcomer to the Hamilton Jewish community, Sandy Sable, our vice president for human resources development, brings an impressive portfolio in marketing, communications and fundraising. Her special qualities will allow us to re-invigorate our GroHamilton project.

Record keeping

Federation secretary Ron Richter has been mandated to re-organize the permanent record of board proceedings including minutes and policies.

Community planning and priorities task force

Monte Levy, a past member of the executive committee, has been charged with a mandate to conduct an examination of demographics, resources, programs, needs and the sustainability of services affecting Hamilton's Jewish community. While currently not an executive committee portfolio, we hope that this will become a standing committee of Federation.

Our board of directors has made a commitment to provide greater transparency and accountability to our community. I am convinced that with our community's support, an energized and focused board and professional staff, we can make great strides in building a strong and sustainable Jewish future in the greater Hamilton area. I welcome input from the community and can be reached at larryszpirglas@jewishhamilton.org. In closing, I'd like wish each and every one of you Shana Tova.

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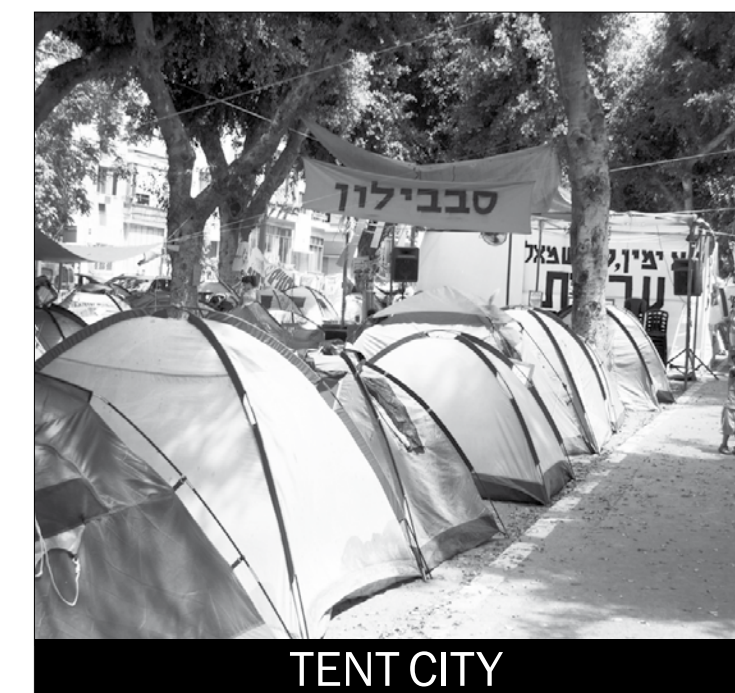


Photo by Wendy Schneider

First there was the Arab Spring. Then came the Israeli summer of 2011 when thousands of Israelis demonstrated in mass rallies and set up tent cities around the country to protest the country's exorbitant cost of housing and other social and economic inequities. The protests culminated on Sept. 3 with the March of the Million when 450,000 Israelis took to the streets in cities across the country. "We are a generation without a future, without savings...who will almost always have to rely on their parents," wrote blogger Karen Kaufman, an immigrant from the UK. "But we are trying to take back our futures and turn things around. Standing with a quarter of a million of my fellow citizens ... I felt prouder than ever to be an Israeli."

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COMING UP

MID-FALL ISSUE

- Deadline for booking ad space
Oct. 7, 2011
- Deadline for receiving editorial copy
Oct. 14, 2011
- Deadline for receiving ad copy
Oct. 24, 2011
- Estimated date of arrival
Nov. 3, 2011

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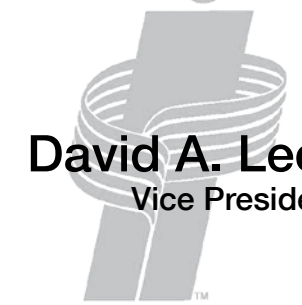
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HAMILTON JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES

ProjectHEART (Holocaust Era Asset Restitution)

Hamilton Jewish Social Services (JSS) is supporting a recently launched effort for restitution of Holocaust era properties by becoming an advocate of Project HEART (Holocaust Era Asset Restitution Taskforce).

Project HEART seeks to identify Jewish Holocaust victims and their heirs worldwide, whose families owned movable, immovable or intangible personal property that was confiscated, looted or forcibly sold in countries governed or controlled by the Nazi forces or Axis powers during the Holocaust era. The only limitation for application is if restitution has already been given for that property since the Holocaust era.

JSS encourages local Holocaust victims and their heirs to visit www.heartwebsite.org or call toll free 1-800-584-1559 to learn more about the program.

Theatre Club

This summer JSS organized theatre outings to

Niagara-on-the-Lake, St. Jacobs and Toronto. On Oct. 27 we will return to St. Jacobs to see the hit play, Blood Brothers. Prior to showtime we will visit the Menonite Farmers Markets. The cost is \$75 including transportation and theatre ticket. For reservations call Lillian at 905-627-9922, ext 25.

Chicken of the Month Club

With Rosh Hashana approaching, we get busy preparing festive meals for family and friends, so please consider participating in JSS's Chicken of the Month Club. Donating a minimum of \$15 a month to the Kosher Food Bank will provide a family with a nourishing Shabbat meal. This program has been extremely popular among both donors and recipients. All donations are tax receiptable. Let's all work together to ensure that everyone has a wonderful New Year. To donate please call Carol Krames at 905-627-9922, ext 21 or email Carolkramesjss@hotmail.com.

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

STEVEN BROCK

September marks the start of another season for the Jewish Genealogical Society - Hamilton and Area. With the excitement of the holy days comes the trepidation of our annual dilemma: How will we ever top last year? While the Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton and Area (JGSH) is pleased to have provided extremely high quality programming for its members and guests over the past several years, 2011 was truly one to remember.

From members Ralph Bloch and Barry Rosen to perennial favourites, Peter Jassem and Henry Wellisch, this past year was certainly like no other. However, the highlight had to be the four instalments of The Jewish Hamilton Project Speaker's Series. Building upon

Wendy Schneider and Billy Shaffir's seminal documentary, this series gave some of your favourite speakers the chance to expand on the more compelling anecdotes from the video. First up was Aaron Shiffman retelling the history of Hamilton's Synagogues. Cuppy Katz followed him sharing his insights of Hamilton's Jewish Businesses. Max Mintz had the audience in stitches with his hilarious Tales from the Chicken Roost. Finally, in a perfect end to the season, the lovely Blanche Levitt recounted personal experiences from her days with the Henrietta Szold chapter of Hamilton's Hadassah. Her musical rendition of I Could Have Tagged All Day from their play My Hadassah Lady will undoubtedly be one of the classic moments of any of our meetings.

Our upcoming season is already shaping up to be another winner. We are thrilled to announce that Rabbi Bernard Baskin will present The Jews of Canada - An Amazing Story. Henry Blumberg and Karen Lasky will relate their personal journeys back into their family histories. Jerrold Landau and JGSH President Hazel Boon will demonstrate the latest updates of some of the most popular genealogy websites. Visit our website for dates and details and join us at any of nine presentations! We look forward to seeing you there.

The JGSH meets monthly at Temple Anshe Sholom, 215 Cline Ave. N., Hamilton. Please contact Hazel Boon at 905-524-3345 or email jgshamilton@gmail.com for more information.

CHABAD HAMILTON

A new year of programs has started at the Beit Menachem Jewish Student Centre continuing in its ongoing tradition of its soup corner, weekly Shabbat dinners and an open door for all Jewish students at McMaster have become a staple at Chabad and this year is no different. In addition we are expanding our offering of Jewish learning with classes and mini-series on the weekly parsha, Jewish practice and traditions and the Jewish perspective on topics relevant to college life. As well we have expanded the hours of Café Chabad, our kosher soup corner available for students to drop in and get something warm and homemade to eat and a cozy place to socialize or seek guidance.

As we approach the Chagim, Chabad will once again provide a chance to eat in a sukkah and take the lulav and etrog to Jewish students at local high schools and on campus with our Sukkah Mobile. Chanukah menorah lightings and the Pesach Model Matzah bakery are being planned as well.

On Sunday, Dec. 11 we will host An Evening of Music and Celebration: Celebrating 32 years of Chabad Lubavitch Hamilton. The event will also mark the fifth yearzeit of Rabbi Zalman Itkin, z"l. Featuring the music of Eight Day, one of the Jewish world's hottest new bands. Watch for details. Chabad wishes the extended Jewish family of Hamilton a Shana Tova u'Metuka!

MELTON

The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School of Hamilton is pleased to announce its third year of courses commencing this October under the leadership of its new director, Rebecca Shapiro.

"The Melton program is very important for our community," said Shapiro. "It provides an opportunity for our leadership to work together and create a bridge between students of different affiliations."

Shalom Village's Rabbi Aaron Selevan will be joining Rabbis Jordan Cohen, Daniel Green, and Dan Selsberg as a Melton instructor.

The Mini-School core course offerings include Rhythms of Jewish Living and Purposes of Jewish Living. This comprehensive 30 week course of text-based lessons will be offered at two locations: Monday Nights at 7:30 p.m. at the Adas Israel with Rabbi Daniel Green and Rabbi Aaron Selevan; and Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. taught in the fall session at Temple Anshe Sholom and at Beth Jacob Synagogue in the spring with Rabbi Dan Selsberg and Rabbi Jordan Cohen.

In addition to the core curriculum, the Mini-School is expanding its course offerings to include several graduate courses open to both alumni and others. These 10-week mini courses will be offered at various locations.

For more information or to register visit www.melton-online.com or contact Rebecca Shapiro at rs Shapiro1@gmail.com or 905-528-0039.

TEMPLE ANSHE SHOLOM

For over 50 years the Temple Anshe Sholom Breakfast Club has presented fascinating speakers accompanied by a delicious breakfast for a reasonable price for fifteen Sundays throughout the school year. This tradition continues uninterrupted with the following slate of speakers.

Beginning on Sunday, Oct. 30, in a special session offered in conjunction with the Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton and Area, we are pleased to present Dr. Ralph Bloch speaking on the topic of What you can learn from tombstones. This presentation is based on Dr. Bloch's extensive explorations of historical Jewish German cemeteries and Jewish Genealogy. On Nov. 6, Peter Christianson, president of Young Drivers of Canada will discuss How Brain Plasticity and an Alkaline PH can extend our driving age and therefore cognition,

to 100—or not? Mr. Christianson also holds the Canadian rights to the Israeli brain game CogniFit. On Nov. 13, David Sampson will share his personal story of Growing up Jewish in Jamaica, and on Nov. 20, our own Rabbi Emeritus, Rabbi Bernard Baskin will discuss, Jews of Canada - An Amazing Story. On Nov. 27 we will conclude the fall series with Les Rothchild, president of the Association of Reform Zionists of Canada, who will give some Reform Zionist perspectives on events in Israel in the wake of the Palestinian bid for statehood and the summer's demonstrations of domestic discontent. Certainly, this diverse and exciting array of speakers should spark everyone's interest.

Breakfast is available each Sunday at 10:15 a.m. for \$7. The presentations begin at 11 a.m. All are welcome.

ADAS ISRAEL CONGREGATION

The year was 1912 and a handful of Jewish Polish immigrants in Hamilton had a burning desire to forge a congregation for their emerging immigrant community. As was prevalent in most North American communities, lantzeit from different regions across Europe established synagogues to service their own constituencies. In Hamilton, Temple Anshe Sholom was established by Jews of Germanic decent followed by Beth Jacob which catered to Russian immigrants. Now, the Polish desired an address of their own.

In 1912, these immigrants cobbled together some funds and a framed cottage was purchased at 126 Cannon Street West.

In 1929 a new majestic synagogue was erected on the site of the cottage and the name was changed to Adas Israel Anshei Sfarad. As the decades progressed, the need to relocate became apparent.

Concurrently, the congregation was searching for a new spiritual leader. In 1958, the synagogue hired a young 24-year-old graduate from Yeshiva University named Rabbi Mordechai Green and with much determination and the help of key members of the congregation, a building campaign was

launched.

Their vision was clear: to establish a grand synagogue edifice in Westdale that would be inclusive of all segments of the Jewish community while maintaining the congregation's Orthodox traditions.

Many regarded this vision as delusional at best since the project was embracing Orthodoxy in an era when the denomination was being abandoned en masse. In addition, the project's ambitions seemed to far outweigh the financial resources of its membership. But with the inspirational leadership of their new rabbi and lay leaders Max Hoffman, Sam Katz, Abe Hotz and Sylvia Katz, the initiative was launched, miracles occurred and the grand facilities of the new Adas Israel Congregation were erected at 125 Cline Ave. S.

As the Adas celebrates 100 years replete with vision, conviction and tenacity the congregation looks toward its next century with great optimism. The synagogue is not only renovating its magnificent facilities in anticipation of this great milestone but will also be rededicating its vision and goals for the future. We welcome all to join us as our plans for the centennial celebration unfold.

MAGEN DAVID ADOM

It's easy to help save a life in Israel. By making a donation to express Yom Tov greetings to your family and friends. A beautiful card will be mailed for you with your own personal greetings. The cost is minimal and you receive a tax receipt. This Yom Tov please consider this wonderful mitzvah. Best wishes to everyone for a healthy and happy New Year.

Jewish Social Services would like to provide a new family to our community with winter clothing, shoes and boots for boys, size 4 to 6. The family could also make use of living room and kitchen furniture and bicycles for both adults and children. If you have any of these items please call Carol Krames at 905-627-9922 ext. 21, or email carolkramesjss@hotmail.com

Jewish Education

KEHILA

LEIA GER, KEHILA PRINCIPAL



Leia Ger (fourth from left) with other participants at RAVSAK'S Sulam program. Photo courtesy of Leia Ger

As a demonstration of Kehila's commitment to yearly professional development, I participated in RAVSAK's SuLaM Program – a program that cultivates the tools and skills of day school administrators. This program was designed to teach school leaders how to make their schools live their Jewish vision; prepare their students by example not just by words. It showed us how to use the words of the Talmud to make school-based decisions and how to support our staff in integrating Judaic learning and values into the words we use with our students, and in all that we do at school each day, weeks and months. Over the next two years we will continue this growth together through the ongoing mentorship program that is an integral part of the SuLaM experience.

For me it was transformational; helping me to see our school in a very different light. Through my studies with 23 other school leaders and impressive education professionals and clergy, it created a tangible skill network around our small school, people who are prepared to extend a helping hand, give advice and ideas to make Kehila JCDS the best that it can be. Not only did I form tremendous friendships but professional connections that will be my professional network throughout my tenure as principal.

I went to Project SuLaM hoping to gain the skills to support my Judaic teachers more effectively and improve the Yiddishkeit and Jewish atmosphere at our school, but returned with a renewed commitment to academic excellence in Jewish education, armed with the skills to make that happen for Kehila Jewish Community Day School and the Hamilton Jewish community.

Thank you RAVSAK, AVI CHAI Foundation, Hamilton Jewish Federation and the Kehila board for this outstanding growth experience.

HAMILTON JEWISH MIDDLE SCHOOL

Now entering its third academic year, the Hamilton Jewish Middle School (HJMS) is continuing to address the diverse needs of our children by providing a multi-dimensional approach to Jewish learning. At the core of this initiative is the dual-track Judaic studies curriculum that strives to meet the differing needs of various segments of our Jewish community. The program offers a source-based track for students interested in building textual skills as well as those pursuing their education at Jewish high schools and Yeshivot in Toronto. In addition, the program offers a cultural track exploring the modern relevancy and application of classical Jewish texts.

Furthering these goals, the HJMS is pleased to welcome Rabbi David Teller, our new Judaic Studies teacher. Rabbi Teller, a young, dynamic and highly regarded educator, comes with a natural ability to relate to children. Born and raised in Toronto, he



Rabbi David Teller

has completed his Master of Science in Education from the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education, received his ordination from Yeshiva University, and earned a bachelor's degree in psychology.

Over the past two years, Rabbi Teller has been educating various demographics in the Toronto region under the auspices of Yeshiva University. Together with his wife, Shira, and his two-year-old son Akiva, Rabbi Teller has relocated to the Hamilton area. The HJMS will certainly benefit from his great educational experience and creative approaches to Jewish learning.

HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY

The Hamilton Hebrew Academy and the Hamilton Jewish Middle School are pleased to introduce their new head of school and director of Judaic studies, Rabbi Eliot Feldman, a highly respected educator with strong academic credentials, extensive experience in general studies, Judaic studies, special education and technology.

Rabbi Feldman earned his Master's degree in Educational Administration from Teachers College at Columbia University, his Master of Science in Education from the Azrieli School of Jewish Education and Administration, his Principal Certification from York University, his Rabbinic Ordination from RIETS, and his Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Yeshiva University.

As an experienced educational administrator at leading Toronto Jewish community schools, he most recently served as Vice Principal at the Toronto Heschel School. A press release announcing his appointment stated that, "Rabbi Feldman will help usher in a new era at the HHA and HJMS enhancing our rich school traditions by utilizing best practice methods in education, communication and school administration."

In a recent interview with the HJN, Rabbi Feldman said his educational vision is based on partnership, accessibility, collaboration, excellence and accountability. While working collaboratively with parents, teachers and students, having an open mind and holding both students and staff to the highest standards of performance and accountability are important values, Feldman put particular emphasis on instilling in students a moral compass. "Moral education is as important for us as academic studies," he said.

Rabbi Feldman's roots in Hartford Connecticut gave him a good understanding of the dynamics of living in a small Jewish community. Rabbi Feldman, whose four adult sons live in the New York area, comes to Hamilton accompanied by his wife, Ann.



Rabbi Eliot Feldman is the new Head of School at the HHA. Photo by Wendy Schneider

TEMPLE ANSHE SHOLOM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Life is noisy. Whether it's the noise of the cars in the street, the noise of a child laughing or crying, or the noise of insects chirping in the night, life is just full of noise. There are noises that we welcome: the noise of a child's first cry signaling the beginning of a new life, and there are noises that we dread: the sound of screeching brakes is never a good noise. There are also the noises that mark time. We know when we hear the strains of Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance that someone is graduating and moving on to something else. We know that the sound of a glass breaking under a chuppah means that a new family has started. We know that the sound of the shofar marks the beginning of a new year.

This year the shofar will also sound the beginning of a new school year. This year will be different from those that came before. We at Temple Anshe Sholom are embarking on a whole new Shabbat morning! We have taken a long hard look at the schedule on Saturday mornings and tried to think how best to plan for a Shabbat morning experience that will bring even more meaning to those who wish to worship and learn with us. By this point, I'm sure you're wondering how you can be a part of this experience. Well, please come join us on a Saturday morning. If you would like to pray with us you have a couple of options. You can join either our Torah study minyan or you can pray with our students and

their families. If you have little ones you might consider coming at 11:30 a.m. on Saturdays when school is in session to participate in Torah Tunes, our special Shabbat service for kids up to Grade 2 and their families. There is even more going on here on Shabbat so please stop by and celebrate with your friends.

Our religious school is going to be bigger and better than ever this year. If you or anyone you know is looking for a warm, welcoming Jewish educational experience please don't hesitate to get in touch with our educator, Cantor Rebecca Moses at 905-528-0121. She would love to welcome you and your students into the school. We wish all of you a Shana Tova u'Metuka!

BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE

Last year, Beth Jacob Synagogue opened its new "shul within a shul". The renovations brought a fresh new spirit to the building that you can still feel it today. That same spirit of renewal and excitement is being felt at the Beth Jacob Hebrew School – which is moving forward and growing. Hebrew classes started Wednesday, September 7 and it was such a pleasure to see familiar faces and several new ones as well.

At Beth Jacob, Jewish education includes Hebrew, Jewish principles and holidays, Israel – and it includes Shabbat. For kids between Grades 1 and 6, we offer Jewish Dimension, a program

that runs Wednesdays and Shabbat. On Wednesday afternoons, we focus on Hebrew language and practices. On Shabbat, we look at Jewish ideas, holidays, Torah and expose the students to shul services – as well as have them take an active role in Shabbat services. We believe the Shabbat experience is the key to their Jewish education.

For children approaching their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, we offer Chai School. Every two weeks, students gather at the synagogue to learn with Rabbi Dan Selsberg and Cantor Eyal Bitton. Our approach is to make Judaism accessible and interesting.

We want to inform but we also want to stimulate interest and discussion.

Once a month, we offer All in the Family, a family education program. Our first one takes place on Sunday, September 18 with apple picking. On Sunday October 16, during the Sukkot holiday, join us for Pizza in a Hut. After the holidays, we are planning a special outing to the National Film Board in Toronto for a memorable animation workshop. And there's more to come. For more information about Beth Jacob Hebrew School call 905-522-1351, ext 18 or email eyal@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

A message of gratitude from Jeanette

Hello everyone!

I want to send my greetings to the Hamilton Jewish Community in honour of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. As many of you know, last May I was entrusted with the job of leading Shalom Village as CEO, replacing Pat Morden after her many years of exemplary and innovative leadership. The appointment began this past summer and it has been a busy few months with a lot of learning, both for myself and for our teams. I want to connect with the Jewish community during this important holiday, as well as take a few minutes to share some words of thanks and reflection.

As I finish my first few months as CEO of this special organization, it is a perfect time to engage in the introspection that is so integral to the celebration of the holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. One of the attitudes that I try to keep front and centre in my own life is gratitude.

When I reflect upon the last few months of my life at Shalom and look towards the coming years it is easy to be filled with gratitude for so many things. I am grateful to the CEO search committee of the Shalom Village Board of Directors for having confidence in my vision for this organization and our residents. I am grateful for the support of our residents, families, staff and leadership teams as I have begun this new part of my career at Shalom. I am so very grateful for the support of the Hamilton Jewish Community who have welcomed me wholeheartedly as the leader of this

important and cherished organization.

Working at Shalom Village all these years has taught me many lessons about the importance of gratitude as a sustaining and fulfilling force in the face of life's challenges and celebrations. There are many residents whose ability to be grateful through tragedy, significant frailty and infirmity is indeed inspiring, and they continually remind me to live with gratitude. I am grateful for their example.



"Working at Shalom Village all these years has taught me many lessons about the importance of gratitude as a sustaining and fulfilling force in the face of life's challenges and celebrations."

~Jeanette O'Leary
CEO, Shalom Village

make possibilities possible, and in a myriad of other ways. Although space does not allow the recitation of 100 blessings, know they are in my heart.

My wish for everyone this New Year is that your life has as much to be grateful for as mine does.

Shana Tova!
Jeanette



Shana Tova from your friends at Shalom Village

Dennis lands back on his feet with determination, and help from the G2H team

As soon as Dennis Carr hit the ground he knew he was in trouble. Moments before he had been loading groceries into his car. The next thing he knew he was laid out in a grocery store parking lot with a fractured left femur.

Condo living
Before the unexpected fall Carr, 89, had been living independently in a condo in Dundas. Since the death of his wife two years earlier he had managed well on his own with the support of his daughter and son.

First stop — St. Joes
After the May 2nd accident Carr was admitted to St. Joseph's Hospital in Hamilton for treatment of his injuries. On July 20th he joined the Goldies2Home program at Shalom Village hoping to increase his balance, muscle strength and endurance.

Stairs
"What I really wanted was to be able to climb stairs again, using my cane," says Carr, who feels that stairs are an important part of life, and rebuilding the strength and balance needed to manoeuvre them would be a big step towards regaining his independence.

Collaboration
Goldies2Home is a collaborative partnership of Hamilton Health Sciences, St. Joseph's Health Care, Shalom Village, Dundurn Place, the CCAC, and the HNH B LHN. More than 400 people have graduated from the G2H program and are now successfully living independently in their own homes.

"Goldies2Home has not only helped many

people regain their independence, but it has put money back in taxpayers' pockets by cutting down on ED visits, freeing up hospital beds and reducing healthcare costs," according to program director Krista Sheppard.

Five days a week
Carr lived at home and attended the G2H program during the day. Five days a week he worked with the G2H team, including physiotherapists, registered nurses, PSWs and recreation staff who helped him regain the physical and social skills he would need for successful independent living. While in the program he also had access to The Club Fitness Centre at Shalom Village where a kinesiologist helped him develop an exercise program suitable to his needs and abilities.

Compassion
"The compassion that he strikes me most," says Carr. "The care, love and attention is like nothing I've ever seen. I've really enjoyed the Goldies2Home program and it has helped me become more independent in my home."

Recognition
The Goldies2Home program has been recognized with a Quality Improvement Award from the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) and a Service Awards for Geriatric Excellence (SAGE) nomination.

Success!
On Aug. 19, 2011 Dennis Carr graduated from the Goldies2Home program after having successfully achieved his rehabilitation goals.



Rosh Hashanah — the perfect time to send Shalom Village cards

We can help you send Rosh Hashanah greetings to your friends and family while you help Shalom Village residents live better lives. You can send one or two single cards or send us your whole list and let us take care of the rest. All it takes is a call to Kathleen at (905) 529-1613 ext. 264 or an email to kathleen@shalomvillage.ca to get things rolling.

Time to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Hannukah Hustle!



It was ten years ago that seasoned runners first joined forces with Shalom Village residents, staff and volunteers to run, walk, and roll in support of The Club Fitness Centre at Shalom Village. The sight of serious long-distance runners sharing a race course with seniors striving to improve their lives through active living is one you will not see anywhere else. The smiling faces as they cross the finish line leave no doubt about the value of this very special event.

In honour of the 10th anniversary of the Hannukah Hustle all participants this year will receive a special commemorative pendant and a T-shirt.

For more information call Greg at (905)529-1613 ext. 220 or email greg@shalomvillage.ca.



Coming November 20th 2011!

Thank you

Grateful thanks to the families of **Adeline Cohen, Rupert Hermann, Brina Silberg, Joseph Cohen, Minna Goodman and Annette Wunder** for requesting donations to Shalom Village in lieu of flowers. Memorial donations are earmarked for palliative care at Shalom Village. This thoughtful gesture will help other families as they face the many challenges at the end of life.



Shalom Village
shalomvillage.ca
70 Macklin Street North
Hamilton, Ontario L8S 3S1
P: 905-529-1613 F: 905-529-7542
E: info@shalomvillage.ca

Holocaust Education

The Hamilton Jewish Federation Holocaust Education Committee presents the 6th annual **Holocaust Education Week** Nov. 3 - 10, 2011

Thursday, Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m.
McMaster University Library

Launch Program of Canada's first entire collection of USC Shoah Videotaped Testimony

McMaster University will be the first Canadian Institution to acquire access to the entire collection of the Visual History Archive (VHA) of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. To mark the launch of this acquisition, Dr. Stephen Smith, the Executive Director of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, will speak on the scholarly, educational and interventionist potential of Holocaust video testimonies and their impact on shaping responses to other genocides and crimes against humanity. Smith writes and lectures widely on responses to the Holocaust and genocide.

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 7:30 p.m.
Adas Israel Synagogue

Kristallnacht Commemoration - In the Name of Their Mothers: The Story of Irena Sendler (Film)

A stirring and heartfelt documentary film about Polish heroine Irena Sendler and her wartime conspiracy of women, some barely out of their teens, who outfoxed the Nazis and saved the lives of thousands of Jewish children. All of the children rescued by Sendler's network survived the war, and many were re-united with their Jewish families. Their stories - evoked through rare archival footage, family photographs and poetic re-creations shot in Warsaw - are a resounding testament to the power of moral courage.

Thursday, Nov. 10, 4:30 - 6 p.m.
Sir Allan MacNab Secondary School

Transforming Holocaust Education in Our Schools Annual Teacher's Symposium on the Holocaust

Kay Andrews is considered one of the UK's leading Holocaust educators. In this interactive workshop, Kay Andrews will present the latest pedagogical methods and classroom techniques for teaching about the Holocaust.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation's Holocaust Education Committee is grateful for the support of our community partners: The Hamilton Spectator, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, McMaster University Library, Madeleine and Monte Levy Virtual Museum of the Holocaust and Resistance, City of Hamilton, Hamilton Police Services, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Toronto, Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada/Toronto Chapter Ontario, Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, Hamilton Catholic District School Board, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, Adas Israel Congregation, Beth Jacob Synagogue, Temple Anshe Shalom, Hamilton Christian Fellowship, Effort Trust Company, Paratus Investors Limited, The Erwin Jacobs Foundation.

Holocaust Archive Comes to Mac



McMaster University has recently announced that it will be the first Canadian Institution to acquire full access to the entire collection of the Visual History Archive (VHA) of the Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. This significant addition to McMaster University's Library and Research capability was facilitated by Hamilton Jewish Federation's Holocaust Education Committee Chair Madeleine Levy.

Levy explained that "access to this collection will transform McMaster University into Canada's foremost research institution on Holocaust-related matters. Under this arrangement, not only the faculty and students at McMaster, but also students, scholars, educators and others throughout the country will have access to this invaluable and powerful collection."

The Shoah Foundation was founded in 1994 by Hollywood director and producer Steven Spielberg as a non-profit organization whose mandate was to videotape testimonies of survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust.

Between 1994 and 1999 the Foundation conducted almost 52,000 interviews in 32 languages and 56 countries, including Canada. Interviewees included Jewish survivors, Jehovah's Witness survivors, homosexual survivors, liberators and liberation witnesses, political prisoners, rescuers and aid providers, Roma and Sinti survivors, survivors of Eugenics policies and war crimes trials participants.

In 2005, the Foundation transferred the video material to the University of Southern California in return for a guarantee of the preservation of the archive and the continuation of the Foundation's mission.

Levy announced that the acquisition will be officially launched on Thursday, Nov. 3 during Holocaust Education Week (see program on this page). On that occasion guest speaker Dr. Stephen Smith, Executive Director of the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Institute will discuss the scholarly, educational and interventionist potential of Holocaust video testimonies and their impact on shaping responses to other genocides and crimes against humanity. The public is invited to attend.



The March of the Living is a two-week educational experience for students in Grades 10, 11 and 12 that takes place in Poland and Israel. Thousands of Jewish teens from counties around the world march the three-kilometre distance from Auschwitz to Birkenau on Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) and celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day) in Israel.

Registration: Oct. 4 - 25, 2011

For more information, contact Elaine Levine at 905-627-9922 ext. 24, elvine@jewishhamilton.org. Application forms and educational session dates will be available shortly. Your family must be in good standing with the UJA to apply.

2012 March of the Living co-chairs are Leia Ger and Anita Bernstein.

Bringing the community together

jewishhamilton.org

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A Healthy e' Happy New Year

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Living it up at the JCC!

JCC Community Barbeque

Community members came out in full force on August 24 to enjoy the annual JCC community barbeque. On hand were representatives from community organizations enthusiastically greeting newcomers and veteran community members alike. Kadimah campers enjoyed the carnival atmosphere with bouncing castles and a dunk tank. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make this event so special.



HOLD THE DATES

Musical Bingo For Adults
Saturday, Nov. 12

TV Trivia Night for Youth
Sunday, Nov. 20

JCC 5th Annual Jewish Film Festival
Saturday, Dec. 3 at Adas Israel
Tuesday, Dec. 6 at Beth Jacob
Thursday, Dec. 8 at Temple Anshe Sholom

Morris Black Public Speaking Contest
Sunday, Dec. 4

Chanukah Party
Sunday, Dec. 18

JCC Winter Camp
Dec. 27-30 and Jan. 2 - 6

Upcoming Programs

First Aid Course

if you are interested in taking or upgrading your first aid and CPR please contact Laura at 905-648-0605.

Babysitting Course for students 10 years old and higher

Canadian Red Cross and the JCC present the Babysitting Course, Sunday Sept. 11 9:30-4:30 at the JCC.

Cost: Members \$45; Non Members \$60.

Basketball & Beyond for ages 6 - 12

Learn the basics of basketball, passing, shooting, rules, drills and more with certified instructor Michaela Jezdikova.

Tuesdays 5-6 p.m.

Session 1: Oct. 11-Dec.13 (free homework club from 4-5 p.m.)

Cost: Members \$70; Non Members \$100.

Extra Innings Baseball for ages 6 - 12

Basic skills are taught through fun and creative techniques encouraging a love for the game. Instructed by Adam Strongman (director of Extra Innings Baseball) Mondays, 5-6 p.m.

(Free homework club from 4 -5 p.m.)

Session 1: Monday, Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 17, 24.

Members: \$42; Non Members: \$60

Session 2: Monday, Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28, Dec. 5, 12, 19.

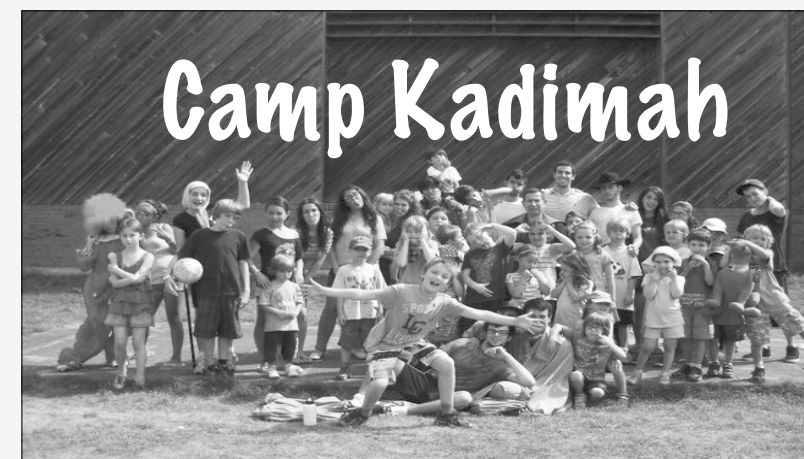
Members: \$49; Non Members: \$70

Sign up for both sessions at once and SAVE!!!

Cost: Members: \$65 Non Members: \$104

Games Day at the JCC

Join us on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. - noon; Play Maj, Bridge, Kanasta or any game you would like to bring. Cost: JCC Members: free; Non Members: join for \$15 a month or pay \$5 per week. Coffee will be provided. Please register at the JCC front desk.



Camp Kadimah

It seemed like just yesterday when Kadimah staff were eagerly waiting for the cars full of campers. After a summer full of theme days, dynamic activities, day trips, overnights, informal Jewish learning, and so much more, it is hard to believe that soon both campers and staff are heading back to the classrooms. Camp Kadimah truly experienced one of the best summers EVER! The Kadimah experience is about community. With a small group averaging 40 campers per week, lovingly supervised by 20 staff members, every person involved (including parents) knew each other by name and established strong bonds with each other, regardless of age. At the end of the day, Camp Kadimah is not just a day camp - it is a home. We can't wait to see you for Kadimah 2012!

Jonathan Vaisberg, director Camp Kadimah

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Women's Philanthropy

Keeping pace with a larger trend in UJA Federations, what was known as the Women's Division will now be referred to as Women's Philanthropy, the fastest growing phenomenon in fundraising today.

Why a Woman's Gift?

People often ask, "Why does the Federation have a separate women's campaign each year? Does it really matter whose name a gift to the organization is made in?" The simple answer is: yes!

Women have been very active participants in the Hamilton UJA campaign process for years; however, there are still many women who say, "We give as a family." Why should each woman and man give an individual gift?

- Because caring is only the first step. Giving one's time and financial resources completes the picture.
- Because every woman has the right to express her own commitment to Jewish life by making her own pledge.
- Because we set an example of Tzedakah for our families by what we do as individuals.
- We each have the responsibility to stand up and be counted.
- Because we are proud of the ever increasing number of women in key community leadership positions. Equality in individual decision making means more equality in individual giving.
- Because her commitment is a moral responsibility that she, as a Jew, must assume simply because she has no alternative - not if she is concerned with Jewish survival.
- Because there is a different set of numbers to consider. Your individual pledge is an individual vote for Jewish survival.
- Because dollars from individual women's separate gifts play a major role in meeting the needs as well as strengthening the fabric of our own community and Jewish communities around the world.
- Because no one else can perform a mitzvah for you. You must do it for yourself.

A gift of the Women's Division decides the quality of the community in which we live. We invite all women to join us by supporting the UJA Federation Campaign as individuals. Women's Philanthropy is YOU!

New Lion of Judah Co-Chairs



Hamilton Jewish Federation is delighted to announce that Gayle Kepecs and Michele Finkelstein have agreed to become the 2012 Lion of Judah Division (LOJ) co-chairs. "Our goal is to engage as many women in our community as possible, by making them more aware of both local and international needs. The more women involved, the more revenue will be generated to deal with today's challenges," they announced recently.

New Pomegranate Giving Level launched

Liz Tick and Sandy Fuss, co-chairs of the Women's Top Gifts Division are pleased to announce the launch of UJA's new Pomegranate Division for women who contribute between \$1,800 to \$4,999 to the UJA Annual Campaign.

The pomegranate is a symbol of bounty, sustenance and strength. There are currently 10 women in our community who give at this level and we invite more women to join us. Look for news about the Pomegranate Division's inaugural event in October.



New lions join the pride

Hamilton Lion of Judah Division is roaring



Pictured above: Some of Hamilton's 25 Lions of Judah. Top row, l to r, Shirley Molot, Cele Steinberg, Gloria Wasserman, Ann Mandell, Rita Richter, Sasha Weisz. Fourth row, l to r, Rhoda Katz, guest speaker Christine Williams and Janet Asa. Third row, l to r, Judy Bennett, Batia Phillips and Rochelle Swaye; Second row, Gayle Kepecs, Michele Finkelstein, Lisa Morris. Front row, l to r, Liz Tick and Danna Horwood.

The 2011 Lion of Judah campaign came to a successful close, when 20 women gathered for dinner at the home of Sasha Weisz in early June to hear Christine Williams, journalist and host of CTS's On the Front Line, give a keynote address.

Sasha Weisz, outgoing Lion of Judah chair, congratulated Rochelle Swaye and Rita Richter on becoming our community's most recent Lions of Judah, making a total of 25 local women who give a minimum of \$5,000 annually to the UJA Campaign.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation thanks Sasha Weisz for three years of dedicated service as Hamilton's Lion of Judah Division chair, for her inspirational leadership, tireless support of the Annual UJA Campaign and for being instrumental in the Lion of Judah Division becoming a sponsor of our community's PJ Library program.



Sasha Weisz presents Rochelle Swaye with her Lion of Judah pin, a symbol that is recognized worldwide for a woman's philanthropic commitment to UJA.

Wishing the Hamilton Jewish Community a Happy & Healthy New Year

לשנה טובה תכתבו

High Holiday seating available! Call the shul office at 905-522-1351 for more information.

Registration now open for our Hebrew School. Call Cantor Eyal Bitton at 905-522-1351 to register.



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Na'amat Canada



What is it Like to Tour a Na'amat Daycare?

It is both heart-warming and heartbreaking. Although many of these kids have known much sorrow, having been touched by war, poverty and broken homes, these innocent faces still retain their smiles.

This Rosh Hashanah, please support Na'amat Canada to ensure that these children continue to be nurtured in a loving environment.

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Na'amat Canada Toll Free: 1.888.278.0792 E-Mail: naamat@total.net Web: www.naamat.com

Sustainable future top priority at Federation

Hamilton Jewish Federation (HJF) President Larry Szpiglias has announced two important new initiatives that look to secure a more stable and sustainable future for the Hamilton Jewish community.

The first involves the HJF board of directors developing a two-year strategic plan for the Federation. "I have asked the board to come together in special session to look at our current priorities, goals and objectives," said Szpiglias. "We will also reach out to other community leaders to participate in aspects of this process."

An initial meeting of the board on September 11 will set the tone by establishing specific objectives for financial and human resources development and governance.

"Developing a solid plan has its own merit," said Szpiglias, adding "but above and beyond that, we wish to establish greater transparency in terms of agency operations and governance to instill in donors at all levels greater confidence in what we do. We want the community to understand and support the return on investment for all our community endeavors." The second initiative is the establishment of a community planning

and priorities task force, which will be chaired by past executive member Monte Levy. The task force's mandate will include the following:

1. Conduct an internal and external scan of demographics, resources, programs, needs and sustainability of services affecting the Hamilton Jewish community.
2. Explore the potential benefit of establishing more formal engagements with institutions such as the United Way, Hamilton Community Foundation, Hamilton and the Roundtable on Poverty Reduction.
3. Explore the potential benefits of expanding our catchment area around the Golden Horseshoe.

The task force is currently being recruited and will begin regular meetings following the High Holy Days.

"I have high confidence that Monte will lead this initiative to a result that will substantially improve the community's ability to identify the issues our community needs to address and to identify innovative ways to address them," said Szpiglias.

Keep our community strong

campaign is \$1.2 million – an increase of 9 percent over last year's total of \$1.103 million.

"We are very grateful that our community demonstrates generosity and commitment, year after year, in good times and in bad and we have every reason to expect that this support will continue," said State, "However, like many other smaller communities, we find ourselves facing ever increasing costs as the community's needs increase, and a community demographic that suggests a shrinking donor base. In addition to relying on our donors to help keep our community strong, an important component of the success of our campaign this year will depend on our ability to attract new donors."

State further mentioned involvement of the leadership of Federation's partner agencies as an essential ingredient to a successful campaign. "Every agency that receives UJA funding has a stake in our achieving the goal we have set and I look forward to working with each of them. In the end however, story of the campaign of 2012 will be told by our community's response to our exceptional cadre of volunteer canvassers. We depend so much on each and every volunteer canvasser and telephone participant and we can't thank them enough for their efforts."

South African Judaica

A member of the Hamilton Jewish Community recently received an item of Judaica that belonged to her great great grandfather, a rabbi in Cape Town in the late 1890s. The Jewish Museum in Cape Town is the recipient of many articles, probably from families who have left the country, who did not want the items, but were loathe to discard them. The museum is happy to give these items a new home. Payment for the shipping costs and a small donation to the museum are requested. The contact person is Jeff Fine, jefffine@telkomsa.net, who has requested that anyone needing genuine antique Judaica, candlesticks, benchers, chanukiah, seder plates, etc. to contact him.

'I'm very committed to continuity'

Jay State explains why he agreed to chair the UJA Campaign

What motivated you to chair the UJA Campaign?

A deep commitment to our community. I've been active in different organizations over the years. Going back to the days when Norman Bennett asked me to join B'nai Brith in the early '70s when I came back from law school. My motivation was in part based on the good values I was taught by my parents. My mom and dad both were very active in the Jewish community. My mom was the first female president of the Council of Jewish Organizations, which was the forerunner of Federation, and only the second woman in North America who presided over that organization. My dad was president of the temple. After I told Larry Szpiglias and Gerry Fisher that I would be honoured to chair this campaign I walked out into the JCC lobby and I pointed out two things. The first was the Kadimah kids who were playing there. I said, 'There's one reason.' Then I pointed at the picture of my mom on the wall of past presidents and said, 'There's another.' I'm very committed to continuity. We have

a very beautiful community and I want it to last.

You are not in this alone. Can you say a few words about the UJA Cabinet?

When I think of the cabinet I think of the word "precious." The members of the cabinet are committed, focused, generous, good people. They work well and they have the right motivation. It's going to make the campaign successful.



Jay State

What are your personal goals for this campaign?

The campaign goal this year is \$1.2 million and while that goal is an extremely important one, the fact is it won't fully meet the needs of those who come to us and request our assistance. I want to reach out to those who have not participated in the campaign and bring them in as contributors. Some of them perhaps are doing many things in many other directions. I'm hoping to help them reach a better understanding of how the UJA Campaign sustains so many vital services in the Jewish community and that the impact of supporting our Campaign means

a strong and healthy community that will be sustainable.

Do you have a message for the community?

One of the things I remember from B'nai Brith is the candle lighting ceremony they used to hold at the beginning of every meeting. What we said for one of the candles was "My parents planted for me, I plant for my children." I feel that all the children in this community are our children and we're planting not only for our children, but for our children's children when we participate in the UJA Campaign.

L'Shana Tova!

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L'Shana Tova! Best Wishes for Rosh Hashana

On October 6th, Ontario will elect a Provincial Government.

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- stronger and more effective health care
- more attention and respect for our seniors
- jobs and prosperity for our children and grandchildren
- a commitment to embrace and uphold human rights
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2012 UJA Campaign Opening
 featuring

TV News Anchor, Best-Selling Author and Provocateur

Ezra Levant



Monday, Oct. 3, 2011
at 7:30 pm
 Temple Anshe Sholom
 215 Cline Ave. N.
 Hamilton

Ezra Levant is the founding publisher of the Western Standard magazine, the only Canadian media outlet to publish the Danish cartoons of Mohammed. That led to two charges of hate speech before the Alberta government's human rights commission. Levant wrote a book about the experience, called Shakedown, which exposed the illiberal nature of Canadian human rights commissions. His new book called, Ethical Oil: The Case for Canada's Oilsands, was published in September 2010. This spring Levant joined the new Sun TV all-news channel as the host of a daily talk show called The Source.

For more information call
 905-648-0605, ext 306



www.jewishhamilton.org



YAD announces the return of

FIRE & ICE

Saturday, Nov. 19
 @ 7:30pm

Dundas Granite Curling Club
 Tickets \$15; Non-curlers \$10;
 \$20 at the door
 Details at yadhamilton.org

Be The Change!

YAD Hamilton provides many opportunities for community members between the ages of 23-45 who want to be involved in ensuring the Jewish future! The Federation's dynamic young adult group is committed to building a stronger Jewish community in Hamilton, Israel and throughout the world. We're passionate about giving back, interested in business, socializing and, of course, having fun! Be the change you want to see in the world! Please contact yad@jewishhamilton.org with ideas for social or mitzvah programs or with questions about upcoming events.

Young Leadership Mission to Havana, Cuba

Interested in participating in a Tikkun Olam mission to Cuba? Find out more at Shabbat Services Beth Jacob Synagogue on Saturday, Oct. 1 when special guest and former Burlington resident, Judi Price-Rosen, currently living in Winnipeg, shares her experiences on a Young Leadership tikkun olam mission to Havana organized by United Israel Appeal Federations Canada.



YAD held its first Summerfest on the Gown and Gavel patio on August 30. The event featured high-energy entertainer and handwriting analyst Elaine Charal. Everyone learned about their own strengths and personalities as reflected in their handwriting while enjoying an opportunity to mix, mingle and network with new friends. We will be sure to bring Elaine back for an encore performance.

Keep our Community Strong



GIVE GENEROUSLY



www.jewishhamilton.org

Hamiltonians in Israel

They come from both religious and secular backgrounds. They were born and raised here, or lived here during a significant time in their lives. They're former Hamiltonians living in Israel, and while their reasons for making aliyah differ, they share a burning desire to live the Zionist dream. In this issue, the HJN shines a spotlight on Faydra Shapiro, Mindy Sarel and Shari Pilo.



Faydra Shapiro and Shaul Katzenstein with their children, at their home in the lower Galilee.

Story and photos by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

Originally from Toronto, Faydra Shapiro spent many years in Hamilton, initially as a PhD student at McMaster and later, when she and her Israeli husband, Shaul Katzenstein made Hamilton their home while raising their five children. Shapiro, who teaches Modern Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, made aliyah with her family in August of 2008. They live in Mitzpe Netofa, a small community in the lower Galilee.

to understand why people aren't making aliyah. It's a little bit strange to me because I didn't have the desire many years ago and now that I'm here, gosh why wouldn't you come here?

Tell me about that the desire. How did it grow and where did it come from?

We came here on a sabbatical with no intention of making aliyah in 2006. We lived in Jerusalem. I was doing my research on evangelical Christian support for Israel, which I'm still working on. Two things really came together that year. The first was that we saw – I especially saw – that it was not only possible for us to do this, it was fantastic. The kids just flourished. Before we spent that year, it was like, aliyah, Israel, Hebrew, how would we possibly manage? So first we found out that it was more than possible – it was really great. The other thing was that in the course of my research, I spent a lot of time with evangelical Christian supporters of Israel... asking questions, trying to figure out what's up with this whole Christian support for Israel. And over the course of that year inasmuch as I was interviewing them and asking them a bunch of hard questions, many people that I became very friendly with started to ask me equally hard questions like, okay, so you read this in the Torah. What are you still doing living in Canada?

You live in Israel and work in Canada. How does that work?

It's crazy but no crazier than a lot of other commuting stories – usually not mothers of young children, mind you, but I arrange my teaching schedule such that I can come home probably every three weeks for a couple of days. It's very difficult but the teaching term is 12 weeks long. Then there's Christmas break, then there's another 12 weeks. And then there's a long summer period. I'm on sabbatical right now until January and my research is here. There are lots of reasons for me to be back anyway for conferences, for research. Between all of those things it's doable.

Why did you make aliyah?

It seems so obvious that I don't even have the words to answer it. For a much higher quality of life for ourselves, for the children. We're so happy here. In fact I now find it difficult

What part of the Torah were they referring to?

That this is the land that God promised to the descendants of Avraham. This is where the whole drama of the Torah takes

place. So if you pray for a rebuilt Jerusalem, if you pray for the ingathering of the exiles and all of this is part of the standard Jewish liturgy, then why wouldn't you take the opportunity to be a part of this? This is such an amazing moment in history. It's like you have this invitation to the greatest party in 2000 years. You have this mind boggling, really extraordinary opportunity to come as a free person, as a Jew, to live freely in your own land. That sense was really conveyed to me over that year and it was like 'Oh right. Click!' And so those two things came together: to realize that it's plausible for us to live here and also to remember a sense of destiny.

Tell me about where you live.

Mitzpe Netofa is a yishuv (community) that was founded about 30 years ago. It's a religious yishuv although it's very broad in its religiousness. I mean everybody is shomer Shabbat and shomer kashrut but there are women who wear pants and don't cover their hair and there's a whole range of what's acceptable. There are people who vote left and people who vote right so it's pretty broad. Ashkenazi, Sephardi. Very mixed.

How did you come to live here?

When we were here on our year of sabbatical and when it became clear that we really ought to be checking out communities we looked at a number of places. Shaul had a friend who he remembered lived here and we saw that there was some kind of program for olim (new immigrants). So

came to check it out for what's called a Shabbat klita. We're definitely happy we chose it. There are about 150 families here. We visited communities in Yehuda and Shomron (Judea and Samaria, also known as the West Bank) and I decided that it was not a healthy environment for myself or for my children, where there was so much tension over time.

Tension between whom?

Between Palestinians and Jews. I couldn't live like that. I couldn't wake up every morning and look and say, 'Great. Just over there they hate our guts.' Next to us is a huge Arab village with 10,000 people. We're 600 here and we have decent relationships. This is very important for me to show my kids.

What is your relationship with the Arab village?

It's pretty positive. When we came here I was on maternity leave for two years. I taught English to the children in the village.

What made you decide to do that?

It came out of the fact that the karate teacher here is an Arab from the village. It was really sort of experimental the first year and nobody was really sure how it was going to work out but it worked out fabulous. He teaches. His daughter, who wears the hijab, also teaches. He's an extraordinary teacher, a wonderful man and our kids compete in karate competitions with Jewish and Arab kids. Most important has been for my kids not to grow up thinking that the situation, so

“There is a simple and inexplicable power to being home. It makes you no safer, and it may, in fact, make you a target. But choosing a home like that promotes clarity; it forces you to decide what you believe in that is more important than your own survival. You know that even when you're home, there's nowhere to run. And still, despite it all – or rather, because of it all – you know there's no place you'd rather be.”

Daniel Gordis, President and Senior Fellow at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem

online at hamiltonjewishnews.com

Video interviews with Cheryl Gal, Alice and Effry Jonah, Shimon and Josie Arbel, Beth Cohen, and Shari Pilo.

to speak, was actually intractable. I wanted them to believe that it is possible, that there's nothing necessarily between Jews and Arabs ... that makes it impossible for them to live next to each other respectfully and decently.

What's the big difference between raising children in Israel and raising them in Hamilton?

What's great for the kids – part of it, I'm sure, is Israel and part of it is living in a small yishuv. If you want to have an observant Jewish life in North America you have to live in a city ... That's where all Jewish life is. It wasn't always that way but it is now. Here you have an orthodox shul, a mikvah, all the religious institutions that you need out in the country so my kids can grow up, really in nature, which I love – without compromising their Jewish lives. And it's very wholesome and natural for them so that their Judaism is very integrated. It's not this very far off place called Israel. You're very much part of things here. Nature is right on our doorstep. So to feel the cycle of the chagim (holidays), to understand the symbolism of the Tanach (the bible), it's right there in front of you when figs are growing next to you as you walk to your gan (kindergarten). Everything is so present.

How old are your children and who takes care of them when they're not in school?

Ten, nine, just turned eight, about to be six and three. We're fortunate in that Shaul and I both, by and large, work from home so usually somebody can take care of things. There are also afternoon programs. Some parents make arrangements with another parent. Also kids stay by themselves much earlier here than they do in Canada. So I would leave my big three alone in the afternoon, without any question or concern, for two hours for sure.

Did living in Hamilton have any influence on your decision to make aliyah?

Yes. Absolutely. I heard a lot of people in Hamilton say, 'Well, aliyah, Israel. I would love to do that, but I can't,' or 'We can't do that, but good for you,' or 'What a dream. I have that dream too.' That kind of talk... to hear so many people with the same dream think that it's such a wonderful idea and wish they could. Well, my job is to figure out how to take control of the situation. That's my dream for myself and for my family. And it's up to me to figure out how to make that happen.

“Everything here is meaningful, towards something, be that for my kids, be that to help Israel, be that for the final redemption.”

FAYDRA SHAPIRO

So is life here like one big adventure?

That's a beautiful way of putting it. It really is. It is in no sense easy. It's not easy at all. It's tremendously rewarding but it's not easy.

In what way is it not easy?

Oh my gosh, from the simple to the most complicated. You get lost in a city and it's so much more difficult for you to navigate your way out, not because the city is more complicated, which it is, but the fact that it takes you twice as long to read the signs. The fact that you're going grocery shopping and the carts don't push straight. I mean simple things ... looking for work, dealing with schools and the kids.

So what are the rewards?

You know I like to say, 'Effort in. Meaning out.' You don't get meaning without effort – not from martial arts, not from religion, not from your family. You can't just open up your hands and say, 'Give me meaning.' It requires effort, it requires discipline; it requires sacrifice. It's the same thing in Israel. So we see much more meaning in our Jewish lives here. In Hamilton, for example, we would go to all that effort in building a succah. All the hammering and preparing and the decorating. And very rarely were we able to sit in it. We would stand inside and watch the rain pour down and ruin all our efforts and eat inside. And for us it turned into such a metaphor. Because here you build a succah and you sit in it all of

Succot. One of the rewards is watching our children grow up very normal and natural in their Jewishness so nobody says, 'Elisheva? What kind of weirdo ethnic name is that?' It's a small thing. It never bothered me in Canada of course. That's multi-culturalism. But what does it mean for a child to grow up where their name is known, where their name is recognized, versus where their name is strange?



Do you have a message you'd like to relay to Jewish Hamiltonians?

I guess that I would encourage people. The biggest thing for us, with aliyah, was the day I stopped being afraid. We were living in Jerusalem and one morning I woke up and I realized that I was not going to starve to death and that if I wanted certain things for myself and my children it was up to me to arrange things a certain way. And if that means commuting then that's what it means. But that I could choose the kind of life that I wanted to lead. Was it going to be easy? Of course not. But none of the big things in my life – having five children, a PhD, a marriage, a career – anything from which you derive deep satisfaction – are easy things, right? But if that's what you want I would say, 'Go and get it.' You'll make sacrifices. There'll be challenges, but it seems to me that life is too short. I didn't want to be coming to visit my grandchildren in Israel from Hamilton. I wanted to be here with my kids so that they grow up here. They're already fully Israeli. Everyone worries 'how will the kids handle it?' The kids managed just fine. The challenges are for the grown ups. But it's such a blessing to watch these guys. To watch them chatter away in Hebrew.



Hamiltonians in Israel

continued

Profile

MINDY SAREL (HOFFMAN) HERZYLIA PITUACH



Mindy Sarel in her garden in Herzylia Pituach

Home

Herzylia Pituach

Occupation

Art history teacher

Family: Married to Yacov Sarel, an Israeli attorney of Moroccan heritage; Her eldest daughter, Elinor, 35, is a financial journalist whose husband works for a high tech company. They have two children. Her son Asa, 33, a lawyer by profession, is in the jewelry export business. Her daughter Aviv, 26, is currently living in Washington, D.C. where she is assistant to the Israeli ambassador.

Seeds of her aliyah

Her parents were very supportive of Israel, particularly her father, who was very active in fundraising for Israel, Zionist summer camps in the States; the Six Day War. "Prior to the Six Day War people were not enthusiastic about pulling up their roots and coming to Israel. I was 17 then, and at that time there was no way my parents would let me go on my own. But they did let me go when I was 19 and I am very thankful for their understanding and courage."

Aliyah Story

The first time I came to Israel was on one of those Europe and Israel trips when I was 17 years old. I came back the following summer to do credits at Hebrew University and spent time on kibbutz with my family afterwards. I applied to Hebrew University the following year and was accepted. I think one of the contributing factors that made life so easy for me at the beginning was that I had two families. I had wonderful extended family in Israel, plus Yacov's family who welcomed me with open arms. They made me feel so at home which allowed me to feel part of Israel very quickly.

On raising children in Israel

"Raising our children in Israel was probably the best thing I did in my life because they were given good values, not just from the family, but

from their school and the youth movements they were involved with. Things were difficult when we were living in Jerusalem in the late '70's, '80's and '90's. My youngest was eight or nine years old during the Second Intifada when there were many neighbourhood stabbings and buses being blown up in Jerusalem. This was probably the most traumatic experience I had in Israel, knowing that your children could be on that bus. There were times when I would sit and cry about it because it was such a frustrating situation. Dealing with fears for your children's safety on a daily basis was difficult. Having said all of that I wouldn't have had it any different. Our children are very lucky that they live in an atmosphere that questions things. They are aware of what's going on around them. They read the newspapers. We have a thirst for knowledge here and I don't think it is as prevalent in North America.

Challenges of living in Israel

I can understand and sympathize with this new social revolution that is taking place right now. And I am proud that this generation has woken up and wants to see change come, to lighten their financial burdens. My daughter and her husband are both well educated, have good jobs and earn a nice living. But they still find it difficult to make ends meet at the end of the month.

Greatest hope

Peace. Peace means much more than the word implies. It means that everyone will have to settle in and compromise. Yes, we have to deal with Hamas and the extremists but there is extreme thinking on both sides. I'm all for ideology and beliefs and I think you have to stick to your guns but I also believe you have to have room for understanding and compromise. I am an optimist and believe that open-minded leaders on all sides will come forth eventually and make courageous decisions – maybe not in my generation, but I pray it will be in my children's.

Middle class struggles

Shari Pilo sees her own struggles reflected in country-wide protests this summer

Shari Wright Pilo was among the hundreds of thousands of Israelis who took to the streets this summer in protest of the high cost of living and other social and economic inequities facing Israeli society. The daughter of the late Norma and David Wright, Pilo lives with her husband and daughter in Modi'in, a town located midway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Modi'in is a beautiful, modern city with a highly educated population, many of whom are immigrants from North America. But, unlike most of her neighbours, the Pilos can't afford to buy a home. They rent their apartment, and have been forced to comply with arbitrary rent increases on an almost annual basis. Two years ago their landlady raised their rent by 26 percent and recently informed Pilo that it was going up a further 10 percent this year.

"Maybe if we had bought an apartment when we first got married 14 years ago we could have managed," said Pilo, "but we had infertility issues and any money we could have put into a down payment we put into having a child."

The Pilos are grateful that seven years of infertility treatment resulted in the birth of their miracle baby, Ma'ayan in 2004, but the delay in purchasing a home has resulted in their being completely shut out of the housing market. They're not alone. An entire generation of young, middle class Israelis are facing the same situation.

Pilo points to the experience of her husband's parents as an example of how different things were a generation ago.

"Baruch's mother moved here from Turkey when she was four years old and the family lived in tents for three years. His father moved to Israel on his own when he was 16 from Morocco. But they were able to buy a very small apartment in a good area and later moved into a bigger apartment. Today they own a very beautiful large apartment in Netanya."

The fact that her husband's parents, without the benefit of a higher education, were still able to buy an apartment while she and her husband, who both have university degrees and good jobs, are forced to rent seems both absurd and wildly unjust.

One of the factors working against young couples looking to buy their first apartment, said Pilo, is that Israeli mortgages require approximately 40 percent of the total cost of the home as a down payment, an amount only those with affluent parents or North American salaries can afford.

If the issue of exorbitant housing costs struck a resonant chord with Israelis across the religious and cultural spectrum, another issue was the high cost of child care. While public school education in Israel is free, the school day ends before 2 p.m., forcing working parents to shell out money for after-school programs. Pilo spends \$500 a month to keep her daughter occupied from 1:45 until 4:30 p.m. Day care for children under three is even more expensive.



Shari and Baruch Pilo with their daughter Ma'ayan.

"We saw all around us young, old, leftists, rightists, religious, non-religious ... It was one of the most exciting and fulfilling evenings I've ever had in Israel."

SHARI WRIGHT PILO

The tent cities and mass rallies of the summer of 2011 have been seen, for the most part, as an exciting sign of the end of an era of Israeli apathy.

"Sometimes I think of Israelis – including myself – as being apathetic because of the stress factor of living here ... But all of a sudden this apathy has disappeared and that to me is amazing," said Pilo.

And, she insists, despite everything, "There's no place like home and no better place to live in the world." As if to illustrate her point, she described the scene the night she and her friend hopped on a train from Modi'in for one of the first of many mass rallies in Tel Aviv this summer.

"We saw all around us young, old, leftists, rightists, religious, not religious, Arabs. Beside us there was a young couple pushing a stroller. On the other side there was an elderly couple. In front of us there were kids from a youth group. Behind us there were the rock and rollers from Tel Aviv. At kitty corner there was a family with teenagers and three feet in front of us there was a young religious couple with a little boy with two prosthetic legs. And I said if he is here everybody should be here. I think it was one of the most exciting, fulfilling evenings that I ever had in Israel and I've been here for 30 years."

The Sar-El experience

Why I volunteer for the Israel Defense Forces

by GORD GARSHOWITZ, Special to the Hamilton Jewish News

Most retirees choose to spend their summers in serenity – on the golf course, by the water, or in their backyard. For two or three weeks every summer, I abandon all of that, wear some khaki, work under the hot Israeli sun, and spend my nights sleeping on a cot in a barracks volunteering on an Israeli Defence Forces base through Sar-El.

Of course, there are countless ways to contribute to Israel, but for 10 years, this has been my special, hands-on way of giving back to a country that has given us so much.

I have now worked on eight different bases, and have done tasks that range from painting a warehouse, packing medical supplies into medics' field vests, fixing treads on armoured personnel carriers, to working on a parachute base. Fortunately for the paratroopers, the volunteers did not fold the parachutes – but we did just about everything else. Jobs that we do, if not done by volunteers, would have to be done by reservists.

This year, I spent the first three weeks of July working at the Matzlach Be'ersheva base. Our group of 12 volunteers consisted of eight Americans, three Torontonians and myself. Our base supplied tools and parts for cars, trucks, tanks and armoured personnel carriers for other bases in the Southern Command. We worked in a warehouse sorting tools sold to Israel by American Forces, who were pulling out of Iraq and Afghanistan.

What I like about the Sar-El experience is the

opportunity to interact both with volunteers from around the world and with Israelis. Most bear with me as I practise my Hebrew, and I get to meet soldiers and officers, learn about Israeli life and work with a generation of young adults who are currently serving their country.

Sar-El, the organization that facilitates the placement of volunteers on IDF maintenance bases, has contact offices in many countries around the world. Volunteers generally go for two or three week placements, though there are also a couple of special one-week groups. Groups begin every three or four weeks throughout the year. Everything is organized, from airport pickup to assignment of duties and all meals and accommodations. The typical work week is Sunday afternoon through Thursday afternoon, at which point volunteers leave the base for the weekend to tour Israel or spend time with family or friends. (I generally took the weekends as an opportunity to sleep in a larger bed and treat myself to non-mess hall meals at some of Israel's delicious restaurants.)

Over the years, I have encouraged many friends to try the Sar-El experience and almost everyone has gone back to the program at least once. I look forward to participating in this program every year. It is my personal way of saying thank you to Israel.

For further information, contact Gord Garsbowitz at gord.garsbowitz@gmail.com or visit www.sarel-canada.org.



Gord Garshowitz working on an IDF parachute base.

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CYCLING FOR SHECHAFIM

by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

"Epic!" was the the word Daniel Rose used to describe the experience of cycling 2,000 kilometres from Hamilton to Halifax that he, his father Geoff and Israeli visitor, Ori Menachem, undertook as a fundraiser for a specialized school in Northern Israel for children with special needs. Averaging about 110 kilometres a day under mostly ideal conditions, the trip took four weeks, said Geoff Rose. "We saw beautiful scenery and met some very nice people in whose homes we stayed during Shabbat," said Rose, who was thrilled for the opportunity to spend



Ori Menachem, Geoff Rose, Daniel Rose, Rabbi Yosef Goldman and fellow Hamiltonian Sean Greenberg at the home of Rabbi Goldman in Fredericton. Photo courtesy Geoff Rose



A Shechafim student getting ready to go for a ride on her therapeutic tricycle. Photo by Wendy Schneider

four uninterrupted weeks with his son. Most memorable was the night they spent at the home of Rabbi Yosef Goldman in Fredericton, New Brunswick where they were joined by fellow Hamiltonian, Sean Greenberg, who serves in the Canadian Reserves and was stationed nearby in Gagetown. "We all crammed into one bedroom at the Rabbi's house and spent Shabbat together. It was so much fun," said Rose. The trip went remarkably smoothly, said Rose, with almost perfect weather and no traffic incidents. "I had a feeling we were being well watched. We were on a mitzvah mission, and they say that can help." The Shechafim riders raised more than \$8,000 from the Hamilton community for the Shechafim School, a regional school in the Upper Galilee for children with severe disabilities. Funds raised will be used to purchase therapeutic tricycles. Thank you Hamilton and thank you to the Shechafim Riders!

Enhancing Israel's security

JNF plants trees along southern border

Since the middle of August, when the terrorist attack on the Israeli-Egyptian border occurred, well over 100 rockets and mortar shells have been fired on cities and communities in south-western Israel.

After the IDF's response in Gaza to the terrorist attack, dozens of rockets were fired at Ashkelon, Ashdod and Kiryat Gat, killing several people and injuring dozens more, as well as causing damage to building and open areas. Many of the rockets were intercepted by Israel's new Iron Dome system.

The areas affected include the Be'eri Forest, Kisufum, the area of Kibbutz Erez, Nachal Oz, and Kerem Shalom.

A paved road, which is hidden from the Gaza Strip, was recently completed following an earlier terrorist attack in April of this year in which an anti-tank rocket was fired at a bus carrying students that had stopped near Nahal Oz. Daniel Viflik, 16, was killed during that incident.

Matan Vilnai, Minister of Home Front Defense, stated that "this new road was completed in less than three months in order to retain a sense of security and offer normal lives to residents in the area." While this new security road is vital to ensure the safety of those traveling between communities located close to Gaza, JNF has also been busy



Planting trees along border roads create a camouflage that prevents terrorists from observing traffic moving on the Israeli side. Photo courtesy of the Jewish National Fund

planting trees along other roads in order to create a camouflage that will prevent terrorists from observing vehicle traffic moving on the Israeli side of the security fence. Besides providing protection from dangerous artillery, the trees provide other important benefits; helping to improve the environment for future generations. Trees prevent soil erosion and that protects the roads. The environmental impact of every tree planted is significant as each one will absorb one ton of CO2 over its lifetime, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions. As well, due to the extreme heat in the Negev, asphalt roads tends to

buckle or even melt and the shade of the trees keeps the roads a little cooler.

The new security roads, together with the Miles of Trees forestation project are projects of Keren Kayemeth L'Israel (the Jewish National Fund) and will help provide security for residents and students traveling in the area.

All funds raised across Canada from this year's High Holy Day Campaign will be allocated to the planting of Miles of Trees forestation project. The Jewish National Fund wishes everyone a healthy and happy New Year. Shana Tova u'Metuka.

Children discover roots of Jewish Hamilton

by LYN CENTER, Special to the Hamilton Jewish News

Some months ago, the Hamilton Jewish News carried an article about a proposed exhibit on Jewish labour and community in the early part of the 20th century. As one method of collecting historical materials, two of the organizers, Kathryn Petersen and I developed a program for children in Hamilton Jewish schools and residents of Shalom Village, called Working Family Stories and Treasures, based on an initiative of the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

To help develop and deliver the program, an enthusiastic and creative young woman, Melinda Richter, has come on board as Project Coordinator. Richter has an M.A. from the University of Toronto in Ethnic, Immigration, and Pluralism Studies, as well as training and experience in curatorship

and art history. We asked Richter to describe the program:

Who and what is involved?

We will be working with students at Beth Jacob Hebrew School, preteens at the Hamilton Jewish Middle School, teenagers from the community and residents at Shalom Village. Parents and grandparents will be an invaluable source of information by reaching back in their memories to remember all the things their family members did to earn a living and build the Hamilton Jewish community.

All participants will begin with an introductory workshop where they will learn about genealogy, family trees and interviewing. Participants will go on to collect information from their families, focusing on the kind of work

their family members did. Two other workshops led by Hana Pinthus (art therapist) and the Print Studio (featuring artists Becky Katz and Matt McInnes) will teach participants how to interpret the stories they collect in creative ways.

What types of artwork will be produced?

Hana Pinthus has an amazing workshop where participants create blueprints of their lives using images and information from the past. During the Print Studio workshops participants learn how to create prints from carvings or digital technology. At each of our participating locations we will be mounting mini-exhibits featuring all of the work that the students and seniors have done. Later in the year we plan to mount



Artist Hana Pinthus and Camp Kadimah campers pose in front of a giant family tree they sculpted based on information they collected about their ancestors' labour and immigration history. Photo courtesy of the JCC

a larger exhibit as part of the James North Art Crawl which will feature work from all of the participating locations as well as a video documentary of the process.

How you can help.

We are seeking donations from the community for the workshops and exhibits. For further information, email workingfamilystories@gmail.com.

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It's up to you to make a difference in this election:

An open letter to Hamilton's Jewish and pro-Israel community

Over the coming few weeks, you have a choice to make. A choice that goes beyond who will be Premier and which candidate will sit in Queen's Park. You can choose to sit on the sidelines of the campaign, allowing others to shape the future of our province and community, or with just a small effort you can give voice to your values and ensure the continued vibrancy and impact of the Canadian Jewish community.

In Canada, the Jewish community comprises only 1.1% of the population, and that number is expected to decrease as time goes on. In order to ensure that our community's values and concerns continue to resonate at every level of government, it is imperative that each of us embrace our democratic responsibilities, and thus ensure our voice is heard.

The Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee (CJPAC) is a national multi-partisan organization dedicated to achieving that goal by activating the Jewish community in the political process (and within all parties). We are here to help you get involved with the campaign of your choice, including providing information, training, connecting volunteers and facilitating political support. With even a small contribution of time or money you can have a significant impact on the political system.

So what can you do?

1. It's up to you to get informed.

Learn more about where the candidates and parties stand on these issues. Stay informed by reading the newspaper, watching the news and being active politically in your riding. Visit itsup2you.ca for links to party websites, information on voting, and information on what you can do to make a difference.

2. It's up to you to get involved.

Volunteering for an election campaign is a great way to build relationships with MPPs and other decision-makers. These relationships are essential to ensuring our collective voice is heard. It's also a great opportunity for networking, professional development and community involvement. Those who have volunteered in the past know how important and fun it can be. Getting involved on a campaign is easier than you think: fill out our volunteer form at itsup2you.ca and CJPAC will pair you with the campaign of your choice. If you are a high school student this counts towards your volunteer hours.

3. It's up to you to support candidates.

Many do not know how easy it is to support candidates in a significant way. Every dollar counts and there are generous tax credits for

political donations. You can target your support and make sure you are involved in an effective way. Every dollar donated should be sent with the message, "thank you on behalf of the Jewish community for your support of our issues." Call Jonathan Ain at 1.866.929.9552 ext. 238 for more information on how to make your political dollars count for the Jewish community.

4. Most of all, it's up to you to vote.

By exercising your right to vote, you have a say in charting the province's course on issues of importance to you and the community. Find out more about voting rules and locations at www.itsup2you.ca.

Together, we can protect and build our community's voice across the political spectrum. Remember – it's up to you!

Henry Wolfond
Chair, CJPAC

Tom Weisz
CJPAC Board Member, Hamilton

Mark Waldman
Executive Director, CJPAC

over 900 volunteers placed during the election.

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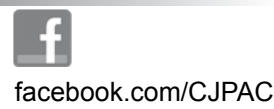
community activity on over 150 election campaigns more regional programming than ever before.

Thank you for a great year. Together we can make this year even better.

Shanah Tovah from Tom Weisz and



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Visit itsup2you.ca to learn how you can help our community and make a significant impact on the provincial election.

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CANADIAN JEWISH POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

BOOK REVIEW

Introducing young readers to Israeli life

by TANYA SCHNEIDER, Special to the Hamilton Jewish News

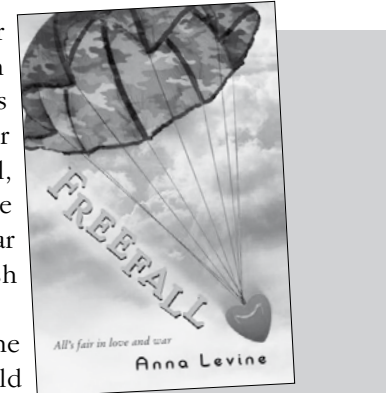
As a teenager, my curiosity for everything Israel was sparked, in part, when I read Edeet Ravel's *Ten Thousand Lovers*. After reading Anna Levine's *Freefall*, I believe that this book has the potential to reach out in a similar way to North American Jewish youth.

Freefall is written through the lens of Aggie, an 18-year old Israeli girl at the most significant crossroads of her young life: getting ready to enter the army after graduating from high school. While the book provides a glimpse into the challenges unique to a young Israeli woman longing to be taken seriously as a combat soldier, it transcends cultural boundaries by addressing more universal aspects facing adolescents such as finding one's identity outside the immediate family, overcoming fears and exploring love and friendship.

The strongest aspect of the book lies in Levine's seamless weaving of authentic Israeli experiences into her story. Interactions between the sexes, encounters with Israeli cab drivers, descriptions of how young Israelis spend their free time, and how the diversity of cultures make up the Israeli landscape are just some of the cultural references reflecting my own experiences in the country.

I especially appreciated Levine's accurate portrayal of the polarities that exist in Israeli culture. In her portrayal of three generations of Aggie's family – Aggie, her parents, and her grandmother – Levine illustrates the striking contrast between the modern Israeli lifestyle with that of its founding generation. That these two life paths are both distinctly Israeli is one of the things that makes Israel such a special place.

Freefall is both a coming of age tale and a glimpse into Israeli society. For a young reader in the Diaspora with little or no knowledge of or interest in Israel, this book can provide the beginning of a relationship.



FREEFALL

by Anna Levine

Greenwillow Books/Harper Collins
250 pages \$18.50

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Funny girl Deborah Sherman

by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

Deborah Sherman was surrounded by friends and family the night of her book launch at the Meadowlands branch of Chapters-Indigo last spring. Not a bad turnout for someone who lives in Copenhagen, but parents Michael and Gwenn Sherman made sure it was a packed house for the Canadian launch of Sherman's second children's book, *A kindergarten teacher who loves to make people laugh*. Sherman lives in Copenhagen with her husband and daughter. She hopes her latest creation will be as well received as her first book, *Triple Chocolate Brownie Genius*, which was chosen as a finalist in the juvenile fiction category of the 2007 *ForeWord Magazine's* Book of the Year Awards.

"My goal is to create funny books," she said. "I definitely have a style – goofy and silly, and I pull out all stops trying to make people laugh." Sherman acknowledges that the apple doesn't fall from the tree. A sense of humour runs in the family. So what did her family and close friends think of her latest book?

"You can't always trust them because they like everything you write." Let the young reader in your family decide for him or herself. The *Bedmas Conspiracy* is recommended for six to nine year olds and is available at local bookstores.



Deborah Sherman at the Ancaster Chapters-Indigo last May. Photo by Wendy Schneider

A TIME FOR CHANGE

Donna Skelly **ONTARIO PC**

Assistant, Dundas, Flamborough, Wentworth

The Hamilton Chapter wishes all our donors, families and friends a very Healthy and Happy New Year.

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Pursuing a dream

Joel Dembe hopes to represent Canada in 2012 Paralympics

by STEVE ARNOLD, Special to the Hamilton Jewish News

Joel Dembe's entire career has been leading to one goal – and next year he has a chance to live that dream. The 27-year-old wheelchair tennis star has a shot at making the Canadian team for the 2012 Paralympics in London, England. He's already ranked the Number 1 player in Canada and 46th in the world. All he has to do is hang onto that world ranking until May – that and raise about \$40,000 to pay the bills to carry him through.

"I feel like my entire career has been leading up to this point," he said in an interview.

"It's a real honour to be asked to represent your country and to play at the highest levels in the world," he added. "It's something every athlete dreams of being asked to do and getting there has become the entire focus of my life right now."

"Achieving this is part of defining myself," he added. "If I make it then I'll be able to call myself a Paralympian for the rest of my life."

Dembe, son of Steven and Cheryl Dembe, started playing wheelchair tennis almost 15 years ago after competing in a variety of other sports including track and field, sledge hockey, challenger baseball, and golf. He was attracted by the game's combination of speed, power and hand-eye co-ordination.

"I can't remember a time when I wasn't active playing something," he said. "I like this because it's a sport that demands you be good at so many things all at once."

The wheelchair is the result of being born with a benign tumor that left his spinal cord compressed causing partial paralysis. The only significant difference between wheelchair tennis and the "regular" game is that the ball is allowed two bounces before being returned.

Dembe's career so far has included several accomplishments – at 16 he won the Junior Division of the 2000 Florida Open, at 19 he was named to Canada's National Development Team, gaining the opportunity to work with some of the top coaches, trainers and players in the country. During those years he was at the top of Tennis Canada's junior rankings, 10th in the Men's A Division and 25th in the Men's Open division. That skill won him a place at international training camps in the Netherlands and the United States, again testing himself eight hours a day against the best rising stars of the world.

Along the way there was also time for education – Dembe is an



Joel Dembe at his game. Photo courtesy of Joel Dembe, special to the Hamilton Jewish News

honours graduate of Brock University's sports management program, a field he wants to pursue when his own playing days are done.

Since being named Canada's top player this summer, Dembe has been maintaining a grueling schedule of tournaments and training. Over this year he has managed

"It's important for someone who is 'disabled' to get out and become active so they don't feel so limited."

JOEL DEMBE

to win three tournaments and has at least two more scheduled later in the year, including competing in the Pan Am Games in Mexico in October. His most recent appearance at the U.S. Open wasn't so successful however – he lost a close match because for a moment his concentration broke.

"I had a few opportunities but I just kind of collapsed," he admits. "It just shows the more you think in a match the worse you're going to do. In the end it all comes down to the mental factor."

That, and money of course. As with many non-professional athletes Dembe walks a tight rope between playing to the best of his

ability and worrying about covering the costs of travel, training and his own needs. Sometimes, he admits, that's a problem that interferes with his game. Those issues have moved more to the front since he took a leave of absence from his job as a marketing analyst at TD Bank to pursue his Olympic dream full time.

"You always feel the pressure to perform to justify what you spent to get to a particular tournament," he said. "I'm doing everything I can to raise a profile and money while also playing."

Efforts at raising a profile include a recent appearance at a Toronto Blue Jays game to throw out the first ball.

Even as a teenager, Dembe was described as a hero and example to others. It's a label he's still not entirely comfortable with, although he knows some may be inspired to get active by his accomplishments.

"It's important for someone who is 'disabled' to get out and become active so they don't feel so limited," he said.

Getting to his current lofty position, he adds, was accomplished with the help of many, but the ones he thinks of most are his parents.

"They have been my rocks all along," he said. "They've been there from the very beginning and without them I never would have come this far."

Donations to aid Dembe's Paralympics dream can be made through Tennis Canada's Wheelchair Tennis Fund, 1 Shoreham Drive, Suite 100 Toronto, ON M3N 3A6. Specify on the cheque that it's for Joel Dembe.

Destination coffee

European style café in the heart of Ancaster

by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

Common wisdom has it that people will go out of their way for a quality product. And quality doesn't even begin to describe the fare at Mezza Caffé. The café, located in the Ancaster Crossings Plaza on Wilson Avenue, is a new business venture owned and operated by Luis Mezza and Ronit Kaufman.

The Mezza family left their home in Caracas, Venezuela in search of a more stable and economically-viable future for their children.

The decision was made during a family trip to North America in April 2006, where they found the Canadians they met, including Canadian border officials, particularly friendly. That fall they enrolled their son Joshua in a Toronto high school, and upon his acceptance to McMaster the following year, the rest of the family – parents, Luis and Ronit and daughters Deborah and Abigail.

Luis Mezza's business model is based on the coffee business he owns in Venezuela, that involves wholesaling coffee beans and equipment and retail outlets.

"Our main business has always been coffee," he said. "This is what we do in Venezuela and this is what we wanted to do here."

But he admits to some initial concerns about breaking into the Canadian market.

"I was a bit afraid because even though Canadians drink coffee in big quantities, their style of drinking coffee is different," he said. But given the response of his growing clientele, who rave about his Brazilian-grown, Italian-roasted coffee, he is confident that he will succeed.

Mezza Caffé specializes in freshly brewed coffee, espresso and specialty coffees including one particularly heavenly concoction aptly named, Daydream.



Mezza Caffé is a family affair. Pictured above are Ronit Kaufman and Luis Mezza with daughters Abigail and Deborah. Photo by Wendy Schneider

The business is a family affair, with Ronit, Deborah and Abigail applying their culinary skills in the café's spotless kitchen.

Included on the menu is thin crust pizza, made with a specialized Italian flour, croissants and Italian pastries and gelato. Also on sale are a variety of coffee beans and coffee machines and grinders.

"In our South American stores we have a lot of competition but clients come on a daily basis because there's a difference they can taste," said Mezza.

Mezza acknowledges that the North American grab and run style of drinking coffee is not what his café is all about. In fact, when it's clear that a customer wants to do exactly that, he encourages him to take a seat and savour the moment.

"I might take longer to make you a coffee," he said, "because it's not only what you drink, it's the atmosphere that surrounds you. I would like you to come here with a friend and sit back and enjoy your coffee."

HONOURABLE MENTSCHEN

Congratulations to Dr. Leonard Ritter for his recent appointment as chair of the Independent Fact-Finding Panel on Herbicide 2,4,5-T by the Ontario government.



Ritter, executive director of the Canadian Network of Toxicology Centres and professor of toxicology at the University of Guelph, will lead a panel of experts to look at the use of the pesticide by provincial ministries and agencies. Ritter is a world leading toxicological expert who has received numerous awards for his work, including a recent award from the World Health Organization in 2006.

The PJ Library

JEWISH BEDTIME STORIES & SONGS FOR FAMILIES

Hamilton Jewish Federation is proud to count itself as one of 135 communities across North America participating in the PJ Library program. Later this fall a letter and sample book will be sent to every home on our mailing list. All families raising Jewish children from age six months through six years are welcome to enroll online once the invitation letter is received. Each book and CD comes with a reading guide created for the PJ Library by Jewish educators and early childhood educators. Through innovative programming, The PJ Library in Hamilton will offer participants programs as a way to connect them with other young families to create a unified community. The local PJ Library program is made possible through the generosity of the Shirley and Morris Waxman Family and the Lion of Judah Division of the Hamilton Jewish Federation. View the PJ Library video and enrollment details at www.pjlibrary.org.

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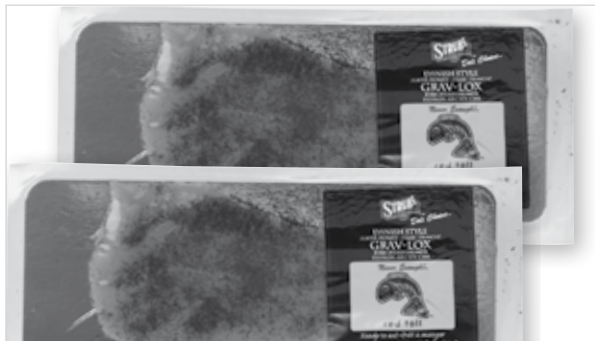
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