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Ottawa's synagogues tackle existential challenges

Congregations face varied problems from declining membership to building and staffing issues, while several alternative models are succeeding

BY JENNIFER GREEN

With numbers continuing to dwindle at many major Ottawa synagogues, congregations are being challenged like never before to find new models to sustain themselves.

The issue is so pressing, said Ian Sherman, president of the Conservative Congregation Beth Shalom, that if the current rate of attrition continues, then the days of the traditional synagogue — with a rabbi, cantor and administrative staff — may soon be over.

Sherman was responding to the Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews released last month that found far fewer American Jews identify as “religious” than in the past. The ranks of American Jews identifying with the Conservative movement in particular have declined to 18 per cent from 41 per cent in 1971.

Sherman said his own congregation has shrunk and now attracts about 500 people on the High Holy Days, down from 1,800 in the 1970s.

“We have been losing a lot of money. All of the hard work the shul volunteers put in ... the fruits of our efforts just don't seem to be there. It's very sad.”

Congregation Beth Shalom has sold its Chapel Street building and must move out by the end of March.

Talks to merge with Agudath Israel, Ottawa's other major Conservative congregation, “have been challenging,” he said.

But ignoring fiscal realities would mean deferring the problem for a future board to face.

“At a certain point you really, really need to take tough decisions,” Sherman

See Synagogue challenges on page 2



PHOTO: ASHLEY FRASER

Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka has been the spiritual leader of Congregation Machzikei Hadas since 1967 and is known for his indefatigable energy and charisma.

Loneliness, cost, clergy and cluelessness

In this guest column, **Samantha Banks**, director of initiatives for the emerging generation at the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, explains why she thinks many young adults are turning away from traditional synagogue affiliation.

Is it not ironic that Yom Kippur – the most depressing day of the year for me – happens to be the day the majority of Jewish people attend shul? No wonder membership in Ottawa congrega-

tions is down. If you only attend shul on the High Holidays, one-third of your experience is associated with standing for hours in silence, starvation and uncomfortable clothing, while dreaming about your dairy-laden meal after sundown.

“My name is Samantha Banks and I am guilty of attending shul three times a year.”

I did not go to Hebrew day school, I did not grow up in a kosher home, and my grandparents were not Holocaust surviv-

ors. I attended a Jew-ish camp. There was nothing Jewish about it, except that every camper was Jewish. Despite my unobservant upbringing, my passion for the State of Israel, my contributions to our vibrant Jewish community and my desire to make a Jewish home are undeniable.

On October 20, I participated in a panel at Limmud Ottawa titled, “Why Do Young Adults Turn Away from Shul?”

See Banks on page 2

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that could, writes Moscovitz > p. 7

David Berman on redesign
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Synagogue challenges: Appealing to the unaffiliated

Continued from page 1

said. "If that is the reality of Jewish life ... then your infrastructures need to be modified to deal with that reality. The traditional infrastructures are no longer feasible."

With the move from the building it has occupied almost since the congregation was created in 1956 by the merger of two downtown congregations – Adath Jeshurun and Agudath Achim – imminent, and a merger with Agudath Israel far from certain, the Beth Shalom board advised congregants last month that temporary relocation sites "in the East End, in the West End and downtown" are being looked at and that CentrepoinTE Theatre has been reserved for the 2014 High Holy Days.

Membership is also a concern at Agudath Israel. Howard Levine, the congregation's president, said the shul attracted only 20 new families in the past year. "It was disappointing," Levine said

adding that membership has been dropping by two to five per cent per year.

As well as a possible merger with Beth Shalom, permanent clergy is an issue of concern at Agudath Israel where Rabbi Barry Schlesinger was brought in from Israel on an interim basis, originally for one year, in 2011. A year-long extension will expire later this year.

A third Conservative congregation, the smaller Adath Shalom, is not encumbered by the infrastructure problems Sherman referred to as it has no office staff and meets on the Jewish Community Campus, usually in the chapel of the Ottawa Jewish Community School, but moving next door to the Soloway Jewish Community Centre when bar and bat mitzvahs and High Holy Day services attract larger crowds.

Meanwhile, several other Ottawa congregations are facing similar infrastructure and membership problems.

Congregation Machzikei Hadas in Alta

Vista has declined by about one-third over the past 15 years, said Jonah Rabinovitch, president of Ottawa's oldest Orthodox congregation. Now it has about 300 families.

One of its attractions has been its charismatic and indefatigable spiritual leader, Rabbi Reuven Bulka. But he is 69, and has been there since 1967.

While Machzikei Hadas is broadening its programming for young families in an attempt to boost membership, Young Israel of Ottawa, a traditional Orthodox synagogue in Westboro, is looking to strengthen attendance by bringing back congregants who have dispersed to smaller minyans in the area in recent years.

As Rabbi Ari Galandauer explained, there are four Orthodox services in the area on Shabbat morning, "so each is a little bit small."

He said there have been group dynamics

and issues that have arisen over the years which led to the emergence of the other Orthodox services in the area.

"My greatest goal is trying to bring [everyone] back together," said Rabbi Galandauer.

Appealing to the unaffiliated is a goal of many congregations, including Temple Israel.

Mark Bowman, treasurer of Ottawa's only Reform congregation, said that while the number of member families is stable at

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More on synagogues: US faces dilemma of non-Jews in the pews, page 26;
Mira Sucharov on going to shul, page 41

Share your thoughts

Join the conversation.

Send letters to the editor to bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com or submit them online at <http://ottawajewishbulletin.com>.

Banks: Like Miley Cyrus sings, "This is our house, this is our rules"

Continued from page 1

Here are four reasons why I believe young adults are straying from traditional shul and Jewish experiences.

Loneliness: Quite often, young adults move away from the cities where they were raised to pursue academic and career opportunities. Without family or friends, shul can be perceived as a daunting place to go to alone.

Cost: Without your family paying your shul fees, and no longer qualifying for a youth membership, the cost can be a burden a young person does not want to budget for.

Clergy: When not attending your own shul, you probably never had the opportunity to schmooze with the rabbis of your new city. It is hard to relate to a sermon and to the leadership of a shul without having a relationship outside the sanctuary.

Cluelessness: What the heck is going on up there? The average shul attendee

does not read or speak Hebrew, does not understand biblical text and cannot relate to the material.

Considering all of the above, can you blame a young person for not making the effort to attend shul?

Young adults today have alternative lifestyles, so why would we choose to go to a place that can come across as restrictive when we can bring Judaism to ourselves? While I am certainly not religious, I do practise my own version of Judaism. Every Friday night, I host or get hosted for Shabbat dinner. I rock the apron, then throw on the heels!

Two of the rabbis on the Limmud Ottawa panel – Rabbi Michael Goldstein of the Glebe Shul in Ottawa and Rabbi Leibish Hundert of the Ghetto Shul in Montreal – have had tremendous success generating large numbers of young adults at their services and Shabbat dinners because their formula is grassroots and



PHOTO: ROBIN CHERNICK

Panelists discuss why many young adults are turning away from shul at Limmud Ottawa, October 20, at Beth Shalom. (From left) Eric Trottier, Adam Moscoe, Samantha Banks, Rabbi Michael Goldstein, Rabbi Leibish Hundert, Rabbi Menachem Blum, (standing) Scott Goldstein.

started in their homes.

Give young adults multiple reasons to walk through your shul's doors, and I promise, after a few social, educational and swanky events, they will return for services, Shabbat dinners and the High

Holidays. They will view your shul as a social meeting ground and not just a high-paying membership club. Young adults are waiting to be engaged! Just like Miley Cyrus sings, "This is our house, this is our rules."

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‘Hallelujah, finally, and welcome to our world!’

In her *Emerging Gen* column, **Ilana Belfer** explains why the *Bulletin*’s new web edition is crucial to her generation.

Some age-old questions: If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? If there’s content of interest to the emerging generation in the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*, but it’s not online, do young adults ever see it?

Probably not.

That’s why, after three years as a *Bulletin* columnist, intern and freelance reporter, I’m jumping for joy over the redesign, which includes an improved website and digital edition, as well as social media – Facebook and Twitter – presence. Prior to the redesign, there were only two or three articles available online per issue.

I try to speak only for myself in my columns, but I think I’m safe in speaking for pretty well all 18- to 45-year-old members of the community when I say, ‘Hallelujah, finally, and welcome to our world!’

I mean it. My generation lives online. According to a 2011 Ipsos Media survey, affluent American millennials, aged 18 to 29, spend more than 40 hours per week online, essentially a full-time job. The figure is likely comparable in Canada, and that number has surely risen with time.

Honestly, I spend most of my day in cyberspace, most days of the week. As my grandma likes to say, “You sure are glued to that thing, aren’t you?”

That “thing” is my computer. “What are you doing on there?” she asks me.

To someone who grew up without the Internet, I can understand why it might seem incomprehensible that I am literally doing everything on there: banking, submitting school assignments, chatting with friends and looking at their photos, shopping, sending out or responding to event invitations, and even dating (JDate only, of course).

So are my peers.

Whatever happened to good old-fashioned radio-listening or TV-watching? We do that online, too.

So, it should come as no surprise that when, in every one of my journalism classes at Carleton University, the professors ask students about our primary source of news, all hands go up at the sound of “World Wide Web.”

What I’m trying to say is, in a time where people – or, at least, people my age – are getting their news, and other things, from exclusively digital sources, the *Bulletin* has (until now) remained exclusively in-print.

That means, for the past few years, my parents’ friends have frequently given me feedback on my latest articles, while most of my friends don’t even know I write for



(From left) Mitchell Fogel, Arielle Kreisman, Emerging Gen columnist Ilana Belfer and Dana Abrams check out the latest online. Ilana admits, “Honestly, I spend most of my days in cyberspace.”

the *Bulletin*. It means that when, in a previous column, I asked the emerging generation several questions and called out for answers, no one responded.

How could I blame them? They probably never even caught wind of the piece. Because the *Bulletin* was inaccessible by way of the central place we turn to for sharing, spreading and discussing information.

The Jewish Federation of Ottawa and the community-at-large have been making grand efforts and great strides over the past few years in trying to engage the emerging generation – a generation that, according to the recent Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews, decreasingly identifies as Jewish, and a generation with declining synagogue attendance.

The Federation hired a director of initiatives for the emerging generation, and implemented a micro-grant program to fund our initiatives. Institutions targeting people my age, like the Glebe Shul, have popped up. And now, finally, we are turning our attention to a valuable community resource: the *Bulletin*.

What better way to connect community-wide than via the community newspaper? The newspaper has no denomination and does not belong to a certain shul or political party. The newspaper need not be read in the west

end, east end or downtown – it can be read by anyone, anywhere.

The newspaper informs us of community issues and events, and acts as an ongoing forum in which we can dialogue about community concerns, whether current or gleaned from a glance back into the archives. It’s a non-physical space where we interact and check in with one another on a regular basis.

Some older people complain that we younger people are not connected. Maybe no one’s been checking in with us in an environment we understand.

Thanks to the Internet, Gen Y has a terrible attention span, but an amazing ability to multitask. We have a penchant for speed and instant gratification. We expect our articles to come with multimedia content such as videos and hyperlinks to other pages. We expect to interact instantly and easily with the content, its author and other readers.

And if you think we’re not “connected,”

think again. We are most definitely connected to Wi-Fi. And, if we can’t get it where we are, we’ll move. We are connected to iTunes, just look at those headphones sticking out of our ears. I am personally connected to thousands of Facebook friends and hundreds of Twitter followers.

If you want to connect with us, follow us where we’re doing our connecting: online.

That the *Bulletin* has taken steps to do this will be critical to achieving the community’s goal of attracting and retaining the emerging generation. Now that the *Bulletin* has entered emerging gen territory, the least we can do is practise *hachnasat orchim* and welcome it into our homes with open arms and food for thought. First order of business: why not share this column?!

On behalf of the emerging generation, I wish the *Bulletin* Mazel Tov on this exciting new chapter.

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and to submit news stories, letters-to-the-editor, photos, announcements and event listings.

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Negev Dinner pays tribute to Heart Institute CEO

BY MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

Dr. Robert Roberts, president and CEO of University of Ottawa Heart Institute since 2004, was the honouree as friends, colleagues and supporters joined Ottawa's Jewish community in paying tribute to the world-renowned cardiologist at the sold-out Negev Dinner presented by the Jewish National Fund (JNF) of Ottawa, October 29, at the Fairmont Château Laurier.

Roberts was honoured "for his demonstration of community leadership, for his integrity and diligence, for his accomplishments, and for his support of the State of Israel."

He chose the Yir'On Recycled Water Reservoir in the Upper Galilee – the region twinned with Ottawa in the Partnership 2gether program – as the beneficiary of funds raised by the Negev Dinner in his honour.

In thanking JNF for honouring him, Roberts said it also gave him the opportunity to thank the Jewish community for all it has done on behalf of the Ottawa Heart Institute.

"Not just for your philanthropy, but so many of you have given of your time on our boards, on our committees, and in our various activities – all of which have been so meaningful to the Heart Institute," he said. "We are very grateful

for everything the Jewish community has done for us."

Roberts also paid tribute to Jewish contributions to religious thought – noting the 10 Commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai have remained a cornerstone of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Western thought – as well as to such fields as literature, music and, particularly, his own fields of medicine and science, and to the State of Israel.

"There are more Nobel Prize winners in science, per capita, in Israel than in any other country in the world," he said.

Roberts devoted much of his speech to a look at what he described as "my optimism for the future of mankind," predicting the 21st century would be one of the greatest eras in human history, thanks to the rapidly developing field of genetics and the mapping of the human genome.

DNA sequencing, he explained, determines an individual's susceptibility to specific diseases and, as we get to the point where everyone's DNA will be mapped, preventive medicine and treatments will be tailored to individual needs. Ultimately, this will result in living significantly longer and more qualitative lives.

Noting that the life span of human beings doubled in the 20th century,



(From left) JNF Ottawa President Alan Blostein, keynote speaker Bret Stephens, JNF Ottawa Executive Director Lynda Taller-Wakter, honouree Dr. Robert Roberts, and Negev Dinner Chair Lawrence Weinstein at the JNF Negev Dinner, October 29.

Roberts predicted that the human life span will double again in this century.

"That means children born in the first 12 years of this century will have an average life span of 120 years," he said. "Their children will average about 140 and their grandchildren about 160 years."

The keynote speaker for the evening was Bret Stephens, the conservative foreign affairs columnist for the *Wall Street Journal*, winner of the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for commentary, and a former editor-in-chief of the *Jerusalem Post*.

Stephens surveyed the current circumstances of the Middle East, noting that Israel remains the only country in the area that is both democratic and stable.

Mahmoud Abbas, he observed, remains president of the Palestinian Authority despite the fact that the term he was elected to expired almost five years ago, and that the Palestinian Authority long ago lost control of Gaza to Hamas.

He pointed out that the military had recently retaken control of Egypt, that

Iraq was slipping back into chaos and that Jordan was buckling under the weight of trying to cope with refugees from the civil war in Syria. Syria, he said, is the direst situation in the Middle East.

Stephens also warned that, should Iran attain nuclear weapon capability, it would put great pressure on Saudi Arabia, "which financed Pakistan's nuclear program," to follow suit.

Referring to the presence of a small group of noisy protesters chanting anti-Israel, anti-JNF and pro-Palestinian slogans outside the hotel prior to the dinner, Stephens said it was important to note Israel's record on traditionally liberal agenda items including environmentalism, human rights – including women's rights and gay rights – and the pursuit of peace was, by far, the strongest of any country in the Middle East.

"Why is it that progressive young people would be protesting a country and an organization that has done more for the environment than perhaps any other country or organization of its kind anywhere in the world?" he asked rhetorically.

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Pew report sparks lively and thoughtful panel discussion

BY LOUISE RACHLIS

Speakers at a lively panel discussion on the Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews stressed the importance of Jewish day schools, and that families must make Judaism a priority.

The discussion, held November 4 at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre, featured panellists Rabbi Barry Schlesinger of Agudath Israel Congregation, sociologist Jackie Luffman, and Rabbi Michael Goldstein of the Glebe Shul and NCSY. The moderator was Bram Bregman, vice-president of community building at the Jewish Federation of Ottawa.

Among the findings of the Pew report were that a growing proportion of Jewish adults say they have no religion but have a Jewish background and consider themselves Jewish. Intermarriage continues its long-term upward trend.

Rabbi Schlesinger spoke about the "Three Bs" of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, the founder of the Reconstructionist movement: belonging, believing and behaving.

"The strongest and most encouraging statistic is belonging. Most Jews are proud of their identity; those are very encouraging numbers," said Rabbi Schlesinger.

"However, as for believing and behaving, we're low in numbers."

The rabbi said he is not overly disturbed by the secularization of Jews.

"There are many secular Jews in Israel ... What I'm worried about is Jewish illiteracy."

He said from Reform Judaism, we've learned about tikkun olam. From Conservative Judaism, about egalitarianism and the addition of women, and from Orthodox Judaism, a sincere interest in Jewish learning from kindergarten to old age.

"Day school education is important for the next generation," said Rabbi Schlesinger. "We should cherish the Talmudic tradition – that is the only way we will learn how to behave ... Judaism is not only about tikkun olam, it's a lot more."

Luffman said that methodological

changes to the last Canadian census will make projections about Canada's Jewish population "much more difficult" because of the lack of proper data.

Regarding trends in interfaith marriage, the rate depends on where you live, she said.

"Geography is important. If you live in Toronto or Montreal, the odds of marrying a Jew are higher" because there is a much larger pool of Jews to meet.

Rabbi Goldstein stressed the importance of Judaism as a lifestyle and in not losing sight of the importance of a core relationship with God.

He quoted from an essay in Slate magazine saying "who cares?" about assimilation.

"I don't like his conclusion, but, if we want to tackle this problem in a genuine way, we have to look at the root causes," he said.

Michael Polowin, chair of the board of Camp B'nai Brith of Ottawa, added a positive note.

"I found this a little depressing, but I want to offer some optimism. Seven years ago, our camp was on the verge of dying," he said.

Polowin said the camp's marketing plan was "forget the older kids, let's get the little kids. Our camp is full now," noting "we are providing the 'b' of belonging."

Responding to the camp's upbeat success story, Rabbi Schlesinger asked Polowin to "engage your kids to work with my shul to build strong, engaged kids."

Mark Holzman, a past president of Temple Israel, noted, "We saw the results of Pew and said 'we know.' Rav Barry said 'tikun olam is not enough; the first thing Temple Israel did 45 years ago was to start a school ... We're doing things at Temple that recognize what's going on in the community. Last year, we took the step to allow civil marriages in the Temple to be performed by the rabbi where one member of the couple isn't Jewish. Thirty per cent of our members are interfaith couples."

In closing the discussion, Bregman noted that 70 per cent of the Pew respondents said 'remembering the



Rabbis Barry Schlesinger (left) and Michael Goldstein listen to sociologist Jackie Luffman's presentation during a panel discussion on the Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews.

Holocaust' was of prime importance for Jewish identity, but said that identity shouldn't be solely based on negativity.

"We should be doing things that add value to our lives. It's got to be something future-oriented. Our identity can't be based on anti-Semitism."

Federation chair Steven Kimmel thanked Bregman for putting the discussion together.

In response to several Ottawa Jewish Community School parents in attendance who had noted declines in enrolment due

to high tuition costs, and to a grandparent who said the cost was a major factor keeping her grandchildren from the school, Kimmel noted that no children in the community are being denied a Jewish education or Jewish camping experience because of the cost.

Kimmel encouraged parents and grandparents to be proactive in ensuring their children and grandchildren's Jewish future.

See more reaction to the Pew Research Center Survey on pages 6 and 17.

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FEDERATION REPORT



STEVEN KIMMEL
CHAIR

‘We are committed to shedding more light every day in our community’

The new *Bulletin* has been a work in progress, with the lay leadership and staff working hard over the past 24 months to bring the vision to fruition. Kol Hakoved to all of them! As you read through this inaugural edition, I hope you will agree their hard work has paid off.

We are set to celebrate Chanukah, and I feel this is a good time to reflect on the sense of renewal that is being experienced at the Jewish Federation of Ottawa.

Tradition has us light the Chanukiah in the window in order to share the light

and the miracle of Chanukah with others. With each day of Chanukah, as we add a candle, we strengthen the light.

At the Federation, we are committed to shedding more light every day in our community by supporting agencies that promote quality Jewish education, excel in caring for our elderly and ensure support for the vulnerable, just to name a few.

All these important needs could not be met without the tremendous financial support and enthusiasm our community has shown to date during the Annual

Campaign thanks to Campaign Chairs Charles Schachnow and Leiba Krantzberg, the hundreds of canvassers and the capable Federation staff who work tirelessly to ensure that we can continue to shine more light, day after day, month after month and year after year.

We are working together with our community agencies on initiatives that will ensure the lights of our people will never be extinguished.

Another message of Chanukah is one of hope. I believe the Ottawa Jewish community has much to be hopeful for and, with the help of each member, we can fulfil our dreams.

On behalf of my wife and children, I wish you all a joyous Chanukah, Hannukah, Chanuka, Chanukkah, Hanuka, Channukah, Chanukka, Hanukka – however you spell it!

Am Yisroel Chai, B’shalom.

As I sit down to write this column, the expression, ‘It’s all in the timing,’ is most appropriate, as this is appearing in the newly remodelled Chanukah edition of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*.

FROM THE PULPIT



RABBI HOWARD FINKELSTEIN
BEIT TIKVAH

We need to re-energize efforts in the wake of Pew statistics

*Let the monies
wasted on studies
be invested in schools
and synagogues standing
on the front line in the battle
against assimilation.*

*Let the energy consumed
in researching
what we already know
in these studies
be invested in outreach.*

The Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews, released last month in the United States, shows a shrinking number of young Jewish people who are identifying with Judaism from a religious point of departure.

The absurd tally that shows that Jewish people consider a sense of humour to be representative of Judaism is laughable and, at the same time, quite pathetic. The rising rate of assimilation in our southern neighbour’s Jewish communities is alarming and is threatening our own constituencies as well.

Years ago, the barnyard wisdom declared that the Canadian Jewish community is 20 years behind its American counterpart.

To my great consternation, I believe we have caught up with them. Our synagogue affiliations are diminishing, our day school numbers continue to dwindle and the rates of assimilation and inter-marriage continue to rise.

There is less and less cohesiveness in the Jewish community vis-à-vis Israel. It is no longer a given that the overwhelming majority of Jews is totally supportive of Israel. There is ennui about Israel in

certain circles today in the Jewish community, despite the successes of Birthright and similar programs.

Interestingly, for a large percentage of the Jewish population in the U.S., the Holocaust serves as a prime indicator of Jewish identification. Anti-Semitism unites the Jew. The horrors of the Shoah unite our people. The positive values of Judaism do not.

It is possible to manoeuvre through the Orthodox enclaves of Toronto and Brooklyn and believe all is good with the Jewish community. While it is true these pockets of Jewish areas give the mistaken impression all is well with the North American Jewish community, the cold reality that most of our people, young and not so young, are at best peripherally affiliated serves as a warning as to our future vitality as a community.

What, then, are the solutions?
Grandiose schemes do not work.

The battle to retain Jewish lives takes place in the streets, in the university halls and in the pubs. Outreach organizations cannot stem the tidal wave of assimilation, but they can rescue individuals from that deluge of dissociation with the Jewish community by providing classes, meals, events, etc.

What we do not need are any more studies where countless dollars are wasted on producing documents that reiterate what we already know on an instinctual and anecdotal level.

Let the monies wasted on studies be invested in schools and synagogues standing on the front line in the battle against assimilation. Let the energy consumed in researching what we already know in these studies be invested in outreach.

Organizations such as Aish HaTorah and their affiliates in North America need support to continue their good work with university students and adults. Outreach organizations can take a page from the playbook of Chabad, probably the most successful outreach program in Jewish history. One does not have to be a Chabadnik to acknowledge the highly successful campaign run by this movement, which speaks to the heart (and perhaps stomach) of the Jew.

Isaiah spoke of the “remnant” of Jewry that would remain loyal to Judaism. I pray that his prophecy not be fulfilled in our time. I pray instead that his other prophecy, in that the knowledge of the Lord will be as the universal as the waters of the world, will indeed come true.

Yes, there are shrinking pews in the synagogues of North America. But we can stem the tide through continued and re-energized efforts to educate the young and the unlearned in an affordable way.

To neglect our tasks as educators as a matter of deference to a devastating report would be gross negligence. As the rabbis tell us in *Sanhedrin*, “Even the saving of one life in Israel is equivalent to the rescuing an entire world.”

OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN

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FROM THE
EDITOR

MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

Recently, much of the conversation in North American Jewish circles has been dominated by the Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews released at the beginning of October. Jewish federations throughout North America, including the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, and many other Jewish organizations, from local synagogues to the largest international bodies, have discussed the implications of the study and what to do about the trends it reports.

Indeed, the Pew study has been the No. 1 topic of late in much of the Jewish media.

It's a primary focus of our report on page 3 about the Federation's panel discussion about the Pew report, of Rabbi Howard Finkelstein's *From the*

Pew report ties in to many of our conversations

Pulpit column on page 6, of a JTA report from the General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America on page 17, of a JTA report of how Conservative synagogues are wrestling with an effect of growing rates of intermarriage on page 26; and is also mentioned in the article about the challenges faced by Ottawa's synagogues on page 1, and in Ilana Belfer's *Emerging Gen* column on page 3, Andrea Freedman's publisher's column on page 8 and Bram Bregman's guest column on page 18.

Although the Pew report statistics apply specifically to U.S. Jews, there is much for Canadian Jews to learn from the trends. The conventional wisdom used to be that Canadian Jews were a generation behind our American cousins in societal trends. I've seen some Canadian commentators who agree with that, others who think we've already caught up.

Perhaps the Pew report statistic that has caused the greatest anxiety in Jewish circles is the one about Jews who identify as being Jewish, but as "Jews of no religion."

The Pew report shows that the younger one is, the more likely they are

to be a Jew of no religion. Overall, 22 per cent of adult U.S. Jews identify as such. Broken down by generation, we see that it ranges from just seven per cent of the *greatest generation* – the generation that fought in the Second World War – to 32 per cent of the millennials, those born after 1980. My own cohort, baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964, is at 19 per cent.

A bit of perspective: According to 2010 polling data, 42 per cent of Jewish Israelis identify themselves as "secular," that is to say "Jews of no religion." That's almost double the findings for American Jews in the Pew report. Another 25 per cent of Jewish Israelis in the 2010 poll identified as "not very religious."

There are many reasons for the growing trend of Jews claiming no religion and a lot of them go back to the development of liberal thought and modernity and to how we now live in North America as citizens who fully participate in all aspects of our wider society. Perhaps that's subject fodder for future columns.

In many ways, the Pew report statistics tie in to conversations that have dominated Jewish circles for a long time on

how to engage young adults – the emerging generation in their 20s and 30s – in Jewish life. It has been one of the primary focus areas of the Federation in recent years and certainly in the pages of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*. Putting the *Bulletin* fully online – which we're doing for the first time with this issue – is a major component of our strategy to engage the emerging generation, most of whom have abandoned printed newspapers in favour of the digital world.

Aspects of these conversations always remind me of how the more things change, the more they stay the same. In Montreal in the 1970s and '80s, when I was a member of the *emerging generation*, I took part in similar discussions. And mine was hardly the first generation to have those discussions.

The same can be said about the changes we're seeing in synagogue life in Ottawa. The models that worked a century ago had been abandoned or changed by the 1950s and '60s. The solutions we find now will be different than they were then; and, years from now, new solutions will have to be found when today's emerging generation is wondering how to engage their grandchildren in Jewish life.

Please join the conversation. Send your letters to bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com or submit them online at <http://ottawajewishbulletin.com/>.

IDEAS AND
IMPRESSIONS

JASON MOSCOVITZ

Community and communication: there can be no community without communication, and a measure of the strength of a community is how good the communication is. The revamped *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* is going to make for better communication, and we should all celebrate that.

As someone who began a television career 40 years ago using black-and-white film, communication innovation has become second nature to me, but is nonetheless always exciting. The obvious truth is the *Bulletin* is not reinventing the wheel, but it is progressing and moving forward, and for that, community leaders should be praised.

It would have been easy, I am sure, over

Let's all celebrate the revamped Ottawa Jewish Bulletin

many of its 76 years of existence to have had the *Bulletin* threatened by lack of interest, lack of volunteers, or lack of money – but people with commitment and vision kept it alive because they knew and understood its importance. And now, with the *Bulletin*'s redesign and expansion to the web, the commitment is there for the next 76 years – at least in spirit.

The *Bulletin* is like the little engine that could. But, within the community, it could become a bigger and a better engine. There are still too many people in our community who don't read the *Bulletin*. Sometimes, little engines like the *Bulletin* could be more boastful, more vocal, more present, and certainly more present-of-mind.

The *Bulletin* is headed in the right direction, but it takes more than that. Communication goes two ways. Those who believe in the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* believe engagement begins with people being interested in the product and then also being interested in making their own unique and important contributions in terms of content.

The *Bulletin* can be an even more important place to get and provide

information and ideas – intellectual, as well as practical. How can you know about all community events, if you don't read the *Bulletin* (or tell the *Bulletin* about your events)? How can you know the human stories that help us better understand organizations like Tamir, Hillel Lodge, the Jewish National Fund, as well as Jewish Family Services? There is an endless amount of information we should know and share within our own community – things the *Bulletin* has been telling us about for 76 years – but not enough of us have been taking advantage of it.

It is there to be distributed and read, and now, with the revamped print edition and web availability, the onus is on readers, not leaders, to do the rest. More people need to subscribe to the *Bulletin* and read it. More people need to make their own unique contributions. The *Bulletin* can be a great forum for community input. We live in an age of communication, should we not begin right at home?

I left journalism for a lot of good and bad reasons almost 12 years ago. I never thought I would write anything for publication again. It was a part of my life I put in the past. It was kind of 'been there,

done that, and thanks for the memories and the political war stories' I had in abundance. As for ever telling a story again in any medium, like I said, I figured my future was behind me.

I knew *Bulletin* Editor Michael Regenstreif, but our relationship, when we would meet at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre, had nothing to do with journalism. Michael and I talked about music. Ask Michael if you ever want to discover a new artist. He can really freshen up your playlist. In any case, two years ago, I got a call from Michael and I knew it had nothing to do with music.

Whatever the subject was, he wouldn't say. He asked if I could see him in his office. We met soon after and I was told several people had suggested I become a columnist for the *Bulletin*. It may have been his idea, but he couched it in the royal 'we.'

I was really surprised and very reluctant. I recall saying I was not sure I have anything to write about. I remember being more against the idea, but I did agree to think it over. Within a month, my first column appeared.

Two years later, the little engine that could has been, and remains, a great experience for me. I love sitting down to write. It has been a wonderful retirement gift that I conclude the community has given me.

I look very much forward to that little engine getting bigger and better.

Jeff Greenberg
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Jewish life is about tackling important issues, meeting today's challenges, and preparing for the future

Every day, as I walk into the office, I smile and think to myself that today will be a good day for the Jews. At the end of each day – after all the phone calls, meetings, emails and more meetings – I reflect that, indeed, it was a good day for the Jews.

As publisher of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*, I read each edition of the newspaper before it goes to print. Two things struck me as I absorbed this first issue published in our new format.

First, what a difference the design's crisp and clear layout makes! Second, how much Jewish angst exists as we ponder existential questions about our shuls, schools, the PEW report, etc.

Ultimately, I came to the conclusion that all of these challenges are actually indicative of the strength of our community – it all depends on whether you choose to view the glass as half-full or not.

Reading Samantha Banks' page 1 guest column about why many young adults have turned away from traditional synagogue attendance and Ilana Belfer's *Emerging Gen* column on page 3, I was inspired to learn that young adults yearn to connect Jewishly, if differently than their parents and grandparents. They are delighted that the *Bulletin* is going online so that they can join in the Jewish conversation and dialogue.

In reading about our synagogues, unquestionably, great change is happening and change is rarely easy. However, new models of religious engagement are connecting a younger demographic to Jewish life.

Is the rapid pace of change taking place at synagogues daunting? Absolutely! At the same time, each and every member of the community has a historic opportunity to shape, change and help form our future.

PEW statistics about declining participation in Jewish life are certainly dispiriting. However, when I juxtapose these feelings with the pride and joy with which I took in the art work and Chanukah commentary from students who attend Jewish day schools, I am comforted and re-assured. These young people take great pride in the miracles of Chanukah and the miracle of the Jewish people.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

ANDREA FREEDMAN



Our challenge is to increase the number of consumers of Jewish education and Jewish life. Not a simple or easy task to be sure, but one which is clearly defined and we can all work on together. And one for which there is a successful precedence in our community with the powerful resurgence of Camp B'nai Brith of Ottawa, which Michael Polowin pointed out at the Federation's panel discussion about the Pew report (see the article on page 5).

When I first read this edition, I must confess I was uneasy.

Part of me likes reading a *Bulletin* that focuses on the Jewish community's finest accomplishments and celebrates key leadership. I enjoy hearing about all the good works and important projects that so many community members undertake.

My uneasiness stemmed from a feeling that this edition is different as it engages in an examination of some of the tremendous challenges that we as a people and community face. However, after some careful reflection, I realized that the fact that the inaugural edition of the new *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* did make me react is actually a good thing.

Jewish life is about respectful discussion and debate. Jewish life ought to be about exploring new ideas and new approaches. Jewish life is about tackling important issues and meeting the challenges of today and preparing for future challenges.

At its core, Jewish life is and should always be interesting and inspiring. And, sometimes, interesting can be uncomfortable – it involves introspection, looking at areas for improvement and allowing for a diversity of opinions to participate in the conversation.

In print and online, we can now all take part in the discussion and debate and we all have a role to play in strengthening our community – ideas, opinions and actions go hand in hand.

When I leave the office today, I will once again think to myself that it was certainly an interesting day and it was also another good day for the Jews. Amazingly, tomorrow has the potential to be even better!

Andrea Freedman is president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa. She can be reached at afreedman@jewishottawa.com.

LETTERS WELCOME

Letters to the Editor are welcome if they are brief, signed, timely, and of interest to our readership. The *Bulletin* reserves the right to refuse, edit or condense letters. The *Mailbag* column will be published as space permits.

Send your letters to Michael Regenstreif, *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*
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Alan Blostein
President

2013 Negev Dinner: Thank you Ottawa

The 2013 Ottawa Negev Dinner was a resounding success, both financially for Dr. Robert Roberts' project, the Yir'On Recycled Water Reservoir, and as JNF Ottawa's key fundraising event. Success is truly a team effort and without the community, corporations and volunteers, we could not achieve our fundraising goals. On behalf of our Board, I want to give a special thank you to Dinner Chair Lawrence Weinstein who worked extremely hard to ensure the financial success of the evening by reaching out to many corporate sponsors; to Honorary Patron Lawrence Soloway for connecting with Dr. Roberts; to Stephen Victor for his ongoing support; and to Dr. Roberts, who graciously accepted the honour and gave JNF Ottawa the opportunity to fundraise on his behalf. In getting to know Dr. Roberts, we can all be proud of honouring both a key community leader and a true mensch.

We want to recognize our sponsors, so please take note of the JNF Thank You ad on page 10 of this edition of the new and improved *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*. Yasher Koach to Michael Regenstreif and the team at the *Bulletin* for the redesign and for providing the avenue to reach out to the community. Several of our sponsors donated their tables so that we could augment our fundraising totals and provide an opportunity for our team of young professionals who volunteered for the evening to attend the Dinner and to learn from our speakers – Dr. Roberts and keynote Bret Stephens.

Our Board worked diligently at canvassing advertisers and community members. Our Advertising Committee was spearheaded by the ever-capable and energetic Jane and Martin Gordon. They ensured the canvassers had the tools and the information to make calls and followed up to ensure calls were made. The team comprised David Baker, Dr. Norman Barwin, Margo Blostein, Lisa Cogan, Oliver Javanpour, Naomi Lipsky-Cracower, Dan Mader, Brian Pearl, Penny Torontow and Karen Zunder. A special kol hakavod, todah rabah and thank you to Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka for being our MC.

To community members of multiple faiths who made financial gifts towards Dr. Roberts' project, we are ever so grateful for your generosity.

And, of course, thank you to Executive Director Lynda Taller-Wakter and to her assistant, Ilana Albert-Novick for their dedication to the evening's success.

December 16 deadline for JNF Blue Box 2013 tax receipt

Please ensure you bring in your Blue Box no later than December 16 in order to get a tax receipt for 2013. If you need a hand, please call our office for help.

January 19 is our Tu B'shevat Telethon

We are delighted to introduce Penny Torontow as our Telethon Chair. You will be hearing more soon on the JNF project we are supporting this year. Meanwhile, please consider volunteering. Call our office at 613-798-2411 to sign up!

Sefer Bat Mitzvah

Mazel tov to **Daliah Miller**, by her loving parents, Lisa and Mitch Miller, and by her loving Bubby and Zaidie, Leah and Ken Miller.

On a daily basis you can plant trees for all occasions. An attractive card is sent to the recipient. To order, call the JNF office (613.798.2411).



JFS day programs help Jewish seniors cope with cognitive impairment

BY LAURA THOMAS
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

The Thelma Steinman Seniors Support Services program of Jewish Family Services (JFS) offers a wide variety of activities aimed at brightening a senior's world and easing common worries of their caregivers.

The program provides practical services that allow Jewish seniors to stay connected and maintain their independence.

The Seniors Department has a dedicated team that works hard to provide high quality programs and services to the Jewish community, including case management, kosher Meals on Wheels, arranging transportation to medical appointments, social programming in English and Russian, assistance for Holocaust survivors, and two adult day programs.

With the help of a private donation, JFS has been able to implement the Chaverim Day Away program, an adult day program designed for Jewish seniors with mild cognitive impairment.

The program provides an enjoyable day of activities designed to maintain independence, provide cognitive stimulation and enhance the well-being of participants. This program has the added benefit of providing a day of respite for caregivers.

The experienced, dynamic and enthusiastic leaders who comprise the program staff are dedicated to creating exciting and meaningful experiences for Jewish seniors.

A second adult day program, the Binah Day program, was created for Jewish seniors with moderate cognitive impairments.

This program provides an opportunity for seniors to have one-on-one interaction with a staff member trained to work with the Fit Minds InterAct Caregiver's Kit. Staff members focus on the unique strengths of each participant, drawing on their needs, interests and experiences.

The InterAct Program is more than just a memory program. It is filled with activities, exercises and games organized around five areas of cognition: language and music; critical thinking; visual and spatial orientation;

computation; and memory.

Both programs provide a comfortable and safe environment for clients. They have use of two large activity rooms, a kosher kitchen and a computer room.

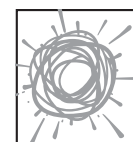
The group activities are designed to trigger memory through sensory stimulation, creative arts and activities designed to promote skills centred on daily living.

These programs have been instrumental in allowing Jewish seniors with cognitive impairments to stay connected socially while remaining in their own homes. With additional financial support from the community, JFS is hoping to expand these programs by offering additional programming days.

The credit for the success of these two programs goes to the dedicated staff, as well as members of the Jewish community who have realized the necessity for adult day programs.

We are always looking for interested volunteers who wish to donate time to help seniors in the community.

If you have a few hours a month and desire to get involved, please contact our volunteer co-ordinator at 613-722-2225, ext. 411.



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Canadian Hadassah WIZO Ottawa opening meeting

Marion Mayman, Annette Albert, Gloria Krugel and Helen Saipé were among the interviewees honoured for their participation in Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW), Ottawa Centre's *Memories* film at CHW Ottawa Centre's annual opening meeting, October 1, at Temple Israel. (From left) Ruth Kahane Goldberg; Marion Mayman, past CHW national president; Annette Albert; CHW National President Marla Dan; Gloria Krugel; Helen Saipé; and CHW Ottawa Centre President Esther Kulik.



Chabad Student Network visits Brooklyn

Rabbi Chaim Boyarsky (far right) accompanied 13 students from the Rohr Chabad Student Network on a trip to New York, October 24-27, where they joined more than 1,000 Jewish students from Chabad campus centres across North America. The Ottawa group is seen here in front of Lubavitch World Headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn.

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Chanukah

BY MALKA ALTER
TORAH ACADEMY
GRADE 6

Chanukah is here
Have a share
And eat all the gelt
No don't let it melt
Up on the sill
Kindle and fill
A wonderful street
Have a nice treat

The miracles of Chanukah

BY JOSHUA WOLFSOHN
OJCS - GRADE 8

Chanukah is a time of joy, a Jewish holiday to commemorate the victory of the Maccabees, a small Jewish army, over the Greeks who wanted Jews to give up their religion or be forced to die or leave the land of Judea.

They burned down the First Temple and de-sanctified it. While Judah the Maccabee was preparing his army, Jews practised Judaism secretly.

One of the miracles of Chanukah was the tiny army of Maccabees defeating the

mighty and powerful Greeks.

The other miracle – the reason why we light candles on a chanukiah – is the miracle of the oil. When the war was over, the Jews needed to light the menorah, but there was only enough oil to last one day. Miraculously, the menorah stayed lit for eight days!

Chanukah is a holiday to celebrate our miraculous victories. So spin some dreidels (which we use because Jews played with them when the Greeks ruled), eat some greasy food (not too much though!), light the chanukiah and enjoy the warmth of family.

Chanukah's miracles

BY MIRIAM KAHANE
RAMBAM DAY SCHOOL
GRADE 5

On Chanukah, three big miracles happened. The first miracle was that the Maccabees won the war against the Greeks. The great miracle in that was that the Greeks had about 1,000 more people. The second was the miracle of oil. They needed to have pure oil to light the menorah. When they came to the *Bas Hamigdas* after they won, they could not find pure oil. After looking for a while, they found a drop of pure oil in a bottle under a board of wood. The third miracle is that the drop of pure oil lasted eight days.

The things we do to remember the two miracles of oil are that we cook things like doughnuts and latkes in oil. Mmmm!

Why do we play dreidel on Chanukah? We play dreidel on Chanukah because the Jews played dreidel when they heard the Greeks coming. So, when the Greek guard asked, "What are you doing?" they would say, "We are playing a game."



There are four sides of the dreidel with a Hebrew letter on each side. The letters are *shin*, *nun*, *hay* and *gimal*, which stand for the Hebrew words meaning "a great miracle happened there."

The miracle happened in Eretz Yisroel so, in Israel, dreidels have a *pay* instead of a *shin*. So the dreidels there represent the Hebrew words, "a great miracle happened here."

We play dreidel with Chanukah gelt (chocolate coins) or raisins. Yummy!

Chanukah is great because we get to have family time. We light the menorah. We play dreidel and we eat a meal. The best part of the meal is that we get to have latkes and for dessert we get jelly doughnuts. Mmmm!

Have a great Chanukah!



Tzvi Yechezkel | Grade 1 | Torah Academy



Nava Wolfish | Grade 5
Ottawa Jewish Community School

CHANUKAH | Students' art and essays



Chaya Sara Loff | Grade 1
Torah Academy

Publicizing the miracle of Chanukah

BY CHAYA BOYARSKY
RAMBAM DAY SCHOOL
GRADE 5

Pirumei Nisa is an Aramaic term which means publicizing the miracle of Chanukah. There are many different ways of publicizing the miracle and one of them is by doing a menorah parade.

Around the world, Chabad does a menorah parade every year during Chanukah. The Chabad community goes into the streets with booming loud music and menorahs on their cars and goes driving through the streets.

Another way of publicizing the Chanukah miracle is by having Chanukah parties in public places like a mall, on Parliament Hill, or even at a Senators game! These are all ways that publicize the miracle.

There is a story about a man who almost took his life, but, after an unplanned visit to one of these public celebrations, he decided to give life a second chance.

A few years earlier, this man had suffered a terrible car accident, which tragically killed his wife and one of his daughters. He was suddenly a single

father taking care of a young daughter.

He fell into a deep depression and decided one day that he would commit suicide. He felt it was only right to first treat his daughter to a movie at the mall. On his way to the movie theatre, he suddenly noticed a festive Chanukah celebration taking place. There was a crowd of people dancing and the man got pulled into the circle. He felt so uplifted he decided to cancel his plan.

This is why it is so important to make sure everyone can learn about and celebrate Chanukah.

The traditions of Chanukah

BY MIRIAM CAYTAK
RAMBAM DAY SCHOOL
GRADE 8

Chanukah is an interesting holiday with traditions that go back to ancient times. It commemorates the rededication of the holy Temple in Jerusalem, during the period of the second Temple. It is celebrated for eight days and eight nights.

One of the most interesting traditions is lighting the candles in the menorah. Each night, one more candle is lit so that on the last day of Chanukah all eight candles are shining.

There are also different traditions involved in the holiday celebrations. It is not forbidden to work during the eight days of the holiday, but usually people go home from work earlier to be there for the lighting of the menorah. Although there are no religious reasons to close schools for the holiday, in Israel they are closed from the second day until the end of Chanukah. Some people have a custom to give Chanukah gelt each day of the holiday. Chanukah gelt is gifts of

money, which parents give to their children.

After lighting the menorah, it is customary to sing "Ma'oz Tzur" and "Haneros Hallalu." People usually sing other songs every day of the holiday. It is also a custom to eat foods fried in olive oil such as potato pancakes and jelly doughnuts.

The word Chanukah means 'dedication' or 'induction.' Also, the word Chanukah can be divided into two: Chanu (they rested) and Kah (Hai, which has a numerical value of 25 in Hebrew. On the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev, the Maccabees rested from their battle and marched into the holy Temple ready to rededicate it.

The miracle of Chanukah occurred in a dark time when there were wicked decrees against the Jews. But the Maccabees had courage and never lost hope. Their *mesirut nefesh* (self-sacrifice) turned the darkness into light!

Today, too, our *mesirut nefesh* for Torah and mitzvot will light up the world and bring Moshiach now!



Shira Rudin

Grade 5
Ottawa Jewish Community School

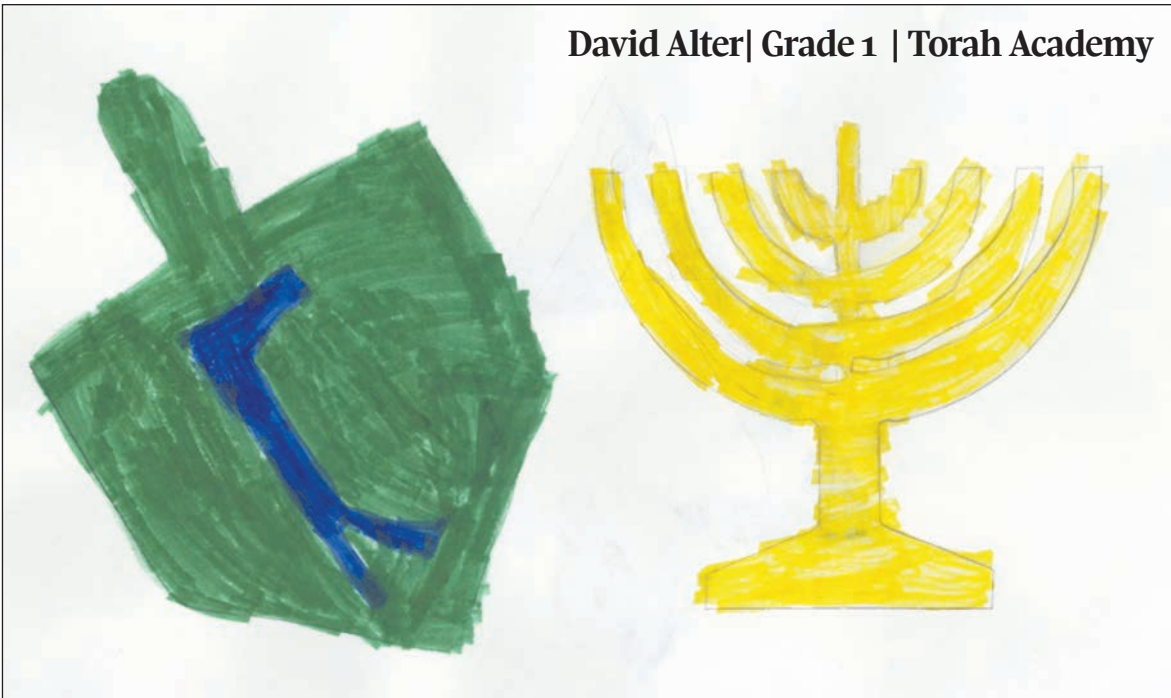
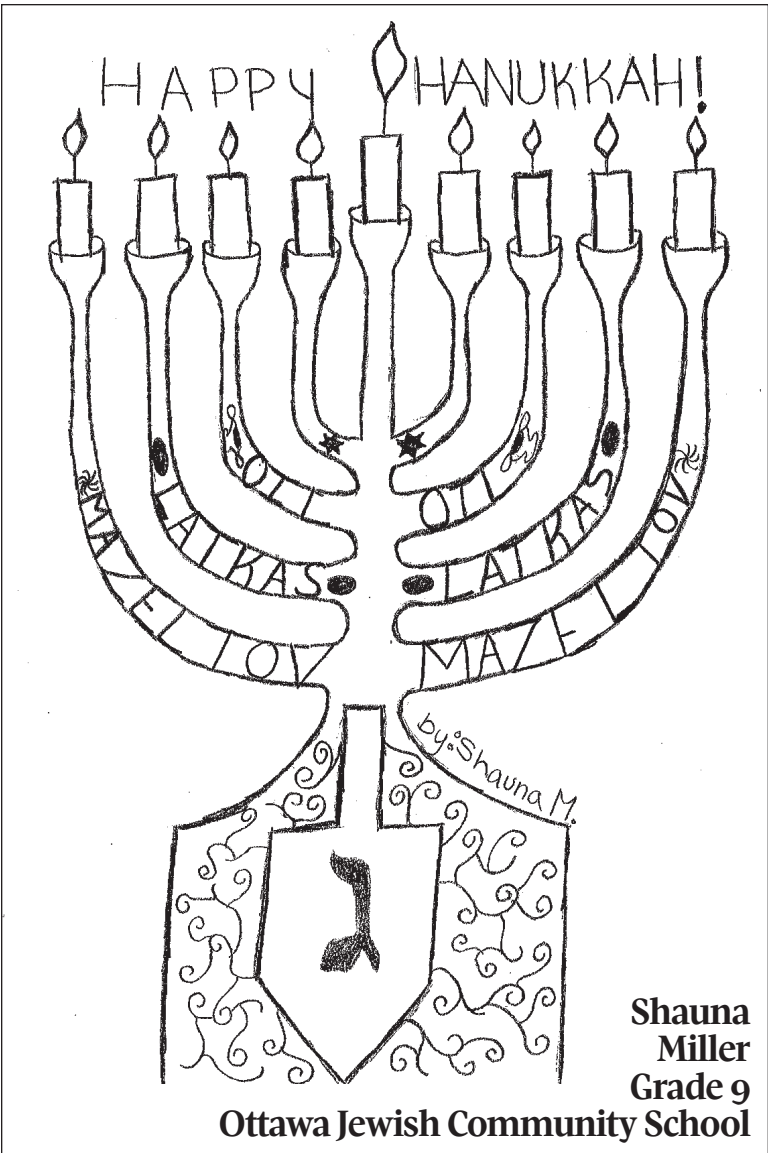
CHANUKAH

Chanukah is a great holiday. It is a great time to party and spend time with your family. There are tons of parties to go to, and lots of food to eat- but have you ever thought of how Chanukah became a holiday? Well, it all started when the Greeks waged war on the Jews, but the Jews created a resistance squad called the "Maccabees" consisting of less than fifty Jews. This resistance managed to overthrow the Greeks and save Israel!



Binyamin MacCleod-Stokes | Grade 9
Ottawa Jewish Community School

CHANUKAH | Students' art and essays



Celebrate the miracles of Chanukah

BY BRACHI COODIN
RAMBAM DAY SCHOOL
GRADE 8

During Chanukah, we celebrate miracles that happened many years ago.

One of the things we do is play dreidel because when Jews were not allowed to learn Torah, children would learn Torah secretly. When Greek soldiers came around, the children

quickly hid their Torah scrolls and started playing dreidel.

We also eat fried foods like doughnuts and latkes to remember the oil that would normally last for one day, lasted eight whole days!

Another custom is giving gifts of gelt to children on Chanukah to encourage them to learn more Torah and do more mitzvot.

The most important thing we

do on Chanukah is light the menorah in order to remember the miracle of the oil and announce it to everyone.

That is why we light the menorah near a window or a doorway.

I really like Chanukah because I get to spend time with friends and family, play dreidel, and celebrate the miracles of Chanukah.



Work continues on sinkhole next to Temple Israel

Congregation hopes to get use of front door back by winter

It's not a biblical archeological dig, but there is an excavation going on beside Temple Israel on Prince of Wales Drive.

The side door is blocked, and Temple members are entering through the kitchen or the lower level.

In a letter to congregants, Temple president Lorne Rachlis discussed the sinkhole, which developed in the Hellenic Centre's parking lot, next door to Temple, early in September.

"Excavation began on the site, which was formerly occupied by a gas station, and various scrap items as well as some contaminated soil were removed. The Hellenic Community asked and received permission to continue the excavation onto Temple property, at their expense, in order to ensure that all contaminated soil would be removed."

They also agreed to return Temple's property surface to its original condition.

The letter noted that the excavation



This photo taken November 5 shows the extent of the work taking place beside Temple Israel's front door.

has been "more extensive and of longer duration than anyone anticipated."

Temple's Building Committee – Co-chairs Marjorie Feldman and Steve

Mendelsohn plus Steve Asherman, David Delicate and Julie Taub – is in regular communication with the Hellenic Centre staff and executive.

"It is expected that the hole will be re-filled and access to our front door will be reinstated prior to the onset of winter," said Rachlis.



PHOTO: MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

Federation meets with agency directors

The Jewish Federation of Ottawa organized a meeting, October 30, with the executive directors of all its beneficiary agencies.

"It is important to bring together the various agencies so they can dialogue and collaborate with each other, as the Jewish community is always stronger when we work together. We plan to do more of these programs for all Jewish organizations in Ottawa," said Bram Bregman, Federation vice-president of community building.



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Synagogues: Alternatives see some success

Continued from page 2

about 350, the shul is striving to refine communications and outreach to the unaffiliated.

The Temple Israel board must also start looking for a rabbi to replace its long-serving spiritual leader, Rabbi Steven Garten, who will retire soon.

Finding sufficient money to support initiatives, from communications and outreach to meaningful programming, is difficult for most congregations. Fees play a critical role in supporting congregations, but many young families now balk at the rates. Most charge annual membership fees ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand per family. But all adjust their fees for people who just can't afford the full amount.

Some congregations have looked at lowering or dropping fees, but it's a vicious circle. Without the money,

they are unable to cover upkeep on the buildings, and continue to pay clergy and support staff.

Ellis Solomon, president of Congregation Beit Tikvah, an Orthodox synagogue in Craig Henry, said fundraising is difficult with many congregations and other Jewish organizations competing for money from the same pool of about 14,000 Jews in the city.

But not only are congregations competing for funds, they are also competing for time.

Working families often find it difficult to get to synagogue for Shabbat services that are several hours long. But what options are there? Should congregations change religious practice to accommodate kids' hockey practice?

The answers aren't clear, but some rabbis insist Ottawa's Jews are still religious; they just want to find new ways to express it.

Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton became the first-ever permanent spiritual leader of Or Haneshamah, Ottawa's Reconstructionist congregation earlier this year. The congregation began as a chavurah meeting in living rooms in 1987. Now, its 70 families meet at a Unitarian congregation in the west end.

Rabbi Bolton said Reconstructionism is "a new vision of Judaism that steps out of the Orthodox-to-Reform continuum. We're a very limber movement. What that means is meeting in Quaker spaces, and we also meet in other synagogues."

Rabbi Bolton said she wants to facilitate all the portals through which Jews of any age can connect with their culture and faith.

Chabad, with several locations in the city, including the Ottawa Torah Centre Chabad (OTC) in Barrhaven, is another growing movement in Ottawa. After years in a temporary structure, OTC is currently constructing a permanent building which is due to open in time for the High Holy Days next September.

While Chabad Lubavitch is a Chasidic movement, it serves as a religious outreach movement aimed at Jews of all denominational backgrounds and levels of observance.

According to the OTC's Rabbi Menachem Blum, young families don't accept synagogue membership as a given.

"It doesn't cut it," he said. "We need to be where they are, and speak their language and be with them," noting upcoming Chanukah programs like the menorah lighting at Canadian Tire Centre during the Senators-Canucks game on November 28.

Orthodox Rabbi Michael Goldstein and his wife Stacy are also trying something different. Working with the religious outreach organization JET (Jewish Education through Torah); they established the Glebe Shul in 2011 as "a shul without walls" aimed at "students, young professionals and new families." Glebe Shul activities mostly centre on social events, classes and Shabbat dinners in the Goldsteins' Fifth Avenue home.

"For dinner, we can squish in 48 and we always have a waiting list," said Rabbi Goldstein.

Do other synagogues and congregations feel like the Glebe Shul is skimming the young people?

"At first there was a feeling that we were getting into the shul business in a place that's already overpopulated with shuls," but Rabbi Goldstein said the Glebe Shul doesn't want to position itself as competition.

"People confuse marketing and sales. They are very different things," he explained.

He said most of the mainstream congregations do a lot of marketing, with great programs, lovely facilities, and lot of good flyers and posters. But then nobody comes and they are disappointed. The Glebe Shul, he said, uses the opposite approach – sales – making one-to-one pitches to individuals, saying, 'Attend this event. You'll like it.'

"We're heavy into sales and that's coming through."

Meanwhile, after Beth Shalom leaves its building in about four months, the only remaining downtown synagogue will be Ohev Yisroel, a tiny, Orthodox congregation of 25 families on Rideau Street.

President Heshel Teitelbaum said the small synagogue keeps its doors open by being receptive to all, attracting travellers and students in the downtown area.

So, while many traditional congregations continue to deal with the challenges illustrated in the Pew report, some of Ottawa's alternative synagogue options appear to be finding ways to redefine what it means to serve the Jewish community's desire for organized religion.

As they look for their own new way forward, leaders of many Ottawa synagogues will likely be taking note of what has happened at Or Haneshamah since the arrival of Rabbi Bolton, the city's first female rabbi. The Reconstructionist congregation has seen an increase in memberships of nearly 10 per cent in the last few months alone, and many more people are asking questions about joining.

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Pew survey statistics cast long shadow over Jerusalem General Assembly

North American leaders debate plans for future

BY BEN SALES

Jerusalem (JTA) – When it's held in Israel once every five years, the General Assembly (GA) of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) aims to focus on challenges and opportunities facing the Jewish state. In large part, this year's GA, held November 10 to 12, was no exception.

Israel's president, prime minister and other prominent politicians addressed the crowd. Sessions covered Israel's foreign and domestic agenda, from Iran's nuclear program to Israel's marriage laws to the aftermath of the 2011 social protests. The conference culminated with a walk to the Western Wall.

But a funny thing happened on the way to Jerusalem. The release of the Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews gave conference delegates a comprehensive picture of Jewish life in America, a set of sometimes troubling statistics and plenty to talk about.

Hanging over the delegates' heads were two questions that have obsessed the Jewish community since the study was released last month: What does it mean? And what do we do about it?

Answers came in sessions before and during the conference, and in speeches by JFNA CEO Jerry Silverman and Chair Michael Siegal. Taken together, they recommended greater accessibility to communal resources and programs such as preschool and camp, combined with a

focus on developing personal connections between community leaders and young Jews.

"The fact that we act collectively, that is our brand," Silverman said at a plenary. "Not just the things we do, but the fact that we do them together. Let's never forget that. Let's never be so passionate about a single cause that we forget that our real cause is community."

Silverman lamented the high cost of Jewish education and called for Jewish preschool to be free, as well as for a major expansion of the Jewish summer camp network.

Federations, Silverman said, need to do a better job of engaging the "low-hanging branches" of alumni from large programs like the free 10-day Birthright trip to Israel. He recommended establishing a one-on-one mentoring program between community leaders and young Jews.

Silverman also advocated making better use of technology and announced plans for the creation of an encyclopedic website within a year to share communal best practices and pool data. He reiterated his call for Birthright to make more of its data available to communities nationwide, a process that Birthright says was already underway.

"Half of our young population has been exposed to Israel and yet we don't follow up," Silverman said. "We could change the face of Jewish communal life one relationship at a time."

Siegal called for the creation of "Jewish development zones" where large communities each would have a summer camp, high-quality Jewish day schools, increased youth programming and leadership training opportunities.

Panel sessions focused less on policy solutions and more on what principles should guide the Jewish community in responding to a lack of communal connection among young Jews. A two-day summit on formulating a plan to strengthen the connection between Israel and Diaspora Jewish communities ahead of the GA emphasized the value of immersive experiences for North American Jews in Israel and with Israelis.

"The Jewish identity of Jews around the world has weakened," the director-general of Israel's Prime Minister's Office, Harel Locker, said at the summit's opening session. "This shift is opening a gap between the Jews of the Diaspora and Israel, especially among the younger generation."

Speaking at a Global Jewish Peoplehood Roundtable sponsored by the UJA-Federation of New York, Boston's Combined Jewish Philanthropies Executive Vice-President Gil Preuss said that federations should focus on giving young Jews meaningful, substantive Jewish experiences instead of aiming to attract the maximum number of participants to programs.

"What does it mean to be Jewish, to be part of the Jewish people?" he said. "If you focus on content, you'll get numbers."

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Old wisdom for building the community of tomorrow

Malcolm Gladwell's bestseller *Outliers: The Story of Success* begins with the remarkable story of Roseto, Pennsylvania. Roseto was a unique town in the mid-20th century in that almost no one under 55 had suffered a heart attack, while death from heart disease among men over 65 was half the national average.

Doctors and sociologists were baffled. Was it healthier living? Were all towns in this vicinity similar? Was it genetics?

After much investigation, researchers concluded there was one reason:

BRAM BREGMAN GUEST COLUMN

community. Roseto comprised close-knit families who cared for, and spoke with, one another. This alone resulted in the townsfolk living healthier and longer.

Being a part of a community is a beautiful thing that enhances our lives, adds meaning and gives us purpose. It is about being with people in good times and

not-so-good times, and working together to improve this world. The Jewish community of Ottawa is one of the finest, one we should all be proud to be a part of.

Historically, Jews have been unified and galvanized by the scourge of anti-Semitism. The question for today, when our survival as a people is no longer a pressing issue, how do we build the Jewish community of tomorrow?

The answer may be found in the most ancient book of all. When Tony Blair was prime minister of the United Kingdom, he regularly learned Bible (Torah) with Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks. Blair asked Rabbi Sacks why only 34 verses were needed to describe creation, but more than 10 times that number to outline the building of the *mishkan*, the tabernacle built by the Jews in the desert.

Rabbi Sacks answered that, in the desert, the Jews had not yet become a nation. Moses needed a way to bring together diverse individuals to become a singular people. So God tells Moses that, to unite the Jews into the nation of Israel, they must come together and build together. By creating an intricate *mishkan*, a common purpose among all the Jews of that time, God and Moses were able to build community.

Rabbi Sacks turned this insight into a book, which became part of U.K. policy on creating a cohesive multicultural society.

As a community, we cannot wait for a common enemy to come along to unite us. In the recent, much-publicized Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews, there was much discussion of the disturbingly low rates of Jewish affiliation and identity. Most alarming to me was a response that did not receive much attention. It was to the question, "What's essential to being Jewish?" The top

answer, by 73 per cent of respondents, was remembering the Holocaust.

I am a firm believer in remembering the Holocaust and its lessons, but, if the most tragic event in the history of the Jewish people is what is the most essential part of what being Jewish means to Jews today, our community will not sustain itself.

This cannot be what Jewish identity is predicated on.

We can build a sense of community in Ottawa in the same fashion that Jews built the *mishkan* thousands of years ago – by uniting and working in common purpose. A common purpose of celebrating our Jewish holidays and traditions, of being there for each other in good and bad times, of bettering our proud homeland of Israel and a common purpose of repairing the world.

We need more *community builders* in Ottawa to unite people for common good. Mitzvah Day is an Ottawa event where the entire Jewish community can be with one another for a morning of doing good deeds and acts of kindness. Let's not wait for something bad to happen. Let's all come together on Sunday, February 9, as proud members of the Ottawa Jewish community and let's do a *mitzvah together*.

Community is something we are all invested in, and, as with all good investments, the more we put in, the more we get out. The Jewish community has so much to offer – if each one of us finds something personally meaningful to get involved with, we can build community together. It is good for our souls – and, apparently, our hearts as well.

Bram Bregman is vice-president of community building of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa. He can be reached at 613-262-6279 or bram@jewishottawa.com.

Employment Opportunity - Machzikei Hadas

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Yemenite Jews en route to Israel during Operation Magic Carpet, an Israeli government operation that evacuated 44,000 Jews from Yemen to Israel in 1949-'50.

Canada urged to recognize plight of Jewish refugees who fled Arab lands

Ottawa (JTA) – A parliamentary committee called on the federal government to recognize the plight of Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

A report from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development recommends that Ottawa “officially recognize the experience of Jewish refugees who were displaced from states in the Middle East and North Africa after 1948.” It also recommends that Canada “encourage the direct negotiating parties to take into account all refugee populations as part of any just and comprehensive resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflicts.”

Submitted to Parliament this month, the 17-page report noted that, during the course of its hearings in May, the committee “learned of the discrimination and hardship faced by Jewish people living in the Middle East and North Africa in the 20th century [which] surged over the years in tandem with the crisis moments of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in particular the 1948-1949 and 1967 wars.

“As a result,” the report states, “almost all of the Jews in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia,

and Yemen eventually left their homes and communities, which had existed in the Middle East and North Africa for centuries.”

The committee heard that, since 1948, about 850,000 Jews fled persecution and violence in the Middle East and North Africa, and that about 650,000 immigrated to Israel, while the rest settled in other countries, including Canada.

The report stressed that “recognition of the experiences of Jewish refugees does not diminish or compete with the situation of Palestinian refugees.”

When the committee began deliberations, the Canadian Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which appeared as a witness, noted that Canada’s official Middle East policy “neglects” Jewish refugees from Arab countries, “only accounting for Palestinian refugees.”

CIJA welcomed the report. “We are hopeful that the federal government will quickly enact the committee’s recommendations and ensure that Canadian policy reflects a fair, accurate and complete account of the history of Middle Eastern refugees,” said its CEO, Shimon Fogel.

Jewish Federation establishes relief fund in response to deadly typhoon in Philippines

Canadian government will match donations

Typhoon Haiyan, one of the strongest storms on record, slammed into the central Philippines on November 8 killing at least 2,275 people, with many more feared dead, while forcing an estimated 750,000 people to flee their homes. In response, the Jewish Federation of Ottawa has established a Philippines Typhoon Relief Fund.

Funds raised will support the life-saving efforts of its partner agency, the Israeli-based humanitarian organization IsraAID, which was one of the first international aid organizations on the ground in the Philippines.

In co-ordination with Israel’s Prime Minister’s Office, IsraAID sent a team to the Philippines immediately, consisting of medical, trauma and relief professionals. On their arrival, the IsraAID team joined forces with local NGOs and UN agencies in treating the hundreds of thousands affected by Typhoon Haiyan which raced across a string of highly

populated Philippine islands from east to west, triggering landslides, blocked roads, uprooted trees and tragic destruction.

“Our local counterparts in the most devastated areas of Leyte and Samar islands are reporting that over 90 per cent of houses collapsed,” said IsraAID Founding Director Shachar Zahavi as the organization prepared for its mission to the Philippines.

“From what I’ve seen and heard, the scenario in the Philippines today is reminiscent of the horrific 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. According to reports, countless people are walking around, aimlessly, in search of food, warmth, and a place to lay their head if only for a little while,” Zahavi said.

Visit <http://jewishottawa.com/> or call Jean Myers at 613-798-4696, ext. 242, to donate to the Philippines Typhoon Relief Fund.

Donations to the fund will be matched by the Canadian government, which has pledged to match funds from individual Canadians donated to registered Canadian charities responding to the crisis.

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Members of the Tamir Neshama Choir with special guest JJ Keki. (Standing, from left) Kate Capogreco, Michael Murphy, Shirley Harris, Jason Kershman, Cantor Daniel Benlolo, JJ Keki, Debbie Wasserman, Robyn Purkayastha, Samantha Molot, Vesna Scott, Frank Charbonneau; (seated) Betty Ann Capogreco, Meredith Caplan, Edith Garmen and Claire Zloten.

The Tamir Neshama Choir and JJ Keki come together in song

Abayudaya leader sings on new recording

BY KATHERINE CARTER
TAMIR

The Tamir Neshama Choir hosted a very special guest, November 2, when Joab Jonadeb (JJ) Keki – a featured musician and singer on the 2005 Grammy-nominated CD, *Abayudaya: Music from the Jewish People of Uganda* – joined as a guest singer on their latest project, a new album being recorded!

The project, which is spearheaded by Cantor Daniel Benlolo, focuses on their message of inclusion and the benefits of working creatively beside artists and professionals, from near and far.

JJ, who was the first chair of the Abayudaya (Jewish) community in Uganda, and is the founding director of the Delicious Peace Coffee Co-operative, an interfaith co-op of Muslim, Christian and Jewish coffee farmers, was in Ottawa recently for several speaking and musical appearances organized through Canadian Friends of Pearl Children, an organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of orphans, disadvantaged children and impoverished families in Uganda.

When Tamir Board member Richard Zuker heard about JJ's visit, he invited him to meet the choir.

"I felt that it was important for JJ and the Tamir choir to meet, to give them an opportunity to hear each other sing, and to sing together," he said.

That single meeting was all it took for something wonderful to occur.

From the moment JJ arrived, a friendship began to develop. JJ brought his guitar in order to perform for the choir and he had a chance to teach them a few pieces.

Over the course of the evening, Cantor Benlolo and JJ connected through their shared interest in interfaith activities.

"I'm from Northern Africa and I also work with the Jewish community in Nigeria, so there was a lot for us to talk about" Cantor Benlolo said.

"It just seemed right that JJ be a part of

the recording."

Choir member Debbie Wasserman could not contain her joy about the whole experience.

"He has an amazing voice! We should try to recruit him!" she said.

"I've never met anyone from Uganda, and it was incredible to listen to him talk about how they practise Jewish life. It's amazing how people can come from different countries, cultures and still find something that connects us to one another," Debbie added. "And that we make music together is really special too."

Two days after their first meeting, JJ was at the recording studio with the Neshama Choir to record "Lecha Dodi," in his African style.

"I was very happy to join them in their singing," JJ said. "They can sing better than many people and that is their gift."

"Being with the choir shows you that God gives everyone something that makes you special. The choir's gift is their voice."

JJ pointed out that "music is also a language of its own. You can hear the words, but you also need to listen to the voices of the people singing. You learn and connect by doing this," he said.

"If I had more time, I would have loved to sing more with them. I have felt so welcomed by the community here, so I guess I'll just have to come back," he added.

The Neshama Choir will continue recording the album this fall and looks forward to collaborating with more musical artists and groups in their endeavour to spread their message of inclusion and the joy of singing.

Come see the Tamir Neshama Choir perform at the Tamir Family Chanukah Party on Tuesday, December 3, 4 pm, at Agudath Israel Congregation, 1400 Coldrey Avenue.

The Tamir Neshama Choir is available to sing at events. For information, call Frances Mercer at 613-725-3519, ext. 112.

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Jewish studies program at Carleton launches micro-giving campaign to subsidize travel course to Israel next May

BY ILANA BELFER
FOR THE ZELIKOVITZ CENTRE

The Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies has taken an innovative new *micro-giving* approach to fundraising for an upcoming travel course in the hopes it will help bring Carleton University students to Israel this coming May.

Micro-giving, also known as crowdfunding, works by raising many small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically through an online donations system.

In this case, the funds will go directly toward lowering costs for Israel travel course participants. Eighteen dollars, for example, pays for a falafel lunch after touring the tunnels under the Temple Mount; \$180 allows three students to share Shabbat dinner with an Israeli family in their home.

"Both in Canada, in general, and in the Jewish community, in particular, we understand education as a public good," said Deidre Butler, director of the Zelikovitz Centre and assistant professor of religion at Carleton. Butler and Zelikovitz Centre assistant director Shawna Dolansky will be leading the course.

"Micro-giving is ideal because it is in line with that sense that we are all invested in education together. Many people come together and show their united support for such a project," Butler said.

Twenty students of various academic majors and ethnic backgrounds have been accepted into the course. However, Butler said, some simply cannot afford to go, unless enough money is raised to reduce their fees.

"I don't want anyone not to go because they can't afford it," said John Osborne, dean of Carleton's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS), in which the religion department is housed. He has pledged \$15,000 from the FASS endowment.

"Students who take [travel] courses tell me afterwards that it was one of the best experiences of their lives, and many say that their lives have been changed as a result," Osborne said.

While the micro-giving model is a fairly new trend, Osborne said, "If it gets results, then why not? So many of the special experiences we want to offer to our students and faculty depend on obtaining additional funding, beyond the university's base budget ... so we try to be entrepreneurial."

The university is certainly encouraging it. Carleton created its very own micro-giving platform called *Future Funder*.

Unlike other websites, *Future Funder* doesn't charge

for submissions and 100 per cent of the funds goes directly to the campaign. And, since Carleton is a registered charity, tax receipts can be issued to all donors.

The goal listed on the course's Future Funder page is \$18,000, but the ideal goal is \$500,000 for a vision that goes far beyond this year's course offering: a comprehensive five-year program with strong ties with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, internships, teaching assistantships, travel support and the development of Israel Studies resources at Carleton, said Butler.

Visit <http://futurefunder.carleton.ca/projects/studyisrael/> for more information or to make a donation.

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OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN | Section Two

Night of Broken Glass was turning point that led to the Shoah

Holocaust Education Month launched on 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht

BY DIANE KOVEN

"After November 9 and 10, 1938, Germany turned a corner on the road to mass murder," said David Engel about Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, an anti-Jewish pogrom in Nazi Germany and Austria.

Engel, a professor of Holocaust studies, Hebrew and Judaic studies and history at New York University, a senior fellow of the Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center at Tel Aviv University, and a member of the Academic Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, was keynote speaker at the launch event for Holocaust Education Month in Ottawa.

The event took place, November 10, at Agudath Israel Congregation and was held on the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

Engel's topic, "The Context of Kristallnacht: Poland, Polish Jewry and the Refugee Crisis," outlined the political



(From left) Shoah Committee members Joyce Bellman and Sara Kardish; Rabbi Barry Schlesinger of Agudath Israel; keynote speaker David Engel; Shoah Committee Chair Mina Cohn; Shoah Committee members Tova Lynch, Ricki Samuels and Benita Siemiatycki; and Jewish Federation of Ottawa President and CEO Andrea Freedman, at the Holocaust Education Month launch event, November 10.

and geographic scene in Europe leading up to and following the events of November 9 and 10, 1938.

Sitting in the comfort of the beautiful sanctuary, it was difficult to imagine the wave of violence, destruction and terror unleashed on the homes, businesses and synagogues of the Jews of Germany and Austria on that same date so many years ago. That night marked a turning point in Nazi Germany's persecution of Jews.

On the eve of Remembrance Day, the audience was reminded of the plight faced by Jewish refugees trying to flee Europe and find a safe haven. Unfortunately, said Engel, Canada's record for accepting Jews was the worst of all Western nations.

"The world today is organized as a system of independent, sovereign states, each of which has responsibility for a limited number of citizens. They are not very well equipped or motivated to worry about people that are not part of that group," he said.

"These decisions can have life and death consequences," he added, urging the audience to ask questions and try to

consider what, if any, other methods could be used to help refugees today and in the future.

Mina Cohn, chair of the Shoah (Holocaust) Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and a child of Holocaust survivors, gave a presentation that included two poignant anecdotes about her own family, many of whom perished in the Holocaust.

The program also included prayers led by Rabbi Barry Schlesinger and Cantor Jeremy Burko of Agudath Israel, an excerpt from the video, *Kristallnacht: The Night of Broken Glass*, and a reading by Holocaust survivor Tova Clark from her memoir, *Compartments*.

Clark was born in Nazi Germany. Her family survived the Holocaust by escaping to Shanghai, China, where approximately 23,000 Jews found refuge during the Second World War. Shanghai was one of the few places in the world to accept Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust. Her story told of her comfortable childhood in Germany being forever changed by the Nazis.

Clark and her family lived in Shanghai

for nine years before leaving for Israel. She later moved to England and lived in a number of countries as a Canadian diplomatic spouse, eventually arriving in Ottawa.

The Holocaust Education Month launch event was presented by the Shoah (Holocaust) Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa. The co-sponsors included the Embassy of the United States, Agudath Israel Congregation, the Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies at Carleton University, and the Campus Outreach Lecture Program of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies.

The event was attended by Holocaust survivors and their families, several Parliamentarians, ambassadors of a number of countries, Jewish community officials and members of the public. CBC Radio news anchor Laurence Wall acted as master of ceremonies.

Holocaust Education Month continues until November 29 with the exhibit, *Jan Karski's Mission for Humanity*, at the Canadian War Museum. The exhibit is free of charge.

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Conservative synagogues wrestle with non-Jews in the pews

(JTA) – To an outsider, the battles might seem to be over trifles – in some cases, just a few feet.

Where may a non-Jewish parent stand in the synagogue during his child's bar mitzvah? Can a non-Jew open the holy ark? Should non-Jewish synagogue members have voting rights?

Such questions have been pushed to the fore by the growing percentage of Conservative homes that include non-Jewish family members – more than one-quarter of them in the United States, according to the recent Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews.

For many Conservative synagogues, the issues are not trivial. They cut to the heart of a philosophical and practical debate about how open they should be toward the non-Jews in their midst.

"For a variety of reasons, my colleagues are being challenged to rethink positions that in the past we accepted almost as dogma," said Rabbi Charles Simon, who as executive director of the Conservative movement's Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs organizes seminars for Conservative synagogues on how to be more inclusive of non-Jews. "It doesn't mean that the standards of Conservative Judaism are changing. It means that my colleagues are metaphorically learning they have to broaden their own tents."

In some ways, the dilemma is not



A non-Jewish woman is among those at a Torah reading at Adas Israel Congregation in Washington. Many Conservative synagogues are finding new ways for non-Jews to participate in synagogue life.

unique to Conservative Judaism; the Reform movement has grappled with some of the same issues. But Reform synagogues are not bound by Jewish law, and the movement accepts intermarriage – two key distinctions from Conservative Judaism. On the Orthodox side, the line against non-Jewish participation is pretty clear; many strictly Orthodox synagogues won't even allow the Jewish partner in an interfaith marriage to lead services.

Conservative synagogues are navigating the parlous middle, wrestling with how to

adapt to an era of increasing non-Jews in their ranks while still adhering to Conservative principles of Jewish law that among other things forbid intermarriage.

The discussions also come at a time of serious decline for the Conservative movement, whose share of the American Jewish population has fallen to 18 per cent, according to the Pew study.

"Since such a large percentage of our younger families include interfaith marriages and relationships, we want very much to keep our children as loyal and

involved Conservative Jews, and we realize that in order to do so we need to be welcoming to their partners and spouses and families," said Rabbi Raphael Adler of the Woodbury Jewish Center in New York. "Many in our congregations are not willing to give up our children and our families to Reform synagogues or to no congregation at all. It seems wrong."

The ways Conservative synagogues are adapting varies widely. Many offer non-Jews the honour of reciting the

See pews on page 29

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Israeli Brunch to return to Ottawa, June 9, to benefit Hillel Lodge

BY ALYCE BAKER
ISRAELI BRUNCH COMMITTEE

In the 1970s and '80s, one of the most popular events in our community was the annual Israeli Brunches sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW). Proceeds from this elaborate event were directed to the Israel Family Counselling Association. Hundreds of women of all ages would flock to some generous patron's home for a visually beautiful and tasteful lunch, leaving with *brunchipes* – some of the most popular recipes served that day and presented in a unique format.

Unfortunately, NCJW's presence in the city disappeared, and, along with it, the Israeli Brunch.

Fast forward to this year when it was brought to my attention that Hillel Lodge's government funding had been cut by \$190,000.

Coincidentally, the Lodge has recently become the new home of Bess Swedlove. Bess will turn 100 this spring and is one of the original *grande dames* of NCJW.

And then the idea hit me. Let's bring back the Israeli Brunch and dedicate the

event in tribute to Bess, with proceeds going to Hillel Lodge, her new home.

The Israeli Brunch will take place Monday, June 9, from 11:30 am to 2 pm at the home of Sharon Appotive. Sharon has a personal connection to Hillel Lodge: her mother, Sue Slack, was a resident.

Patrons are encouraged to drop in during their lunch hour, as we are trying to accommodate working women. We will also provide transportation for those requiring a ride.

In order to eliminate any carbon footprint in this eco-friendly age, we will be sending *e-vites* rather than mailing invitations. With the event limited to 200 persons, email us at israelibrunch2014@gmail.com to ensure you are "on the list" and provide your email address to confirm your invitation.

As an added bonus, Israeli Brunch guests will receive a copy of the newly published cookbook, *Friends with Food Benefits*, a compilation of local recipes and stories gathered over the years.

This event promises to be both unique and memorable. Don't miss it!



(From left) Myra Aronson, Roslyn Kimmel and Daphne Arron at an Israeli Brunch, circa late-1970s.

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Rabbi Steven H. Garten, Spiritual Leader

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Pews: Different congregations take different approaches

Continued from page 26

English prayer for the government, Israel or peace. Some allow non-Jews voting rights but bar them from board positions. Others exclude them from membership.

For Debbie Burton, who was married to a Jew and raising her kids as Jews but wasn't Jewish herself, exclusion from synagogue ritual roles never really bothered her until her daughter's bat mitzvah, when she was told she could not speak from the pulpit of her Chicago-area synagogue.

"It was the first time that I had ever felt that I was excluded from a minyan activity because I was not Jewish," Burton, a professor of mechanical engineering at Northwestern University, wrote in a 2010 essay for *Interfaithfamily.com*. "I was hurt to feel prevented from publicly sharing my thoughts on the occasion of a Jewish milestone of my child. After all, even though I wasn't Jewish, I had played an important role in my children's Jewish education and upbringing."

Burton told JTA that the experience prompted her to push for changes in her synagogue's policies, though in the end she didn't require the changes for herself because she converted.

During life-cycle events, many

Conservative synagogues now offer non-Jews a place of honour, but with limitations. At the Woodbury synagogue, non-Jewish parents may join their Jewish spouses when receiving an aliyah to the Torah during a bar mitzvah service, but the non-Jew must take a couple of steps back when the blessings are recited. A non-Jewish grandparent may offer an English blessing composed by the rabbi, but only from his place in the pews, not from the bimah.

Rabbi Adler says reaction to the changes has been mixed: Some members have threatened to quit if certain changes are adopted.

Rabbi David Booth of Kol Emeth in Palo Alto, Calif., recently began giving non-Jews in his congregation a stand-alone ritual role unconnected to life-cycle events: opening the ark. Last month, the Conservative movement's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards formally endorsed the practice.

At Congregation Kneses Tifereth Israel in Port Chester, N.Y., Rabbi Jaymee Alpert offers a public blessing to interfaith couples right before their wedding in an adaptation of the traditional Shabbat aufruf celebration that precedes a Jewish wedding. Rabbi Alpert also presents the

interfaith couple with the same synagogue gift bestowed upon Jewish couples.

"We should be as open and inclusive as possible within the parameters of Jewish law and the Conservative movement," she said. "It's not that the congregation is advocating intermarriage, but I think there's a little bit of acceptance that this happens, and don't we want our children and the next generation to feel comfortable in the synagogue?"

Rabbi Alpert says she finds it painful to have to explain to interfaith couples why she cannot officiate at their weddings. Though the Conservative movement also bars its rabbis from attending intermarriages, the rule often is ignored.

Like many Conservative clergy in Canada, Rabbi Jarrod Grover of Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto considers intermarriage a breach of Conservative Judaism. At Beth Tikvah, non-Jews are barred from membership. Synagogue mail sent to interfaith homes omits the name of the non-Jewish spouse. The synagogue does not allow blessings for interfaith unions.

"We do not recognize the validity of intermarriages – period. There's no simcha, there's no aufruf," Rabbi Grover said.

He believes the best way to welcome non-Jews and encourage them to raise a Jewish family is to lower the bar for conversion.

"The danger of making the shul too welcoming for the intermarried is that

there stops being any reason to convert, and I don't want that," Rabbi Grover told JTA. "I want to push conversion because the right way to raise Jewish children is with two Jewish parents."

Rabbi Stewart Vogel of Temple Aliyah in Los Angeles rejects that approach.

"Parents who have made a commitment to raise a Jewish household and they don't convert, I think they're heroes," Rabbi Vogel said. "I think they deserve our praise and recognition. Instead, what do they get? At best, a feeling that they're accepted."

Rabbi Vogel's synagogue doesn't just welcome interfaith families but celebrates them. On "anniversary Shabbats," when couples celebrating anniversaries are acknowledged in shul, intermarried couples are honoured along with everybody else. At bar mitzvahs, the non-Jewish parent is invited to be part of the tallit presentation but must step back when the blessing is recited.

"Some of my most committed congregants are non-Jewish congregants," he said.

Rabbi Vogel says he initially was resistant to many of these changes, but his attitude shifted over time.

"My actions have been changed by the personal interactions with congregants and seeing how with a change in attitude we can really inspire them Jewishly," he said. "Someone who might otherwise turn away is now validated and sanctified. It's so affirming."



Employment Opportunity Executive Director Jewish Memorial Gardens

Jewish Memorial Gardens is looking for a compassionate individual with excellent interpersonal and business skills to manage the Bank Street and Osgoode cemeteries.

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For more information, please contact **Rabbi Anna Maranta**, Spiritual Leader
613.867.5505 or glebeminyan@gmail.com

Bulletin aims to be force of “communal consciousness”

The *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* has been a part of my life since I was kid growing up in Ottawa. I've shepped *naches* over family and friends appearing in its pages over the years. I recall serving as a member of the *Bulletin* committee back at Chapel Street. I've enjoyed flipping through decades of old *Bulletins* with my mom, the archivist. And Shabbat dinners at my folks wouldn't be complete without leafing through its pages at the coffee table.

And there lies the greatest challenge when we were asked to redesign the *Bulletin*: having personally lived through several demographics, all my warm *Bulletin* feelings were nostalgic. The *Bulletin's* proud 76 years of publishing should not be a piece of nostalgia, at risk of dying out with an aging subscriber base.

My vision for the future of the *Bulletin* was welcomed by the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin Review Committee* and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board: I imagined the next 76 years of *Bulletins* beginning with a revitalization: and I'm thrilled that today you hold in your hands the best evidence yet of this transformation.

A *Bulletin*:

- whose entire content is indexed by Google and can be read worldwide, even back issues;
- where social media engagement will complement our printed content;
- accessible electronically for those with disabilities, or who prefer to experience content translated into Yiddish, Russian, French and more;
- poised to engage citizen journalists (snapping and submitting community events as they happen, for moderation on our website) alongside our traditional reporters.

It's tempting, when redesigning a publication or website, to jump directly to the look. Instead, we started with strategy, engaging and consulting with eager community leaders and advocates

DAVID BERMAN GUEST COLUMN

on the *Bulletin's* future appearance, content and role in our community. The goal: a redesign that delivers long-term renewal rather than just a facelift.

Our journey led us to a layout schema that you'll find easier on the eyes, uses space more effectively and speaks in a tone that respects our past and future.

The new “OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN” flag is fashioned in a typeface designed in Canada to honour the late Mordecai Richler. And the headline and text font is an authoritative yet comfortable family called Pratt, designed specifically for newsprint right here in Ontario. Oh, and we even consulted design colleagues in Israel to discover that there is no clear agreement on the Pantone colour for Israel flag blue!

A huge thank you to: Mike, Francie, Michael, Brenda, Barry, Pauline, Andrea, everyone on the Jewish Community Campus, as well as my team, Cynthia, Khadija, Steven, Ben and Curtiss for helping to fulfil the dream of the *Bulletin* as “a force for constructive communal consciousness” envisioned by its founders back in 1937.

That vision has never been more achievable, on our collaborative platform where every member of our community has the power, like never before, to contribute starting with telling us if you like it, and how we can tweak the new design to serve you better.

David Berman, of David Berman Communications, <http://www.davidberman.com/>, is the creative force behind the redesign of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin.

Happy Chanukah!



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Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) is Canada's leading Jewish women's philanthropic organization. Founded in 1917, CHW is non-political, volunteer driven and funds programs and projects for Children, Healthcare and Women in Israel and Canada.

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Yasmin Vinograd

***Yasmin Vinograd is a litigation
and dispute resolution lawyer
with a focus on commercial
and estate litigation***

I am a member of The Israel Bar (2004), the Law Society of Upper Canada (2011) and the Canadian Bar Association (2011).

I joined Merovitz Potechin LLP in 2011. My areas of practice include Commercial and Estate litigation.

I am fluent in both Hebrew and English and can provide services in both languages, including notarizing documents in Hebrew.

I have also been added to the Israel Bar Association's database of Israeli lawyers qualified to give expert opinion on Canadian law.



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Steinman siblings thrilled with summer spent at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

BY LOUISE RACHLIS
FOR CFHU

Adina and Noam Steinman, the children of Ned Steinman and Golda Feig-Steinman of Ottawa, both spent this past summer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Adina participated in the Rothberg International School summer program while Noam was a lab research assistant.

For Adina, 18, one of the highlights of spending the summer studying in Israel was getting out of the classroom.

For Noam, 21, the best part was getting "my feet wet in research and real life in Israel. I loved going to work and not being a tourist."

The siblings have family history with the Hebrew University. Their grandmother, Carolyn Steinman, was director of the Montreal chapter of Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (CFHU) for 25 years.

"I decided to go to the Hebrew University because I had heard such great things about the school from friends and family," said Adina. "I was also interested in taking courses about Israeli politics and history, and the university provided an enriching program that included coursework, lectures, trips and guest speakers surrounding those topics."

Adina particularly enjoyed the experiential learning at the Hebrew University.

"Rather than sitting in long lectures, the professors took us out into the streets of Jerusalem to teach us about culture and politics," she said. "We got to visit the

Knesset, Yad Vashem, and even had a day trip to Tel Aviv to enhance our learning experience. These opportunities allowed me to learn about Israel outside the classroom. It was a new and interesting way to learn about the country."

She was in Israel for two months and spent the first month living in the newly renovated student dorms at the Hebrew University.

"This was an amazing experience," she said, "since I got to live with students from all over the world, who were also enrolled in the summer program."

During the second month, she travelled through northern Israel with friends and spent some time with her family.

"This worked out perfectly, because I got the perfect blend of family time and having an individual experience in Israel."

The most memorable part of her summer, Adina said, was attending the Maccabiah Games opening ceremony in Jerusalem. The event brought together Jews from around the world to compete in sporting events.

"Seeing all these different communities come together to appreciate the state of Israel, sports and the Jewish people was truly inspiring."

Now in her second year at Brandeis University in Massachusetts, Adina plans to major in economics and business and hopes to get an internship in Israel within the next year.

"This was my second summer at the Hebrew University," said Noam. "I found

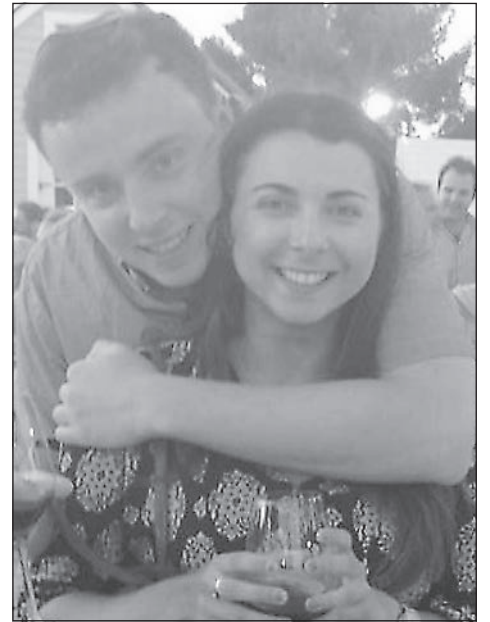
a great lab to work in, in natural product synthesis, nanoparticles and polymer synthesis or, more simply, chemistry. It was amazing!"

Noam has been to Israel many times and plans to move there once he finishes his own degree at Brandeis. He is now in third-year chemistry and looking at PhD programs in chemistry in Israel.

"It's always better to get real experiences in Israel by working with Israelis, if you can," he said. "There's nothing like getting to know people in your field, where you want to live."

"I'd strongly encourage young students to attend the Hebrew University," said Adina. "This school is located in Israel's capital, which is full of so many religious and cultural activities. The Hebrew University is reputable worldwide and the courses are taught by interesting professors. There is no better place to learn about Israel than inside Israel itself, and my summer at the Hebrew University provided an excellent environment for studies about Israel."

Founded in 1918, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem opened officially in 1925 as Israel's premier university and leading research institution. The Hebrew University is ranked among the 100 leading universities in the world and first



Siblings Noam and Adina Steinman both spent the summer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

among Israeli universities. The founding charter declared the institution would be open to every qualified man and woman irrespective of religion, race or nationality.

CFHU facilitates academic and research partnerships between Canada and Israel as well as establishing scholarships, supporting research, cultivating student and faculty exchanges and recruiting Canadian students to attend the Rothberg International School.

For more information, visit <http://www.cfhu.org/about-HU>.



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Houses of Worship: New book by Ottawa photographer Mark Schacter

BY LOUISE RACHLIS

Mark Schacter, an Ottawa-based photographer, is author of a new book of photographs, *Houses of Worship*, published this month by Fifth House.

He sees the photographs of religious institutions as a way to portray an aspect of the 'invisible.'

"I'm not religious at all," said Schacter, 56, "but I've always been fascinated by religious symbolism and faith ... As a photographer, the challenge is 'how do you explore something that is invisible?' My solution was to approach faith through the buildings people erect to practise their faith."

Schacter began doing the photography for the book in early 2012 after the publisher gave him the go-ahead. He found the synagogues the least ostentatious of all the religious buildings he was photographing.

"This made sense to me, because diaspora Jews have often wanted to keep a low public profile," he said.

It occurred to him halfway through

the project – as he was photographing Temple Sons of Israel in Sydney, NS, where the Jewish community is shrinking, that he might also be photographing history.

"In many places," he said, "I was photographing buildings in bad need of repair, but where the dwindling membership base can't afford to fix them. I had the feeling that many of the buildings will not be functioning as houses of worship in 30 or 40 years."

Schacter grew up in Thunder Bay, and left with his family when he was 16. After living in various places, he and his wife, Shereen Miller, settled in Ottawa in 1997. He does all kinds of photography, including urban, industrial and landscape.

His father used to tell him a story from the 1930s when he was in the Thunder Bay synagogue on Yom Kippur and a rock came crashing through the window during Kol Nidre.

"Houses of worship can bring out the worst in us, they become targets of intolerance. But I think they can also inspire tolerance. Whatever religion you



Mark Schacter

ascribe to, you can relate to what a house of worship stands for – a basic human desire for certainty and a sense of permanence."

The book contains photographs of about 200 synagogues, churches, mosques, gurdwaras and temples (Hindu, Buddhist, Baha'i) in Canada and

the U.S. Twenty-three of the photographs are of synagogues, 17 of which are in Canada.

The book also includes transcripts of interviews Schacter did with a rabbi, an imam, a Buddhist scholar and two Christian clergy about the significance of the house of worship to the practice and experience of religious faith. There is also an introductory essay that explains how his interest in this project was rooted in his experience as a Jewish boy growing up in Thunder Bay.

On the front of the book is a photo of the Pretty Place Chapel in the Blue Ridge Mountains of South Carolina. On the back is the interior of the North Shore Congregation of Israel Synagogue in Glencoe, Illinois, which was designed by the same architect as the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City that were destroyed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001.

Schacter also has two earlier books of photography, *Roads* and *Sweet Seas: Portraits of the Great Lakes*. Visit <http://www.luxetveritas.net/> for more information.



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Life at the Lodge

Where Great Things Are Happening ...

As the new Director of the Hillel LTC Foundation, it is my pleasure to share with the community all of the exciting activities taking place at Hillel Lodge. – *Jana L. Rand*

A New and Improved Look for the Lodge

I believe that the Lodge is an extension of the community. It is your Home! For that very reason the facility represents a considerable investment – which is why this news is so wonderful! We are very sensitive to keeping the building and it's furnishings up to date and in good condition. We take pride in that.

This past month, through some generous donations, we were able to remodel the main lounge with a whole new look. The new furnishings are modern and have a home-like feel. They have been warmly received by our residents and their families. In addition, improvements are being made throughout the Lodge. New flooring has been ordered, new chairs and equipment for the Hair Salon and all four lounges on all the units will have updates made to them.

The Foundation Office goes Mainstreet!

In the new year, the Foundation Office will be relocating to the main lobby (formerly home to the Auxiliary Gift Shoppe). Now, more than ever, it will be easy to find us! This exciting transformation will allow residents and their families the opportunity to visit the Foundation office regularly for news and to stay in touch regarding updates on the various happenings at the Lodge.

Website re-design

The Foundation office will be embarking on the launch of a new website. Please visit our current site at www.hillel-ltc.com. We want to hear from you on what family members, donors and visitors want to see to make the site more user friendly!

For more information about the Foundation, don't hesitate to contact me directly at 613.728.3900 ext. 192 or jana@hillel-ltc.com.



New furnishings enhance the main lounge.



The Auxiliary members and attendees at the Auxiliary Tea held October 27th, 2013.

Giving Our Residents' A Lift – Auxiliary Tea held October 27th 2013

The Auxiliary of Hillel Lodge has a very simple and important mandate and that is to help the Lodge and its residents make every day a little better. Functioning autonomously, the Auxiliary provides services and raises the money required to help bring the many important extras that bring comfort and enjoyment to the residents. With close to half of the resident population over 90 and more than 50% occupying wheelchairs, new assistive devices are needed to help support the most frail and vulnerable. Some proceeds raised from this year's tea resulted in the purchase of two mechanical lifts. – THANK YOU!

If you want to make a difference in people's lives (including your own), give volunteering at Hillel Lodge a try. The time commitment can range from a few hours per month to regular weekly or bi-weekly visits. To become a volunteer, please contact Marilyn Adler, our Manager of Recreation and Volunteer Programs.

Hillel Lodge is proud of the quality care we provide to our residents. Donations to the Lodge can be made in several ways: by going to our web site at www.hillel-ltc.com; contacting the Long-Term Care Foundation at (613) 728-3900 extension 111; or e-mailing us at bev@hillel-ltc.ca



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Dr. & Mrs. Dover (60th) by Gail & Stephen Victor

Jeannette & Arnold Finkelstein (50th) by Ilan & Bryna Rumstein

Rabbi & Mrs. Finkelstein (Tani's upcoming wedding) by Mory Macleod & Jonathan Stokes; Tom & Natalie Gussman

Sophie & Neil Frenkel (40th) by Esther & Irving Kulik

Cecille & Bernard Hattin (65th) by Lisa, Adrienne,

Simone, Alan, Michael & families

Ryan & Tara McLean (Wedding) by Gord & Laura Spergel

Sandra & Ivar Riff (Gabriel & Karen's Engagement) by Bryna & Murray Cohen

Michael & Jackie Shulman (50th) by Linda Nadolny-Cogan & Arthur Cogan

Michael & Rachelle Silverberg (Ben & Karen's Engagement) by Marty & Elaine Brodsky

Cantor Ben Silverberg & Karen (Engagement) by Marty & Elaine Brodsky

Dr. & Mrs. H Stern (Daniel & Erin's Engagement) by Debra & Gary Viner

Rick & Helen Zipes (Kyle & Connie's wedding) by Debra & Gary Viner

MAZEL TOV TO:

Burt & Jackie Gorenstein (chanting Maftir & hafTorah) by Annette Albert & Lew Perelmutter

Miriam Levitin (Your move to Toronto) by Nicole Goldstone

Dr. & Mrs. H Stern (Andrew receiving PhD) by Debra & Gary Viner

Frayda Wiseman (Your retirement) by Rosalie Schwartz

IN HONOUR & APPRECIATION

Beverlee Ashmiele by Linda Nadolny-Cogan & Arthur Cogan

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Jane Kovarikova by Danny Strong

Jacqueline Lamarche by Merle Haltrecht

Lianne Pelletier & Alexandre Matte by Maman et Papa

Stanley & Barbara Plotnick by Linda Nadolny-Cogan & Arthur Cogan

Arianne Matte Scheide by Maman et Papa

Dr. Mark Silverman Shana Tova by Jane & Martin Gordon

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Leadership program pairs students with Jewish community agencies

BY ILANA BELFER
FOR THE ZELIKOVITZ CENTRE

It's no secret that one of the central community questions of the day is: how do we engage the emerging generation? The Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies at Carleton University has been helping to address this concern through the Developing Future Leaders program (DFL) – but funding for the program may soon run out.

DFL, now in its fourth year, is a program that pairs Carleton students with partner agencies in the community for paid work placements. Some of the agencies have included the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, Hillel Ottawa, Congregation Machzikei Hadas, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, and Tamir.

In addition, interns are required to participate in 20 hours of leadership training throughout the year.

"I think DFL is a great program," said Mitchell Bellman, former president and CEO of the Federation. "It allows young people to get experience working in Jewish organizations, it allows organizations to get input and support from these very capable students in a variety of ways, and I think it exposes the Carleton students to what Jewish professional work is all about."

Practical on-the-ground experience can be hard to come by in a classroom-centric university setting, especially when seeking remuneration in the "age of the unpaid intern," which, unlike DFL, leaves some students unable to take on apprenticeships due to financial constraints.

"I've never been able to interview people before, so I find that to be amazing," said Dana Murray, a master's student of religion and public life, who is helping the Ottawa Jewish Historical Society document the history of Jews in Lowertown.

Outreach, project management and event co-ordination are also professional skills she said she expects to gain.

Her supervisor, Joel Weiner, said the Historical Society has benefited as much as the interns themselves.

"They're not working bees – they're thinking strategically and creatively about what we want to do and then going ahead and doing it," he said.

On DFL feedback forms, agencies have noted the benefit of having an extra hand, as well as the ability to tap into the creativity and energy of youth.

Ultimately, though, DFL is about building bridges between the student and partner agency, as well as the community-at-large. Many of the interns remain involved in the community even after their time with DFL has ended.

"I see this as a stepping stone into the Jewish community," intern Benita Arora said.

As a partnership of the Jewish community, the university and private funders, DFL director Josée Posen said the DFL program has proven to be a successful model of how to interest young people in Jewish communal affairs.

The larger vision is to share that model with other Canadian Jewish communities, or even other ethnic and religious communities.

There have also been talks with the Federation of using DFL as a feeder program for young leadership programs, she said.

But DFL's potential can only be realized with funds that go beyond the program's current 'sunset,' in spring of 2015.

"With the vision and necessary funding, the Canadian Jewish community can establish a reservoir of Jewish leadership capacity for the future," said Posen.

For more information, visit <http://www1.carleton.ca/jewishstudies/> or contact dflprogram@carleton.ca.



(councillor)
Jan Harder

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Camp Gan Israel

This past summer, counsellors came from Los Angeles, Chicago, Winnipeg, New York, Buffalo and Ottawa to work at Camp Gan Israel in Ottawa. After camp, one day, the counsellors visited with Dorothy Nadolny, sharing their plans for the future and their love of working with Jewish children and teaching Jewish values.

(From left) Bracha Leah Caytak, Yehudis Raices, Shira Friedman, Chaya Karp, Dorothy Nadolny, camp director Devora Caytak, Chaya Mushka Glaser, Estee Hanoka, Chaya Mushka Wolowik and Mussia Caytak.

Call Devora Caytak at 613-729-7712 or visit <http://www.cgiottawa.org/> for more information or to register children from 18 months to 13 years of age for next summer.



Ottawa Modern Jewish School

Jordan Gregory (left) and Sadie Rivier were among the Grade 4/5 students at Ottawa Modern Jewish School who baked chocolate chip challah, October 27.

See page 42 for an *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* subscription-saving deal.

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Jewish Youth Library to celebrate 30th anniversary with fundraising dinner, May 4

BY NESHI RODIN
FOR JEWISH YOUTH LIBRARY

The Jewish Youth Library of Ottawa (JYL) will hold its 30th anniversary fundraising dinner on Sunday, May 4 at the Fairmont Château Laurier.

The event will showcase the JYL's Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool, Ottawa's only Jewish Montessori preschool, along with the Friendship Circle, Camp Gan Israel and the Judaica library. The dinner will honour Erin Gailor, the senior Montessori teacher as 'Teacher of the Year,' and Doron Shmorgun and his wife, Elianna Saidenberg, who are the school's 'Parents of the Year.'

Gailor is responsible for the preschool's Montessori content and heads a team of three other teachers.

"Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool isn't a babysitting service or a daycare," said Gailor. "It is a true centre of learning where children work at their own pace in a prepared, loving environ-



Students and staff from the Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool enjoy a hayride and apple picking field trip, October 1.

ment. We are child and family oriented, a 'little house of children,' with the vision and goal of responding to the child's natural inquisitive mind and drive for independence."

As well as pre-academics, the preschool focuses on helping the children – who range in age from 18 months to five years – develop *mentchlichkeit* (humanity, decency).

"Children learn how to respond with grace and courtesy, as vibrant beings expressing their independence while helping each other," said Gailor.

"Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool gives me the opportunity to

give the children a love of learning and a solid foundation for their future," added Gailor. "I treasure every day that I come to school to teach them."

Sarah Beutel, whose four children attended Camp Gan Israel, and whose two youngest attended the preschool, said she learned about the Jewish Youth Library almost 18 years ago when she attended a Shabbat program with her first child.

"Our children loved all the programs and gained very much from the experience, making special lasting friendships," said Beutel.

"The preschool is very special, the

teachers are exceptionally warm and caring, and the curriculum is excellent and very well-rounded. Not only have the children gained close friends from attending the JYL preschool and camp, our family's closest friends are all families met throughout the years through participating in JYL programs. It is a unique organization that holds a special place in our hearts."

For more information about the preschool, other JYL programs, or the 30th anniversary dinner, contact JYL Director Devora Caytak at 613-729-7712 or visit <http://www.jewishyouthlibrary.com/>.



Andrew, Bronfman Fellow 2005, age 25
attended UPENN and
today he is studying to be a doctor at
The Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai in NY

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See page 42 to learn how to lock in our current best rates for the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin.

Students with learning disabilities thriving at Tel-Hai College in Upper Galilee

Kfar Blum, Israel – Itamar Katz has finally found people who speak his language – not the Hebrew or English he speaks with ease, but the language of learning disabilities.

"I can't describe the feeling of thinking you're alone in the world," says Katz, 28, who is studying biotechnology and agriculture at Tel-Hai College, north of Kiryat Shmona in the Upper Galilee. He's able to pursue his studies with the help of the college's Support Centre for Students with Learning Disabilities.

"Part of the prep course for this program is actually learning about ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and other learning disabilities. That's where I found people who spoke my language."

The learning disabilities centre is internationally recognized for its holistic approach and individualized programs, which include peer mentoring and career counselling. Ninety-eight per cent of its students graduate compared to about 75 per cent or fewer in regular college programs.

Students complete an undergraduate degree in four years instead of three. They learn time management, organizational skills and how to use assistive technologies, such as computer programs that help with reading and writing.

They also receive emotional support and counselling, which are essential for young adults who have been written off throughout their lives as 'lazy,' 'slow' or 'anti-social.'

"It's a way of being – you have to learn to manage your energy, not just your time," says Katz, who needs to channel his excess energy with frequent horseback rides "or other things fall apart. [My counsellor] Ilana understands that, and knows that I have to plan that into my schedule."

Katz was born in the United States and moved to Eilat when he was eight. His lack of Hebrew skills meant he was behind his Israeli peers from the outset. He barely made it through school, and had a hard time in the army.

It was only later in life that the engaging young man was diagnosed with ADHD as well as dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia – learning disorders that involve difficulties with reading, writing and mathematical skills.

Although he's skilled at training horses – his passion is for horses with special gaits, like the Tennessee walking horse and the Icelandic horse – that's not a great career option in Israel. And he had trouble holding down other jobs.

Katz started at Tel-Hai three years ago, the same year he started taking Ritalin for his ADHD. He met his fiancée through the program, and is thinking about



pursuing graduate studies.

Ben Hakimi, 33, is in his third year of the environmental science program. He studied at both the Hebrew University and Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, but "couldn't take it any more" because of his learning disabilities.

He was constantly told he had to learn how to study, but no one gave him useful skills or strategies until he took the preparatory program through the support centre.

The Upper Galilee is one of the most beautiful parts of Israel. But, like many peripheral regions of the country, it faces major socio-economic challenges. And its towns, kibbutzim and *moshavim* (agricultural settlements) are still recovering from the rocket attacks and devastation of the Second Lebanon War in 2006.

The Jewish Federation of Ottawa and other Jewish federations across the country support a variety of projects and programs in this region through P2G (Partnership 2gether), which links our communities with Israeli regions to strengthen Israeli society and promote unity and Jewish identity. (I'll be writing more about this in future columns.)

The Canadian connection to Tel-Hai's learning disabilities centre is through Vancouver's Thau family, which has been a major supporter of the mentorship program.

But our Ottawa community has had a long relationship with other projects at Tel-Hai, which offers academic and continuing education programs in sciences and the humanities to about 4,500 students.

The college describes itself as "the most powerful engine for the educational, economic and social development of the Upper Galilee." Its outreach programs include the Sidney Warren Science Education Centre for Youth, which runs enrichment programs for about 1,000 talented elementary and high school students, including a significant number of Druze.

That's one of our partnership projects, as is a new regional 3-D printing network that will be connected to the Warren Centre.

The benefits of these partnerships and initiatives are not limited to the region, or even to Israel.

Efrat Birk, who was dismissed as a 'lazy student' in her youth, completed a biotechnology degree at Tel-Hai with the help of the learning disorders centre. She went on to study medicine at Tel Aviv University, where she discovered a gene that leads to a particular type of developmental delay.

Itamar Katz has been an informal mentor to a fellow horse enthusiast with severe learning disabilities, who'd never talked to anyone about the challenges that were limiting his options in life. Now 19, the young man is about to enter the army.

Ben Hakimi is not only succeeding in his own studies, but he's mentoring other students with learning disabilities, and is trying to develop a program for students with autism spectrum disorder.

"I felt I belonged," Hakimi says of the emotional and practical support he received at the college. "Everybody knew my name."

Happy Chanukah!



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Music & Liturgy – From Talmud to Today

Learn how the sounds heard in North American Ashkenazi congregations evolved from their rabbinic origins into "Nusah America."

This class explores the history and development of Jewish liturgical music. It will offer a civilizational overview of how the musical components of our services evolved, and address the issue of spiritual and musical leadership in contemporary congregational and havurah settings. Musical experience or knowledge of Hebrew reading is not necessary to attend, participate and learn.

January 21 – February 25
Tuesday 1:00 – 2:30 pm
Instructor: Rabbi Liz Bolton
(Or Haneshamah Reconstructionist Congregation)

Purim & The Book of Esther: For Mature Audiences Only



THE Megillah (Book of Esther) is full of historical improbabilities, oddly-named characters and a whole lot of R-rated activity. It has been unfairly consigned to the roster of pre-school or childhood Jewish holiday events. With its sex, murder conspiracies, and the eleventh-hour rescue of an entire nation, the book of Esther could serve as the plot for a very contemporary web-based drama series! It is recommended that you read a translation of the Book of Esther prior to the first class.

February 20 - March 13
Thursday 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
Instructor: Rabbi Liz Bolton

Contemporary Jewish History

Join University of Ottawa professor Pierre Anctil as he looks at Jewish history beginning with the French Revolution of 1789 and ending with the Six Day War in the Middle East. The course examines the evolution of several Jewish populations/communities living in different countries and under different political regimes, such as France, Germany, Eastern Europe, North America and Israel. Students will look at the notions of Jewish emancipation, Jewish nationalism, Zionism and Jewish peoplehood, seen from different historical angles and on different continents.



January 27 – March 10
Monday 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
Instructor: Professor Pierre Anctil

From Gorbachev to Putin – Russian Writers & Society

These six lectures will trace the evolution of Russian society from approximately 1980 to 2000. The lectures will be combined with short readings and discussion of some of the most interesting works of Russian writers from that period. Among the topics to be discussed;

The 'Sovok'. Life and love inside Russia during the late Soviet period: vodka, adultery, and the greyness of life.

Sergey Dovlatov, *The Suitcase*. Vodka, irony, and emigration as solutions to the problem of being Jewish in the USSR

From Perestroika to Destroyka. How Gorbachev tried to save the USSR, why it was impossible and what happened instead.

Pelevin: *The Yellow Arrow*. Cutting deals, doing "biznis" and getting back to sanity in a rapidly disintegrating reality

The 90's: *Apocalypse Now*. Yeltsin's Russia: who were the winners and losers? The oligarchs and the New Russians, the generals and the Chechens.

Ludmila Petrushevskaya, *The Robinsons*. The cycles of Russian history. Surviving the latest apocalypse.



January 20 – March 3
Monday 10:00 am – 11:30 am
Instructor: Professor Douglas Clayton – University of Ottawa

Here to Stay – Tribal Migration to Ottawa of the Irish, Italian, Jewish & Chinese Communities

Ottawa historian, author and columnist Phil Jenkins, author of *An Acre of Time*, a well-known local history of the settlement of LeBreton Flats, will give a series of four lectures on the theme of the 'tribal' migration to Ottawa as the city grew in the wilderness from 1850 – 1950. Each lecture will feature four acts; where they came from, how and when they came, where in the city they settled and how they contributed to the life of the city.



January 23 – February 13
Thursday 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Instructor: Phil Jenkins

ART HISTORY - GUSTAV KLIMT'S VIENNA

Why the enduring fascination with Gustav Klimt? This novel four week series on his life and work looks at Vienna and the spirit of the age, the world of art in transition, Klimt's career crisis and the creation of the Vienna Secession (alternative art movement) and the artist's creative legacies. The series will take students to Vienna with a brief visit to the Jewish community wherein were found centers of culture, known as Jewish 'salons' and where Klimt found support from the Jewish community during his career crisis.



February 5 – February 26
Wednesday 10:00 am – 11:30 am
Instructor: Robert Sauvé

MUSIC AT MIDDAY CONCERT SERIES with Pianist Katherine Addleman

Join pianist Katherine Addleman as she performs works by the following composers and talks about their lives.



January 22 Johann Sebastian Bach
February 26 Domenico Scarlatti
March 19 Fanny Mendelssohn
April 30 Franz Joseph Haydn
May 14 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

All concerts performed in the SJCC Social Hall from 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

Literature

Nobel Prize Winner Alice Munro & The Discovery of Self

This course follows Munro's career from her first collection, *Dance of the Happy Shades* (1968), to her latest publication, *Dear Life* (2013). Each class will examine 2 short stories looking at issues of gender, self-identity, home and themes of universality. We will watch interviews, read excerpts on what other authors have said about Munro, all the while piecing together her famous literary career. Short stories can be found online, or at the library. You will learn which stories will be studied the week before.



January 28 – March 4
Tuesday 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Instructor: Lindsay Foran – TA
University of Ottawa

The *truth* about the legend of Chanukah

I'm not sure, but I suspect I may be one of the last people over the age of 10 to find out that the miraculous oil story of Chanukah is just a legend! Kind of reminiscent of coming home for winter break during my first year at university to discover I was the last one in the family to find out that our dog, Heidi, had died!

'Truth' is a word to be avoided when discussing history and religion. The victors of a battle often write the history. The facts of what happened in the past depend very much on whom you ask and, when it comes to religion, everyone has a different truth.

Chanukah is the only major Jewish holiday not explicitly mentioned in the Torah, since the events that inspired the holiday occurred after it was written. The rabbis wrote about Chanukah in the Talmud, but that was written more than 600 years after the Maccabees' revolt. Their version of Chanukah differs markedly from the *Books of Maccabees* written in the second century BCE.

So we have here two versions of the Chanukah story: one from the *Books of Maccabees* and the other from the Talmud. Both versions agree on the first part of the story. Around 200 BCE, Judea came under control of the Syrian King, Antiochus III. He was a benevolent fellow and allowed the Jews to continue practising their religion. Things changed drastically when his son, Antiochus IV, took over.

This evil king outlawed the Jewish religion and ordered the Jews to worship Greek gods. In 168 BCE, his soldiers marched into Jerusalem, exterminated thousands of people and desecrated the holy Second Temple by constructing an altar to Zeus and commanding the Jews to sacrifice a pig upon this altar.

The Jewish priest Mattathias and his five sons led a large-scale rebellion against Antiochus and his army. When Mattathias died in 166 BCE, his son, Judah Maccabee, took over. Within two years, the Jews, relying on guerrilla warfare tactics, defeated the Syrian Greek army and drove them out of Jerusalem.

The Maccabees cleansed the Second Temple, rebuilt the altar, lit its menorah and celebrated the rededication (the word 'Chanukah' means dedication). And thus the

eight-day festival of Chanukah was born.

Why eight days? Well, here's where the story begins to diverge. According to the *Book of Maccabee II*, while the Maccabees were fighting, they had missed the eight-day holiday of Sukkot, so, to celebrate the Second Temple rededication, they declared a 'better-late-than-never' celebration of Sukkot.

The Talmud, though, offers an alternative explanation, that Judah Maccabee and his team, who took part in the rededication of the Second Temple, witnessed what they believed to be a miracle. Even though there was only enough oil to keep the menorah burning for a single day, the flames burned for eight nights. This wondrous event inspired the rabbis to proclaim a yearly eight-day festival.

The rabbis barely mentioned the battle between the Maccabees and the Greeks in the Talmud. The reason for this is unclear. Perhaps they did not want to encourage the celebration of a military battle, or perhaps, as pacifists, they did not want to encourage the Jewish people, who at that time, were living under Roman rule, to be inspired by revolt.

Rabbi Andrew Jacobs explains the miracle of



CINDY FEINGOLD

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Chanukah this way in a December 15, 2011 post to his *Blog Shalom*:

"Even without the oil, Chanukah is still a miraculous story. The Maccabees were a tiny group of Jews who should not have been able to defeat the powerful Greeks. But they did! And, because of this miracle, Judaism survived and did not become consumed by Greek culture. This story of miraculous survival repeats itself many times throughout Jewish history. Despite tremendous powers that have raged against us, nothing has stopped the Jewish people. This is a miracle."

<http://tinyurl.com/miracle-Chanukah>

Although the miraculous oil story may be a legend, I refuse to give up food fried in oil on Chanukah! To celebrate my newfound knowledge, I am going to go all out this year and celebrate Chanukah with these decadent Pomegranate Sugar-Dusted White Chocolate Doughnuts.

POMEGRANATE SUGAR-DUSTED WHITE CHOCOLATE DOUGHNUTS

Makes 16 doughnuts

The doughnut dough recipe for these treats comes from Anna Olsen, on her Food Network show, *Bake with Anna*. The idea of filling them with white chocolate ganache and then rolling them in pomegranate sugar comes from the genius mind of Chef Lynn Crawford! I have adapted their recipes slightly.

Pomegranate Sugar

1 cup white sugar
2 tablespoons pomegranate juice

White Chocolate Cream Filling

6 ounces good quality white chocolate, finely chopped (do not use white chocolate chips)
1/4 cup 35% cream
1/2 cup 35% cream

Doughnut Dough

2/3 cup warm homogenized milk (105 F.)
2 1/4 teaspoons (1 package) instant dry yeast
1/3 cup sugar
3 eggs at room temperature
3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup unsalted butter at room temperature
Vegetable oil, for frying

In a small mixing bowl, combine the sugar and juice together. Spread evenly on a baking sheet and allow to dry overnight at room temperature. Pulse pomegranate sugar in food processor for about 30 seconds and store in a sealed jar. Can be made a week ahead.

Place the chocolate in medium-sized bowl. Set on top of a pot of hot water over low heat. Mix until smooth. Remove from heat and stir in 1/4 cup 35% cream in 2 batches. Set aside to cool. Whip remaining 1/2 cup 35% cream until stiff peaks form. Fold cream into melted chocolate. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use. Can be made a day ahead.

Add the milk, yeast, sugar and eggs to a bowl and blend slightly. Add the flour and salt and blend by hand or in a mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment. Immediately start adding the butter a bit at a time and continue to mix until the dough comes together. If using a mixer, continue to knead the dough until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes, and if mixing by hand, once the dough becomes difficult to stir, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead by hand until smooth and elastic. Place the dough into a lightly oiled bowl, cover the surface of the dough with plastic wrap and let rise for at least 2 hours, or chill and let rise overnight.

Turn the risen dough out onto a lightly floured surface and roll it out to 1/2 inch thickness. Use a 3-inch cookie cutter to cut out 16 doughnuts, re-rolling the dough, if needed. Place the doughnuts onto a parchment-lined baking tray, cover the tray with plastic wrap and let the doughnuts rise for 45 minutes, if using room temperature dough, or for an hour, if using cold dough.

Pour the oil into a tabletop deep fryer (following manufacturer's instructions) or into a large, deep pot so that it is only filled about 3 inches. Heat the oil to 350 F (use a candy thermometer, if cooking doughnuts in a pot). Have a baking tray lined with paper towel, with a cooling rack placed over it. Place a doughnut onto a slotted spoon and lower gently into the oil. Fit in as many doughnuts as you can, but with enough room that they have at least an inch between them. Fry the doughnuts for about 3 minutes, then flip over and fry for another 3 minutes. Use your slotted spoon to remove the doughnuts onto the cooling rack to drain.

Fill a disposable piping bag, fitted with a medium sized plain tip, with the white chocolate cream. Place the piping bag tip in the side of the doughnut and squeeze gently to fill doughnut. Be careful not to overfill. Roll the filled doughnuts in the pomegranate sugar.

These are best served the same day they are made.



Shul: 'What makes me go? What makes others stay away?'

If my own estimates are correct, I am among the minority of Ottawa Jews – especially in my age demographic and especially in the non-Orthodox community – who can be found at shul with my family on Shabbat roughly once a month. What makes me go? What makes others stay away? And what makes me value going while understanding and relating to why others don't?

Ever since Steven M. Cohen and Arnold M. Eisen wrote about the Jewish "sovereign self" in their book, *The Jew Within: Self, Family, and Community in America*, published in 2000, social analysts of Jewish life, particularly in non-Orthodox communities, have understood that religious practice is experienced more and more as a choice rather than as a fixed obligation. For non-Orthodox Jews, Jewish practice is not automatic, even if certain rituals may give rise to strong sensory or *kishke* memories and associations.

On a given Saturday morning, when we're not at shul, my family is typically rushing one or more of my kids to an extra-curricular activity, seeing the adults tag-teaming to yoga class, or lounging at home, watching Saturday morning cartoons, reading or playing cards.

When we do get our act together to get dressed in our shul finery and drive 10 minutes west, I am always glad we did. The kids develop a first-hand relationship with a community space that is not commercial. They pal around with their friends, enjoy the teen-led kids' service, and form friendly connections with other shul members representing a variety of generations. And they develop a sense of communal identity and hone their



MIRA SUCHAROV
VALUES, ETHICS,
COMMUNITY

Jewish literacy. On a recent Shabbat, my daughter helped lead the very wordy "Ashrei" prayer after my son was given the honour of opening the ark – a fascinated smile crossing his lips as he peered into the Torah-scroll-filled opening.

Sure, I have my bored and restless moments (a Shabbat morning Conservative service isn't exactly concise), and it sometimes feels like an effort to fit these semi-structured hours into our weekend. Still, we are a minority within a minority. Most Ottawa Jews rarely, if ever, come to shul on a given week. Most Ottawa Jews associate shul, if they do go at all, with High Holidays and perhaps Purim.

So what are shuls to do?

It seems to me there are a few options.

Shuls can focus on attracting members by emphasizing lifecycle events. In that case, a shul is there for you if and when you need it. Membership is therefore viewed as an insurance policy.

Or a shul can also focus on trying to fill the pews on a regular basis, a strategy that will more likely lead to a committed membership base. Creating a connection between Jewish education and Jewish practice – in the

form of a shul-based supplementary school – can help, but that is not without its costs and risks. So can a delicious and nutritious weekly Kiddush.

Warm, energetic clergy are a key, as is a warm and welcoming atmosphere. While professional clergy are trained to be welcoming, I would think many shul membership communities are less welcoming than they think they are. Finally, going to where others are – in the form of creating opportunities for 'public space Judaism' – may help bolster the particular brand, if not regular shul attendance.

But, what if Jews simply don't want to come? What if they prefer to spend their free weekend mornings with the kind of recreational activities that provide exercise or other direct artistic or skill-building enrichment? What if they just want to laze around the house, enjoying the unstructured family time of a private Saturday morning? What if they want to read or take a walk or watch Netflix or visit with friends or catch up on work?

All this raises the question of whether shuls should work to help create demand, or simply respond to waning and shifting preferences. In the case of religious institutions, the business of creating demand is risky business. It is a fine line between creating an attractive product that naturally draws people versus wielding the weapon of guilt and obligation.

Is there a point at which shuls should simply claim defeat, and allow natural membership to atrophy as the older generation fades away, perhaps amalgamate as the opportunity arises, or perhaps operate a skeleton operation – available for life cycle events and open on major holidays only?

Today, I leave you with more questions than answers. Maybe we can discuss this over egg and tuna salad with carrots and zucchini sticks on the side – at shul Kiddush.

Mira Sucharov, an associate professor of political science at Carleton University, blogs at Haaretz.com.

Harnessing the power of making one change

According to the "Global Burden of Disease Study 2010 (*The Lancet*, December 13, 2012)," which examined health data in 50 countries from 1990 to 2010, obesity now poses a greater global health threat than malnutrition.

Except for sub-Saharan countries, more young adults are dying from non-communicable diseases, such as heart disease and cancer, than from starvation or communicable diseases. The culprit is the Western lifestyle the majority of countries have adopted. Essentially, we are eating ourselves to death.

The study also indicated that, while advances in medicine have allowed men and women to live longer – more than a decade longer than in 1970 – the last 14 years of their lives, – *our* lives – on average, are of decreased quality due to illness or pain.

The good news is that deaths from heart disease in Western countries have declined by 70 per cent due to medical advances. The bad news is that more people are being diagnosed with heart disease due to lifestyle.

The key is prevention. Unfortunately, when we are young adults, we may feel as though we are invincible. As we get older and wiser and sometimes develop health issues, we may still live like an ostrich. Denial doesn't make problems go away.

Whether I'm discussing obstacles and goals with individual clients, or presenting a motivational talk to a group, one of the main themes I address is change. People are often afraid of this concept because they don't truly understand it. Change is not all or nothing. Change doesn't mean you have to give up everything you enjoy.

Those who most need to change are often the most resistant to it. It's frightening to step out of your comfort zone. It takes courage and commitment. Once you



GLORIA SCHWARTZ
FOCUS ON
FITNESS

understand that you truly have the power to improve your body inside and out, you'll be more receptive to change.

One of the activities I challenge attendees of my motivational talks to do is write down one specific change they believe they can make, effective *immediately*. I emphasize a sense of urgency because procrastination usually results in inaction.

I'm giving you, my readers, this same challenge. Think of some of your unhealthy habits and identify one change you're willing to make starting now. Send me the one change you're committing to and I'll send you some tips to help you succeed. gloria.schwartz@rogers.com

Need an example? How about "I will not eat fried foods anymore"?

You can implement this change with a few strategies. When dining out, ask your server how food is prepared and choose a baked option over fried. Modify the way you cook food. During Chanukah, skip the traditional artery-clogging *sufganiyot* (deep-fried doughnuts). Bake, rather than fry, golden latkes on a baking sheet sprayed with olive oil. Adapt your thinking and learn to enjoy a healthier holiday – and, more importantly, enjoy every day – without all the *chazerai*.

Here's another example. Do you, like so many people,

discount and deflect compliments about your appearance? When someone points out how slim or fit you look, or that your outfit is flattering, do you automatically respond with self-deprecating humour? One change you can implement to help with poor body image is to repeatedly remind yourself to accept compliments by simply saying "thank you."

A single, small change will not overhaul your physical and emotional self. However, it is a starting point. We all have to start somewhere. Committing to an achievable change in writing is a powerful statement that will help you move forward. When you consistently reproduce that change, you'll feel motivated to make other changes. Eventually, you'll cross the chasm from apathy to action.

A series of small changes can evolve into a process of transformation. But you won't be able to make changes, if you dwell on your fears. You need to shed your baggage and drop the excuses.

According to Charles Horton Cooley's "looking-glass self" theory (1902), we perceive ourselves the way we *think* others perceive and judge us. Feeling embarrassed, frumpy or unco-ordinated? Perhaps you think that's how others perceive you and, therefore, you won't set foot in a fitness class or work out at the gym. Did you ever consider that people might actually be admiring you for your efforts or are not even noticing you? We need to stop worrying about what others might be thinking about us.

Incorporating change and consistency into our lives may seem like a paradox. In its simplest terms, we need to change our negative thoughts and behaviours one at a time and consistently engage in more positive ones.

Congratulations to the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* on the new design and web edition. The *Bulletin* is a consistent source of information in my household.

Gloria Schwartz is a certified personal trainer at the Soloway JCC.



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Book contrasts the commander of Auschwitz with the determined German Jew who brought him to justice

***Hanns and Rudolf: The True Story of the German Jew
Who Caught the Kommandant of Auschwitz***

By Thomas Harding
House of Anansi Press
348 pages

I read *Hanns and Rudolf: The True Story of the German Jew Who Caught the Kommandant of Auschwitz* at the beginning of Holocaust Education month. Written by a journalist who is the grand-nephew of "Hanns" of the title, the book is partly biography and family history, partly a detective mystery, and partly documentation of the destruction of the Jews in death camps such as Auschwitz and Treblinka as part of the "Final Solution."

The lives of the two protagonists are presented in parallel, although Rudolf Höss was 17 years older than Hanns Alexander, the Jew who pursued him. The story of both individuals is presented in the context of their families and their environment from childhood until adulthood. Pictures and documents as well as footnotes and references are plentiful.

In *Hanns*, the *kommandant*, we see the evolution of a poor unloved boy who grows into a man who relishes violence, the company of male comrades and the recurring sense that he is always alone, nevertheless. He manages to put aside any human feeling in the service of what he might think are *great* causes to the point where he is able to organize the death of millions coldly and objectively because of some political imperative rather than personal hatred.

In *Rudolf*, the pursuer, we are introduced to a young Jewish boy growing up in the heart of a privileged family, whose father is a doctor, and, with his twin brother, is capable of pulling very nasty and cruel pranks. The twins are presented as spoiled brats until the Nazis come to power and everything changes. The whole family is forced out of its life in Berlin into exile, the two boys, now teens, having to make their way in the world with little money.

Hanns is a true psychopath. The story of his activities and testimony about them at his trial is both gripping and horrifying, but leaves open the question of how human beings could do such things to other human beings and pretend to be leading a normal life.

The tale of how Hanns eventually tracks down Rudolf contains both cruelty and a lingering on themes of revenge. Perhaps that is a true reflection of Hanns' character. After capturing Rudolf, he seems to have retreated from public life and hemmed himself in somewhat because of his hatred for Germans and Germany.

The final part of the book is like a detective novel and keeps one riveted to the text even though the final result is known.

The epilogue, which describes the reaction of descendants of Höss to what he did, is a lesson on human psychology in the face of what seems like impossibly cruel actions by our ancestors.

There are, however, some disturbing and potentially

RUBIN FRIEDMAN BOOK REVIEW

"A gripping thriller, an unspeakable crime, an essential history, a scrupulously dispassionate narrator." JOHN LE CARRÉ

Hanns and Rudolf

*The True Story of the
German Jew Who Caught
the Kommandant
of Auschwitz*

THOMAS HARDING

controversial aspects to the book.

Thomas Harding senses something of this problem as he apologizes for part of it in his author's note: "By calling Hanns and Rudolf by their first names I do not mean to equate them ... If this offends, and I understand why it might, I ask for your forgiveness."

But the issue goes deeper. Although the author claims he did not want to create any moral equivalence between the two main characters, he describes them in similar terms several times.

Both Rudolf and Hanns are described as being able to compartmentalize their experience between the cruelty of their work and home life. Both Rudolf and Hanns are capable of cruelty when they believe in the justice of their cause. They are even described as having had the same favourite children's book, *Max and Moritz*.

Finally, I am not sure the author understands the quotation from *Deuteronomy* with which he opens the book, because it seems to blame the Jews for their suffering.

Hanns and Rudolf is a good biography and family memoir, an excellent documentation of the Holocaust, and a grippingly engaging detective story. But I would look elsewhere for moral understanding.

Rubin Friedman is the author of *Our Family Holocaust Chronicle: Part 1 – Running for Their Lives*.

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In Memory of:
Morris Kerzner by Carol and Stuart Levine;
by Enid Slack and Ron Kanter and family; by
Sandra Palef and Nissim Avraham; and by
Marlene Levine and Andrea Siman.

SAM AND SUE SLACK ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of:
Jean Lichtenstein by David and Sharon Appotive and family.

JACK AND LINDA SMITH ENDOWMENT FUND

In Observance of the Yahrzeit of:
Inez Smith by Leslie Smith.

RUTH TALLER MEMORIAL FUND

In Memory of:
Jeffrey Katz by Nina and Jason Taller.
Roslyn Rose by Nina and Jason Taller.

CLAIRE AND SAM TANNER MEMORIAL FUND

Birthday Wishes to:
Joe Sega by Lana and Stephen Tanner.
In Memory of:
Jeffrey Katz by Lana and Stephen Tanner.
Sol Goldmaker by Lana and Stephen Tanner.

MOSES, CHENYA AND HENRY TORONTOW MEMORIAL FUND

Birthday Wishes to:
Jean Naemark by Beatrice Torontow and family.

STEPHEN AND GAIL VICTOR ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of:
Jean Lichtenstein by Stephen and Gail Victor.

HARRY AND RAE WEIDMAN MEMORIAL FUND

In Memory of:
Marcia Dworkin by Leonard Shore and Jane Mirsky.

MILDRED AND PERCY WEINSTEIN ENDOWMENT FUND

Mazal Tov to:
David and Beverly Gluzman on the birth of their new grandson by Mildred Weinstein.

ROBERT WENER AND LYNNE ORECK WENER FAMILY FUND

Birthday Wishes to:
Robert Wener by Dorothy Ullman and family.

IRVING AND DIANE WEXLER FAMILY FUND

In Memory of:
Jeffrey Katz by Carol Segal and family.
Roslyn Rose by Carol Segal and family.
Rabbi Mordecai Berger by Carol and Felicia Segal.

SAM AND HELENE ZARET MEMORIAL FUND

Mazal Tov to:
Stephen and Jocelyne Greenberg on the birth of their granddaughter by Debi and Neil Zaret and family.

ZIPES KARANOFKY FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND

Mazal Tov to:
Helaine and Jack Gould on the birth of their fourth grandchild and second grandson by Rick and Helen Zipes.
In Memory of:
Jeffrey Katz by Rick and Helen Zipes.

THE WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE PHILANTHROPY PROGRAM

Providing support for services and programs that directly benefit women and children.

WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE ENDOWMENT FUND

Birthday Wishes to:
Robert Wener by Sarah and Dan, Daniel and Joan, and Joan Sheps; and by Yaffa Greenbaum and Jack Shinder.
Adele Shinder by Yaffa Greenbaum.

Mazal Tov to:

Lynne Oreck-Wener and Robert Wener on the engagement of their daughter Taryn to Tim by Janet Dollin and Zave Chad; by Eileen Melnick-McCarthy and family; by Debbie Halton-Weiss and Ronald Weiss; by Debi and Neil Zaret and family; and by Yaffa Greenbaum and Jack Shinder.

Brittany Cantor on her marriage to David by Yaffa Greenbaum and Jack Shinder.

In Memory of:

Arnold Isaacson by Lynne Oreck-Wener and Robert Wener; by Erica Sher and family; and by Eileen Melnick-McCarthy and family.

Jeffrey Katz by Yaffa Greenbaum and Jack Shinder.

Bill Curry by Eileen Melnick-McCarthy.

Condolences to:

Marcia Aronson on the loss of her dear sister Susan, by Yaffa Greenbaum and Jack Shinder.

THE SAUL AND EDNA GOLDFARB B'NAI MITZVAH PROGRAM

MAX MORGAN MITZVAH FUND

In Memory of:
Arnold Isaacson by Sarah Beutel and Steven Morgan.

Contributions may be made online at www.OJCF.ca or by contacting Jessica Kerzner at 613-798-4696 extension 274, Monday to Friday or by email at donation@ojcf.ca. Attractive cards are sent to convey the appropriate sentiments. All donations are acknowledged with a charitable receipt. We accept Visa, MasterCard and Amex.

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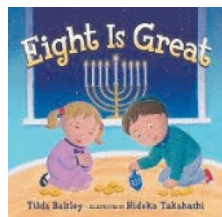
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Six new books to help young children enjoy Chanukah celebrations

(JTA) – A gift-giving, angst-ridden purple gorilla is among the characters who help enliven the Chanukah celebrations in these new holiday books for children.

Eight is Great

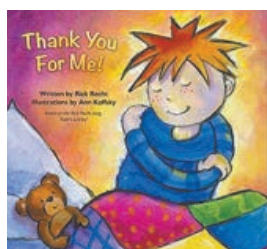
By Tilda Balsley;
Illustrated by Hideko Takahashi
Kar-Ben
Ages 1-4, 12 pages



Simple rhymes and illustrations enliven the colorful toddler board book that plays on the theme of the eight nights of Chanukah.

Thank You For Me!

By Rick Recht;
Illustrated by Ann Koffsky
Jewish World Publishing
Ages 1-3, 14 pages



The illustrated lullaby, which can be read or sung, encourages young ones to appreciate themselves and all that surrounds them.

ABC Hanukkah Hunt

By Tilda Balsley;
Illustrated by Helen Poole
Kar-Ben
Ages 3-8, 32 pages



A lively rhyming alphabet romp through Chanukah provides plenty of entertainment for young kids. Each

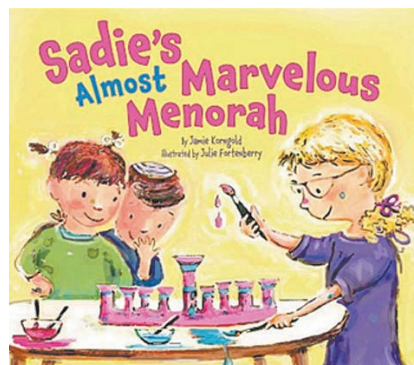


PENNY SCHWARTZ CHANUKAH KID LIT

large-format page is filled with cartoon-like illustrations and a simple riddle that can be solved by looking at the pictures of flames on a menorah, a maze to Jerusalem's Holy Temple and plates full of sugar-coated doughnuts.

Sadie's Almost Marvelous Menorah

By Jamie Korngold; Illustrated by Julie Fortenberry
Kar-Ben
Ages 2-6, 24 pages



What pre-schooler won't relate to young Sadie when her carefully crafted and painted clay menorah shatters into a million pieces? Sadie's spirits are lifted when she discovers that the shamash helper candle holder did not break. All's well when Sadie uses the pink-and-blue shamash to light all the household menorahs, starting a new family tradition.

Julie Fortenberry's colorful illustrations allow kids to tell the story through the expressive and energetic art.

The Eighth Menorah

By Lauren L. Wohl;
Illustrated by Laura Hughes
Albert Whitman
Ages 4-7, 32 pages

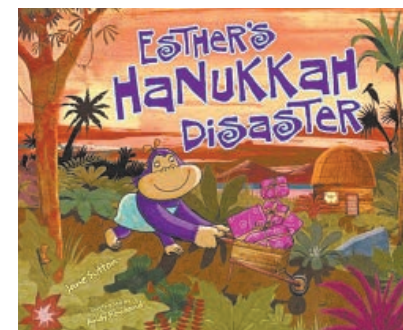


In this delightful story, a young boy named Sam makes a Chanukah menorah in Hebrew school using a shiny rock he picks at a park outing. But he frets: What will his family do with one more menorah? In phone conversations with his grandmother, Sam confides that he's keeping a special Chanukah secret for the family. Their relationship feels authentic and warm. Readers will wonder along with Sam as he tries to figure out the perfect new home for the menorah.

Laura Hughes' illustrations convey a contemporary, real-world feel. Grandma lives in a condo in an urban high-rise, and there's a refreshingly diverse group of kids at Hebrew school. Rules for how to play dreidel are included.

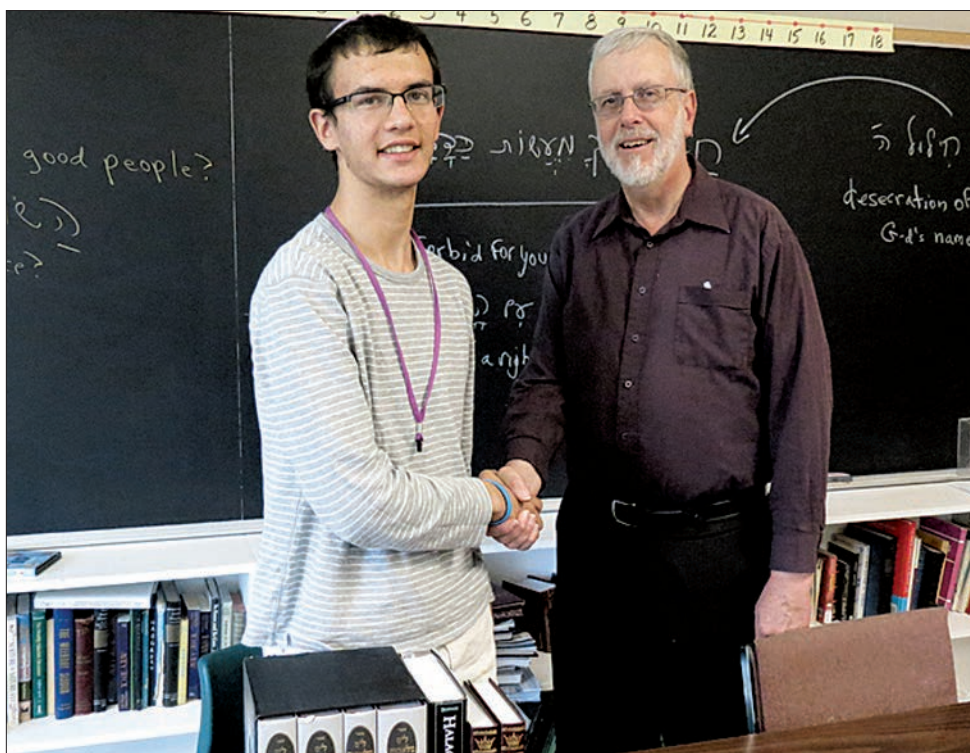
Esther's Hanukkah Disaster

By Jane Sutton;
Illustrated by Andy Rowland
Kar-Ben
Ages 4-9, 32 pages



Poor Esther. The endearing purple gorilla is looking forward to celebrating Chanukah with her jungle friends, but all the gifts she selects turn out wrong. Worse, the friends give her the "perfect" Chanukah gifts. But Esther makes it all right at a Chanukah party where good friends celebrate together and swap the gifts.

COMMUNITY MILESTONES | Celebrating significant milestones or events



◀ **Jonathan Roytenberg**, a grade 12 Ottawa Jewish Community School (OJCS) student, is congratulated by Rabbi Howard Finkelstein, head of Judaic studies, on winning a special award for Talmud proficiency from the Yeshiva University High School Bekiut Program. A number of OJCS high school students are participating in this program, which attracts more than 2,000 students from across North America who study the same tractate of Talmud. Last year, the students studied tractate Rosh Hashanah dealing with the Jewish calendar and holidays. This year, they are studying tractate Taanit, which delves into the issues concerning public and private fasts.



▲ **Lyla Sasha Granovsky**, born October 11, 2013
Daughter of Rena Garshowitz and David Granovsky. Proud grandparents Paula and Gord Garshowitz of Dundas, and Israel and Faina Granovsky of Montreal.

Send us notices of your significant milestones or events and they will be published on a space-available basis.
Email your photos and information to: bsilverman@ottawajewishbulletin.com

WHAT'S GOING ON | November 25 to December 8, 2013

FOR MORE COMMUNITY LISTINGS, VISIT JEWISHOTTAWA.COM AND SELECT 'CLICK TO SEE MORE MONTHS'

WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAYS

Drop-In Playgroup for newborn to 3 years of age. 9:00 am.
Info: 613-798-9818, ext. 263.

TUESDAYS

Israeli Folkdancing. Learn contemporary Israeli dances in a friendly atmosphere. No partner required.
6:30 pm - Introductory Steps;
7:00 pm - Beginners and Requests;
8:30 pm - Intermediate and Advanced Requests. Ottawa Jewish Community School Gymnasium, 31 Nadolny Sachs Private.
Info: 613-256-6272.

FRIDAYS

Shabbat Drop-in. After playtime, recite blessings, sing songs and enjoy a snack of challah and juice. 9:30 am.
Info: 613-798-9818, ext. 263.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Shalom Ottawa community TV show on Rogers 22. 6:00 pm. (Repeats November 29 at 6:00 pm.)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25 TO THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Ottawa Jewish Community School Production of "The Three Musketeers".
31 Nadolny Sachs Private, 7:00 pm.
Info: 613-722-0020.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Jewish Federation of Ottawa Members' Meeting, featuring the unveiling of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin's* new format and fresh content. All welcome. 7:00 pm.
Info: 613-798-4696, ext. 236.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Chanukah Night at Canadian Tire Centre, featuring the Ottawa Senators vs. Vancouver Canucks. Discounted tickets at www.capitaltickets.ca with promotional code DREIDEL. 7:30 pm.
Info: 613-798-4696, ext. 241.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Community-Wide Chanukah Ball, featuring live entertainment, dancing and buffet dinner. Tickets available from: Adath Shalom, Agudath Israel, Beth Shalom, Machzikei Hadas, Temple Israel, Glebe Minyan, Beit Tikvah and Or

Haneshamah. Congregation Beth Shalom, 151 Chapel Street, 7:00 pm.
Info: 613-789-3501.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

Celebrate Chanukah with PJ Library and Agudath Israel Congregation: Stories, songs, candle-lighting, and more. Loblaw's College Square, Community Room (upstairs level), 1980 Baseline Road, 6:00 pm.

Info: 613-798-4644.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

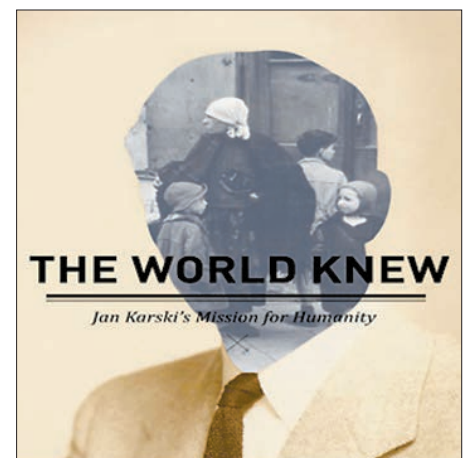
Stand-up Comedian Alan Shain and Propeller Dance, an integrated dance company. Presented by Congregation Agudath Israel's TOV Team (Tikkun Olam Volunteers) in celebration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities. 1400 Coldrey Avenue, 7:00 pm.
Info: 613-728-3501.

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION MONTH continues until November 29

THE WORLD KNEW – Jan Karski's Mission for Humanity describes the four perilous missions that Karski, a young Polish diplomat, undertook to smuggle information out of occupied Europe about the fate of Polish Jews and into the hands of the Allies.

Exhibit at the Canadian War Museum
1, place Vimy Place

Guided tours available.
Info: 613-798-4696, ext. 253.



UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ACTIVITIES TAKE PLACE AT THE JOSEPH AND ROSE AGES FAMILY BLD, 21 NADOLNY SACHS PRIVATE

CONDOLENCES

Condolences are extended to the families of:

Roy Bassett

Rachel Paley

Myra Schwartz, Toronto
(mother of Ellen Wright)

Miriam Weiner

May their memory be a blessing always.

The Condolence Column is offered as a public service to the community. There is no charge.

For listing in this column, please call 613 798-4696, etc. 274. Voice mail is available.

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TASTY TIP: Sprinkle papaya with lemon or lime juice to BOOST its delicious flavour.

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Mitzvah Day

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Info or to get involved: Ariel at 613-798-4696 x 241 or afainer@jewishottawa.com

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