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## Limmud conferences

Limmud Ottawa organizer Adam Moscoe is inspired by his visit to Limmud U.K.

> p. 14

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# OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN

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## Rabbi Steven Garten to retire after more than 19 years at Temple Israel

Rabbi Garten will remain in Ottawa as the Reform congregation's first rabbi emeritus.

**BY LOUISE RACHLIS**

Rabbi Steven Garten, Temple Israel's longest serving spiritual leader, will retire on June 30, after more than 19 years as spiritual leader of Ottawa's Reform congregation.

In a message to the congregation late last year, Rabbi Garten said he wanted to give Temple Israel sufficient notice of his retirement date so the congregation could prepare and conduct a thorough search for his successor.

"I will continue my association with Temple and my many friends in the congregation and in the Ottawa Jewish community through my position as rabbi emeritus," he wrote. "I will be 66 years of age next year and, after being on call 24/7 for 39 years, look forward to focusing on my teaching and learning, and, of course, golf."

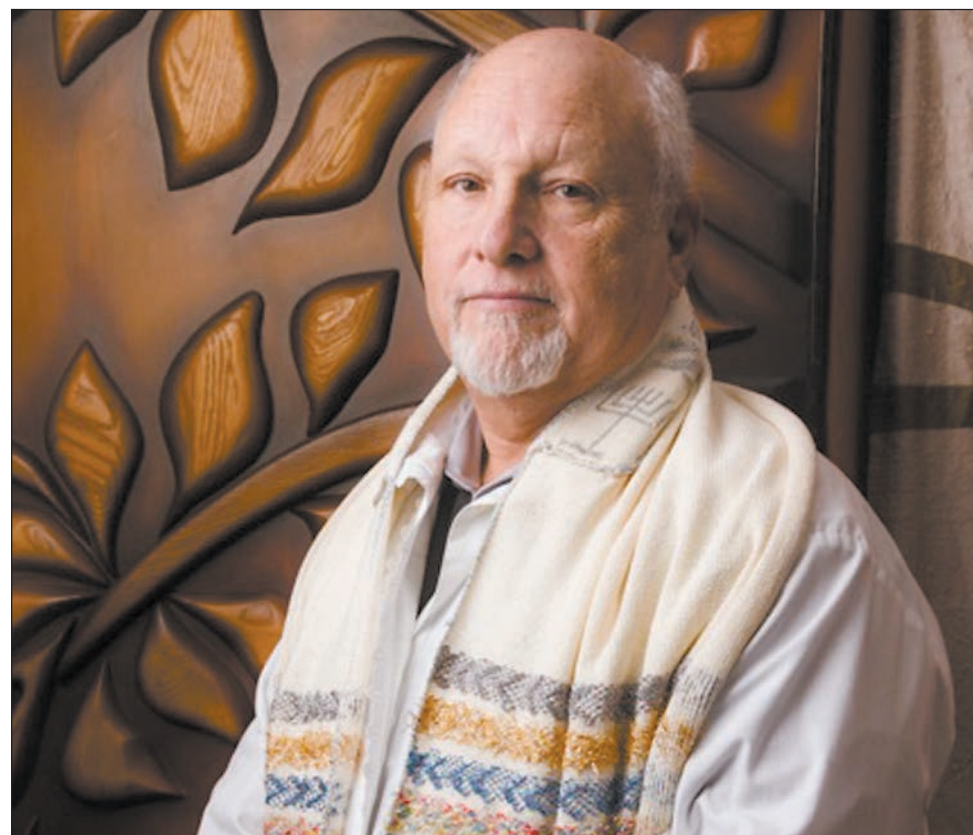
Earlier in his career, Rabbi Garten worked in Toronto for 17 years at Holy Blossom Temple and Leo Baeck Day School before going to California in 1992.

"The California earthquake was in January 1995, and we decided we didn't want to stay there," he said. "The first choice was to come back to Canada. Temple Israel was looking for a rabbi, and we found

each other – in spite of the weather differences."

Under Rabbi Garten's leadership, Temple Israel has grown in its outreach to unaffiliated Jews, its many social justice activities, strengthened interfaith dialogue between the congregation and Christians and Muslims, and supported a strong and vibrant supplementary religious school and youth group.

See Rabbi Garten on page 2



Rabbi Steven Garten plans to spend more time travelling and teaching after he retires from the pulpit on June 30.

## Harper reaffirms Canada's unyielding support for Israel in Knesset speech

**BY BARBARA CROOK**

**Jerusalem, Israel** – "Through fire and water, Canada will stand with Israel."

These words prompted yet another standing ovation for Prime Minister Stephen Harper in his first speech to the Israeli Knesset January 20.

Harper's speech reaffirmed Canada's unyielding support for Israel. He spoke of the longtime economic and military ties between the two nations, but empha-

sized "the personal ties of friendship and kinship."

"It is right to support Israel, because, after generations of persecution, the Jewish people deserve their own homeland and deserve to live safely and peacefully in that homeland.

"Let me repeat that: Canada supports Israel because it is right to do so."

Harper's speech, delivered in English and French, drew multiple ovations from

the packed gallery, which included more than 250 Canadian members of the prime minister's delegation.

It also prompted heckling by two Israeli Arab members of the Knesset. Ahmed Tibi and Taleb Abu Arrar ultimately walked out of the assembly when Harper questioned the wisdom of those who would condemn Israel as an apartheid state.

See Harper on page 2

**inside:** Hillel event policies 'not restrictive' > p. 3

Changing roles of Orthodox women > p. 5

Barbara Crook on Harper visit to Israel > p. 21

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# Harper announces \$66 million in new aid to Palestinians

Continued from page 1

“Think about the twisted logic and outright malice behind that,” Harper said of the apartheid label, which he considers a prime example of “the new anti-Semitism.”

“A state, based on freedom, democracy and the rule of law, that was founded so Jews can flourish, as Jews, and seek shelter from the shadow of the worst racist experiment in history, that is condemned, and that condemnation is masked in the language of anti-racism.

“It is nothing short of sickening.”

It was difficult to determine whether the subsequent wave of applause reflected approval of Harper’s remarks or

relief that the hecklers had left the assembly.

The speech in the Knesset was the highlight of the second day of Harper’s first trip to Israel. He and his wife Laureen started the day in Bethlehem, where they visited the Church of the Nativity.

He then met with Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah, where he announced a new \$66 million aid program to advance the peace process, promote security and deliver humanitarian assistance.

But the focus of the visit was and is to reinforce Canada’s ties with Israel.

See Harper on page 4



Prime Minister Stephen Harper addresses the Knesset in Jerusalem, January 20, 2014. PHOTO: JASON RANSOM

# Rabbi Garten: Temple Israel plans to engage interim rabbi

Continued from page 1

In addition, there has been growth in Thursday morning minyanim and Shabbat and Erev Shabbat service attendance, well-attended Torah study classes and conversion classes, joyous festival celebrations, and High Holiday services that bring virtually all Temple Israel congregants together.

The bond between Temple Israel and the State of Israel has also grown under Rabbi Garten’s leadership. Nearly 220 congregants have travelled to Israel on missions guided by the rabbi.

Inspired by his vision, Temple Israel now conducts interfaith marriages and has a faithful and strong component of interfaith couples in the congregation, ensuring a Jewish education for their children.

Under Rabbi Garten’s leadership, Temple Israel has welcomed alternative Jewish families, such as gay and lesbian, transgendered and interracial, as well as singles.

“As a congregation, we’ve also been in the forefront of social justice issues outside the Jewish community,” he said. “We continue to have long-term relationships with homeless shelters, and non-Jewish social justice projects and aboriginal

communities. For Africa, we raised \$15,000 for mosquito nets, \$13,000 for solar cookers and much more.”

All of those issues have spin-offs, such as changing the rules at the cemeteries to allow non-Jewish spouses and a progression of changes, he said.

“Lastly,” the rabbi said, “our congregational relationship with Israel is second to none. The varieties of speakers we host along the spectrum of thought; there have been notable changes over the course of time.”

“As an inclusive *chevra*, Temple Israel is at the forefront of connecting within and without the Jewish community in Ottawa,” said Temple Israel President Mark Bowman.

“At a time when religious organizations are witnessing declining participation, Temple Israel has maintained its membership at 350 to 370 families, and we are looking forward to growth.”

Past president Lorne Rachlis has known Rabbi Garten since his arrival at Temple Israel and got to know him very well during the last three years as he served as the congregation’s president.

“He is my spiritual leader, but I also consider him to be my friend,” says Rachlis.

“He has been gracious, opening his house to celebrate festivals, always willing to talk, and has extensive biblical, Talmudic and historical knowledge, which he shares willingly and well. His design and leadership of this fall’s Temple tour of Israel demonstrated his kindness, caring and curiosity as he made sure all 25 of us on the tour were well looked after, well briefed and well satisfied.”

Rachlis says he is delighted Rabbi Garten will still be involved in Temple Israel life as rabbi emeritus.

Rabbi Garten is currently on his usual winter leave, but will return to active duty to complete the annual cycle of events before taking formal retirement in June.

“My plans are to spend less time in committee and board meetings and more time travelling and teaching. I’d like to continue to lead trips to Israel, and I want to do more teaching,” he said. “Not having the schedule of a congregational rabbi allows that to happen.”

Temple Israel has embarked on “more than a search for a new rabbi, it is a search for ourselves,” said Bowman. “It is a time of transition, not only in determining what the community wants in a new rabbi, but

envisioning the next era of our congregation.”

Bowman said the Central Conference of American Rabbis has established a unique and highly successful approach and process to assist temples who are in transition.

“The approach is to hire an interim rabbi, sometimes called a ‘transitional rabbi’ on a short defined contract of one to two years,” he said. “The process has proven extremely successful, particularly in our situation after a long-serving rabbi retires.”

Temple Israel has formed its Interim Rabbi Search Committee.

Rabbi Garten says he’s looking forward to remaining in Ottawa. His son and future daughter-in-law live here and his daughter lives in Washington D.C., “an easy drive or flight to visit her.”

He and his wife Lisa are pleased he will still be here to officiate at weddings and funerals and more.

“I look forward to still being involved in the life of the people with whom I’ve created wonderful relationships.”

Temple Israel will announce celebrations in honour of Rabbi Garten’s retirement in the spring.

## BULLETIN INDEX

BOOKS AND BAGELS	20	CONNECTING BRANCHES	25	MAILB AG	8
BOOK REVIEW	26	FITNESS	22	MY ISRAEL	21
CAMPUS LIFE	25	FOUNDATION	23-24	VALUES, ETHICS	22
COMMENTARIES	6 + 7	GUEST COLUMN	14	WHAT’S GOING ON	27

## CANDLE LIGHTING BEFORE

FEB 7	4:58 PM	MAR 7	5:37 PM
FEB 14	5:08 PM	MAR 14	6:47 PM
FEB 21	5:18 PM	MAR 21	6:56 PM
FEB 28	5:28 PM	MAR 28	7:05 PM

## BULLETIN DEADLINES

FEBRUARY 12	FOR MARCH 3
FEBRUARY 26	FOR MARCH 18
MARCH 12	FOR APRIL 7
APRIL 2	FOR APRIL 28

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**The April 28 issue of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin is community wide, with an early deadline: April 2.**

# Event policies are not restrictive, says Hillel Ottawa director

Scott Goldstein responds to questions in light of recent controversies at two American Hillel chapters.

BY MONIQUE ELLIOT

Hillel International's policies for campus events are stifling the potential for positive dialogue about the relationship between Israel and the Palestinians, some critics say.

Hillel, the main organization serving Jewish students on university and college campuses, is active on more than 600 campuses worldwide. The local branch, Hillel Ottawa, serves the approximately 1,500 Jewish students at the University of Ottawa, Carleton University and Algonquin College.

Recently, Hillel chapters at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Swarthmore College near Philadelphia became the centre of a debate when Harvard Hillel changed details about how it would host Avraham Burg, a former speaker of the Israeli Knesset, and Jewish students at Swarthmore declared their Hillel to be the first "Open Hillel" and that it would not abide by Hillel International's guidelines on what kind of speakers and events they could host.

The Harvard event was originally co-sponsored with Harvard's Palestinian Solidarity Committee, an organization that also supports the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel. Collaborating with individuals or organizations that support the BDS movement run counter to Hillel International's guidelines.

According to Hillel International's official guidelines, a range of political opinions about Israel is welcomed in order to facilitate dialogue and students' personal growth in a safe and supportive environment.

"Hillel welcomes a diversity of student perspectives on Israel and strives to create an inclusive, pluralistic community where students can discuss matters of interest and/or concern about Israel and the Jewish people in a civil manner."

The key to the debate, however, lies within Hillel International's Standards of Partnership, which some critics say can be interpreted as much too broad in order to facilitate constructive dialogue about the relationship between Israel and the Palestinians.

While the organization encourages its campus chapters to engage with all other groups on campus, "Hillel will not partner with, house, or host organizations, groups, or speakers that as a matter of policy or

practice: deny the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish and democratic state with secure and recognized borders; delegitimize, demonize, or apply a double standard to Israel" and supports BDS.

Peter Beinart, a liberal Jewish American political pundit and author of *The Crisis of Zionism*, ignited the debate about Hillel's policies when he wrote "The American Jewish Cocoon," for the September 26, 2013 edition of *The New York Review of Books*, a strong critique about how insulated and unaware American Jewry is to the realities of Palestinians and life in the West Bank.

Among Beinart's criticisms was that Hillel's "standards make it almost impossible for Jewish campus organizations to invite a Palestinian speaker.

"Guidelines like Hillel's – which codify the de facto restrictions that exist in many establishment American Jewish groups – make the organized American Jewish community a closed intellectual space, isolated from the experiences and perspectives of roughly half the people under Israeli control," Beinart wrote.

"And the result is that American Jewish leaders, even those who harbour no animosity toward Palestinians, know little about the reality of their lives," he added.



Hillel Ottawa Executive Director Scott Goldstein (left), seen here with Noah Borer, Hillel's student life co-ordinator, says Hillel International's policies are broad and give local chapters the ability to make their own decisions about who to partner with.

Hillel International's guidelines do not prevent campus chapters from maintaining an inclusive atmosphere with lively dialogue, said Scott Goldstein, executive director of Hillel Ottawa.

"I think the guidelines are broad, and I think the broadness of the guidelines ... give us an ability to make our own decisions when it comes to various elements of partnership and inclusivity on campus," Goldstein said.

The war of words, he explained, is encouraging Hillel chapters to review their campus activity guidelines to ensure they are following the international organization's standards for what events and speakers can be hosted on campus, under the Hillel banner.

"Just because we may not want to host an event with a group on campus that calls for Israel not to exist, it doesn't mean we wouldn't welcome them at any of our other events," Goldstein said.

"It doesn't mean that we would not speak with them in a private manner; we just wouldn't host them under the Hillel banner," he added. "We're still open to having discussions with individuals who disagree [with our policies]."

While Harvard Hillel actually did host Burg in November, the event had to be in two parts as a private dinner and then a public talk at different locations in order to meet the requirements, an aspect noted as awkward by one of Harvard Hillel organizers.

Steve McDonald, spokesperson for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), noted that CIJA policy for event partnership and speakers is similar to Hillel's and said CIJA respects the organization's policy choices.

"We think that Hillel has every right to determine its policies and to select which programs work best for its own mandate and the speakers that it hosts accordingly," McDonald said.

While every Hillel chapter is unique, Goldstein reiterates that the support for Israel is a unifying cause for all campus chapters and is a pillar of what the organization stands for.

"Being part of Hillel means that we do believe in the right for Israel to exist as a democratic state in the Middle East and therefore we do not support anyone who is trying to seek a future without Israel as a democratic state."



**Social Action Mission:** Members of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa's Partnership 2gether Social Action Mission are seen on a hill overlooking Jerusalem. The group was in Israel from December 26 to January 5. Participant Jon Avery will discuss the mission in a guest column in the February 17 issue of the Bulletin. (From left, standing) Simon Sitwell, Andréa Black, Shelby Levine, Eric Trottier, Jon Avery, Sara Kardish, Renée Pelletier, Daniel Gold, Raymond Huyer; (kneeling) Adam Aronson, Samantha Banks, Samuel Levine, Abbey Murawnik, and Rabbi Michael Goldstein.

# Harper: Canada stands for what is 'principled and just'

Continued from page 2

Harper acknowledged that Canada has made mistakes in the past, such as refusing to allow Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany to enter the country in the 1930s.

"But, as a country, at the turning points of history, Canada has consistently chosen, often to our great cost, to stand with others who oppose injustice and to confront the dark forces of the world," he said.

"It is, thus, a Canadian tradition to stand for what is principled and just, regardless of whether it is convenient or popular."

Harper said that, while it might be easier to "go along to get along," and follow the trend in international diplo-

macy to single out Israel for criticism, any failure by Canada to stand up for our shared values with Israel would ultimately erode these values.

"And so, either we stand up for our values and our interests here in Israel, stand up for the existence of a free, democratic and distinctively Jewish state, or the retreat of our values and our interests in the world will begin.

"Ladies and gentlemen, just as we refuse to retreat from our values, so we must also uphold the duty to advance them."

Harper reiterated Canada's support for a Palestinian state, but said it must be a "viable, democratic Palestinian state, committed to living peacefully alongside the Jewish State of Israel."



PMO PHOTO: JASON RANSOM  
Prime Minister Stephen Harper is greeted by Israeli children on his arrival at the Knesset as Yuli-Yoel Edelstein, speaker of the Knesset, looks on.

He also spoke of his government's scepticism of the interim nuclear accord with Iran, and its commitment to continued sanctions against Iran.

"Canada will evaluate the success of this approach not on the merits of its words, but on the implementation and verification of its promised actions.

"We truly hope that it is possible to walk the Iranian Government back from taking the irreversible step of manufacturing nuclear weapons.

"But, for now, Canada's own sanctions will remain fully in place.

"And should our hopes not be realized, should the present agreement prove ephemeral, Canada will be a strong voice for renewed sanctions."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also seized the opportunity to attack the interim agreement with Iran. He compared the Iranian nuclear program to a train with multiple stops, each one more deadly, and said the interim agreement allows Iran to improve and upgrade its nuclear engine.

"In a final agreement, the international community must derail the Iranian nuclear train. Iran must not be left with the ability to build nuclear weapons."

The event at the Knesset opened with remarks by Yuli-Yoel Edelstein, the speaker of the Knesset, who spoke of the importance of "P2P" connections: People to people, parliament to parliament and partner to partner.

"We need a partner for peace," he said. "Today, the Palestinian Authority is not a partner for peace – as long as the media incite against Israel and as long as they teach hatred in their schools."

Labor MK Isaac Herzog, leader of the official opposition, said that, because Canada and Israel have such a close relationship, it was appropriate to talk about "our internal quarrels."

He said that, contrary to the remarks of Edelstein and Netanyahu, the Palestinians "are not a danger to Israel," and that Harper's visit to the Middle East could be an "historic opportunity" to re-energize the peace process.



PMO PHOTO: JASON RANSOM  
Prime Minister Stephen Harper meets in Jerusalem with Shimon Peres, president of the State of Israel, January 21.



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# Questions continue to arise over the role of women in Orthodox Judaism

BY URIEL HEILMAN

**New York (JTA)** – The announcement late last month that SAR, a modern Orthodox high school in New York, is allowing girls to lay tefillin is helping expose an increasingly sharp fault line within Orthodoxy.

For decades, it has been difficult to sort out the precise dividing lines between the varieties of Orthodoxy – ultra, haredi, centrist, modern, liberal. Each elastic category bled into others, and the movement has been broad enough to encompass everyone from black-hat-wearing rabbis with long beards to young women in jeans and T-shirts.

What united them was a stated commitment to halachah – Jewish law traditionally defined – and, of course, self-definition as Orthodox.

In recent years, however, a visible divide has been emerging over a single issue: the role of women. It quickly is becoming a line in the sand, pitting reformers against traditionalists.

The decision by SAR High School, located in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, is just the latest development on this front. Before it, came the decision by Rabbi Avi Weiss, an Orthodox rabbi in Riverdale, to ordain female Orthodox clergy. The ordination call was preceded by Orthodox minyanim that took a second look at halachah and decided that allowing women to lead certain parts of worship – Torah reading, the introductory morning prayers known as *Psukei D'zimra* and a few other rituals – did not violate the letter of the law.

It's difficult to say when it all began. Was the original Bais Yaakov School for Girls, opened in Poland in 1917, the first breach, breaking the traditional ban on giving girls a formalized Torah education? The school, which by today's standards would be considered ultra-Orthodox, was then seen as groundbreaking. Only the imprimatur of the widely respected Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, known as the "Chofetz Chaim," helped stem the controversy that greeted

its establishment.

In North America, a key milestone came in the latter half of the 20th century when Orthodox schools began offering girls the same Jewish education offered to boys. For many years – and this is still the case in many Orthodox institutions today – only boys were allowed to study Talmud, the central text of Orthodox Judaism. But, when Orthodox schools began allowing girls to study Talmud, under the authority of Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik of the Maimonides School near Boston, it opened the door to a new way of thinking about the role of Orthodox women.

Many of the logical conclusions followed. If an Orthodox girl could study Talmud in high school, why couldn't she in college? By the early 1980s, Yeshiva University, the flagship institution of modern Orthodoxy, was offering elective Talmud classes at its Stern College for Women, though it wasn't until 2009 that Stern opened a master's program in biblical and Talmudic interpretation to women. In 1984, the Drisha Institute, a New York institution under Orthodox leadership, opened the first full-time women's kollel study program.

The glass ceiling of female Orthodox spiritual leaders began to shatter, too. In 1992, Drisha began offering a three-year program "paralleling rabbinic ordination" to certify female scholars. A few years later, Nishmat, an institution in Jerusalem established in 1990 "to open the gates of higher Torah learning to women," inaugurated a program to certify women as *yoatzot halachah* (consultants on Jewish law). The consultants mainly ministered to women on laws pertaining to sex, Shabbat and kashrut.

In 2009, Rabbi Weiss pushed the envelope even further by ordaining Sara Hurwitz, later conferring on her the title of "rabba," a feminized version of rabbi. The move was condemned immediately – not just by the haredi Orthodox, but by leaders of the centrist Orthodox Rabbinical

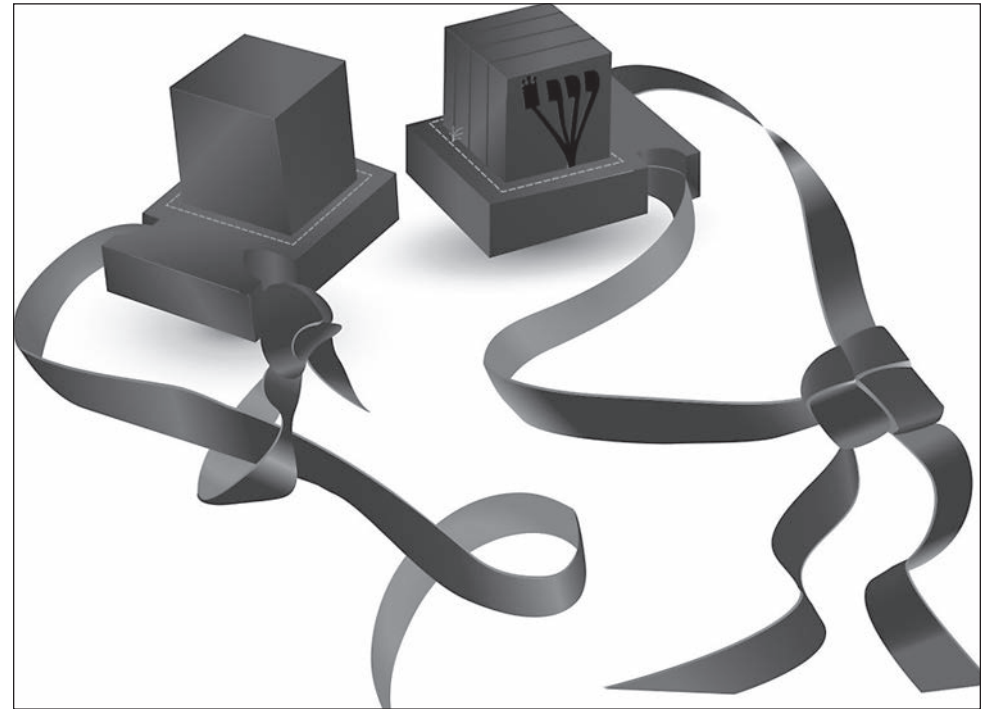


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

A modern Orthodox high school in New York has begun to allow girls to lay tefillin.

Council of America (RCA).

"The ordination of women as rabbis represents a serious and inappropriate breach with our sacred tradition and is beyond the pale of Orthodox Judaism," said Rabbi Steven Pruzansky of Teaneck, N.J., who was vice-president of the RCA at the time.

For a long time, it had been unusual for one sector of Orthodoxy to condemn another, despite differences in practice and even ideology. Many families span the various kinds of Orthodoxy, no one's quite sure of what the contours of modern

**See Women on page 8**

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extend deepest sympathy to the Katz family on the passing of  
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who touched the lives of many families in the Ottawa community.  
May his memory be a blessing and source of strength for all.**



FEDERATION  
REPORT



WARREN AND LINDA MELAMED  
MITZVAH DAY

**W**e are very excited and honoured to be chairing Mitzvah Day 2014. On Sunday, February 9, the Jewish Federation of Ottawa will be hosting our community's eighth annual Mitzvah Day, a day in which members of the Jewish community come together and donate our time and energy to giving back, one good deed at a time.

It is a wonderful way to unite the community in the spirit of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) and to teach our children how to give back. Mitzvah Day is not necessarily about raising money for charity, but rather about becoming involved in a personal way, each of us

with our own two hands, to help those in need.

We immediately said yes when we were asked to chair Mitzvah Day because we felt that it was both an excellent way to give back to the community and a terrific way to teach our two children, Jacob and Michael, about what it means to help those in need. We have volunteered both inside and outside the community for many years, but Mitzvah Day is different. It is a hands-on way of helping that is fun, meaningful and rewarding for the whole family.

Just a few of the wonderful mitzvot this year include:

- Donating ponytails to Locks of Love,

## Mitzvah Day: 'A wonderful way to unite the community in the spirit of tikkun olam'

*Mitzvah Day is not necessarily about raising money for charity, but rather about becoming involved in a personal way, each of us with our own two hands, to help those in need.*

an organization that provides hair pieces for children with medical hair loss;

- Writing letters of support and encouragement to *Lone Soldiers*, the soldiers from other countries serving in the Israel Defense Forces;
- Making sandwiches for the Ottawa Mission and Shepherds of Good Hope;
- A used hockey equipment donation drive for the Canada Israel Hockey

School, a terrific bridge-building program for Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Druze boys and girls;

- The exciting Extreme Football Challenge in which teams play in a tournament and raise money for the Pulmonary Hypertension Association of Canada, a cause that is near and dear to the hearts of our family.

There are many more mitzvot to choose from. Indeed, there is something for everyone and for all age groups.

We would like to thank all of our committee members, as well as Ariel Fainer and the staff of the Federation for all of their hard work in making sure that Mitzvah Day 2014 will be a great event.

We hope the entire community will come out and lend a hand. We look forward to seeing everyone there.

For more information about Mitzvah Day, or to volunteer, contact Ariel at [afainer@jewishottawa.com](mailto:afainer@jewishottawa.com) or 613-798-4696, ext. 241. Or register online at [www.mitzvahdayottawa.com](http://www.mitzvahdayottawa.com).

FROM THE  
PULPIT



RABBI ARI GALANDAUER  
YOUNG ISRAEL

**T**he 2014 Winter Olympics begin in just a few days in Sochi, Russia. Countries from around the world will participate in friendly competition as their athletes vie for Olympic gold.

While the excitement builds as we anticipate the opening ceremonies, I recall an important lesson from the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Steven Bradbury was representing Australia in short track speed skating. He was not expected to win by any stretch. Not by his country, his family, and even himself. He was the long shot of long shots. Sure enough, as the final race was coming down to a photo finish, Steven Bradbury was well behind in fourth place

## A lesson in Olympic success

when suddenly the impossible happened.

The lead skater fell and tripped the skater immediately behind him, who then did the same to the third place skater. As luck would have it, Steven was far enough behind the pack that he had enough time to manoeuvre around his competitors, thus avoiding the pile up, and continued across the finish line first to win gold!

As amazing as this was, the story does not end there. In the semifinals, only the top three skaters qualify for a chance to compete for a medal in the finals. There too, Steven Bradbury was trailing in fourth, when the skater in third place fell down close to the finish line, enabling Steven to qualify for the finals and a chance at a medal.

But the sheer luck does not end there either. In the quarter-finals, where only the top two qualify for the semifinals, Bradbury finished third in his race and was under the assumption that he had been eliminated from further competition. Except, one of the top two qualifiers, a Canadian named Marc Gagnon, was disqualified for obstructing another racer, thereby allowing Steven to advance to the semi-finals.

Nothing short of miraculous! Simply unbelievable!

In fact, Steven himself admitted that he

had no chance of winning, based on his own abilities. Therefore, part of his strategy was hoping that other skaters would indeed fall.

In an interview after the race he said, "I was the oldest bloke in the field and I knew that, skating four races back to back, I wasn't going to have any petrol left in the tank. So, there was no point in getting there and mixing it up because I was going to be in last place anyway. So, I figured I might as well stay out of the way and be in last place and hope that some people get tangled up."

I find it absolutely amazing that someone can recognize that, on his own, on paper, based on simple raw facts, he has no chance at success, and yet he tries anyway.

Upon further reflection, however, this is what Jewish history, our history is all about. An underdog nation that seemingly has no chance of survival, let alone to succeed and thrive and contribute so much to the world, with one hand tied behind her back!

Like Steven Bradbury, we compete because we believe in the impossible. In Australia, they call it "Doing a Bradbury," meaning an unexpected or unusual success.

In Judaism, we call it *Hashkacha Pratis* (the guiding hand of God.)

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FROM THE EDITOR



MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

## Harper visit to Israel a time of pride for Jewish community

report on a major breaking story as it unfolded and with more content than we could possibly use in the print edition. It was an exciting few days as we took advantage of this new tool to deliver news quickly to the community in a way we've not been able to before.

From all accounts, Harper was a huge hit in Israel, earning acclaim from Israeli politicians from across the political spectrum (there were two Arab members of the Knesset who heckled Harper during his speech and then walked out), from much of the Israeli press, and from everyday Israelis (as Barbara notes in her *My Israel* column on page 21).

All the while, we were also monitoring the mainstream and social media coverage of the Harper trip – particularly the commentaries. Some pundits applauded Harper. Others were highly critical and some, including several commentators generally seen as pro-Israel, felt the trip was too plainly partisan and missed opportunities for Canada to use its friendship to push Israel in areas of disagreement.

Some implied Harper's support for Israel was simply electioneering in search of the Jewish vote in the next

election.

To be sure, Harper and the Conservatives have courted the Jewish vote, just as they've courted the vote in other ethnic and religious communities – and just as the other parties have also done so.

Those accusations that Harper's – and the Conservative Party's – support of Israel are motivated by a search for the Jewish vote have been circulating for years. I've listened to Harper and such ministers as John Baird and Jason Kenney speak about Israel over the years and I've no doubt they are absolutely sincere in their support for Israel.

And the Jewish vote is only concentrated enough in a couple of Toronto-area ridings and one in Montreal that it matters. The Muslim community in Canada, the vast majority of which is naturally much more sympathetic to the Palestinians than to Israel, is about three times the size of the Jewish community and growing. So, if it was about electioneering rather than principle, Harper's tilt would be elsewhere.

To be sure, there is also tremendous support for Israel on the Liberal – and even the NDP – bench. For example, I

don't think there's a parliamentarian anywhere in the world whose record on Israel approaches that of Liberal MP Irwin Cotler.

In his speech to the Knesset, Harper clearly said, "Criticism of Israeli government policy is not in and of itself necessarily anti-Semitic," before going on to discuss some of the efforts to delegitimize Israel that do cross that line.

And, while Harper would not criticize Israel publicly (just as he did not criticize the Palestinian Authority publicly), he did allude in his joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – which Netanyahu confirmed – that policy differences with the Israeli government on such issues as settlements and occupation were discussed.

Indeed, Harper pointed out that a reiteration of Canadian policy on key issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was publicly posted just before the trip. These are long-standing Canadian policies dating back to long before Harper was in power and can be seen at [tinyurl.com/Canada-policy-I-P-conflict](http://tinyurl.com/Canada-policy-I-P-conflict).

Harper's visit to Israel and its implications for Canada-Israel relations in the years to come was a time of pride for the Canadian Jewish community. And, despite an ill-conceived comment at the Western Wall by one Conservative MP, it really wasn't about the 2015 election.

Much of our attention during the production period for this issue of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* was focused on Prime Minister Stephen Harper's first-ever visit to the State of Israel and the first official visit to Israel by a Canadian prime minister since Jean Chrétien's trip 14 years ago.

Our *My Israel* columnist Barbara Crook was part of the 200-plus-person Canadian delegation that accompanied Harper on his tour of Israel, and her reports from Israel for us, some JTA coverage, several official photos from the PMO and from other Ottawa members of the delegation, were posted quickly on the new *Bulletin* website at [www.ottawajewishbulletin.com](http://www.ottawajewishbulletin.com). It was our first opportunity to use the site to

IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS



JASON MOSCOVITZ

## National pride and our quest for Olympic hockey gold

winning goal in the 1972 Summit Series against the Soviets, a new generation of Canadians will remember Sydney Crosby's overtime, "golden goal," as it was dubbed, in the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver.

It's a funny thing how we remember the details of wins, but can't remember a thing about Olympic losses.

The Summit Series and the Winter Olympics in Vancouver were four decades apart and, yet, there is something about both men's hockey teams' performances that's worth noting. Both teams comprised the most elite players Canada had to offer and, yet, with all that talent, Team Canada squeaked out a last-second win in 1972, and won in overtime in 2010.

While we still stubbornly call hockey, "Canada's game," more than ever we have to learn to share it. Interest in hockey is now bigger than ever. Not so long ago, Americans thought hockey was no better than fake wrestling or roller derby on television. There was regional interest, but national hockey ratings in the U.S. were dismal. Ratings have been growing and soaring over the past two years.

On New Year's Day, when more than 100,000 people attended an outdoor NHL

game in a Michigan football stadium, Americans proved they have learned to celebrate hockey just as we do. We may still cling to bragging rights, and we can be fixated on once again being crowned Olympic champions, but it will be a struggle just as it was last time and the time before that.

Getting back to Sydney Crosby's winning overtime goal at the 2010 Olympics. He scored it against a very strong American team. There is always a bit of luck that goes with a sudden death overtime goal victory and luck was on our side on that magical day. Luck aside, what is a fact, is how evenly matched the two teams were. It was our best versus the American best. On the women's side, the American team remains Canada's toughest opponent.

It used to be that the odd American from such northern states as Minnesota, North Dakota or Massachusetts would make it to the NHL. Today there are Americans in the NHL from California and Colorado, as well as many points east, west and south. The American players are trained as well as ours and with their much bigger population, and with so

many more young girls and boys playing hockey, they, too, see themselves as the best and with limitless potential to get better. The Americans, both the men and the women, want to turn their silver to hockey gold in 2014.

And how about all the other supremely talented Olympic teams also filled with NHL stars. The Russians used to shine brightest, but they are now faced with stiff competition from the Swedes and the Finns.

There was a lot of Canadian hand wringing this recent winter holiday season when Canada's national junior team finished out of medal competition for the second consecutive year. After dominating the international tournament for years, it was the sixth year in a row they didn't win the gold medal. Interestingly, during that six-year span, no single team has dominated, which tells us how many good teams there are.

But that dose of reality does not diminish expectations for the upcoming Olympics. Can you imagine the pressure in the heads and on the shoulders of everyone involved in the 2014 men's and women's Olympic hockey teams?

While Canadians continue to fervently believe Canada is the best, the difficult truth is we are now just one of the best.

The consolation prize is Olympic hockey will be so competitive and so much more worth watching!

It is time to get excited. Really excited! Soon the whole country will be watching the Winter Olympics. We will watch Canadian skiers, figure skaters, speed skaters and bobsledders, but, inevitably, so much more attention will laser in on men's and women's hockey games.

Canadians have always thought that, because we invented hockey, we have to be the best at it. If, and it's happened before, we do not win hockey gold at the Olympics, it will provoke a national calamity. Our hockey is about national pride.

Just as there is a generation of Canadians who remember where they were when Paul Henderson scored that



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## JEWISH BELIEF; ASSIMILATION

Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton's *From the Pulpit* column ("Believing: What constitutes Jewish belief in God?" January 20) touches on key points regarding faith in God and declares that the traditional belief in a supernatural deity is "pediatric."

While the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* should not be the forum for theological debate, one cannot remain silent in face of this evaluation, which flies in the face of traditional Judaism for millennia. The parsha of *Yitro*, which discusses Divine Revelation, and the giving of the Commandments at Sinai, serves as a foundation stone of our faith, which is based on the concept that the Creator of the universe is not some amorphous force, but the protector and guardian of Israel.

The characterization by Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan that Rabbi Bolton refers to of God being "symbolically expressive of the highest ideals for which men strive," forces one to ask who determines what these "ideals" are. Does this determination change on a daily basis? Would someone pray to an ideal? Finally, Judaism

combines together faith and actions through the concepts of *Emunah* and *Mitzvot*, which lead to *Yediat Hashem* (the knowledge of God).

On a different note, in her *Values, Ethics, Community* column ("Pass the shortbread: revisiting the December dilemma," January 20), Mira Sucharov asks whether we would be worse off if we "dip into multiple narratives," meaning that perhaps we should be incorporating other faiths' holidays into our makeup if they are ostensibly secular.

As it is, the Jewish community has assimilated to the point of almost no return in certain circles. The recent Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews basically indicates that. We should not be prepared to say Kaddish for the Jewish community. While it may appear desirable to adopt the majority culture, the need to establish barriers to prevent wholesale assimilation must remain in place. In Parshat *Yitro*, God commands us to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation." If we have no identity, what are we?

**Rabbi Howard Finkelstein**

## 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*  
21 Nadolny Sachs Private, Ottawa, ON K2A 1R9. Or by email to [bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com](mailto:bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com)

# Women: Some support new roles

Continued from page 5

Orthodox are, and it's not unusual to find haredi Orthodox Jews worshipping in modern Orthodox shuls and vice versa. (Neither consider it acceptable to worship in Conservative or Reform synagogues.)

But, as liberal Orthodox Jews support new roles for women, particularly in the synagogue, it's looking increasingly like Orthodoxy is undergoing a schism.

The more traditionalist elements of the Orthodox community view the reforms as beyond the pale, a threat to the integrity of their halachic community. This is why Rabbi Weiss and the yeshivas he has established, including the liberal Orthodox rabbinical school Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, have faced so much Orthodox opposition – from the RCA, which does not recognize Chovevei ordination, to Israel's Chief Rabbinate, which recently questioned Rabbi Weiss' Orthodox credentials.

Incidentally, SAR is not the first Orthodox school to

allow girls to lay tefillin. The Ramaz School in Manhattan made such an allowance as far back as the early 1990s, though it made no public announcement about it until SAR did last month. And eight centuries ago, the daughters of Rashi, the medieval French rabbi, famously were said to have worn tefillin.

While the more public battles have been over women being ordained, laying tefillin or reading from the Torah, there are innumerable issues related to women both large and small with which Orthodoxy is grappling. It's not just about clergy, but also women serving as synagogue presidents, making the blessing over bread or wine on Shabbat, or dancing with Torah scrolls on Simchat Torah. While initially considered aberrant, some of these practices have gradually gained acceptance in mainstream Orthodox circles.

See Women on page 14

## House Exchange

Ex-Ottawa couple living in Moshav Zippori, Israel, would like to exchange houses with someone in Ottawa any time from mid-August to mid-September, 2014.  
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KKL-JNF will commemorate Ariel Sharon, the 11th prime minister of Israel, with a 60 km scenic route in Nahal Shikma in the Negev that will pass through Sharon's Sycamore Ranch (Havat Shikmim) and near the graves of the former prime minister and his wife Lily. The road will be named Arik Sharon Road.

The proposed scenic route runs along the river channel from the Kibbutz Dvir area to the Zikim Beach. Once Israel's longest and most beautiful road is complete, with its spectacular unique landscapes, it will be possible to travel in any private car along the entire run of the river, and to take in the beautiful natural and landscape sites, nature reserves, springtime bloom and archeological sites, and enjoy parking areas for outdoor recreation in KKL-JNF forests.

JNF Canada has decided to commemorate Ariel Sharon's passing by taking donations in his name and creating a JNF forest in his memory. If you want to participate in the JNF Canada tribute, please call our JNF Ottawa office.

**JNF Ottawa Tu Bi'Shevat Telethon**

JNF Ottawa is grateful to all of the people and the behind-the-scenes work of our staff and the many volunteers it takes to make this very important campaign a reality. This year, we were once again able to offer our volunteers offices to call from, coffee, snacks and prizes. Our corporate sponsors are the very reason that JNF Ottawa can offer volunteers such a fantastic experience as a reward for giving up a few hours on a Sunday for a great cause, when they could be with family, on outings, at events or running errands.

Our returning corporate sponsors include Loblaw's College Square, Regional Realty, 9-to-5 Coffee, and Rideau Bakery. Some of our amazing prizes included a brand new HP printer from Staples on Carling Avenue and an incredible Sens package from Canadian Tire on Carling Avenue that included four tickets, a Jersey and a Zamboni ride for a child aged five to 12. Other prizes were donated by Marvalee Designs and Pampered Chef. Naturally, we also rely on the gracious and kind donations from the community to make our campaign a success.

This was the first year we had a guest from KKL-JNF Israel visit us. In early January, Aviram Zuck, JNF's forestry director in the Northern Galilee made several presentations to the Ottawa Jewish Community School. He described the work that JNF has done in Israel and continues to do in an effort to combat desertification using, among other methods, biblical techniques that have been reimagined for this century. He also showed striking before-and-after photos of a transformed swampy, malaria-infested wasteland into the beautiful Hula Valley – now the site of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's JNF Welcome Centre project, a major tourist attraction, and destination for thousands of migratory birds.

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# JET organizing Ottawa contingent for Jewish Women's Renaissance Project trip to Israel: 'Birthright for mothers'

BY HANNAH DAYAN  
FOR JET

**T**he best part of this trip was meeting a group of amazing Ottawa Jewish women that I will be connected to forever and experiencing first-hand the wonderful culture of Israel," said Nikki Shapiro of her experiences on the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project (JWRP) trip to Israel in 2010.

"I was inspired through the amazing journeys and life stories of many courageous and exceptional people, and I discovered that I too am on the right track to leading a fulfilling life," she said.

The JWRP trips, whose Ottawa contingents are organized by JET (Jewish Education through Torah) have been referred to as "Birthright for mothers" and are offered to Jewish mothers with school-aged children. The highly subsidized trip has an exciting nine-day itinerary that includes visiting such sites as Artist Quarter in Safed, camel riding in the desert, *chessed* (kindness) projects such as preparing food baskets for the poor, and classes to encourage spiritual and personal growth.

Since 2009, more than 2,500 women from 12 countries, including 65 women from Ottawa, have participated in the JWRP trips, which are led by Lori Palatnik.

This year, JET has partnered with the Jewish Federation of Ottawa to extend the trip by a 10th day so that the women may visit Metulla in the Upper Galilee, a community partnered with Ottawa in the Partnership 2Gether program, a project that connects seven Jewish communities in Canada with five communities in Israel and builds a living bridge between Diaspora and Israeli communities. In Metulla, the Ottawa partnership has helped develop infrastructure and enhance the Hanadiv elementary school.

The women travel in Israel as a group, developing close relationships and learning from each other. On their return, Ottawa city leaders help to continue the close connection with follow-up and weekly classes and

events with JWRP trip alumni from previous years. Topics of the classes range from parenting to the meaning of the holidays in the Jewish calendar year.

The group from Ottawa has also formed JWRP-613, to promote leadership and connection with the community and Jewish values. The goal is to put all the lessons learned on the trip into action. The theme for this year is "From Head and Heart to Helping Hand," and projects this year have already included preparing Chanukah hampers of food and basic necessities for those in need in the community. Later in the year, the group will be learning about Ten Yad and the Kosher Food Bank.

The next JWRP trip takes place from July 20 to 30 and JET is now accepting applications. For more information or to apply, visit [www.jwrp.org](http://www.jwrp.org) or contact JET at 613-695-4800 or [lauren@jetottawa.com](mailto:lauren@jetottawa.com).



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# Science writer to discuss the origin of the universe at Soloway JCC

BY MAXINE MISKA  
SOLOWAY JCC

“We are stardust, billion-year-old carbon,” sang Joni Mitchell in her 1970 song, “Woodstock.” But Mitchell may have underestimated the age of the universe by more than 10 billion years.

In *The Stardust Revolution: The New Story of Our Origin in the Stars*, Almonte-based science writer Jacob Berkowitz provides a genealogy of our bodies that spans the age of the universe. Berkowitz will speak on the subject at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre on Sunday, February 23 at 2:00 pm.

*The Stardust Revolution* chronicles the scientific advances of the past few centuries through three revolutions: the Copernican revolution, which displaced earth from the centre of the universe and made it part of the solar system; the Darwinian revolution, which recast human beings as part of the web of life; and the Stardust revolution, which links the chemistry and biology of life to the rest of the universe.

In his book, Berkowitz weaves this story together with lesser known information about the discovery of the building blocks of life – organic molecules such as ammonia, methane, acetic acid, proteins and fats everywhere in space. Astronomers assumed that interstellar space was void and sterile, but, when radio and space-based telescopes enabled scientists to analyze the chemical make-up of distant galaxies, they discovered how wrong they had been. Everywhere that astronomers searched, space was filled with water, carbon and organic molecules – the



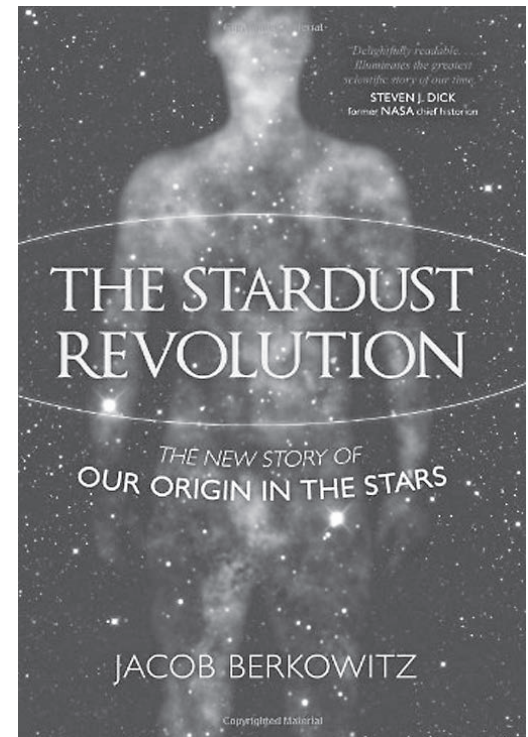
“When we look into the dark depths of the night sky now, we know that the Earth, rather than a watery oasis, is a tiny blue drip in a cosmic sea,” writes Jacob Berkowitz.

substances necessary for the development of life. Berkowitz provides a riveting description of a universe evolving towards complexity, where life seems to be an emergent possibility throughout.

*The Stardust Revolution* has an impressive reach, tracing the history of scientific thought from an eternal, static universe where the stars and elements of the periodic table have always existed to the understanding of stars as dynamic forges creating the elements through fusion. He explains how astronomers gradually were able to learn about the composition of light through telescopes and prisms and, subsequently, how to determine the chemical elements present in distant stars by analysing their light spectrum. Through this analysis, as

well as the sampling of meteorites and bits of a comet captured by the Stardust Mission of comet Wild 2, scientists have shown that we are chemically one with the universe. In Berkowitz’s cogent writing, microscopic diamonds extracted from a meteor and a giant stellar nursery millions of light years away are joined.

As well as describing scientific advances, Berkowitz also elucidates the doggedness of scientists to pursue what their colleagues tell them is impossible. Nobel Prize winner Charles Townes, co-inventor of the laser, decided he would search for water in interstellar space using a radio telescope. While his colleagues believed molecules could not survive the vacuum and radiation of space, Townes found the signature of water wherever he looked.



Berkowitz describes this eloquently, “When we look into the dark depths of the night sky now, we know that the Earth, rather than a watery oasis, is a tiny blue drip in a cosmic sea.”

Berkowitz is also the author of *Jurassic Poop: What Dinosaurs (and Others) Left Behind* and *Out of This World: Amazing Search for an Alien Earth*, which was selected as best astronomy book for 2009 by *SkyNews* magazine. He has written for the *Globe and Mail* and been a guest on CBC’s *Quirks and Quarks*.

Tickets are \$10 at the door. For information, contact Roslyn Wollock at [rwollock@jccottawa.com](mailto:rwollock@jccottawa.com) or 613-798-9818, ext. 254.

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# Shabbat dinner leads student to begin exploration of her Jewish roots

BY BENJAMIN MILLER  
FOR CHABAD STUDENT NETWORK

Discussing *teshuvah*, the Jewish concept of spiritual return, Rabbi Chaim Boyarsky of the Chabad Student Network explained, "It's better to be in an elevator on the first floor going up than on the 10th floor going down."

Algonquin College journalism student Dali Carmichael is an example of someone who has experienced this.

"My mother is Jewish and my father is Anglican, but other than celebrating their respective high holidays, they are both actually rather secular," Carmichael explained, when asked about her Jewish background.

"We didn't say grace or do a Shabbat dinner in my house. They decided not to force any religion on me, but instead exposed me to basic elements of each of their own faiths with the thought that I would choose what I wanted for



PHOTO: KATIE STEWART, DALISELEPHANTS.WORDPRESS.COM

Algonquin College journalism student Dali Carmichael says learning about Judaism has brought her closer to her heritage and to her mother's family.

myself when I got older."

As the only Jewish child in a rural Ontario community, her only real contact with Judaism was through books and occasional visits with her Jewish relatives in Toronto.

Yet her desire to connect to her roots was always present and she carried this through her studies.

"In my second year at Algonquin, I was tasked with writing a feature article for the student-run *Glue Magazine*. I thought about all of the people I knew who had explored their spirituality while I was in university, and I thought that it would be interesting to look at the reasons why people return to religion or spirituality at a certain point in their adult life.

"One of my sources was a Jewish acquaintance who invited me to a Shabbat dinner hosted by the Rohr Chabad Student Network. I ended up taking a class with Yocheved Boyarsky, who co-directs the organization with her husband Rabbi Chaim Boyarsky, and the

rest is history."

Carmichael's assignment proved to be fateful as she has continued to explore her spiritual and Jewish roots, grappling with exactly what they mean to her. Yet, she is sure that whatever Judaism turns out to be in her life, where she began will leave an important imprint.

"Coming from a secular background, to me it is more than a religion," she said.

"I enjoy learning about the mitzvot, and I believe they create a positive framework with which I can inform some of my own morals and ethics."

The process of learning about Judaism also makes me feel closer to my heritage and my maternal family, which is really the biggest takeaway for me thus far."

While Carmichael's story is her own, Rabbi Boyarsky explained it can be likened to the story of the Jewish people. Although Jews have long been scattered around the world, as each of us returns, we all in some sense return.

## Big name artists heading to Israel

(JTA) - While Pink Floyd co-founder Roger Waters' efforts to stop artists from performing in Israel have been getting plenty of attention, the list of upcoming big-name concerts scheduled there continues to grow.

The latest additions: Neil Young and Justin Timberlake, joining Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber and, (fingers crossed), the

Rolling Stones.

First up is Timberlake, who will play Tel Aviv on May 28, according to *Haaretz*.

*The Times of Israel* reports that Young and the band Crazy Horse are scheduled to perform in Tel Aviv on July 17. The iconic Canadian musician last played in Israel in 1995 during his "Mirror Ball" tour with Pearl Jam.



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# Limmud conferences inspire and engage Jewish communities around the world

‘At Limmud, you can’t escape the fact that it’s great to be Jewish,’ said Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis at the Limmud U.K. conference on December 23.

Rabbi Mirvis was first chief rabbi of the United Kingdom to attend the annual conference in the more than 30 years since its founding.

The success of Limmud in the U.K. has given rise to more than 60 Limmud conferences around the world from Bulgaria to Peru and from South Africa to Israel. As a representative of Limmud Ottawa, I was fortunate to experience this year’s flagship Limmud conference, which brought together a record-breaking 2,600 attendees.

Ranging in age from babies to bubbies, an amiable collection of rabbis, musicians, neuroscientists, politicians, journalists and students of every variety descended upon the University of Warwick for a marathon week of Jewish learning. Limmud has utterly ignited Jewish life in the U.K. and, given the considerable similarities between British and Canadian Jewish communities, it can and will do the same here – if we let it.



Limmud is guided by a set of core values and principles that often brush against the norms of established Jewish communities. The formalities we tend to tolerate – reverence for individuals based on their title or status – are eschewed in favour of the notion that anyone can be a teacher, and so too can anyone be a learner. That might be a “hippie” concept, but it works – and not just for those who did indeed grow up in the ‘60s. Astonishingly, about half of the attendees were under 35.

But just what makes Limmud U.K. such a phenomenon?

First, Limmud deregulates the marketplace of ideas, thereby healing intra-communal tensions. Limmud’s strength is the tremendous diversity of its programming. Anyone can present a session. The only restrictions are logistical – time and space. Cross-communal and inclusive, Limmud will only reject presenters whose participa-



Adam Moscoe (second from right) with Limmud International delegates from Italy, Australia, South Africa, and the United States.

tion in the conference would compromise its good name.

With basic accommodations and atrocious meals, there is little glamour to Limmud U.K., yet thousands of Jews – even those from warmer climates – clamour to register. The lesson is clear: people will sacrifice comfort for intellectual, spiritual and social stimulation. Not the sort of stimulation that confines Jews to silos and confirms their long-held beliefs about Israeli settlements, women’s participation in prayer, or the like. Rather, by bringing together Jews from all walks of life – from the unaffiliated to the chief rabbi – and allowing them to interact in a fresh and motivating atmosphere, Limmud offers a platform for the resolution of tensions that exist when Jews of different denominations and lifestyles fail to talk to one another.

Second, Limmud taps into the limitless power of volunteers. Limmud U.K. has developed a level of professionalism whereby volunteers – the majority of whom are under 30 – have clear expectations and they recognize, given the size and profile of the conference, that any neglect of their responsibilities, no matter how mundane, would compromise the ultimate goal of taking attendees one step further on their Jewish journeys.

Third, Limmud facilitates intergenerational conversation. At a session over Shabbat entitled “Jewish moot court,” Joel

Grishaver challenged participants to critically reason through tough ethical dilemmas, including whether Israel Defense Forces units can justifiably permit non-Orthodox style of prayer. Dozens of people raised their hands to give opinions, including two children, both around 10 years of age, who stood up on chairs and shared their well-considered views with the crowd.

Limmud must be an environment where everyone’s thoughts are valued, regardless of age, status or background. It is an unparalleled opportunity for inter-generational dialogue and exchange, which would undoubtedly contribute to the growth and sustainability of Canadian Jewish communities.

The preceding was a taste of Limmud. It’s arguably better than Aruba, and it’s definitely better than Chinese food and the multiplex on Christmas. I believe Limmud activities throughout Canada have the potential to inspire and engage members of our Jewish communities, regardless of their level of religious observance. Moreover, I am excited to see Canada increase its participation in what has become a truly global network – Limmud International.

Adam Moscoe is member of the Limmud Ottawa organizing committee. He can be reached at adam.moscoe@gmail.com. Visit [www.limmudinternational.org](http://www.limmudinternational.org) to learn more about Limmud.

## Women: Fringe phenomenon?

Continued from page 8

Will the changes considered controversial today gradually gain mainstream acceptance, too? Or are they fated to remain a fringe Orthodox phenomenon?

In an elastic movement with no central governing authority or membership structure, it’s hard to say. Clearly the haredi Orthodox will stand against change. The question is which way the modern Orthodox and the institutions associated with them – the RCA, Yeshiva University, the Orthodox Union and the National Council of Young Israel, to name a few – will swing.

There is, perhaps, one factor that may play an outsize role in determining this: leadership. If the change agents within Orthodoxy become educators, role models and leaders of the next generation of modern Orthodox Jews, successfully pass on their commitment to both halachah and egalitarianism, and continue to live a life committed to Jewish law, they could transform the face of modern Orthodoxy.

But, if they fail, then those who have been arguing all along that these changes have no place in Orthodoxy will see vindication in that failure.

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# JCC of Ottawa Summer Camps

Pamela Rosenberg

## JCC of Ottawa Summer Camps team is gearing up for another great season

While the temperature outside continues to drop the focus inside the Soloway Jewish Community Centre is on sunshine and summer time as the JCC of Ottawa Summer Camps team put together the blue print for what promises to be another unforgettable season.

With Day Camp, Travelling Sports Camp and 16 Specialty Camps, including two new ones, JCC Summer Camps offers a wide variety of programs and something for every child and interest.

Soloway JCC Ganon Preschool Director Lauren Lee returns this summer as Director of Day Camp along with Meghan Polowin as Communications Director, Arielle Kreisman, Senior Program Manager, Judaics and Debbie Shapiro, Program Manager, CIT's.

"Besides being part of our camp for many years these young women are also involved and extremely dedicated to the Jewish community," says Lauren. "They are enthusiastic and I am thrilled that they are part of the new Day Camp Administrative Team."

Some new things to look forward to this summer include camp-wide Shabbat celebrations and events plus a variety of new weekly themes. Senior campers (7-10) will be going on exciting field trips and, in her role as Senior Camp Programmer, Arielle will ensure that this group is having fun and getting the most out of their summer experience.

With Lauren at the helm, those sending their children to summer camp for the first time can feel confident that their little ones will be welcomed by a friendly and familiar face which makes for an easy transition from school to camp.

Executive Director of Summer Camps and Director of Travelling Sports Camp, Jon Braun has planned tons of exciting afternoon road trips for his adventurous

group. This summer Travelling Sports Campers will visit some of their favorite spots to play tennis, rock climb, go-cart, windsurf plus welcome special guests from the world of sports.



Tzofim, Israeli Scouts Caravan, will be back again this summer to entertain the campers and bring some Israeli culture to camp.

Young sports enthusiasts will have the opportunity to participate in a basketball clinic with Ottawa Basketball Hall of Famer, Coach Carlos Brown; be part of a Soccer Clinic with the Carleton University

Ravens; toss a football with a former Bishops University Gator; and take part in an Archery clinic by X Quest Archery Club.

"The CFL is back in the Capital and Travelling Sports Camp will be going to a REDBLACKS game," according to Jon. "There's only one place to be in the summertime and you know where that is...JCC Summer Camps."

The Specialty Camps list has expanded once again bringing the total to 16 interesting and entertaining weeks. Making their debut at the JCC this summer is If We Could Talk to the Animals and The Director's Cut - Silent Motion Picture.

"Specialty Camps give kids a chance to experience something new or master a skill," says Gail Lieff, Specialty Camps Director. "Each week allows children to get creative, have fun and make friends."

Other sensational Specialty Camps include Radical Reactions Chemistry & Crime, Boot Camp, Girls on the Go, Horseback Riding Camp, Powered up LEGO Camp, The Great Adventure, Photography Camp, Tennis Fun Camp, Band Camp, Summertime Splash, Coach Brown's All Star Basketball Camp, Girl Power Camp, Last Blast and The Directors Cut Claymation/Animation.

For more info on JCC of Ottawa Summer Camps pick up a brochure or visit [jccottawa.com](http://jccottawa.com).



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# A free trip to Israel! What's the catch?

NOAH BORER  
HILLEL OTTAWA

**W**e all know the old adage that says there's no such thing as a free lunch. Well, what if I told you that you could not only have a free lunch, but you can enjoy that free lunch in Israel.

What's the catch?

Well, I can assure you that there is no catch when it comes to Taglit-Birthright Israel: Canada Israel Experience. It is a rite of passage for Jewish young people to go on Taglit-Birthright Israel, but I wanted to write this article to make you aware of what the program truly is, and who is eligible to apply.

Birthright Israel is a free 10-day trip to Israel for anyone of Jewish heritage (at least one parent must be Jewish) between the ages of 18 and 26 who has not participated in an organized program trip to Israel after age 18. This is a change in Birthright policy as anyone who had previously participated in an organized trip to Israel at any age was previously ineligible.

That's it. If you meet those simple criteria, you should be eligible to apply for this gift.

Registration opens online at [www.israelforfree.com](http://www.israelforfree.com) on Wednesday, February 19 at 10 am. Canada Israel Experience is excited to offer trips that leave from May until August with multiple trip dates each month.

Once you register and have filled out the online application, you will have an in-person interview with officials in Ottawa.

If you are deemed eligible and have paid the \$250



Taglit-Birthright Israel participants hike down from Masada.

PHOTO: NICOLE HAUSMAN

deposit, you are one step away from going to Israel. You will be entered in the Canada Israel Experience lottery system and, hopefully, will join the thousands who have enjoyed this gift before you!

If offering a free trip to Israel isn't a big enough draw for you (or your son or daughter) and you are skeptical, read on.

This 10-day trip to Israel is said to be the best 10 days ever for participants. It is an extremely secure and safe

experience for the participants. The informative, educational and life-changing trip goes from the Western Wall on Shabbat to the Golan Heights to Yad Vashem and, of course, hikes up and down Masada to be followed by cooling off, covered in mud, while floating in the Dead Sea.

That's it. Be sure to register on February 19. If you have any questions or are still unsure about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, email me at [studentlife@hillelottawa.ca](mailto:studentlife@hillelottawa.ca).

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To commemorate 65 years of service, Aufgang Travel is offering a special anniversary tour of Israel on May 1st -11th, 2014, led by Canadian Mahalnik, Joe Warner. Joe Warner served in the 4th Troop Anti-Tank Artillery Unit in 1948, during the War of Independence.

The tour is of Jewish interest and offers the traveller a chance to experience some of the most celebrated religious, cultural and historical sites; as well as the opportunity to meet with speakers who will offer unique perspectives of Israel along the way, from its struggle as a fledgling state and creation of its military, to the constantly changing regional landscape and implications for the future of Israel.

Featuring 5 nights in Jerusalem, 2 nights in Tiberias and 2 nights Tel Aviv, the tour includes ceremonies around Yom Hazikaron at the Kotel and Yom Ha'atzmaut, as well as a visit to the Mahal Memorial at Sh'ar Hagal. A moving visit of Yad Vashem is also on the itinerary, and participants will have an opportunity to meet with a Holocaust survivor while visiting the somber memorial.

Additional highlights include a chance to see the Shrine of the Book and Dead Sea Scrolls; a meeting with a kibbutznik at Kibbutz Shaar Hagolan at the foot of the Golan Heights, and a lecture on Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism) by David Friedman during a stop in Tzfat (Safed).

The majority of the tour is spent in Jerusalem, with five nights at the Dan Panorama Hotel. A unique tour of Jerusalem is on the itinerary, guided by Avi Melamed, a Strategic Intelligence Analyst, former Israeli Senior Official on Arab Affairs, and Regional Expert specializing in the Current Affairs of the Arab and Muslim world and its impact on Israel and the Middle East.

Shabbat celebrations include a stop to participate in a Shehecheyanu ceremony at Haas Promenade, which offers a spectacular view of the entire Jerusalem landscape, including the sparkling old city and surrounding walls.

"We wanted to pay homage to this milestone in Aufgang's history with something very special," said Vicky Zaltsman, Executive President of YYZ Travel Group. (Aufgang Travel became part of YYZ Travel Group in 2005). "This tour is a journey through Israel's past, present and future. It celebrates our Jewish heritage and the connection we all share with Israel."

A full itinerary is available at <http://www.aufgangtravel.com/tour-details/?item=aufgang-65th-anniversary-tour-of-israel&hotels=0>.

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Lynn Abrams by Cheryl Leyton  
Stan Katz by the Residents, Board and Staff of Hillel Lodge; by Susan and Charles Schwartzman and family; by Dee and Yale Gaffen; by Golda and Ned Steinman; and by Sheldon and Trudy Wiseman  
Estelle Barkun-Yaffe by Susan and Charles Schwartzman and family  
Dr. Elaine Scales by Gary and Heather Cohen  
Gretl Fischer by Gary and Heather Cohen  
**R'FUAH SHLEMA:**  
Carol-Sue Shapiro by Cheryl Leyton and Gert Leyton  
Dr. Graham by Cheryl, Gert and Mimi Leyton

**MAZEL TOV to  
ROGER GREENBERG  
and SARA VERED**

The Hillel Lodge of Ottawa extends a hearty mazel tov to these two new appointments to the Order of Canada, community leaders Roger Greenberg and Sara Vered. Both these outstanding people are behind a long list of incredible achievements and we are very lucky to have them as part of our community. Kol HaKavod to you both!

**THE LODGE EXPRESSES ITS SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR YOUR KIND SUPPORT AND APOLOGIZES FOR ANY ERRORS OR OMISSIONS. DUE TO SPACE LIMITATIONS, THE WORDING APPEARING IN THE BULLETIN IS NOT NECESSARILY THE WORDING WHICH APPEARED ON THE CARD.**

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# Books and Bagels to resume at Temple Israel, February 16

BY ANNE ALPER  
FOR TEMPLE ISRAEL

Following three interesting sessions in the fall, Temple Israel's Books and Bagels series is set to resume.

Three Sunday morning sessions have been confirmed to date and each begins with a bagel breakfast at 9:30 am followed at 10 by a presentation and discussion of the featured book.

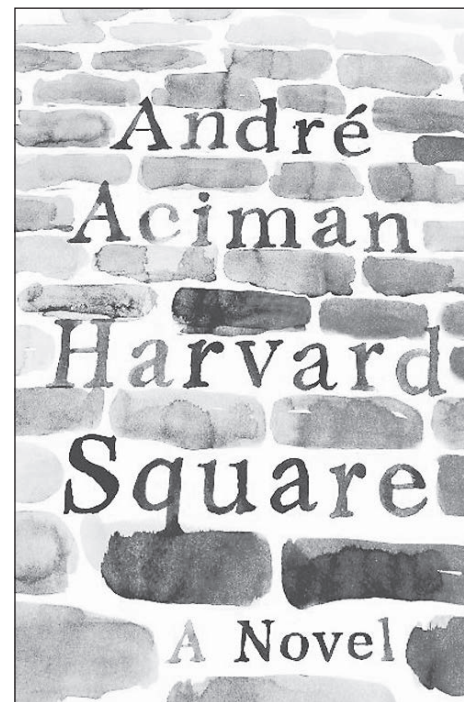
All sessions will be held at Temple

Israel, 1301 Prince of Wales Drive. While there is no charge, a voluntary donation to cover the cost of breakfast is appreciated. Everyone is welcome.

On February 16, Ottawa author Barbara Fradkin will review *A Man in Uniform* by Kate Taylor. Based on the infamous Dreyfus Affair, *A Man in Uniform* is a gripping and seductive spy novel set in late-19th century Paris, when France was still recovering from its losses in the Franco-Prussian war, the army was seeing traitors everywhere and the government feared both the Germans and the anarchists.

On April 27, *Harvard Square* by André Aciman will be reviewed by Sophie Kohn Kaminsky. This book focuses on the lives of two young immigrants, an Egyptian Jew and a Tunisian Muslim, living in Cambridge, Massachusetts in the 1970s, who become friends. The Egyptian is a privileged, intellectual and acutely insecure graduate student at Harvard University. The Tunisian is a bombastic, barely legal resident who ekes out a living driving a car. Aciman's memoir, *Out of Egypt*, won a Whiting Writers' Award.

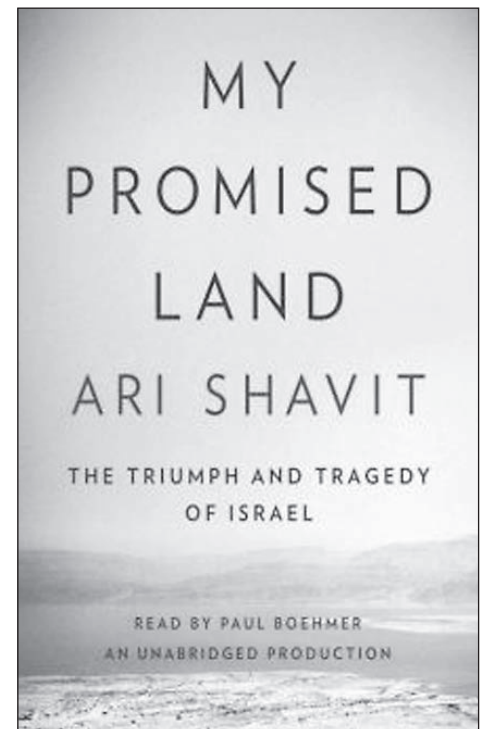
And on May 11, Rabbi Steven Garten will review *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel* by Ari Shavit, a deeply personal and authoritative narrative that reflects on the



entirety of the Israeli experience. It has been named a Best Book of the Year by the *New York Times* and the *Economist*.

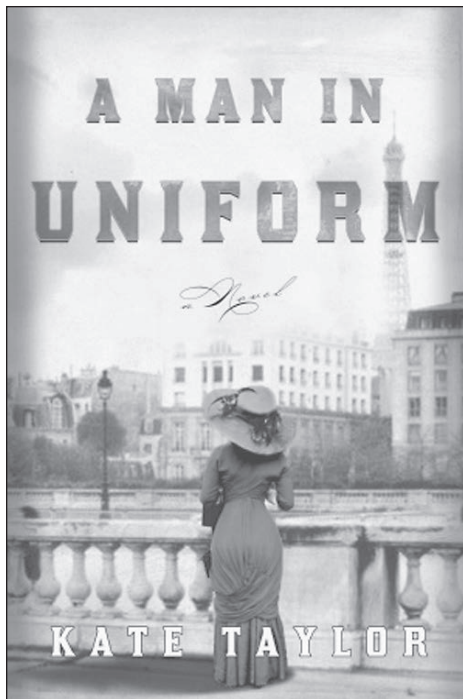
In addition to the Books and Bagels sessions, Temple Israel will host Adam Heffez, author of *Words and Walls, Social Commentary Through Graffiti in Israel and the West Bank*, on Sunday, March 30.

Heffez, a foreign policy analyst focusing primarily on Syria and Yemen



at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, will give a presentation telling the story of the hopes and frustrations and visions of both Israelis and Palestinians through the anonymous, spontaneous and uncensored medium of graffiti.

For more information on Books and Bagels or the Adam Heffez event, contact Shayla Mindell at 613-594-4556 or [shaylamindell@rogers.com](mailto:shaylamindell@rogers.com).

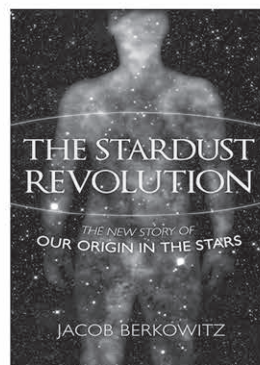


## The Stardust Revolution:

The New Story of Our Origin in the Stars  
Sunday, February 23 • 2:00 pm

Carl Sagan famously noted that "We are star stuff". But how have we evolved from stars to us? *The Stardust Revolution* tells the amazing, unfolding story of our cosmic origins and connection, one in which the central question we ask about our place in the cosmos is changing from "Are we alone?" to "How are we connected?"

Jacob Berkowitz is an award-winning science journalist, author and performer. He's the bestselling author of *Jurassic Poop: What Dinosaurs (and Others) Left Behind*, and his book *Out of This World: The Amazing Search for an Alien Earth* was a *SkyNews* magazine best astronomy book for 2009.



**Admission: \$10 at the door**

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## Purim and 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 murder conspiracies, sex 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  
\$75 M • \$90 NM  
Instructor: Rabbi Liz Bolton

Contact: Roslyn Brozovsky Wollock | 613-798-9818 x254 | [rwollock@jccottawa.com](mailto:rwollock@jccottawa.com)

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# Reactions of Israelis to Harper's visit fuel deep Canadian pride

**J**erusalem – It's an old cliché that sometimes you have to leave your country to truly appreciate it – or at least to realize the special nature of things you take for granted.

So it was for me after witnessing the remarkable response to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's first visit to Israel. In fact, it also gave me a greater appreciation of Israel, which has become a second home to me over the past 10 years.

"I feel even more proud to be a Canadian when I see you in this country," I told the prime minister in our sole encounter, just after he had visited the Kotel.

It was not just experiencing the multiple ovations during Harper's historic speech in the Knesset, or seeing him receive the key to Israel's parliament – the first foreign dignitary to be granted this privilege in the history of the state.

Nor was it watching him turn a state dinner – with security so tight that every person at Harper's table had his or her own scarily stern Israeli bodyguard – into a jam session that had even the most reserved guests singing "Bahmp, bahmp, bahmp" during his rendition of Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline."

No, it was seeing and hearing the reaction of ordinary Israelis, who were so excited to hear that I was Canadian.

"Your prime minister is amazing," said a clerk at my favourite pen store in Jerusalem's German Colony.

"How long are they staying? Do you think they will have time to come here?" asked a cashier at the Steimatzky book store in the Mamilla Mall.

It was seeing the entire transcript of his Knesset speech fronting the opinion section of the *Jerusalem Post*. And it was reading a commentary by veteran Israeli journalist Herb Keinon, who pointed out that, while Harper was not the first visiting world leader to praise Israel's values of freedom and democracy, he was the first who didn't feel the political need to balance this praise with criticism of Israel's policies in the West Bank and the settlements.

"His was not a 'Yes, but' speech; his was a 'Yes, yes' speech," Keinon wrote in the *Jerusalem Post*.

"What a shame, Netanyahu had to be thinking to himself while listening to Harper's words, delivered without pathos and in a very matter-of-fact and even dry Canadian manner, that there are not more leaders out there like him.



"... No wonder ... that most of the rest of the House stood up at the end and gave him a rousing ovation. It's not every day that Israel, increasingly feeling isolated and alone, hears such words of praise and friendship."

That doesn't mean Harper agrees with every decision and policy of the Netanyahu regime. Indeed, he pointed out on more than one occasion that close allies are allowed (and perhaps expected) to have differences.

But, unlike U.S. President Barack Obama and French President François Hollande, Harper had no desire to take Israel to task in order to please her many critics. Nor did he care to curry favour with mainstream Canadian media on the trip, who appeared frustrated by his refusal to be baited into expanding his views on settlement construction and the precise nature of a future Israeli-Palestinian peace accord.

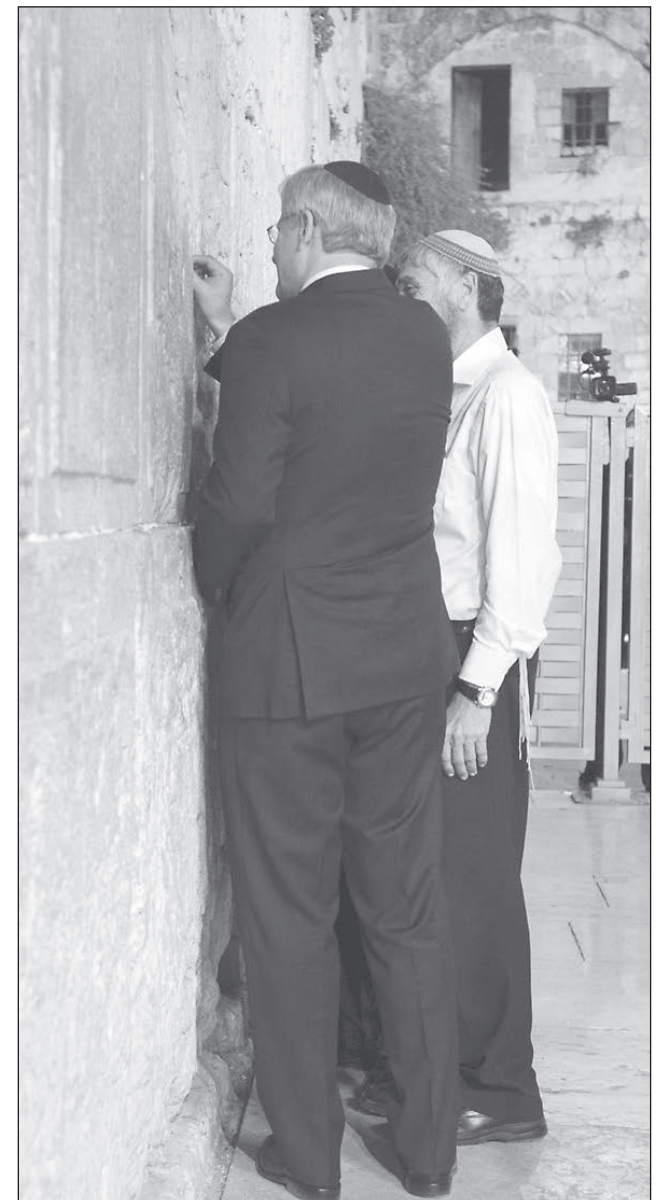
"Any attempt to have me, while present in the Middle East, single out the State of Israel for criticism, I will not do," he said.

Were Harper a silver-tongued orator in the style of former U.S. president Bill Clinton, it would be tempting to dismiss his remarks during his first trip to Israel as a typical politician's charm offensive.

But, as Keinon noted, Harper does not aim for passion or charisma, although his words are so powerful that an Israeli friend remarked, "We are still waiting for Bibi [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu] to make a speech like that."

It's the very nature of his matter-of-fact style of speaking that makes our prime minister's message so convincing, at least to those who can overcome hand-wringing and political correctness long enough to focus on the wisdom of embracing the only democracy in the Middle East, even though it is far from perfect.

As Harper said, so simply and yet so powerfully, "Canada supports Israel because it is right to do so."



Prime Minister Stephen Harper places a written prayer in the Western Wall, January 21. PHOTO: JASON RANSOM

Perhaps that's an old-fashioned concept in a world of moral relativity, but it is somehow very Canadian – at least in the way that I define our national identity.

*Barbara Crook paid for her own travel and accommodation during the prime minister's visit to Israel.*

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# Former Canadian ambassador hopes for two-state solution

**W**ith Israeli-Palestinian peace talks quietly proceeding, I sat down with Michael Bell, a former Canadian diplomat with extensive experience in the region.

As Canadian ambassador to Jordan in the late-1980s, to Egypt in the mid-1990s, and to Israel from 1990 to 1992 and again from 1999 to 2003, Bell has seen his share of bilateral and regional attempts at peace, some more fruitful than others.

We spoke recently in person and then by phone about the sputtering peace process and about the Old City of Jerusalem project to which Bell has devoted much of the last several years.

Perhaps in a bit of punditry revenge, I started out by asking Bell the question that I most hate being asked: What is prohibiting the sides from reaching peace?

At root, he believes that the barrier to peace between Israel and the Palestinians comes down to a “lack of trust.” It may not be a particularly novel observation. But it is one that has forced Bell to move beyond abstraction and diplomatic despair and plunge into the details. Along with several colleagues, Bell has drawn up a governance proposal for the Old City that would involve an executive committee with Israel and the nascent State of Palestine being the two key members.

In working closely with Israeli and Palestinian representatives on the proposal, the authors asked themselves what would meet the basic needs of both parties.

“Access, control, and sense of belonging that each party wanted without threatening the needs of the other,” was their response.

A version of their proposal appeared in 2009 in the



MIRA SUCHAROV  
**VALUES, ETHICS,  
COMMUNITY**

journal *Foreign Affairs*, with a three-volume set of papers to be released this spring.

About the West Bank settlements, Bell thinks they are an “obstacle to peace. They send a message to Palestinians that, rightly or wrongly, the land they consider to be their own, the last of historic Palestine, is at risk through population movements, which is aggravated by the behaviour of ultra-nationalist settler groups who [in turn] have a disproportionate influence on policymaking.”

Still, despite the intertwined nature of land and populations in the area, Bell holds out hope for the two-state solution. He believes a one-state solution, which has been gaining ground among Palestine-solidarity activists, is not a viable one.

“I cannot conceive of educational systems or health systems that would be compatible, let alone the societal norms that Israelis and Palestinians have, that you could mix these and accommodate these. You [would be] importing into a state a struggle for power.”

The two-state solution, on the other hand, could conceivably come to fruition – even given the Israeli fear over rocket attacks. On this point, Bell suggests, with a lot

of international help – the kind of help Gaza did not receive following the Israeli withdrawal – “and with a lot of restrictions, including the stationing of troops – American-led NATO troops, or, less likely, Israeli troops, that the chance for this kind of harassment is relatively modest, especially since the two security services work so closely.”

This sort of political solution, he continues, will have a positive spillover effect onto Israel’s domestic situation.

“If relative satisfaction exists among the Palestinian leadership, there will be less reason among Palestinian citizens of Israel to support radical movements; they will feel less threatened, and they can feel equal citizens, in a state which was proclaimed to be a Jewish state by the United Nations. Many states have minorities – look at Russia, look at Canada.”

Ultimately, Bell is troubled by the mutual demonization of the other, something he sees as being carried into realm of Israel-Palestine activism.

“I think there’s a tendency to disregard the complexities of a situation.” He notes that observers are quick to ask “is he pro-Israeli or is she pro-Palestinian?” with the two notions seeming to be mutually exclusive stances, which they are not.

Logging so many years in a conflict-ridden region could make anyone a cynic. But Bell remains a hopeful pragmatist.

“I’ve worked with a lot of people on both sides over the decades. There are still grounds for viable accommodation.”

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

# What would you do to lose weight?

**T**o what lengths would you go to lose weight?

Remember when people were getting their jaws wired so they couldn’t eat anything but a liquid diet? I’ve never known anyone who did that, but I read about it. Based on the same principle, now you can get a patch sewn onto your tongue! It makes eating so painful that you can only consume liquids.

After one month, the Beverly Hills plastic surgeon who invented the patch removes it and voilà – you’ve lost weight. If the gross factor isn’t enough to turn your stomach and turn you off food, think about this: the device puts the patients at risk for infections, ulcers and choking.

Those who can’t consume sufficient calories lose weight, regardless of the method employed to make eating difficult. Those who don’t change their lifestyle will regain the weight as soon as their jaw is unwired or their tongue patch is removed and they return to their old, deeply ingrained habits. Surviving on a liquid diet or any other severely calorically restricted diet puts participants at risk for other medical problems such as gallbladder damage. Procedures are not solutions, although they can be part of the solution in some cases. Addressing one’s underlying psychological issues for extreme eating, and slowly but surely changing one’s lifestyle is the answer.

Desperate people do desperate things. There’s a sucker born every minute and a snake oil salesman willing to take advantage of him. Anyone who promises that you

can get fit in just 10 minutes per day or lose weight while continuing to eat fries and cake every day is more interested in profiting off of your naiveté than helping you achieve your goals.

Have you heard about the man who ate all his meals at McDonald’s for 90 days and lost 28 pounds? Of course, he lost weight because his fast-food diet consisted of significantly fewer calories per day than he used to consume. Formerly sedentary, he began walking for exercise, which contributed to weight loss. This type of diet has two major flaws: 1) without engaging in regular strength training, some of the weight loss would include muscle mass – not a good idea because we need to build and maintain muscle; and, 2) while he did choose some of the healthier menu options such as salads, including hamburgers, fries and sodas as dietary staples fails to deliver sound nutrition. I think this man has done a great disservice to overweight people whom he may have fooled into thinking that fast food is a healthy option.

One of the best decisions I ever made was to stop going to fast food restaurants. If you want to get lean, fit and healthier, you need to learn life skills such as how to shop, prepare and eat healthy food. You also need to learn about portion control so you don’t eat too much – or too little. You can lose weight eating anything, as long as the calories you consume are fewer than the calories you burn; however, a balanced diet is preferable because it provides the right amount of complex carbs, protein,



GLORIA SCHWARTZ  
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healthy fats, vitamins and minerals you need based on your age, height, weight, gender and activity level. Think beyond the numbers on the scale. Think in terms of health.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- People who eat a healthy breakfast everyday have a significantly increased chance of long-term weight management, and are less likely to develop Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and become obese.
- People who skip breakfast consume more sweets, soft drinks, fewer vegetables and less fruit; tend to have higher cholesterol, elevated insulin levels and larger waist circumferences; and have an increased risk for Type 2 diabetes, heart attack or death from coronary artery disease.

I’m very excited to announce that my book *Personal Best: Train Your Brain and Transform Your Body for Life* will be available at the end of February at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and at select local businesses.

It’s the story of my journey from overweight, unhealthy couch potato to fit long-distance runner and personal trainer.

In addition to sharing my personal challenges and how I overcame them, I include a seven-point plan for success, and lots of tips like the ones in this article. No quick fixes. No gimmicks. It takes hard work and commitment to achieve your goals.

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

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## Kosher food now being served twice monthly at Carleton

When Lewis Novack came to Carleton University from Halifax, Nova Scotia, three years ago, he was shocked to find out the school's only residence cafeteria served no kosher food whatsoever.

Novack, now a third-year biology student, said he quickly realized that, although the cafeteria had options specifically for students with vegetarian and hallal needs, there were no options for students who observed kashrut.

"The residence cafeteria has halal, vegetarian and even vegan options to satisfy those people whose diet warranted it" he said. "Many kosher people live on campus, however, and I wondered why there were no kosher options for these students."

First-year students who live in residence at Carleton are required to buy a full meal plan, which includes the use of the cafeteria. As a first-year, Novack found it extremely frustrating to travel all the way to the Loblaws at College Square to get kosher food, especially since he was paying a steep price for the cafeteria meal plan.

He decided to speak with Carleton's vice-president for student services, as well as the manager and marketing directors of Aramark, the company that manages the Carleton cafeterias. He said they have provided support



RANDY FOX  
CAMPUS LIFE

in rectifying the situation and assisted in bringing in kosher sandwiches as well as 40 pounds of kosher brisket last year.

Recently, Novack has come even further in his talks with the school's administration and Aramark. On December 11, there was a full kosher meal served in the residence cafeteria. The university took the step of purchasing all new equipment, utensils and plates to be used for kosher food. All of the above will be used only for kosher and will remain separated when not being used. Moving forward, a kosher meal will be served twice monthly in the residence cafeteria with Novack and Hillel Ottawa director Scott Goldstein ensuring that kosher meat and sandwiches from the Rideau Bakery will be available.

Novack said this could very well make Carleton a

much more appealing university choice to prospective students who observe kashrut.

"This is a great sign for our students and makes Carleton a strong contender for the entrance applications of observant students," said Goldstein.

Although they are happy with what has been done already, both Novack and Goldstein believe there is still much to be done.

While the school has purchased all the required cutlery and utensils and will be keeping them separate, there is not a mashgiach to supervise the preparation of the food, so those students who strictly observe kashrut are still not be able to eat there.

The next step, said Novack, is to have a mashgiach onsite ensuring the food is fully kosher.

In light of what still needs to be done, Novack and Goldstein, as well as many Jewish students at Carleton, are hopeful this will pave the way to a fully kosher kitchen – as there are at several other Canadian universities.

"In the end, I would like to see this be a sustainable option at Carleton University," said Novack. "This is something that should be available to Jewish students and that many students will be able to take advantage of, Jewish or not."

## Israeli genealogy company offers powerful tools to build family trees

You're probably familiar with Utah-based genealogical giant, *Ancestry.com*, which operates in Canada as *Ancestry.ca*. Also making an impact throughout the world is *MyHeritage*, an Israeli company launched in 2005 and based in Bnei Atarot, just outside Tel Aviv.

Currently employing 150 people, the company was started by Gilad Japhet, a genealogist who began working on his own family tree at the young age of 13. Japhet's idea was to build collaborative family trees in which a user enters his family tree at [www.MyHeritage.com](http://www.MyHeritage.com) and invites relatives to assist in building the tree together. Its program differs from other providers of similar services by offering users the ability to enter information in 40 different languages, enabling people from around the world to join together in a family project.

Over the past eight years, *MyHeritage* has grown to the point where it now boasts 75 million registered members and 1.5 billion names on its 27 million family trees. Most members start by using the company's free *Family Tree Builder* software, which allows the user to enter his family tree, and can store the results on the company's server and on the user's personal computer.

*MyHeritage* gives away *Family Tree Builder* CDs at genealogical conventions and through magazine and newspaper inserts – in fact, *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* subscribers will find one with this issue – or you can download the program free at [www.MyHeritage.com](http://www.MyHeritage.com). While the software is free, the basic membership limits users to a maximum of 250 names on the family tree, so serious users are encouraged to purchase a premium or premium-plus subscription.

Over the years, *MyHeritage* has expanded its services by acquiring collections of historical documents, such as old newspapers, birth and marriage records, and much more. Much like *Ancestry.com* and *familysearch.org*, the company understands that, unlike the days when genealogists would spend hours looking over docu-

ments and microfilms at archives, researchers today are looking for instant gratification. It fulfils this need by allowing the user to locate information on that elusive family member while researching comfortably on a home computer or smartphone. *MyHeritage* also grew by acquiring eight competing companies, the most notable being *Geni.com* in 2012 in a move strategically designed to prevent *Ancestry.com* from acquiring it.

While all of the major players offer the ability to store family trees and to search records within their vast databases, *MyHeritage* has developed some unique and powerful tools.

**Smart Matching** compares the user's family tree to the millions of others on the site and looks for matches. The developers built in sophisticated technology to compensate for differences in spelling and language. Once matches are found and verified, the owners can communicate and collaborate with each other.

**Record Detective** is a unique technology that takes a person on your family tree, and intuitively looks for other information about that person. For example, if a family member on your tree is listed as having been married in a certain city in a certain year, when *MyHeritage* finds that person mentioned in a newspaper wedding announcement, it will take additional information located in that announcement to build a larger profile on that person and will automatically



JOHN DIENER  
CONNECTING  
THE BRANCHES

research other family members listed in the announcement. Similarly, if you search through the site for someone in a U.S. census record, it will go beyond that initial search to find information on everyone in that household in various census years and will look for other types of records on those people, such as newspaper articles, immigration records or death records.

**Super Search** is *MyHeritage's* search engine used to explore historical records contained in hundreds of databases. By entering a name in the search box, the software will pull matches from over four billion records, saving the user the trouble of searching each database one at a time.

*MyHeritage* also allows users to scan and store copies of photographs and family documents on its server, which has a powerful **Facial Recognition** capability. This function allows you to tag a family member in one picture, and the tagger will recognize and tag them in all of your pictures automatically.

So, why not install the *Family Tree Builder* CD and try working on your family tree. You have nothing to lose and may just discover why millions around the world are hooked on genealogy.

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# How Sholem Aleichem's milkman became a cultural phenomenon

## Wonder of Wonders:

### A Cultural History of 'Fiddler on the Roof'

By Alisa Solomon

Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company  
448 pages

Alisa Solomon's *Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of 'Fiddler on the Roof'* is a fascinating look at how Sholem Aleichem's Yiddish short stories about "the affable dairyman Tevye" were transformed into a Broadway blockbuster and a film that far exceeded the author's expectations.

I adore reading about the theatre, particularly the changes that occur from a show's inception until its final production on stage, so I was eager to get my hands on Solomon's work. However, she accomplishes far more than an offering of backstage gossip (although there's plenty of that to enjoy), starting with Sholem Aleichem as he began writing for the New York stage, and ending with the 2004 revamping of *Fiddler on the Roof* for a new production on Broadway.

Solomon chose to write about *Fiddler* because of its identity beyond a commercial Broadway offering. She sees the show as "a global touchstone for an astonishing range of concerns: Jewish identity, American immigrant narratives, generational conflict, communal cohesion, ethnic authenticity and interracial bridge building, among them." Even those who condemned the musical – saying it destroyed the humour and satire of Sholem Aleichem's short stories – can't deny that it speaks to a wide audience.

After discussing Sholem Aleichem's limited success as a playwright, Solomon shows the different forms his Tevye stories took in the decades after his death – from new translations to staged versions to the television broadcast of one theatrical offering. Some productions, particularly by left-leaning theatre groups, were used to stir up social consciousness, while others appealed to the nostalgia people felt for Old World life. However, many American Jews began shying away from their heritage in the 1950s after many Jewish performers and writers were blacklisted and called before the House Un-American Activities Committee during the McCarthy Era.

According to Solomon, this began to change partly due to the success of the movie *Exodus*. Its story of proud Israeli heroes helped make the past safe again by

## RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN BOOK REVIEW

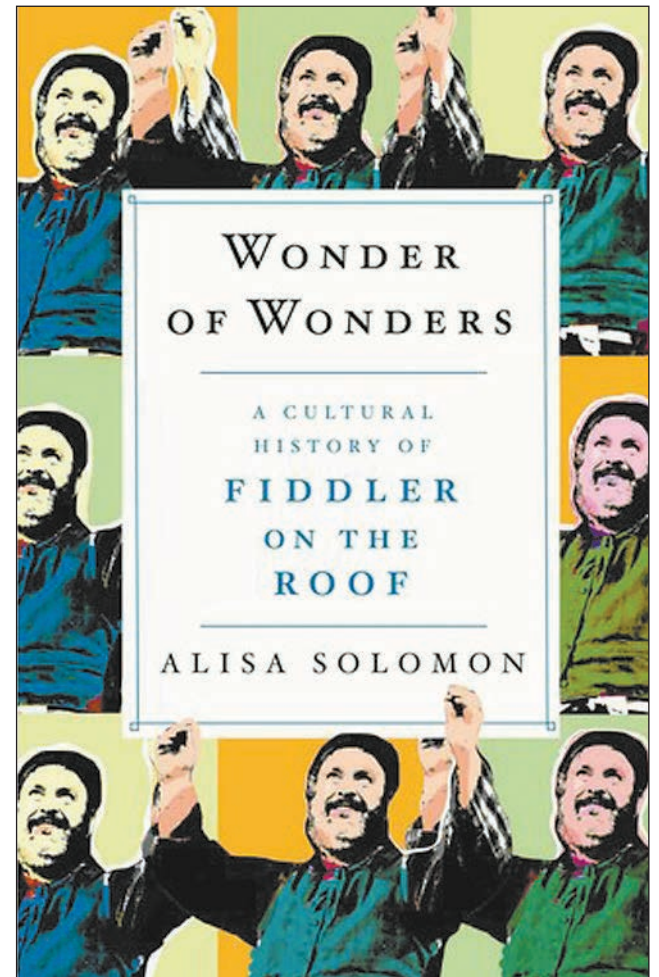
giving "Jewish history in Europe a meaningful role as glorious legacy."

*Fiddler* gave North American Jews a safe way to look at this past. The show jelled when the writers and directors found the focus of the show: a portrayal of "the dissolution of a way of life." With the opening song, "Tradition," setting the theme, the action showed "the forces breaking down the traditions ... from both the inside and the outside. In the first instance – modern children challenging their parents' staid ways – the generational conflict would make the story universal. At the same time, the violent anti-Semitism of czarist Russia would exert pressure externally." Solomon notes, though, something was left out of the picture: "Jewish law and religious practice." *Fiddler* gave Jews "a legacy that could be fondly claimed without making any demands." For the larger community, it depicted Jews with whom they could sympathize.

Solomon talks about numerous productions, with a special focus on the Israeli and British versions, along with a chapter on the making of the film. Two other in-depth discussions look at an all-black student version performed in Brooklyn in the 1960s, including information about the tensions then between blacks and Jews over the New York City school system; and a Polish adaptation early in the 21st century that takes place in a landscape devoid of its Jews, most of whom perished during the Holocaust.

For me, the most amazing section of the book is Solomon's discussion of Jerome Robbins, the director and choreographer of the original Broadway production, who has been vilified for naming names before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

While the author doesn't excuse his behaviour, she makes it understandable. The self-hate he felt about being Jewish and gay forced him to disavow his past. As Zero Mostel, who played Tevye in the original Broadway production of *Fiddler* and who was among the Jewish performers that were blacklisted, proclaimed, "Naming



names is not Jewish." Solomon believes that was the reason Robbins did it: to deny his essential Jewishness.

*Wonder of Wonders* ends with an overview of how *Fiddler* has spoken to several generations of Jews:

"In the 1960s, *Fiddler on the Roof* served as an engine of Jewish acculturation in America. For the next generation of assimilated Jews, it became a sacred repository of Jewishness itself. And, for the next generation still, it became part of a multivalent legacy, available as a source of further exploration for those who wish to follow Tevye as he wanders on."

Solomon's marvellous work makes Tevye's journey from the Pale of Russia to the shores of America come alive.

This review originally appeared in *The Reporter*, Vestal, NY.

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# WHAT'S GOING ON | February 3 to February 16, 2014

FOR MORE COMMUNITY LISTINGS, VISIT [JEWISHOTTAWA.COM](http://JEWISHOTTAWA.COM) AND SELECT 'CLICK TO SEE MORE MONTHS'

## WEEKLY EVENTS

### MONDAYS

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

### TUESDAYS

**Israeli Folkdancing:** Learn contemporary Israeli dances. No partner required. 6:30 pm - Introductory Steps; 7 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, FEBRUARY 3 AND WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

**Share Your Vision for Federation & Our Community!**  
The Jewish Federation of Ottawa is undertaking a strategic planning initiative and wants to hear from you! Info:  
<http://www.jewishottawa.com/page.aspx?ID=266712>

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

**OJCS introduces "Parlour and Parent Meetings":**  
New and prospective parents are invited to the homes

of families to learn about the school. Today, meet to discuss "Middle School" at the home of Leila and Stuart Ages, 30 Cimarron Crescent, 7:30 pm.

**More topics on February 6 and 10.**  
Info: [sl.levine@theoics.ca](mailto:sl.levine@theoics.ca)

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

**OJCS introduces "Parlour and Parent Meetings":**  
New and prospective parents are invited to the homes of families to learn about the school. Today, meet to discuss "Grade One and beyond - What to expect from OJCS?" at the home of Tracy Pulvermacher and Gianni Donatucci, 36 Marble Arch Crescent, 7 pm.  
Info: [sl.levine@theoics.ca](mailto:sl.levine@theoics.ca)

**An Evening with Author Ayelet Tsabari:** a young Israeli author of Yemeni descent living and writing in Canada. She is the author of *The Best Place on Earth*. Presented by New Israel Fund of Canada at Raw Sugar Cafe, 692 Somerset Street West, 7:30 to 9 pm. Info: 1-855-781-4322, [atarah@nifcan.org](mailto:atarah@nifcan.org) or <http://nifcan.org>

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10

**OJCS introduces "Parlour and Parent Meetings":** New and prospective parents are invited to the homes of families to learn about the school. Today, meet to discuss "High School" at the home of Ned Steinman and Golda Feig-Steinman, 1 Aldridge Way at 7 pm.  
Info: [sl.levine@theoics.ca](mailto:sl.levine@theoics.ca)

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12

**Emerging Generation event:**  
**You Had Me at Chai (Speed Dating),**  
MUST Kitchen and Wine Bar, 41 William Street, 8:30-10 pm.  
RSVP Bethany, 613-869-9384

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

**Books and Bagels:** A bagel breakfast followed by discussion of *A Man in Uniform: A Novel*, written by Canadian author and journalist, Kate Taylor. Barbara Fradkin, an Ottawa mystery writer, will review the book, Temple Israel, 1301 Prince of Wales Drive, 9:30 to 11:30 am.  
Info: 613-224-1802

## COMING SOON

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

**Kabbalat Shabbat and Dinner:** services include song, mediation and learning. Everyone is welcome! Song sheets provided. Dairy vegetarian potluck afterward. The Glebe Minyan, 91A Fourth Avenue, 6 to 9 p.m.  
Info: 613-867-5505, [glebeminyan@gmail.com](mailto:glebeminyan@gmail.com)

### SUNDAY, MARCH 9

**"Schmaltz A Greased Purim,"** SJCC Purim shpiel directed by Pierre Brault, 7 pm.  
Info: 613-7989818, ext. 254

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

## CONDOLENCES

Condolences are extended to the families of:

Stanley Katz

Florence Margulies Rosenfeld, Q.C.

May their memory be a blessing always.

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