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NOVEMBER 25, 2019 | CHESHVAN 27, 5780

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Tamir is 'fiercely fabulous for inclusion' at second fashion show

Diversely-abled models, professional models, and community leaders all walked the runway in support of Tamir. **Matthew Horwood** reports.

Over 400 guests packed the Grand Hall of the Canadian Museum of History, November 4, for Tamir's 'Stepping Out in Style 2.0.'

Tamir, the Ottawa agency "dedicated to assisting people with developmental disabilities realize their potential in a supportive Jewish environment," was proud to present Ottawa's "only fashion show featuring diversely-abled models, professional models, and community leaders," for the first time in 2017. The event was so well received by the community that it has now become a much anticipated biennial fundraising and public awareness event. All funds raised

go directly to support Tamir programs.

Joshua Finn, a member of the Tamir Board of Directors, gave the evening's opening remarks.

Tamir, Finn said, has been "life-changing" for his family, as his brother Jordan has received support from the organization since 2008. "Knowing that Jordan has excellent caregivers has been a huge relief for my parents. They also have the peace of mind that Jordan not only has his basic needs met, but is living a fulfilled life."

Media personality and fashion entrepreneur Jeanne Beker and Jamie Greenberg, a Tamir participant, were MCs

See Tamir on page 2



MCs Jamie Greenberg (left) and Jeanne Beker share a moment on stage during Tamir's Stepping Out in Style 2.0, November 4, at the Canadian Museum of History.

Sharon and David Appotive honoured at Negev Dinner

BY MATTHEW HORWOOD

Eight hundred people filled the Infinity Convention Centre to capacity, November 11, to honour community leaders Sharon and David Appotive at the 2019 Jewish National Fund (JNF) of Ottawa Negev Dinner.

The Appotives, who have been mar-

ried for 39 years, have an extensive volunteer history in Ottawa's Jewish community.

Hartley Stern, the Negev Dinner's honorary chair, praised Sharon and David for "continuously doing the right things to support their community" and, in reference to the dinner's beneficiary, Save a Child's Heart (SACH),

an Israeli charity that has provided lifesaving treatment to more than 5,000 children in 61 countries suffering from congenital and rheumatic heart disease, for raising funds to support a charity that looks after "the most vulnerable population: children with sick hearts."

Sharon currently sits on the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation Board, is

a regular volunteer with Jewish Family Services' StreetSmarts program, Ten Yad and the Chevra Kadisha, and co-chaired the 2016-2018 Jewish Federation of Ottawa Annual Campaigns.

David, co-owner of Howard Fine Jewellers and Dahavland Capital Corporation, volunteers with the Ottawa Vaad

See Negev Dinner on page 3

inside:

Jewish giving legacy program
 launched > p. 6

Jewish Family Services
 celebrates 40 years > p. 8

A gift of a Sefer Torah: From Jews in
 Ottawa to Jews in Africa > p. 13



**Jeremy
 Roberts** MPP
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Tamir: Special event successfully boosts inclusion awareness

Continued from page 1

for the evening. Jamie describes his role as “a unique opportunity. I was honoured to be asked to MC the show and thrilled to meet Jeanne Beker. The night of the show it was nice to see my friends from Tamir all dressed up and excited to walk the runway. I was thrilled to look out into the audience and see my parents as well as so many other people from the community supporting Tamir.”

More than 45 models took to the runway to strut their stuff, wearing a variety of outfits from fashion designers Desigual, Dominique Bridal, IZ Adaptive, Kania, Richard Robinson and Vivati.

The runway models included Ottawa City Councilor Mathieu Fleury; Jewish Federation of Ottawa Chair Michael Polowin; Solange Tuyishime, Mrs. Canada International 2019; Ottawa Redblacks player Rafael Araujo-Lopes; and 18 Tamir participants. Supporters of JOIN – the Jewish Ottawa Inclusion Network, and some students and parents from the Ottawa Jewish Community School also took their turn on the runway, adding a new dimension to the show.

JOIN co-founder Madelaine Werier participated in the fashion show along with her daughter, Rachel. During the summer, Werier’s son Sammy was able to attend camp thanks in part to a ‘shadow staff’ provided through Tamir’s ‘Keshet for Kids’ initiative. Werier said part of the fun was in the preparation. She and her daughter attended three practice runs held at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre, where the participants were coached on “how to demonstrate confidence, how to walk and how to choose a pose they liked.”

For the evening’s musical entertainment, Juno-nominated folksinger Craig Cardiff teamed with Tamir’s Neshama Choir, coordinated by Deborah Davis, to sing “Love is Louder,” “Safe Here,” and “True Colours.” A special video was also part of the events, with testimonials from families who have benefited from the life-changing supports Tamir has been able to offer their loved ones.

Renee Berezowski, assistant director at the Richard Robinson Academy of Fashion Design, said when Tamir asked for her help in coordinating the event, she knew it would be a “beautiful opportunity” to enable Tamir participants to shine on the runway.



Tamir participant Debby Applebaum strikes a pose on the runway during Tamir’s Stepping Out in Style 2.0, November 4, at the Canadian Museum of History.

Berezowski enlisted the support of 20 students from her business marketing class to assist in operating the fashion show, from outfitting the models and doing hair and makeup, to assisting with backstage and front-of-house tasks.

Debby Applebaum, a Tamir participant since 2002, was a model at the first fashion in 2017 and took to the stage again this year. Debby said she especially enjoyed getting to try on several “marvelous” outfits, and she “fell in love” with the purple outfit from Richard Robinson she wore on the runway. “Not the airport runway – we didn’t take off by plane!” she joked.

Tamir Executive Director Mark Palmer said this year’s fashion show was “truly an amazing event, on so many levels,” and the expressions of delight and pride on the faces of participants and audience members were “unforgettable.”

According to Palmer, many parents who, all too often, have felt the pain of seeing their kids marginalized got to see them receive public recognition for the first time.

“It did feel like a very special moment in which the needle may have been moved – just a touch – in terms of awareness around the cause of inclusion in our community,” Palmer said.

Adam Moscoe, chair of the Tamir Fashion Show Committee, came up with the idea for the first fashion show in 2017.

This year’s show, Moscoe said, “was another high point for our participants, families and supporters, and a chance for many new people to be inspired by our participants, who are true champions for inclusion.”

Did you miss the show? Stay tuned for video highlights, soon to be released!



Tamir participant Meredith Caplan walks the runway during Tamir’s Stepping Out in Style 2.0, November 4, at the Canadian Museum of History.



Folksinger Craig Cardiff and choir director Deborah Davis lead the Tamir Neshama Choir in singing Cardiff’s song, “Safe Here,” during Tamir’s Stepping Out in Style 2.0, November 4, at the Canadian Museum of History.

Howard Sandler

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Negev Dinner: 'No better example of a miracle than saving a child's heart'

Continued from page 1

HaKashrut and Congregation Machzikei Hadas and has served on the boards of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, the Ottawa Jewish Community School, Hillel Ottawa and Camp B'nai Brith Ottawa.

SACH will use funds raised at the Negev Dinner to support the construction of the International Pediatric Cardiac Center at the Wolfson Medical Centre (WMC) in Holon, which will serve as a children's hospital.

Following a short video about SACH, Dr. Ahmad Zarour, a cardiac surgeon from the West Bank, spoke to the audience about his involvement with the organization and the need for a new children's hospital.

Zarour, who has travelled on more than 50 missions with SACH and is currently enrolled in their seven-year training program, said the facility would be one of the largest cardiac surgery and treatment facilities in the Middle East, and would "allow children of different religions, backgrounds and cultures to receive the best care possible."

Sharon Appotive said that with so many worthy causes "competing for our finite time, energy and dollars" the couple was "beyond appreciative" that the dinner attendees chose to support SACH.

"Children are our everything. They are our heart and soul, and we shower them with boundless love and opportunities. What would life be like if we had a child in need of cardiac surgery without the hospitals, doctors, nurses and support to save them?" she asked.

"Tonight, because of JNF, Save a Child's Heart, and all of you, we have more hope and are able to give a little bit more of our hearts," Sharon said. "Tonight is about the heart of our family, the heart of community and the heart of Israel."

David Appotive said the couple's involvement with the "extraordinary organization" began with their 2013 trip to Israel, when they visited the WMC and witnessed the "unrelenting human kindness" the doctors and nurses of SACH provided to children. The couple visited the facility again in 2018 because, he said, "we were smitten with this hospital."

"Combining our strong love and desire to support children and the state of Israel, alongside our family's history with heart disease, there was no second guessing ourselves. Save a Child's Heart would be our JNF project," David said.

David quoted Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, who said, "In Israel, in order to be a realist, you must believe in miracles."

David Appotive said there is no better example of a miracle than saving a child's heart.

Among those paying tribute to Sha-



Negev Dinner honorees Sharon and David Appotive are joined on stage for the presentation of the certificate of honour by family members and Negev Dinner and JNF officials.

(From left) Ryan Appotive, Yoni Appotive, Negev Dinner Chair Jeff Miller, Jaye Appotive, Honorees David and Sharon Appotive (holding the certificate), Brody Appotive, Negev Dinner Honorary Chair Hartley Stern, JNF Ottawa Executive Director Lynda Taller-Wakter, and JNF Ottawa Board Chair David Baker.

"In Israel, in order to be a realist, you must believe in miracles."

David Ben-Gurion

ron and David were 2016 Negev Dinner Honoree Barbara Farber, Negev Dinner MC Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka, and Negev Dinner Chair Jeff Miller.

The keynote speaker was former U.S. senator Joseph Lieberman, the Democratic Party's U.S. vice-presidential candidate in 2000. Lieberman commended Sharon and David Appotive for using JNF funds to "make visible and tangibly support" SACH, which Lieberman called "the ultimate expression of our Jewish faith and values."

Lieberman spoke at length about Theodor Herzl, the founding father of modern Zionism, who organized the First Zionist Congress in 1901, the same year the JNF was founded.

Lieberman said he sees the state of Israel as not just a place of refuge and sanctuary in times of trouble, but as a "glowing, aspirational role model" for Jews around the world who had previously felt the need to keep a low profile.

Lieberman said while the U.S.-Israel partnership continues to receive strong support in opinion polls, support for Israel in the United States is diminishing among segments of the Democratic Party and among young people. These challenges to Israel, he said, need to be "taken on directly," and the changing attitudes towards the Jewish State "must be taken seriously by all who care about Israel and the U.S.-Israel relationship."



Former U.S. senator Joseph Lieberman, speaking at the Negev Dinner, said Israel is a "glowing, aspirational role model" for Jews around the world.



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FEDERATION
REPORT

LAWRENCE WEINSTEIN
OTTAWA JEWISH COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

The Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation is excited to share that we were selected as one of four new organizations to join 62 others participating in a Jewish legacy giving program that to date has secured more than 25,000 after-lifetime commitments with an estimated value of almost \$1 billion for communities across North America.

Why is the Foundation so pleased to be involved? A successful legacy campaign launches a conversation about what the whole community wants for its future – the Jewish Ottawa we hope our great-grandchildren will inherit. We

Legacy giving program launched

aim to inspire everyone, all potential donors, to develop a sense of mutual responsibility for that future, where securing legacy commitments is a win for the whole community.

Beginning immediately, we are partnering with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) to help start this community-wide legacy giving program, creating a shared goal for 13 other local Jewish organizations to work toward. As a part of the collaboration, we have partnered with area social service organizations, day schools and synagogues. These organizations join us as a part of the four-year initiative that provides coaching, training and incentive grants to ensure that legacy giving becomes integrated in the philanthropic culture of the community.

As a participant, Foundation will receive a grant from the Grinspoon Foundation with matching funds of approximately \$100,000 each year to provide participating local organizations with the opportunity to receive unrestricted incentive grants based on meeting legacy commitment benchmarks. And our Foundation is very

much engaged to ensure that all 13 of our partners are successful.

“The Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) is very excited to be partnering with the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation to establish a culture of legacy giving in Ottawa,” said Arlene D. Schiff, national director of the program. “The time is right. This legacy program will make the most of the generational transfer of wealth, change the language and landscape of giving and provide generous and forward-thinking members of the Ottawa Jewish community with the opportunity to express their passion, purpose and commitment to their most valued Jewish organizations.”

Life & Legacy is the newest initiative of HGF, which is investing \$30 million over a 10-year period to preserve vibrant Jewish life for future generations by ensuring the long-term financial health of Jewish community organizations in cities across North America, including Ottawa.

“Providing Jewish communities with proven tools and training to help them secure their long-term financial goals is absolutely vital. Through the Life

& Legacy program, I’m hopeful that we will be able to help sustain vibrant communities that allow future generations to enjoy our rich Jewish culture and heritage,” said Harold Grinspoon, the founder of HGF.

Every member of the Jewish community benefits from strong Jewish institutions. Now is your chance to assure continuity of services and programs in Jewish Ottawa by making a legacy gift in your will or estate plan. Within this special partnership you can then choose one or more of these partner organizations to benefit from your gift. It’s simple and yet very powerful. The more successful we are together, the more all the organizations, and entire community, benefits. The endowments you will create will ensure the long-term sustainability of our values and our dreams for all future generations.

What will be our legacy? Find out how you can become involved by contacting Micah Garten at 613-798-4696, ext. 270, or mgarten@JewishOttawa.com.

Lawrence Weinstein is chair of the board of the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation.

FROM THE
PULPIT

RABBI GAVRIEL RUDIN
YOUNG ISRAEL OF OTTAWA

Born and raised in the United States, I did not know what to expect upon moving to Canada. Americans tend to think of Canada as a cold distant suburb of the U.S., but somehow I get the impression that Canadians had a different view on the matter, eh?

The first thing I must say is that Canadians definitely have a lot of pride in their country. I think I saw more red maple leaves in the first week I was here than in an entire maple tree forest. The light and sound show on Parliament Hill this past summer was an amazing display of all that Canadians have to be proud of.

Canadian politeness is definitely a welcome change, having grown up a stone’s throw away from New York City (New Yorkers are not necessarily rude, they just have their own special way of

First impressions, north of the border

displaying affection and compassion). But in all honesty, my welcome to Canada and the Ottawa Jewish community has been truly amazing.

I often say that living in a Jewish community of our size, we are just too small not to get along. I have said that in the past, regarding other Jewish communities of similar sizes, but here I feel like I am preaching to the choir. The warm welcome I received from Jews across the Jewish spectrum, both from leadership and laypeople, has made my family and me feel valued and right at home. I feel privileged to have joined a diverse, yet united, team of Jews, dedicated to community growth and advancement. I strongly believe that this is how all Jewish communities were meant to be. While we may be different and may have different views and opinions, we share common goals and work together to achieve them, each adding our own unique piece to the greater puzzle.

Evidence of the need for community unity can be found when analyzing the very first “Jewish community” in all of history. When the Jews left the land of Egypt and spent 40 years wandering in the desert, the Torah details the formation in which they camped. The Taber-

nacle was in the middle, surrounded by the 12 tribes, each with its own special place. The commentaries compare this encampment to the shape of an old fashioned spoked wagon wheel. Can you picture it? There is a centre point and there are 12 spokes spreading out from the centre in different directions. Each tribe was different and lived their lives in different ways. Each had different strengths and weaknesses, and each had something different to contribute to the greater good. Despite their differences, they were all anchored to the same point in the middle, their service to God, represented by the Tabernacle.

The same is true with our communities. We are all different, and have our own strengths and weaknesses. However, as long as we can remain connected to the core values that keep us coming together toward a common goal, our differences will be the key to our success, not our undoing.

My first impression of this community is one of unity and direction. I believe that we are well on our way to continued growth and success, within the Jewish community and out. I am proud and excited to be a part of the Jewish Ottawa community!

OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN

VOLUME 84 | ISSUE 4

Ottawa Jewish Bulletin Publishing Co. Ltd.
21 Nadolny Sachs Private, Ottawa, K2A 1R9
Tel: 613 798-4696 | Fax: 613 798-4730
Email: bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com
Published 19 times per year.
© Copyright 2019

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The Bulletin, established in 1937 as “a force for constructive communal consciousness,” communicates the messages of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and its agencies and, as the city’s only Jewish newspaper, welcomes a diversity of opinion as it strives to inform and enrich the community. Viewpoints expressed in these pages do not necessarily represent the policies and values of the Federation.

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\$36 Local Subscription | \$40 Canada
\$60 USA | \$179 Overseas | \$2 per issue

Funded by the Government of Canada.

Canada

ISSN: 1196-1929
Publication Mail Agreement No. 40018822

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
Ottawa Jewish Bulletin
21 Nadolny Sachs Private,
Ottawa ON K2A 1R9

FROM THE EDITOR



MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

Since returning to work a year-and-a-half ago after open-heart surgery, daily exercise has been a priority and since my office is located in the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC), I am very lucky to have a first-class fitness centre just downstairs from my desk. The SJCC locker room is often the scene for impromptu and opinionated discussions on the news and issues of the day.

U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders – who is currently campaigning for the 2020 Democratic Party presidential nomination – has been the centre of a couple of recent locker-room discussions. If nominated, Sanders would be the first Jewish candidate nominated by one of the two

Feel the Bern on antisemitism and Israel

major parties for the U.S. presidency.

The first discussion was in early October after Sanders suffered a heart attack on the campaign trail and had a couple of stents inserted to open up his arteries. One of my locker-room buddies was angry that Sanders, whom he described as “pro-BDS, anti-Israel and antisemitic,” would have Israeli-made stents inserted.

I don’t know whether or not Sanders’ stents were made in Israel. I could find no mainstream media references to where the stents were made. Be that as it may, it is simply wrong to suggest that the leftist Sanders is “pro-BDS, anti-Israel and antisemitic.”

Sanders has spoken of his admiration for the Jewish state and for the ideals of Zionism, and has noted that he lived and worked on a kibbutz near Haifa as a young man in 1963.

While Sanders has consistently voiced his support for the State of Israel, including the right of Israel to defend itself from attacks, and for a two-state solution to the conflict with the Palestinians, he has been vociferous in his opposition to certain Israeli government policies, particularly the occupation and settlement expansion in the West Bank, and to Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu. On these matters, Sanders is in lockstep with about 75 per cent of the American Jewish community, as well as with millions of Israelis.

On BDS, Sanders has repeatedly rejected the call to boycott Israel. Earlier this year, he released a statement saying, “While I do not support the BDS movement, we must defend every American’s constitutional right to engage in political activity.”

The more recent locker room discussion about Sanders was on November 14 (I am writing this on the 15th), a few days after Sanders published an article in Jewish Currents on antisemitism – an article that has provoked much reaction in Jewish circles. <https://tinyurl.com/JC-Bernie>

I was pleased to see Sanders write so eloquently about antisemitism, particularly about the lethal consequences of right-wing antisemitism as manifested by the white nationalist movement. As Sanders points out, “hate crimes against Jews rose by more than a third in 2017 and accounted for 58 per cent of all religion-based hate crimes in America.” That year, we saw what happened in Charlottesville, and more recently we have seen right-wing antisemitism lead to the tragic synagogue shootings in

Pittsburgh and Poway.

But it was disappointing to see Sanders merely pay lip service to left-wing antisemitism, noting, “It is true that some criticism of Israel can cross the line into antisemitism, especially when it denies the right of self-determination to Jews, or when it plays into conspiracy theories about outsized Jewish power.”

While right-wing antisemitism has repeatedly proven lethal, the effects of left-wing antisemitism are also consequential. Look at how pro-Israel students are marginalized on many campuses. Look to the United Kingdom, where the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn, once overwhelmingly supported by British Jews, is now seen by many as an existential threat to the Jewish community. Or look to some of Sanders’ own supporters like Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, who has apologized more than once for using antisemitic tropes, or Women’s March organizer Linda Sarsour, who claims that a feminist cannot be a Zionist.

Sanders’ generalized thoughts on antisemitism and his specific thoughts on right-wing antisemitism are correct. But he seriously underplays the extent and the effects of left-wing antisemitism.

IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS



JASON MOSCOVITZ

‘Not enough shock and zero shame’

replays at night.

The spectacle of watching the unthinkable every day for weeks was a measure of how the Watergate hearings had to be one of the best live dramas in the history of television. That and the mourning weekend for president John Kennedy would be the classics.

Not to diminish anything on the Kennedy side, Watergate ran on high over a long shelf life. It never got boring. It just got better. What made it so interesting was that back then, many Americans didn’t think a president could do such rotten things.

Today, people take it for granted that President Donald Trump is no angel, but Nixon had a checkered past as well. He was called Tricky Dicky long before Watergate. Point being, back then, the president of the United States, by virtue of the office, was usually, at least initially, given the benefit of the doubt.

In Nixon’s time, there was no all-news television or social media. The president was allowed to breathe and some things really were kept top secret. It was a cloistered public existence compared to today’s madness.

But for all the differences, there are similarities – one of them glaring. The root of both presidents’ trouble was actions they undertook to get dirt on

political opponents, past and present. Nixon was bloodthirsty for dirt on the Kennedys.

Nixon would have survived Watergate except for those countless tape recordings in which he clearly incriminated himself. Once the Supreme Court decision forced their release, Nixon’s Republicans in the U.S. Senate jumped ship and his presidency was dead.

You would have to wonder if the call with the Ukrainian president was taped or preserved when Trump was seeking dirt on Joe Biden. Somehow, you would think not. One would assume Nixon was the last of the U.S. presidents who taped themselves for posterity, but in that nut house environment, who knows. What we do know is that there are hotly contested differences over the veracity of the transcript.

Officials on the call with Trump have given sworn testimony that the White House version is missing some key parts that would put Trump in an even worse light. Missing parts?

It reminds me of a pivotal Nixon tape with an 18 minute gap. Nixon said Rosemary Woods, his executive assistant mistakenly erased the 18 minutes while transcribing. There was so much bad stuff without the gap one could only assume the 18 missing minutes

was a smoking machine gun.

There was something else about Nixon. The Watergate break-in was not Nixon’s only faux pas. His long list of misdeeds included another break in at a psychiatrist’s office to get dirt on another political enemy. And how about his threat to use the Internal Revenue Service to go after enemy journalists?

Trump’s long list of misdeeds stem from a Nixon-like mind that sees enemies everywhere while Trump surpasses Nixon when it comes to adultery and illegal payoffs to keep women quiet.

Watergate had “Deep Throat,” Mark Felt, the second-in-command at the FBI who was passed over by Nixon when he named a new director. On one of the tapes, Nixon referred to Felt as “that Jew from the FBI,” even though Felt was not Jewish.

Trump’s Ukrainian extortion attempt burst open when a whistleblower came forward because, as in the Nixon era, it ultimately came down to a president’s abuse of power.

Nixon resigned before he was impeached. Trump won’t have to because in today’s world of five scandals a day, his bad behaviour is the swamp that is the Trump presidency.

Unlike Watergate, there is not enough shock and zero shame.

As the Trump impeachment “breaking news” drama in the U.S. continues to feed on itself, I am more interested in the big picture than the details. The big picture inevitably brings me to comparisons with the Watergate scandal that crushed president Richard Nixon.

The historic Watergate hearings in the summer of 1973 coincided with my graduating from journalism at Carleton University. My major was political science. Watergate became my passion and I absorbed everything. I had the time to go full throttle.

After graduation, I worked part-time doing media research. I worked on my own schedule, so I had lots of free time to follow Watergate all summer. I watched every second and then the



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EXPANDING THE CIRCLE

In her Modern Mishpocha column (November 11), Jenny T. Burns eloquently delineates both the bounded and inclusive aspects of her interfaith family life. I want to let readers know that the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa sponsor a program called “Expanding the Circle” for interfaith families to meet and share their experiences. The program consists of guided discussions and social activities facilitated by Jodi Green, MSW, and Jewish community professional. The program is free and babysitting is provided so that all members of the family can participate.

Last year at Expanding the Circle we discussed December holidays; Judaism – culture or religion; Shabbat (with challah baking); life as a minority; Purim and antisemitism; Pesach; navigating family celebrations; Israel; and belonging to the Jewish community.

One of our participants wrote about her experience:

“Expanding the Circle provided me with tools and resources to help me incorporate more of my Jewish heritage into my mixed background family. It helped me to appreciate my roots and to pass this appreciation on to my partner and our children.”

In meeting regularly and getting to know each other, participants were able to explore aspects of interfaith family life, felt comfortable expressing their struggles and successes, and learned about the Jewish community, all while their children played in the next room. Please join us!

Expanding the Circle meets monthly from 4:00-5:30 pm on a Sunday at the SJCC. The next meetings are November 24 and December 15. For information, contact me at mmiska@jccottawa.com or 613-798-9818, ext. 263.

Maxine Miska
Assistant Executive Director
Soloway Jewish Community Centre



(From left) Andrea Gardner of Jewish Family Services presents the Elaine Rabin Social Service Award to Rabbi Deborah Zuker, Ruchama Uzan and Madelaine Werier, founders of JOIN – the Jewish Ottawa Inclusion Network, at the JFS annual general meeting, October 30, at Bayview Yards.

Jewish Family Services celebrates 40 years at AGM

BY MATTHEW HORWOOD

Jewish Family Services of Ottawa (JFS) celebrated 40 years of serving Ottawa’s Jewish community at its annual general meeting, October 30, at Bayview Yards.

According to JFS Executive Director Sarah Caspi, “none of this would have been possible without the support of our innovative, dedicated and resilient staff.”

When the organization was created in 1979, Caspi said, it was located in the basement of the Jewish Community Centre on Chapel Street, with just three staff and a budget of \$42,000. Today, JFS has over 80 staff, offices that occupy two floors at 2255 Carling Avenue, and a budget of over \$6 million.

JFS serves 8,300 clients with more than 65 programs and services, including its Tikvah Program to support vulnerable and low income Jewish residents of Ottawa, Shalom Bayit Services for women experiencing abuse, settlement support for newcomers from various cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, and a variety of counselling services for people of all ages.

“We continue to grow in size and scope, but we stay true to our mission to serve our community,” Caspi said.

“Whether we are providing case management to an aging Holocaust survivor, offering trauma counselling to a vulnerable newcomer, creating a safety plan for a woman leaving an abusive relationship or providing

See JFS on page 9

Former Israeli Mossad Agent, Yola Reitman, shares her leading role in rescuing Ethiopian Jews from Sudan

(as seen in the recent Netflix movie Red Sea Diving Resort).



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JFS: Community is better when people work together

Continued from page 8

short-term counselling to someone struggling with mental health issues, our staff are there to help," Caspi said.

Jack Shinder, whose three-year term as chair of the JFS board ended at the AGM, said JFS' corporate leadership has "never been stronger." However, Shinder said, the organization's capacity to serve its clientele requires more human input, and so he encouraged the audience to consider working alongside JFS with "empathy, expertise and understanding."

Shinder was succeeded by Mark Luden and Steve Morgan who now serve as co-chairs of the JFS board.

Morgan said JFS is "working from a position of great strength" as a result of the skill, talent and dedication of its staff and laid out the JFS board's priorities for the coming year: to "take stock of where we have come from and where we want to be in the future"; to ensure the organization has the proper structures in place to reflect its size and maturity; and to leverage JFS' volunteers to build upon the knowledge and experience of its board members.

Luden quoted from the fourth chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, "two are better than one – but pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up." Luden said this passage is a commentary on a person's fear of isolation and disconnection, which JFS has been working to decrease for 40 years. Luden also wished for "increased connections between all of us" in the New Year.

Jackie Holzman, Ottawa's mayor from 1991 to 1997, was guest speaker at the AGM. JFS was founded following a review of the social services available to Ottawa's Jewish community that was conducted by Holzman. The study found that despite what many thought at the time, there were problems in the community.

"When we talked about alcoholism, poverty or the unemployed, people would say 'not in our community,' but there was a need," Holzman said. "Our community is so much better when people work together, and that's what [JFS] is all about."

Holzman is currently vice-chair of Compassionate Ottawa, a volunteer-driven organization created to "support and empower individuals, their families and their communities throughout life for dying and grieving well."

Holzman said in 2017, when Compassionate Ottawa was being



Shelli Kimmel receives the Jewish Family Services Volunteer of the Year Award from George Sladowski at the JFS annual general meeting, October 30, at Bayview Yards.



(From left) Jewish Family Services Co-Chairs Steve Morgan and Mark Luden with Past-Chair Jack Shinder at the JFS annual general meeting, October 30, at Bayview Yards.

created, they found that JFS was the "go-to agency" when it came to the multicultural community. That is why Compassionate Ottawa has partnered with JFS to "help people in their own environment, with their own language and culture, to be able to decide how they want to live."

The Elaine Rabin Social Service Award, given annually to "an individual who has stood up for a cause or on behalf of a group that struggles to stand on their own" was presented by JFS Assistant Executive Director Andrea Gardner to Madelaine Werier, Rabbi Deborah Zuker and Ruchama Uzan, founders of JOIN – the Jewish Ottawa Inclusion Network, an organization that facilitates and advocates for inclusion for children with special needs in the community.

George Sladowski presented the Volunteer of the Year Award to Shelli Kimmel, and Caspi presented the Long Service Awards to dozens of JFS staff, to celebrate work milestones of 10-15 years, 15-20 years and 20+ years.

Jewish Federation of Ottawa President and CEO Andrea Freedman, said the hallmark of any



Keynote speaker Jackie Holzman with Jewish Family Services Executive Director Sarah Caspi at the JFS annual general meeting, October 30, at Bayview Yards.

great community is not how it treats its "kings and queens," but how it treats its most vulnerable. Freedman credited JFS' "inspiring leadership team and tireless and dedicated volunteers" for helping to make Ottawa's Jewish community "extraordinary."

‘You meet new people, enjoy yourself and have some laughs’

Creative Connections provides weekly programming for older Jewish seniors at the SJCC. **Matthew Horwood** reports.

‘Friendship, community and social engagement’ are at the forefront of Creative Connections, a weekly Jewish social and recreational program geared towards Ottawa’s “cognitively well, older seniors.”

Creative Connections is a joint program of AJA (Active Jewish Adults) 50+ and the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC). The celebration of Jewish holidays, education through invited scholars, and the enjoyment of Jewish film and music, are integral components of the program.

The program meets on Tuesdays at the SJCC. Typically, there will be some sort of presentation or discussion in the morning followed by an exercise session. After lunch, there will be another presentation or activity, often in conjunction with AJA 50+.

On November 5, programming began in the morning with a musical performance by Jay Kassirer and Rita Finnigan with Patsy Royer, who led the audience in singing songs such as “Sunrise, Sunset” from “Fiddler on the Roof,” and “Memory” from “Cats.”

The seniors then participated in a ‘Gentle Gym’ workout led by professional trainer and Ottawa Jewish Bulletin fitness columnist Gloria Schwartz, which involved light exercises with dumbbells and medicine balls, all of which could be completed while sitting.

After lunch catered by Babi’s Restaurant, the Creative Connections group joined with AJA 50+ for a talk by criminal defense lawyer Lawrence Greenspon, who discussed Canada’s criminal justice system and spoke about the trials of Jian Ghomeshi and Joshua Boyle.



Jay Kassirer and Rita Finnigan, with Patsy Royer at the keyboard, lead a singalong session for Creative Connections, November 5.



Gloria Schwartz leads a ‘Gentle Gym’ workout for older seniors during Creative Connections’ day of activities, November 5.

Previous guest speakers for Creative Connections have included Danielle LeFrancois, who presented her nature photography, lawyer Kate Wright, who talked about the law for seniors, and Ilana Rabin, who spoke about celebrating the High Holy Days in Israel.

Olly Wodin, coordinator of Creative Connections, said the aim of the program is to create a welcoming Jewish space for seniors, provide a variety of stimulating and engaging programs, and to “reduce the isolation that sometimes comes with older age.”

Wodin said many of the program’s ideas are generated from the Creative Connections members themselves, and some lead programming on areas of their interest or expertise. For example, in December, Evelyn Marcovitch, Naomi

Skoll and Eva Gelbman will be sharing their stories, and in January, Murray Citron, who contributes book reviews to the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin, will offer a presentation on Yiddish poetry.

Odin says participants feel consistently engaged in Creative Connections and they are a “lively, welcoming and intelligent bunch.” She added that the group “would love to have more volunteers.”

Murray Citron, a four-year participant of Creative Connections, said Merle Haltracht-Matte, then the program’s coordinator, invited him to join while he was at Hillel Lodge recovering from hip surgery. Along with several other seniors, Citron now makes use of Para Transpo services to regularly attend the sessions.

Citron said he enjoys the ‘Gentle Gym’ workouts as they are “not too

strenuous” while still providing a challenge, and can be completed while sitting down or holding on to chair, and said the Creative Connections programs that appeal to him the most involve music, such as singalong sessions and Junkyard Symphony, or when Schwartz times her exercises to songs by artists like Tony Bennett and Doris Day.

Eleanor Bocian said she was introduced to Creative Connections 12 years ago, when a friend encouraged her to join.

“You meet new people, enjoy yourself and have some laughs. It keeps me going,” Bocian said.

Bluma Dieks-Goldenberg, who began participating in Creative Connections 18 years ago, when it was “just six or seven people,” said the program is a great way to get her out of the house.

“I enjoy the speeches and music, and I definitely like to sing along,” Goldenberg said.

Creative Connections runs on Tuesdays from 9:30 am to 2:15 pm, in three 10-week sessions taking place in fall, winter and spring. Membership in AJA 50+ or the SJCC is required to participate. The program costs \$50 for each session, and an additional \$60 a session for those requiring transportation. For seniors struggling with the program’s costs, financial assistance is available.

For more information about Creative Connections, contact Olly Wodin at creativeconnections@aja50plus.ca or 613-627-3837.

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Film screening celebrates ‘special relationship’ of Greek and Jewish communities

BY LOUISE RACHLIS

Last February, Steven and Doris Ramphos saw the film, “Life Will Smile” at the Greek Orthodox Church in Naples, Florida.

“Life Will Smile” is a documentary based on the true story of an entire Jewish community of 275 surviving the Second World War, thanks to the brave actions of the people on the Greek island of Zakynthos.

This is widely thought to be the only Jewish community in Nazi-occupied Europe to survive the Holocaust intact, without losing a single one of its members.

“We were so moved by this film that we were certain we wanted to share it with our friends and family in Ottawa,” said Doris, knowing immediately that it was something she wanted to do.

Steven Ramphos is president and founder of District Realty and he and his wife are active supporters of many local charities including the University of Ottawa Heart Institute and the Hellenic Community of Ottawa.

“My husband Steve and I have such a connection with the Jewish people of Ottawa, specifically with the Shinder family. The Shinder family are our fam-



(From left) Steven and Doris Ramphos, who presented the film, “Life Will Smile,” in Ottawa with Steven Priovolos, the film’s producer, and their daughter, Paulina Ramphos, who was the MC for the evening.

ily,” she said. “My husband Steve was originally partners with Lionel Shinder, Jason’s late father, when they incorporated District Realty. Prior to that, Steve worked at Regional Realty for Len Potchin and later Steve Gordon.

“He has been closely connected to the Jewish people both as friends and in business. When we saw the movie in Naples we felt proud. We felt proud that the Greek people assisted the Jewish

people in Zakynthos, Greece.”

Immediately after she saw the movie in Florida, Doris contacted Steven Priovolos, the film’s Los Angeles-based producer, to see if she could arrange a screening in Ottawa in November. Not only did he agree, Priovolos said he’d attend himself.

“His only condition when screening his movie is that no one be charged. This made me want to screen it even more,” she said. “Steven Priovolos is an extremely compassionate person who wanted to share this incredible story.”

On November 7, Steven and Doris Ramphos sponsored the Canadian premiere of “Life Will Smile” at the Infinity Centre during Holocaust Education Month and Priovolos was present for a question-and-answer session with the capacity audience – mostly from Ottawa’s Greek and Jewish communities – following the screening.

The event was “truly a celebration,” said Doris. “A celebration of the close connection between our two cultures. A celebration of humanity. A celebration of the special relationship that our two communities share.

“I was surprised by the number of people who registered to attend: 550

people,” she added. “Our event was originally planned for 200. The registration kept increasing. It was a room full of people sharing an amazing compassionate story. I cannot tell you how special the night was.”

Earlier in the day, explained Doris, Ambassador Dimitrios Azemopoulos of Greece hosted “an incredible luncheon” at his residence where he honoured the departing ambassador of Israel, Nimrod Barkan. “It was a beautiful lunch.”

The luncheon was attended, she noted, by Supreme Court Justices Andromache Karakatsanis and Rosalie Abella; Andrea Freedman, president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, and Michael Polowin, chair of the Federation; Tony Vanikiotis, president of the Hellenic Community; Father Alex Michalopoulos of the Greek Orthodox Church; Rabbi Idan Scher of Congregation Machzikei Hadas; Rabbi Menachem Blum of Ottawa Torah Centre Chabad; and Steven Priovolos, the producer of “Life Will Smile.”

Visit www.lifewillsmile.com for more information on the film and the story of how the Jews of Zakynthos were saved and www.stevenpriovolos.com to learn more about the producer.

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Antisemitism: 'The time for silence is finished'

Deborah Lipstadt, a world-renowned professor of modern Jewish history and Holocaust studies at Emory University, was keynote speaker at the launch of Holocaust Education Month in Ottawa. **Louise Rachlis** reports.

There's not much we can do to get rid of antisemitism," said Professor Deborah Lipstadt. "But we can become the unwelcome guest at the dinner."

"We can't be quiet," she told an enthusiastic full house at Kehillat Beth Israel on November 10.

"Telegraph the message especially to young people: You've got to speak out! The time for silence is over. We see it on the right, we see it on the left – the time for silence is finished."

Lipstadt's talk was the keynote address at the launch of Holocaust Education Month in Ottawa, held on the 81st anniversary of Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass), the antisemitic pogrom in Nazi Germany and Austria that was the prelude to the Holocaust.

The event was organized by the Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship at the Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies at Carleton University.

Lipstadt famously won the libel suit brought against her by Holocaust denier David Irving in the British courts, described in her book *History on Trial*. Her most recent book is *Antisemitism: Here and Now*.

"Antisemitism is part of a grouping of forms of hatred, but it's different in that it's a conspiracy theory, with that element of fear," said Lipstadt. "The template of antisemitism is the way the story of the Crucifixion was used in the Middle Ages," that the Jews wanted



Keynote speaker Deborah Lipstadt seated in the front row at the launch of Holocaust Education Month with a group of dignitaries.

(From left) Rabbi Howard Finkelstein; Deputy Head of Mission Franziska Hagedron, Embassy of Germany; Benoit-Antoine Bacon, president of Carleton University; Professor Deborah Lipstadt; former justice minister Irwin Cotler; Professor Jan Grabowski of the University of Ottawa, recipient of the Arie Van Mansum Award.

Jesus to be killed because he wanted the moneychangers out, and the Jews asked the Romans to kill him.

As Lipstadt explained, that conspiracy theory went beyond the Church: Voltaire, Karl Marx, and the eugenics movement, "they all sound the same."

"The antisemite looks on Jews to be feared in a malicious and devious way," she said. "The Jew becomes the devil or the demon... the only one who can harm God, and he comes in disguise so you don't know you've encountered him until they've done their damage."

She described a Nazi propaganda film that promoted Jews dressed in regular clothing as more dangerous than those with side-locks and traditional garb.

"We all recognize the kind of antisemite who shoots up synagogues," she said. "Those people are dangerous, but for the dangerous things they do, they are easier to spot and fight... The dinner party antisemite sits at dinner and says he hired an associate – he's

Jewish - but he's very honest."

Then there's the "stirring up the pot" enabler kind of antisemite on the left and on the right, like Jeremy Corbyn and Donald Trump, she explained.

"Nice people don't attend rallies in Charlottesville and chant 'Jews will not replace us.'"

For many of the people on the progressive left, their view of prejudice is "refracted through a prism of ethnicity, class and power." Jews are white, privileged and, ipso facto, have power, she said. "They look upon the Jew as someone who could not be a victim of prejudice."

And the far right "is something else." They believe "there is a plan afoot for a genocide of white Christians" and these black and brown people, "they're not smart enough to be doing this on their own, so the Jews are helping them... George Soros has become the Rothschild of the 21st century. That's what they meant in Charlottesville when they chanted 'Jews will not replace us.'"

Lipstadt added that a fight over whether antisemitism is worse on the left or the right is useless.

"They both are dangerous in different ways: on the left, structurally; on the right, dangerous in terms of its violence and conspiracy theories."

Criticism of Israeli government policies is not antisemitic, she said. "It becomes antisemitic when you have this myopic view of Israel being the only one doing a bad thing in the Middle East..."

You have to ask, what's going on? Why this myopia? That's what disturbs me. When you call for the destruction of Israel, that's antisemitism."

Holocaust denial, Lipstadt said, is a form of antisemitism.

But the fight against antisemitism shouldn't become our sole identity, she cautioned. "Then we turn Jews into an object, what's *done to* Jews, instead of what Jews *do*."

After a standing ovation, Lipstadt was thanked by former justice minister Irwin Cotler, chair of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, who praised her for stressing "the compelling importance of each and all of us of standing up and being counted. This must be the overriding message we take away. We cannot let antisemitism become the linchpin of our identity and who we are."

The HEM launch event also included the presentation of the 2019 Arie Van Mansum Award for Excellence in Holocaust Education. Created in memory of Arie Van Mansum, who was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, the award was presented to Professor Jan Grabowski of the University of Ottawa by Global News journalist Abigail Bimman.

"The legacy of courage and sacrifice of the righteous must be preserved," said Grabowski. "The history of the Holocaust finds itself under direct attack, including more recent forms of Holocaust distortion."

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A gift of a Sefer Torah: From Jews in Ottawa to Jews in Africa

A group of 38 North Americans – including 28 members of Kehillat Beth Israel in Ottawa – journeyed to Arusha, Tanzania this month with the gift of a Sefer Torah for the small Jewish community there. KBI member **David Roytenberg** reports from Tanzania.

In 1971, the Jewish community of Arusha, Tanzania, beset by Christian missionaries determined to convert them, lost their only Sefer Torah in a fire related to the conflict with the missionaries. The Tanzanian government had nationalized their synagogue leaving them homeless and without a Torah.

The community struggled in the following decades to continue its existence but suffered a further blow with the death of their rabbi. In the face of all these difficulties the late rabbi's son, Yehudah Amir, a lawyer by profession, has carried on the leadership of the community, acting as [a de facto] rabbi, chazzan and teacher. He studies daily by Skype with Rabbi Meyer Landy in New Jersey, and the community meets every Shabbat for prayers.

In the spring of 2019, thousands of miles away, Congregation Kehillat Beth Israel of Ottawa, established by the merger of two long standing Ottawa synagogues, Congregation Beth Shalom and Agudath Israel Congregation, began an inventory of the many Torah scrolls in its possession. Both of the predecessor congregations had accumulated a large number of scrolls as a result of earlier amalgamations. The spiritual leader of Kehillat Beth Israel, Rabbi Eytan Kenter, began looking for a small congregation somewhere that might be in need of a Sefer Torah.

Soon after sending out word, Kehillat Beth Israel learned of the plight of the Arusha community and the fact that it had been without a proper Torah since the 1970s. With a membership of 70 persons, the community continued under Yehudah's leadership, and the offer of a Torah scroll was accepted by Yehudah on behalf of the Jewish community of Arusha.

On November 7, a group of 38 pilgrims from North America celebrated with Yehudah and the Jewish community of Arusha the inauguration of their new Torah scroll. A procession of several dozen people marched with the Torah into the synagogue and placed the Torah in the ark. A few minutes later, the Torah was removed from the ark and read for the first time in its new home. Rabbi Kenter led the Thursday reading of the first Aliyah from Parshat Lech Lecha.

After the reading, the Torah was joyfully lifted and tied and placed back in the ark. The participants, both the visitors from North America and the local people, were greatly moved by the celebration. Yehudah, in particular was visibly touched by the proceedings.

For myself, it was a great privilege to be a witness and participant in this important moment of great joy for this small but resilient Jewish community. The Jewish community in Arusha has been quietly coping with its problems on its own for decades, without the help or even the knowledge of the broader Jewish



Above: Rabbi Eytan Kenter reads from the Torah, November 7, in the small synagogue in Arusha, Tanzania. It was the first passage read from the scroll – a gift from Kehillat Beth Israel in Ottawa – in its new home.

Right: Yehudah Amir of the Jewish community of Arusha, Tanzania carries the community's new Torah – a gift from Kehillat Beth Israel in Ottawa – to their synagogue.

world. The contact by remote communication with Rabbi Landy provided them with a lifeline and the visit by our group from Kehillat Beth Israel has hopefully demonstrated that engagement with the wider Jewish world will enrich them and bolster them in their struggle to survive as a Jewish community.

In the coming years, I hope this connection will blossom into ongoing ties of mutual affection and support between Kehillat Beth Israel and the Jewish community of Arusha.



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Strawberry Blonde Bakery is now kosher

BY LOUISE RACHLIS

For all of their six years in business, Strawberry Blonde Bakery has been vegan, gluten-free and nut-free – and now the bakery has added kosher to the in-demand offerings at their two locations, 111 Richmond Road in Westboro and 767 Silver Seven Road, unit 17, in Kanata.

“I’m thrilled that Strawberry Blonde Bakery has become kosher,” said Rabbi Levy Teitlebaum, director of Ottawa Vaad HaKashrut. “It speaks to their dedication and inclusion of the community.”

Ottawa Vaad HaKashrut is a kashrut certification agency recognized by the Association of Kashrut Organizations. Its mission is to facilitate the availability of a wide variety of reliably kosher food, products, and services to Ottawa’s Jewish community.

“About five years ago, Rabbi Teitlebaum approached us about becoming kosher, because we used to be located under the Ottawa Bagelshop,” said Strawberry Blonde owner Jacqui Okum.

They were only two staff at the time and very busy, and so they didn’t get around to it, she said. “However, we touched base about a year ago because the Ottawa Bagelshop wanted to develop a gluten-free bagel, and we re-visited the idea of making our whole bakery kosher. Manager Allison Iris-Fong was very detail-oriented and helped us take it off the ground. We looked at every ingredient, changing ingredients that weren’t kosher.” As well, they also had to guarantee the products were dairy-free and nut-free.

There are a few items made by Strawberry Blonde before their kosher certification, like chocolate and



“The response [to becoming kosher] has been amazing, more than I expected,” says Strawberry Blonde Bakery owner Jacqui Okum.

frozen items, that aren’t yet kosher. Once those items are sold out, everything in the bakery will be kosher. Now about 75 per cent is, Okum said, and everything

non-kosher is clearly labelled.

“We also do catering, wedding cakes, wholesale to all the Farm Boys across Ontario, and some smaller health food stores in Ottawa,” said Okum, who now has about 40 staff in the two locations. “It’s a lot of business to manage.”

Personally vegan, she said that while working on the kosher process with Rabbi Teitlebaum, cross-contamination safeguards were put in place. “You can’t make mistakes. You can’t not be serious about it.”

Rabbi Teitlebaum describes Okum as “a leader who creates delicious masterpieces. Vegan, gluten free and now kosher. Definitely someone who takes their labour of love seriously.”

“All the staff at Strawberry Blonde Bakery are wonderful to work with. Allison and I have been working closely for over a year to achieve this milestone. Mazel Tov!”

“In kosher, we’ve always believed that we are affected by the food we consume, both physically and spiritually,” said Rabbi Teitlebaum. “This certification acknowledges that understanding our food source is as significant as eating it.”

Strawberry Blonde posted on social media about going kosher early this month.

“The response has been amazing, more than I expected,” Okum said.

“Couples come in to order wedding cakes and say ‘You’ve made me so happy!’ It makes all the work worthwhile.”

For more information, call 613-725-2253, or visit www.strawberryblondebakery.com.

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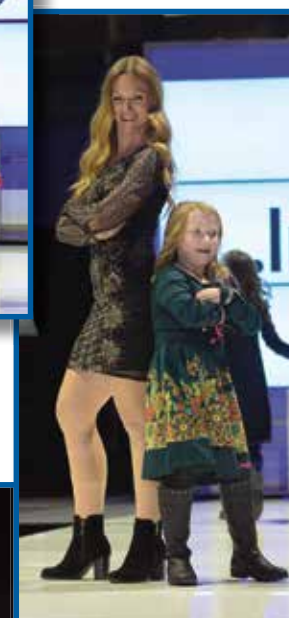
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The impact of mental illnesses

Psychiatry is the branch of medicine focused on the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental, emotional and behavioural diseases. Psychiatrists' education and training allows them to understand the relationship between mental health and other illnesses, make a diagnosis and work with the patient to develop a treatment plan.

Mental illnesses are disorders which affect mood, thought processes, perception and reality testing. Depending on the nature and severity of the disorder cognitive function, insight and judgement may be affected. Mental illness may also result in changes in behaviour and bodily functions such as sleep, appetite and energy. Mental illness is typically categorized as anxiety/mood disorder, major depressive illness, bipolar illness, psychotic illness, eating disorders, and substance abuse disorders.

Anxiety disorders are perhaps the most prevalent. As a category, it includes several subtypes including performance anxiety, separation anxiety, generalized anxiety somatization and panic disorder. As an example of how common anxiety disorders are, a recent Statistics Canada report indicated that about 2.6 per cent of Canadians aged 15 and older reported symptoms consistent with generalized anxiety disorder, a condition characterized by a pattern of frequent, persistent worry and excessive anxiety about several events or activities. For major depressive illnesses (disorders characterized by sustained low mood as well as signif-



DR. KATHI KOVACS
**HEALTH &
WELLNESS**

icant changes in sleep, appetite, energy, motivation, libido, concentration, and decision-making) 4.7 per cent of the population aged 15 and older were affected.

Mental illness affects all ages and backgrounds. In any given year, one in five Canadians will experience mental illness. In Canada, 6.7 million people live with a mental illness, compared to 2.2 million Canadians who have Type 2 diabetes. Mental illness hits earlier in life than most other medical disorders. More than 28 per cent of people between 20 and 29 years of age suffer with a mental illness in any given year. By the time a Canadian is 40 years old, one in two will have had a mental illness.

Suicide accounts for 24 per cent of deaths in the 15-24 years age group. Self-harm is on the rise, and the impact of mental illness on society is astronomical. It affects families, friends, classmates, workplaces and health care facilities. The Mental Health Commission of Canada determined the economic cost, due to mental illness, of at least \$50 billion per year. Approximately \$7.7 billion of this are direct costs related to hospital

care and morbidity and mortality.

The most serious impact, however, is on the individual. Having a mental illness can be isolating and often results in shame and guilt. It is even more difficult for patients with mental illness to navigate a stressed healthcare system. Even within a caring environment, there is stigmatization. Mental health patients may be considered to be less serious cases in busy waiting rooms. These patients often have more difficulty in advocating for themselves.

For proper assessment and treatment, a multidisciplinary approach is optimal. The first step is to visit a general practitioner (GP) so that medical causes can be ruled out as causes of the mental illness. Even some medications may have psychiatric symptoms as side effects. Often the GP will initiate treatment with therapy and/or medication and will often refer their patient to a psychologist, mental health social worker or other healthcare provider. A psychiatric consultation can be made by the GP if needed.

In Ottawa, there are several community agencies that provide excellent counselling, urgent care and crisis intervention. Safety is key and for emergency care there should never be any hesitation in contacting emergency services. There are many initiatives underway in our area to improve our knowledge of mental illness, but there is still much to learn about the interplay between the mind, body and life experience.

Dr. Kathi Kovacs is chief of the Department of Psychiatry at the Queensway Carleton Hospital.



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Walking gait and strategies to improve it

The manner in which you walk – known as your gait – is an indicator of vitality and a strong predictor of life expectancy and health. As you move about in your daily activities, think about your preferred gait speed: the speed at which you usually walk. Is it slower than it used to be? Is it slower than other people in your age group? A slow gait can be caused by underlying physical and cognitive deficits.

A longitudinal study of over 900 people spanning four decades tested and compared the participants from age three through age 45. The participants were evaluated on various physical functions including hand-eye coordination, balance and grip strength, and 19 biomarkers including blood pressure, dental health, cardiovascular fitness and waist-to-hip ratio.

They also underwent brain scans at age 45. Slow gait speed in their 40s was associated with significantly poorer physical health and cognitive deficits, including smaller brain volume and more cortical thinning indicative of premature accelerated ageing. Gait speed is sometimes used as a marker of health and fitness in elderly adults; yet, the study showed that gait speed is something to examine in middle-aged adults as well because it may be a warning sign of diseases or premature death decades before symptoms develop.

<https://tinyurl.com/yyvgacrk>

You can take a 10-metre walking test to determine your gait speed. The test can give you an idea of how you compare to your age group. If you take the



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test and find you fall below the norm, do not be alarmed. A variety of factors are involved in your gait such as lower body strength, vision, proprioception and aerobic capacity. Discuss your timed results with your doctor to determine if further testing is warranted to identify the causes of your slow gait.

To test your speed, measure a distance of 20 metres in a straight line. There are different variations of this test. A common method is to make a mark on the line at five metres, 15 metres and 20 metres. Someone with a stopwatch must time you. If you normally use a walker or cane, use it for the test. Begin walking at the start of the line at your usual self-selected pace and do not stop until you reach the end. The recorder begins the stopwatch when your toe crosses the five-metre mark and stops the stopwatch when your toe crosses the 15-metre mark (smart phones have stopwatches, usually in the clock app). The first and last five metres aren't included in the time as they're used for you to accelerate and decelerate. Perform the test three times then calculate the average time. For example, if you took six, seven and eight seconds to complete the test, your average is seven.

To calculate your speed in metres

per second, divide the distance (10) in metres by your average seconds (e.g., 10 divided by seven equals 1.43 metres per second). You can compare your score to the following standardized table of average walking speed (metres per second) by age and gender: Age 20-29, men 1.36, women 1.34; Age 30-39, men 1.43, women 1.34; Age 40-49, men 1.43, women 1.34; age 50-59, men 1.43, women 1.31; Age 60-69, men 1.34, women 1.24; Age 70-79, men 1.26, women 1.13; Age 90-99, men 0.97, women 0.94.

Studies show that the best strategy to improve gait speed is to work on strengthening your lower body with progressive resistance training with high intensities. There are numerous exercises to target these muscle groups. Ask your personal trainer or physiotherapist for recommendations. Surprisingly, add-

ing balance or endurance training hasn't been shown to significantly improve gait speed. However, adding music to provide a rhythmic component to your exercise helps with gait speed as it trains cognitive functions important for gait.

<https://tinyurl.com/y2webrn8>

Stretching to improve your range of motion or flexibility in your hip flexors allows you to take longer strides which may improve speed.

Practicing walking helps improve your cardiovascular fitness which will provide the needed oxygen to the muscles and keep you from feeling breathless. Walking on a treadmill is unidirectional at a controlled speed. To work on motor skills, walk on the floor or outdoors in different directions, (e.g., side to side, forwards and backwards or along a curved path); this can improve performance and create a more efficient system for walking that requires less energy and therefore leaves you less fatigued.

<https://tinyurl.com/yyyn8o4af>
Being proactive about your fitness can improve your quality of life. With proper training you can increase your gait speed, walk with more confidence and potentially increase your lifespan.

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'Be very grateful to live in Canada,' Holocaust survivor tells his grandchildren

Fred Fiksel, now a resident of Hillel Lodge, survived one of the Nazis' most notorious slave labour camps. **Matthew Horwood** reports.

While Fred Fiksel, 97, is now living comfortably at the Bess and Moe Greenberg Family Hillel Lodge with his wife, Jessie, he was once a prisoner of one of Nazi Germany's toughest slave labour concentration camps.

Fiksel was born in the Tarnopol region of Poland (now part of Ukraine) in 1922. He says his family was well-off, and he had a "very happy childhood." But when the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, Fiksel's family was "dislodged from our normal course of life" and Fiksel was sent to the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp complex, located in Eastern Austria.

"It's a terrible thing to get up in the morning and there's somebody knocking on the door to take you away to a camp, simply because you are Jewish," Fiksel said.

As noted on Wikipedia, the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp complex were labelled as "Grade III," meaning they were the toughest camps meant for the "incorrigible political enemies of the Reich."

"The conditions in the camp were negative, and [the Nazis] tried to destroy us," Fiksel recalled.

Fiksel was forced to perform slave labour while in the camp – which included working in mines, munitions and arms factories – all while receiving minimal food rations, "just 200 grams of bread and watery soup" a day.

When the Allies pushed into Germany, the Mauthausen-Gusen camps were liberated by the U.S. army on May 5, 1945. It is estimated that of the approximately 320,000 people imprisoned in the camps, only about 80,000 survived.

While Fiksel survived and was able to recover in an American military hospital, his mother, father and sister did not survive the Holocaust. He doesn't even have photos of his family to remember them by.

Fiksel lived in Italy for five years before immigrating to Montreal in 1951, alongside his brother, Jay. In Montreal, Fiksel met his wife, Jessie, who survived the Holocaust by hiding in a basement for two years during the Nazi's occupation of Poland. Fiksel said he and his wife got along because they both had a "long story of survival and a certain compassion for people around us, and for each other."

Fiksel said he received support from Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, which paid for his schooling and allowed him to earn several degrees.

"I was clinging to education as not only a means of curiosity, but also because it was an easy way to get sustenance to survive," he said.

Seline Yegendorf, Fiksel's daughter, said her father would always tell her, "Nobody can take away your education or your curiosity for learning."

In the 1960s, Fiksel attended McGill University in Montreal where he earned



Fred Fiksel, in his room at Hillel Lodge, recalls living on minimal food rations while working as a slave labourer during the Second World War.

degrees in science, arts, electrical engineering and biomedical engineering. Yegendorf recalled that during the day her father worked, and at night he would attend classes.

"He was very tenacious and driven to become something. I think he put all his stress into becoming successful," she said.

Fiksel worked for 30 years in the field of medical device technology related to the technical and regulatory aspect in government and industry, or as Fiksel put it, "stopping companies from engaging in monkey business and trying to peddle whatever they could to the public."

His work experience includes acting as an adviser to the Pan American Health Organization; serving on the Canadian Standards Association's Health Care Technology Program as executive of the Steering Committee on Health Care Technology; co-founding the Canadian Association of Manufacturers of Medical Devices; and founding HTC Associates, a healthcare technology consulting firm.

Fiksel said he is grateful to live in Canada, "a fantastic and wonderful country," especially when he hears about people in other countries being "dislodged from their normal lives, put away into camps or killed."

"I keep telling my grandchildren – and maybe I repeat this too often – that they should be very grateful to live in Canada," Fiksel said. "They can have a good future, provided they get an education and work hard to fit into the realm of society."

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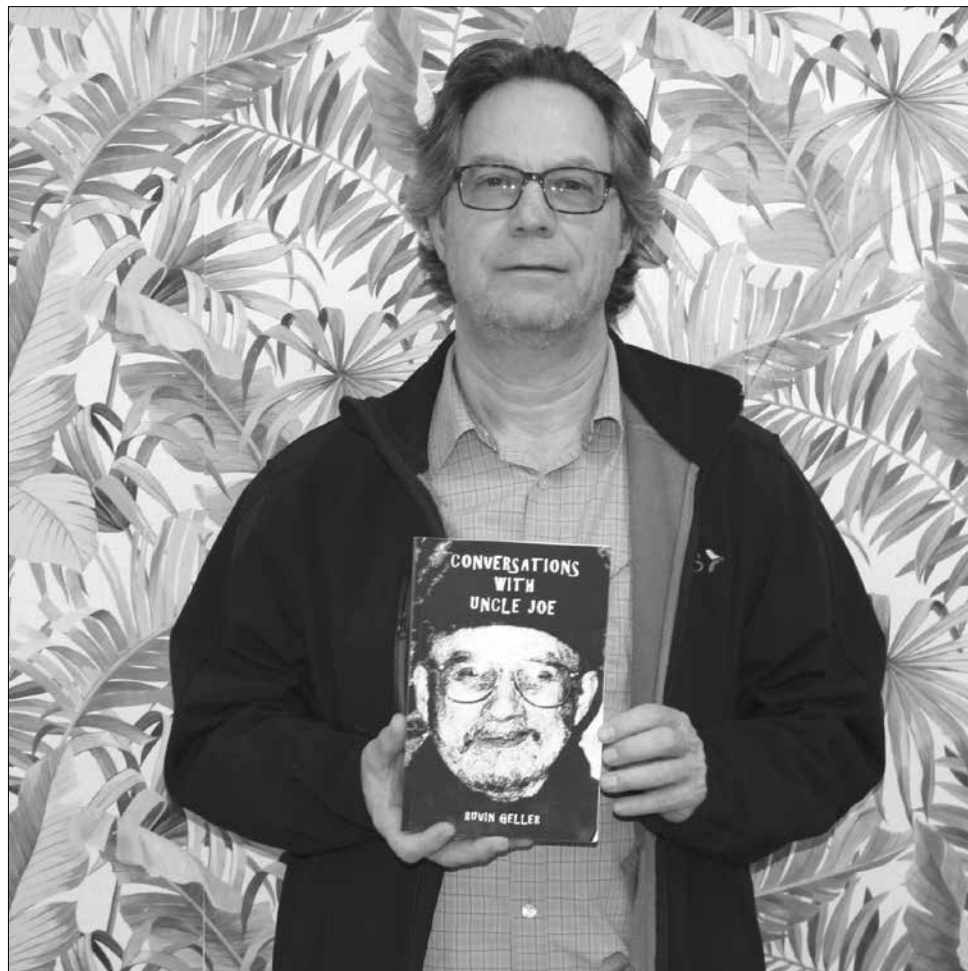
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Ruvin Geller's Uncle Joe was 'quite a character'



Ottawa author holds a copy of his latest book, *Conversations with Uncle Joe*.

BY MATTHEW HORWOOD

Ruvin Geller, a Montreal native who has lived in Ottawa for over 35 years, began writing jokes in 2012 because he wanted to try standup comedy. But, then he decided he would rather “just sit and write a book.”

Geller published his first book, *Sit Down Comedy*, a collection of comical short stories and puns based on his life, in 2013. Now he's back with a second effort, *Conversations with Uncle Joe*, recounting discussions he'd had with his late uncle over the course of his life. Each chapter of the book is a different memory of Uncle Joe, who Geller describes as “a cross between Archie Bunker from ‘All in the Family’ and Larry David’s character in ‘Curb your Enthusiasm.’”

In one chapter, Uncle Joe gets pickle brine in his eye after managing to get his hand lodged in a pickle jar. In another, Uncle Joe argues that he doesn't need to clean his dirty glasses because they “won't get sick and they don't smell.” Several chapters reference Uncle Joe's frequent flatulence, which, Geller says, was a “big joke for him.”

In each chapter, Geller sets the year for the conversation by mentioning which current rock song he was listening to at the time. *Conversations with Uncle Joe*

also includes numerous references to Judaism and to Montreal, which he says, “quite a few people will be able to relate to.”

Geller defines the book as a work of biographical fiction, because while many stories about his Uncle Joe have “some truth to them,” he made a lot of them up.

“Some of the stories may have started out being real, but maybe I exaggerated a few points or changed things if I thought they were funnier that way,” Geller said.

Geller acknowledges many stories in the book are “politically incorrect” and “not exactly friendly to today's tolerance of the planet's rich cultural diversities.” He said this is because, at the time, stereotypes were “far more common than they are now,” and so Uncle Joe could be “ignorant, but not racist.”

Geller said while the overall purpose of the book is to entertain, its underlying message is that “deep down inside, no matter how rough around the edges a person is, they can still be good.”

“[Uncle Joe] was rough around the edges, didn't have an education and was a bit of a simpleton, but he was not as bad in real life as he is in the book,” Geller said. “I believe my uncle was a good person. He was certainly quite a character.”

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Opinion: What the fall of the Berlin Wall meant for Eastern European Jews

BY LIAM HOARE

VIENNA (JTA) – “Neither ox nor donkey can block the path to socialism,” the East German leader Erich Honecker boldly declared on August 14, 1989. Less than three months later, on November 9, the Berlin Wall would fall.

Newsweek’s then-Berlin bureau chief Michael Meyer called 1989 the year that changed the world. In *We the People*, British historian Timothy Garton Ash described the opening of the Berlin Wall as “a moment of emancipation and liberation.” Ron Zuriel, a Jewish photography enthusiast, went to the wall frequently in the days following November 9 to capture the moment. He told Mark Kurlansky for his 1995 book *A Chosen Few* that East Germans “came into a different world.”

Thirty years later, Garton Ash acknowledges that across Central and Eastern Europe, “the reality” of post-Berlin Wall Europe “did not live up to the dream.” Such is the nature of revolution on the one hand, though it is certainly true that the fruits of 1989 were not evenly shared.

But if one community can be said to have been entirely transformed by the Velvet Revolutions of that year and the sometimes-bumpy transition from communism to democracy, it would be Eastern European Jewry.

After 1945, Holocaust survivors in Western Europe, augmented by immigrants from Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and North Africa, were able to rebuild Jewish life following the destructive fascist experience. But Judaism under communism became what Kurlansky describes in *A Chosen Few* as a “death cult.” Though community bonds remained, religion and Zionism were anathema to communism. Jewish identity became a secret and Judaism itself withered.

Things began to change in the late 1980s when non-Jews in Poland, for example, took a renewed interest in Judaism, leading to the birth of the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival. Yet it was only post-1989, after the communist monopoly on power had been eradicated, that Jewish life itself could be revived.

There were teething problems, particularly in Germany, as Kurlansky captured. Separated for 40 years, the two Germanys had developed two Judaisms.

“The biggest event of the year at the [East Berlin] synagogue was the annual memorial to Kristallnacht,” Kurlansky writes, adding that though there was an official East German Jewish Community that put on lectures and cultural events, for most Jews in East Germany, their new religion was socialism.

After reunification, East Germans felt that they had been colonized by the West, their institutions dissolved and way of life dismissed.

Intra-communal conflict and questions surrounding financial sustainability have not gone away. Still, to survey the past 30 years is to witness Judaism, once buried, being brought back into existence. Anyone who has reported from the region since the fall of the Berlin Wall has heard their own stories of young people



The Berlin Wall opens in November 1989.

PATRICK PIEL/GAMMA-RAPHO VIA GETTY IMAGES

whose parents unearthed their Jewishness, bequeathing to their children a secret that they knew need not be hidden any longer.

Since 1989, Judaism in Eastern Europe has multiplied. The work of the JDC and Hillel International, Moishe House and the Lauder Foundation has given birth to new Jewish schools, community and cultural centers in Warsaw and Krakow, Budapest and Timisoara, and with it, new avenues and approaches to Judaism. Synagogues like Fraenkelufer in Berlin have been rejuvenated, new communities including Warsaw’s Reform Beit Warszawa established, while the post-’89 generation of Jewish leadership like Alek Oskar, president of Organization of the Jews in Bulgaria, has arisen to take the reins of community institutions.

And the freedom to travel and the birth of cheap air travel has strengthened Eastern European Jewry’s connection to Israel, as did programs like the Jewish Agency’s MiNYamin Fellowship.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the Velvet Revolutions of 1989 made all this possible. It was a victory for Jewish life. Communism could not provide the conditions necessary to live as a minority, be one Jewish, Roma or LGBT. Only liberal democracy offers the basis for stable Jewish life in Europe. This means not only the freedom of speech and thought, assembly and association, but also the right to private and family life and, as important, the rule of law and equal treatment thereunder.

Of course, whether in Hungary – an authoritarian

state with a democratic facade where neo-Nazis recently demonstrated in front of a Jewish-run community centre – or Poland, those conditions are now being deliberately undermined and the gifts of 1989 squandered.

“We know you can turn an aquarium into fish soup,” so went the joke picked up by Garton Ash in 1989, “but can you turn fish soup back into an aquarium?”

The challenge after the fall of the Berlin Wall was, in other words, tremendous. Its anniversary is a reminder not just of the work that has been done in the name of liberty, democracy and rebuilding Jewish life in Central and Eastern Europe but that which is still to come.



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New Chanukah CD

BY GABE FRIEDMAN

(JTA) – Haim, Jack Black, the Flaming Lips, Yo La Tengo and other prominent artists have recorded songs for a Chanukah album titled “Hanukkah+.”



The album also features contributions from folksinger Loudon Wainwright III, Adam Green (of the band Moldy Peaches), Alex Frankel (of the electronic group Holy Ghost) and more.

Rolling Stone reported that the record is a mix of covers and original songs. Haim’s contribution is a cover of the late Leonard Cohen’s “If It Be Your Will.” Black wrote two originals, and the Flaming Lips and Wainwright also penned new songs for the album.

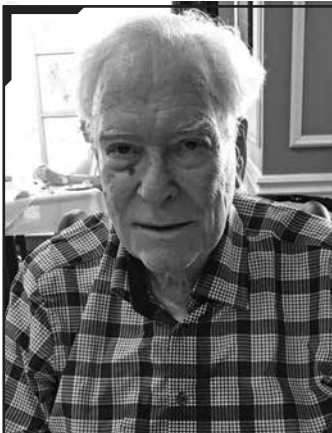
The project is the brainchild of Grammy-winning music supervisor Randall Poster, who was inspired by Yo La Tengo’s annual run of Chanukah concerts.

“When our old friend Randy Poster asked us to contribute to an album of Chanukah songs he was putting together, we were kind of stumped,” Yo La Tengo, which is led by singer Ira Kaplan, said in a statement. “As non-practicing Jews (and non-Jews), truthfully the holiday has little meaning for us (that’s the meta-joke behind Yo La Tengo’s Chanukah shows), but we were open to inspiration.”

Bess and Moe Greenberg Family Hillel Lodge

Get To Know Us

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Alfred Friedman

He did not wear #11 for the Ottawa Senators, but he might be Ottawa’s original Alfie.

Alfred “Alfie” Friedman was born in Ottawa in May 1934. His mother was originally from Philadelphia and his father was from New York – they moved to Ottawa during the depression when family (The Ottawa Glucks) offered Alfie’s father a job. Alfie as he is better known, grew up in Sandy Hill, attended

Lisgar and then graduated from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania followed by an MBA from NYU.

Alfie was a partner in many of Ottawa’s best known restaurants such as Marble Works, Mayflower, Maxwell’s, and more. Alfie would travel the world, which he loved to do with his wife Kaysa, and then come home to Ottawa with a new concept for a dining experience.

Interviewing Alfie for this article was a pleasure. Watching his eyes light up as he shared with me how he met Kaysa almost 55 years ago at the Dorval airport. Their flights were delayed due to snow. She was flying home to Sweden and he was flying to New York. He approached her and when he found out she was from Sweden, he said “I know someone from Sweden”. Well, not only did he know someone from Sweden, Kaysa actually knew the same person and the mutual friend had been trying to persuade Kaysa to visit Ottawa to go on a blind date. Without telling Alfie, Kaysa learned about and then converted to Judaism in Sweden. In 1964, they were married in a synagogue in Stockholm. The ceremony was in Swedish and Hebrew. Alfie’s best man (and lawyer), Arnie Goldberg said “If you didn’t understand, I can get you out.” Alfie didn’t understand a word but was thrilled with the outcome.

Alfie and Kaysa have two children, Michael who lives in LA and Stephanie (and Klaus) who live in Vancouver. Their two grandchildren are Oliver and Spencer.

Alfie has a special way of connecting with people. When he learned that I was a hockey fan, he told me about travelling with Kaysa to Russia in September of 1972 for the Summit Series. He shared with me that one of the Bronfmans was travelling with them along with a few Ottawans (Norman Loeb, Norm Zagerman, Norman Mirsky, Mike Dworkin, Hy Soloway and more). Hy Soloway spoke Russian, and organized for the group to visit Leningrad and attend synagogue services at a shul in Moscow. They would come back to their hotel rooms, and the rooms had been tossed. They knew that the KGB was listening, so each evening Kaysa would say “goodnight” to the picture on the wall. When the final game ended and Canada had won the series, there were no taxis or modes of transportation available to the Canadian fans. Many of us have watched Paul Henderson’s goal on television. We have heard about the series through various documentaries. It is a treat to hear the first-hand accounts from a member of our Ottawa Jewish Community.

Alfred “Alfie” Friedman has been active in many Ottawa charitable organizations. He was also one of the Founding members of Temple Israel, VP of the Ottawa Vaad Ha’ir, past chair of the UJA annual campaign, and over 20 years ago, he was on the committee that recommended that Hillel Lodge should move from Wurtemberg Street to the current location on the Jewish Community Campus. Now Alfie is a resident of Hillel Lodge, benefitting from the foresight of our community’s need for more Long Term Care beds. From his room at the Lodge, Alfie enjoys keeping up with what is happening in the world and listening to good music.

By Mitch Miller, Executive Director, Hillel Lodge LTC Foundation



U.K. Labour Party has an opportunity in upcoming elections

The antisemitism controversy is holding it back

BY CNAAN LIPSHIZ

(JTA) – After nearly a decade in power, Britain’s Conservative Party is in tatters.

Years of failing to negotiate a deal with the European Union to follow through with Brexit have led to internal party discord and roiled public frustration. Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s controversial push to leave the EU without a negotiated deal has only added to the political headache.

As if Brexit woes aren’t enough, Conservatives are also under fire in the media for alleged xenophobic radicalization in their ranks – not least by Johnson himself, who last year wrote an op-ed calling Muslim women who wear face-covering veils “ridiculous” for choosing to look like “bank robbers” or “letterboxes.”

Johnson’s approval ratings in August were the lowest of any British prime minister in over 40 years of polling, and since then he’s suffered a succession of policy defeats. He felt the need to call for new elections, which will be held December 12.

It all adds up to what seems like ideal conditions for the liberal Labour Party’s return to power, which it has not held since 2010 under Gordon Brown.

But multiple opinion polls consistently suggest that the Conservatives still have a significant lead on Labour, which has been led by Jeremy Corbyn since 2015.

Corbyn’s hard-left economic policies, often described as populist, his perceived neutrality on Brexit, and his history of alleged support for Britain’s enemies have caused major strife in Labour’s own ranks and likely have contributed to its dismal performance in the polls.

But Labour’s many scandals involving antisemitism – and the British media’s unrelenting attention to these problems – are also a key factor holding back the party at this crucial moment of opportunity, according to expert observers.

Following Corbyn’s takeover of the party, hate speech against Jews and Israel began proliferating in Labour’s ranks. Thousands of incidents have been recorded both by internal Labour groups like Labour Against Antisemitism, and external ones, including the Campaign Against Antisemitism.

Corbyn came under scrutiny increasingly in the media and beyond both for his alleged failure to stop the hate



U.K. Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn makes a campaign speech in Battersea, England, Oct. 31, 2019.

speech and for past actions in which he appeared to ignore, condone or encourage it – and even to partake in it himself.

He has defended a London mural showing bankers, understood by many to be Jewish, playing monopoly on the backs of dark-skinned people. He once said that U.K.-born “Zionists” have “no sense of irony.” He blamed “the hand of Israel” for an Islamist terrorist attack in Egypt in an interview for the Iranian state-run Press TV network. He has called Hezbollah and Hamas – terrorist groups that vow to destroy Israel – his friends. In 2015, he placed a wreath in a Tunisian cemetery to commemorate the Black September terrorists who killed 11 Israelis at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

In 2016, an inter-parliamentary committee, which included Labour representatives, accused Labour of creating a “safe space for those with vile attitudes towards Jewish people.”

Jewish community leaders and prominent members have not minced words about the controversy.

British Jewry’s leaders, including Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the former chief rabbi of the U.K., said it would be an “existential threat” to their community were Corbyn to come to power. In a recent poll, 85 per cent of British Jewish respondents said Corbyn is antisemitic.

In a Jewish News poll last month of more than 1,000 non-Jewish voters, 55 per cent agreed with the statement that Corbyn’s “failure to tackle antisemitism

within his own party shows he is unfit” to lead.

In the poll, 51 per cent said Labour has a “serious antisemitism problem” – up from 34 per cent when the same question was asked by an earlier ComRes poll. Just 18 per cent disagreed.

According to a YouGov survey from May, 80 per cent of British voters are now aware of Labour’s antisemitism crisis, and just 19 per cent are still convinced by Labour and Corbyn’s arguments that they are not antisemitic.

Still, a typical voter from northern England, for example, where few Jews live, will likely not be aware of the intricacies or the timeline of the Labour antisemitism crisis, says Jonathan Arkush, the previous president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

But even there, “there is now a pretty wide spread perception that there’s something rather nasty around Labour,” Arkush suggested.

“Voters aren’t stupid. They’re able to recognize when a pregnant woman, a member of Parliament, is being bullied,” he said, referencing the case of Luciana Berger, a young rising star who resigned from Labour this year over antisemitism while pregnant.

“They recognize it when another Jewish lawmaker, who represented Labour for 20 years, faces hostile and aggressive questions at a party meeting,” Arkush added, referencing recent incidents involving lawmakers Louise Ellman and Ruth Smeeth. Ellman recently joined other Jewish Labour leavers when she quit the party over antisemitism after 55 years in its ranks.

If Corbyn’s critics, especially his Jewish ones, are correct, it means that the general electorate is punishing Corbyn for Labour’s perceived treatment of a minority so small that it comprises less than one-half of one per cent of the population. It’s a remarkable scenario considering the relative success of parties with a longer tradition of antisemitic controversy elsewhere in Europe, including the National Front in France and the Freedom Party in Austria.

The possibility that Labour pays a price for its antisemitism problem at the ballot box makes Jonathan Hoffman, an activist who last year spearheaded a billboard campaign against Corbyn, feel “relieved.”

“If we lived in a society whose people and media were prepared to overlook antisemitism, it’d be a terrible place,” Hoffman said. “And I’m proud of how Jews, but also many non-Jews, are standing up to antisemitism here.”



BROADWAY TUNES HIGHLIGHT AUXILIARY TEA

By Marion Silver

For Auxiliary Of Hillel Lodge

Broadway favourites delighted a capacity audience during the annual Hillel Lodge Auxiliary Tea on Sunday, October 27th. Enthusiastic performances by Orpheus members Adam Moscoe, Katie Shapiro, Stephania Wheelhouse and Joseph Stone and piano accompaniment by Evelyn Greenberg charmed the audience of 220 consisting of residents and guests. The delectable party sandwiches and elegant desserts, provided by Creative Kosher Catering, were enjoyed by everyone in attendance.

Shelley Goldenberg, Auxiliary President, welcomed everyone. In his remarks, Ted Cohen, Executive Director of Hillel Lodge, expressed his appreciation to the Auxiliary for their continued commitment to the well-being of the elderly. He cited, that this year’s fundraising efforts allowed the lodge to purchase new mattresses for each resident and provided seed money for a new horticultural initiative and as well continue ongoing programs throughout the year.

This year’s tea was ably convened by Hennie Palmer, Julie Kanter and Corinne Taylor. Beautiful floral arrangements were provided by Diane Langdon of Langdon Flowers and Dirk Visbach of Dirk the Flowerman. Bohne Forsberg designed the graphics and Issie Scarowsky and Boris Dachevski photographed the afternoon’s proceedings. Finally, a special mention must be given to Marilyn Adler and Patti Haas for their untiring efforts and ongoing devotion to Hillel Lodge.

The Auxiliary thanks all of our donors for their ongoing support to our Telethon and Tea allowing us to continue our efforts on behalf of the residents.

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When in doubt, Shaboom!

Near the start of the school year, during the 10 days of repentance between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we received an email from our son's Grade 2 teacher explaining there had been a few incidents of children not treating each other with respect. Teachers were working with the students to "reinforce positive relationship building and kindness at school," including modeling positive social interactions and role playing challenging social situations. They encouraged parents to talk with their kids about respect and kindness at home.

My partner Marci and I were taken aback as our children's school exudes warmth and respect. But we were also heartened the school was treating these incidents as teachable moments and transformative opportunities.

The day we received the email, we had a great sit-down with our kids (our daughter just started junior kindergarten) after dinner about being an ally to any kids who need help, respecting each other, and saying "sorry" when we make mistakes. We talked about being aware when something is awry in class or the playground, and knowing how to step in and be a leader and helper by showing kindness and respect to fellow classmates, and getting a grownup when their help is needed.

That night, I thought about how the timing of the incidents at school meshed well with themes of the High Holidays – about the importance of treating each other well and engaging in teshuvah (heartfelt repentance) when we do something wrong or miss the mark. I wanted to put what had happened in a Jewish frame, as I felt that what was happening could also



DARA LITHWICK
**MODERN
MISHPOCHA**

help show how relevant Judaism is to figuring out how to live and get along.

But I did not quite know where to start.

I turned to my first source of help, "Rabbi" Google, and typed a few words – "teshuvah," "children," "respect," "sorry" – into the search field.

Google nailed the response. One of the first results was a YouTube channel called BimBam for a series of cartoon shorts titled "Shaboom."

I was delighted. "Shaboom!" is an animated series geared to four-to-seven-year-olds that combines Jewish wisdom with high quality programming. It is musical, fast paced, sweet, contemporary, addressing universal values through a Jewish lens. It includes 10 episodes plus Passover and Chanukah specials all focused on fixing the world through meaningful acts of loving kindness.

The series stars two magical "sparks," Gabi and Rafael, who live in a playhouse in the clouds. The reference to "sparks" is intentional, as are their names. In Jewish mystical tradition, following the work of Rabbi Isaac Luria in the 16th century and elaborated through Chasidism, holy sparks are essentially God's light that shattered into sparks or vessels in the creation of the world. When we engage in acts of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), we help redeem the sparks to connect

the light back to God, healing God in the process.

The names Gabi and Rafael are also quite meaningful. Rabbinic literature identifies Michael, Gabriel, Uriel and Raphael as the four chief angels who surround the divine throne, each of whom has particular attributes. The Hebrew root in the name Gabriel (Gabi) means strength of God, while Raphael means God's healer.

Gabi and Rafael have different colour skin, and both take the lead in teaching key concepts. Together they accurately represent the gender and racial diversity of what it means to be Jewish.

The next day I showed two episodes to our kids, and they loved them. They found the situations relevant to their lives. They loved the pacing and the characters, and especially loved learning the Hebrew words. I loved how the episodes are also entertaining and educational for me, and serve as great launching points to talk to my children about the issues that are addressed in the videos.

Since then we have watched episodes about welcoming guests, and visiting the sick, and our kids look forward to more.

Of note, digital studio BimBam, that created "Shaboom," ended active operations in April after 11 years of creating Jewish content online. At that time, *ReformJudaism.org* became the steward for all digital storytelling content produced by BimBam, including "Shaboom," many parenting resources, a library of "Judaism 101" content for young adults, animation of the Torah including a new King David series, totalling more than 400 original videos. Family resources can be found here: www.bimbam.com/kids-family/

When in doubt, Shaboom!

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Interfaith Family Program at the Soloway JCC

Expanding the Circle gives families an opportunity to connect and explore different ways to celebrate holidays and share experiences through workshops and social events.

Here's what past participants had to say about the program:

"Expanding the Circle provided me with tools and resources to help me incorporate more of my Jewish heritage into my mixed-background family. It helped me to appreciate my roots and to pass this appreciation on to my partner and our children."

"A nonjudgmental space to learn about and share diverse experiences of Jewish family life."

For information and to RSVP contact Maxine Miska, Assistant Executive Director, Soloway JCC at (613) 798-9818 ext. 263, mmiska@jccottawa.com

Sunday

November 24
December 15
January 19

4:00 pm – 5:30 pm
Soloway JCC
21 Nadolny Sachs Pvt.
— No charge —
Babysitting included

Join in anytime!



SolowayJCC

A 'Yiddish cultural tragedy' in Winnipeg's North End

RUBIN FRIEDMAN BOOK REVIEW

Shot Rock

By Michael Tregebov
New Star Books
220 pages

Shot Rock, Michael Tregebov's new novel is a kind of Yiddish cultural tragedy. It deals with inevitable change as people age and find themselves passing into the memories of the next generation, a narrative sparked and energized by both anxieties for what will be and warm comic relief. And at the end, it still leaves open many of the questions posed in the story for the future to answer, a smaller perhaps more optimistic version of Tevye the Dairy Man.

Tregebov introduces us to the main character, Blackie, and some of the sources of his pleasures and anxieties in the first page. The curling season is late in starting while his wife has left him. Soon his anxieties and the reader's are increased. Max Foxman, the wealthy president of the only Jewish curling club in the North End of Winnipeg announces the

building will be sold to a grocery chain.

Like two stones dropped into water, the subsequent ripples move outward to drive much of the plot forward. Another stone drops when Tino, Blackie's son, also moves out to live with his friends.

While the story is fiction as the author notes, "This story is a story," it resonates with events in the real world. The Jewish community in Winnipeg went through a shift of its population from the North End to the South End where newer developments of larger houses were being built in the late 1960s and early '70s. Thereafter, many of the city's Jewish institutions, including synagogues and the Jewish Community Centre followed suit.

Blackie and many of his friends, at the time of this story, would have been in their late 40s or early 50s. They came from a generation of mostly small business owners or employees of other Jewish business owners. Some, through luck or ambition, had become large business owners and wealthy.

The main plot focuses on Blackie's coterie of friends agreeing to fight the sale of the curling rink and to take on the money and influence of the "South Enders" led by Max Foxman.

The humour in the story comes from the quick dialogue exchanges, especially

among Blackie, Duddy, Suddy, Chickie, Oz and their advisers, two student Trotskyists, Tino and his mentor, the wealthy non-Jewish Michael.

Duddy and Suddy interrupt a discussion with an observation that leads into another topic before it is brought back again to what was originally being talked about. They use odd Yiddishisms, not always correctly or spelt to be easily understood: "Mishlockt Yiddin"; "It's noch nila"; "Shockling his leg." And I have no idea what "a sol chen van" means.

The structure of the exchange becomes like an interwoven strand of DNA rather than a straight line talk driven only by logical progression. Some of these excursions are crass and sexist but are typical of what some Jewish males of that milieu and background sounded like. It was very familiar to me and even though I wince, I find it accurate and the efforts to control it, amusing.

Blackie and Oz generally represent the calmer and more rational approach to

the issues and are assisted by the two young men who help keep the group focused on what can be done. The tension in this effort is built as each side in the fight over the future of the building tries to counter the other's moves to obtain the largest number of votes.

In tandem with this is the effort of Blackie and his team to qualify for the Brier, the curling championship. Tregebov does an excellent job of describing each game building the tension. If they win the championship, it will be harder to sell the building.

These plotlines are resolved by the end of the book as is the plot concerning Blackie and his wife. Only the future of the son, Tino, is not firmly decided by the end of the novel, but there are strong hints about whether he will stay to study math and science or run off to Toronto to be a poet.

While it seems that the strong and warm bonds among the original group will withstand the shocks and strains of this exercise, only the future will tell.



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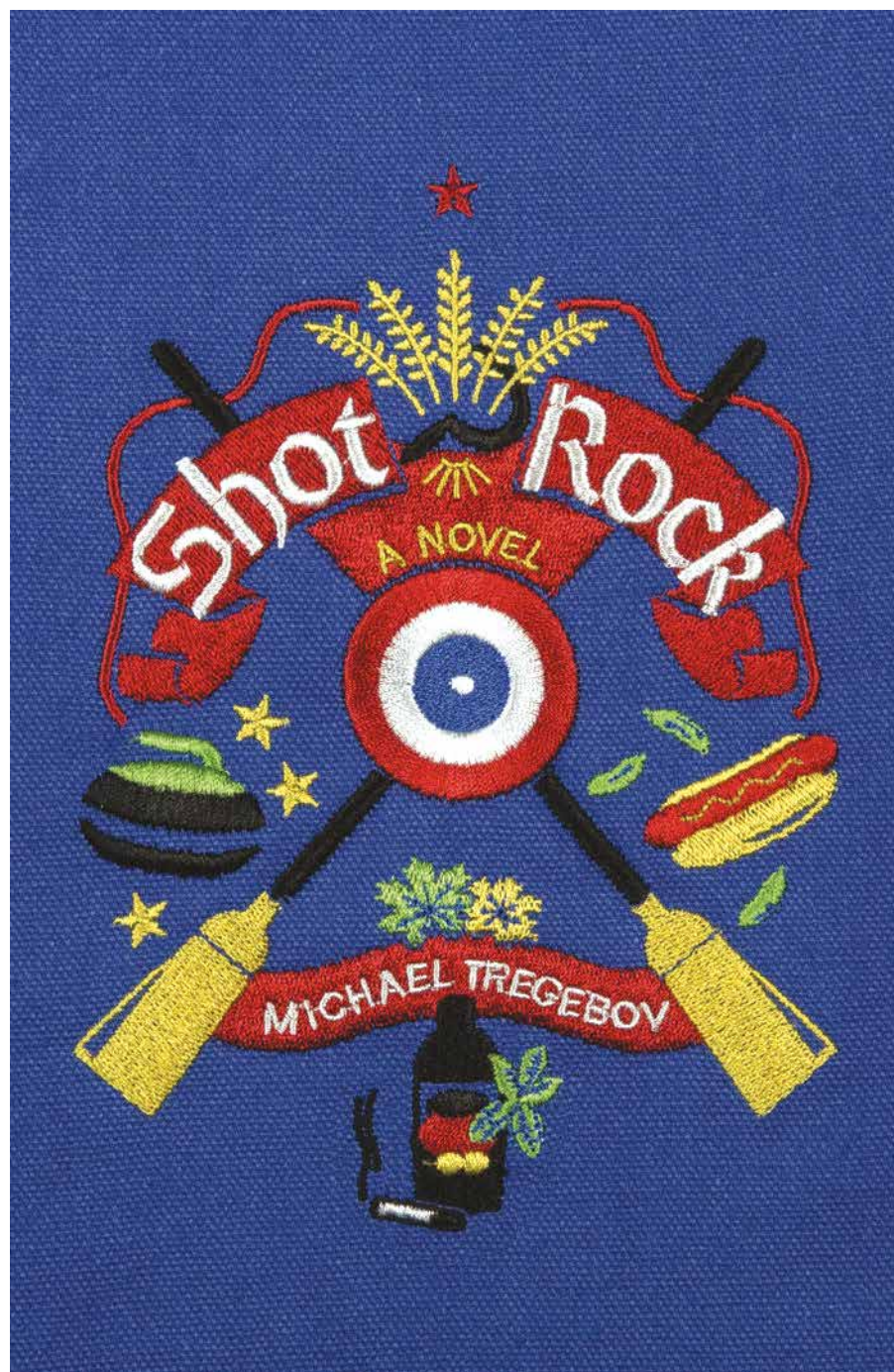
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WHAT'S GOING ON | November 25 to December 8, 2019

FOR MORE CALENDAR LISTINGS, OR TO SUBMIT EVENT LISTINGS, VISIT WWW.JEWISHOTTAWA.COM/COMMUNITY-CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

Finding Connection to God and Meaning Through Our Prayers

7 - 9 pm, Mondays through December 30, 1724 Kilborn Ave.

Contact: Ilana Benzaquen, 613-523-0279 helene.ilana@gmail.com

Cost: Free. Bring your Hebrew prayer book, learn the meaning behind prayer and gain an appreciation of the prayers that are said on a daily basis.

Beit Tikvah Mincha (Winter edition)

1 pm, Monday-Thursday, until February 27, 2020. Congregation Beit Tikvah, 15 Chartwell Ave., 613-723-1800

With the change of the clock the first weekend of November, we are instituting a Monday through Thursday Mincha service at the shul to be held at 1 pm.

Jewish & Kabbilistic Secrets to Feeling Good However You Feel

7 - 8:30 pm, Tuesdays through December 17, 2019, Ottawa Torah Centre, 111 Lamplighters Dr.

Contact: Rabbi Blum, 613-843-7770 rabbi@theotc.org

Cost: \$90. This course takes a fresh approach to the battle against bad feelings, providing realistic spiritual mechanisms for remaining upbeat no matter what life brings.

Bible Basics with Lauren Shaps

9:15 - 10:15 am, weekly on Thursdays through December 13, 2019

Contact: Lauren Shaps, 613-695-4800 lauren@jetottawa.com

Searching for wisdom and a deeper understanding of relationships and your mission in life? See how events of the Exodus speak to challenges you face today.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Jewish Refugees from Arab Lands

7 - 9 pm

Contact: Viviane Ohana

viviane_ohana@hotmail.com

Women writers explain the journey of Sephardic women exiled from North Africa. Nina Lichtenstein, author of *Sephardic Women's Voices Out of North Africa*, and Chochana Boukhobza, author of *For the Love of the Father*.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

"From Dachau to Cyprus" - Jewish Refugees and the Cyprus Internment Camps 1946-1949.

7 - 9 pm

Contact: Anne Read,

613-798-4696 ext. 355

aread@jewishottawa.com

Eliana Hadjisavvas's topic will be "From Dachau to Cyprus" - Jewish Refugees and the Cyprus Internment Camps 1946-1949. Special guest and Holocaust survivor, Rose Lipszyc will also share her story. Sponsored by Shoah Committee of Jewish Federation of Ottawa.

Na'amat Soup Extravaganza

7 - 9 pm, Location to be confirmed

Contact: Marilyn Schwartz

marilyn_sch1970@yahoo.ca

Cost: \$30. Featuring 5 different soups crafted by Jackie Sitwell. Sip and slurp while listening to speaker Aviva Rotenberg, founder and administrator of Ottawa Kosher Jewish Foodies. She will discuss "The role of food in bringing the Jewish Community together." Funds raised support Na'amat.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28

JNF Ottawa presents Yola Reitman, former Mossad Agent

7 - 9 pm, location to be confirmed

613-798-2411

Contact: Ilana Albert-Novick

613-798-2411, ottawa@jnf.ca

Cost: \$18. Yola Reitman will share about her leading role in "Operation Brothers" to rescue Ethiopian Jews, as seen in the Netflix movie "Red Sea Diving Resort."

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30

PJ Library does Havdallah with Temple

5:30 - 7:30 pm, Temple Israel,

1301 Prince of Wales Dr.

Contact: Jordan Waldman

613-798-4696, ext. 240

jwaldman@jewishottawa.com

Come meet the new Rabbi and enjoy Havdallah with friends and family.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

Journey Through the Ukrainian-Jewish Encounter

10:30 am - 12 pm

Contact: Roslyn Wollock

613-798-9818 ext. 254

rwollock@jccottawa.com

Cost: Free. Alti Rodal will provide an overview of the history of Jews on Ukrainian lands.

Yiddish Cafe

2 - 4 pm

Contact: Roslyn Wollock

rwollock@jccottawa.com

613-798-9818 ext. 254

A joyful Yiddish afternoon with wit, skits, comic, capers and a nosh. \$10 at the door... *Bilig Vi Borscht*.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4 TO

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

Scholastic Book Fair at OJCS

Ottawa Jewish Community School, 31

Nadolny Sachs Pvt.

Contact: Jenn Greenberg

613-722-0020 ext. 345

j.greenberg@theoics.ca

Books for all ages in English, French and Hebrew, as well as all the interesting trinkets. 8 am to 4:30 pm on Wednesday and Thursday, 9 am to 3:30 pm on Friday.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6 TO

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

1Table Shabbat Dinner Single Over 60

7 - 8:30 pm, Kehillat Beth Israel

1400 Coldrey Ave.

Contact: Rabbi Zuker, 613-728-3501

rabbizuker@kehillatbethisrael.com

Cost: \$25. A Shabbat experience designed for unattached adults.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

Chanukah Gift Fair

10 am - 4 pm

Contact: Ella Dagan

613-798-9818 ext 243

edagan@jccottawa.com

Holiday gifts, decorations, and everything you need to celebrate Chanukah.

PJ Library Annual Chanukah Party

10 am - 1 pm

Contact: Jordan Waldman

jwaldman@jewishottawa.com

613-798-4696, ext. 240

Cost: \$5 per child/\$10 per family. Stories, crafts, sufganiyot and a performance by Singsong Party Time. No need to be a PJJ subscriber. Entertainment sponsored by District Realty.

Remembering Leonard Cohen - Concert with Tower of Song Band

2 - 4 pm

Contact: Roslyn Wollock

rwollock@jccottawa.com

613-798-9818 ext. 254

\$Cost: \$10. Join Jerry Golland and the Tower of Song Band as they play your Leonard Cohen favourites. Sponsored by Soloway JCC and Limmud Ottawa.

CANDLE LIGHTING BEFORE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29	4:04 PM
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6	4:02 PM
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13	4:02 PM
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20	4:04 PM

BULLETIN DEADLINES

ISSUE DATE	SUBMISSION DEADLINE
JANUARY 27	JANUARY 8
FEBRUARY 10	JANUARY 22
FEBRUARY 24	FEBRUARY 5

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:

Fred Ballon

Yudie (Jules) Brozovsky

Bonnie McPhail

Harry Postner

Ricarda Smith

*May their memory
be a blessing always.*

The Condolence Column is offered as a public service to the community. There is no charge. For listing in this column, please call 613 798-4696, ext. 274. Voice mail is available.

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