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Rabbi Simes will be remembered by the thousands he inspired

BY MICHAEL AARENAU

Rabbi Yehuda Simes, a beloved educator in Ottawa's Jewish community, died of pneumonia on February 7 at Queensway Carleton Hospital. He was 49.

Rabbi Simes had been an immensely popular Judaic studies teacher at the Ottawa Jewish Community School (OJCS) and at Torah High – an institution he co-founded – when a tragic highway accident on June 20, 2010 near Orleans, N.Y., left him a quadriplegic.

Undeterred by his new reality, Rabbi Simes created a website, "Rolling Rabbi" – <https://rollingrabbi.wordpress.com> – where he blogged about his life and delivered insights about Torah and Judaism that inspired readers in Ottawa and around the world.

Just 10 months after the accident – after three months in intensive care and six months in a rehabilitation hospital before returning home to his wife and children – Rabbi Simes surprised students at OJCS when he visited the school and delivered a speech.

At the school, Rabbi Simes was temporarily amongst the people whose lives he brightened with every lesson he taught and who brought him so much joy. He would return to OJCS and Torah High to teach as often as he could in what would be unforgettable moments for his students who would hang on every word.

In the years since the accident, Rabbi Simes also visited Montreal, Toronto,



Rabbi Yehuda Simes is surrounded by Torah High students and staff on his return to the classroom in 2011.

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Nine things you didn't know about Purim > p. 16

Rabbi Steven Garten on Edgar Bronfman's "Why Be Jewish" > p. 26



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Rabbi Simes 'had a contagious optimism'

Continued from page 1

New York and even Israel to speak with and inspire young people.

Bram Bregman, as then NCSY director, co-founded Torah High with Rabbi Simes in 2006 and spoke at his funeral service, held in the evening on February 7, at Congregation Beit Tikvah.

Bregman attributed the growth and success of Torah High to Rabbi Simes' tremendous teaching abilities and his down-to-earth nature, which touched the lives of everyone who attended his classes.

"Rabbi Simes believed that you don't deserve respect as a teacher, but that you must earn it. He treated every student with respect, and would take a real interest in their life by asking genuine questions, and valuing what they said. He built relationships with his students, and he and [wife] Shaindel would have entire classes over to their house for a Yom Tov or Shabbos meal; and they often invited parents to come as well," Bregman said.

Bregman said he was moved by how Rabbi Simes coped with his personal tragedy and by his kindness, undying

optimism and immensely positive outlook on life.

"He didn't ask 'Why did this happen to me?' but, rather, 'What does God want of me now?' He would convey that God does not send a struggle without the tools to overcome them. This was Rabbi Simes," he said.

Rabbi Howard Finkelstein of Congregation Beit Tikvah, director of Judaic Studies at OJCS, and a long-time friend of Rabbi Simes, said his relationship with Rabbi Simes was "so much deeper than the ordinary rabbi-congregant relationship" and that he had "true admiration for who he was and what he did.

"When he could no longer communicate through word of mouth, he used his eyes and his smile and they were communicating a love of Torah and a love of Yiddishkeit.

"He didn't have to say anything; he just had to be there. He was living Torah. You don't need words, you just need actions, and this is a person who was living actions. Just his very essence of being there was an inspiration to people."



Rabbi Yehuda Simes uses voice commands to 'type' his "Rolling Rabbi" blog in 2014.

I was one of Rabbi Simes' students at OJCS both before and after the accident left him paralyzed.

While he may have been in a wheelchair, he was still Rabbi Simes. There was virtually no difference in his essence before or after the tragedy. Nothing, not even a life-altering highway accident, could take away his love, respect and adoration for God, his family, his students and the Jewish people as a whole.

Rabbi Simes always had a contagious optimism and indescribable joie de vivre, truly cherishing every moment.

While Rabbi Simes may be gone, he will be remembered by the thousands whose lives he touched, including mine.

Rabbi Simes is survived by his wife, Shaindel Simes, who is also an educator, and by their nine children. His burial took place in New York.



City of Ottawa welcomes Israeli ambassador: Mayor Jim Watson welcomes new Israeli Ambassador Nimrod Barkan at a reception, January 24, at Ottawa City Hall. (From left) Rabbi Eytan Kenter and Cantor Daniel Benlolo of Kehillat Beth Israel, Mayor Watson, Ambassador Barkan and Rabbi Idan Scher of Congregation Machzikei Hadas.



Rabbi Yehuda Simes with wife Shaindel in 2015.

Michael QAQISH
CITY COUNCILLOR
GLOUCESTER - SOUTH NEPEAN
613-580-2751
michael.qaqish@ottawa.ca
www.michaelqaqish.com

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(councillor)
Jan Harder
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Eighty years of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin now online

The **Ottawa Jewish Bulletin** celebrates our 80th anniversary in 2017 and the entire collection of Bulletins in the **Ottawa Jewish Archives** has been digitized and is being made accessible online free of charge. Archivist **Saara Mortensen** explains.

The Ottawa Jewish Archives is pleased to announce the completion of a digitization project providing online access to the complete run of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin from 1937 to present.

“Ottawa Jewish Bulletin Online” is a digitization project with the goal of providing free universal online access to the Ottawa Jewish Archives collection of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin. The project was undertaken in the lead up to 2017, Canada’s 150th Anniversary of Confederation and the Bulletin’s 80th Anniversary year.

The first issue of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin was published on October 22, 1937. The Bulletin has since become the voice of the Ottawa Jewish community, its leaders, and its organizations. It has educated, informed, entertained, consoled, at times aggravated, and moreover unified its readership. The newspaper has strengthened religious and ethnic identity; served as a forum for generations of Jewish thought; and chronicled the development of a small immigrant community into a vital group contributing much to Ottawa life.

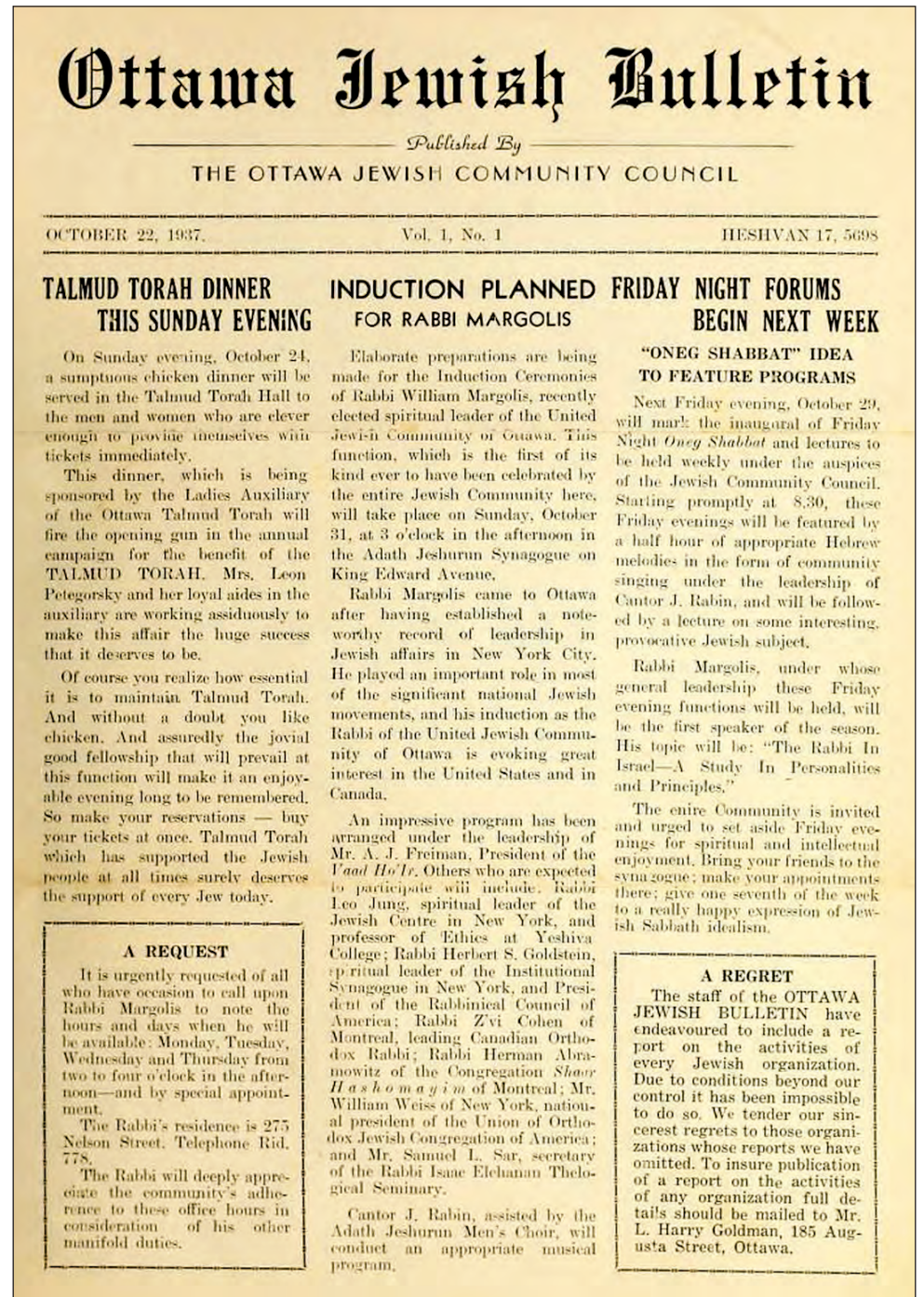
Currently, 924 issues of the Bulletin spanning 1937 to 2009 are universally accessible online for free. Issues dating from 2010 to the present will be added to the digital library in the coming months.

Cover-to-cover scanning was completed at the Internet Archive Canada (IAC) Regional Digitization Centre in Toronto. As part of the scanning process, IAC utilizes optical character recognition, or OCR, a technology that enables the content of scanned documents to be word searchable, greatly increasing the collection’s research potential.

The IAC will host the digitized Ottawa Jewish Bulletin collection at their publicly accessible digital library for perpetuity, with the end result being that the Bulletin archive is accessible online in its entirety with provisions to add digital issues as they are published. The digital collection may be accessed at www.archive.org/details/ottawajewisharchives.

[The Library section of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin website – www.ottawajewishbulletin.com – currently includes PDF and page-flip versions of all issues since September 2007.]

Through recent modernization and collections accessibility projects, the Ottawa Jewish Archives has made efforts to make its collections accessible and open to the community-at-large. The Bulletin collection is an unmined treasure of the Archives, which has in the past only been accessible through on-site consultation. Now, anyone with an internet connection can access the news



The front page of the first issue of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin, published October 22, 1937.

stories, columns, features, editorials, and advertisements that document the cultural, social, and civic growth of Ottawa’s Jewish community and will allow for local, national and international access to the depth and richness of our local area’s Jewish heritage and history as recorded through Ottawa’s Jewish community newspaper.

The project also has great potential to impact children and youth attending

Jewish day schools and public schools as access to the collection may allow students and educators to use this previously “hidden” and underutilized collection of local newspapers to inform and supplement their local history curriculum.

The project was made possible by funding from the City of Ottawa Heritage Funding Program 2016 and by the Ottawa Jewish Historical Society.



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Community work 'is within my DNA,' says new CFO

Sylvain Beaudry brings a wide range of experience to his new role as chief financial officer of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation, the Soloway JCC and Ottawa Jewish Community School. **Louise Rachlis** reports.

Sylvain Beaudry is no stranger to accepting challenges with confidence and professionalism. "I was impressed with Sylvain from the moment I met him during the interview process," said Jewish Federation of Ottawa Chair Linda Kerzner. "He had a unique combination of experience and skill sets that stood out from the other candidates. It's so special to find someone who was a business owner, served in the military, and worked in the charitable world. That range of experience has enabled him to confidently accept any challenge thrown at him – as shown by our experiences with him in this short period of time." The chief financial officer (CFO) is responsible for overseeing a staff of seven

that collectively supports the financial needs of Federation, the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation, the Soloway Jewish Community Centre and Ottawa Jewish Community School, explained Beaudry, who became the permanent CFO on January 30 after several months as interim CFO following the departure of Shelley Crawford. "In his short time here, he has demonstrated tremendous financial acumen and management skills. He has made excellent progress automating functions and providing regular reports to managers and boards. He is a pleasure to work with and is a very welcome addition to the team," said Federation President and CEO Andrea Freedman in announcing Beaudry's permanent appointment.



"My objective is to provide services to our stakeholders at the level they expect," says Sylvain Beaudry, the recently-appointed CFO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, SJCC and OJCS.

Beaudry's responsibilities include the development and management of effective and streamlined administrative and financial systems, including financial, accounting, administrative and human resources. The CFO is involved in strategic planning, evaluation and professional development initiatives. "The position is very challenging and rewarding, both professionally and personally," said Beaudry, who com-

pleted his MBA and Chartered Professional Accountant designation, and then his Certified Management Accountant designation in 2006 at the Université du Québec en Outaouais in Gatineau. "It requires having knowledge and expertise in a very large array of needs and requirements of different organizations." Beaudry said his main focus in the **See Beaudry on page 21**

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

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Questions, contact Rachel at 613-798-4696 x 236 or rabenhaim@jewishottawa.com



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Celebrating Canadian Jews of the last 150 years



A series of profiles throughout 2017 spotlighting the contributions of historically important Jewish Canadians to our country.

Constance Glube 1931 - 2016

Chief justice of Nova Scotia was first female chief justice in Canada

By Chelsea Sauvé

Constance Glube was a trailblazer who rose to the highest ranks of the Canadian legal profession traditionally dominated by men. She was a champion of the rights of minorities and women, and a mentor for women in the law. Glube spent her career committed “to overcoming the gender, ethnic, and religious barriers of her era.”

The daughter of Pearl and Sam Lepofsky, active members of Ottawa’s Jewish community, Glube graduated from McGill University in 1952 and from Dalhousie University Law School in 1955. At a time when women didn’t often attend law school, no less practise in the profession, she began a journey of many firsts for women and the law. One of only two women in her graduating class, Glube remained in

Nova Scotia where she married and established her career.

She began her career at Kitz Matheson and was later a partner at Fitzgerald and Glube. In 1969, she joined the City of Halifax legal department and became city manager, the first woman to hold that position in any Canadian city.

Glube was appointed to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia in 1977, the first woman to serve as a justice on that court. She became chief justice of Nova Scotia in 1982, the first woman to hold the position of chief justice in Canada. This was a huge feat in an era where men dominated the bench. In 1998, she became the chief justice of the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal – the province’s highest court – and held the position until her retirement in 2004.

Glube, who was awarded both the Order of Nova Scotia and the Order of Canada, is recognized as a pioneer of her time – a leader and role model for women across professional boundaries. Volunteerism and mentorship were at the core of her ethos. She embraced core tenants of the Jewish faith, including her commitment to human dignity and basic rights.

Glube demonstrated profound commitment to the administration of justice as a lawyer and judge; to gender equality as a feminist and leader; to Judaism through involvement in her synagogue and local community, and in her support for the State of Israel; and to her family as a devoted wife, mother and grandmother.

Justice Constance Glube passed away on February 15, 2016 at age



84. She was married to the late Richard Glube and was survived by their three sons and a daughter, and by five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

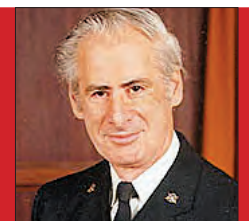
Reflecting on Glube’s legacy, Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin of the Supreme Court of Canada said she “was a woman of vision, and she had the energy to realize that vision.

“She left the Canadian justice system richer and more effective than she found it. We are all indebted to her.”



Next in the series *Albert Mendelsohn* 1917 – 1995

A career soldier, Albert Mendelsohn began his service as a Canadian Army officer in 1939 at the beginning of the Second World War and retired in 1972 at the rank of brigadier-general, the first Jewish officer to attain a general’s rank in the Canadian Armed Forces.



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FEDERATION
REPORT



SHIMON KOFFLER FOGEL, CENTRE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH AFFAIRS

I have never accepted the assumption that minority communities like ours engage government solely on issues of parochial concern. To the contrary, the Jewish community has a long, rich history of contributing to public policy for the betterment of broader Canadian society. As the advocacy agent of Jewish Federations of Canada–UIA and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is currently active on a variety of files that reflect the diversity of Jewish policy interests and our collective commitment to support vulnerable non-Jewish communities.

First, we have taken a lead role in building an interfaith coalition to strengthen Canada's hate crime laws.

Our collective efforts have impact beyond the Jewish community

While this initiative began long before the horrific attack on a Quebec City mosque, that atrocity only underscores the dangers of bigotry – and the need for robust laws to counter hate crimes.

This is why we mobilized more than 20 interfaith organizations – including Christian, Muslim and Sikh groups – to take a stand in support of Bill C-305, a bill sponsored by Nepean MP Chandra Arya. Under current Criminal Code provisions, hate mischief against a place of worship is automatically considered a specific crime with significant penalties – but this does not extend to venues such as schools and community centres. Under C-305, this gap in the Criminal Code will be closed, ensuring that these offenders can no longer evade Canada's hate crime laws.

Second, we are urging parliamentarians to pass Bill S-201, which will establish a federal ban on genetic discrimination. Today, there is no prohibition against employers or insurance providers demanding release of genetic test results. Consequently,

The Jewish community has a long, rich history of contributing to public policy for the betterment of broader Canadian society. ... The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs is currently active on a variety of files that reflect the diversity of Jewish policy interests and our collective commitment to support vulnerable non-Jewish communities.

many Canadians decline tests for fear of the harm it could have on their livelihood. Because of a higher than average predisposition for gene markers associated with major illnesses such as breast cancer, Ashkenazi Jews are particularly

at risk of genetic discrimination. At the time of writing, S-201 is about to return from committee to the House of Commons for Third Reading. Our hope is that it will receive support across party lines and, once enacted, a federal ban will complement similar legislation we are advocating at the provincial level.

Third, we are working with various LGBTQ and human rights groups to strengthen legal protections for a vulnerable community: transgender Canadians. The Senate will be debating Bill C-16 in the coming months, which will list gender identity and gender expression as protected grounds in hate crime provisions of the Criminal Codes as well as the Canadian Human Rights Act.

CIJA is the only faith or ethnic community organization serving on the executive of Trans Equality Canada, the coalition spearheading this initiative. Data reveal that hate crimes against transgender victims tend to be particularly violent – underscoring the need to ensure our laws are updated to protect this community. No one should be targeted simply for their identity.

Effective advocacy requires an engaged community. If you are interested in becoming involved on these or any other issues, I invite you to connect with us at info@cija.ca.

Shimon Koffler Fogel is CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

FROM THE
PULPIT



RABBI MENACHEM BLUM
OTC CHABAD

This article is being written a day after the Jewish holiday of Tu B'Shevat. On Tu B'Shevat, the 15th of the Hebrew month of Shevat, we celebrate the New Year for trees. On this day, it is customary to eat different fruits, especially those from the seven species for which the land of Israel is praised in the Torah.

The timing of this celebration seems strange. If we were to celebrate when the trees become covered with fruits, it would be understood. Yet, we celebrate the New Year for trees when the trees are barren, cold, orphaned from their foliage and produce. For us living in Ottawa, the

On Tu B'Shevat, we celebrated the potential

15th of Shevat is usually a day when the trees are not even visible. They are covered in heavy snow. Why celebrate a New Year for trees in the dead of winter?

The Talmud explains that in the Land of Israel, by the 15th of Shevat, most of the winter's rain has saturated the earth, and the new sap starts climbing in the trees, allowing the first flowers and fruits to bud shortly after. By this day, a new sap rises into the tree that allows its future rejuvenation.

It is true that, when you look at the tree on Tu B'Shevat, it looks lifeless and barren. It displays no signs of rebirth and no signs of a new life. It will still take some time to develop buds, and it will take even more time to pick the actual fruits. Nevertheless, that is only on the surface. Although you can't see any change, life is starting to flourish anew secretly.

Tu B'Shevat is the celebration of potential, invisible yet real. All of the future growth of the tree is possible only due to the sap rising in the tree at the time of the 15th of Shevat. The potential has been created and that is a good

reason to celebrate.

My dear teacher, the Lubavitcher Rebbe Ob"m, once related that Tu B'Shevat teaches us an invaluable lesson in life. It is very important for us to recognize and celebrate the potential that exists in every situation and not get frustrated by the process. Even when we can't see the fruit yet, we must celebrate the process of growth itself and the tremendous potential that exists.

We all deal with various struggles in life that we need to work on. These can be internal or external challenges. As we begin to work on them, we can easily get discouraged as no sign of success is in sight. The dark nights are long and all is covered in snow. Tu B'Shevat reminds us that under all that cold and snow, the sap of the trees is rising, readying for spring.

Tu B'Shevat signifies that we have to learn to celebrate potential even before we can see the results. That is the reason why we eat fruits precisely then. We want to recall that the final product is never created in a vacuum; it all traces back to this moment when the inner work began.

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PUBLISHER
Andrea Freedman

EDITOR
Michael Regenstreif

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Brenda Van Vliet

BUSINESS MANAGER
Eddie Peltzman

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FROM THE EDITOR



MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

Spinning the results of a misleading poll

one were designed specifically to elicit the kind of responses the sponsoring organizations and individuals were looking for and could interpret – or misinterpret – for their own purpose.

For example, the lead question in the poll was, “Generally speaking, do you have a positive or negative opinion of the Government of Israel?”

A plurality of 46 per cent said they had a negative view of the Israeli government, while 28 per cent said they had a positive view and 26 per cent said their view was neither positive nor negative.

The CJN quoted a spokesperson for one of the anti-Israel organizations, who said, “The poll shows that 46 per cent of people polled, who had an opinion, had a negative view of Israel.”

Actually, the poll showed nothing of the sort. The poll did not ask about views of Israel – only of the government. The spinmeister knew this, but was purposefully misinterpreting the results.

To be sure, a recent poll I saw showed that 48 per cent of Israelis had a negative view of the Israeli government, while 43 per cent had a positive view. So the

negative view of the Israeli government is even higher in Israel than it is in Canada.

And a poll in the United States released on February 23 showed that the current U.S. president had an approval rating of just 38 per cent (and a disapproval rating of 55 per cent), while here in Canada, a January poll showed an approval rating for the current prime minister at 48 per cent (and a disapproval of 42 per cent).

The CJN also quoted Martin Sampson, director of communications and marketing at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, who correctly asserted, “The questions appear to be designed to elicit answers that support the perspectives of the anti-Israel activists who funded the research.”

How someone views a country – one’s own country or another country – is not the same as how one views that country’s government.

Opposition to specific government policies or to a particular government, or its leaders, is basic to democracy. And that distinguishes Israel from virtually every other country in the Middle East.

EIGHTY YEARS OF THE BULLETIN

As Saara Mortensen, the archivist at the Ottawa Jewish Archives details on page 3, all of the editions of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin in the Archives’ collection have been digitized.

Issues from 1937 to 2009 are already available for all to access, conduct research and enjoy at www.archives.org/details/ottawajewisharchives. Issues from 2010 to the present will be added to the site in the coming months.

This means that all 80 years of the Bulletin are now online as all issues we’ve published since September 2007 are in the Library section of the Bulletin website. www.ottawajewishbulletin.com

We’re tremendously excited about this project, which the Archives undertook to mark both Canada 150 and the 80th anniversary of the Bulletin.

It’s a big step forward for us and for researchers.

Previously, the only way for researchers to find something in an old issue of the Bulletin was to visit the Archives and work with the archivist in looking at an old issue. Now, anyone can do it more quickly and efficiently from any computer with Internet access.

Thank you Saara, the Ottawa Jewish Archives, the City of Ottawa Heritage Funding Program 2016, and the Ottawa Jewish Historical Society for making this happen.

headline, February 22, on the Canadian Jewish News (CJN) website – and presumably in the new print edition of the paper – jumped out at me. “46 per cent of Canadians negative toward Israeli gov’t: poll,” it read.

The poll in question was a survey conducted by EKOS Research on behalf of two organizations and two individuals well known for their opposition to the State of Israel and for their support of the goals of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement against Israel; organizations and individuals whose actions have sought to delegitimize the very existence of a Jewish state in the Middle East.

Like many polls, the questions in this

IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS



JASON MOSCOVITZ

Right-wing extremism is no longer on the fringe

ordinary kind of young man studying international relations with no long-term footprint of either extreme views or hate-mongering. The Bissonette his neighbours knew was not the radicalized, right-wing zealot he suddenly became just months ago.

It is incredible how quickly he evolved into a cold-blooded mass murderer motivated by extreme right-wing politics. It is an interesting comparison that so many Jihadi terrorists have also taken less than a year to become convinced that mass murder is a justifiable means to an end.

As reported, Bissonette went to hear a speech in Quebec City given by Marine Le Pen, leader of France’s ultra-right National Front Party. Before her, the party was led by her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, who is remembered as a sizzling anti-Semite. But today’s leader of the National Front finds it more politically advantageous to belittle and generate fear of Muslims than to berate and bully Jews. And, as you would have to know, Marine Le Pen adores and heralds Donald Trump’s victory.

Needless to say, when Marine Le Pen spoke in Quebec City, there were at least enough Quebecers curious enough to go

and hear her – Bissonette among them. Who knows how many took her as seriously as Bissonette did, but the newly minted, ultra-right-wing convert was turned on. He proceeded to go online, where he read more and learned more about similarly thinking people who preach and practise hate.

The important point has been made by many that Canada can’t be smug about terrorism when the accused terrorist is of the homegrown variety whose family here dates back generations. There are no borders from hatred.

In Quebec, there is significant past and present political history to consider. In recent years, there was the Parti Québécois’ proposal for a Quebec Charter of Values. There was never any doubt that the move to ban the hijab, the kippah and a visible crucifix in government workplaces was really about satisfying a political constituency that was uneasy with the high numbers of recent Muslim immigrants.

As it turned out, the Parti Québécois lost the subsequent election, and the Quebec Charter of Values hit the trash heap; but the thinking behind the

proposed charter, and its supporters, didn’t just go home and forget about it.

Historically, the most active pro-Nazi party in Canada was in Quebec before and during the Second World War. Led by Adrien Arcand, the National Unity Party had links with many Catholic action groups in Quebec, where many university students first found their political voices.

In the late 1990s, someone sent me documents that proved a small handful of active Quebec politicians were members of Arcand’s party in Quebec in their youth. I remember the day I stood in the foyer of the House of Commons as a CBC-TV political reporter and asked Michel Gauthier, then leader of the Bloc Québécois, what he thought about those revelations.

He asked me what my point was. Then, after a brief exchange, he got angry and blurted out, “What is your problem, Mister?” I was speechless. I recall a Jewish colleague behind me whispering in my ear, “Tell him your problem is the six million.”

Fast forward to where Marine Le Pen and her National Front Party could be the next domino to fall in the upcoming French election. Right-wing extremism is no longer on the fringe.

A week after the Mosque attack, I attended a Friday night Shabbat service at shul where two policemen stood guard outside for 12 people.

This really is a new world.

The killing of six men in a mosque in Quebec City on January 29 is still so shocking. So much terrorism has sadly become so commonplace that it almost dulls the senses but it was not so in this case. Not when the terrorist was a white guy from chez nous.

Alexandre Bissonette, the 27-year-old student charged with six counts of murder, picked interesting timing for his deadly rampage. While U.S. President Donald Trump was apparently going judiciously overboard to ban people from seven selected Muslim-majority countries, a once run-of-the-mill Quebecer acted on a deeply rooted hatred of Muslims.

The term “run-of-the-mill Quebecer” needs to be clarified. Bissonette was an

Analysis: Trump, the Jews and the political weaponization of anti-Semitism

BY ANDREW SILOW-CARROLL
(JTA) – Was that so hard?

At some point last month, it looked like U.S. President Donald Trump was never going to use “anti-Semitism” in a sentence. It took a fourth series of hoax bomb threats at JCCs around the United States and imprecations from Jewish groups across the ideological spectrum for the president to at last use the “A” word.

“Anti-Semitism is horrible and it’s going to stop, and it has to stop,” Trump said on February 21 after touring the new

National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington.

“The anti-Semitic threats targeting our Jewish community and our Jewish community centres are horrible, are painful and they are a reminder of the work that still must be done to root out hate and prejudice and evil.”

That it took so long for Trump to condemn anti-Semitism after twice being asked about it in one week, and coming on the heels of a White House International Holocaust Remembrance Day statement that somehow omitted any

mention of the Jews, was “mind-boggling” to many groups, including the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which said so in a tweet.

It had reached a point that I already started imagining a White House Passover greeting that didn’t mention the Jews.

“Starting at sundown, the world will come together to remember certain events in Egypt,” it would begin, and end with, “I’ve made it clear that all plagues are horrible.”

What made Trump’s demurrals stranger is that denunciations of anti-Semitism are to presidential declarations what kosher symbols are to supermarket goods: It doesn’t hurt to have one, and only Jews usually notice.

So why did it take the administration five tries to get it right?

I am counting the two news conferences, in which Trump basically punted on the question from two Jewish reporters; a statement from the White House on February 20 that denounced “hatred and hate-motivated violence of any kind” without mentioning Jews or anti-Semitism, and daughter Ivanka’s tweet saying “We must protect our houses of worship & religious centres. #JCC.”

The JCC hashtag was a nice touch, but not exactly a Queen Esther-style declaration of co-religious solidarity.

Pundits tried to explain Trump’s hesitation. Peter Beinart blamed narcissism, using the theory that when Trump hears “anti-Semitism,” he can’t help but take it as a personal attack that he must fend off.

I wondered if it was simple belligerence – that the more you ask this president for something, the more he is likely to say “You can’t make me.”

Or maybe he was just annoyed at the ADL, the group most identified with combating anti-Semitism, for repeatedly calling him and his campaign out for either ignoring or encouraging intolerance.

Maybe Trump saw CEO Jonathan Greenblatt’s February 17 column in the

Washington Post recalling how “the Trump campaign repeatedly tweeted and shared anti-Semitic imagery and language,” thus “allowing this poison to move from the margins into the mainstream of the public conversation.”

The most ominous explanation, offered by Bradley Burston from Haaretz, the left-wing Israeli newspaper, and a surprisingly outspoken Chuck Todd of NBC News, was that Trump was throwing a bone to – or at least trying not to alienate – the “alt-right” trolls who formed a small but vocal part of his winning coalition.

“Mr. President, we believe you, and many other Jews believe you. So, please make it clear that not only are you not an anti-Semite but that you reject people who are – even if they did vote for you,” Todd said.

If Trump had been struggling with a political calculation, it was reminiscent of one that played out in the 2008 campaign, when then-candidate Barack Obama was being pressed to disavow an endorsement from Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan.

When he was asked about Farrakhan during a debate with fellow Democratic contender Hillary Clinton, you could almost see the thought bubble over Obama’s head as he weighed rejecting Farrakhan without alienating supporters who considered him a hero.

Obama answered by reiterating his “denunciation” of Farrakhan’s anti-Semitism, leading to a semantic debate with Clinton over the distinction between “denouncing and rejecting.” Eventually the ADL’s then-director, Abe Foxman, declared that Obama had cleared the Farrakhan hurdle.

If Trump’s allergy to the “A” word is a political calculation, what would it be? He knows that three of every four Jews didn’t vote for him, and perhaps someone is whispering to him, à la James Baker, that he gains no advantage by caving to a special interest as liberal as the Jews.

See Trump on page 12

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Of course, we thank the educators, shuls and organizations for participating in our Tu Bishvat campaign. Plus, we gave a class on Tu Bishvat to Grades 7 and 8 at Ottawa Jewish Community School and a breakout session at Congregation Machzikei Hadas.

This year's Tu Bishvat campaign helped raise funds to plant trees in Kfar Aza, a small town on the frontlines of Israel's defence near the border with Gaza. Trees are a first line of camouflage and defence for residents, including children.



Volunteers David Baker, Justin and Cindy Poplove, and Penny Torontow at the JNF Ottawa Tu Bishvat Telethon.

JNF Ottawa and Ottawa Talmud Torah plant for the future

Eliana Mandel, who, since joining our JNF Ottawa Board, became head of Ottawa Talmud Torah School, organized an indoor seedling planting for students at the greenhouse of Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School. Parents and kids rolled up their sleeves to do the mitzvah of planting seedlings.

JNF Canada Mission to India and Israel

Every year JNF Canada hosts an incredible Mission and this year's Mission will be an unforgettable journey of a lifetime to India and Israel. We know this Mission will sell out quickly, so if you are at all interested, please let us know. Contact Sharon.Lehrer@jnf.ca or call us. Please visit our website or call us for more details.

JNF Futures premieres at a Cinq-a-Sept

Over 30 professionals joined JNF Futures for our first Cinq-a-Sept in January. Thank you to our co-ordinators, David Granovsky and Victoria Shore, for planning our first-ever JNF Futures event. More events are planned for 2017. Like us on Facebook or contact us if you are a young professional, working downtown, and want to get or stay involved with JNF Futures.

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A digital circulation system is being phased into the Greenberg Families Library at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre.

Greenberg Families Library enters digital age

BY ESTHER SHETZER
GREENBERG FAMILIES LIBRARY

A new digital circulation system is being phased into operation at the Greenberg Families Library in the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC). Soon, the old system of cards, file boxes, stamps and ink pads will be consigned to history.

The digitalization project was the brainchild of former librarian Michael Kent, who applied for a Jewish Federation of Ottawa Fund for Innovative Capacity Building grant in 2015.

"This is a one-time grant that offers Federation-sponsored organizations support for an innovation initiative or pilot project," said Kent. "The grant was approved, and the funding came in early 2016. Barcodes and all arrived in February 2016, and the process to do the changeover began right away."

It took staff almost a year to barcode the entire collection – a Herculean collaborative effort.

"The new technology brings the Greenberg Families Library into the 21st century," said veteran librarian Jack Schecter. "The manual card system was cumbersome,

checking borrower cards was slow, cards were sometimes lost, privacy was an issue, and it was necessary to physically inspect the shelves to determine whether an item was available."

The new system will provide a better service model to library patrons. They will be able to determine whether a title is available, and renew and reserve items from the online catalogue using their home computer.

The Greenberg Families Library is a unique resource in the city. The collection contains about 13,000 items, including books, newspapers, magazines, DVDs, CDs and audiobooks. All items are selected for their Jewish content by library staff endeavouring to cater to a broad spectrum of borrowers, including those interested in religious texts, modern themes, the latest titles, Israeli movies, or books for teens, toddlers and septuagenarians.

As the newest librarian on the Greenberg Families Library staff, I have to say that I am so impressed by the quality of the collection. You can really see the care and dedication to collection development that has been ongoing since the library opened in 1998.

The Greenberg Families Library is located on the second floor of the SJCC. Come by and take a book!

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Ontario considers basic income pilot project

BY SHELLEY RIVIER, MSW
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES OF OTTAWA

Ontario is considering a pilot project to test the benefits of a basic annual income. The intent of such a program would be to decrease poverty by giving Ontarians a basic untaxed income that is higher than Ontario Works (about 75 per cent of the Low Income Measure) with a recommendation of an additional \$500 per month for disabled people.

A discussion paper, "Finding a Better Way: A Basic Income Pilot Project," prepared by former senator Hugh Segal, recommends testing in three sites to compare outcomes with other sites that are using the conventional system of Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program.

The pilot project would run for three years and measure health outcomes, life choices, education outcomes, work behaviours, community level impact,

food security reliance, administrative costs, social inclusion, mobility and housing.

It is hoped that a basic annual income would reduce the reliance on other heavily used community and government resources.

A study of a basic income in the 1970s in Manitoba showed how it could be done. Poverty was basically eliminated, and emergency room visits decreased, as did chronic illness, crime and unemployment. There was also an increase in the level of education.

Anyone who has to work within the current social safety net knows how confusing, and how humiliating, it can be. With its complicated rules and often impossible-to-explain policies, a person may be left feeling even more vulnerable than when he or she came in. A basic income would eliminate the need to interact with such a draconian system.

Work, as we know it, has been

changing dramatically with the advent of technology that decreases the need for unskilled labour. We need to examine what it means to work and its quality and value to the person. Society will not need the abundant pool of workers we have and which we continue to churn out every year. A basic income would guarantee a standard of living for all persons as opportunities for full-time, secure work continue to dwindle.

There is not enough information in the discussion paper to know if a guaranteed annual income will be a reasonable solution to poverty, but it is a step in the right direction. By removing such barriers as assets, earnings and the burden of securing other financial resources, an individual would be assured of an acceptable level of income with the option of increasing it through other alternatives, including employment.

Visit <http://tinyurl.com/zbsrdqs> to read Segal's discussion paper or its summary.



In "Finding a Better Way: A Basic Income Pilot Project," former senator Hugh Segal recommends testing a system of guaranteed annual income in Ontario.



Professor Ruth Gavison

Hebrew University professor to speak marriage and divorce in Israel

BY SUSAN LANDAU-CHARK
ZELIKOVITZ CENTRE FOR JEWISH STUDIES
CARLETON UNIVERSITY

The Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies will welcome distinguished Hebrew University of Jerusalem law professor Ruth Gavison to Ottawa on Thursday, March 30, as she delivers the Edgar and Dorothy Davidson Lecture on Thursday, March 30, 7 pm, at Carleton University's Azrieli Theatre.

Gavison will explore fascinating issues of state and religion in Israel concerning the regulation of marriage and divorce.

There is religious monopoly over these matters for all religious groups in Israel. While there is a debate among Israeli Jews about this situation, Muslims and Christians largely side with the Jewish religious parties in supporting the status quo – an indication of the rich complexity of life in Israel.

"I do not think that democracy and the Jewish distinctness of Israel are a zero-sum game," said Gavison via email in response to a question about democracy and minorities in the Jewish state.

"True, it is much easier to be a member of a minority in a civic state, like the U.S.

or Canada, than to be a minority in a state which defines itself as the nation-state of one people. ... However, Israel is much more democratic and the status of the Arab minority is much better now than it had been at the foundation of Israel. Democracy and minority rights are seldom in a perfect state, and there is always room for improvement, but the direction in present day Israel is towards more equality and integration," she said.

Admission to Gavison's lecture is free of charge. For more information, contact the Zelikovitz Centre at 613-520-2600, ext. 1320 or jewish.studies@carleton.ca.

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Send your letters to: bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com

SJCC Biathlon to raise funds for scholarships

BY PAMELA ROSENBERG
SOLOWAY JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) Biathlon Committee is gearing up for its fourth annual Spinning and swimming fundraiser.

The Biathlon on Sunday, March 26, is a fun day of fitness where teams of 12 take part in a high energy Spin class, followed by swimming laps in the pool, all in support of the SJCC.

“Team captains and participants get together with friends and make new friends, engage in friendly competition, and in some healthy exercise,” said Sabina Wasserlauf, the SJCC chair, Biathlon chair and an SJCC Spin instructor. “If it’s their first time in the place, they get to see our excellent facility all while raising funds for a worthwhile cause.”

Since its inception, money raised by the Biathlon has helped purchase a new dehumidification system for the indoor pool, and supported improvements to the outdoor pool and funding for community and youth programs. This year, the money will go to scholarships for families and individuals who need financial assistance with programs like the Ganon Preschool



SJCC Biathlon Chair Sabina Wasserlauf (centre) with her team at the Second Annual SJCC Biathlon in 2015.

and JCC of Ottawa Day Camps. “We came up with the idea for the Biathlon as a way to raise some much-needed funds in response to losing revenue from the bingo games we previ-

ously ran. The reality has surpassed our expectations,” said SJCC President and COO Barry Sohn. “The Biathlon has become a fun and relatively easy way to support the SJCC to the tune of \$20,000

annually.”

Michael Levitan, a long-time SJCC member and board member, has been part of the Biathlon since the second year of the event. He first became involved when he came to swim on a Sunday and found that the pool was closed due to the event.

“When I went to find out why it was closed, I was put in touch with Sabina and was made a Team Captain the following year,” said Michael, who had never taken a Spin class until the Biathlon.

On the day of the Biathlon, each of the nine teams has a time slot for their turn to Spin and then swim. The teams come up with fun names and sometimes costumes. SJCC Spin instructors lead a high energy hour-long class before the participants head to the pool to swim as many laps as they can in 30 minutes.

And don’t be intimidated if you don’t include Spinning and swimming as part of your regular exercise routine. Anyone can be part of the Biathlon as all are encouraged to participate at their own level.

To be part of the SJCC Biathlon, contact Health and Wellness Director Carla Gencher at cgencher@jccottawa.com or 613-798-9818, ext. 278.

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The Polish ‘Blue Police’ and the Holocaust

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Professor Jan Grabowski, a University of Ottawa historian speaks about his fascinating new book which examines the role of Poland’s police force in crimes against the Jewish populations under the Nazi regime. A new government bill, prepared by the Ministry of Justice, would make it a criminal offence for anyone implicating Poland, or the Polish people, in the crimes of the German Third Reich.



Contact: Roslyn Wollock (613) 798-9818 ext. 254, rwollock@jccottawa.com

Trump finally denounces anti-Semitism

Continued from page 8

Trump's critics pin the issue on his chief strategist, Stephen Bannon, who came to the Trump campaign after steering Breitbart News, which he himself called a "platform" for the alt-right, among other right-wing movements. In turn, Bannon's defenders note that Breitbart is enthusiastically pro-Israel and often keeps tabs on anti-Semitism.

But search "anti-Semitism" at Breitbart and a pattern emerges. The site seems most exercised about Jew-hatred when it is committed by Muslims, European leftists, and far-left and anti-Israel activists on U.S. college campuses. When it does report on hate crimes in the United States, its coverage is almost always skeptical, highlighting hate-crime "hoaxes" or quoting those who deny that there has been a surge in hate crimes here or in Britain since the U.S. elections or Brexit.

Last month, when much of the press corps was focusing on how and whether Trump would denounce anti-Semitism,

Joel Pollak, a senior editor-at-large at Breitbart, was accusing the media of hyping fears of anti-Semitism. Pollak blames an "ongoing pattern of false 'hate crimes'" and the media's reluctance to report on left-wing anti-Semitism. But, mostly, he blames general "anti-Trump hysteria."

"Trump's critics seem to want to believe false accusations of anti-Semitism, which justify their hatred of him and maintain a sense of outrage and unity among activists," writes Pollak.

For Pollak and other Breitbart contributors, the reporting and denunciation of anti-Semitism is a partisan weapon wielded by the left to discredit the right. (Just as Trump asserted that it's a charge wielded by a dishonest media to discredit him.) Of course, Breitbart also politicizes anti-Semitism, using it as a scarlet "A" to be worn, almost exclusively, by Muslims, campus radicals, 'self-hating Jews' and European leftists. In fact, it has become an increasingly familiar trope both on the left and the right that the other is more anti-Semitic.



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks about anti-Semitism after touring the National Museum of African American History and Culture, Feb. 21, 2017.

At least both sides agree that anti-Semitism is bad, even if they hesitate to take responsibility for the version that metastasizes among their ideological allies. They want to target the Jew haters, but are wary about friendly fire.

Maybe the mistake of Jewish groups in seeking a strong response from Trump is that they are living in a simpler past, when both sides could agree that anti-Semitism was an evil, no matter the perpetrators or their politics.



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A graphic for a Purim Carnival. It features a stylized tent with balloons and streamers. The text reads: "Community Wide PURIM CARNIVAL Sunday, March 12 • 9:30 am to noon". Below this, it lists activities: "9:30 am - KBI Kids Presents an Interpretive Purim Story (Social Hall)", "10:40 am - Megillah reading with Rabbi Scher (Social Hall)", and "10:00 am - 12:00 pm - Carnival (Gym)". It also includes information about joining the JCC, Kehillat Beth Israel, Beit Tikvah, Machzikei Hadas and Or Haneshemah for a community-wide carnival, with a \$5 per family fee and hamentashen and juice served. The location is Soloway JCC, 21 Nadolny Sachs Private. Contact information for Gail Lief is provided at the bottom: (613) 798-9818 ext. 303, glieff@jccottawa.com.



Rabbi Yona Metzger, Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel from 2003 to 2013, was convicted of fraud and sentenced to prison.

Former Israeli chief rabbi sentenced to prison for fraud

JERUSALEM (JTA) – A judge in Jerusalem rejected a plea deal between prosecutors and Rabbi Yona Metzger and sentenced the former Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel to 4.5 years in jail on fraud and other charges.

The sentence imposed by the Jerusalem District Court judge was more than the 3.5 years under the plea bargain signed in January, but less than the maximum seven years.

Under the January deal, Rabbi Metzger pleaded guilty to fraud, breach of trust and tax offences.

Rabbi Metzger will be the first Israeli chief rabbi to serve jail time on corruption charges. He is scheduled to begin his prison sentence on May 3 at Nitzan Prison in Ramle.

The judge, Moshe Yoad Hacoen, said in his ruling that he felt that he needed to

increase the sentence due to Metzger's high public position, The Times of Israel reported.

The rabbi was charged in October 2015 with fraud, theft, conspiracy, breach of trust, money laundering, tax offences and accepting bribes. He was accused of accepting nearly \$2.6 million US in bribes – keeping nearly \$2 million US for himself while paying the rest to accomplices and charitable organizations.

Rabbi Metzger was accused of profiting from donations directed to charitable causes and taking bribes to sway his opinion on matters he decided as chief rabbi.

He completed his 10-year term as chief rabbi in July 2013. Metzger was arrested and questioned a month before his term ended and released.

McGill student council fails to impeach member who tweeted 'punch a Zionist'

MONTREAL (JTA) – McGill University's Arts Undergraduate Society voted not to impeach Igor Sadikov for his "punch a Zionist today" tweet last month.

On February 22, the society voted 22-16 with seven abstentions on the fate of Sadikov, also a member of the student legislative council at the Montreal university.

Since his original tweet on February 6, Sadikov has refused to resign from the McGill Student Society while issuing carefully worded "apologies" and calling his tweet a "misguided joke."

"Many of my constituents and fellow students, and some of my friends, adhere to Zionist ideology," he said in a statement to the Arts Undergraduate Society. "I am Jewish myself."

Sadikov, 22, who supports the anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions

movement, said he was targeting a "political philosophy," not Jews.

McGill has remained split over those who want Sadikov ousted from his student government positions and even expelled, and those charging that the university's student union executive bowed to pressure from the administration when the executive reversed its decision not to censure him.

In the McGill Daily, where Sadikov once served as editor, he called such efforts "a new low."

McGill principal Suzanne Fortier, meanwhile, defended its intervention on the grounds that "with any incitement to violence, it is our duty."

Pro-Israel students have said they feel hostility and isolated on campus. Petitions to expel Sadikov have been launched online.



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Place your Passover Greetings in the Bulletin

Passover is around the corner.

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Send best wishes to the community on behalf of your business or place personal greetings to your family and friends wishing them a Chag Sameach.

The deadline for placing a greeting is March 10.

Please contact Business Manager Eddie Peltzman for more info:

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Tel Aviv and Jerusalem marathons revel in a ‘healthy competition’

BY HILLEL KUTTLER

(JTA) – Noah Roth likes to recall two moments from Israeli marathons in which he’s raced: a competitor in Jerusalem breezing by him in 2010 wearing all-black, haredi Orthodox garb but for a white athletic shirt; and a Russian woman on Tel Aviv’s Allenby Street who last year handed sprinters cups of clear-liquid refreshment – not water, but vodka.

“I’m neither a Tel Avivian nor a Jerusalemite. I like both cities, and I like both marathons,” said Roth, a corporate recruiter who lives in Beit Shemesh, about midway between the two cities. “Jerusalem has more of

a family feeling. Tel Aviv is more like, ‘I’m out here for the event.’”

While hardly on par with the New York, Boston and London marathons that draw world-class runners, the Jerusalem and Tel Aviv races are huge for Israel, attracting growing numbers of competitors and providing welcome jolts to the economy.

This is marathon-event season in Israel. Tel Aviv staged its race on February 24 and Jerusalem’s is coming up on March 17. The Tiberias Marathon, Israel’s oldest, was held on January 8.

They are scheduled so near each other because of the

weather, competitors and organizers said. The window for safe and hospitable racing is a narrow one in the winter before the long, hot summers.

The especially tight period between the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem events also reflects some of the rivalry between the cities. Organizing officials say they feel welcome at each other’s events, but don’t jointly market them here or abroad, nor do they approach potential sponsors together.

That’s OK with Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat who told JTA that a rising tide lifts all boats.

“The better we do separately, the better we do together,” said Barkat, a longtime runner who is entered in the 10K race in his city’s event.

He added: “It’s a very healthy competition.”

Not so healthy, though, to Yossi Melman, a Tel Aviv-based journalist who has run 35 marathons, including a dozen in Israel.

“There’s no reason Tel Aviv or Jerusalem can’t be held in October or November,” he said. “It’s really ridiculous [having] three marathons in nine or 10 weeks. You can’t run three marathons in 10 weeks.”

Some actually do after modifying their training.

Roth completed the trifecta in 2016 and is trying again this year. He runs Tiberias, the fastest course of the three, aiming for a personal best, and Tel Aviv as a fairly reasonable reprise a mere month and a half later. Roth competes in Jerusalem just because it’s Jerusalem. In the

See Marathons on page 15

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Noah Roth finishing the Tel Aviv Marathon in 2016.

COURTESY OF ROTH

Marathons: Israel's three long distance races take place over the winter

Continued from page 14

latter two, he obsesses far less over his split times and sometimes doesn't even wear his running watch.

"Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are like dessert. I can take my feet off the gas and have fun," he said.

Each city's signature sporting event has unique allures and drawbacks.

Jerusalem Marathon partisans speak of being uplifted by the route's brief sojourn in the Old City and the magnificent views of it from other neighbourhoods – several interviewees used the term "running through history" – and by large crowds of cheering spectators. They also talk of the brutality of the city's extremely hilly terrain.

Those favouring the Tel Aviv Marathon cite the city's seaside beauty and the energy drawn from racing through Israel's commercial capital, but also the sometimes-challenging heat. (The city permanently shifted its marathon from springtime to February in 2013, but even then a man competing in the half-marathon that year died of apparent heat-related causes. In 2015, the event was

cancelled midway through due to extreme heat.)

And Tiberias? It draws sneers for an uninspired course – dipping counter-clockwise around the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee, then boomeranging back – and the near absence of spectators, but praise for being consistently flat, enabling runners to post their best times in any of the country's three marathons.

The best runners stand to profit in the coming weeks. Tel Aviv is offering \$15,000 to the first marathoner to break the course record and \$40,000 for finishing in 2:08 or faster. Jerusalem's various prizes include \$1,500 to a marathoner setting a course record.

The current record for Tel Aviv is 2:10:30, and for Jerusalem 2:16:09 – both set by Kenyans in the past three years. That compares to the world record of 2:02:57 set in Berlin in 2014 by another Kenyan, Dennis Kimetto.

Some 40,000 runners competed in the Tel Aviv Marathon and its related half-marathon, 10K, 5K and charity walks; 25,000 have registered for Jerusalem's various event categories.



Runners taking part in the Jerusalem Marathon, March 18, 2015.

YONATAN SINDEL/FLASH90

Ilanit Melchior, tourism director of the nonprofit Jerusalem Development Authority, a sponsor of the capital's race, projected that city hotels, restaurants and shops will earn \$7.5 million US just from the 3,000 foreign runners (600 of them marathoners) from 50 countries, not counting money spent by their travel companions. Ofer Shytrit, whose company produces the Tel Aviv Marathon,

offered a "minimal estimate" of \$5 million that runners spent in town for his event.

"If you have one start-up, it's a start-up. If you have two or three, it's a market," said Barkat, who made his fortune in high-tech.

The popularity of the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem marathons, he said, "creates a dramatic improvement in the market."

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OTTAWA JEWISH
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Nine things you didn't know about Purim

BY JULIE WIENER

(My Jewish Learning via JTA) – With costumes, spiels and lots of drinking, Purim is one of Judaism's most raucous holidays. You might know about beautiful Esther thwarting evil Haman's plans, the custom of getting drunk and what hamantaschen are. But we're guessing there are a few things about Purim, which this year starts at sundown March 11, that might surprise you.

1. Esther was a vegetarian (or at least a flexitarian).

According to Midrash, while Queen Esther lived in the court of King Ahasuerus, she followed a vegetarian diet consisting largely of legumes, presumably so that she would not break the laws of kashrut. For this reason, there is a tradition of eating beans and peas on Purim. (After all, you'll need something healthy after all the booze and hamantaschen.)

2. You're supposed to find a go-between to deliver your Mishloach Manot, the gift baskets traditionally exchanged with friends and family on Purim.

The verse in the Book of Esther about Mishloach Manot stipulates that we should send gifts to one another, not just give gifts to one another. As a result, it's better to send your packets of goodies to

a friend via a messenger than to just give them outright. Anyone can act as a go-between, so feel free to recruit the postal service or even that nice guy in the elevator to help you deliver your gifts.

3. The Book of Esther is the only biblical book that does not include God's name.

The Book of Esther also makes direct no references to the Temple, to prayer or to Jewish practices such as kashrut.

4. Hamantaschen might have been designed to symbolize Haman's hat – or his ears or pockets. Or something a little more womanly.

Some say these cookies represent Haman's ears (the Hebrew name for them, "oznei Haman," means just this), and refer to a custom of cutting off a criminal's ears before his execution. Another theory is that the three corners represent the three patriarchs whose power weakened Haman and gave strength to Esther to save the Jews.

Yet another theory: Because the German word *tasche* means "pouch" or "pocket," the cookies could signify Haman's pockets and the money he offered the king for permission to kill the Jews. Finally, in recent years, some

See Purim on page 17



Queen Esther's diet consisted largely of legumes so that she would not break kashrut laws. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



2016 GJ Cooper Scholarship recipient Shelby Levine was awarded a scholarship of \$16,075 at the Foundation's Annual General Meeting (presented by Paul Finn, 2016 Scholarship Committee Chair).

For complete details and list of eligible programs, please visit www.ojcf.ca or contact Mike at 613-798-4696 ext 252 or by email at mbazuk@jewishottawa.com

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GJ Cooper Scholarship Award

The award, valued at approximately \$15,000, is granted each year to support a member of the Ottawa Jewish Community, or Ottawa student, between the ages of 18 and 30, who has displayed leadership qualities, academic excellence and has an interest in the Jewish Community. As per Mr. Cooper's wishes, the award must be used to advance one's formal education or apprenticeship in the fields of artistic, literary or social sciences.

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OTTAWA JEWISH
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Purim: Holiday celebrated one day later in ancient walled cities

Continued from page 16

feminists have suggested the cookies, which after all are not dissimilar in appearance to female reproductive parts, were meant to be fertility symbols.

5. In 1945, a group of American soldiers held belated Purim services inside Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels' confiscated castle.

According to JTA coverage at the time, the Jewish chaplain "carefully arranged the candles over a swastika-bedecked bookcase in Goebbels' main dining room," and Jewish soldiers explained to their Christian comrades in attendance "about Haman and why it was so fitting that Purim services should be held in a castle belonging to Goebbels."

6. The Book of Esther, which many scholars theorize is fictional, may be an adaptation of a Babylonian story.

Some scholars argue that the Book of Esther adapted stories about pagan gods – Marduk becoming Mordechai and Ishtar transformed to Esther – to reflect the realities of its own Jewish authors in exile.

7. The Jewish calendar has a regular leap year with two months of Adar (but

only one Purim, which falls during the second Adar).

To ensure that the holidays remain in their mandated seasons, the Jewish calendar was ingeniously adjusted to accommodate the 11-day difference between the lunar and solar years. In the fourth century CE, Hillel scheduled an extra month at the end of the biblical year, as necessary. The biblical year begins in spring with Nissan (Exodus 12: 1-2) and ends with Adar. Hillel, in conjunction with the Sanhedrin (Jewish supreme court), chose to repeat Adar (Adar I and Adar II) every third, sixth, eighth, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th year over a 19-year period.

8. Purim is celebrated one day later inside walled cities than it is everywhere else.

The Book of Esther differentiates between Jews who lived and fought their enemies for two days within the walled capital city of Shushan and those who lived in unwalled towns, where only one day was needed to subdue the enemy. The rabbis determined we should make that same distinction when memorializing the



What does hamantaschen symbolize? Answers abound.

event. Accordingly, if a person lives in a city that has been walled since the days of Joshua (circa 1250 BCE), as Shushan was, Purim is celebrated on the 15th of Adar, a day referred to as Shushan Purim.

9. Just after the 1991 Gulf War, Israel's most popular Purim costume was of the Israeli army spokesperson whose face appeared on TV every time a Scud missile alert sounded – and people snacked on "Saddamtaschen" instead of hamantaschen.

Spokesperson Nachman Shai's "reassuring tones earned him the sobriquet "National Valium," while Israel was being pelted with Iraqi missiles, according to a JTA report at the time. That year, while many costume-makers avoided the temptation to make Saddam Hussein costumes (it would be like a Hitler costume, one vendor told JTA), bakeries hawked "Saddamtaschen," which "look and taste exactly like hamantaschen."

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AGES 2-15

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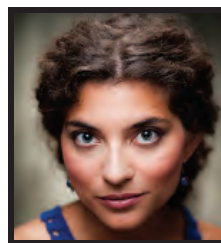
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On being welcomed as a stranger

I recently returned from Guinea. It is one of the nine poorest countries in the world, and it only takes about two seconds to see why.

At first glance, life for most people in this country unfolds like a photo essay in National Geographic. The environmental catastrophe is profound, with mountains of trash everywhere and the air black with burning coal. The country is still recovering from the fight against Ebola, and yet health care is inaccessible to most. The government is lax with infrastructure and basic resources including safe roads, sanitation, and education. Life in the countryside, and in the villages, can be easier, but there is an ongoing exodus to the city.

When we were in the seaside capital of Conakry, my friend and I lived for a few weeks in a very poor but dynamic neighbourhood in a district called Kaloum. There was a herd of goats living at the bottom of the street and chickens in the communal courtyards. Each morning, the roosters began to crow on cue with the muezzins' call to prayer. The shacks and houses were made of concrete and corrugated tin roofs and each was infested with mice and cockroaches. We were lucky to have an air conditioning unit where we slept, but the electricity and water cut out randomly every day, and we never knew when or for how long. Our hosts owned two spoons, three knives, and a small plastic box to keep sugar, bread and bananas safe from the vermin and ants. Food was scarce. But it was here on this street that my friend and I felt most at home in Guinea, and where we



SARAH WAISVISZ
DISPATCHES FROM THE DIASPORA

came to understand the intimate link between survival, resilience and community.

I do not want to overemphasize the poverty or wax poetic about the challenges facing our neighbours. I do not want to make postcards out of their poverty because, in fact, there is nothing poor or underdeveloped about this culture. Instead, I want to remember how each person I met in Guinea shook my hand and asked me how I was; how children showered me with grins and cuddles; how I was offered precious soap and water by a neighbour when I wanted to clean my hands before tending to Bouba's wound; and, how, when Husseinatou braided my hair one night, three neighbours and their children came to help. Whenever we sat down to eat, or read, or go on an errand, someone was always eager to keep us company.

These are the names of the children in Kaloum who were our best friends: Buntu, Moussa, Sekou, Mabinti, Fatou, Mohammed, Maya, Mentané, Eliza, Princesse, Katy, Jeanne and Bouba.

Little Mohammed was our protector. Moussa was our

translator. Princesse was the ringleader. Buntu and Mentané taught us Susu and clapping games. Katy and Jeanne were twins. And Bouba became my son. For two weeks, I cleaned and bandaged a stubborn wound on his tiny leg, and he wanted nothing more than to be carried by me all the time. I sang him lullabies in French and cradled him in my arms. The afternoon we drove to the airport, he tried twice to climb into the taxi.

At one end of the street was the shack where a young man cooked us omelette sandwiches with mayonnaise and ketchup and made us extra-strong Nescafé-au-lait. Each time we ate our breakfast, we spoke to the imam whose mosque was next door. He rode a motorcycle and lived nearby. I told him I was Jewish and we talked about Abraham/Ibrahim, Sarah/Saran, Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael.

He said God made us all the same, and that every religion values peace. But it is greed that leads to strife and war. It is greed that is responsible for all problems. When we are generous and kind, like Ibrahim and Saran who opened wide their tent to strangers, there will be peace on our planet.

"Inshallah," I replied.

"Inshallah," he echoed.

The night before we left, as she presented me with a beautiful bracelet, a neighbour made me promise not to forget our friends on the street. How could I? Their kindness, generosity and courage have a place in my heart.

In Susu, there are two ways to say welcome. You can simply say, "*I ndu sene*," or you can say, "*I kely i khongni, i fa i khongni* (you have left your house to come here, but you are at home here now)."

A meal fit for a queen!

In the Bible, the story is told of how Queen Esther, along with Mordechai, foiled Haman's plan to kill all the Persian Jews.

On Purim, let's celebrate all women. Maybe the men in the household can prepare this meal!

APRICOT PUMPKIN HAMANTASCHEN

Dough

- 1/4 pound butter or margarine
- 1/4 pound whipped cream cheese
- 1 cup flour
- 2 teaspoons sugar

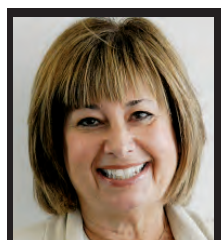
Mix all ingredients in a processor until a ball is formed.

Filling

In a processor mix together:

- 1 1/3 cups dried apricots
- 1 cup pumpkin butter
- 1/2 cup apricot spread
- 2 dashes each of cinnamon and cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract

Separate dough into four balls. Roll out on floured board. Use a 2-inch diameter glass to cut out circles. Fill each circle with 1/2 teaspoon of filling. Pinch together. Bake on a greased cookie sheet at 400 F for 20 minutes. Makes 45 mini-Hamantaschen.



ALYCE BAKER
HOLIDAY COOKER AND BAKER

HONEY LEMON CHICKEN

- 4 chicken drumsticks and 4 thighs
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 whole garlic cloves
- 6 thyme sprigs
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 lemons thinly sliced

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Place large oven-proof skillet on medium high heat. Add oil garlic and thyme.

Season chicken with salt and pepper. Place the chicken in skillet and sear on both sides. Remove onto plate.

To the skillet add vinegar, honey, sugar and water.

When the sugar is dissolved, place the chicken back in the skillet and turn over a few times to coat with the sauce. Place lemon slices over the chicken.

Bake in oven at 350 F for 50 minutes. Serve chicken and pour sauce over it.



LEMON SPINACH WHOLE WHEAT FETTUCCINE

- 1 box whole wheat fettuccine
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 3 cloves garlic
- Pinch of hot pepper flakes
- 1 package baby spinach
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Grated lemon rind

Cook fettuccine 7-9 minutes. Drain, reserving 1/2 cup cooking water.

In a frying pan over medium heat, cook garlic 3 minutes. Stir in pepper flakes, spinach, salt, and 3 tablespoons cooking water. Cook until spinach is wilted. Add pasta and mix through.

Serve with a squeeze of lemon juice if desired.

CHERRY TORTE BARS

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 2 cups ground almonds
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter
- 1 1/3 cups sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups cherry jam

Whisk flour, almonds, cinnamon and salt.

Beat butter and sugar until fluffy. Add egg and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture.

Knead dough with hands until dough is stiff.

Line a 9" by 13" pan with parchment paper.

Press all but 1 cup of dough into the pan. Spread the jam over the dough. Crumble remaining dough over the jam.

Bake at 350 F for 45 minutes.



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OJCS prepared me for university by teaching me about time management skills. A skill we developed early since we took many subjects at a young age.
~ Abby Greenberg

The OJCS teaches students not to just be good, but to do good. OJCS prepared me for High School and University in a variety of ways. From the trilingual aspect, which taught me great time management, prioritization, and organizational skills – allowing for me to balance a busy and challenging schedule, to giving back to the community, volunteering, and being involved.
~ Noa Kardash

The small intimate classes give you the opportunity to build relationships with your teachers and I find that gave me a lot of independence and taught me how to communicate and sometimes even stand up for myself.
~ Hana Engel

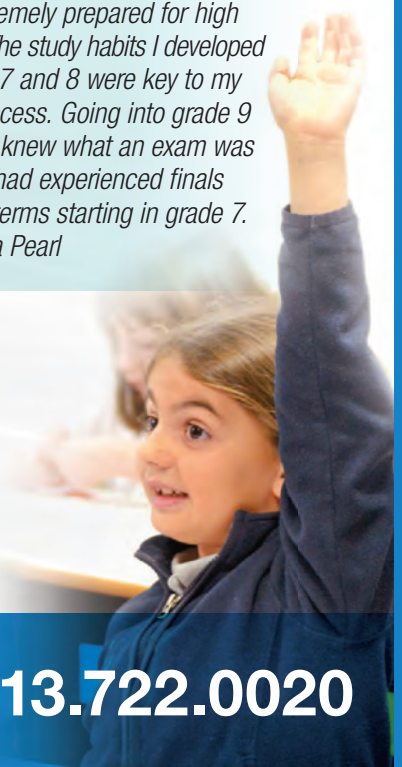
When I came out of OJCS I felt extremely prepared for high school. The study habits I developed in grade 7 and 8 were key to my early success. Going into grade 9 I already knew what an exam was like as I had experienced finals and midterms starting in grade 7.
~ Allegra Pearl

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When community isn't what it seems

A couple of months ago, I deleted Facebook from my cellphone. I didn't delete my account. Facebook is useful and can be a lot of fun. But I'd hit a point where I seemed to be constantly checking the site on my phone and I realized it wasn't helping me feel any more connected to people.

In fact, it was the opposite. All those minutes spent scrolling through people's photos and interesting articles or pithy status updates was beginning to feel isolating somehow, and I was tired of it.

It turns out there's a phrase for that phenomenon – when time on social media makes you wonder whether everyone is having more fun than you. It's called FOMO, or fear of missing out. Some researchers have described it as an acute form of social anxiety that's in fact what leads many of us down the path of social media addiction. We're so afraid of missing something we never want to disconnect.

I first heard of FOMO while on maternity leave. A friend used the expression as we were talking about the isolation, something that isn't helped, when you see other new moms posting pictures of their outings on social media or realize they're getting together for play dates and you're not invited. Or, you're just too afraid to leave the house with your baby to accept an invitation.

The sense of FOMO gets a bit worse when it's connections with other Jewish families you feel you're missing, especially when that sense of connection is important to you to begin with.

My friend and I reassured each other often that we weren't really missing anything, but we both knew a bigger step was coming: What was going to happen if and



STEPHANIE SHEFRIN
**MODERN
MISHPOCHA**

*If Facebook makes me feel isolated,
I can delete it. I don't fear
missing out on cat videos so much
that I'm not able to walk away.
But the sense of isolation that comes
when you feel you're not part
of an actual real life group –
that's not a social media construct.
That's what causes people to disconnect
from community altogether.*

when our kids weren't in the same daycare as all the other Jewish families we knew?

We were worried that, if our kids weren't with them, we'd be excluded from the relationships all those families were building.

It's not necessarily deliberate – that exclusion – it's just what happens. The day-to-day interaction with other families builds connections that are stronger than the less regular ones you get at PJ Library events or at synagogue.

I realized this pretty keenly during Mitzvah Day, the

one-day do-good-a-thon the community hosted in February.

At one of the events for young families, you could immediately tell whose kids were in school together and which kids – and their parents – didn't know anyone at all.

It's natural, of course, for children to flock to others they know. And, in the joyful chaos that is Mitzvah Day, it's easier to follow your own kids and, in turn, be with the parents you see all the time.

But it did strike me that, on a day where we were supposed to be coming together as a single community, there was a definite sense in that room of division among young families linked almost explicitly to where the kids are in school.

We need to do better. Ottawa is not big and – let's be honest – the religious spectrum in the Jewish community is already a pretty divisive force.

There's merit, to be sure, in supporting all the various options that are out there for Jewish education in Ottawa. But the downside, to me, seems that it has become another point of division. It clearly is at the preschool level, and I can only imagine that it continues as the options open up between full day school and supplementary choices.

If Facebook makes me feel isolated, I can delete it. I don't fear missing out on cat videos so much that I'm not able to walk away. #Iwillsurvive

But the sense of isolation that comes when you feel you're not part of an actual real life group – that's not a social media construct.

That's what causes people to disconnect from community altogether.

And that's something to real to fear.

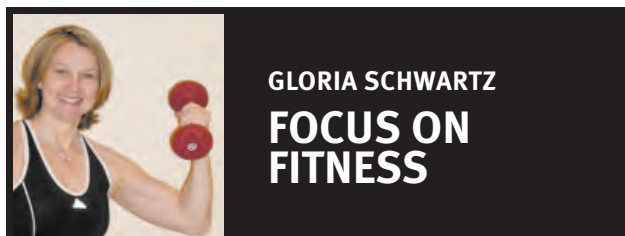
Are your fitness facts 'alternative facts'?

The relationships we have with our health care providers are based on trust. We trust that they possess sound knowledge and that they continue to learn and stay abreast of the latest studies. The same should hold true with your fitness professionals. Many people enjoy taking classes because they don't have to think about what to do; they simply follow the instructor and rely on his expertise. But, just as medicine evolves, so does the field of fitness. What may have been considered best practices a few years ago may no longer be the case.

Some exercises that used to be regarded as the gold standard are no longer deemed effective or even safe for all populations. Yet, some fitness instructors and trainers continue to encourage these outdated practices. Online exercise videos and other Internet resources may come from questionable sources or may be long out of date.

Sit-ups are an old-school exercise that strengthens your abdominal muscles, if done correctly. However, if done incorrectly or overused, sit-ups can cause back strain and pain. Sit-ups that involve twisting motions, such as the Russian Twist, can be especially risky, if you already have back issues. I recently attended a class in which the instructor had participants of all ages perform this exercise without checking and correcting their form and she didn't offer an alternative.

So-called weight-loss programs circulating on social media involve large numbers of daily repetitions of one exercise or another. Welcome to the world of alternative facts. The truth is that being overzealous and doing 100 sit-ups per day will not transform a big belly into toned abs. The term "toned" is neither here nor there. Sit-ups don't burn a lot of calories and therefore will not get rid of belly fat to reveal your glorious abs. If you have a lot of



GLORIA SCHWARTZ
**FOCUS ON
FITNESS**

*Whether we call them alternative facts,
deliberate lies, myths, misinformation
or simply outdated notions,
following the wrong fitness information
can be a waste of your time
or even have potential harmful effects*

belly fat, you may not even be able to do sit-ups. A better exercise for your abdominal muscles is the plank. This static exercise engages multiple abdominal muscles as well as your back, glutes and hips without putting stress on your spine.

A popular misconception is that running is bad for your knees, that it causes the cartilage in the knee caps to degenerate. We've heard that for years. But now we know it's not true. Taking up running may put you at risk for knee injuries if your hip stabilizers, quads, hamstrings and core are weak or imbalanced. A sound strengthening program that includes these muscles will minimize the risk. A longitudinal study by Stanford University that looked at knee health of older runners versus older non-runners found that non-runners had significantly more osteoarthritis of the knees than regular runners. Running strengthens the connective tissues that stabilize

the knee joint and may shield against osteoarthritis. <http://tinyurl.com/h6grpry>

Another outdated notion is that stretching **before** you exercise will prevent injury. What we now know is that pre-exercise stretching diminishes your athletic performance and does not prevent injury. A better strategy is to do a dynamic warm up or at least five minutes of light cardio exercise to warm up the muscles.

For a long time, we were told that stretching **after** exercise reduces delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) felt 24 to 72 hours after exercise. Science has shown that this is not true. Post-workout stretching helps you relax and increase flexibility; therefore, I highly recommend it. But it won't reduce DOMS associated with unaccustomed or strenuous exercise.

Benjamin Franklin wrote, "There are no gains without pains," in 1878, but it was actress-turned-fitness-guru Jane Fonda who popularized the motto, "No pain, no gain" in her 1980's best-selling exercise videos. This factoid needs to be outed once and for all. Pain during or after exercise, such as aching joints or acute pain, indicates something's wrong such as an injury. If you experience pain during an exercise, don't do it. Unlike pain, muscle soreness or discomfort following exercise is normal.

Whether we call them alternative facts, deliberate lies, myths, misinformation or simply outdated notions, following the wrong fitness information can be a waste of your time or even have potential harmful effects. If you're unsure whether an exercise is safe or right for you based on your individual level of fitness, physical limitations or health, don't be afraid to ask a fitness professional or get a second opinion. You only get one body, so make sure you take care of it based on the best information available. And remember, everything is subject to change.

Beaudry: New CFO 'brings tremendous financial acumen'

Continued from page 4

immediate future is on reviewing the roles and responsibilities of the finance staff, and on streamlining and automation, and technology-enabling systems. He also sees his role as a mentor and coach to the finance department staff.

"My objective is to provide services to our stakeholders at the level they expect; timely, accurately, and in the most cost-efficient way," he said.

Beaudry served in the Canadian Armed Forces for six years.

"Upon 'retiring,' I went back into my hometown, Mont-Laurier in the Laurentians, where I bought my first

business," Beaudry said.

Over the years, he has bought and/or managed various businesses in wide-ranging industries including martial arts, a convenience store, hospitality, property management, auto parts, and industrial hardware. He has also been a Chamber of Commerce director and president of an association of business owners.

Beaudry has held a number of positions in the Ottawa-Gatineau area. He was comptroller for Les Terrasses de la Chaudière; general manager of the University of Ottawa Student Federation (SFUO), where he managed different services and businesses; and director of

finance and administration for the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW).

Most recently, Beaudry was vice-president of finance and operations at United Way Centraide Canada from 2013 to 2017 overseeing the financial affairs of the 108 Canadian United Way organizations.

"Throughout my career as a business owner and manager, and at SFUO and CUPW, I have always been close to the community and its people," he said. "This aspect is within my DNA and I have missed this over the last few years."

He said he appreciates the diversity of services offered by Federation, its ties to

the community, "the dedication of the people towards helping the vulnerable, and the energy that emerges from the staff and management in the pursuit of their goals and mission."

In his spare time, Beaudry enjoys spending time with his family – his wife Anie, and daughters Claudia and Alicia – particularly at the cottage. His hobbies include fishing, driving his all-terrain vehicle, martial arts and walking.

Kerzner praised Beaudry's team-oriented, fun-loving approach.

"He's a solid team leader, and we are looking forward to a great and successful working relationship," she said.



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A Hillel Lodge Honour Fund is a permanent pool of capital that earns interest or income each year. This income then supports the priorities designated by you, the donor.

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R'Fuah Shlema:

Daniel Levine by Marilyn Adler and Neil Blacher

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In Memory of:

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In Memory of:

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In Memory of:

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In Memory of:

Joan Usheroff by Joy and Seymour Mender and family and Sharon and David Appotive and family

Ethel Naor by David Kalin

Fruma Appotive by Joy, Seymour, Jess, David and Jared Mender

In Honour of:

Sonia and Sheldon Shaffer Happy Anniversary to a very special couple by Lysette and Louis Kohn

Susan and Charlie Schwartzman Congratulations on the birth of Rory by Lysette and Louis Kohn and Joy, Seymour, Jess, David and Jared Mender

Joy and Seymour Mender Mazel Tov on Jessie's engagement by Dorothy and Hartley Stern and Barbara and Steve Levinson

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Seymour and Judy Berger Mazel Tov on the birth of your new grandson by Esther and David Kwavnick

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Here's a great opportunity to recognize an event or convey the appropriate sentiment to someone important to you and at the same time support the Lodge. Call orders may be given to Cathie at 728-3990, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday. You may also go to: www.hillel-ltc.com and click on the "Donate Now" button to make your donations. Cards may be paid for by Visa or Mastercard. Contributions are tax deductible.

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Photos: Howard Sandler and Issie Scarowsky



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The Board of Directors of the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation acknowledges with thanks contributions to the following funds as of February 9, 2017.

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IN MEMORY OF:
Rabbi Yehuda Simes by Congregation Or Torah (Chicago).

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MAZEL TOV TO:
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IN MEMORY OF:
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Susan and Charlie Schwartzman on the birth of their new grandson, Rory Jason Schwartzman by Myra and Sam Krane. Heather, Danny and Michal Rajf on the birth of their grandson and nephew, Rory Jason Shwartzman by Myra and Sam Krane.

ANNIVERSARY WISHES TO:
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The Women's Collective
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2017 Grant Application is now open!

If you have an idea that could make a positive difference in the lives of women and children in this community, please apply.



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Sid Cohen by Brenda and David Saxe.

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Sid Cohen by Sandra Marchello.

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Contributions may be made online at www.OJCF.ca or by contacting the office at 613-798-4696 extension 274, Monday to Friday or by

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Attractive cards are sent to convey the appropriate sentiments.

All donations are acknowledged with a charitable receipt.

Foundation FACTS



An Endowment Fund can be your way to make a commitment to our future.

An **endowment fund** creates a legacy in support of charitable organizations for current and future generations. Funds can be opened in amounts from \$1000 and up. Your dollars will be carefully invested in fixed income and equity markets - as part of the Foundation's larger portfolio - to generate distribution income. Each year, a portion of the funds are distributed to the causes that you care about.

The Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation supports the long term financial stability of the agencies which serve the Ottawa Jewish Community.

Find out more at OJCF.CA or contact **Arieh Rosenblum**, Director of Development at arosenblum@jewishottawa.com 613-798-4696 x270



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OTTAWA JEWISH
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Learn more about how the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation helps the community

Cemetery offers respect and comfort for families at hardest time

Jewish Memorial Gardens (JMG) fulfils a critical and essential role in our community as the place where we inter, honour, respect and remember our deceased loved ones.

The first Jewish cemetery in Ottawa was founded in 1892, when members of Adath Jeshurun Synagogue established a burial ground on Bank Street. Today, this cemetery covers 14 acres. A second cemetery was established in 1976 in Osgoode to ensure an additional supply of land. In 2008, all synagogues came together to transfer the two cemeteries and their management to a single entity, Jewish Memorial Gardens.

“We have solutions for all streams of Judaism,” says Jonathan Ben-Choreen Freedman, chair of JMG as he explains how the organization strives to serve our community with compassion and sensitivity by supporting those suffering the loss of a loved one while also helping to honour our past generations.

“We meet families on what are among the worst days of their lives, and if we bungle that, their affinity to community can be severely impacted. Unfortunately, death is part of the Jewish cycle of life, but how we deal with the families of the departed can impact, for a very long time, their feelings toward community.”

Mr. Freedman explains that JMG goes the extra mile to offer comfort and respect. He gave the example of how there was a Jewish person who was not connected to the community and who passed away while living on his own. No one knew immediately of the death. When the body was finally discovered, it was taken to the morgue and remained there in limbo until JMG was contacted by an Israeli lawyer. The lawyer explained that members of the extended family in Israel had been contacted by the person’s only friends in Canada, all of whom were not Jewish. JMG quickly got to work to help.

“We were able, within a day, to get the body out of the morgue. And then we made sure we had a minyan for the funeral and, truly, the family had no words to describe how much comfort that brought them. Certainly, in death, this person was handled with respect.”

Indeed, JMG allows us to fulfil the mitzvot of *k’vod ha-meit* and *nichum aveilim*, showing deep respect and honour for the dead and



comforting those who have experienced a loss.

Most recently, this has been achieved by the massive renovation of the Bank Street location.

“We have a cemetery to be proud of,” says Mr. Freedman. “There is a new entrance and parking inside the cemetery, eliminating the once difficult on-street parking. Three new garden spaces give families areas to rest and contemplate. These include the historic garden in the oldest section of the cemetery, the Holocaust Memorial, which now has more prominence and sits at its own plaza, and a large reflective garden. There is a gazebo that provides protection for families meeting for graveside funerals.”

There is also a new memorial for those who died fighting in wars.

“That was really important for us to do. As the generations of those veterans pass on, we wanted their memories to be there for the next generation to teach people that sometimes your country needs you, and you have to answer that call,” says Mr. Freedman.

The cemetery raised all of the funding required for the revitalization project through a special capital campaign that includes a reserve fund that will be invested with the Foundation and will go toward upkeep of JMG.

“We are not a beneficiary agency,” explains Mr. Freedman. “We rely on donor dollars to provide a level of service that our deceased deserve.”

Foundation assists donors in contributing to the long-term financial support of the agencies which serve the Ottawa Jewish community. To find out more, contact Arieh Rosenblum, Director of Development, at arosenblum@jewishottawa.com or 613-798-4696 x270.

Bronfman responds to a generation searching for reasons to be Jewish

Why Be Jewish?

By Edgar M. Bronfman

Signal

256 pages

Amazon lists eight books titled, *Why Be Jewish?* It is a question that can be answered from many different perspectives and is 'the question' of the 20th and 21st centuries. Prior to the emancipation of Western European Jews in the late 19th century, Jews really had no choice but to cling to their heritage as a mode of personal survival. Laws and societal norms established by the Catholic Church, feudal princes and authoritarian rulers made it virtually impossible to reject one's Jewish heritage.

Emancipation provided Jews the opportunity to participate in secular, civil society. It even offered the possibility of rejecting one's birthright. We are all too familiar with the path taken by the descendants of Moses Mendelsohn. Michael Meyers, a noted historian of the period called him the first modern Jew. His descendants did not choose to follow the religious or ethnic path of their father, grandfather or great-grandfather. In 1985, noted American sociologist Charles Silberman wrote a fascinating study, *A Certain People: American Jews and their Lives Today*, in which he argued that all Jews of the 20th century are "Jews by choice." He argued, as many did before him, that external societal pressures forcing individuals to remain within the tribe no longer exist. Therefore, each individual chooses to identify as Jewish.

This background serves as the environment in which Edgar M. Bronfman was raised. Son of Samuel Bronfman, founder of the Seagram liquor empire, he was raised in Montreal in a home that gave him space to live in both the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds.

Bronfman – who eventually served as president of the World Jewish Congress for 20 years, chair of Hillel: the Foundation for Jewish Campus life, and founding supporter of the Bronfman Fellowships and My Jewish Learning – has entered into the discussion with *Why Be Jewish*, a very personal account of his epiphany. He completed writing the book shortly before his death, at age 84, in 2013.

Bronfman tells us that, as a young man, he walked away from his rudimentary practice of Judaism; and, while he was always engaged in fighting anti-Semitism and Jewish persecution, "his identity was shaped by a sense of belonging to a specific ethnic group rather than an attachment to Jewish tradition."

RABBI STEVEN GARTEN BOOK REVIEW

The book lists Bronfman's 12 principles that guided his secular Jewish practice.

His choices and his interpretations of the principles serve as the main content of the book.

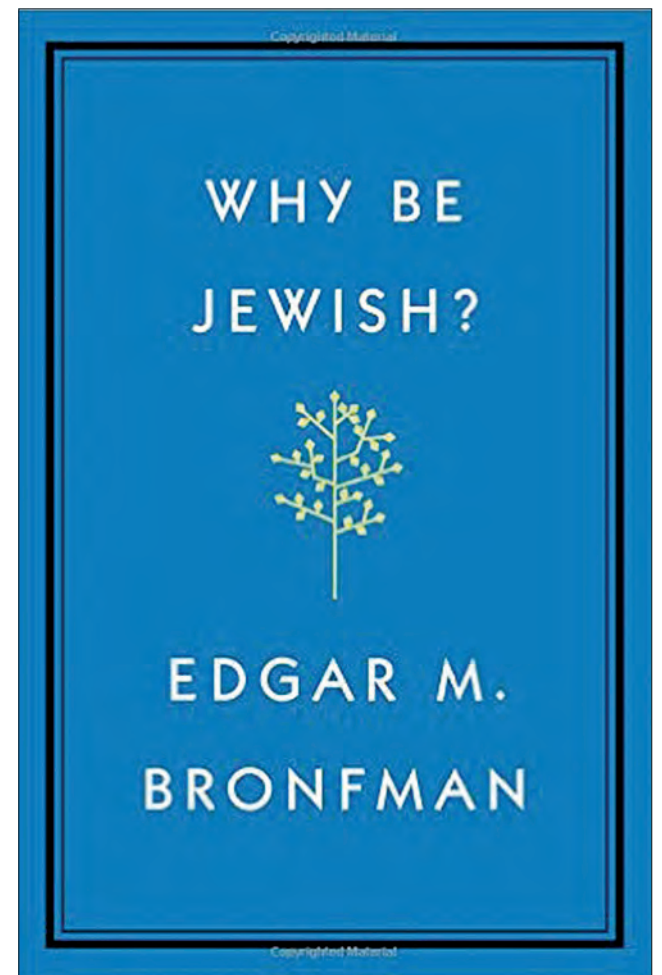
Interspersed with personal vignettes and rabbinic midrashim, the text is a very readable memoir. He has opened his heart and his soul to his readers in an attempt to convince a generation searching for reasons to be Jewish.

I applaud his energy and his ability to synthesize a life of Jewish commitment with Jewish learning.

However, at age 60, that all changed. Returning to Montreal from Moscow, he found himself sitting next to an Orthodox Jew reading a Hebrew text. One thing led to another, and Bronfman learned that the text was Talmud and the gentleman was studying Daf Yomi, the 7.5 year project of learning the entire Talmud, one page per day.

Intrigued by this, Bronfman promised to investigate what kind of writings can hold one's attention for 7.5 years of daily study. From that moment on, Bronfman committed himself to Jewish learning and to basic Jewish practices. He never became a 'believer,' but he began searching for the intrinsic values of Jewish Life. *Why Be Jewish* is a compilation of his answers.

The book lists Bronfman's 12 principles that guided his secular Jewish practice. His choices and his interpretations of the principles serve as the main content of the book. Interspersed with personal vignettes and rabbinic midrashim, the text is a very readable memoir. He has opened his heart and his soul to his readers in an attempt to convince a generation searching for reasons



to be Jewish. I applaud his energy and his ability to synthesize a life of Jewish commitment with Jewish learning.

I find his principles oddly traditional for a text that claims to offer new insights. His list begins with a lengthy discussion of how Judaism demands one to ask questions, repair the outer and inner worlds, perform acts of loving kindness, welcome the stranger, engage with Jewish traditions, texts, philosophy, history and art to name just a few.

As I read, I thought of the famous story attributed by the Gemorah to Rabbi Hillel the elder: Once a gentile came to Hillel and asked him to teach him the entire Torah while standing on one foot. Hillel answered: "Love your neighbor as yourself. All the rest is commentary, now go and learn!"

That is the essence of *Why Be Jewish*. It is a personal account of one person's search for commentary. His answers are not unique, but they are pathways to understanding how one can find meaning in a Judaism that is defined as secular. I am not convinced Bronfman has achieved his stated goal, but he has eloquently given reason to feel proud that such a searching, probing individual spoke on behalf of the Jewish people.

**To advertise in the
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WHAT'S GOING ON | March 6 to 19, 2017
FOR MORE CALENDAR LISTINGS, VISIT WWW.JEWISHOTTAWA.COM/COMMUNITY-CALENDAR

Daylight Savings Time begins March 12.
Clocks turn forward at 2 am.

The list of Purim events is current to the Bulletin deadline. For an up-to-date listing, visit <https://jewishottawa.com/our-community/purim-2017>

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

Learn to Lead with Chazzan Benlolo: Join Chazzan Benlolo on three Tuesday evenings in March and learn to lead Shabbat services, including Kabbalat Shabbat, Shacharit, Musaf and Havdallah. Also March 14, 21. Kehillat Beth Israel, 1400 Coldrey Ave., 7 pm.
Info: Daniel Benlolo, chazzan@kehillatbethisrael.com

Malca Pass Library Book Group Meeting: "And the Birds Rained Down" by Jocelyne Saucier will be reviewed by Gerald Halpern. Kehillat Beth Israel, 1400 Coldrey Ave., 7:30 pm.
Info: Maureen Kaell, 613-224-8649, mkaell@rogers.com

SATURDAY, MARCH 11

Purim Night Fever at KBI: Join Kehillat Beth Israel in your best retro attire for a 70s-themed Purim. Kehillat Beth Israel, 1400 Coldrey Ave., 5 pm.
Info/RSVP: Susan Grossner, 613-728-3501, susan@kehillatbethisrael.com

Purim at Or Haneshamah: Join Ottawa's "deconstructionist" community that never wants its own building in our seriously silly, tasty, and fabulously garbed Erev Purim. Costume-up, bake and bring a batch of Hamentashen to compete or to share, and bring spare change for our collection of Matanot L'evyonim

(gifts for those in need). Or Haneshamah, 30 Cleary Ave., 6:30 pm.
Info: Or Haneshamah, 613-239-4988, info@orh.ca

Israeli House Purim Party: Israeli House Purim event. Adults only, 7:30 to 11 pm.
Info: Ella Dagan, 613-798-9818, ext. 243, edagan@jccottawa.com

Glebe Shul Purim Party: Celebrate Purim second-hand style. Dig up some treasures from your local Value Village or from deep within your closet for our thrift shop-themed party. Good friends, hot food and an open bar. Avalon Studios, 738A Bank St., 8 pm.
Info: Yoey Shaps, glebeshul@gmail.com

SUNDAY, MARCH 12

OTC's "Purim in NYC:" Join OTC for non-stop fun: Amazing Aerial Silk and Trapeze Show on Broadway; special workshop for children; learn and try the great circus art of trapeze; face painting in Central Park; buffet dinner of NYC delicacies; picture taking with the Statue of Liberty; Megillah reading with slide show in Times Square; L'Chaims in the village; NYC masquerade. Ottawa Torah Centre Chabad, 111 Lamplighters Dr., 4 pm.
Info: Rabbi Menachem Blum, 613-843-7770, rabbi@theotc.org

Paw Patrol Purim Party: Music, popcorn, giant games, prizes. Come and have your picture taken with characters from Paw Patrol.

Young Israel of Ottawa, 627 Kirkwood Ave., 4:30 pm.
Info: Miriam Tanger-Friedman, 613-724-8590, yandm613@gmail.com

Purim in the Shtetl: Come celebrate at Machzikei Hadas with a Shtetl feast and featuring mentalist duo The Evasons, Shtetl Tavern with Ottawa's North of 7 Craft Distillery and open bar, kids costume parade. Kids entertainment with Bricks4Kidz. Machzikei Hadas, 2310 Virginia Dr., 4:30 pm.
Info: Michael Goldstein, 613-521-9700, mgoldstein@cmhottawa.com

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

Hit the Hockey Madness ice: Face off with your friends and join the Canadian Alumni Association of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for its first ever Hockey Madness game on ice, to help send Canadian students to study at Hebrew U. A free family skate will follow. Barbara Ann Scott Arena, 2205 Torquey Ave., 4 pm.
Info: Daniel Tor, 343-998-3451, dtor@cfhu.org

CANDLE LIGHTING BEFORE

MARCH 10	5:41 PM	MARCH 24	7:00 PM
MARCH 17	6:51 PM	MARCH 31	7:09 PM

BULLETIN DEADLINES

MONDAY, MARCH 13 *	FOR MONDAY, APRIL 3
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29	FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19

* Early deadline: Community-wide Issue ** Early deadline: holiday closures

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:

Arnold Greenberg
George Karlin

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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