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OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN

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JCCs across North America plagued by bomb threat hoaxes

BY BEN SALES

(JTA) – When Cincinnati’s Mayerson Jewish Community Center was hit with a bomb threat on January 18, Adam Bellows was satisfied with how the staff handled the preschool kids, including his two-year-old son.

The kids, said Bellows, had no idea the threat had happened. They were evacuated and taken to a secure location where they watched cartoons.

But, after he got home, Bellow’s son started having a tough time. He couldn’t sleep, and was scared to return to preschool the next day.

“It was hard to see how much it disturbed him,” Bellows said. “He wasn’t scared at the time or anything, but, the next day, he was saying, ‘I don’t want to go to the JCC.’ He kept asking, ‘Are we going to watch Mickey Mouse again? Is mommy going to come pick me up again?’ His world was interrupted.”

More than 120 bomb threats have targeted JCCs, day schools and other Jewish institutions in the United States and Canada, coming in six waves since the beginning of the year.

While many JCCs report that members and preschoolers are staying put, there have been some exceptions. The Roth Family JCC near Orlando has seen 50 children pull out and, in Birmingham, Alabama – where the JCC has been targeted four separate times – six families have withdrawn their children.

Parents who spoke to JTA were happy with how the centres have handled the threats. The kids have returned promptly to their programs, and business has been able to carry on as usual.

“She wasn’t scared, she wasn’t worried,” said Matt Mandell, 39, of his four-year-old, a preschooler at the JCC in Rockville, Maryland, which was threatened. **See JCCs on page 2**



The Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver was evacuated, March 7, following a bomb threat received via email. It was one of more than 120 false bomb threats received by Jewish institutions across North America since January

Threats and attacks can also bring us together in solidarity

BY MICHAEL REGENSTREIF
EDITOR

I’m writing this column in the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin office, which is located within the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC). I also attend programs at the SJCC and swim in the pool. In other words, I spend a lot of time in the building.

The SJCC is a welcoming place. It really is my second home, and I enjoy coming

here almost every day – despite levels of security that are much tighter than when I started here almost a decade ago. The front doors are locked now, and SJCC members and staff swipe their membership cards in barcode readers to enter the building. Non-members are buzzed in after showing photo ID and telling the front desk staff the reason for their visit. Uniformed security guards are always on duty, and there are cameras in strategic

locations throughout the Jewish Community Campus.

Even though the security is tighter than it used to be, the security measures are handled in a welcoming and friendly manner, so the experience of coming to the building is not really very different than it was 10 years ago.

The need for these security measures has been painfully obvious in recent months.

In November, there was a rash of anti-Semitic, racist and Islamophobic graffiti attacks in Ottawa that targeted four Jewish locations – including a building here on the Jewish Community Campus, two synagogues, and a private home used as a prayer and study centre – as well as a church, where the minister and many of the parishioners are African Canadian, and a mosque.

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JCCs: Trudeau pledges support in fighting anti-Semitism

Continued from page 1

ened on January 9.

“They did a great job of keeping everyone calm and not getting them scared unnecessarily. I feel very, very comfortable with it. There’s only so much you can do.”

An open letter to U.S. President Donald Trump, signed by all 100 U.S. senators, urged specific action on anti-Semitism and alluded to the fiscal pressure on JCCs.

“We are concerned that the number of incidents is accelerating, and failure to address and deter these threats will place innocent people at risk and threaten the financial viability of JCCs, many of which are institutions in their communities,” the March 7 letter said.

Several Canadian JCCs – including locations in Calgary, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg – have received bomb threats. The JCC in London, Ontario has received bomb threats twice.

In response, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau condemned the attacks in a statement issued on March 8 and pledged the federal government’s support in combatting anti-Semitism.

“This week, Jewish communities across the country have again been targeted by hateful threats and acts designed to make us all afraid. I want to say again – we will stand by you every day



Police block off a parking lot at the Jewish Community Center of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas, February 27, following a bomb threat.

in the face of intolerance, prejudice and outright criminal acts. We understand the fear and anxiety each one of these threats creates in the Jewish community, especially when the locations targeted are places where Jewish families and children gather. The cowards who target Jewish schools, community centres and

synagogues won’t shake our resolve, and we’ll work with law enforcement to bring them to justice,” said Trudeau.

“In Canada, we stand together because we know that diversity is our strength. It built this country. Jews in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and across the country should know they have the full support of the Government of Canada as we guard against a resurgence of anti-Semitism. We’re with you, and will do everything we can to keep you safe.”

As of press time (12 noon, March 10), there have been no bomb threats received at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) in Ottawa. However, staff working in the building – including SJCC, Jewish Federation of Ottawa, Ottawa Jewish Community

Foundation, Ganon Preschool and Ottawa Jewish Bulletin staff – have received briefings on how to respond in the event of a bomb threat and an evacuation drill has been held.

Security protocols on the Jewish Community Campus are constantly updated, notes Federation President and CEO Andrea Freedman in a Bulletin article, to “ensure that we are appropriately prepared should there be a threat. We must all remain vigilant and attentive, while, at the same time, continue to enjoy participating in the richness and fullness of Jewish life.” (See page 3.)

Even among parents who are keeping their kids in JCC preschools that have received bomb threats, stress has been created in places meant to be immune from danger. Even as the youngest kids remain unaware of the bomb threats, they’ve resulted in scenes of cribs being pulled outside, and law enforcement officials searching Jewish community campuses. Last month, the Anti-Defamation League issued a brochure titled, “5 Tips for Talking with Children about Bomb Threats at Jewish Community Centers,” which is available online. <http://tinyurl.com/ADL-5-tips>

While the threats have all been hoaxes, the disruption and inconvenience are having an impact on members and parents.

“I’m not scared, I’m infuriated,” said Emily Hausman, 29, whose three kids all attend preschool at the Birmingham JCC. “I find the whole thing infuriating. A threat is just a threat. They’re not real and we’re being inconvenienced, and our poor kids are being inconvenienced, and dragged out into the rain.”

Ottawa Jewish Bulletin Editor Michael Regenstreif contributed to this report.

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For information regarding the program, registration, and housing: www.yiddishottawa.com

Or contact the program coordinator and instructor: Professor Rebecca Margolis rmargoli@uottawa.ca



See page 27 for Publication and Deadline dates and Candlelighting times.

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Our rapidly changing world

How well we manage change is a measure of our success, writes **Andrea Freedman** as she completes her fourth year as president and CEO of the **Jewish Federation of Ottawa**.

It has become an annual ritual of mine to write an article for the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin to mark the anniversary of March 11, 2013, the day I began working on behalf of Ottawa's Jewish community. After my first year working for you, my Bulletin article began with a question from the play "Rent."

"525,600 minutes. How do you measure, measure a year?"

If there is one word that best captures the last 525,600 minutes, it is change.

Firstly, the world we live in has changed.

When I began my career in the Jewish world as a youth director at a Jewish community centre (JCC) in Massachusetts, my only security concern pertained to the potential of misbehaving teens. But, I write this message just after the latest series of bomb threats against Jewish institutions in North America, including three in Canada today.

It is painful to regularly read accounts of evacuations at JCCs. But, at the same time, the resoluteness of people is remarkable.

Security on the Jewish Community Campus is an issue that I spend a great deal of time on, as do many members of our staff and several key volunteers. What used to be a relatively minor portfolio has become significant as we constantly update protocols, communicate with staff, and ensure that we are appropriately prepared should there be a threat. We must all remain vigilant and attentive, while, at the same time, continue to enjoy participating in the richness and fullness of Jewish life.

Secondly, the world we communicate in has changed.

Thoughtful debate and discussion has been replaced with the desire for immediate disruption and quick responses. I am

constantly amazed at the words people chose in Facebook posts and how quick we are to disparage both people and ideas.

Social media and the Internet have evened the playing field when it comes to accessing information. It is also exceptionally positive how quickly and effectively information can be conveyed. You can now mobilize people on an important issue in a matter of hours. However, as with many things in life, change has positive and less positive consequences – and we work hard to maximize the positive and minimize the negative.

Finally, the Jewish world we live in has changed.

Jews affiliate and participate differently than we did a decade or two ago, and subtle shifts continue today. We join



Federation President and CEO
Andrea Freedman.

organizations – including synagogues – less frequently than previous generations, and children from fewer families attend Jewish day schools.

However, that is not the same as disengagement. After approximately two decades of the Birthright Israel program, a significant percentage of the under-40 Jewish population has visited Israel. In Ottawa, the PJ Library program has a market penetration rate of approximately 50 per cent of its target audience. The growth of PJ has been exponential over the past four years.

People, today, want and demand choice and customization. I'm writing this article a few days before Purim and there is an astounding variety of Purim activities scheduled to take place in Ottawa – as varied as the types of hamantaschen being made. Virtually any type of Purim party or activity was available to community members.

While choice is a good thing, a question we must consider is "How much choice can a community of 14,000 Jews support?"

The world we live in has changed in profound ways since I first began my career in Jewish communal service – and since I began working on behalf of Ottawa's Jewish community four years ago. And it continues to change.

So, how do you measure 525,000 minutes? By how well change is managed.



Tamir visits CBC: Tamir participants, accompanied by Cantor Daniel Benlolo, visited the CBC Ottawa newsroom, February 24, for a tour conducted by radio news anchor Laurence Wall. (From left) Laurence Wall, Festus Minah, Lee Waxman, Shirley Harris, Cantor Daniel Benlolo, Vicky Ferkin, Debby Appelbaum and Sherry Brachfeld.



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An Ottawa businessman's hockey history

Many in Ottawa's Jewish community recognize **Len Potechin** as a successful entrepreneur, a supporter of philanthropic causes, and a regular 'minyanaire' at Kehillat Beth Israel. Few, though, are aware of his athletic prowess. **Irv Osterer** reports.

Len Potechin was born in Montreal in 1926 and developed an early passion for our winter pastime. He played midget hockey with Doug Harvey and Sam Pollock, and junior B hockey in Lachine, Quebec.

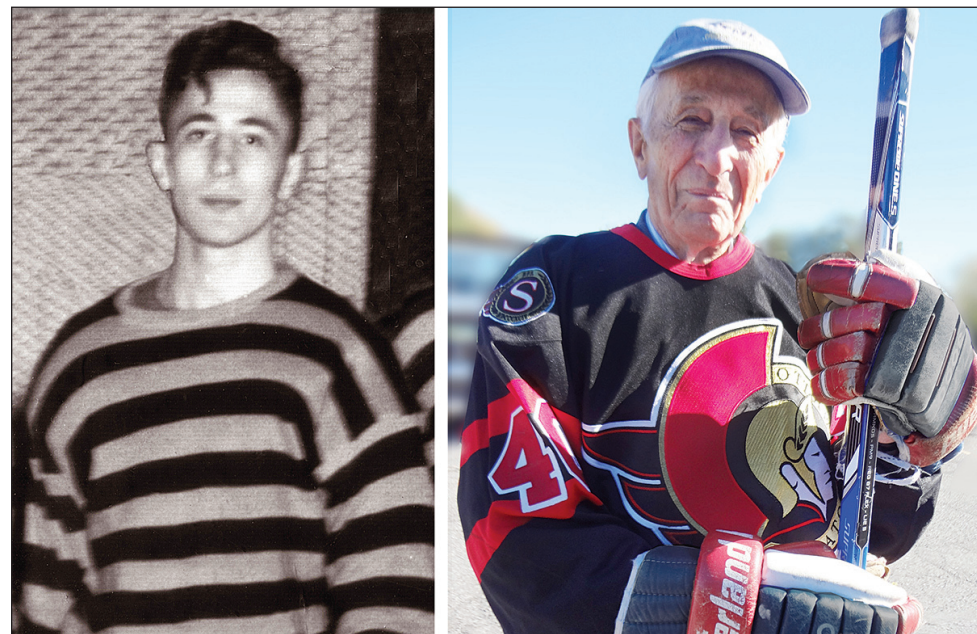
A questionnaire attached to Potechin's 1944 university acceptance asked if he was active in sports. When Dalhousie's hockey coach discovered a junior B winger in their list of freshman, he immediately recruited Potechin. However, upon learning that his brother, Norman, had been wounded in Italy, Potechin enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy.

Our armed forces believed that sport was a morale booster and encouraged men

to compete in regional leagues as team rosters had been depleted by conscription. Every effort was made to keep the university and junior leagues active in the Maritimes, and the Navy advised Potechin to play hockey in Halifax and finish the year at Dalhousie.

Potechin played for both the Dalhousie Tigers and the junior A Halifax Centrals that year. Players were responsible for their own skates and, although sticks were supplied, breaking one was frowned upon. Potechin recalls the better players would sometimes find a \$25 bonus in their pocket after a game or practice.

While the Tigers lost the City Intercollegiate Championship to St.



(Left) Len Potechin, at age 18 in 1944, in uniform for the Dalhousie Tigers. (Right) Len Potechin, at age 90 in November 2016, shortly before he left to spend the winter in Florida.

Mary's, the Centrals proved to be a powerhouse with forwards Blakeney, LeBlanc and Potechin leading the way. Several newspaper reports called them the best line in Maritime junior hockey.

The Centrals won the Halifax league title and edged Truro to advance to the provincial championship where they defeated Glace Bay for the Nova Scotia hockey crown. Their successful playoff run came to an end in the Maritime final at the hands of the Moncton Bruins. In eight of the nine playoff games, Potechin racked up an impressive four goals and four assists.

Following the academic year, Potechin was told by the Navy to report to Toronto, where he again found his athletic prowess in demand – this time in track and field. And, with the end of the war in the Pacific, Potechin's 15-month stint with the military ended. He was honourably discharged on December 18, 1945.

Potechin entertained serious thoughts of trying out for major junior hockey. At the time, teams were sponsored by NHL affiliates and were always looking for talent. But the late Isidore Potechin was not enthralled with the possibility of his son playing in the OHL. Len laughs and quotes his father, who told him to go to work, that he'd sit Shiva if he embarked on a hockey career. "Ich vol sitzen shiva. Gay arbeiten," his father said.

Potechin took his father's words to heart and went to work – first in the restaurant business and later with Regional Realty in Ottawa.

Potechin and wife Mary now spend the winter months in Florida, and he still maintains a keen interest in hockey and follows the NHL closely. He is in good health and great shape and still looks like he could help the Ottawa Senators' power play!

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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.

Albert Mendelsohn 1917 - 1995

The first Jewish general in the Canadian Army

Albert Mendelsohn began his regular service as a Canadian Army officer as a lieutenant in 1939 at the beginning of the Second World War. During the war, he rose to the rank of major and then stayed in the Army as a career officer. He retired in 1972 as a brigadier-general, the first Jew in the Canadian Armed Forces to attain a general's rank.

Mendelsohn was born in 1917 in Montreal and grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home in the Laurentian village of Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts where his father, Isaac Mendelsohn, an immigrant from Romania, worked at the Mount Sinai Sanatorium, a Jewish hospital for the treatment of tuberculosis.

Mendelsohn entered McGill University in Montreal in 1934 to study mechanical engineering. Hitler had come to power in Germany and, anticipating the possibility of war, Mendelsohn applied to join the Canadian Officer Training Corps at McGill. He rose through the ranks and was

commissioned as an officer, at the rank of second lieutenant in the active militia, in 1937. Mendelsohn graduated from McGill in May 1939 and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in the reserve of officers before leaving Montreal for a job in Sault St. Marie, Ontario.

Canada entered the Second World War in September 1939, and Mendelsohn was called to duty. He went overseas in 1941 with the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division and was part of the landing at Normandy on D-Day.

In his book, "Canada's Craftsmen at 50," the story of electrical and mechanical engineering in the Canadian Armed Forces, Colonel Murray C. Johnston discussed Mendelsohn's various assignments following the war.

"After the war [Mendelsohn] served on the directing staff of the Canadian Army Staff College, as the Canadian military observer with the United Nations Military Observer Group (India and Pakistan), as the

first commander of the Canadian Headquarters United Nations Forces in the Congo, commandant of the RCEME [the Canadian Army's Corps of Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers] School and, in 1962, head of Corps of RCEME.

"Promoted brigadier-general in 1967, he was appointed to Headquarters Materiel Command. Later, having served as senior military adviser to the Canadian Delegation of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Laos, he became director general-maintenance and, subsequently, director general-ordnance systems until his retirement in 1972."

The Canadian Armed Forces were unified in 1968 and, thanks to Mendelsohn's leadership, the Corps of Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers remained a separate engineering group in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mendelsohn lived in Ottawa in the final years of his military career and continued to live in the city after his retirement, frequently advising the federal government and Canadian



Armed Forces on military matters. A bachelor during his military career, he married Susanne Perfitt Saville in 1975.

In retirement, Mendelsohn's interest in Judaism and religious observance was rekindled. He studied Hebrew, relearned the Jewish prayer book, and became active in Congregation Beth Shalom.

After his death from prostate cancer on November 10, 1995 at age 78, a fund established in his memory at Beth Shalom provided new Torah mantles for the congregation.

At his funeral, an honour guard of 100 military engineers paid tribute to Mendelsohn outside the Jewish Community Chapel on King Edward Avenue and during his burial at the Bank Street Cemetery.



Next in the series

Lawrence "Lorry" Greenberg 1933 - 1999

One of the founders of Minto Developments (he left the company in 1960) Lawrence "Lorry" Greenberg was the first Jewish mayor of Ottawa, serving from 1975 to 1978.



Submit an essay

To help mark Canada's 150th, we are welcoming personal essays from readers. Please share with us! What does it mean to you to be Jewish in Canada? As a Canadian Jew, what do you hope for our future? Is there anything special in our Canadian history that has impacted you as Jew?

Please note, submission should be about 300 words and will be edited for style. Send submissions to: mregenstreif@ottawajewishbulletin.com

FEDERATION
REPORT



JONATHAN BEN-CHOREEN
FREEDMAN, HILLEL OTTAWA

Hillel Ottawa provides university students with a broad Jewish experience

need a place that feels safe and secure and this is what Hillel aims to do.

When my oldest child went away to university, she called home that first Sunday. She said her roommates had spent the weekend feeling homesick. But, in her case, she had gone to the Hillel House, and went to the director's for Shabbat meals. It dawned on her that being Jewish meant being part of a special club that allows you to find kinship wherever you go.

At Hillel Ottawa, we strive to provide students with a broad Jewish experience. This includes social events, drop-by-for-lunch events, and Shabbat dinners. As well, our staff is always there to offer an ear to students trying to get their thoughts together on an issue, and to help our student board fulfil its vision. We even deliver meals to students under the weather.

Hillel provides a safe environment for students to discuss Israel and learn

As a smaller Jewish community, we are always looking to grow. We would like our out-of-town students to consider Ottawa as a place to set down roots. For this, we are looking for mentors ... to donate a little of their time to advise or have coffee with an interested student.

about it. The student leaders on our Israel Awareness Committee provide information to students on campus about the complexity of a democratic Israel.

As a smaller Jewish community, we are always looking to grow. We would like our out-of-town students to consider Ottawa as a place to set down roots. For this, we are looking for mentors in all

professions, and with knowledge of the civil service, to donate a little of their time to advise or have coffee with an interested student. If you are interested, please contact us at 613-236-2345 or director@hillelottawa.ca.

The funding for our activities comes from three sources: the Jewish Federation of Ottawa; the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, our national advocacy arm; and, donations from our supporters.

We thank our funders for their support. However, I feel the students deserve the best we can give them and, for that, we need your support. It is only through increased donor generosity that we will be able to continue to grow and increase the quantity and quality of our events.

Our success is showing. We started a wine and cheese cocktail event several years ago where students got to meet and hear members of Parliament from the Liberal, Conservative and New Democratic Parties. The first year, 50 students attended. This year, we had 200. Our Friday night dinners used to average around 25. Now we get 60 students.

At Hillel Ottawa, we are currently gearing up to have meals ready for the students for the week of Passover. I end by wishing you and yours a Happy Passover.

University is a very important time in the development of one's ideas and beliefs. For many students, it is the first time away from home. Even for hometown students, it is a time to form new relationships. Therefore, our community puts much importance in providing services to Jewish students.

Think of yourself in a new city or environment. You don't know anyone in your class, even though your class is large. You are assigned a roommate, whom you have only just met. You must feed yourself, and even maybe do laundry! All this is overwhelming. You

FROM THE
PULPIT



RABBI ROBERT MORAIS
TEMPLE ISRAEL

Cuban Jewish community is small, but vibrant

symbols. Truly amazing!

During the communist revolution, about 90 per cent of the Cuban Jewish community left the island. Many had fled from communism and were unwilling to once again live under its ideology. Large numbers of them settled in the U.S. More recently, there have been significant numbers who have made Aliya, building their lives in Israel.

Our group had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Jewish community. They told us that in Cuba they have never felt persecuted; that anti-Semitism is all but absent.

When the revolution began, participation in religious life was seen as potential competition to the people's allegiance to the government. But, for the past few decades, that seems to have changed. The Jewish community is now very small, but incredibly vibrant! Beit Shalom, the largest of Havana's three congregations has restarted its congregational Sunday school. They have a thriving youth program. We joined them for Shabbat services on Friday and Saturday, and the services were primarily led by the youth.

But maintaining Judaism in Cuba is not easy. They depend on donations from communities like ours. Did you

But maintaining Judaism in Cuba is not easy. ... Did you know that Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA provides Passover food for Cuba? Each year, for more than half a century, we have been sending a container full of Passover food to make sure the community can celebrate Pesach.

know that Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA provides Passover food for Cuba? Each year, for more than half a century, we have been sending a container full of Passover food to make sure the community can celebrate Pesach. When our group went to Cuba, we brought medical supplies, treats and gifts and we sponsored the Shabbat evening meal.

The synagogue is entirely run by volunteers. There is no rabbi in Cuba, except those who come and visit from time to time. Yet their Judaism is vibrant and enriches the lives of their members. I am looking forward to our next trip!

I have just returned from leading a trip to Cuba.

We spent a week in Havana exploring the city's Jewish and secular culture. The Jewish community was first established in Cuba in the 1920s when many Jews fleeing Eastern European persecution ended up there.

During, and especially after, the Second World War, many Jewish refugees found their way to Cuba. At the community's height, there were 15,000 Jews there, mostly centred in Havana. There were many synagogues, Jewish schools and community institutions. In the centre of Havana's old city you will find Hotel Raquel – a hotel originally built to cater to the Jewish community. It is a beautiful five-star hotel that is completely decorated with Jewish art and

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FROM THE EDITOR



MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

Continued from page 1

(One person was responsible for all of those graffiti attacks and he was apprehended in large part thanks to security measures in place here on the Jewish Community Campus.)

And, since January, there have been more than 120 bomb threats called and emailed to Jewish institutions in North America – mostly to JCCs, but also to Jewish day schools and offices of Jewish organizations. While the vast majority of the bomb threats have been at JCCs in the U.S., there have been several here in Canada. One that hit particularly close to home for me was the bomb threat at the JCC of Greater Vancouver, a JCC where I spent much time during the four years I lived in Vancouver as a kid, and have visited on numerous occasions since.

All of the bomb threats to date – this

Intent of anti-Semitic attacks is to instil fear

column is being written on March 10 – have been hoaxes. Although there have been no real bombs, and no one has been physically harmed and no property has been damaged, we can't become complacent and treat a bomb threat as routine. Each must be taken seriously in co-operation with law enforcement officials.

These bomb threat hoaxes are affecting the Jewish community. A JTA article on pages 1 and 2 of this issue discusses – among other things – the effect of bomb scare evacuations on very young children. Jewish institutions are reviewing security procedures, and the effects of publicly manifested anti-Semitism are many. And, to be sure, these bomb threat hoaxes are anti-Semitic in their intent.

Recent manifestations of anti-Semitism have not been limited to bomb threat hoaxes. I've mentioned the graffiti attacks we experienced here in Ottawa, and there have been other communities where similar attacks have taken place. Great numbers of tombstones have been overturned at several Jewish cemeteries in the U.S. A bullet was fired into a (thankfully unoccupied) Hebrew school classroom in a synagogue in Indiana, and

The graffiti attacks in Ottawa resulted in people from different faith and cultural communities gathering in solidarity. Political leaders from across the ideological spectrum expressed support for communities under attack, and desecrations at Jewish cemeteries in the U.S. spurred a fundraising campaign in the Muslim community to help repair the damages.

many Jewish journalists have been subjected to vicious anti-Semitic social media campaigns after writing critically about the new president of the United States.

The intent of all of these anti-Semitic incidents – and you can say the same for other forms of racism and bigotry – is to instil fear and insecurity. Sadly, and understandably, many people do become fearful in response.

One of the consequences of these incidents is that they can embolden

bigots to act on their prejudices. At this point, we don't know who is responsible for the vast majority of the recent bomb threats. Is it one person? Is it a small group acting in concert? Or is it a bunch of copycats taking inspiration from previous threats? So far, only one man, linked to eight bomb threats in the U.S., has been arrested – and law enforcement has determined that he was a copycat who had nothing to do with the vast majority of the incidents.

But these anti-Semitic incidents can also have unintended consequences. One consequence that perpetrators don't intend is that they bring people and communities together. Those graffiti attacks here in Ottawa resulted in people from different faith and cultural communities gathering together in solidarity.

Political leaders at all levels of government and from across the ideological spectrum have expressed their support for communities under attack and, as Barbara Crook notes in her My Israel column on page 16, desecrations at Jewish cemeteries in the U.S. spurred a successful fundraising campaign in the Muslim community to help repair the damages.

To be sure, attacks or threats aimed at intimidating or preventing the full participation in society of any religious, racial or cultural community, is an attack or threat aimed at all of us. But to see individuals and communities responding in solidarity is inspiring.

IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS



JASON MOSCOVITZ

Observations on the Conservative leadership race

leadership race is fierce and, in almost all cases, it is civil war. Brothers and sisters of the same family try to beat each other in a take-no-prisoners atmosphere that often leaves scars and bitterness that never subside. There was a long-serving member of Parliament I learned a lot from, and I can still hear him saying that, years after a leadership race, members of a political party can go to a policy convention, look into people's eyes and instantly know which side they were on.

I also remember my first day on the job as a parliamentary reporter at the Quebec National Assembly. It was 40 years ago when I first took my seat in the press gallery and a veteran reporter from the Montreal Gazette walked by and told me there was a basic lesson about politics I should know. He told me to look down where the members are and realize that if I took any of them out for a drink, that after just one scotch, they would tell me they should be leader of their party.

Scotch is the only possible rationale for 14 candidates being in the current Conservative leadership race. There are so many men and women vying for the

crown that they fall over each other on stage when there is a leadership debate, they bang on the same doors of donors for money and, because they need so desperately to make names for themselves to be noticed, there are some desperate policy suggestions that make "progressive" Conservatives sick to their stomachs.

What is strange is that the interim leader is not on that long list of too many contenders. Rona Ambrose is still seen by many Conservatives as the best candidate the party doesn't have, but there's no changing the fact that she's not on the ballot.

Technically, Ambrose couldn't run because that was a condition for being interim leader. But the Conservatives could have changed that rule to accommodate her. Then again, had she wanted to be leader, she would have passed on the interim job. It is a safe assumption that Ambrose is a rare breed of politician who can thoughtfully say no to the limelight.

With no obvious frontrunner, the door swung open for a Trump-like outsider to

blast in from a world far away from the buzz, machinations and gossip of Parliament Hill. Is a Kevin O'Leary victory possible? The formula is actually simple to explain. We live in the age of celebrity.

But, to compare one reality-TV businessman to another, it has to be said that, from all available evidence, past and present, O'Leary is not the impulsive lying bully that Donald Trump is. O'Leary is more tolerant, more reasonable, more grounded and, above all, more moderate. But he is equally as slick with his one-liners. He is aggressive, smug and, undoubtedly, an opportunist trying to hijack the Conservative Party.

O'Leary is the kind of successful individual who would not be in this race if he hadn't diligently done his homework and assessed his chance of winning. High-end research informed him it would be far from a clear path, but that he could win.

His celebrity as a TV star is really the only thing that leapfrogged him to the top end of the Conservative pack. He knows it. We know it. Lucky him.

How irritating it must be for all the other contenders who doggedly slugged it out for years as long-serving MPs and cabinet ministers.

Now we wait to see if celebrity in Canada can trump everything else.

There are many things that are crazy about the Conservative Party of Canada's leadership race. In May, the roots of the party of Sir John A. Macdonald will meet up with the modern day reality of anything-being-possible in politics.

I remember Brian Mulroney telling Canadians when he launched his successful leadership bid in 1983 to "hold on to your hats," just as I recall Jean Chrétien telling people in his first unsuccessful leadership attempt in 1984 to "fasten your seat belts because it's going to be a hell of a ride." They were both right.

The intensity of a major party's

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Muriel Suissa offers a demonstration of Moroccan Sephardic cooking during Limmud Ottawa, November 20, 2016.

Limmud Ottawa seeks proposals and volunteers for 2017 event

BY LOUISE RACHLIS
FOR LIMMUD OTTAWA

Being part of Limmud Ottawa is an opportunity to do something positive for Jewish arts, culture and community in Ottawa.

"Limmud participants come from very diverse backgrounds, religious affiliations, age, gender, religious practice, nationality, and level of Jewish knowledge," said Jenny Roberge, who founded Limmud Ottawa in 2012.

"Limmud helps to maintain a healthy and vigorous exchange of information and ideas throughout the Jewish community of Ottawa, Canada, Israel and the world," she said. "Limmud provides a forum in which all sections of the community can come together to learn and discuss without rancour."

Roberge notes that many of the topics for Limmud sessions now come from community members.

"Two years ago, 30 per cent of our presentations came in from local individuals who made proposals. Last year it was half."

While the recent post-Limmud survey indicated some respondents "wanted more celebrity names," she said, "that's not what we are about. Even though we have criteria and vet submissions, Limmud is open to everyone and we welcome diverse perspectives. We are a grassroots organization and all proposals are treated with respect."

Limmud Ottawa 2017 will be held Sunday, October 29 at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre.

"This year, we're planning a more compact Limmud," Roberge said. "We want to engage entire families, artists of varied mediums, the unaffiliated, lesser known organizations, as well as our loyal Limmudnik base."

Roberge notes Limmud is a worldwide, volunteer-based phenomenon with Limmud events taking in many communities in many countries.

"Each Limmud is created by a community for a community," she said, "and Limmud volunteers are considered to be among the most influential people in Jewish communities."

Limmud Ottawa is affiliated with Limmud International, partners with the Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies at Carleton University and the Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program at the University of Ottawa, and is a beneficiary of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa.

There are many ways to get involved with Limmud. Community members are invited to submit session proposals on topics of interest; volunteer to organize and develop the daylong conference; and volunteer to help fulfil needed tasks before and on the day of the conference.

"You can start large or small, it all makes a difference," said Roberge. "We want to hear from you."

For more information, or to get involved, visit www.limmudottawa.ca or www.facebook.com/limmudottawa or contact Limmud Ottawa at info@limmudottawa.ca.



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

Send your letters to bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com



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New world leadership, focused vision

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With a new world chairman and directorate, KKL-JNF is refocusing to meet changing needs – for Israel and the world.

The next few years will see a shift in focus to three main areas of activity.

1. Israel's periphery, which includes the Galilee, the Negev and the social periphery. KKL-JNF will help the State of Israel move a half-million new residents to the Galilee, and a million new residents to the Negev. For KKL-JNF, this involves creating infrastructure, strengthening the economy, building housing for students, and helping with housing for young couples.

2. Education within informal frameworks, including youth movements in Israel and pre-IDF preparatory training programs, as well as operating an informal education network throughout the Jewish world, to strengthen Jewish identity and intensify the connection to Israel.

3. Strengthening international ties and serving as a "light unto the nations," through sharing the knowledge and experience KKL-JNF has accumulated over the years in combatting desertification, water management and agriculture (food security), with countries whose climate is similar to Israel's.

In all of its undertakings, KKL-JNF continues to strive to advance the interests of the environment and **sustainability**, which also involves raising awareness and education.

Change is a process and we are involved in a process that is leading to new and attractive projects for donation. KKL-JNF's transparency and calls for proposals will enhance capacity building and strengthen the organization.

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Stanley Kershman, on his special birthday, by Dov Vinograd.

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www.JNFottawa.ca

Canadian Jewish Experience exhibit to be launched on April 2

An exhibit marking the contributions of Jews to Canada and celebrating the 150th anniversary of Confederation is set to open in Ottawa.

The Canadian Jewish Experience: A Tribute to Canada 150 will be unveiled on Sunday, April 2, 1 pm, in the lobby of 30 Metcalfe Street, two blocks from Parliament Hill.

The Canadian Jewish Experience is composed of specially created exhibit panels illustrating nine major themes, including Jewish contributions in war and diplomacy, public service, human rights, economic growth, arts, culture and sports. A travelling version of the exhibit will be displayed in other cities across Canada.

The Canadian Jewish Experience will also present a lecture series to highlight the contributions of Jewish Canadians to the development of Canada.

A Canadian Jewish Experience website will be launched to provide more detailed information about the exhibit topics and the accomplished Jewish Canadians it highlights. The website will also provide information about the lecture series and locations across Canada where the travelling exhibit can be viewed.

"Excitement is building as we approach Canada Day 2017," said Tova Lynch, chair of the Canadian Jewish Experience committee. The exhibit "will tell Canada's Jewish story to many thousands of visitors to Ottawa in 2017."

"The first Jewish Canadians arrived more than 100 years before Confederation," said Senator Linda Frum. "We've been here for a quarter of a millennium, but many Canadians don't know the role we've played to make our country strong and vibrant. The Canadian Jewish Experience will help to change that."

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson said the national capital is the appropriate home for the Canadian Jewish Experience.

"In 2017, Ottawa will be at the centre of celebrating Canada's 150th birthday," said Watson, "and Jewish people have played a key role in all facets of life in the city. In fact, their accomplishments here reflect all the themes of the Canadian Jewish Experience, including being elected mayor."

The Canadian Jewish Experience is seeking local volunteers to staff the Ottawa exhibit and provide information to visitors.

For more information, contact Tova Lynch at 2017CJE@gmail.com or 613 680-8820.



The Canadian Jewish Experience exhibit will help Canadians appreciate the role Jews have played to make Canada a strong and vibrant country, says Senator Linda Frum.

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Passover Fair to take place April 2 at Beit Tikvah

BY MARILYN SCHWARTZ
PASSOVER FAIR COMMITTEE

Ottawa's annual Passover Fair, a collaboration of Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW), Na'amat Canada and Congregation Beit Tikvah will take place on Sunday, April 2, 10:30 am to 4 pm at Congregation Beit Tikvah, 15 Chartwell Avenue in Craig Henry. The event is open to the entire community.

Na'amat Canada Ottawa can help you get ready for Passover through its annual Kosher-for-Passover wine sale. A large selection of wines is available from a variety of countries, including Israel, Chile, Italy and the United States.

For the list of available wines, or to place an order,

contact Deana Schildkraut at 613-726-9595 or deana.schildkraut@gmail.com. Your order will be ready for pickup at the Passover Fair.

The Passover Fair will feature many vendors selling jewelry and Passover gifts such as matzo covers, afikoman bags, aprons, gift wine bags in holiday fabrics, seder plates, books for adults and children, Kosher-for-Passover wines and much more.

The sponsoring organizations support local and Israeli projects.

For more information, contact Beit Tikvah at 613-723-1800 or shul@cbto.org; Deana Schildkraut of Na'amat at 613-726-9595 or deana.schildkraut@gmail.com; Anna Chodos of CHW at annachodos@rogers.com; or Marilyn Schwartz at marilyn_sch1970@yahoo.ca.



Afikoman bags will be among the items available at the annual Passover Fair.



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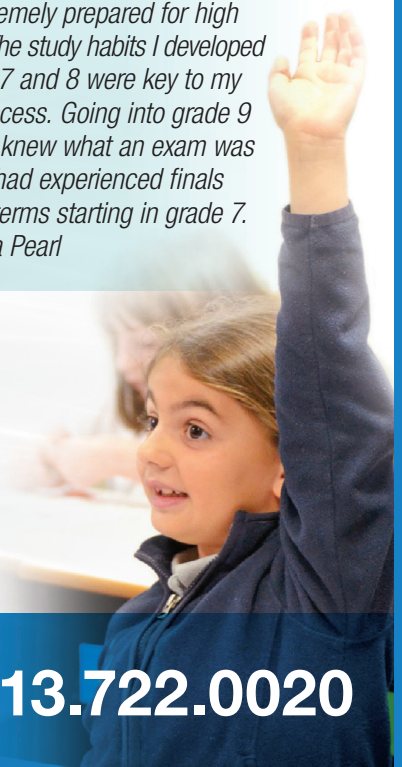
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David Rubinger, Israeli photographer who took iconic shot of soldiers at Western Wall, dies

JERUSALEM (JTA) – David Rubinger, the Israeli photographer who took the iconic photo of Israeli paratroopers standing in front of the Western Wall after its capture in the Six-Day War, has died.

Rubinger, whose photos chronicled much of the history of the Jewish state, died on March 2. He was 92.

Rubinger was awarded the Israel Prize for his body of work in 1997, the first photographer to receive the award. He reportedly took 500,000 photos of Israeli people and events during his career.

An immigrant to Israel from Austria, he arrived in Israel in 1939 at 15 and fought in 1944 with the Jewish Brigade, a military division of the British army led by British-Jewish officers in Europe.

He began his career as a photojournalist in 1955 with the daily HaOlam Hazeh and then for Yediot Acharonot. He was also Time-Life's main photographer in Israel for five decades, beginning in 1954. He also served as the Knesset's official photographer for 30 years.

The photo at the Western Wall was taken on June 7, 1967, after paratroopers pushed into the Old City of Jerusalem and reached the narrow space between the Western Wall and the houses that faced it at the time. Rubinger maintained that the photo wasn't successful from an artistic perspective but that its wide distribution

has made it famous.

His own favourite work, he told interviewer Yossi Klein Halevi in 2007, depicted a blind boy who arrived as a new immigrant in Israel in the 1950s stroking a relief map of Israel.

"I call it, 'Seeing the Homeland,'" Rubinger told Halevi.

Israeli President Reuven Rivlin eulogized Rubinger in a statement.

"There are those who write the pages of history, and there are those who illustrate them through their camera's lens," Rivlin said. "Through his photography, David eternalized history as it will be forever etched in our memories. His work will always be felt as it is seen in the eyes of the paratroopers as they looked upon the Western Wall, and in the expressions on the faces of the leaders of Israel, which he captured during the highest of highs and lowest of lows."



David Rubinger's iconic photo shows Israeli paratroopers standing in front of the Western Wall in Jerusalem shortly after its capture during the Six-Day War, June 7, 1967.

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Here is some good news for a change

The Israeli prime minister is having a bromance with the increasingly mendacious and duplicitous U.S. president.

Six Israeli settlers are on a hunger strike to pressure the government to build them a new settlement. Jewish institutions throughout North America are receiving bomb threats, and Jewish cemeteries are being vandalized.

And our pals at ISIS are calling for more attacks on Israelis and Jewish targets in the West.

The news that's making headlines is not good – which is why I'm going to write about some positive things that are worth celebrating.

You know I like to write about interesting Israeli innovations, and I have one to share. But let's start with two stories of Jews and Muslims doing good things for each other.

After hearing about the attacks on Jewish cemeteries in St. Louis and Philadelphia, two American Muslims set up a fund to raise money to help repair the cemeteries.

Linda Sarsour and Tarek El-Messidi reached their goal of \$20,000 US within three hours of announcing the crowdfunding campaign, and have raised more than \$140,000. Whatever is not needed for the cemetery repairs will be used to support any other Jewish institutions that are under attack.

“Through this campaign, we hope to send a united message from the Jewish and Muslim communities that there is no place for this type of hate, desecration, and violence in America,” they wrote at launchgood.com, a global crowdfunding platform to support Muslim charity, creativity and entrepreneurship.

Not only is it great to see Muslims helping Jews like



this. It's inspiring to see the range of projects on the Launch Good site, from projects to help individuals and communities victimized by hate crimes (including almost \$250,000 raised for victims and families of the Quebec City mosque shooting) to a food hamper project in Calgary and a virtual resource centre for Muslim women to talk about sex.

On the Israeli side, there is good news and bad news about one of its humanitarian efforts. The good news is that, since 2013, four Israeli hospitals have treated more than 2,000 Syrian patients, most of them injured in the civil war.

“They used to tell us the only enemy of Syria was Israel,” a young Syrian fighter named Mohammed al-Souria told CBC News. “But, when we came here and we saw the treatment, everything ... everything we were told has changed. And now Israel is 100 times better than [Syria's president] Bashar al-Assad in the way they treat humans.”

The IDF has a field hospital in the Golan Heights, where patients are assessed before being moved to hospital.

The Ziv Medical Center in Safed also has a clinic where doctors and nurses treat illnesses and injuries not related to the conflict. They also provide vaccinations

that aren't available in Syria because the health care system there has fallen apart.

The bad news is that these hospitals may have to stop treating non-emergency Syrian cases, if the Israeli government doesn't reimburse them for the Syrian patients they have already treated at an average cost of \$20,000 CAD per patient.

It's a fine balance between providing much-needed humanitarian care and making sure that Israeli patients don't fall between the cracks. Let's hope it can be resolved – and that some of the patients whose lives have been saved by Israelis can teach others that the negative things they've learned about Israel aren't true.

OK, I have space for one cool Israeli invention in this good-news column. As usual, I learned about it from www.nocamels.com, a research project and website that highlights cutting-edge Israeli innovations. I just learned that NoCamels is sponsored by Canada's Asper Foundation.

As I slump over my laptop, I'm excited to read about a wearable gadget called the Upright Trainer (www.uprightpose.com), which trains you to correct your posture. Using an adhesive patch, you attach the device – it's only 10 cm long and weighs a mere 25 grams – to your lower back. It vibrates when you slouch, so you are constantly reminded to sit up straight.

A study conducted by Upright with Ernst and Young employees in Israel found that 75 per cent of users improved their posture and reduced their back pain.

It's \$174 CAD on the Upright site, and is also available on Amazon. Perhaps it will be my birthday present to myself!

It is so easy to get overwhelmed by all the negative things we read about in the news, especially when it comes to Israel and anti-Semitism. Just for today, let's give ourselves a break.



APPLY NOW! 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.

Applications Open!
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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



There are better ways to handle criticism than censorship

A few weeks ago, Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA) launched a large-scale campaign at Carleton University by hanging inflammatory posters all over campus. The posters were pictures of cabinet ministers in the current Israeli government with provocative quotes, many of which were less than kind to Arabs, followed by “Still think Israel wants peace?”

Most Jewish students at Carleton were immensely frustrated by this poster campaign, and there were immediate calls for action. In an attempt to create unity and prevent irrational responses from lone actors, a member of Hillel created a secret Facebook group where temporary calm was established. However, the tranquility of level-headedness quickly collapsed and the reaction from many was disheartening.

Some called for SAIA’s posters to be torn down. Others suggested covering them up with innocuous cat memes; and several people called for students to complain to Equity Services en masse in the hope that they would force SAIA to take down the posters or even try to have SAIA shut down as an official campus group.

Many did speak to Equity Services only to be told (predictably) that Equity Services couldn’t really do anything about it, but they were sorry that students felt discriminated against.

As vice-president (communications) of the Israel Awareness Committee (IAC), I wrote an op-ed for the student newspaper explaining why the poster campaign was underhanded and did little to advance dialogue on a complex subject that deserves substantial discussion, not simplistic talking points. I also explained that Zionism is a broad spectrum encompassing many views; that, like me, one could oppose both the actions of the



MICHAEL AARENAU
CAMPUS LIFE

Rather than get into the politics of the current Israeli government’s agenda, I will say that both criticism and praise of its policies should be protected speech.

current Israeli government and the settlements movement and still be a proud Zionist; and that the IAC looks forward to engaging in meaningful dialogue with students of all views and backgrounds.

While I expected such a childish campaign from SAIA, I didn’t expect such a hypocritical response from my colleagues.

I say hypocritical because these same people rightfully decried the McGill student newspaper’s actions in no longer publishing pro-Zionist columns, but then tried to shut down the free speech of a group [SAIA] with an opposing ideology.

I’d be the first to say that SAIA’s poster campaign was repugnant and I have no doubt that many (if not all) of their executives are anti-Semitic. But the poster campaign itself is not anti-Semitic and to go crying to Equity Services to label it as such in order to stifle their views

both belittles real anti-Semitism and does little to help our cause.

There’s a difference between the government of Israel and the State of Israel and, while SAIA clearly has both in its crosshairs, I’m shocked to see so many of my colleagues feel personally targeted when confronted with inconvenient truths about some members of the government. Rather than get into the politics of the current Israeli government’s agenda, I will say that both criticism and praise of its policies should be protected speech.

It’s unfortunate that, rather than reflecting on criticism, or entering into debate, many students have gone the route of U.S. President Donald Trump and labelled anything they disagree with as “fake news” that needs to be shut down immediately. This process practically plays into the hands of our opponents.

Recently, the Israeli government denied – but then allowed – entry into Israel to a staff member of Human Rights Watch to cover human rights issues in the West Bank and Gaza because its reports are considered biased against Israel by the government.

On a similar note of crushing freedom of expression, the Knesset passed a bill that forbids people who openly call for boycotting settlements from entering Israel – even though many well-known Israelis embrace the concept of treating Israel-proper differently than the West Bank. What credibility do we have as advocates for freedom when we actively work to crush it? We don’t get to only support free expression when it’s convenient.

Ultimately, we have so much to gain by staying on the moral high ground. If we completely silence criticism, then all we’ve done is open ourselves up to more of it.

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‘What behoves us?’

On March 1, Concordia University in Montreal evacuated three buildings on its downtown campus because of a bomb threat contained in a vicious letter full of anti-Muslim hate.

On February 27, swastikas were found painted in a classroom at York University in Toronto and Calgary’s Jewish community centre was evacuated because of a bomb threat. Since January 1, 2017, there have been more than 100 bomb threats made to Jewish community centres and Jewish schools across the United States [and several in Canada], mostly in waves. They began on January 9 when 15 JCCs and schools received bomb threats; other waves of threats were reported on January 18, January 31, February 20, February 27 and March 7.

During this same time, Mount Carmel Jewish Cemetery in Philadelphia was desecrated, just a few days after a similar incident was reported in St. Louis, Missouri’s Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery. In total, several hundred gravestones were toppled over and broken. In Philadelphia and St. Louis, Jewish and Muslim clergy, activists and compassionate citizens have come together in solidarity to raise money and do the physical work of restoring the cemeteries.

How much organization and effort is required to take down several hundred gravestones? How much organization and effort is required to right them again?

Earthquake and drought followed by freezing followed by war.

*Flags are blossoming now where little else is blossoming
And I am bent on fathoming what it means
to love my country.*

The history of this earth and the bones within it?



SARAH WAISVISZ
**DISPATCHES
FROM THE
DIASPORA**

Last year, several congregants from Or Haneshamah participated in a reading group led by Patti Lenard, associate professor of political philosophy at the University of Ottawa. Together, we studied Hannah Arendt’s “Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil.” We were floored by Arendt’s detailing of both the German policies and the necessary compliance by other states that led eventually to the Final Solution, and we were haunted by Arendt’s portrait of Adolf Eichmann who defended himself, throughout his trial, as an ordinary man living in an amoral, totalitarian society.

“For the lesson of such stories is simple and within everybody’s grasp,” Arendt wrote. “Politically speaking, it is that under conditions of terror most people will comply but *some people will not*, just as the lesson of the countries to which the Final Solution was proposed is that ‘it could happen’ in most places but *it did not happen everywhere*. Humanly speaking, no more is required, and no more can reasonably be asked, for this planet to remain a place fit for human habitation.”

Arendt puts the onus on her readers to think about their own potential for complicity, their own willingness to

stand up against injustice – even when the world in which they live has gone mad.

*A patriot is not a weapon.
A patriot is one who wrestles
for the soul of her country
as she wrestles for her own being,
for the soul of his country
... as he wrestles for his own being.*

These days, I often think our world has gone mad. And, when I think about this, my instinct is to want to escape. But, now, I understand that the dream of physical escape is as impossible as emotional escape always was. I thought I had “escaped” to West Africa this past January. But, even though we didn’t have electricity for five days in a row, we eventually heard that a gunman in Quebec City had opened fire on a mosque during prayers and killed six men.

Because we learned the news belatedly, we were able to learn all the details at once, including the name of the mosque, which is our teacher’s mosque when he lives in Canada. And then we learned that two of the men who were killed were from Guinea and they were friends of our friend we had been dancing with for days in Guinea far from everything.

What is this cycle of violence we are in? My heart is aching, and we can never escape, not ever, not when these stories feel all too familiar as if they are our own bones, as if we have lived them before, over and over and over again throughout time.

*Remember ...
that every flag that flies today is a cry of pain.
Where are we moored?
What are the bindings?
What behoves us?*

Note: The poetry verses in this column are from “An Atlas of the Difficult World” by Adrienne Rich.

Exercise after illness or injury or if living with a chronic disease

One of the best things you can do for your health is to be physically active. Regular exercise doesn’t just offer the potential for longevity (or at least more years of life); it can mean the difference between a good quality of life now and in your later years versus being incapacitated and unable to enjoy the simple pleasures of life.

If you’ve recently had a bad cold or the flu, you may need to ease back into exercise. While your symptoms may have dissipated, you should give yourself adequate time to recuperate and regain your energy. Don’t make the mistake of putting exercise completely on hold. Rather, consider partaking in physical activities with a bit less intensity than usual.

If you were injured and have been unable to exercise or have not exercised the body part that was injured, make sure that, when you resume exercise, you follow your health care practitioner’s advice. Depending on the nature of the injury (e.g., damage to the soft tissue versus bone) you may need to avoid or modify certain movements. You may need to temporarily lighten the load of weight-bearing exercise, avoid high impact exercise such as skipping and jumping, or limit the range of motion of some movements. An aquafit class is suitable for many people coming back from injuries because the water provides buoyancy and resistance for a strength-building and aerobic workout while significantly reducing pressure on your joints.

If you’re at home recovering from a hospital stay, for example, if you had surgery, there may be certain exercises that are contraindicated until you’re fully healed. You may have been discharged so quickly that your head spun and you find yourself at home unsure of what to do next. Although there are some exceptions, in general, the bed is not your friend.

Gone are the days when hospitals would keep patients



GLORIA SCHWARTZ
**FOCUS ON
FITNESS**

Whether you’re recovering from a short-term illness, an injury, or are living with a chronic health issue, communicate with your medical and fitness professionals to find the best types of exercise for you.

If there are occasional days when you just need to rest, that’s OK, too. Listen to your body.

for lengthy stays and doctors would confine normally mobile patients to a bed for constant rest. Financial cutbacks are one reason, but you’re really encouraged to get out of bed and walk as soon as possible to prevent bed sores, improve breathing, stabilize blood pressure, reduce weakness, prevent loss of strength and improve your appetite and mood. A study by the University of Haifa found that hospital patients over the age of 70 who walked around the ward had better outcomes than those who remained in bed for several days of hospitalization or just sat next to the bed. Short-term immobility led to increased loss of muscle reserves and resulted in more complications with functional abilities and health.

<http://tinyurl.com/grz3y4a>

If you’re an outpatient undergoing treatment for a chronic medical condition such as cancer or kidney

failure, exercise can help you rebuild your strength and lift your mood.

If you’re on chemotherapy, dialysis or other medical protocols, some exercises may be too strenuous during certain periods such as the days of and following treatment. During those periods, you may want to try more gentle exercise such as yoga and walking. On other days, you may have the energy and strength to engage in other activities. The mental lift you get from exercise may help you deal better with your physical ailment.

There are various fitness programs offered in the community for people living with such situations as advanced kidney disease, diabetes or multiple sclerosis (MS). Ask your doctor or Google to find resources.

If you’re recovering from a heart attack and you’ve already completed the rehab program at the Ottawa Heart Institute, or if you’re living with another chronic condition, you may want to try a Heart Wise exercise class that provides a safe and appropriate level of intensity of cardio, strength and flexibility training.

The Soloway Jewish Community Centre offers Heart Wise Vitality Plus classes. For a complete list of Heart Wise program health benefits and locations, including classes specifically designed for seniors with diabetes, visit www.heartwise.ottawaheart.ca. To find out about group exercise and learn-to-run classes for people on dialysis, visit www.alivetostrive.ca. You can get a free online guide to physical activity for people with MS at www.mssociety.ca.

Whether you’re recovering from a short-term illness, an injury, or are living with a chronic health issue, communicate with your medical and fitness professionals to find the best types of exercise for you. If there are occasional days when you just need to rest, that’s OK, too. Listen to your body.

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Jewish Family Services builds bridges while supporting the vulnerable

Jewish Family Services (JFS) is a special agency whose work and efforts reach far beyond what people might first imagine.

The agency provides more than 65 programs to Ottawa residents, children and adults, Jewish and non-Jewish. These programs run the gamut from counselling services and poverty relief to memory clinics for Jewish seniors and help for battered Jewish women.

Last year, more than \$130,000 in Foundation grant commitments went to JFS, with the largest proportion going to the Thelma Steinman Jewish Seniors unit. Funding from both the Foundation and the Federation's Annual Campaign is directed to Jewish clients. And more funding is always needed. In fact, the demand for services is constantly growing.

Within the Jewish community, the primary support service is the Tikvah Poverty relief program.

"Looking at the numbers in our community, I think most people would be surprised," JFS Executive Director Mark Zarecki explains. "We feed as many as 400 to 500 people monthly... Fresh fruit and vegetables are provided through the Miriam's Well program," while non-perishable food is available from the Kosher Food Bank at Kehillat Beth Israel.

And the Tikvah program does more than provide food - it is a holistic overarching support program. Vulnerable, low income individuals and families are matched with a social worker or case manager who refers them to all available resources and then advocates for them. Financial assistance is available to those who qualify. There is even a support program to help people celebrate Jewish holidays when costs can rise.

Mr. Zarecki adds that there is much need in the community, but perhaps the most vulnerable are seniors. Committed to helping seniors live with dignity, JFS has a comprehensive care program called the Thelma Steinman Seniors Support Services, created by the generous donations of community members.

Among the services provided is the Chaverim Program for Jewish seniors with mild cognitive impairment. The program gives social, physical, and mental stimulation in a supportive Jewish environment for the senior, with the added benefit of providing a respite day for the caregiver. There is also the Binah program, a memory clinic for those with moderate cognitive impairment.

Senior support services also include visits from volunteers and staff, and Teleshalom (a weekly phone call just to check in and say Shalom). In addition, there are as many as 50 to 100 meals brought to seniors' homes monthly through the Kosher Meals on Wheels program.



Meals on Wheels goes beyond feeding people, Mr. Zarecki explains. It is also an important point of contact for many seniors. "Sometimes we are the first to know when a client is sick and needs help."

Then there are the critical transport services.

"Getting a ride to an appointment can be very difficult for many seniors," Mr. Zarecki says, "Our van service is in great demand, and we also work with other outside agencies to share transport needs. If our vans are free, we will help wherever it's needed."

While the work to help those in our community clearly shows JFS's mission to strengthen Jewish life in the spirit of Tikkun Olam, there is a large component of helping the broader community that merits celebrating. By reaching out to all those in need, JFS is a proud bridge-builder between Jewish Ottawa and the entire city.

An example of this is JFS's involvement with Refugee 613. Refugee 613 is a coalition of individuals, agencies, and community groups working to help refugees. Most recently, this coalition helped as many as 1,500 Syrian refugees integrate into our city.

Working with the Muslim community, JFS has made great inroads in relationship building. Mr. Zarecki has been invited to speak at mosques and was moved to see the JFS sign even translated into Arabic at one such event. Mr. Zarecki also shared how he has witnessed several cases where contact with JFS has been a person's first experience with Jewish culture and values. The positive interaction has led to meaningful mutual understanding that touches people's hearts and minds and has resulted in the Jewish community gaining new supporters.

Indeed, we can all be proud of JFS's life-saving work and the respect this has brought to our whole Jewish community. This agency is putting into action the Talmud quote that says: "Whoever saves one life, saves the entire world."

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.

What does the Bible say about lying?

When a Lie is Not a Sin: The Hebrew Bible's Framework for Deciding

By Rabbi Dennis S. Ross
Jewish Lights Publishing
176 pages

Although the laws of the Torah clearly encourage people to speak the truth, many biblical figures – including the patriarchs and matriarchs – lie. Everyone from Adam to Moses either tells an untruth or lies by omission. In *When a Lie is Not a Sin: The Hebrew Bible's Framework for Deciding*, Rabbi Dennis S. Ross explores biblical lies in context and offers lessons on how to discover when it's permissible to tell a lie.

Rabbi Ross notes that not all lies are punished in the Bible. For example, “when Abraham and Sarah decide to lie about their marriage with ‘We’re sibs,’ the Hebrew Bible not only smiled on that lie, it goes on to brag that the early Hebrews are eventually blessed to walk away from that incident with a caravan full of swag.” On the other hand, in Exodus 23:7, God tells the Israelites to “keep far from a falsehood.” Can these two parts of the text be reconciled?

Before discussing this idea, Rabbi Ross explores an essential question about the biblical text itself: Did the events in the Torah actually occur? If not, then some say that any debate is irrelevant because the text itself is a falsehood. However, Rabbi Ross believes that the Torah tells a different type of truth than that found in academia: it teaches spiritual and moral truths. He notes, “The Hebrew Bible’s truth is not like the scientific truth that tells us when water freezes or boils, what the earth is made of, and how the weather came to be. The Hebrew Bible’s truth is not the historical truth that pinpoints what happened in ancient times – who, where, what, when, how, or why.” He believes that whether or not the events actually happened is less important than the lessons we can learn from them.

The central section of the book looks at the biblical

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN THE REPORTER, VESTAL, N.Y. BOOK REVIEW

text, focusing on everything from “little lies” (white lies, embellishments, half-truths, paternalistic lies, etc.) to “big lies” (lying to protect oneself, lying to get ahead, lying to hurt others, etc.). Rabbi Ross notes that even God tells white lies; for example, when God doesn’t tell Abraham that Sarah said he was too old to have another child. He also notes that ancient rabbis discussed when lies can be told so that someone’s feelings aren’t hurt.

One rabbinic debate focuses on whether or not one should tell a bride she’s beautiful if she’s not. The majority opinion is that the person should lie. However, Rabbi Ross suggests that the reason the opposing opinion (not to lie) also appears in the rabbinic text is to remind people that there are situations when the truth should be told – for example, a friend telling the bride the truth about how she looks in a dress in order to prevent her from being embarrassed in public.

Rabbi Ross notes that even when telling these types of lies, it’s important to consider the possible ramifications. For example, lying can cause hard feelings and almost destroy a family, as seen in the Jacob story. When Jacob pretends to be Esau in order to receive their father’s blessing, Esau is so furious, he’s ready to kill his brother. In order to prevent this from happening, Jacob is sent to

his mother Rebecca’s family to live.

Lying also affects Jacob’s life there. Rebecca’s brother Laban gives his oldest daughter, Leah, to Jacob as a bride rather than the daughter he promised. That lie also affects Leah. She is the unloved wife who seeks comfort by having children.

Rabbi Ross looks at rabbinic interpretations of these texts with some rabbis condemning the behaviour while others find ways to excuse what occurred.

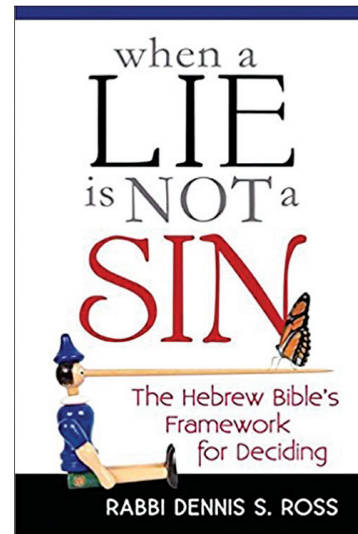
In the concluding section of his work, Rabbi Ross uses the biblical text to create a framework for deciding whether or not to tell a lie. For example, he offers ques-

tions one should consider before speaking: “What if I told the truth?”; “Is a law or code of ethics involved?”; “Have I considered a test of publicity?” – meaning, what would happen if one is discovered to have told a lie?; “Am I prepared to take responsibility?”; “Am I under duress?”; “How would I feel if someone lied to me like this?”; “After the fact: Do I express repentance and ask forgiveness?”

For Rabbi Ross, one of the most important things for a person to consider is whether or not he is lying to himself about his reasons for speaking a falsehood. Even if someone does feel the need to lie, he should acknowledge what is really occurring. Rabbi Ross also

believes that we need to struggle with the texts where God lies because those instances don’t necessarily excuse any falsehoods we tell. To put this in perspective, he discusses his work in medical ethics, which provides a practical framework to the questions raised.

When a Lie is Not a Sin does succeed in offering readers a way to understand how lying can affect our lives. Placing the discussion in a biblical and rabbinical context helps present Jewish approaches to the problem. The book is easy to read, although those unfamiliar with the biblical elements will need to keep a Bible handy in order to understand the tales in context.





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IN APPRECIATION

Thank you to the many friends and extended family who sent cards, donations and e-mails with messages remembering their interactions with **TEENA HENDELMAN** (z”l), dearly beloved wife of Walter and mother of Lisanne. We are deeply appreciative of your thoughtfulness, kindness, caring, generosity and support.

Walter and Lisanne Hendelman

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WHAT'S GOING ON | March 20 to April 2, 2017

FOR MORE CALENDAR LISTINGS, VISIT WWW.JEWISHOTTAWA.COM/COMMUNITY-CALENDAR

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

Ottawa Jewish Community School Open House:

All are welcome, particularly anyone interested in or thinking about attending OJCS next year. Chat with OJCS parents, board members and teachers over a glass of wine. An opportune time to have curriculum questions answered. There will be a short presentation and video about what the school has to offer.

Please RSVP by March 20.

100 Versilia Drive, 7 pm.

Info/RSVP: Jennifer Greenberg, 613-722-0020, ext. 345, j.greenberg@theojs.ca

The Polish "Blue Police" and the Holocaust:

Professor Jan Grabowski, a University of Ottawa historian, speaks about his new book, which examines the role of Poland's police force in crimes against the Jewish populations under the Nazi regime, 7:30 pm.

Info: Roslyn Wollock, 613-798-9818 ext. 254, rwollock@jccottawa.com

SUNDAY, MARCH 26

Soloway JCC Annual Biathlon:

A fun day of fitness. Put together your team of 12, or be placed on a team, and spin and swim to help raise funds for the Soloway JCC, 8:30 am.

Info: Carla Gencher, 613-798-9818, ext. 278, cgencher@jccottawa.com

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29

Women's Torah Study with Rabbi Zuker:

Join Rabbi Deborah Zuker in her home for a monthly Women's Torah Study, on subjects related to women in the Torah and Jewish tradition. Members and non-members welcome. Also April 26, June 21, 7 pm.

Info/RSVP: Rabbi Deborah Zuker, rabbizuker@kehillatbethisrael.com

SUNDAY, APRIL 2

Annual Passover Fair:

Featuring handcrafted items in holiday fabric by Amit chapter CHW, Designs by Sharron, Israeli jewelry, books, Passover gifts, aprons, wine bags in Passover fabric. Na'amat will have pre-ordered Kosher for Passover wine for pick up. Extra bottles also available. A collaboration of Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW), Na'amat Canada and Congregation Beit Tikvah. Congregation Beith Tikvah, 15 Chartwell Ave., 10:30 am.

Info: shul@cbto.org

or <http://www.cbto.org/Contact.htm>

PJ Library presents

Ottawa Talmud Torah's Passover Party:

Take part in special holiday crafts, story readings, the crossing of the Red Sea, and delicious treats.

Congregation Machzikei Hadas, 2310 Virginia Dr., 2 pm.

Info: Ariel Fainer, 613-798-4696 ext. 240, afainer@jewishottawa.com

COMING SOON

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Yiddish is Alive and Well:

Rebecca Margolis demonstrates the myriad ways in which Yiddish is thriving. Who is speaking, singing, reading and writing today? Who is producing and watching Yiddish film and theatre? No Yiddish knowledge required. Thursdays until April 27, 1 to 2:30 pm.

Info: Roslyn Wollock, 613-798-9818 ext. 254, rwollock@jccottawa.com

MONDAY, APRIL 10

Gourmet Passover Seder at Machzikei:

Join Rabbi Idan Scher for a beautiful gourmet communal Seder on the first night of Passover. Reservations available for family tables.

Machzikei Hadas, 2310 Virginia Dr., 7:30 pm.

Info: CMH office, 613-521-9700, office@cmhottawa.com

CANDLE LIGHTING BEFORE

MARCH 24	7:00 PM	SECOND DAY OF PESACH
MARCH 31	7:09 PM	APRIL 11 after 8:25 PM
APRIL 7	7:18 PM	APRIL 14 7:27 PM
FIRST DAY OF PESACH		SEVENTH DAY OF PESACH
APRIL 10	7:22 PM	APRIL 16 7:29 PM

BULLETIN DEADLINES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29	FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19	FOR MAY 8

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:

Sharlene Day

Sandra Levinson

Nelly Shifferer, Germany
(mother of Ellen Fathi)

Dr. Irving Soloway

*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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