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‘Life is defined by the choices we make’

Gillian Presner told her inspiring story of choices in the face of a difficult situation at the annual Choices event for women. **Louise Rachlis** reports.

When physician and mother Gillian Presner gave her acceptance speech for the Freiman Family Young Leadership Award on June 14 at the Jewish Federation of Ottawa annual general meeting, the Choices committee decided their worldwide search for a keynote speaker for the annual event scheduled for November 1 at Kehillat Beth Israel was over.

Because of the young Ottawa native’s “positivity, strength and determination, the choice became clear,” said Choices Co-Chair Jen Zaret. For the first time in 11 years, the Choices speaker did not come from outside the community.

Choices is an annual women’s event presented by the Jewish Federation of Ottawa Women’s Campaign that is designed to inspire women to become involved and make choices that can affect change in their community. Co-Chair Jackie Barwin thanked the sold-out crowd of 300 for attending and paid tribute to all who helped make the evening a success.

Standing at the microphone in a striped emerald dress, her short dark hair highlighted by a tinge of pink, Presner, 38, spoke frankly about how her life of “great privilege – comfortable home, loving family, never lacking necessities, access to an excellent education, and good health” – was shattered 15 months ago by a devastating medical diagnosis.

“When you’re in your mid-30s, with a three-year-old and a one-year-old, and about to have a newborn, and



HOWARD SANDLER

(From left) Choices Co-Chair Jackie Barwin, Jewish Federation of Ottawa President and CEO Andrea Freedman, keynote speaker Gillian Presner, Annual Campaign Co-Chair Aviva Ben-Choreen, Choices Co-Chair Jen Zaret and Annual Campaign Co-Chair Sharon Appotive gather at the Choices event, November 1, at Kehillat Beth Israel.

you’re told you have a malignant tumour the size of a tennis ball in your brain, there is no lemonade to be had,” she said. All you can do is pick up those lemons and do the best you can to either learn to juggle them, or, more likely, just learn to look at them in a new way so they don’t make you cry.”

A graduate of Hillel Academy (now the Ottawa Jewish Community School) who attended Jewish summer camps, Presner is a longtime community volunteer. She joined her husband, Neil, and family members

Bernie and Donna Dolansky, and Shawna Dolansky and Grant Overland, as co-chairs of Federation’s Annual Campaign kickoff last year while also still canvassing for the campaign, as she has done annually since 2008.

After her diagnosis, she was suddenly inconsolable, she said. “All I could see and focus on was my imminent demise.”

Presner said friend Staci Zemlak-Kenter helped her reframe her “limited time” as “deliberate time.”

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Choices: Presner stresses ‘the absolutely amazing power of community’

Continued from page 1

“However, for a long while, this held me back even further. By my regular standards, I wasn’t using my ‘deliberate time’ well enough,” Presner declared.

One of her epiphanies this year, she said, is that “it is normal, healthy, and, indeed good to be ‘good enough.’ I can be a ‘good enough’ mom, wife, person, doctor, and patient – excelling in some things but not all, and still experience success and happiness... I will continue doing the best I can every day and be content in the knowledge that this has to be ‘good enough.’”

For instance, she said, “I no longer wear makeup aside from when I’m ‘dressing up’ and I want to wear it for me. To be honest, I no longer care what the strangers I meet throughout the day think of my face.”

She said she frames everything in her life by her role as a mother, and her legacy.

“For me, this underscores the importance of raising my children with good values, ambition, confidence and a sense of family and community, and self-discipline. I don’t want my kids defining themselves through the lenses of others, as I did for far too long.

“We all have horrible days, but we can be thankful, on those days, for the wonderful things we do have. And that changes everything. For example, while I have been generally well since my initial recovery, I still struggle with the effects of both my cancer itself and of its treatment,” she said.

“I can’t return to the career I love full-time because of difficulty with high-level decision making under pressure and multi-tasking, and from time to time I still feel the effects of my intra-operative stroke. However, I’m thankful every day for these struggles because it reminds me that I’m here to have them, and the fact that these are at the fore means that I’m not yet struggling with a much bigger demon – recurrence.”

Presner said she decided not to devote any of her limited energy to feeling guilt.

“What has happened to me has also completely changed the way I view getting older. While I still fret about my little grey hairs, I’m also happy I’ve made it to the point of my life to have them, and that I can have fun covering them up with bright pink. I relish and savour birthdays like never before. I love learning new things and I take great joy in planning for my



Keynote speaker Gillian Presner addresses the annual Choices event for women, November 1, at Kehillat Beth Israel.

HOWARD SANDLER

family’s future, picturing it as I plan, instead of being devastated that I will probably miss most of it.”

Presner also spoke about the “absolutely amazing power of community” and stressed the importance of choosing a partner who will be “both our greatest champion and our most honest critic.

“In keeping with my philosophy of not forgetting myself, I will *not* say that I owe all my successes to Neil Presner, but I certainly do owe a great deal.

“I’m sure it’s clear by now,” she said, “that I think

that life and what we take from it is defined by the choices we make... If I inspire even one of you to look at your life through a bit of a different lens, I’ll be very happy and excited.”

Presner used ice cream as a metaphor for her current outlook on life.

“I’m absolutely committed to making my latter years my best years,” she said. “In that vein, I encourage all of you to do the same. Go out there, jump in with both feet, and eat all the ice cream with your face.”

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A capacity audience of 300 attends Choices, an annual event of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa Women’s Campaign.

HOWARD SANDLER

A frustrating encounter with the Israeli bureaucracy

Elana and Roger Keen of Ottawa will be making aliyah to Israel in early 2018. On a pre-aliyah trip to their new home in Modi'in they wanted to buy a used car. Roger Keen tells their story.

This is the sad story of how my cousin, my wife and I tried, and failed, to change the ownership of a used car. As with all good stories, it started with the best of intentions.

My wife Elana and I intend to make aliyah from Ottawa to Modi'in in a few months. We've got the apartment, the fridge, stove, washing machine and the pots, pans and cutlery. We're in Modi'in for a couple of months on a pre-Aliyah trip.

We found out that our cousin in Holon was trading in her three-year-old, low mileage, car for a new one. Great, we'll buy the car so that when we arrive we'll have a car ready and waiting for us. That's when the trouble started. We don't have enough money with us so we'll have to get it from Ottawa. We arranged for the money transfer through a transfer services agency and then spoke to our bank in Ottawa.

"Please," we said, "we'd like some of our money to pay for what will be our car."

"No way," said our Ottawa bank adviser (whose job description says he is there to help us). "You have to be here in person to make a money transfer."

"But you know us," we said.

"That is of no importance," said the banker, "you must be here in person."

There was no way out of that roadblock.

"Bye-bye, car," we said to our cousin.

Then our eldest son, who lives in Israel, stepped forward.

"I have the money, I'll loan it to you," he said.

"Hello again, car," we said to our cousin.

The money was duly transferred in a most efficient manner.

Off now to the Modi'in post office to make arrangements for the ownership transfer. There we found out that the car ownership transfer could not be done for us at the post office because we were still considered tourists. They told us only the Transportation Ministry could arrange the transfer.

Our cousin suggested the Transportation Ministry head office in Holon would be the best place to do the transfer. So early one Sunday morning we drove to head



Roger and Elana Keen at Gan Haim, the moshav where their eldest son lives, August 22.



The used car that Roger and Elana Keen will finally own once they make aliyah in 2018.

office, got our number, met our cousin and waited for a good two-and-a-half hours. We saw the whole gamut of Holon society walk past us as we were sitting waiting.

All of a sudden our number was up (in a manner of speaking) and the three of us went to see the clerk behind the glass barrier.

"We're here from Ottawa, Canada. We've bought my cousin's car and would like to change the ownership,"

we said, full of enthusiasm.

"I need to see a 12-digit number on the visa stamp in your passport before I can do the transfer," the clerk said.

"We don't get stamps on our passports anymore. That little slip of paper with a nine-digit number is our entry visa," we replied.

"Sorry," said the clerk. "I need to have a 12-digit number on the visa stamp in your passport."

We asked to see a supervisor. The supervisor came, looked at the three of us very seriously, looked at our passports, our visa slips of paper, and our cousin's *Teudat Zeut* (Israeli ID).

"I need to have a 12-digit number on the visa stamp in your passport before I can do the transfer," the supervisor said.

We'd heard that line somewhere before. Realizing we were not getting anywhere we left the office.

OK, so now we have to get an old fashioned physical visa stamp in the innovation nation. Where to go? Our youngest son said the Ramle office of the Population and Immigration Ministry was the place to go.

On the Tuesday morning we went to Ramle. We waited patiently in line, talked with the information desk and were told that the visa section was only open early in the morning. We were too late for that day. We were told to come back early on Thursday morning as the office is not open on Wednesdays.

On Wednesday we tried the Transportation Ministry office in Ramle to see if the ownership transfer could be done there. No luck. Holon is the only place where this can be done. We went back to Holon to for the suggested second opinion, waited the regulation two-and-a-half hours, and got our second opinion. The second opinion was the same as first opinion. At least the Transportation Ministry is consistent.

When we asked for a written explanation of what was required, the clerk said "I am not going to tell the Visa Department how to do their job."

Thursday morning we were back in Ramle bright and early, second in line. We talked with the visa clerk who was very helpful but very confused.

"Why would anybody need a physical visa stamp?" she asked.

We didn't know. She didn't know. Bottom line: there is no visa stamp. The entry slip is our visa. No car ownership change.

At this point we admitted defeat. The bureaucracy had won despite our best efforts. In the end our youngest son took ownership of the car. We'll get the ownership back after we've made aliyah, got our *Teudat Zeut* and visited our friendly Modi'in post office.

Memo to Transportation Ministry: Please update your car ownership transfer procedures for tourists like us. Todah rabah.

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Author to tell shocking story of the ‘Nazi Titanic’

BY LOUISE RACHLIS

In *The Nazi Titanic*, author Robert Watson tells the tragic story of the SS Cap Arcona, a German luxury ocean liner that has been used by the Nazis to play the Titanic in a propaganda film. Later it was used as a transport ship during the Second World War. Near the end of the war the ship was packed with concentration camp prisoners when it was mistakenly bombed by the British Royal Air Force. Nearly all of the prisoners died in the attack.

“It was one of the single most bloody events of the Holocaust – a real whopper – and people are curious and even outraged that the British government would try to keep it a secret. What were they trying to cover up?” said Watson in recent telephone interview with the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin.

Watson said he has been occasionally approached by Holocaust deniers at appearances where he has told the story.

“This is shocking. When I hear that I’m angry and saddened, and yet inspired to go out and tell the story even more. In 2017 it’s flat-out lunacy that we still have to discuss whether the Holocaust ever happened,” he said. “We have to be ever vigilant. Journalists and historians have a responsibility to make this front and centre in our work.



There are many stories about the Holocaust still to be discovered, says historian Robert Watson.

“As a historian, I always tell my students there is always more we *don’t* know about history than we *do* know,” said Watson, a professor at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida.

“With the Holocaust, forests worth of pages have been filled up and yet there are still secrets,” he said. “We owe it to those who’ve been lost to keep digging... We need to tell the stories to every future generation.”

Watson, who has been teaching for three decades, originally intended to write about the end of the Second World War.

“We didn’t know much about the last couple of days of the war,” he said. “That’s because in the final few days, the Nazis were either dead, dying, or on the run, and so they didn’t document everything as well as they had before, and all the chaos swirled around. I was looking for stories of love and loss, to tell the story of the last week in a personal way.”

While digging around for stories, he found a letter written by a British officer who described the bombing of the SS Cap Arcona.

“I was shocked. I’d never heard of it!” said Watson.

Because books on the war hadn’t mentioned the Cap Arcona story, he initially assumed the account had been a mistake. He then came across a few small stories on the topic, but they had “no scholarly rigour.”

When Watson pursued his own research on the subject, he found out that the story was true.

“The British were so mortified by

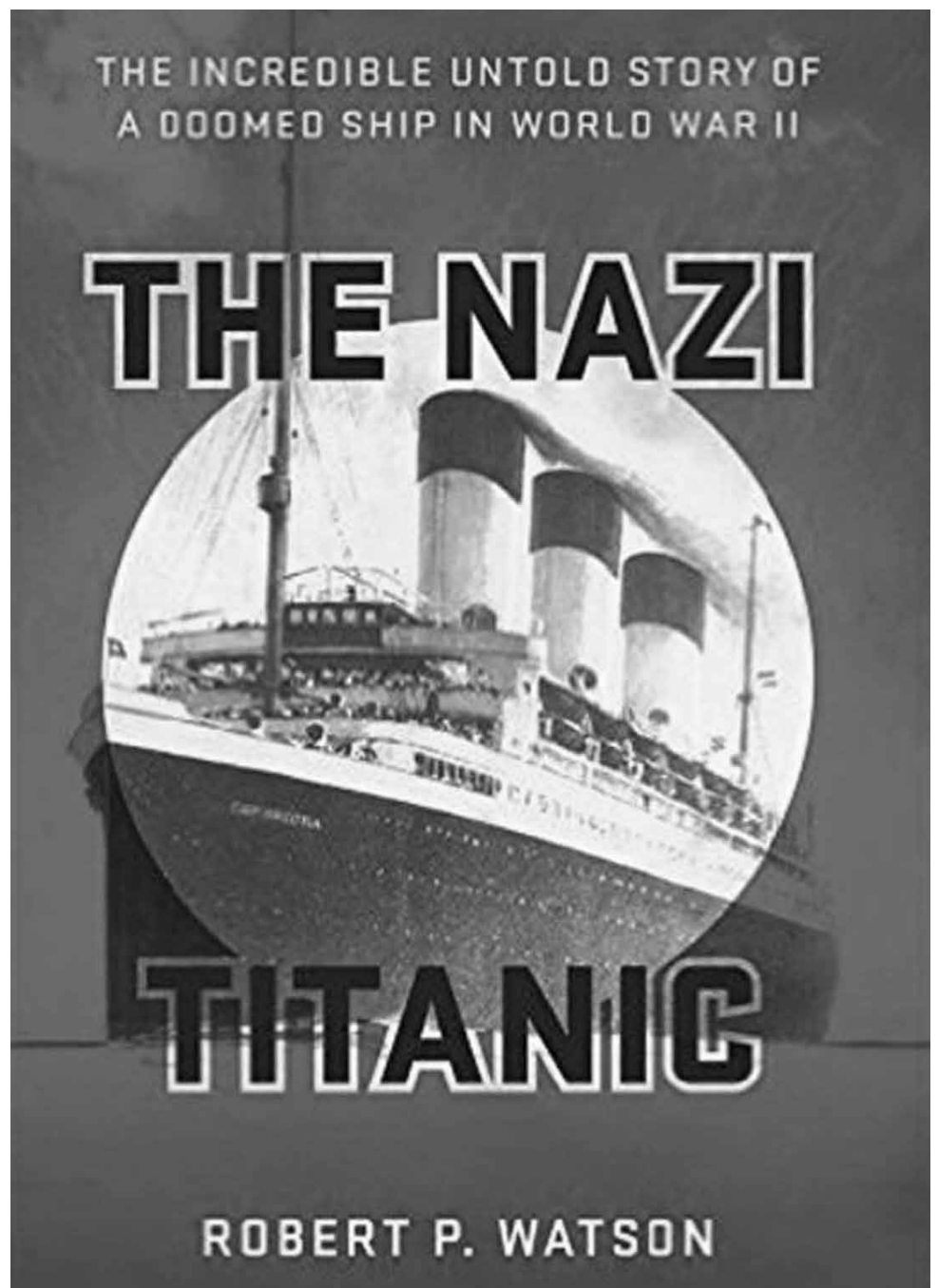
what they’d done, they declared that all reports about that event were classified top secret and locked away in London. There they sat for decades.”

When he began his research, a few documents had been declassified, but nobody had looked at them.

“The British government has now declassified everything,” said Watson. “I sat down and read everything, to tell this tragic story. I feel the whole world needs to use this as a lesson as to what can happen if we aren’t vigilant.”

Watson will be in Ottawa during Holocaust Education Month to discuss this tragic story on Wednesday, November 29, 7 pm, at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre at an event presented by the Shoah (Holocaust) Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa. Admission is free of charge and copies of *The Nazi Titanic* will be available for sale.

For more information, contact Natalie Abenhaim at 613-798-4696, ext. 355, or nabenhaim@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.

Freda Paltiel 1924-2003

Pioneering advocate for women's health issues

By Saara Mortensen
Ottawa Jewish Archives

Freda Paltiel was born in Montreal in 1924 and was educated at Queen's University in Kingston, McGill University in Montreal, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem Medical School in Israel, where she received her master's degree in public health in 1966. While living in Israel, she set up and ran the medical-social services at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem.

After graduation, she returned to Ottawa to work as a research associate for the Royal Commission on Health Services, the Senate Committee on Aging, and the Canadian Welfare Council, where she produced a book on poverty. In 1967, she joined the federal civil service as senior research officer in the Department of National Health and Welfare.

In 1971, Paltiel received a special

assignment to act as coordinator, status of women, for the Privy Council Office to coordinate the implementation of the recommendations in the Royal Commission on the Status of Women's report. In 1973, she returned to the Department of National Health and Welfare, where she remained until her retirement in 1993, serving as the special adviser, status of women, to the minister of health and welfare.

A recognized authority in the fields of health and social policy, Paltiel devoted two decades to conceptualization, policy and program development to bring about gender equality and social equity in Canada and abroad. She was an action-oriented researcher and advocate of mental health, working with community and professional groups.

Paltiel served on many boards and committees. She chaired Canadian task forces on both family violence



against women and women's reproductive health, and was the federal representative and the first chair of the federal/provincial/territorial working group on women's health. She served as adviser to the World Health Organization on women's health and development and on family health. Paltiel represented Canada at World Population Conferences, meetings of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the International Social Security Association and meet-

ings of the Pan American Health Organization.

Locally, she served as president of the Ottawa chapter of Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University, was an honorary national vice-president of Women's Canadian ORT and was a member of the board of ZONTA Club of Ottawa – an organization of professionals working to empower women worldwide through service and advocacy. Paltiel established endowments in women's health and development at each of her alma maters. In addition, she was involved in many voluntary activities nationally and internationally.

Following her retirement, Paltiel was named to the Medical Research Council's Advisory Committee on Research of Women's Health and to the advisory committee of DES Action Canada. Paltiel was appointed to the Order of Canada in 1993 for her contributions in creating an impressive network of organizations that deal with the health and social status of women.

Freda Paltiel was married to Khayyam Zev Paltiel and they were the parents of four children: Jeremy, Candida, Ari and Ora.



Next in the series

Leonard Cohen 1934-2016

Legendary poet, novelist, songwriter and singer



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FEDERATION
REPORT



RABBI MARK ROSE
NCSY

NCSY and Torah High offer programs for Jewish teens

and philosophy. A face lift of Torah High has replaced the old model – a social, recreational program that dabbled in informal discussions about Judaism – to a serious program that offers a credit in exchange for teens’ fulfilling academic requirements that meet the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines.

Since taking on the role of NCSY Ottawa’s executive director this fall, I have shared my passion for strengthening and developing new programs. I am pleased to say the changes have taken hold and are gathering momentum as the programming is attracting a larger swath of Ottawa’s Jewish teens. While the course requirements must meet ministry guidelines, the material is nevertheless relevant and interesting, and all classes are taught in an exciting interactive format in a casual environment.

Classes always include free food and take place in Centrepointe at the NCSY Teen Centre, which is outfitted with large flat-screen TVs, PS4, Xbox, couch-

es, computers, Wi-Fi, and an ice cream tub machine. Teens get the best of both worlds – an environment that allows them to investigate and delve into their Jewish heritage with courses delivered by highly qualified teachers, while socializing with like-minded peers in an environment that is just hip and cool enough to make it appealing.

NCSY Canada, whose mission is to connect, inspire and empower Jewish teens and encourage passionate Judaism through recreational and educational programming in a more informal context, is also growing. School clubs for Jewish teens have been launched, where teens meet in their home high schools for an hour of casual discussion and socializing.

A record number of Ottawa teens also signed up for NCSY’s annual Shabbaton in Niagara Falls in November where they spent a Shabbat together with teens from Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton for an amazing,

inspirational experience.

Other notable events include: the launching of Learn n’ Earn, also in November, which is a six-week pilot program where teens get together to learn Jewish themes with mentors in exchange for a monetary stipend; and a Havdalah party that marked the end of the Shabbat Project weekend, October 27-28, a grassroots movement that aims to attract as many families across the religious spectrum and from a multitude of backgrounds as possible to celebrate one Shabbat together.

NCSY and Torah High are also looking ahead to the summer, offering early bird deals on NCSY’s summer programming, among which is the organization’s flagship and highly popular TJJ trips, where teens tour Israel for four weeks.

So, while modern culture offers the transient taste of fun to Ottawa’s Jewish teens, NCSY and Torah High are able to cut through the fast-paced noise of modernity to offer something meaningful to Jewish high school teens in Ottawa.

To register for Learn n’ Earn, or one of NCSY’s summer programs, please email me at rabbimark@ncsy.ca.

Who would have thought that public high school teens would opt to take a Jewish course to help fulfil their high school credit requirements? Yet that is exactly what is happening at Torah High, a supplementary Jewish school that offers a variety of courses for high school credits.

Many Ottawa teens are discovering their Jewish identities and making positive connections with their community at Torah High, a school that offers a variety of courses on Jewish topics such as ethics

FROM THE
PULPIT



RABBI EYTAN KENTER
KEHILLAT BETH ISRAEL

‘Even when something is repaired, it is never the same’

to God, telling the Almighty that he has destroyed God’s gift. God then tells Moses to write his own set of the tablets (which brings us to four tablets in total) as the Divine set had been broken and could not be replaced. After another 40 days, Moses returned with the divinely authored broken set and the humanly crafted whole set and both were placed in the Ark of the Covenant to accompany the Israelites on their journey.

The question can be asked why both sets of tablets were kept? We had a new, properly constructed set of tablets, why did we need to keep the broken remains of the first? Why did we want to carry with us that reminder of Moses’ and the Israelites’ greatest sin?

I suggest that the reason for keeping both sets is that we need to remember that even after Moses created his own set of tablets, his relationship with God wasn’t the same. While the sin of the golden calf was in the past, the memory of the pain felt by Moses and God, and the embarrassment of the people, did not go away. Even when something is repaired, it is never the same as it was.

In our lives, we spend a lot of

time fixing problems, but not nearly enough time acknowledging the brokenness behind them. When we forgive someone else, that does not mean that the hurt and pain of the transgression has vanished. Sometimes the appropriate action is, in fact, not attempting to ‘fix it,’ but simply recognizing the real pain and challenge that exists. The new tablets were placed in the Ark of the Covenant to represent our desire to repair our relationship with God, but keeping the broken set also reminds us that we need to accept and acknowledge the broken feelings have not gone away.

There is very real brokenness that exists in our personal lives, in the larger world, and yes, in our Jewish world as well. There are ways that each of us causes real harm and pain because of our beliefs and actions. And we must find ways to try to repair those breaches. But perhaps even more importantly, we need to accept and acknowledge that being human means being broken and, in that shared brokenness, we can gather together – just as we did around the Ark of the Covenant.

The Torah tells a story of four tablets. Not the three tablets of History of the World fame or the two tablets we sing about on Passover, but rather the four tablets that are created sharing the Ten Commandments as well as representing the special connection between God and the Jewish people. The first two tablets were written by the finger of God. God presented these tablets to Moses to share with the Jewish people.

But meanwhile, back in the camp, the Israelites had built a golden calf and were worshipping it. Moses was so angered by the sight that he threw the tablets down at the calf destroying the idol, but also the tablets. The remnants were collected in the aftermath and Moses sheepishly returned

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FROM THE EDITOR



MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

According to data from the 2016 census released late last month, there are now 143,665 Canadians who define their ethnicity – in whole or part – as Jewish. This represents a decline of well over 50 per cent from 2011 when 309,650 Canadians reported their ethnicity as Jewish in the National Household Survey.

“Obviously,” as Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) CEO Shimon Koffler Fogel told the Canadian Press (CP), “the Jewish community didn’t shrink by more than half in the past five years.”

Indeed, Jewish identity is a complicated matter and it’s not just a matter of religion. There is also Jewish ethnicity – which might manifest in historical or cultural identification, and in concepts of Jewish peoplehood, Jewish

Census data needs to be reliable

nationhood, and Jewish community.

While our aging population and low birth rate may have resulted in some decline in Canada’s Jewish population in the five years between 2011 and 2016, there could not have been the kind of statistical change we see in the 2016 numbers published by Statistics Canada.

So, how to explain the huge difference?

The problem it seems was in the methodology used to determine ethnicity. While everyone filling out a census form writes in their ethnicity (or ethnicities), ‘Jewish’ was not among the 28 ethnicities listed as possible suggestions in 2016. ‘Jewish’ was among the suggestions listed in 2011.

It’s only natural that many – if not most – people filling out the form will look at the suggestions and choose an answer from among them. And that can be especially problematic for measuring the Jewish population in census years like 2016 when religion is not even measured. (Religion is measured in the census every 10 years and is scheduled to be measured again in 2021.)

How did Statistics Canada determine which ethnicities to list as possible suggestions on the form?

Demographer Charles Shahar, the chief researcher at Federation CJA in Montreal, explains that 20 of the choices represent-

ed the ethnicities which received the most responses in the 2011 survey, four represented examples of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and four more were chosen as examples representing different geographic regions from around the world.

‘Jewish’ was the 22nd most popular response to the 2011 survey so was left off the list of suggestions for 2016 (Shahar notes that each of the four examples chosen to represent geographic regions – ‘Lebanese,’ ‘Mexican,’ ‘Somali’ and ‘Colombian’ – all had smaller responses than ‘Jewish’ in the 2011 survey).

And if Statistics Canada uses the top 20 from 2016 to determine the suggestions for 2021, ‘Jewish’ will certainly not be included as that response fell to 47th place among Canadian ethnicities in the obviously skewed 2016 census.

Accurate census numbers are a vital tool for long-term planning. Community organizations, governments of all levels, school boards, universities, hospitals, social service agencies, transportation boards and many other bodies rely on accurate census data to help determine how they serve their communities and clientele.

Clearly, the deeply flawed 2016 numbers are not useful to Jewish community organizations – including federations such as the Jewish Federation of Otta-

wa – that rely on the data to formulate policy and make plans in such areas as education and assisting vulnerable segments of the community.

According to Shahar, “The 2021 census ethnicity question must include ‘Jewish’ as a sample choice in order for the question to accurately identify Jews... Otherwise the census will lose its usefulness as a primary source of demographic information.”

This is something that CIJA has quickly prioritized in the face of the 2016 numbers.

“Our goal is to propose constructive reforms to the government in order to improve the census and rectify this critical shortcoming,” said Fogel in a statement provided to the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin.

The point of providing examples on the form is to help Canadians understand the kinds of possibilities they can include when responding about their ethnic or multi-ethnic identities on the census form. And because Jewish ethnicity and identity can be a more complex matter than ethnicities like Italian or Greek, it is vital that ‘Jewish’ be given as an example on future census forms beginning in 2021.

Census data needs to be reliable. At least in one area, the 2016 census results are anything but.

IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS



JASON MOSCOVITZ

The honeymoon is over and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is not sitting as pretty as he once was. He is looking tired and his voice has been nervously running at a higher pitch. He and his government are showing their age.

After the excitement of a resounding election victory, it is only a matter of time before the warts start to appear. After two years, at the midpoint of the mandate, the Trudeau government is now facing a fact of electoral life. The people never love you forever.

After the huge Progressive Conservative majority victory in 1984, I spoke to one of the architects of the win. Being a realist, I asked how he felt knowing that

Will the finance minister ever see ‘sunny days’ again?

one day his party would be thrown out of office. A newly elected government, he said, was like a baby: new and innocent for as long as it lasts.

Innocence was lost when Finance Minister Bill Morneau couldn’t convey the right messages about his tax reform plan. His pitch was aimed at making more middle income people feel that there was tax fairness in Canada, but it unraveled under the heavy weight of Morneau being a wealthy man using loopholes the rich have perfected.

And then the second shoe fell.

Trudeau and his family had set up a family trust to keep as much of the family fortune as possible away from the Canada Revenue Agency. These revelations make speeches on tax fairness lose their lustre in a hurry. What a silly road the Liberals took and what a scar on their credibility.

Politics is often about a moment in time when someone can mark the day when the floodgates sprang open. The Trudeau government’s moment may have been when the prime minister and the finance minister appeared together to try to rescue their tax

reform plan. For a very obvious reason, Trudeau felt compelled to answer all the reporters’ questions himself – even when a reporter asked a direct question of Morneau.

The obvious reason was that Trudeau thought he could respond better than his finance minister. That points to a lack of confidence in Morneau, his most important minister. A finance minister with a credibility problem is like a hockey player who can’t skate.

The spectacle on television had Trudeau answering with Morneau in full view, standing mute, just behind him. It was a close-up shot and you could see Morneau’s eyes as you visualized the wheels turning in his head.

Politicians are proud people with larger-than-life egos. It is a combination that also makes them so fragile. They get dramatically hurt in a hurry. Let’s remember that it was Trudeau who enticed Morneau to join his team and, undoubtedly, promised him a starring role. Morneau was humiliated by the very man who brought him to the dance.

It is not that difficult to read the mind of a politician, especially a prominent

cabinet minister, when he or she is left to dangle in the wind by their leader. The universal human instinct is to wonder why in the world they took the bait to get into the dirty game of politics.

As Trudeau answered questions you could sense Morneau thinking he would rather be vacationing at his villa in France. He would probably have been happier being anywhere else. He was probably also asking himself if he would ever see “sunny days” again as finance minister.

Finance ministers don’t come and go. Prime ministers feel most comfortable when their finance ministers stay in their jobs for years. Despite their terrible personal relationship, Paul Martin was Jean Chrétien’s finance minister for nine years. The late Jim Flaherty, Stephen Harper’s steady hand at the wheel, served as finance minister for eight years.

How long Morneau will last is now in question and the question itself is a problem for the Trudeau Liberals. It is not to say that the Morneau saga will ultimately lead to the defeat of the government, but it does mean, at minimum, that a few more notches have fallen off the government’s credibility scale.

The government needs to contain this damage before other things unravel because of it.



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The Shabbat Project

Many of Ottawa's congregations and community organizations held special programs to mark the fifth annual Shabbat Project observance of Shabbat on October 27 and 28. More than one million people in 1,416 cities and 97 countries participated in some way. Hundreds of communities – including Ottawa – hosted challah bakes in the days leading up to the Shabbat, attracting dozens to hundreds of participants.

The sold-out Women's Community Challah Bake, organized by the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, was held October 26 at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre.



Women's Community Challah Bake Co-Chairs Bonnie Engel (left) and Sari Zelenietz demonstrate how to prepare the challah dough for baking.



One of the many tables of challah bakers that filled the SJCC social hall gather for a photo during the Women's Community Challah Bake, October 26.



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Fulfilling her life's passions on the Hill Senator Linda Frum shares her insights

Speaking to a sold-out JNF Futures Women lunch event in September on Parliament Hill, Senator Linda Frum recounted the most influential female Jewish role models in her life and provided her thoughts on how to lead an inspired life.

Senator Frum gave a nod to her late mother Barbara Frum, a "truly Canadian feminist trailblazer" as the inspiration for her professional life. "I've recreated my own childhood," she said, adding that she saw that her mother "loved to work and she was a great mother."

It was her late grandmother – her mother's mother – who was her Jewish role model. She said she got her "sense of responsibility" from her grandmother. Having arrived from Europe and settling in Niagara Falls, her late grandparents sowed the seeds of Jewish life in the 1920s: they had to fund a cemetery, recruit rabbis and create the Jewish community.

Both of these influential women, she said "were strong working women and were blessed to have partners who supported them." Senator Frum counted herself among these blessed women – not just because of her supportive spouse and family, but also because she "feels blessed to live in a country [in which she is able to] speak freely for Israel."

The responsible senator says she is "a watchdog and voice for Israel" adding that she "is very vigilant and keeps an eye out for slippage [in support]."

Her vigilance is very much ingrained in her approach to living a fulfilled life. "A life focused inwards is not satisfying; if you're capable of more, do it; think about your external world."



JNF Futures Women's Luncheon chaired by Valerie Michailovich and Victoria Shore.

SOLD OUT JNF NEGEV Dinner honouring Lawrence Greenspon.

Thank you. Photos are on Facebook.

Sefer Bar Mitzvah Inscriptions

Daniel Barak, by his grandparents, Reisa and Allan Glens
Leo Benedek, by his grandparents, Magda and Peter Benedek
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MODERN MISHPOCHA

I was surprised and disheartened when I read Rabbi Eytan Kenter's second day Rosh Hashanah sermon online. It was inflammatory and disparaging of the entire Orthodox community of Ottawa. With a little investigation, I was quickly reassured that the harsh stories Rabbi Kenter told, some of which were repeated by Stephanie Shefrin in the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin (Modern Mishpocha, October 30), were either fundamentally inaccurate or highly skewed toward a negative understanding. But the damage is done and our small and fragile community has splintered further.

Many of the observant families that I know contribute significantly to the calibre of Jewish life in Ottawa, serving as both professionals and volunteers in Jewish education, the Chevra Kadisha, kashrut, daily minyanim, and countless acts of giving and caring, despite the fact that Ottawa is not the easiest of cities to raise an observant family. They do this out of a desire to contribute to our community and out of a strong commitment to Jewish life and practice. They are the unsung heroes of Jewish Ottawa. Without their presence Jewish Ottawa would lose significant vitality. It would be a shadow of what it is today.

Attacks on others make for poor politics and poor religion. It leaves everyone feeling angry and cynical. Communication breaks down and communities become polarized. Wouldn't it have made more sense for Rabbi Kenter and Stephanie Shefrin to use their forums to share the current successes and future vision of Kehillat Beth Israel (KBI)? To encourage KBI congregants to step up and engage further in Jewish life and learning; to reach out to others to share their vision and encourage friends to attend KBI services and programs?

Judaism emphasizes the damage caused by *lashon hara* (slander). It behooves every one of us to think before we speak, and even more so community leaders who speak or write in a public forum. Attack politics may work in the United States, but I prefer Canadian civility, where we recognize that as a mosaic, not a melting pot, we will have differences. Yet we choose to focus on what brings us together and we are all strengthened by that choice.

Lauren Shaps

FROM THE PULPIT, MODERN MISHPOCHA

I very much appreciated Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton's "With all of our voices" column (From the Pulpit, October 30). I read it right after Stephanie Shefrin's Modern Mishpocha column and the difference between the two, in tone and message, provided a stark contrast. Both authors seem to be calling for our community to engage with and welcome all our members, but from very different places. Rabbi Bolton speaks of the community's obligation to listen, show compassion, and work together. Shefrin criticizes community institutions and [seems to] reserve special disdain for the Ottawa Orthodox community.

The contrast between these two articles reminded me of an excellent piece by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, "Beyond the Politics of Anger" (Daily Telegraph, November 11, 2016). Rabbi Sacks reminds us that "anger is a mood, not a strategy, and it can make things worse not better. Anger never solves problems, it merely inflames them." He proposes we move beyond the "confrontational politics and divisive zero-sum thinking that have so brutalized public debate." Instead, Rabbi Sacks espouses a politics of hope, strengthening our families and communities, building a culture of collective responsibility, and moving beyond party politics.

We live in an age of callout culture and alternative facts. As a member of the Orthodox community, it has been especially painful for me personally to see misinformation and vitriol seeping into our everyday discourse. Although I feel hurt, I still believe there is room for hope. I recently had the privilege of co-chairing the Women's Community Challah Bake. Seeing women from all the different parts of our community join together to bake challah and support the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank was truly inspiring. When we put aside our differences and work together, we can make miracles happen.

I love the Ottawa Jewish community. I see the potential we have to make it even better. I hope we choose to follow Rabbi Bolton's example, finding a blessing in all of our voices, and moving forward together.

Sari Zelenietz

LETTERS WELCOME

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

Send your letters to Michael Regenstreif by email to bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com

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Rabbi Garten to lead Melton School trip to Israel

BY PAMELA ROSENBERG
SOLOWAY JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE

Students of the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning are getting the opportunity to take their learning out of the classroom and into the pages of history.

The Melton study trip to Israel is based on the graduate course “Beyond Borders: The History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict” and it is open to all Melton students and the community at large.

“The trip is perfect for anyone who has wondered about the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict,” said Rabbi Steven Garten, director of the Melton School in Ottawa. “It’s for anyone who wants unusual learning.”

The adventure begins in Tel Aviv on March 12 and wraps up on March 21 in Jerusalem. Accommodations in Israel are top notch and include the Carlton in Tel Aviv, the Pastoral Hotel in the Upper Galilee near the Golan Heights and Jerusalem’s Inbal Hotel.

Travellers will visit Israel’s borders with Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinian territories and will have the opportunity to speak with the Druze, Palestinians and Israelis – including settlers. Rabbi Garten says this is not a trip for first-time visitors as it is not a typical tourist trip of Israel.

“It’s tourism, with the value-added focus on places



Rabbi Steven Garten will lead a Melton School trip to Israel next March that will explore the Arab-Israeli conflict.

that represent where the history of the conflict began. When we go to the Golan Heights, it’s not just about the Six Day War. We’re trying to understand how Arab nationalism after the Ottoman Empire began,” explained Rabbi Garten. “In the territories, we will visit a settlement and try to understand not just biblical origins that some speak to, but how this land was part of the Ottoman Empire and how it emerges as part of the Zionist ideal.”

A project of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Melton School gives adults the opportunity to acquire Jewish literacy in an open, trans-denominational, intellectually stimulating learning environment. Ottawa is one of only two Canadian cities currently offering the program.

The Ottawa contingent will be joining Meltonians from all across the globe in Israel.

“We want to create a chavura of Ottawans that gives the trip some Canadian flavour,” said Rabbi Garten.

Current Melton courses at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre include “The Dramas of Jewish Living throughout the Ages” with Rabbi Garten, “The Ethics of Jewish Living” with Rabbi Idan Scher, and the graduate course on which the Israel trip is based.

For more information on the Melton study trip to Israel contact Rabbi Steven Garten at rabbishg@rogers.com. For more on the Melton program, contact Roslyn Wollock at rwollock@jccottawa.com.

Awad Loubani to present ideas for peace between Israelis and Palestinians

BY ESTELLE MELZER
ADATH SHALOM CONGREGATION

Adath Shalom Congregation invites Ottawa’s Jewish community to meet and listen to Awad Loubani, a Palestinian-Canadian born in a refugee camp, who is now an activist for peace between Palestinians and Israelis. The program will take place on Saturday, November 25, 8 pm, at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre.

Loubani was born in a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon in 1949. His parents were from a village in northern Galilee which they fled during Israel’s War of Independence in 1948.

He studied at UNWRA schools and graduated from the American University in Beirut with a bachelor of commerce degree. Loubani had almost completed



Palestinian-Canadian peace activist Awad Loubani will discuss potential paths toward peace between Israelis and Palestinians on November 25 at the SJCC.

Loubani has thought deeply about potential paths toward peace between Israelis and Palestinians and will share his perspective and initiatives with the community on November 25.

his MBA when the civil war in Lebanon prevented him from graduating. His thesis was on the Israeli banking system.

Loubani immigrated to Canada in 1991, earned his MBA from the University of Calgary and entered the Canadian public service. He is currently the director of Quality and Risk Management at Public Services and Procurement Canada. He also teaches at Carleton University.

Awad attended the first Peace Camp Canada for Israeli, Palestinian and Canadian youth in 2006. He became a leader of the organization and remained involved in the camp until 2014.

In 2006, Awad and his wife, Yasmeen, also participated in a 150-member, 12-country peace delegation to Israel, the Palestinian territories and Jordan.

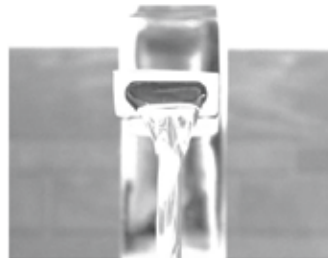
Loubani has thought deeply about potential paths toward peace between Israelis and Palestinians and will share his perspective and initiatives with the community on November 25.

There is no charge for this event. Adath Shalom Congregation encourages anyone interested in learning more about peace initiatives to attend. Space is limited so please RSVP to Estelle Melzer at estelle.melzer@gmail.com.

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Tamir models will be stepping out in style at first annual fashion show

BY KRystal VALENCIA
TAMIR FOUNDATION

Fashion blogger Dominique Baker says that much of her success is due to “the overwhelming community support I have received here in Ottawa. ‘Style Domination’ wouldn’t be the ‘little blog that could’ without all of my Ottawa-based readers.”

So Dominique has decided to focus some of her energies on giving back to the community that has supported her. She is especially excited to be part of the committee organizing Tamir Foundation’s first annual Stepping Out in Style Fashion Show, taking place Monday, November 20, 7 pm, at the Canadian War Museum.

The Tamir Foundation is dedicated to giving people with developmental disabilities the opportunity to reach their potential in a supportive Jewish environment. The Stepping Out in Style fashion show is a first in Ottawa: an all-inclusive event focused on diverse-ly-abled models taking centre stage to strut their stuff. Tamir will be partner-

ing with some amazing retailers to show that all people deserve the chance to fulfill their dreams. Funds raised by the show will be used to personalize Tamir participants’ rooms, repaint houses and replace furniture.

Preparations for the event started weeks ago. Tamir models began an intensive training program with Models International Management to learn how to walk the catwalk with poise, positive energy and pride.

“The Tamir models are absolutely killing it!” Dominique reported. “Frankly, most of the models need no training at all. They have unleashed their inner supermodels! To see the excitement on their faces and hear how thrilled they are being part of this event makes all the hearts in the room burst with excitement.”

“Models who started the lessons shyly are now ending each session excited to take centre stage and strike their best pose.”

The models will be donning both adaptive wear and retail outfits on the red carpet and catwalk.

Stefan Keyes of CTV Ottawa will host



Model Meredith Caplan receives some catwalk instruction from Megan Fuger of Models International Management as Tamir participants prepare for the “Stepping Out in Style Fashion Show,” November 20 at the Canadian War Museum.

the glittering event and DJ Paq of Hot 89.9 will spin hot beats all night.

The evening will begin with a cocktail hour and hors d’oeuvres. The fashion show will follow and the event will conclude with a dessert buffet.

For more information or to purchase tickets to Tamir’s Stepping Out In Style Fashion Show, or to make a donation in support of Tamir, contact Krystal Valencia at kvalencia@tamir.ca or 613-725-3519, ext. 104.

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photo: @dlt Maude Chauvin

Robert Hage to speak at Emunah membership event

BY LISA BOGDONOV
EMUNAH OTTAWA

In celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary, Emunah Ottawa is honoured to host a talk by Robert Hage, a former Canadian ambassador to Hungary and Slovenia, who also served in diplomatic postings in Washington, Lagos and Paris, at our upcoming annual Membership Drive on Sunday, December 10.

Hage's presentation, "Canada in the Eyes of the World," promises to be full of stimulating and insightful perceptions based on his extensive experience and travels. Hage has a unique perspective on how our country is perceived worldwide and the impressions we leave in other countries.

Hage is an executive fellow at the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy and an honorary senior fellow at the University of Ottawa Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, where he teaches a course on modern diplomacy.

A Canadian diplomat for 38 years, Hage also served as deputy head of the Canadian mission to the European

Union in Brussels, and acting head of mission at the Canadian Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

As principal counsel for the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, counsel on the Environmental Side Agreement to NAFTA, and a representative for Canada at the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, he also brings a wealth of experience in many issues to the floor.

Emunah Ottawa supports hundreds of programs and services for disadvantaged children and youth throughout Israel. Please join us for this informative and fun evening that will include stories of our mission, presentations of prizes to the winners of our Rosh Hashanah Colouring Contest, and a lavish Chanukah-themed pareve buffet.

The Emunah Ottawa Membership Drive takes place Sunday, December 10, 6:30 pm, at the home of Barbara Crook, 11 Clemow Avenue. Tickets are \$36 (or \$25 for Emunah lifetime members) and will be available at the door.

For more information, contact Rivka Kraus at 613-241-5613 or Gladys Zarecki at 613-406-5742 Marsha Kaiserman at marsha.kaiserman@rogers.com.



Former Canadian diplomat Robert Hage will speak about how Canada is viewed by the rest of the world at the Emunah Ottawa Membership Drive, December 10.

Why 30,000 Orthodox women belong to this recipe-sharing Facebook group

BY YVETTE ALT MILLER

(JTA) – Getting dinner on the table is a challenge for any busy, modern family.

With larger-than-average family sizes and religiously mandated dietary restrictions, however, mealtimes can be even more complex at Orthodox Jewish homes. On the one hand, there are a limited number of kosher restaurants in any given area. On the other, home-cooked Shabbat meals are often consid-

ered the highlight of the week.

Take the financial burden of kosher dining with large families, combine that with the demand for weekly delicious meals for a crowd, and the pressures of feeding an observant family can become rather intense.

But what if there was a way to trade time and family-tested meals with a like-minded bunch of people?

Thus the Facebook page I Don't Cook

But I Give Out Recipes was born in 2007. www.facebook.com/groups/idontcook/

It's the brainchild of two Brooklyn sisters – Goldie Adler Nathan, 35, and Esty Adler Wolbe, 29 – who created a forum to allow kosher cooks from across the globe to trade recipes, swapping information about everything from chicken soup and cholent to Italian desserts and kung pao tofu.

I Don't Cook But I Give Out Recipes, however, quickly became more than just a recipe swap site. It has evolved into a full-fledged community of mostly Orthodox women who discuss everything from health issues to the division of labour in families. Today, its 30,000 members swap tips on marriage, child rearing, holidays and, of course, cooking.

"It's a support group," said Wolbe, a mother of four, of the page's success. "Friday afternoon, when you're busy cooking [for Shabbat], you know you're not alone."

Kosher cooks, she points out, face burdens above and beyond most home cooks, including meeting dietary restrictions and the high cost of kosher meat.

"We're overcooking, not just on Thanksgiving and Christmas," Wolbe said. "We overcook once a week on average."

The size and the commitment of the page's members are particularly impressive considering the site began as some-

thing as a joke. As a 19-year-old newlywed who lived in a cramped basement apartment, Wolbe "hated her kitchen," per Nathan's description. Instead of cooking for herself and her husband, Yitzy, a loan officer at a car dealership, the couple would go out to eat or visit relatives for meals.

So Nathan created I Don't Cook But I Give Out Recipes to tease Wolbe, who loved dishing out recipes and advice despite never actually using her kitchen.

"My mother is always saying 'how can you make fun of your sister like that?'" Nathan said with a chuckle.

At first, the page was simply a forum for family and friends to share recipes or post a photo of a particularly picture-perfect meal. Soon, though, word spread among members' extended networks, and more people began using the page to post recipes and talk about food on a regular basis.

As it happens, Wolbe was just beginning a cooking odyssey of her own. When she had her first baby in 2007, eating out wasn't so easy anymore.

"It was born out of necessity," she said of her cooking, "and soon it became love."

Their family, Wolbe explains, moved to the United States from the Ukraine, where their grandmother was known for her cooking prowess, which she passed on.

See Recipes on page 22

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Chabad of Centrepointe

Chabad of Centrepointe celebrated its 15th anniversary with a gala reception chaired by Barbara Crook at the Hungarian Embassy honouring Cantor Moshe Kraus.

(From left) Hungarian Ambassador Balint Odor, Bassy Mendelsohn, Rivka Kraus, Barbara Crook, Cantor Moshe Kraus and Rabbi Chaim Mendelsohn gather at the reception.



Irv Osterer honoured

Irv Osterer of Merivale High School receives the 2016-17 Secondary School Visual Arts Award from the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board's Advisory Committee on the Arts. The award was for Osterer's Norval Morrisseau-inspired design used for Orange T-shirt Day to focus attention on the residential school issue. The award was presented, October 24, by school trustee Donna Blackburn (seen wearing the shirt).



Canadian Jewish Experience exhibit on Parliament Hill

The Canadian Jewish Experience exhibit, a Canada 150 project celebrating the contributions of Jews to Canada, continues to be displayed in the lobby at 30 Metcalfe Street and at the Canadian War Museum.

Meanwhile, travelling versions of the exhibit are also being displayed at locations across Canada. Visit www.cje2017.com for more information.

The exhibit came to Parliament Hill on October 23 and was opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

(From left) Canadian Jewish Experience committee members Neil Finkelman and Tova Lynch and Members of Parliament Michael Levitt, Deb Schulte and Eva Nassif cut the ribbon.



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A young Canadian encounters a Nazi war criminal

To Look a Nazi in the Eye
By Kathy Kacer with Jordana Lebowitz
Second Story Press
234 pages

MURRAY CITRON
BOOK REVIEW

Holocaust survivors are, as we know, a dwindling number. So are perpetrators. So, also, are those of us who were far enough away that we were not in immediate danger, but think back and are appalled that we lived at the historical moment when such a thing happened.

And there are the generations that have come since, and will come, and have this thing to learn about.

Jordana Lebowitz is a young adult from Toronto, a student at the University of Guelph, and a granddaughter of Holocaust survivors. In April 2012, at age 16, she was on the March of the Living and met Hedy Blohm, an Auschwitz survivor. Three years later, in April 2015, she learned from Hedy of the

forthcoming trial in Germany of Oskar Groening, known as “the bookkeeper of Auschwitz,” and Jordana made up her mind that she had to be there, to “be a witness to history in the making.”

Kathy Kacer is the daughter of Holocaust survivors. She has a master’s degree in psychology, lives in Toronto with her family, and has written a number of widely distributed books about the Holocaust that are largely intended for young readers. She contacted Jordana after reading in the press about her plan to attend the trial. The resulting book, *To Look a Nazi in the Eye*, tells two stories: Jordana’s and Groening’s.

Hedy Blohm and two other Toronto residents were to be witnesses at the Groe-

ning trial. Through Hedy, Jordana was able to contact the German prosecuting lawyer, Thomas Walther, who arranged courtroom access for her, and ultimately paid for her hotel for five nights, telling her that since “your parents will not be here. I need to watch out for you.”

Jordana contacted Jewish organizations in Toronto and Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies gave her a \$1,000 grant on condition that she would write a blog about the trial. That covered her air fare.

Her greatest challenge was convincing her bubbe and parents who were horrified at the thought of Jordana going to Germany. She threw a tantrum at their Passover seder and they came around. The narrative will resonate with anyone who has ever tried to talk a teenaged daughter or son out of doing something.

Groening was an SS functionary who became well known in 2009 when he gave a BBC interview. He told how he was sent to Auschwitz, which he said he’d not heard of before, in 1942. Before the war he had worked as a bank clerk. He was given a job at Auschwitz for which he was considered qualified: to collect all valuables brought by Jews who arrived on transports, to keep accurate records, and to forward the valuables to Berlin for use in the war effort. He was also put in charge of clearing

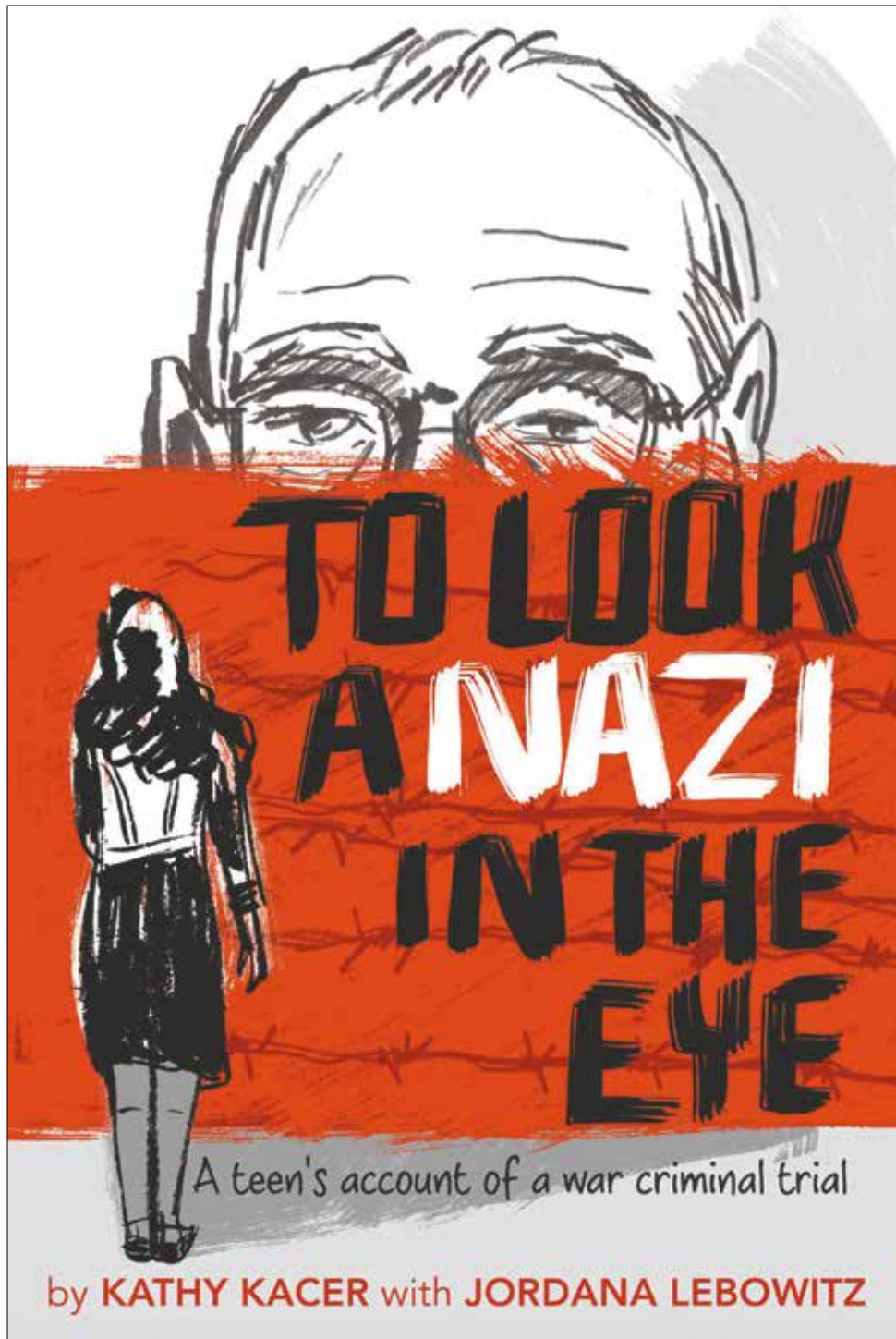
the ramp of luggage left behind when Jews were sent to the gas chamber, so that those arriving on the next transport would not be alarmed.

Groening has no crises of conscience. The Nazi propaganda had convinced him that Jews were the enemy of Germany. Asked about the Jewish children, Groening said, “My answer has been this: The children were not the enemy at the moment. The enemy was the blood inside them.”

Of the more than 8,000 SS men who worked at Auschwitz, only 43 were brought to trial in Germany. The German courts ruled early on that they needed eyewitness evidence of an accused taking part in a killing to convict. It was Thomas Walther, the prosecutor in this case, who in 2011 established, in the John Demjanjuk case, that being part of the extermination camp machinery was sufficient to establish that the accused was an accomplice to murder.

Kacer takes readers vividly into the courtroom. Jordana is a nervy protagonist, who even strikes up conversations with Groening and the presiding judge. She spends five days in Luneberg, where the trial takes place, and is relieved, sometime later, to learn that Groening has been convicted.

Jordana has continued her life as a student and Holocaust education activist.



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Israeli doctor learns Canadian approach to treating patients

Dr. Igal Kushnir was mentally prepared for his first cold Canadian winter – but not for the warmth of Canadians.

The Israeli oncologist, who arrived in Ottawa over the summer to begin a two-year fellowship at the Ottawa Hospital Cancer Centre, has been overwhelmed by the friendly welcome he has received.

“You have this stereotype of northern people as cold, but here in Ottawa, people are so friendly, so nice and so warm,” said Kushnir, 37.

“And it’s a very friendly hospital.”

Kushnir, whose specialty is urology, is the fifth Israeli fellow to do a medical oncology fellowship in Ottawa since the program started in 2009.

A first-generation Israeli from Kfar Saba (his family is originally from Moldova); Kushnir graduated from the Technion and did his first fellowship at the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center.

He was looking for fellowship positions to improve his clinical research skills and advance his career when he heard about the Ottawa program.

“A colleague had done a fellowship here a few years ago and had only good things to say about the city, the hospital, and even the weather,” he said.

I’ve written in the past about some of the amazing breakthroughs that are happening in science, technology and medicine in Israel. So what would attract a young oncologist to Canada in general and Ottawa in particular?

“It’s quite interesting to see the difference in attitudes and the way we approach the patients,” said Kushnir.

“The differences are not so much between country



BARBARA CROOK
MY ISRAEL

to country as from institution to institution.”

He says that Ottawa doctors treat patients more aggressively than at his previous hospital. If a primary cancer had metastasized to another part of the body, for example, the team he worked with in Israel would have considered the cancer incurable, and offered palliative treatment only.

“Here, they try to cure the patient with more aggressive treatment.”

He says he’s also noticed a difference in the behaviour of patients and families compared to what he has seen in Israel.

“Israel is very much a Mediterranean culture, with very expansive emotions. Family members get very involved, and they try very hard to protect the patient.

“I’ve seen family members stand behind the patient and wave their hands at me to stop me from telling the patient bad news – sometimes even stopping me from telling the patient that he has cancer.”

Dr. Tim Asmis, a medical oncologist who specializes in gastrointestinal cancers and is the director of the fellowship program at the cancer centre, says that visiting fellows are also able to experience the team treatment approach that is one of the great strengths of Canadian oncology and not as well-established in many other

countries, including the U.S.

“It’s not just the team we have here in Ottawa,” he said. “We’re constantly in touch with colleagues across Canada to find out what treatment is best for a particular patient.

“In a day, we can find the best solution for that person.”

The visiting fellow can see what works well here and try to implement it when he or she returns to Israel. In return, the cancer centre gets a fully-trained, highly motivated medical oncologist as part of its team.

“It’s a real win-win,” Asmis said.

Despite its size, Ottawa is also a major centre for clinical trials of new cancer treatments and protocols. There are close to 200 trials that are active or in follow-up mode, and the program employs a full-time staff of 100.

Although he’s been here only a few months, Kushnir is already thinking about things he’s learned in Canada that he can take back to Israel. He’d like to see more collaboration between the two countries, such as collaborating on a clinical trials database.

And he hopes to share with his Israeli colleagues the team approach that has been so effective here.

In the meantime, he and his partner – a scientist who was able to line up a great position at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada – are getting settled in Ottawa with their 11-month-old daughter.

They are both nature lovers, so are out exploring just about every weekend.

“It’s been really enriching to experience a different culture and a different lifestyle – how other people live, how other people do medicine.”

Hans Jonas: A German-Jewish philosopher at Carleton

Call it a case of forgotten history. It is little known that Hans Jonas, among the most influential German-born Jewish intellectuals of the 20th century, started his academic career in North America teaching at Carleton University from 1950 to 1955.

After emailing the philosophy department for an interview, no one knew enough to even discuss his work – with good reason, too. There is nothing on campus named in his honour; there is no statue or plaque. He is left as a footnote, if mentioned at all. But, from reading his memoirs, it is clear that his time at Ottawa was far from insignificant in shaping both the history of German Jewish intellectuals and modern philosophy.

When Jonas died in 1994 at age 89, he died alone in his home. He’d cheated death before. His mother died at Auschwitz, and his academic career might have gone alongside Heidegger, his past mentor who he publicly – with untold personal risk – repudiated for Heidegger’s earlier support of Hitler. Why not outfox evil once more? He was a bioethicist after ethics was disproved in the camps of Sobibor and Birkenau; he was, to use Isaac Deutscher’s phrase, a “non-Jewish Jewish” philosopher a century after modern philosophy consumed religion, and then all but collapsed after Nietzsche. Still, while he had important friends – Jonas and Hannah Arendt took philosophy classes in Munich together, Leo Strauss mailed him correspondence, Martin Buber wrote his reference letter to Carleton University – friends only go so far after a sorcerer conjures up a tempest.

Several days before he died, Jonas received the Pre-



ALEXANDER CHUCHIN
CAMPUS
LIFE

Since Jonas was a philosopher and not a prophet, he instead promised that he would never come back to Germany except as a soldier in a conquering army. He received his wish.

mio Nonino Prize for his life’s work, and in his keynote speech, he remembered the initial storm. It emboldened him. In 1933, before he left Germany for Jerusalem, then Montreal, and from there to Ottawa in 1950, he wrote in his memoirs about a bar in the Spessart region. There, the men began to sing, “When Jewish blood from the knife blade spurts/Then all will be well again.” He rose up, a Gentile woman beside him, itself punishable by death, and said “Come on, pull out your knives. Here I am. Here’s a Jew.” The men stopped their song.

The choice of words was not an accident. Jonas was an observant Jew, and unlike Leo Strauss, his long-time confidante, he attended shul regularly. Aristotle wrote that courage is the original virtue, and all other virtues stem from it. In Judaism, this is summed up best in Hebrew: *Hineni* (Here I am). Repeated 178 times in the Tanakh, it is a call for action, a reply to a call from God

Himself. Moses said the line at the miracle of the Burning Bush. Samuel began his prophecies with the same word. Even Leonard Cohen sang it in the title track to his last album, “You Want It Darker.”

Yet, since Jonas was a philosopher and not a prophet, he instead promised that he would never come back to Germany except as a soldier in a conquering army. He received his wish. The British Army’s Jewish Brigade needed men like Jonas. After the war, he fought again in the Israeli War of Independence, stationed at the siege of Jerusalem. And then he fought abroad, against nihilism, namely for the value of organic life and its phenomenology.

Judaism teaches that life itself is the highest pursuit, and Jonas wrestled with its implications after creation. If the last phase of his thinking was on ethical studies, ranging from cloning to theodicy, his most influential book – it sold 200,000 copies and inspired the European Green movement – was his 1979 study on the challenge of modern technology, *The Imperative of Responsibility*. His moral principle was simple: “Act so that the effects of your action are compatible with the permanence of genuine human life.”

But when Jonas came to Montreal, none of his earlier work was published, not even his textbook examination of Gnosticism. From the 70 applications he sent for a professorship, it was only Carleton University that offered him an interview – and then the position. His time with the “industrious and pleasant” students intoxicated him, more so for his potential in the Galut. The result, as Jonas phrased it, “During my time in Ottawa I decided once and for all not to return to Jerusalem but to seek my future in the United States.”



ENVIRONMENT

- \$80 Million invested into cycling and pedestrian infrastructure in this Term of Council
- Ottawa River Action Plan underway and cleaning up our precious waterways
- Planted 150 trees in all 23 wards through the Canada 150 Maple Groves project
- Redeveloped Main St. into a cycling and pedestrian friendly street



ARTS

- Opening of the newly expanded and renovated Ottawa Art Gallery (OAG) and Arts Court in December 2017
- Hosted the inaugural Mayor's Gala for the Arts which raised \$ 75,000 for the OAG
- \$ 250,000 invested through the Ottawa 2017 Arts, Culture and Heritage Investment Program
- Increase the City's base funding through the City's Arts Momentum Fund



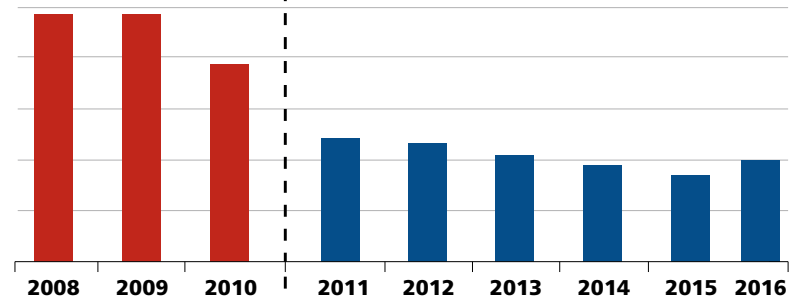
HELPING PEOPLE

- Implemented the low income transit pass, EquiPass, and fare, EquiFare
- Invested record amounts in Affordable Housing
- Renewed parks, community spaces and recreation facilities
- New Central Library coming



COMMUNITY SAFETY

- Hiring 75 new Police Officers over 3 years
- Increased the number of Paramedics
- Approved the use of photo radar in school zones
- New red light cameras installed



FISCAL DISCIPLINE

- Maintained a Triple A Moody credit rating
- Keeping the City affordable with a 2% tax cap
- Keeping City projects on or under budget

Good genes, bad genes: Behaviour can affect gene expression

Did you know that you have approximately 20,000 genes? Genes are inherited from your biological parents. Science has made great inroads with respect to identifying the human genome and some of the genes associated with different diseases.

While genetic predisposition for diseases puts you at increased risk, it does not mean you are destined to get those diseases. “Genetic nihilism” is a term coined by Dr. Dean Ornish, a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, to describe people who believe there’s nothing they can do if they have a genetic predisposition.

Some genetic diseases and disorders, such as Down syndrome, are present at birth.

Others, such as breast, colon and skin cancer, manifest later in life. These are the ones we may be able to prevent with a healthy lifestyle. How can we control gene expression? In other words, how can we help our body suppress our disease-causing genes from being expressed and promote the expression of our disease-preventing genes?

Exactly how to do so is not yet fully understood but there’s scientific support to indicate that there are a number of things we can do. While doing all the right things does not guarantee perfect health, it can significantly reduce our risks and empower us to live optimistically rather than throwing our hands up in the air because our close blood relatives have or had various diseases.

The more comprehensive lifestyle changes we make, according to Ornish, the more profound impact they’ll have on our health. <http://tinyurl.com/yb82rjcw>

What are these lifestyle factors?



GLORIA SCHWARTZ
FOCUS ON FITNESS

Epigenetics investigates the expression and suppression of the genes we inherit at birth, and attempts to explain changes in how our genes express themselves as a direct result of our behaviour. Some factors that affect our genes are beyond our control, such as ageing. Environmental pollution and exposure to viruses and chemicals also affect genes. Some factors are within our control, though education, income and accessibility impact our choices: eating whole foods and more plant-based foods, using beauty and household products containing fewer toxins, preventing sunburns, getting vaccinations and taking precautions to prevent sexually transmitted diseases can impact our gene expression. Most of us have the choice whether to exercise, stop smoking and reduce alcohol consumption but such behaviours are not always easy to achieve. Stress management and getting adequate sleep also impact our genes. Epigenetics suggest we have more control than previously thought when it comes to preventing the onset of both sporadic and heritable diseases.

Not only can we potentially change our own gene expression – for better or for worse – with our lifestyle habits, but we can pass down our altered genes to our future offspring and successive generations as well as influence our children’s lifestyle and impact their genes.

Genetics play a role in our risk for many physical and mental diseases. Advances in genetic testing means we may be able to find out if we carry genes for specific diseases, such as mutations in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes which significantly increase the risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Finding out you carry one or more genes that put you at increased risk can be frightening. Genetic counselors can help you decide if you want to find out and they can discuss options to reduce your risk should you carry such genes.

In addition to medical interventions such as surgery, it’s important to consider lifestyle modifications. For example, people who carry two copies of the specific genes associated with heart attacks and who are therefore at very high risk of having a heart attack had twice the risk of having a heart attack if they ate a diet lacking adequate fruits and vegetables, compared to people with the same genetic predisposition who ate a prudent diet. Studies on identical twins (such twins have identical genomes) in which one twin had schizophrenia or bipolar disorder found that molecules around the genes may play an important role in whether some diseases are present or not.

<http://tinyurl.com/y8lybkg2>

We are not completely at the mercy of our genes. Nature and nurture both play a role in the development of many genetic diseases. Genes establish the potential for disease. While family history is a strong predictor of disease, our lifestyle choices and exposure to environmental factors can increase or reduce our risk of various diseases. Until science provides all the answers, your best bet for health may be to focus on fitness, eat right and enjoy life.



Ottawa Jewish Community School

JOIN US FOR A

WINE & CHEESE INFORMATION NIGHT

Learn about how the foundation of an excellent education begins with kindergarten at OJCS.

<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">INFORMATION NIGHT 01</div> <p>WHEN: Nov. 16th at 7:00pm</p> <p>WHERE: Home of Aaron and Erin Smith 161 Claridge Dr.</p> <p>RSVP BY: Nov. 14th</p>	<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">INFORMATION NIGHT 02</div> <p>WHEN: Nov. 27th at 7:00pm</p> <p>WHERE: Home of Lindsay Borovay & Darren Morenstein 615 Melbourne Ave.</p> <p>RSVP BY: Nov. 23rd</p>	<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">INFORMATION NIGHT 03</div> <p>WHEN: Dec. 20th at 7:00pm</p> <p>WHERE: The Ottawa Jewish Community School 31 Nadolny Sachs Private</p> <p>RSVP BY: Dec. 14th</p>
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RSVP TO: Jennifer Greenberg | j.greenberg@theojcs.ca

Recipes: Community-minded spirit keeps recipe-sharing group going

Continued from page 1

“I come from a long line of amazing cooks,” she said. “I grew up in the kitchen.”

Fast forward to 2015, when Wolbe, a full-time foodie by then, with a popular kosher food blog, *Cooking with Tantrums* – <http://cookingwithtantrums.com> – as well as an online cooking show, was shocked to discover the page had 8,000 members.

That year, Wolbe became administrator of I Don’t Cook But I Give Out Recipes. She switched it to a closed group – vetting new members to make sure they actually exist – keeping it focused on kosher food and insisting on a high level of courtesy from users.

“Esty does a fabulous job of setting and keeping the tone friendly, fun and helpful,” said member Vichna Belsky, 35, of New York. “Plus, it’s fun to sometimes bump into a random person someplace and discover you’re both in this group.”

While the focus is on Jewish cooking, it’s emphasis is the unique needs of religiously observant Jews. “Fake shrimp ideas needed!” read one recent post. Another declared: “Hosting a bunch of teenagers next Shabbos lunch. Need ideas for a menu that will go down well with them.”

However, given that Jewish cooking – along with home cooking, in general – has become decidedly more gourmet in recent years, not all of the group’s members enjoy putting meals on the table.

“The foodie world has exploded,” said Wolbe, pointing to the proliferation of cooking shows, magazines and blogs, hers included. “Everyone has the ability to be a top chef.”

For some Orthodox Jewish women, who typically entertain on a weekly basis, it can be stressful to keep up. “Just wanna say, no other group has made me feel



Sisters Esty Wolbe (right) and Goldie Adler Nathan are the founders of the I Don’t Cook But I Give Out Recipes Facebook page.

quite this inadequate,” read one recent I Don’t Cook But I Give Out Recipes post.

“It makes me want to cry,” declared another. “I look at all these masterpieces and feel like a complete failure.”

However, these and similar posts garner hundreds of responses – with some users sharing tips (such as “start simple” or choose just one or standout dishes) and others providing reassurance that not everyone was busy producing restaurant-quality meals.

“I remember one post by a mother saying ‘I just had a baby and I don’t know how people do it, I’m so exhausted,’” Wolbe said. “And within a few minutes,

she had three weeks’ worth of meals. These [the people who responded] were total strangers.”

Over the years, users have asked for help finding kosher accommodations while travelling or posted pictures from the supermarket inquiring about unfamiliar kosher symbols on packaged foods. Some have also tried to find jobs for members.

One common post on I Don’t Cook But I Give Out Recipes: “Taking challah in an hour, please send names.” That’s a reference to the mitzvah of separating a piece of dough as one makes challah, in remembrance of the portion of dough that used to be given to the Temple priests in Jerusalem during ancient times. It’s one of the key mitzvot with which observant Jewish women traditionally identify. Many women pray for others before taking challah, and the requests for names can generate up to a hundred requests for prayers.

The requests from page members include those for recovery from illness, for children and fertility, for young women to speedily find a marriage match.

“It can take 20 minutes or more to recite all the names,” Wolbe said, “which is a long time when you’re trying to make dinner for your kids.”

Yet week after week, members continue to ask their fellow kosher cooks around the world for the names of loved ones for whom to pray.

It’s that community-minded spirit that keeps I Don’t Cook But I Give Out Recipes alive.

“It’s like being friends with a huge bunch of really savvy, smart and experienced cooks who are available 24/6 to help you,” said member Nechama Samuels, 42, who lives in Israel. “In return, we try to chip in and do our part to help others.”

She adds: “All in all it’s a wonderful resource and even – dare I say it? – family.”

Canada’s Best at Celebrating the Contributions of Canada’s Jewish Scientists

with **Dr. Joe Schwarcz**, Professor of Chemistry at McGill University in Montreal and Director of the McGill Office for Science & Society



As we continue to celebrate Canada’s best at 150, Dr. Joe Schwarcz, Professor of Chemistry at McGill University in Montreal and Director of the McGill Office for Science & Society, will discuss some of the monumental achievements and contributions of a number of Canadian Jewish scientists – among them, Dr. Ralph Steinman, Dr. Sidney Altman, Dr. Rudy Marcus, Dr. Mark Wainberg and Dr. Leo Yaffe.



Sunday, November 26
1:30 pm SJCC Social Hall A
Admission: \$10 at the door

Contact: Roslyn Brozovsky Wollock | 613-798-9818 x254 | rwollock@jccottawa.com

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WHAT'S GOING ON | November 12 to 26, 2017

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

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Camp Ramah in Canada Open House!

6-7pm, Kehillat Beth Israel, 1400 Coldrey Ave.
Info-session for parents, activities for children, dinner for all.
RSVP by Nov. 7 to leora@campramah.com

Descendants of Holocaust Survivors Speak Out

7-9 pm, Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St.
Contact: 613-695-9700. chesatcarleton@gmail.com
Topic: Memory, Identity and Emerging Narratives.
Sponsored by CHES.

Too Late for Two States? A talk with Gershon Shafir

7-9 pm
Contact: Gabriella Goliger, 613-222-3838, goliger@rogers.com
Is a two-state solution still doable? Sponsored by Canadian Friends of Peace Now.

Malca Pass Library Book Discussion Group

7:30-9 pm, Kehillat Beth Israel, 1400 Coldrey Ave.
Contact: Maureen Kaell, 613-224-8649, mkaell@rogers.com
Cost: \$5. "The Noise of Time" by Julian Barnes will be reviewed by Alvina Ruprecht.

Ottawa Israeli Dance

7-10 pm, every week on Tuesdays until Dec. 19, 2017
Contact: judy@ottawaisraelidance.ca
Contemporary Israeli dances. Great music. Exercise. All ages welcome. Cost: \$5/evening (pay at the door)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Federation Members' Meeting

7-9 pm, Contact: Solange Ashe, sashe@jewishottawa.com
Stay informed on issues affecting Ottawa's Jewish community. Open to the public. Featuring a multifaith panel discussion on the importance of interfaith in advocacy.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Shabbat Dinner featuring Jody Mitic

4:20-7:30 pm, Congregation Machzikei Hadas, 2310 Virginia Dr.
Contact: office@cmhottawa.com
Jody Mitic is an Ottawa City Councillor. Mitic served in the Canadian Armed Forces. He lost both of his legs in a land-mine incident while serving in Afghanistan. Cost: \$30

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

CMH Sisterhood Scotch & Whisky Tasting Experience

7:30 - 10 pm, Congregation Machzikei Hadas, 2310 Virginia Dr.
Contact: carolkershman@gmail.com or susan@finkelman.ca
The Machzikei Hadas Sisterhood presents four tastings and food pairings prepared by B'tavon, end of evening scotch auction. Cost \$40. Register online or by calling shul office. Must be at least 19 years of age to attend.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Holocaust Education Month - Rescue in the Phillipines (documentary)

4:30 - 6:30 pm, Centrepointe Chamber Room, 101 Centrepointe Dr.
Contact: Natalie Abenhaim, nabenhaim@jewishottawa.com
Screening of a documentary that tells how 1,200 Jews escaped the Nazis and immigrated to the Philippines with the help of an unlikely coalition. Sponsored by the Shoah Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Stepping out in Style

6:30 - 9 pm, Canadian War Museum, 1 Vimy Pl.
Contact: Krystal Valencia, 613-725-3519 x104, kvalencia@tamir.ca
Fashion industry professionals prove that all people deserve

a chance to pursue their dream on the runway. Cost: \$50. Presented by Tamir.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Chanukah Gift Fair

10 - 4 pm
Contact: Ella Dagan, edagan@jccottawa.com
Annual Chanukah gift fair at the JCC.

PJ Library Chanukah Party

10 am - 12 pm
Contact: Ariel Aronson, 613-798-4696 ext.240, aaronson@jewishottawa.com
Cost: \$10.

Celebrating the Contributions of Canada's Jewish Scientists

1:30 - 3 pm
Contact: Roslyn Wollock, rwollock@jccottawa.com
Dr. Joe Schwarcz, Professor of Chemistry at McGill University in Montreal and Director of the McGill Office for Science & Society, will discuss some of the achievements of Canadian Jewish scientists. Cost: \$10.

CANDLE LIGHTING BEFORE

NOVEMBER 17	4:12 PM	DECEMBER 8	4:01 PM
NOVEMBER 24	4:07 PM	DECEMBER 15	4:02 PM
DECEMBER 1	4:03 PM	DECEMBER 29	4:09 PM

BULLETIN DEADLINES

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22	FOR DECEMBER 11
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3	FOR JANUARY 22
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17	FOR FEBRUARY 5

* Early deadline: Community-wide Issue ** Early deadline: holiday closures (all dates subject to change)

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:

Eddie Broitman

Gordon Murray, Toronto
(brother of Joe Murray)

*May their memory
be a blessing always.*

Bernard Hattin, Toronto
(father of Lisa Garman)

Bernard Pollock

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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