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**Hamilton  
Jewish**

# News

Tishrei 5779

The voice of Jewish Hamilton Sept 2018

## J HAMILTON CELEBRATES ITS GRAND OPENING

The new community space officially opens its doors on Sunday, Sept. 16

STORY BY **LAURA WOLFSON**,  
SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

**W**HEN YOU COME TO VISIT J HAMILTON for the first time, you will surely feel the positive energy in the air. The new home of the Hamilton Jewish Federation, the Jewish Community Centre, the Jewish National Fund, and the Beth Tikvah Foundation, J Hamilton is much more than a building. It is a home for our shared memories and a place where JewishHamiltonians of all ages and from all backgrounds can gather for social and educational events. J Hamilton represents the unlimited possibilities that can occur when all of us work together to create a thriving and caring Jewish community. The entire community is invited to attend its grand opening on Sunday, Sept. 16.

J-HAMILTON OPEN HOUSE CONTINUES ON P5



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

The new Jewish community hub at 1605 Main St. W. is celebrating its grand opening on Sunday, Sept. 16.



PHOTO: DONNA WAXMAN, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

Rabbi Morton Green served the Adas Israel Synagogue for 60 years.

### END OF AN ERA

The death of Rabbi Morton Green in Israel last July struck a blow to the Adas Israel community. His passing, together with Rabbi Bernard Baskin's recent move to Toronto marks the end of an era in this community's storied history.

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“The Jewish community suffered the first flu fatality in the city.”

The 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic's devastating effects on the City of Hamilton.

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All of us at the Hamilton Jewish Federation and the Hamilton Jewish News wish you and your loved ones a happy and healthy 5779. Shana Tova U'metuka.

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FROM WENDY SCHNEIDER'S DESK

# THE END OF AN ERA



PHOTO: DONNA WAXMAN, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

The late Rabbi Morton Green

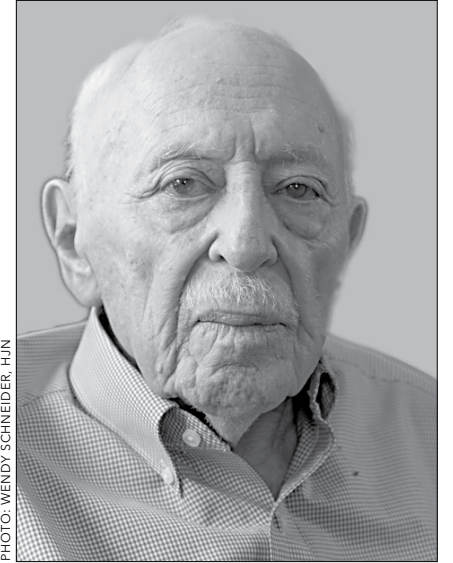


PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

Rabbi Bernard Baskin

Within the space of a single week last July, The Hamilton Spectator published two stories of great significance to the Jewish community. The news of Rabbi Morton Green's death in Israel at the age of 84, followed by a moving tribute to Rabbi Bernard Baskin, 97, on the eve of his move to Toronto, marks the end of an era in Hamilton Jewish history and the loss of two of its most iconic personalities. For 60 years, we took their presence among us as a given. Their absence leaves us bereft and wondering where we go from here.

The name of Rabbi Green was practically synonymous with the Adas Israel Synagogue, where he served as spiritual leader for 44 years and as rabbi emeritus for 16 years. A true visionary, Rabbi Green founded the Hamilton Hebrew Academy — this community's first Jewish day school, and built the city's mikvah, whose story of origin is the stuff of legend. Rabbi Green's contributions to Jewish Hamilton went far beyond the Orthodox community and his passing leaves an immeasurable void.

Rabbi Bernard Baskin's contributions to our community and to the city are similarly difficult to measure. A brilliant and witty orator, an insightful literary critic and a champion of multi-faith initiatives, Rabbi Baskin oversaw Temple Anshe Sholom's growth from a small 85-member shul in 1949 to a thriving 450-strong membership by the end of his 40-year tenure. During that period, and in the 20 years since, Rabbi Baskin has continued to enrich Hamiltonians through his regular columns in the Hamilton Spectator, weekly book talks at his beloved shul and frequent appearances at Jewish community events, where his invocations would invariably evolve into commentaries on the state of affairs here in Canada and in Israel. During last spring's Negev Dinner, keynote speaker Martin Short shared some of his fondest high school memories spent at the Baskin home before treating the audience to a hilarious impression of the rabbi's signature oratorical style. Moments later, Rabbi Baskin, accompanied by his son David, took his place at the podium to a standing ovation to give what was probably his last Negev Dinner invocation. It was a moment that will most likely remain etched in the memories of all those in attendance.

I would be remiss at this point not to mention the late Rabbi Israel Silverman, who presided over Beth Jacob Synagogue for 30 years. Like Rabbis Green and Baskin, Rabbi Silverman, who passed away in 2004, was so closely identified with his shul and Camp Ramah Canada, that in Conservative Movement circles across the globe, Hamilton gained some renown as the city where he lived.

During the 1960s, 70s and 80s, these three rabbis led by example, their influence knowing no bounds. The era of rabbis enjoying a 30-year-plus tenure may be behind us, but at times like this it's well worth taking a moment to appreciate our storied past and and contemplate where we go from here.

## CHANGES AT THE HJN

You may have noticed that the Hamilton Jewish News has a new look. Founded more than 75 years ago as the C.J.O News (after Federation's predecessor, the Council of Jewish Organizations), Hamilton's Jewish community newspaper is funded through Hamilton Jewish Federation's annual Community Campaign, our loyal advertisers, and the Allen and Milli Gould Family Foundation, sponsors of our new Jewish Life section.

The Hamilton Jewish News is delighted to introduce our new assistant editor, Abigail Cukier, and welcome our new editorial committee which includes Jordan Abraham, Steve Arnold, Steven Brock, Abigail Cukier, Barry Rosen, Simone Rotstein, Ben Shragge, Phyllis Shragge and Louis Stroud. We are also grateful for the ongoing support of the members of our advisory board, Aviva Boxer, Celia Rothenberg and Wade Hemsworth.

The Hamilton Jewish News takes great pride in being a mirror that reflects the vibrancy and diversity of Jewish life in this city, and strives to live up to our mandate to be the voice of Jewish Hamilton. On behalf of all of us, we wish our readers a happy and healthy new year. Shana Tova U'Metuka.

Wendy Schneider is the editor of the Hamilton Jewish News. You can reach her at [wschneider@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:wschneider@jewishhamilton.org).



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PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

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PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

Last spring, JNF Hamilton hosted Israeli paralympic gold medalist Noam Gershony at Beth Jacob Synagogue. There, Gershony told the story of his miraculous recovery from near fatal injuries he sustained while serving as an IDF Apache helicopter pilot during the 2006 Second Lebanon War. Defying all odds, Gershony began playing wheelchair tennis less than a year

after his injury, and six years later, became the first Israeli to win gold in wheelchair tennis in the 2012 London Paralympic Games. Left, Gershony and his sister Raanana pose with JNF Hamilton president Haim Goldstein.

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COMING UP

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- Deadline for receiving ad copy - Oct. 15, 2018
- Estimated date of arrival - Oct. 31, 2018

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The Hamilton Jewish News is published four times a year by Hamilton Jewish News Inc. and funded by the Hamilton Jewish Federation  
CIRCULATION 2,000

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Hamilton Jewish News invites members of the community to contribute letters, articles or guest editorials. Written submissions must be forwarded by the deadline indicated in each issue. This newspaper reserves the right to edit, condense or reject any contribution for brevity or legal purposes.

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Being five years away from a major redevelopment requires a very different mind set than we've had in the past. Yael Arnold



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# CHANGING PRIORITIES AT SHALOM VILLAGE

As major redevelopment looms, fundraising takes on new urgency

STORY BY STEVE ARNOLD,  
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Shalom Village's new presidents know their term of office is going to revolve around one issue — money. Of course that's a perennial issue for Jewish community leaders, but for David Horwood and Mayer Michalowicz, who have taken over board leadership of the Macklin Street North campus, it's going to be even more critical as the 40-year-old home faces a government-ordered redevelopment of its long-term care facility. The project is to be completed by 2025.

"Our term is going to be financially intense," Michalowicz said in a recent interview. "But, at the end, we're going to have financial assets that will be good for 50 years so there's no need to strain to pay for it all at once."

The update of the Village's long-term care facility is part of a 10-year provincial strategy to make nursing homes less institutional. Among the new standards are requirements to eliminate rooms with three and four beds, increase the floor space of rooms and provide more ensuite washrooms.

A consultant is busy estimating what work will be required at Shalom Village and how much it will cost. Construction work is expected to start in five years and take two years to complete. Shalom Village's apartment complex will not be affected.

While plans and costs are being studied, Michalowicz and Horwood are laying plans for their community appeal.

"We're hoping to keep the final campaign to a reasonable ask," Michalowicz said.

Leading the project will be a refreshed board of directors, including younger members with broader experience than previous panels.

Horwood and Michalowicz represent those changes. Horwood is vice-president of Effort Trust with years of experience in property redevelopment while Michalowicz is an accountant.

Outgoing president Yael Arnold said this is a significant change from the years when the board was dominated by



Incoming Shalom Village co-presidents Mayer Michalowicz and David Horwood with outgoing president Yael Arnold.

health care professionals and academics.

"Unfortunately, there's no influx of new funds to pay for all of this, but we have a target date that has to be met," she said. "We have a very optimistic feeling at the governance level now."

"We have an excellent facility here with a strong reputation for care, but being five years away from a major redevelopment requires a very different mindset than we've had in the past," Horwood said. "This project is very much part of Hamilton's renewal."

"Now is the time for us to be as lean and as efficient as possible," he added.

The allied Shalom Village Charitable Foundation will be involved in raising money for the redevelopment.

Incorporated in 1974 as The Hamilton Jewish Home for the Aged, Shalom Village's first facility was a single home on Queen Street South. Construction on the Macklin Street campus started in 1980 and the first five residents arrived in December

1981. The building officially opened in 1982. The nursing home component opened in 1990.

Today, the campus consists of 127 long-term care beds and 81 apartments. Seventy-five people participate in day programs and 132 people from the community use the fitness club. The facility employs 258 staff.

About 30 per cent of the apartment units and 70 per cent of the long-term care beds are occupied by non-Jews. Those statistics represent both a challenge and an opportunity in the coming campaign.

On one side it means the fundraising campaign could reach beyond the Jewish community. But there is also the fear that some in the Jewish community could argue Shalom Village is losing its essential character.

"Some people might think that change in demographics will dilute our Jewish values," Horwood said. "Shifting demographics have always been there but our fundamental values remain very deeply entrenched."

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I like the idea of being in a traditional but also liberal Conservative community and being part of day-to-day spiritual life. ELYSA KESHEN



Elysa Keshen



Einav Symons

# STAFF CHANGES AT BETH JACOB

STORY BY **ABIGAIL CUKIER**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

When Elysa Keshen saw a posting for a position at Beth Jacob Synagogue, she thought it was a perfect fit.

"I met my husband in Israel in the army. If we had stayed there, we would have probably been on a kibbutz. We are not big city people. We want to be part of a warm Jewish community that is not too big," said Keshen, who is the new director of Innovation and Community Engagement for Beth Jacob.

A Toronto native, Keshen attended Jewish day school from Grade 1-12 and attended Camp Ramah as both a camper and staff member. After graduating high school, she earned a Religious Studies degree at York University with a specialization in Jewish Studies. She moved to Israel and served in the Israel Defense Force's Iron Dome Unit for 18 months.

In 2016, Elysa and her then fiancé, Josh, returned to Toronto with their dog, Milo. They married last August. Over the past two years, Keshen has worked as an educator at both supplementary and day schools. In June, she graduated from Hebrew College with a Masters in Jewish Education where she received distinction for her thesis on the impact of weekly challah baking in kindergarten.

"I like the idea of being in a traditional but also liberal Conservative community and participating in the daily services and being a part of day-to-day spiritual life. That attracted me to Hamilton and Beth Jacob," said Keshen, 27. "I look forward to getting to know the community. There is so much to look forward to and so much to hope for in the future."

Keshen's new position as director of innovation and community engagement will replace the former executive director position held by long time Beth Jacob employee, Hanna Schayer. She will work alongside Einav Symons, Beth Jacob's new director of education, to develop innovative programs and run synagogue operations.

A native of Israel, Symons grew up in Canada and has a Bachelor of Arts in Education and Religious Studies, as well as a Master's in Jewish Education from York University. She holds a principal of day school license and is a certified New York State public and Jewish day school teacher with many years of experience. Symons is married to Dr. Andrew Symons and they live in Williamsville, NY with their two children, Gilad and Shira. Her mother and her brother and his wife and three children live

## NEED TO KNOW

After nine years, Beth Jacob executive director Hanna Schayer has retired. While she plans to remain active in synagogue life, Schayer will pursue other interests and spend more time with family.

After four years, Rina Rodak retired from her position of education director at Beth Jacob. She will dedicate more time to her business, NowWhat? Consulting, which helps families navigate social, academic and vocational challenges through case management, advocacy and resources. She runs NowWhat? with another former Beth Jacob education director, Milena Romalis.

in Hamilton, and Symons will be spending several days a week in the city over the course of the school year.

"I love Jewish education. When I was considering what else I might do, I realized I can't work anywhere but the Jewish community," said Symons, 50. "I don't want to feel like I am going to work each day, which I have never had in all my years of working in Jewish education.

"I am excited to be here. I want to provide new opportunities for kids and adults to learn. The desire is there, we just need to provide it in a way that works for the way people live now."

Keshen agrees.

"All synagogues across North America are struggling to engage people, especially in my age group," she says. "We are going to work for that. We want to breathe new life into the community."



If you're a Jewish first responder, or a Jewish writer or poet who lives in the Hamilton area, the Hamilton Jewish News wants to hear from you!

Please contact [wschneider@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:wschneider@jewishhamilton.org) if you'd like to be interviewed for upcoming articles.

# J HAMILTON GRAND OPENING

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The J Hamilton open house festivities begin at 10 a.m. with family friendly activities that include PJ Library storytelling, balloon making and face painting, and a sing-along led by Camp Kadimah director Oliver Borr. An especially exciting aspect of the morning's programming will be the creation of a communal art collage that, with your help, will convey the richness and depth of Jewish Hamilton history and hint at the unfolding potential that lies ahead.

We are asking everyone connected to the Jewish community to bring us your photos of Jewish life in Hamilton. It doesn't matter what size or colour, or even the quality of the photo — just something that represents your best memories: a family Passover seder at Uncle Syd and Auntie Sophie's house in 1957, your parents' wedding at the synagogue in 1978, volunteering at the Hadassah Bazaar in 1986, the UJA Walkathon in 1999, the Hanukkah Hustle in 2008, your daughter's Bat Mitzvah in 2013 ... all of this and more applies. We want to use all of these in a rotating gallery exhibit of Jewish life in Hamilton. You can drop off your photographs at 1605 Main St. W. in Hamilton in an envelope marked "Welcome Collage" or email high resolution jpeg images to [grymberg@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:grymberg@jewishhamilton.org). (Make sure you include your name and contact information so that we can arrange to return your photos to you after we've scanned them!) We are planning on a dedication of the collage to take place around Hanukkah.

The afternoon will feature activities geared more towards an adult audience. Come for coffee and live music (performers TBA) at 2 p.m. and stay for a 3 p.m. screening of the film, "Ben-Gurion: Epilogue". The acclaimed documentary about Israel's founding father offers a rare intimate look at what went on inside Ben-Gurion's heart and mind. The film presents a recently unearthed interview with him, discovered in the Spielberg Archives, that was conducted in 1968, 20 years after he declared

## NEED TO KNOW

**WHAT:** J HAMILTON Grand Opening

**WHEN:** Sunday, Sept. 16, 2018

**WHAT TIME:** 10 a.m. Bagels, cookies, coffee and juice followed by collage making, Rosh Hashanah arts and crafts, PJ library storytelling, balloon making, face painting, and a sing-along led by Camp Kadimah director Oliver Borr. 2 p.m. Coffee and live music 3 p.m. Screening of *Ben-Gurion: Epilogue*, a 60 min. documentary by Yariv Mozer and Yael Perlov

**CONTACT:** [grymberg@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:grymberg@jewishhamilton.org) 905-648-0605

the establishment of the Jewish State and five years after he left the government, quite abruptly, to retire. Ben-Gurion's introspective soul-searching provides a surprising vision for crucial decisions Israel needs to make today. The film also brings thought-provoking insights about the role of leaders in today's complex world.

Supporting our Jewish educational institutions, providing opportunities for youth, caring for the vulnerable members of our community, providing a place where everyone can gather for social events, welcoming newcomers, celebrating and supporting Israel — all these values and more are served by the new J Hamilton. We can't wait to see you at our open house. For more information contact Hamilton Jewish Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg at [grymberg@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:grymberg@jewishhamilton.org).

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## INTRODUCING YESOD FEDERATION'S NEW LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

STORY BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

When David Shore first moved to Hamilton with his young family 18 years ago, he participated in the Federation-sponsored Genesis leadership program, an experience that served him well through years of serving on the Federation board and chairing Kehila's board of directors. This fall, the McMaster professor in the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour, is showing his appreciation by heading up a new Federation leadership program called Yesod.

"I benefitted hugely from Genesis. not just in the Jewish community but in my work life," he said. "This is a great way to give back."

Shore initially turned down CEO Gustavo Rymberg's invitation to head up Yesod because he felt that his current juggling of work, volunteer and familial responsibilities left him very little time to take on one more thing. Then he looked at the documentation.

"It's a really well-designed program because it has all the key aspects of a leadership program that's also situated in Jewish tradition and values," he said. Each session begins with a Torah reading relating to a leadership issue faced by a well-known biblical character. The Yesod curriculum was developed through the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning and was written by Dr. Erica Brown. The course provides

insights into personal and organizational leadership through a Jewish perspective by merging Judaic text study, business skills, leadership theory, and experiential application.

An even more compelling reason for Shore derives from his observations about this community's Jewish organizations.

"Hamilton really needs young leaders. We have had a lot of excellent leaders in this community, but most of them should be taking a mentorship role and less of a leadership role," he said.

Shore said he's often felt frustrated by the number of occasions that bold ideas have failed to make it to the implementation stage.

"There's always this promise of potential, but little forward progress. We have all the right pieces. We just haven't put them together in the right way."

With so many young people moving to Hamilton in recent years, the Yesod program has come along at just the right time to develop "well educated, thoughtful, and considered leaders."

Yesod is open to anyone in the Hamilton Jewish community who wants to gain leadership skills through a Jewish lens. Participants must be dedicated to attending the full program. For more information contact Gustavo Rymberg at [grymberg@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:grymberg@jewishhamilton.org) or call 905-648-0605 to register. See page 7 for more information.

## SNAP COMMITTEE TAKES ON A NEW MANDATE



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

SNAP committee members l to r: Carole Adler, Sandra Morris, Anita Bernstein, Joy Zians, Marilyn Levy and Einav Symons. Standing behind is OCAD University's Our Doors Are Open coordinator David Pereyra.

STORY BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Remember SNAP? The Special Needs Action Project was created as a Hamilton Jewish Federation committee back in 2015 whose mandate was to offer support for special needs families in the Jewish community. As of July 30, that mandate has been expanded significantly, when SNAP committee members gathered at the new J-Hamilton building to be trained as facilitators charged with advancing inclusion in the Jewish community and other faith communities across Hamilton.

The Train the Trainer seminar at J-Hamilton was given by David Pereyra, coordinator of Our Doors Are Open, a project of the Inclusive Design Research Centre at OCAD University (formerly the Ontario College of Art

and Design).

Our Doors Are Open was created to help faith communities throughout Ontario make their places of worship more inclusive to people with disabilities. While many synagogues and churches have installed ramps, elevators or designated bathroom stalls, Pereyra says that there is much more involved in making a space truly inclusive. Religious rituals and practices, for instance, may unwittingly exclude people with disabilities, which can include deafness, hearing loss, developmental, learning, and mental health disabilities, and anyone who relies on a service animal, wheel-chair, or other assistive device.

Faith communities interested in adopting a more inclusive approach into the design of

their spaces and programs, however, will face challenges resulting from the fact that the diversity of needs of individuals with disabilities is much greater than those of able bodied people. That's where the SNAP committee can be helpful.

As OCAD's new Hamilton partner, the SNAP committee will focus its attention on the Jewish community before offering its consulting services to other faith communities. SNAP members will start by contacting their respective organizations and help them reexamine their services, programs, and rituals and brainstorm ways to make their organization more welcoming. If you'd like a SNAP member to contact you or for more information, please contact Anita Bernstein at [bernstein.anita@gmail.com](mailto:bernstein.anita@gmail.com).

# Shana Tova from Shalom Village

Honour your loved ones with a tribute card



The Shalom Village Charitable Foundation invites you to send one of our personalized Rosh Hashanah greeting and tribute cards this new year, featuring artwork by our residents. By reaching out to family, friends and loved ones this Jewish new year through the purchase of our Rosh Hashanah cards, you touch not only the recipients, but also the lives of our residents at Shalom Village.

To make your donation and send your card visit [www.ShalomVillage.ca/Giving](http://www.ShalomVillage.ca/Giving) or contact [kathleen@shalomvillage.ca](mailto:kathleen@shalomvillage.ca)

As we come together to celebrate the High Holidays, Shalom Village extends our warmest wishes for this new year, 5779. Rosh Hashanah marks the start of a new year – a time of humble prayer, joyful celebration, and hope for a new beginning.

At the heart of this holiday is the belief that the power of personal transformation is not outside us but lies within. In this season of renewal, we celebrate that spirit; we honour our fathers and our mothers; and rededicate ourselves to the work of Tikkun Olam, repairing the world.

From all of us at Shalom Village, L'Shana Tova Tikatevu. May this year be a year of blessing, good health, and peace for you and those you love and may you be inscribed for blessing in the Book of Life.



Our Annual Tea has a new date!

For the first time since its inception, we are hosting the 37th Annual Ladies Auxiliary Tea in the fall. We hope you will join us on Oct. 17, 2018 for an afternoon of delicious treats, fabulous hats and charming conversations with friends.

To make a donation or purchase a ticket, contact Kathleen Thomas at 905-529-1613 X264 or email [Kathleen@shalomvillage.ca](mailto:Kathleen@shalomvillage.ca).

# YESOD

## A new Jewish community Leadership Program

### HAMILTON FACULTY

**David Shore** is a professor in the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour at McMaster University, where he serves as the principal investigator in the Multisensory Perception Laboratory. His main area of study is human perception and cognition with an emphasis on how humans integrate information from multiple sensory systems.

Within the Jewish community, David has played an integral part in developing the Kehila Jewish Community Day School. He has served on the board for more than 12 years, three times as school chair. He is currently engaged with the school developing a donor relations initiative. David also served on the Hamilton Jewish Federation board for two years and was on the committee to restructure Federation bylaws. All of this work was supported by his engagement with the Genesis leadership initiative more than 15 years ago.

**In his role as Yesod facilitator, David brings both an academic perspective and practical leadership experience in the Hamilton Jewish community.**



The Jewish Federations of North America Mandel Center for Leadership Excellence, in partnership with the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning and the Hamilton Jewish Federation, is pleased to offer Yesod, **a leadership program designed to prepare future Federation and Jewish community leaders.**



**Yesod, the Hebrew word for foundation, aptly describes this vital initiative of the Hamilton Jewish Federation.** The leaders of a community are the foundation upon which a community is built and their success is inextricably linked to the success of the Federation system. The goal of YESOD is to support communities in building a pipeline of excellent volunteer leadership. Yesod will help our community build sustainable volunteer leadership succession plans.

The Yesod program consists of eight highly interactive sessions and will provide participants with the tools and techniques to develop their own leadership skills.

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There are a lot of ghosts from the past here, both from the Shoah and the communist occupation.



PHOTO: EVAN BINDELGLASS, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

Hamilton Jewish Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg enjoys a rowdy sing-along at the Szarvas summer camp in Budapest for young Jews from across the region.

# REBORN JEWISH COMMUNITIES

More than 70 years after being wiped out, Jewish life in Berlin and Budapest is experiencing a rebirth with the help of Jewish Federation funded agencies

STORY BY **SUSAN ROTH**,  
SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Last July my husband and I participated in a leadership mission to Berlin and Budapest sponsored by the Jewish Federations of North America. The mission was designed to help Federation leaders understand the challenges faced by Eastern European Jewish communities today and to learn how Federation-funded programs are contributing to the renewal of Jewish life in the area.

Before our departure I felt a pit in my stomach. How do you go back to a place where such atrocities were committed during the Shoah, when six million were murdered just because they were Jewish, as well as countless others who were gay, disabled, or Roma. How do you walk on the Unter de Linden where the Nazis once marched in unison; or walk through the park in the Bavarian quarter where Jews couldn't even sit on the park benches; or go to the Grunwald Station where at Platform 17, 50,000 Jews were shoved into train cars for deportation to extermination camps?

Many of us are aware that today, Berlin is a thriving metropolis, with great food, music festivals, and lots of Israelis, but what is happening from a Jewish perspective?

When Jews first returned to Berlin in 1945, they referred to themselves as Jews in Germany rather than as German Jews. This terminology remains. Jews felt conflicted and tentative about returning to Germany. Most were not even from Berlin before the war, but it was a place for them to live. They thought it would be temporary. For the most part they kept their Jewishness secret. Often, they didn't tell their children they were Jewish. Of course they were afraid. Their numbers were small.

Post-war teenagers who knew they were Jewish lived with the awareness they were surrounded by a generation, some of whom

took part in rounding up and murdering Jews. Many moved to Israel to escape this reality.

Germany neither memorialized nor referred to what happened under the Third Reich until the 1980s. The memorial at Platform 17 was the first to be completed in 1987, after much controversy. And even then, the inscription was vague, not mentioning Jews or murder. With the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall that marked the end of communist rule in Germany, there was freedom of movement for the first time in a generation. The Jews who poured in to Germany from the former Soviet Union knew very little about Judaism after 70 years of communist oppression, but in the early 1990s, with the help of the Joint Distribution Committee and the Jewish Agency, Jews started to experience what it meant to be part of a community. Schools, community centres, and camps started to help those Jews seeking their lost identities.

Today there are about 300,000 Jews living in Germany, 250,000 of whom come from the former Soviet Union. There are a lot of ghosts from the past here, both from the Shoah and the communist occupation. Natan Sharansky once said of this fastest growing Jewish community in the world, "if we don't do something fast, this community will disappear." However, I felt reassured by the rejuvenation of Jewish life in Berlin. This is nothing like your "typical" Jewish community in Canada. Most families have one Jewish parent and very little knowledge about Jewish practices. The community is open to all those who define themselves as Jewish. Very few people have synagogue affiliation.

I was absolutely amazed at the sensitivity shown to Jewish Berliners by the Jewish Agency, the Joint Distribution Committee and the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation. They are not pushing their own agenda, but rather



PHOTO: PAUL ROTH, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

Mission participants take part in a Yizkor service at the Levetzowstrasse Deportation Memorial. Once the location of Berlin's largest synagogue, it became a collection point for imprisoned Jews before deportation to concentration camps.

helping people find their own expression of Judaism. They are building a community, with joy and mutual respect. Very often the parents seek out Jewish education for their children with the children ending up teaching the parents Jewish customs.

One of the most effective tools in teaching young adults about Judaism is Birthright Israel. Before the trip, participants attend three seminars that orient them to basic Jewish practices. They visit Israel with some background and, upon their return, their Birthright group becomes a place for learning, celebrating holidays, making friends and welcoming other Jews to the community.

The story of reconciling with the past continued in the second part of our trip in Budapest. Although the Nazis did not occupy Hungary until 1944, the ferocity of the Third Reich's actions there was unprecedented. In the span of three months between April and July 1944, 490,000 Jews were deported to concentration camps. These were mainly the Orthodox Jews from the countryside. The majority of those who survived the Holocaust were from Budapest and generally unaffiliated. After the war they tried to conceal their Jewish identities by changing their names, joining the Communist party, and trying not to be overtly Jewish. Parents tried to save their children from persecution by hiding their Jewishness. Here, as in Berlin, there are ghosts from the past haunting people's everyday lives.

What I learnt from this mission is that realities can change and that the generation of Jews living in Budapest today are seeking Jewish meaning in their lives. Individuals somehow find out they have Jewish roots. They are "coming out of the closet" and want to explore their own Judaism. This is exactly what's happening at their Jewish Community Centre; a lively place with programming for all ages, including theatre, art classes, holiday celebrations, and Hebrew lessons.

In Canada, we have a long history of Jewish summer camps that have for generations promoted positive Jewish experiences. Using this model, the Joint Distribution Committee, funded by North American UIA dollars and the Ronald Lauder Foundation, sends 1,500 children from 20 countries in Europe to Camp Szarvas every summer. There is also representation from Israel and North America.

REBORN COMMUNITIES CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

# REBORN COMMUNITIES



PHOTO: PAUL ROTH, SPECIAL TO THE JIJ

Berlin's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. The columns evoke a disorienting feeling.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

The visit to this camp was absolutely heartwarming. When we came, campers were split up into groups engaged in swimming, sports, Israeli dancing, art, and discussions with the very cool Rabbi Tommy. The children were completely engaged in their activities. For me, the pinnacle experience was seeing the spirit in the dining hall. One group would start a song and the next group of kids joined in. Children were standing on their chairs, arm movements in sync, their voices pounding out songs in unison in English, Hungarian, Romanian and Hebrew. They belled out their tunes with incredible enthusiasm, reaching a feverish pitch. I kept thinking, "Here it is. The ghosts of the past are being smothered." Unfolding before my eyes, was a beautiful renewal, a total juxtaposition to the ugly past.

It didn't matter that these kids came from different countries and spoke different languages, they have found meaning, fun and acceptance among each other. They have found meaning in their Jewish community and they will bring that home to their respective families. These children are the

key to breaking down the barriers of fear of exposure that have plagued generations of Jews in Eastern Europe. It is only through reconciling the past that empowerment truly begin.

One of the songs the children sang so enthusiastically, written by the legendary Rabbi Nachman, says it all.

Kol Ha'olam kulo  
Gesher tzar me'od  
Veha'ikar lo lifached k'lal

The whole world  
Is a very narrow bridge  
and the main thing is to have no  
fear at all

I am truly thankful for the opportunity I had to better understand the needs of our people in present day Eastern Europe and to see how our Federation dollars are being wisely spent.

*Longtime community members Susan and Paul Roth live in Dundas.*

Thank you to our members, donors and friends for another successful year!

**Wishing the entire Jewish community Shana Tova - Happy and Sweet New Year**

Help make a difference this Rosh Hashana for the women, children and families in Israel.



For information on how to get involved contact [naamat@naamat.com](mailto:naamat@naamat.com) or call 1-888-278-0792

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# TOGETHER, WE WELCOME THE NEW YEAR 5779

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for a year of peace, good health, and fulfillment.

**L'Shana Tova tikatevu ve-techatemu**

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The withdrawal from food on Yom Kippur is not that difficult, but for some of us, the withdrawal from caffeine is debilitating. **SIMONE ROTSTEIN**

## TIPS FOR A YOM KIPPUR FAST



SIMONE ROTSTEIN

Addictions, I've had a few. Well, maybe two. Both helped me to cope with social awkwardness; keeping my hands busy and my mind aroused. In university, I started smoking cigarettes and progressed to become a pack-a-day addict. I used to look forward to the reassuring pull on that first cigarette, as I woke each morning. It was a hard addiction to give up.

My second addiction, which continues to this time, is caffeine. I cannot imagine a day without coffee and, in the morning, I wake up looking forward to my first sip of that dark, aromatic brew. Initially, my coffee drinking was done socially, occupying my hands and my mind. Now, it is a routine that is almost always satisfied in my home. I drink three cups a day, two in the morning, with my breakfast, and one espresso after lunch.

Not a huge intake, but, essential to my well-being. Over the years, I've switched from a drip coffee maker to a French press and from ground to dark, shiny whole beans, milled daily.

Eight years ago, I splurged on a miraculous, Swiss coffee maker. I pour dark, whole coffee beans in one side of the machine and clear, filtered water in the other, press a few buttons and, straightaway, the machine creates a wonderful, fragrant java. It produces the perfect cup, grinding the correct amount of beans and pushing through the grinds, as much hot water as is needed to create the brew I desire. The coffee has a delightful, pale crema sitting on top of the dark infusion. My parents referred to the crema, the thin layer of foam on their Turkish coffee, as 'whish'. They used to discuss the consistency of the 'whish' as a reflection on the quality of the demitasse. The 'whish' needed to be thick, creamy coloured and blanket the coffee.

My machine and I have a very close relationship. By the different sounds it utters, I understand what it is telling me. "Your mug is ready." "The beans need replenishing." "You need to clear out the old grounds as the container is full." I instinctively recognise the

signals it transmits and respond with care, as I would to a person expressing needs. It has a digital display to inform me when it is heating up and when it is ready to prepare a cup of joe and it tells me to clean it or to decalcify it, at the appropriate times. I take good care of my coffee maker and it reciprocates.

How do I know this is an addiction, despite the fact that I do not increase the amount I drink? Well, as a Jew, I observe Yom Kippur. This day of reflection and atonement is also a 25-hour fast day - no food, no drink. As a young teenager, I had no problem with the fasting but I remember my mother, year after year, ending up in bed with a massive migraine and unable to enjoy the savoury, cheese sambouseks, and the sweet, date-filled ma'amouls she had prepared to break the fast after sunset. She didn't join us for that meal, remaining in bed, moaning and in acute pain, not rising until the next morning, weak and famished. Until I, like my mother, became a coffee addict, I didn't sympathize with her suffering.

The withdrawal from food on Yom Kippur is not that difficult. The pangs of hunger reduce during the day, remaining twinges and, as the hours pass, I am closer and closer

to good food. In contrast, for some of us, the withdrawal from caffeine is debilitating. Nausea, headaches and general feelings of being unwell exhibit themselves quickly. The 25-hour fast becomes excruciatingly difficult.

I need about 10 days before the start of Yom Kippur to withdraw from my daily intake. The first two days, I whittle down to two cups and over the next few days, reduce my consumption to one. It's a challenge to give up that last coffee. I mix it with some decaffeinated grounds, horror of horrors, and then, switch to green tea. Finally, on the day before Yom Kippur, I am reduced to drinking herbal tea. With these preparations, I sail through the day, avoiding the troubles that plagued my mother.

The evening that Yom Kippur ends, I eagerly chew on a delicious slice of apple with honey. Subsequently, I seek out a flavourful, fragrant cup of coffee, sleep be damned. Without a hitch, I restart my addiction.

*Simone Rotstein is an emigrant from Egypt via France to Montreal. She has lived in Hamilton since her marriage to Ed. Her writing began about seven years ago.*

## RHYTHMS AND REFLECTIONS OF THE SEASON



KHALM SMIDERLE

Rhythm is a basic necessity for living. Without a heart beat one cannot live, making it the most universal rhythm there is. Rosh Hashanah is the first half of the heart beat that defines the holiday pulse of the Jewish calendar year. It is the "lubb" in the "lubb-dupp" sound of a heart-beat. This Jewish "lubb-dupp" is followed by a series of symbol

crashes, cow bells (even!), and other percussive marvels representing the rest of the Jewish year. If Rosh Hashanah is the "lubb", then Yom Kippur is the "dupp", and what should happen between the two halves of this heartbeat is critical.

Rosh Hashanah calls Jews to be retro- and introspective. Who are you? What have you done or not done justly over the year prior? It's not so much a question of "Am I a good person", but rather, "could I have been a better person? What can I do to be a better person?"

Like other new year traditions it's an opportunity to hit the reset button and choose to make modifications in one's life. It's the chance to tap into the collective

momentum of change. So why not just go with the secular flow of the Gregorian calendar?

Whether you take the back story literally or not, God made everything, then made people, people turned out to be not so great, so God got rid of most of them. Eventually out of what was left of humanity came a group of people God decided to choose for some particular obligations. *Tikkun Olam*. The call to repair the world. This is something that Jews are particularly obligated to do. Anybody can participate, but for Jews it's part of a collective agreement. Whether one believes in God or not, being just, and working hard to do better is part of Jewish tradition.

One cannot affect positive change externally without mastering positive change within. Life is busy. The Jewish calendar is full of "pause and reflect" about lots of different things, but Rosh Hashanah is directed at the self. Having a chunk of time set aside within a familiar cadence to self examine in the context of a deep spiritual and moral obligation is extremely helpful, but also uniquely Jewish.

*Khalm Smiderle is a multimedia artist who has helped produce various video projects for the Jewish community. A Hamilton native, Smiderle is also a convert to Judaism.*

### *Shanah Tovah*

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) wishes all of our members, friends and supporters a happy, healthy, and a peaceful New Year!

We are deeply grateful for your generosity and continued support of our projects for Children, Healthcare, and Women in Israel and Canada.

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**TOGETHER** we have the power to transform Jewish life.

YACHAD

TOGETHER | 20  
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TRANSFORMING JEWISH LIFE IN HAMILTON

# TOGETHER | 20 CAMPAIGN | 19

YACHHAD

**Colonel Richard Kemp** has spent most of his life combating terrorism and insurgency. In his 30-year military career he commanded British troops on the front line in some of the world's toughest hot spots. He was wounded while fighting terrorists in Northern Ireland and in 2013 it emerged that he had been named as a target on Al Qaeda's death list.

In 2009, at an emergency session of the UN in Geneva, Colonel Richard Kemp vigorously refuted Judge Goldstone's allegations of war crimes against the Israel Defence Forces during Operation Cast Lead. He was in Israel during the Gaza operation, Protective Edge in 2014 and Pillar of Defense in 2012, meeting with senior military officers, government officials and ministers. He also spent time with Israeli troops around the Gaza border area and visited the cities of Sderot, Ashkelon and Ashdod while they were under fire. He gave evidence in February 2015 to the United Nations Commission of Inquiry investigating the Gaza conflict and in June 2015 addressed the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva rejecting the Commission's report.

In 2018, Kemp was once again on the front line during Hamas's series of violent terrorist operations intended to breach the border from Gaza into Israel. In May, he addressed the UN Human Rights Council, refuting their allegations that the IDF had acted disproportionately and accused the Council of encouraging terrorism by their failure to recognise that Hamas was responsible for the violence.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## COLONEL RICHARD KEMP, CBE

OPENING EVENT | THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2018 | 7 P.M.

**Colonel Richard Kemp** is a board member of former Spanish Prime Minister Aznar's Friends of Israel initiative, the Israel-based NGO Monitor, the U.S.-based Advancing Human Rights, the campaign group Veterans for Britain and the Community Security Trust; and a patron of Campaign Against Anti-Semitism. He is Senior Associate Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies in London, Fellow of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and adviser on terrorism to the Home Affairs Select Committee in the UK parliament. Kemp spends much of his time in the Middle East and the United States, where he is frequently called upon to brief Congress and government officials on current strategic and security issues.

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Anita begged her parents not to send her away, but they saw no alternative.

# LESSONS IN SURVIVAL

Hamilton's Holocaust survivors are aging, and, at a time of rampant Holocaust denial, their stories matter now more than ever. Below, Anita Spenser's story, the first in a series of profiles by **Phyllis Shragge**

STORY BY **PHYLLIS SHRAGGE**,  
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

**A**s a young girl in Czechoslovakia, Anita Fuchs lived a wonderful, privileged life. Her house was grand, complete with a cook and a kinder-fraulein (governess). She has fond memories of life with her parents, including family skiing trips to Switzerland, vacations to Yugoslavia and Austria, and Sunday breakfasts in her parents' bedroom. And above all, she remembers her parents' love and understanding. She was secure in the knowledge that her home was her refuge.

But her world was shattered by the reality of the time.

In 1939, as the Nazis marched into Prague, Anita's parents realized that the threat to Jews was imminent. The safety of their children, 12-year-old Anita and her eight-year-old brother Jiri, was all that mattered. They made the ultimate sacrifice: They sent the children away.

Anita Spenser, nee Fuchs, recalls the shock of being thrust into a sphere of uncertainty as she and her brother joined the Kindertransport, a movement providing thousands of Jewish children in Europe a chance at a future with families in England. Anita and Jiri were among the 669 Czechoslovakian children directly saved by Nicholas Winton, a British stockbroker who was later acknowledged as

a reluctant hero. His contribution to Kindertransport was not known until 1988, when his wife discovered a scrapbook detailing his work. He was ultimately honoured with a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth and a Czech prize for outstanding service to humanity. To this day, Anita keeps a picture of Nicholas Winton on her refrigerator.

Anita begged her parents not to send her away, but they saw no alternative. They escorted Anita and Jiri to the train filled with children bound for safety in England. When Anita and Jiri transferred to a ship for the last leg of the trip, they were separated from one another. Jiri found it difficult to be away from his sister who had assumed the role of surrogate parent. Each evening, he would insist that Anita come by to say good night. He needed her assurance that everything would be all right and Anita did her best to console him, even though she was in need of consoling as well.

Anita and Jiri lived in Brighton, England, near one another but in separate homes. Anita describes her living situation as "pretty horrible." The couple who took her in had a bad marriage and there was tension in the home. The most troubling aspect of those years was that Anita felt threatened by the husband. She was able to withstand his advances, but his presence was unsettling.

Anita did well in school until she realized that there would be no



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

Anita Spenser and her brother escaped wartime Czechoslovakia on the kindertransport.

financial support for her to attend university. Her marks plummeted, as did her optimism for the future. The headmistress at her school, a Miss Warmington, realized that the bright refugee student had enormous potential and she was able to find a scholarship for her and one for Jiri as well. Once again, Anita found the determination to work hard at her studies.

While at university, Anita was informed that her mother and father were killed in Auschwitz.

She was devastated, but she swore that she would continue her studies in memory of her parents.

Jiri earned a PhD and remained in England where he married and had four children. Anita studied social work at the University of Birmingham and became a psychiatric social worker. While at university, she met another Jewish refugee, a man named Ian Spenser who had also escaped Prague on a Kindertransport train. They married and moved to Canada, and

eventually to Hamilton, where Ian became a chemistry professor and researcher at McMaster University. Anita became an associate professor at McMaster and worked for many years as a social worker in the department of psychiatry at St. Joseph's Hospital. They have two children, a son and a daughter.

Her recollection of her experiences as a youth bring tears to her eyes. But she remains strong.

"You have to live life," Anita says. "You have to go on."



WISHING THE JEWISH  
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& HAPPY NEW YEAR,  
FROM MY FAMILY  
TO YOURS.

- Mitch Sherman, Product Advisor

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CAMP KADIMAH - JCC HAMILTON

# WHAT A SUMMER!

STORY BY **OLIVER BORR**, DIRECTOR  
PHOTOS BY CAMP KADIMAH STAFF

Camp Kadimah was an absolute thrill this summer, from the first day to last. A typical week involved an exciting carnival on the holiday theme of the week, a thrilling trip, a day of swimming, and a boisterous Shabbat party showcasing our counsellors' singing and acting talents. Spoiler alert: there wasn't much talent, but that's what made it so entertaining!

What really differentiated this year from others was that I tried to build on the successes experienced in previous years. I asked past Camp Kadimah directors what worked best for them and, much like a recipe, added a little of this and a little of that. Once I had the structure, I just had to find a way to make the camp experience better than ever.

I tried to make the experience for the parents a new one as well. I created an Instagram account, reinvigorated the Facebook page, and kept parents updated throughout the summer. That way, they knew in real time what their kids were getting up to. On top of maintaining an online presence, I also published weekly newsletters to keep parents in the loop. It's tough for the parents to leave their kids all day, every day. The least we can try to do is to keep them involved as much as possible.

Another example of bringing back successes from previous years was Crazy Kessef. Crazy Kessef is holiday-themed raffle tickets the kids received for winning games, participating, showing support for their peers, or simply good behaviour. The kids would enter their Kessef into a raffle that was drawn at the end of the Shabbat party every week. Some prizes included remote-control drones, helicopters, or giant teddy bears.

Between the added emphasis on marketing, Judaica, buzzworthy outings, and overall positivity, it's no surprise that Camp Kadimah was as wildly successful as it was. I can't wait to see what's in store for next year!



Camp Kadimah field trips are second to none!



At Kadimah, there's lots of love to go around.

## The Hamilton Jewish Federation and Jewish Community Centre have an opening for a full time Program Coordinator

The candidate should have the personal qualities and skills to motivate and be a role model to volunteers and staff. The coordinator should be able to articulate the mission of the Hamilton Jewish Federation and the Jewish Community Centre with creativity, energy and enthusiasm.

### Qualifications

The candidate shall be experienced in a field related to programming and planning in a nonprofit organization. He/she shall have experience in Jewish communal services or a related field. Preference will be given to a candidate who demonstrates a full knowledge and understanding of Jewish ethics, values, and community life as well as worldwide Jewish concerns.

### Specific Assignments

Develop, implement and administer all aspects of the following:

- Yom Ha'atzmaut community celebration
- Holocaust education programs, including student and teacher seminars, Kristallnacht, Yom Hashoah commemorations and International Holocaust Remembrance Day
- Annual lectures and special events

### General Assignments

- Prepare annual budgets for all programs and events
- Plan annual general meetings and special events
- Participate in all Federation and JCC events.

Salary is commensurate with qualifications. Please forward your resume by email to [grymberg@jewishhamilton.org](mailto:grymberg@jewishhamilton.org) by the end of September.

# Shana Tova from CIJA

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## TEMPLE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL



PHOTO: DORA-ANN COHEN ELLISON, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

TAS students and staff create artwork for Shalom Village residents.

**DORA COHEN ELLISON**, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Temple Anshe Sholom Religious School's first family program is Saturday, Sept. 22. We will begin at 9:15 a.m. with a Shabbat song session in the chapel. Families with children age 4-12 are invited to join us.

New and exciting offerings this year include Exploring Torah and prayer through various art forms, increased opportunities to develop Hebrew language skills, and our biennial Mock Wedding celebration! Also new - a social night out to see "Once Upon A Mattress" with Drury Lane Theatre on Nov. 8, 2018.

Our teachers nourish the love of Torah, help form a connection with the Jewish community, and guide students as they explore their faith in God. Our Religious School helps students form deep bonds with other Jewish children and adults, as they study Jewish culture, traditions and language.

We welcome children from babies to age 16, to participate in our programs. Families

with young children can drop in to our weekly Tot Shabbat for infants up to age 4 from 11 a.m. -12:15 p.m. and our monthly YoFi Shabbat at 5:15 p.m on the first Friday of each month. School-aged children up to Grade 10, can register to participate in engaging learning sessions on Shabbat mornings and on Wednesdays after school. We aim to help families develop a strong Jewish identity and a deepened connection to our local and global Jewish Community. Together with Beth Jacob, we offer our Grade 8-10 students an opportunity to volunteer in the community and learn together with their peers, through our program B'yachad.

Please check out our blog at anshesholom.ca (click on Learning; click on Religious School) and contact us to find out how you and your family can become part of our wonderful school community.

For more information contact Dora-Ann Cohen Ellison at [dacellison@anshesholom.ca](mailto:dacellison@anshesholom.ca).

## BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE

**ELYSA KESHEN**, DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Beth Jacob Synagogue is a modern, traditional, egalitarian community that is fully inclusive and welcoming of people of all backgrounds. We offer engaging and innovative programming for all ages.

On Sept. 26 we will be hosting a whiskeytasting event in our sukkah. We welcome all community members to join us for a night of conversation, good company and quality spirits.

This year we are excited to offer a very unique cantorial experience. Joining us from New York City, our High Holiday cantor will be Rabbi Cantor Avinoam Sharon. Cantor Sharon completed his cantorial training at the Jerusalem School of Cantorial Art and Music and was an opera singer performing with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his cantorial skills, Sharon is an ordained Conservative rabbi, an IDF officer, and a lawyer. He worked as the head military criminal prosecutor for the IDF in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and was involved in the apprehension and

prosecution of terrorists. He also served as a liaison between the IDF and the FBI. He has published numerous articles in many legal journals and publications and is currently living in New York pursuing a doctorate in Talmud and Jewish Law at the Jewish Theological Seminary. We are thrilled to have Cantor Sharon leading our services this year with Rabbi Hillel.

Friday nights we enjoy an especially uplifting musical service led by Rabbi Hillel in the popular Carlebach style. In summer months when Shabbat doesn't arrive until late in the evening, Rabbi Hillel leads the service with guitar, mandolin or charango(!), while congregants drum along with tambourines and castanets. It is a joyful start to Shabbat. Friday night services begin at 6:00 pm and Shabbat morning services at 9:15 a.m.

See our website [www.bethjacobsynagogue.ca](http://www.bethjacobsynagogue.ca) or call 905-522-1351 for more information. We would love to have you join us!

## BETH JACOB HEBREW SCHOOL

**EINAV SYMONS**, EDUCATION DIRECTOR

It is with great excitement and anticipation that Beth Jacob Hebrew School teachers and staff are looking forward to the start of the school year.

This year, Hebrew school for grades SK-7 will continue on Wednesdays from 4:30-6:15 p.m. While class time has been lengthened to accommodate a more in-depth learning, the curriculum has also been modified to attain greater fluency and proficiency. School-wide programs with Temple Anshe Sholom will include the themes of Beresheet, Chanukah, Tu B'Shvat and Passover. Students in the B'nei Mitzvah program at Beth Jacob and the Temple will explore together for six sessions, the responsibilities and expectations involved as they reach this milestone in their lives.

The B'Yachad educational and social action program for Grades 8-10 with Temple Anshe Sholom will continue to reflect the pro-active collaboration of both congregations in meeting the needs of Hamilton Jewish youth. This program will expose students to Jewish values and ethics and provide hands-on opportunities for Tikkun Olam. Classes will meet at both congregations throughout the year on Wednesdays from 4:30-6:15 p.m.

Hebrew Enrichment classes will take place on Mondays from 4:15-5:45 p.m.

This year, Beth Jacob students will be introduced to an exceptional online learning platform, which has proven to be very successful in other schools.

A new initiative this year will be the introduction of Adult Hebrew Beginner's class which will take place on Wednesdays from 6:45-7:30 p.m. beginning on Oct. 17. This class will introduce adults to the mechanics and skills needed to decode the Hebrew alphabet. Vocabulary will be introduced, and confidence will boost!

Beth Jacob Hebrew School's first social meet-and-greet will be on Sept. 5 at Myer's Farm from 4:30-6 p.m. to pick apples as we prepare together to welcome the new year.

Registration forms are available on the Beth Jacob Synagogue website and it may also be downloaded from the Beth Jacob Facebook page. Forms are also available

For any questions or additional information please contact Einav Symons at [einav@bethjacobsynagogue.ca](mailto:einav@bethjacobsynagogue.ca) or call 716-574-6016

Wishing you a Shana Tova U'metuka!

### AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM HAMILTON JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES

Many in the community are aware that the United Way has decided to no longer fund Hamilton Jewish Social Services. Whereas JSS appreciates the good that United Way does in our community by funding other agencies, this decision is having a very significant detrimental effect to the services which JSS provides for the most vulnerable in our community.

Many community members have designated some or all of their United Way donations to Hamilton Jewish Social Services. If you have made a designated gift to us through the United Way, we would ask that you please advise us so that we can

ensure that JSS receives that money. We encourage community members to donate to the United Way if you wish but also to donate directly to JSS at [www.hamiltonjss.com](http://www.hamiltonjss.com). Thank you for your continuing support. Caring for the vulnerable among us is our community's highest priority.

#### NOTE FROM THE HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION:

We remind JSS supporters that by increasing your donation to the Hamilton Jewish Federation Community Campaign, you also enable an increase to JSS and to all the other important services in our Jewish community.



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## THE JOYOUS SIDE OF DNA TESTING

BY **HAZEL BOON**, JEWISH  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

It's true. When we open Pandora's Box we have to be prepared for whatever comes our way. I recently discovered that some of my cousins had taken DNA tests through Ancestry.com. I wanted to compare all of our results so I asked them to transfer their raw data results to the project I manage at Family Tree DNA (there was no cost to do this). I watched with great anticipation as their data began to appear in my project. Some of what I saw supported what we already knew, but there was some data I didn't expect. One match was unexpected and very interesting. There was a strong match of a previously unknown individual to my cousin Sandra. This man also tested as a match to Sandra's brother and a few cousins who had tested. I asked Sandra to contact the gentleman. We then waited impatiently to hear more. Sandra met with this man and discovered that his mother worked for Sandra's father back in the day. It's fairly certain that they are half siblings. Unfortunately both parents are no longer with us to say one way or the other. Sandra was overjoyed to welcome a new half-brother to her family.

Having data from multiple cousins was of great help in this process. Most people don't have a sufficient paper trail for a secondary confirmation which makes additional cousin matches necessary to know how strong a match we have.

The Jewish Genealogical Society - Hamilton and Area (JGSH) meets 10 times a year. Our fall meetings are set for Wednesdays, Sept. 5, Oct. 17 and Nov. 14, 2018. For more information please check out [jgsh.org](http://jgsh.org) or call 905-524-3345.



Fourth generation Adas member, Aily Leibtag recently celebrated her wedding at the shul.

## YOUNG COUPLES ARE TYING THE KNOT AT THE ADAS

BY **GOLDIE WEISER**

While more and more young Jewish couples are choosing to get married in venues other than synagogues, a recent trend in Hamilton is tipping in the other direction.

"People talk about destination weddings," said Rabbi Daniel Green. "Nothing is more heartwarming and encouraging to a community when that destination is their shul," about the recent phenomenon of couples choosing the Adas Israel as their wedding venue.

"I think many factors that go into that decision — our magnificent facilities, the historic significance of a synagogue, and the strong feeling of attachment that people have to our congregation," said Adas Israel president Stan Katz.

Aily Leibtag, a fourth generation member of the Adas, spoke of the significance of starting her life in the context of community. "Getting married at the Adas was a way for my husband, a Toronto native, to be embraced by a community that has been by my side

throughout every step of my life," she said.

Geoffrey Zalter and Elana Moscoe recently wed at the Adas as well. "Elana fell in love with the community," said Geoffrey, "and decided she wanted to spend her life here. As soon as she came to Adas she fell in love with it as well. Throughout my life I have been connected with the Adas and I couldn't see my wedding going any other way."

Samara Strub and Ira Nightingale have also chosen the Adas as their destination. Both of their parents were married there by the late Rabbi Mordechai Green and have family ties to the congregation that date back over a century. "It was our dream to have Rabbi Mordechai Green co-officiate at our children's wedding, like he did with ours," said Lila Strub.

"This congregation means so much to both our families and it is touching to have the next generation, Rabbi Daniel Green, officiate for our next generation as well."

## KOSHER FOOD BANK SHELVES NEED FILLING

BY **CAROL KRAMES**, DIRECTOR,  
JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES

More than 20 years ago, food banks were created as a result of poverty becoming a bigger problem in our society. Food banks, however, are nothing more than a bandaid solution for the real problem that too many Canadians, through no fault of their own, simply do not have enough money for food and other life necessities.

Fortunately, most of us are living above the poverty line. Money may be tight and we cannot have everything we want, but we manage. For a large part of our society, however this is not the case. Many Canadians are either unemployed, working at a minimum wage job, living on disability pensions, single parents, welfare recipients, and seniors, whose sole income is their pensions. When your pension or salary just barely covers your rent, there is no money for food and the basic necessities of life. Many Canadians have the mistaken idea that people could work if they really wanted to, or are unaware of the large numbers of people in need.

As Jews, we are obligated to be mindful of and recognize the needs of the vulnerable. It's our responsibility to keep our food bank going. Several kosher food banks in Canada are closing their doors because of lack of support. This cannot be us. Keeping food bank shelves filled is a year-round problem, but at holiday time, it is particularly important to help our clients enjoy a warm holiday meal.

When doing your holiday shopping this year, please keep the vulnerable in mind. Gift cards, food, and cash contributions are all appreciated. For more information visit [hamiltonjss.com](http://hamiltonjss.com). Wishing you a happy and healthy new year.

*Wishing you and your family a Happy and Healthy New Year!*



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**COURSE ON  
MINDFUL  
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As we enter the period of self-reflection of the Yomim Noraim, keep in mind that a key component for change is self-compassion. Mindful Self Compassion (MSC) is an empirically supported eight-week training program designed to cultivate the skill of self-compassion. Based on the groundbreaking research of Kristin Neff and the clinical expertise of Christopher Germer, MSC teaches core principles and practices that enable participants to respond to difficult moments in their lives with kindness, care, and understanding. Rapidly expanding research demonstrates that self-compassion is strongly associated with emotional wellbeing, less anxiety, depression and stress, maintenance of healthy habits such as diet and exercise, and satisfying personal relationships. And it's easier than you think.

After participating in this workshop, you'll be able to:

- Practice self-compassion in daily life
- Understand the empirically supported benefits of self-compassion
- Motivate yourself with kindness rather than criticism
- Handle difficult emotions with greater ease
- Manage caregiver fatigue
- Practice the art of savoring and self-appreciation

The next course offering begins Sept. 26, 2018. For more information, visit [mindfulselfcompassionhamilton.ca](http://mindfulselfcompassionhamilton.ca).

**HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY**

In partnership with the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton Hebrew Academy is pleased to announce the completion of its new playground and park areas. With the help of a leading landscape architect firm, the park was designed to benefit not only the students of the HHA but the community as a whole. Studies have shown that unstructured play enhances the social-emotional wellbeing of a child as well as their cognitive development.

Over the past several years, the Hamilton Hebrew Academy has embarked on state-of-the-art upgrades to its facility. Principal Rabbi Yaakov Morel underscored the transformative nature of these recent initiatives.

"Effective education is more than curriculum and pedagogy," he said. "it is about creating a child-centred environment that sparks the imagination and excites the mind."

The new park areas include a toddler village, with a track circling a toddler hill, surrounded by a variety of shops, houses, and art centres. The shops are all designated with Hebrew signage to help integrate an Israeli cultural experience. Next to the toddler village is a staging area with amphitheatre seating and a modern, playstructure



PHOTO COURTESY THE HHA

The new HHA playground is named in memory of Moussia Zaltzman.

with rubber surfacing that provides challenging activities for older children.

Many thanks to Counsellor Aidan Johnson, and the generous allocation from the City of Hamilton Ward 1 Participatory Budget as well as community donors.

The playground is being dedicated in memory of Moussia Zaltzman, of blessed memory, a beloved member of the HHA family, who spent countless hours enjoying outdoor fun at the HHA during her short, but exuberant, six years of life.

**KEHILA  
HESCHEL  
HAMILTON**

In our eighteenth year in Hamilton, Kehila is formally joining the The Abraham Joshua Heschel family of schools, one of the highest-ranked Jewish day schools in North America.

To assist with this evolution, Gail Baker, one of the co-founders of the Toronto Heschel School, will be providing training for the Kehila staff and on-going weekly consultation. Kehila will greatly benefit from Baker's extensive experience as past Toronto Heschel Head of School, co-founder of the Lola Stein Institute and THINK magazine contributor. Baker has dedicated her career to developing innovative educational opportunities for children and educators alike.



New Kehila principal Gail Baker

On Oct. 5, Kehila is honoured to host Susannah Heschel, daughter of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, who will formally launch Kehila's affiliation with the Heschel family of schools — reflected in our new name: Kehila Heschel Hamilton. Heschel has been instrumental in advancing her father's educational philosophy by supporting schools inspired by his vision to create learning environments that are pluralistic, inclusive and committed to social/civic activism and Tikkun Olam.

Join us as we celebrate Kehila's next chapter and witness this exciting transformation. The celebration starts at 10 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 5.

For more information about Kehila Heschel Hamilton call 905-529-7725 or email [office@kehilaschool.ca](mailto:office@kehilaschool.ca).

Kehila Heschel Hamilton wishes the community a sweet and healthy new year.

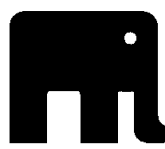
**MCMMASTER HILLEL**

JUDITH DWORKIN, DIRECTOR, MCMMASTER HILLEL

McMaster Hillel is pleased to announce two new staff members who will be joining the team at McMaster University this Fall. Beth Vander Stoep is McMaster Hillel's new advocacy coordinator. Originally from Washington State, USA, Vander is a recent graduate of Northern Arizona University with a Master's of Sustainable Communities. VanderStoep has a wealth of experience building connections on her local campus, and most notably, she was responsible for establishing the Jewish Students Association and building it from

the ground up at Central Washington University.

Nevo Schipre is McMaster's Hillel's new Jewish Agency Israel Fellow shared with Guelph Hillel. Schipre is an alumni of UJA's Shinshinim program and is thrilled to be working with the Canadian Jewish community again. Schipre is from Maalot, a small town in northern Israel and is most looking forward to getting to know students and working together on bringing Israel to campus.



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# ISRAELI FOLK DANCING

BY DEENA SACKS, SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

“It’s my favourite hour of the week,” I tell everyone. Israeli dancing with Wendy Schneider. Actually, it is my favourite hour and a half of every week — and sometimes, if I’m lucky, Wendy stretches the class another 5 or 10 minutes. When class is over, I try to find the dances on YouTube so that I can practice at home.

When I was young, I would play records of the Karmon Israeli Dancers over and over — dancing my heart out in the living room of my parents’ house. How I wanted to be a dancer in that troupe. Dancing at Wendy’s is the closest I can get to being part of the Karmon dancing experience.

Israeli dancing is more than exercise for the body. Learning the steps and combinations is challenging, and great exercise for the brain. At Wendy’s Israeli dance class, we learn new dances, listen to Hebrew songs, sing along, learn some Hebrew language, and have fun.

In her teaching, Wendy divides the dance into segments to teach the steps and combinations. She keeps reviewing the steps until most of us have a sense of the dance — then she puts on the music and says, “fake it till you make it”. Off we go.



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

Magda Mizgalewicz and Joy Pekar at a Mom and Baby Israeli dance class.

## NEED TO KNOW

### WHAT

Israeli Folk Dancing for adults  
Mom and Baby Israeli Dancing

### WHEN

Wednesdays 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Tuesdays 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

beginning in mid-October

### WHERE

Wendy’s Yoga Studio in Dundas

### COST

\$10 drop in

### MORE INFO

wendysyogastudio.ca

Nessa brings her wealth of biblical knowledge to every class. She is our scholar, always providing an explanation for the origin of the music, its biblical reference, its interpretation, and its evolution over time. She can even provide translation in Hebrew, Yiddish and English.

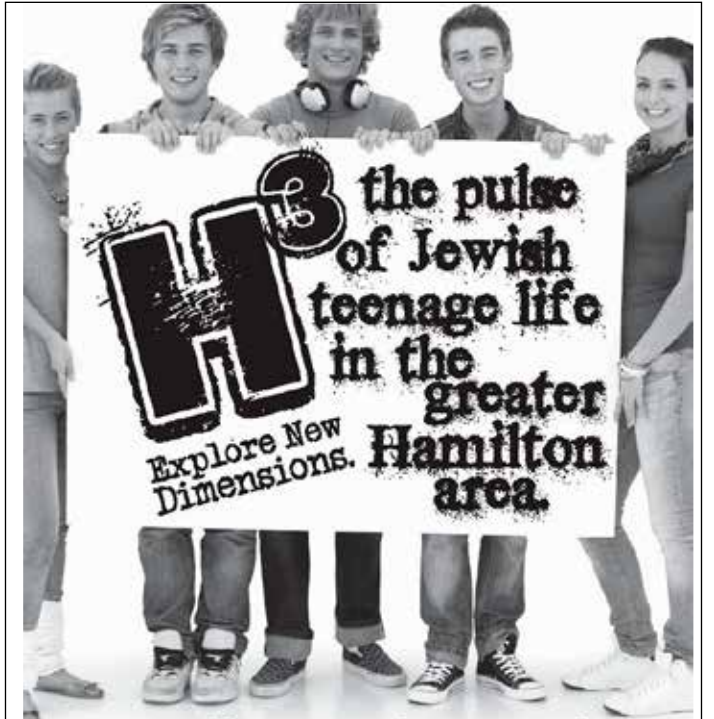
Vivienne brings her experience as a dancer. She transforms every movement into ballet. She is graceful and light on her feet, yet I am impressed by her ability to stomp when appropriate.

I come for the Hebrew songs, the dancing, and the opportunity to immerse myself into a world connected to Israel. As long as Hebrew songs are playing, I am happy.

One day, I would like to be able to join the elegant dancers on Gordon beach in Tel Aviv and not stumble all over their feet. For now, it is Wendy’s class.

Cherkessia, Yemenite, Mayim steps, although confusing at the beginning, feel like second nature after a while.

The dance group is a mix of the regulars, the occasionals, and the newly hooked. We all come with a love of dance and willingness to learn.



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TOGETHER, the Hamilton Jewish Federation, the Jewish Community Centre, the Jewish National Fund and Beth Tikvah Foundation celebrated an exciting milestone in Jewish Hamilton history.

## J HAMILTON MEZUZAH DEDICATION | 07.05.2018





The green efforts of JNF's work quickly turned to black and it is heartbreaking to see such destruction.

# FIRES RAGE IN THE NEGEV FROM TERROR KITES

JNF CANADA

In late March a simple, yet new kind of warfare was waged from the Gaza Strip into the Western Negev. Kites and balloons have sadly become a weapon in the hands of violent Gaza protesters intent on setting fire to Israeli forests and fields. When the wind changes direction and blows from the west in the direction of the Gaza border communities, these winds have been transporting fire-carrying kites and balloons across the Gaza-Israel border to set fields and forests ablaze, causing serious damage to the farmland, forests, ecology and livelihoods of southern Israel.

More than 450 burning kites and helium balloons have arrived from Gaza all hours of the day, causing thousands of acres of planted forests and farmers' fields to go up in flames. The forests were not only a green lung for local residents, but also served as a sort of security fence between the border communities and the Gaza Strip. The fires have caused local farmers millions of shekels of damage and have spread to kibbutz perimeters,

endangering lives. Wildlife in forests and local nature preserves have been trapped in the fires and have perished.

First it was kites and balloons, but one afternoon, Israel Nature and Parks Authority personnel found a kestrel, a member of the falcon family and a common bird in Israel, hanging from a burned tree wearing a harness attached to a wire wrapped around flammable material. The bird was discovered after workers put out a fire that had broken out in Habesor National Park.

Since the 1950s, KKL-JNF has planted more than 35,000 acres of forests in the Western Negev. The pioneers in the Negev have made their mark on Israeli history, literally making the desert bloom. However, the green efforts of their work have quickly turned to black and it is heartbreaking to see such destruction. The land will need to recover and there is a very large area to rehabilitate. It will take many years to restore things to the way they were before and recreate beautiful well-established forests on the same scale.



PHOTO: TOM LORENDENBERG, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

KKL-JNF's firefighters, together with the IDF and the Israel Fire and Rescue Authority, battle daily against the fires. KKL foresters fight to save every tree they so lovingly nurtured. And we hope that kites and balloons will soon return to their former status as children's

playthings.

Join the JNF Canada campaign to rehabilitate, replant and regreen what is being destroyed in the Be'eri and Kesufim Forests. Call our office at 905-527-5516, email us at [hamilton@jnf.ca](mailto:hamilton@jnf.ca) or donate at [jnf.ca](http://jnf.ca).

A fire caused by an incendiary kite rages in a field near the Gaza border.

## DAVID SWEET

Flamborough-Glanbrook



David Sweet, M.P. and Almut Sweet

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PHYLLIS SHRAGGE

INTRODUCING A NEW HJN SERIES

# THE JOYS OF GRANDPARENTING

STORY BY **PHYLLIS SHRAGGE**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Your mission, Phyllis, should you choose to accept it, is to drive the grandchildren to and from school. As always, should you be responsible for any misfortune, you will be saddled with lifelong guilt, because these precious beings are your daughter's children, not your own. (This tape will self-destruct in five seconds.)

Mission impossible, well, not quite. But mission stressful, oh yes.

My assignment is clear: I have the task of driving my six-year-old grandson and my four-year-old granddaughter to school while their parents are taking a much-deserved vacation out of town. We leave the house promptly at 8 a.m. and head towards my car which is seconds away from the front door. What could go wrong?

"A kitty-cat!" Lyla exclaims as a cat runs across the driveway. Lyla is in heaven because cats are her obsession. She has a collection of toy cats of all shapes and sizes and cat motifs adorn many of her dresses. If a book, game, or toy has a cat theme, she is delighted. As well, to the puzzlement of her parents, Lyla has informed her school friends to call her Kitty, and many of them do.

The cat scurries down the sidewalk. Lyla runs after the cat. Her brother Max yells: "We'll be late for school!"

She chooses to ignore his words. I run after Lyla.

The cat leads the race. A close second is Lyla. Following on her heels is an out-of-breath and frantic me. Max waits by the car. He is not going to waste his energy.

I am not without guile. I plan for all emergencies. "Lyla," I shout. "Would you like a banana muffin?"

She turns and smiles. I know my granddaughter. Banana muffins are her favourite. "No muffin until you are in the car, honey," I say.

The children are buckled in and we are on our way. I am conscious of every vehicle within blocks of my car and my eyes dart in every direction in case of.... well, just in case.

We arrive at the school, safe and sound. I take a deep breath. "Remember to use the car door closest to the sidewalk," I warn the children. They roll their eyes. I say this

every time I drive them.

I park in between the signs that seem to indicate that stopping is allowed. However, this is Toronto and the signage is designed to be confusing. There is a 50/50 chance that my car will be towed away while I'm bringing the children into school.

They run towards the school entrance which is adjacent to a small playground for the younger children. Lyla decides now is the time to play. I do not have another banana muffin. Max, thank goodness, saves the day. "Lyla, your friends are waiting for you inside," he says. He is a smart boy. A genius, actually.

Max leads us through the maze of hallways. Max has a good sense of direction, for which I'm thankful. I leave him at his classroom and he waves good-bye. Is he too old for a hug in front of his friends? I won't risk it.

Lyla runs towards her classroom and I'm close behind. She heads to her girlfriends and doesn't glance in my direction. I won't take it personally. At least I try not to.

As I walk back to the car, my heart pounding and the sweat dripping from my brow, I realize that it is too early in the day to have a glass of wine. I ponder on why this assignment is so difficult. I drove my own five children to and from school and to and from lessons for years and years. (My huge Suburban, grey with a red stripe, and an exterior backup alarm, was legendary at Earl Kitchener School.)

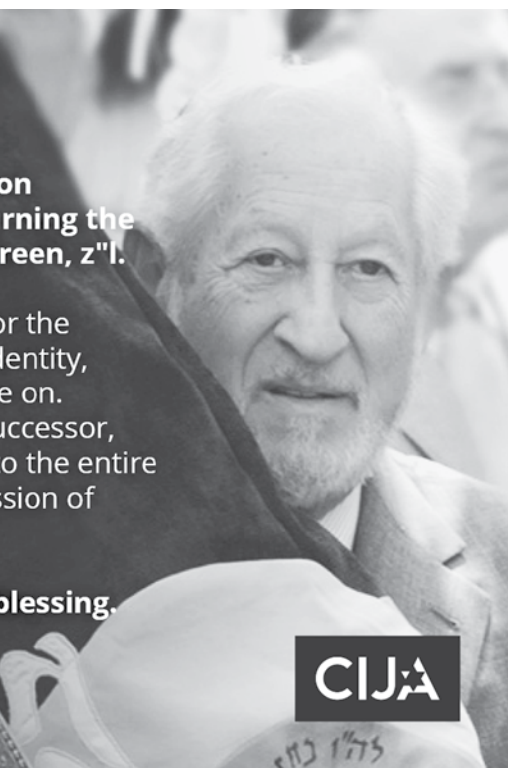
My grandchildren are so dear to me and I play a special role in their lives. My love for them is limitless and caring for them is a privilege. But, yay, I have the rest of the day free until I have to pick them up!

My cell phone rings. It's my younger daughter who lives in Burlington. "Mom, can you pick up Will from daycare on Thursday?"

"Of course," I say. Now where is that glass of wine?

*Phyllis Shragge has three grandchildren and another grandchild on the way. She lives in Ancaster.*



**I am conscious of every vehicle within blocks of my car and my eyes dart in every direction.**



**CIJA joins with the Hamilton Jewish community in mourning the loss of Rabbi Mordechai Green, z"l.**

He was a strong advocate for the Jewish community, Jewish identity, and Israel. His legacy will live on. We extend to his son and successor, Rabbi Daniel Green — and to the entire family — our sincere expression of condolence.

**May his memory be for a blessing.**


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The virus spread across the province like a firestorm, infecting 300,000 people and killing 8,700.

# THE SPANISH FLU'S DEVASTATING TOLL

A hundred years ago the Spanish flu killed millions worldwide, including 500 in Hamilton

STORY AND PHOTOS BY STEVEN BROCK, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

As the First World War was finally winding down in the autumn of 1918, few realized that a much more deadly, worldwide killer was just on the horizon. This one would take two to four times more lives around the world than the four years of bloody conflict.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the 1918 Pandemic of the Spanish Flu. Responsible for killing between 20 million and 50 million people around the world within a year, the 1918 flu is recognized as the deadliest outbreak of infectious disease in recorded history. Neither Canada nor Hamilton was immune to the rapid spread of the infection with 50,000 dying across the country and more than 500 in Hamilton alone.

Today, we think of the seasonal flu as a nuisance illness with only the very young and elderly being at risk. After a few miserable days, just about everyone fully recovers and resumes their normal lifestyle. However, the majority of victims of the highly contagious strain of influenza that attacked the globe in the second decade of the 20th century, were previously healthy adults between 20 and 40 years old.

Dr. Isra Levy, formerly of the Canadian Medical Association, told TVO earlier this year that the 1918 strain of influenza "seemed to cause a massive immune reaction that led to, among other symptoms, respiratory distress in previously healthy people. As the

disease progressed, many victims quickly developed complications such as pneumonia and died, usually within a day or two from the onset of illness.

The virus hit in three separate waves. It first showed up in the spring of 1918. Although it likely did not originate there, it became known as the Spanish flu, because Spain was the first country to publicly announce an outbreak in April of that year. Being neutral during the war, Spain did not censor its press the way other countries did. As autumn approached, the virus spread throughout France and many Allied soldiers returning home unwittingly carried the virus back with them. This set off a virulent second wave encompassing all four corners of the earth.

The first Canadian report of the second wave was an outbreak at the Polish Military Camp in Niagara-on-the-Lake in early September. The disease then quickly spread up the Golden Horseshoe into Hamilton and on to Toronto.

The virus swept across the province like a firestorm, infecting 300,000 people and killing 8,700. Hamilton reported more than 7,000 cases. Hamilton's burgeoning Jewish community suffered the first flu fatality in the city, when 25-year-old Esther (Hattie) Warshofsky died on Oct. 3, 1918. Two days later, her 29-year-old sister Daisy Harris also died



The graves of 25-year-old Esther (Hattie) Warshofsky and her 29-year-old sister Daisy Harris who died two days of each other from the 1918 Spanish Flu. The two sisters are buried side by side in the Anshe Sholom cemetery on Limeridge Road.

from the virus. The two sisters are buried side by side in the Anshe Sholom cemetery on Limeridge Road. By the time the scourge was over, Hamilton's Jews had buried more than three per cent of their population of about 800.

Hospitals quickly became overrun with flu patients. The war effort had depleted medical and nursing staff across the province, causing a severe lack of care providers. Temporary infirmaries were set up around town, including at the historic Ballinahinch mansion on James Street South and The Jockey Club Hotel at the corner of Barton and Ottawa.

Volunteers from various service organizations, including the Jewish Women's Association, local church groups, the YWCA and the nursing organization, the Sisters of Service (S.O.S) all stepped in to care for the sick.

At first, the government downplayed the aggressiveness of the flu in an effort to avoid panic. The city's medical officer of health, James Roberts discouraged the use of nose and mouth covering masks as he believed the flu could be warded off by going outside and inhaling the fresh air. In late September, the Ontario Board of Health went so far as to announce that the new strain of flu was "less dangerous than measles or scarlet fever."

Although they suggested that people avoid public gatherings and crowds, they urged people to maintain their current routines.

However, within a couple of weeks, as the severity of the illness became more apparent, stricter controls were enforced to control the spread of the disease. On Oct. 16, the Hamilton Board of Health closed all schools, dance halls, theatres and other public gathering places. Public funerals were outlawed, even though more burials than ever were required. The demand for caskets became so great that eight cabinet makers were enlisted to work around the clock to meet the demand in Hamilton alone.

When the third wave of the pandemic arrived in the spring of 1919, the flu virus had significantly weakened. Many people who had survived the infection during the second wave had developed a level of immunity when subsequent waves struck.

By the summer of 1919, the devastation had finally ended. In one year, 1.3 million Canadians are believed to have contracted the Spanish Flu. It is estimated to have killed more people worldwide than the plague of the Middle Ages.

Although we are still not immune to similar flu outbreaks, early detection and advances in medical technology have greatly decreased the severity and devastation of the illness. The most recent pandemic occurred in 2009, when a strain dubbed swine flu swept the globe. However unlike in 1918, 14,000 people died worldwide, as compared to the millions who lost their lives 100 years ago.

The lawyers and staff at Ross & McBride LLP wish the entire community a happy and healthy New Year.

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Before Hamilton rudely stole its thunder, Sydney was Canada's steel town.

# JOURNEY TO THE EDGE OF CANADA

Ben Shragge is reminded of his hometown in the most unexpected of places

STORY BY BEN SHRAGGE, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

When I tell people here in the U.S. that I'm Canadian, I occasionally get a surprised reaction: "Oh, you don't sound Canadian!"

Perhaps that's because I'm from Southern Ontario, which is less a distinct region and more the Canadian spear-tip of the global monoculture. (This applies mostly to the Greater Toronto Area; Hamilton is, as always, a beacon of light in the darkness.) We speak like the TV-people speak—North American default—with the occasional "eh" thrown in.

When I landed at Halifax airport, and was told that I could catch the bus downtown "oot there," I felt among familial but foreign people—like a mainstream Jew entering a neighbourhood of Yiddish-speaking black-hatters.

At my hostel, I entered into a conversation between a local and a travelling Englishman. When I told the Englishman that I was from "near Toronto" (a sad phrase, but a verbal necessity for Hamiltonians on the move), he asked if people there are as nice as people in Atlantic Canada. I responded that Canadians get less nice the farther west you go.

The local interjected: "People get nicer again once you leave Central Canada."

To which I replied, "We're still nicer than Americans."

And thus I conclude, we Central Canadians may be the least Canadian Canadians, but we're still a titch un-American, thank you very much.

Halifax features a lovely boardwalk bookended by two museums, one on immigration and one on marine history. I told the lady selling tickets at the marine museum—which includes an exhibit on the Halifax Explosion—that I live in Boston and had seen the Christmas tree her city sends us every year. She knew the story, and said that it brought a tear to

her eye—and it literally did. You don't get that kind of reaction from Central Canadian museum types.

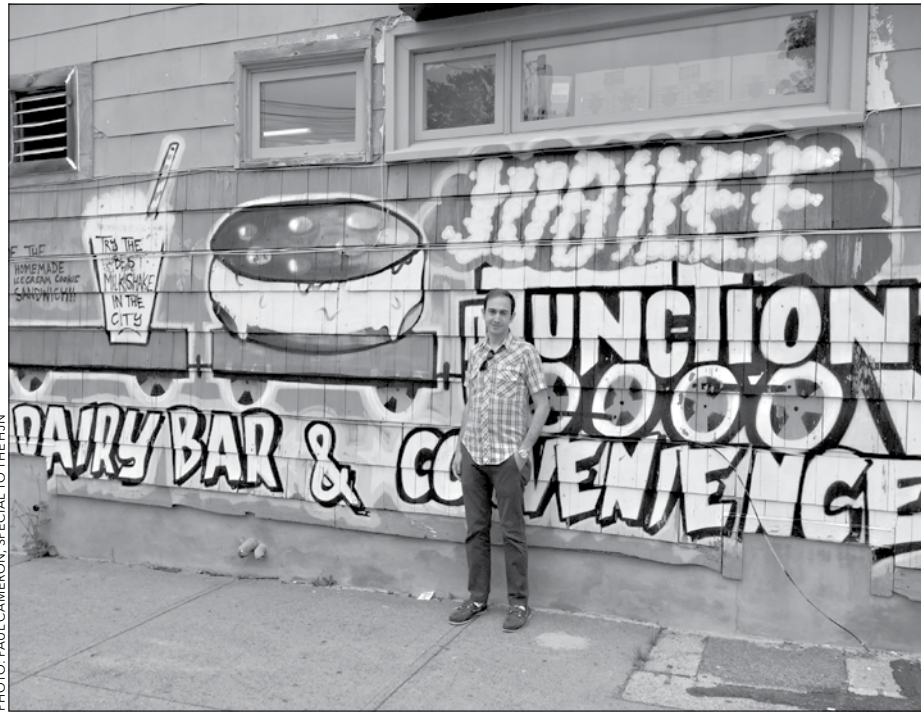
The Halifax Explosion was a 1917 disaster in which two ships, one laden with explosives bound for the Kaiser, collided, triggering the largest man-made explosion before Hiroshima. Around 2,000 died and thousands more were injured and left homeless. The state of Massachusetts quickly sent trains filled with medical personnel and supplies to help, and Halifax sends a Christmas tree to Boston each year in gratitude.

In today's political climate especially, it's nice to remember that common decency between countries is a thing.

Other worthwhile sites include the aptly named Halifax Citadel, a Halifax-based citadel that once protected this highly ranked port from the British Empire's various foes—including those Americans who later came to its aid. Teenagers wearing delightful military-grade kilts conduct educational-cum-entertaining tours, and a military museum is also located on the grounds.

At the military museum, the contributions of Canada in general and Nova Scotia in particular to martial greatness are explored. Among the lesser-known facts I learned was that David Ben-Gurion received training by the British in Nova Scotia as part of the Jewish Legion, which went on to fight the Ottomans. Nova Judea was not to be, however, as Ben-Gurion stayed in the Middle East to become Israel's first prime minister.

Also in Halifax, I was introduced by a former local to Jubilee Junction Dairy Bar & Convenience, "Home of the original homemade ice cream cookie sandwich!!" The concept is inarguable: you select a cookie and an ice cream flavour. They then place a heap of ice cream on top of the first cookie,



A local artist's rendering of the homemade ice cream sandwich, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

ask you what kind of mini chocolate bar you want, and add that to the mix. They then place another cookie on top (it could be a totally different kind of cookie from the one at the bottom), and you eat it. The results speak for themselves.

A notable site near Halifax is Peggy's Cove, a town known for its picturesque lighthouse. The lighthouse is perched above a series of large, interconnected rocks that are home to tourists taking pictures. It is indeed a picturesque lighthouse and I have the pictures to prove it. But let's move on; you can see the pictures on Instagram.

I didn't plan to spend long in Sydney—Cape Breton Island's de facto capital—but a delay in renting a car to drive the Cabot Trail meant I was there for the good part of a day, so I decided to make the most of it.

The city's touristic pièce de résistance is a giant fiddle located near a commercial pavilion catering to cruise-ship passengers. But one can only spend so long listening to prerecorded fiddle music emanating from a giant fiddle before thoughts of self-immolation spring to mind, so I decided to do some exploring.

I stumbled upon the Jost House Museum, which is an old house once owned by someone named Jost. The main attraction, however, is the omniscient (if "omni" means "Sydney") tour guide, who taught me everything there is to know about the city as I waited for the first available car out of there.

Among the whirlwind of facts I learned: before Hamilton rudely stole its thunder, Sydney was Canada's steel town, and many Sydney folk once ventured to Hamilton in search of the jobs that Hamilton itself later lost. Now Sydney, and Cape Breton in general, is on an economic downturn, eager for investment and immigrants. A Cape Bretonian even started a campaign to get Americans disappointed by Trump's election to move there. One, by my tour guide's count, did, but it may have been for other reasons.

Sydney, I came away feeling, is like an Atlantic Hamilton: hard-scrabble but abounding in civic pride and inimitable character, which assures it a noble destiny even as more prosperous but grainless Babylons fall.

My feeling of connection to

Hamilton deepened when I called a cab after dropping off my rental truck. (No cars were available—I did drive the Cabot Trail, which is indeed extremely scenic, but I don't see the point in describing nature, so we'll skip over that.)

The cab driver, sleeveless and listening to Pink Floyd, advised me that the door to his van didn't always open. Once inside, I was assured of a pleasant journey by his non-functioning meter and decision to damn the occasional beep and not wear a seat-belt. Along the way, he pointed out a family of eagles that live near the dump—a couple and a male adolescent. (Incidentally, Cape Breton contributed to the repopulation of the U.S. eagle population, my tour guide told me.)

But my Atlantic Hamiltonian got me to the airport safe and sound and charged a fair, if entirely arbitrary, \$15.

Scenic drives and picturesque lighthouses are great and all, but to me, that's what travel is really about: getting off the beaten trail to eat a homemade ice cream sandwich, and to learn from a cab driver about a family of eagles that live at the dump.

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