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Hamilton
Jewish

News

The voice of Jewish Hamilton Dec. 2018

After Pittsburgh

COMMUNITY RECEIVES AN OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT

Hundreds gather in grief and solidarity for a multi-faith vigil honouring those murdered at Pittsburgh synagogue

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

THEY CAME FROM ALL walks of life. Politicians, clergy, and ordinary citizens of all faiths joined their Jewish brothers and sisters in grief and solidarity at a multi-faith vigil held at Temple Anshe Sholom on Oct. 30. The event was held in response to the horrific attack that took place at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue a few days earlier. Several speakers addressed an overflow crowd of an estimated 600 people, on the themes of inclusion, support and defiance against the forces of hate and intolerance. The vigil, presented by the Hamilton Jewish Federation and the city's three main synagogues, was one of hundreds that took place throughout North America that week.

HUNDREDS GATHER CONTINUES ON P4



Hundreds gathered in solidarity and support of Hamilton's Jewish community at a multi-faith vigil held at Temple Anshe Sholom following the shooting at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue.



Kibbutz Nahal Oz resident Yael Raz Lachyani spoke to a Hamilton audience about the resilience of communities living on Gaza border.

ISRAEL'S RESILIENCE

Israel is widely recognized as one of the most creative and innovative countries in the world, but the never-ending threat of terror and war is testing the resiliency of Israelis living on the Gaza border.

JACKI LEVIN REPORTS: **P6**

STEVE ARNOLD COVERS SOUTHERN
RESIDENT'S HAMILTON APPEARANCE: **P14**

“Jewish funeral homes are under a great deal of pressure today.”

The United Hebrew Memorial Chapel has a long tradition of providing the ultimate service.

STEVEN BROCK REPORTS: **P9**

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All of us at the Hamilton Jewish Federation extend to you and your loved ones best wishes for a Happy Chanukah.

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Anti-Semitism is a big deal, not because it's built on belief in absurdities and outright lies, but because anti-Semitism can become lethal." COLLEEN DECKER

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GUEST EDITORIAL

GRIEF, RESILIENCE, AND HOPE



Colleen Decker, Manager of Strategic Communications at CIJA

EIGHTY YEARS ago, on the evening of November 9, 1938, Nazis ransacked Jewish homes, shattered the storefronts of Jewish-owned businesses, and destroyed synagogues across Germany in a deadly attack against European Jews that marked the beginning of history's darkest chapter: the Holocaust.

Years ago, I stood in a cold, dark museum in the middle of Washington D.C. and took it all in. Filled with sudden, profound grief, and with tears streaming, I finally began to understand the horror that began that dreadful November night. And, I will never forget it.

Standing in the United States Holocaust Museum, surrounded by monuments and archives that depict the greatest moments in American history, I was struck by the realization that, although the atrocities of the Holocaust had not occurred in the U.S., there they were on full display in the heart of the U.S. capital. After working in the Jewish community for more than a decade, I understand why. And, as witnesses to the deadliest antisemitic attack in U.S. history, the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting, I hope the rest of the world understands too.

Anti-Semitism is a big deal. Not because it's discriminatory or offensive, although it's certainly both. Not even because it is built on belief in absurdities and outright lies. No, anti-Semitism is a big deal – with consequences far beyond the Jewish community – because anti-Semitism can become lethal.

We've seen it time and time again – in Buenos Aires in 1994, in Mumbai in 2008, in Paris in 2015, and now in Pittsburgh in 2018.

The world's oldest hatred is on the rise globally, and that should give us pause. We are not immune in this beautiful country. In fact, according to Statistics Canada, the Jewish community remains the most-targeted religious minority in the country.

So, what's the solution?

First, whether it's halfway around the world, just south of the border, or right here at home, we cannot allow anti-Semitism to permeate to the mainstream. That is why the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is advocating for a national policy for online hate that includes the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism.

And, second, we must take security seriously. We are fortunate to have politicians who speak out strongly against these hateful acts and brave law enforcement officers who willingly put their lives on the line, sometimes paying the ultimate price, to protect us. But that's not enough. We must do more.

Eleven innocent people died in the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting. That's far too many, and yet that number could have been much higher. Though no amount of training can possibly guarantee safety during horrendous attacks, like the one in Pittsburgh, by preparing ourselves we can mitigate some of the damage and save some lives, and that's something. This is why CIJA has a National Community Security Program (NCSP) that provides dedicated, responsive, and sustained security support and offers free training to educate community members about how to detect and prevent threats and how to manage crisis response.

I took a lot away from my visit to Washington all those years ago, but nothing stood out to me more than the inspirational strength and resilience of the Jewish community. Though previously afflicted in ways so horrible that most people – before seeing it with their own eyes, as I did that day – simply cannot imagine it, the community thrives today in countries all around the world. It is remarkable.

I was reminded of that resilience again after the attack in Pittsburgh, as I witnessed thousands of community members unite in towns and cities across the country to remember the victims and their families, to mourn the senseless loss of life – and to sing.

As the many voices in the crowd rang out together as one, singing Oseh Shalom Bimromav, hope woke within me. Closing my eyes, I could hear a still, small voice within me. The same voice I first heard in Washington. The one I know was mirrored by everyone in the crowd. It was crying out, "Never Again."



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How community families celebrate the holiday



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

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Calling on Jewish artists working in all media

JHamilton is interested in providing a platform for both emerging and established artists to showcase their talent, share their stories and connect with the community through visual art.

For more information please contact JCC and Federation program coordinator, Jonathan Riaboy at 905.648.0605 x 301.

PRESERVING JEWISH MEMORY



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Journalist, photographer and filmmaker, Ed Serotta, left, in conversation with community members following his keynote presentation at Hamilton's Kristallnacht commemoration on Nov. 11. Serotta's institute, Centropa, has collected the oral histories of 1,200 Holocaust survivors still living in Central and Eastern Europe and digitized more than 20,000 of their photographs.

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FEBRUARY ISSUE

- Deadline for booking ad space - Jan. 15, 2019
- Deadline for receiving editorial copy - Jan. 23, 2019
- Deadline for receiving ad copy - Feb. 4, 2019
- Estimated date of arrival - Feb. 26, 2019

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It was comforting to see the diversity in the audience, reinforcing the fact that in the struggle against hatred there is more that unites us than divides us." DR. DANIEL KOLLEK

COMMUNITY VIGIL BRINGS OUT HUNDREDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Among those bringing words of solidarity and comfort from Hamilton's multi-faith community were Imam Abdullah Hatia from the Halton Islamic Association, Rev. Linda Thomson from the Canadian Unitarian Council, Rev. David Cummings from the Hamilton Christian Fellowship, and Dr. Mani Subramanian from the Hamilton Hindu Samaj. Mayor Fred Eisenberger spoke words of sympathy on behalf of the City of Hamilton.

Representing Hamilton's Jewish community were Rabbis Jordan Cohen, Hillel Lavery-Yisraeli and Aaron Selevan — Rabbi Daniel Green was on a plane home from Israel during the vigil — and Hamilton Jewish Federation president Jacki Levin. The program was punctuated with several emotional high points — Cantor Paula Baruch's and Rabbi Lavery-Yisraeli's singing of liturgical prayers and Leonard Cohen's "If It Be Your Will", with musical accompaniment by Jordan Abraham and signing by local teacher of the deaf, Dennis Nash, and second year McMaster student Daniella Mikanovsky's recitation of her poem, "Ner Tamid". An active member of McMaster

Hillel and frequent contributor to spoken word poetry events, Mikanovsky told the HJN that visualizing her own synagogue with all the power cut off but for the glow of the eternal light helped set the scene from which she developed her poem. "I was reminded of the attacks in Charleston and Quebec City," she wrote, "but I never understood the pain of those communities until today. That's why I wanted to spread a message of unity in my poem."

Rabbi Lavery-Yisraeli's remarks, reprinted days later in the Hamilton Spectator, were especially compelling, drawing spontaneous applause when he said that fear of violence should not deter Jews from "increasing our efforts to do the right thing, because helping people escape oppression and danger is fundamental to our Torah," and moments later when he vowed that "We will continue attending synagogue and showing the hateful that we will not be discouraged, lose our dignity, or be terrified. Inspired and encouraged, we will go forth from our places of worship and continue mending the world."

Judy Rochweg was among the hundreds of community members who attended the event. In an



PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIELLA MIKANOVSKY

McMaster student Daniella Mikanovsky's poem *Ner Tamid* struck a resonant chord.

email to the HJN she wrote that she felt moved by the community's response to the violence in Pittsburgh.

"The environment was one of warmth, inclusivity and solidarity," she wrote. "I am proud of the work that the Hamilton Jewish Federation did to so quickly and effectively plan this vigil."

Dr. Daniel Kollek echoed her comments when he wrote, "It was comforting to see the diversity in the audience, reinforcing the fact that in the struggle against hatred there is more that unites us than divides us."

Ner Tamid

In every synagogue you visit across the country
There is a light, fixed in the front above the ark where all eyes can meet it.

Ner tamid: The everlasting light.
The flame, the bulb, which never ceases to glow.
A light to represent the presence of God in this place.

Even in power failure—Ner Tamid has its own source.
the eternal flame never goes dark, even when darkness enters this place.

Bullets ricochet past men, women and children,
backs turned as they face the Lord.
Who dare bring this darkness?

Who dare attack these souls in prayer?
In Charleston, Quebec City, and now Pittsburgh.
Who dare disturb these souls in prayer?

Hatred.
Blind, misunderstanding,
I'd-rather-shoot-you-than-get-to-know-you-hatred.

Breeding in the darkest corners of our society
Feeding on the distances between us, conspiracies, and lies as old as time.

This hatred
Armed with an AR15
Shouting words nearly as painful as his bullets
Brought darkness to this holy place.

But in this darkness,
Ner Tamid, the eternal light
Flickers through.

Barely tearing through smoke and screams...
Ner Tamid stays alive.
Just as we, brothers and sisters — regardless of who you worship in your holy space
We stay alive.

Our eternal flame will not be extinguished
Our fight will never falter.
Our Ner Tamid cannot go dark until we have banished the darkness

Keep the light burning.
Keep the flame alive.
As bullets of rain hit our fiery souls
We'll hiss and sputter but never, ever die.

If we stand together
As we are here tonight
Not just in times of mourning
But always, forever
The combined light of our souls

Will finally be enough.

Daniella Mikanovsky



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACQUES SCHOENBERG

FROM OUR HEARTS TO THEIRS

Jacques Schoenberg travels to Pittsburgh regularly for business, but his most recent trip had an added significance. In anticipation of his early November visit, Schoenberg approached Hamilton Jewish Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg with an offer to bring a message of love and support from Hamilton to the Pittsburgh Jewish community. On Nov. 8, Schoenberg hand-delivered an envelope on behalf of the Hamilton Jewish Federation and the Jewish National Fund to the offices of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh.

From there, his customer drove Schoenberg over to the Tree of Life Synagogue. "It was extremely painful being there, but consoling at the same time," wrote Schoenberg in an email to the HJN. "It was nice to see so many inter-faith memorials at the shul and the support of that community" At the same time, he continued, visiting the memorial at the synagogue affected him "the same way that I felt when I saw Auschwitz 20 years ago."

HAPPY CHANUKAH



TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.





Jewish summer camp provided a unique forum to deepen my understanding of my Jewish identity." LAURA WALTMAN

GROW HAMILTON RETURNS WELCOMING NEWCOMERS TO OUR COMMUNITY

BY MICHELLE GOLD, HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION GROW HAMILTON COMMITTEE

OVER THE PAST two years, Hamilton Jewish News profiled several well-known Jewish families in our community who immigrated here as newcomers, in years past. Their stories were illuminating—they shared their reasons for emigrating, challenges they encountered, and reflected on the process of settling into their new adopted town. Today, Hamilton is receiving increasing inquiries from people considering a move to our Jewish community.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation has recently re-established its Grow Hamilton Committee, whose mandate is to coordinate access to information for those considering a move, as well as to warmly welcome newcomers to our community. Our role will be to serve as a first point of contact. To achieve our goal, we are starting by developing a compendium of information. We want to gather information on who we can refer inquiries to for information on housing, schools and education, religious organizations, health services, and business connectors in our community. We are also seeking to develop a list of friendly residents, who can initiate social networking in the Jewish community for newcomers. These are just preliminary activities of what we envision becoming a broader and more extended reach to grow Jewish Hamilton over time.

We are also reaching out to community members to request your feedback and involvement.

- If you've had experience with relocating in the past, please share with the committee what were your needs as a newcomer in a community? Was there something in particular that made you feel welcome? What would have assisted you in settling into that was not readily available?

- If you provide a program or service in our community that can benefit people considering Hamilton, or those who are new arrivals:

- Please contact the committee to identify your program or service, so that we can include this information in our directory.

- Would you be willing to invite newcomers to your home for Shabbat dinner, or offer to meet someone new for coffee? Please contact the committee and let us know.

- Do you know anyone who is considering moving to Hamilton, or has recently arrived? If so, please contact the committee. We'd like to begin right away to provide information and make connections within our Jewish community that are welcoming and helpful.

Laura Wolfson, Grow Hamilton committee chair, can be reached at byrnewolfson@gmail.com or by leaving a message at 905-541-2889.



PHOTO COURTESY CAMP RAMAH

COMING TO JHAMILTON OVERNIGHT JEWISH CAMP FAIR

A Chanukah activity for the whole family

BY LAURA WALTMAN, HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION EDUCATION COMMITTEE

I VAGUELY remember my first summer at Jewish overnight camp. I was eight years old and spending the month of July on my own for the first time ever. I remember Shabbat prayers overlooking the waterfront on Friday nights. I remember Maccabiah (colour wars) and the excitement of the whole camp reaching a feverish pitch. I remember the loud cheering of all of the campers in the *chadar ochel* (dining hall). I remember crying with my friends as we left camp and headed home for the new school year. All are memories that will stay with me for a lifetime. These summers were formative years for me; all of them from my first year as a camper to my last year on staff as the "Camp Mom". Woven seamlessly into all of these memories was the strong sense of Jewish values and tradition.

Jewish summer camp provided a unique forum to deepen my understanding of my Jewish identity, at times very deliberate and other times much more subtle. It is an extremely important

experience for children in our community. This is why I'm so excited about the upcoming first annual Overnight Jewish Camp Fair that's being organized by the Hamilton Jewish Federation at J Hamilton, 1605 Main St. W. in Hamilton, on Dec. 2 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The camp fair will have representatives from many of the Jewish summer camps across Ontario that represent the entire spectrum of Jewish culture and identity. As part of the fair, there will be a variety of Chanukah-themed activities organized and led by the camps, as well as *soofganiyot* (Israeli-style jelly donuts) and refreshments. In addition to the overnight camps, Camp Kadimah, our local Jewish day camp will also be present. Finally, the Hamilton Jewish Federation will be raffling off prizes to assist with the tuition for those who register for the summer at a Jewish overnight camp.

I sincerely hope that the community will join me in the goal of sending more Jewish children to Jewish summer camps this summer, and I look forward to seeing you all at the camp fair.



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Israelis don't live in fear. They live vibrant, full lives, but there is always the need to think about security." JACKI LEVIN

A MODEL OF INNOVATION AND RESILIENCE

Jewish Federation president Jacki Levin reports on her recent mission to Israel

BY JACKI LEVIN, SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

I HAVE TOURED much of Israel, but had never participated in a mission until this past October, when my husband, and I, together with Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg, took part in a Canadian mission to Israel arranged by the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA). The mission was followed immediately by the annual JFNA General Assembly (GA) which was held this year in Tel Aviv to celebrate Israel's 70th Anniversary. Both experiences were overwhelming in what we saw and learned about Israel's challenges, strengths and how the country is exporting its expertise in so many fields to the rest of the world.

We began our mission in the Upper Galilee where we toured the area and visited projects funded by Canadian federations. We travelled to Tzfat, where we learned about its history as a centre of Kabbalah and how the city was levelled by an earthquake in 1837. In Metulla, we visited the Canada Centre, home to Israel's largest ice-skating rink and funded by Canadian Jewish federations, including our own. Canadian federations also funded a children's playground at Kibbutz K'far Giladi, and an innovative learning program developed at Tel Hai College for elementary students.

Some people are under the mistaken impression that money raised by Federation goes to the Israeli government. The truth is

that our community supports projects that help children, immigrants, the poor and the sick — projects that are vital to the growth of Israel.

Our group of 85 Canadians spent Shabbat in Jerusalem, joining up with 1,000 participants of other JFNA missions for a Kabbalatt Shabbat ceremony outside the Old City walls. From there, we walked to the Western Wall. Being among thousands of Jews who had gathered there to welcome the Sabbath was a very emotional experience.

The most interesting part of the mission was visiting Israeli communities on the Gaza border. At a small memorial park located just 800 metres from Gaza City, dedicated to the soldiers killed in the 1950s while fighting Fedayeen terrorists, we were briefed by an IDF soldier on the ways in which the Israeli army has responded to constantly changing modes of attack from Gaza. We learned how Israel has responded to each new form of attack with characteristic innovation. In response to rocket launches, Israel developed the Iron Dome. To stop infiltration through tunnels, Israel is in the process of building a 100 ft. deep underground wall, studded with sensors that can detect any movement. With that avenue closing, Hamas has resorted to sending incendiary balloons and kites, which the army is responding to by using drones. Now Hamas is using a new tactic — psychological



Hamilton participants on a recent Canadian Jewish Federation mission to Israel included (l to r) Hamilton Jewish Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg, Federation president Jacki Levin and Community Campaign co-chair Larry Levin.

PHOTO COURTESY JACKI LEVIN

warfare. Many Israeli communities are located less than one kilometre from Gaza City, and Hamas has recently started using loudspeakers throughout the night with terrifying messages in Hebrew like "We will kill you. We will rape your women." It is especially terrifying for children to hear these messages, preventing them from sleep.

In Sderot, a community of about 25,000 in the western Negev less than a mile from Gaza, we learned about the Israel Trauma Coalition (ITC), which works with residents of Sderot and surrounding communities to help them cope with the trauma of the situation. We also heard from therapists who are using small animals to provide nonverbal treatment for children suffering from trauma. One of the most poignant observations is how things that children love,

like balloons and kites are now the things that they have learned to fear. The expertise of the ITC is exported all over the world when needed and they recently sent a team to Pittsburgh after the synagogue shooting.

The mission provided us with a wonderful opportunity to see and experience things that we couldn't have done on our own and we learned a lot.

Some overall impressions of amazing Israel: Israelis don't live in fear. They live vibrant, full lives, but there is always the need to be concerned about security. On kibbutzim, as in large Tel Aviv apartment buildings supported by the government, people are adding safe rooms — safe from rockets and from earthquakes.

The technology boom in Israel is incredible. There are delegations from countries and multi-national

organizations constantly visiting the country to see this, partnering with Israel and purchasing Israeli companies and inventions. The towers in the cities are ultra-modern. New skyscrapers are going up all the time and the Tel Aviv skyline is breathtaking. Israel had more tourists this year than it has ever had. And, of course, the food and wine are outstanding.

The JFNA General Assembly began in Tel Aviv following the mission. The theme of the GA was "We Need to Talk" and focussed on the differing views of Israeli and diaspora Jews. It was fascinating, informative, often emotional and always overwhelming — but that is for another article that will appear in the next issue of the HJN.

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The persistence of anti-Semitism is no excuse for fatalism. Polio exists too." **BEN SHRAGGE**

GROGGERS FOR PITTSBURGH



BEN SHRAGGE

AFTER THE October 27 attack that left 11 dead, a top story in the New York Times was headlined "Who Is <sound of grogger>, the Suspect in the Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting?"

The killer's name, of course, was included in the original headline. But the sound of a grogger is more appropriate.

On the Jewish festival of Purim, groggers (noisemakers) are sounded every time the name Haman is mentioned. Haman, the genocidal villain of the Purim story, is the archetypal recipient of the Hebrew curse yimakh shemo: "May his name be obliterated."

The ancient Greeks and Romans had a similar tradition. After Herostratus burned down

the Temple of Artemis solely to achieve infamy, the authorities responded by forbidding mention of his name under penalty of death.

The names Herostratus and Haman live on, but the impulse behind the ban, and the grogger, should be felt today. Namely, we should deny the weekly mass shooters (and bombers) the recognition they seek. If we need to name evil names, they should be accompanied by noise. Better yet, they should be accompanied by — or replaced by — the names of their victims.

I did read the "Who Is <sound of grogger>" story, because while the killer's name should be forgotten, the forces giving rise to murder must be remembered. The force, in this case, is anti-Semitism.

The term "anti-Semitism" was popularized by a 19th-century German whose name isn't worth remembering. While anti-Jewish rhetoric and violence has an ancient pedigree, "anti-Semite" was a self-description intended to

paint over old-fashioned religious hatred with a veneer of pseudo-scientific racism.

Anti-Semitism is an anachronistic term, falsely implying that there's a "semitism" (a racial essence, as opposed to a love of "ch" sounds, shared by speakers of Semitic languages: Jews, Arabs, Assyrians, and Ethiopians) to be against. But while the term is problematic (though the Pittsburgh shooter did posit a pan-Semitic conspiracy in which "evil Jews are bringing evil Muslims into the country"), the phenomenon is real enough.

Jean-Paul Sartre vividly painted a psychological portrait of the anti-Semite. Writing in the 1940s, he could be describing the shooter of today: The anti-Semite "localizes all the evil of the universe in the Jew. . . . But since Evil, to the anti-Semite, is incarnated in unarmed and harmless men, the latter never finds himself under the painful necessity of being heroic." Thus the delusional "heroism" of the anti-Semite:

storming a fortress (a synagogue with open doors) to strike down the forces of evil (a family physician, two developmentally disabled brothers, a little league coach . . .).

Sartre recounts a classmate who blames his failure to pass an exam on a Jew who passed in his place: "Far from experience producing his idea of the Jew, it was the latter which explained his experience. If the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him." As long as humans fail, and then fail to take responsibility for failure, anti-Semitism will have its allure.

But the persistence of anti-Semitism is no excuse for fatalism. Polio still exists too: but it's gone from more than 350,000 cases in 1988 to 22 reported cases in 2017, according to the World Health Organization. Diseased mindsets are harder to track: yet I was struck while reading Sartre that though his psychological insights still ring true, his picture of a society (France in the '40s) riven by

popular anti-Semitism is a world apart from today's North America.

"The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice," said Martin Luther King Jr., invoking the progressive thrust of the Bible. Taking the long view, perhaps the arc is bending in the direction of a messianic era in which mass shooters beat their AR-15s into ploughshares; Russian bots spread messages of love; and anti-Semites consummate their obsession by converting to Judaism. Perhaps the current moment is just a false start on the winding way to a higher end.

But if there's an arc of the moral universe, it's very long; much longer than a single life. And whoever destroys a single life, Jewish tradition teaches, destroys the whole universe. So a grogger is in order, a chorus of groggers, to drown out incitement to murder: noise, but also action.

Ben Shragge is the digital editor of the Hamilton Jewish News. He

THIS YEAR'S WOMEN'S MARCH: WHY I WON'T BE MARCHING



JOY PEKAR

AT THE TIME of the first women's march, we didn't know the details of those who organized it. Like so many others, I sewed my pink hats, shared them with friends and wore them with pride. But now we know, and if you don't yet know, then please read, because you need to know.

It is time to stand up for women's rights. And we probably do need a women's march to help do that. But we don't just need to stand up for some women's rights. We need to stand up for all women's rights ... including Jewish

women's rights.

Did you know that in the "Unity Principles" of the women's march organization "Black women, Native women, poor women, immigrant women, disabled women, Muslim women, lesbian queer and trans women" are all specifically identified but Jewish women are not? Yet, anti-Semitic attacks account for more than half of all hate crimes in both Canada and the U.S. (Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey)

It is time to for everyone to start to really understand anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is not just right-wing extremism. Anti-Semitism is so pervasive that before the Tree of Life Synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh on Oct. 27, it didn't even warrant dialogue in mainstream media, on university campuses, or on social media.

Jews are the number one target of religious based hate crimes in both Canada and the U.S. In the U.S Jews represent less than two per cent of the total population yet are the target of more than 50 per cent of the hate crime there. In Canada Jews represent roughly one per cent of the population and over 50 per cent of religious based hate crimes, and in some years, the greatest victims of hate crimes for any reason.

Up until last week, there were no hashtags, no articles, no mention at all of the number one victims of hate crimes in North America. It is time for us all to understand that anti-Semitism lives not only on the right, but deeply in the left of the political spectrum in a way that no one is talking about, but it is time to start talking about.

In September, Linda Sarsour, one of the main leaders of the

2017 Women's March stated that American Muslims shouldn't "humanize" Israelis. Who on the left stood up to point out to her that Israelis are in fact human! Some would argue that anti-Semitism aims to dehumanizing Jews until their murder makes sense.

So, what do these two things (anti-Semitism and the women's march) even have to do with each other? Why does it matter?

It matters because two years ago, women needed a voice to start something so important, but now, women need a new voice. One that does not question if Israelis are humans. One that does not compare Jews to termites, or support those who do. One that does not believe it is OK to praise terrorists or Hitler, as Farakhan did in a 1984 speech. It matters because we need a voice for all women's rights. Who will we allow to speak on our behalf?

If having a voice that stands up against hate, and stands up for all women's rights matters to you then when it comes time to march in a women's march, as one is being planned for Jan. 2019, please consider not marching in the Women's March.

As for me, I have donated my pink hats so that those in need can be warm this winter. And I'll keep looking for a leader who will fight for my rights. My right to exist, my right to be safe, my right to equal pay, my right to proper health care. A leader who values me for all that I am. For being a woman. And a Jew.

Joy Pekar lives in Hamilton with her husband and children. She hopes the world her children inherit will be better than the world today and tries to do her part to make that happen.

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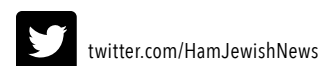
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Both physically and mentally, I astonished myself on what I could do on this trip." HANNAH BYRNE-WOLFSON

HOW DO WE SAY GOODBYE?

Carol Krames retiring after 43 years at the helm of Jewish Social Services

BY SUSAN ROTH

CAROL KRAMES, executive director of Hamilton Jewish Social Services recently announced that she will be retiring in June 2019. Born and raised in Philadelphia, Krames and her husband Lester moved to Canada in 1969.

Carol started working as a social worker at the Hamilton Jewish Federation in 1976, then located at the old Jewish Community Centre on Delaware Avenue. She worked with JCC director Sam Brownstone and Federation executive director Sam Soifer. It wasn't until 2001, that Hamilton Jewish Social Services became a separate agency and Carol has been at its head since.

I first met Carol in 1999, in the dingy basement of a Kiev hotel on a UJA Mission to Kiev and Israel. Together with our husbands, we were sorting clothes donated by our community that would be distributed to the needy. We laughed a lot and connected immediately. Right from my initial encounter, it was very clear who Carol is. Her essence is kindness and generosity. Whether it's a family member, a client, a friend, or a colleague, her love for humanity permeates everything she does.

During her 43 years at Hamilton Jewish Social Services, Carol was an integral part of every aspect of the agency. Seeing Carol operate at JSS was like watching the energizer bunny moving in perpetual motion from room to room. She greets participants



PHOTO: LESTER KRAMES

Carol Krames is retiring after 43 years at Hamilton Jewish Social Services.

cheerfully and mindfully. She assesses each individual's current situation and understands what it means to be facing prob-

lems; whether they be financial, emotional, physical or psychological. Carol truly cares that someone is having trouble paying their hydro bill or that someone's spouse lost their job. What I have learned about Carol is she finds the good in every soul and then she finds it easy to want to help them.

How do we say goodbye, when Carol has been such a powerful and loved figure at Jewish Social Services. The truth is that in Carol's case we will not say goodbye. Instead, we will say L'hitraot — Hebrew for "see you later." We are positive that Carol will continue to be a part of the JSS family. She already has plans for how she can volunteer her services to the agency. She can't let go completely and neither can we.

Susan Roth is president of Hamilton Jewish Social Services.

MY ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

BY HANNAH BYRNE-WOLFSON

TEEN TRIPS TO Israel are often described as 'the trip of a lifetime'. Mine was certainly no exception. I learned so much from this experience, and the following is just a small sample.

1. I am stronger than I think. Both physically and mentally, I astonished myself with what I could do this trip. Whether it was climbing a mountain or pulling myself out of a homesick stretch, I have more fortitude than I could have imagined.
2. Israel is a much more complicated place than I will ever know. We want to see the sides of it that are magical and wonderful, but not all of it is like that. Being at the Kotel was one of the most amazing experiences I've ever had, but the intrinsic sexism in the politics surrounding its control can make it an uncomfortable site for liberal Jews.
3. There is something connecting about being surrounded by other Jews. In Hamilton I am involved in the Jewish community, but I was astonished that in Israel, Judaism is all-encompassing.
4. I am so lucky — not only to be able to travel to Israel for five weeks, but also to have support the entire way. I have come to value goodness in my life. When we went to Auschwitz, when I fasted on Tisha B'Av, or when we went to Masada, I felt a draw to that goodness.
5. Don't give up on something because it hasn't worked before. I was never a great camp or youth



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, HJN

Hannah Byrne-Wolfson is a Grade 12 student at Westmount Secondary School.

learn a bit about each other. Later that day, I played chess with a man who spoke only Hebrew, and even though we could rarely understand

the other, we still both had fun. It even turned out he was an international chess champion (so I didn't stand a chance!)

8. I am more adaptable than I think. I had fun living out of a suitcase and lugging everything around every few days because it was well worth it.

9. Israel really is magical. It has a complicated past, but there were so many sites where I felt a connection beyond myself.

10. I'm ready to grow up a little. This trip has shown me that I can do more than I ever imagined, all by myself. When we came home, my friend and I talked about how no one (save for our parents) was ever going to care for us like our counsellors did again, and it's scary, but a little exciting too. All of us have astonished ourselves by our own capability, and we are starting our lives as individuals. I would like to thank Hamilton Jewish Federation's Ralph Travis Israel Experience Fund for supporting my trip of a lifetime.



May this holiday season bring peace, health and happiness throughout the coming year.

Chag Chanukah Sameach!

~ Moishe, Eli & Gabe Chaimovitz & their families ~

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It is all about treating the deceased with dignity and respect. We will always be here." DAN LEVY

A TRADITION OF CARE AND TRUST

For more than 100 years, the United Hebrew Memorial Chapel has provided the ultimate service to the Jewish community

BY STEVEN BROCK, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

IN GENESIS 47:30, Jacob asks his son Joseph to “do me a true favour” and bury him alongside his ancestors. The concept of *Chesed Shel Emet* or a good deed of truth—that is burying the dead within Jewish tradition—is the final act of kindness we can do for our fellow human beings. It is devoid of ulterior motives, as the recipient can never thank or repay the kindness.

For more than 100 years in Hamilton, this mitzvah has fallen to the United Hebrew Memorial Chapel (UHMC) and the local chevra kadisha (Jewish burial society). While a less organized Jewish funeral organization undoubtedly existed before then, the earliest record of the UHMC predates 1916.

Its current president, Dan Levy believes it started out in homes, often in those of the deceased. Then as the community matured, UHMC established its first parlour on John Street North. Expanding into a larger building at 54 Vine St. in 1954, it finally moved into its current location on Ewen Road in 2002. In fact, to many people, “we are still affectionately referred to as Vine Street,” says Levy with a smile.

As the only Jewish funeral home in town and in the greater area, UHMC serves an area reaching from Mississauga to Niagara and along the 401 corridor to Kitchener. Available 24 hours a day, it provides one-stop services.

“When somebody passes, a phone call to us is all it takes. We take care of everything,” said Levy. “And because we are a small community, we know most everyone. I would say that in 80 to 85 per cent of the cases, we know the family. So it is a very personal

level of service and we believe that families appreciate the fact that they are not dealing with strangers.”

Levy laments that “Jewish funeral homes and cemeteries are under a great deal of pressure today all over North America.” Jewish institutions are all addressing issues such as the burial of non-Jewish spouses in consecrated cemeteries, embalming and the burial of cremains (cremated ashes).

Each Jewish community has its own “minhag” or local customs and will often do things differently than other communities. Remaining true to their mandate, Levy confirms that while servicing the entire Jewish community of Hamilton and area, UHMC is an Orthodox funeral home. So whether Reform, Conservative or Orthodox, they provide only one level of service that conforms to orthodox halacha.

Unlike many Jewish funeral homes, UHMC is a non-profit corporation. Run by a five-person board of governors, it does not require any financial assistance from Hamilton Jewish Federation or any of the synagogues. Paid staff are kept to a minimum and the chevra kadisha currently consists of about 10 men and 10 women, all of whom are volunteers.

Comfortably seating 300 people, UHMC houses one of the largest funeral chapels in the city. There is a proper Kohanim room with a separate roof and its own entrance, with no access into the chapel (as this classification of Jewish high priests is not permitted to be in the same enclosed space as a dead body). Within the past year, the family room was



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Dan Levy in the United Hebrew Memorial Chapel.

refurbished through the generosity of an anonymous community member.

In addition, UHMC offers services such as grief counselling, funeral pre-planning and benevolent services, including providing a Jewish burial even when a family is unable to pay. When it comes to physically preparing the deceased for burial, the chevra kadisha works within the UHMC to carry out the tahara (ritual cleaning and preparation of the body), with male volunteers performing the tahara on men and female volunteers caring for the women.

Over the past century, one family has led the way in providing this service to the Jews of Hamilton. In the early days, Sarah Garshowitz was at the forefront leading the women’s chevra kadisha. After emigrating from Russia in the late 1800s, this mother of 12 children trained several of her daughters to carry on this ritual mitzvah. Among them was Levy’s mother, Marion Levy, as well as

Ruth Lewis, Esther Shecter and Goldie Robbins. As they married, many of their spouses joined the men’s chevra kadisha, including Al Shecter and Harry Robbins.

Goldie, Garshowitz’s 11th child, eventually took over the reins of the women’s chevra kadisha from her mother. After working with her sisters and other volunteers for a number of years, she brought in her daughter, Sheryl Katz to continue the tradition. Katz has now been involved for the past 46 years and has led the women’s side for the past 20. Supporting the family tradition, her husband, Stan Katz leads the men’s side. His family also has a history of community service with the chevra kadisha, as his mother and two of his aunts were also involved.

Levy came on board a little later than his cousin Sheryl, joining in 2000, working alongside Aaron Shiffman at the UHMC. Levy then took over for Shiffman nine years later and has also been the chair of the Beth Jacob Cemetery since 1997.

“We have a good team in place and right now I have no plans to retire. However, when the time comes, you would want to find someone who is prepared to make a long-term commitment,” said Levy adding that these volunteers all serve the community and give their time and effort from the “goodness of their hearts. It is all about treating the deceased with dignity and respect. We will always be here.”



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TRANSFORMING JEWISH LIFE IN HAMILTON



We had the aroma of latkes permeating the school." **CHARLOTTE PRICE**

CREATIVE CHANUKAH TRADITIONS

BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER AND ABIGAIL CUKIER**
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Chanukah is a holiday filled with traditions including lighting the menorah, playing dreidel and eating latkes and sufganiyot. The Hamilton Jewish News asked some community members what special traditions or Chanukah memories they hold dear.



Charlotte Price holds a hanukkiah (Chanukah menorah) given to her by her family for a special birthday. "It is really a piece of artwork with each candle holder adorned with dangly whimsical Jewish and musical ornaments. I just love it for its uniqueness."

ANNA LILLIMAN

"Every year, we hold all eight days, trying to invite a different family each night. We have at least 12 different hanukkiot and we light each one, with all the guests and household members taking turns, going from youngest to oldest. We play dreidel, giving dreidels away to people and then sing songs. We do talk about freedom and assimilation too. I tell the stories of Judith. But the *hanukkiot*, especially all of them lit on the last night—that's 108 candles burning—that's astounding."

DEBBIE RICHTER

"We used to have special nights of Chanukah, such as calendar night, book night and CD night. Each of my kids would get that item as a gift. I still send each of them a book and a calendar for Chanukah."

CHARLOTTE PRICE

"At my children's school in Burlington, they were the only Jewish kids. I would come into their classrooms and tell the Chanukah story. I would bring a *hanukkiah* and light all eight candles, teach the Dreidel Song and give kids a plastic dreidel. We even made latkes once. We only did it once because it was so labour-intensive and we used up a lot of electricity with four to five frying pans. But we had the aroma of latkes permeating the school."

TIKI AND YALI LEVGOREN

Yali says, "My mom makes sufganiot and when friends come over she asks them if they want to put in jelly or chocolate filling."

Tiki says, "In Israel, we used to have 'Erev Sufganiot' – one night with our extended family. But here, to feel the holiday, we try to host almost every night, except for the Adas Chanukah dinner. It's also a great opportunity to invite our religious friends, who don't drive on Shabbat. Last Chanukah, I probably made at least 200 sufganiot from scratch. The real thing, like in Israel."



Tiki and Yali Levgoran celebrate Chanukah by hosting friends and baking hundreds of homemade sufganiot (traditional Chanukah donuts).

CHANUKAH PHOTOGRAPHS ON THIS PAGE:
WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

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HOLIDAY FEATURE



Each morning of Chanukah, my kids open up an envelope containing a special activity that we will do that night." **ABIGAIL CUKIER**

CHANUKAH 5779

This year, Chanukah begins on the evening of Sunday, Dec. 2 until Monday, Dec. 10. The Hamilton Jewish News wishes you a happy Chanukah and that you may enjoy your special traditions with family and friends.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CUKIER FAMILY

Abigail Cukier with her family and faithful friend.

ABIGAIL CUKIER

"Each morning of Chanukah, my kids open up an envelope containing a special activity that we will do that night. Some favourites have been board game night, reading Chanukah books, family dance party and dreidel tournament. We also include donating money to charity, giving away toys or taking food to a food bank."

Rebekah Burjaw brings dreidels to school to share her culture with her classmates.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GRIVER FAMILY

The Griver family has a tradition of taking a family photo on the eighth night of Chanukah.

RYAN GRIVER

"We have a tradition of taking a family photo on the eighth night of Chanukah. It was really nice to look through the years and see how we have grown together."



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BURJAW FAMILY

BRENDA BURJAW

"Each year, we take over the kitchen two to three weeks in advance and go into production to turn 10 pounds of potatoes into delicious latkes. We also produce dozens of shortbread cookies, cut into Chanukah shapes and decorate them. We package up several and share them with our neighbours and friends. Every year, we purchase enough dreidels for Rebekah to bring to school to share her culture with her classmates. I have gone to school to provide her classmates with a quick education on our holiday stories and how to play the dreidel game. Lastly, we always make sure that we give back to the community either through a donation or volunteering."



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“Most of the time we don't get more than three seconds notice of a terrorist rocket.” Yael Raz Lachyani

LIVING UNDER FIRE ON THE GAZA BORDER

Kibbutz Nahal Oz resident describes the toll on Gaza border communities from the seemingly never-ending conflict

STORY BY **STEVE ARNOLD**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

A TERRORIST ROCKET fired from the Hamas bastion of the Gaza Strip can reach Yael Raz Lachyani's kibbutz home in three seconds.

That's barely enough time to look into the sky and measure the chance this rocket will kill you or someone you love. Such threats are just part of life when you live a scant 800 metres from the hotly disputed Gaza-Israel border. Despite the risk, however, Lachyani and her 450 neighbours at Kibbutz Nahal Oz refuse to leave.

“In the beginning it was just one or two rockets every couple of weeks and we all thought it would go away,” Lachyani said in an interview before a recent series of presentations in Hamilton. “For the last 12 years, however, we've been dealing with security rather than building a strong community. Instead we've built a large emergency staff plus shelters and safe rooms.”

Lachyani's stop in Hamilton was part of a three-city tour sponsored by the Jewish National Fund. Her Hamilton stop was co-sponsored by the JNF Regional Ontario unit and the Hamilton Jewish Federation. Her presentations at JHamilton, Shalom Village and Temple Anshe Sholom were an effort to make

comfortable Canadian Jews understand what it is to live under constant threat of terrorist attacks and all-out war.

“We are so close to the border that most of the time we don't get more than three seconds notice of a terrorist rocket,” she said. “I have to have two safe rooms in my house. You have a normal life here, not us. We hope for a normal life, but I'm happy that you have a normal life.”

That dream of a normal life, where communities build schools, hospitals and good roads rather than bomb shelters; where children can look into the night sky and see fireworks rather than terror rockets and fire kites, has sustained Nahal Oz residents for almost 70 years.

The kibbutz was founded in 1951 by a group of IDF veterans who had served in the western Negev and wanted to settle in the harsh, but beautiful, desert region. Nahal Oz is one of the few remaining kibbutzim in Israel today that sustains itself largely by agriculture, growing tomatoes, potatoes and sunflowers. Early life was difficult during the violent times of the 1950s and 1960s as Israel's Arab neighbours tried to destroy the fledgling country. Conditions improved after the Yom Kippur War of 1973 when



PHOTO COURTESY OF JNF HAMILTON

Kibbutz Nahal Oz resident Yael Raz Lachyani (centre) poses with (from l to r) JNF regional Ontario executive director Suzy Polgar, Rabbi Jordan Cohen, JNF Hamilton president Haim Goldstein, and Cantor Paula Baruch after her presentation at JHamilton.

Gazans began to find a measure of stability with jobs in Israel.

“Through the 1970s and 1990s we had normal, neighbourly relations with Gaza,” she said. “Everything was calm, normal and peaceful.”

Those times didn't last, however, and since 2000 and the rise of the terror organization Hamas in Gaza, the entire western Negev region has endured rocket attacks and assaults from terror tunnels under the border defences. In 2014 those assaults forced Israel into an incursion into Gaza dubbed Operation Protective Edge.

(Protective Edge sent Israel Defense Forces air and ground attacks into Gaza to destroy Hamas terrorist infrastructure

and stop rocket attacks on Israeli civilians. The seven-week operation resulted in 67 IDF soldiers killed and 469 injured. As many as 2,300 Gazans were killed.)

During that brief war Lachyani did briefly flee the kibbutz.

“For us, 2014 was the hardest year we've seen, it was just terrible,” she said. “That year I left the kibbutz and lived as a refugee in my own country, relying on the good people of Israel. That was a bad time with lots of missiles falling all around us.”

During that time a Nahal Oz family was killed by a terror rocket near the end of the conflict. By the end of the operation 35 per cent of the population of the kibbutz had fled and not all returned.

“We had two years of quiet after Operation Protection Edge – not Canadian quiet, but relative quiet for us,” she said. “Now we live with border protests and fire balloons that can cause a really big fire.”

Part of what keeps the citizens of Nahal Oz clinging to their little slice of Eden, Lachyani said, is the people who are their neighbours.

“I love kibbutz life because we celebrate everything together,” she said. “If someone else spends 10,000 shekels on fireworks, we'll spend 20,000. I'm optimistic that one day the situation will be different and we will have the kind of neighbours we want. To get there we have to raise our voices and make people understand.”

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

Happy Hanukkah.

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PROFILE

ON BEING A JEWISH WRITER

Family and social justice are major themes in Ellen Jaffe's writing

STORY BY **BARRY ROSEN**,
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

IN EARLY AUGUST, I had the pleasure of interviewing Ellen Jaffe, a well-regarded member of the Hamilton arts community, just prior to her move to Toronto.

Having a creative imagination — and knowing how to use it — has been a strong theme of Ellen Jaffe's life, beginning in childhood. Another theme has been her commitment to social justice and interest in family, which comes through in much of her writing.

Jaffe has published several works and is known primarily, but not exclusively, for her poetry. She is also the author of the young adult novel, "Feast of Lights", has taught writing to various age groups and has written a book about journaling, called "Writing Your Way". Jaffe co-edited two anthologies with Lil Blume, in 2009 and 2011 and has also been a contributing writer in many publications. She has also worked as a psychotherapist in addition to her writing career.

After growing up in New York City, Jaffe left the United States in 1972 and moved to England, where she studied psychotherapy. Her move to Canada in 1979 was in part due to her opposition to the Vietnam War. She lived in Woodstock, Ontario until 2000, when she moved to Hamilton.

Both of Jaffe's parents loved reading, and there were always books around. "I started writing when I was really young. I always remember writing, ever since I could hold a pencil," she said. "I remember telling myself stories as a little girl. As an only child, I had a lot of time. I would imagine a

“

If I were naming a child today, I would call her L'Chaim, life." ELLEN JAFFE



PHOTO: WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Ellen Jaffe strikes a pose at Dundas's Carnegie Gallery before her recent move to Toronto.

town and write about it. I used my imagination a lot."

Jaffe spoke very highly of Hamilton and how it has influenced her writing career. Living in Woodstock was too limiting for her as a writer and while living there, she began to meet with Hamilton writers.

"I moved to Hamilton as I knew people here. I felt at home here very quickly," she said. "Toronto felt like it was too far and too big. There was a lot of generosity among writers here, a sense of community and collegiality because it's smaller."

When she arrived in Hamilton, Jaffe connected with Rabbi Bernard and Marjorie Baskin, who helped her and with whom she became friends. She became involved with Temple Anshe Sholom, where she and Lil Blume directed three successful Jewish Literary Festivals in 2002, 2009 and 2012.

Creativity and self-expression are fundamental human needs, says Jaffe, noting the value of keeping a journal, which helps release thoughts and feelings. She revealed how journaling helped her deal with things in her life, such as her mother dying. Jaffe also believes writing can be used to fight injustice and shake up complacency. She writes every day and says she feels better when

she does. She never experiences writer's block, but sometimes procrastinates. Her advice to aspiring writers is to read and write as much as possible, enter writing contests and participate in writers' groups.

Jaffe feels that being a Jewish writer gives her a unique perspective. Her family was not observant but they celebrated major holidays and she always identified as Jewish. We discussed how the reverence for words is one aspect of being Jewish. Another is the focus on social justice and family, both of which are exemplified in Jaffe's work. Her novel, "Feast of Lights", is entirely Jewish in its content and theme.

"I always felt a strong Jewish connection," she said. "There's a social conscience that comes with being Jewish. It means you identify with anyone who's oppressed. I think being Jewish is a way of looking at the world. There is a comfort with words."

Jaffe will definitely be missed in this community, but she assured me that she will maintain a connection with Hamilton, a city that has clearly been an important part of her life and artistic career.

For more information about Ellen Jaffe and to order her poetry book, "Skinny Dipping" with the Muse, visit ellen-s-jaffe.com.

Baby Naming

For those killed and injured at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, October 27, 2018 (Cheshvan 18, 5779), during a baby-naming ceremony, and for their loved ones. And for all of us.

If I were naming a child today,
I would call her L'Chaim, life.
I would call her Tikvah, hope.
I would call him Gabriel, God is my strength,
and Raphael for healing and protection.
I would plant the Tree of Life in her heart, in his heart,
to grow and flourish in sweetness and peace, Shalom,
rooting out evil weeds and seeds of hatred, violence,
isolation from humanity -- and from spirit.
I would ask the breath of life to flow through him, through her
like a quickening wind,
making the evil eye quiver and turn aside in fear.
Let Shekhinah sing songs of joy and bring comfort in sadness
under nurturing wings.
Let this child's name be holy,
And let this child be whole-hearted, blessed, and wholly loved
for all the days of her and of his life.

Ellen S. Jaffe

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The Hamilton Jewish News is grateful to the Allen and Milli Gould Family Foundation for their generous sponsorship of its new Jewish Life section.

B'NAI BRITH CELEBRITY SPORTS DINNER

Another star-studded line-up

ANOTHER STAR-studded lineup is being assembled for the annual B'nai Brith Sports Celebrity Dinner. Now in its 68th year, the esteemed event has always drawn the support of the region's most prominent businesses and institutions, while raising well over \$2 million for a wide array of local, national and international charitable causes. The dinner has also served as an opportunity to honour and celebrate the top male and female high school student athletes from across Hamilton.

Past head table guests such as Jackie Robinson, Pete Rose, Bill Walton, Joe Carter, Bobby Hull and Jesse Owens have graced the stage and shared illuminating and inspiring stories from their fabled careers. This year will be no exception as the dinner committee finalizes the dais lineup.

Co-chairs Jeff Paikin and Brent Clifford are immensely proud to see how the dinner has evolved over the years. "This event has grown into the premier social

NEED TO KNOW

What: B'nai Brith Sports Celebrity Dinner

Where: Hamilton Convention Centre

When: Monday, Jan. 28, 2019

Tickets: \$135 plus HST.

Contact laura@nhdg.ca or hamiltonsportsdinner.com

event in the city," says Paikin. "Aside from the chance to meet sports legends, the dinner provides a rare opportunity for the aspirational to mix and mingle with the area's most affluent businesspeople and professionals."

This year's event will once again be held at the Hamilton Convention Centre, on Monday, Jan. 28, 2019. Those interested in sponsorship or tickets can contact Laura at laura@nhdg.ca or visit hamiltonsportsdinner.com/. Please be advised that tickets for this event sell out quickly, so act fast to avoid disappointment.

JOURNEY TO MOROCCO

Synagogue group is heading to North Africa in the spring

AFTER NUMEROUS successful tours of Israel and a very moving trip to Central Europe, Temple Anshe Sholom's Travellers are off on a new adventure to Morocco. Departing March 31, 2019 and lasting 11 days, this Jewish heritage tour of Morocco will be an immersive opportunity to learn about the unique history and traditions of Moroccan Jewry, an ancient culture that reflects both European and North African influences. The Jewish presence in Morocco dates back more than 2,500 years, to the time of the Carthaginian state. Before the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, there were about 350,000 Jews in Morocco, the largest Jewish community in the Muslim world. Today, fewer than 2,500 Jews remain in the progressive Muslim nation.

"After witnessing the destruction and rebirth of Ashkenazic Jewry during our tour of Central Europe, I thought it was time that we had a chance to learn first-hand about the Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewish communities in the Muslim world," said Rabbi



Jordan Cohen, who will be leading the tour.

"We have a number of individuals and families in our congregation who are of Moroccan descent, and, after Israel, Canada has one of the largest Moroccan Jewish populations in the world."

The Moroccan adventure will include tours of Casablanca, Rabat, Fes, and Marrakech, as well as travel through the Atlas Mountains and a night at a Berber Camp in the Sahara Desert. In addition, to help prepare for the tour, learning sessions will be held at Anshe Sholom including a presentation by Ralph Benmurgui

Temple Anshe Sholom

Travellers are heading to Morocco this coming March.

on "Moroccan Jewish Family and Culture" and a "History of Morocco" with McMaster professor Ellen Amster. All who are interested are welcome to join our adventure in Morocco. For more information contact Rabbi Cohen or register online at www.arzaworld.com.

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This gathering provided families with a forum to share their experiences with others who are travelling a similar journey." **ANITA BERNSTEIN, CHAIR, SNAP COMMITTEE**

SPECIAL NEEDS ACTION PROJECT

ON HAVING A SIBLING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Film highlights special bond among family members

BY **ANITA BERNSTEIN**, SPECIAL NEEDS ACTION PROJECT COMMITTEE CHAIR

SIBLINGS HAVE a unique relationship and each individual plays a different role in their family. Does having a brother or sister with special needs impact this relationship?

On Nov. 4, the Special Needs Action Project (SNAP) committee of the Hamilton Jewish Federation partnered with the Down Syndrome Association to explore this topic at a gathering at JHamilton. More than 60 participants viewed the Israeli movie "My Hero Brother" (www.myherobrother.org/) and listened to a panel of people who reminisced about their experiences growing up with their sibling with special needs. Some of the themes that surfaced during the discussion included the realization that life with a sibling who has special needs is the only reality that they know, the wish to always protect their sibling from difficult situations with peers, the feeling that the family was often focused on the needs of the sibling

with challenges, the long-term responsibility a brother or sister feels to help their sibling with special needs especially after their parents have passed away as well as a reflection on the unique and loving relationship they developed with their brother or sister who has challenges.

The aim of the SNAP committee is to provide support and education to families of individuals with special needs and tools for professionals supporting these individuals. This gathering provided families with a forum to share their experiences with others who are travelling a similar journey. The resource fair that preceded the movie, sponsored by Beth Jacob Synagogue, showcased some organisations that provide support services to these families.

Do you know a family who could benefit from the support of the SNAP committee? Please contact us at the Hamilton Jewish Federation or snap@jewishhamilton.org.

BETH JACOB HEBREW SCHOOL

BY **EINAV SYMONS**, BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE

BETH JACOB Hebrew School is off to a great start. The school runs on Wednesdays from 4:30 to 6:15 p.m., and is open to all members of our community regardless of synagogue affiliation. Many students start showing up as early as 3:30 p.m. only to participate in the various centres available to them. Students are creating their own Parsha books, play games, read, practice their Hebrew and have an opportunity to schmooze with their peers while enjoying healthy snacks.

Our T'fillah time includes singing Hatikvah and saying our school pledge. Rabbi Hillel leads some prayers and imparts lessons from the week's Torah portion.

The school is divided into three pods taught by our exceptional teachers: Fay Schmerling, Gila Lawton and Tracy Kornblum. While the Hebrew curriculum focuses on prayers, the Judaic curriculum includes Bible, ethics, life-cycles and holidays. On Mondays from 4:15 to 5:15 p.m. numerous students have registered for the enrichment Hebrew opportunity, taught by Rabbi Yonah and Einav Symons. This year, Beth Jacob Synagogue Hebrew School has successfully implemented an online Hebrew program geared to develop and facilitate greater conversational Hebrew for the students.

For more information about the school, call the synagogue at 905-522-1351 or email einav@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

JEWISH LIFE ON CAMPUS

BY **REBECCA BUCKLER**, MCMaster HILLEL

MCMaster HILLEL has had a spread of events as diverse and chock-full as a well-assembled bagel. Programming began before the school year even started, with a highly requested bagel lunch during frosh week. With an amazing turn out, first year students both on and off-campus in all different faculties gathered in the Hillel lounge to eat, meet each other and learn more about Hillel at Mac. The enthusiasm and anticipation in the air for the new school year were palpable!

On the second day of school, Hillel had an amazing booth set up during McMaster's annual club's fair. Though it was a particularly hot day, so many students came to our booth, wanting to find out more about Hillel and signing up to be involved. Later that week, we celebrated the start of the school year with a delicious BBQ at Temple Anshe Shalom. After Rosh Hashana, our Jewish education chair, Rebecca Benjamin, set up a station in the student centre with facts about the customs and traditions of the high holidays.

Traditionally, bagel lunches at McMaster Hillel are on Wednesdays. Since Yom Kippur fell on a Wednesday this year, we opted to have bagel lunch on a Tuesday. Everyone was super grateful to enjoy a carb heavy lunch, perfect for a pre-fast meal.

The semester wrapped up with a Hillel Shabbat dinner. There was no better way to end the semester than with friends and good food at a traditional Friday night dinner.



PHOTO: COURTESY THE JEWISH NATIONAL FUND

AMAZING JNF BLUE BOX SCAVENGER HUNT

More than 50 people took part in JNF's fifth annual Amazing JNF Blue Box Collection and Scavenger Hunt on Oct. 14. Congratulations to winning teams, the Paling family, Elliott Raphael and Daniel Laengerer, the Shapiro family, the Michalowicz family, Frank Klinger and Rhyen Laengerer, the Tsaidi family, Charlotte Guest, Eva Raphael and Jenia Rabotnilov. There is still a chance to be entered into the draw for two Negev Dinner tickets valued at \$360. For every blue box received between now and Dec. 14 that contains more than \$100, one ballot will be entered into the draw. Call the JNF office at 905-527-5516 for more information.

JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES CAN MATCH VOLUNTEERS BY PASSIONS AND INTERESTS

BY **DINA HONIG**, JSS CAREER COUNSELOR

HAMILTON JEWISH Social Services has assisted many people in our community with their career transition plans and job searches. We encourage retirees or those who are currently unemployed to donate their time to help our community. It has been my pleasure to volunteer at Hamilton Jewish Social Services for the past two years as a career counselor and volunteer coordinator. Speaking from experience you gain from volunteering more than you give.

We have recently developed a database of agencies in the Jewish and general community who are in need of volunteers. Two or three hours can make a difference in

someone's life. Volunteer opportunities include:

- Assisting in libraries
- Providing administrative support to community schools
- Visiting the elderly
- Assisting and encouraging people to leave their homes.

We invite anyone who either wants to volunteer in or get help with career planning or a job search to call me at 905-627-9922 ext. 24 or email dhonigjss@hotmail.com. You can also visit our website at www.hamiltonjss.com. We are looking forward to helping our community in this coming year.



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Without a doubt, the Maccabiah and Grade 8 trip are the highlights of every child's last year at the HHA." **RYAN GRIVER**

HHA'S SHABBAT IN A BOX PROJECT RAISES FUNDS FOR GRADE 8 TRIP

BY **RYAN GRIVER**
HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY

HAVING SPENT more than a decade sending kids to the Hamilton Hebrew Academy (HHA), without a doubt two annual events stand out. Maccabiah and the Grade 8 trip are the highlight of every child's last year at the HHA. The chance to be a captain, a leader, to take your team to victory through song and skit. Taking your first overnight group trip with friends and teachers to learn and explore this great world of ours.

During a recent parent association meeting at the HHA, we talked about the positives of the school, focusing on what worked to help us understand why it did, and how we could support it. As we went around person to person in the newly redesigned Library Learning Commons talking about the teachers, the financial support, the extra-curricular programs, and the focus on family, I raised my hand and then spoke in my turn.

"Two things," I said. "First, right here, where we are, is a beautiful place. It is a modern and thoughtful room that engages the child in all the senses and provides many spaces for each unique child to explore. My dream is the HHA trip. I want to make this trip excellent. I want to fundraise every year enough so that the trip's reach will not be limited by its financial grasp."

At the end of the meeting, two inspired parents, David Levy and



PHOTO: COURTESY THE HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY

Rebecca Abraham, approached me and said, "Yes! What do you want to do and how can we help?" Abraham is a caterer and Levy runs Chocolate Tales, and helped with logistics. The menu was set and we were ready to find some partners to support this project. JCC and Federation's new program coordinator, Jonathan Riaboy, was incredibly supportive in offering the new physical space on Main Street West as a pick-up point.

When Shlomo Assayag, a Toronto food entrepreneur and owner of the Speedy Meaty: Toronto Kosher Guru Facebook group found out about the project, he launched a contest that raised awareness of the HHA in Toronto. Marty Strub donated a jar of "Marty's Pickles" for each box.

With the menu set and advertising flyer created, all we had to do was sell. We sold out all 58 boxes within two weeks of the launch. As the children are very involved in chesed (good deeds) projects,

HHA Grade 8 students prepared 58 Shabbat food boxes, as a fundraiser for their annual graduation trip.

we sent four boxes to Hamilton Jewish Social Services and the Toronto organization, Tomchei Shabbos.

This is being written the day before we start cooking. The kids from Grade 8 will be decorating each box individually and writing a D'var Torah to be said at the meal. Their energy and excitement is heart-warming. They are so excited to visit JHamilton this Friday. I don't know how this story will end. But I get a sense that it's just the beginning for "Shabbat in a Box".

KEHILA HESCHEL SCHOOL OF HAMILTON

Excerpt from the naming ceremony of Kehila Heschel School of Hamilton by **Gail Baker**, co-founder, Heschel Toronto

The board and staff of the Kehila Community Day School recognize that how you choose to educate your children is one of the most important decisions that you will make. We honour this choice. We honour it by recognizing the importance of nurturing your children to become critical and creative problem solvers, curious learners, articulate and innovative thinkers. Most importantly, we recognize that all children must learn independence, perseverance and resilience.

It is no mere coincidence that Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel was chosen to be the spiritual mentor of this school. Rabbi Heschel's contribution to the world of Jewish education and to the larger world is well known.

Rabbi Heschel espoused the belief that to be a good Jew, one must see the world with admiring eyes and appreciate our unique role in its betterment. He urged us to study – not just ancient miracles, but the miracles we see every day – and look at our experiences with admiration, wonder and awe.

As a Heschel Jewish Day School, we have the opportunity to bring that sense of awe to our children's learning. With an emphasis on Jewish ethics and values, we focus on our shared history, our sacred texts, and our shared efforts to affect positive change in our community and our world.

As a Heschel school, we teach that all of humanity was created B'tzelem Elohim, in God's image. Children will learn that while this makes them unique and special, it does not make them superior to anyone, for everyone was created this way. We must therefore view our peers with compassion, dignity and a sense of responsibility.

Take a moment and imagine a school where children come knowing that they will be celebrated for their uniqueness and where they will come to a place knowing that the bricks and mortar are a shelter and a window to the outside world. Imagine a school that embraces the diversity of the Jewish world and where students learn that mitzvot are commandments and not just good deeds; that Tzedakah is not charity but justice; that lashon horah, gossip, is poison and that it is the obligation of the Jewish people to help bring about Tikkun Olam, the repair of the world. Ladies and gentlemen, you are imagining the Kehila Heschel School of Hamilton.



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YOU can join the Shalom Village family in making Chanukah happy for everyone. Your gift can help us spread love and laughter by making a donation to our 3rd Annual Snowflake Appeal.

For every \$25 donated, Shalom Village will display a snowflake throughout the residences—to celebrate your generous gift and spread kindness throughout Shalom Village.

Remember Shalom Village for your year-end giving. When you give by December 31st, 2018, your gift will also be tax deductible.



These young people are already showing that they know better than to ever be part of the prejudice problem." **ELYSA KESHEN**

RESPONDING TO HATE WITH KINDNESS

Synagogues encourage children to share their reactions over Solidarity Shabbat

BY **ELYSA KESHEN AND DORA ANN COHEN-ELLISON**, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

ELYSA KESHEN

IN THE PLANNING of Beth Jacob's Solidarity Shabbat it became pertinent to find an appropriate and meaningful way for children to share their reactions and concerns to the events of the past week. Programs were designed for children from kindergarten to Grade 4 and for Grades 5 and up.

The younger group, led by Fay Schmerling and myself, explored kindness by tying it with the Torah portion Chayei Sarah. We explored how Rivka became Isaac's wife because of her kind nature. After a discussion regarding what we can do to be kind to one another, the children explored their thoughts using marbles, sea shells, and popsicle sticks.

Six intelligent young men and women made up the teen group, led by Anna Lilliman. It was clear from the outset that they were more aware, interested, capable and creative than most people give teens credit for. They discussed the situation in Pittsburgh openly and frankly, voicing their fears and discussing an appropriate Jewish response to hate. After singing Oseh Shalom, the group read quotes from famous Jews about combating hate and the importance of kindness, and discussed their impressions. What was most beautiful was the care and respect the children gave each other, from a young man including a shy girl in the discussions, to the easy acceptance of some students' disabilities. These young people are already showing that they know better than to ever be part of the prejudice problem. When we rejoined the adult service, a participant read a poem in honour of the Tree of Life synagogue and both groups led the congregation in a few prayers. Children's programs such as these are fun, necessary, and a way we can celebrate being Jewish together.

Beth Jacob will be hosting a teen program once a month beginning Dec. 1 as well as a tandem children's program. For more information or to get involved contact me at 905-522-1351 ext 10 or email elysa@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

DORA ANN COHEN-ELLISON

ON THE MORNING of #standupforshabbat, I was teaching and leading Temple Anshe Sholom's Shabbat children's service. As we explored the values of helping each other, trusting in God, and being the best version of our selves, a student asked, "So Morah Dora-Ann, if we listen to you and learn what is in the Torah, and then we go to school and grow up, and always remember to do good

things like you teach us, is that how I make the world better?"

"Yes! Yes!" I exclaimed, while holding back tears. I was moved to tears by his innocence, by his enthusiasm and by his overwhelming feeling of hope. Later in the week, we watched a BimBam video (Jewish videos that explain the basics of Judaism for adults and kids), narrated by Mayim Bialik, that challenged the students to act and behave in a way that demonstrates the teachings in the Torah.

At Temple Anshe Sholom, our students are always learning how to help others and how to make a difference; and they are learning that they need not do this alone. There is a large Hamilton Jewish community to explore, to help, to engage. On Dec. 19, our

students will join with Beth Jacob students and travel to Shalom Village. We will challenge students with the mission to put a smile of every face we visit. Together, we will explore the healing power of humour and love.

Looking for some Chanukah family fun? Please join us at our YoFi Chanukah Party on Sunday, Dec. 2 from 2 to 3 p.m. We will start with songs, followed by crafts, games and story time. I hope to see you there! Families with little ones under age 5 are invited to join us for Tot-Shabbat on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. For more school information and updates on our activities, please follow our blog at anshesholomreligiousschool.wordpress.com.

MAC HILLEL HOLDS VIGIL FOR PITTSBURGH SLAIN



PHOTO: COURTESY/MCMAS TER HILLEL

In the wake of the horrific shooting at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue, McMaster Hillel held a vigil on Tuesday, Oct. 30 in memory of those who lost their lives. The vigil brought together more than 150 people from across campus to honour and remember the victims. Max Librach, president of McMaster Hillel, remembered the victims, and Daniella Mikanovsky recited a poem (see page 4) that she wrote just a few days after the tragedy. The university's flags were flown at half mast and the administration issued a statement condemning anti-Semitism.

Wishing the community a Happy Chanukah!



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For more information and registration please contact Jonathan at jriaboy@jewishhamilton.org

