



- ▷ Special guest editorial by Pat Morden • 4
- ▷ Impact makers in our community • 10
- ▷ A pandemic pivot by an Israeli teacher • 17



SEPTEMBER 2022 | TISHREI 5783

Hamilton
Jewish

INews

The voice of Jewish Hamilton

End of an era and a new beginning

Beth Jacob Synagogue sells its landmark Aberdeen Avenue building but maintains use of its beloved “shul within a shul”

STORY BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**
HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

NEARLY SEVEN DECADES after moving from its humble, first home on Hunter Street to an elegant and impressive facility on 375 Aberdeen Ave., Beth Jacob Synagogue has sold its building in a “best-case scenario” arrangement that’s allowed the synagogue to maintain use of its beloved Richter Chapel, also known as the “shul within a shul”—the 160-seat sanctuary built of Jerusalem stone that was completed in 2011 as part of a major renovation. It was in that sanctuary that the historic vote took place on June 26, overseen by a representative from the accounting firm Taylor Leibow. When the results were announced—163 in favour, seven against and three abstentions—all who came to cast their votes in person that day burst into spontaneous applause, an acknowledgement of the shul’s executive committee, whose tireless efforts had produced a deal that both put the synagogue on stronger financial footing than it had seen in decades while allowing it to remain in the building as a tenant for the next five years.

END OF AN ERA CONTINUES ON **P5**

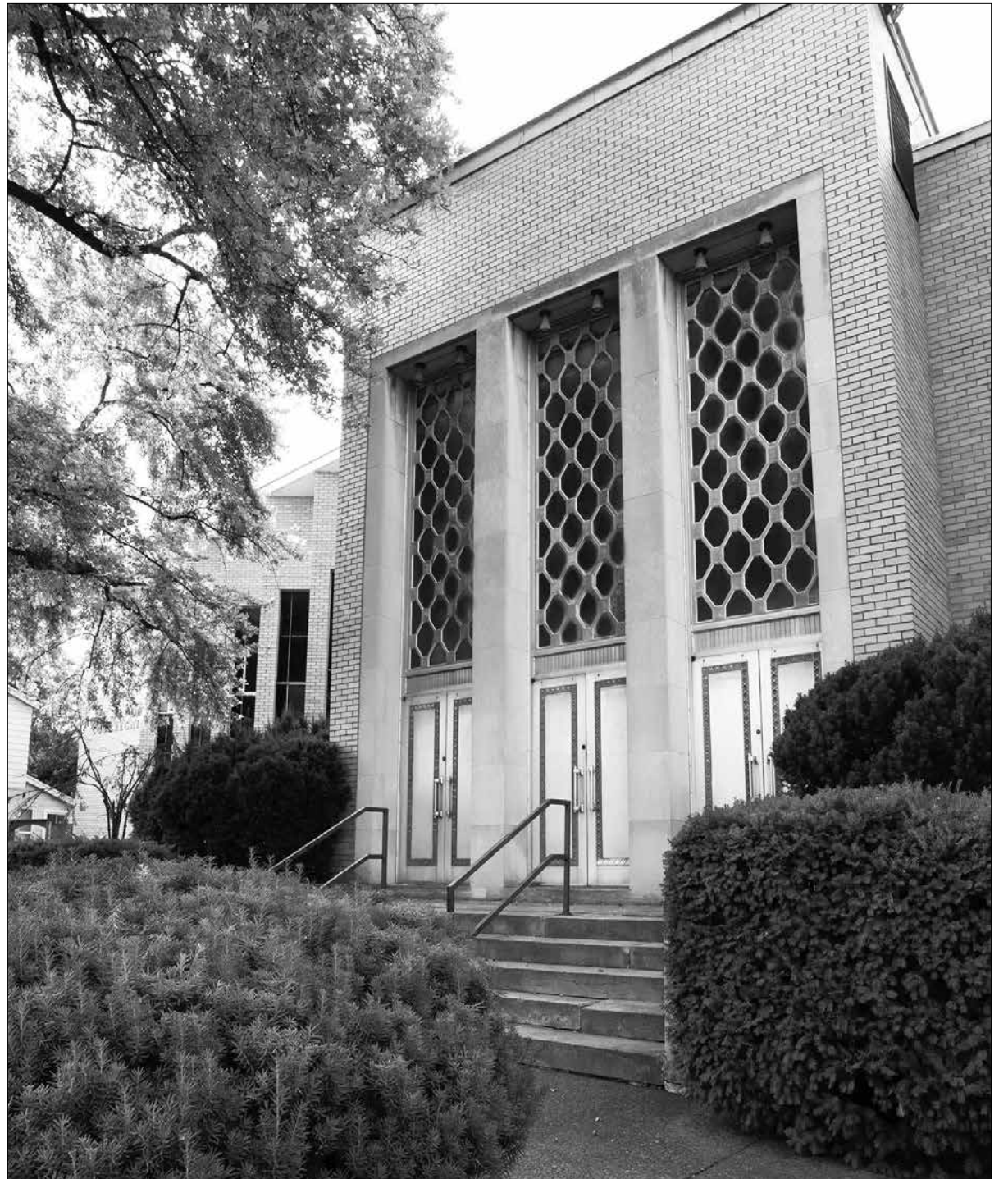


PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

“I think that we’re all sad that we’ve lost part of our past, but it’s also a very happy day that we’re moving forward.”

DAN LEVY, MEMBER OF THE BETH JACOB EXECUTIVE

Hamiltonjewishnews.com

Hamilton Jewish News is funded in part by a generous gift from the Allen and Milli Gould Family Foundation.



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The stain of antisemitism in our community



Gustavo Rymberg
CEO
HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION

IT WAS ANYTHING but an auspicious start to a new school year. Just two months before Hamilton's first international conference on antisemitism, two hate crimes targeting the Jewish community took place over the course of a few days during the first week of September.

The first occurred when antisemitic messages were found scrawled on various locations in the downtown core. The second, more disturbing incident involved a break-in at the home of a Jewish community member, that police are investigating as hate-motivated.

The incidents come just weeks following reports by B'nai Brith Canada and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) that Jewish Canadians, representing barely one per cent of the population, remain the most targeted religious minority for hate crime in Canada. Our people were victims of 14 per cent of all reported hate crimes in 2021, which included beatings, vandalism of synagogues and the plastering of swastikas in schools.

Whenever these incidents occur here in Hamilton, Federation kicks into action. We report the incident to the police and to CIJA, we put all our beneficiary agencies on alert, and encourage them to review and update their security procedures. And then we watch in frustration as the perpetrators, having been found and arrested, are released on bail, not through any negligence on the part of police, but as a requirement of Canadian law.

As the details surrounding these incidents unfold in real time, it's not unusual for Federation to hear from concerned community members with expectations as to what immediate action should be taken. Recently I received a message accusing Federation of not making the safety and security of community members a priority. I was both confused and surprised to receive such "feedback" in the midst of a crisis, which, to my mind, reflected the writer's lack of appreciation for our need to wait for reliable and trustworthy information about the incident and protect the confidentiality of those involved.

These are times when our Jewish community has to be more united than ever. We can't hide in the face of antisemitism. We should continue to be proud to be part of public events. Our presence is our strongest weapon. We have to talk about antisemitism and educate the public, while always be alert and ready. We can't be afraid to celebrate as a community and we should do so with pride. Participation in our commemoration and other events as a community is our voice

and our way to say, "We are here and we are Jewish!"

Our second strongest weapon is our vote. For the coming municipal election, we are obligated to learn what we can about each mayoral candidate. At the same time, we must ask ourselves difficult questions. As a Jew, should I vote for someone promoting policies against Israel? Should I vote for someone promoting white supremacy or who is creating division?

So, what do we do about antisemitism? Here are some suggestions from myjewishlearning.com and jewishphilanthropy.com.

- Antisemitism grows when leaders stoke our tendencies to define an "us" and a "them," even if it isn't about Jews.
- Get involved, personally and financially, with national organizations and local groups that research, program, and advocate against hate and for human rights.
- Strengthen democracy. Hate of all kinds grows when democratic institutions – a free press, independent judiciary, and so on – are weaker. When anyone's civil or human rights are under threat from political leadership, antisemitism is likely to grow.
- "Name and Shame." When you read or hear of an antisemitic speech, statement, article or book, call it out and press political, cultural and religious leaders and the media to denounce those responsible and insist they be shamed, censured or removed from leadership positions.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation tracks incidents of hate to measure and combat antisemitism. Please email grymberg@jewishhamilton.org or call 905.648.0605 x 305 to let us know about the incident. Be specific and include as many details as you can remember.

If the incident is hate-motivated, report it to Hamilton Police Services at 905-546-4925 or online at hamiltonpolice.on.ca/report-crime/online-reporting/report-hate-crime-online. To remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or crimestoppershamilton.com.

You can also contact CIJA at cija.ca/report_hate.

If you are in immediate danger, please dial 911.

Wishing you all a year of love and fulfilment, a year free from hate and a year of good health.. From all of us at the Hamilton Jewish Federation, L'Shana Tova Tikatevu.

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Yad Vashem honours Frank Junger



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Frank Junger (seated) with family members and Alana Saxe (far right) from the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem (CSYV). "The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem in partnership with the Ontario Government is honouring Frank this year among nine other Holocaust survivors for their courage and resilience and starting anew here in Canada. This annual event has honoured close to 300 Holocaust survivors who settled in Ontario. We are honouring Frank to recognize him for sharing his testimony with students and adults alike and making an impact in our community," said Saxe. The ceremony was held Aug. 21 at JHamilton.

COVER STORY

The end of an era for Beth Jacob Synagogue

6

LOCAL NEWS

Changes in the Jewish communal scene

10

SPECIAL MENTSCHEN

Our community's impact makers

17

ISRAEL NEWS

A surprising role for Hebrew poetry

21

LIVES REMEMBERED

Ahuva Soifer, a life well lived

NEXT ISSUE: CHANUKAH 2022

DEADLINES Booking ads: **Nov. 1, 2022**

Advertising copy: **Nov. 22, 2022**

Publication date: **Dec. 7, 2022**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2 Guest Editorial

4 First Person

5 Cover story

6 Local News

10 Special Mentschen

12 JCC News

16 Feature story

17 Israel News

19 Local Voices

21 Lives Remembered

22 Community News

FEDERATION NEWS:
13, 14, 15 & 18

HJN

The Hamilton Jewish News is published six times a year by the Hamilton Jewish Federation

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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#Here for Good

The importance of being at H.O.M.E. at Shalom Village

Facing the known and unknown with courage, Shalom Village is taking ownership of things needing to change



BY **PAT MORDEN**
SPECIAL TO HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

THE MEZUZAH is a reminder. Its familiar message guides us to live our life on purpose, strongly connected to values with loving kindness. The Torah wisely suggests placing the mezuzah on doorposts, to talk about its message regularly, to teach it to our children, to live it. This well-honed practice is one we can return to, to recover, when we as humans, from time to time, lose our way.

Pat Morden has been contracted by the Shalom Village Board of Directors to support the staff and leaders as they enhance their ability to honour our fathers and mothers at Shalom Village.

Not surprisingly, given the enduring nature of this idea, organizations who hold fiercely to their shared purpose, standards, and values with respect and compassion are found to be more successful. Additionally, when they struggle, they recover faster. Our good fortune at Shalom Village is that on each doorpost we have the reminder of the mezuzah. In addition to bringing clarity to our shared purpose of “honouring our fathers and our mothers” we have made our steps and values clear in our A.T.H.O.M.E mission.

These long-ago crafted words, “Acknowledge, Together, Home, Organization, Memories, Enablement” were created with care to represent how we can be: on purpose, with loving kindness, creating a home trusted by our community, closer to care, but not further from family, values or the uniqueness of each and every life.

Historically, Shalom Village embodied these words, and was celebrated as a model for innovative, effective, and compassionate approaches to living, for those who called us home. These practices are deeply ingrained



PHOTO BY WENDY SHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

in our staff, and their impact is still felt today.

Guided by these values, our staff, since the beginning of the pandemic, have consistently walked through the fires of COVID and change, putting their lives on the line for our fathers and mothers; loving them, healing them, and when they can not do that, they hold them with compassionate hands.

The significant impact and strains of COVID have shown us there is a need for Shalom Village to rebuild our capacity to realize and live these A.T.H.O.M.E, values and the board of directors is committed to do so.

Through thoughtful reflection and feedback from both our Shalom and the broader community, the board of directors has asked me to work with our staff, our families, community partners, and other external expertise to undertake significant, informed steps to bring forward ideas and actions that are carefully designed to renew and strengthen our A.T. H.O.M.E mission and values.

Improvement takes courage and

“Together we embark on numerous initiatives that will help Shalom Village move forward, in positive and meaningful ways.”

support. It takes faith and love. It takes patience and time.

We are, as the mezuzah encourages, “Talking about them when we sit at home and when we walk along the road, when we lie down and when we get up.” This is where we must begin and what the team at Shalom Village has already begun implementing. Like you, everyone at Shalom Village, is excited and committed to stepping more resolutely into practices that honour our fathers and our mothers.

Facing the known and unknown with courage, Shalom Village is taking ownership of things needing to change. Together, we walk through the hard grounds of renewing and trusting our A.T.H.O.M.E. values. The future is reflected in the comments spoken to me recently by a daughter, mourning the death of her dad from COVID, who stepped forward to help us be better. She shared with me, that although sad, she also appreciates the staff for changing in the last year of his life, her dad’s lived experience. When he moved to Shalom, he moved from wanting to die to looking

forward to each day. To me this said: a lot to learn, and so much to be proud of. Loving kindness and leadership that embrace the A.T.H.O.M.E standards is the way forward.

Many of you through volunteering, words and generous deeds are sustaining, encouraging and nudging forward your committed Shalom Village team. We need you. We thank you.

Together, we embark on numerous initiatives that will help Shalom Village move forward, in positive and meaningful ways. Leadership and teams are reengaging with our A.T.H.O.M.E. vision and values in all they do. Walls and spaces are being renewed with paint, décor and purpose. A focused plan is evolving to ensure that our practices align with directives from our regulating bodies and the Fixing Long Term Care Act. We have leaders who are knowledgeable and engaged and are recruiting more people with the skills, knowledge and values to fulfill our mandate using effective, safe, and quality practices.

It is a privilege to be back at Shalom Village supporting the team during this time of renewal. Together, we will fiercely embrace A.T.H.O.M.E., and will make Shalom’s possibilities, possible. I look forward to reconnecting with old friends and to meeting new ones who can help encourage, support and celebrate all that happens within and without our doorposts. We are greeting the sweetness of the new year with hard work, clarity, and excitement.

Pat Morden was a leader at Shalom Village from 1990-2011, serving as CEO from 1996. Since her move to a more rural setting, Pat’s business, Growing Leadership has coached both individuals and organizations to dig deep and find new and more effective ways to flourish.



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“Seeing the faces that were in that room for this milestone historic moment, I was really proud”

The end of an era

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

AFTER THE APPLAUSE, Dan Levy, the committee’s most senior member, approached the podium to make a few off-the-cuff remarks. In a conversation with the HJN the next day, he did his best to recall what he’d said.

“When we moved into Aberdeen, we were all proud as punch with the brand new building. It was an incredible feat, not only of architecture and size. It really blew the socks off most religious institutions in terms of where it was, its being in Hamilton and part of the Jewish community.” But Levy recalls 1970, the year he joined the synagogue board, as the beginning of a new preoccupation.

“From 1970 to the present day, every board, every executive, and every president has devoted much of their time to an aging building and diminishing dues base ... maintaining the status quo or simply making ends meet.”

Nonetheless, the decision to put the building on the market after months of exploring other options was not easy. “Our biggest fear early on was that if we put the shul up for sale, where will we go,” said Levy. “No one dreamed that we would find a buyer that would make it possible for us to lease back the significant space, the shul within a shul, the magnificent Richter chapel.”

He concluded his remarks on an optimistic note saying the sale will enable the synagogue to “do all the things that we haven’t been able to do over the last number of years, and that’s to rebuild the heart of this synagogue and put together the groundwork to sustain this synagogue for the next 100 years. That’s our plan.”

In the days and weeks that followed the vote, the HJN spoke with some of those responsible for shepherding the shul through this significant moment in its history. Shul president Lorne Richter told the HJN that he recognized that “something had to be done or the congregation would wake up in a bankrupt situation” three years ago, but that progress was slow until he managed to put together an executive that included Ted Lax, Brenda Burjaw, Dan Levy, Stephen Yanover and David Walman. “We had a fabulous team,” he said.

But the momentum really began after an offer came in from a non-profit charitable Hindu organization.

“The best deal in our mind always had to ... maximize the proceeds we could get from the sale, but also, respect our needs,” Brenda Burjaw, a banker by profession and long-time shul treasurer told the HJN, “so when this buyer group came to us, we were excited.”

The \$6.25 million offer from the Radha Madhav Society “fit all the boxes.” “They knew we had a congregation that had an emotional tie to the building ... and that we had put a lot of money and effort into the Richter Chapel, and that what we were proposing as a second-floor space remaining ours worked for them.”

After prolonged negotiations, a deal was eventually worked out that allowed Beth Jacob to lease back 6,500 square feet of space, which includes



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

The Beth Jacob team that worked tirelessly to secure the financial health of the synagogue from left to right: John Levy, Dan Levy, David Walman, Stephen Yanover, Ted Lax, Brenda Burjaw and Lorne Richter.



The original main sanctuary of Beth Jacob at 375 Aberdeen Ave.

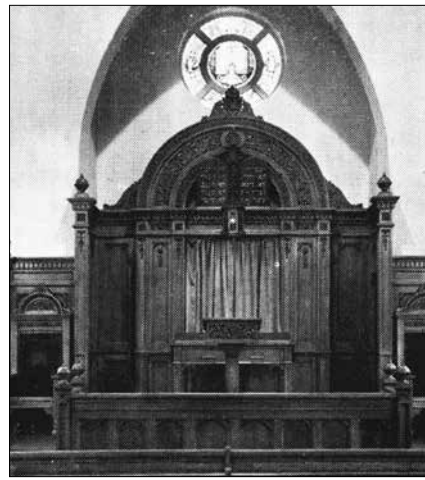
a separate entrance, a new upstairs foyer, the Richter Chapel, a renovated kitchen, washrooms, a library, and second floor offices for the next five years.

Burjaw said that the synagogue will net approximately \$5.8 million after paying off legal and broker fees, its bank loan and renovation expenses. Along with its pre-existing endowment funds, that leaves it on stronger financial footing than it has had in decades. “We’re going to come up with a policy that preserves the principle, maximizes the interest and limits the risk,” said Burjaw.

Multifaith worship spaces have become a global phenomenon, and though the concept of a synagogue sharing space with a Hindu temple may be groundbreaking for Hamilton, it’s not unprecedented. Burjaw said the committee spoke to members at a synagogue in California in a similar situation who described the accommodation as “wonderful.”

Dan Levy said there’s been a significant number of synagogues throughout North America either merging with other synagogues or sharing space with non-Jewish organizations. “Where we are today, it’s simply all over the world ... We’re not carving out new territory,” he said.

John Levy, under whose co-presidency the Richter Chapel was constructed and who has worked closely with the executive committee over the last three years, told the HJN that,



The original aron kodesh (holy ark) in its Hunter Street shul location that remains in Beth Jacob’s hands and will be used during High Holiday services.

notwithstanding three generations of his family’s deep involvement with Beth Jacob, he has no regrets about where the shul finds itself today.

“It’s emotional for me ... that the (large) sanctuary’s going to be gone for us, but the reality is we couldn’t support it anymore. The community didn’t need it,” he said, acknowledging that it took him some time to come to terms with selling the building. “I went through a “we can’t do that” like everybody else. And then I sort of said, think about the future ... I think the building, as marvellous as it is, it’s just a structure. It’s an important structure, but we can replace that.”

Dan Levy echoed that sentiment

when asked whether he felt sad in the aftermath of the vote. “I think that we’re all sad that we’ve lost part of our past,” he said. We loved the sanctuary and will no longer have it, but I think that we’re sad for the bricks and mortars. Our synagogue is about our people, about our community, and for that I’m happy with the ways things have turned out because we’re moving forward. So yes, it’s a sad day, but it’s also a very happy day that we can now move forward with a different view.”

On her drive down to the synagogue on June 26, Burjaw was nervous about whether they’d get a quorum of 36 people for an in-person vote. But when she walked into the Richter Chapel, her mood shifted to one of elation.

“Seeing the faces that were in that room for this milestone historic moment, I was really proud. I was emotional. I was happy,” she said. “We got people who haven’t come to services in more than two-and-a-half years or, frankly decades, come and show that this is something they’re supporting—to keep a Beth Jacob congregation for the future. Whatever was going to be the end result, that in itself was huge.”

Lax, whose family has been Beth Jacob members for generations, spent much of the last three years driving from his home on Lake Simcoe to Hamilton for executive and board meetings, and more recently, to assist Lorne Richter with all the myriad tasks surrounding downsizing the synagogue. In the weeks leading up to the Aug. 2 closing, he carved out some time to sit in the Lax family row in the large sanctuary and be alone with his thoughts.

“I was just sitting back and remembering all the great people that we had in our synagogue. How everyone supported it and how we evolved over the years. It’s very sad for me. But I’m glad that we went ahead and were able to go ahead and put the deal together and we now have the Richter Chapel thanks to everyone. It’s made it easier knowing that we have a home.”

“The best deal in our mind always had to ... maximize the proceeds we could get from the sale, but also, respect our needs.”

BRENDA BURJAW
Beth Jacob treasurer

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BETH JACOB: THE END OF AN ERA
EPISODE ON THE SHPIEL OF HAMILTON PODCAST.
WHEREVER YOU GET YOUR PODCASTS

Changes in the Jewish professional communal scene

McMaster Hillel director, Judith Dworkin promoted to Hillel Ontario as Rabbi Ben Shefter steps into the director's role at McMaster Hillel

BY ABIGAIL CUKIER
HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

JUDITH DWORKIN calls her time as director of McMaster Hillel a "highlight" in her career. After seven years in the position, Dworkin has moved to Hillel Ontario, as vice president of campus life and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

In this role, Dworkin will supervise the directors at McMaster University, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University and the Toronto Metropolitan University Hillels, as well as the Jewish program, which connects Russian-speaking Jewish students in Toronto. Dworkin will also work to advance DEI initiatives organizationally and provide educational resources for staff and students to become a truly inclusive community.

"I am proud of working with students in helping them achieve their leadership potential and to watch them become strong leaders of the Jewish community," Dworkin says, reflecting on her time at McMaster. "I am especially proud of the strong community that is McMaster Hillel and the participation and the pride that Jewish students have of their Hillel. McMaster Hillel is a truly unique and special place to be a Jewish student. Everyone who comes to McMaster would agree."

Dworkin says she is looking forward to supporting the "talented professionals who have a strong dedication to campus and students" in her new role.



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

"I am especially proud of the strong community that is McMaster Hillel ... a truly unique and special place to be a Jewish student."

JUDITH DWORKIN

Hillel Ontario vice-president of campus life, diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives

When Dworkin started at McMaster Hillel in 2015, she held the only professional position. The organization grew to include other support positions, including a senior Jewish educator to serve the growing needs of the Jewish community on campus. Rabbi Ben Shefter, who started as senior Jewish educator at McMaster in 2019, will now take on the role of

director of McMaster Hillel.

"I'm so pleased that Rabbi Shefter will succeed me in leading McMaster Hillel to great new heights and successes," Dworkin says. "Rabbi Ben has been an integral part of the McMaster community, where he not only serves as senior director and Jewish educator but also as a chaplain of the Spiritual Care and Learning Centre of



COURTESY RABBI BEN SHEFTER

"I look forward to expanding my impact on developing the next generation of leaders."

RABBI BEN SHEFTER

McMaster University," Dworkin says. "Please join me in wishing a big mazel tov to Rabbi Ben as he starts his new and expanded role on campus."

Rabbi Shefter says he is excited about his new role. "I joined McMaster Hillel three years ago to provide and support the spiritual and religious needs on campus," he says. "As I transition to the senior director role, I look forward to expanding my impact on developing the next generation of leaders and supporting the growth of the Hamilton Jewish community. University is an intense academic venture and providing a place to grow holistically is essential to the adults they will become."

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New leadership at Beth Jacob Synagogue and Hamilton Jewish Family Services



PHOTOS BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

“I’m really hoping to encourage a warm and welcoming experience overall.”

TAL-OR BEN CHOREEN
New synagogue manager, Beth Jacob



BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**
HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

HEATHER MCLEAN’S journey to the top position at Hamilton Jewish Family Services was not a linear one. The Brock University graduate was a languages major before switching to sociology and discovering an affinity for social work. Before being hired to replace Alexis Wenzowski as head of HJFS, McLean was programs manager at the Mississauga Food Bank, a job, she says, “that changed the trajectory of my life in guiding me towards poverty reduction and food insecurity.”

The following interview took place in July.

Q What attracted you to this position?
A It was definitely the goals and mission of the organization, which is to strengthen individual, family, and communal life through these incredible Jewish values of respect, solidarity, and communal responsibility. But also, the poverty reduction through the kosher food bank, the mental health counselling and support and the incredible seniors program that they’re offering are just a completely holistic way to make sure we’re providing folks with all the support that they need and helping the whole person.

Q What are your immediate goals?
A Certainly in the first year, I’m looking to ensure stability for the organization. These are very challenging times with the cost of living, with inflation, the cost of some of the programs that we’re offering. Even the food bank for example, since last June, has seen about a 57 per cent increase in usage, which is incredible. Even month to month, we’re seeing sometimes 20 more clients per month and kosher food typically costs anywhere between 20 and 50 per cent higher, so I want to ensure that we’re able to support the community as best we can through that program. As well as strengthening the seniors program, ensuring the mental health supports can be built upon and we can offer more of those services, because mental health has been such a struggle through the pandemic. Certainly it’s a very serious issue now in the community.

Q What are the values you bring?
A I believe in servant leadership — something you find so much of in this community, the volunteers and staff who are contributing their time. That’s really part of why I wanted to join this organization so that I can support the team here and the incredible work that they’re doing.

BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**
HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

TAL-OR BEN CHOREEN had been living in Hamilton for just over two years when a job posting from Beth Jacob Synagogue last spring caught her eye.

Born in Ottawa, Ben Choreen spent a number of her formative years in Israel and has a PhD in art history. She also has many years of experience working for Jewish organizations, including Hillel Ryerson and the Azrieli Foundation in Montreal.

Since being hired as Beth Jacob’s synagogue manager last May, Ben Choreen has been hard at work behind the scenes, but she looks forward to meeting more of the Beth Jacob community this fall.

Her role is multi-faceted.

“As of right now, I’m wearing multiple hats. Especially now that the rabbi isn’t here, (Rabbi Hillel Lavery-Yisraeli ended his term in July) there are a lot of responsibilities that need to be filled. My hand is in every single committee right now.” She also sends out weekly emails, coordinates the staff and organizes weekly kiddushes.

Ben Choreen also hopes to see Beth Jacob members come out in greater numbers to in person services.

“I’m really hoping to encourage a warm and welcoming community experience overall. I know that this is a fairly tumultuous period for a lot of folks in the Beth Jacob community and I just want to make sure that I’m there to show them that someone’s listening to their concerns and respond to them as best as I can.”

Ben Choreen has received invaluable support from long-time synagogue staff, volunteers, and members of the executive who have been particularly helpful.

“I’ve been leaning on them a lot,” she said. “I would not have been able to achieve anything without the support of the membership that has really stepped up during this period.”

Executive committee member Hanna Schayer, who also served the synagogue as its executive director for many years, was on the search committee that hired Ben Choreen.

“Imagine conducting a job interview where the candidate — very well educated, highly intelligent, thoughtful and personable — wants to support the Jewish community by working within it. We struck gold with Tal-Or and have been pinching ourselves ever since,” she said, adding that Ben Choreen is “the right person at the right time.”

“I believe in servant leadership — something you find so much of in this community.”

HEATHER MCLEAN
New executive director, Hamilton Jewish Family Services

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Happy and Healthy New Year*



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SERVE **HOT**

A Sephardic side dish for Rosh Hashanah



BY **SIMONE ROTSTEIN**
SPECIAL TO HAMILTON
JEWISH NEWS

RICE IS TO EGYPTIANS what couscous is to the North Africans; a daily staple and, growing up, my favourite rice dish was my mother's Rice with Vermicelli. In Arabic, Roz refers to the rice and the word 'shaghria' which also means hair, references the vermicelli. This side dish is often served on Rosh Hashanah, "so that one may be prolific and have many children."

ROZ BIL SHAGHRIA (RICE WITH VERMICELLI)

INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup dry vermicelli, broken in 1-inch pieces
2 TBSP olive oil
1-1/2 cups long grain rice
3-1/4 cups boiling water or stock or use a bullion cube with the water
Salt

INSTRUCTIONS

In a saucepan, fry the vermicelli in the oil over medium heat until lightly golden, stirring often and watching, as they brown very quickly. Add the rice and stir to coat the rice grains. Pour in the boiling water or stock, add salt and stir well. Cover and cook over low heat for about 20 minutes. The rice should be tender and the water absorbed. Serve hot.

NOTES

I use brown rice and the cooking time is about 30 to 40 minutes. You can fry a minced onion before adding the vermicelli. Butter or other oils can be substituted for the olive oil. A little coriander and cinnamon can be added with the rice.

שנה טובה
SHANA TOVA



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Federation helps Ukrainian couple settle in Hamilton

Couple from Ukraine received invaluable support from the Hamilton Jewish Federation's J-Welcome Home Committee

BY **ABIGAIL CUKIER**
HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

AT THE END of June, having escaped Ukraine after the Russian invasion, Hanna Khudenko found herself on a new continent. The 26-year-old was seven months pregnant and alone, with just her dog. But she says she put her trust in the people who were trying to help her.

"I just had hope in my heart," she says. "Then I met Laura and my host family and neighbours and they were smiling and full of life. They just wanted to help, not because they want something from you but just because they want to help. They have enough and they just want to share it."

Hanna Khudenko is a Ukrainian national who applied for assistance through Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) Toronto. Khudenko is not Jewish but JIAS pledges to help anyone who needs immigration assistance. Khudenko indicated that she wanted to come to Hamilton, so JIAS Toronto contacted Laura Wolfson, who coordinates Hamilton Jewish Federation's J-Welcome Home Initiative.

The part-time position was made possible because of the unprecedented success of last year's Community Campaign, according to Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg, who said that the community response "in wanting to welcome and support Ukrainian refugees has been phenomenal."

Khudenko had been staying in Turkey since the beginning of the

war. She flew with her dog, Apollon, who had been a street dog until Khudenko and her husband, Murat Gunhan rescued him.

Khudenko stayed with a host family in Toronto for a month and then Wolfson secured an apartment for her and Gunhan as of Aug. 1, which was made possible by the support of Effort Trust and other Jewish community donors. Only a couple weeks after arriving in Canada, Apollon died unexpectedly. Khudenko was devastated, but she said she had to concentrate on her future and the arrival of her husband in August.

Neighbours paid the large veterinary bill, while others donated furniture and household items. Teperman's Hamilton store donated brand new furniture, along with a card signed by all of their staff welcoming the couple to Hamilton. Other volunteers put up curtains (donated by Home Depot) and fixed things around the apartment. A network of Dundas moms who are collecting baby items for Ukrainian families donated items including a crib, high chair, diapers and toys.

"The furniture is beautiful. It looks like a home where you have been for years," Khudenko says. "There are candles, flowers, frames with photos I printed out of our family from Ukraine and Turkey and of me and Murat. It feels homey."

When Wolfson told her neighbours about Khudenko, she said they showed up with cash donations, well over \$1,000 to help with the couple's rent and expenses. "It's been



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

so gratifying to be able to help this family," Wolfson says.

"Helping other people who are in this kind of situation is not just the right thing to do, it's our Jewish obligation."

Wolfson and members of the JWelcome Home committee helped Khudenko apply for OHIP coverage, arrange midwifery care and open a Canadian bank account, which allowed her to apply for the financial assistance made available to Ukrainians in Canada who have fled the

war, and to apply for a social insurance number. They also arranged for Khudenko to network with a group of Ukrainians who recently came to Hamilton and people who could help Gunhan find employment.

"I feel like I arrived in the Good Place, like that TV show," Khudenko says. "Laura is an unbelievable woman and the whole community has been amazing. I was alone without my husband or family and the people made me feel safe. It makes me feel like we can build a future here."

Murat Gunham, left, and Hanna Khudenko fled Ukraine and chose Hamilton as their new home. In this photo, they pause in the calm at the Urquhart Butterfly Garden in Dundas.



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SHANA TOVA!

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The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs is the advocacy agent for the Jewish Federations of Canada



Hamilton's community Impact Makers

Excerpts from HJN's The Shpiel on Hamilton "Impact Makers" podcast series, which focuses on Jewish Hamiltonians who are changing lives for the better

BY WENDY SCHNEIDER
HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

"BE THE CHANGE you wish to see in the world." Most of us have heard this quote by Mahatma Gandhi and perhaps even been inspired by it. It's a beautiful sentiment and one that reminds us how anyone, really, has the power to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

But in these times of extreme political polarization, economic uncertainty, war, famine, and a warming climate, it can be difficult to believe that one person really can make a difference.

And yet, it has always been clear to the Hamilton Jewish News that there are, in fact, many individuals in our community who are making a difference in their respective fields. That's why its affiliated podcast, The Shpiel on Hamilton, recently launched "Impact Makers," a series of episodes that highlight the work they are doing and seeks to understand what motivates them to devote so much of their time and energy to improving the lives of others.

Below are excerpts from the series first three episodes.

Laura Wolfson

COORDINATOR, FEDERATION'S
JWELCOME HOME INITIATIVE

What she does

Laura Wolfson is the community professional in charge of Hamilton Jewish Federation's J-Welcome Home initiative, a role she first took on as a



Laura Wolfson awaits a new family arriving from Israel.

volunteer several years ago after retiring from her position as director of education and cantorial soloist at Temple Anshe Sholom. As the point person for those interested in moving to Hamilton, Wolfson picks up newcomers from the airport, finds them places to live, fills up their refrigerators with groceries on the eve of their arrival, arranges for Shabbat dinner invitations, and introduces people to other families or older couples with whom they have something in common. She's also been instrumental in developing the J-Welcome Home website and securing complementary synagogue memberships, Jewish day school and Camp Kadimah spots for newcomers and organizing official welcome events.

Why she does it

"The idea of "kol yisrael arevim zeh le'zeh" — that we are all responsible for one another as Jews is something that really informs who I am. We have a small Jewish community that is thriving because there are so many opportunities for people to be involved."

Roots of her activism

"There are moments I can recall

growing up when it became crystal clear to me that Jewish community is all about taking care of each other. My mom's oldest friend had a son my age who died tragically when we were 18 years old and I remember all the moms surrounded her in this embrace of mourning and comfort. This was the first thing I remember of how we take care of each other because this is what you do."

Role models

During the Bosnian war, my parents sponsored a young couple with two very young children who had left everything. They had nothing. My parents helped them find work and a place to live, furniture, getting settled for the children, and they, to this day, remain members of our extended family. When we buried my mom last January, the husband of the family was one of the pallbearers who said that my mom was his Canadian mom. That was the kind of role modeling that they did. They didn't say you should take care of people who need help. They just did it and I learned from that.

I also recall learning about Judy Feld Carr, who essentially rescued

the entire Jewish community in Syria in secret over 25 years. And I remember thinking, she actually believed she could make a difference and that was the thing that made it all happen. I wanted to be like her."

Amanda Katz

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HOMELESS CARS

What she does

Amanda Katz, 27, is the executive director of Homeless Cars, a charitable foundation founded by her family. Homeless Cars helps people turn their old car into a meaningful donation that it distributes to charities that work to eliminate homelessness in Ontario.

Why she does it

Katz lives in Toronto, but Hamilton has always been close to her heart. Seven years ago, when her father introduced her to 541 Eatery Exchange, a non-profit restaurant where people have the opportunity to help pay for someone else's meal, Katz was deeply affected. "I had such a desire to do some of that work myself. And I began starting volunteer programs for them after spending a couple of years

Amanda Katz, 27, heads the charitable foundation, Homeless Cars.

"I just love to put my energy towards organizations that are helping people in need."

AMANDA KATZ
Homeless Cars

PHOTOS BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



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CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

volunteering on my own. So it's been a long journey for me ... I just love to put my energy towards organizations that are helping people in need within our own community and our own backyard."

Role models

Katz said that community work has been something she's always been interested in. "My mom would drag my sister and I out of bed at 6 a.m. on Wednesday mornings and take us to Out of the Cold. Her day-to-day willingness to put others first is something that was ingrained in me from a very young age. My great grandfather came from very humble beginnings but was able to build up a business that my grandfather, uncle and father eventually took over. Over the years, they managed to build something to the place that they could give back to the community. There was always a desire to support organizations at large. But Hamilton is a place that we care about deeply."

Serendipity

After several years working in the advertising industry in Toronto, Katz realized she wanted to make the focus of her work supporting small organizations that are making an impact within the community. "I looked at a number of charities and am just very thankful that Homeless Cars was not only searching for somebody, but it was something that was near and dear to my heart. I've been very thankful for the opportunity to take it over."

Dr. Samantha Winemaker

PALLIATIVE CARE PHYSICIAN

What she does

Dr. Samantha Winemaker, a palliative care physician in Hamilton, is on a mission to change the way the healthcare system treats patients facing terminal illness. In 2021, Winemaker

"There are too many people who end up feeling helpless, hopeless, worthless, and that life is meaningless at the end of life."

DR. SAMANTHA WINEMAKER

and a colleague launched The Waiting Room Revolution, a podcast about unlocking the secrets to a better illness experience. Since then, Dr. Winemaker has amped up her game even further on several social media platforms, where she is a strong and passionate advocate for change.

Why she does it

When Dr. Winemaker began practicing palliative care medicine 19 years ago, she enjoyed the high of coming on to the scene when things were dire, "when the only thing I could do was help with their symptoms in a way that felt like heroism." Patients would often hug her and thank her for coming.

"It is such a feel good experience, when you make people feel better instantly when they're so desperate. But the truth is that quickly turned dark to me," she said.

After starting to feel "like I was at the end of a river in a cesspool—the river being healthcare when people were spit out and I was supposed to stitch people back together ... and the poor patients and families didn't even know that it shouldn't have been that way," she tried, at first, to change the system from within.

For years, Dr. Winemaker tried sitting on committees; writing articles; and influencing the medical students, residents, doctors and nurses she was teaching, but when her efforts were not producing the outcome she'd hoped for, Dr. Winemaker decided to turn to the public. If patients and families demanded a different type of interaction with the healthcare system, she thought, then change might be able to happen. A Toronto publisher dissuaded her from writing a book until she had first built

up a network of support, which is why she turned to her two daughters "who helped me understand that the power of what I could do with social media is much bigger and faster than any other avenue."

The M.A.I.D. factor

Another development that catapulted Dr. Winemaker into action was the legalization of assisted dying.

"There are too many people who end up feeling helpless, hopeless, worthless, and that life is meaningless at the end of life." Winemaker said it scares her to see an "unbelievable" number of Canadians asking for assisted dying "because they don't know what they don't know," and she's seen innumerable of people change their minds about asking for MAID (medical assistance in dying) once she's been able to help them understand that it's possible to have a meaningful life "even through a serious illness."

Her impact

Dr. Winemaker has amassed more than 30,000 followers on TikTok and thousands of followers on her Instagram and Twitter accounts.

"To me, it's less about the numbers and more about the affirmation that I get from the comments that people make like, 'I'm so grateful that I found you,' 'This has made such a big difference for me' or 'I finally understand what happened last year.'"

Even more than the affirmation, Dr. Winemaker said the comments and reactions to her social media posts have helped shift her advocacy from her original focus on palliative and end of life care to the bigger question of empowering patients right from the beginning of the "very foreign system called the healthcare system."

Finally, going public about the



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

shortfalls of our healthcare system has not led to the professional ostracization Dr. Winemaker feared might occur. "I've had more healthcare professionals thank me and more healthcare providers say, 'you've actually given us a new language.'"

Roots of her activism

"I really do believe it has been born out of my exposure to patients and their families and what I see as unnecessary suffering due to the healthcare system or due to our societal death-denying propensity. I'm 52 and I might be having a swan song. I'm a woman who's learning from my two girls who are going through a lot of social activism and I think it's just a combination of all these stars aligning. I have suddenly felt a huge fire within me and it doesn't come from decades of community activism. It came as a perfect storm at the right place, at the right time, and with the right opportunities."

Dr. Samatha Winemaker is a palliative care physician in Hamilton.

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HAMILTON JCC FALL 2022

J-MOVIE CLUB (on zoom)

The celebration of Jewish cinema continues with the second season of the J-Movie Club. Members will join film and media scholar Dr. Benjamin Wright for a discussion of Jews on film and films about the Jewish experience.

The Movie Club asks the central question: What is a Jewish film? To answer this, Dr. Wright has selected 6 films from around the world that take viewers from war-torn Poland in 1942 to Israel in 1995, and from New York City in the 1960s to the 1990s, as well as into the macabre mind of director David Cronenberg.

Benjamin Wright holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Studies from the Institute of Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture at Carleton University and was previously the Provost Postdoctoral Fellow in the Humanities in the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California. His writing on film history has appeared in numerous academic journals and book collections, and he has taught media studies at USC and the University of Toronto. He is currently the Business Development Specialist in Continuing Education at the University of Windsor.

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About your instructor: Geraldine Katz has been volunteer-ing with NJOP educational programs and has taught the NJOP Crash Course in Hebrew Reading, Jewish history, and holiday observance for 25 years, first in New York City, and now in Hamilton.

BBYO AND HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION FORM AN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP TO ENGAGE JEWISH TEENS

The Hamilton Jewish Federation, the cornerstone of Jewish life in Hamilton for more than 80 years, has formed a historic partnership with BBYO, the world's leading pluralistic Jewish teen movement, to engage Jewish teens in the Hamilton area.

As part of the collaboration, BBYO will launch a new chapter for teens in Grades 8-12, housed at J Hamilton. The new chapter will temporarily be known as BBYO Hamilton, until the founding members choose a name as part of the official chapter chartering process.

BBYO programming is completely teen-led and staff-supported and offers teens exciting and exclusive events in their own community, ranging from weekend conventions to sports leagues and social events to community service projects. Let us know how best to contact you (or your teen) and we'll make sure to be in touch with more information!

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CELEBRATE AT THE J! BIRTHDAY PARTY PACKAGES Sundays, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

BLANK CANVAS | \$250 FOR 2 HOURS

- Room Rental
- Onsite staff for duration of event
- Access to audiovisual equipment
- Use of tables and chairs
- Cleaning fee

J-PLAY BDAY | \$300 FOR 2 HOURS

- Room Rental
- Access to all JPlay toys
- Onsite staff to set up
- JPlay for duration of event.
- Access to audiovisual equipment
- Use of tables and chairs
- Cleaning fee

STANDARD | \$350 FOR 2 HOURS

- Room Rental
- Onsite staff to handle any requests
- Staff member will set up and take down
- Choice of colours for decorations including napkins, plates, cups, and cutlery
- Use of sound system and projector
- Use of all tables & chairs
- Cleaning fee

DELUXE | \$450 FOR 2 HOURS

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- Onsite staff for duration of event to handle any requests
- Staff member will set up and take down
- Use of sound system and projector
- Use of all tables & chairs
- Cleaning fee
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J-CENTRE FOR WELLBEING

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SERIES WITH NICK AND CHANTAL PETRELLA:

This series of talks focuses on the importance of mental health, as well as how to navigate the surrounding stigma around mental illness. Focused on Nick's journey, and Chantal's experiences in supporting Nick through his challenging times. This duo will inspire and empower listeners to break down barriers to advocating for mental health and awareness.

Nick, Wednesday, Sept. 28 | 7 p.m.
Chantal and Nick, Wednesday, Oct. 26 | 7 p.m.
Free series

HOMEWORK CLUB:

This weekly club is designed to provide kids in Grades 3-6 with an opportunity to work on their homework assignments with an accredited teacher. Students can ask questions or get clarity on a variety of subjects in a quiet and supportive environment. Only 12 spots available! Registration is required. Refreshments will be served.

Thursdays, Sept. 29 to Dec. 15
4:30 - 6:30 p.m. | \$5/session/student

MIND AND BODY: THE SPECTRUM OF WELLNESS

This introductory talk with Dr. Adam Norris discusses the different realms of health, and the importance of considering the balance of the various aspects of wellness to maintain a person's overall health. Looking at balancing nutrition, sleep, anxiety, and physical activity as the focus of health and wellbeing.

Monday, Dec. 5 | 7 p.m.
\$5 suggested donation

INSPIRATIONAL WRITING WORKSHOP WITH ERIC WALTERS:

Kids in Grades 3-6 are invited to a writing workshop with author Eric Walters, as he discusses his writing inspirations, as well as his recent book "Don't Stand So Close to Me" about children's experiences with the COVID pandemic. He will also discuss his experience spending time in an orphanage in Kenya. Do not miss this amazing opportunity to be inspired by this incredible author!

Sunday, Nov. 6, 10 a.m.
\$10/participant

KNITTING CLUB:

Meet up with friends and other experienced knitters to socialize and knit together in our cozy lounge chairs. Bring your own needles and yarn! Facilitated by Laura Wolfson.

Mondays, Oct. 31, Nov. 14 and 28
Dec. 12 | 2 p.m. Free program.

PAINT WITH MAGGIE:

Painters of all skill levels are invited to come and paint a unique picture in a Jewish theme. Guided by artist Maggie Norris, painters will be given all materials needed to create a stunning work of art. Children aged 10 and up.

Rosh Hashana edition:

Thursday, Sept. 22 | 5 to 7 p.m. \$15/participant

CREATIVE FLOW WITH FORTUNÉE:

Usually paper and scissors go hand-in-hand, but not for this project. Tissue paper will be painted and torn into strips or random pieces, that in turn will be glued together to form mesmerizing images, or interesting abstracts. Overlapping the paper will result in depth and new perspectives. Creativity comes from the mind of the young artist. As the Festival of Chanukah approaches, we will create art to reflect its imagery. Recognizable shapes of menorahs or dreidels, or more abstract visions of fire and light may appear and delight the viewer. Children aged 10 and up will be guided by local artist, Fortunée Shugar in getting their creative juices flowing.

Chanukah edition: Sunday, Dec. 4 | 1 to 3 p.m.
\$10/participant (All materials included)

MAHJONG

If you love Mahjong, you will love to play it at the J-Hamilton!
 Please bring your own cards.

Drop in: Thursdays | 1 p.m. Starting Sept. 29
\$5/session (sign up every Tuesday for Thursday play)

WELCOME TO THE J-CENTRE FOR WELLBEING

The experience of COVID 19 has shone the light on the need for a gathering place that will offer social and emotional support to people who are dealing with mental health challenges associated or exacerbated by the pandemic.

The centre will aim to reduce the social isolation and anxiety that so many people are experiencing by offering a place for people to come together and connect. The centre will offer informal activities, groups, and drop-in programs, and it will offer a public awareness and educational program in collaboration with the mental health community in Hamilton.

Maggie Norris is the Centre for Wellbeing's Coordinator. She holds a Master's degree in Health Studies and Gerontology from the University of Waterloo and has extensive experience in designing and running children's programming at the JCC of Youngstown, Ohio. Maggie looks forward to bringing her knowledge and experience to her hometown's Jewish community. At the Centre for Wellbeing, Maggie's goals are to provide our community with informative lectures and creative activities which aim to improve the overall mental health of our community members. Her programming will include educational and engaging activities that appeal to all ages.



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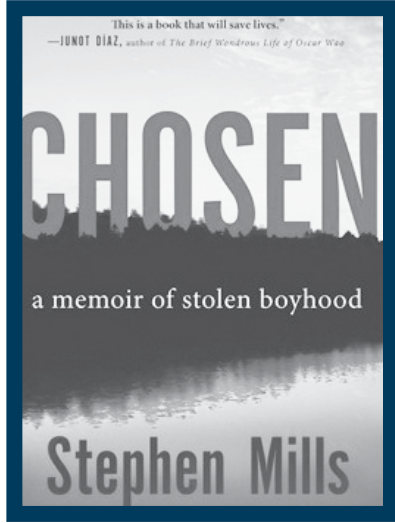
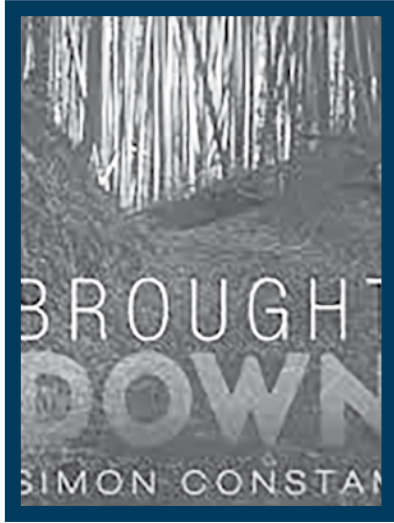
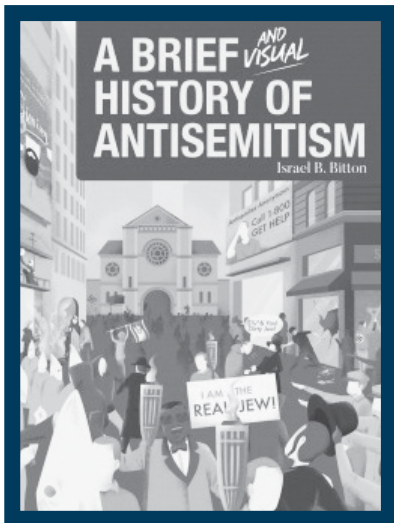
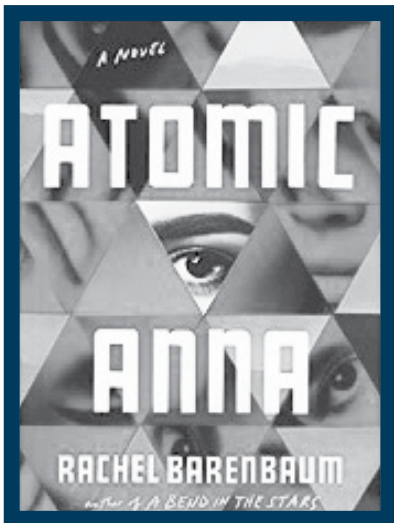
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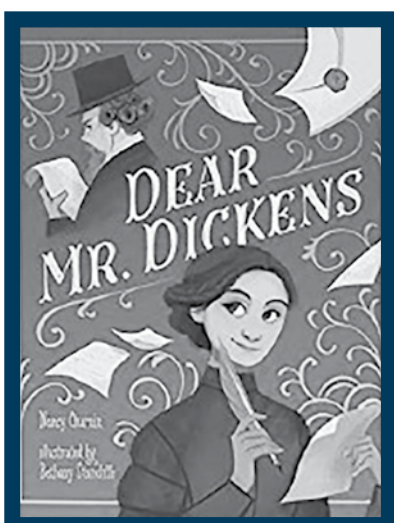
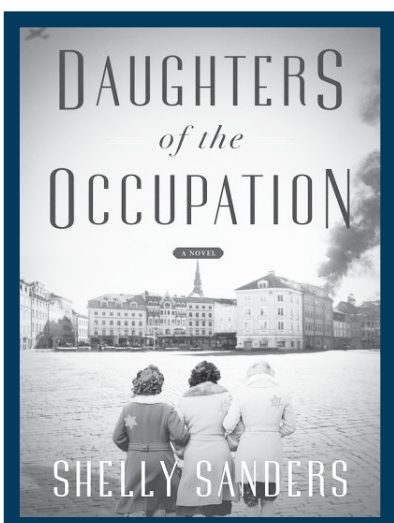
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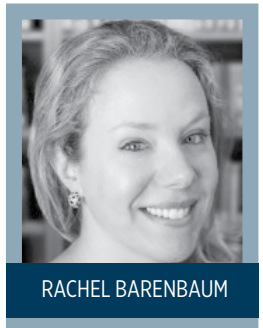
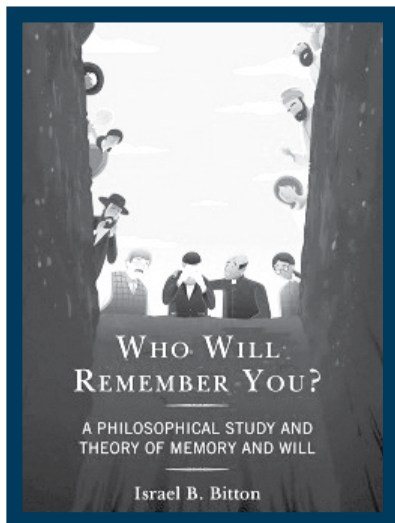
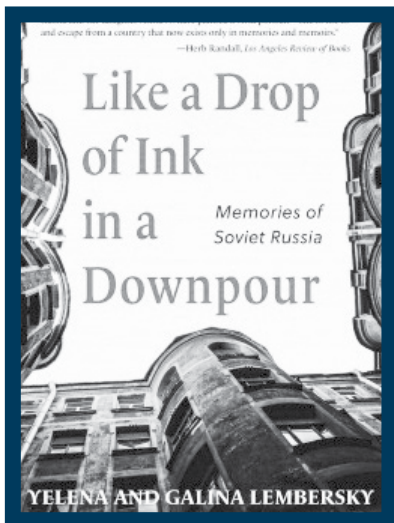
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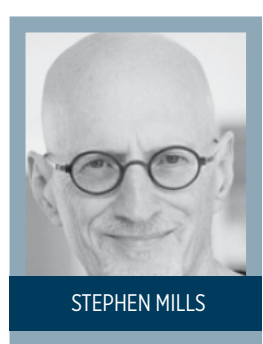


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Forward in creating a more inclusive, diverse and secure Jewish community.

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WE GO FORWARD

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Why allies are important in the fight against prejudice

By allying ourselves with others we encourage others to seek alliance with us

BY HARVEY STARKMAN
SPECIAL TO HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

LOOK AT the young men in the 1935 photo of the Elm Grove Gym. Arms around each other's shoulders, Jewish and Italian boys who grew up and played together in the same downtown neighbourhood. Davey Yack, Sammy Luftspring and Frankie Genovese fought hard against each other as amateur and professional boxers. But two years before this photo was taken, on a hot August evening, they and the other aspiring boxers in the photo fought together against members of the Swastika Club and the Pit Gang in what is now known as the Christie Pits Riot. In the battle against antisemitism and xenophobia, the Jews and Italians found common cause.

When you're in a fight, it's good to have someone who has your back.

In 1936, a group of progressive, working-class Jews, members of the Jewish Labour League Mutual Benefit Society (later the United Jewish People's Order) wanted to purchase a piece of land straddling the Credit River in Brampton, but the Canadian National Railway would not sell to them. They did, however, sell it to members of the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association. They in turn transferred the land to their Jewish allies who used it to create Camp Naivelt, Yiddish for "new world"—a world that presumably would not tolerate the prejudices of the old.



ONTARIO JEWISH ARCHIVES

How about an example closer to home? From its conception in 1926, Westdale was planned as an "upscale, exclusive, white Protestant community." Deeds to purchase land or transfer title contained restrictive covenants like this one: "None of the lands shall be used or occupied by, or let, or sold to Negroes, Asiatics, Bulgarians, Austrians, Russians, Serbs, Rumanians, Turks, Armenians, whether British subjects or not, or foreign-born Italians, Greeks or Jews."

The court battle against restrictive covenants like this began in 1945 in Toronto when Drummond Wren, head of the Workers Education Association of Canada, supported by the Canadian Jewish Congress, began to challenge them in court. Other cases followed, leading to decisions and appeals that reached all the way to Supreme Court of Canada before the Ontario Government passed legislation in 1950 to finally make restrictive covenants illegal.

When you're fighting against racism, antisemitism, prejudice, intolerance and discrimination, it's good to have allies. But it's important to be

an ally as well.

As immigrant communities become established, they become more self-sufficient, more institutionally complete. The process often starts as a response to difficult conditions and lack of opportunity and acceptance. Historically, this has been the case with the Jewish community. While there is definitely an upside to "making it" and forging a strong sense of community, there can also be a downside. The danger of this kind of success lies in becoming too inward-looking. And that can be a mistake.

A community perceived to be for itself alone, may find itself misunderstood, isolated, stereotyped, mistrusted and—in extreme cases—hated. Being both inward and outward looking allows us to live in a wider community that shares the desire and the means to respect, support and sustain us all. Allyship is reciprocal. Allying ourselves with others encourages others to ally themselves with us.

How do we do this? It's about working together. Communities can unite around shared concerns like the

The Jewish and Italian boys in this archival photo fought together against members of the Swastika Club and the Pit Gang in the Christie Pits Riot. In the battle against antisemitism the Jews and Italians found a common cause.

disturbing rise of hate, food insecurity and the need for safe and secure shelter. They can build coalitions and advocate together. Good work is already happening. A lot of important intercommunal contact takes place at the grassroots level through the work of synagogue and church committee volunteers who run local Out of the Cold programs together. Others join in solidarity in campaigns like No Hate in the Hammer. Community service organizations such as Hamilton Jewish Family Services partner in larger community programs like Hamilton Food Share.

At the organizational level, the Hamilton Jewish Federation has partnered with the Canadian Polish Congress and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress around the crisis in Ukraine. Hamilton Jewish Federation is also represented on the Board of the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre. Finally, through the generosity of the Lion of Judah's Women Helping Women Project, the women and women-led families who reside in the Putnam YWCA affordable housing apartments will no longer experience food insecurity.

We have made a good start, but the work must go on, the connections with others strengthened. We live in troubling times. The consequences of COVID-19, political division, geopolitical unrest and economic uncertainty have revealed strains and caused tears in the social fabric. These are conditions that have never been good for minority communities, including our own. In all times—but especially in these times—it's good to have friends.

Harvey Starkman is a regular contributor to the Hamilton Jewish News.

“Being both inward and outward looking allows us to live in a wider community that shares the desire and the means to respect, support and sustain us all.

Israeli teacher's pandemic pivot has far-ranging impact

Rachel Korazim's Hebrew poetry classes have sustained hundreds of devoted followers during pandemic period

BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**
HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

IT WAS the sight of Italians singing on their balconies that prompted Rachel Korazim to post a Facebook message to her 1,000 followers on the morning of March 15, 2020. Like the rest of the world, the 75-year-old freelance Jewish educator was in lockdown, but the singing Italians had given her an idea.

"I can't sing like the Italians, but I know how to teach shira," she wrote, using the Hebrew word that means both "song" and "poetry," before announcing that she planned to teach a Hebrew poetry class on Zoom that night to anyone who showed up.

Teaching Hebrew poetry has been a post-retirement career Rachel Korazim took on in 2008 after 25 years as an educational emissary and consultant with the Jewish Agency for Israel. At Israel's prestigious Shalom Hartman Institute, where she is a member of the faculty, Korazim's innovative approach to teaching Hebrew literature as a mirror into Israeli society has gained her a large following among rabbis, lay leaders and Jewish study enthusiasts. But even Korazim could not have predicted the enthusiastic response that had her upgrade her Zoom account that first week to accommodate the 100 people showing up night after night. And for those first few months, Korazim was teaching night after night — except for Friday and Saturday — and suffering the effects of jet lag from rising early every morning to prepare for the next day's class.

What compelled her to keep up such a gruelling schedule?

"I don't know. There was such a demand," Korazim told the HJN.

"I had people in seniors' homes. And they were in their rooms," she said. "You hear the cri de coeur that people are alone. They need to talk and the poetry aroused something. This is what poetry does and why I teach it."

The poetry certainly aroused something for Suzanne Levin, a retired



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Rachel Korazim poses in her home study from where she has taught all her online classes since the beginning of the pandemic.

oncology physician assistant, who appreciated having a community to feel a part of after losing her husband in December 2019. Korazim's "extraordinary classes" were "well ahead of synagogues, federations and many other organizations offering Zoom study opportunities," Levin told the HJN in an email. "But much more than just learning, Rachel Korazim built a community, a family, a place where people all over the world found new friends, a home. For me, newly widowed, with family scattered around the country, it was a comfortable place I could go several days a week."

Although we've never met, I feel as if I know Suzanne Levin, as well as fellow students, Audrey Asher and Mona Fishbane from the many hours I've spent in Korazim's online archive. The three women all attend three to four live classes a week and are among the "regulars" who stay on Zoom after the formal presentation for discussion and personal sharing.

Asher, a retired lawyer based in Kansas City, told the HJN that when she began attending Korazim's classes, she felt "like I was going to Harvard."

"She's giving us a sociological history of Israel ... of how poets in any society reflect the society ... We're getting the reflection of Arab Israelis,

of Palestinians, of people on the far right, the left, the religious ... it certainly enriches my understanding of the country, makes me feel even more connected."

Mona Fishbane, a psychologist from Teaneck, New Jersey, has spent the last two-and-a-half years immersed in online Jewish learning, most of it with Rachel Korazim.

"From the get-go I was totally hooked," she told the HJN. "What I love about her classes is she's bringing ... all the nuances and complexities of Arab-Israeli relations, of Mizrahi-Ashkenazi relations, of Dati-Hiloni (religious and secular) relations, without judgement ... the whole of Israeli society through the lens of Hebrew poetry."

Fishbane also spoke about the impact of Korazim's sharing so much of herself with students.

"Her personal experience so deeply enriches it ... She brings her humanity forward and welcomes our humanity ... Her heart is big, her mind is expansive. It's just been incredible and it's really sustained me," she said.

I could relate to Fishbane's remarks, for I too felt sustained by revisiting material I had last encountered as a Jewish studies student in the 1970s and by Korazim's quintessential "Israeliness." That's why, when a family emergency brought me

to Tel Aviv for a week last February, I reached out to Korazim and asked for an interview.

That's how I found myself sitting in the sunlit living room of Korazim's spacious Jaffa apartment on a Friday morning, listening to this remarkable woman's stories about her pandemic adventures. I learned that she logs into Zoom 30 minutes before class "because people come to see me," and stays for at least 30 minutes after class to give everyone a chance to share; about the sponsorship model Korazim came up with that allows most of her students to attend classes at no cost; about her decision to reach out to unemployed Israeli musicians and pay them to perform during her poetry classes; that among Korazim's most devoted students are psychiatrists, poets, university professors, a former senior legislative counsel for the U.S. House of Representatives and the CEO of the Sheldon Adelson Foundation; that the shidduchim (matches) she's facilitated included rabbis and mourners, doctors with those seeking medical advice, and old acquaintances who've rediscovered each other.

I am still learning things about Korazim through her emails and classes which, thankfully, are ongoing. For more information, visit rachelkorazim.com.

"What I love about her classes is she's bringing all the nuances and complexities of the whole of Israeli society through the lens of Hebrew poetry ... Her heart is big, her mind is expansive."

MONA FISHBANE
Psychotherapist

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Why have kids?



Ben Shragge

“I WILL MAKE your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky.”

For many millennials, God’s biblical promise to Abraham would be more threat than blessing.

According to a 2021 Pew survey, 44% of US non-parents aged 18 to 49 say it’s not too or at all likely that they’ll have children. That’s a 7 per cent increase from a previous 2018 survey. As for why, while health, finances, no partner, and age were mentioned by 10 per cent or more of respondents each, the majority (56 per cent) said they simply don’t want to have children.

Obviously, not every adult is in the right position in life to start a family. But for those who are able, what’s the case for having children? For most members of previous generations, there didn’t need to be a “case.” Having children was something you just did, like getting married, moving to the suburbs, and going to church or synagogue. Needless to say, the younger generations aren’t doing those as much, either.

Although I think there’s a strong case to be made for having children (I had one), I also see the appeal of a DINK (double income, no kids) life-style. Why not spend your time and money on travel instead of childcare, fine dining instead of formula, personal development instead of someone else’s education? If you’re going to dramatically disrupt your life, you need a better reason than “because that’s what people do.”

But here’s the thing: though the prospect is scary, it can be good to dramatically disrupt your life. The challenges and pleasures of your twenties often become less challenging and pleasurable as you mature into your thirties. As you age, your needs evolve. I wouldn’t want to be the same person now as I was when I was 25. And I wouldn’t want to be the same person when I’m 45 as I am now. If you have children, you are guaranteed to grow along with them for the rest of your

life. You may be exhausted at times, but you will rarely be bored.

Of course, you don’t need a kid to keep growing as a person. But having children is a uniquely time-tested way of doing so. When you become a father or a mother, you take on a role that your parents took on, that their parents took on, and so on, going back before the dawn of human history. Those of us alive today are the descendants of an unbroken chain of parents. We are heirs to what anthropologist James Rilling calls “a global parental caregiving system that generalizes not only across mothers and fathers, but also across mammals.” Having a child triggers neural and hormonal changes that biologically prepare us for caregiving. As much as raising a family is a challenge, it’s in us to rise to the occasion.

According to psychologist Paul Bloom, the research is mixed as to whether having children is good for quality of life. In one study, working mothers recalled spending time with their children as less enjoyable than shopping, preparing food, or watching TV. Other studies have found a decrease in parents’ happiness when children are born, which may be influenced by their nation’s child-care policies (or lack thereof). And yet, beyond the day-to-day stressors, “When you ask people about their life’s meaning and purpose, parents say that their lives have more meaning than those of nonparents.”

Quality of life is not just about how much fun you squeeze into a day. It’s about the meaning you feel at the end of it. And to become a link in a chain that preceded you and will outlast you is meaningful. That meaning doesn’t just come from the propagation of genes. It comes from passing down values, stories, and traditions that were passed down to you in turn. It comes from having the opportunity, through your child, to help positively shape the future beyond your own lifespan. That connection to past and future—not to mention the naches—is good reason to postpone travel plans and disrupt your life.

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Ben Shragge is the HJN’s digital editor. He lives in Boston with his wife and baby daughter.

“Quality of life is not just about how much fun you squeeze into a day. It’s about the meaning you feel at the end of it.”

On journeys and destinations



Helaine Ortmann

ON A RECENT Saturday, my husband I travel to the far east. This, in the era of COVID. Let me explain.

We set out from the West Harbour GO Station, 10 minutes from our downtown home, and prepare to be lulled into nirvana for the next hour and 49 minutes, past green and brown fields, back yards, lots, parks, ravines, ponds and light industry, as we roll toward Scarborough, where our newly-married son, his wife and spunky little Boston terrier, Mulder, live.

For these two seniors, the GO Train is a mechayeh.

After countless trips over the years, to and from Toronto, we have come to loathe that ride. It is stressful and long; you have to have the steely nerve and skillset of a NASCAR driver to manage the course.

The GO, for the most part, is predictable and punctual, and at \$10 each for a one-day weekend pass, return, it’s a bargain. We tuck our car into a parking lot, with seven others, that has space for 300. The Rocky Mountaineer it isn’t, but when you consider that this is our first train trip since COVID, it’s pretty good.

We strike up a conversation on the platform with a woman in her twenties who tells us she thinks it’s “neat” we are taking public transit, unlike her mother. We kvell at how hip we are. Moreso, because I am sporting a pale olive-green backpack, carrying the strawberry-chocolate chip muffins, challah and pasta sauce I have made for the kids.

On this late morning train, there are relatively few passengers boarding to and past Union Station, and we arrive at Guildwood at 1:02 p.m. as scheduled.

We spend a joyous afternoon with our two sons and their partners (and Mulder), celebrating the birthday of our daughter-in-law with pizza and Krispy Kreme donuts. The newlyweds extend warm hospitality, serving us food on a beautiful blue stoneware dinner set, and the six of us sit on jewel-toned chairs around their live-edge wood dining room table; wedding gifts.

It’s always joyous when we can be with our kids (and Mulder); but COVID has underscored how precious life and health are. And, if we ever did, we no longer take for granted how important it is to be with each other, hug each other, and take in emotion and feeling without the filters of Zoom and FaceTime.

All too soon, it’s time for our Jewish goodbye. No small feat for me. I’ve been told I can’t say hello in under 10 minutes. I’m sure it’s part of my genetic inheritance or lineage that I find it so difficult to part from dear family and friends. Once, after several attempts to get me to budge, my long-suffering husband left me standing (should I say, talking) on a sidewalk. Mortified (me), he circled the block, then came back to pick me up.

So, we say the final goodbye and board the west-bound train to follow the sun set.

The ride home is livelier, busier. At each stop leading to Exhibition Place, individuals, couples and small groups board the train. We sense something is happening this Saturday night. It turns out to be a Keith Urban concert.

Cloaked in our COVID masks, we scrutinize this cohort of humanity; dressed after Urban in classic jeans, button-down and low-cut T-shirts, blazers, and artistic tattoos.

It stays lively, even after the twenty-somethings exit Exhibition. Young people and families juggle bags, phones, AirPods (or EarPods or earbuds, who knows?) and, like trained circus performers, elegantly balance bicycles, strollers, e-skates and their children as they anticipate their stops.

The diversity is stunning and exhilarating; and we feel refreshed and renewed to be out in the world having been so long deprived of all manner of experience because of COVID—social, cultural, and in-person human.

As we near our stop—West Harbour GO, the final frontier—the train car is all but empty, like it was earlier in the day. We disembark, pull off our masks, and find our car, one of a handful.

Once home, my husband I smile at each other and think to ourselves ... what a wonderful day.

Helaine Ortmann loves to garden, bake, walk, write and be with her family.



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Shalom Village seeks street artist

Shalom Village is looking to create a vibrant, street-art walkway along our (indoor) York Street corridor that is home to our corner store, cafe, salon, gallery, health club, theatre, synagogue and more!

We are looking for a creative, passionate artist, interested in helping us revitalize our “main drag” to reflect the brilliance and resilience of our residents and community. If this is you we’d love to chat!

Please contact Marie at info@shalomvillage.ca and write “street art” in the subject line, with your contact information in the email.



Get out and vote



Miriam Sager

ON YOM KIPPUR, the High Priest, Cohen Gadol, would enter the Holy of Holies. His short prayer included a request of God to ignore the rain-related prayers of travellers.

The priests knew that it is human to selfishly wish for sunny weather when you are riding your donkey to Jerusalem—or when you're at the cottage—if rain was needed, as it often was in the semi-arid climate. Now that we no longer have a High Priest, it is up to us to be the responsible adults, and we need our modern day leaders, too, to be thinking of the common good.

Jews have survived by building strong families and cohesive communities. We are good in those dimensions: a good education, strong institutions—for our own children, for our own people. That is excellent. It is a good thing that we have survived and flourished.

However, COVID has reminded us that it is not enough to think about our own. Many of us have worn masks and gotten vaccinated to protect each other and our healthcare system, but then we were also reminded that pandemics know no borders and we should be sharing our stash of vaccine with other countries to reduce the opportunity for new variants to emerge. Similarly, we are discovering that climate change is a global predicament: deadly heat waves are not restricted to distant continents, destructive storms do not only hit southern islands, drought and crop failure affect Canadian farmers and consumers too, wildfires rage not

only in California. Living this far north, like having our Great Lakes and our own strong communities, are not enough to keep us safe.

Perpetuating the status quo will not do in a changing world; deferring action to “later,” though convenient, is no longer a viable option. In the approaching municipal election, it is time to vote for candidates who do not bury their heads in the sand and do not disrespect our intelligence by trying to lure us with promises of selfish gain or convenience: better roads are nice but we need them to be safe, and we all must figure out how to drive much less; clean parks are lovely, but when the unhoused are hounded out of parks into isolated ravines as housing becomes less and less affordable, our city is neither caring nor truly safe. We need a police force that will be helpful to all minorities, not just to us the Jews; we need

“Perpetuating the status quo will not do in a changing world; deferring action to “later,” though convenient, is no longer a viable option.

our conservation areas intact and wetlands restored, not sold off into warehouses, if we are not to shortchange our children's future.

On Oct. 24, let's make sure to get out and vote, and let's check out the fresh faces running to represent us on Council and as mayor. The time has come for leaders who will indeed lead, with courage, integrity and responsibility for

the best possible long-term outcomes for the entire community. The current debates in the city are critical for the shape of the society that we live in, and we need our municipality to work towards a stronger, sustainable and ethical future where no one is left behind.

Miriam Sager is an Israeli-Canadian who lives in Hamilton, works at SACHA (sexual assault centre) and believes that “time is short and the task is great” (Rabbi Tarfon)

A tribute to a friend



Phyllis Shragge

AT THE TIME of this writing, my good friend is dealing with a dire prognosis.

She is a brave woman, although she would be reluctant to call herself brave. When she first received the bad news about her health, she reacted like most of us would: first came shock, then denial. When she realized the inevitability of her prognosis, she hoped that inner strength might delay the outcome. We laughed together when she described a conversation with her doctor.

“My doctor asked how much I was sleeping during the day. When I said I slept most of the time, he predicted that I didn't have much time left. He told me I should get my affairs in order. So yesterday, I made myself stay awake for most of the morning and the afternoon. That'll show him!”

Don't we all want control over an uncontrollable situation? And yet when we near the end of our lives, perhaps giving up control becomes synonymous with finding peace.

I'm not a philosopher, nor am I particularly wise, but I've lived with someone who accepted his fate almost the instant he received his diagnosis of stage four cancer. My late husband Bill died 10 years ago. He was a busy cardiac surgeon dealing with life and death almost daily and likely that was a factor in how he dealt with his own impending death. But Bill was quick to point out that it was his spirituality as a committed Jew that gave him a sense of peace as the end of his life drew near.

My friend recalls a remarkable dinner the four of us (she, her husband, Bill, and

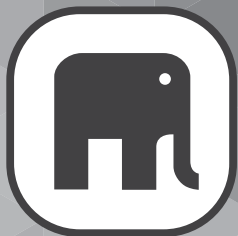
I) had about a year before Bill died. We joined our friends at a restaurant in Ancaster for what they assumed would be an uneventful night out. Perhaps it wasn't fair to them to turn a social occasion into the revelation of Bill's terminal diagnosis. Towards the end of our dinner, Bill matter-of-factly broke the news that he was dying. There was no mention of fighting the cancer and “winning the battle.” Bill hated the concept of winning and losing when it came to disease. He discussed his cancer in detail, making it clear that there was no chance he would be cured. In recent days, as my friend struggles with her illness, she often says she admires the strength Bill seemed to have.

I tell my friend that she is strong in so many ways. I've always admired her. She is warm and giving. She is a retired educator, an intellectually curious woman with a sharp, analytical mind. She is confident and well spoken. She doesn't hold back when she thinks a wrong needs to be righted. She's the person you want on your side when the going gets tough.

And now, the going is tough for her and her wonderful family. I want to do what I can to help her through this time, but I'm not her husband, nor one of her daughters, nor one of her cherished granddaughters. I'm just a friend. I wonder if she realizes how much she means to me.

My friend has written: “Our family is not only Jewish, but it has felt Jewish to its core.” I hope that, as with Bill, their Jewish identity translates into spirituality that can uplift, support, guide them, and as well, give them a sense of peace.

Phyllis Shragge is a local writer, mother of five, and grandmother of four. Her friend died shortly before publication of this issue of the HJN.



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AHUVA SOIFER, 101

A brilliant and beloved educator, Torah scholar and mentor

BY RABBI YONAH LAVERY-YISRAELI

AHUVA SOIFER was my havrutha for seven years, but we knew each other very, very little. I want to start with that fact because it shows how much she honoured Torah, and how serious was her commitment to that mitzvah. She let me know early on that she was uninterested in small talk. When I would arrive at Shalom Village, book in hand, she would tolerate me asking how she was with a grim, patient smile. Then we would immediately get to work learning Talmud.



Ahuva Soifer,
a lifelong learner.

people repeat a behaviour over many generations, there must be something to that behaviour?" The look she gave me was absolutely withering. Actually there are times in the Talmud where someone says something stupid and one of the sages looks at them and they turn into a "pile of bones" in shame. I'm lucky

Ahuva and I didn't live in times when people had such powers.

Her look was the look of someone who had, too many times, encountered people and communities with goofy, counterproductive, and self-injurious behaviours, behaviours which stick around despite consistent evidence that they aren't working. One of many times I realized how important it is to learn Torah with a social worker. I am sure her look was also crafted by a lifetime of artificially-imposed, sexist obstructions to her desire to learn and engage with Judaism fully.

If I am being frank, not enough people are inspired by Ahuva. If a legally blind woman who can't speak and who lives in an old folks' home can show up for Torah, what is our excuse? We know what is important in life, and consistently fail to show up for it.

Whereas Ahuva was literally unstoppable. Just this week when I came to her bedside to learn the third chapter of Bava Qama, she immediately woke up, reacted at all the right times, and when I put in pauses where she might have once spoken, she exhaled heavily. To me, this means she listened and was learning and had things to say, though she could not express them. Like the prophet Devorah said, "those who love God are like the sun, rising in night." Devorah picked the sun to show a person who can do mighty things just by being themselves. The sun isn't trying to be the sun, it just is, but we feel its warmth. That was like Ahuva.

FROM AHUVA'S FAMILY

Ahuva Woll Soifer was born Feb. 10, 1921 in Sioux City, Iowa to Herschel and Rivka Woll, newly-arrived immigrants from Russia. In 1933, a doctor advised that her younger brother needed warmer weather, Rivka took both children to Palestine, where Ahuva crossed the Tel Aviv sand dunes to attend the prestigious Herzliya Gymnasium.

After returning to New York City, Ahuva met Samuel Soifer and earned a BA at Hunter College, while he earned his at the City College of New York. Their many moves ultimately culminated in Hamilton, where Sam became the

director of the Jewish Federation and Ahuva taught interdisciplinary classes at McMaster University Medical School.

In addition to raising four children, Ahuva worked in jobs ranging from teaching Hebrew to practicing social work. She also was unusually active in Jewish and secular community groups and received numerous awards for her service and leadership. She was an involved member of Beth Jacob Synagogue, Pioneer Women, among numerous other groups, and stood out as a lifelong learner in book groups and Talmud and Torah study.



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L'Shana Tova

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Kadimah J-Camp welcomes new families



PHOTOS BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Among the happy campers this year were many newcomers to the Jewish community

KADIMAH J-CAMP has had another fantastic summer this year. They travelled through seven countries, exploring different activities and making delicious foods that are unique to each of the countries, ending off each week learning all about how each country celebrates Shabbat!

A beloved community tradition, Kadimah J-Camp offers a great place for children from Jewish families to have fun, be active, make friends, and try new things. What's more it is also often the best place for young families to make connections with one another.

Since the inception of Hamilton Jewish Federation's "J-Welcome Home Hamilton"

initiative, families who are new to the Hamilton Jewish community have been offered a free week of Kadimah JCamp for their kids in their first year here. Dozens of new families have taken advantage of this offer, and after their children have had a wonderful week, many have extended their time at camp to 2 or more weeks.

"It's been such a pleasure for me to offer this as a welcome gift for our newcomer families" said Laura Wolfson, the coordinator of Federation's J-Welcome Home Hamilton initiative.

"What a great way for the kids to make new Jewish friends and enjoy all the great activities that Kadimah JCamp has to offer. The parents are also able to connect with other parents, and learn about what else is going on in the community. It's a win-win for increasing engagement in our Jewish community."



TESTIMONIALS

Our son has really connected with the other campers and camp supervisors. He wakes up everyday excited to go to camp. Celebrating Shabbat on Fridays together with other kids has been so affirming for him of his Jewish roots and made him feel part of a bigger community.

Lishai Peel

After relocating to Hamilton three months ago, Kadimah JCamp has been the perfect setting for our oldest child to be a first time camper and make lasting friendships with other young members of the local Jewish community. You can tell the staff really love the kids and their only goal is to entertain them with engaging, fun activities. The campers absolutely adore the staff and you can see the excitement in their eyes when you pull your car up to drop off in the morning. We can't wait for next year!

Tyler-Rose Garnet



Coming from a background of teaching physical education in Argentina, I have enjoyed my time working as a sports specialist at Kadimah JCamp! I love my new community and it makes me feel like I am back at home. I have also met many new families and I appreciate their willingness to help and support me with anything I need. Looking back on my experience this summer, I have enjoyed watching the children grow and build connections with each of them. I couldn't have done it without the support from the directorial team and my peers!

Ivan Chernov



PHOTO CREDIT NEEDED

Special thanks

We are very grateful to all our Summer Lovin Appeal Donors.

Your generosity has allowed us to host a variety of events including ice cream truck days, animal visits, concerts in the courtyard, and so much more! On behalf of our seniors, THANK YOU!

Save the Date

41st Shalom Village Ladies Auxiliary Tea

Wednesday, October 26, 2022
1:00 p.m.

*Stay tuned for more details...
and this year's twist.*



TEMPLE ANSHE SHOLOM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
Jewish Learning Program

DORA-ANN COHEN ELLISON

SINGING, DANCING, art and learning with friends; these are the activities that make High Holy Day services and learning at Temple Anshe Sholom fun! Our interactive family service and program creates a space where children are excited to attend with their grown-ups and create lasting memories. This fall, we are offering many meaningful opportunities to gather in person, as well as our Online Yom Kippur PJ's & Prayers: a short, guided family moment of reflection before bed. I am especially excited about our second annual Erev Rosh Hashanah Family Celebration, this year featuring the amazingly talented David Gershon (of Judy and David). Please join us on Sept. 25 at 4:00 p.m., as we start the new year singing and dancing together. Visit anshesholom.ca for registration information for all programs and activities.

Our Jewish Learning Program kicks off with a family program on Sept. 17, and we invite you and your children to learn and explore together. For students in Kindergarten through Grade 7, we offer our Jewish Learning Program on Shabbat mornings and Wednesday evenings. This year we are providing new opportunities for our teens to engage in synagogue and community activities. Students in Grades 8 through 12 are invited to sign up for our high-school program "B'yachad — Making a Difference in Your Community." Our high school program runs on Thursday evenings, and



Dora-Ann Cohen Ellison and daughter Evie are getting ready for High Holiday services.

is open to all Jewish teens interested in learning how to make positive impacts on themselves, their immediate community and their greater community. B'yachad is a great opportunity for teens to discuss hot topics, to learn about ways to support and help their community, and to make new friendships. Sessions will include opportunities to volunteer with and learn about many of our local community agencies. B'yachad begins on Thursday, Sept. 22 at 7 p.m. Temple Anshe Sholom offers a fantastic supplementary Jewish Learning Program for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. Our Temple school community is flourishing, as we welcome new families to Hamilton. We hope your family will join in our learning and spiritual programs, renewing connections and engaging with other families. For all school and registration information visit anshesholom.ca/tas-religious-school.

L'Shanah Tovah from my family to yours!

OUT OF THE COLD

Food insecurity is greater than ever

CINDY RICHTER

THE JEWISH community's contribution to OOTC will begin our twenty-third season in November. Our knives are sharpened, well-priced non-perishable foods are being stockpiled, toiletries, hats and gloves too. We are wildly passionate about feeding the homeless and vulnerable in Hamilton evidenced by the 1,300 guests who received 2,300 meals last season averaging 210 meals per night.

Sadly the cost of food has soared and like last year, we are providing services for more guests, many who have never accessed Out Of The Cold, that will find their way to us. Hold a food drive, sock drive, cookie drive or step up to volunteer in a capacity that honours our tradition to make the world better. We welcome your contributions to the Out of the Cold Fund by calling Beth Jacob Synagogue. Contact us at c-richter@sympatico.ca. Shana tova.

McMASTER HILLEL

McMaster Hillel is a home for you



McMaster Hillel students gathered in the university student centre.

RABBI BEN SHEFTER

I WOULD LIKE to introduce you to McMaster Hillel. You might have interacted with Hillel when you were in university; heard about Hillel as being the home for Jewish campus life around the world, or maybe Hillel is new to you entirely. Either way, as students begin returning to campus this fall, I want to re-introduce you to McMaster Hillel.

Over the past two years, McMaster Hillel has been learning, growing, and changing. Through shutdowns, health restrictions, and isolation, McMaster Hillel continues to build a more vibrant community in Hamilton.

Hillel has always been a home away from home for students at McMaster and this year we will expand on that mission.

We will provide space and foster community for students to be Jewish And:

We will be a space for people who are Jewish and LGBTQ2+ to find their voice, irrespective of their religious upbringing.

We will be a home for Jews from around the world, Beta Israel, B'nai Israel, JOC (Jew of Colour), Mizrachi, Russian, Sephardi, and more to weave a tapestry of a shared Judaism.

We will be an arena for students to grapple with their relationship with Israel

from every angle.

We will champion accessibility, ensuring that no physical or physiological need keeps anyone from being part of our community.

We will be the spiritual home for Jews by choice, intercultural Jews, Jews of any denomination, Jews of no denomination, and people interested in learning about Judaism. And, we will be an incubator for innovation and professional development, guiding students to be the leaders of the future.

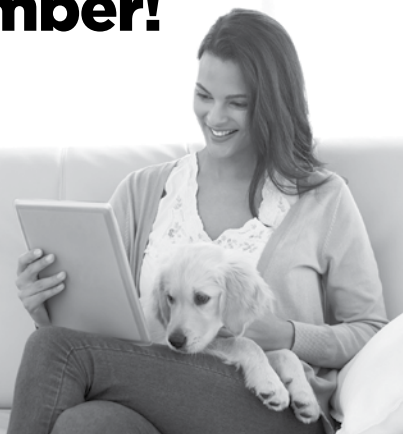
These aspects are embedded in the mission and vision of Hillel as a pluralistic organization, and we will take active steps to put these values into practice this year.

Our work must incorporate traditions and voices from the Global Jewish pantheon. Hillel is a place for students whether they have been in the Jewish community their whole life or whether this is the first time they have shown up.

As we welcome the 2022 academic year and the Jewish year 5783, Hillel is excited and ready to welcome students back and to enable every Jewish student to build an enduring connection to the Jewish community and to Israel.

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JOSH SALMON

HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY

HHA celebrates its 60th anniversary



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ADAS ISRAEL

The late beloved HHA principal Rabbi Zev Eisenstein, pictured here with Rabbi Daniel Green and the late Rabbi Morton Green, will be honoured (along with the school's current principal Rabbi Yaakov Morel, at an upcoming gala celebrating 60 years of the Jewish day school.

SIX DECADES AGO, the Hamilton Hebrew Academy introduced Jewish day school education to the region. The decision to launch the school marked a turning point within the community. In the early 1960s, the general mood of the American Jewish community was against the establishment of Jewish day schools. People wanted to immerse their children in American culture, and they felt that day schools were ghettoizing. In Hamilton, like many other cities, all Jewish children were sent to public school, with the option of attending after school Jewish programs. At that time, the Talmud Torah afternoon school located at the JCC on Delaware Avenue, dominated the educational landscape. In spite of this, a few stalwarts within the community, led by Rabbi Mordechai Green, remained committed to the vision. Fueled by conviction and perseverance the school open its doors in 1962.

The founding principal, Rabbi Herbert Millen, lay the foundations for the school's early success. As time passed, Rabbi Zev Eisenstein became principal

of the Academy, and the school attracted students from all affiliations, becoming a true community school. His warm and embracing personality not only won over the hearts of the parents and staff but, most importantly the children. Together with Mrs. Rivka Shaffir, they shepherded the school for more than 40 years. By the early 1990s, enrollment in the school grew to more than 300 students. This number represented the largest percentage of students in a North America Jewish community attending a Jewish day school.

As the school enters its seventh decade, it continues to experience unprecedented growth under the direction of its principal, Rabbi Yaakov Morel, and dean, Rabbi Daniel Green. For two consecutive years, the school has been expanding its early years programs with the building of an additional toddler and nursery rooms.

The HHA will be celebrating its Platinum Anniversary on Sunday, Nov.13 as they dedicate the new Mclean Educational Centre. To join this milestone, please visit hha.ca.

TEMPLE ANSHE SHOLOM

High Holy Day in-person services

RABBI JORDAN COHEN

Welcome home to Anshe Sholom! Welcome back home to all of our veteran members and friends! After the pandemic mostly kept us out of our spiritual home for the past two High Holy Days, this year we are back, and we look forward to greeting one another in-person with the most genuine wishes for a happy, healthy, and sweet new year. For this High Holy Day homecoming, we hope you will find our services and programs comfortable and familiar, featuring many of the readings and melodies that you have come to enjoy over the years. As the German Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn wrote, "The High Holy Days are like a magnetic force that pulls us closer to our Judaic roots, heritage, and community that is found in the synagogue." May the force of the High Holy Days 5783 draw us all back in the spirit of renewal, reconnection, and return.

Welcome home to all of our newer members and friends! Over the past two years of the pandemic shutdown, we have been blessed to have many new members join our Anshe Sholom community; many who are new to the Hamilton area as well. We welcome you to your new spiritual home in Hamilton. We hope that you



HJN FILE PHOTO

will have a long and meaningful association with the Anshe Sholom community, and we look forward to celebrating many joyful occasions together.

We welcome you home to Anshe Sholom. We have a wonderful schedule of services, programs and events planned for the coming year and we are excited to share these activities together, both in-person and continuing online. Everyone is welcome to join us for a joyful celebration of Jewish life. We wish everyone a happy, healthy, and enriching new year.

BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE

Exciting High Holy Day news



PHOTO COURTESY OF RABBI DAVID RUSSO

Rabbi David Russo, grandson of Beth Jacob Synagogue's longest serving rabbi, Rabbi Israel Silverman, will officiate at this year's High Holy Day services at the newly renovated Ancaster Memorial Arts Centre.

TAL-OR BEN CHOREEN

BETH JACOB Synagogue has undergone tremendous change and we are excited to be starting a new chapter in our shul's dynamic story. In July, we marked the departure of Rabbi Hillel Lavery-Yisraeli and his family as he accepted a new position in Queens, New York. We wish them all the best!

We had a lot of meaningful programming over the last few months. We partnered with Jewish organizations across Hamilton to partake in a Pride Shabbat, wrapped up our Girls in Trouble programming, and celebrated the return of Kabbalat Shabbat Down by the Bay. Our programming committee is busy planning the fall activity schedule. Most thrilling is our re-energized Hebrew School curriculum that centres on experience and activity-based education (see Beth Jacob Hebrew School column)

In August, we began a new Shabbat service and shifted to a triennial Torah reading cycle. While we search for new spiritual leadership, we have engaged Harvey Bitterman to lead our services in conjunction with many of our lay leadership. Come join us for Shabbat, reach out, and get yourself on the list for honours or maybe even provide your own d'var Torah! Together, our services will bring an array of voices to Shabbat worship. For the time being, our weekday services continue to be held virtually.

We are excited to share with the community, that our 5783 Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur services will be held in person at the beautiful newly-renovated Ancaster Memorial Arts Centre Theatre led by Rabbi David Russo (the grandson of Rabbi of Beth Jacob Rabbi Israel Silverman z"l), Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner, and Brian Albert. A family service will be provided by David Gershon. To honour the history of our shul we will be using the original aron kodesh (ark) from the Hunter Street shul. High Holy Day services are free and open to the entire Jewish community but require registration.

For more information, contact office@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

As we look forward to 5783, we are excited to say that we are now in a better position to support our thriving local and regional Conservative Jewish community.

On a personal note, I am tremendously grateful and touched to have been so thoroughly welcomed and supported in my new role as synagogue manager. I have enjoyed meeting many of you over the summer and look forward to putting more faces to names in the coming months. Should you have any questions about the synagogue, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. You can find me at talor@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

BETH JACOB HEBREW SCHOOL

New year of classes begin in October

AIMEE WIGLEY

OUR CHILDREN, parents and school weathered the turbulent pandemic, perfecting the Zoom format, masking, and social distancing. It speaks to the resilience of both our staff and students that they have adapted and evolved – taking on whatever hurdle life has thrown our way in stride. With this in mind, we are excited to return to an in-person education model for the new academic year.

Our curriculum integrates experiential learning through creative arts, drama, community involvement, and active participation so that each student will have an enriched understanding of Conservative Judaism, Hebrew, Jewish culture, ethics, and tefillah. Our education model, based on interactive, experiential learning, helps students make connections between their studied material and daily life. It features a wealth of guest speakers and experiential lessons, tailor made

for students of all ages and educational backgrounds.

Our focus at BJHS remains on providing dynamic learning opportunities that are engaged with environment and community. We believe this approach empowers students and instills them with confidence in their conservative Jewish identity and practice.

After school instruction will be conducted on Wednesdays and combined with a monthly Shabbat School lesson. We will offer a sample of our programming throughout the High Holidays. The 2022/2023 academic year will commence in mid-October. Look out for more children programming and education announcements in our weekly ChaiLites and at bethjacobsynagogue.ca

For more information about enrolment, please call 905-522-1351 or email us at office@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

JEWISH NATIONAL FUND

Finding hope in a new community



Ukrainian refugee children playing at a Jewish National Fund facility in Nes Harim.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JNF CANADA

JNF CANADA

THIS YEAR'S Negev campaign will support the Ukrainian orphans who have been given refuge at the Nes Harim Field and Forest Education Centre in the Jerusalem Hills. The children, ages 2-18, were only meant to stay one month, but their stay has been extended until the war is over.

At the start of the war, 100 Ukrainian orphans from the Chabad "Alumim" school in Zhytomyr travelled through Romania and safely arrived in Israel. The plan is to stay until the war is over and focus on acculturation, learning, and healing.

On approximately 14 hectares of a green forest nestled in the picturesque Jerusalem Hills, the Nes Harim Field School offers kosher dining, modern classrooms, a synagogue, log cabins, and camping facilities. Normally, the school provides tailor-made programs for a wide range of populations throughout the year that includes school children and families, as well as providing separate and integrative activities for children with disabilities and special needs. Currently,

though, due to this humanitarian emergency, the facility is dedicated solely to attending to the care of the refugee children, who enjoy a variety of fun and enriching activities in addition to a daily school schedule held on the premises, as well as field trips within Israel.

JNF Canada is funding the construction of two outdoor facilities. For the younger children, a playground will be built, and for the older ones, a Ninja themed outdoor obstacle gym will be built. There they can play and train in groups or individually on the obstacle course while keeping fit, building strength, and developing endurance, agility, and mental resilience. In addition to enhancing their health and self-esteem, this activity can help enhance the youngsters' ability to recover from trauma.

JNF is invested in ensuring that each child enjoys a positive and restorative experience in response to the violence from which they were forced to flee. Your participation in this project is important in ensuring that the Jewish Ukrainian children have everything they need to feel safe and strengthen their relationship with the land of Israel.

KEHILA HESCHEL

Making Kehila your choice

DENISE CUSSON

CHOOSING THE right school for our children is one of the most challenging and important decisions parents make—and it feels like finding quality education has never been harder!

Our family moved to Hamilton days before our oldest son was to enter JK in September 2014. While there was a great public school next door, we chose Kehila Heschel at that time because it was small and familial, and the school's inclusive values aligned to ours, and we wanted our children to have a high quality secular education that developed their Jewish identity and sense of community.

Fast forward eight years: our oldest son has completed his first year of middle school following his time at Kehila from JK to Grade 5, and my youngest son is entering Grade 4 at Kehila.

We have experienced both school systems during the pandemic and wanted to share some reflections on both, as they may help others considering options:

Quality of education

We learned first hand that Kehila Heschel graduates often enter public school ahead of the game academically. Across my older son's cohort, many families noted that the children found public school "easy" and were excelling academically. In public school, the teacher's attention is spread across many students with differing capabilities. Enrichment offered to my son was online and self-driven and did not work for him. Kehila teachers can adapt to the child's capabilities more easily. Offering enrichment or alternative approaches happened seamlessly.

Screens and other influences

We were shocked to learn that kids in our public school brought their devices

into the classroom, in addition to accessing them at recess and lunch. My son spent class time watching other students play video games on their smartphones when the teacher was focused elsewhere. Kehila Heschel offers a more controlled environment where technology is leveraged, but in a purposeful way to support education, rather than as a daily, constant distraction to learning.

Response to the pandemic

Being small and innovative, Kehila leadership and teachers were able to transition their education to virtual in just a few days. I will never forget how grateful and relieved I was when we received our schedule and our kids were connected to their teachers and classmates via Zoom without missing a beat. They had all of the core subjects, as well as art and outdoor education. Even in 2020, the kids painted, sculpted, and headed outside with their journals to interact with the living world. The precautions taken to keep the students safe were fulsome and effective and guided by our Health and Safety Panel in partnership with Public Health.

Community and relationships

Kehila Heschel has been the foundation of our social network since moving to Hamilton. The teachers and leaders at know each student well. This means a lot, especially when facing challenges and celebrating small victories that can only be noticed by someone who cares deeply.

There are always pros and cons to the choices we make, and what's right for our kids evolves over time. Now in the world of 2022 more than ever, I am thankful for Kehila Heschel and the years my children can spend there.

Jacob & Leslie Peretz

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ADAS ISRAEL CONGREGATION

Cures for the High Holy Day blues

ADAS ISRAEL

Holiday seasons are complicated times for many. While traditionally associated with joy and celebration, for an increasingly large demographic, they are, in fact, the opposite. For those who are alone, and even for those generally content to be by themselves, holidays are often marked by depression, stress, and feelings of emptiness.

High Holy Days across North America were traditionally times to celebrate family and community. Family pews filled the sanctuaries, people dressed for the occasions, and gathered for large family meals in the evenings. With shrinking family units, often scattered across wide geographical areas, coupled by immigrants with no local roots, the dynamic of the High Holy Days radically shifted. As this trend took root, the trajectory of change was accelerated by dropping synagogue membership with COVID emptying out much of the remaining seats. All factors combine for a knock-out punch to the traditional High Holy Day experience. The result, people nostalgically yearning for connection without the ability to achieve meaningful holiday interaction.

During COVID, the Adas Israel launched several initiatives to redefine the holiday experience and bring holiday



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ADAS ISRAEL

Enza Naftali baking apple cakes for High Holy Day baskets.

joy to families throughout the area.

Holiday baskets

Hundreds of baskets filled with freshly baked apple cakes, honey, and various other holiday needs were prepared and distributed throughout the city.

Rosh Hashana holiday meal

A gala holiday dinner, hosted at the Adas on the second night of the holiday, targeting those looking to celebrate together as a community.

Pre-Holiday fair at the orchard

Apple picking, holiday booths, hayrides and more. For more information, please visit adasisrael.ca.

HAMILTON JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

A return to in-person programs



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

Some recent J-Walk club attendees enjoying a stroll by the Hamilton waterfront.

HEATHER McLEAN

KINDNESS. Since joining Hamilton Jewish Family Services, I have bore witness to it on a daily basis; in our staff, Board, volunteers, and clients, through words and acts of service. Plato said that kindness is more than deeds. It is an attitude, an expression, a look, a touch. It is anything that lifts another person. There is no question that the work of HJFS is lifting others and offering a helping hand.

Seeing the happy faces of vibrant seniors returning to in-person activities at our Seniors Active Living Centre has been a joy. Chair Yoga with Natasha is a hit, J-Walk, ESL and Computer classes are well-attended, and Kibitz Corner is re-summing. The Friendly Caller Program and Peer Group for Men are getting underway, mental health, life navigation and financial assistance services continue to provide needed support to the community.

Carol's Cupboard has seen a 70 per cent increase in food bank visits since this time last year. We are receiving calls and

visits from clients who are experiencing homelessness or struggling to find affordable, suitable accommodations. On average, 14.6 per cent of Jewish adults live below the poverty line. Food and shelter are at an inflection point across our communities.

The late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson said, "If you see what needs to be repaired and how to repair it, then you have found a piece of the world that God has left for you to complete."

These challenging times reveal much that is in need of repair. Tikkun Olam guides us to use our collective gifts and efforts to make a difference in the lives of others.

We thank you for your support and invite you to come by HJFS for a visit or get involved in the work we are doing, whether by donating or volunteering with us. To learn more, please visit our website at: hamiltonjfs.ca or email info@hamiltonjfs.ca.

Monday - Thursday
9 AM - 4:30 PM

October Is Blue Box Month

Drop off your Blue Box and pick up a new one!
Drop off at 1605 Main Street West

Enter for a chance to win tickets to the 2023 Hamilton Negev Dinner

JNF CANADA | jnfhamilton.ca | 905.527.5516 | hamilton@jnf.ca

Donate Your Car

End Homelessness in Hamilton

1-833-465-7227

PARKWAY MOTORS HAMILTON

HAPPY NEW YEAR



May your new year be sweet

RED HILL



NISSAN parkway NISSAN
OF STONEY CREEK

UPPER JAMES



DISCOVER ROSH HASHANAH

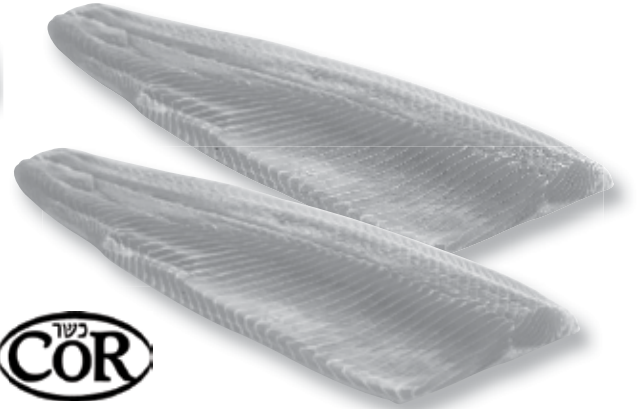
SHANA TOVA שנה טובה



9.99 ^{lb} pickled beef
brisket
Kosher
22.02/kg
20113297_NG



1.49 Ta'ambonne hummus,
dip or spread
selected varieties
200 g
21396343_EA



15.99 ^{lb} fresh Kosher
Atlantic salmon
fillet tray pack
35.25/kg
21029025_NG

Kedem
sparkling
juice



2.99
750 mL
20034185006_EA

Nature's Best
sliced cheese
selected varieties



4.79
170 g
21079873_EA

Kedem
or Yehuda
gefilte fish
selected
varieties



6.49
680 g
20045872_EA/20874769_EA



3.99
1.89 L
Kedem grape juice
selected varieties
20314022001_EA



2.99
284 g
Manischewitz
matzos
selected varieties
20800102003_EA

Zeta extra virgin
olive oil 750 mL
or Bartenura
balsamic
vinegar 500 mL



8.49
each
20162492_EA/21080259_EA



1.79
each
Crown Chunk light tuna
in water or oil, 170 g
or Crown cut hearts
of palm 400 mL
20104490_EA/20291574_EA



Glick's honey
21485617_EA
8.49
907 g

Berman
cookies 80-200 g
or Shufra
chocolate bars 90 g



1.99
each
20883086_EA

White Rock
seltzer
selected varieties



.79
1 L
201042540_EA

Snappy Snax corn
chips
or pretzels
selected varieties



2.49
255-425 g
20037910_EA

FORTINOS

Prices effective at 1579 Main St. W. Hamilton
location only until Wednesday, October 5th, 2022.