

# SHALOM! שלום

Spring 2009 Vol 34 No. 1

Nisan 5769

## HAPPY PASSOVER



ENGRAVING: THE SPICE BOX, 2006, DAVID SILVERBERG

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## BY HOWARD CONTER

DEAR FRIENDS:

I AM VERY EXCITED TO SHARE THIS MESSAGE WITH OUR ATLANTIC JEWISH COMMUNITY.

The reason is I want to express my pride in the work of your AJC

in times of crisis. It is well recognized that in areas where we have a history the AJC does an excellent job; this includes Holocaust Education, UIA campaign, Partnership 2000 and the printing of Shalom magazine. My pride concerns how the AJC was able to handle the difficult situation posed by the reaction to the Israel-Gaza War and Israel Apartheid Week.

The media attention, the public protests, the anti-Israeli speeches and editorials in all four of our provinces required rapid and definitive attention. In a very short time the AJC, the representative of Jewish communities of all of Atlantic Canada, had to respond to an overwhelming sea of protest and misinformation that was being presented in many different forums. I am extremely proud to say that our AJC rose to the task



and redefined its role in our Jewish lives. Under the direction of Jon Goldberg our executive director, our staff of Mark David, Bill Chernin, Edna LeVine and Matthew Libel, answered the challenge. Speakers were found, editorials and stories were challenged, events were organized and communication was maintained with all of our National organizations. Our campus organization was present on almost every University in the region. Letters to the editors were questioned in all the local and campus papers, speakers were questioned at anti-Israel rallies and at the same time events in support of Israel and the truth were planned and rolled out. This was hard, time consuming and often thankless but needed to be done.

So in this difficult time for Israel and the Jews of the Atlantic Provinces I am proud to acknowledge the work and dedication of the AJC. I think our representation is strong and extremely capable and I want to conclude by once again thanking our staff for rising to the occasion and doing what was necessary and what was right.

I want to wish all of Atlantic Canada a good Passover and all the best of health and happiness in these interesting times.

Sincerely,

Howard Conter

## YOM HASHOAH

### (Holocaust Memorial Day) Schedule

**Sydney, Cape Breton:** Sunday, April 19th, 2pm  
Temple Sons of Israel Synagogue. Keynote speaker: Mr. Max Eisen

**Charlottetown, PE:** Tuesday, April 21, 2009 5:30PM  
Memorial Hall, Confederation Centre, Keynote speaker: Dr. Israel Unger

**Moncton, NB:** Tuesday, April 21st, 7 PM,  
Moncton Community College,  
1234 Mountain Road. Keynote speaker: Mr. Philip Riteman

**Halifax, NS:** Tuesday, April 21st, 8PM  
Pier 21, Heritage Hall. Keynote speaker: Mr. Max Eisen

**Fredericton, NB:** Sunday April 26th, 3:00 pm.  
Sgoolai Israel Synagogue. Keynote speaker, Mr. Elly Gotz

**St. John's, NL:** Sunday, April 26th, 7:30 PM,  
Inco Building, Memorial University.  
Theme: Listening to Survivors and Ernie Mauskopf will be interviewed by his son Randy.

**Saint John, NB:** Monday April 27th, 7:30 P.M.  
Shaarei Zedek Synagogue. Keynote speaker: Mr. Elly Gotz

# שלום!

**President: Howard Conter**  
The Atlantic Jewish Council  
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The Spice Box shows an elaborate hand fashioned in silver, displayed on a handsome tiled table top. The key guarding the very special spices is ready to be opened by the rich Jewish merchant after he has greeted his ship's arrival at the port on their return from the Far East laden with new spices. He is in his carriage, pulled by 4 horses, heading down to the dock to see the new consignment. Meanwhile the Dove of Peace protects the box and its contents.

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IT'S BEEN  
A LONG  
WINTER  
HERE IN  
ATLANTIC  
CANADA.

Sometimes  
I feel like  
Moses must  
have felt  
when he  
wandered

40 years in the desert (it's a long time!). And yet when I look outside, see the sun, and feel a bit of its warm rays, it's like the manna from heaven that the Israelites experienced. Which brings me now to our Passover edition of Shalom Magazine.

Just a few more days to sell your chametz and get ready for the first seder. Where does the time go? It just seemed like yesterday that I was extending everyone Chanukah greetings for our last edition in December. Now it's April and here we are about to celebrate the "Time of our Freedom."

Over the past three months, I have become closely involved with the Israel Action Committee on campus here in Halifax. As most of you know, the Gaza War brought out an outspoken anti-Israel component in the media and the population in general. There were demonstrations against Israel, against the Canadian Government, and, in some limited cases, even against Jewish Canadians. When I first met the group of concerned students who are involved with Israel advocacy, I was quite shocked by their nervousness and anxiety at the situation on campus. It became apparent to me, working with Bill Chernin, our Director of Campus Services, and Mark David, our Community Relations Chair, that at this time and at this juncture in our history, we could not leave the situation to the students alone. So, with the support of the Atlantic Jewish



Council, I stepped in to take an active role with the staff and students to plan and organize an Israel Advocacy Program, not only for Halifax but as best we could in other areas of the Maritimes. I won't go into the details, as they are covered in Mark and Bill's articles. However, I will say that we were able to restore the level of confidence in our Jewish youth on campus and also to give them a feeling of pride in what the State of Israel does and in the actions of the Jewish community throughout the Diaspora.

In Halifax we brought in three excellent speakers to different venues, both on and off campus. There were a number of meetings with the press and appearances on talk radio. At St. F.X., Mark David attended a lecture to meet with some pro-Israel professors and then, a few weeks later, Mark was able to bring down Professor Olmert as part of our own program on campus. Professor Olmert went to Fredericton with Mark David and I know Mark has been in contact a number of times with the Fredericton community and also other areas in the region. It's apparent to me that the time has come for us to become more proactive in Israel advocacy. In order to do this, I must rely on the AJC reps and the community leadership to keep us posted on what's going on in their respective communities. It is only this way that we can move to counter the anti-Israel or anti-Jewish sentiment that will arise and I assure you, we know from history that it will.

The other main area which I have been concentrating on is immigration. Working with the very capable Edna LeVine, who staffs our immigration desk at the AJC, I have dealt with some of the 42 families we expect here in Halifax this year. The more I get involved, the more I realize the kind of commitment that we at the AJC have made and the responsibilities, particularly in the settlement area,

which are enormous. In addition to the co-operation from the community, we must have active volunteers and thanks to our Immigration Committee and our Settlement Committee we are beginning to put together a solid team to help in this task. I'm also aware of initiatives in this area both in Fredericton and Moncton and I know that those communities are working towards bringing newcomers into their fold.

It looks to be an interesting spring and summer. So, my friends, I wish you and your families Chag Sameach, a happy and healthy Pesach, and this year at your seders, when you fill your cup of wine for Eliyahu, let us also think of the many newcomers who have come and will come this year in the hopes of finding a better life for themselves and for us creating a bigger and stronger Jewish community.

**YOU CAN HELP  
AN ISRAELI YOUTH  
EXPERIENCE A  
WONDERFUL SUMMER  
AT CAMP KADIMAH**

For the summer 2009 the AJC and Camp Kadimah has agreed to bring up to 10 Israeli youth from the Sderot/Ashdod area.

Our UIA Partnership 2000 partners have agreed to finance up to 50% of the airfare. We need \$9,000 to make this a summer to remember for these wonderful children.

Please make your tax donation (receipt provided) payable to the Atlantic Jewish Foundation so we can perform this Mitzvah.

# CAMPUS NEWS

BY BILL CHERNIN, DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS SERVICES,  
ATLANTIC PROVINCES

PAGE 4

THE SECOND TERM OF THE YEAR IS COMING TO A CLOSE AND WE ARE HAPPY TO REPORT IT WAS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL TERM. MANY OF THE PLANS WE LAID HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY EXECUTED AND OUR PROGRAMMING INFRASTRUCTURE HAS PROVEN ITSELF, NOT ONLY IN HALIFAX, BUT ON SMALLER CAMPUSES AS WELL.

Last term we were making plans for three regional programs; our second annual regional Shabbaton, a campus tour of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Exhibit, and a campus tour of an Israel speaker.

The Shabbaton was very successful, and was a solid improvement over last years. 13 students visited from outside of Halifax and our programs were better-attended than last year, and tailored to address our regional needs. Additionally, the Halifax students participated in greater numbers. The theme was: The Jewish Community and Your Place In It. We wanted Jewish students to be aware of the diversity that exists within our broader Jewish community and to understand that whatever their personal beliefs, no matter how atypical they might feel, there is most likely a segment of our community that shares their beliefs. Our programs included What Jews Believe (how to answer the common questions for non-Jews, and ourselves), Journey to Your Roots, The Jewish Spectrum: where you fit in, Judaism and Diversity, Social Action, and Support on your Campus. Each thematic program had an average attendance of 17 students, our Shabbat dinner had 52, and our



Shabbat Unplugged party had 100 plus students, with what amounted to a 12-piece Klezmer band, composed of local Jewish student musicians and their friends.

The tour of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust exhibit was also very successful. We contacted five universities to arrange visits and were successful with four (UNB was unable to find synchronicity with our schedule). This being Atlantic Canada however, weather intervened to cancel our visit to Mount St. Vincent's University leaving us with three visits to Mt. Allison, Acadia, and St. F.X. Considering we could only arrange to have the exhibit at our disposal for one week, we felt the tour was very successful.

We also planned to do a regional tour of an Israel speaker, and though we are very happy with our results, we were not able to tour as much as we hoped. We were able to bring two public lectures to Dalhousie this term, and another to St. F.X. Additionally, our established practice of approaching professors and faculties who have interests coincidental to our speaker's expertise produced great results this term, as we were able to provide academically valuable opportunities on the St. Mary's campus (for the first time), as well as with the Dalhousie Foreign Policies faculty (second time), the St. F.X. Political Science department (first time), and with the Dalhousie Law School (first time), and the King's Journalism school (2nd time this year, third time total). We also had positive responses from Mount St. Vincent's University (would have been second time) and MUN (would have been first time) but logistical difficulties interfered in these cases. We also believe we have solid leads for cooperation at UCB. We are confident that our techniques for cooperating with the professors and faculties are very sound and that we will work with all of these

universities in the near future.

Highlights in the rest of the term were marked by a Tay Sachs screening session we helped organize in Halifax, working with Karen Conter, Dr. Mark Ludman and his IWK colleagues, and Rabbi and Bassie Feldman. The JSA cosponsored a Shabbat dinner with the Spanish society which over 100 students attended and they also participated with the Muslim Student Association during their Islam Awareness Week (thanks to Rabbi Sherbill). Additionally the Israel Affairs Committee had a party at which approx 50 people attended, many of whom were Israel supporters from outside of our Jewish community.

The Jewish Student house continues to fulfill its potential as our student community center, playing host to our second annual Super Bowl party, our smoked meat lunches, our Shabbat dinners, our Shabbat Unplugged program, (which was probably the best party we've ever had), our Shabbaton, our many meetings, and as a storage facility for the frozen meals we ship to the small campuses.

Our student leaders have done outstanding jobs and many are graduating and will surely be missed. The Israel Affairs Committee had an extremely successful year, and responded extremely well to the anti-Israel activity on campus while maintaining their own agenda of positive, peace oriented programming. The Halifax JSA moved in exciting new programming directions, and Mt. Allison and Acadia had strong years and should continue as organized clubs into the future. We're now in the process of interviewing over 40 students for the Birthright Israel program this summer. It was a great year and we wish everyone a great summer.

THIS SPRING AND CONTINUING THROUGH THE FALL HALIFAX WILL BECOME HOME FOR OVER 30 NEW IMMIGRANT FAMILIES. IN EARLY SPRING THE IFRAIMOV, LESHCHINSKY AND RATCHINSKI FAMILIES WERE WELCOMED TO THE COMMUNITY. Igor Kolodin arrived during the winter and he is eagerly awaiting the arrival of his family this summer. To assist with the creation of a settlement infrastructure, Mila Voihanski, executive director, JIAS, Canada came to Halifax this winter and facilitated the development of a settlement program to meet the needs of the new families. Mila also contacted the communities of Fredericton and Moncton to gather information on their immigration program and provide settlement information. During my trip to Israel this winter I had the opportunity to meet with the families that are expected to arrive in Halifax. Their optimistic perspective and genuine enthusiasm to join our community was encouraging as they expressed a keen desire to contribute to the growth of our community.

In 2005 the UN designated January 27th as International Holocaust Remembrance Day and this year Holocaust survivor Philip Riteman was the keynote speaker at a program held at Dalhousie University.



*International Holocaust Remembrance Day, left to right: Andrea Knight, Managing Editor, Azrieli Foundation; Elin Beaumont, Program Coordinator, Azrieli Foundation; Edna LeVine; Dr. Naomi Azrieli, Executive Director; Philip & Dorothy Riteman*

Philip Riteman continued to speak throughout the winter in Nova Scotia, including an AJC fundraising event for Holocaust Education where Mr. Riteman related the details of his meeting with Tuvia Bielski in NL. Tuvia Bielski's story of survival in the Belarus woods during the Holocaust was depicted in the film *Defiance*, where he along with his brothers were able to save over a thousand people. Two of the Bielski Partisans later settled in Newfoundland and it was through them that Philip Riteman met Tuvia. Mrs. Riteman noted that when Tuvia was in her home, although she was not privy to the details of his heroic acts during the Holocaust, she was able to sense from the reverence he received that he was a man of great importance.

The Azrieli Foundation, Toronto, ON has made a commitment to publish and distribute, without cost, first hand testimony of Holocaust survivors. In January Dr. Naomi Azrieli, Executive Director, along with staff members Andrea Knight and Elin Beaumont met with Halifax area survivors to provide information on their program and offer the opportunity for survivors

to submit their testimony. To facilitate this endeavor I contacted several King's College School of Journalism students to help with the transcription of testimony. The Azrieli Foundation's visit to Halifax also included a roundtable discussion, hosted by the AJC, with community organizations to discuss Holocaust Education programming. All the Atlantic communities received information on the Azrieli Foundation, including the first set of books that they published. These books are available online at <http://www.azrielifoundation.org>

## SPECIAL OCCASION?

*Do you have a simcha or other special occasion, such as a wedding, birth, bar/bat mitzvah, or graduation, to share with your friends in the Atlantic Canadian Jewish community? Why not place a special notice in the Shalom?*

*Contact*

**Edna LeVine**  
at 422-7491 x226 or  
[elevine@theajc.ns.ca](mailto:elevine@theajc.ns.ca)  
for availability and rates.

## UNLEASH YOUR INNER CRITIC!

*The AJC often receives advance copies of books on Jewish history or culture.*

*You may be reading such a book. How about taking the time to share your impressions by writing a book review for the Shalom? No stress - you simply read the book at your own pace, then submit a review at your leisure.*

*If you are interested, contact:*

**EDNA LEVINE**  
at 422-7491 x226 or  
[elevine@theajc.ns.ca](mailto:elevine@theajc.ns.ca)



*Centre: Edna LeVine, meeting in Israel with families who will be settling in Halifax, from left, Irina Yampolski and her husband Eugeni Motin; Pavel Lyashko; and Irina Epelbeym who arrived in Halifax in late March with her family husband Leonid Leshchinsky and their 3 year old son Itai.*

## FROM THE DESK OF MARK DAVID, UJA CAMPAIGN ADMINISTRATOR

SINCE THE END OF 2008, THE EMPHASIS AT THE UJA CAMPAIGN DESK HAS BEEN TO COMPLETE THE VARIOUS LOOSE ENDS REGARDING



THE 2008 CAMPAIGN, SUCH AS DEALING WITH MISSING RECEIPTS, PREPARING REPORTS AND CONTINUING WITH THE INTEGRATION OF OUR NEW DATABASE PROGRAM.

Despite the severe economic turbulence in 2008, the response to the Atlantic

Canada UJA Annual Campaign was essentially positive. Kol HaKavod to our many donors – your continuing support is essential - it is greatly appreciated, and it is put to good use.

You may wish to consider whether you would like to make your UJA donation in either monthly or quarterly installments throughout the year – you may find it much convenient and easier to manage.

On another topic, with the commencement of Operation Cast Lead, many challenges arose in the Israel advocacy area. The Atlantic Jewish Council was extremely fortunate to host John Loftus in February at both Dalhousie University and University of King's College – due to his varied

background and many contacts, Mr. Loftus is extremely well-informed about the truth behind the headlines in Gaza, and delivered two fascinating presentations. In addition, he was interviewed for a full hour on the local Rogers radio station 95.7.

In March, a veritable glut of prominent speakers visited the region. Dr. Yossi Olmert spoke in Fredericton, Halifax and Antigonish, Dr. Itamar Marcus spoke in Halifax, and Michal Michlin-Friedlander also spoke in Halifax. Unfortunately, due to timing constraints, it was not possible to arrange for these speakers to appear in other communities, though that is always being considered.

## FROM THE DESK OF RABBI DAVID ELLIS, AJC REGIONAL CHAPLAIN

### Time for less bar and more mitzvah

~The North American Way

There was a church that had a problem with an infestation of rats. They hired exterminators, paid money over and over again, but nothing seemed to work.

The minister walked down the street to the local synagogue to see if they had any solutions.

No, said the rabbi, we don't have any problem at all with rats.

What was your solution, asked the minister.

Well, we did have a big problem with them. But we bar-mitzvahed all of them, and we haven't seen them since.

The story would be funny if it were not so true.

At just the point when a young person's Jewish life should begin to take form, they come to shul for a few

ceremonies, give what amounts to a Farewell Address, throw a party and that is all.

I spoke to someone recently concerned about her child's Bat Mitzvah. I replied that I would be more worried about one month, one year after the Bat Mitzvah-to see if your daughter is still on the Jewish track, or whether she has drifted away.

There is no doubt that the type of Bar/Bat Mitzvah commonly practiced in North America should be abolished. If one were to pick six or seven years of learning, it would be better for children to learn that many years after age 12 or 13, when one is beginning to grasp the adult world and let the earlier years go.

But is there an alternative?

~The Israeli Way

The most memorable Bar Mitzvah I ever attended was one in Israel. I did not know the boy and never saw him

afterward. I was not even formally invited, no one was.

At the yeshiva at which I was studying, one Thursday morning a man from the neighbourhood came to the morning minyan with his son and a small sack of food.

His son was 13 that day he said, and he wondered if he could do his Bar Mitzvah there. Certainly, my rabbi said.

No formal plans. No caterer. No invitations. No decorations. Just the pure essence of what it should be.

The boy got up during the Torah reading and said the b'rachos. We all sang and wished him Mazal Tov. Then the sack was brought out, and the 15-20 who were there had a l'chayim and a piece of cake. That was it.

Obviously, this young man continued on with his Jewish learning for many years.

*continued*

We often hear how Israel should be an inspiration to us. Why not begin with doing our Bar/Bat Mitzvahs Israeli-style-with a minimum of pomp and the extraneous, with a maximum of genuine faith and long-term commitment.

### **You shall not stand idly by . . . . .**

I received a notice recently from the local Baha'i community to attend a presentation on the fate of their brethren in Iran.

The Baha'is, you would know, have a recent monotheistic religion (from the mid-19th century) with many ties to the Holy Land. Many have visited the beautiful Baha'i Temple in Haifa. Their founders spent many years settling in various parts of what is modern Israel and took inspiration therefrom.

The presentation and the conversations I had with many persons were quite shocking.

We have many programs and ceremonies for Holocaust awareness. But, we must admit, that though it still has a message for us and that, as we say on Passover~b'chol dor vador-that in every generation there are those who would do us evil; most North American Jews are frankly living in very safe and comfortable settings, far distant from the trials of the Shoah.

Such is not the case with the Baha'i community of Iran.

If you were to change the names, the stories of the Baha'is in modern Teheran are exactly the same ones of the Jews in Munich in 1938. Imprisonments, exclusion from universities, businesses attacked, the entire community under threat. Of the dozen or so persons I spoke to, all had immediate relatives who had been killed by the regime. One man present was not a Baha'i but a Sunni Moslem, who had been tortured by the Shi'ite powers.

We are told in Leviticus that we shall not

stand idly by the blood of our neighbour. Although in the first instance, the commandment applies to helping Jewish brethren-Jews have never tried to "save the world" at large-it also applies in extension to sincere co-religionists of other faiths.

I would seem that if anything would be a slam-dunk case for our concern and assistance, that it would be the fate of the Baha'i community in Iran, which would be entwined with the fate of the Jewish community there.

Yet my quick searching of various websites-such as those of the Canadian Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith, the Wiesenthal Center, the Anti-Defamation League and the Wyman Institute-indicate that they have all missed the plight of the Baha'is.

But-let's not wait and stand idly by. Wearing my kippah and identifying with our community, I was asked by numerous Bahai's there to bring the support of our community to share with their concerns.

If anyone wishes to join me in some concrete proposals and activities with the local and regional Baha'i communities, please contact me.

### **An appeal to sanity**

Thus is entitled a most remarkable essay by the British-American philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. I found it in a bookstore next to the bus terminal in Moncton, when I was "On the Road Again."

Whitehead was without question one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century. He wrote specialized logical and scientific philosophical works. But he had the old-fashioned broad English education in the classics and literature as well. As such, he was well-qualified to write on most any subject.

"An Appeal to Sanity" was written in 1938, as a witness to the world situation at the time. Though political philosophy

was not his main forte, it is amazing to see how profoundly he understood the situation of the day. So much so, that his deep analysis is still pertinent to the current world situation.

He noted four dominant tendencies of the world history of his day: 1. The rise of new nations such as Czechoslovakia after World War I. 2. The rise of Nazi Germany. 3. The movement of Jews to their homeland. 4. The awakening within the Arab and Moslem worlds.

While the forming of the new nations gave them new freedoms, they also created problems for minority groups within their borders, without the experience to deal with them. If you exchange Czechoslovakia and the Sudetenland with Georgia and South Ossetia or with Bosnia and Kosovo, you have the same situation being played out in our times.

Whitehead saw the immense devastation about to be wrought by the foreboding war with Germany. His "appeal to sanity" was timely but unheeded.

Most remarkable, though not Jewish himself, Whitehead, in the only passage in his writings to my knowledge which extensively mentions Jews, gives as lucid an understanding and defense of Zionism as there is. He notes the Jews' contributions to Western religion and culture and foresaw that then Palestine would be a future source of Jewish creativity.

Finally, he mentions the change within the Moslem world in our times. After years of backwardness, oppression, colonialism, poverty-at times coming from the outside but also from within-their world was experiencing a new self-understanding. It could no longer be that such huge numbers of persons with a distinctive heritage, religion and traditions could be pushed into the background.

*continued on page 10*



# JIMI HENDRIX & JUDAISM

BY RABBI ARI SHERBIL, BETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, HALIFAX, NS

JIMI HENDRIX CALLED HIS CONCERTS AN "ELECTRIC CHURCH". In

an interview on the Dick Cavett show in the late 60's Hendrix was asked to explain what he meant by that. He said,

"Well it's a belief I have...we're playing for our sound to go inside the soul of the people and see if we can awaken some kind of vein in their minds".

Jimi Hendrix actually spoke a lot about how Music is a religion for him. "Music is more spiritual than anything. People will have to rely on music to get some peace of mind...direction actually." Often describing how his concerts and being on stage are a religious, even transcendental experience for him. But to most people when thinking about religious people, Jimi Hendrix is not someone who comes to mind.

In talking about religion in general and what people are looking for in his music



he said, "Today what people are looking for, they're not going to get it by going to Church. I was thrown out of Church. I came in wearing Tennis shoes so they threw me out. Today Church is an institution." This could be said about a lot of Jewish places as well, that it's become an institution. If people are looking for something, they won't get it by coming to Synagogue either.

For someone who considers religion in one way to be institutionalized and in another way to be who he is essentially would seem like a contradiction. But rather, Hendrix took the essence of religious experience and played it on his electric guitar. He removed the institutional format in order to generate a truer "experience". "We don't preach, but every song is a sermon; every song is a philosophy. We should be like the Evangelists." Hendrix was quoted in a 1969 interview with Nancy Carter.

We are living in a very unique time and generation. People today question what religion is, what Judaism is and if at all it's relevant to their lives. People question the point of going to Synagogue, the point of even belonging to a Synagogue.

People question and are looking for "experience" rather than just doing what the previous generations have done. My sense though, is that people are questioning without finding the answers they're looking for.

Although I am a Rabbi of a Synagogue, I am like everyone else: looking for



Purim 2009

Camp Kadimah Alumni Barbara Jones, daughter of Dr. Stuart Jones and Susan Goldberg Jones graduated from the Barry University School of Law, Orlando, FL, in December, 2008. She sat for the Florida Bar Examination in February, 2009.

Barbara is the niece of Jon Goldberg, Executive Director of the AJC, and Victor and Judith Goldberg, the granddaughter of the late Barbara and Morris Goldberg, and the sister of Melissa Jones (currently a 2nd year student at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia, PA). Barbara attended Camp Kadimah for 8 years and her sister Melissa attended Camp Kadimah for 7 years and was a CIT her final year.

Barbara plans to practice law in Florida.



experience. What brought me to where I am was asking myself the same question as on Jimi Hendrix's album, "Are you experienced?". I am looking to generate experience, understanding, creativity and to relate to the questions of our generation while I'm in Halifax. So I invite everyone and anyone in the Maritimes who's reading this to give me a call or email me what's on your mind. The worst thing that could happen is that we could listen to some Jimi Hendrix. And if that's not your thing, I also listen to less religious music.

Wishing everyone a Happy Pesach.



# CELEBRATING OUR FREEDOM

BY RABBI MENDEL FELDMAN, CHABAD LUBAVITH OF THE MARITIMES

PAGE 9

WHAT IS THE POINT IN CELEBRATING AN EVENT THAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED?

THIS QUESTION APPLIES TO OUR BIRTHDAY, ANNIVERSARY OR OUR EXODUS FROM EGYPT.

THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY BRINGS TWO DEFINITIONS FOR CELEBRATION:

THE ACT OF OBSERVING A DAY OR EVENT WITH CEREMONIES.

THE ACT OF SHOWING HAPPY SATISFACTION IN AN EVENT.

According to the Kabbalah there is yet another phenomenal aspect of celebration. We can best understand this through a story with R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi. He was incarcerated for some heinous crime (like teaching Torah). One of the techniques the prison used to disorient the prisoners was to lock them in a cell with no light and confuse their concept of night and day. Once a guard came into R. Shneur Zalman's cell and told him it was night time; he should get ready to go to sleep. The Rebbe responded, no, it is 2:13 in the afternoon. The guard was astonished and asked R. Shneur Zalman how he knew what time it was.

The Rebbe explained one can perceive physical time from spiritual time. Every hour corresponds to another configuration of the Divine name. When one knows the Divine configurations, R. Shneur Zalman concluded, one can know the time of day.

The Divine configuration and energy gives the strength and direction for the events of each particular day and time. When a special event occurs on a specific day, there is a unique Divine energy present at that time. Each year on the anniversary of that special event, we have the ability to access

and generate this special energy. The physical circumstances have changed so the actual event does not happen again, but the spiritual force is present. So, on our birthday, the divine energy that was present to generate our birth is reinstated. This is called our Mazal (as in Mazal Tov) it is our unique connection to G-d.

On Passover, the unique divine energy was one of redemption. On this day we were liberated from Egyptian bondage.

Each year on the day of Passover the unique Divine energy is once again present and accessible. The Torah teaches us that when we remember and relive these events properly then we will be able to access and generate the unique Divine energy that was present at the very first redemption and it will be able to be applied in our lives now. This energy is ever more pronounced at the Seder, it is the exact time of redemption.

When G-d emancipated us from Egypt, this was only the beginning. It was a physical liberation but not a total spiritual one. The purpose of Yetziat Mitzrayim, G-d's taking us out of Egypt, was to open the path for our future spiritual redemption and growth. The purpose of celebrating the Seder (the exact time of the redemption) is to evoke that initial power of breaking boundaries, so that we may free ourselves from our personal limitations.

So we are not only celebrating something that happened 3,300 years ago, but on the contrary. What happened 3,300 years ago was a celebration and initiation of our potential for freedom today.

## ***A Once-in-a-Generation Event: "Blessing of the Sun"***

**It occurs only once in 28 years and it is happening April 8, 2009.**

At 8:00 AM on the morning of Wednesday, April 8, 2009, we will join



Jewish communities around the world in celebrating a rare astronomical event, the sun's return to the point of its creation. To mark this milestone, Chabad of the Maritimes welcomes you to participate in a unique and joyous gathering to recite the traditional "Blessing of the Sun."

While there will be no obvious spectacle in the sky, this "realignment" of space and time – occurring only once every 28 years, when the sun's path relative to the Earth reaches its yearly starting point on Wednesday, the day of its creation as recorded in the Bible – is a unique and exciting opportunity "to rejoice in the life-giving role that G-d has given the sun in the wonder and beauty of the natural world."

With solar power an increasingly viable alternative to non-renewable energy sources, this once-in-a-generation event is timely and practical – for it reminds us that we are blessed with virtually unlimited power and potential, just waiting for us to tap into it.

A "Blessing of the Sun" celebration, was held Wednesday, April 8, 2009 at 8:00 AM at the Chabad House 1171 Waterloo Street, Halifax, NS.

# WHAT'S A NICE JEWISH GIRL LIKE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?

BY LESLEE SACKS

WHEN I WAS 17 YEARS OLD, MY FATHER SENT ME TO ISRAEL FOR THE FIRST TIME. I had been scheduled for two months in sleep-away camp, as was the custom in my family since my seventh birthday. However, a terrible storm had rendered the camp uninhabitable. What were my poor parents going to do with me for two whole months? Nu? The answer was a trip to Israel covering the entire country: East to West and North to South. I had no idea what to expect. Here I was, a Yeshiva graduate, the granddaughter of a big macher Zionist and I knew nothing about modern Israel. Needless to say, when I stepped off the plane at Lod, having spent a sleepless 16 hours (it was a very long time ago), I was slapped in the puss with the realization that "I was Home." Wow, what a feeling. I enjoyed that summer very much, but one incident stood out in my mind. We were staying at a children's village and, as was our custom, we said Birchat Ha Mazon after each meal. The children of the village did not and when we asked them why not, they replied "Because we live in Israel. We don't have to prove we are Jewish."

When I moved to PEI, this incident came to my mind. I was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. I described myself as

non-observant, but very Jewish (whatever that means). PEI is not a place one would usually associate with Yiddishkeit, however, I feel my Jewishness more keenly here than I ever did in NYC. Everywhere you go in NYC, there is Jewishness; everything is kosher; everyone, including gentiles, speaks some Yiddish.....I lived in NYC, so I never had to prove I was Jewish.

I now live in PEI and I feel a need to connect to all those things I learned as a Jew in NYC: family, kindness, tzedaka. It is harder to be a Jew here, but I am enjoying the effort. I am remembering and making new memories. Once again, I feel as if I am "home" here. There is so much here that I had lost in NYC. People still rely upon each other for communication, relationship, education and

entertainment; perhaps because the Island was isolated for such a long time. Whatever the reason, the Island makes you feel as though you have to "connect" to your neighbors; to learn from them as well as teach them; to make them welcome in your home as well as accept their hospitalities; to contribute as well as accept what is offered. Life in PEI is the very essence of Judaism: to live within the community of man.



Sol Feldstein, president of the PEI Jewish community and Leslee Sack (Photo by Sandra Ireland) Island Cultural Heritage Day in Stratford Town Center Gymnasium. There were approximately nine other cultural groups from the Island that participated with music, dance, food and costumes. The Stratford City sponsored the event. This is second year the event has been held, and attendance was about 400 people during the day.

## RABBI DAVID ELLIS - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Here Whitehead is instructive for us. We might applaud his support for the Jewish cause but say that he was wrong about the Arabs and Moslems.

But this cannot be. These peoples have teachings and a culture which is often very similar to the Jewish ones. Our languages are similar. We have also shared our identity through the powers of governments and kingdoms. As we and they have formed in recent years our own leaderships, both have faced the challenges and temptations which come

from an idolatry of power.

In other words, Whitehead's "Appeal to Sanity" is still an appeal to our own times.

If anyone wants a copy of this lucid essay, call me and I will send it to you. Even better-maybe several would wish to discuss it sometime.

Although I was born after Whitehead lived, I had the great privilege of studying with Whitehead's leading student, Professor Charles Hartshorne for several years. Whitehead's and Hartshorne's

ideas are very close to Judaism, especially as we would deal with the challenges of religion in a modern scientific world.

So, on the road again. Who knows what I'll find? Maybe another Whitehead book? Maybe an excellent book on Jewish law, which I found several years ago, in all places, at the Frenchie's in Yarmouth! Who knows?

Best wishes for Passover and the spring. Should be seeing everyone in the region in the next couple months, let's hope for simchahs.

# OUR NEW TREE OF LIFE IN THE SHAAR SHALOM SYNAGOGUE, HALIFAX, NS

BY LYSA APRIL AND CYNTHIA GUZNER

PAGE 11

WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE EYTZ CHAIM THAT HAS FOR DECADES GRACED THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE SHAAR SHALOM IS ALMOST FULL - THANKS TO THE TIRELESS EFFORTS OF MOLLY RECHNITZER; THE GOOD NEWS IS... a new one has sprouted right across the hall! Our determined Molly found a wonderful metal artist to design and fabricate the new tree, generously sponsored by Michael Argand and Jim Spatz in honour of their parents: Gordon and Rose Argand, and Riva and Simon Spatz.

The new tree was designed and constructed by artist Brodie McGruer of Owen Sound, Ontario. After high school Brodie moved to B.C. to study wood design and metal work. In 2002 he began his studies at NSCAD, receiving a double major in fine art (sculpture) and jewelry by 2006. After working as a set designer for Neptune and traveling the work for inspiration, Brodie returned to settle in Owen Sound where he now performs in front of the stage and continues to specialize in silversmithing. Silversmithing is the technique used to make our new tree.

The new tree of life was designed to have a very natural feel. The branches were cut from flat copper sheet and hand hammered into their final form. They were then joined to each other and to the trunk to form the completed tree. Brodie endeavored to make the branches flow as naturally as possible while maintaining a recognizable familiarity with the Hebrew Script. The hand riveted joints in the tree also act as indicators of the ends of the individual characters. The copper is not lacquered and is intended to take on a darker colour or "patina" as it ages. The current and evolving tones will be complemented by the deep reddish brown



*Tree of Life being assembled: Michael Argand, artist Brodie McGruer and Jim Spatz*

of the background wood (maple veneer and pine trim).

The brass leaves were all hand cut. They are lacquered and will maintain their current colour. They are attached to the acrylic "canopy" in a systematic yet fairly organic array. At the base of the tree will be the stones. Brodie cut them individually from a beautiful grey-brown marble. They are there to "support" the tree and give it strength.

**The Argand Family:** Gordon and Rose Argand came to Halifax with their young daughter Susan, in 1950 from Munich, Germany. After the war, they were looking for a new life and family. Rose's only surviving brother, Simon Spatz, had emigrated to Canada earlier. Gordon and Rose were survivors of the Holocaust, and both had lost almost all their family members. They had met each other in a displaced persons camp in Germany, married and lived in Munich. Gordon was a watchmaker. He had survived the war as a hidden Polish Jew, fixing watches at night, sleeping in the day. Rose escaped a Nazi labour camp, and lived in a cave in the woods in Poland.

Gordon had been born in Pshmeshe, a town in the Austrian Hungarian Empire—which later became Poland. Rose grew up on a farm in Poland and had fond memories of her early life, her brothers and her sisters.

Rose was pregnant with her son Michael when she arrived in Halifax and he was born here, a first generation Canadian. Gordon and Rose bought a small grocery store in North End Halifax, and lived above the store. They both worked long hours in the store, trying to learn the language, and to make friends in Halifax. Family was the primary importance to the couple and they were very proud of their children, Susan and Michael.

Gordon and Rose were founding members of the Shaar Shalom and were regular shul attendees. Gordon, a Kohain, sometimes helped out by leading services. He was quite learned in Judaism. Rose was an active member of the Sisterhood and is remembered for her expertise at the synagogue bazaar schemata table as well as her sunny smile and welcoming way, particularly with new immigrants.

The silver menorah that is displayed at the Shaar Shalom was lovingly given to the synagogue by Gordon and Rose. He had brought it with him from Europe.

Gordon died in Halifax at the age of 75, in September, 1985. Rose, died in Florida at the age of 86, in November, 2007.

**The Spatz Family:** Simon Spatz was born in 1913 in Unterwalden, a small village in eastern Poland; he was one of eight children. The family was very poor and it fell to Simon, at a young age, to help support his family. He started his working career at the age of 12, buying cattle in a town market 30

*continued on page 12*

## ACROSS THE DIVIDE

BY SYDELLE GROBE

AYAT ABED ISAID WAS BORN IN JORDAN OF PALESTINIAN PARENTS AND RAISED IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES. SHE IS CURRENTLY STUDYING JOURNALISM AT ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY IN FREDERICTON N.B. Her family travelled often to their ancestral home among the Palestinians where she used to hear about the beauty of Palestine. She "grew up believing that no questioning of authorities is permitted." She is a truth-seeker and desires "to become an effective individual whose first priority is to spread the truth wherever possible, and to achieve peace starting with myself and then others. I would love to be part of the process of changing the world into a better place to

live. I want to be the voice of the silenced individuals."

**Richard Blaquiere**, married and the father of two teenage daughters, is a high school social studies teacher in Woodstock, New Brunswick. Richard has a long history as a human rights advocate in the schools and communities of New Brunswick. He and a colleague brought a number of students to visit Dachau in 1988 and that same year was a participant in the Holocaust and Hope Tour for Educators to Germany, Poland and Israel. Richard coordinates Woodstock High School's participation in the Asper Foundation's Holocaust and Human Rights Study programme and has twice brought students to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

How can people of goodwill surmount differences in cultural background and gain insight into each other's beliefs?

Perhaps, it must commence one relationship at a time. Such was the case when Richard Blaquiere, educator and advocate of Israel's right to defend itself from those sworn to its destruction, and Ayat Abed Isaid of the United Arab Emirates encountered each other one frigid January evening when pro-Israeli and pro-Gazan sympathizers stood on opposite street corners in Downtown Fredericton, Richard had heard previously that an anti-Zionist Palestine Solidarity group was planning to hold a vigil in Downtown Fredericton in support of victims of Gaza. He was moved to do something

*continued*

## OUR NEW TREE OF LIFE - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

km east of his home, bringing them home with his horse and wagon, and selling the meat in the city of Lemberg, 20 km to the west. By the time Simon was in his 20's and the war broke out, he had become a very successful businessman.

During the war, Simon lost most of his family in the Holocaust - he and his sister Rose Argand survived. He made his way to Munich in 1946, and met and married Riva Melamedek. Riva was born in Maniewiczze, a small town some 200 Km to the northeast of Simon's village, and also in Eastern Poland. There were five girls and one boy in her family, and Riva and two of her sisters, Ina and Libby, survived the war and the Holocaust. Simon went into the meat business in Munich, operating three retail stores as well as a large wholesale business; the American Army in Germany was one of his largest customers. Despite the very comfortable life he had created he and his family wanted to leave Germany and come to Canada, where Riva's sister Ina had lived for two years. Simon and Riva, along with their son Jim, who was born the previous year, emigrated to Canada in February, 1950.

Their daughter Shirley was born in Halifax in 1955.

In Halifax, Simon worked in a couple of local stores to both learn the English language and learn to cut meat. In 1952 Simon bought his own business - the SouthEnd Market on Morris Street in Halifax. He worked very hard and built the Market into a thriving business. Riva also helped out in the store. While he was still working and running the SouthEnd Market, Simon launched his real estate business, to be incorporated as Southwest Apartments. He initially started with a few houses and built his first property, a 12-unit Apartment building on Tobin Street in the early 1960's. In the late 60's, Simon sold his meat business and went into real estate full time. For many years, Riva acted as the bookkeeper for their apartment business.

Simon got to know enough about the construction business to be his own general contractor. When he renovated or built it was always with the goal of creating quality for the long term, as he never sold any of his buildings. He respected his tenants, trusted them, got to know them and liked

them. The result was that these apartments were always in demand, and the company always had enviable occupancy levels and lease renewal rates. Southwest Properties has grown to become a leading developer of residential and commercial property in Atlantic Canada and one of the largest owners of quality multi-family residential buildings in the Halifax region.

Simon served as a member of the Board of Directors, Beth Israel Synagogue; Canvasser, United Israel Appeal, and Canvasser, Israel Histadrut Campaign. In 2002, Simon was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Law Degree by Saint Mary's University. The citation highlighted Simon's provision of quality accommodations to thousands of the University's students over several decades. In 2007, Simon was inducted into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame. Simon passed away in the fall of 2007.

Riva was an active member of Hadassah and the Beth Israel Synagogue and Sisterhood for many years, and was a longtime canvasser for United Israel Appeal. Riva continues to live at their home on Armcrescent East in Halifax.



about it. "I believe in exercising personal responsibility," he said. "This was going to be another irrational attempt to blame everything on the Jews."

He wrote a Letter to the Editor of The Daily Gleaner inviting the public to join him in a peaceful, silent vigil for the victims of Hamas aggressions in Israel and in support of the very existence of the state of Israel to be held simultaneously with the Palestinian Solidarity event.

"It's about balance," explained Blaquiére. "This group makes no effort to present the Israeli perspective. I am a friend of Israel and a friend of the Jewish people. I was determined to stand alone if no one came, but to my delight over 20 citizens joined me. On one of the coldest nights in January, we stood for about an hour holding two large Israeli flags as motorists passed by honking their horns and giving us the thumbs up sign."

As the Palestinian Solidarity group was organizing across the way, a young woman rather lightly dressed for such a cold night arrived with a microphone and recording equipment. After a while she crossed the snowy street and approached members of the pro-Israel group on the opposite side. She was a Journalism student at St Thomas University she said pleasantly. Could she interview some people in the group? "I told her that we had agreed to hold a silent vigil to show our support for the people and the state of Israel," said Richard. "but she impressed me as being sincere, and I agreed to speak with her at a later date."

"Thank you very much Sir for your help!! You don't know how much it means to me," said Ayat in reply to Richard's e-mail message agreeing to an on-line interview which follows.

**Ayat:** My first question is: What is your name, where do you teach and what subject?

**Richard:** My name is Richard Blaquiére and

I teach social studies at Woodstock High School in Woodstock N.B.

**Ayat:** Do you think that Israel has the right to defend itself against any outside aggression?

**Richard:** Under international law, sovereign nations do have the right to defend



*Fredericton residents brave frigid winter temperatures to hold a silent vigil in support of the people and the state of Israel.*

themselves when attacked by outside forces. Hamas, although not the government of a sovereign state is morally, if not legally, obligated to respect the sovereign state of Israel. Israel must protect its citizens. The psychological effect of the attacks on the people of Sderot will be studied some day I am sure. They sometimes have 15 seconds to take cover. Many families sleep in bomb shelters. Over 800 wounded and 13 killed. If not at a time like this, when does Israel defend its citizens?

**Ayat:** What was your reaction when the assault first took place?

**Richard:** I wondered why anyone was surprised. Hamas had been firing mortars and rockets for years and had been warned several times to cease but didn't. This continued for three years. There is a double standard applied whenever Israel is attacked. As if those people in the homes of Sderot should just put up with it. Nonsense! I remembered saying "O shit! Now it begins." Did you know that Israeli authorities made over 100,000 phone calls to Gazans warning them to get out before the IDF came in?

**Ayat:** People have been accusing you and throwing names at you. How does that make you feel?

**Richard:** It hurt at first. I'd be lying if I said it didn't, but they do not try to understand what I am saying. Because I ask for balance in apportioning fault, and because I worry in print about the under current of anti-Semitism present in some of their rhetoric, they say I have no compassion; that I support the suffering of Gazan children, that I am stupid, alcoholic, ignorant and a racist. I have those e-mails! How condescending and arrogant and uncivil of them to do that! The hurt gets replaced by anger followed by a calming, and I am good to go

**Ayat:** Why do you think they are treating you that way?

**Richard:** For different reasons, I expect. I know some of these people,

and they are kind and decent people who are moved by the images of real suffering on the ground. That is all they choose to see, however. The medium IS the message! To seek truths as opposed to "the truth" in untangling the web that leads to the cause would better solve the pursuit of peace. But that would mean acknowledging that Arab leaders have been complicit in the continued tragedy of the Palestinian people: That there is an ethos of anti-Semitism amongst radical extremists Muslims that prohibits sincere dialogue with the Israelis. That there is a culture of extreme anti-Western values being perpetuated by the extremists that is deadly for Israel and, indeed, for all of us if left unchecked.

And some treat me this way because they don't like Jews, I expect...

**Ayat:** Whom do you think should be blamed for what's going on now in Gaza?

**Richard:** I'd rather not play the blame game as such. I think my answers above give you a sense of where I stand on that question. But it really is a failure of humanity, isn't it? For thousands of years this region has been embroiled in wars and internecine violence and there are good people on all sides, yet we remain with swords drawn and

*continued on page 14*

# LIFE IN THE IDF

PAGE 14

BY CRAIG FOX

*Editor's note: Craig is the son of Cathy and Colin Fox, Halifax. Craig is serving in the IDF as a lone soldier, a soldier in the army who is not a native of Israel nor has family living there.*

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I WROTE SOMETHING, BUT CLEARLY LOTS HAVE BEEN HAPPENING. TO START OFF, I WAS PROMOTED TO SERGEANT SEVERAL MONTHS AGO AFTER COMPLETING A SPECIALTY EXPLOSIVES COURSE. I've also moved to a new apartment with the assistance of an organization in the Givati Brigade called Beit Kobi that gives assistance to lone soldiers in our brigade. Lately I've been serving in the West Bank city of Nablus (Schem) doing guard work and missions inside the city.

I recently returned to Halifax for a vacation at the end of a speaking tour with The Jewish Agency where I represented the IDF as a soldier who was involved on the ground in the recent Gaza operation. During this tour we were trying to help and educate the Jewish communities that we visited about the situation in Southern Israel and the areas affected by the rocket attacks coming from Gaza. Over the last eight years there have been over 10,000 rockets fired into Israel. As well, there has not been a single day where a rocket has not been fired into Israel with the intent to kill its civilians. And there was something that I learned as well on this tour which struck



*Craig Fox: in full gear*

me deeply. When you read the newspaper or hear in the news that x number of rockets were fired into Israel but that no one was injured... Well, post traumatic stress disorder isn't considered an injury. And even worse is hearing that a new term had to be made for the people of Sderot because their stress is ongoing. They have to learn to continue on with their lives in a place where you have 15 seconds to run between the sound of a siren and a rocket landing.

In the recent months, the range of the rockets coming from Gaza were increased to include both Ashdod and Ber Sheva. In response to this Israel launched Operation Cast Lead (for those who don't know, the name has to do with a Chanukah song in Hebrew) at the end of December. My unit was among those who were pulled from their current duty to partake in this operation. We were in the front line when the ground portion of the operation began. People always ask me to try to describe what it was like on the entrance into Gaza. The best I can do is explain that it was over twelve hours of hiking through the mud with incredibly heavy gear. The sound and light was something that I've never seen before. No training mission, no movie, no mind-melting violent video game could have prepared me for what it really is like to be there. Even now, trying to think back it's hard to concentrate on it. It was just so

"busy" yet at the time everything seemed like business as usual and as if it were just a really loud training exercise. From then on it became more of a surreal thing where it was hard to believe that any of us were really involved in what was going on. Only afterwards you can begin to actually think about, and digest all that happened.

I'm avoiding writing any details of the operation here, but I think it's a shame

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## ACROSS THE DIVIDE - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

hearts frozen in hate. How sad for all of us.

**Ayat:** What do you think of the Canadian government's standpoint with Israel?

**Richard:** I never thought I would agree with Harper on anything, but I think it is the right thing for us to do.

**Ayat:** Finally, do you think the Palestinians and the Israeli's can live in peace?

**Richard:** I do but we are nowhere near that time yet. And certainly not while the Jew-hating Hamas is the dominant force claiming to speak for the people of Gaza. God willing and common sense and vigilance prevailing, we will get there

but Hamas has "gotta go." For starters.

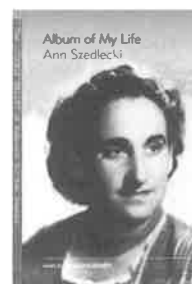
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The Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program was established by the Azrieli Foundation in 2005 to collect, preserve and publish the memoirs and diaries written by survivors of the twentieth-century Nazi genocide of the Jews of Europe who later made their way to Canada. The print editions of these distinctive records are available free of charge to libraries, schools, and Holocaust-education programs across Canada, and to the general public at Azrieli Foundation educational events.

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that people in North America generally have been forced to rely on only what the media has decided to release, in order to inform themselves. It was frustrating for the soldiers, knowing that no matter what we did inside, no matter how hard we worked at protecting innocent life, and following the rules of engagement that the IDF has set forward... our story was not going to be seen in its true light. Israel and the IDF will always be slandered by unfriendly media, and not be given the opportunity to present an opposing side. For those who are unaware, the IDF has their own account on YouTube where they posted and continue to post videos from both Gaza and other operations to try and show the world a more honest view of things. Thankfully we live in a

time where we are beginning to have alternative options for gathering our media and can begin to get a clearer picture. But it's only those who are actively searching that will find the real story. So I encourage everyone that I speak with to become an ambassador for Israel in their day to day lives. To speak up when they hear people discussing false or biased information. To stand up and have a voice heard when they see biased reporting in their local and national media.

I can personally say that the Israeli people, and soldiers are very aware of the support and love of the Jewish communities abroad and take it to heart. From my units mobile synagogue donated by the Hamilton community, to the 24 year old



*Jewish Agency 2009 speaking tour*

pain in their butt soldier donated by the Halifax community, an impact is seen and felt amongst everyone there and I also want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support. It's the moral support that keeps everyone going more than anything else.

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# CROATIA: CLASSROOM HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

BY MILJENKO HAJDAROVIĆ,  
PETAR ZRINSKI SENKOVEC SCHOOL, CROATIA

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*Editor's note: In the summer of 2008 Wayne MacIntyre was invited to Yad Veshem to teacher a workshop for educators. Wayne MacIntyre, Vice Principal, Herring Cove Jr. High, Halifax is an active member of the Halifax Holocaust Education Week Committee and during HEW 2008 he launched the paper clip project on Citadel Hill.*

## Introduction by Wayne MacIntyre

I first met Miljenko in the summer of 2008 in Jerusalem. He was in a class I taught on creating the Classroom Holocaust Museum. We didn't really get to talk much while there. However, having written me to say that he would create a webpage dedicated to the Classroom Holocaust Museum, he and I began to correspond via email more frequently. In this manner we came to

know each other a little better.

His enthusiasm for the Classroom Holocaust Museum displayed a deep dimension when he informed me that he would plant tulips, open the museum in his school, and then leave it open for



Oto Konstein, Holocaust survivor in the museum

one month so that he could invite other schools to visit it in Senovec, Croatia. He was true to his word!

He managed all of this in spite of the death threats that he received to the point where the police had to get involved. Perhaps he was awakening a topic that many hoped had died in a country that once had citizens who collaborated with the Nazis.

In spite of the threats to himself and his students, the Classroom Holocaust Museum was a success! The president of Croatia sent him a personal letter congratulating

him on his willingness to educate his students. The Israeli ambassador arrived to attend the opening ceremonies and offered congratulatory remarks to the Senovec students and staff. Miljenko has recently been contacted by the staff at the Croatian concentration camp, Jasenovac. Planning is underway to have him and his students work on a project together at the camp.

Though Miljenko uses the Shoah to help students examine human rights abuses, he broadens the discussion in his museum by having his students study what is going on in Darfur. The Classroom Holocaust Museum has encouraged his students to be mindful of the traps that can lead to human rights abuse.

Miljenko is clearly a teacher with a great passion for educating his students. May this passion inspire others in the name of human rights.

## THE IDEA OF USING PAPER CLIPS IN THE DESIGN OF MUSEUMS IS NOT NEW.

Eleven years ago students and teachers of the U.S. Whitwell Middle School began their school Paperclip Project. They wanted to educate students to make a difference in the world of human rights; they used the Holocaust as the theme for their lesson. In the Holocaust people were murdered because they were different from those in power. The project grew and now the whole Whitwell community has a museum in a railway car that once transported victims to their death. The predominantly white Christian community in Whitwell Middle School had the opportunity to learn about the Holocaust from survivors, to hear their testimony, and to learn lessons from them for the next generation. Wayne MacIntyre made a similar project two

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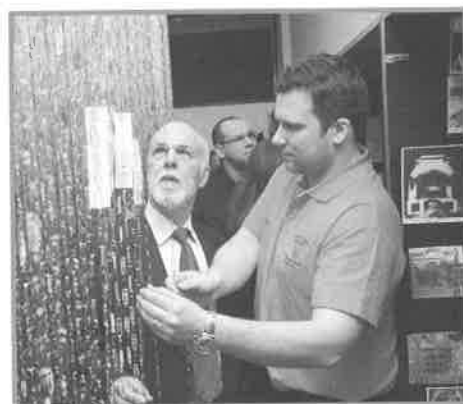
years ago in Herring Cove Junior High School in Halifax. His idea was to find a symbolic way to talk about this horrible event. His environment was like Whitwell – a white, predominantly Christian community with few links to the Jews or the Holocaust. He expanded upon the Whitwell model. He created a Holocaust museum in his own classroom. There were displays on all four walls and outside in the hallway. The central display was the 100 000 paper clips suspended in chains from the ceiling, each paper clip represented one person from the Holocaust. In this way, he helped his students understand the magnitude of the loss of life.

Our Croatian story is a little bit different. While North America participated in the Second World War by sending its soldiers overseas, our region directly participated in the war and in the Holocaust. To make our story a little clearer I should clarify the historical background of Croats and Croatia. The Croats settled the area in which we live today in the Early Middle Ages and from the 8th to the end of the 11th century, we had our own imperial dynasty: the Kingdom of Croatia. From the beginning of the 12th century until the developments in late 20th century, the Croats have always been under foreign rule. We obeyed the imperial dynasty of Arpad, then the House of Anjou, and for almost 400 years Croatia was under the rule of the Habsburgs.

After the First World War, in order to be liberated from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, unfortunately we chose to join a new state of the South Slavs. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was not the achievement of Croat wishes, but was imposed hegemony by the Serbian dynasty of Karadjordjevic. In a country where Serbs dominated and suppressed other nations various terrorist organizations were formed with the goal to overthrow the

empire. I should point out that the Macedonian organization VMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) and the Croatian Ustasha killed King Alexander in 1934.

The Ustasha allied themselves with Mussolini who wanted to crush the Yugoslav empire and take the whole Adriatic coast. The Ustasha were led by



*Israeli ambassador Meirom and Miljenko Hajdarovic*

Ante Pavelic, the Croatian version of the Führer, and from 1941 they ruled the quisling Independent State of Croatia. The Ustasha were the carriers of the Nazi ideology of racial supremacy in this region and applied these racial laws when they killed Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and Croats in the concentration camps such as Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska.

With the fall of the Third Reich the Ustasha regime in Croatia came to an end. Most of the Ustasha adherents were killed in partisan reprisals after the war, but a small part of them fled to various countries. After the war a new South Slavic federation of different nations in this region was created, a federation with states that could not live together. Ultimately, the federation broke up in the early nineties of the last century when the Serbs first tried to prevent the collapse of Yugoslavia using arms. They wanted to forcibly create a Greater Serbia by tearing up Croatia, Bosnia and

Herzegovina. The old antagonism woke again and former Ustasha members were partially reinvigorated when the new Croatian authorities were searching weapons financiers in the beginning of the Croatian Homeland war.

History and the teaching of recent history in Croatia are still a terrain of political controversy. The topics of the Holocaust, partisans' and Ustasha crimes are still very sensitive. Each party wants to demonize the other side without a real respect towards the innocent civilian victims.

Last summer I was a scholar of the Croatian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. For two weeks I participated in the International Institute for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. I selected a lecture by Mr. MacIntyre because I was interested in creative applications of knowledge about the Holocaust in teaching history. I immediately promised that I would bring this project to Croatia.

There were many steps involved in making the project a reality. I had to design the project in which I included the specifics of Croatian history, the Holocaust and some current world problems. So, I offered the project "Study on Human Rights based on the Holocaust" to school administration and students. It was quite easy to animate students because they are interested in topics that offer a shift away from traditional, daily school activities. On the other hand it was important for school administration not to have additional costs.

The general plan was to work with students on the topic of human rights, to use the Holocaust as an example of an extreme event that negated human rights, and then to bring more attention to current problems such as hunger,

*continued*

child labor and the use of child soldiers. We started the project in September last year and we set the goal to open the museum with the presentation of our work on International Holocaust Remembrance Day on the 27th of January 2009. The main part of the museum was 100,000 paperclips that represented the victims of the Holocaust. For our ambitious goal, we had less than five months time and had to work very hard.

We began to collect paperclips at the end of September. To attract more attention to our action we started a weblog, and Facebook group and we began to issue (photocopy) our fanzine (news letter, brochure). Students were interested in the project, and especially delighted when they started to receive the first envelopes with letters and paperclips. We were always looking for at least one box of paperclips as a sign of support. I have to admit that public interest was not too big but the media gave us more attention only after we collected over the desired number of paperclips. I have to emphasize that we were extremely pleased to receive a letter of support from Croatian President, Stjepan Mesic.

In November we started corresponding with Oto Konstein who lost his father, mother and sister in Auschwitz. It was interesting to observe the development of students' ideas about how to arrange our museum using the small free space available in the school. We had a small room with a dozen cabinets used as storage for old books and teaching materials. During the autumn months we decided to use the cabinets so that each of them could be dedicated to telling one story. Twenty-five students were divided into teams to work on their stories. With the help of available literature and the Internet, each team worked on its story and relayed their experience to other teams. Already at that level I noticed a great potential

when students were working as teachers as they spread their knowledge about certain topics. This was also the pedagogical goal - students becoming teachers on this topic, because most children learn best from peers. Cabinets with photos and text were divided into the pre-war period, anti-Semitism, concentration camps and ghettos, the



*Holocaust museum team*

Independent State of Croatia, Hope (Righteous among the Nations and the creation of Israel), Ecumenism, today's Issues on Human Rights and children, the Diary of our project, and of course, some of the letters of support, leaving space for comments.

By the opening of the museum we were able to collect 153,000 paperclips. They were connected to form chains in such a way that the part of the story representing the Holocaust had only plain, gray paperclips. In the other areas we had colorful chains that represented the diversity of normal life.

Here I do not have enough space for explaining all of the exhibition. However, I need to point out a few details. For example, the difference between the pre-war stories and the Holocaust was that in the first pictures we can see the family before the war, then isolated children without parents in the Holocaust. We placed some photos of camp inmates into the paperclip chains. In one part there

were special triangle labels for types of camp inmates. In each cabinet students placed an object that was associated with the event portrayed in that cabinet. These objects included an old camera, a phone, broken glass as a symbol of Kristallnacht, a travel bag, a bunch of shoes, stars of David, a rice bowl as a symbol of the daily allowable amount of food, a model of the concentration camp Auschwitz, etc.

On the day of opening we hosted many people including the Israeli Ambassador Shmuel Meir, and as a special guest, Oto Konstein. He held a special lecture with students involved in the project in which he described his fate in the Holocaust. He then took time to answer their questions. His testimony was recorded and was distributed on DVD to all of the teachers (30 of them) in our Medjmurje County.

During February the Museum was visited by groups of students from various schools and they pointed out their desire to work on similar projects in their schools. Currently I am working with students to convert the museum into a mobile exhibit. We are planning to show the exhibition in late May in the museum of the concentration camp, Jasenovac. The exhibition will be bilingual so we will be able to present our work to visitors who do not speak Croatian. Since the project is still in progress I cannot give any final comment or conclusion.

Sadly I have to admit that we have a number of people that are Holocaust deniers and some even attacked me in online articles. In any case, I believe that the work on the project was instructive for me as a teacher, as well as for students who participated.

*Feel free to write him and his students at:*

<http://www.classroom-holocaust-museum.com>

# ASHKENAZI JEWISH CARRIER SCREENING

BY JANET MARCADIER, MSC, CGC, CCGC, GENETIC COUNSELLOR



*Dr. Mark Ludman and the staff of the Genetic Clinic*

*Editor's note: The AJC would like to thank Dr. Mark Ludman and the staff of the Genetic Clinic Janet Marcadier, Tina Babineau, Julie Hathaway, and Aidan Thomas for their time and effort.*



AN ASHKENAZI JEWISH CARRIER SCREENING CLINIC WAS HELD ON JANUARY 25, 2009 AT CHABAD HOUSE.

The reasoning behind the screening was that some genetic diseases are more common in certain ethnic groups. Even with no family history of a genetic condition, people of Ashkenazi Jewish background are more likely to be carriers of certain genetic diseases. The screening day was organized through the help of Karen Conter and Bill Chernin. Based on the success of this clinic, we hope to hold another clinic in the fall of 2009.

The clinic was run by staff from the Maritime Medical Genetics Clinic at the IWK Health Centre. The clinic consisted of a presentation, question and

answer period, and then blood draws for individuals interested in learning about their carrier status for five genetic conditions. These conditions included Tay-Sachs disease, Canavan disease, Familial Dysautonomia, cystic fibrosis, and Fanconi Anemia type C. For more information about these diseases or information about future screening clinics, please contact the Maritime Medical Genetics Clinic at (902) 470-8754.

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# IN REMEMBRANCE OF BEN PROSSIN "BENNY" 50 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

BY JON GOLDBERG

PAGE 21

*Editor's note: Ben Prossin was the first President of the AJC, 1975-1979. He was also Director of Camp Kadimah, 1968-1972 and Chair of the Camp Kadimah Committee, 1984-1985.*

EIGHT DAYS AGO, I BID FAREWELL TO MY DEAR FRIEND BEN PROSSIN ON A COLD, WIND-SWEPT TORONTO AFTERNOON AT THE PARDES SHALOM CEMETERY. On the drive from the synagogue to the cemetery I was joined by our good friend Sheldon Cohen, who knew Benny for even longer than I did, as they grew up together in Glace Bay. As Sheldon drove, I couldn't help but reflect on the relationship that Benny and I shared for half a century.

I first met Benny at a Young Judea Kinus in Halifax in 1959. As a Haligonian, I had not gone to Camp Kadimah, but to an American camp, so it wasn't until then that I got to meet most of the Jewish kids from outside our city. Benny and I immediately struck up a friendship based on our mutual interest in Israel, politics, and good food. These were the three cornerstones of a friendship that lasted 30 years while he lived in Atlantic Canada and continued for the 20 years that Benny lived in Toronto. As teenagers, we both served on the executive of Atlantic Young Judea. In 1962, I went to Camp Biluim in Sudbury. Benny was a year and a half older than I and he was a madrich that summer at Biluim. In fact, he had encouraged me to attend. When I got to the camp and realized that it wasn't a luxury summer like I had been used to in the United States or even at Kadimah, I was somewhat disappointed. When they began to teach us Israeli dancing instead of softball and swimming, I was more than disappointed. I was somewhat... rebellious. In fact, I will never forget the dance instructor saying, "This guy should go home!" However, there was a part of the curriculum I did enjoy and



excel in, and that was Jewish and Zionist history and Sichot, which happened to be led by my dear friend Benny. After three days of camp, the madrichim and the director had a meeting to discuss my future. Benny stepped up and said, "Before you throw this guy out, see how he does in public speaking and our Jewish and Zionist history quizzes." (Can you believe they had quizzes?!) I am pleased to say that the staff grudgingly accepted my presence at Biluim for the rest of the summer.

Benny came to Dalhousie in 1963. I was still in high school, but we managed to spend quite a bit of time together. Benny was involved in university politics and was one of the leaders of the Dalhousie Liberal Party, even then showing a keen interest in the Canadian political system. Benny was also involved at the national level with Young Judea and was just beginning his work with Canadian Zionist Federation and other national Jewish organizations. Of course this did not leave too much time for his studies, which was so aptly pointed out to me when one evening he and Sheldon and some of our friends were having supper at a local establishment when a Chinese student came over and

said hello to Benny. Benny, of course, was polite and as the student walked away, Benny turned to us and said, "Who is that guy?" Sheldon, of course, said, "Why Benny, that's your physics lab partner!" It was seven months into the term. Nevertheless, Ben obtained a degree from St. F.X. and then returned to Dalhousie, where he graduated in Law.

I can't forget my years as section head at Camp Kadimah in the late 1960s when Benny was director. Those were great years as Benny allowed me to develop my abilities as a leader and madrich, and encouraged me to keep involved with the Jewish community even though many of my peers were dropping out or moving away.

I have so many memories of Benny over 50 years that time and space could not allow me to cover properly the extent of our friendship. However, I remember Benny and I attended the Liberal Leadership Convention in 1968 in Ottawa. Benny was for Trudeau and I was for Robert Winters (a Nova Scotian and cabinet minister at the time). I'll never forget that experience and Benny, of course, backed the winner and his future took off within the party.

Benny and I also went on a vacation together, some time in the early 1970s to the Bahamas. Both of us rented motor scooters, which, of course, we crashed and I ended up in some local infirmary having a scraped knee treated while Benny negotiated the fees.

While Benny spent his years in Halifax, he became like a member of our family. My late mother and my father both thought very highly of him. His sense of humour, his love of Israel, and his continued interest in politics, both general and Jewish, always sparked great debate in our household. For a period of ten years, I would say that Benny joined

*continued on page 22*

our family for Shabbat dinner twice or three times a month, plus of course the Chagim and always at family simchas. I still remember Benny's campaign for MP in a Halifax constituency. He really had no chance against an established Tory in, what was at that time, a Tory riding. We ran a great campaign. I remember helping to raise money and knocking on doors with Benny. Benny loved to meet the voters and was really in his element. A little known fact was that Benny also managed my failed bid for an aldermanic seat in Halifax in the mid-70s. We had a lot of laughs, got good press; I won the debate and got clobbered in the general election.

At the same time, Benny was the first president of the Atlantic Jewish Council in 1975. The Jewish community of

Atlantic Canada was always close to his heart and his work for our region with the ZOC, the CZF, and then the AJC was legendary.

Approximately 20 years ago, Benny left for Toronto, first with CJC and then, for the last 17 years, with JNF. Was I surprised at his success? No. Was I surprised at how well he was liked? No. After all, I was there to witness his character and personality shaped during the formative years, and I could appreciate the fact that he did so well in Toronto. I visited Benny many times over the last 20 years. He came to Halifax once or twice and also to the reunion in Glace Bay a number of years ago. I know that he made many dear friends in Toronto and was also supported by many former Maritimers who lived in

Toronto. Lil Jacobson and her family were so supportive and kind to Benny, both before and after he took ill. We used to speak at least once a month. He would call for news from home and I would ask how he was feeling. We would trade a few stories. And our lives moved on. I last saw Benny in Toronto in November at a Camp Kadimah reunion. He was honoured, along with other past directors, and we had a few laughs...just like the old times.

In closing, I can say that for all of us who were close to Benny, there will be a certain void in our lives. For me, it will be something I can never replace. And yet that jovial smile and kind sense of humour will remain with me always. "Shalom Benny". Rest in peace.



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# KIBBUTZ HAMADIA: THEN AND NOW

BY MICHAEL COLUMBUS

PAGE 23

My brother Jack had Edna send me a copy of the winter issue of Shalom magazine. I e-mailed Edna to thank her and said I would work up an article for the Passach Shalom. So here goes.

## JUST BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

I was born and raised in New Waterford, Nova Scotia. Parents: Hyman and Freda Columbus. Brother: Jack, Sisters: Hinda McLean and Brenda Steiger. My dad's family is the Columbus family from Saint John, NB which ended up in Fredericton and Woodstock. Cousins: Prof Allen Selby in Fredericton and Dr. Howard Conter is another cousin.

A week after the six day war I and two other Young Judeans from Cape

Breton were among the first group of volunteers to go to Israel and we worked on a Kibbutz in the Negev for three months. I fell in love with the people and country.

I made Aliya in March 1974 and attended an Ulpan on Kibbutz Hamadia in the Bet Shan Valley and also became a member of Hamadia.

In 1976 I did training in the artillery core in the IDF. In Cape Breton I



In fall 2007 Jack visited his brother, pictured: Jack in front of the Aron Kodesh at the Ashkenazi Shul in Migdal Ha Emek. Jack and I were on a search for the Torahs from the New Waterford shul. When we closed the shul in New Waterford, Allen Burnick, our last president, saw to it the the Torahs went to Israel and to Migdal HaEmek.



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was a very active sport shooter - mainly trap shooting (clay target shooting - more on that later, I was good enough to be selected as an alternate for the 1969 Maccabia). I was offered an instructors position at the IDF's sniper school and spent two years as a sergeant-major 1979-80.

In 1981 I married Debora Green of Minneapolis and we have three daughters Ayalla, Avital and youngest Esti.

All of our children have served in the IDF. Esti is doing her service in Nahal now. Debbi is a dental hygienist, very busy on a number of Kibbutzim and in Bet Shan and Afula clinics. I have had a number of jobs on Hamadia. Water manager, warehouse manager at Hamadia's plastic factory and now as Kibbutz security officer.

I have been active in defense work since Aliya. Whether on Kibbutz, Zahal or as an officer in the Israeli Border Police. I joined the Bet Shan Valley IBP volunteer unit in 1986, patrol officer and commander of the sniper section of our QRT (quick reaction team). I have won three national sniper championships two back to back and no one had or has done that.

WELL AS THIS IS MY FIRST ATTEMPT AT AN ARTICLE I WILL KEEP IT SHORT. Wasn't too sure as what to rant about then I thought as Purim was this week and every one needs a good laugh. And the joke is --that as of this moment

*continued on page 24*

Ehud Olmert is still Prime Minister ~laughable if I wasn't crying. So this article will be on the Israeli political scene as I see it.

I am proud to say that beginning with Yitzhak Rabin ~in every election my vote has been for the candidate that won, i.e. Rabin, Netanyahu, Barak, Sharon, Olmert and now again Bibi.....ain't that terrific because my next statement will upset some of you to whit. ***Each succeeding prime minister was worse than the one he replaced.***

I will start with Yitzhak "let's take a chance" Rabin with Oslo. He and Shimon played with the security



*Michael Columbus returning from reserve duty*

of my country and lost big time.

Bibi and Barak are two sides of the same shekel .....both smart-too smart

for our good and thought they could do it all alone.

Sharon~was a liar ~ with the pull out of Gaza " if they do something we can go back " ~yah, sure ~eight years of rockets.

I only hope that Bibi learned a great deal from his ignominious first term and will do a much better job this time around. He turned the county's finances around as Finance minister~so fingers crossed.

This country needs election reform. Something in the way of regional

representation instead of voting for a party. David Ben Gurion always wanted to make this change but no party has ever received a majority to carry out a change as drastic as this. The first Knesset was elected in 1949 by the party system as a good percentage of the voting population was under arms.

We need the Canadian system of area ridings and it would be great that when calling an election the vote occurs within six weeks, as in Canada, not what

happens here waiting 4-6 months here ~a real farce.

Reading the above and watching my blood pressure go up let's end with a more positive note. With all our problems Israel is a vibrant society and we will get it right in the end. Ein breira.

PS~ I mentioned that my hobby is trapshooting.....to be specific Olympic Bunker Clay target shooting. I have a few posts of pictures I took at various clubs I have shot at. I'll list them here and you can see them on your computers.

A Kosher Passach~~~~MIKE.

Pictures:

Hungary

<http://www.trapshooters.com/noframes/cfpages/thread.cfm?threadid=178102>

Cairo, Egypt

<http://www.trapshooters.com/noframes/cfpages/thread.cfm?threadid=179700>

Amman

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# 41 AND COUNTING!

BY JACK COLUMBUS

PAGE 25

THERE WAS NO INTERNET OR BIG-SCREEN, HIGH-DEFINITION TV'S. THERE WERE NO COMPUTERS. GAS WAS STILL MEASURED IN GALLONS AND THE PRICE WAS DIRT CHEAP BY TODAY'S STANDARDS.

That was 1968, the first year of what has become an annual tradition in Cape Breton ...the Hadassah-WIZO Bazaar

difficult to mount such an ambitious project.

But, that hasn't stopped the ladies of Hadassah. Local volunteers from outside the Jewish community have happily jumped



L to R - Rita Swartz, Zelda Yazer - Gift Dept. 1968



L to R - Ethel Webber, Reva Nathanson (Convenor of 1st Bazaar, 1968)

at Temple Sons of Israel synagogue in Sydney.

Over the years, the hard work of the many volunteers has raised much money for Israel and local charitable causes. As time has gone by, community numbers have dwindled, making it more

in to augment the work force, donating many hours of their time to make the Bazaar the success it was at the beginning and continues to be.

This year will be Bazaar Number 41. It will be held on May 27th and promises to be another fun-filled (not to mention bargain-filled) day at the shul. As a famous game show host was fond of saying, "Come On Down!"

The phrase still applies to Cape Breton's Hadassah-WIZO bazaar.

## CAPE BRETON HADASSAH-WIZO BAZAAR WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2009

*Dear Friends of the Bazaar:*

*Due to transport limitations, we need only "Quality" Ladies & Teens Clothing, Costume Jewelry.*

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*Contact person:*

*Judith Goldberg - Phone: 902-425-6527*

*Cut off date is May 1, 2009*



L to R - The late Fanny Zilbert, the late Ann Zilbert, the late Ruth Wolfson Willannsky (Handicraft Dept. 1968)

# LAST JEWISH-OWNED BUSINESS IN GLACE BAY CLOSES

BY JACK COLUMBUS

PAGE 26

IT'S THE END OF AN ERA. THE LAST JEWISH-OWNED RETAIL OUTLET IN GLACE BAY HAS CLOSED ITS DOORS.

David Ein, owner of Ein's Men's Wear and Toby's Ladies Wear says it was a bittersweet moment, but the time had come to face reality. "Business has been declining in recent years", he said, "and as much as I would like to have continued, there was no way we could."



Glance Bay's Commercial Street was once a beehive of activity with primarily Jewish-owned stores up and down the street. From clothing stores to grocery stores to jewellery stores, names like Rosenbloom, Hamburg, Lighter, Rukasin were common in the downtown from the early 20th century onward. Sadly, the beginning of the end occurred in the last few decades when the town's economy began to suffer as the main industry, coal mining, became uncompetitive with other energy sources.

Mr. Ein says he never planned to be in retail. But, as a young law student he worked summers at his parents' stores and liked it. He agreed to manage the operation for a year when his mum and dad wanted some time off in the 70's and, he says, that's when the retail bug really bit. He's been at it ever since, through good times and bad.



"I'm going to miss it," he adds, "particularly the friendships made over the years with customers, and especially with my staff, some of whom have been with me for well over 30 years."

"I'm not sure what the future holds," he says, "but I'm not retiring just yet and hope to remain active in business or some allied endeavour soon."

## SYDNEY LAWYER VISITS SDEROT

BY DWIGHT RUDDERHAM

THERE ARE MANY IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CALLING FOR PEACE IN RESPONSE TO ISRAEL'S MILITARY INCURSION INTO THE GAZA STRIP. The question is, "Where has this international outcry been for the last eight years while Hamas rockets rained down on Israel?" Since 2001, the Hamas have been firing rockets from Gaza into Israel virtually on a daily basis. I visited the Town of Sderot which borders Gaza. Admittedly, I did not realize there were rockets being fired from Gaza on a daily basis. If I had, I may not have gone to this community. I later learned five rockets were fired into Israel that day. Thankfully, none were in my vicinity.



As we drove through this beautiful agricultural community of Sderot, there was a eery quietness in the Town. I began

to realize there were no people outside. There were no children playing outside, no one was on the soccer field, there was no one walking down the street. It became apparent that people stayed indoors as much as possible to avoid being struck with a rocket.

We visited an elementary school. There was a large square cement structure outside the school. This was a bomb shelter. When a rocket is fired by Hamas, an alarm sounds and the children have 15 seconds to leave their classroom and make it into this shelter which frankly didn't seem all that safe to me.

We also visited a site where two young children, girls aged 2 and 4 were killed by

*continued*

# IN REMEMBRANCE OF BUBBI MARY FEINSTEIN

## BY LINDA FEINSTEIN

PAGE 27

*Editor's note: This eulogy was delivered by Mary's grand-daughter, Linda Feinstein, at her funeral service in Toronto. Mary was born in Moncton but moved to Cape Breton after she married Kenneth Feinstein. They started raising their 4 children there ( Simon, Isadore, David and Anita) but moved back to Moncton, where Kennie operated a grocery store. It supplied local Jews with kosher deli, kosher bread, etc. Mary was very, very active in the community and was involved in every facet of community life. She moved to Toronto in 1987, to be closer to her 4 children, and their families, all of whom were living there. Mary died on October 2, 2008 and was 92. There was a funeral service in Toronto but she was buried in Moncton, where she had maintained synagogue membership even while living in Toronto.*

I HAVE MANY MEMORIES OF BUBBI MARY THAT HAVE BEEN SURFACING OVER THE PAST LITTLE WHILE AS IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT HER TIME WITH US WAS DRAWING TO A CLOSE.

The wellspring of thoughts rushed at me after she left us to join Zaida Kenny once again.

When we were young Lenny, Kenny and I did not get to see Bubbi Mary that often. However our yearly visits to Moncton were very special as Bubbi opened her home on Portledge Avenue and the Toronto Feinsteins moved in.

My childhood memories embrace the tactile and visible things that children remember. Yummy baked treats that were the best around. Nothing could beat Bubbi's peppermint brownies and pineapple chocolate squares. We waited to taste her cakes and cookies and loved to take home the care packages wrapped in wax paper and Eaton's boxes. She baked for us but also for the rest of the family and the community

I have extra special memories of the house on Portledge which provided the details of good stories – an attic that was a treasure trove of stuff – a bathtub with feet and a sink with separate facets for hot and cold. I looked forward to

breakfast every morning which included: hot water in a bowl and a ½ grapefruit for Bubbi. Her special spoons with the serrated tips always fascinated me. I was also amazed by the lonely washing machine which lacked a partner. This made it necessary to hang the laundry on the line. For a kid with a washer and dryer it was really something when the clothes came into the house frozen. Especially since we then had to let the laundry thaw so that it could dry in the house.

Some of the best childhood memories though were of the many trips we would take with Bubbi around Moncton. My favourite was the trip to the dairy for fresh chocolate milk in the bottle which I can still taste to this day. We also took trips to the co-op to get something!!! Bubbi also took us along on her many journeys through town – to pick up rent from the schleppers and meet with the multitude of handimen that worked for her. The best trips for me though were the constant and exciting visits with

*continued on page 30*

## SYDNEY LAWYER VISITS SDEROT - CONTINUED

one of these rocket attacks. The children were playing outside their home at the time. I began to understand more fully why people only left their home when they absolutely had to.

The reality of these rocket attacks is that not even the Hamas know where these rockets will land. They are crude devices that can't be guided. However, they are still effective in their main purpose – exploding and killing Israelis. The Hamas fire them indiscriminately.

We then visited a Police Station in Sderot and were taken around back. I was shocked to see the remnants of hundred of rockets that had only recently been fired and exploded in Sderot.

As Israel and the rest of the World did

nothing to stop these rocket attacks, they became more frequent and the rockets became more sophisticated. Apparently, Hamas can't aim them any better but they can fire them further and with more frequency. The people of Sderot live in constant fear that they or worse, their children, will be struck by a rocket. They live with this fear every single day. Since the rest of the World sat by and did nothing, the Israelis had to take matters into their own hands. Does anyone reasonably believe that Israel should sit back and allow this to continue?

Hamas is dedicated to the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people. They will not negotiate. If they agree to stop firing the rockets it will only be temporary so that Israel will leave Gaza and Hamas

won't be destroyed. They will start firing rockets again and the cycle will continue. There is really only one way to stop Hamas from firing these rockets. It is up to the Palestinian people to reject the approach of Hamas and stop supporting them. Many Palestinians have already done so by supporting Mahmoud Abbas. He is the president of the Palestinian National Authority and controls the Palestinian Territory of the West Bank. Mr. Abbas endorses a peaceful approach in dealing with Israel and is open to negotiation. If the people of Gaza reject Hamas and support the approach of Mr. Abbas and others, then there may truly be a lasting end to the violence.

*Dwight Rudderham is a Sydney lawyer.*

# Around the Region



Itamar Marcus, Director Palestinian Media Watch, at Dalhousie University with Israel Affairs Committee Vice-President Paige McPherson and President Alexandra Dezenhouse



Maisie Epstein at unveiling of plaque and photo to honour Sid Epstein, z"l at Autism Centre, St. John's



Purim in Moncton, Ivan Cohen, Matthew Leibl, Francis Weil



Rebbetzin Bassie Feldman, Chabad Purim Bash



Moriah Dechtar & Bianna & Karin Kaksin, Chabad Purim Bash



Rita Pink, Louise Wolfson, Dorota Golwaka, Andrew Wolfson, Jon Goldberg, listening as Philip Riteman speaks about his meeting with Tuvia Bielski, during a Holocaust Education fundraising event at the opening of the film "Defiance" in Halifax.



Edna LeVine, with guest speaker Dr. Yossi Olmert, AJC president, Howard Conter, Halifax



Claire Frankel-Salama with French Immersion students from MacDonald Drive Junior High viewing a Torah, NL



Larry Riteman with guest speaker John Loftus, former US Government Prosecutor and Army Intelligence Officer, who spoke in Halifax about "The Middle East - the truth behind today's headlines"



Purim celebration in Halifax with the 2 Rabbis: Feldman and Sherbill



Mark David with Miriam Ziv, Israeli Ambassador to Canada, as well as David Busheikin of Calgary



AJC president Howard Conter, with Colin and Kathy Fox, as they provide an update from their son in Gaza at the rally for Israel, Halifax



Ruth Fuller at the Moncton Purim Celebration.



Torah study group: Leslee, Darryl, Winston McGregor, Prof. Naylor, Victoria Bloom, PEI



The Azrieli Foundation hosted a meeting to discuss their Memoir Project: left to right: David Korn, Lilian Falk, Helena Jockel, Morris Strug, Elin Beaumont.



Jon & Dani Schneider at Purim celebration in Halifax



Purim revellers in Newfoundland 2009



Marcela Rosenberg and her daughter at the ceremony as they became Canadian citizens in PEI.

# CAPE BRETON REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY PASSES HOLOCAUST RESOLUTION

BY JACK COLUMBUS

THE CAPE BRETON REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY (C.B.R.M.) HAS PASSED A RESOLUTION DECLARING JANUARY 27TH, 2009 HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY.

The resolution was introduced by District 9 Councillor Tom Wilson on behalf of the Cape Breton Holocaust Education Committee. Wilson told council it was important that the Holocaust never be forgotten and that right-thinking people must be pro-active in ensuring that the lessons learned from that terrible period point the way forward to a better world in the days ahead.

Following is the text of the resolution which received unanimous approval.

**Whereas:** The United Nations has passed a resolution to make January 27 an

International Day of Commemoration to honour the Victims of the Holocaust and;

**Whereas:** On January 27, 1945, Soviet forces liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp, discovering the largest Nazi killing centre in Europe. Therefore, Auschwitz has become a symbol of the Holocaust, representing the depths of man's inhumanity to man;

**And Whereas:** The prevalence of Holocaust denial and related disrespect associated with such ideology towards the millions of innocent people who died during World War II serves as a disservice to the murdered;

**And Whereas:** Holocaust survivor, Nobel Prize winner and author Elie Wiesel said, "I decided to devote my life to telling the story because I felt that having survived I

owe something to the dead, and anyone who does not remember betrays them;"

**Be It Therefore Resolved:** That the Cape Breton Regional Municipality recognize January 27th, 2009 as "Holocaust Memorial Day" in order to instill the memory of the genocide in future generations, to prevent history repeating itself and to avoid another Holocaust.

## SHAI GABSO CDs

*The AJC has a limited number of Shai Gabso (Israeli musician who performed at the AJC Biennial) CDs available for purchase. The price is \$20 each. If you would like to buy one (or more) for a gift, or just to add to your collection, please contact;*

**MARK DAVID**

at 422-7491 x224 or [mdavid@theajc.ns.ca](mailto:mdavid@theajc.ns.ca).

## IN REMEMBRANCE OF BUBBI MARY FEINSTEIN - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

family and the open arms everywhere that we went.

These are my memories of our childhood time spent with Bubbi Mary. This time with Bubbi taught me how important family is and opened me up to a life which was totally different from that in Toronto.

My adult memories are more about who Bubbi was and what she meant to every person she met. Bubbi was a kind and pleasant woman who made friends wherever she went; seeing only the good in others. Her giving and charitable ways showed in everything that she did. She was determined and strong with an ability to persevere through every challenge that she was given. I read a quote by Maya Angelou which made me think of Bubbi and what I hope to carry on for her - "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Bubbi touched so many people with

her ability to forget so she could see the beyond the obvious. She had an extra special way of making those around her feel good. As I continue to grow as a woman and person I will work to maintain Bubbi's legacy.

As Bubbi aged some of her special light faded but she never lost her love of time spent with family, nor her ability to make those around her laugh. It became more difficult for her over the last few months as fatigue took over but she still had those moments that shone through. I know that Bubbi would want us to go forward remembering every special way that she touched our lives.

Each of us has our own special memories of Bubbi Mary because she touched so many on her long journey. What we share are the collective memories of Mary Feinstein: Mother, Bubbi, Aunt, Sister, Wife and Friend - Her special sense of humour which was her gift to all of us.

-Her unwavering belief in goodness which softened the sometimes harsh reality of life.

-Her ability to see sunshine in a cloudy sky which opened us to the endless possibilities if you only believe.

-Her silent pride in her children and grandchildren which was evident if you looked into her soul.

-Her love of her family and friends which taught us to love without boundaries.

-Her endless love for Zaida Kenny that never waned which showed us that it is possible to find that special someone and hold them in your heart no matter what obstacles come in the way.

Bubbi, you have gone home now to be with the man of your heart and I know he is happy to have you back. We will all miss you dearly but we will also live peacefully with the memories of your full life and the lessons that you shared with all of us.



# PEACE MARCH AND RALLY IN SYDNEY

BY JACK COLUMBUS

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ABOUT 50 MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN TURNED OUT IN BITTERLY COLD WEATHER AT NOON ON SATURDAY, JANUARY THE 17TH FOR A "PEACE MARCH" UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE CAPE BRETON MUSLIM SOCIETY.

The marchers paraded through a section of downtown Sydney and were calm, quiet and respectful. Signs and placards were much in evidence, none of which was inciteful, offensive or anti-Israel. The only banner that might be categorized as partisan was one that said "Save Gaza". All the others were simply pro-peace and anti-war.



Later that evening at Cape Breton University, the event continued with a series of talks chaired by a Sydney plastic surgeon, Dr. Abdulrazzak Atiyah, a native of Kuwait who has been practicing in Sydney about a dozen years.

Avvie and Evy Druker, Garson Lecker, and Darren and Shayna Strong of the Cape Breton Jewish Community attended the evening event. Mr. Druker says "There was a bigger turnout than we expected, despite the weather. CBU has a number of students from Egypt and Pakistan, some of whom were in attendance. All were very well behaved and some came over to speak to us in

very friendly terms."

Mr. Druker added, "Dr. Atiyah set the tone, saying that we are all interested in peace and that we have more in common than we have differences. He spoke of

the three Abrahamic religions based on common principles. He gave a history of Palestine and Gaza, the establishment of the State of Israel and what has ensued for the past 60 years or more, including the recent conflict in Gaza. While we may not have agreed entirely with his interpretation of everything, his presentation was balanced and not at all offensive.

He then introduced a lady who now lives in Cape Breton but who came to Nova Scotia from Gaza and who still has family there. She spoke of their victimization and the problems communicating with family during the crisis.

The floor was then open to questions or comments. Some of the comments might have been a little off-the-wall, but Dr. Atiyah handled them well and said openly that he didn't agree with the speaker's comments in cases which could have been offensive. Dr. Lecker was the only one from the Jewish community who made a comment and it was very appropriate and complimentary. Mr. Druker concluded, "It was a successful coming together of Jews, Muslims and Christians."

## CAPE BRETON CHANUKAH PARTY

BY BETTY SHORE

ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28TH SERVICES WERE HELD FOLLOWED BY THE ANNUAL CHANUKAH AND DINNER PARTY (LOTS OF DELICIOUS LATKES) AT TEMPLE SONS OF ISRAEL IN SYDNEY, ATTENDED BY ABOUT 50 PEOPLE.

The highlight was a visit from "Merrie", the Chanukah bear.

Pictured with "Merrie" are from left to right: Ethan Strong, Zoe Ceresne Silverberg, Aidyn Ceresne Silverberg, Isabel MacIntosh, Bailey Karrel, Manny Strong held by mom Shayna Strong.



## SYDNEY EDUCATOR INFORMS STUDENT TEACHERS AT ST. F.X. ABOUT HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

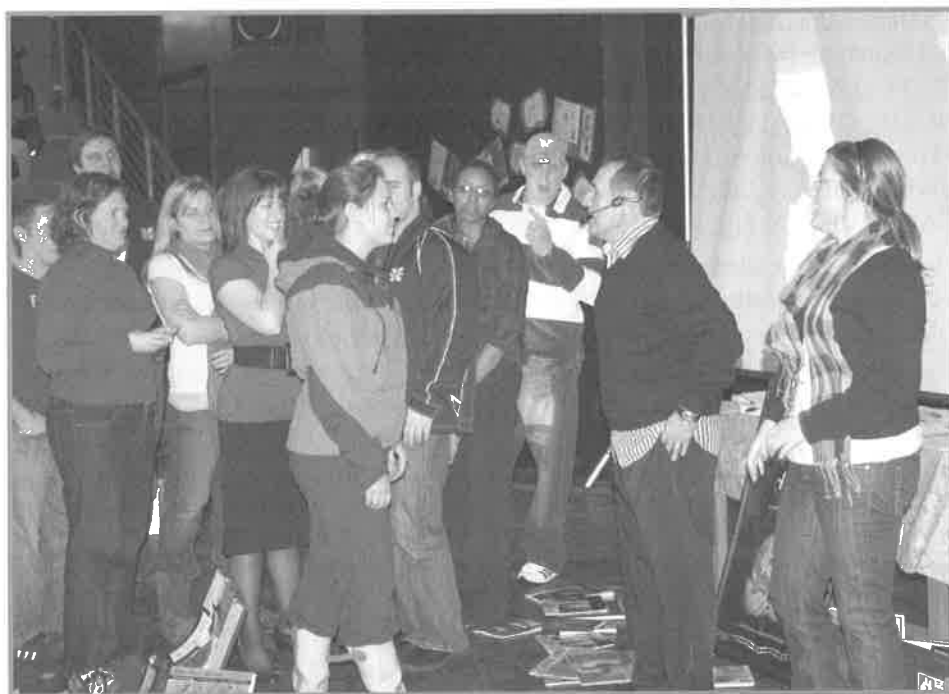
BY JACK COLUMBUS

THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS GOT A FIRST-HAND TASTE OF THE VALUE OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WHEN WELL-KNOWN SYDNEY ELEMENTARY TEACHER KEVIN LINDEN WAS A RECENT GUEST LECTURER FOR BACHELOR OF EDUCATION STUDENTS AT SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY IN ANTIGONISH, NS.

Linden, who was instrumental in the publication of an anthology of student holocaust poetry (*The Future Is In Our Hands*) and attended last year's March of the Living for Educators, says he was extremely excited to be able to speak to university students about the importance of Holocaust Education.

Thanks to the Canadian Jewish Congress, Linden was able to provide the nearly two hundred future teachers in attendance with copies of the educators guide for the FAST program (Fighting Anti-Semitism Together) which he describes as a valuable resource for any educator teaching the Holocaust to elementary school students.

Linden noted that he was fortunate in having a former student Kate MacMullin join him during the presentation. She



addressed the student teachers, giving a personal perspective on what Holocaust Education meant to her. He says her talk was "very powerful and passionate" and she received a resounding round of applause. "She was a true inspiration there".

"There was a great deal of enthusiasm", Linden says "a number of B.Ed students and professors came to speak to us

about the presentation to learn more about the topic. We provided them with information on resources from my personal collection as well as a teacher resource list the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board Holocaust In-service Committee has put together."

"In all", Linden concluded, "it was a successful venture and one I'd like to do again".

## CLUB MASSADA NEWS, HALIFAX, NS

BY BARB ALBERSTAT, PRESIDENT

Club Massada continues to meet every month and provides an excellent opportunity for people over the age of 50+ to meet and socialize in a pleasant and friendly atmosphere.

This is an outing for many seniors to see others that they would not normally get to greet. Club Massada members and guests are provided with a dairy

hot soup, main lunch, salads, tea and coffee and a delicious dessert. We are also entertained with great speakers and musicians at the meetings.

If anyone can provide transportation once a month for one or two members it would be greatly appreciated. It will only take an hour of your time, and it would be a great mitzvoh. And we are

always looking for guests to visit us, and perhaps become members. Our meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month in the Shirley Burnstein Hall of Northwood. Our next meeting will be in April, after Passover.

COME AND JOIN US.

*Wishing everyone a Happy Passover.*

# JNF'S ANNUAL TU BI'SHEVAT TELETHON A SUCCESS

BY LAURA TSINMAN, CO-ORDINATOR, JNF ATLANTIC CANADA

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ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST A GROUP OF 20 LOCAL VOLUNTEERS GATHERED AT THE EASTLINK TELEVISION STUDIOS IN SACKVILLE, NOVA SCOTIA TO BEGIN THE WORK OF CALLING MEMBERS OF THE ATLANTIC JEWISH COMMUNITY FOR DONATIONS TO THE JEWISH NATIONAL FUND'S ANNUAL DRIVE TO PLANT TREES IN ISRAEL.

This year's funds were specially allocated to plant a forest of trees in honour of Eldad Regev z"l and Ehud Goldwasser z"l, the two Israeli soldiers who were kidnapped and murdered by terrorists. The trees will be planted in Adamit Park, an area in the north of Israel close to where the two soldiers were kidnapped.

Thanks to the work of our volunteers this year's telethon was a smashing success! Concerns about the difficulty of raising funds during these tough economic times were quickly put aside as our volunteer callers found the members of Atlantic Canada's small but dedicated Jewish community more than ready to support JNF and plant trees in Israel for this special Tu Bi'Shevat project. In fact, when the campaign was over and the numbers were tallied we found that we had achieved an amazing increase in donations of more than 10% over last year, which had itself been a record breaking year.

Many thanks go to Mike Smith and the staff at Eastlink Television for their generosity in letting us use their space and for the setup of all

the phones. Of course, the telethon could not have happened without our wonderful volunteers: Karen Conter, Leah McNight, Maryanne Ferguson, Molly Rechnitzer, Marcia Kohler, Adam Conter, Steven Rappaport, Noreen Rappaport, Leo Weniger, Bonnie Abramsky, Sondra Rutman, Bette Ross, Jennifer Rubenstein, Ryan Spinner, Andrew Spinner, Mark Appleton, Boris Tsinman, Myrna Yazer and Aviva Rubin-Schneider.

JNF Atlantic Canada was the first region in the country to hold their Tu Bi'Shevat Telethon this year and we were very happy to get our Canadian colleagues off to such a great start.

Many thanks to all of JNF's generous donors here in Atlantic Canada!

## Just add **Sobeys**

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largest selection of Kosher and  
Passover products in Atlantic Canada

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# SAMUELSON IN SINGAPORE - FORMER ST. JOHN'S TEACHER BRINGS EXPERTISE TO THE FAR EAST

BY DANETTE DOOLEY - SPECIAL TO THE TELEGRAM

*Editor's note: Keith Samuelson, a retired teacher from St John's has been a tremendous Ambassador for Holocaust Education Programs in NL. He was also presented with an award for outstanding Holocaust Education educator at the St. John's Yom Hashoah Service.*

KEITH SAMUELSON FEELS LIKE PINCHING HIMSELF TO FIND OUT IF WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING TO HIM OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS IS REAL. "Sometimes, when I think about working with such incredible people and living in a beautiful condo with a spectacular view of the downtown skyline, I can't believe I'm here and not back in a classroom gazing out through The Narrows wondering if there's a place for me out there somewhere," the former Prince of Wales Collegiate (PWC) teacher says of his life in Singapore. Samuelson often wondered where life would take him after he retired from PWC in June 2008.

A month after his teaching career ended he left this province to work as an international educational consultant in Singapore where he works for the Centre for British Teachers in a two-year partnership project with the Singapore Ministry of Education. His job is to enhance the teaching of English in areas such as critical reading, creative writing and confidence speaking. "It's sort of a combination of professional development/curriculum enhancement position, thus similar to my previous project I work at home but with the full support of the system," he says.

## Exciting life

Born and raised in St. John's, Samuelson says it's exciting to live in a financial centre on a par with London and New York and observe rapid developments in commerce, technology, the arts, tourism and fashion. "They have a world class economy ... and one of the world's highest student



achievement rates," he says. Samuelson's 30 years of experience as a teacher, administrator and curriculum consultant has earned him numerous accolades, including the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence. A Holocaust educator, he was also a finalist for the 2006 Governor General's Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Canadian History. It's been an eye opener, he says, to work in the Singapore education system which is rated among the best in the world in terms of student motivation, academic achievement and teacher morale. The Singapore government has hired consultants from several countries, including the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States to implement specific reforms for the benefit of youth and society. Like Samuelson, the teachers have proven track records as innovators. "I think there's an expectation that adapting some of our approaches to creativity will make them (the Singapore students) even more competitive globally, as their education system is a major factor which has led to economic

prosperity," he says.

## Strict rules

Singapore is one of the world's few city-states. The smallest country in Southeast Asia, it gained independence from Malaysia in 1965. With over 4.8 million people, Singapore has earned a reputation as the safest, cleanest and greenest country in the world, Samuelson says, and recently was rated by the United Nations as the world's most sustainable city. "It is the only major city in the world that has no slums," Samuelson says. It's also a place where chewing gum (except for medicinal reasons), spitting, littering and rude public behaviour are prohibited, and English, Chinese, Malay, Tamil and Hindi are the official languages. Teachers are highly respected and accountable and students are extremely motivated, Samuelson says. "The system is based on meritocracy. The ministry seeks out talent and fast-tracks the most accomplished

*continued*

into leadership positions. ... People are promoted based on their record of achievement. Those who advance have already proven themselves in the classroom, and they're expected to continue to do so," Samuelson says. He recognizes that improving a system that is already operating at such a high level of efficiency is challenging. "There's real talent at the top as well as at the classroom level, real vision, real action, and real results supported by data and evident in relationships between students and teachers, teachers and principals, principals and the Ministry of Education."

#### Motivated students

Singapore's public education system is intertwined with its economic survival, as well as national security. It's a country that has excellent relations with its neighbours, Samuelson says. "Singapore's armed forces are among the strongest in the world, well capable of defending this tiny city-state against any attack." Law and order are maintained on the home front by consensus, he says, with serious consequences for anyone who disrespects the law. As a result, he says, the crime rate is extremely low and women can walk the streets alone at night without fear of being harmed.

The public is reminded, however, that low crime doesn't mean no crime and that vigilance is a civic responsibility. With temperatures between 26 C and 31 C most days, the weather is quite a contrast to Newfoundland, Samuelson says. "Fortunately, it rains frequently, which makes it much more comfortable." The food industry is also second to none in Singapore, Samuelson says. "Every nation on Earth seems to be represented in the food industry. You can enjoy any kind of delicious food at any price and in any locale, whether it's sky dining in a cable car overlooking the harbour, sitting in a cafe alongside

the Singapore River, or sampling local delicacies at your neighbourhood hawker centre."

Samuelson says his wife Maureen has also settled into her new life.

She also finds the people - who bow frequently and smile often - open and kind, he says.

"We've been made so welcome and formed so many personal friendships with local Singaporeans as well as other

ex-pats that we feel very much at home, yet very much a part of the exciting adventure that is Singapore."

It's an adventure that Samuelson and his wife will savour for at least another year-and-a-half.

*This article was reprinted with the permission of Danette Dooley*

## CHAG SAMEACH



*To all our Donors, Friends  
and Families during  
the Passover festivities*



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## REPORT FROM THE ROCK

BY CLAIRE FRANKEL-SALAMA

MMMM.....I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER TASTED A HAMANTASCH AS DELISH AS THOSE MADE BY BONNIE LEYTON THIS YEAR – FULL OF FIGS, PRUNES AND WINE. Definitely a gourmet version. And what an evening! Barely any snow, following several days of spring sunshine! Having just arrived from a month in Gainesville, Florida where my husband and I spent part of his sabbatical, I felt truly at home and thankful not to be buried under a Purim snowstorm. On the other hand, we had been warmly welcomed by the members and leaders of Beth Israel in Gainesville, a vibrant and extremely active egalitarian Conservative synagogue and we do miss our new friends in that lovely university town.

This winter started fairly late, just around Chanukah. Our party, unimpeded by the usual North Atlantic blizzards, took place on December 28th. Following a great supper featuring fresh latkes,

games and singing contests, we lit the full Chanukiyah and chanted the familiar blessings marking yet another year of freedom. We were pleased to welcome Dr. Noah and Laura Ditkofsky, new to St. John's from Toronto, and Daniel Salama, home from McGill. We were also pleased to see Dr. David and Christine Wright before their trip down south.

The following week we held a Kiddush luncheon following Shabbat services to honour Ernie Mauskopf on his birthday. Ernie has been reading the Torah and leading services for many years at Beth El, and we wish him many more years of good health and strength. In fact, he was in great form as he read the Megillat Esther on Purim this past Monday. Yasher Koach!

This past winter we had an opportunity to honour another of our members, former synagogue president Sidney Epstein z"l. Sid had been very active in the community at large and was involved in many philanthropic activities. His tremendous efforts in raising funds for the Elaine Dobbin Autism Centre were recognized at a reception with the unveiling of a picture and plaque in the presence of his widow, Maisie. We are very proud of his accomplishments and miss his presence at Shul terribly. Should you be in St. John's,



*Chanukah party at Beth El Synagogue*

the Autism Centre has a wonderful restaurant that is open for lunch with fresh vegetables and herbs grown in the greenhouse as part of their programme.

We have had several significant educational activities as well. I had the pleasure of visiting a Grade two class at Roncalli Elementary School before Chanukah. After we went through the story of the Macabees, played games and sang, the girls' choir, headed by Ayla Rouah, daughter of David and Genia Rouah, stood up and regaled me with several rounds of "O Chanukah, O Chanukah". Tears came to my eyes as I listened to that familiar tune in its unlikely location in the middle of the North Atlantic.

The following month two French Immersion classes from MacDonald Drive Junior High visited the synagogue

*continued*



*Rouah family at Purim party, NL Top: Chanukah party at Beth El Synagogue, bottom right: Claire Frankel Salama teaching a class at Roncalli Elementary school, NL about Chanukah*



*Claire Frankel Salama teaching a class at Roncalli Elementary school, NL about Chanukah*

WHILE SPRING IS FAST APPROACHING, AND OUR WINTER HAS NOT BEEN TOO HARSH, WE REALIZE THAT WINTER WILL STILL HAVE "THE LAST LAUGH" BY SENDING ONE OR TWO MORE SNOWSTORMS OUR WAY. IN THE MEANTIME, HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR HAVURA'S EVENTS SINCE THE LAST ARTICLE.

Before I begin, did you know that Frommers has listed the 100th Anniversary of Tel Aviv and The 100th Anniversary of the First Successful Expedition to the North Pole (Newfoundland Captain Bob Bartlett being one of the main players) as two of this year's ten key global anniversaries? More at [www.frommers.com/articles/5828.html](http://www.frommers.com/articles/5828.html).

Chanukah: We had our Chanukah party on the first night. The week before

there was a latke making party at the **Bennetts'** when forty three pounds of potatoes were used. Believe it or not, all the latkes were eaten at the party. The klezmer band was our main entertainment. Some Havura members joined in with their instruments and we spent the evening eating, playing dreidel, singing and dancing. The children had ample space to run around and dance. We had lovely table prizes made by **Diane Siegel**. Great jobs were done by **Elizabeth Malischewski** in organizing the event, **Inbal Bahar** in organizing the children's activities and several other members who helped make the evening a success.



*Purim celebration*

**Religious Social Action Coalition:** This coalition of virtually all religions in Newfoundland and Labrador held a public meeting in January at which Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, and Hindu spokespeople met with three of Newfoundland's MPs to urge Parliament to pass a "trickle up" stimulus plan, rather than the more typical "trickle

*continued on page 38*

## REPORT FROM THE ROCK - CONTINUED

for the afternoon. After a quick introduction to Jewish holidays, life cycle, the synagogue and the Torah, the students were introduced to the symbols of Kashrut. They were quite amazed to find out that so many of the products they regularly consume are indeed Kosher.

These past few months we have been busy organizing the Holocaust Memorial which will be held on April 26th at the INCO centre at the University. Admirably chaired by Dr. Barbara Grandy, the committee has been meeting frequently and is well on its way. In addition to the 300 or so guests, we look forward to welcoming the students participating in the Asper Foundation programme for human rights who will be traveling to Washington, D.C. in May.

Well, the memory of those exquisite Hamantaschen can mean only one thing - one month until Pesach, the most challenging holiday for small communities. Dominion has again stepped up to the plate, thanks to the efforts of Shimon Wilansky. We plan to hold our second annual Community Seder on the first night, complete with a full Kosher turkey dinner and wine. Not only should we ask, "Ma Nishtanah?" - what is different about this night,



*Megillah reading by Ernie Mauskopf, accompanied by Chief Messod and Crocodile Mike, NL Purim celebration*

but also what is the same, and what do we share with the Atlantic, with Gainesville and with all the other Jewish communities, both large and small, across the world.

down" plan. The event launched a signature campaign that collected 7,000 signatures on a petition that has been presented to Jack Layton and will soon be presented to Michael Ignatieff and the Prime Minister.

**Rally for Peace:** In early January, The Muslim Students' Association of Memorial University and the St. John's Campaign Against War coalition joined forces to co-sponsor a rally in favour of peace for those in Gaza and the West Bank. The Executive Director of this group sent out the press release using his title of President of Memorial Graduate Student Union which caused concern as it seemed that he was promoting this rally on behalf of the graduate students which was not the case. Included in the rally was a United Church Minister who also spoke. **Rob and Shari Ritter, Susanne Gulliver**, president of the MUN Jewish students group as well as several other Jewish students attended the rally to monitor it. Havura member Rob Ritter has spoken with the local Imam, with whom we have good relations, about the pending gathering. The Imam mentioned to Rob that he had told the students to focus on the issue of cease fire. Rob and Shari met with several concerned Jewish students during this time to discuss how to handle uncomfortable situations, should they arise.

**Friends:** Last October, several Havura members attended Jerusalem Day at Foxtrap Pentecostal Church where Judith Yoel, sister of a Havura member **Katherine Side**, spoke about her life in Israel and church members spoke about their love for Israel and the Jewish people. This March, a dozen members

from the church attended a Friday night Havura Shabbat Service and presented members with several copies of the Tanakh.

**Holocaust Memorial Service:** Havura members are working with Beth



*Purim celebration*

El Synagogue in organizing and participating in this event in April which is usually very well attended by the general public, especially representatives from other religions.

**Purim:** Purim started with a hamantashen making party with help from our youngest members during their Sunday school session. Parents, children and others made hamantashen together and then Hebrew teacher **Inbal Bahar** told the story of Purim to the enthralled young group. It was an enjoyable couple of hours for all of us. On Purim eve we held a community meal provided by the Havura. **Brad Gibb, Lisa Bendzsa** and **Ruth Noel** did the planning and shopping and they and the **Bahar-Koubis** prepared the food. **Elizabeth**

**Siegel** and **Gil Shalev** conducted a wonderful service and cajoled several people to help read the Magilla. **Baja Broches** did a great job modernizing the English translation this year. Everyone liked her style and it was very easy to understand. There was much merriment and lots of noise, especially when the name "Haman" was mentioned. A good time was had by all.

**Media:** The St. John's Telegram gave Purim wonderful coverage. The Saturday before the holiday, the food section had an article about hamantashen with recipes provided by **Nancy Bennett**. On the first day of Purim there was an article about the holiday, its history and traditions

written by **Angelique Myles**, along with a beautiful photo of Angelique overlooking Jerusalem on her trip to Israel last summer. We have had many compliments on both articles.

**Mazeltovs:** **Sharon Koubi** has been accepted as a resident in family medicine at Memorial University and got his Canadian citizenship in January.

We wish all of you a joyous Passover.

If you are coming our way, please contact us via e-mail [info@havura.org](mailto:info@havura.org) or call 834-7866.



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# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND COMMUNITY NEWS

BY DARRYL BLOOM

WELL, AS I TOLD YOU ALL, IN THE LAST EDITION OF "SHALOM" THE CHANUKAH PARTY WAS BEING HELD AT MY HOUSE; WELL, IT WAS HELD; AND BY ALL ACCOUNTS, IT WAS A SUCCESS. At least sixty people representing the PEIJC crammed into my small house. Jews and non-Jews, Russians, and Canadians, Burmese, and Indonesians, Israelis, and Scandinavians- it was a real "Smorgasbord" And so was the dining table; there was loads and loads of super foods prepared by our resident chefs, and we all ate well. Many participants brought their homemade wine and other spirits, and one could have thought that it was a Purim party. Well, that was the first candle of Chanukah, and the children

lit the Chanukia and sang their prayers beautifully.

The last night of Chanukah was marked by a smaller-more intimate group-at Rosalie Simone's residence. Since this was a smaller group, we were able to play some Chanukah trivia games, and see how much we all knew (or didn't know) about the "Festival of Lights". Rosalie, Don, thanks again for a wonderful evening.

Tu Bishvat was celebrated by a small group with a big appetite-boy did we eat. When great cooks come together, masterpieces can be made from the fruits and barley used to celebrate the birthday of the trees- and indeed, masterpieces were created. This Seder was held at the residence of Leslee Sacks, who has given so much to the community; the Seder was led by the eminent Professor Joseph Naylor,

who continuously enthralled us with his knowledge of the Torah.

And speaking of Professor Naylor, how can we not write about his weekly Torah class, which is continuously being enlarged. In fact; about two months ago, Mr. Winston McGregor was appointed

moderator to control the different streams of thought emerging at once from this dynamic group of vocal intellectuals-and the battle between the psychologists and the philosophers continue. We had our Seudat Purim at the Torah class; the Hamatashens were great; we made it a special class, studying the origins of the celebration of Purim.

Recently, the town of Stratford had a festival representing the different ethnic groups on the island. The Jewish community was there, and Leslee manned of table, presenting the baked goods she prepared, as well as the latkes of Evelyn Feldman, and the Challah of Heather Evans. The Chinese in particular loved Leslee's honey cake, and I loved their dumplings.

At the moment the community is hard at work preparing for the "Seder" like busy little bees they are arranging special shipments of food from Toronto, and arranging a hall for the festivities, gathering and exchanging their Passover recipes, and thinking who will be best to lead the "Seder" -Professor Naylor does not drive on Yom Tov.

Anyways, right now I am talking with Matthew, the AJC Youth Coordinator, planning an event for this coming May, maybe a Shabbaton, maybe a Klezmer concert; at the moment it is uncertain, but what is certain is that we are going to put on a great event to tell you about in the next issue of "Shalom".

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THE FREDERICTON JEWISH COMMUNITY HAS NOT LET THE SNOWIEST WINTER IN YEARS SLOW US DOWN. WE'VE HAD A WONDERFUL WINTER FILLED WITH ACTIVITIES. In January, we welcomed Rabbi Ellis to town with a community Shabbat dinner at the synagogue, prepared by Lea Adilman



*Josh Stephens at Purim party*

and her team of volunteers. Soon after, the synagogue was host to a community get-together featuring local musician Cesar Morales, who played guitar and sang for the guests. We welcomed March with a sleighride, and a week later it was Purim! Shelley and Joshua Stephens, Albina Lazarev and Or Wengrowicz made

hamantaschen that were served at our Purim party at the shul. The children and the young at heart made Purim masks, led by Aya Wengrowicz. On Purim, Arnold Chippin read aloud the entire megillah. Thanks to all the volunteers who made these events a success.

Next, we're looking forward to Pesach. President Louis Budovitch, sisterhood president Shelley Stephens and the Fredericton Jewish community wish everyone a chag sameach.



*Fredericton sleighride: Twenty-five adults and children from the Fredericton Jewish Community enjoyed a sleighride and hot chocolate around the fire at Oakland Farm Lodge, New Maryland on Sunday March 1. The afternoon was also an occasion to celebrate the first birthday of Inna and Leon Gimelshtein's daughter Michelle. The families who participated were: Besner, Brown, Francis, Gimelshtein, Grobe, Israeli, Kaplun, Lazarev, Lupu, Rosenfeld, Stav and Wengrowicz.*



*Inna Gimelshtein and daughter Michelle*



*Joseph Samuel at Purim party*



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## SHALOM FROM MONCTON

BY NANCY COHEN

CHEDER CLASSES ARE GOING WELL AT TIFERES ISRAEL, THANKS TO OUR VERY DEDICATED VOLUNTEER TEACHERS, JOAN SICHEL, FRANCIS WEIL, JACK HALLER AND IVAN COHEN. TEN CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 5 AND 12 ATTEND CLASSES EVERY SECOND SUNDAY.

There is also a Shabbat Junior congregation every other week and the students are encouraged to attend Friday evening services.

Purim was celebrated with a beautiful Megillah reading by Matthew Leibl. He warmed the children up with a little rehearsal before the reading. They



Michael Makarov at Purim celebration

quickly proved they were up to the task of obliterating Haman's name and kept it up until the very end. We also enjoyed a dinner of cholent and hamantashen prepared by Sisterhood. Hats off to Ruth Fuller, Olivier Weil and Betty Druckman for their dedication and hard work in preparing for this event and ensuring its success.

In recognition of Organ Transplant Week, our congregation will host the New Brunswick Organ Transplant Association (Moncton Chapter) at a forum to learn about and discuss the "Jewish Perspective on Organ Transplant". The guest speaker will be Rabbi David Ellis.

Mazel tov to: Nicole Druckman and Jack Haller on the birth of their son Samuel Isaac. Congratulations to big brother Joshua and grandmother Betty Druckman. Annette and Oscar Coleman on the birth of their granddaughter Serena Naomi. The proud parents are Elissa and Mat Dillon. Serena is a sister for Marissa. Mya Rinzler and Marc Hachey on the birth of their baby girl Liv. A granddaughter for Harold and Roxie Rinzler.



Purim Chulent

Harry Brody on his engagement to Shari Walfish.

On behalf of the Moncton community I wish everyone a happy and healthy Passover.



Ladies Purim Night

## SAINT JOHN JEWISH COMMUNITY

BY SUSAN ISAACS-LUBIN

WITH SPRING ON ITS WAY (FINALLY!) AFTER THIS LONG SNOWY WINTER, OUR COMMUNITY ALSO SEEMS TO BE AWAKENING AND BLOSSOMING.



New building

Our snowbirds are arriving home, and we are having an easier time getting regular Minyanim on Shabbat. Our Museum is busy preparing for their new season - in our brand new building. This requires more work than usual, as hanging exhibits and displays is a whole new experience in totally new space.

They are also gearing up for Holocaust Memorial Day on April 27th, which will be the first public event in our new building. Our guest speaker this year is Elly Gotz from Toronto. His story is unique as both he and his parents all survived the camps.

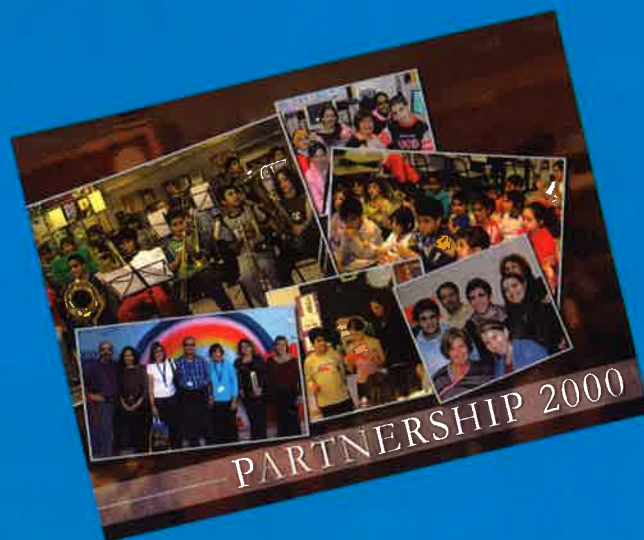
Purim was celebrated with Moishe Granik reading the Megillah and everyone



New building

participating with noisemakers, and enjoying Hamentaschen after.

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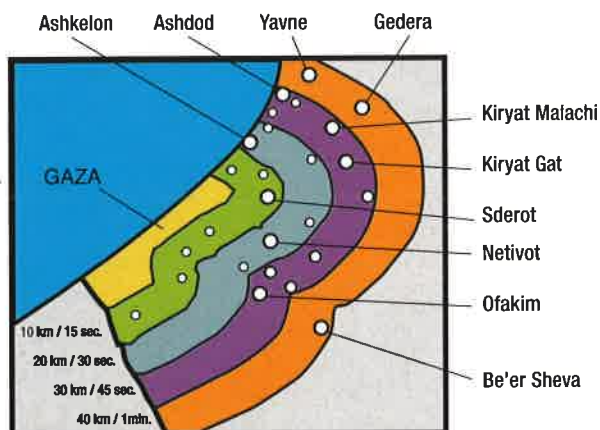
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