

SHALOM! שלום

Fall 2010 Vol 35 No. 2

Tishre 5771

SHANAH TOVAH!



Margarita Tsvaygenbaum, The Way That Leads To..., (acrylic on canvas)

IN THIS ISSUE

- › FEATURE: P2K COAST TO COAST IN HALIFAX
- › AROUND OUR REGION
- › RABBI'S CORNER



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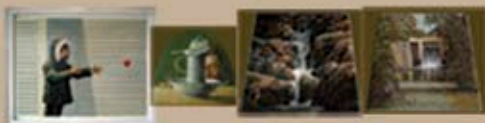
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Cover Artist: Margarita (Tsvaygenbaum) Fainshtein

Margarita (Tsvaygenbaum) Fainshtein originally from the Ukraine received her Bachelor's degree in 2006 from the University of Haifa, Israel and immigrated to Halifax, NS in September 2009 with the support of the Halifax Jewish community. Since her arrival in Halifax she has taught art to children in the Jewish community, at the public libraries, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and several community centres. Locally her work has been exhibited at Nocturne 2009 and FRED's Art Map exhibition. International exhibitions include Israel, England and the USA.

שלום!

President: Howard Conter

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NOTE TO OUR READERS

Our Atlantic Jewish community is losing more and more members as the years go on.

In the past, Shalom has printed stories of regional community members who have passed away.

While we try to acknowledge the major contributions of many of our late friends and family members, we request that you inform Shalom of passings of which we may be unaware so we may recognize these individuals.

Shalom's editorial staff reserves the right to determine the length of memorial pieces to be printed in the magazine.

Written articles are the opinion of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the AJC.



President's Message

by Howard Conter

We Atlantic Canadians have been spoiled by an amazing summer so far, the best weather that we have seen in years and hopefully relaxing times for all of us who appreciate this very special part of the world in which we live.

There is still some time left before the onslaught of return to school, the opening of universities and the start of Rosh Hashanah. It is my sincere hope that we all get to enjoy it to the fullest. As we all have the chance to slow things down a little bit, the world and its issues continue at full speed around us. Unfortunately the positive vibes of summer in Atlantic Canada does not alter world events or our situation as Jews in the Maritimes or Jewry worldwide.

Our concerns both locally and internationally are still front and center. In our Maritime community we face the final closure of another community synagogue; this time in Glace Bay. We have read the tributes to the synagogue and the Glace Bay community in all our local and even national publications. We have heard all the quotes and old tales told on our local and national media. Fitting tributes all but the final meaning is yet another strong and vibrant Jewish congregation has ceased to function. Once again a small town has lost its Jewish identity a further victim of the Jewish move to the center of the country. Unfortunately this is a story we hear more and more from small communities across all of Canada. It is a very strong and worrisome trend. This needs to serve as an eye-opener to all of us who still live in our Atlantic Canadian Jewish communities, that if we want our identity to continue, we have to make a real effort to preserve it. We have to work at it. We have to do our best to ensure our place on the map can continue as a strong source of Jewish life. This is something to think about as we move towards another New Year.

As we continue to enjoy summer and maybe take a little time off from our day to day hassles and worries, please take a moment to think about Israel, our homeland. This summer, like most summers our friends in Israel have not had the ability to relax in their summer. Ongoing missile attacks from Gaza and even the Egyptian Sinai continue on a very regular basis. And last month the ambush of IDF soldiers inside Israel's northern border as they performed very routine maintenance. As you are aware the IDF with the approval and appropriate notification of UNIFIL and their Lebanese neighbors, went on a mission to trim trees that were obstructing their view. Trees that were inside Israel's own border. The IDF troops were fired upon and a commander was killed. This commander was Lt. Colonel Dov Harari age 45. He was on what was to be his last military reserve mission after 27 years of service to the IDF as a regular soldier and as a reservist. He has left behind a wife and 4 children. He was killed in an ambush inside Israel while leading other soldiers in basic maintenance. Things unfortunately have not changed for our Israeli partners.

As we rest and enjoy our summer our brethren in Israel must work every day to maintain the sovereignty of the State of Israel.

For this goal they cannot rest and neither can we as Diaspora Jews in general and members of the Atlantic Jewish Community specifically. Let us take the necessary steps to ensure that we do our utmost to support both the strength of our local community and the State of Israel.

As all of us approach the end of a beautiful Maritime summer I ask everyone in the region to recommit to making our local and world Jewish society that much more vital. One very unique way to achieve this is to join our Maritime Mission to Israel this October and experience in person its true beauty and strength. (information available at the AJC office).

From Karen, Jenna, Adam and myself we wish all of you the happiest, healthiest and most prosperous of New Years. Let's make it a great one for the Atlantic Provinces and the State of Israel.



CONSULAT GÉNÉRAL D'ISRAËL
CONSULATE GENERAL OF ISRAEL
קונסוליה כללית של ישראל



Montreal, August 16, 2010

Dear friends,
Shalom,

I am honored to present my best wishes to the Jewish community of Atlantic Canada on the occasion of Rosh Hashanah.

As we enter the New Year, the State of Israel continues to face external challenges and significant obstacles in our quest for peace. Israelis remain as determined as ever to seek peaceful and fruitful relations with all peoples in our region.

As Jews, we are privileged to share a rich history and heritage that has spanned the course of many millennia. The solidarity that ties our people, whether in the homeland or the Diaspora, is as crucial as ever as we prepare to confront the challenges of tomorrow.

On behalf of the State of Israel and my colleagues at the Consulate General in Montreal, I would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy 5771, while thanking your community for your strong engagement and attachment for Israel.

May this year bless Am Yisrael with peace, prosperity and unity.

Shana tova!

Yoram Elron
Consul General of Israel

From the Desk of

Jon Goldberg, Executive Director

Two Decades Later

It was twenty years ago in September of 1990 that I came to be employed as a “programmer” at the Atlantic Jewish Council. Since then, we have produced over 75 issues of *Shalom*. I guess you might say this is an anniversary issue for me.

I want to welcome our readers to the High Holiday issue of *Shalom* for 5771. This is our biggest edition ever, and I hope you will find it both informative and interesting. The *Shalom* magazine has been published by the Atlantic Jewish Council for over 30 years. It allows the Jewish community of Atlantic Canada, former members of our community, and friends of our community to be in touch and stay in touch with Jewish life here in our region. Our list of subscribers (well over 1000) extends from Israel to over 100 communities in Canada and the United States. My friends, in a job where most of what we do is intangible, it is a pleasure to once in a while meet one of our readers who tells me how much they enjoy *Shalom* magazine. I would like to congratulate Edna LeVine and Joel Jacobson for their efforts and dedication in bringing a quality product to our readership.

Another sultry summer August day winds its way through the hourglass of my life here at the AJC. It has been a terrific season, weather-wise, for everyone in Atlantic Canada. Can you believe that Halifax has been HOT on a good many of the days over the past six weeks? Camp Kadimah, I have been told, has experienced 38 out of 42 days of sunshine. They had a terrific summer but I was personally sad to say farewell to Joanna Wexler, who served our community in various capacities over the last 15 years, her last five years as Camp director. Joanna began at the AJC office in 1995 as a programmer and



went to camp her first summer as Shira instructor; now, she is the mother of two wonderful children, has her accounting certificate, and a husband, Ezra. They are both active members of the Jewish community here in Halifax, and I wish her and her family success in their future endeavors. Joanna, I will miss you.

However, just as I was sad to say farewell to Joanna, I am delighted to welcome Jared Goldlust as the new director of Kadimah. Jared and I go back many years, through his time as a camper and staff member at camp, to his involvement with the Jewish Students' Association here at Dalhousie, where he became president and did a great job. He then went on to Brandeis in Boston and recently completed his Master's degree specializing in Jewish Community Service. He will be setting up an office in Toronto in September, and this augurs well for the future of our camp.

This summer also saw the AJC bid farewell to Mark David as a member of our staff. Mark has spent over a year with us as UJA Administrator and also dealt with Israel advocacy and community relations. I know he will be a success at whatever he chooses for a vocation and

that he will always retain connections to our community. For me personally, I have known him for 35 years and I will miss his advice and presence here in our office. The good news is that Mark assured me that he would be available to handle any CRC situations for which I need his assistance.

Since our last issue, the Yom HaShoah programs were once again very successful throughout the region. You will have an opportunity to read about this in this issue. My congratulations to everyone involved in these most important programs. Holocaust education is a major function of the AJC. We are constantly striving to do as much as we can with very limited resources, both human and financial. The Yom HaShoah programs reached thousands of our fellow Atlantic Canadians every year. Again, special thanks to the survivors in our region who give up their time and energy to speak to hundreds of students and citizens every year. Izzy Unger, David Korn, Helena Jockel, Francis Weil and of course the indomitable Philip Riteman: may they go from strength to strength.

This past year has seen immigration and settlement as a major component of our activity here in Halifax. Over the last year and a half, we have been joined by 31 new families, with over 50 children. Again, my thanks to Edna and our immigration committee for their hard work and diligence in trying to integrate these newcomers into our Jewish community. Integration, of course, is the key word, and has proven to be a challenging prospect for all of us involved. I am pleased to say that the vast majority of the newcomers have found employment. Some have bought homes, some children have gone to our Hebrew School, some to Camp Kadimah, and I look forward to working with the newcomers and members of our

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

community to further integration and settlement this coming year. I would like to also congratulate the immigration committees in Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John for their effort in bringing newcomers to their respective Jewish communities. JIAS has assisted us in creating a settlement infrastructure and helped us when problems have arisen. To all the Atlantic Canadians who have helped with the settlement for our newcomer families: I want to thank you personally and let you know that there is more to be done and more families coming.

Over the last two decades, we as a region have suffered from lean years and good years as far as Rabbinical presence is concerned in our communities. This past year, we have been fortunate to have Rabbi Goldman in Fredericton, Rabbi and Mrs. Yagod in Moncton, Rabbi and Mrs. Ari Sherbill in Halifax, along with Cantor Ari Isenberg and Chabad Lubavitch, also in Halifax. Our regional chaplain, Rabbi Ellis, services Cape Breton and also visits Yarmouth, Newfoundland, and PEI when required. I want to thank the Rabbis throughout the region for their cooperation, assistance, and advice.

Our United Jewish Appeal campaign will begin next month. We look forward to bringing some excellent speakers to the region, and I want to welcome Daniel Stern as director of Campaign and Regional Community Services. Dan will be visiting most of your communities over the next two months. Perry Romberg, who now is the director of Financial Resource Development, will also be visiting the region this fall. Please remember that your gift to the UJA campaign touches lives, near and far. The AJC, through UJA, encourages Jewish continuity in Atlantic Canada, stands with the people of Israel, fights Anti-Semitism, stands for Canadian and world Jewry, and invests in the next generation with national and Israel-based programs. Over the past 11 years we have been involved in the Partnership 2000 (P2K) program as a member of the Coast-to-Coast communities. Atlantic Canada has led in giving to the Galilee Panhandle.

When your local canvasser calls, we ask that you respond to the challenges that we face in Israel, at home here in Canada, and around the Jewish world. Please join us in living generously!

In this issue, you will see an ad for our upcoming UJA/Atlantic Region Mission to Israel, October 27- November 4. We have a few seats left and a great group already committed. If you want a special experience, please call for information.

Over the last two decades here at the Atlantic Jewish Council, I have had the opportunity to work with some great lay volunteers and some wonderful staff. That continues today, so I guess my luck is still running. To our management committee - Howard Conter, Shulamith Medjuck, Kathy Zilbert, Tim Margolian, Victor Goldberg, Mark Rosen, Michael Pink, Jack Haller, and Ruth Chippin - who really drive the organization, and suffer through my rare idiosyncrasies: "Todah Rabah". I want to thank Bill Chernin, Director of Campus Services, for his hard work and loyalty over the past year. My appreciation also goes out to Svetlana Ratchinski, one of our newcomers, who joined our staff as bookkeeper/controller less than a year ago and has been a wonderful addition. To the co-op students from Dalhousie and everyone else who helps keep our office going, my thanks for your assistance. And to Edna LeVine, whom I mentioned a number of times above, I also want to thank her for her wonderful work on Holocaust education and her involvement with various human rights events on


behalf of the AJC.

Well, my friends, as you can see by the picture above, there I am, in Dodger blue, at the new Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, early in July. That outfit did not win me too many friends that day, but I enjoyed the game! I have been a Dodger fan since 1955, and this was my first visit to the new Yankee Stadium, with my nephew Eric, whom I was visiting at NYC. It was too hot! No more day games in the summer for me: 98 degrees. The baseball season is winding down, with just a few more weeks to NFL and hockey. For a sports fan, September and October are great times. I want to wish all our readers Shanah Tovah, a happy and healthy 5771 for you and your families.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our AJC 17th Biennial Convention, November 20-21st, 2010 in Halifax.

May the coming year be a year of peace and prosperity for our community, our country, and Kol Israel.


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of Directors and Staff
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families and friends a
very healthy & happy*



Shana Tova
5771

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From the Desk of

Edna LeVine, Director of Community Engagement

Philip Riteman has always been exactly honest recounting his experiences during the Holocaust. With determined commitment he frequently warns against the dangers of complacency. Throughout the year, with the support of his wife Dorothy, he works tirelessly to fulfill speaking engagements throughout the Atlantic Provinces. This fall, Flanker Press, NL will publish his biography, ensuring his story will continue to educate to benefit society.

Also this fall, as the Azrieli Foundation prepares to launch the third series in their Holocaust Survivors Memoirs Series, two manuscripts by Holocaust survivors David Korn and Helena Jockel are being edited for future publication in their series of Canadian Holocaust Survivor Memoirs. The inclusion of their first hand testimony will enrich our knowledge of this part of our history.

Provincial Nominee Programs have facilitated immigration to this region and the communities of Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John and Halifax all have established local immigration committees to increase their Jewish population. This summer I coordinated a Maritime Immigration Seminar, in Moncton, for communities to share their immigration information. Settlement and retention were the main priorities and keynote speaker Mila Voihanski, Executive Director, JIAS Canada, provided her expertise and knowledge in this area. Further details about the seminar can be



Maritime Immigration Seminar in Moncton, r to l: Edna LeVine, Victoria Volkanova, Mila Voihanski, Sydelle Grobe, Francis Weil and Igor Kaplun

found in the Newcomers section.

I participated in a Roundtable this spring, hosted by Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff, which was highlighted by discussions on the talent and skills newcomers bring to our community. The wide range of cultural communities in Atlantic Canada provides an opportunity to attract and successfully retain new immigrants in this region and there was a consensus on the need to retain and develop new strategies for successful retention.

With the purpose of understanding and addressing the needs of newcomers to Halifax this summer the AJC welcomed Irina Epelbeym as a part-time Community Services Worker.

Yom Ha'atzmaut in Halifax this year was organized by the Newcomers Program Committee and their Israeli style dinner celebration was outstanding. This summer a community blueberry picking program was organized to the enjoyment of all the participants.

In the spring I attended a workshop on social media for non-profit organizations. Social online networks have broadened communication and are highly accessible, encouraging participation. Information from this workshop resulted in updates on the AJC website, where you will find links on our homepage (www.theajc.ns.ca) to join the AJC facebook group and other social media sites. We have also included a link to a secure online site for donations to specific AJC programs. Updates to our website will continue throughout the year as we utilize technology to link our communities, share information and create a more user-friendly site.

Planning is under way for Holocaust Education Week in Halifax (October 25 – November 7). This year King's College, the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, Pier 21, the Azrieli Foundation, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and the Nova Scotia Teachers



Guest speaker David Demian, centre, meets with Edna LeVine and Mark David prior to the Yom HaShoah program in Halifax

Union continue as partners. Information on programs will be available on our website in late September.

This summer I had the pleasure to learn from Philip Riteman how to cook Gefilte Fish and Pickled Salmon, which he learned by watching his mother and aunts prepare. Below is his recipe for Pickled Salmon.

Philip Riteman's Pickled Salmon

Brine Ingredients:

3 1/2 cups white vinegar
8 cups water
3 T salt
1 cup white sugar
1 handful pickling spices
1 handful whole black peppercorns
4 medium onions, skin removed, halved then cut in medium thin slices

Fish:

2 kg salmon fillets

Brine Preparation:

In a large stock pot over moderately high heat combine the vinegar, water and salt. Bring to a rapid boil then add the sugar, spices, peppercorns and bay leaves. Reduce heat, add the onions and simmer, covered partially while preparing the fish.

Preparation:

Remove skin and slice salmon fillets into 2" strips then wash well.

Uncover and return brine to high heat and boil. Add fish and boil on high heat for 5 minutes then reduce heat and continue to cook for 10 minutes. Cool completely and transfer to containers.

From the Desk of

Mark David, UJA Campaign Administrator

Editor's note: Mark David was a valued addition to our office. We wish him the best in his future endeavors and look forward to him contributing to the AJC.

This is my last dispatch from the UJA Administrator's Desk, as I left the AJC at the end of June. I wish to thank all those who donated to the UJA Annual Campaign, and encourage them to continue to do so. If you are not a donor, then please consider making even a nominal donation on an annual basis – I believe it is important that everybody should contribute in some manner to the costs of running our Jewish communities and supporting the State of Israel. I particularly want to thank all the people in all our communities who helped in the conduct of the Campaign – they are vital to its continued success, and I hope that they remain involved. Thanks also to Perry Romberg and to the UJA staff in Toronto – and best wishes to Dan Stern as Perry's successor.

The UJA Campaign will now be structured to be covered by both our Halifax and Toronto office. I have been involved in the transformation process, and believe that for various reasons, it will result in a more efficient campaign, if only in an internal sense. I will remain associated with the UJA Campaign in a volunteer capacity, and will also continue my work regarding Israel advocacy (you can check out my blog at <http://supportisraelnow.blogspot.com>).

I enjoyed working with my colleagues at the AJC, and wish them the best. They work very hard and always appreciate support from the community – especially expressed in terms of attending community events.

In closing and in particular, I want to thank Jon Goldberg. We have been friends for decades and I worked for him from 1975-1982, when he was in the retail business. I



can tell you that unless you have worked at the AJC on a day to day basis, you likely have little idea of the extremely limited resources that Jon, as Executive

Director of the AJC, has to work with, the constant tug from all directions upon those resources, and the numerous issues that continually arise for which there is simply no answer in some "Jewish Executive Director" manual. I believe that Jon is the longest serving Jewish Federation Executive Director in Canada. His knowledge and experience reflect that and are irreplaceable. He works very hard for the interests of all the Jewish communities in Atlantic Canada (including the many university students on our campuses) and for the State of Israel. I enjoyed working for him again, and I want to thank him for his friendship and leadership.

Rosh HaShanah 5771

Throughout the tefillot/prayers during Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, a short phrase is repeated many times – *"Repentance, Prayer and Charity cancel the stern decree"* ותשובה ותפילה וצדקה מעבירין את רע הגזרה. The Rosh HaShanah-Yom Kippur period, called the Yamim Noraim (Days of Awe) stress three core principles of Jewish faith, practice and tradition. *Repentance* refers to introspection, personal evaluation of one's relationship with G-d, one's fellow man and with how one lives one's life daily. *Prayer* refers to personal communication with G-d and with one's perspective of the world and its source. *Charity* refers to man's responsibility for and his behaviour with his fellow human beings and to the world at large. While reflection and prayer are highly personal and subjective, *charitable acts*, acts of kindness (chesed) and social responsibility are clear and simple – lend a hand, lend an ear, be caring, recognize that individual well-being is tied to communal/societal health – be charitable and act charitably by supporting those services that assist those in need (whether physical, emotional, spiritual, young and old). The message is that we strengthen ourselves by strengthening others.

With the coming New Year we at United Israel Appeal of Canada hope you will continue to support our community welfare programs, right here in Canada, in the FSU and in Israel.

My very best wishes to you and your family

for a Healthy, Sweet and Happy New Year 5771 – תשע"א
Perry Romberg, Director, Financial Resource Development,
United Israel Appeal of Canada

P2K Coast to Coast in Halifax

by Joel Jacobson

It was the first trip to Atlantic Canada for many committee members of the P2K Coast-to-Coast partnership with the Galilee Panhandle.

Their reaction to the meetings and tours on the June 18 Halifax weekend was as positive as their discussions on the results of the long-time connection between six Canadian cities and the Atlantic region with five towns and councils from Israel's north.

"P2K was developed as a means of building bridges between the diaspora and Israeli communities," said in-coming Canadian co-chair Ron Weiss, an Ottawa physician. The Israeli co-chair, entering the second year of a three-year term, is Guy Lipkin, a businessman from Moshav Sde Eliezer, a community 150 km north of Tel Aviv.

Weiss said the Canadian contingent, representing Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Hamilton and the Atlantic Provinces, generates money, through United Israel Appeal donations, to fund projects in the Galilee.

"A few years ago, we began a major initiative to fund computer labs in Metulla elementary schools. Within a

year, they had 30 new computers, made videos, and even started a radio station where, on the floor, they painted a map of Vancouver Island, overlaid with a map of Israel, to show the similar size of each."

He said a partnership was developed with a high school whose students exchanged travel ventures with Canadian high schoolers. A dance troupe from Vancouver performed with Israeli dancers as well, he added.



Coast to Coast participants join together for their final meeting at the Prince George Hotel in Halifax

"One of our main targets has been children at risk and we've worked with philanthropic organizations and foundations to assist those," he said. "In addition, we've initiated a new medical school in Tzfat, scheduled to open in 2011."

Andrea Freedman, Toronto, national director of planning and development for UIA Canada, added, "We've narrowed our focus to three areas - building bridges, capacity building and youth and education. Projects are presented by the Galilee committee to the Coast-To-Coast committee each year, are vetted in terms of appropriateness, and decisions made. Of course, our Israeli counterparts have an essential role in guiding us."

Lipkin said the committee structure



Mark Gurvis, Liat Cohen-Raviv and Jeff Bradshaw, share a joke at the Zilbert residence during the P2K meetings held in Halifax.

in Israel has changed dramatically since P2K began. "At first, it was the mayors of the communities on the committee but two years ago, we shifted from professional (political) participation to lay leadership. There are 40 partnerships between the diaspora and Israel but ours is the only one now with lay leadership. It makes a tremendous difference as we look at the broad aspect for our region. Other partnerships are looking at our model now."

Lipkin said he has discovered the sense of Judiasm abroad. "We are thrilled when delegations come to our area, from children to teachers and educators to lay leaders. Yes, we benefit

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A view from the bridge during a tour of Camp Kadimah



Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter, second from left, addressed the P2K committee meeting, including AJC president Howard Conter, Israeli co-chair Guy Lipkin and Canadian co-chair Ron Weiss.

continued from page 7

from the funds but it also strengthens our communities (to see the caring). The projects focus on education, from youth to teaching leadership skills to mid-teens, through young adults who have completed their military service. We're working hard to keep our young people in our area rather than seeing them emigrate to larger centres."

He said his Israeli committee identifies the needs "because we live there" but the decision on what projects to undertake is made by the overall Coast-to-Coast and Israeli groups.

Kathy Zilbert of Halifax, completing her three-year term as Canadian co-chair,

says she received a connection stronger than any other volunteer group with which she's been associated. "There have been many changes, particularly the global look the Israelis have toward projects in their region, rather than concentrating on their specific communities. The move to lay leadership has ensured that. Initially, it was a Canadian-driven partnership because we raised the funds and recommended where they should be used but now, because of lay leaders, it's really taken off."

She praised Aharon Valency, mayor of Galil Elyon, who had a regional approach when he was in the partnership and stressed the need for lay leaders.

Zilbert said it's been a privilege for her to be co-chair, "coming from the smallest member of the (Canadian side of) partnership. I was welcomed by the larger communities, showing this is truly a Coast-to-Coast venture where large and small can flourish to do more for Israel."

The group spent a day touring and meeting at Camp Kadimah where dozens of children from Northern Israel have spent six-week camp experiences in the last several years.

"I never saw such a camp," Lipkin said with awe in his voice. "I can imagine what the kids go through when they get here."

He laughed. "I want to go live there."

P2K Steering Committee Meetings *June 19-21, 2010, Halifax, Nova Scotia* by Karen Conter

Summer in Nova Scotia is all about visitors, sunshine and Camp Kadimah.

Friends from Vancouver to Halifax and from the Galilee Panhandle took full advantage of those Nova Scotia splendours as Halifax and the Atlantic Jewish Council were honoured to host the annual Canadian meetings of Partnership 2000. Although it took a lot of organizing and planning, the meetings were a tremendous success during a

sun-drenched weekend of socializing and meetings.

Activities began Saturday night with a welcome dinner at the home of Howard and Karen Conter. Partnership participants and a number of local guests enjoyed an informal evening of reconnecting with old friends and meeting new ones. The evening was also an opportunity to thank outgoing National Chair, our own Kathy Zilbert, for her efforts on behalf of Partnership.

Joanna Wexler and associate director, Jared Goldlust. Morning meetings were held in the RCC and followed by lunch in the Chadar. Camp Kadimah co-chair Victor Goldberg welcomed everyone to our jewel in the woods.

Joanna gave an informal talk about Camp Kadimah and its importance in Nova Scotia and to our Partnership with the Galilee Panhandle. As part of the Geisher Chai program, Atlantic Canada has hosted a number of CITs from the

Kathy was honoured by Guy Lipkin, Israeli Co-Chair, new Canadian Co-Chair Ron Weiss of Ottawa, and Rick Schreiber of Vancouver, Kathy's predecessor.

The next morning we boarded an early bus to Camp Kadimah for our first day of meetings. We were met by director,



Coast to Coast held their first meeting at Camp Kadimah.



Andrea Freedman, National Director Planning & Development, UIA Federations Canada, chats with Kfir Maoz, Dorin Eilon-Heiber and Ifat Eilon-Heiber, during the P2K dinner.

north of Israel at Camp Kadimah so they could experience a Canadian summer camp, also giving Kadimah youth the opportunity to make new friends from the north. The following summer, Atlantic Canadian Biluim participants will visit the north and re-connect with these new friends. This program has been a huge success for over 11 years.

After lunch and more meetings, Joanna led a tour of camp and Jared conducted a team building exercise. This event brought together everyone in our group – new and veteran committee members, Israelis and Canadians, lay and professionals! It was fun, interactive and involved everyone!!

As a summer visit to Nova Scotia isn't really complete without a visit to Peggy's Cove, there was a quick visit to the lighthouse before returning to Halifax for dinner at the home of Mennie and Lynda Suissa. Former Lt. Governor of Nova Scotia, Myra Freeman, welcomed the visitors and talked about her term as the first Jewish Lt. Governor of Nova Scotia

and the sometimes difficult decisions she had to make as she balanced her position and her religious beliefs.

More meetings were held the following day at the Prince George Hotel. Our lunch guest was The Honourable Darrell Dexter, Premier of Nova Scotia, who spoke of his visit to Israel and his new-found love of the country. Meetings ended by late afternoon, enabling participants to relax and prepare for dinner, held at the home of Arthur and Kathy Zilbert.

Partnership is a unique and wonderful aspect of the United Israel Appeal. There are many organizations worldwide that allow one to be involved either by committees or fundraising. But Partnership is different. It allows us to really connect with the people and the communities we are assisting.

We find out first-hand the needs of the community, their area's problems, and decide as a group how and where we can help. At Alie Giva Elementary School, for example, we have provided an English

classroom that is located in a bomb shelter so the children can learn in an environment that is safe and comforting in time of chaos and turmoil. Recently, a large group of women, organized by Joanne Nozick of Halifax, play Mah Jong regularly throughout the year. They pay a small membership fee and directly support a warm house for women in the north of Israel.

However, the best part of Partnership is the friendships we have made over the past number of years. Traveling to Israel each fall and spending time in the north has effortlessly become more of a feeling of going to the cottage and visiting family than the typical trek to business meetings. As every organization we too are in need of more involvement from our local area. If you find you have extra time, enjoy supporting Israel and travelling please feel free to get involved.

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Campus Life

By Bill Chernin, Director of Campus Services, Atlantic Provinces

It's a challenging thing to write about what happened on campus in the summer, since not much happens on campus in the summer. I think it might be interesting for you to read about what goes on behind the scenes, in preparation for a new school year, so here you go.



By late August we have plans with the student leaders to attend their society fairs and for their first programs, on those campuses that have JSA's (Dal/Kings, Acadia, Mt. Allison). The society fairs are where many of the new Jewish students make contact with the Jewish student groups.

In Halifax it's much the same, but on a much larger scale. Arrangements are made to make the 1st year students living in residence aware of us, a program is planned for these same students, and the JSA bbq (our most attended program of the year) is also planned and waiting to happen. The JSA exec, which was elected in the Spring, will also start holding meetings, and planning. Additionally, with our Hillel Atlantic emails, we notify students of the High Holiday services across Atlantic Canada, and try to facilitate invitations for them to Holiday meals.

We also try to develop new programming opportunities and engage new students on the smaller campuses by utilizing those students we met at our Regional Shabbatons the previous Winter. For example, this year we have a student at St. Mary's who would like to organize programming there, and we can put her in touch with another new St. Mary's student who contacted us through our Hillel Atlantic website. The same is true

at Mt. Allison. Enabling these connections on small campuses is very important because they have so few Jewish students. (Whenever we make contact with a new student on a new campus, we immediately offer them leadership advice and ready-to-go programs, so that they can begin to program). During this first round of activity we also advertise our next set of programs, including the Shabbat dinners, the smoked meat dinners, the basketball league in Halifax, etc. and we welcome suggestions and involvement from all students regarding the type of programming they'd like to participate in; It's through this surveying of students across the region that we developed our Remembering Dachau to Defend Darfur program, and last year our new social justice group ROW (Repair our World) - ROW's website will be completed for September so they can start signing up new members and begin their first full year of operations. By November we begin planning our regional Shabbaton (held every January).

The name of the game, as you can see, is engagement. This past summer the national organization which funds our programming, (NJCL) re-branded itself Hillel Canada, much as we re-branded ourselves Hillel Atlantic several years ago. At their staff conference in August we will learn about various methods of engagement, through topics such as the "Art of Relationships - approaches and models," "Jewish Emerging Adults - search for meaning and mentorship," "How to Teach People with Big Questions," and "Models of Engagement." Topics

are chosen based on the experiences of our planning committee (of which I'm a member). It might also interest you to know that last year, myself and the other staff members who work alone, were organized into a team of our own, called "Emerging Campuses," which we have all found to be rewarding, in regards to our training, our problem solving, our program sharing, and our general satisfaction.

I've spoken very little about Israel advocacy, but suffice it to say that it goes forward as always, with efforts underway to arrange a speaker tour of several campuses for the fall plus a premier speaker for Halifax, the modification of our Propaganda or Education campaign, and collaboration with, and support from, our national partner, the University Outreach Committee. Our core leadership is in place for the Israel Affairs Committee. Birthright Israel trips will run in December and next summer, Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University, will visit us again this fall, along with MASA, and our community will undoubtedly diversify, strengthen, and grow this year. I hope you all enjoyed this little journey behind the scenes.

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"You hope to rise above your disease and excel."

by Jennie David

Editor's Note: Jennie David, daughter of Susan and Mark David, Halifax, had ostomy surgery on August 10th, and is recovering in Boston as she prepares to enter her sophomore year at Boston University. With her positive attitude and strong sense of academics, she is planning on taking an enhanced course load this year.

Having Crohn's meant nothing to me.

In other words, I didn't know what that meant, I had no expectations or apprehension of the future – I thought the diagnosis would bring an easy answer.

But I was wrong.

I had been 11 years old when the pain began, ripping across my preteen abdomen, cutting me in half, draining blood – but I had no idea that the pain inside would be a chronic enemy. By the end of September 2003, I was 12 years old and had been diagnosed with Crohn's Disease. The shock and denial were overpowering; I would wait by the phone, anticipating my doctor calling to tell me he had misdiagnosed me – but the phone never rang. I refused to take my medication unless my parents forced me, I cried at night thinking of how different I was from my junior high peers.

Like the slow drain of pills from a bottle, time passed slowly day by day and yet my junior high years were over before I knew it. Junior high paralleled Prednisone, my first hospitalization, and immunosuppressants. I was excited to go on the grade 9 trip with my friends, a celebration of how far we had all come. The idea of being virtually trapped on a bus for 13 hours made me anxious – no bathroom access meant the real possibility of a very public accident. I somehow survived the long ride and collapsing on the hotel bed was victory in itself. At breakfast the next morning, a teacher chaperone approached the table I was sitting at with friends and asked



me how my stomach was doing. I was embarrassed, of course, but also upset – I wanted to reply that it was my intestines not my stomach, but I just smiled. The rest of the trip brought restaurant menus that were not Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) friendly and chaperones who were oblivious that my condition might be as legitimate as a severe food allergy. While I was happy that I was able to be a part of the trip, it also made me disheartened that although I had come a long way in terms of being able to talk about my disease, the academic world was unaware and unendingly challenging to a student with IBD.

During that summer, I came across the application for the CCFC's new Youth Advisory Council (YAC). I was so passionate about raising my voice about IBD and 'coming out of the stall' and I loved the CCFC events, so I applied, penning my greatest hope was to realize the hopes of other youth with IBD. A call came one night from my excited regional director who informed me that I had been chosen and was the youngest member. I was so thrilled that I would be able to help change something.

High school was no different – a new adventure and a new challenge. My Crohn's Disease meant continuous flare-ups, maybe a three month break, but mostly a chronic state of active disease. For me, this propelled me to be upfront with all of my teachers and exposing my disease. It was hard to be open and comfortable with the topic while

still trying to express the severity and seriousness of the condition. My teachers were kind and empathetic, making the conversation less awkward and more encouraging.

I felt different than my peers because at the end of the day I was very different. I fumbled to find a way to introduce myself using anything outside of the realm of my disease – though it didn't define me, it had changed my life and the past three years. By the 10th grade, I was injecting Methotrexate, a new drug every time the last one failed. One Friday, I was at my locker with a friend who was gushing about the weekend and how excited she was. She turned me to and asked about my upcoming weekend as she packed her bag. I sighed, commenting on how I'd have to inject chemotherapy into my thigh that night, not so thrilling. I shut the locker and looked up, her mouth was open, I had inadvertently discovering the fool-proof method of silencing any teen.

Meeting the other youth on the YAC was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. I virtually knew nobody with IBD, particularly no youth. Everyone on the council was warm and smart, funny and empathetic. They were kind and patient, they instantly became my closest friends and my pseudo older siblings. It seems ridiculous to form such intense bonds in a weekend, but they understood a part of me that was untranslatable, they knew what it was like to walk in my shoes.

The first few years of moderately mild disease and intervention left me poorly prepared for the years that lay ahead. The summer between 10th and 11th grade was spent in the hospital, celebrating my 16th birthday amidst a public injection of my Methotrexate to the excitement of the nurses who were impressed I could do it myself. It made me confused about what everyone was saying – who praises a child for how well they can inject a medication? I knew I had finally crossed over into the

continued on page 12

continued from page 11

realm of the medical universe; I was just as comfortable in the hospital as I was in my own bedroom. It was an extension of my life.

I had a little over a month from my birthday in late July until the 11th grade started. I was excited and nervous – I had been elected to be on the executive of the student government and I was starting the International Baccalaureate (a college prep program) diploma program. While my teachers and guidance counselor saw my spark to learn, they hesitated on giving me the thumbs up, concerned about the immense workload and my crippling disease in combination with a nervous system pain disorder that was developing. And while it might have seemed reckless or stubborn at the time, I smiled at their insecurities and informed them I was doing the program anyway.

Any teen, regardless of illness, comes face to face with stress. However, a teen with IBD has to be that much more conscious of stress and one's reaction to it, otherwise the stress could exacerbate an already precarious situation. In part because of my previously unremarkable past with IBD, I was semi-oblivious to the devastating effects on my life, I just kept working and kept getting sick. I was unknowingly entering an unthinkable journey – my nonsensical roller coaster of trying and 'failing' every available IBD treatment.

One day in the student government room, I was venting about my illness and the immense blood loss and the obvious pain that comes with it. After a long pause, one of the guys cleared his throat and asked if I was talking about 'girl bleeding.' I laughed, assuring him that Crohn's wasn't the same as a period, but it also made me angry – why don't people know about IBD? The thought raced through my mind – there is so much left to change about how we perceive IBD. It gave me more fuel to push my work with the YAC to really make a difference.

By the 12th grade, I felt empowered by my YAC friends who went to university and had successful, happy lives, despite my deteriorating body. I landed in the

hospital three times throughout the year, each time admitted through the ER with enough blood to sink a ship. Each time the drugs didn't work, each time I was there for weeks. My teachers panicked – it was my final year of a very rigorous and intense academic program. But they had no reason to worry, I had developed a system – leaving my work in the bathroom. In all honesty I spent the vast majority of my time in the bathroom, and desperately seeking a distraction, I had books and work to fill the time. When I think about my hospitalizations that year, I initially think of the major assignments I finished. One of the most memorable was a Theatre project that I had my family helping coloring in pictures of make-up sketches as I ran back and forth to the bathroom with my IV pole and NG tube guzzling scope predatory liquid to my damaged bowels. I did work right up until they wheeled me away for the colonoscopy. That year I had many NG tubes, in and out of the hospital, a couple of PICC lines, and many needles. My NG feedbag-backpack became known as my 'snack pack' – it helped others cope with my disease that I was at ease with. I was relieved to have a physical reminder of my disease, not for myself, but for others, so that they could see and perhaps begin to understand the horrific consequences of my disease.

The 12th grade not only brings prom dresses and yearbooks – but that all important decision of what to do after high school. As a dual citizen thanks to my Mom's American roots, I had always wanted to go to university in the States. I bet if you asked me as a five year old I would have told you the same thing, and I wasn't willing to give up that dream to go to a local school for my health. I wrote my college essays from the toilet, expressing myself as vividly and heartfelt as possible. Those who knew me did not show hesitation about my desire, they knew I could do it, it was the people who didn't know me well who encouraged me to stay home and get healthy. Again, I smiled and decided to go to Boston University to achieve my new career goal of being a pediatric psychologist for chronically ill children. And, to the surprise of those who

doubted my decision to IB during high school, I graduated at the very top of my class.

Of course I was nervous about going away to school. Of course I was scared that I would get sick so far away from home. But illness or not, life is made up of probabilities and gambles and I was going to BU come rain or shine. It helped that there are so many great hospitals in the city, particularly when I ended up in the hospital during the first semester for about a week. I kept on top of my work as always, bringing books to the bathroom and emailing the professors myself – I have found that honesty and alerting them to future absences is the best policy. After I was discharged, my doctor at the BU health centre called asking if I wanted more time for assignments or such. I was offended, I was able to deal with my work, I had never taken a break handed to me and didn't plan to begin doing so. In hindsight, the doctor was trying to be supportive, which I appreciated, but

I have learned to be so independent when it comes to my disease that sometimes any advice can seem patronizing. But, as I learned, sympathy is not an attempt at patronizing, it's a bridge to understanding.

Being at BU has been the most amazing experience of my life. I had wonderful classes and professors, thoughtful people who saw me as an academic with a barrier and not a problem. I was on the Dean's List both semesters in addition to being a part of several extracurricular activities and making great friends. Yes, I did make a habit out of going to the hospital. Yes, I downed bottles and bottles of medication throughout the year. Yes, I was sick and had accidents and cried, but I also got back up and kept going. It wasn't easy, and I didn't do it alone, but – I did it.

Years ago, my English teacher got the class to write letters to our future selves. I wrote – "You hope to rise above your disease and excel." And though my wishes



were years ahead of the troubles I faced and continue to face each day, I think of the words I hoped to live by and try to live by them each day. My work with the CCFC and YAC makes me so proud, it has allowed me to see success in all areas

of life through the phenomenal people involved. My Crohn's is not a 'lunch-bag' disease – it's not one I can easily take to school, it prisons me to the bathroom and to painful and invasive procedures. However, in the words of a famous BU

mind, Crohn's taught me the following lesson: "Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."-

Mount St. Vincent Professor Recognized for Teaching Excellence

by Joel Jacobson

Denise Nevo is a humble woman. The old joke says, "She has much to be humble about" but in Denise's case she has much of which to be proud, but is unwilling to take credit for the many accomplishments she has made over the years.

An associate professor in the Department of Modern Language at Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax, Denise received the Alumnae Award for Teaching Excellence at the fall 2009 Convocation. She was nominated by her students, and, after a rigorous interview process by a committee of students, professors and alumni, was chosen from four finalists to receive the prestigious award.

Born in France 67 years ago, Denise is an accomplished professor (33 years teaching French at the Mount) who originally earned a degree in biochemistry at University of Paris before moving to Halifax with her husband, Natan Nevo, himself an accomplished teacher of Russian and a renowned artist.

Denise later gained bachelor and masters degrees in French from Middlebury College in Vermont and began teaching university level courses in 1966. She joined the Mount in 1977.

Fluent in English, French and Hebrew (she briefly lived in Israel and visits there twice a year now to visit a son, his wife and their children), and a professional Certified Translator (English-French) and Literary Translator (Hebrew-English and English-French), Denise admits she likes teaching and will miss it, if and when she becomes officially retired.



She was forced to take compulsory retirement two years ago when she turned 65 but was retained on a three-year contract, one which she hopes will be renewed when it expires in 2011.

"I'm proud of this award, to be recognized for what I like to do," she says. "I enjoy the interaction with the students and that they appreciate what I do. Some students have said to me they took 12 years of French (in public school) but have learned more in a three-month term from me and have been motivated to learn more."

Denise says she tries to explain French culture, language and grammar in an interesting way. She obviously has success doing it.

"I received an e-mail from the selection committee saying my name had been put forward [for the Teaching Excellence Award] by a group of students. I was asked if I would let my name stand, and at once I said no, thank you, because I'd have to meet people, be interviewed and go through a process. I'm really a private person."

But, she admits, she was told her students had written a passionate letter about her (she never saw it) and, "if they took the time

to write 500 words about me, and collect [the required] supportive signatures, I couldn't say no."

Denise has served on the university senate, on virtually every committee and has had input into the workings of the Mount. She is involved with the MSVU Faculty Association, Canadian Association of University Teachers Defence Fund, and, for many years, in the Association of Nova Scotia University.

She smiles, "You will find me on the picket lines of many Canadian faculty union strikes."

Her teaching philosophy is to use personal anecdotes, humour and real life experiences when she teaches. In an article written about Denise for a Mount publication after the award presentation, alumna Lisa Whynott said, "Not only does she show her students that she is an ordinary person just like they are, but she also genuinely cares about them. She has been called a grading machine because of her ability to have all assignments marked and passed back by the following class. She provides thorough and clear feedback and makes it a priority to be as available as possible to her students. Students often receive e-mails from Professor Nevo at midnight (on a weekend) with answers to her questions."

Denise stresses, "I try to teach them to think, rather than to regurgitate my own information back to me. And I try to establish a link between their current experience as students in the classroom, and the life they will have as professionals after they graduate."

Denise Nevo obviously sets an example for all university teachers to follow.

Spatz Chair

by Joel Jacobson

A chair in Jewish Studies at Dalhousie University is being established with impetus from Jim Spatz in honour of his parents, Simon and Riva, who survived World War II as freedom fighters in Poland.

Once fully funded, the endowed chair will reside in the Religious Studies program within the Department of Classics and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The campaign goal is \$3 million of which about one-third has been assembled, either through direct donations or pledges, Dalhousie officials said.

Jim Spatz made what he calls a "substantial contribution to start the program. It feels great to be able to do that. I feel privileged to be able help establish the chair and to honour my parents."

Chris Steeves, development officer at Dalhousie School of Management but who was initially involved with the Spatz Jewish Studies program as development officer of the School of Arts and Sciences, added, "The endowment will produce \$150,000 in annual income to provide a salary and other costs. We hope to have the faculty person in the Spatz Chair by July 2011," he said. "The Chair in Jewish Studies was a faculty-driven project presented to External Relations and we provided help getting it going."

Jim Spatz said it was the university's idea to create the chair. "As board chair, I heard about it and knew I wanted to support it. It was a great fit for me, personally, with my Jewish background."

The number of Jewish students on the Dalhousie campus has blossomed to more than 600, a large percentage from Ontario, in the last half dozen years. Through the years, Dalhousie has had, or has, a Jewish president (currently Tom Traves), chancellor (Dr. Richard Goldbloom filled that role), members of the Board of Governors (current chair is Jim Spatz) and much more representation from the local community.

"Jim's gift took the Chair from the visionary to the reality stage," said Ronald Mitton of the Development office. "From there, we have approached his friends, colleagues and others in the community, in Halifax and from afar, to support the program. The response has been excellent."

Jim Spatz heads a major housing and commercial development company in the Halifax area that was started by his father soon after he, Riva and infant son, Jim, emigrated in 1950.

Simon, who lost most of his family in the Holocaust, was interned at a labour camp and fled to the forest with his younger brother just a day before the camp was "liquidated" and all the occupants murdered. Riva belonged to a partisan group in the Jewish resistance movement and lived out the war in the woods of Poland.

"When you see what my parents went through, it makes you more tolerant. The freedom and opportunity represented by Canada makes you want to give back," said Jim Spatz. "They didn't go to university but my sister and I both went to Dal. It is a good story for me to be able to do this."

The Simon and Riva Spatz Chair in Jewish Studies will have three areas of focus: teaching, research and outreach. The chair is envisioned to help students appreciate how centuries-old beliefs influence contemporary world events.

Current course offerings related to Jewish Studies include Hebrew, Aramaic, Judaism, the history of Ancient Israel, and Jewish philosophies and theologians.

The Spatz chair will support an intellectual community by exploring interconnected

religious traditions and come to understand how they play out in contemporary society.

A significant portion of the Chair's efforts will focus on teaching and program development. The research goal will be to expand the knowledge of Judaism at the university and complement the work currently being pursued in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Sharing knowledge and findings will be the goal of the outreach program.

"Potential donors strongly recommending making the program relevant to today and what it happening on the world front, as much as history," said Steeves. "We expect the Chair will expand the outreach portion of the program by bringing in speakers and authors, and engaging the entire local community."


Jim Spatz agreed. "The existence of a Chair in Jewish Studies will hopefully foster one in Islamic Studies in the future. A university is there for people to exchange ideas, not always friendly, but the ability to do that is at the heart of what a university does."

Simon, who passed away in fall 2007, received an honorary degree from Saint Mary's University in 2002 and, with Jim, was inducted into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame in June 2007. Both Simon and Riva, who still live in the family home, were active volunteers in the Jewish community.

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Camp Kadimah Summer 2010

by Joanna Mirsky Wexler, Director

Camp Kadimah just ended another fabulous summer on the shores of Lake William with gorgeous weather for most of the season!

The CITs had an incredible time tidal bore rafting in the Bay of Fundy, and spending time at the beach, biking and parasailing in PEI! They also had the opportunity to meet with the PEI Jewish Community in Charlottetown and see a bit of small town Jewish life.



Whitney Karrel and Lipaz

We had a large Israeli contingent in 2010, with 31 Israeli kids brought in through private donations for the summer. They have had an amazing impact on camp this summer bringing in contemporary Israeli culture, but maybe as importantly, they describe the experience as one where they feel they have been here for years and have made best friends.

Popular programs were repeated such as our 4 day Maccabia (colour war), hockey marathon, world cup soccer, basketball and softball houseleague championships and so much more. Campers of all ages went

out on a range or out trips to amazing local sites such as camping trips to Kejimikujik National Park, Blomidon Provincial Park, Upper Clements Amusement Park, Rissers Beach Provincial Park, The Oaklawn Farm Zoo, and so much more.

We saw some future campers this summer as well- Early on in the summer, we held a pre-gibbie day, for campers ages 5-9 to come and spend a few hours in programming with their parents at camp. This was so successful that we decided to add to the experience: A 24 hour taste of Kadimah! 12 pre-gibbies joined us for a sleepover and programs all day. It was terrific and we are so excited to see them join us for real next summer!

Applications for our 2011 season will be out shortly. Please visit our website at www.campkadimah.com or call the office at 902-422-7491 ext 225 for details. If you are in Toronto, or know a future camper



Joanna Wexler and family

who would have the summer of their life at Kadimah, make sure you get in touch with Jared Goldlust, our new director for the 2011 summer season, at jared@campkadimah.com.

I would like to thank all the campers, staff and camp committee who all helped to make this summer such a success! The work has been a labour of love not only for me, but also for the committee and its chairs, past and present; Andrew Wolfson, Mark Rosen, Victor Goldberg, Jim Spatz and Michael Pink. Jon Goldberg has been an incredible supporter of Camp Kadimah throughout the years. I have loved being so involved in Jewish life and education through Kadimah. It has been an incredible place to be these last many years. I look forward to spending this time with my young family (it's going by too fast!) but I'm sure I will see you at Camp next Visitors Day!



CIT trip



Aaron Pedvis



Corey Matlow and Lily Samuel

New Camp Director Gains MBA from Brandeis

by Joel Jacobson

Jared Goldlust, associate director of Camp Kadimah, with a joint MBA degree in Jewish professional leadership from Brandeis University in Waltham, MA, is the second graduate of the Robert and Elisa Spungen Bildner Graduate Fellowship of the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC).

The unique fellowship allows one scholar per year to pursue the degree at Brandeis's Heller School for Social Policy and Management and at Hornstein: The Jewish Professional Leadership Program @ Brandeis.

The goal of the fellowship is to train the next generation of Jewish summer camp leaders. Over two years at Brandeis University, Bildner Fellows are advised by a Hornstein faculty member with camping expertise. In addition to academic coursework, they complete two summer camp internships, attend professional development opportunities offered by the Foundation for Jewish Camp, and dedicate themselves to working at a Jewish camp in a leadership role for three years following graduation.

Jared is a graduate of Dalhousie University with degrees in Recreation and Management. Originally from Thornhill, Ontario, he spent summers as a child at Camp Northland B'nai B'rith and Camp Kadimah. Jared will take over as full time Kadimah Director in the fall and will run the Toronto office through the winter season.

"I am extremely thankful and indebted to the FJC and the Hornstein program for having this powerful learning experience over the past two years," Jared says. "It is because of the fellowship and the program that I am now able to move into the real world, assuming the directorship of a Jewish summer camp at such a young age. I firmly believe that a partnership between these organizations is a match that is necessary and can be a model of success

for developing Jewish camp leaders of the future."

"We are so proud of what Jared has accomplished," says Jeremy J. Fingerman, FJC CEO. "We know he will go on to have a

significant impact on Camp Kadimah, and the entire field of Jewish camping, and we look forward to watching him make strides in the industry and community."

A Look Back at Camp

In 2006, 10 grandchildren of Ralph and Shirlee Medjuck, attended Kadimah.

Clockwise from top are:

Eva Stein on shoulders of Jason Stein, Hallie Benjamin on shoulders of Matthew Stein, Abby Suissa, Isaac Benjamin, Jacob Suissa, Amanda Medjuck, Liane Stein and Andrew Medjuck



Kadimah a "Forward" Step for Israeli Campers

by Joel Jacobson

The benefits of integration are evident as 31 Israeli young people smile broadly when talking of their experience at Camp Kadimah, as a camping adventure and with their Canadian counterparts.

When this interview was done July 16, the 2010 Camp season was just over two weeks old. It seemed as though many of the Israelis campers had been here forever – and that is a good thing.

"I made friends the first day," said Noy Hemon, 16, a counsellor in training from Yesod Hermaala in the Upper Galilee. "I found everyone so very friendly and open."

There are six in the CIT program, 18 in Machar (14-15 years of age) and seven in Kochot (12-13). There are also three staff members, one a chaperone who travelled with the children from Israel and is a CIT counsellor, and two on head staff – one teaching song and dance and the other drama. The Israelis are partially funded through a scholarship program supported by Canadian alumni of Camp Kadimah. Six children receive backing from the P2K partnership between Northern Israel communities and Canadian cities.

Camp Director Joanna Wexler noted donations are still being accepted to offset the expenses of each Israeli camper, estimated at about \$6,500 including air fare.

"The benefit of [bringing Israelis to camp] is the relationship it creates between the Israelis and Canadians. The Canadians can leave camp with Israel being alive to them, not just propaganda, and having met real people. The Israelis leave knowing they are not alone and isolated, that there are kids their age who know of them and care about them."

Tom Talsmith, 13, from Gadot, Upper Galilee, said each Canadian is different but he finds all the kids love Israel. "I didn't know it would be like that."

Noy nodded his head in agreement. "Many kids now want to go to Israel, or, if they've



been there, want to go back."

Noy and the other CITs went to Halifax a day before (July 15) for a Halifax Jazz festival concert with guest artists, Israeli guitar-tuba trio Boom Pam. "Everyone loved it. It was a lot of fun, especially when they did Hebrew songs."

One of the goals of the Israelis is to improve, or learn, English.

"I try to speak English all the time," said Tom, although others admitted they speak Hebrew to each other when they're together.

Maya Kahalani, 16, Kiryat Shmona, in the Upper Galilee, stressed they "have to speak English if we're going to learn. Some of the Canadians try to speak Hebrew to us and we encourage that so they can learn but our aim is to improve our English."

Shon El-Yam, 15, Kibbutz Urin, in the South, near Sderot, 15, has enjoyed new activities he'd never experienced in Israel. "Water skiing is a lot of fun."

Eli Arliuk, 16, Kibbutz Ayelet Hashachar in the Upper Galilee, has taken to softball, while Noy enjoys canoeing and social

night.

Joanna, in her fifth and final year as director, has seen Israeli children attending camp for several years. "We're lucky with this group," she said. "They've integrated so well. They've said they feel like they've been here for years and want to come back." Although, with the demand and desire to create exposure for different youngsters, the program doesn't allow return visits. Joanna said some programming has been geared to making the Israelis feel at home. "At our Oneg Shabbats, we have more contemporary Israeli music. We're even doing an immigration project focusing on Pier 21 (In Halifax) and the Israelis have been contributing."

Assistant director Jared Goldlust, who will wear the director's mantle next summer, said the Israeli campers arrive at Kadimah with the misconception young people around the world aren't supporting them.

"When they leave here, they've met 300 new people who care about them," he said.

Montreal Consul Amazed with Camp Kadimah

by Joel Jacobson

The eyes of Avraham (Avi) Lev-Louis and his wife Batia were opened wide; their jaws dropping in amazement as they toured Camp Kadimah on July 16.



Camper listening to Consul Avi Lev-Louis

"Magnificent." "Wow" "Everyone is so happy." – were only a few of the remarks from the Consul in the Montreal office of the Consul-General of Israel, and his wife, who were making their first official visit to Atlantic Canada since he assumed his role last September.

Guided by camp director Joanna Wexler, assistant director Jared Goldlust and camp committee co-chair Michael Pink, Avi spent several hours watching the children at camp enjoy their activities, spoke for about 20 minutes in Hebrew to 31 Israeli youngsters attending Kadimah, and briefly addressed the entire camp during lunch period in the Chadar Ochel.

With a strong understanding of Canada and Canadian Jewish camping, Avi spent many of his formative years in Montreal, before returning to Israel at age 27 to do army service and join the foreign diplomatic corps. He has spent consular time in Dublin, Ireland, Prague, Czech Republic, plus Ottawa and Toronto before accepting his most recent posting.

He and Batia were awed by the art work of current and former campers on a mural near the Machar and CIT outdoor sport field, a project funded by the New York-based Foundation for Jewish Camps. Later, Avi photographed a mural of a large map

of Israel, created by the CITs of 2007, and joked, "Israel seems larger here."

Casually dressed in a short-sleeved dress shirt and jeans, Avi was excited about the integration of Israeli programming and the emphasis on the connection between Israel and the diaspora.

While speaking with the Israeli contingent, he sensed their excitement at being in Canada. Each camper introduced him or herself and told where they were from in Israel. Avi stressed that Israel is not a "war country" but one of culture and education and peace and, with pride, spoke to them about the wonderful inventions that have come to the world from Israel, such as the cellular phone and computer, as well as



Consul speaking to campers

advances in health.

As he spoke to the entire camp, Avi noted his role as consul is to identify shared values between Israel and Canada. "The favourite part of the job is the cultural aspect but my job is also to explain Israel's political position. I'm very proud to speak of Israel's accomplishments in the world that have helped society as a whole."

He mentioned the millions of people integrated into

Israel's society from places like Russia, Ethiopia and, many years ago, from Europe after the Holocaust. He also noted times are challenging for Israel, with the constant threat of terrorism and the Anti-Semitism that just won't go away.

"I hope you will be inspired to help Israel so there will be peace and prosperity, there and in the entire world," he told the campers.

In appreciation for the lunch he and Batia enjoyed, Avi presented Camp cook Anne Joudrey with The Book of Jewish Food, by Janna Gur.

While in Halifax, Avi and Batia attended the Halifax Jazz Festival, thoroughly enjoying a Thursday evening concert by Israeli guitar-tuba trio Boom Pam.

"The Halifax community, both Jewish and non-Jewish, was very welcoming to Boom Pam. There were no demonstrations, just appreciation of great talent," he said.

He also addressed the congregation of Shaar Shalom Synagogue at Shabbat services Saturday morning July 17.

"This is my first trip to Nova Scotia and the smaller communities. [The consular office] doesn't get to the Maritimes often enough and we should be here more. It's important, but there is a lot of work in the Montreal office too," he said.



Joanna, Batia, Consul Avi Lev-Louis and Jared Goldlust tour camp

Immigrant Seminar Maritime Communities Meet On Newcomer Issues

by Joel Jacobson

Getting immigrant families involved in the local Jewish community is one of the keys to retention and growth say lay leaders of the flourishing newcomers program in Maritime Canada.

At a one-day June seminar in Moncton, attended by representatives from Moncton, Fredericton and Halifax, leaders, including those in the immigrant community, stressed the importance of the new families being thoroughly connected to synagogue and community life.

Similar discussions, via teleconferencing with JIAS Canada and the AJC, were held with members of the Saint John newcomers committee.

There are currently 33 families in Halifax with another 35 expected between spring and fall 2011. Moncton has three immigrant families with a nomination pending while Fredericton reported nine families settled with three pending. Saint John, with an active committee, reported 20 families visited the community with nine submitting applications and 11 in the process of doing the same.

Keynote speaker at the one-day conference, coordinated by Edna LeVine of the Atlantic Jewish Council, was Mila Voihanski, executive director, JIAS Canada, whose input to the immigration program and settlement of new families has been most valuable.

The Moncton report, presented by newcomer Victoria Volkanova, discussed the expectations of members of the new families, including attending minyan a couple of times a month, attending functions in the Jewish community, and requiring both spouses to be Jewish to ensure interest in Jewish community events.

The Moncton committee, also represented by Nicole Druckman and Francis Weil, outlined what it has done on a newcomer family's arrival, including assisting with banking, insurance, job interviews, finding

apartments, furniture etc. A meeting with Moncton's Multicultural Association was held to discuss that organization's role in the settlement process.

Igor Kaplan of Fredericton, also a newcomer, spoke on behalf of the New Brunswick capital's committee. He said the synagogue offers immigrant families a free membership for two years, after which they are billed and asked to pay as much as they can afford. He also said families are expected to attend a regular calendar of seasonal, social and holiday community events, and that both spouses must be Jewish.

The Fredericton committee concentrates on selecting families where one spouse has a good chance of successful employment. It has created a one-page questionnaire for each family to complete which helps

to determine level of Jewish commitment. Committee member Sydelle Grobe said six people are creating an itinerary for the family, ranging from meeting possible employers to banking information. She asked for a list of "in demand" professions to provide potential newcomers and will speak with the local Chamber of Commerce regarding desirable professions.

On behalf of the Saint John committee, Norman Hamburg reported the first group of nine were highly



Mila Voihanski, second from left, meets with newcomers in Moncton.

educated with good English skills. In the second group, three families had English difficulty and were not as highly skilled.

Speaking on behalf of committee chair Dan Elman who was unable to be part of the conference call, Hamburg indicated the multicultural center was a valuable

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continued from page 19

resource and that a meeting had been arranged with a staff member of the Community College to provide information on employment and assess skills.

He said the visitors met with the Multicultural Society, Enterprise Saint John, members of the Jewish community and the Department of Immigration, Fredericton. The Saint John committee arranged tours of the city, shopping, a

community Shabbat service and it was a very positive experience.

The committee (Joseph Arditti and Erminie Cohen are also members) emphasized that families being approached must have two Jewish parents, must know jobs are available in their profession, and that they have the required skills needed, plus enough funds to live for one year.

The expectations of the Jewish Community are similar to those of other Maritime

centers - that the families, hopefully with young children, attend services to secure the continued existence of a Jewish community in Saint John, with a stress on reaching out to the children.

One fear expressed was the potential loss of families to larger centres. Experience indicated families will say what the new community wants to hear so they get to where they want to be.

Immigration News from Fredericton

by Sydelle Grobe

This year the Fredericton Jewish Community Immigration Committee

hosted four families who visited the city as potential immigrants under the New Brunswick Provincial Nominee Program (NBNP). Immigration proceedings for three of the families are now being processed. The fourth family has decided to remain in Israel for the time being following unforeseen circumstances in their family.

As a consequence of previous exploratory visits, four families relocated to Fredericton from Israel this past fall and spring.

We also offer hospitality and advice to aid in decision making and re-location plans of families who are not applicants under the NBNP. One such family relocated here from Great Britain under the auspices of the entrepreneurship section of the NBNP. Another Israeli family who originally relocated to Saskatchewan under the Saskatchewan provincial nominee

program chose to move to Fredericton. Committee members have also assisted a new University of New Brunswick faculty member and his wife from the United States to settle in our community. Several community members formed warm friendships with an Israeli family who lived in Fredericton the year before last and returned this year to spend the summer with us.

Members of the immigration committee are pleased to welcome these families to Fredericton. They join four other families who arrived in previous years and are now well-established in the community.

Fredericton is an attractive city for would-be immigrants who are searching for a small city in which to raise their families, as evidenced by 70 families currently in the queue. The immigration committee responds to inquiries about re-location from many origins. Website inquiries have been received from Canadian-born Jews, as well as Jews living in the United States,

Hungary and Israel. The committee has established a set of criteria for determining which families we invite to come for an exploratory visit. One important criterion is indication of opportunities for employment for at least one of the spouses.

Not everyone we have assisted has chosen to become a member of Sgoolai Israel Synagogue. However, more young families are members now than before the immigration committee began its work under the NBNP. Religious classes once again are filled with children being instructed by our enthusiastic Rabbi Yosef Goldman. Attendance at minyans has increased. Therefore, the committee is confident that the process of helping immigrants to settle in Fredericton has been successful and that the Fredericton Jewish community will continue to grow.

Committee members: Sandra Byers, Leonid Gimelshtein, Rabbi Goldman, Sydelle Grobe, Igor Kaplun, Ellen Lupu, Irina Tarnavsky and Israel Unger.

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Reflections from my Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program

by Aaron Smythe, Halifax, NS

From April 25-28, 2010 I was in Washington, D.C. on the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies education trip. Little did I know then that this trip would turn out to be such a fun and educational experience.

On my first day in Washington we traveled around the city to different monuments. I got to see the Jefferson Memorial that I had only ever seen on television. I also stood on the marble stone at the Lincoln Memorial where Martin Luther King Jr. had delivered his "I have a dream" speech on. Day three was very similar to day one but we spent our time going to the different Smithsonian museums instead of visiting monuments. My favourite Smithsonian museum was the air and space museum, which I went to with Shael and Jacques. It had all kinds of real planes hanging from the ceiling and had a bunch of things that would be used in space travel. It was so much fun!

My second day in Washington was a very serious day because we spent the day at the Holocaust museum. The museum was amazing. It was very well done but parts of it were really hard to take in. Some of the things I saw and learned about in the museum were unbelievable. Things I never knew had happened during the Holocaust, such as the Pogroms that took place in many Jewish places around Europe and the experiments that were performed on the people in the concentration camps. I can't even explain how sick these experiments were, they even had a slide show of them so that you could see how they were used. It was disgusting.

One of my clearest memories of the museum was the train car. In the middle of one of the exhibits there is a real cattle car that was used to transport the



Asper 2010 participants: from Halifax: Max Fineberg, Jacques Wolff, Aaron Smythe, Shael Brown, Hannah Novack, Zachary Novack, Alanna Pink, Anna Sadofsky, Hyla Silburt, Rebecca David, Robyn Budovitch, Jacinda Renee Solomon, From Fredericton: Jasmine Kranat, Michelle Chippin and Amanda Brown. Chaperones and teachers: Judith Goldberg, Halifax & Rabbi Yosef Goldman, Fredericton and lay chairperson and chaperone Dawn Frail, Halifax

Jews and you have to walk through it to get to the rest of the exhibit. When I stepped into the cattle car I got a really strange feeling as I was looking around trying to picture the hundred or more people that would have been packed into the very same car I was standing in. I felt almost like I was one of them, standing in a car that really could have only held half of the people in it at most. I kept thinking that the only difference between me and the many other Jews that had stood in that tiny cattle car was that I wasn't being shipped off to a death or labour camp against my will, along with millions of other people of whom only a handful would survive. I was only passing through the car, nudging my way through the crowd of souls and memories of the real people that were there before me, knowing that I would step out of the car and be safe and free to be who I am.

After everything I have learned on this trip I really feel like I need to start standing up more for people who are being discriminated against or being singled out in some way. I have learned that simple stereotypes and rumours that people say and start can turn into much bigger problems, such as the rumours that Hitler started about the Jews. Hitler started saying things about the Jews that weren't true and he ended up turning most of Europe against them. It is our job to stop people from saying things about other races and cultures because we are the ones who know what can happen. I have also come out of this trip with a stronger Jewish pride. I have learned about how badly the Jews were treated in the Holocaust and how many were killed. The fact that our religion survived and is still increasing in population today makes me feel really proud to be a Jew.

A Message of Hope A Day with Holocaust Survivor Philip Riteman

by Taffara Murray

The walls of the gym are lined with posters, the seats are filled with people anxiously waiting, and Philip Riteman is making his way to the front. As I sit here waiting for something I feel I worked hard to accomplish along with all of my classmates and my communications teacher Kathryn, I can't help but think back to the days that brought us to where we are in this gym. It was one question that would lead us up to this wonderful opportunity, and that question was, "What was the Holocaust?"

My communications class in the Adult Learning Program at NSCC was studying genocide. We explored Rwanda and Darfur and went back in history to learn and discover. While learning and digging deeper, many of us came to a realization - what did we really know about the Holocaust? We knew it happened, and that was it. Why did it happen? When did it happen? What actually took place? This is when we decided this was something we all wanted to learn more about.

We then learned of Philip Riteman, a Holocaust survivor, who lived here in Halifax. Then we all discussed and thought what an opportunity it would be if he would come and speak to us. Never in a million years did I imagine the event that would actually take place from this one thought!

Then one day, Kathryn stood up at the

front of the class and announced that Philip Riteman had agreed to come speak to us. Our class was ecstatic and we started talking to one another about how great this would be. "But wait", Kathryn says, "there is more." More? How can you get much more than Philip Riteman coming to speak to us? She then tells us that he and the Brigadier General will be coming. Once again, we started talking with excitement. "Wait. There is still more", she says. Still more? How can she top this? "Philip Riteman is coming to speak with us on the day of the 65th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz, which is also International Holocaust Remembrance Day."

This left us all speechless. What an amazing opportunity we were all getting! This was a once in a life time experience, and it just kept getting better and better.

And with that, we were off - planning and getting assigned duties and tasks. Everyone wanted to be a part of this event, and everybody was putting in their fair share to ensure this day would be the best we could

make it. Classmates who barely spoke together to help each other with whatever they could. The days leading up to this event were filled with anticipation, team work, and hard work. It was the most worthwhile



Philip Riteman describing the photos to Brigadier General Tony Stack

thing I've ever done in my academic career, and I'll never forget the experience.

I heard the principal of our school get up to the microphone and start to speak, and I snapped back from my thoughts on the prior days. This was it; it was starting.

The Brigadier General stood up and spoke, and we all listened to his words of experience and stories of what he knew and had seen in his career.

Then, it was Mr. Riteman's turn. He walked up to the front and took the microphone.

As he spoke, I swear you could hear a pin drop. Everyone was hooked on every word he was saying. He told us of his family, the days leading up to being sent to Auschwitz, the awful train ride there, and then actually being in Auschwitz. His stories made my stomach do 360's and my heart jump into my throat. My eyes stung with tears, and my breath was taken away. I thought to myself, "Have I ever really felt pain? Have I ever really felt fear?"

Then he said something, something that will never leave me. He said "You don't know where you're going, until you get there." These are the truest words I've ever heard. You can never know what is going to happen, until you are there and it is



In military dress, far left, Brigadier General Tony Stack, is captivated by Philip Riteman after introducing him.

happening.

When I decided to go back to school and work towards achieving my high school diploma, I never imagined that I'd be sitting in a gym full of people, listening to this amazing man speak and tell his story, so that I may have the learning experience that most will never have.

When he was done speaking, I'm sure you could hear our applause all around the campus as we stood from our seats and thanked Mr. Riteman for this wonderful opportunity.

As the day came to an end and I was driving home, I still had tears streaming down my face. How lucky am I to be where I am today! I am young, I am smart, I have

a great family and wonderful friends, and I am free. We all take that for granted way too much, and way too often.

So as I walked through my front door, I sat down on my couch, and scooped my two-year-old daughter up in my lap and held her close.

I cherished that moment with her a little longer than I would have the day before, and I said



a little prayer of thanks for where I am today, and all that I have and love.

Dear Mr. Riteman:

My name is Chrissy Gray. I was Student Ambassador on January 27th, 2010 when you came to the NSCC Akerley Campus to tell us your story. The few hours I spent with you and your lovely wife, Dorothy, was and still is an honour and a privilege. I think of you quite often and when I do, I get a tear in my eye. Not only because of what you went through 65 years ago, but because I saw a small piece of another side of you no one else here has seen. I saw your great sense of humour and saw happiness in your eyes and smile, and heard it in your voice. I consider myself lucky to have been granted the position of Student Ambassador for your visit.

Before your visit, I knew what the Holocaust was and I've read articles about it and saw pictures. But, to hear what happened from someone who has lived it is a lot different than reading about it in a book. When you spoke to us that day, Mr. Riteman, I saw that happiness and humour fade away. I heard 6 million voices in your words. I saw 6 million

tears in your eyes. You truly are the one voice of 6 million and I know you have touched many hearts and changed many lives. I will never forget that day for the rest of my life.

I have a picture of you and me, and I have to say that you look 159 years young! The picture stands where everyone can see it so when they ask who that man in the picture is, I can tell them, "He's one of the bravest men I have ever met", and I will tell them why.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. Riteman. Thank you for being so brave and educating our children about this terrible piece of history. In my opinion, it helps them realize how lucky we are to live

here "in heaven". I will make sure my own children hear your story and learn about what happened 65 years ago. I will teach them, "It is better to love than to hate."

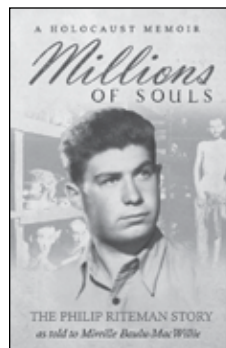
I hope to see you again.

*Sincerely,
Chrissy Gray*

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by Philip Riteman as told to Mireille Baulu-MacWillie



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Philip Riteman's story was recorded by Mireille Baulu-MacWillie during a series of interviews at Philip's home in Nova Scotia, Canada.

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Philip & Dorothy Riteman with student ambassadors at NSCC.

The March of the Living for Educators 2010: Walking in Remembrance; Returning with Responsibility

by Anne McLeod, Social Studies Teacher,
Prince Andrew High School, Dartmouth, NS



The group singing in a synagogue in Krakow

For ten days in July I was part of a trip that left me mentally, physically and emotionally drained. I would not have missed a second of it. Twenty-six educators from across Canada were given the opportunity to experience the places of the Holocaust in the company of an incredible lady, Vera Schiff, herself a survivor of Theresienstadt. Along with our guide, Yishai and the organizer, Carson Phillips, we were all about to go through an intense 10 days that none of us will ever forget as we walked in the footsteps, sometimes literally, of the millions who, 70 years ago, walked the same paths with no hope of returning.

Berlin is a bustling, modern city that still harbours pockets of its darker history. Wannsee House is a lovely villa set on lake, surrounded by manicured gardens. Standing in the foyer, looking up at the curved staircase, it was hard to comprehend that, in 1942, in the room in front of me, over some refreshments, Heydrich and the top Nazi officials met to plan the implementation of the "The Final Solution". This surreal feeling accompanied me throughout the trip

as I visited place after place where atrocities had occurred, listening to the words of those who had survived to tell their stories, but seeing blue skies and having the words underlined by birdsong. Surreal, indeed! Following our visit to Wannsee we had the first of many

debriefing sessions, sharing our feelings and thoughts. The insights brought to our discussions by Vera were invaluable. Throughout the trip, she was always open to sharing her thoughts, feelings and experiences with us and truly was the heart and soul of our group. Even when she was finding the places emotionally taxing, she was always involved and I feel very blessed to have had the chance to speak with her one on one several times on a variety of topics. I know that she touched every single one of us very deeply

The Jews of Berlin were taken to Gleis (Track) 17 to be loaded onto trains and deported, so that was where we went next. As I looked at the dates and numbers of deportations, I observed that in the last two years of the war there were many transports with only twenty-five or so people on them.

This underlined the fact that as the war was drawing to a close, the Nazis were more intent on killing Jews than they were in providing the infrastructure to win the war. This was also evident at Birkenau and Majdanek where the death count soared in the last 2 years. Standing on that railway platform, gazing at hill we had just walked up and at the tracks before us was the first of many experiences that left me trying to grasp the enormity of what happened there but still with the question "How could this happen in a civilized country?" still pounding in my head, as it does even now.

While in Berlin, we also visited Saschenhausen, one of the first camps established to deal with primarily political prisoners and homosexuals. As I had been to two other camps previously, Mauthausen and Dachau, I was a bit prepared as to what I was going to see as far as buildings and layout; however as we entered the remains of the crematoria, a group of young Jewish teens were having a memorial service and this moved me to tears. As a high school teacher, it brought home to me the legacy that the Shoah has left to these young people and also to all future generations. I guess that it why



Janus Korczak's Orphanage

I am a Holocaust Educator, to ensure that these lessons are never lost.

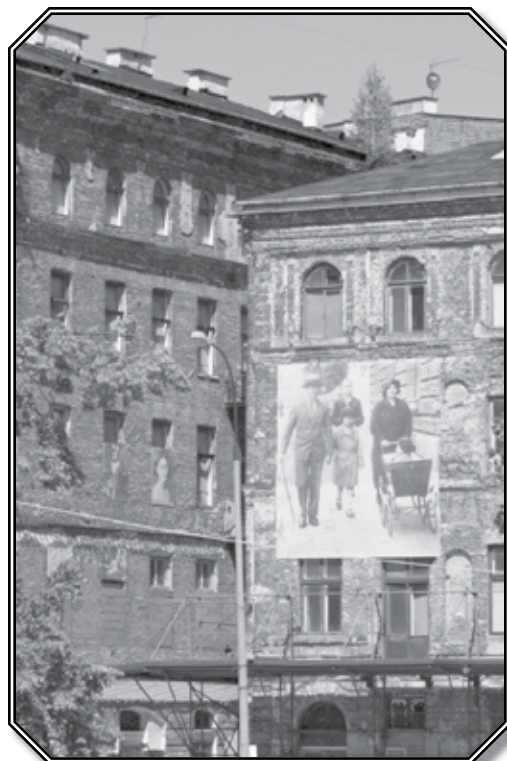
Much more was packed into our two days in Berlin, but as we later came to realize, these were our "easy" days. A long bus ride took us into Poland where we were stopped and detained by the Polish Border Police. No reason was given; they wanted our passports and we were not allowed to leave the bus for an hour. As I sat there watching them go through our papers, first puzzled, then a bit concerned, I was able to connect in a small way to the confusion and fear that the Jews felt as they watched their freedom being taken from day by day with no explanations, no reasons and few choices. What if we did not get out passports back? What if....? For forty-five minutes, I was able to imagine what it must have been like; Germany was a civilized country in the 1930s and 1940s just as Poland is in 2010. Yet these things happened, and, are still happening in some parts of the world. This experience brought an unexpected yet valuable

dimension to our journey.

Standing outside of Oskar Schindler's factory in Krakow was another surreal moment for me, not because of its fame, but because there, in the window were the pictures of two people whom I had met at Schindler's grave in Jerusalem last year. Nahom and Eugenia Manor were both imprisoned in Plasow and rescued by Schindler. They met and fell in love in this factory and three years ago celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary at his graveside. Seeing them look out at me from the window of the factory brought the events of 70 years ago into the present as nothing else had. At the site of Plasow, where nothing of the infrastructure remains, we stood on the scarred earth where masses of human bodies had been burned and listened as one of our group told the story of her grandparents who had been imprisoned there. Needless, to say, it was a powerful moment that brought

two names and faces clearly into focus out of the millions.

My visit to Auschwitz / Birkenau is a blur to me now, but as I process my photographs, I have vivid snatches of recollections. I had heard about the size of Birkenau, but nothing can truly prepare you for its vastness. The barracks, the skeletal chimneys, the ruined crematoria, the "Sauna", the site of "Kanada", the groves of trees where people waited quietly for their turns to be gassed, the pond of ashes: I was desperately seeking a quiet place alone where I could give way to my emotions, but we were very rushed and it was only after we reached the pond of ashes that we were given the chance to wander and reflect. It was then that I noticed a large ditch covered in small blue wild flowers; a mass grave. The tiny blue flowers bloomed profusely as if to declare their reason for being, "Forget Me Not!" I had found my place to weep.



The Warsaw Ghetto

If you have ever seen Fiddler on the Roof then you know what the tiny shtetl of Tykochin is like. As we wandered down paths to the river where the Jews of Tykochin drew water, swam and did laundry, we heard the story of why there are no Jews left in this rural Polish village. The Synagogue is still there, and we learned a wonderful Jewish song and danced there, but the Jews are gone. We followed in the footsteps of 3400 Jews as they gathered in the village square. Over 2000 of them were loaded onto trucks and taken to the Lopochowa Forest nearby. There, they were unloaded and marched down the same path that we followed until they reached a clearing where 1,400 of them were shot and buried in a mass grave. Two more mass killings resulted in two more graves: one with 350 bodies and one with 200. This place for me was one of the hardest to bear. We sang Hatikva; I did not know the words, but I knew the melody and prayed for all of those innocent people lying there in the Lopochowa Forest. That is why there are still no Jews in Tykochin.

We saw much more in Warsaw: the remnants of the Ghetto, the Ghetto



Me at a remnant of the Warsaw Ghetto wall

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Anne with Vera Schiff

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Wall, Treblinka, but our trip ended at Majdanek. This camp had one purpose: death. It is intact and is, for me, the most impacting of all the camps I have been to. The Mausoleum holds the ashes of people who were killed and burned there; flecks of bone are still visible; it is raw. Here we came face to face with the end result of all we had seen: the ashes of innocent people. And here I had to evaluate what I learned from this experience.

As an educator, I feel the responsibility to instill in my students a sense of compassion for humanity; that they may recognize hatred and prejudice wherever they may encounter it and be able to fight it, even if they find it in

what is happening. Genia Manor took my hand and said to me, "Please don't let our stories be forgotten." I have taken that as my personal responsibility to her and the many other survivors whom I have met; their stories and the lessons to be learned from them will be told. Seeing the places and walking in the same steps as so many who died has made the Shoah visually real to me. I am a photographer and feel and see with images. It was not until I was processing my images that many of the emotions hit me. It makes me even more prepared to combat deniers when I encounter them.

Personally, this trip left me with even more questions than I had before.



The Umschlagplatz, Warsaw - where the Jews were held before deportation

The more I learn and witness, I feel that I should be coming to some answers. However, perhaps Vera said it best at Majdanek when she explained why she came on the trip. "I came in the hopes that this time I would find closure. I did not find it. I now have to accept that this is not a place where you can find closure." If we are able to come to terms with the Shoah; to find all the answers, then we are very close to rationalizing it. That, indeed, would be a very dangerous place to be.

If you are interested in viewing my pictures from the trip this is my Flickr site.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/annemcl/>

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Watchmen for The Nations Embrace Jewish People

by Joel Jacobson

David Demian added a different dimension to Yom Hashoah in Halifax, quite a change from previous touching, heart-rending recollections by Holocaust survivors from near and far.

Demian, an Egyptian by birth, an Orthodox Coptic Christian by faith, and a man bothered by discrimination and hatred of and by human beings, spoke passionately about the ill-treatment of Jews trying to flee Germany on the SS St. Louis in 1940 and their subsequent shunning by the world and eventual return to Germany where many met their fate.

A strong believer in God and His contact directly with him, Demian is director of Watchmen for the Nations; a Christian-based group, comprising many denominations and churches, plus business leaders, media people, and many with the same heart.

He told a large audience at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, where there is an extensive display of artefacts and lists of names of passengers from the St. Louis, how he disliked Jews early in his life because of the wars between his native country and Israel, but looked inward, spoke with God and asked Him to change his heart. It happened.

"I was living in Canada (he arrived in 1988



as a medical doctor) and, a few years later, (when living in Vancouver and wishing to see change in people's attitudes toward one another,) I was invited to a conference between Arabs and Jews in Switzerland where I was representing Arab people. I knew I wanted to see nations heal," he said.

In 1997, he was visiting Miami and met Herbert Karliner, a St. Louis survivor. Demian told him he wanted to bring all the survivors they could find to Canada to apologize on behalf of all Canadians for turning the ship away, to express their sorrow.

Karliner told Demian it would never happen but Demian insisted that is "what God wants us to do."

It DID happen. On November 5, 2000 in Ottawa, 50 survivors were welcomed with open arms by The Watchmen.

"If the church doesn't take responsibility, who will? We faced them and repented," said Demian. "We even had Baptist pastor Doug Blair of Sarnia, Ontario, in attendance, the great nephew of Frederick Blair, the minister of immigration in 1940, who convinced Prime Minister Mackenzie King, who was in favour of allowing the Jews in, that it shouldn't happen. He coined the phrase, None is Too Many."

Blair appealed to the survivors. "I'm humbled to be here. I understand my name is not dear to your heart

but I repent what went before. Will you forgive me? Will you let me call you my friends?"

At the dinner, each survivor was presented a glass sculpture with an embracing hand emerging from a maple leaf and holding a Star of David with the St. Louis sailing through the Star.

Demian told the Yom Hashoah audience that Christians have a responsibility to remember and to revise the past, to say "Your God is my God, Your people are my people, and we're one family. This journey is never finished. Christians and Jews can walk together. I pray Canada will provide refuge if hard times come again."

The Watchmen for the nations produced a film of the Ottawa dinner, plus other events they've held in Canada and of missions to Israel called The Embrace, a record of a five-year journey of repentance of Christians for Jews in Canada.

During Yom Hashoah ceremonies, six candles were lit by community members, each candle signifying one million Jews lost in the Holocaust. Names and backgrounds of survivors living in the Halifax area were also read to express the 2010 theme of Yom Hashoah, The Voices of the Survivors, as chosen by the international committee in Israel and Yad Vashem. In addition, letters and testaments from Jews lost in the Holocaust were read.



John Hennigar-Shuh, general manager, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Jon Goldberg, AJC executive director and guest speaker David Demian, director, Watchmen of the Nations, meet prior to Yom HaShoah ceremonies at the museum in Halifax.



Ina Kohler, Halifax, lights a candle on behalf of all Holocaust survivors

Stellar Event, Starry Crowd

by Joel Jacobson

It was an evening for the ages, or at least the decade.

For the first time in 10 years, Beth Israel Synagogue honoured its own, and members of the wider Jewish community, for the work they have done to make the synagogue, and the greater Halifax and Nova Scotia communities, even better.

At a dinner at Beth Israel Synagogue Auditorium May 12, Nova Scotia Premier, the Honourable Darrell Dexter, was on hand to address more than 160 people and present certificates to 48 community members, recognized for their career, volunteer and philanthropic accomplishments.

In addition, 90 volunteers in the Beth Israel Congregation, from past presidents and board members to various synagogue committee members, dedicated

minyanares and those doing the little things to make a shul successful, were presented certificates by president Paul Lipkus and Rabbi Ari Sherbill.

The dinner committee was ably chaired by Frank Medjuck who fostered the need for an event such as this to pay homage to great people. Each attendee received a 48 page commemorative book, highlighting the accomplishments of all honourees who came from many walks of life and interest.

In remarks to the audience, master of ceremonies Joel Jacobson said there were many more people who could have been honoured but the committee was limited by the nominations forwarded by members of the community. "This is an event that should be held more than once every 10 years," he said.

Premier Dexter commented on a trip to

Israel he made a year or so ago, under the auspices of the Canadian Jewish Congress, when he was leader of the opposition.

"I was so impressed with what this small country has done," he said. "It is the bastion of democracy in a troubled area of the world, yet, despite the general thinking, I felt safer in Israel than I sometimes do in Halifax."

"Israel is a country I recommend to people to visit and I certainly want to return to see more in the future," he added.

Frank Medjuck termed the event a success. He said the next morning, "All reports are: 'over the top', 'first class', 'wonderful evening', 'flawless', 'room was fabulous'."

Those unable to attend, or wishing additional copies for family and friends, can purchase a souvenir book at the Beth Israel office for only \$10.

Advertising Feature

Israeli Kosher Wine for the High Holidays

Rosalind and I are both sommeliers, familiar with the wines of many countries. In 2007 we toured key Israeli wineries after being on the Atlantic Jewish Council's last mission to Israel. Rosalind wrote about this incredible experience in Shalom magazine, particularly of how we were blown away by the world-class quality of Israeli wines and winemaking. Sean Wood, wine writer for the Halifax Chronicle Herald, wrote of his similar experience following a separate tour for Canadian wine writers. As a matter of fact, he was impressed enough with Israeli wine to write of it in two separate laudatory articles. So, gone are the old days of Israeli kosher wines being the equivalent of sweet sacramental wines like Manischewitz. Welcome to the new world of Israeli Kosher wines comparable to quality non-Kosher wines from anywhere on the globe.

Rosalind and I have worked hard to ensure reasonably priced Israeli kosher wine comes to Nova Scotia, and we're pleased to say it will be available for the first time, in time for this year's High Holidays at NSLC's Port of Wines and Bayer's Lake stores.

The wines are Yarden Mount Hermon Red and Yarden Mount Hermon White. They should be available sometime between August 23 and September 3, depending on when the shipment arrives, and the price will be under \$20. Both are Bordeaux style blends that are clean and crisp and ready to accompany most holiday dishes.

Under Nova Scotia law individuals are not allowed to sell wine, so Rosalind and I are not selling it, nor are we advertising for NSLC. We are just happy Israeli Kosher wine will be here, but it can only be purchased from Port of Wines on Doyle Street in Halifax or at the Bayer's Lake NSLC outlet. For those who might not be able to get there, or who want to be sure of a supply for the High Holidays, Rosalind or I can take orders for you and have the wine set aside.

Philip Belitsky • Home: 902-429-0767 • Cell: 902-430-0962 • Email: Philip.belitsky@dal.ca

Club Massada

by Barb Alberstat, President

Once again, Club Massada had a wonderful full year filled with many lunches and programs in the Shirley Burnstein Room of Northwood. It is these numerous good times that brings many of our Jewish Seniors together to meet and greet each other. Sometimes these special occasions are the only times that many of our seniors have the opportunity to see other members of our community in a congenial atmosphere.

This is the commitment that Club Massada has to this community. We have continued this commitment for over 25 years. We had our Annual Chanuka Luncheon at the Shaar Shalom Synagogue and everyone enjoyed the meal and dreidles and Chanuka chocolate gelt. Many thanks to the President and Board of the Shaar

for making this happen. Both the Gift Shops of the Shaar Shalom and Beth Israel synagogues were available for purchases.

Without the support given to Club Massada by the Board and co-workers we could not exist. Therefore a great big thanks to all of these volunteers for their hours of work.

We ended the year on a special Closing Dinner held once again at the Prince George Hotel with approximately 70 people in attendance. The evening began with the presentation of Trees in Israel to Shirley Burnstein, Co-ordinator and Barbara Alberstat, President. Other presentation of Trees in Israel were handed to Edith Schneiderman and Ralph Garson for their many years of Presidency. Also Trees were awarded to Rose Ellis for all her assistance with some of the seniors during the lunches at Northwood. Sylvia Levin was

presented with a Tree for being one of the founding members of Club Massada and helping to name our seniors group. Special certificates of thanks were handed out to all the Board members and committee members: Erika Bernikier, Marianne Ferguson, Mildred Glynn, Borace Jacobson, Mindy Jacobson, Ethel Stein, Pearl David, Ruth Garson, Shoshana Katz, Molly Rechnitzer, Marta Markus and Jean Zlatin.

During the evening fun Door Prizes were given out by Mindy Jacobson. Shirley and I give our thanks to everyone for another great year and hope that it will continue for more years to come.

May you all be blessed with Health and Happiness in the New Year and we look forward to seeing all the members and guests in September.

Bessie Rinzler Passes Away in Toronto

by Joel Jacobson

A matriarch of the Maritime Jewish community passed away a week before her 96th birthday in Toronto in late April.

Bessie Rinzler, born in Chatham, N.B. and raised in Newcastle, N.B., lived in Halifax for many years before moving to Toronto, at age 90, to be closer to many in her family.

She was a past president of Massada Club of Halifax and contributed her time and volunteer service to the Beth Israel Synagogue there. She and late husband Max were fixtures at Halifax community events. Bessie and Max, married 65 years before his passing in 1999, had two children, Juanita and Morley, and four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Bessie's granddaughter, Jordana Frankel-Sable, married to her oldest grandson



Steven Sable in Toronto, wrote a stirring tribute to a woman who touched her deeply for her strength and devotion

to family and friends. Even after she left Halifax six years ago, she remained connected to dear friends like Jean Zlatin, Pearl David, Naomi Judah and Barbara Alberstat.

Jordana recalls Bessie's love for reading, eating sweets, music, and meeting new people which she did constantly in her Toronto residences.

Jordana writes, "Knitting was one of Bessie's passions and after she made enough sweaters, hats & scarves for her family members, she then moved on to the Mitzvah Knitters - knitting 100 stitches in a row for a baby blanket, and kvetching all the way and loving it!"

She recalls with fond memory, "Bessie, (Nanny) who was only in my life for almost six years in Toronto, made it feel like a life time of great adventures."

PHOTOS FROM AROUND OUR



Linda Jonas Schroeder plays a flute solo as a prelude to Yom HaShoah ceremonies at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax.



The Moncton Public Library held a multicultural festival to launch its summer reading club "See the world @ your library". Nancy Cohen represented the Moncton Jewish Community at the Israel table.



Sheldon Bernikier and Frank Medjuck enjoy festivities during Yom Haatzmaut party in Halifax.



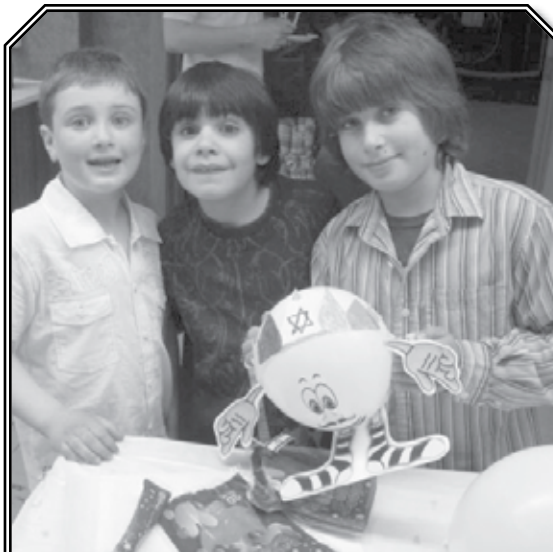
At the closing ceremony of the 2009-10 Shalom Halifax Newcomers Program, the students presented artwork they created to the Atlantic Jewish Council. It hangs proudly in the AJC office.



Gerald Walsh, President of Gerald Walsh Associates Inc., a firm specializing in executive search and executive coaching, advises Halifax newcomers on finding jobs at Urbanity.



Isaac Moscovich and Bryan Gaum celebrate a newcomers' event at Bryan's Urbanity Salon in Halifax.



Halifax children work on crafts during a Yom Haatzmaut party in Halifax.



As outgoing Canadian chair of P2K Committee, [name] presents a memento from incoming chair Ron We...



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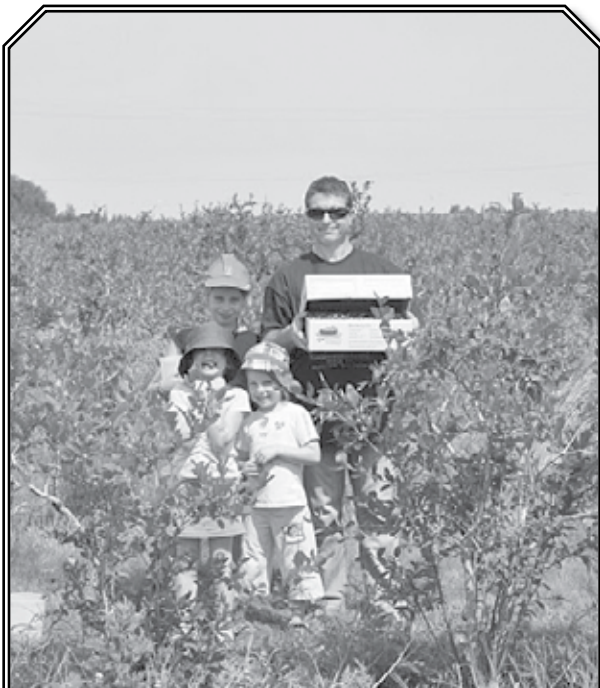
Megan Leslie, MP (NDP) Halifax, Jerry Blumenthal, Halifax Councilor, District 11, and Leonard Preyra, MLA (NDP) Halifax Citadel- Sable Island, attend Yom HaShoah ceremonies in Halifax.



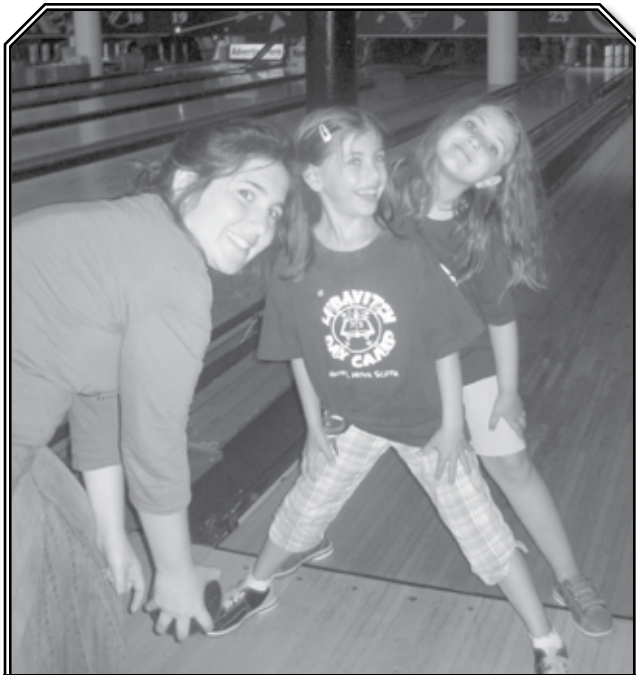
Israel Unger, center, a Holocaust survivor, speaks with community members after Yom HaShoah ceremonies in Fredericton.



rch, career transition and
Salon.



The Erlich family enjoys participating in the community blueberry picking program in Halifax.



Children of Camp Lubavitch in Halifax enjoy a bowling outing.



Kathy Zilbert received a
award of Ottawa.



Fredericton community members enjoy a summer picnic at Killarney Lake.



Marcie Gilsig reads names of Holocaust victims at Victoria Park in Halifax on Yom HaShoah.

The Women in Judaism Series

by Marcie Gilsig

I was recently reminiscing with Ari Sherbill, Rabbi of the Beth Israel Synagogue, about how the Women in Judaism series got started. "It was the first or second day of Sukot", Rabbi Sherbill reminded me, "and I gave a talk in Shul about how the Sun and the Moon have a relationship to Men and Women in Judaism. Someone suggested that I do it again, perhaps for a Lunch and Learn. So I did that and because you were teaching at that hour and couldn't attend you offered to host a class one evening in your home ... from that began Women in Judaism!"

We meet monthly, during the academic session, in my living room. People arrive around 7:30 so we can chat and catch up; happy to see each other as another month has passed and we have much to share.

When Rabbi Sherbill arrives we begin the formal part of our meeting with a Centering; a process of accessing calm through presence. Often this is a short meditation on the breath. One of the Hebrew words for soul, n'shama, shares the same root as the Hebrew word for breath, n'shima. Just as the Hebrew illuminates the mysterious unity of our breath and our soul, so we are unified through the practice of Centering. The whole group is drawn into the present moment, relaxed and focused, ready to learn. Before beginning to study, we say the Brachot Hatorah,

Blessings of The Torah.

In these gatherings we engage in the words of Torah in specific relationship to Women in Judaism. Rabbi Sherbill always comes prepared with an interesting topic to explore, supported by several texts, filled with stories, laws and mysteries of the Jewish people. Torah texts are layered with meaning. Through study with Rabbi Ari we engage with the wisdom embedded in the text and are able to glimpse the hidden "secrets" he often speaks about. Hebrew is an essential key that unlocks meaning in the texts. With Rabbi Sherbill, it is fun to look closely at individual words, sometimes even at individual letters to understand a hidden message. As students of Torah and as Women, we discuss, argue about, and marvel over the many levels of meaning in the Torah. Asking questions, perhaps the central tool in Torah study, is encouraged. And there is opportunity to share stories, offer a reading or a poem, break into a chant, or simply just be.

The Women in Judaism series is a way to discover and experience ones self through the study of Jewish wisdom and spirituality. According to Dawn Frail, a member of the Shaar Shalom Synagogue and a regular participant, "Women in Judaism provides an informal, supportive venue to explore spirituality in Judaism from a female perspective. We never know

where our discussions will take us, but by the end of the evening, we're always spiritually richer for having taken the journey." Indeed we always end feeling uplifted. We close our evening as we began, meditating in a sacred circle, connected to our Jewish n'shamas, and to each other.

On a personal note, it is a pleasure and honor to host the Women in Judaism series. It gives us a chance to celebrate being Jewish Women; women of differing ages, backgrounds, and varied Jewish practices, who come together to study, to learn and to grow, both in community and as individuals. I know I speak on behalf of all of us when I say I appreciate our fearless leader Rabbi Ari Sherbill, who inspires us, challenges us to think in new and creative ways, and always holds his seat even in the face of a challenge. And thank you to all the men and women who participate. You make it a truly lovely evening that is blessed with ritual, spirituality, and a feeling of oneness.

The next Women in Judaism will take place on September 16th, @7:45pm, 1454 Birchdale Ave., where we will have a conversation and and discussion on Tzitzit. For more information please call Rabbi Ari at the Beth Israel Synagogue, 422-1301 or Marcie Gilsig @422-9870.

Fredericton News

by Ellen Lupu

There's lots going on in Fredericton. This past spring Rabbi Yosef Goldman organized a well-attended community seder at the synagogue and took three students from our community to it. In April, the synagogue hosted a moving Holocaust Memorial that filled the sanctuary. Please see the

accompanying articles for more details about these events.

In June, we celebrated two high school graduations, Matthew Chippin from Fredericton High School and Phillip Soicher from Ecole Sainte-Anne. Mazal tov! Other simchas: Marc and Ayten Kranat sponsored a Kiddush in honour of their anniversary, and Shelley and Byron Stephens celebrated

their 28th anniversary in August.

Community members gathered at Killarney Lake in June for a potluck picnic, swimming and companionship. In August, we welcomed our Kadimah campers and staff home from camp. Now the community is looking forward to Igal Tichonov's bar mitzvah on September 4. Congratulations to the family.

From the Rabbi's Study

by Rabbi Yosef Goldman

It is hard to believe that it is already almost a year since I arrived in Fredericton. There are two very wonderful events I would like to share with you.

During the winter, organizing the community Seder, I received several emails asking how long it will be. I don't take any short cuts, but somehow everything we do here is 'short, sweet and to the point', so I could safely answer those emails that it would be short but fun. It was a great experience for me and for the community. I want to thank Carol Airst, Shelley Stephens and many more for organizing and preparing. It is also my pleasure to thank the Knights of Columbus volunteers who served, washed and cleaned everything from beginning to end, and to Aaron who cooked a wonderful and delicious Seder meal for over 60 people.

After a short trip to Israel, I was off to Washington, D.C. with three girls from our community, Amanda Brown, Michelle Chippin, and Jasmine Kranat, through the Asper Foundation. During the winter we studied together about the Holocaust and Human Rights around the world and specifically in Canada. The US Border Control Officer in Montreal put us through our first test of tolerance and patience, but I think we passed the test with flying colours (and with lots of tears). You were great girls!

The four days we spent in Washington taught us a whole lot about how we truly are all one human race, though we have different opinions. The highlight of the trip was, of course, the Holocaust Museum, and we learned so much more than what we knew before. For example, we experienced the story of a survivor who spoke to us, first hand, about her life as a child during the Holocaust in Holland. She has such a vivid memory, we felt as if she was describing

something that happened last week.

We also were fortunate to visit the Newseum, a Museum showing the history of news making. I took pictures of several things that, in my eyes, show how we really are one human race. The antenna from the World Trade Center (September 11th), where the terrorists did not care which religion/colour a person was. More so, appliances found after Hurricane Katrina, natural disasters definitely do not make exceptions between "races"/religions when they hit. I myself almost missed out of the trip to Washington, being detained in Israel after/during the Volcanic Ash episode.

We want to thank Edna LeVine, for all her work and help, and the Asper Foundation, for making this a great and meaningful trip.

On behalf of the Fredericton Jewish community, Louis Budovitch, president of Sgoolai Israel Synagogue,



Shelley Stephens and her son enjoying the picnic

and Shelley Stephens, president of the synagogue Sisterhood, wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year. Shanah Tovah!

Mark Stein

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Yom Hashoah in Fredericton

by Sydelle Grobe

Max Eisen was guest speaker at the annual Fredericton community Yom HaShoah Holocaust Remembrance Service at Sgoolai Israel Synagogue.

Mr. Eisen was born in Moldava, Czechoslovakia in 1929 into a large orthodox Jewish family. In the first ten years of his life he had a normal childhood with all the amenities that good parenting and extended family provided. "Life changed dramatically when Hungary occupied the eastern part of Slovakia in March of 1939 and racial laws were imposed on the Jewish population," he said. "This led to dehumanization, segregation, and confiscation of businesses. All Jews had to wear the Yellow Star of David for visibility."

His extended maternal family consisting of grandmother, uncles, aunts and cousins were deported from Slovakia in 1942 to *Majdanek-Lublin Death Camp* where they were murdered. In May 1944 his immediate family of parents, two younger brothers and baby sister and paternal grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins all perished in *Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp* following deportation.

"I survived slave labour in *Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Melk and Ebensee Camps* and was forced to go on a death march in January of 1945 where thousands died from exposure to severe weather

conditions and malnutrition," said Eisen. "I was fortunate to find a discarded paper cement bag, which I wore under a flimsy shirt to protect myself from freezing. We had no food for eight days and handfuls of snow along the way were the only sustenance."

After eight days of marching, the ever-diminishing group reached a bombed railway bridge over the Danube River at Mauthausen, Austria. They were forced to cross the bridge on foot. Eisen made it across but many did not have enough strength to avoid missing sections and fell to their deaths in the icy waters.

Eisen was liberated at *Ebensee Concentration Camp* in Austria on May 6, 1945 by the *761st Black Panther Tank Battalion of the United States Army*; the first all-black fighting unit in Europe.

Following liberation, he was determined to return to his family home, now in Czechoslovakia, with the hope of finding family members that might have survived and would take care of him.

"Upon arrival at my home, I discovered that our neighbours had occupied it and I was made to feel unwelcome," recalled Eisen. "The realization set in that at the age of sixteen, I was homeless and alone in the world."

He spent three years recovering from his ordeal in a Jewish orphanage organized for surviving teenagers in Marienbad, Czechoslovakia. Afterward, he was admitted to Canada as a

displaced person, arriving in Toronto in October 1949 as a ward of *Jewish Family and Child Services*. "This organization helped me get clothing, a place to stay and work," he said. "I learned English at night school and by



Marlene Unger at the Holocaust Memorial

reading books and newspapers."

Through increasingly more responsible jobs and applying his own resourcefulness, he gained the experience necessary to start his own manufacturing company in 1964. The business prospered and eventually employed up to 65 people. Eisen retired in 1992 after a successful business career as a respected pioneer in the industry.

A court case in Toronto in 1985 involving a Holocaust denier motivated him to get involved with the *Holocaust Education Centre of Toronto* as a speaker/educator. In 1991, he started speaking about the dangers of hatred and discrimination in society in an effort to promote understanding between community groups.

Lt-Governor Graydon Nicholas, Mayor Brad Woodside, Royal Canadian Legion Branch President Jean-Guy Pelletier and veterans of the Royal Canadian Legion were guests of honour at the service.

Sgoolai Israel President Louis Budovitch welcomed everyone to the service. Ellen Lupu read a selection from the Book of Joel that praises the virtue of bearing witness. "Hear this, ye old man, and give ear. All ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your

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children of it, and let your children, and their children another generation." Shelley Stephens and Mark Kranat led participants in a recitation of the 23rd Psalm.

Six memorial candles were kindled. Survivors Max Eisen and Israel Unger lit candles honouring victims of the Holocaust. Roz Brown lit a candle on behalf of all victims. Jean Guy Pelletier lit a candle honouring members of the armed forces who lost their lives in World War II. Mayor Brad Woodside lit a candle to honour the Righteous Gentiles. Lucia Demaio and Scott Ronis, new members of the Fredericton Jewish Community, kindled the sixth candle. A seventh candle, in hope of a bright future for all young people, was kindled by Jonathan Lazarev, a student at Bliss Carmen Middle School.

Anton Tarnavsky sang the haunting hymn Ani Ma'amin, "I believe," a confirmation of faith which death camp victims sang on their way to the gas

chambers, and Kael Molai Rachamim, a traditional memorial prayer. "Exhalted, Compassionate God, grant perfect peace in your sheltering presence among the Holy and the Pure to the souls of all our brethren; men, women and children of the House of Israel, who were slaughtered and burned."

Israel Unger recited the Mourner's Kaddish a traditional prayer that praises God and pleads for peace. "May the Father of peace grant peace to us, to all Israel and to all mankind ..."



Lieutenant General Graydon Nicholas and our guest speaker, Holocaust Survivor, Max Eisen.

Following the service, the Jewish community hosted a reception in the social hall of the synagogue.

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Report from Moncton

by Nancy Cohen

Joan Sichel has been organizing the Holocaust Memorial services in Moncton for the past 25 years and this year she decided it was time for her to retire. For awhile it seemed that there would be no service, but with less than three weeks to go (and Passover to prepare for), Victoria Volkanova and I offered to organize it with the assistance of Joan and Francis Weil. The service was held on April 11 and in spite of the limited time we had to get it organized, it went smoothly and there was a good turnout from both the Jewish and non Jewish communities, as well as several official representatives such as the mayor. Victoria and I quickly learned how much work is involved in organizing this service and on behalf of the community would like to thank Joan for dedicating so much time to making sure there was a community commemoration every year and organizing many wonderful and moving services.

Tiferes Israel Preschool is now in its 30th year and a celebration to mark this



Lynne is the third girl from the right (tallest one)

milestone took place on May 16. All former teachers, graduates and parents of graduates were invited to a beautiful reception. David Attis, the school's founder paid tribute to the wonderful teachers who have made Tiferes Israel the best preschool in Moncton.

Several of our youngest members had a great time while learning about Judaism at Tiferes Israel Day Camp. The camp, held during the last couple of weeks of June, was directed by Rabbi and Rebbetzin Yagod and led by their daughters Chumie and Huvie. It provided a fun filled Jewish atmosphere for children ages 4 to 11.

Athletes from around the world converged on Moncton during the last two weeks of July when the city hosted the International Association of Athletes Federations World Junior Track and

Field Championships. Francis Weil, Janyce (Rubin) Arsenault and her three daughters Julie, Lynne and Natalie volunteered to help out with this event. Lynne (see picture) was one of the six young women selected to be a VIP host and she was chosen to walk the Prime Minister out in the opening ceremonies.

Many former members of our community returned to

Moncton for the long weekend in August to attend the Attis Family Reunion. By all accounts it was a busy and fun filled weekend. Prior to Kabbalat Shabbat, the entire community was invited to hear guest speaker Dr. Eric Goldstein, a history professor and expert in Lithuanian emigration.

We are fortunate to have more new immigrants join our community. Inga and Igor Safronchik and their two children have recently moved to Moncton.

Mazel tov to Peter Gergely on the marriage of his daughter Laura to Andrew Offman the son of Ken and Wendy Offman, in Halifax on Aug 8th. Congratulations to Laura's grandmother Sara Gergely.

Mazel tov to Barrie and Evy Carnat on the marriage of their son Daniel to Deanna Allan. The marriage took place on August 8 in Kelowna, BC.

Mazel tov to Daniel Cohen, son of Ivan and Nancy on graduating with his BA from Dalhousie University.

Mazel tov to Reuben Cohen who will receive the Order of New Brunswick at a ceremony on October 27.

Best wishes to all for a happy, healthy and sweet New Year!

Mazal Tov! to Betty and Alan Hans, Moncton, on your 60th anniversary, September 14th.

We wish you many more happy, healthy and nachas filled years together.

Love, Lisa & Steve, and Jeff, Cheryl, Josh & Caleb

Reuben Cohen

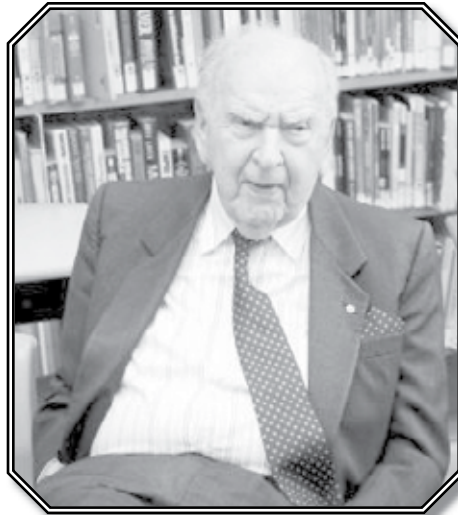
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Moncton's Reuben Cohen has received a bevy of honours in his career as a lawyer, businessman, philanthropist and community supporter.

He is a companion of the Order of Canada and a member of the New Brunswick Business Hall of Fame as well as Chancellor Emeritus of Dalhousie University and recipient of numerous honorary degrees from Atlantic Canada universities.

Now, Reuben Cohen can add the Order of New Brunswick to his list of acknowledgements, an award to be presented by Premier Shawn Graham at a ceremony October 27.

Cohen told the Fredericton Gleaner that at almost 90 years of age, "You don't get



excited by too much," adding he would attend the ceremony "If I'm still alive."

Cohen began a legal career in the 1940s after completing his law degree at

Dalhousie University. He went on to found Central Guaranty Trust, which expanded into a multibillion-dollar empire but was liquidated in 1992.

He was a director of several major companies, including Petro-Canada, Maritime Life Assurance Company and the Mortgage Insurance Company of Canada.

Cohen is also a philanthropist with a passion for the arts inspired by his late wife, Louise.

The Université de Moncton renamed its art gallery after the Cohens in recognition of a fund they established to help the institution amass a large Acadian art collection.

He was also involved with the YMCA of Greater Moncton, Friends of Moncton Hospital Foundation and the Moncton

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Rotary Club.

Cohen's memoir, *A Time to Tell: the Public Life of a Private Man*, in 1998, became one of the top 10 non-fiction hardcover best-sellers in the country.

Cohen was appointed as a Member of the Order of Canada in 1979, promoted to an Officer in 1990 and named a Companion of the Order in 2001.

The Order of New Brunswick was established in 2000 to honour current

or former longtime residents who have reached a high level of individual achievement in any field and contributed to the social, cultural or economic well-being of the province.

News From Saint John

by Susan Isaacs - Lubin

The Saint John Jewish community has had two deaths that have been very meaningful to us in the past short while.

Jerry Koven, beloved husband of Marcia Koven, died the end of June. Jerry was a well known business man in our community. He owned the Grand Department Store on the west side of Saint John and was very active in the community. Jerry was also out Gabbai Rishon for many years until his health forced him to retire. Jerry was a small man in stature, but a very large man in his influence in this community. Jerry had an infectious laugh that we will all remember. Our sympathies go out to his family – his wife Marcia, daughters Diane, Charlotte and Sheri and son Andrew and their families.

We were also saddened by the death of Abe Davis. Abe and his wife of 68 years, Goldie, owned the Ideal Stores on Union

Street. Abe was also a vital part of the Saint John Community throughout his lifetime. Abe was known for his sense of humour, his love of music and the arts, and his generosity and charitable acts. Although Abe and Goldie moved to Toronto after their retirement, they remained in our hearts as Saint Johners and he came home to us to be buried here. Our thoughts are with his family – his wife Goldie (Garson), his children – Philip (Heather), Rozie (Nordau), Susie (David) and Michael (Hyla) and his many grandchildren.

Over the winter and spring we have done more renovations on our new building. We have built a new meat kitchen, which is just about complete; and we have installed tile on the floor in a room that we plan to use as a multi-media room in the future.

We have been actively looking at new immigrants to help us grow our community. To this end, we have entertained two groups of potential

immigrants from Israel this spring. Both groups were very interesting and are interested in moving to Saint John. We hope that things work out with as many as possible.

Mazeltov to The Honourable Erminie J. Cohen, who has received another international award. This award is given by the North American Council on Adoptable Children, headquartered in New Haven, Connecticut. Erminie is one of seven receiving an award this year – and the only Canadian. Her award is the Activists Award given for her work in founding the New Brunswick Adoption Foundation which to date has found homes for approximately 800 children.

We are looking forward to having Cantor Jeff Spitzer with us once again for the High Holidays. Cantor Spitzer comes from the Boston area and has been with us a number of years. He has a beautiful voice and we look forward to his services.

Saint John "Mensch" *Jerry Koven Passes Away*

by Joel Jacobson

An icon of the Saint John Jewish community will be remembered as a mensch, a man with an infectious laugh, and one who was upright, honest, loyal and compassionate.

Jerry Koven passed away June 26, 2010 at 90 years of age, evoking fond memories from family and friends.

Blessed with a sharp wit, Koven ran the

Fairville Department Store in Saint John from the late 1930s until he closed the store in September 1994. He took over the retail operation from his late father, who died prematurely. Koven, a Dalhousie University Commerce graduate at age 19 in 1938, declined to attend Yale Law School to which he had been accepted, so he could help his mother operate the family business.

"Jerry was one of the most considerate

people I was blessed to be associated with," said first cousin and close friend, Norman Holtzman, who also had a Saint John retail background. "When he dealt with you, or talked with you, he always made you feel like you were the most important person in the world. He enjoyed life and he loved people."

In declining health for the last two years, Koven was Gabbai Rishon of Sharrei Zedek Congregation which lacked a rabbi for the

last many years.

Very family oriented, Koven "taught us the most important thing in life is family," said daughter Diane of Ottawa, one of Jerry's four children. "We learned to do the right thing at all times, to be honourable, ethical and always a good person."

She added her father cared for others, whether in the immediate community or the world at large. "He did a lot of charitable work that nobody knew about. He wasn't seeking fame or notoriety. His life set an example for all of us."

Holtzman noted people who visited Fairville Department Store became more than customers. "They were his friends,"

he said.

Koven, who leaves wife Marcia in Saint John, and children Diane, Charlotte (Toronto), Sherry Sheffman (Victoria B. C.) and Andrew (Short Hills, N.J.), and eight grandchildren, was born October 19, 1919 in New York's Lower East Side and came to Saint John in 1930 from Jersey City, N.J. His father established an ice cream parlour on King Street West before starting the department store.

Koven was an honours graduate of Saint John High School, attended Mount Allison University before earning his Bachelor of Commerce at Dalhousie University. He married Marcia of Saint John in 1948

"He took real joy in life," said Diane, recalling a man who loved his children and grandchildren – and chocolate ice cream, something he enjoyed virtually every night before bed.

Despite running a sole proprietorship (which meant he was responsible to the store 24/7), Koven ensured he was home for family dinner every night between six and seven o'clock, said Diane.

"We were in and out of the store and spent time with him every day," she continued. "He gave each of us support, financially and emotionally, and was there for us any time and any place."

Report from the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum

by Katherine Biggs-Craft, Curator

The last few months have been busy ones at the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum.

Max Eisen, a Holocaust survivor from Toronto, was our guest speaker for our Yom Hashoah program on April 12th. He spoke about life in the small Czechoslovakian town where he grew up and the experience of surviving in the camps. Mr. Eisen shared his family's story and his personal story of liberation by the 761st Black Panther

Tank Battalion of the United States army. He has visited Auschwitz numerous times with the March of the Living Program and also had the chance to meet the American soldier who liberated him. He closed his presentation by sharing a photograph of his beautiful Israeli granddaughter, named for the sister he lost in the Holocaust.

As in past years, Mr. Eisen was invited to speak at two high schools in Saint John where the hundreds of students who heard

for the summer months. This year's group was a very talented one and we wish them well as many move on to university to continue study in music and art.

The Saint John Jewish Historical Society held its annual general meeting on Sunday, May 30th at which time a new board was elected to oversee the organization's operations for the next year. Those elected were : Gary Davis, president; Teresa Goldsmith, vice-president; Sandra Levine, treasurer; Katherine Biggs-Craft, secretary; Rolf Duschenes, C.M, David Elman, Neil Franklin, Lloyd Goldsmith, Rev. Dr. Philip Lee, Dr. Elizabeth McGahan, Dr. Morris Mendelson, all as directors. Dr. Joseph Arditti serves as immediate past-president.

The summer season is well under way. We welcome visitors through the Museum from Sunday to Friday. Saint John continues to be a preferred port of call for many cruise lines and the cruise season, which began in late May, will continue until the end of October with the Queen Mary as the last ship for the season. We will continue to offer the Jewish Heritage Bus Tour for visitors and we anticipate continued success with that venture. To further attract visitors we introduced a Jewish Heritage Walking Tour through an older part of the city.

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*Artwork by Hilari McLeod,
Jewish Holocaust Study Group participant*

his presentation were visibly moved.

In 2009 – 2010 the Museum held its ninth Holocaust Study Group.

The participating students presented their final projects as part of the Holocaust Memorial Program. Many of the students presented original music and art work to the guests in an informal setting after the official program was concluded. The art work remains on exhibit in the Museum

AROUND OUR REGION: SAINT JOHN

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Although we anticipated only a modest success with a new venture, it has been very popular. We have had to increase the number of times it is offered during the day from one to three and trained additional. They see the area where our early immigrants arrived, the homes where many our prominent and ordinary Jewish citizens lived and where many Jewish merchants and professionals operated stores and offices along and near Union, Charlotte and King Streets. We also show the corner where the late great Hollywood actor, Walter Pidgeon's father had his grocery store and the homes of some other prominent Saint John residents. The stop at the Museum is the mid-point of the tour and gives the visitors (and the guides) a brief rest.

In between tours, the everyday operation of the Museum continues. We have been fortunate in receiving numerous project grants from the municipal, provincial and federal governments and private donors which will allow us to improve our archives,

our educational activities, and our exhibits. The provincial and federal governments have also been generous in providing funding for the employment of five students for the summer months to assist with all facets of the Museum's operation.

We hope that you will find the time over the remainder of the summer and fall seasons to visit Saint John, to see the Jewish Museum and enjoy the city's hospitality.



*Bruce Washburn, president, Congregation Shaarei Zedek and
Max Eisen, Holocaust survivor*

A Champion for Children

Published Saturday August 7th, 2010 and reprinted with the permission of The Telegraph Journal, Saint John, NB



Erminie Cohen has played many accomplished roles in her 84 years, including that of a senator. But for nine years, her resources have been devoted to a cause that is both personal and public - finding permanent families for children.

For her work in pioneering and championing the N.B. Adoption Foundation, Erminie Cohen has been honoured by the North American Council on Adoptable Children in Hartford, Conn., which has awarded her one of 10 activist awards. She is the only Canadian to have made the organization's shortlist for 2010. The honour is richly deserved.

Under her direction as founding chairwoman and board member, the foundation has found adoptive families for about 800 children since 2002. Before the foundation was created, 25 children a year were adopted in the province, on average. Thanks to the public education and outreach the foundation has performed, that figure has risen to approximately 100 children a year - a remarkable success.

Erminie Cohen is the first to stress that

this success is a collective triumph - not "a solo performance," but "a symphony of efforts." And the foundation's work is not done; as long as there are children seeking "forever families," there will be a need to promote understanding of adoption.

There aren't many people who can say they have brought new hope and happiness to hundreds of families. Erminie Cohen can, and her accomplishments put her in the same league as Margaret Norrie McCain, who has championed better understanding of early childhood development, and Dr. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell, who has campaigned for early childhood literacy.

New Brunswick needs more advocates of this calibre - community builders who realize the true test of any society is how well it cares for its children.

Report from The Rock

by Claire Frankel-Salama

Nice to be back. My husband, Messod, and I just got back from 7 weeks away. Four weeks were spent in Madrid and Barcelona where Messod was doing research on Judeo-Spanish ballads, thanks to one of the few remaining grants in Humanities research, two weeks were spent on holiday (mmmm), and one week at a conference on Judeo-Spanish at the University of London. The last evening we were invited to have dinner at the Bevis Marks Synagogue (the oldest synagogue in use in the UK) which is a smaller model of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of Amsterdam. Both synagogues use candlelight (the latter exclusively) for services, weddings and other festivities.

During the first month, Messod and I attended services at the Balmes synagogue in Madrid and the synagogue on Carrer Avenir in Barcelona. Both communities, although larger than St. John's, are truly small communities. During the generous Kiddush and Seudat Shlishit, we had a chance to share and compare our concerns and experiences, some of which are remarkably similar. Both Rabbis and Kosher meat are hard to get and very expensive. Assimilation is a huge problem, although many young people there are considering or making Aliyah. Volunteers are called upon to put forth huge efforts to keep the communities going. Numbers



In the "Call" or old Jewish ghetto of Girona in Catalunya

swell in tourist season, but in general, they are not growing. One difference is, of course, that we do not need armed guards at our front doors.

Like our counterparts in Europe, we have many activities in addition to regular services. This past spring we have had many outreach classes, some in the synagogue and some in the schools. In April I visited St. Kevin's High School in the Goulds and gave two talks and a Powerpoint presentation. As it was just before Pesach, I brought Matzah for them to try.

The following Sunday I gave a presentation on the Holocaust to 40 to 50 students, chaperones and teachers who are doing the Asper Foundation programme. The students were extremely involved and grateful, and the session was meaningful for all, myself included. In May they went to the Holocaust Museum in Washington.

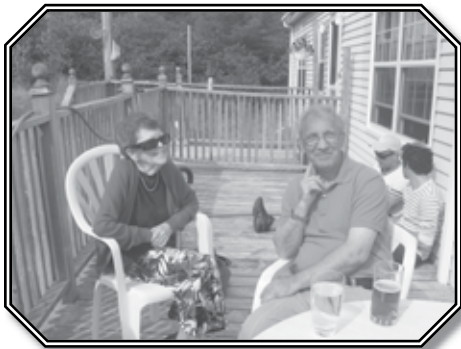
The following month we welcomed a youth group from St. Peter's in Upper Gullies to a Friday night service and Oneg. They were preparing to go on a youth pilgrimage to Israel (see picture). We also welcomed 60 World Religions students from Prince of Wales Collegiate to the Synagogue in May.

This past spring we were extremely busy with preparations for the Holocaust Memorial Service. The committee, chaired by Dr. Barbara Grandy, included Professor Messod Salama, June Mercer, Bonnie Leyton, and myself, as well as Ruth Noel, Elizabeth Malischewski and Shari Ritter from the Havura. As the theme was "Righteous Christians", both Ruth and I spoke about our personal experiences. Dr. Gerhard Bassler, Professor Emeritus of the Department of History at Memorial University was the guest speaker. The event was a huge success, as usual, with approximately 300 in attendance. Dr. Bassler, Ruth and I were interviewed by CBC radio, and there were several articles in the Telegram as well.

Shortly afterwards, Philip Riteman came to give two weeks of lectures on the Holocaust to schools on the island, and we were delighted to welcome him back to Beth El where we held an Oneg in his honour.

We were also very busy with the ordering of Passover goods. Thanks again to Shimon Wilansky for his efforts. We had an amazing first Seder at the synagogue which was organized and prepared by Barbara Grandy, with the aide of June Mercer, Bonnie Leyton, Messod Salama, Shimon and Lin Wilansky and myself. Among the many attendees were Dr. James Rosen and his wife, Mary Pratt (yes, that Mary Pratt) and Dr. Michael Berman. The Rivkins decided to have their Seder at home as their daughters, Ruth and Hannah, are leaving for university outside of the province this fall. We also missed the Rouahs this year, as Robbie and Kelly just had a new baby, Jacob. Mazel Tov to all the Rouahs.

Since then we have had some wonderful visitors: Rabbi Zusshe Silberstein, who was here for a conference just prior to Shavuot, gave us two lectures on the meaning of Shavuot. He was very warm,



Picnic at the Mercers - July 2010

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informative and entertaining, and we hope that he will visit us again. The first night of Shavuot also marked the Yahrzeit of our former president, Sid Epstein, and we were pleased to welcome his family who joined us for the service and a special Kiddush in his memory.

On July 16th, Rabbi Shmuley Boteach (yes, that Rabbi Boteach), his wife, Debbie, and several of his delightful children spent Shabbat with us. He gave a talk which included much praise for our "heroic efforts" in keeping Judaism and the synagogue alive here in this province during an Oneg which was organized by Dr. Michael Paul. The following Monday evening we observed the eve of Tisha Be'Av with the traditional reading of the Kinot.

The following weekend, we welcome still more guests, including Dr. Barry and Lynn Cutler, parents of Rabbi Adam Cutler, assistant rabbi of Beth Tzedek in Toronto (and former Ramahnik), the Onrots from Florida and the Hefners from Calgary. The Hefners knew our former teacher, Yossi Suissa, and other friends of Beth El, including Milton Bogoch. We are constantly reminded of how well connected is the Jewish world. Our guests helped us with the Minyan, as Ernie and Randy Mauskopf said Kaddish for the late Ida. We were also entertained by Randy's bright and energetic four-year-old, Iain. On Shabbat morning we welcomed our former members, Eugene and Dianne Grumer, who now reside in Florida after spending several years in Clarendville.

This past Sunday we attended the annual

Shul picnic held by Dr. David and June Mercer. The day was perfect and the Mercer's cod au gratin was excellent as always. It was great to see Dr. David and Christine Wright again, who recently returned from Florida. We were also glad to include Daniel Salama, who is home for the summer from McGill where he is studying law. He has begun articling here this summer, and is leaving to study at the University of Groningen in Northern Holland for the fall term. We are particularly excited, as my mother's family lived in that area for hundreds of years, and he plans to visit the towns where his ancestors made their living as merchants.

Last, but certainly not least, we have to mention the great achievements of two of our former members. Dr. Robin McGrath, who drops in when she is visiting from Labrador, is the winner of the Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Award this year for her fictional account of a Jewish merchant in 19th century Newfoundland. It is loosely based on her extensive research of the history of the Jews in this province. To learn more about her novel, please read the laudatory article published in the Canadian Jewish News at the following www.cjnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=19165&Itemid=86

We also thank Robin for her generous donations to the Synagogue and look forward to her next visit.

Yet another high achiever who will be visiting in August is Dr. Douglas Wilansky. Douglas, who was a founder and the head of the Nuclear Medicine department at



Picnic at the Mercers - July 2010

Etobicoke General Hospital, was honoured in June by a Recognition dinner and lecture. In addition, the Nuclear Medicine department has been named in his honour. We wish to you and your wife, Ruth, a huge "Yasher Koach" and many more years of good health.

Douglas and Ruth will be visiting with Judy Wilansky, another former member who now lives in Toronto. We congratulate her and all the Wilanskys on the birth of Zelig's son in Vancouver.

As we enjoy the summer and start planning for the High Holy Days, we wish all Shalom readers, especially those in the small communities, the best. Remember, when you travel, it is worthwhile visiting synagogues in other parts of the world, and particularly in other small communities. It is important that we realize that we are not alone and that there are quite a number of us working towards the same goals.

Occasional Wanderings: Germany, June 2010

by Michael Paul

"Why would a Jew want to visit Germany", asked Mrs. Betty Barban skeptically, who at 97 years is the oldest member of the Jewish community in Newfoundland and Labrador. She had a point, as she and her family and the parents of her late

husband, Andreas, had to flee Nazi oppression in Vienna following the Anschluss, literally on the last boat from Genoa to China in April 1939. In fact they were in the Suez Canal close to the Red Sea on Pesach each eating a small piece of Matzo, as they sailed

to Shanghai where they spent the next eight years.

I answered her that I was fortunate to be able to attend a medical meeting in my area of expertise in Munich, and would also take the opportunity to learn more about



*Ohel Yaakov Synagogue-Munich
Shamess- Erich Lehmann*

Jewish life past and present in the areas that I planned to visit- between Frankfurt am Main and Munich. With limited time, exactly which towns or cities I should visit was the question. I decided first upon the areas of the "Shum" region as it was called in Hebrew. Shum, a play on words, means garlic in Hebrew (the Jews put garlic on most of their foods in the old Ashkenazi world of Germany, and in medieval depictions of Jewish men, they were drawn as holding a bag of money in the right hand and a bag of garlic in the left hand), and was also the acronym of the three famous

places of Jewish learning in medieval Germany- Speyer, Worms and Mainz.

Upon arriving in Frankfurt am Main, I took the train for the 40-minute ride from the airport to Mainz, a medium-sized town on the Rhine River that was important for trade in medieval times. There is only a very small Jewish community now, which holds services from time to time in a rented factory, as it awaits the completion of its new synagogue. The community is mainly Jews from the former USSR, with a smattering of Israelis. I located the Judengasse along which there has been erected a monument to memorialize the Jewish victims of the Shoah. This memorial has a plaque and a stylized picture of the façade of the pre-Kristallnacht synagogue. I took the train to Wiesbaden, which is quite close to Mainz. There too was a Judengasse of sorts- called the Gasse "am der Alten Synagoge", but there was no plaque to mention anything about the town's former Jewish residents.

The town of Worms was a major centre of Jewish learning, with Jews being known to live there for over 1000 years. The old town of Altstadt was surrounded by the remnants of the ancient wall and its towers. One tower near the old Jewish quarter is now called the Rashi Tor, in honour of the famous resident. The current complex includes the oldest synagogue in Germany



*Munich Synagogue- Ohel Yaakov
main entrance close up*

(it was the very first synagogue rebuilt in post WWII Germany by the state and federal governments), the old Mikvah, and the Jewish museum, built on the spot where there had been the Jewish old peoples' home. The synagogue was initially destroyed in 1096 during the rampage of crusader mobs on their way to the Holy Land. The next destruction occurred in the mid-14th century at the time of the Black Death when the Jews were accused of poisoning the wells causing the plague. The synagogue was brought to rubble in November 1938.

The 1,100 Jews of Worm almost all perished. The rebuilding of the ancient synagogue was done in 1959-60 using the rubble fragments mixed with new stone bricks. The reconstruction was based on the many photos of the original structure available to them. They tried to be true to imitate the lighting, arrangements of the seats, Bimah and Aron haKodesh. Somehow the famous Rashi chair was saved. Currently the synagogue is used sporadically for Friday night and High Holiday services. The community imports someone from Mainz to help run the services. The museum is run by the city government and it shows artifacts of former Jewish residents of Worms - their homes and businesses, as well as articles from the old synagogue.

A short distance away was the old Freidhof, or Jewish cemetery, surrounded by a high



Ohel Yaakov- Munich- Interior view

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wall, with a house for the permanent caretaker and his family. The cemetery is divided into ancient and modern sections. The latter is closest to the main gate. I was in awe as I entered the ancient section. The matzayvoth, or tombstones, were enormous, of a red sandy colour and appeared to be of substantial weight and many of them about four to five feet tall. One could still make out the ancient Hebrew script and small decorations on stones that were not moss-covered. Here and there were the symbols of the Kohanim, the priestly tribe, with the hands outstretched in blessing, the picture of a lion or of a deer, or other animals.

Very close to the walking path were two very prominent stones upon which had been placed many pieces of paper with small stones to weigh them down. One was the stone of the Maharil and the other the stone of the Baal Shem. The stones in this section appeared to be placed in a very haphazard manner, and many had toppled over.

The next section had stones dating from the late 1700's to the early 1930's. Some monuments were ornate, others plain. Almost all were marble. I read many of them, gaining a small glimpse into the history of this remarkable Jewish community. Not a single stone had been desecrated by the Nazis during the entire 1933-45 period. The same could not be said of the ones living in Worms.

The evidence of Jewish existence in Speyer, the last of the three towns of the Shum, was disappointingly minimal. There was no ancient synagogue, nor an ancient cemetery. There was not even a Judengasse on the city map, only a small mark where the ancient Jewish bath once stood.



Augsburg Synagogue

Heidelberg was a similar story. This city on the Neckar River had been a centre of Jewish trade in medieval times. There was an established community which shared the same fate of other European Jewish communities - a repeat cycle of welcome, exorbitant taxation, extortion, pillage, imprisonment, forced conversions and eventual expulsion only to be welcomed back as the ruler needed more money and then the cycle was repeated yet again many times over.

The old synagogue was situated very close to the Neckar. One would think this to be fortunate for those involved in trade, but, in fact, the Jews were given a small portion close to the river in order to suffer the most during the frequent floods which occurred each spring from the river swollen by the melting snow from the surrounding mountains. There is a mark on one building showing that, in the late 1700s, the level of the water was well over seven meters above the usual water level, wiping out the entire Jewish quarter, and ruining all trading assets of the tradesmen. There was a memorial square with 12 small pedestals made of the stones from the ruined synagogue, to symbolize the 12 tribes. At the front of the square was a small bimah upon which there was an inscription in Hebrew to memorialize the destroyed

community. There is currently a small synagogue in active use. The community is small.

I traveled to Nurnberg, the city made infamous by the early Nazi rallies, Nurnberg Racial Laws promulgated in 1935, and by the later war crimes trials. The city was also home to artist Albrecht Durer, whose workshop is now a museum. The University of Heidelberg was one of the first universities in the 19th century that accepted Jews on faculty without their having to convert first.

In the 20th century, the university was plagued early on by virulent anti-Semitism and was one of the first to expel Jewish students and faculty after the Nazi rise to power. Despite my carefully studying the city map and hours of walking in the old city, all that remained was a Judengasse, without any sign of a memorial to its former Jewish citizens.

Regensburg on the Danube was one of the few German towns not bombed at all during the WWII era. Its ancient sections are truly authentic. There is an active Jewish community in Regensburg. On my way there, I passed a square named "Dachau Platz", and was intrigued as to the square's name. A plaque explained that several non-Jewish citizens had been sent to Dachau for their resistance to the Nazis and perished there. The Jewish community was small but had been revitalized by the influx of Russian Jews in the early 1990's. The complex was surrounded by a wall, on which had been placed a memorial plaque. There was a locked gate leading to the complex. I rang the buzzer and stated that I was a Canadian Jewish visitor. I was buzzed in and walked through the main door. On the wall opposite the opening was a painting of the old pre-1938 synagogue. Up a flight of stairs was the secretary's

office. She was very pleased to have a Jewish visitor and was most eager to show me around. The sanctuary of the Orthodox synagogue had a linen mechitzah, and was designed in the usual Ashkenazi manner. The current rabbi joined us to point many things out to me. In my Yiddish and in their German, we got along very well. The Rabbi insisted on my coming to his family's apartment a few blocks away for some tea. He told me a few things about the community such as the Russians who had joined the community posing some very serious problems in terms of their Jewishness. There were many mixed marriages with children who may consider themselves Jewish but halachically are not, the issue of lack of circumcision which was not widely practiced in the former USSR, and the matter of Kashruth. He also told me that to get people to come to services he has to "feed them". His wife bakes several challas for the Friday night services. He also informed me that before he started providing meals in the succah, only eight to 10 people attended. Now that he feeds them, he had to build an extra large succah to fit at least 60 people!

Mixed marriages were understood as often the person had few Jewish partners available in their locale. The rabbi told me the German Orthodox Rabbinical court would try very hard to convert the spouse if he/she so wished and would not impose too harsh a trial or requirements on them. There were problems, he told me, where in one family, for example, one child wanted to become Jewish and the other had no interest, problems that they have been dealing with over the years.

There is a Mohel in Frankfurt who does circumcisions at no cost, viewing it as a great mitzvah. For kosher meats, someone travels to Strasbourg every two weeks, the closest Jewish community at 3 ½ hour's drive away. The Rabbi and his Israeli-born wife have several freezers to keep their stock of food.

The Rabbi and others teach the children of the community. He told me that when the afternoon school is in session, there is always a police car parked in front of the building. For his own education, he has no one locally with whom to study, so he has invested in CD-ROMs from Jewish educational institutions. He said he has not experienced anti-Semitism in Regensburg, but they are always watchful. The authorities are very friendly towards

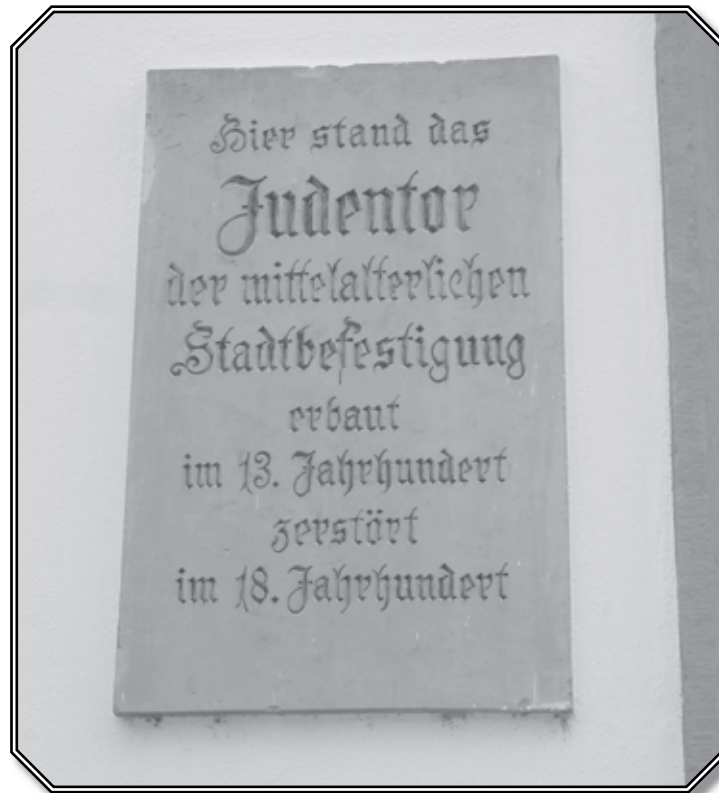
it once was. Currently very few of the city's approximate 1,750 Jews are active in communal affairs, according to the community's archivist.

He said the rabbi is 82 years old and not able to be too active. They cannot attract any younger rabbis. The problem of "who is a Jew" is also prominent in this community, as he told me the community's definition is very lax. For example, he claimed the current Chazzan was from Serbia but it is believed that his mother is Christian but father is Jewish. However he is accepted by the Rabbi and the community as being Jewish.

The services are more than 95% in Russian with only a smattering in Hebrew. Even though the services are understandable to the main constituents, no more than 30 or 40 attend Friday night services and about eight to 10 come on a Saturday morning. They rarely use the main sanctuary. The building used by the Gemeinde not only houses the synagogue, but also a museum, which is used by the city's educational system to teach elementary and high school children about the German Jewish history, especially Jewish persecution during the ages. There are many artifacts in museum cases from the old community - Torah scrolls, torah ornaments, holiday items, old books, etc.

Munich was the final city on my short trip. This, too, is a city tainted by its association with the very early days of Nazism, and by the massacre of the 11 Israeli athletes during the 1972 Olympics. The city that was once almost Judenrein, is now home to a very active Jewish community which some estimate at about 10,000. There are three known synagogues- one small shtiebl, a shul in the Jewish section of the city on Possartstrasse, and the main synagogue, Ohel Yaakov, in the centre of town.

When I visited Munich in 1992, Ohel Yaakov was close to the Gartnerplatztheater, but they moved into



Plaque in Heidelberg near the ancient Jewish quarter by the river Neckar

the Jewish community. The Rabbi told me about another historical Jewish site in town, a low white structure shaped in a rectangle with the word Mizrach in Hebrew where the old synagogue's Aron haKodesh stood. This ancient site was uncovered several years ago.

About a 35-40 minute train ride from Munich is the city of Augsburg, quite wealthy and the site of many great churches and palaces. The Jewish community Gemeinde and synagogue were only a few minutes' walk from the main street in the Altstadt. This is a liberal community, similar to the American and Canadian Reform movement. The community today is only a shadow of what

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their new place about five or six years ago. The new complex of three buildings, connected by tunnels, only a few blocks away from the Dom and Alt Rathaus, contains the synagogue, Gemeinde offices and Jewish museum. The complex is guarded by police almost round the clock, and by several Israeli security men.

The Gemeinde is open 24 hours a day and to enter one must talk to the Israeli security person who sits behind bullet proof glass. The museum, on three floors, has a kosher snack bar on the main floor, next to the Judaica store. At this visit were curated Israeli artists and their displays. There was also a section of the history of the Jews in Munich, which dates back to about 1275, when Jews were first mentioned in official documents.

The Gemeinde building also houses a kosher restaurant called Einstein's, with a picture of the celebrated physicist putting forward his theory of Cholent on a blackboard! I had lunch here and was amazed when the manager told me he was originally from Montreal, but has been living in Munich for a few years with his family. He only smiled when I asked him how a Sephardic person with the family name of Sousanna fit in this very Ashkenazi community.

To enter the synagogue when it's not open for services requires a visitor to undergo questioning by the security agents and the presentation of a passport. The agents keep the passport and give you a guest pass. The tunnel to the synagogue contains memorial plaques and named all of the Jewish residents of Munich who perished in the Shoah.

From the synagogue basement, it is only a single flight of stairs to the sanctuary. The staff was very busy preparing the sanctuary for a Bar Mitzvah the next day. I met the Shames, or beadle, a very charming man by the name of Erich Lehmann, who was originally from Mainz. He showed me the Aron haKodesh with its eight Torah scrolls beautifully dressed in decorated donated mantles. I took many photos. What was very impressive was the ceiling made of plexiglass to maximize the amount of light entering the room.

That evening for Shabbat services I had arranged to be with the Chabad Rabbi - Rabbi Diskin, who has been stationed in Munich for 21 years. He and his wife run the local Chabad house which is across the hall in their apartment building. The Chabad organization has about 10 houses across Germany as listed on their website at www.chabad.org Rabbi Diskin, his wife and two young children were very inviting and kind.

I joined the Rabbi on the short walk to the Possartstrasse synagogue. The ubiquitous Israeli security agent was present at the entrance but did not ask me any question as I was a guest of the Rabbi. Services were, of course, late starting. After all, schmoozing business was the first order on the agenda!

A young fellow from Kiev who is studying in Munich led Mincha. The people in attendance were mainly of Russian origin, with a smattering of former Polish residents. There was also an Israeli visitor and a man from South Africa who had made aliyah many years ago.

Rabbi Diskin then led the Kabbalat Shabbat services. As is the custom, the Rabbi invited anyone who needed or wanted a place to go for Shabbat – an act of Chesed. The Rebbetzin had made a delicious supper and the discussion around the table included Chassidic stories about great saintly rabbis, the current state of political affairs in Israel and the United States, and many other related topics. As I was leaving, the Rabbi reminded me that, as a visitor to the community, I was invited to the Bar Mitzvah the next morning.

I arrived at Ohel Yaakov at about 8:45am. Erich Lehmann greeted me at the door wearing his top hat and high collared shirt with cravat. Of course, there was the gold chained watch across the vest. The shul began to fill and eventually there was



Interior of the Worms Synagogue

standing room only in both the men's and women's sections. The shul rabbi, Rabbi Langnas, was originally from the U.S., but has been with this shul for 12 years. He has a very nice voice and started the psukei d'zimrah before the chazzan took over. The chazzan was a young man with a very soft and melodious tenor voice. The Bar Mitzvah boy did his chanting of the Maftir and haphtarah very well, after which everyone on the Bimah was peppered with candies. Both the Rabbi and the Bar Mitzvah gave short talks in German. I was sitting next to a man who was both a medical doctor and a dentist. He indicated that Jews who are members of the Gemeinde are taxed at a rate of 8%, half of which is deductible from federal taxes. He lamented the fact that many of the Russians and Israelis in the city are not members.

After services ended, a buffet was served outside of the Gemeinde building. The way was lined by some of the adults in the community singing mazal tov songs to the family of the Bar Mitzvah.

My brief trip to Germany's Jewish communities showed how out of the ashes of destruction and annihilation a community can be reborn, with vigor and vitality. Yasher Koach to the Jews of Germany.

Jewish Community Havura, NL

by Ruth Noel and Nancy Bennett

Our best news this year is that the Havura held its first-ever Bar Mitzvah. And then, like a double portion of manna, we held our second Bar Mitzvah a week later!

Our First Bar Mitzvahs

"Summertime and the living is easy". But this July when the Havura had not one but TWO Bar Mitzvahs one week after the other – we were all quite busy. These are the first Bar Mitzvahs for the Havura – what an exciting time. Several Havura members contributed much time and effort preparing the two boys. The families were guided by our Baal Tefilah, Elizabeth Siegel in designing a beautiful Saturday morning service and they prepared special siddurs for both Bar Mitzvahs.

The celebrations started with a Friday night service and out of this world Oneg Shabbat held at the home of Arnold and Nancy Bennett. The two Bar Mitzvah boys, Matthew Bendzsa, son of Lisa and Paul Bendzsa, and Shamus Brown, son of Kari Brown and Paddy Mackey, their families and out of town guests joined us for this evening service to mark the beginning of

their entrance into Jewish adulthood.

Both boys spent many hours learning all the necessary Hebrew, blessings and their Torah portion with Elizabeth Siegel. However, their education did not stop there. They studied Torah, Talmud, and Jewish philosophy and ethics with Arnold Bennett. Avrum Richler, Debby Brown, Ruth Noel, Inbal Bahar,

Paul Bendzsa and other Havura members held lessons in Jewish music, ancient history, symbols, and challah-baking. These two young men also volunteered with our Hebrew School and with the Native Friendship Centre. This tzedakah project involved not just helping out at the Native Friendship Centre but also exploring the shameful living conditions of young natives in Canada and how to press government to improve those conditions. The entire Community benefited from this experience.

Relatives and families came from across the continent to be with the boys on their special day. After services we had wonderful meals provided by the families and community with much merriment. The local klezmer band, now called the Newish



Shamus Brown practicing his Torah portion while teacher Elizabeth Siegel looks on

Klezmers, played at both Bar Mitzvah parties. Over the past four years, this group has entertained at all of our Purim and Hanukkah parties. Three party-goers sat in: Paul Bendzsa, Robert Sweeny and Charlotte-Anne Malischewski.

The St. John's Telegram featured a story on Matthew's Bar Mitzvah in the A-Section on the Saturday of his Bar Mitzvah. The following Saturday, they ran a lovely photo of Shamus practicing his Torah portion while Elizabeth supervised.

Mazel Tov to Shamus, Matthew and their families.

Other News

Passover was a challenge this year as only the basic supplies came in to our usual supplier—the Dominion on Stavanger Drive. The kosher for Passover meats and dairy were lost in shipment. Apparently the wrong address was given and the products did not arrive. We could identify with Moses and the Jews, wandering the wilderness with limited food supplies. However we all survived and enjoyed the Seders with



Premier Danny Williams holds gifts from religious leaders at the House of Assembly Prayer Breakfast flanked by Imman Mahmoud Haddara, Council of Churches Chair the Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy, Jewish Community Havura representative Arnold Bennett, and Hindu Temple Past President Dr. Veeresh Gadag.

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family and friends.

We held our annual Holocaust Memorial Service in April, together with Beth El Synagogue. Havura member Elizabeth Siegel was the moderator and Ruth Noel and Elizabeth-Anne Malischewski were on the planning committee. This year's theme was Righteous Gentiles. Dr. Gerhard Bassler, Professor Emeritus of History at Memorial University of Newfoundland, was the keynote speaker. Ruth Noel spoke about family members who were saved by kind Christians who were made Righteous Gentiles through Yad Vashem. Martin Connolly was our technical expert and Brad Gibb was the official photographer. Other



Nick, Lisa, Paul and Matthew Bendzsa before Matthew's July 24th Bar Mitzvah



Ruth Noel speaking at this year's Holocaust Memorial

Havura members who participated in the evening included Lorne Sulsky, Andrea Monro, and Matthew and Nick Bendzsa.

In May, the Hindu Association held its Fifth Annual Multi Faith Symposium on Spirituality. The theme for this year's symposium was The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Growth. Arnold Bennett spoke on the Jewish perspective and it was well received by the audience.

Summer came a little late, but the hot weather finally arrived and with it a flurry of activities for the Havura. As usual, we welcomed visitors from distant places as they visited our Province, enjoying its spectacular scenery and hospitality.

In June, we held our annual picnic at the home of Arnold and Nancy Bennett in Conception Bay South. As in past years,

the weather cooperated. Music, games and good food were the themes of the day. The Havura furnished grilled trout, and vegetarian hot dogs and hamburgers. Members brought their special side dishes and desserts. Robert Sweeny was our excellent barbecue chef for the day.

The Barbecue also gave us a chance to say a fond goodbye to our dear friends, the Imam of our local Moslem Association and his wife, who are moving to Ontario to be near their children and families. Dr. Mahmoud Haddara and Faiza Enanny have been wonderful friends of our Jewish community and served with several of our members in various organizations. A beautiful photograph of a Newfoundland scene, taken by Havura member Brad Gibb, was presented to the couple after speeches and reminiscences. We all had a chance to

say "shalom and salaam".

Social Action

The Havura also participated in an historic occasion. Along with the Council of Churches, the Muslim Association and the Hindu Temple, we held a Prayer Breakfast with Premier Danny Williams and almost all members of the House of Assembly. Lorne Sulsky delivered a prayer for Newfoundland and Labrador and the House of Assembly. Arnold Bennett gave the keynote talk, focusing on the work the House of Assembly can do to close the gap between rich and poor. As part of the Religious Social Action Coalition, the Havura also participated in follow-up meetings with Cabinet ministers and staff to discuss anti-poverty legislation.

At the Breakfast, Premier Williams reflected



At this year's annual picnic we said a fond goodbye to friends Mahmoud Haddara and his wife Faiza Enanny – leaders of the local Muslim community. "Righteous Gentiles"

on the great progress the province is making in bringing religions together, and he noted that the provincial memorial service after the offshore crash of a Cougar helicopter last year set an important precedent when then Havura President Nancy Bennett, the Imam, and the past president of the Hindu Temple took part in the service as equal partners with the Archbishop and the head of the Council of Churches in an ecumenical service attended by the Premier and the Prime Minister.

The Religious Social Action Coalition also held an organizing meeting in Gander and continued a dialogue on federal poverty

policy with local Members of Parliament.

News and Notes:

Mazel Tov to Lorne Sulsky and Heather MacDonald on their marriage.

Mazel Tov to Martin Connelly and Emily Wilson on their marriage.

Mazel Tov to Matthew Bendzsa for winning third place for seventh graders at the national Canadian Chess Challenge in Montreal.

Mazel Tov to Sarah Pickett and Kathleen Hackett on the birth of their son Kohen Edward Hackett.

Condolences to Jennifer Morian on the

passing of her mother Donna Copeland.

Condolences to Nancy and Arnold Bennett on the passing of Nancy's mother, Doris Derrickson.

Condolences to Sheina Lerman on the passing of her sister Judith Lerman.

August will give us a little "down time" – except for our regular Shabbat services and Talmud Study – before the High Holy Days begin in early September. If you are coming this way, please contact us via email: info@havura.org or call us at 709-834-7866.

We would love to welcome you.

May the New Year bring you good health and happiness. L'shana tova.

PEI News

by Rosalie Simeone

As we all get ready for the High Holydays, here is a snapshot of events on PEI over the Spring and Summer.

Pesach was celebrated in true PEI fashion with our Community Seder. The Service was led by PEI Jewish Community President John Zarwan, and was attended by approx 60 members and guests.

Yom Hashoah was observed over April 12 and 13th, 2010, with a public Memorial Service and a school visit. Our guest speaker this year was our good friend Philip Riteman. He, as usual, connected strongly both with the adults



Richard Chase with members of the PEI Jewish Community at the opening of his art show.

and the youth. Please see the Yom Hashoah Report and the Report from Jo-

Anne White for further information.

The women's Torah Study group has now established regular meetings.

On July 2, 2010 members of our community attended the opening on an art show featuring works by Richard Chase. Richard is a summer member of our community.

On July 2, 2010, the CIT's from Camp Kadimah were hosted to a pot luck picnic at the home of Rachel Kassner and Joel Palter. About 22 PEI members attended.

Coming up this weekend, on Sunday Aug. 8 is our annual picnic at the home of Ayelet Stewart. We are all looking forward to good weather and a fun time.

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Yom Hashoah Holocaust Memorial 2010

by Rosalie Simeone, Chair, Holocaust Education Committee for PEI

Holocaust Memorial was observed April 12 and 13th, 2010 in Prince Edward Island.

Our two day Holocaust /Yom Hashoah Memorial started with a public service at Confederation Centre-Memorial Hall in Charlottetown PEI on Monday April 12th.

The programme began with Ms Cynthia Dunsford, member of the Prince Edward Island Legislative Assembly, relaying a message from the PEI government. She recognized the importance for all Islanders to commemorate Yom Hashoah, and included the importance of the Holocaust Day Act, and the contributions of our Canadian Veterans.

Ms Joanne White then introduced Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies programme, and the 9 students participating this year. Four of the students presented some related readings

and a slide show.

After the Memorial Candle Lighting, Mr. Philip Riteman took the stage.

As he always does, he held the total attention of every member of the audience of approx. 200, as he spoke about his experiences. His presentation ended as it began, with the exhortation to the audience; "I'm begging you don't hate. I want you to teach your children to love. Think for yourself. Never let yourself be brainwashed by other people"

Thanks go out to the members of the Jewish Community who helped by reading out names. Special thanks to Heather Evans and Leslee Sack who managed the guest book, and made sure that the audience members felt welcome. Thanks also go to the participants of the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Programme, for participating in the evening, and passing

out programmes.

On Tuesday April 13th, Philip Riteman participated in the Holocaust/Yom Hashoah programme at Donagh Regional School. The presentation was lead by the Asper students. Mr. Riteman then spoke to 100+ grade 9 students from Donagh and Birchwood schools. The students were very affected by his story and the message of thinking for oneself, and loving not hating.

The 2010 PEI Holocaust/Yom Hashoah programme was made possible by the following: Atlantic Jewish Council, The Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany, the PEI Jewish Community, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs- Canada Remembers- Community Engagement Partnership Fund.

Retired New Waterford Businessman Recalls Earl Days of Coal-Mining Town

by Jack Columbus

It was "Louis Allen Day" at the New Waterford Historical Society on a summer afternoon in July as one of the former coal mining town's best-known retired businessman recounted memories of people and events in the last century when the community was in its hey-day.



Louis Allen, speaking at the New Waterford Historical Society

Mr. Allen, who followed in his father's foot-steps in the operation of grocery stores regaled his listeners with his encyclopaedic knowledge of the businesses on Plummer Avenue, the main street and the characters who called the community home. Many of the stores in the bustling downtown of the 30's, 40's, 50's and 60's were Jewish-owned as the town supported its own synagogue and rabbi until the closure of the shul.

As he strolled down memory lane, Allen recalled the close-knit nature of the



Members of the audience at the New Waterford Historical Society listen to Louis Allen's presentation

community and the social occasions that brought people of all ethnic backgrounds and religious persuasions together.

Glance Bay's Fanny Cohen Celebrates 102nd Birthday

by Jack Columbus



Fanny Cohen, Fruma Shore

Fanny Cohen of Glance Bay is living proof that age is just a number. Miss Cohen was the honoured guest on July 16th at Tigger's Restaurant in Marion Bridge

where family and friends gathered to celebrate her 102nd birthday.

The honoree blew out the candles on a special birthday cake and thanked all those in attendance for their warm greetings. A retired school teacher, Fanny continues her life-

long interest in community affairs and maintains many daily activities.



L - R Shirley Dubinsky, Reva Nathanson, Faye David, Ruth Lewin, Diana Schwartz, Marilyn Zisserson, Edy Lecker listen as the guest of honour, Fanny Cohen, speaks

Mysterious Bone Fragments Found Near Hebrew Cemetery in Sydney

by Jack Columbus

Several bone fragments found near the Hebrew Cemetery in Whitney Pier, a section of

Sydney, NS appear to be human, according to forensics experts.



L to R Harold Davis, CBRM Police Rep., Professor Joe Parish, Rabbi David Ellis

The discovery of the bones was first announced by Cape Breton Regional Police in early April. A person walking behind the graveyard spotted what appeared to be bones and contacted police.

The authorities closed off the area and conducted an investigation. An assistant professor of anthropology, Joe Parish, working on behalf of the

provincial medical examiner searched the area and found more bones. Professor Parish said from what he was able to determine he "didn't think it is a recent forensic case ... a missing person or anything like that."

He said the location of bones can change as the ground shifts due to frost.

Officials of the Temple Sons of Israel in Sydney were also contacted by police to see if they could shed any light on the case. The perimeter of the cemetery appeared to be undisturbed and there were no breaks or openings in the fencing surrounding it.

AJC Regional Chaplain David Ellis inspected the site and said if the bones were definitely proven to be human they would most likely be reburied in the cemetery.

Holocaust Survivor Claire Baum Recounts Her Time as a “Hidden Child” in Holland

by Jack Columbus

Holocaust survivor Claire Baum lived for three years as a “hidden child” during the second world war. She was one of more than 3500 Dutch Jewish children who were given away by their parents in a desperate attempt to allow their offspring to survive the Nazi onslaught.

Baum, now a resident of Toronto, was the guest speaker at the 10th annual Yom HaShoah observances at the Temple Sons of Israel on April 11th. She was born in Rotterdam three years before the start of World War 2 as war clouds gathered and the persecution of Jews grew. The Nazis invaded The Netherlands in May of 1940, and the Dutch capitulated a few days later. Two years later Baum and her younger sister were placed into hiding.



Guest Speaker Claire Baum with Mark Eyking, MP Sydney-Victoria

Her father had decided the family had to be split up if they were to have a chance of surviving the conflict. Of the many Jewish children who were placed with non-Jewish families, only about 1500 were

alive when the war ended.

At first, Baum and her sister were put into a stranger's home, but fear of being betrayed by a Nazi sympathizer prompted the Jewish resistance to re-locate the girls. They were then placed with a 28 year old married woman who had no children of her own. Baum said, “We had to hide our childhood, and we had to live a constant lie in order not to be betrayed”.

After the war had ended, Claire said, a strange man and woman knocked on the front door of the home she and her sister were staying in. The strangers turned out to be her parents. But the little girls, who had not seen them for three years, failed to recognize them.

The family emigrated to Canada in 1951, settling in Toronto.

Cape Breton University Professor Launches New Book

by Jack Columbus

Cape Breton University Professor, Mark Silverberg launched his new book, ‘The New York School of Poets and the Neo-Avant-Garde: Between Radical Art and Radical Chic’, Friday, March 26th in the CBU Art Gallery.

Silverberg, a resident of Sydney, is the Associate Professor of American Literature at CBU. His essays on twentieth century literature and culture have appeared in anthologies and journals such as English Studies in Canada, Literary Imagination, and Contemporary Literature. He is also a published poet.

In his book, Silverberg examines New York City in the 1950s and 60s and its

cultural and artistic rebirth. He highlights the family resemblances between the New York School poets, identifying the aesthetic concerns and ideological assumptions they shared with one another and with artists from the visual and performing arts.

Silverberg notes: “This is a book about one of the most exciting moments and locations in modern American art. New York in the 1950s and 60s was rather like Paris in the 1920s—it was the place where young artists gathered to make the future.”

The New York School of Poets and the Neo-Avant Garde, also looks at the way these poets re-conceptualized avant-garde

art, at a time in the United States when what was once “radical art” was being appropriated and repackaged as “radical chic.”

Silverberg's in-depth analysis of the strategies the New York School poets used to confront the problem of appropriation tells us much about the politics of taste and gender during the period, and suggests new ways of understanding succeeding generations of artists and poets. He received his BA from York University, BEd from the University of Toronto, and MA and PhD from Dalhousie University. Dr. Silverberg specializes in American Literature, Interdisciplinary Arts, and Poetry and Poetics.

Glace Bay Shul

by Adam Conter

A report from the ground as I briefly reflect on watching a synagogue close.

Last Thursday I made my first visit ever to the Glace Bay Shul. I travelled with David Ein to determine which benches my family would remove from the shul to own as a keepsake of the memories of my family history in Glace Bay.

The place is indeed hollowed. All memorial boards are down from the walls, the Torahs and arch curtains gone and a faint dampness has set in. The siddurs have been boxed in preparation for burial and the property has been assessed and put to market for any takers.

Today marks my second anniversary of living here in Cape Breton. I have taken great pride in my synagogue attendance nearly every Friday night and Saturday morning when in Sydney. These shabbos days are filled with mixed feelings as I watch the elderly members of our Temple Sons of Israel congregation in Sydney make every effort to participate in what are the final years of their community. Members here have deep historical roots in thier community, from its inception, through its boom and now as it begins to wither. Two of our most active members, Ike David and Jack Yazer, are well into their nineties and can be counted on each weekend to make an appearance. This usually brings a smile to my face as these men are both characters and have a spirit I can only hope to have at even half their age.

The remarkable thing is how self-aware the community is of its present state, and the knowledge that sadly there is not much which can be done about it. The Cape Breton community, be it New Waterford, Glace Bay or Sydney proper, has little to offer young people, especially young Jews, who typically have professions. The dominant employer here is the Call Centre industry, with some



government jobs and other small trades. The potential here to begin and grow is squandered by the existing established big players and the general population's attitude that nothing needs to change, and that those changes would likely be resisted. The community as a whole suffers and sadly, the Jewish population, as such as small percentage, hasn't much of a chance.

We cannot forget those who make it to synagogue do their part, but a newspaper report of 57 members is a far cry from the truth. Twelve maximum can be counted on to participate in weekly shabbos services, and usually we are stunted at 8 or 9 and find ourselves moving to the Tim Horton's on George Street to have a coffee and gossip and where the elders fill me in on funny stories about my family and its history. Where these other reported 45 Jews are is a mystery to me as I grow more and more frustrated, weekly, at an apparent lack of effort from those who should be more capable than their 94 year old elders.

Cape Breton holds amazing historical value with respect to our Jewish heritage. The Synagogue in Whitney Pier, now a museum, highlights a wide array of multicultural history from what was once the largest melting-pot of any community. The demise of the Glace Bay shul, which once housed both my grandmothers over 50 years ago, is a sad representation of the present state of a once dominant and

boisterous mining town.

The last remaining members of the Temple Sons of Israel in Sydney live on and are strong. Each week they welcome Darren and Shayna Strong-Allen through the doors with their two young sons, 5 and 3, and watch as they tear up and down the sanctuary aisles, running full pace, something my parents remind me I used to do growing up in Halifax. The services are led by whoever has the most energy that day, Fridays, Marty Chernin, Saturdays, Harold Davis, sometimes sitting on a stool if his legs are feeling weak. Rabbi David Ellis will visit from Halifax occasionally as the Regional Clergy and will always regale the small crowd with rabbinical wisdom, the congregants appreciating his effort and the addition of one more body to help round out the 10.

As members get older their health fails and our congregation ensures that there is an update each week on the status of friend and family in local hospitals, sad as no one wants to be ill, more sad as we need these people to make minyan.

The congregation has its largest numbers as we pay our last respects to long standing members of the community as, unfortunately, funerals certainly are outnumbering bar-mitzvahs in these parts.

I have been here for two years and know my presence here will not be long standing. As I prepare for my next adventures, I do so with a heavy conscience, as I know I am taking a person away from a community that needs people. This however is backed by the expectation of the community that I will likely leave, off to other challenges.

I just wanted to give you all an update from the ground and let you know that a visit out here should be over a weekend. Come on down and if we can't make 10, I'll buy you a coffee.

Cape Breton Hadassah Rings Up Another Successful Bazaar

by Evelyn Davis

The 42nd Canada Hadassah Wizo Bazaar was held on May 27th at the Temple Sons of Israel Synagogue in Sydney, Nova Scotia. The co-chairs; Shirley Cherin, Marilyn Zisserson and Betty Shore referred to this year's event as a "Mini Bazaar", but the public response was once

again overwhelming.

The handmade quilt, made and donated by Mary Anne Cohen, created a great stir and Warren Zisserson sold the tickets with enthusiasm. The tea room was busy the entire day and repeat customers welcomed

one another since many had not seen each other for a full year.

Once again, the evening auction was lively and the response enthusiastic. Everyone enjoyed the birthday cake served at the end of the evening.



Bazaar Workers L-R Shayna Strong, Myrna Yazer, Karen Conter, Mary Anne Cohen



Bazaar Workers L-R (standing) Wendy Cohen-Ross, Ruth Levine, Charlene Cohen, Ann Neville, Sheila Murphy, (seated) Nonie MacLeod



Bargain hunters at the 42nd annual Cape Breton Hadassah Bazaar

An Unforgettable Moment

Rabbi David Ellis, AJC Regional Chaplain

Many of you know I was invited with many others to welcome Queen Elizabeth on her entrance to Province House. Obviously it was a once-in-a-lifetime event, and I will always remember it.

But it was not the most memorable thing for me that day. Something else was.

As I walked out from the delegation, I met two of Nova Scotia's former premiers, John Hamm and Rodney MacDonald.

John Hamm immediately accosted me, "Say, where were you this year? You were supposed to be at our ceremony at King's College, and you weren't there!" He was referring to the graduation ceremonies they hold each year in May at the college, his alma mater. "But, Premier, this year your ceremony was scheduled on Shavuot, a major holiday, and I was in Cape Breton

for that. I sent something to be read in my absence. Didn't they read it?" "Yes, they did. But we want to see you back there next year. We'll get the date right."

I was greatly honoured by this complement. I would only add that Premier Hamm was the most dedicated and honest leader of any government I have ever lived under.

My absent words for the graduation are below. LaShanah HaBaah, if not in Jerusalem, at least I will be at King's.

For The Commencement at King's College, 20 May 2010

The graduates of Kings are gathered together on this day coinciding with the Jewish holiday of Shavuot. Unwittingly, a more appropriate day could not have been selected, though I am not there personally to convey this message.

For Shavuot, "weeks" in Hebrew, commemorates the end of the Passover holiday season.

Passover, celebrating the coming out of Egypt, is not a finality on the Jewish calendar. It was the beginning of the Jewish nation as a free people. But as you have learned from history, freedom is only a penultimate goal. Many peoples have achieved freedom over the last centuries but reverted to tyrannies because they had no plan to implement their new-found possibilities.

The Jewish tradition makes Passover the beginning of the journey, which finally ends fifty days later at Mt. Sinai. However the experience is conceived, there is no doubt that a heritage was formed at that time which would guide the children of Israel to their settlement in the Promised

Land and an influence on all religions and cultures of the West.

This is the essence of the Shavuot holiday. The tie is made between them by counting in anticipation each day from Passover to Shavuot, in the time of the omer. Days add up to weeks. The seven times seven weeks indicates a fullness and completion of mission.

And so for the King's students graduating today, the teachings of the Passover / Omer / Shavuot period encapsulates their last four years.

Your "Passover" was in leaving home in freedom for the first time. But what did you do with your freedom--attend beer bashes and wild parties? Or did you make something of your new setting of opportunities?

There were difficulties in your adjusting to a new discipline, just as the Jews faced adversity historically during the Omer period. But you added days up; you learned new skills. Courses were put together, ideas developed, so that you can now look upon the whole process.

Now your freedom four years ago has come to its goal. With all the challenges, you should be able to stand on your Mt. Sinai on this day. You will look back at the past saying, "I have accomplished something with my freedom." You are now directed forward, with a "covenant" of graduation--talents, ideas and anticipations--which will from here onwards guide your lives.

So may the meaning of the Jewish holiday be a template for your achievements on

this day, as you start a new project of freedom and fulfillment in the upcoming years.

A Lost Tzaddik 1951-2010

"... I saw a world overturned--those who had been on the top were on the bottom, those on the bottom were now at the top..." Talmud

Some would say these next paragraphs should not be included here. This person was not a prominent person in the community. In the last years of his life only Mr. Phil Alberstat and myself knew much of him. By many he would have been dubbed a street person for his style of dress and unconventional life.

And yet--as I confront the Jewish texts which make up our High Holidays liturgy, I am compelled to share some general details of his story.

Due to his disabilities, he was not able to hold a job. Our office helped him with some of his needs. He would call on me at times for advice and perspective. When I first met him years ago, I admittedly did not know what to make of his questions. They were frankly not always coherent. But if you listened closer and consistently, he was trying to make sense of life. He sensed lately that his time was short. However he had lived his life, he was looking to make his last chapter one of meaning and reconciliation.

We are now saying for the holiday season Psalm 27. It has the stunning words--sh'ma hashem, koli ekra--literally, "hear, oh L-d, I will call my voice." Many times we cannot state those things which matter

most deeply to us, but there is a voice in us making the effort.

Our Jewish teachers and those in other religions have taught us to be attuned to children, mentally distraught persons, the aged--who make not have or have lost the facilities and veneers of civilized life but who are ipso facto forced to search their depths for a desperate call of their voice.

And then on Sukkot, we are told all of the Four Species are required for the lulav. Our sages say symbolically that all persons--low and high, learned or not, accomplished or non-achieving--are all important for our community. Like the Four Species, they must all be held together.

So this person, in his unconventional way, was from his lost and hidden voice, conducting his own High Holidays services in his last months.

I hope that I was able to share some things with him. I know that Ed Gordon, alav ha-shalom, helped me understand many things.

Rabbi David Ellis is available for introducing persons looking for Jewish mates in the region. All inquiries and discussions are strictly confidential.

Rabbi David Ellis
902-422-7491, ext. 228
rabbiellis@theajc.ns.ca

High Holiday Reflections

Ari Isenberg, Spiritual Leader, Shaar Shalom Congregation, Halifax

This issue of Shalom reminds us of the imminence of the Yamim Noraim, the Ten Days of Repentance. For me, I am reminded that it was in September



2000 that I first led you through a High Holiday season - I was 19 years old. What we did not know then is that the inception of our relationship would fuel a mutual desire to nurture an unwavering bond between us, a bond that has already evolved into a decade of collaboration and meaningful work together.

I am now 29 years old and this year marks another transition. Just a few hours after the final Shofar blast is sounded, denoting the closing of the gates and the end of Yom Kippur, I will be on a flight to Israel where I will spend nine months studying, fulfilling an integral component of the rabbinical school program at JTS.

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Preparing for this season is necessary. Give yourselves the gift of meaningful reflection before arriving in shul for Erev Rosh Hashanah (Wednesday, Sept. 8th @ 6:30pm). Assume for yourselves the task of Cheshbon Ha'Nefesh and Teshuvah.

Cheshbon Hanefesh literally translates as "spiritual accounting". Within the context of our lives, it is a way in which we are able to evaluate our progress as individuals. It is a self-established marker, an alarm clock of sorts. God wishes for every human being to fulfill his or her respective goals and to live to his or her fullest capabilities. Through introspection and self-examination, two specific aspects of Cheshbon Hanefesh, we are able to evaluate our successes and our failures of the past year. We are then able to use this

self-evaluation as a means towards self-improvement and further development of our positive traits.

It is in the fulfillment of this first step that we can then reach outward and focus on Teshuvah. Teshuvah means repentance. We must carve out the time it requires to talk to our family, friends, and acquaintances, addressing issues that have affected us in the past year. Dialogue not only bridges the gaps between us, but it also diminishes the impact of any intentional or unintentional wrongdoing.

Let this High Holiday season have the greatest impact possible. Reflect, evaluate, assess, reach out, talk, and heal.

I wish you and your families a Shanah Tova U'metukah, a sweet and good year, filled with ahavah (love), bri'ut (health), v'simcha (and happiness).

Chief Justice to Speak

The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada will deliver the 2010 Dr. Saul Green Memorial Lecture on Tuesday, October 19th.

The lectureship established by the Green family in 2006, is co-sponsored this year by Shaar Shalom Synagogue and the University of King's College. The lectureship provides the Synagogue with an opportunity through partnering, to make a contribution to the larger community.

Dr. Saul Green was a founding member of Shaar Shalom Synagogue and a graduate of Dalhousie University's medical school. A general surgeon, he practised medicine in Halifax for almost fifty years.

God, Save Us, Please!

By Rabbi Yosef Goldman, Sgoolai Israel Synagogue, Fredericton

I have beautiful memories from when I was much younger. The new year is a good time for memories. When I was but a baby, or maybe a toddler, my Savta in Toronto would sing to me Avinu Malkenu (Our Father, our King) as a lullaby, and, apparently this is what I fell asleep to.

When we state this: "Our Father, our King, be gracious with us and answer us, though we have no worthy deeds; treat us with charity and kindness, and save us" are we lying? Are we just being humble? How can we say that "we have no worthy deeds"?

The Talmud tells us (Tractate Avoda Zara 17a) that when Rabbi Yossi Ben Kisma was on his death bed, Rabbi Chanina Ben Tradyon (one of the Holy Ten Martyrs killed by the Romans) came to visit his Rabbi and asked him a very interesting question: 'am I going to be in the world to come (Olam Haba)?' Rabbi Yossi answered him (like any good Jew) with a question: 'have you ever done a good deed?' Rabbi Chanina answered that he remembers one time when he had set aside money for the Purim meal and festivities, and by mistake



they got mixed up with money he collected for charity, and he gave all the money to the poor (when some of the money was definitely his).

Because Rabbi Chanina was more pious and strict on himself, doing it wholeheartedly, his Rabbi promised that he will merit and be in a good place in the world to come.

Recently, someone from my community recommended that I watch the movie "A Serious Man" (2009). In this movie, I really enjoyed a scene where Larry Gopnick (Michael Stuhlbarg) asks Rabbi Nachtner (George Wyner) : "what is Hashem trying to tell me"?

The Rabbi tells him a story about a dentist in their community who found the word HOSHIEINI (save me) engraved in the Goy's (gentile) lower teeth. After the

dentist was troubled by this and could not eat or sleep, he asked the Rabbi what does this mean?

The Rabbi gave the dentist the general (not too elaborate) answer: "the teeth? We don't know! sign from Hashem? We don't know! helping others? Couldn't hurt!"

What we are asking God in this prayer is, that although we are not sure we have worthy deeds, that do not have a side benefit for us, or even if we took pleasure in getting a compliment which we did not fully deserve for something we did, we are nevertheless asking that he treat us with his 'charity and kindness'.

Rabbi Yossi Ben Kisma (and Rabbi Nachtner) teach us that we should strive to do one deed in our life (or better yet, every year) which is in total devotion to Hashem, without any side benefits.

I think that the reason Hashem gave us so many commandments, positive and negative, is so we can "pick and choose". There is not one Jew who can keep all of the Mitzvot – not even Moses. In order to do all of them, you would have to be a woman and a man, a Cohen and a Levite,

a married person and a widow/er, a king and a judge, a free person and a slave, and the list goes on...

This is why most of our prayers, as well, are in the plural form: 'Avinu', 'Malkenu'

and 'Hoshieinu, (that would probably be the only difference between the movie and the real life – we, in real life, would have found that message in the plural form).

We pray as a community that Hashem should answer our prayers and bestow upon us and the whole world a Happy New Year!

What do we do when something doesn't go our way? How do we treat people whom we don't agree with or get along with?

by Rabbi Ari Sherbill, Rabbi, Beth Israel Synagogue, Halifax

There is a story of Rav Aryeh Levin, who while living in Israel around the time of the establishment of the state was famous for his compassion and kindness.

Among his many acts of kindness was paying visits to the local jail where the British officers often took in Israeli's before we were given our own control of the land. Once while visiting the jail, there was a large group of Neturei Karta, Satmar Chasidim who were brought in because of a demonstration. This group was very against Rabbi Levin because he was close friends with Rav Kook. For those who know, Rav Kook, who later became the first Chief Rabbi of Israel, spoke highly of the loftiness and holiness of the land of Israel, and especially how important it is for every single Jewish person to live there. Israel is so essential to the Jewish soul, said Rav Kook, that it makes sense that it was established by people who claimed to be secular, not religious and even anti-religious. These views were considered holy to Rav Kook and his followers, but absolute treif to groups like the Neturei Karta.

So when Rav Aryeh Levin went to visit the jail and found the group from Neturei Karta, Rav Aryeh went out of his way to make their stay as comfortable as possible. He told the officer who watched over them that, "these are pious Jews, they should be



asked that they be moved to a warmer room.

One time, as Rav Aryeh was leaving the jail, one of the leading members of the neturei Karta group covered his eyes and exclaimed, "Close your eyes and don't look at his face! It is prohibited to look at the face of an evil person, and he is friends with Rav Kook!" The officer was so appalled, he almost hit this man. After all that Rav Aryeh had done for them, the kindnesses that he showed, the generosity of spirit and time- they scream that he is an evil person and can't even look at him?!

Rav Aryeh said, "Can't you see how pious these men are? They are absolutely men of truth -for all my kindnesses cannot bribe them to change their views ... what pious Jews..."

Most of us have been to Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur services - perhaps every year. It seems like the same old thing - we force ourselves to go, wait for

taken extra good care of." One of their rooms was dark so Rav Aryeh asked that they be moved to a lighter room. One room was cold so Rav Aryeh

the extremely long services to end, year after year. Some songs we like, some songs we don't, words that are more understood in English, etc.

The truth though is, Rosh Hashana is not about what happens in Synagogue, but what happens in our own lives. It is not about going to a service but rather having a time to think about how my life is going-and should it be going better?

I invite you to think about the above story with Rav Aryeh this year. Let's for a moment forget about whatever we might think we know about the High Holy Days -and think how these holidays can make me higher in the following way: The kindness that Rav Aryeh showed, his brilliant, honest, calm, compassionate patience that he showed to someone who insulted him so vehemently - is that a quality that I live with? Of all the things I do in my life- how much is filled with the kind of qualities that we so appreciate in the above story?

If the entire world lived and thought in the way that Rav Aryeh did-our world would be a better world, a more perfect and enjoyable world. If our homes were filled with family members who lived like Rav Aryeh, our homes and family lives would be more perfect, more peaceful.

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God willing we will all see this new year as a year where we become the people that we should. This is not about ideas, religion, practices, services, customs

or clothes. This is about becoming a real and pure person, a good person, a giving person, a compassionate and happy person. God willing we will all become human beings together.

"Exploring & Enjoying Judaism At The Beth"
www.rabbiari.wordpress.com
phone: 902.422.1301

Rosh Hashanah

by Rabbi Yagod, Congregation Tiferes Israel, Moncton

A new year is approaching. We will soon gather to hear the call of the shofar as well as to fast on Yom Kippur. We live in a world brimming with choices and possibilities. There is so much opportunity in today's world. And, yet, we are still burdened with the responsibility of making good choices. Sometimes when our existence is comfortable we can make a choice to ignore or disassociate ourselves with fellow congregants and members of our community. After all, we have what we need to live. Therefore, we can just pick and choose completely. However, we also live in lonely times. The notion of honest, selfless service to the community has definitely lost some popularity. The days when family members typically lived in one city, separated by two or three blocks, are long gone. Even families are often so spread apart that despite all the comforts there is an undercurrent of loneliness. Furthermore, it is often said, that the trouble with the eastern world is that no one ever forgets where they come from and in the western world no one ever



remembers. A generation and it's unique customs can easily be forgotten.

We as Jews are an international mix because we have lived in most countries in

this world at some time in our history. Yet, the house of Israel is one. When we come together, everyone brings a little from their former host country. And, so, we possess both the power of remembering and of forgetting. We have a highly developed communal structure and yet are, at the same time, highly individualistic. Even the prayers we say have some differences, such as with Ashkenazi and Sephardi customs. The upcoming holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur have something to teach us in this regard. The shofar, an integral part of the High Holidays, is considered a form of prayer. What is so fascinating about this is the fact that the shofar is a simple sound and, without regard to

which community you belong to, the sounds and order is pretty much the same wherever you are (each shofar has a nuance of difference, but they are essentially the same). This is a universal oneness at the core of the prayers we offer on Rosh Hashanah. The same holds true for Yom Kippur. While the prayers might differ slightly, we all fast the same way at the same time around the world. This is another universal thread running through the House of Israel on the most sacred day of the year. The laws of fasting are identical in all of the various groups of Israel. And, so, the message (the first and most important overriding message) is that at the beginning of the year we are to observe-to feel and to internalize-our essential oneness. We are to connect with our very core and keep the clear direction intact.

May Hashem help that we will find a year for drawing closer together, connecting with those we have enjoyed a close relationship in the past. If in the coming year we can each find just one relationship to repair or revive, then we will have absorbed the true meaning of the High Holidays.

A New Year's Resolution

by Rabbi Mendel Feldman, Chabad Lubavitch of the Maritimes

On Rosh Hashanah G-d determines what our next year is going to be like. What the year holds for us, life or the opposite, health or the opposite, peace of mind and tranquility, prosperity?

Our Sages tell us the exact amount of our earnings for each year is determined on



Rosh Hashanah, we cannot earn one dollar more than the amount ordained. If we are deserving we will earn the amount determined by G-d

on Rosh Hashanah.

On Rosh Hashanah we receive life for the next full year, let us reflect on what our wishes are for the upcoming year, what are we going to pray for.

When we come to G-d and ask for our needs and wishes, we need to think in G-d's terms, what is it that He needs from us

why should He grant us our hearts desire? Why should he bring world Peace? Why should G-d give us another year of health and happiness? We need to give him a good reason, a reason that would benefit Him.

This can be explained with the following analogy.

Two individuals worked for a company, the company took a turn for the worse and was going to lay off many employees. They both knew that they would need to meet with the CEO of the company and convince him not to be the ones laid-off

The first man met with the CEO and argued why he needed the job, his wife had just given birth to their third child, they had recently bought a new home, he

really needed the money and can't be let go.

Then the second man met with the CEO and argued why he should keep the job, he was an asset to the company, he had developed new techniques in marketing their product, in keeping customers satisfied, in sustaining the company. The company needs him even more in this time of crisis.

Who do you think kept their job?

On Rosh Hashanah it's crucial that we think about what G-d needs and then we can ask G-d for what we need. We need to dig deep into our hearts and souls and see what we can give back to G-d, G-d grant me health because...?

Because if you grant me health I promise

I will use that health to be a better Jew (not only a better person), G-d wants us to be better Jews, to Daven, observe Shabbat, study, give charity, this is what G-d needs from us.

So on Rosh Hashanah instead of focusing only on what we want from G-d, let us think about what G-d wants from us.

So as we prepare for Rosh Hashanah let us make a general commitment to G-d that we will be better Jews this year, let us all make a specific resolution and take upon ourselves a specific Mitzvah for the year, which can act as the key for which G-d will bless us with a sweet year.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy and sweet new year.

Inter-Faith Holy Land Tour Planned

Rabbi David Ellis, chaplain of the Atlantic Jewish Council, will lead a nine-day tour to Israel from May 11-19, 2011.

The idea for the trip, open to members of the Jewish and Christian communities of Halifax and Atlantic Canada, came from Elayne Pink and Fred Mack of Absolute Travel Specialists who approached AJC executive director Jon Goldberg.

"He responded positively," said Elayne.

Rabbi Ellis, with many contacts in the Christian community, immediately came on board, citing the interest he has found among Christian clergy and congregants.

"Many people in the 40-60 age group are greatly connected to their churches. They know a lot and are curious about the backgrounds of both Christian and Judaic ideologies. And the Christians have a different take on Israel than do Jewish people. They are eager to learn and want to learn more about Judaism, its history and even today's issues, all of which will be discussed during the tour."

There will be a full-time Israeli tour guide for the 44 members of the tour as well as Rabbi Ellis and possibly a Christian minister. The tour will include historical Jewish and Christian sites.

Rabbi Ellis said he plans to conduct a course, prior to the trip, for the participants to give them background on the history of the region.

Cost of the trip is \$2,929 per person with a \$590 single supplement, plus taxes and surcharges of \$570. Covered is round trip airfare from Halifax to Toronto to Tel Aviv, plus accommodation, daily breakfast and dinner, entrance fees to selected places of interest and air-conditioned motor coach.

Expressions of interest, with a deposit of \$500 per person is requested by October 30, 2010.

**Inter Faith Holy Land Tour
May 11 – 19, 2011**



Escorted by Rabbi Ellis

Absolute Travel requires a deposit of \$ 500.00 per person to hold your spot by October 31, 2010, which is refundable up to 90 days prior to departure.

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Letters to the Editor

Sydney & Area Chamber of Commerce Recognizes Mr. Irving Schwartz

I enjoyed your article about Irving Schwartz. He is a wonderful person and in my experience with him, a no-nonsense person who gets things done without a lot of fanfare. Several years ago, when I produced a documentary about my Uncle, the honourable Senator, Colonel Jack Marshall, I sent a copy to Irving and several other CEOs of various cable companies in the maritimes. While the others hummed and hawed, asking for copyright verification, various formats etc.

Irving immediately took the video and put it on the air through his cable companies in Cape Breton. It was first aired around June 6th, D-Day remembrance which was extremely significant, as Col Marshall was only 22 years old when he landed with the Canadian forces on Juno Beach in Normandy in 1944. Irving saw the significance and didn't hesitate to show a documentary about a young Jewish boy from Glace Bay, who was a true war hero and a source of pride to the maritime Jewish community. That was 7 years ago, and I'm still waiting for the other men of importance to get back to me and make up their minds. I really don't need them when I have a great MENSCH like Irving Schwartz who makes up his mind and goes full speed ahead.

I am forever grateful to him and so is my extended family.

All the best,

Dr. Larry Gaum

Toronto, ON

Dr. Gaum was born and raised in Sydney, Cape Breton.

Sole Jewish Monument on Crete Being Revived

By chance I discovered that you had a story about the Etz Hayyim Synagogue in Crete in your recent issue of Shalom (Vol. 35 #1). Since I am a member of the International Board of Trustees of the Etz Hayyim I read the article with special interest as I do anything about the synagogue.

There are only a few things that I would like to add to the article. First a correction (which I am sure has been pointed out to you). The photo of Alex Phoundoulakis was mis-labeled as being that of Bill Johnstone.

While the article focused on the two arson attacks earlier this year, there is much more to the Etz Hayyim then this. It is a functioning synagogue that continues to survive.

Things that are normally associated with synagogues are part of the life of the Etz Hayyim despite the small number of Jews who live in Crete year round. Since the synagogue was rededicated in 1999, there have been weddings (including our daughter's in 2004). In fact, there were three in 2009 and one this past June.

There was one Bar Mitzvah several years ago and one Bat Mitzvah (in the beginning of August of this year). There has even been one major family reunion hosted by the synagogue.

Services are held for all the holidays and on Erev Shabbat (with or without a minyan). There is a functioning mikvah, the reconstruction of which was much like "Heracles' labour of cleaning the Augean stables" though it took more than a day to accomplish. In addition, the mikvah is the coldest one in Europe.

Throughout the year, one can find lectures and concert series held at the synagogue.

During the school year, the Etz Hayyim is visited by various grades to provide the students with some understanding of the history of Jews in Crete.

More interestingly, the Etz Hayyim is perhaps the best known synagogue in Greece. This is certainly the case for Israelis since there are many charter flights from Israel to Crete from Pessach until the end of Sukkot. All offer a visit to the Etz Hayyim as part of a tour package. As well, many Jewish and non-Jewish tourists from elsewhere make it a point to visit the synagogue.

The Etz Hayyim is not just a memorial for a vanished Cretan Jewry. It is a living institution which continues to grow, perhaps not in numbers but in functions. For example, a Cretan Jewish Studies Centre is in the planning stages.

In spite of the arson attacks, life goes on at the Etz Hayyim. And, while security has been enhanced, it still is a pluralistic open institution that welcomes everyone.

All of this is due to the efforts of Dr. Nikos Stavroulakis who was responsible for the reconstruction and rededication of the synagogue in the late 1990s. Nikos is a unique individual, artist, writer, scholar, and author of the "Cookbook of the Jews of Greece" among other books.

I suggest that anyone who is interested should visit the Etz Hayyim website or their blog site at:

<http://www.etz-hayyim-hania.org>

<http://blog.etz-hayyim-hania.org>

Shalom,

Dr. Morty Lazar

Ra'anana, Israel

Member, International Board of Trustees of the Etz Hayyim Synagogue, Hania, Crete.

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