

Shalom

CONNECTING THE ATLANTIC JEWISH COMMUNITY



FALL 2017

AJC Pride Dine Together
Hockey Dreams Come True
Family Shabbaton at
Camp Kadimah

MR. GAGA
THE MOVIE

VEGANISM
AN INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI ASA KEISAR

PLYING THE
RAG
TRADE
IN MONCTON

Atlantic Jewish Film Festival

OCTOBER 19-22 2017 • HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

4TH ANNUAL ATLANTIC JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

*** And the not-to-be-missed Saturday night Gala Film & Party! ***

THR	THE WOMEN'S BALCONY <i>Hebrew with English subtitles</i>	TIME 7:00 pm (Opening Feature) LOCATION Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane, 5657 Spring Garden Rd.
FRI	WOMEN IN SINK <i>Hebrew with English subtitles</i>	LUNCH TIME SHORTS PROGRAMS TIME 11:00 am LOCATION Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St.
	THE CHOP <i>English</i>	
	I WANT TO BE A BOARDER <i>Yiddish</i>	
	JOE'S VIOLIN <i>English</i>	
	<i>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CARBON ARC</i> THE WEDDING PLAN <i>Hebrew with English subtitles</i>	
SAT	FAMILY COMMITMENTS <i>German, Arabic with English subtitles</i>	TIME 7:15 pm LOCATION Bell Auditorium, NSCAD, 5163 Duke St.
AJFF GALA PARTY – 9:00 PM to 12:00 AM		
SUN	<i>FAMILY PROGRAM</i> LUBIN, FROM CHELM & RAZZMATAZZ <i>English</i>	TIME 1:30 pm LOCATION Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St.
	<i>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PHOTOPOLIS</i> CARVALHO'S JOURNEY <i>English</i>	TIME 3:00 pm LOCATION Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St.
	KEEP QUIET <i>Hungarian and English with English subtitles</i>	TIME 7:00 pm (Closing Feature) LOCATION Halifax Central Library, 5440 Spring Garden Rd.

AJFF.CA

TICKETS ON SALE SEPTEMBER 25



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This publication is printed by:
HALCRAFT PRINTERS INC.

Mailed under Canada Post:

PUBLICATIONS MAIL SALES AGREEMENT

NO. 40052452

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.

Shalom

FALL 2017
VOL. 42 | NO. 2
TISHREI 5778



14



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COVER ARTIST: SERGEI RATCHINSKI

I started to be interested in painting and photography when I was 10 years old. I attended five years of Art School in Odessa, Ukraine. In the 80's I took part in the movement of contemporary artists in Ukraine and participated in many exhibitions. I had personal exhibitions at the Museum of Folk Art in Odessa. From the early 90's I lived in Israel where I had exhibitions in private galleries. My paintings have been sold to private collections in Europe, America and Israel. Since 2009 I have been living in Nova Scotia, Canada. I have a lot of ideas and work on new projects in painting and photography. I would like to welcome you all to my future endeavors.

Sergei's artwork can be viewed/purchased at: www.saatchiart.com/rsd

Michael Argand, President
& Naomi Rosenfeld, Executive Director

WHY DO WE NEED THE AJC?

The other day, we were discussing the answer to the following question:
*“If there are already synagogues throughout Atlantic Canada,
why does the Jewish community need the AJC?”*

To be honest, this is not a question we've thought about at length before. Our mission statement states that we are, “dedicated to enhancing the quality of Jewish life in Atlantic Canada,” but *what does that really mean?*

After reflecting on the incredible work done by all of our staff and volunteers at the AJC, we have distilled our need for the Atlantic Jewish Council down to six essential reasons:

TO STRENGTHEN JEWISH IDENTITY.

From a community perspective, we aim to strengthen Jewish identities across Atlantic Canada – young and old, secular and religious, newcomer and native. Sometimes we do this by simply providing a space for Jews to come together – like our community BBQ, *Old Stock* outing, young adult happy hour event, teen Shabbat Dinner, and many Hillel Atlantic events. Other times, we provide program grants to communal institutions across our region to help support traditional Jewish holiday programming like Chanukah parties, Passover Seders, and Lag B'Omer BBQs. However, we also continually seek new and innovative ways to strengthen Jewish identities across our region. For example, the *Moishe House Without Walls* (MHWOW) program we launched this year provides Jewish young adults the funding they need to create Jewish events in their own homes. Additionally, *PJ Library* – a groundbreaking initiative that provides one free Jewish-themed book to Jewish families with young children – has helped parents across our region foster Jewish identities amongst their children. We are so excited to expand on our *PJ Library* program this year with our new Halifax pilot-program – the *Halifax Shabbat Project* – which will see us facilitating and funding PJ Library families getting

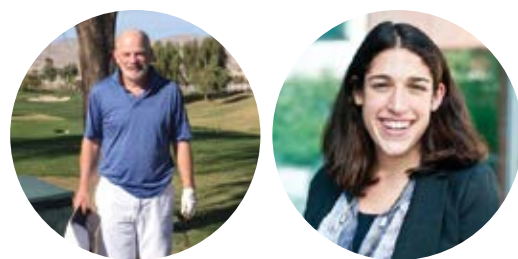
together for ongoing Shabbat dinners in their own homes.

TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

In small Jewish communities like ours, building relationships with and bringing Jewish/Israeli culture to the general community is vitally important. In conjunction with our national partners, our team has formed strong relationships with politicians, dignitaries, and other community leaders across our region. Combined, our team met with over thirty such leaders this year, welcomed more than 15 dignitaries to our community events, and even toured two ministers around Camp Kadimah! Not only do these relationships allow us to advocate on behalf of Jewish community needs, but they also position us strongly to fight any incidents of Antisemitism in our region. In addition, we also aim to bring Jewish/Israeli culture to the general community of Atlantic Canada. Some great examples of this outreach include our critically-acclaimed Atlantic Jewish Film Festival, our annual serving of Christmas Day lunch at *Spencer's Senior's House*, our public Shabbat dinners such as our *Pride Shabbat Dinner*, our screening of Israeli film *Mr. Gaga* in partnership with *Halifax Dance*, and our inclusion of Jewish/Israeli works in local festivals such as the Literature Review of Canada's *Spur Festival* (where we screened *Hummus: the Movie*).

TO HELP OUR MOST VULNERABLE, AND THOSE THAT STRUGGLE WITH THE AFFORDABILITY OF JEWISH LIFE.

As a Jewish communal institution, we aim to help Jews in need. This includes funding care for Jews living in poverty in the Former Soviet Union, helping vulnerable Jewish



communities in Israel, and helping Jews in Atlantic Canada when they come to us in times of need. We also help Holocaust Survivors in need in our community: we act as the regional bridge between the *Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany* and local survivors. However, we know that it is hard to afford Jewish life these days. Therefore, we also provide subsidies for Camp Kadimah, for attending Jewish experiences in Israel, and for any program we operate that has an entrance fee.

TO UNITE THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES OF OUR REGION.

Through several initiatives, we aim to bring our region together as one *community of communities*. For instance, our tri-annual publication of *Shalom Magazine* keeps all of us updated on every community's happenings throughout the region, and helps bind together the community of former Atlantic Canadians living across Canada and the world. Additionally, by consistently updating our Atlantic Canadian list of *Simchas & Sorrows* on our website (theajc.ns.ca/simchas-sorrows/), the AJC allows Atlantic Canadians near and far to be there for one another, both in times of sadness and of joy. Finally, alongside Camp Kadimah, we run several programs on a continual basis that aim to physically bring us together as a region – be that our Biennial Convention, our

annual family *shabbaton* at Camp Kadimah, or our annual university student *shabbaton* in Halifax.

TO REMEMBER THE HOLOCAUST, AND TO EDUCATE ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST.

Holocaust education and remembrance has always been a part of our core at the Atlantic Jewish Council. This past year, we sponsored eight different Yom HaShoah ceremonies across the region, everywhere from St. John's, NL to Bass River, NS. In Halifax, this ceremony was complemented by our International Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony in January, and our widely-attended Holocaust Education Week in November, which, for the first time, held an event in Fredericton as well. We also sent seven teens on an *Asper Foundation* Holocaust studies trip to Winnipeg and continue to offer Atlantic Canadian teens and young adults the opportunity to attend *The International March of the Living*.

TO SUPPORT THE STATE OF ISRAEL, AND TO CONNECT ATLANTIC CANADA TO ISRAEL.

We know how important supporting and connecting with Israel is to our community. Not only does a portion of our *United Jewish Appeal of Atlantic Canada* (UJA) Campaign dollars go directly to supporting the *Jewish Agency for Israel* but, through our campaign, we also fund more than 15 social service and educational projects in our partnership region in the north of Israel, *Etzba HaGalil*. Furthermore, through Hillel Atlantic, we fight BDS and other anti-Israel rhetoric on our campuses. However, we don't just support Israel, we connect Atlantic Canadians to Israel. Last year, we sent more than 30 young adults from our region on free Birthright trips to Israel, and we're sending 13 mothers with young children from our region there on a highly subsidized trip this fall. We also fully subsidized four 16-year-old leaders from Israel to attend Camp Kadimah this summer. Of course, we put on many Israel-related

events in our region, including Israeli-themed lectures, movie screenings, and events related to celebrating Israeli holidays such as Yom Ha'atzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim. Finally, we are working together with a group of volunteers to coordinate the 100th anniversary of the Jewish Legion at Fort Edward, NS, which saw Israeli legends such as first Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion and second Israeli President Yitzhak Ben-Zvi living in Atlantic Canada.

Despite these important reasons why our Jewish community needs the AJC, the AJC needs us too. Now more than ever, the vitally important work we do depends on all of us giving back to the AJC – both with our time and with our money. We hope that you will consider volunteering in some way with the AJC this year, and consider supporting the 2017 UJA Campaign. In this way, together, we can together continue to enhance the quality of Jewish life in Atlantic Canada.

Shana Tova! 🌟



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14th Annual Holocaust Education Week



November 1-8 2017

All programs are free of charge and open to the public



for more information visit www.HolocaustEducation.ca

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PROGRAM: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2

Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 | 10:00 AM

Holocaust survivor Nate Leipziger and former chief of the Sagkeeng Ojibway First Nation and Residential School survivor Theodore Fontaine discuss loss, trauma, and memoir in the journey toward healing. See November 1 program information. Advanced registration required.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PROGRAM: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 | 10:00 AM

Margaret and Arthur's Story, chronicles the Weiszes' experiences during WWII, their escape from Hungary to Canada and their new life in Hamilton. Told through the eyes of living Weisz descendants, this 35 minute documentary addresses the themes of courage, survival and love, and educates youth about the need for tolerance and kindness in our world.

In attendance Danna and her father, Tom Weisz, who will further illuminate the story of his parents' journey and answer questions. The large group presentation will be followed by small group presentations available on-site at Pier 21 or in classrooms (HRM only).

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

OPENING PROGRAM: The Power of Memoir and Storytelling: What Can We Learn from the Trauma of the Past?

Halifax Central Library, Paul O'Regan Hall 7:00 PM | Introduced and facilitated by Dr. Dorota Glowacka, University of King's College



Olga Milosevich reads from *Chief Lightning Bolt*, the first novel by Mi'kmaw Elder, Dr. Daniel N. Paul, the author of *We Were Not the Savages*. In this tale of peace and war, friendship and love, Paul brings back to life the customs, traditions, and rich spirituality of pre-contact Mi'kma'ki.

Nate Leipziger, who, as a young teenager, survived several Nazi concentration camps and a death march, joins Theodore Fontaine, former chief of the Sagkeeng Ojibway First Nation and survivor of the Fort Alexander and Assiniboia Indian Residential Schools, in a conversation about how they came to write their memoirs. Their two distinct narratives intersect and speak to each other in examining loss, trauma and the use of memoir in the journey toward healing.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5

KAMP: The Musical



Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 | 2:00 PM

KAMP: The Musical is an original Nova Scotian production by local Halifax artists Jamie Bradley (Book) and Garry Williams (Music, Lyrics). *KAMP* tells the story of a group of homosexual men, who are convicted under Paragraph 175 and forced to wear the pink triangle against the backdrop of isolation Block 14 in a Nazi concentration camp. These men suffer heavy labour and torture; yet, find the strength to defy their captors by producing a cabaret, replete with political satire, drag, and plenty of "camp". Using their wit, talent, art, and irreverence, they struggle to survive, hold on to their identities, and save their humanity. *Kamp: The Musical* was developed with the support of Playwright's Atlantic Resource Centre, Arts Nova Scotia and DaPoPo Theatre.



WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

FEATURE FILM: *Fanny's Journey*

Bronfman Theatre, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 | 7:00 PM

Fanny's Journey is an incredible tale of bravery, strength and survival, a story of a daring young girl who will stop at nothing and fear no one. In 1943, 13-year old Fanny and her younger sisters were sent from their home in France to an Italian foster home for Jewish children. When the Nazis arrive in Italy, their caretakers desperately organize the departure of the children to Switzerland. When they are suddenly left on their own, these 11 children do the impossible and reach the Swiss border to freedom.



The 14th annual Holocaust Education Week programs are made possible in part by a generous grant from The Azrieli Foundation.



From The Desk Of EDNA LEVINE

Director of Community Engagement

Building bridges in our community and between communities is central to community engagement.

Multifaceted topics of the Holocaust inspire us to think critically about democracy, inclusion, and values, both within the context of the Holocaust and in contemporary society.

The 14th annual Holocaust Education Week programs continue to tie communities together and present programs to challenge, awaken, and encourage action and conversation. First Nations histories, the genocide of Indigenous people, parallels between Jewish and Aboriginal experiences of historical trauma demonstrate the need for our communities to support each other. Last year I met with Dr. Daniel Paul, Mi'kmaw Elder and Dr. Dorota Glowacka, University of King's College, to discuss a joint program for Holocaust Education Week. This fall, in Halifax, we are excited to host our first program, opening night, Holocaust Education Week, joining our communities to share knowledge and experiences, with a reading from Daniel Paul's newly released novel, *Chief Lightning Bolt*, and invited guests Holocaust survivor Nate Leipziger, and Ted Fontaine, former chief of the Sagkeeng Ojibway First Nation and Residential School survivor.

Holocaust research is difficult, information on homosexual victims is scant and "gay genocide" is often not included in the many stories of Holocaust victims. A dramatic reading of *KAMP*, the Musical, during Holocaust Education Week, in Halifax, offers an exceptional opportunity to educate and for audience members to explore history, themes and culture while fostering an appreciation for the arts. This local project by Halifax artists Jamie Bradley and Garry Williams supports artistic development and community collaboration.

First-person accounts are vital to our understanding of the Holocaust. The stories of people, who survived adversity and went on to rebuild their lives as immigrants to Canada, resonate with individuals from diverse backgrounds. In May, working with the Canadian



Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 and the Azrieli Foundation, over 300 students, at two presentations, English and French, had the opportunity to hear Holocaust survivor Judy Abrams recount anecdotes of the wartime period and share her experiences. The event was preceded by an evening program with Jeanne Beker who read from her parents' memoir, *Joy Runs Deeper*, their wartime story of survival.

The Atlantic Jewish Council is pleased to own a copy of the Canadian Jewish Experience exhibit, created and organized by volunteers, primarily in Ottawa, in connection with Canada's 150th anniversary. Their purpose was to create an introductory display that celebrates Canada from the viewpoint of the country's Jewish communities. Working with Tova Lynch, project leader in Ottawa, we organized the launch of the exhibit at the Halifax Central Library, with the Hon. Geoff Regan, MP Halifax West, opening the exhibit. Communities in Atlantic Canada have been invited to host the exhibit in their community and we are currently in discussions with several universities in the Maritimes to display the exhibit.

The 4th Summer Family Shabbaton at Camp Kadimah once again provided families with a joyful weekend on Lake William meeting new families and connecting with friends. I was delighted to plan the weekend with a volunteer committee, headed by Nana Shteinberg, and committee members Tanya Svidler, Michael Gadilov and Arthur Brin. Are you interested in a fun family weekend, meeting new families, connecting with friends and strengthening our Atlantic Jewish community? If so, please consider volunteering

to plan the 5th Shabbaton (August 2018) -an exciting milestone celebratory weekend!

This spring the Atlantic Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) presented the Halifax premiere of the film *Mr. Gaga*, with the support of Halifax Dance and the Halifax Central Library. Audience members learned about Gaga, a new way of gaining knowledge and self-awareness from movement. I was excited to discover local dancers engaged in Gaga training and look forward to exploring a partnership to offer a Gaga people workshop in our area.

The 4th Atlantic Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) in Halifax opens October 19 screening international award-winning films for four days. Working with returning chair Lynn Rotin and the organizing committee, Phil Belitsky, Rosalind Belitsky, Jon Goldberg, Anna Hazankin, Linda Law, and Peggy Walt to ensure filmgoers an engaging line-up of films with relevant programming and partygoers an entertaining gala. Details are at: AJFF.ca.

Wishing you and your family lots of joy, good health, and peace in the New Year, Shana Tova! 🍀



Media personality Jeanne Beker signs the memoirs of her parents, *Joy Runs Deeper*, published by the Azrieli Foundation Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs.

CAMP KADIMAH NEWS



Kadimah 2017: What Gives?

Each summer at Kadimah, we create a theme which drives our summer long programming content and links to the Jewish values we integrate into daily life at camp.

BY PHIL DAVID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAMP KADIMAH

In past years, it was “Year of the Mensch” and “I am Kadimah”. This summer, our Programming team led by Associate Director, Sarah Atkins, created the theme “What Gives?”. Underlying “What Gives” is the Jewish value of generosity – *Nedivut*. So this past summer, we encouraged our campers and staff to *give* generously – of their time, enthusiasm, creativity, friendship, and excitement – to get (and more importantly, give) as much as possible out of the Kadimah experience this summer.

Whatever the annual theme, each points directly to the very core of the community spirit which has made Kadimah such a unique, *indescribable* second home for so many since 1943. And I say *indescribable* because whenever we ask an alumnus (from years gone by who drops in to reminisce) why camp was so special to them personally, there is usually a long pause before the inevitable answer... “You just get it when you’re here”.

The 2017 season was our biggest summer on record with 340+ campers, marginally north of our previous highs through the early to mid-2000s. Eighty Maritimes-based campers and 20 staff were joined by new and old Kadimahniks from Australia, Singapore, Israel, England, the US and across Canada – making our camp truly international in flavor. Although the days are long past when Maritime kids drive our annual enrolment, Kadimah’s reputation as Canada’s friendliest Jewish camp is still influenced by the warmth and acceptance of Maritime campers and our location deep in the heart of Nova Scotia. When Eli Zebberman led the way to create a Jewish camp back in 1943

(and in 1944 when we moved from Port Mouton to our present site in Barss Corner), he may not have known that 74 years later and counting, there would be more kids from Toronto than Halifax, but I’m guessing he would have predicted the impact of the *Maritimes’ community* would be the most important factor differentiating Kadimah to this day.

Even with our rich history, change remains the only constant, in part to keep things interesting for our campers and staff and also, because we are part of a fiercely competitive industry where *innovation* and *preserving history* are constantly in flux. Whether programmatic or physical, change was in full display when the kids arrived in 2017. We tried new Peulah this summer like stand up paddle boarding (a huge hit) and Israeli-themed Sebaba (still some work to do!) Maccabia had a green team for the first time in 20

summers. In a world dominated by cell phones – which are not allowed at camp – we continued our very purposeful initiative to *bring kids together outside* by adding lots of new places centrally located for kids to play, talk, chill and be kids.

This included two new paved mini-courts in Goshrim and Machar; the Kumzits Bonfire Site next to the Peter Stone building; “The Swing” in Kochot-land; amazing new communal water toys for our emerging waterpark and our new bonfire site just beyond the Chairmans Field; and of course, the crown jewel – our new *Frank Medjuck Sport Court* – which replaces the decades-old Auxiliary Sports Field. A huge thanks to Ralph and Shirlee Medjuck for their extremely

generous donation in memory of a Kadimah institution – Frank Medjuck. And kudos to our campers for leaving their phones at home and finding new ways to engage, mingle and enjoy the most important thing camp has to offer – each other!

I’m always amazed when I speak with parents after each summer who are blown away by how much their kids have grown up while at camp. Yes, there are structured activities like daily Swim Instruction, Sports, Arts and Boating activities and with those, all the skills the kids learn through weeks of J-strokes and breast strokes and Israeli dance steps.

But those other magical moments at camp when kids chill out in between or after curfew – that’s when they soak up the intangibles that Kadimah has to offer, where they learn those invaluable life skills without realizing it and which they’ll take with them for a lifetime – teamwork, communication, problem solving and even conflict management.

I speak about this often and I’m pretty sure I write about this every year because it still amazes me, 18 summers into my camp life dating back to the 70s. Our campers’ level of self awareness not only skyrockets when and after they spend time at Kadimah, they also learn so much about the kids they live with – their strengths and even where they may falter. They see each other at their best and they inevitably see each other at their worst, just as they would with brothers or sisters at home. Yes, they may bicker but they make up quickly because they’re so close at camp and they can’t fight forever. They’re probably going to be sharing a cabin with each other for years to come so they know they need to find a way to make it work. When you have



42 straight sleepovers with a bunch of your closest friends just a couple of feet away, you can't help but learn a lot – the most important being how to be a good friend.

So when I reflect back after each summer ends, I realize life is rarely perfect, even at a perfect place like Kadimah, but it gets pretty darn close when you get to spend 6 weeks at the greatest place on earth. We hope to see you there in 2018 for CK75.



KADIMAH HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

2018 REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN


If you are considering a summer at camp, act now before we are full for the season. Registration is available online at www.campkadimah.com

STAY IN TOUCH WITH KADIMAH YEAR LONG

Want to keep abreast of all that is happening at camp in the off season? It's easy. Visit us online or follow us on social media:

- Facebook.com/campkadimah
- Instagram.com/campkadimah
- Twitter.com/campkadimah
- Vimeo.com/campkadimah

KADIMAH 75 CELEBRATIONS (2018)

We hope all our alumni will take the opportunity to travel to Halifax and Barss Corner next summer for **CK75**. Between July 27 to 29, 2017, Kadimah will be celebrating its 75th anniversary. A Friday night Shabbat dinner and Saturday evening Social are being planned by the organizing committee before everyone makes their way to camp on Sunday morning for Visiting Day. Tickets are now available online at www.kadimah75.com. Don't delay. Space will be limited. 



CHW Children
Healthcare
Women



Shana Tova!

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

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

Debbie Eisenberg
National President

CHW Board of Directors

Alina Ianson
National Executive Director

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) passionately supports programs and services for **Children**, **Healthcare**, and **Women** in Israel and Canada.

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2018 Registration is now open!

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GIVE BACK TO CANADA: CIJA LAUNCHES PLEDGE 150 CAMPAIGN

BY **STEVE McDONALD**, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AT THE CENTRE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH AFFAIRS (CIJA) THE ADVOCACY AGENT OF CANADA'S JEWISH FEDERATIONS

Reflecting on Canada 150, Shimon Koffler Fogel – CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) – recently wrote in the *Globe and Mail*:

“Surely marking 150 years as a united confederation means more than just an extravagant party and a day off work? ... Canada 150 is an opportunity to appreciate the privileges and benefits we enjoy in our great country. But these reflections risk becoming mere platitudes if they are not animated with positive action. With privilege comes responsibility. Canada 150 is a moment for each of us to consider how we can pay the great gift of being Canadian forward through tangible contributions that enhance the experience for all who call Canada home.”

As someone whose family has been in Canada since the late 1700s, these words resonated with me. Indeed, my own ancestors were among Canada's first refugees: Loyalists who had supported and fought for the British in the American Revolution.

In my case, the Lyon family (my father's mother's family) were Connecticut Loyalists who lost everything because of their active service to the Crown. Passionate supporters of the British way of life and system of government, they fled to New Brunswick bereft of their possessions. In their new home, unfamiliar but welcoming, they turned their efforts to building the extraordinary country that would become Canada.

The legacy the Loyalists left – combined with the work of generations of Canadians from innumerable backgrounds – was poignantly felt on the 150th anniversary of Canadian confederation. Today, Canada is the envy of much of the world. While Canada is not perfect (what nation is?), Canadians enjoy greater freedom, security, social harmony, and prosperity than perhaps any other country on the planet.

More than anything, our forebears taught us that, as with most good things in life, a remarkable country doesn't just happen; it is the product of vision, values, and hard work. This no less true today than it was in 1867. The country my children inherit will be made better or worse by the actions (or inaction) of my own generation.

It was in that vein that Shimon continued, in his *Globe and Mail* column, to present a *Pledge 150* challenge to all faith communities:

“The challenge is straightforward: we ask every church, temple, mosque and synagogue to commit to undertaking 150 positive deeds that make Canada better tomorrow than it is today. 150 volunteer hours visiting the elderly. 150 new donations to community food banks. 150 new Canadian Blood Services donations. 150 hands extended to Indigenous communities. The list of concrete opportunities is as limitless as the need for them.”

What better way to teach our children what it means to be Canadian than to do something tangible to make our country a better place?

CIJA Report continues on page 13 >

CIJA

Canadian.
Jewish.
Advocacy.

Improving life in
Canada

Supporting
Israel

Strengthening our
Community

▶ **Shana Tova**
from all of us
at CIJA

This year – and every year – we're in it together.

There is a role for you. Get involved at cija.ca/near-you.

cija.ca

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





Library PROGRAM

A GIFT for **JEWISH CHILDREN** and their families

The Atlantic Jewish Council is thrilled to continue to offer the **PJ LIBRARY** (PJ, as in pajamas). A program that provides families raising Jewish children (ages 6 months to 5.5 years) in Atlantic Canada with a **FREE** treasury of Jewish books and music!

Every month, families enrolled in PJ LIBRARY receive a high-quality, expert-selected and kid-tested (!) Jewish book or CD (one per family) as a gift from the community.

Through the generosity of **The Atlantic Jewish Foundation** with support from the **Harold Grinspoon Foundation**, the Atlantic Jewish Council has made this program available to 50 families in Atlantic Canada.

This is a great opportunity to sponsor part or all of project through your donation to the Atlantic Jewish Foundation.

A donation of \$65 will enroll one child currently on waiting list in our region.

Please help expand this program in our region.

*Contact: Neli Shpoker, UJA Campaign Administrator
uja@theajc.ns.ca or leave a message at 902-422-7491 x224*

WHAT WOULD MARTIN BUBER HAVE SAID ABOUT THE MOVIE “MR. GAGA”

BY JANET KRAVETZ

On June 8, 2017, I had the pleasure to watch the documentary movie “Mr. Gaga”, presented by the Atlantic Jewish Council. “Mr. Gaga”, Ohad Naharin, is a world renowned choreographer and artistic director of the Israeli Batsheva Dance Company. Naharin is also the originator of an innovative movement language, Gaga. Gaga has revolutionized the company’s training, and emerged as a growing force in the larger field of movement practices for both dancers and non-dancers. Gaga emphasizes the exploration of sensation and availability for movement and is now the primary training method for Batsheva’s dancers.

I actually can’t wait for the upcoming Atlantic Jewish Film Festival; images and words on the screen can be very powerful and I often walk away from a good film pondering the enigmas and conflicts featured in these films. I have never seen the Batsheva Dance Company perform, but from watching the film I could feel the dancers sharing their own authentic and powerful experiences with us. Dancers come to Israel from around the world to learn the Gaga Language. One could almost feel that the Gaga language practitioners are communicating with us in a primitive fashion, their bodies singing a new universal language, yet every movement singing a very individual song. The Dance Magazine calls Naharin “the most widely worshiped Guru of modern dance”.

The audience that watched the film in Halifax had this to say: “made me want to dance more...mesmerizing...hypnotizing...electrifying...”. I wonder, how did Naharin manage to transform this dance into a universal experience? Martin Buber said, “when two people relate to each other authentically and humanly, God is the electricity that surges between them.” Are Gaga practitioners learning through each and single movement to relate to themselves, to each other and to the world more authentically and humanly?

Naharin faced a dance-related spine injury, and says he developed Gaga language during the rehabilitation stages to express himself

more gently, in a way that feels healing and not potentially injuring. Later he lost a beloved wife to cancer and says dance and grief don’t contradict each other, as dancing can heal physical and emotional pain. It seems that Naharin is more willing to talk about his physical struggles than his emotional struggles, but he succinctly describes his family’s move away from his beloved Israeli kibbutz Mizra, as one would feel when separating from a Siamese twin. Very aloof, very passionate, a man of obvious contradictions, he started his career searching his way in the international dance scene: he began his dance training with the Batsheva Dance Company and later studied at and joined top dance schools and groups in NYC; while refusing to dance to their rules. It seems to me that Naharin has been yearning, since his days in the kibbutz, to dance to his own heartbeat, but to be also closely surrounded by people, being part of something greater than him. Buber said, “every man’s foremost task is the actualization of his unique, unprecedented and never-recurring potentialities, and not the repetition of something that another, and be it even the greatest, has already achieved.” Naharin might be a controversial figure, but he definitely dances to his own tune and the Gaga language begs the question – can authentic dance heal an injured body, can it heal a wounded soul? ❸

Janet Kravetz, an international award winning author and poetess emigrated from Israel to Halifax in 2009.



< CIJA Report continued from page 11

At the same time, the Pledge 150 approach requires us to be thoughtful, organized, and sustained in our contribution. Based on the premise that we are changed through repetition, the great Jewish philosopher-rabbi Maimonides noted that it is better to undertake many individual acts than one large act of giving. The process of giving not only benefits the recipient but, when adopted as a conscious habit, it also creates a mindset of generosity in the donor.

If you, your family, or your synagogue are interested in taking part, I invite you to visit www.pledge150.ca for more details – and to connect with us to share your Pledge ideas with others. As for me and my family,

we have pledged to collect 150 items of clothing over the year to donate to those in need. By encouraging our young children to be part of the effort, we share with them the importance of helping those less fortunate – a value at the heart of Jewish tradition and Canadian civic values. ❹

VEGANISM: An interview with Rabbi Asa Keisar

BY ALEX RUDCOVSKI

The vegan movement has existed since earlier times, but in recent years it has shown a great progress around the world where people change their diets and lifestyles as they have become aware of the commodity status of animals or become conscious of the health and environmental risks of consuming animal products.

Veganism is “a way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose” (*The Vegan Society*). Using animals for food, entertainment, clothing, and beauty cannot be accepted in this type of progressivism we are living in. Let alone that the meat industry responsible for creating cow emissions, which the *Independent* called “the world’s top destroyer of the environment” (2006). Nowadays most of our food comes from cruel, harmful and unneeded factories which take the lives of over 56 billion animals annually (*Animal Equality*).

In this unique social revolution, it is Israel that caught a spot of the most vegan country in the world, and where the vegan population has doubled itself since 2010. Currently, 5 percent of Israel’s population defines themselves as vegans (*The Tower*, 2016). The rise of veganism shouldn’t be taken lightly; apparently promoting a revolution in our plates can be much harder than other social changes happening. For this reason, I conducted an interview with Rabbi Asa Keisar, a well-known figure located in Israel who dedicates his work to the advocacy of veganism. Keisar, born in 1973, says that his father raised him as a vegetarian; Asa transitioned to veganism after learning about the cruel egg and dairy industry; to a nut shell – approximately 15,000 male chicks are killed every day in Israel as they do not lay eggs; thus they are not profitable. Likewise, newborn calves are separated from their mothers minutes after they are born so the milk will end up on our shelves (*Anonymous – for Animal Rights*). Keisar believes that the “suffer and sorrow” that animals go through the egg and the dairy industries are much greater and crueler than that of the meat industry.

In 2015, Asa created a YouTube lecture named “the lecture every Jew should see” (www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv-07kO9BGE), and it reached half a million views. Keisar touched upon different topics regarding the Jewish laws and tradition, and refuted some common opinions and misunderstandings of the Biblical language. He highlighted the idea that Kashrut cannot be maintained once moral and religious values are not represented. The lecture provoked a public controversy as Keisar’s knowledge and explanation brought a different perspective on Judaism’s role on this earth, and on the value of being compassionate and respectful towards God’s creations. Asa stated that

“after the release of the video there was a surprising demand to discover more information about veganism from the sources I presented. I decided to combine all the necessary materials I had at the time to make this information more accessible; especially when many Yeshiva (an Orthodox Jewish seminary) students are not exposed to the internet, and they spend their days learning scriptures. So distributing the book for free was the best way to make it happen”. A few months later, Keisar published the awaited book *Velifnei Iver*, translated as “Before the Blind”, in reference to the commandment in the Book of Leviticus “Do not put a stumbling block before the blind”.

Keisar understands the contradiction between the vegan ideals and God’s permission to eat meat. He suggests that this permission has long become an acquired right or habit. He adds that this is “exactly as the permission to kidnap a captured woman from a battlefield (Deuteronomy 21). The authorization to eat meat is based on compromise, and has been allowed because many would fail to follow a commandment of giving up meat. The Torah allowed meat as a way to contain a phenomenon from spreading”.

Keisar claims that veganism is the “Torah’s ideal”, and that we need to be critical and aware of today’s industry and businesses surrounding animals and their by-products. The numbers are terrifying and Asa reminds us that compassion and the belief in justice should start with how we treat those below us; “Am Israel is called Rachmanim bnei rachmanim (merciful son of merciful parents), and compassion is one of our identities, as Hazal said”. Keisar sheds the light on this important lesson by adding that “we should be an “Or La Goyim” (a light unto the nations) and acting as role models”. Presently, the innocent



animals literally being created for the benefit of the food industries, suffer a tremendous pain and a loss of self-ownership, far from what the biblical times have predicted. Keisar decisively adds that “we cannot be silent to it, otherwise it will be perceived as blasphemy”.

In respect of Kashrut, Asa suggests an interesting exegesis that “in today’s high-demanded mega industries of meat, eggs and dairy, there is a high risk of violating Torah’s laws on animal cruelty and suffering. Most of the slaughters taking place on an assembly line, which affect the accuracy of the Shchita (slaughter) and also exposes the animals to each other’s sense of fear and death that makes the animals realize they will be killed. This kind of fear can make their lung shrink, which is forbidden according to the Kashrut laws”. 🍷

Alex Rudcovski, a fourth year criminology student with minors in sociology and religious studies at Saint Mary’s University, Halifax emigrated to Canada 3 years ago from Netanya, Israel and has been a proponent of veganism in recent years. This summer Alex was the summer student Event Coordinator at the Atlantic Jewish Council.



Vegan Gefilte Fish

PREPARATION:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F, and spray a baking sheet with oil.
2. Boil or bake the potatoes until soft, and peel them. At the same time, boil water in a small pot, add the vinegar and cook the cauliflower for about 10 minutes, until soft.
3. Grind the cauliflower in a food processor and transfer to a small bowl.
4. Grind the potatoes, until a sticky and smooth texture of dough.
5. Mix the potatoes and cauliflower together.
6. Add salt to taste, and add the oil, almond flour and potato flour. A very soft texture should be obtained.
7. Let cool for half an hour in the refrigerator.
8. Make 10 patties from the dough, using wet hands and a tablespoon, and place them on the baking sheet.
9. Garnish each patty with a slice of carrot, spray with oil and bake for about 20 minutes (the patties should be a bit golden and no longer soft to touch).

INGREDIENTS (FOR 10 GEFILTE FISH):

- > 3 frozen or fresh cauliflower florets (about half a medium sized cauliflower) + tablespoon of vinegar for cooking (see note below)
- > 3 small potatoes
- > 3 tablespoons of almond flour
- > 1 tablespoon of potato flour
- > 1 tablespoon of oil
- > Salt
- > Oil spray
- > Half of a cooked carrot, cut into 10 round slices

TO SERVE:

Best served with a spicy horseradish, delicious hot from the oven or cold from the fridge!

NOTES:

- > The vinegar neutralizes the smell of the cooked cauliflower.
- > It is recommended to grind the potatoes in a food processor and not to mash them, in order to obtain a smooth and sticky puree, which will help hold the patties together.

*The recipe and photo were reprinted and translated with permission from:
<http://dapeitamar.blogspot.ca/>*



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HOCKEY DREAM COMES TRUE

It's a dream come true for Itamar Amiel

BY JOEL JACOBSON

The 13-year-old from Tel Aviv is completing a five-day hockey school in Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, hosted by the community's favorite son, and Itamar's idol, Sidney Crosby.

Itamar has been playing hockey in Israel for only a couple of years but is showing the skill needed to advance from a B league to an A league in his age group. His goal is to eventually train with the Israel National Under-18 team, and qualify to represent his country in world competition.

But today, on the same ice where Crosby grew his game to become the superstar he is now, Itamar is learning skills with 160 other youngsters. He has no trouble keeping pace with his peers, even though many of them have been on skates since age 5 and play scores of games each winter.

There are only two artificial skating surfaces in Israel, one in Tel Aviv and one in Metulla, in the north. Itamar is lucky to get three practices a week (three hours) but nothing diminishes his love for the game he first saw played late one night (or early one morning). He and his father, Jonathan, watched the 2014 World Cup on television.

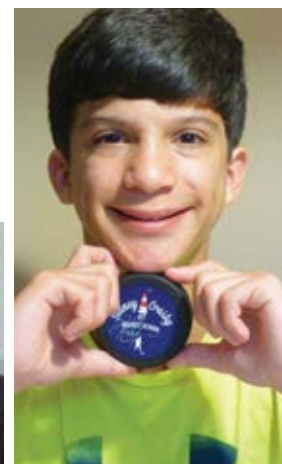
"Crosby played that game," says Itamar. "I had heard of him but more of (Alexander) Ovechkin because many of my hockey teammates were of Russian descent. I don't see many games live because of the time difference but see some re-runs. I DID see the final game of this year's Stanley Cup final, though. (won by Crosby's Pittsburgh Penguins)."

His first skating experience was in August 2014 at the BMO Center in Hammonds Plains, NS with his grandfather. He liked it, and even saw Crosby, Nathan MacKinnon (Colorado) and Brad Marchand (Boston) skate on another surface of the four-pad arena. That was a WOW moment for him, an incentive to keep on with the game.

His father sent an application to the Sidney Crosby Hockey School last spring, one of about 3,000 from around the world. Jonathan, an Israeli resident for the past 22 years, had planned a visit to Halifax at that time to visit his family. It was part of a five-week trip to North America for Jonathan, wife Lilach, Itamar and six-year-old Daniel. They went to Disney World, the New York city area, Niagara Falls and Toronto, but Itamar says nothing tops the hockey school.



SIDNEY CROSBY GIVES A HOCKEY TIP TO ITAMAR AMIEL AT THE CROSBY HOCKEY SCHOOL IN DARTMOUTH. Photo by Lilach Amiel



ITAMAR AMIEL OF ISRAEL, HOLDS A SIGNED SIDNEY CROSBY HOCKEY PUCK.

"When I saw the acceptance letter from the camp, I cried with happiness," says Itamar. "And when I stepped on the Cole Harbour ice for the first time, I was the happiest kid in the world."

That was Monday July 10, Itamar's 13th birthday, "the BEST birthday ever," he remarked. He will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah at Halifax's Beth Israel Synagogue July 15.

Itamar has travelled farthest among the 160 campers. All Canadian provinces and territories, plus dozens of US states are taking part in the intense on-ice and off-ice sessions.

"I'm learning things at the camp that I'd never learn in Israel," says Itamar. "Today, it was turning with and without the puck, stickhandling, and shooting. My shot is pretty hard but I miss (the net) a lot."

"Today, too, Sid demonstrated a few things for our group. He's a pretty good hockey player," Itamar, an avid Penguins fan, says with a grin. ☺

"When I saw the acceptance letter from the camp, I cried with happiness," says Itamar. "And when I stepped on the Cole Harbour ice for the first time, I was the happiest kid in the world."

SALTSCAPES: PLYING THE RAG TRADE IN MONCTON



BY ISADORE FINE, AS TOLD TO SANDRA PHINNEY

EDITOR'S NOTE: ISADORE FINE Z"L PASSED AWAY IN AUGUST, THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN *SALTSCAPES MAGAZINE*

"One thing I learned is never try to pressure a woman to buy something"

It's been said that the formula for living is quite simple: wake up in the morning, go to bed at night, and occupy yourself as best as you can in between.

Isadore Fine, of Moncton, has spent a lifetime occupying himself as best as he can during his waking hours – from adapting to a traumatic childhood experience, to serving his country during the war, to falling in love, and creating lasting legacies.

Pull up a chair; please meet Isadore Fine.

I was born in Rozana in Poland. Father came over to Canada in 1921; my mother and I came over shortly after. We lived in Peterborough, Ontario, in a cold-water flat, over Braund's grocery store. My dad went out to peddle. He had a bicycle and he'd buy a pack of cigarettes and would sell them one at a time for a penny or two.

In those days, they had a habit in Europe of stuffing the firebox with newspaper, putting a few pieces of wood on top, then pouring kerosene over to set it afire. My mother had long hair and one day, it caught on fire. She grabbed me, protected me in a cuddle, and ran down the outside stairs. She was engulfed in flames and died.

I was a year and seven months old. I did not know this; it was told to me much later.

Eventually my father got married again, and along came six sisters, but my stepmother was the kind you read about in books. So I was left to myself. It was tough times; troubling times.

My father took me out of high school when I was 16 to work in his used furniture store. He said, "Isadore, I'm paying George Lustik \$7 a week. He's got three kids and I hate to let him go but I don't have the money. You come with me, and I'll pay you \$3 a week." This wasn't an invitation; I had to go. I'm still waiting for the first cheque!

Then the Second World War came along and, at 21, I received my call. I couldn't picture myself carrying a bayonet but there was an opening in the air force to join the radar corps. I entered the war in 1940 and was posted to Clinton, Ontario, a little village close to London where we learned how radar worked. They outfitted me with a uniform and gave me \$1.30 a day. Hallelujah! I passed the course and joined the radar corps.

After a year or two, the Royal Air Force Ferry Command needed five radar experts. By this time I was stationed in Scoudouc, New Brunswick, and I was one of the five. I was sent to Elizabeth City in

North Carolina. My landlady was Mrs. Williams and I lived there with her family for two years. Every morning I was picked up and driven out to the air base where we installed and serviced radar units. This was all very secretive work.

One day, I got a handwritten letter from New York. It didn't make any sense, so I took it to Mrs. Williams. She said, "Did you know you had an Aunt Rose?" I said, "No." We read the letter together. Aunt Rose had found out where I was; we agreed to meet in Norfolk, Virginia. In those days, Norfolk was like Halifax during the war – an embarkation point.

So I got time off and wore my air force uniform. She took the ferry from Cape Charles over to Norfolk. It was a sea of servicemen but this little dark-haired lady came towards me, started to cry, and threw her arms around me. That opened up a great new life for me.

I discovered that I had six uncles who were born in Poland, and my grandfather was one of the aristocrats of the village. If you had family troubles or were poor, he would help you.

At the end of the war, I was earning only \$2.10 a day but my room and board were paid for so I saved my money. One of my father's sisters, who had known my mother, said: "Remember, Isadore, to put a stone on your mother's grave," as she knew that my mother had been buried in the pauper's cemetery in Toronto. One day, my dad asked, "Would you let me pay for half?" That was the only time he ever admitted that my mother had been his wife. We put the tombstone on the grave in 1944 when I came home on furlough.

Before going to the United States, while I was stationed in New Brunswick, I read a notice saying the Jewish Community in Moncton would be entertaining service people the upcoming Friday night at the synagogue. So I went. They had a nickelodeon going in the basement and that's where I spotted this girl. She was only 16 but there was something about her; we danced. She told me later that she said to her aunt sitting next to her, "He seems awfully nice." Her aunt replied, "Hang on to him."

She went off to study at Dalhousie University but we promised to write one another, and we did – for over two years. When I came back

we spent more time with one another, became engaged, and got married in Moncton in 1946.

We then moved to Peterborough and I went to work for my dad's furniture store but he still wasn't making much; I knew we had to get out on our own. At that time my father-in-law owned a building on Main Street in Moncton and it was empty. So we came back in 1947. I paid him \$200 a month rent and started Fine's Limited, selling men's and women's clothing. Eventually I opened three more clothing stores, and introduced marked-down prices.

One thing I learned is never try to pressure a woman to buy something, and never go out of the way to make a sale for the sake of the commission. I also learned to hire staff who were bilingual and who had warmth towards customers. So we built up a good history of satisfied customers.

Of course, we had family – three boys and one girl. Children are everything. *Ich krign naches*. That's an old Yiddish saying that means "I gather pleasure – or receive good things – from my children." And, now, there are three grandchildren!

Back when I had the stores, I went to Montreal every season to buy clothes. This particular day I went by a narrow little shop, the Canadian Guild of Crafts, with windows full of cobwebs, where I could see small pieces of carved stone about the size of my fist. Inside, I picked up a little soapstone fish. It had a nice feel to it so I asked: "How much does it cost?" The sales clerk said, "Fifteen dollars." That was half a week's wages, so it wasn't peanuts. I tried to get into that store as often as I could.

Eventually the curator Virginia Watt – who knew the Inuit sculptors in the north and used her knowledge to buy with care – and I became friends. She set aside the best things to show me. So I learned and accumulated for over 20 years. It was a passion – and an addiction! These pieces were packed like sardines everywhere.

In 1990 we decided to donate the collection to the University of Moncton. We wanted to keep the collection here, and I admired what the university has done to help the Acadians. It took five years before it was approved, as it needed a security system, a proper display place and insurance.

My stipulations were that the sculptures had to have English and French names; they couldn't be taken off the grounds; the collection had to be on display at regular hours; and there could not be a viewing fee.

And I wanted my wife's name to be on the collection so it's officially called the "Esther and Isadore Fine Collection of Inuit Art." You know, not once did she ever say to me, "Isadore, I think that's enough." I loved her for that.

You see, I fell in love with my wife the first time we met; she died in my arms 60 years later. We had our ups and downs – even some arguments – but the core of our relationship was strong. When you have a marriage like that, it's just short of a miracle. ☺

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AROUND OUR REGION : HALIFAX



Shirley Nevo getting excited for our upcoming JWRP women's trip to Israel!



Halifax Jewish young adults enjoying our first ever happy hour social event!



Four Israeli CITs from our Partnership region we sponsored to attend Camp Kadimah enjoying a meal in Halifax.



Mikey Fox and Molly Reznitzer at our UJA campaign volunteer training session at Camp Kadimah.



The AJC contingent marching in the 2017 Halifax Pride Parade.



Shirlee and Ralph Medjuck dedicating the new Frank Medjuck Sport Court at Camp Kadimah.



Andy Fillmore (MP), Morgan Manzer (Chair of Halifax Pride), Schuyler Smith (Board Member of Halifax Pride), Ariella Kimmel (CJIA), Naomi Rosenfeld, Jim Spatz, and Rafah DiCostanzo (MLA) at our first ever Pride Shabbat Dinner.



Four Israeli CITs from our Partnership region we sponsored to attend Camp Kadimah enjoying a snack at the Conter's residence in Halifax after talking to community members about the north of Israel and their experiences at camp!



Minister Leo Glavine (Communities, Culture, and Heritage for NS), Michael Pink (Co-Chair of Camp Kadimah), Deputy Consul General Rotem Segev (of Israel to Quebec & Atlantic Canada), Sherry Pink, Michael Argand (chair of AJC) Jo-Anne Nozick, Minister Labi Kousoulis (Labour and Advanced Education for NS), Naomi Rosenfeld at Camp Kadimah.



Minister Leo Glavine (Communities, Culture, and Heritage for NS) and Deputy Consul General Rotem Segev (of Israel to Quebec & Atlantic Canada) playing tetherball with campers at Camp Kadimah.



Pat and Daniel Paul at the Pride Shabbat Dinner, Halifax Seaport Market rooftop.



Geoff Regan, MP Halifax West opened the Canadian Jewish Experience exhibit at the Halifax Central Library, pictured with Sara Beanlands, Principal and Senior Archaeologist, Boreas Heritage Consulting Inc.



Halifax students Jacob Appleton, Benjamin Berman, Jordan Collins, Joseph Lecker-Evans, Gilad Maianski, Aidan Rittenberg, and Adar Svidler, with chaperone Craig Fox, outside the Canadian Human Rights Museum, Winnipeg, as part of the Asper Human Rights and Holocaust Studies program, pictured with students from École Sainte-Anne, Fredericton, NB.

ASPER HUMAN RIGHTS AND HOLOCAUST STUDIES PROGRAM:


My Asper Experience

BY GILAD MAIANSKI

Starting this program, I was unaware of how much I could gain from this experience intellectually and as a person. Our weekly meetings quickly helped me learn about various cultures and the discrimination they face. These sessions helped me develop a sense of cultural understanding and appreciation. Whether we were discussing the difficulties of Asian immigrants in Canada, or the vile hate crimes that Jews, “Gypsies”, Homosexuals, and others faced through WW2, I was given a vast and new point of view. Through the meetings, I found a true value for how accepting and open Canada is. Though it has not always been like that (The treatment of Native Canadians in Residential Schools), this showed us that bad ideas can still morph in to good ones and while grave errors were still made they can be fixed for future generations. Our trip to Winnipeg was planned in a way that helped us see the aspects of society in Winnipeg, such as a tour of a bison plain, as it is the Provincial animal.

Through the meetings, I found a true value for how accepting and open Canada is.

We also spent time watching programs (such as plays and dances) that showcased Native and Irish heritage. Overall, the highlight of the trip was of course, seeing the Canadian Museum of Human Rights. I was fascinated by every level of the building, and could clearly see the hard work that was needed to design such a wonderful museum. In conclusion, the Asper program helped me mature as an individual, and edified me on how far the world has come since its days of blatant

racism, homophobia, sexism, and just sheer discrimination. But it also taught me that we still have our ways to go, and that it's to make sure others are instructed like we were in the Asper Program. I'm so glad I decided to make the effort to join the program, and would recommend the program to all. 

ON THE LIFE OF STEVEN ZATZMAN Z"L

Steven Zatzman: An Extraordinary Father, Zaidy "Z", and Mensch.

March 2, 1952 – May 1, 2017

BY NOAH ZATZMAN, BELARIE ZATZMAN, AND RENÉE ZATZMAN

The very first thing Steven Zatzman would want you to know is that his greatest joy in life was to be a father.

His story begins in the Dartmouth home of Myer (Mike) and Miriam, where Steven was the first son and devoted older brother to Marty, Ian, and Ray. Steve and his brothers were raised with common-sense, Jewish Maritime ethics, honed during summers at Camp Kadimah. Steve was a camper, staff, and later, a committee member. A devoted camp dad when his own children were at Kadimah, Steve returned often when Marty served as camp director.

Steve was a regular shul-goer at the Beth Israel Synagogue, except in 1965 at age 13 when his family moved to Tuscon, Arizona where he fondly remembered celebrating his bar mitzvah. Steve was strongly committed to the Halifax Jewish community and served as President of the Beth Israel from 2013 to 2015. He was also a dedicated "Next D'Or" committee member who envisioned a strong Jewish future in Halifax. It was his long-standing hope that an amalgamation between the Beth Israel and Shaar Shalom congregations into one facility would come to pass.

Beyond his community involvement, Steve was also a prominent lawyer. He completed a law degree at Dalhousie University and a master's in law at the University of London, England, before returning to Dartmouth to begin his litigation career. In 2009, Steve was appointed Queen's Counsel by the Government of Nova Scotia, recognizing his fine character and exceptional contributions to the practice of law.

Steve's personal life was full of joys and challenges. He fell in love with Arlene Lottner while vacationing in Florida, and described their coupling as the "disco queen of Fort Lauderdale" meets "John-Boy." They married in 1981 and had three beautiful children, Daniel (1983) and twins, Elana and Renée (1986). Steve suffered overwhelming losses when both Miriam and Arlene passed from breast cancer one year apart in 1993 and 1994.

In the face of such immense tragedy, Halifax's Jewish community came together to support the family. Many wonderful memories and meals were shared in Andrew and Louise Wolfson's home, building a deep friendship that grew from Andrew and Steve's law partnership of over 30 years. Steve was also supported by Joyce Angus, the family's beloved housekeeper. For over 25 years, Joyce never called him Steve or Mr. Zatzman; she simply called him Dad.

Later in life, Steve found love again with his partner of 20 years, Dr. Shirley Caspin. They travelled the world together and shared a love of theatre. Steve often recounted his story of returning from studying abroad looking rather gaunt: "I spent all my money on shows. I had nothing left for food!" In December, Steve took the family to see *Come From Away* (a musical about Newfoundland's response to diverted 9/11 air passengers). He proudly and loudly announced to other audience members following the show that, "we are Maritimers!"

Steve was a true mensch. He faithfully ensured that his children remained close with Arlene's family in Florida, taking them every year to visit. Steve continued this tradition even when they became adults; and he

continued to telephone his mother-in-law every Sunday for the rest of his life.

Steve did not willingly leave Halifax in July 2016 for Toronto. Rather, he was "abducted" by

Marty and sister-in-law Belarie so that the family could provide more support for Steve during his illness. Steve would later acknowledge that he missed Halifax but relished the time spent in Toronto with his children and new grandson, Austin (named for Arlene) for whom he was "Zaidy Z".

During his courageous battle, Steve began writing a memoir. He was writing for his children, but also for Austin and the grandchildren to come. He wrote that despite tremendous challenges, he led a happy and rich life.

On his 65th and final birthday, Steve was surrounded by his nieces and nephews alongside Daniel, Elana and Renée, and provided a preview of his "soon-to-be-bestselling" memoir! Steve grinned when he asked them to remember that "my greatest joy in life was to be a father". 🍷



ON THE LIFE OF MARLENE UNGER Z"L

Three years ago my memoir was published with the title *The Unwritten Diary of Israel Unger*. Shortly after its publication a friend called and said you know you have the wrong title you should have called it *Marlene and Israel A Love Story*,

Marlene was kind, courageous, brave and indefatigable when she pursued a just cause. The Torah commands Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof Kol Yemai Chajecha. Justice, Justice Shall Thou Pursue All the Days of Your Life. Marlene was the embodiment of that commandment.

Marlene loved Fredericton, she loved New Brunswick, she loved Canada and she loved Israel. Above all she loved her Family.

The following remarks were made by Israel Unger on two previous joyous occasions when Marlene received the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Award and when she was awarded the Order of New Brunswick.

One of the big things Marlene did was to fight Malcolm Ross. In 1978 Malcolm Ross sent a copy of his book *Web of Deceit* to the New Brunswick Teacher's Federation and it was given to Marlene to read. She was outraged. She could not believe that in the 1970's someone would try to peddle hate like that. Marlene read all his books, his letters to the editor and watched his interview on television. His books copied ideas from the "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion", a fraudulent and antisemitic book from the early 1900's, questioned the fact of the murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazis.

One day she was shopping at a local grocery store called Tingley's and saw Ross's book on display. She went to see the owner and he was as shocked as Marlene to see antisemitic material on his magazine rack and removed the books immediately. Marlene

started to look at the bookstores in Fredericton for his book. The Public Library had his books and one of his books *Christianity vs Judeo-Christianity* catalogued under Comparative Region, Marlene fought that and was successful in having the cataloging changed.

What Marlene achieved in her battle against Ross is that she was able to have a resolution passed by The New Brunswick Teacher's Association recognizing Holocaust Denial as a virulent form of anti-Semitism. Another resolution she was instrumental in having passed was that the Union lawyer should adhere to the New Brunswick Teacher's Association resolutions on racism and anti-Semitism in adducing and deducing evidence at the Human Rights Inquiry.

FROM DAUGHTER SHARON'S EULOGY:

My mom was exceptionally proud of her granddaughters. Rebecca is her first grandchild. Following her birth, she set up the cottage to be a kids' paradise from carrying sand and clay to endless baking and more recently setting Rebecca up in her own playhouse originally built by my grandfather. Next came Sophie who shares a love of math with her grandmother. My mom taught her mental math so that she could beat all of the adults in solving math problems. My youngest is Meira who shares a love of reading with her grandmother. Together they read voraciously many series of books long after I was asleep. Luisa and Viviana live in Switzerland and each year my mother visited them with one suitcase filled with 8 Hannukah presents for each girl. Luisa would say that she counts down the 50 weeks of the year until she gets to spend 2 weeks with Granny and Zaidy in New Brunswick.

My mother taught at Fredericton High School for 30 years. Her nature as being a mother first and foremost came through there as well. Her students affectionately knew her as

Mom or Momma Unger. She cared so very much for her students and would give extra help after school every day often until 5:30 or 6 at night. Just before she retired, she created a permanent memorial for the 63 students from FHS who died as soldiers at war.

When she retired she became the Fredericton Representative on the Atlantic Jewish Council and then the chair of the Atlantic Jewish Council's Holocaust Education Committee in hopes that it would help have the New Brunswick Department of Education hold a long promised workshop on the Holocaust. In fact, they held a successful workshop in Moncton. She was instrumental in having Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, proclaimed as an Act in the New Brunswick legislature. For these efforts, she was recognized with an award by the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre as well as an Order of New Brunswick. 5



AJC PRIDE DINE TOGETHER

BY JOEL JACOBSON

A Pride Shabbat dinner July 28 was the first-ever effort in Halifax to bring together the local Jewish and LGBTQ communities to show, support, understanding and respect between the two groups.

Last year's Pride Halifax annual general meeting was disrupted by cries of anti-semitism. The Shabbat dinner helped mend the rift.

Hosted by Atlantic Jewish Council, with assistance from CIJA, two Halifax synagogues, and several corporate sponsors, the outdoor rooftop event drew 115 people to the Halifax waterfront.

Ariella Kimmel, CIJA's senior manager, partnerships, attending from Toronto, said, "This is the second of five planned Shabbat dinners we're supporting with LGBTQ communities across Canada (the first was in Toronto in June 2017) because Shabbat is a time for people to come together.

"This was a tremendous success. Naomi (Rosenfeld, executive director of AJC) and her team did a fantastic job of putting this together. Despite the size of the Halifax community, the sell-out crowd (115) far surpassed the one in Toronto."

She added the event had significance after last year's Pride AGM fiasco. "It was hurtful to both communities. This was an important step to heal the rift."

At its AGM last October, Halifax Pride defeated a resolution that called for the banning of Size Doesn't Matter (SDM) and other materials at Pride that showcase the achievements of Israel's LGBTQ community. SDM is a Canadian program run by CIJA, which highlights Israeli culture, technology, lifestyle, and values.

For several years in Halifax, the AJC has made use of SDM materials while leading a contingent of LGBTQ and allied Jewish community members participating in annual Pride events. The resolution singled out the Jewish community for censorship but its defeat ensured Pride's core values of inclusion and equality would be upheld at future events.

Rosenfeld called the Shabbat dinner a "beautiful celebration of inclusion. There were amazing conversations at every table (where a conscious mixture of cultures was pre-set) and people heard unique stories."

With Halifax Liberal MP Andy Fillmore and Nova Scotia Clayton Park West Liberal MLA Rafah Dicostanzo in attendance, Morgan Manzer, chair of Halifax Pride emphasized that events like this "help us listen to one another, understand each other."

Manzer was grateful the AJC proposed the Shabbat dinner. With a smile he noted, "Food is a unifier."

Recently admitted to the bar, the Nova Scotia Legal Aid Lawyer said this is a first great step to rebuild trust between Pride and the AJC and between Pride and other groups.

He painfully told his own story of coming out.

"I was confused with my own identity, growing up in a small town in New Brunswick and knowing no one who was gay. In my early

20s, I accepted who I was. In 2011, working in Halifax, I marched in the Pride parade and realized I could embrace who I was. I felt accepted and filled with hope."

One guest speaker, Sherri Kasten of Halifax was frank in her remarks.

"Today, there are Jews here, and queers, and we are all welcomed at this dinner. There is more connecting us than dividing us. I'm Jewish, I'm queer and I'm a left-winger, an interesting combination. I have found Pride in Halifax to be very healing."

Kasten participated in the recent Halifax Pride Parade, witnessed by thousands of Nova Scotians. "For one day, we aspired to be Rainbow people, singing and dancing in the streets. I was a proud queer and proud Jew, blending my sensitivities with others. I just hoped not to be vilified."

Schuyler Smith, a former AJC board member and now on the board of Halifax Pride, welcomed guests by explaining Shabbat traditions, inviting Jewish community members to lead the blessings over the hand-washing, wine and challah, and explained the mitzvah of having guests at Shabbat dinner.

Baptist minister Elaine Walcott of Halifax, who said an interfaith prayer prior to dinner, stressed, "We're all children of God. We celebrate God's covenant to love all of creation. We are an open community and this dinner will interconnect us and help us heal." 3



Above:
Ariella Kimmel, senior manager, partnerships, CIJA, addresses the audience at the AJC's Shabbat Pride dinner in Halifax.

Left:
Morgan Manzer, Halifax, chair of Pride Halifax, speaks at the AJC-organized Shabbat Pride dinner in Halifax.

4th Summer Family Shabbaton at CAMP KADIMAH

This year I was delighted to once again organize a Shabbaton at Camp Kadimah. To build better bridges in our community and bring young families together I worked closely with Nana Shteinberg and committee members Tanya Svidler, Michael Gadilov and Arthur Brin to organize a fun family weekend. AJC summer student Alex Rudcovski assisted in organizing and supervising a family craft program. Meeting new families, connecting with friends, enjoying delicious kosher meals, Kabbalat Shabbat, crafts, sports & water activities, evening bonfire complete with kosher marshmallows, were some of the weekend highlights. Most popular feedback from families: let's do it again next summer!

— Edna LeVine, AJC director of community engagement

REFLECTION FROM ALEX RUDCOVSKI (AJC SUMMER STUDENT):

This was my first time at Camp Kadimah and I was completely overwhelmed with the beautiful location and view. I had a chance to experience the amazing nature of Nova Scotia in a different atmosphere, which was created by the sense of unity that was resting upon us during that weekend.

I had the pleasure to lead the arts and crafts activities for families and children, and met some very creative kids who couldn't resist glitter and beads, and were running around Camp with their Magen David ribbons on their heads.

I felt that although some of us were strangers to each other before the shabbaton, we quickly found a mutual ground to tie us together that allowed us to share this unique experience.

People were constantly doing something – some were canoeing, playing sports, singing and playing the guitar, and even a spontaneous soccer game was taking place, inviting children to watch Israel's favorite sport!

Camp Kadimah made us feel welcome, surrounded by the stories of the cabins' walls telling us of campers that in some way we can identify with; and I thought to myself how funny it is to be a Moldavian who lived in Israel, and somehow found herself in the green Nova Scotia, sleeping in cabin 21, and on my way to the Shabbat dinner. 🌟



CAPE BRETON NEWS

BY SHARON JACOBSON

*It was Woody Allen who said
"Time is nature's way of keeping
everything from happening at once."*

Well, our past two seasons in Cape Breton saw a steady stream of events flowing by...

As Heidi Schwartz pointed out to me with a respectful irony, there were four Unveilings and a Wedding.

For the stone-settings, the community came together with the families of Jerry Dubinsky; then, Evy Dubinsky Carnat, Gwen Gaum and also Norris Nathanson.

At this time, Rabbi Ellis usually quotes from a lovely book of poetry and children speak of their parents with humour and deep sentiment. There may be song....Farewell to Nova Scotia was a heartfelt tribute by the Nathanson family.

For the Dubinsky-Carnat summer, a spirit of joy did rise again indeed with the wedding of their son, Toby and his lovely bride, Penny D'Souza.

Manny Strong, son of Shayna and Darren, went to Rome and Rose Schwartz Rubinoff, daughter of Heidi Schwartz and granddaughter of Inez Schwartz went to Spain.

Manny attended a Model United Nations program with 3 of his school classmates as representatives of the Netherlands. He prepared a speech for the economic and finance committee regarding the desertification of various parts of the world, dealing with water, conservation rights and drought conditions. Others dealt with the human rights of women and children. All representative schools of the various nations would then come together to discuss solutions to these world problems.

This brings to mind Max Lerner's aphorism, "I am neither an optimist nor pessimist, but a possibilist." And so, hopefully, the future these young people will propose will be one of pragmatic possibilities!

Rose had the rewarding opportunity to sing in a choir, Viva! Her effervescent personality gives new meaning to "Alegria and Jubilo!"

But the old saying "youth is wasted on the young" was never so obvious as at the birthday luncheons of Lil Nathanson, 100 years young and baby sister, Bella Shore, 95 years young-er! Guests at the table ranged from high 60's, to middle 70's and onto high 80's. Shirley Chernin

I believe is nearing 90! Despite the lively and robust energy of this group, the names have been hidden to protect their vanity? At least mine has....Louis Allen turned 90 this year and does not mind revealing his age...

Rabbi Ellis informed me that he had been invited to Truro to speak to a group of citizens who wished to know more about Judaism; its history, culture, religion and people. I personally found this very curious as to what prompted the interest. I will ask the Rabbi the outcome as I have heard he has had many unusual requests throughout the province. He has yet to be asked the recipe for gefilte fish?

Which brings me to the valiant effort of Shayna and Darren Strong with their production of a community Seder at their home! I would compare this event to the parting of the Red Sea which I am sure Moses would rather do any day than cook for his motley band that followed him through the desert complaining about G-d knows what (because Moses couldn't seem to satisfy them)? Shayna and Darren did satisfy their guests with great hospitality.

Not only are Cape Bretoners of all ages, travelling, learning, singing, having birthdays, they are also "staying married". Joan and Frank Elman will be celebrating 55 years of marriage with a special kiddish lunch in Shul sponsored by their daughter Marlene, and her husband, Bruce, and their daughter Ariel.

We have had an increase in Shul attendance, not because of the Trump Bump, but because of the regular wonderful summer residents; the Schicks, the Kuriloffs, Heidi Schwartz, Lon Dubinsky and others who I perhaps have inadvertently missed coming to synagogue.

Last spring, a native son of Glacé Bay, Ellie Marshall passed away. He was a lovely man, gleeful raconteur, and a president of the Congregation Sons of Israel.

L' Dor v' Dor... from one generation to the next... We have members from 10-12 years old to 100 years old... All doing their thing... all part of Our Town.

And when we congregate on a Saturday morning we are indeed – "Da-Minion of Canada"! 🇨🇦

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MONCTON NEWS

BY NANCY COHEN

We have been fortunate to have some wonderful families join our community in the last few years. They have become active members and enriched our shul with their friendliness, warmth and willingness to help out and take part in activities. Unfortunately, we have also lost a few families who would have been happy to stay in Moncton if they had been able to find suitable jobs. We do, however, look forward to welcoming a new family in September. Gabriel and Dayanne Wahlberg will be moving here from Brazil, with their young daughter Hannah. Gabriel is a scientist who will do research at the Atlantic Cancer Institute.

Some of you might remember the Shalom report for Moncton from last December in which I wrote about Richard Donovan, a new member of our synagogue. I recounted how grateful we were to Richard for volunteering his time to help out with much needed chores around the shul, as well as how excited he was to rescue an old mezuzah from under many layers of paint on a house next to the shul. Richard had moved back to Moncton after making aliyah and serving in the IDF. We were shocked and deeply saddened to learn that Richard had died on May 11, the day before his 40th birthday. Richard, a gentle, kind person was loved by all who knew him. He was also a talented photographer, and a writer who liked expressing his thoughts on an old typewriter. His time in the IDF left him with PTSD, and the struggles he endured are clearly indicated in this poignant piece below.

short biography ...

without ego, although this is difficult. handguns and assault rifles i can handle like an extension of my own hand. i am an ex israeli combat soldier. i lost my soul a while back ago. i go to synagogue as often as i can. my deep soul is slowly resurfacing after hiding in the deep recesses of whatever i am a coffee snob. i love massage therapy. it is a beautiful practice. i will never stop learning how to help people. i am not perfect. never will be. but i try. i wanted to be a combat medic in the army. the army thought i would do better with a light machine gun. never leaves my mind. i cry sometimes. i smile too. i smile more often now. my comfort food is oreo cookie ice cream. which is kosher. thank hassid. i am an irrational optimist, which i think is very rational.

R. DONOVAN

May and June brought two beautiful simchas. Josh Weinberg-Fillmore, son of Sari Weinberg and Danny Fillmore had his bar mitzvah on May 20. The bar mitzvah of Zev Davidson, son of Jordan and Hannah Davidson took place on June 24. Both boys did a fantastic job and were a credit to their teacher Rebbetzin Yagod. Mazel tov to their families!

An end of year Cheder celebration took place in June. The children were honoured with certificates for their achievements and the parents and grandparents were recognized for their support, encouragement and assistance during the school year. All present expressed appreciation to Rebbetzin Yagod for her dedicated and tireless work administering the Cheder and teaching the children.

Unveilings took place in July for Sarah Gergely, Shirley Berelovitch, Stanislav Yazgur, Lois Maklin and Rhoda Maklin Gaum. Beautiful receptions took place at the shul after each unveiling, thanks Carole Savage and Judy Cohen.

On August 20 Francis Weil represented the Jewish community and read a prayer at a ceremony in the City of Dieppe to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid in France.

We are very thankful for all of our dedicated volunteers who do so much for our little community, but at this time I would like to give a special shout out to Uri El for reading the Torah so beautifully each Shabbat. Yasher koach Uri!

Everyone is looking forward to the community barbecue, which will take place on August 27 at Betty Druckman's home in Shediach. A bake sale will take place during the barbecue. There are some fabulous bakers here so it would be a good way to stock up on some delicious goodies for the holidays.

MAZEL TOV TO:

Peter Gergely and Marilyn Webster (Bridge-water) on the birth of their grandson Simon Hersh Gergely on April 7 in Edmonton. Proud parents are Andrew Gergely and Aliya



Photos: Enjoying the end of summer BBQ.

Spigelman. A brother for Orly Naama.

David and Margaret Attis on the birth of their grandson Benjamin Rio (Benyamin Nahar) in Toronto. Proud parents are Aviva Attis and Jeremy Koven. A brother for Joseph.

Rabbi and Rebbetzin Yagod on the birth of their grandson Yaakov Nesanel in Providence, Rhode Island. Yaakov is the first child for Mayer and Chumie Juni.

Maxine and Ralph Roness on celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

Betty and Alan Hans whose son-in-law Rabbi Steven Garten of Ottawa (husband of Lisa) was honoured with the Raoul Wallenberg Citation for Moral Courage in the Face of Antisemitism. The award ceremony took place on Parliament Hill.

Unfortunately, I have to end my report with sad news. Isadore Fine a long time member of our synagogue passed away on August 19 in Halifax at the age of 97. Our heartfelt condolences to his family.

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



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FREDERICTON NEWS

BY AYTEN KRANAT

In May, the Fredericton Jewish community hosted a "meet and greet" with Colonel Adam Susman, Israeli Defence Attaché to Canada. His stop in Fredericton was coordinated with his visit to the nearby military base of Camp Gagetown. He cited the importance of cooperation between Canada and Israel on a number of different fronts, including cyber security. He will be moving on from his Ottawa posting in August.

We have had a number of visitors passing through Fredericton during the summer months from across Canada, the United States and Israel. It is always a pleasant task to welcome visitors to our community, especially family members.

Chedar classes will be resuming in September as well as adult Hebrew conversational classes. If interested contact malkak@live.ca

for more information.

A warm welcome is extended to Alan Sheppard and his wife Carolyn. Mazel Tov to the proud parents and grandparents as we name baby William in shul this week-end.

Mazel Tov to Shaindy Goldman and Roberto & Sara Tito on the marriage of their children, Elliot and Rina, who were married in Toronto at the Torah Emet Jewish Centre in July. Best wishes to the happy couple who will be residing in Toronto.

Mazel Tov to Yossi Lazarev (parents, Albina and Isaac), on receiving his degree from Ottawa University in Family Medicine. Dr. Lazarev will continue his residency at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

Mazel Tov to Michelle Chippin, (parents, Arnold and Rose), on receiving her degree in Classics from Mount Allison University.

She will be continuing her education at the University of New Brunswick.

Mazel Tov to Rachel Lipkowitz, daughter of Natalie (nee Chippin) and Sid Lipkowitz, granddaughter of

Bernard and Valerie Chippin, on receiving her B.Ed. from York University.

Wishing Rhoda Daouine (nee Budovitch) mazel tov on her 60th birthday.

Mazel Tov to Ron Gimelshtein, his parents Inna and Leon, sister Michelle and grandparents, on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah. The simcha is taking place in Israel.

Mazel Tov to Leda Milchenko on her graduation from Fredericton High School, and her parents, Irina and Andrei.

Condolences to Shelly Parent (nee Eusler) and families, on the passing of her beloved husband Danny.

Condolences to Marc Kranat and family, on the passing of his father Laurie in the UK.

The unveiling for Lillian Cohen (z l), mother of Warren and Morton, was recently held in Toronto.

Our best wishes to Valerie Chippin, husband Bernard and Harry Chippin who are now at home after a brief stay in hospital.

On behalf of the Sgoolai Israel Synagogue Board, we wish to extend warm New Year's greetings to all our friends in the Atlantic Region. Best wishes for a year of good health and happiness; Lshana tovah! 🌟

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SAINT JOHN NEWS

BY SUSAN ISAACS LUBIN

Summer is always a relatively quiet time as far as activities in the Synagogue are concerned. We have started having Shabbat Services every Saturday morning, as well as Friday nights. We have been able to get a Minyan most of the time. We are also continuing Hebrew School for one of our classes each week. The parents from this group have requested this, and it has worked out well.

We had a Bar Mitzvah the end of June – Amit Friling, son of Amos and Ilanit Friling. They were pleased to have Ilanit's mother and siblings with their families here for the occasion. We wish the Friling family Mazeltov.

In May, we had another pizza party, held Friday night right after Services. We had a tremendous turnout of approximately 65 people. This is a very popular event.

We had two unveilings this summer – one

for the late Jen Cohen, mother of Laurie Cohen- Hackett. The second unveiling was for the late Joanne Morrison, mother of Debbie, of Halifax, Mark, from Windsor, Robin from Toronto, and Nancy from Saint John.

Our third annual picnic was held on August 20th at Hammond River Angling Association. This was a day filled with food, fun and laughter. We had approximately 120 people in attendance, and we barbecued hamburgers and hotdogs. Everyone enjoyed themselves, and despite heavy fog in the morning, the fog cleared, the sun came out, and the kids were able to go into the water. We hope to repeat this event next summer.

We look forward to welcoming Chazan

Matthew Goldberg for the High Holidays.

He was in Saint John for one Service over the winter months, and we were fortunate to be able to retain him for the High Holidays.

On behalf of everyone in Saint John, we want to wish our Maritime family and friends a Shana Tovah. May you all be blessed with a healthy and fulfilling New Year. ❧



Photos: 1. Eat the cake first! Katy's Dubnikov and Uri Friling. 2. Pizza Party in May. 3. Preparing food for Bar Mitzvah – Ilanit Friling, Anna Barnea-Yitzhak, Ilanit's mother. 4. Starting to Bar ecumenical – Cathy Cohen Tait, Norman Hamburg, Bill Thompson (Cathy's husband).

BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

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SAINT JOHN JEWISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

BY KATHERINE BIGGS-CRAFT, CURATOR

The Saint John Jewish Historical Museum has had a busy year with new exhibits, lots of visitors, new accomplishments and there is still lots to do before the tourist season ends.

A new exhibit was opened in May – “Ha-bonim, Hadassah and Hope: Building A Jewish Homeland”. By now most people in the community have heard that David Ben-Gurion and Itzhak Ben-Zvi were in Saint John sometime between 1917 and the spring of 1918. They were recruiting men to join the Jewish Legion which was being formed to free Palestine from the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. In the years that followed and through to the 1980s, the Saint John Jewish community organized many fundraising events to support various causes in the development of the State of Israel. This activity included teas, Negev Dinners, Israel Bond dinners, Youth Aliyah dinners, fashion shows, art shows, thrift shops and bazaars, community calendars and gift cards. The exhibit incorporated many photographs from the events, along with programs, newspaper clippings and other memorabilia. Visitors to the Museum have been quite impressed with the level of activity.



David Ben Gurion and Yitzhak Ben Zvi visited Saint John in early 1918. They were on their way to join the Jewish Legionnaires who were going to fight in Palestine. We will be conducting research about this visit over the winter months to learn more about their time in the city.

Visitors to the Museum can still see the exhibits on Jewish war veterans, Pamdenec and Holocaust survivors and explore Jewish holy days and customs and visit the Shaarei Zedek Synagogue.

Each summer many members of the community stop by the Museum as part of their visit “home”. Each year we look forward to a return visit by museum founder and curator emeritus, Marcia Koven and her children



– Diane, Charlotte, Sherry, Andrew and granddaughter Franny.

Over the summer the Museum hired three students through federal and provincial employment grants. Tovah Kashetsky and Kendra DeMerchant returned for another summer and Amit Marciano worked for his first summer. All three enjoyed the experience of giving tours to the visitors and were a great help in sorting, describing and organizing more than 30 boxes of archival material. Later in the fall it is hoped that we can add these boxes to the collection already housed at the New Brunswick Museum Collections Centre on Douglas Avenue. This task would not have been completed without their help.

The Museum will be open through September and October from Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. If you are in Saint John, you are encouraged to stop by. These two months are also the busiest of the year with cruise ships coming almost daily – with several double and triple ship days. We look forward to having some community members volunteer on these days to help make the visitors welcome. Having the opportunity to meet the people who make up the community here is truly a highlight for our visitors – and so rewarding of an



Photos: 1. Koven family. 2. Summer students.

experience for visitors and volunteers alike. The 4th Annual Saint John Jewish Film Festival takes place from Saturday, October 21 to Thursday, October 26. We encourage community members to become a sponsor for the festival – there are levels to suit everyone – contact the Museum for more information on how you can help with this project. Tickets for single films are only \$10/person or passes can be purchased for \$40.00 which will allow entrance to all the films shown from Sunday to Thursday. This year’s line-up offers a rich variety of films reflecting the Jewish experience. 🕒

SAINT JOHN JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

SATURDAY OCTOBER 21 Gala Opening Film and Reception
Mary Oland Theatre, New Brunswick Museum

7PM
FANNY'S JOURNEY – DIRECTOR LOLA DOILLON, FRANCE/BELGIUM 2016
Inspired by an autobiographical book by Fanny Ben Ami, Fanny's Journey tells the story of a young girl, separated from her parents in Nazi-occupied France, who attempts to lead eight children to safety in Switzerland.

TICKETS \$10 - 7 PM SHOWINGS
The following films will be shown at
Shaarei Zedek Synagogue, 91 Leinster St.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 22, 7PM
Let Yourself Go – Director Francesco Amato, Italy 2017
An upright psychologist gets more than just a physical workout when he signs up for personal training sessions with an attractive young instructor. He enlists Claudia, a conservative psychiatrist who lives next door to his estranged wife with whom he is still secretly in love, to help get him into shape.

MONDAY OCTOBER 23, 7PM
1945 – Director Ferenc Torak, Hungary 2017
On a sweltering August day in 1945, villagers prepare for the wedding of the town clerk's son. Two Orthodox Jews arrive at the village train station with mysterious boxes labeled "Fragrances." The town clerk fears the men may be heirs of the village's deported Jews and expects them to demand their illegally acquired property back, originally lost during the Second World War.

TUESDAY OCTOBER 24, 7PM
Theodore Bikel: In the Shoes of Sholom Aleichem – Director John Lollos, USA 2014
A pioneer of modern Jewish literature, Russian author Sholom Aleichem created a litany of characters and stories that have brilliantly kept Yiddish culture alive. Theodore Bikel is a consummate performer whose luminous career spans countless screen and stage roles. Bikel breathes new life into these tales of Eastern European shtetl life.

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 25, 7PM
On The Map – Director Dani Menkin, Israel 2016
After the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Israel was hungry for a collective uplifting event. "On The Map" recounts the story of how one Tel Aviv team no one thought could win toppled the four-time defending European Champions and put Israel firmly on the map. The movie delivers a film that honors Israeli heroes, mesmerizes fans of the game and captures the spirit of a nation triumphant and victorious against all odds.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 26, 7PM
Women's Balcony – Director Emil Ben Shimon, Israel 2016
An accident during a bar mitzvah celebration leads to a gender rift in a devout Orthodox community in Jerusalem. When the women's balcony in an Orthodox synagogue collapses, leaving the rabbi's wife in a coma and the rabbi in shock, the congregation falls into crisis. Charismatic young Rabbi David appears to be a savior after the accident, but slowly starts pushing his fundamentalist ways and tries to take control.

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PEI NEWS

BY ERNIE SCHLEICHKORN

In the summer on PEI, we usually convene to host an annual picnic, which allows everyone to meet the summer residents. Unfortunately this year the event was cancelled due to Force Majeure (torrential downpours).

We were fortunate to be offered the opportunity to set up a booth at Bridgefest 150. This was an event in Borden Carleton to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Confederation Bridge and Canada 150. With the help of the AJC and Winston MacGregor PEIJC president, we manned a booth at this event and did some Public Relations for the PEI Jewish Community.

We are now actively planning for the High Holiday Services coming up in one month. I personally am looking forward to this event as I have the mitzvah/honour of sounding the Shofar during the Hashanah services.

The expert who blows (or “blasts” or “sounds”) the shofar is termed the *Tokea* (lit. “Blaster”) or Ba’al Tekiah (lit. “Master of the Blast”). Being a Ba’al Tekiah (shofar sounder) is an honor.

A shofar is an ancient musical horn made of ram’s horn, used for Jewish religious purposes.. All pitch control is done by varying the player’s embouchure. The shofar is blown in synagogue services on Rosh Hashanah and at the very end of Yom Kippur, and is also blown every weekday morning in the month of Elul running up to Rosh Hashanah.

Shofars come in a variety of sizes and shapes, depending on the choice of animal and level of finish.

In our PEI Shtetl, we used to use a shofar made out of a ram’s horn. In recent years, we added a Yemenite Shofar made from the horn



of a Kudu (African Antelope).

I brought both to a Rosh Hashanah service. The Ram’s horn sounded like a transistor radio, in comparison to the full blown orchestra acoustics of the 40 inch Yemenite Shofar.

Wishing everyone a Chag Sameach for the High Holidays from the gentle island. ⑤

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JEWISH COMMUNITY HAVURA OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

BY KATHERINE SIDE AND RUTH NOEL

The Havura sponsored Israeli filmmaker, Irene Orleansky and screened her excellent film, *Bal Ej: the Hidden Jews of Ethiopia*. The film uncovers a community of the hidden Jews who live in the northern part of Ethiopia. Persecuted and deprived for centuries, they have sometimes practice or have converted to Christianity for self-preservation; but, they also continue to secretly practice a pre-Talmudic form of Judaism. Fifteen synagogues survive where the faithful maintain their beliefs and traditions. The film, which was also written up in *The Jerusalem Post*, is intended to create an awareness of these injustices and help these communities in Ethiopia to preserve their synagogues and identity. The film will also be screened at a number of film festivals in Europe in the fall.

We held our annual end of the year picnic and barbeque at the home of Nancy Bennett. It was a perfectly sunny and bug free day in June. Although many members were out of town, we had forty people who enjoyed a gourmet meal of barbequed salmon, vegetarian hotdogs and hamburgers, corn on the cob, salads and desserts. The children enjoyed playing games and we all had a good time.

Sadly, we also said good bye to Shari and Rob Ritter, who moved back to Toronto to be with their family. The Ritters were among the founding members of the Havura and in their nearly sixteen years in Newfoundland, they were active in Jewish affairs at regional and national levels. Shari was a former Havura representative on the Atlantic Jewish Council and B'nai B'rith, and was active with Democrats Abroad. Rob was a representative for B'nai B'rith. Shari was co-chair of Home-share, St. John's and Rob was Co-chair, Senior's Resource Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador and both were both active members of the NDP. We will miss them, but look forward to their visit next summer.

Our members also continue to be active in the wider St. John's and Newfoundland community.

Havura Vice-President, Dr. Steven Wolinetz spoke on behalf of the Havura, at a community vigil in Bannerman Park to denounce racism and white supremacy and its recent, tragic outcomes.

Board Member, Brenda Rishia represented the Havura at the monthly breakfast meetings of the St. John's and Area Council of Churches, which includes invited representatives of religions other than Christianity. The Council of Churches' aim is to express unity among denominations and provide for common action in community service.

Board member Nancy Bennett was a panelist at "ReVITALize-Opportunities Born out of Challenges!" at Wesley United Church, St. John's. Many of the institutions that we created, developed, paid for, volunteered at, understood – are rapidly changing or closing. The aim of this event was to engage religious groups in these changes. It was a convergence of religions in the city of St. John's in reaching out to other religious groups in a warm and welcoming way. In June, Nancy was also a panelist at "Faith in the Public Square," a conference hosted by the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador.

One notable speaker was the Rt. Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, former Governor-General of Canada.; another was Sister Elizabeth Davis, former CEO of Eastern Health and recipient of the Order of Canada. The panel discussion included a representative of the local Muslim community, Dr. Muhammad Nazir. Its aim was to look at the contribution of faith communities to the wider social fabric of our province. Speakers explored the roles and social impact of faith communities in areas such as immigration, housing, poverty and mental health. Nancy spoke about her mother's escape from Germany, during the Holocaust, where religion was twisted into hatred rather than the social justice goals of this conference and outlined the path she had chosen to rediscover her Judaism, create a Jewish family, and live a life devoted to



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Photos: 1 & 2 – Havura picnic 2017. 3. Gay Pride March: Havura marchers!

advancing social justice. Nancy also spoke about the question, "Is there a role for mysticism in one's spiritual growth?" at the St. John's Hindu Temple Association, including about modern Jewish movements with understandings of mysticism.

Members of the Jewish Community Havura participated, once again, in the St. John's Gay Pride Week and joined in both the interfaith service and the Pride parade. A local choir sang "Hineni Ma Tov" and "Mi Sheberach," two songs appropriate to the occasion. Havura member, Justin Tobin designed a poster with the Hebrew, *Gevah*, and below it, he wrote "means pride." His poster caught the attention of the local media.

We continued to hold regular bi-monthly Shabbat services, and occasional children's services, and it has been our pleasure to also welcome visitors who came from various parts of Canada, and farther. For those who saw whales and icebergs, both of which were in abundance this summer, it was an extra special treat.

Continues on page 33 >

NEWFOUNDLAND NEWS

News from the far east

BY **RABBI CHANAN CHERNITSKY**, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF NEWFOUNDLAND

Wow what a summer! Following a very warm welcome from the local community, we moved after Shavuot to a permanent location on Newfoundland drive.

For our first Lag B'aomer we had a fabulous BBQ in St. Phillip's with over 20 people in attendance! Great food and a great time was had by all.

We have seen a flurry of visitors from various countries.

Whether they were looking to borrow a siddur, requesting a hospital visit, kosher catering or Shabbat hospitality, we were happy to be able to help.

One quiet Sunday morning the phone rang. It was someone from Israel, asking that we visit her mother who had been in a car accident in Bonavista r'l, and was now at the Health Science hospital in St. John's. We dropped everything and went to visit her. She was relieved to see us.

As summer is zooming by and we are

almost in the high holiday season, we are planning a delicious Rosh Hashanah dinner preceded by the blowing of the Shofar, not to be missed! Contact us for details.

The "Read it in Hebrew" program, a course to learn to read Hebrew in just 5 sessions by the Jewish Learning Institute will begin G-d willing after the high holidays.

Our Kids in the Kitchen program will be starting G-d willing after the high holidays as well. Kids ages 3-12 are invited to come and learn how to cook/bake delicious foods in a Kosher kitchen and have fun too!

We have a wide array of ongoing classes on various topics: the weekly Torah portion, Kabbalah, Talmud and more. One on one classes are also available upon request.

In partnership with Toiber Toys LTD. we have started our "Smiles for Children"

program, through which we will be donating new toys to the Janeway Children's hospital on a regular basis.

We are also working to start a diaper bank open to everyone.

Please join us at our public grand Menorah lighting, this upcoming Chanukah!

We are open 24/7. If you are coming to visit please let us know and we will be happy to meet you. For more information you can reach us at 709-341-8770 or through e-mail at chabadofnewfoundland@gmail.com. Check out our website! www.chabadofnewfoundland.org

< *Continued from page 32*

Our Havura will host egalitarian services, and community meals for the high holy days and holidays. If you are visiting St. John's or are moving here, please join us. We welcome guests and visitors. You can contact us through our new website or by email, or telephone (www.havura.org, or info@havur.org, or 709-834-7866).

May the New Year bring you good health, happiness and may you be inscribed in The Book of Life.

NEWS AND NOTES

Mazel Tov to Justin Tobin who went on the Birthright programme, further cementing his link with his Jewish roots and learning more about Judaism and Israel. He has been invited back to be a madrich next year, and is looking forward to returning to Israel.

Mazel Tov to Sharon Roseman on her appointment as Associate Dean (Graduate Studies and Research), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Mazel Tov to Shari and Rob Ritter on their move to Toronto.

Mazel Tov to Katherine Side who was awarded a writing residency at Arteles, Hämeenkyrö, Finland. ⑤

LET'S GO CANADA!

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TRURO: THE JEWISH CENTRE OF THE MARITIMES

BY RABBI DAVID ELLIS, AJC REGIONAL CHAPLAIN

But, Rabbi, how could Truro be the Jewish centre-?!?!?

There are hardly any Jews in Truro-?!?!?

There was the Margolian's department store which served the town for 88 years. But it was closed several years ago.

I was once told by a late person whom I had no reason to question, that there were a number of Jewish stores in Truro in the 20s.

But there was a spate of smashing of windows at Jewish businesses; almost every Jew left town. I tried to verify this story through newspaper records or other sources, but none seem to exist.

And, of course, there was never a synagogue or a minyan in Truro, as there were in many small towns years ago.

But – during the month of April some remarkable events of Jewish significance happened in Truro, so that it became the Maritime Jewish Centre – with significant events which did not take place anywhere else.

THE WOMEN'S PENITENTIARY – A SEDER

The regional women's prison is in Truro, just off of the highway exit.

One of the chaplains called me – would I be able to give a talk to the women there on the Jewish High Holidays. One woman a retired teacher, the other a nun.

I said I could – but that it was approaching Passover – maybe we could do some sort of seder together.

Yes, that would be fine.

So I came up a few weeks before Passover with some matzah, some Haggadahs and a seder plate with the foods and symbols.

I honestly did not know what to expect. But what occurred defied all my predictions.

The women had been studying the book of Exodus for the last few months. So the story was clear to them.

They came around the table. I could not tell that they were prisoners; they just looked like a gathering of women.

But we started going through the Haggadah.

The bread of poverty – come and eat. How is this night different? The four sons. In every generation one must see themselves as having come out of Egypt.

For the sons I asked – the wicked son, why

is he there? Why bother with him? If he's not interested, why not just get rid of him?

And one woman gave the most marvelous answer.

Well, right now he is the wicked son – but maybe he won't be wicked if he stays at the table and listens to the story.

So paragraph after paragraph, we exchanged the most wonderful insights and questions.

We scheduled it for an hour and a half. We went two hours. There is no question that we could, as the rabbis in B'nai B'rak, have discussed the coming out of Egypt till the next morning.

As we were concluding, the young lady to my right said – Rabbi, I'm leaving here tomorrow, I have a trip early in the morning to the airport to go back to my home in Newfoundland. Could I have a copy of this book we've been reading?

Well, it wasn't mine to give away, I had borrowed them from the Beth Israel synagogue. But I said, take it anyway – I'll make it up.

So in a prison in Truro, I had a most memorable seder, with persons who understood the coming out of Egypt and would use it as their inspiration for their lives. So the chaplains have reported to me since.

In coming back to the Jewish community in Halifax, I found my Passover was frankly anti-climactic.

When is the Superstore getting the gefillte fish in? Do you know when the dairy products will be there? Can you heat your oven to the highest temperature, or do you have to blow torch your oven? Is the foil you get at Sobey's kosher for Passover? Can you use sunflower oil for Passover? When is your family coming in from the airport?

All good questions, nothing wrong with them. But – is that your only question?!? Is Passover just about ovens and kitchens? Don't you see how massive this story is, how it speaks to real life and social and world issues?

How did the gentile women prisoners in Truro get the story, and you missed it?

A WORLD WHICH IS NO MORE – YIDDISH STORIES IN TRURO

I had taught a class on the Yiddish literature tradition at the Nova Scotia Seniors

College in Halifax several years ago. They heard of the class in Truro and requested that I teach it there.

So toward the end of April I started a six week course on the basic Yiddish authors – Isaac Leib Peretz, Shalom Aleichem, Sholom Asch, Isaac Bashevis Singer

Forty-five people enrolled in the course. Most came regularly.

All the students were good, but about a dozen had outstanding talents in reading literature, as retired English teachers, librarians, professors and the like. Most everyone was familiar with the Hebrew Bible, which was, of course, the background to all Yiddish literature.

Why would Yiddish literature speak to a non-Jewish audience in Truro?

Because we now see, they are stories of great genius. They are on the level of Hans Christian Andersen's short stories, which are read all over the world, not just in his home country of Denmark.

Most of them take place in the shtetl, the small villages of Eastern Europe. Most of the class was from small towns in Colchester or Pictou County, so they would have run into similar characters and situations.

So we recreated the Jewish world of Europe. The religious quest of Peretz's characters. The whimsical humour of Shalom Aleichem, written at a time of pogroms throughout the Russian empire. The magical and demonic world of Isaac Singer. The folklore of Hershel of Ostropol and the elders of Chelm. Visual effects, from the photos of Roman Vishniak.

With the courtesy of the Shaar Shalom, thirty some Yiddish books in English were borrowed from its library. There were 70-80 reads of these books. The inter-library loan was used in Truro library, for many books not available there.

The last class we read a difficult Holocaust memoir by the Lithuanian writer Chaim Grade. Here again, many observations of points I never had thought of.

Again, as I came back to Halifax, there was a denouement.

The class started around the time of Holocaust remembrance. I was not there for it. I was up at Bass River near Truro, where I've been for the last few years for a memorial.

But it sounded the same. There was the remembrance of Nazi atrocities, the reading of names.

But – where was the remembrance of the Jewish world which we lost? What was in that world? How did people live? What did they believe in?

Oddly enough I found several prominent persons in Halifax had never heard of Isaac Bashevis Singer, the Nobel Prize winner for literature. His works tell us all about the lives which were lost – their prayers, the foods they ate, their superstitions, their study of Jewish sources.

How come no one remembers these treasures, works of world-recognized genius?

ADDENDUM

Several weeks later I was at Spring Hill prison, an hour past Truro.

I had a three hour discussion with four prisoners. But mostly with one.

This young man had read many Jewish books, albeit of a Messianic Jewish bent. But he had dozens of questions.

What is the messiah? What are the end of days? The story of the witch of En-dor in the book of Samuel – was Samuel literally resurrected? What laws are Jews supposed to observe in our time? How will the temple be rebuilt? How will they do the sacrifices?

I told the others – hey, you ask some questions too! But they said, no – we're interested in his questions.

So – Truro and its environs became a centre for Jewish inquiry and study during this last spring.

I hope – that it will be an exemplar to other venues, for a rich interest and inspiration of Jewish study, as we move toward the New Year. ☺

REPENTANCE, PRAYER AND CHARITY REMOVE THE (BAD) DECREE

BY RABBI YOSEF GOLDMAN, SGOOLAI ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, FREDERICTON

In one of the most important and moving prayers during the High Holy Days (UNETANEH TOKEF) we say that “Repentance, prayer and charity remove the (bad) decree”. I would like to explain this prayer as I understand it

Each one of these elements is written in the Torah as a positive commandment according to some of our nation's greatest Rabbis. What I mean by this is that different Rabbis over the generations have tried to put together a list of the 613 commandments, since the Talmud says (Tractate Makoth 24a): “Rabbi Samlai taught (the following) 613 commandments were given to the Children of Israel (the Jewish Nation) etc.” Since the Talmud did not give us the list, we have to figure this out. Maimonides (1135-1204) does not count repentance as a positive commandment, but many others of our codifiers do. Nachmanides writes that the source for this commandment is a verse in Parashat Nitzavim: “VESHAVTAH AD HASHEM ELOKECHA” – “and you shall return to your G-d, Hashem” (Deuteronomy 30:2).

The second element, prayer, is derived from the verse: “and you shall worship Him” (Deuteronomy 10:20), and this concept is mentioned quite a few times in the Torah. But, the Torah does not specify any of the details that could be answered by the “Wh questions”. Who has to pray? Where? When? How many times? Etc.

Charity, I think, is the most obvious. Even if it were not specified in the Torah, and it is, of course, we would have learned it from the way that the Prophets wrote about the Torah. For example, every Friday night, we sing ESHET CHAYIL – a woman of valor (Proverbs Chapter 31). In the center of the chapter, we find the expression: “she opens her hand to the poor”, and in the 17th verse: “Torat chessed al leshonah” – “the Torah of loving-kindness is on her tongue”. Most of what the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah were complaining about, was the fact that the People of Israel were not supporting the poor, and even behaving most negatively towards them.

The second Mishnah of “Ethics of our fathers” (Pirkei Avot) says the following: “on

three pillars (or principles) the world exists: on Torah, Avodah (prayer) and (acts of) loving-kindness”. These words are those of Shimon Ha'Tzadik (Simon the righteous/just). How did he earn this title?

First, I shall note that this title is extremely rare in the oral Torah, (unlike today that every Rabbi is HAGA'ON HATZADIK – the genius righteous man). The only other person that I am aware of receiving this title, was Joseph, our Fore-Father Jacob's son. According to the Talmud, even though he was very powerful, he did not use (or abuse) his authority for anything but the good for our people. There is a verse in Psalm 133, that compares the anointing oil on Aaron to the dew that falls on the Mountains of Zion. When the Jewish people do not have a king, the authority is given to the High Priest, and Shimon Ha'tzadik served in this capacity for 40 years. Unlike other High Priests, he concentrated on being extremely kind to the people, and did not remain in his ‘ivory tower’. Something I only learned a few years ago, is that the High Priest was not allowed (or able) to leave Jerusalem ever, since there was a meal offering that he had to bring to the Altar every day, twice a day. But, Simon the righteous left Jerusalem on many accounts (all listed in the Talmud), when it involved helping another person. The message is that you cannot concentrate only on Torah and prayer, but, rather, we have to combine those do with helping others, even if this means missing an opportunity to worship G-d! This is how he earned this title.

Wishing you all a very happy and good New Year, and may Hashem grant us our wishes with the merit of fulfilling other people's needs! ☺



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FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

BY RABBI RAYSH WEISS,
CONGREGATION SHAAR SHALOM, HALIFAX



The deeper we delve into our ancestor's stories, the better prepared we are to face the challenges and complexities of our current moment. This past summer, in our T is for Talmud Shaar Shalom lunchtime learning series, we focused on five essential Talmud stories and their cultural, ethical, and religious implications for today. To reflect the summer season, when we as a people mark and mourn the destruction of the Temple, we concluded the series with a long stretch of narrative which explains how the second Temple was destroyed.

The Talmud describes how the Temple was destroyed on account of an incident in which a man was hosted a banquet and asked his servant to invite his friend Kamtza. The servant accidentally invited the man's nemesis, Bar Kamtza. When Bar Kamtza appeared at the feast, the host instructs Bar Kamtza to leave. But Bar Kamtza wishes to stay and offers to pay for his own meal, then half the feast, then the whole banquet – all just to avoid the shame of being publicly humiliated. But the host remains resolute in his insistence that Bar Kamtza leaves. The rabbis present at the banquet fail to reprimand the host, and Bar Kamtza sets off to inform the local government against them.

Having heard from Bar Kamtza that the Jews are rebelling, the emperor sets up a test: He sends a calf to see whether the Jews will sacrifice it. On the way, Bar Kamtza blemishes the animal so that it will not be fit for sacrifice. The rabbis considered sacrificing the blemished offering for the sake of peace with the government. The rabbis are keenly aware of Bar Kamtza's trap and even consider violating normal ritual norms for the sake of saving lives. But in the end, a single rabbinic voice of equivocation prevails and the rest is history.

While the traditional reading of this story relates to the evils of *sinat chinam* (baseless hatred), this story is every bit as much a criticism of inertia and inaction. We learn from the Kamtza/bar Kamtza story about the obligation of rabbis and Jewish leaders to speak up against injustice. Historically, the rabbis did not constitute the reigning class or power bloc during most of the time of the Temple – some of our earlier rabbinic heroes overlapped with the Second Temple, but they did not exist as the dominant class of leaders until later. As we discussed repeatedly in our Talmud class series, in the Talmud, the rabbis often project themselves back in time, usually to portray themselves as telling the priests what to do, or otherwise fixing things. But the Bar Kamtza story imagines them back in time in order to criticise themselves.

As modern Jews, many of us imagine what we would have done had we lived during now-infamous chapters of history: “if I were alive during such-and-such crisis, I would have [resisted the Nazis, fought slavery, invited Bar Kamtza to dinner].” It is an assertion of profound self-reflection and self-admonition to say, “Actually, if I had been there, I wouldn't have done anything.” Perhaps the rabbis are simply trying to explain why they did not manage to save the Temple. As the story progresses, the heroes are definitely the rabbis. But in this moment, the rabbis do not try to portray themselves as heroes, but rather acknowledge both the importance of bystanders, and the fact that most of us do not and would not have risked being that bystander who courageously and perhaps unpopularly objects.

As I write this piece, we are witnessing an alarming resurgence of anti-Semitism and white supremacy just south of us, and even here, on a smaller scale, in Halifax, with the Canada Day hate incident. As Jews, we carry the responsibility to respond to such hatred with voices of reason and love. We must be vocal in our opposition to hate – both our integrity and future survival depend on it. 5

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

BY REBBETZIN FRIMET YAGOD,
CONGREGATION TIFERES ISRAEL, MONCTON, NB

Honey, Rosh Hashanah's symbol for a sweet, new year, conjures up images of family sitting around the Yontef table with Challah and apples dipped in that delectable liquid along with Mom/Bubby's delicious dishes of carrot tzimmes, potato kugel, roast and honey cake.

Honey is also one of the symbols of the Land of Israel and Torah. Twenty one ten times throughout the Tanach (Written Torah), Israel is described as a “land flowing with milk and honey”. Although the Torah is referring to date honey, this article is focusing on the sweetness of honey irrespective of the type. The Song of Songs (4:11) describes Torah as Devash, the Biblical word for honey. It is because of this comparison that the initiation for very young children into Cheder is to have them taste the honey that is placed on Alef Bet shaped letters. How did honey become the symbol for this? Couldn't the Torah use a different metaphor?

We know, both from ancient times and our era, that honey acts as a sweetener and medicinally. From burns to scrapes and general health, raw honey has very powerful healing qualities. Rosh Hashanah is to the time to take stock of ourselves, heal past hurts, forge better relationships with Hashem and those around us, and embark on new and better beginnings. This can only take place when we make tradition an essential part of our lives and see the sweetness and beauty that Hashem has given us. This beauty is manifested through our surroundings and the special people who make our life's journey in this world very meaningful and inspirational.

When we sit down this Rosh Hashanah to dip our Challah and apple in honey, let us reflect on the beauty of our Tradition as well as the gifts and people who Hashem has put into our lives.

On behalf of my family, let me with you all a Happy, Healthy, and Sweet New Year.

May everyone have a meaningful, uplifting and inspirational Rosh Hashanah. 5

GET A (NEW) LIFE

BY RABBI CHANAN CHERNITSKY, DIRECTOR, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF NEWFOUNDLAND

Were you ever in a situation where your phone was about to die and, somehow, a second before the battery died you managed to plug the phone into the wall?

Did you ever find yourself in a relationship where the emotional currency was completely depleted, and yet managed to salvage the relationship somehow?

That is what Rosh Hashana is all about.

Hashem desires to have a relationship with us. It is because of this relationship that He invests His divine energy into our world giving it life. At the year's end, on erev Rosh Hashana, that energy is gone. Hashem turns to us and asks "I want you, do you want me?"

The blowing of the shofar is our answer to Hashem, that yes, we do want Him. And Hashem says "If so, I have the desire to give life to the universe for another year".

It's been a long year. We've had our ups and downs. Perhaps even more downs than ups.

However, we know that even if we have nothing upon which to base a relationship, if there is willingness, we can build again. This willingness infuses the situation at hand with brand new life.

You might have complaints and you might have issues in your relationship with Hashem. Nevertheless, on Rosh Hashana, all Hashem is asking is one question: "I want you, do you want me?". In other words "Do you have the willingness to continue?" All

we have to do is answer "yes", and the energy that we need to continue another year will immediately rush into the world and into our lives.

This Rosh Hashana, whether we find ourselves in shul, or not, let's take upon ourselves to do another Mitzvah, or improve in the observance of a Mitzvah, showing our willingness to reconnect to Hashem.

* * *

The story is told that a businessman who would often travel for work, found himself spending the night in a town not too far from his own. He woke up in the middle of the night to screams of "Fire!". A terrible fire had broken out and was quickly causing a lot of damage. He saw how one of the townsmen picked up a trumpet, blew it with all his might, and suddenly a group of firemen gathered and worked together to put out the fire before more damage was done. When this businessman went back to his hometown, he met with the town council and told him about his experience. He assured them that all they needed to fight fires was to blow a trumpet and firefighters would come and extinguish the fire.

To the town's misfortune, they soon had an opportunity to try out this sophisticated system. They were certain that there was nothing to fear, since, they would blow the trumpet and the rest would be history. To their horror, after blowing the trumpet numerous

times, they realized that nothing happened. No group of men had gathered to put out the fire!

There happened to be someone there visiting from the town this idea was taken from. He cried out: "You fools! You think that the trumpet puts out the fire?! The trumpet just informs the firefighters that there is a fire!"

This is an analogy for Rosh Hashana. The special moment of the blowing of the shofar, and all the meaning that goes along with it, is directly proportional to our preparations and resolutions to improve for the future.

As our Sephardic brothers say on the night of Rosh Hashana "Let the previous year and its curses end, and the upcoming year and its blessings begin!". ☺



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THE KING IN THE FIELD

BY RABBI MENDEL FELDMAN, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF THE MARITIMES

Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year, when the fate of all creation is inscribed for the coming year. It is closely followed by Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, during which we pray that all our sins of the previous year be forgiven. These days have come to be known as the High Holidays.

Preceding the High Holidays is the month of Elul, the final month of the Hebrew calendar. During Elul, we take the time to reflect on all our deeds and misdeeds of the past year. We ask G-d to judge us favorably and grant us a good and sweet year.

The relationship between the Jewish people and G-d is often compared to that of a human king and his constituency. On an ordinary day, the king is in his palace, surrounded by high ranking ministers and guards. In order to gain an audience with the king, one must go through many levels of bureaucracy and protocol before even being allowed to step foot in the royal palace, let

alone meet with the king personally.

Occasionally, however, the king goes for a tour of the outskirts of his country, roaming the fields and villages, meeting with the common folk residing in the far out regions of his land. It is then that anyone wishing to meet with the king can simply approach him and make a request. Gone are all the formalities and red tape. All one needs to get the king's attention, is the courage to approach the king and make oneself known.

After such a wonderful encounter with the king, the simple people from the countryside follow the king back to the capital, to reap the benefits of their meeting, and to appreciate the glory of the great king.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of the Chabad philosophy, compared the month of Elul to that time when the king is in the "field." Certainly, during the rest of the year everyone has the ability to connect with G-d through prayer, study, and Mitzvot. Yet it

is during this month (leading up to Rosh Hashanah) that G-d is particularly accessible and available to listen to our prayers and requests.

We, however, must make the first move. G-d is there, but we must seize the opportunity and make ourselves known. We must remind G-d that we care, and we request that the coming year be a year of blessing and happiness. We assure G-d that the coming year, on our part, will be a better year. It will be a year of greater observance and a year of more diligence in our Jewish behavior. We then anticipate that G-d reciprocate, and grant that all our wishes come true.

At that point, we all follow G-d back to the "palace," to the High Holidays when we solemnly recognize G-d's sovereignty, and truly appreciate G-d's greatness.

On behalf of Bassie and myself I would like to wish you a happy, healthy and blissful New Year. ☺



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

BY RABBI YAKOV KERZNER, BETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, HALIFAX

One year in Halifax has allowed my wife and I to appreciate the warmth and sense of community unique to Jewish life in the Maritimes. It didn't take long before a sense of belonging became the norm. The care and concern for our welfare and the hospitality that we experienced translated into positive feelings about the Halifax Jewish community.

It is also quite apparent that Halifax, no different than other small Jewish communities, faces challenges. It is incumbent on every member of our community to work in concert to ensure that Halifax will carry with a vibrant Jewish life for generations to come. As Rosh Hashanah nears, we will turn to G-D and pray that we will be written in the Communal Book of Life. But, prayer is only one tool that we have in our reserve.

Our sages tell us that the second Temple was destroyed and the Jewish people dispersed because of *sinat chinam*, unnecessary hatred. What does that mean? Every hatred has a cause, however small. And every hatred is a negative force in the life of a community.

Why don't the sages ascribe our downfall to hatred, whatever the cause. Shakespeare addresses this very question in his play, *Romeo and Juliet*. The Montague and the Capulet families are rivals and enemies. Their hatred is the root cause of this classic tragedy. Shakespeare left out an important detail. Why did these families hate each other with such viciousness? The point is obvious. The family rivalry took on a life of its own. The root cause was probably long forgotten. All that was left was the hatred. Too often, we are held hostage by our personal, familial or communal history, caught up in an emotional rollercoaster ride that we no longer control.

The only solution is to rise above the petty divisions. This does not mean that *machloket*, disagreements should not exist. The Sages in *Ethics of our Fathers* teach us that a dispute that is for the sake of heaven will continue to exist. Legitimate disagreements are not only understandable, they are beneficial. Walk into any *beit midrash*, a study hall where Torah is being studied. The noise is constant. Passionate

arguments between study partners bear a resemblance to last year's Republican debates. But, when the session ends, the friendship is evident. Their argument was truth oriented not a battle of egos. Seekers of truth will always respect one another. The friendship will only grow.

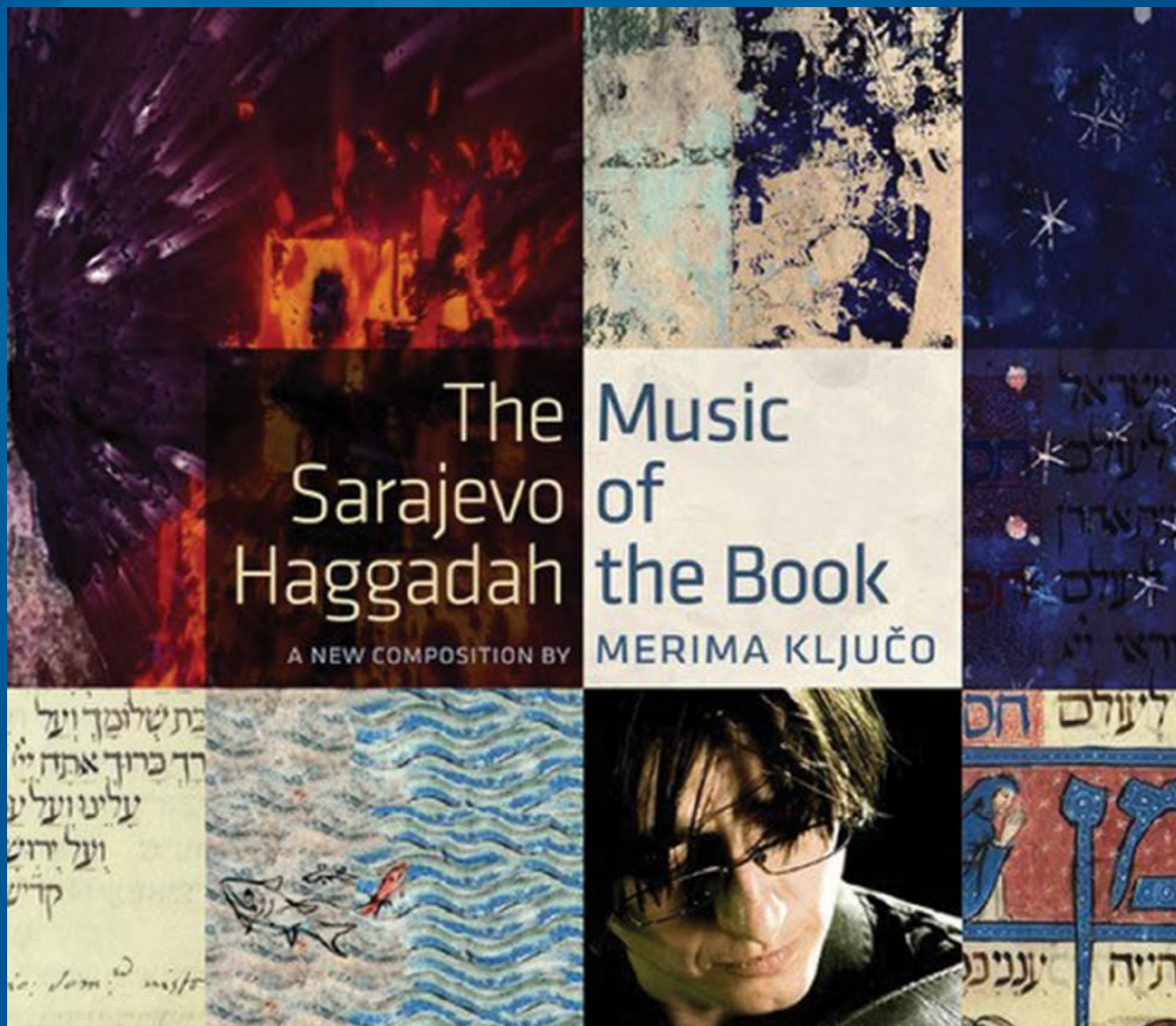
The lesson is clear. A vibrant community will have disagreements and different perspectives on many issues. No matter our differences, we can find common ground and goals. Those differences can and will be a cause for growth and diversity within the larger community. A healthy attitude will help us all focus on our common goals while agreeing to respect our differences.

Halifax is a beautiful community with passionate people. With G-D's help we will continue to survive and thrive. During the High Holidays, we need to approach G-D with prayer and a plan. Breaking down that which divides us and working together will only make the future brighter for all of us.

May we all have a fruitful new year and strive to grow together as a unified community. ☺



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