

Shalom

CONNECTING THE ATLANTIC JEWISH COMMUNITY



FALL 2019

**Premier
Stephen McNeil**
VISITS ISRAEL

STUDYING IN ISRAEL:
**A YEAR AT
TEL AVIV
UNIVERSITY**

VOLUNTEERING
IN ISRAEL:
**SAVE A CHILD'S
HEART**



SHANA TOVA 5780!



Atlantic Jewish Film Festival

AN ATLANTIC JEWISH COUNCIL PRODUCTION

THE 6TH
ANNUAL AJFF!

NOVEMBER **21-24** 2019, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA



CELEBRATE AT THE SATURDAY NIGHT FILM & RECEPTION

Saturday, November 23

My Polish Honeymoon

Starts at 7:30 pm followed by a reception

Bronfman Theatre, Bratty Hall

Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

1055 Marginal Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Kosher reception with cash bar to follow

\$18 (\$25 at The door)

Stay Tuned for all the details. **AJFF.CA**



SHALOM MAGAZINE

President

MARILYN KAUFMAN

Executive Director

NAOMI ROSENFELD

Editor

EDNA LEVINE

Design

MEGHAN RUSHTON

Advertising

EDNA LEVINE

Address all correspondence,
including advertising enquires, to:

EDITOR, C/O SHALOM

ATLANTIC JEWISH COUNCIL

5670 SPRING GARDEN ROAD SUITE 309

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA B3J 1H6

TEL. 902-422-7491 | FAX 902-425-3722

ELEVINE@THEAJC.CA

ATLANTICJEWISHCOUNCIL@THEAJC.CA

www.theajc.ca

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NOTE TO OUR READERS

Our Atlantic Jewish community is losing more and more members as the years go on. In the past, Shalom has printed stories of regional community members who have passed away. While we try to acknowledge the major contributions of many of our late friends and family members, we request that you inform Shalom of passings of which we may be unaware so we may recognize these individuals. Shalom's editorial staff reserves the right to determine the length of memorial pieces to be printed in the magazine.

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

Shalom

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Premier Stephen McNeil visits Israel.
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BOTTOM COVER PHOTO CREDITS: Abigail Mendel-Elias, Rachel Kohler, Sam Kohler, Zachary Novack, Jessica Pink



From The Desk Of **MARILYN KAUFMAN**

President of the Atlantic Jewish Council

SHALOM FRIENDS

Almost a year has passed since we embarked on our journey together, navigating our way through the Atlantic Jewish communities, attempting to meet requests for assistance with programming, and resolving community concerns. The Atlantic Jewish Council Management Committee has met monthly to discuss ongoing issues and concerns impacting our communities. We have also included input from your community representatives in our meetings. We are the oversight committee of checks and balances that tries to ensure a smooth running of AJC operations.

As the summer comes to a close, so does another successful year of Camp Kadimah. College and university students are preparing for another academic year on campuses throughout Atlantic Canada. We began expanding our reach in New Brunswick last year through Hillel, and hope to continue broadening our base. With assistance from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, we have successfully countered antisemitic incidents in three of our communities. Premier McNeil of Nova Scotia completed a successful trade mission to Israel. A number

of our communities have held community summer BBQs, which are a great way to end the summer and kick off the New Year. We continue to welcome newly arrived immigrant families and help them adapt to their new home. We also reach out to others who are currently unaffiliated but who are searching for a Jewish connection.

Perry Romberg has been instrumental in chairing the cross-country National Small Communities Forum, which has dealt with a number of common issues shared by our small communities. This has proven to be most successful when we used webinar technology. We have held two AJC sessions modelled after it. This is a way to be more inclusive of members of our communities, and at the same time allow them to take part as small groups from members' homes. It also keeps us abreast of what is happening in other jurisdictions across Canada. Perry will be with us soon for our UJA campaign, and I would encourage you all to help us meet our collective responsibility.

Thank you, Edna LeVine, for your excellent work and dedication. I know that you are

busy preparing events for the Atlantic Jewish Film Festival (AJFF). Svetlana, thank you for your diligence in ensuring that the AJC office run smoothly. Thank you to Rabbi Ellis, who has ensured that we have a presence among the greater Atlantic Canadian community. Thanks also to our summer students who have also contributed to keeping the cogs running smoothly.

I am pleased to inform you that our executive director, Naomi Rosenfeld, has agreed to stay on for another term with us, and we look forward to continuing our strong working relationship with her. Her energy is boundless.

We have planned an AJC board retreat in September to set out priorities and establish strategies as we move forward.

We have upcoming elections in Israel and Canada, along with the Brexit vote in the UK, all which will impact Canada in some way. So get out and vote in the advance polls.

We welcome Rabbi Karlin to the Shaar Shalom Synagogue and wish him well in his endeavours there.

Our condolences to those families who, sadly, have lost loved ones this past year.

Often running through my mind is the phrase, "the importance of being Jewish." Of course, many a book have been written on this topic, and how we identify with our own Jewishness is in itself very personal. We all have a part to play in the continued success of the Atlantic Jewish Council. Let us build together upon the positive foundation we have established to make us stronger as we move ahead into the future. I have worked to ensure that we have a national voice, and I hope it will help to increase Canadian awareness of Jewish Canadians east of Montreal.

As Rosh Hashanah approaches, I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the AJC Board to wish you all a healthy and happy New Year. Thank you all for your support.

Shana Tova Umetukah. 





From The Desk Of NAOMI ROSENFELD

Executive Director

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MY TIME IN ISRAEL WITH THE PREMIER OF NOVA SCOTIA

This past spring, from June 7th–June 16th, I had the honour and privilege of accompanying the honourable Stephen McNeil, Premier of Nova Scotia, on his first trip to Israel, on behalf of the Atlantic Jewish Council and the Atlantic Jewish community as a whole.

The delegation accompanying the Premier was kept to a small group of thirteen people: the Premier, Laurie Graham (the Premier's Chief of Staff), Albert Walzack & Mike McMurray (NS Dept. of Intergovernmental Affairs), Bernie Miller (NS Dept. of Business), Alice Aiken (Dal's VP of Research), Matthew Hebb (Dal's VP of Government Relations), Larry Stordy, QC (Partner at Stewart McKelvey & Chair of Dal's Board of Directors), Sarah Young (Managing Partner at National Public Relations), Jim Spatz (Chairman & CEO of Southwest Properties Ltd.), myself, and two RCMP officers.

The seven-day mission was focused predominantly on educating the delegates about Israel's journey to becoming the "Start-Up Nation," including visits to various tech-transfer offices at universities across the country, roundtables with start-up incubators and tech hubs, and meetings with entrepreneurs, investors, and government officials. However, the trip's itinerary was also infused with many cultural elements, including visits to museums/historical sites and guest speakers who joined us for meals and could speak to Israel's many facets and current issues.

While it's hard to choose from among the many impactful experiences over the course of this mission, here are some of my favourite experiences.

GUIDED TOUR OF THE OLD CITY & THE KOTEL ON SHAVUOT

Serendipitously, the first day of our mission happen to fall on Shavuot. This timing meant that business meetings were out of the question, allowing for our group's

introduction to Israel to be none other than a guided walking tour of the Old City of Jerusalem. As children dressed in white with flower wreaths in their hair made their way with their parents down the streets of the Old City to the Kotel, we listened to University of Haifa archeologist Dr. Haim Cohen describe the sites of ancient Jerusalem, illuminating his statements with words of Torah and personal anecdotes. Upon arriving at our last stop on the walking tour—the Western Wall—each of the delegates, including the Premier, was given a kippah and invited to approach the Kotel, which was packed with people immersed in Shavuot prayers.

MEETING WITH AVI HASSON, FORMER CHIEF SCIENTIST OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

While many of our meetings over our week-long mission focused on innovation and Israel's rise as the start-up nation we know today, none left quite as large of a mark on our delegation as our meeting with Avi Hasson, former Chief Scientist and Head of Israel's Innovation Authority. While looking out onto the Mediterranean Sea from the 3rd floor boardroom of the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation in Tel Aviv, Avi beautifully explained the entrepreneurial mindset of the Israeli people, the country's tolerance of and willingness to embrace failure, and the brilliant philosophy behind the Innovation Authority's funding structure.

MUSEUM OF BRIGADES

When our van dropped our delegation off at the small little museum situated on Moshav Avihail near Netanya, I think many of our delegates wondered what we were doing there. After all, having already visited ancient archeological sites such as the Old City in Jerusalem and world-renowned exhibits such as the Israel Museum, why come to a modest, understated, five-room museum on a Moshav in a Tel Aviv suburb? However, once our guide began telling the history of Jewish volunteers who enlisted in Jewish

Battalions of the British Army in World War I, we began to understand. After all, one of these battalions—which included David Ben Gurion and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi amongst its ranks—trained in Windsor, Nova Scotia. The Premier—a native of the Annapolis Valley—and the entire delegation stood there blown away as our guide read out translations of David Ben Gurion's descriptions of Fort Edward in her thick Israeli accent.

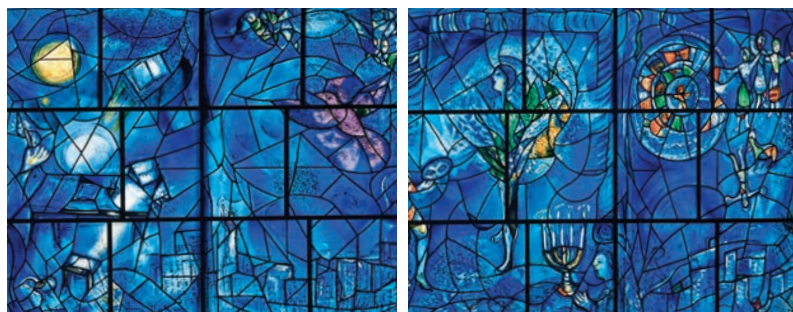
YAD VASHEM

In the planning meetings for this mission, I remember being asked whether I felt that a visit to Yad Vashem was important for this delegation. I had insisted it was. Although I am immensely proud of the extensive Holocaust education work that we do here in Atlantic Canada at the AJC, there are very few Holocaust education experiences that can compare to walking through Yad Vashem. Although the museum was crowded, you could have heard a pin drop while walking amongst our delegation. While some members of the delegation kept their eyes and ears pinned squarely on our guide through the exhibit, others wandered off when they found things on the walls that caught their attention. But in every case, the emotion was palpable. On our way out of the museum, as the Premier was signing Yad Vashem's guest registry, one delegate told me that they had not really understood the true impact of the Holocaust until seeing Yad Vashem. I think that sentiment was consistent amongst the entire group.

In the three months since returning to Nova Scotia, I have stayed in touch with many of these mission participants and I am excited to report that there are many plans in the works to move forward with Israel-related and inspired initiatives.

Shana Tova and best wishes for a happy and healthy 5780! 🌟

16th Annual Holocaust Education Week



October 30 to November 7 2019

All programs are free of charge and open to the public

for more information visit www.HolocaustEducation.ca



(L-R) The film "The Day I Met Hitler" | Filmmaker Ronen Israelski | Holocaust survivor, Pinchas Gutter's Memoir "Memories in Focus" | Pinchas Gutter | Sol Naiman, Holocaust survivor

Student Program Registration: Pre-registration and student preparation required. Please contact: Edna LeVine, AJC Director of Community Engagement: engagement@theajc.ca

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4: PINCHAS GUTTER, Holocaust survivor
Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21
See November 3 program for details

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5: PINCHAS GUTTER, Holocaust survivor
Islands Consolidated School, Digby County
See November 3 program for details

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, morning: SOL NAYMAN, Holocaust survivor
Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21
See November 7 program for details

The 16th annual Holocaust Education Week programs are made possible in part by a generous grant from The Azrieli Foundation.



For program and schedule updates visit www.HolocaustEducation.ca

OPENING: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30 | 7:00 PM

THE DAY I MET HITLER

Halifax Central Library, Paul O'Regan Hall
5440 Spring Garden Road, Halifax

Film screening with introduction and narration by the filmmaker Ronen Israelski

"The Day I Met Hitler" features newly discovered stories and images of the most infamous man in history. Racing against time, the filmmaker weaves together the personal narratives of the last remaining people who had direct contact with Hitler. The film and lecture are presented by a son of a Jewish boy who met Hitler in Berlin in 1934.

Ronen Israelski, Toronto, is a documentary filmmaker. Ronen has been involved in the media industry for over 20 years, working in Israel and Canada. This film is his personal biography as a son of a Holocaust survivor.

Presented with the support of the Halifax Central Library.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3 | 2:00 PM

PINCHAS GUTTER, HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21,
Rowe Hall | 1055 Marginal Road, Halifax

As ten-year-old Pinchas is deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to the killing site of Majdanek and then to concentration camps, he shuts himself off to the terrors surrounding him and tries his best not to be noticed, to become almost invisible. But after liberation, his photographic memory won't let his past fade away, and Pinchas struggles to deal with nightmares and flashbacks while trying to raise a family and heal his emotional scars.

Born in Lodz, Poland, on July 21, 1932, Pinchas Gutter was the only member of his immediate family to survive the Holocaust. Pinchas lived in France, Israel, Brazil, and South Africa before immigrating to Canada (Toronto) in 1985.

Copies of Pinchas Gutter's memoirs will be provided to attendees free of charge compliments of The Azrieli Foundation.

Sponsored by The Azrieli Foundation.

Presented in partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7 | 7:00 PM

SOL NAYMAN, HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21,
Bronfman Theatre | 1055 Marginal Road, Halifax

Sol Naiman was born in Stoczek Wegrowski, Poland on November 5, 1935. In September 1939, when the Nazis attacked the town, Sol and his family fled to the nearby forest. They later ended up in Bialystok, which was under Soviet control. They were then deported to a forced labour camp in Syktyvkar, deep in the Soviet Union. In 1944 they were shipped to a different labour camp in the Ukraine.

In 1948, Sol and his family were admitted to Canada, together with other Holocaust Survivors as part of the "Tailor Project" and settled in Montreal. Sol and his family moved to Toronto in 1969.

Presented in partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

EDUCATORS PROGRAM – MONDAY, OCTOBER 25
PROVINCIAL SOCIAL STUDIES CONFERENCE

Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax



From The Desk Of **EDNA LEVINE**

Director of Community Engagement

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF) is a federal Crown Corporation, and reports to the Minister of Heritage and Multiculturalism. This spring, they embarked on a cross-Canada regional consultation process to help determine priorities for their next strategic plan. The focus was on understanding what people across Canada believe the role of the CRRF may be in the future, and what directions a national organization focused on race relations and eliminating racism must consider. The session conducted in Halifax gathered representatives from the non-profit sector, government agencies and educational institutions. The open-ended discussion provided the CRRF with the opportunity to get insights on the daily struggles of Atlantic Canadians. Issues of concern in our region included the rise of right-wing extremism, the absence of sharing data and resources, difficulties with diversity and inclusion relating to under-employment, as well as the lack of representation in the CRRF from Atlantic Canada. The 2020-23 CRRF Strategic Plan will be released this winter.

Holocaust education inspires us to think critically about democracy and inclusion in present-day society. The 16th annual Holocaust Education Week (HEW) presents programs to challenge, awaken, and encourage action and conversation. This fall, HEW is hosting two programs featuring survivor testimony and welcomes to Halifax Holocaust survivors Pinchas Gutter (Toronto) and Sol Nayman (Toronto). Last fall, Robert Katz (Maine), creator of a multi-media installation at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center in Augusta, presented in Halifax, Moncton, and Fredericton to rave reviews as he mesmerized audiences with his animated storytelling. On October 6th, Katz will present his not-to-be-missed program in Saint John, NB. Holocaust Education Week opens in Halifax on October 30th with a screening of a new documentary, *The Day I*

Met Hitler, with live narration by filmmaker Ronen Israelski. Additional program details are on the opposite page, and updates are available at HolocaustEducation.ca. Holocaust Education Week programs are made possible, in part, by a generous grant from The Azrieli Foundation.

The Nova Scotia Social Studies Teachers Association Conference will be held on October 25 at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, and will once again feature a workshop on Holocaust education. This year, The Azrieli Foundation will present a program highlighting their new digital resource called Re:Collection, which is an educational tool for exploring the history of the Holocaust through first-hand accounts of survivors who immigrated to Canada after the war. Teachers will learn about the range of Canadian resources that are available to teach the Holocaust and practice strategies for bringing Re:Collection into their classrooms. Re:Collection is an engaging and effective pedagogical tool, suitable for grades 5-12, because it brings together two key considerations in Holocaust education: the integration of survivor voices into the study of the Holocaust, and the use of technology to support student learning.

In 2018, the Montreal Holocaust Museum (MHM) adapted four of their exhibits: *Hana's Suitcase*; *the Heart from Auschwitz*; *17 Letters: For the Last Time and Forever*; and *Exploring the Evidence: The Holocaust, Cambodian Genocide, and Canadian Intervention*, for the Nova Scotia curriculum. The Atlantic Jewish Council, one of the Pan-Canadian partners on the MHM nationwide inter-action project "Beyond the Walls of the Museum", will host the exhibit "And in 1948 I Came to Canada—the Holocaust in six dates" during the entire month of January at the Nova Scotia Archive in Halifax. Events and student programs (for students in grades 5-12) to support the exhibit are being organized.

Please check our website HolocaustEducation.ca for updates.

Why the Jews? screened to over 350 people at the Halifax Central library this spring, with filmmaker John Curtin in attendance. This fascinating film interviewed Jewish luminaries, including former Israeli President Shimon Peres, Alan Dershowitz, Dr. Ruth Westheimer, and Lord Jonathan Sacks, to find out the reasons for Jewish achievement as well as explanations for the darkest hours in Jewish history. Why, historically, has the world hated the Jews so much, and why have they been so successful? John Curtin, a Montreal filmmaker, is also a journalist with more than 30 years of experience in television, radio, and print, and is a recipient of the Gemini Award. Curtin engaged the audience after the film with stories on the making of the film as well as a lively Q&A session.

The 6th Atlantic Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) in Halifax opens November 21st, screening international award-winning films for four days. Returning chair Lynn Rotin and the organizing committee (Philip Belitsky, Rosalind Belitsky, Jon Goldberg, Anna Hazankin, Linda Law, Jordan Schelew, and Peggy Walt) are busy working to ensure filmgoers have an engaging line-up of films with relevant programming. The AJFF provides an opportunity to experience the Jewish world through film, presenting films that ordinarily would not be screened in Halifax. This year, to celebrate our 6th anniversary, the Saturday evening film, *My Polish Honeymoon*, will be screened at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 and include a post-film party. The complete festival schedule is available at AJFF.ca. Please plan to attend and support the growth of the AJFF!

Wishing you lots of joy, good health, and peace in the New Year. Shana Tova! 🌟

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Shana Tova

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the advocacy agent for the Jewish Federations of Canada



CIJA'S ELECTION GUIDE HIGHLIGHTS COMMUNITY'S PRIORITIES

STEVE MCDONALD, DIRECTOR, POLICY AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, AT THE CENTRE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH AFFAIRS (CIJA)

This column represents my last as a member of CIJA's professional staff. After nearly a decade of serving our community through CIJA, I will begin a new role as Vice President, Communications and Marketing, at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto in September.

I never imagined I would be capable of feeling excitement (at the new opportunity) and sadness (at leaving CIJA) all at once. While I am leaving CIJA, CIJA in so many ways is not leaving me. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work on behalf of Jewish Canadians on the issues that affect our collective future. And I am pleased to share one of the last projects that I had the honour to be a part of: CIJA's Federal Election Guide.

As the non-partisan advocacy agent of Canada's Jewish Federations, CIJA cannot be involved in partisan political activities. However, CIJA can and does mobilize Jewish Canadians to exercise their democratic rights. As a part of this effort for this fall's election, we have published a policy guide to highlight some of the issues that impact our community, with the goal of empowering grassroots activists to make an even greater impact.

This year's Election Guide (which may be found at cija.ca/election43) is a great conversation-starter for those who wish to connect with their local candidates. It addresses policy proposals across a range of topics. To name just five, this includes:

COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

Given the global rise in antisemitism, we are urging the federal government to devote resources to police hate crime units, provide financial support to help places of worship and day schools offset the costs of security personnel, and implement a national strategy on online hate and radicalization.

SUPPORTING ISRAELIS

We are advocating for MPs from all parties to stand with Israelis—our close democratic allies—when Israel is threatened by terrorism or singled out in discriminatory votes at the

UN. We are also calling on the government to expand research and innovation ties between Canada and Israel.

TAX AMENDMENTS TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

We are calling for tax credits to recognize the value of volunteering for charities and help parents offset the costs of children's overnight summer camp.

MAKE CANADA MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

We are advocating for federal investments in affordable housing for people with developmental disabilities, as well as reforms to the Disability Tax Credit to make it more inclusive and accessible.


COUNTERING TERRORISM AND THE IRANIAN THREAT

We are calling for a parliamentary inquiry into Canadians and global terrorism, with a focus on providing support for Canadian victims of overseas terrorism and holding accountable Canadians who have travelled overseas to join terror groups. We are also urging the government to ensure diplomatic ties with the Iranian regime are not renewed until there are concrete improvements in Iran's behaviour.

These are just a few examples of our multi-faceted policy agenda. I encourage you to visit cija.ca/election43 to read the guide. My hope is that it will inspire you to get involved in the election and engage your local candidates.

As I close this column, I thank you if you have read (and I hope enjoyed!) my columns in this publication over the years. As someone who has met with and supported grassroots activists from Halifax to Victoria—and

so many places in between—I have seen firsthand that ours is an extraordinary community.

I can also testify to the unparalleled work our team at CIJA performs—tirelessly and often with little fanfare—on behalf of our community and our cause. Because of their diligent and strategic efforts, our community has a strong voice where it matters. I invite you to be a part of that voice by becoming actively involved with CIJA. 

SEND A DONATION & BEAUTIFUL TRIBUTE CARD TO CELEBRATE A JEWISH HOLIDAY, BIRTHDAY, OR OTHER MILESTONE!



Contact Naomi Rosenfeld,
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The Beit KKL-JNF Canada House in Sderot, the city closest to the Gaza border, will serve as an after-school education, empowerment, and enrichment center for high school students from Sderot and its surroundings. These students will be provided with the necessary tools and skills for academic success in the fields of science, technology, math and engineering. Partner with us this High Holiday season to help build the Beit KKL-JNF Canada House in Sderot, as we aim to close the educational achievement gap, foster academic success and empower youth in the periphery.

MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION AT JNFATLANTIC.CA ATLANTIC@JNF.CA 902.444.4563

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It is in the Negev that the creativity and pioneer vigor of Israel shall be tested."

— David Ben-Gurion

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of the Negev

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You can support BGU by contributing to scholarships; enabling students to pursue their education is the best investment we can make to build the Negev and Israel. Scholarship recipients perform volunteer work in Beer-sheva, so supporting these students is a double mitzvah.

May the coming year bring health, happiness and mazal to you and your family!

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CAMPUS NEWS

BY **LINDSAY KERR**, DIRECTOR OF HILLEL AND NEXT GENERATION ENGAGEMENT

This summer I was, once again, lucky enough to have the opportunity to lead a Jewish teen tour for BBYO Passport—my seventh over the last five years.

It was a service-learning trip once again, but this time in Dominican Republic. I had been there before, seven years ago, with my family on a resort vacation. This is something that made me really excited about my teen tour, because I was going to see the country in a very different way from how I did the first time I was there.

In July, 31 teens, three other staff, and I traveled to Santiago, Dominican Republic, where we met our program facilitators from The Dream Project and travelled by bus up to Cabarete, which would be our home base for the majority of our time there. Before diving into our main project, we learned about The Dream Project, our partner organization. They work with many communities along the north coast of Dominican Republic in many different areas including literacy, early childhood education, women's health education, adult education, and more.

The sub-program we worked on was an educational day camp for kids in Cangrejo, Dominican Republic. The camp is divided by age, with the older kids attending in the morning and the younger kids attending in the afternoon. The camps are then divided into smaller colour groups by age which do the different activities together. This summer's camp theme was "emojis," so all classroom decorations and activities had to do with that. On the first day, our teens picked a classroom to join which then became their assigned groups for the rest of the project. Each day (Monday-Thursday) groups did reading, writing, drama, and sports. Friday is a special competition day at camp. The kids and teachers participated in different relay races and competitions with their colour all morning. There were classic relay race competitions like egg toss, and hula hooping, and a one we'd never seen before where 10 people in a line all had balloons in between each person and had to do two laps of the basketball court. Our time at camp flew by

and by the end it was clear that everyone, both our teens and the local teens, had a really meaningful experience. At the beginning, our teens had Spanish levels ranging from none to semi-fluent, so it was interesting to see them practising and gaining confidence through their time with the kids who had varying levels of English.

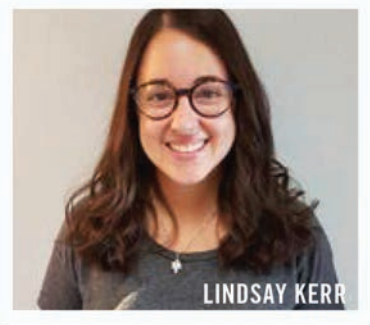
Another element of our trip was learning about the history of the Jewish people in Dominican Republic, which is quite interesting but not that well known. One afternoon, we went to the Jewish History Museum in Sosua, where we learned that DR was one of the one of the few countries to accept Jewish people during and after WWII. At the Evian Conference, DR offered 100,000 visas for Jewish refugees but surprisingly only around 5,000 were actually given out. Most of the Jewish immigrants in DR settled in Sosua, on the north coast, while others settled in Santo Domingo, the country's capital, where most of the Jewish people are today. To help the Jewish people feel more settled and supported, each family was given a large plot of land, 10 cows, a mule, and a horse as well as loans and access to education. As time went on, Jewish people settled comfortably in Sosua and eventually opened a Jewish day school. It is no longer a Jewish day school but it is still open, now as a highly regarded private school. The Jewish cemetery, which is on the same grounds as the school, needed a little beautification so during our visit we did a mini project there sweeping off the headstones and giving them a fresh coat of paint.

Most of the Jewish people living on the north coast are transplants who work in the travel industry, so since summer is low season, many leave the country during this time. We were lucky enough that one lady was still in town, so she joined us for our first Shabbat when we were in the Sosua Synagogue, which operates fully thanks to volunteer service

leaders. The teens had an opportunity to ask her questions about living Jewishly in such a small community. Our second Shabbat was with Chabad in Santo Domingo, where we got to meet some of the Jewish community and see how they celebrate Shabbat as well.

I am so grateful that I've been able to have these opportunities over the last five summers and even more grateful that my year-round job allows me to continue with them. I went in excited to see a different and, of course, much more realistic side of Dominican Republic and my experience did not disappoint. Many teens expressed the same sentiment about seeing a different but more real side of a country that we so often associate with resort vacations.

If you would like to know more about my summer or have any questions, I would love to tell you! Please don't hesitate to send me an email. [✉](#)



PHOTOS: (1) Group at the Montesorri school
(2) Staff team

CAMP KADIMAH 2019—HERE AND NOW

It was just a few short weeks ago that the last bus of campers pulled out of the gates of Camp Kadimah, carrying happy, fulfilled, and teary-eyed campers back to their homes in the city. Camp Kadimah 2019 was truly a “thing of great beauty that we loved with all our might.” The summer was filled with meaningful moments; we built strong communities in each section and throughout the camp, deepened our campers’ connection to Judaism and connection to Israel, and of course we had loads of fun!

Only someone who has spent time at Camp Kadimah can understand the bittersweet feeling one has when camp concludes: a feeling of gratitude, fulfillment and appreciation mixed with the longing for our friends and our community that will take place over the next 10 months until we are together again. The “post-camp blues” is something that campers and staff alike experience in the days and weeks following camp. That only speaks to the power of the Kadimah experience and the impact it has on the almost 500 people who enjoyed its beautiful environment this summer.

The summer of 2019 was filled with so many highlights and moments of meaning: The junior camp, Machar, C.I.T. and staff plays, Maccabia (Mazal Tov to the Red Team!), house leagues, six glorious Shabbatot, Oneg Shabbatot that blew the roof off of the R.C.C., our participation as the first North American Jewish Camp in the Shira B’Tzibur program (check out the video on CampInTouch), the C.I.T. trip, Machar Day, the Richard Siegel Memorial Hockey Marathon, our fabulous mishlachat) of Israeli campers and staff, Visitors’ Day, our closing banquet and so much more!



These are not simply a collection of memories from a fabulous summer but rather each of these experiences contribute to our growth as individuals and as a community. Our collective memory helps define who we are as a people and will serve as a foundation on which we will continue to build more memories next summer and beyond.

We would like to send a special thank you to all of our superstar campers and their families, to our outstanding staff and our dedicated volunteer Camp Committee for helping to ensure the summer of 2019 was nothing short of phenomenal. This was truly a communal effort.

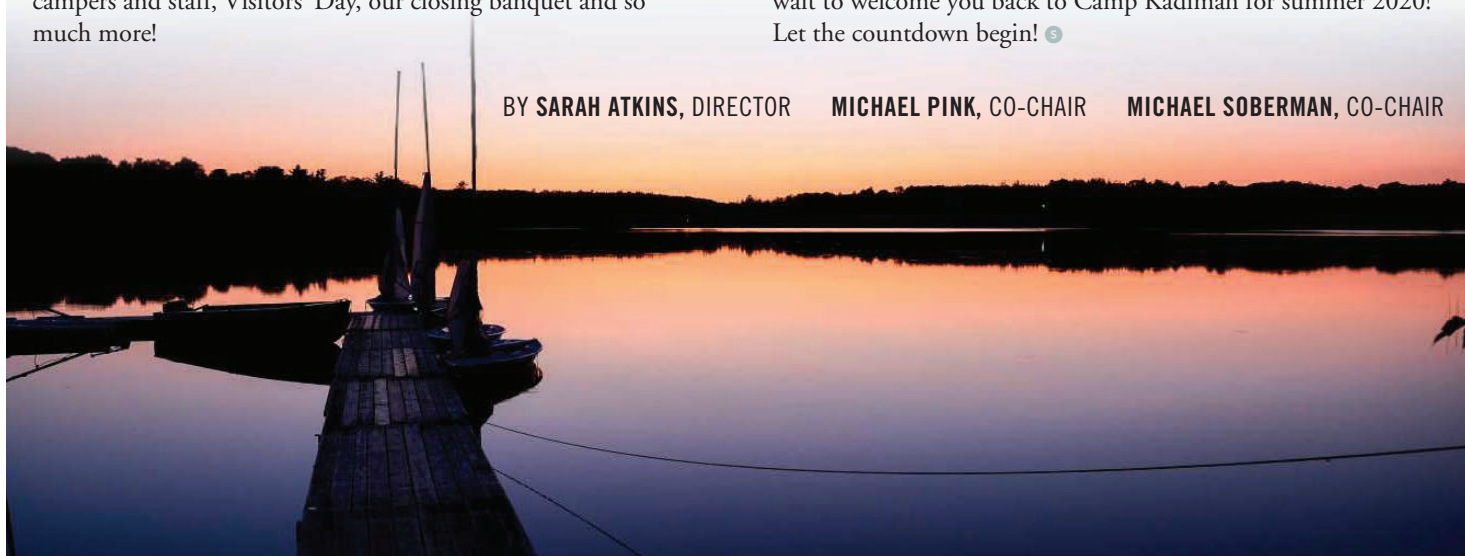
Our camp is a thing of great beauty; let’s continue to love it with all our might!

Wishing everyone a meaningful year of growth and we cannot wait to welcome you back to Camp Kadimah for summer 2020! Let the countdown begin! 🕒

BY SARAH ATKINS, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL PINK, CO-CHAIR

MICHAEL SOBERMAN, CO-CHAIR





BURNSIDE

LAW GROUP

Kelly Patrick Shannon, B. Comm. L.L.B

Joseph JeBailey, B.A., LL.B

Derek B. Brett, B.A., J.D.

109 Ilsley Avenue, Unit 9, Dartmouth, NS B3B 1S8

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BILUIM ISRAEL A UNIQUE

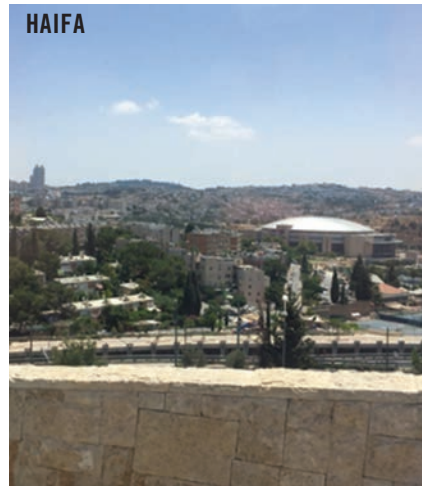
BY SAM KOHLER

This summer I had the opportunity to participate in Biluim Israel. Biluim Israel is a guided tour across Israel designed for Jewish teenagers to learn about Israel and its people and cultures. We participated in many group sessions focusing on leadership training and character building in line with Jewish values. In Israel we started in the North and made our way to the South over a four week period. Along the way, we visited various communities, sites, and groups of people, and learned about all the different cultures and histories in Israel. Many of the sites and communities we visited were very significant in Jewish history, which connected us to the generations of our people who came before us. We learned about the background of events that happened, what we did as a people in those situations, our history, and all about present day Israel.

Nearing the end of our trip, we visited an organization called “Brothers For Life,” an organization created and run by injured soldiers for supporting soldiers recently injured during combat. What I liked about this was that everyone there was very supportive of each other, and was able to understand and relate to the experiences they had gone through. With each other’s help and support, they were able to look at a brighter future for themselves regarding friends, family, and work.

When we were in Jerusalem we had the opportunity to visit the Western Wall. We were all given pens and paper to write a note to put in the Western Wall. At first I didn’t know if I wanted to put a note in the Wall. I was rather overwhelmed being at such an important place but I eventually decided to write something on the paper. I took a while trying to find the right words to put on the note, and when I finished writing it there was barely any time left to put it in the Wall. I was able to get the time I needed while everyone else was taking a group photo. I missed the photo, but I was able to get my note into the Western Wall, and that felt very important.

Biluim Israel was such a great experience. I think that every Jewish person should visit Israel at least once. Biluim gave me the opportunity to grow and gave me a better appreciation and understanding of my Jewish identity. 



HAIFA



WESTERN WALL



EILAT

“One of the most amazing parts of the trip was that everyone around me was Jewish. Coming from Atlantic Canada, where the Jewish population is small, it was amazing knowing I was on a bus with 50 other Jewish 17-year-olds, and on top of that the other bus had another 50 Jewish 17-year-olds, and what’s more, the people walking on the streets were also Jewish! Sometimes it was hard to grasp. I’ll always remember this special feeling.”—Rachel

SUMMER EXPERIENCE

BY ABIGAIL MENDEL-ELIAS

This summer I participated in Biluim Israel, a trip where all CYJ campers come together for an intense four-and-a-half-week trip across Israel. We did everything possible, from hiking to snorkelling to sand surfing. We also engaged in many different conversations regarding pluralism and coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis as well as talking to Woman of the Wall and IGY (Israeli Gay Youth). Starting in the North and ending in the South, we explored every aspect of Israel and it was a very exciting, fun and educational summer. Thanks again for helping to send me on this trip! 🇮🇱



BY RACHEL KOHLER

Hi, my name is Rachel Kohler and this summer I was very fortunate to attend Biluim Israel. I've got to say, there is no better way to go to Israel for the first time than to go on Biluim Israel. It was an amazing and meaningful experience, and being with old and new friends made it even better. During our travel across Israel, we went to famous places and religious sites, ate some very delicious Israeli food, met with minority religious communities in Israel, hiked, went to shuks, furthered our education of Israel, volunteered, and immersed ourselves in Israeli culture. Overall, we had a lot of fun.

I enjoyed visiting the Kotel, Masada, and Mount Tzefahot the most. It was special to be at the Kotel since I had always heard about it growing up. It was interesting seeing women from around the world joining at the Kotel. I looked at the sidurs in their hands printed in many languages and realized how large the Diaspora is. Masada and Mt. Tzefahot were the most rewarding hikes we did. We watched the sunrise at both locations, and they were so beautiful they looked like paintings. The best part about the early morning hikes is that we were experiencing them with our friends.

Speaking of friends, I got to make many great friends during the trip. Most of the campers already know each other from Biluim Canada, but they welcomed the Kadimah campers with open arms. We created special bonds with new friends and strengthened our bonds with old friends. Being with friends made my time in Israel the best it could ever be. It was special to experience Israel along with friends who were also there for the first time, as well as friends who've been there before.

I do have a few other favourite parts of the trip. One of them was Pizur lunch. For Pizur, we each got an allowance and went with our friends where ever we want to eat. I had falafel and shwarma for the first time, and also ate a lot of ice cream during Pizur. Another favourite part of my trip was rooming with other girls. A specific time



I remember was when all the girls in my bus were put in a guest house together. I have many memories from those two nights together, we had a lot of fun.

One of the most amazing parts of the trip was that everyone around me was Jewish. Coming from Atlantic Canada, where the Jewish population is small, it was amazing knowing I was on a bus with 50 other Jewish 17-year-olds, and on top of that the other bus had another 50 Jewish 17-year-olds, and what's more, the people walking on the streets were also Jewish! Sometimes it was hard to grasp. I'll always remember this special feeling.

I'm grateful for Biluim Israel. I made many new friends, experienced many things that I've wanted to do since I was little, learned a lot about Israel, and grew as a person. Thank you to everyone who made Biluim Israel happen. It was a trip that I will remember for my life. 🇮🇱

ASPER FOUNDATION

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HOLOCAUST STUDIES PROGRAM

Editor's note: Last spring, five Halifax students completed the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program, culminating in a trip to The Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. The Asper Foundation created the program using a curriculum specifically designed by Holocaust and human rights educators. In our community we organize this program in alternate years for students in grades 8-10.

BY NOAH DRUCKER

This year I had the opportunity to be part of a program run by the Asper Foundation, which gave me perspective on just how hard some people have it. While going to Winnipeg and meeting the kids in the other groups was the most fun part, I think the part of the program that was most impactful were the education sessions that we attended every Sunday before the trip.

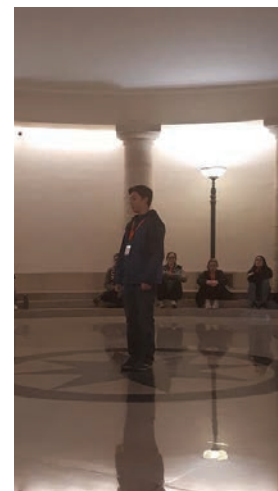
Every Sunday our group would meet together and discuss different events that had happened to the Jewish community. We would then think about and discuss the circumstances in the world that had allowed these things to happen.

For example, one of the Sundays we learned about the St. Louis ship. We learned about how the ship had left Germany with visas to Cuba but was turned away because of pressure from the Nazis. This meant the ship had to embark on an almost year-long excursion around the Americas, visiting almost every country along the Atlantic coast, including Canada. Canada not only denied them access but sent out two Navy ships to keep the St. Louis from entering Canada's waters. They sent out two fully armored defense vessels to keep away one small passenger ship with a few poor sad Jewish refugees on board.

The circumstances that allowed this to happen were because Canada had an almost Trump-esque view on immigration and border security and refugees. At the time Prime Minister Mackenzie King's government were devising a plan to inhabit Canada's Western prairies. They were advertising to ethnic groups they thought would be suitable for farming, this included Americans, Eastern Europeans, and Russians. The groups that were not accepted, or considered "not suitable," were black people, Hispanic people, Oriental people, Indian people and of course the Jews. They were viewed as city folks and the government's belief was that in a generation they would move away from farms and into the city, therefore "infecting our economy".

Once we arrived in Winnipeg, we had the opportunity to hear some of the survivors of the Holocaust speak. One survivor was Isaac Godfried. His story significantly impacted me. Having learned about what the Jewish people have gone through helped me understand his story better. At the time of the Holocaust starting Isaac was only 14, in grade 7, which is the same age I am now. It's scary to think that he was only 14 when it started. He said that his biggest regret in life is that he never got to finish school. It's interesting that his biggest regret is not being able to finish school because if you asked most kids in school if they wanted to be in school most of them would probably answer no.

I'm very grateful that I had the opportunity to go on the trip and be a part of this program. I truly hope that more kids from Halifax will get the same opportunity I did because it was such an amazing experience. 5



BY SARAH GOLDBERG

Listening to Isaac Gotfried reminded me how thankful I am. Sometimes, I forget that it wasn't always easy to be a Jewish family in the past. It makes me both sad and upset to think that so many people had huge hatred towards Jews without a reason. It's not fair that his country turned against him without ever meeting him. Isaac has lived through the Holocaust. He has proven that happiness is achievable even when you have been through terrible times. I think it's important that we live our best, and not get caught up on anything minor, because in the big picture we are so lucky to be right where we are. Being a Jew is special because we have a family with each other. Our community overcame something terrible, but we continue to stick together and support each other. I know, I will never have to experience discrimination like before, and the thought of anyone being treated unjustly disgusts me. Everyone is continually learning how to be a better person, and the Holocaust seems unfathomable, but it's important not to forget the horrid past they have gone through in order to be where we are now. I am surrounded with friends and family who I love. I know, I will not take that, or anything else for granite anytime soon! 🇮🇱

BY REBECCA SCHELEW

When I was given the opportunity to participate in this program, I was excited to be able to learn about the Holocaust and human rights while being emerged in Jewish culture. The whole experience was very educational and amazing. Even though there are many "best parts" of my experience, I'd have to say my favourite was going to the Museum of Human Rights. The day we went there was the day I learned the most. The museum had so much information about many things I know about from past experiences, but also many things I'd never heard about. As my friends and I walked around the museum we were all very surprised at how many incidents there were where human rights were violated, that we didn't know about. What stood out to me the most was learning about all the human rights violations in North Korea. I'm very glad I got to participate in this program and attend this trip. I learned so much and I will never forget all the fun and educational memories from this amazing program. 🇮🇱

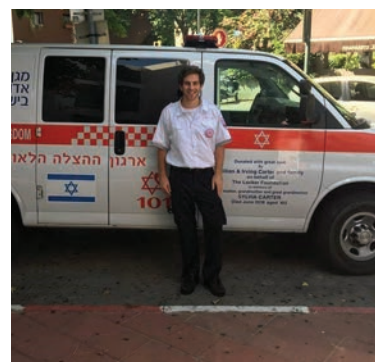


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A YEAR AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY



BY ZACHARY NOVACK, B.SC. (HONS) M.P.H.

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since I began my studies at Tel Aviv University (TAU). I was accepted into the master's degree of Public Health (MPH) in Disaster and Emergency Management. This degree program is housed in the Sackler Faculty of Medicine and is part of their international programs. My degree program attracted students from around the world including Mexico, Germany, France, Brazil, and the United States. I was the sole representative from Canada and as such was frequently called upon to present the Canadian and sometimes even the western perspective. Since the program was only a year in duration, the workload was extremely intense. Much of my time was spent reading, researching, writing, and working in groups. The faculty were all at the top of their field. Not only did they have impressive academic qualifications, but they also had practical, on the ground experience. This combination greatly improved the learning experience and made the lectures and assigned tasks both practical and enjoyable. Throughout the year, I was lucky enough to participate in hands-on activities including executive simulations, tabletop exercises, and search and rescue training. The diversity of the student body introduced a level of cosmopolitanism that would be difficult to replicate elsewhere. The university itself is a beautiful ultra-modern campus located on the northern edge of the city and has a deservedly international reputation for excellence.

If you think that I spent all of my time in the library studying, then that would be wrong. I used my free time to experience Tel Aviv and Israel. While I have visited Israel on many prior occasions, usually as part of an organized trip, I have never actually lived in Israel and there is a huge qualitative difference. I not only lived as an Israeli, I began to think and see the world through the eyes of the locals. While there are certainly serious things to think about in terms of the regional geopolitics, I learned the average Israeli goes on with living their life.



I also took part in all that a modern city had to offer in terms of clubs, restaurants, culture, recreation and shopping. Tel Aviv is a sophisticated modern city that bulges with activity, diversity and excitement. I also learned that Israelis are remarkably resilient and only worry about important things. Living in Israel helped to put many things into perspective. Perhaps the biggest benefit of studying and living in Israel is that you never have to explain who you are, what you believe in and what you can and cannot do. Gone were the days of rescheduling exams and tests scheduled for a holiday or Shabbat or explaining why you cannot eat certain foods.

I also used my time in Tel Aviv to volunteer. I simply wanted to give something back to the community and at the same time gain some valuable experience and learn more about the culture. I was an active member of the student senate, volunteered throughout the national elections, and represented TAU students at a nature reserve cleanup. Throughout the year, I trained to accompany Magen David Adom first responders in the ambulance. Needless to say, from these experiences I saw Tel Aviv from yet from another perspective. 5

SAVE A CHILD'S HEART

BY JESSICA PINK

I recently had the opportunity to travel to Israel to volunteer at Save a Child's Heart (SACH). But before I describe my experience, let's rewind back to last fall when I became great friends with an individual through Guelph Hillel. Before I even got to know her very well, she couldn't stop talking about SACH. She told me all about this incredible organization, and with little convincing, we were booking our flights to Israel.

Save a Child's Heart is a non-profit organization that brings kids from all over the world for lifesaving cardiac surgery, as where they live, the surgery they need is not available. SACH also brings in doctors from these underdeveloped countries to train them at the Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, so they can then go home and perform these surgeries, reaching even more kids. SACH will take in any child regardless of race, religion, gender, or financial status. 50% of their patients are coming from neighbouring countries in the Middle East, 40% from Africa, and the rest from elsewhere. A child is a child and if SACH can save them, they will. Without SACH, these kids would have no hope for life.

My role while volunteering in Israel was to stay at the home where the kids and their mothers stay while they are either pre- or post-surgery. My job was essentially being a camp counsellor, allowing the kids to just be kids and to give the mothers a break. If the child is over five years old, they come without a caregiver in order to bring more kids for surgery. It is obviously very difficult for a child to leave home by themselves which is why it is so important to make sure the home is such a welcoming environment. I played with the kids, did arts and crafts, took lots of pictures and videos, and sang lots of songs. There was never a dull moment during the day!

I thought I knew what to expect when I arrived at SACH. I would play with kids to keep their minds off of their health conditions and that they were far away from home. Everything changed when I first walked through the door of the SACH home. In Canada, we grow up knowing how privileged we are to have healthcare. In our lives, we all experience sickness, whether it is us, a friend, a parent, or grandparent. It is hard to put my experience into words, but when you walk into a room full of children (newborn babies to kids up to 18), and know that not one of them would survive if they were not being treated in Israel, it sure changes your perspective and gives you a loud wake-up call.

In the two weeks I spent in Israel I have never laughed so much in my life. Only a few of the children and mothers spoke bits of English, which meant we had to communicate in other ways. At first, this was challenging. I didn't know any of the kids or moms, and they didn't know me. But within a day, that quickly changed. I quickly realized that all kids speak "kid," which means that as long as you are there to smile, giggle, give lots of hugs and play with them, you are in for a lot of fun! With the adults, it was definitely more challenging, but with



time and patience we figured it out. SACH proved that non-verbal communication tells an entire story. Some individuals did not speak a word of English, and I feel that I know them so well and had so many conversations with them. One of my favourite memories is that every night when our shift was over at dinnertime, we would head out for a bit and each night the kids would say "You come back?" before we left. We reassured them we would only be gone for a little while, and when we returned, the kids would come running to the door waiting for hugs.

Although I was only at the house for two weeks, watching the children's growth was incredible to see. In two weeks, many post-surgery kids grew stronger every day, gaining enough energy to even just run around outside. I got to see the 5000th Save a Child's Heart patient achieve which is a monumental SACH achievement. I got to meet people from Uganda, Kenya, Zanzibar, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Ghana and Kurdistan—people from countries I probably would never have met otherwise. I tasted cultural foods and learned a few words and songs in Swahili. I got to learn about them, and they got to learn about me. The welcoming warmth that circled the home is something you don't see very often.

SACH is an unbelievable organization for so many reasons, but what I find so special is its diversity. Although I was in Israel, it didn't feel like I was just in the Jewish State. I got to experience little pockets from all over the world. Most of the patients were from Africa but I worked with volunteers from Israel, London, Australia, Canada, and the US, truly making SACH a global project.

Save a Child's Heart is yet another reminder to me of how special Israel is and the exemplary leadership Israel is continuously demonstrating to the world. I feel very privileged to have been able to travel to Israel to spend two weeks at SACH, but coming home I know more than ever the importance of Tikun Olam and how privileged I am to come home to family, a community, healthcare, and resources which ensure I can live a long, happy, life. 5

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE AJC ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

BUILDING JEWISH COMMUNITY



WE SPONSORED 10 home-hosted **SHABBAT DINNERS** for groups of young families

300+ **PEOPLE** attended **AJC COMMUNITY BBQS** across the region



200+ **PEOPLE** attended our **BIENNIAL COMMUNITY SHABBAT DINNER** and 3rd annual **PRIDE SHABBAT CELEBRATIONS**

We coordinated the assembly and delivery of **50 MISHLOACH MANOT GIFT BAGS** to Jewish seniors in our community



We helped organize **4** young adult **SHABBAT EVENTS**

200+ **PEOPLE** celebrated at our **ANNUAL COMMUNITY HANNUKAH PARTY**

83% of **SURVEY RESPONDENTS REPORTED CONNECTING SOCIALLY** with other Jewish families during **PJ LIBRARY PROGRAMING** this year



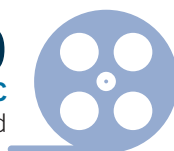
ENHANCING COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND OUTREACH



WE HELPED RUN 6 **JOLT TEEN VOLUNTEER** programs

WE COORDINATED the delivery of **28 MISHLOACH MANOT BAGS** to campus leaders and administration by Jewish university students

WE SCREENED 10 **JEWISH FILMS** under the **ATLANTIC JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL** brand



350+ **PEOPLE** attended our screening of the film **"WHY THE JEWS?"** with filmmaker John Curtin



21 **BUSINESS PEOPLE** from around Halifax attended our lunch to promote the new **CANADA ISRAEL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

WE SPONSORED a journalism student from King's College to research, write, and present the **UNTOLD STORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY'S ROLE** in the aftermath of **SWISSAIR 111**



50+ **POLITICIANS AND DIGNITARIES** attended an **AJC PROGRAM** this year including MPs, MLAs, City Councillors, the Premier of NS, the Halifax Chief of Police, University Presidents, the Lieutenant Governor of NS, and more

300+ people attended our **CELEBRATION** of the **100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JEWISH LEGION TRAINING** at Fort Edward in Windsor, NS

THANK YOU TO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21



Halifax Public Libraries



HALIFAX



PHOTOPOLIS
THE HALIFAX FESTIVAL OF PHOTOGRAPHY

SEPTEMBER 2018–AUGUST 2019



SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, SUBSIDIES AND EMERGENCY FUNDING



WE PROVIDED \$10,000
to subsidize Atlantic Canadian
YOUTH EXPERIENCES IN ISRAEL

WE ISSUED \$52,500
of **TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS** to
residents of our region to attend
post-secondary institutions in Halifax



WE GAVE OUT \$6,000 to help
LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN NEED

WE DONATED \$13,150
TO SUPPORT JDC'S WORK
helping **VULNERABLE JEWISH**
COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD



WE HELPED 4
HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS
in need receive home care

WE GAVE OVER \$133,000
to support **CAMP KADIMAH**



100+ **WE PREPARED OVER**
hot dinners and snacks
for customers of **OUT OF THE COLD**



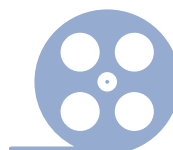
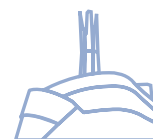
WE SERVED 30+
LUNCHES to **SENIORS** at **SPENCER'S**
HOUSE on Christmas Day

EDUCATING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS



WE SUPPORTED 7 YOM HASHOAH
CEREMONIES in Halifax, Sydney, PEI, St.
John's, Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John

5 TEENS PARTICIPATED in the
AJC cohort of the **2019 ASPER**
HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN
RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM



WE SCREENED THE HOLOCAUST
DOCUMENTARY "WHO WILL WRITE
OUR HISTORY?" to sold out crowds in
Halifax, Fredericton, and Saint John for
International Holocaust Remembrance
Day (January 27th)

OVER 400
GENERAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS and
600 STUDENTS came out to
HEAR TESTIMONY FROM HOLOCAUST
SURVIVOR MAXWELL SMART at Pier 21



WE TRAINED 100+ PUBLIC EDUCATORS
in **HOLOCAUST EDUCATION**
STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES
at the NS provincial social studies
department conference



THANK YOU TO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS



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SAINT MARY'S
UNIVERSITY SINCE 1802
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here with friends



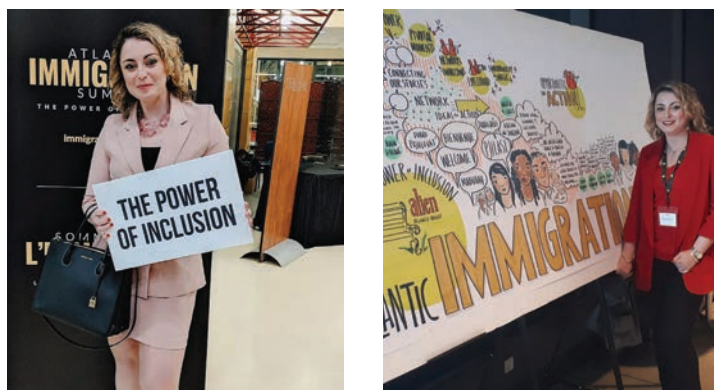
Full copy available online at: www.theajc.ca or email Naomi Rosenfeld: executivedirector@theajc.ca to receive your free hardcopy.

CAMP KADIMAH



Summer visitors to Camp Kadimah included the Hon. Andy Fillmore, Halifax MP, pictured with Michael Pink, and Sarah Atkins, camp director, as well as AJC staffers Svetlana Ratchinski, Naomi Rosenfeld, and Lindsay Kerr. They all enjoyed a boat ride on the beautiful Lake William, attended camp events and ate in the Chadar with enthusiastic campers!

THE POWER OF INCLUSION



The 2019 Atlantic Immigration Summit, Halifax. Roundtable leader, Yulia Sultan-Shakh, Customer Experience Lead at Scotiabank, facilitated a round-table conversation to focus on proposing and developing actionable initiatives leading to practical and informed solutions for immigrant attraction and integration.

THE 3RD ANNUAL AJC PRIDE SHABBAT DINNER



Israeli buffet style, was held at Halifax City Hall. This year, the event was co-hosted with two of our national partners—the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee (CJPAC)—as a Halifax Pride Community Registered Event, with the support of Mayor Savage's Office.



HALIFAX PRIDE PARADE



The Halifax Jewish community joined together for the 4th year to march in the Halifax Pride Parade.

WHY THE JEWS?



Why The Jews? screened to a full house at the Halifax Central Library. Montreal filmmaker John Curtain answered questions and engaged the audience in a lively conversation after the film.

MONCTON NEWS

Celebrating a Wonderful Teacher

BY HANNAH DAVIDSON

My husband has been after me for several years to write an article celebrating my colleague friend, Michael (Mike) Flinn, and the thoughtful way he teaches his students at Riverview High School about the Holocaust. Now that it's summer, our sons are at Kadimah, and I'm on vacation, I've finally done it. To be fair, Mike has pretty much written the article for me, since he was kind enough to provide me with written answers to my questions.

Mike is a fabulous teacher. He has a contagious passion for history and a great sense of humour. Whereas most high school teachers prefer to teach college preparatory students, Mike is happy to teach students at all levels; he welcomes the challenge!

I've been in Mike's class to observe his unique approach and his students' work on several occasions. I never know exactly what to expect. For example, for his trench warfare lesson, he built two mock trenches with desks, strung Christmas lights across them, and even had rubber rats in the trenches. When he sounded an alarm, the students threw paper balls at each other. They had written facts about WW1 on the crumpled paper, and when they were hit with a paper ball, they stopped and read the facts out loud. Every single student was engaged in the lesson. Mike really knows how to think outside the box!

My favorite thing in Mike's class, however, is a 3-D replica of a rail car (pictured) that was built by his level 3 (non-college preparatory) students. When I invited some of the members of the synagogue to see the project, one remarked that it was museum-quality. However, it is the story behind the memorial project that is the most remarkable. Here it is, in Mike's words:

HOW DID THE IDEA COME ABOUT? WHAT DID THE PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

The idea developed over time. I had wanted to do something more tangible with the subject of the Holocaust in my History 113 class for a long time, but I needed the

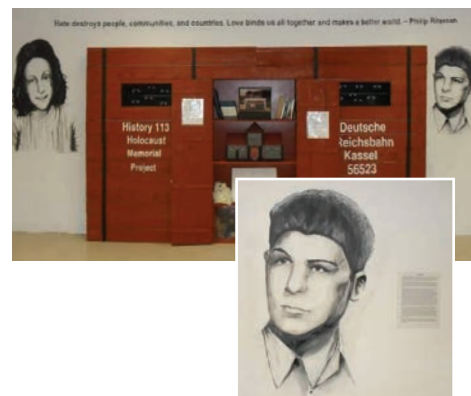
right class to do it. Finally, in the spring semester of 2011, I thought I had that class, and I was right. I put it out to the class that I wanted to use the back wall of my classroom to create a permanent memorial to the Holocaust. My idea was to have a cattle car painted on the back wall and some inspirational pictures and quotes to make people think. It was at this moment that one of my students, Mark Bishop, put forth the idea that changed the direction of the project and made it into what it is today. Mark said, "Why would you paint a cattle car when I can built one instead?" This was exactly what I was looking for for this project: I wanted the students to take control and ownership of it. Only then would they truly learn the lessons I was striving for them to learn. So, without asking permission, we started planning and researching for the project, and over an 8 to 10 week period we completed it.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SPECIAL TOUCHES?

The whole project is a special touch. However, there are several aspects that are a part of it that make this more than a Holocaust memorial, if that makes sense.

The portraits of Anne Frank and Philip Riteman are a part of the display for a particular reason. The memorial is not just a memory of those who died. It is also a memorial to those who survived. Most people know the story of Anne Frank ... or at least have a general knowledge of the story. However, few know the stories of those who survived. That's why Philip Riteman is there. His survival story and testament of the horrible things he witnessed are important for people to know and to pass on to their loved ones. Without survivor stories, the horrors of the Holocaust are at risk to succumbing to the rantings of Holocaust deniers.

The quote at the top of the memorial is an important message and lesson to be learned from the Holocaust. It is from Philip Riteman's book, *Millions of Souls*. The quote



says, "Hate destroys people, communities, and countries. Love binds us all together and makes a better world." THIS is a lesson I want all of my students to learn whether they are learning about the Holocaust in my class or ancient Greek history. This message is permanently in my classroom and hopefully goes with my students when they leave.

The bottom shelf of the memorial is a plexi-glassed section filled with old shoes and yellow stars. The immediate purpose of this shelf is to make note of the large bins of shoes and clothing the Allies found in the liberated concentration camps that signified the number of innocent Jews murdered. Under the surface of this lies a mini-memorial. In the semester prior to building this memorial, one of my students, Nick Woodard, lost his mother to cancer. He was my student when this happened. Nick and I had a good student-teacher relationship and his father thought it best to get Nick in my class during the second semester so I could be there to help him through the days and weeks after his mother's passing. Nick and his family were cleaning out his mother's closet and he thought, rather than throw out his mother's shoes, it would be nice to use them in the memorial to help people learn remember the innocent. So, the Holocaust memorial has become a memorial to Nick's mother, as well.

Finally, but very important to me and many of the teachers and students at RHS, the top shelf of the memorial is dedicated to one of the students that helped to build it. Mark Bishop, who put forth the idea to build the memorial as it is today, was tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident in January 2012, just seven months after the completion of the project. The top shelf of the memorial has flowers and a picture

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of the History 113 class that built the project. Also, and this brings a tear to my eye just thinking about it, there is a string of paper clips interwoven with the flowers. The Dutch wore paper clips during the Holocaust as a sign of defiance to the Nazis and their murderous plan. In 2010, Mark Bishop was a student in my Social Studies 10 class. During that class, he was bored and took all of my paper clips and attached them together. After Mark's death, I was going through my desk looking for something and I came across the paper clips ... still strung together. It was as if Mark was speaking to me. I immediately added them to the memorial. The top shelf has some lessons about the Holocaust and the defiance of the Dutch, but it also acts as a memorial to a student who had a huge impact on me.

HOW DO FUTURE CLASSES LEARN FROM IT?

My classes and other teachers' classes learn from this memorial every year. Just this past semester, I gave a presentation to an ELA 9 class about the memorial. You will note

that only part of my wall is painted white. The white area represents the approximate length of a cattle car. When I am teaching about the Holocaust, the first thing I do is get the students to stand in the area marked off by the white wall. I place desks opposite the wall to represent the approximate width of a cattle car. There are usually about 20 to 30 students in this area. I ask them if they feel crowded while they are standing there. Then I ask them to imagine that there are 80 to 100 people standing in the same area. This gives the students a small sense of how the Jews were crammed into these cattle cars like animals. This gets their attention very quickly and then I use the information and stories that go along with the memorial to extend their knowledge further.

WHAT MAKES YOU SO PASSIONATE ABOUT TEACHING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST?

When I was in high school, I am sure I learned about the Holocaust, but when I started my History degree at the University of New Brunswick, I realized that I knew very little about it. So, I took an Honours level course at UNB about the Holocaust.

It changed my life. That same year, the movie Schindler's List came to the theatres. I went to see it with the History Department at UNB and it was then that I said to myself, "No other student going to forget what he/she learned about the Holocaust." It has become sort of my mission to teach students what unabated hate and lies can lead to if we do not stand up to it.

WHY DO YOU ENJOY TEACHING LEVEL 3 WHEN MOST TEACHERS SHY AWAY FROM IT?

The answer to this question is simple... I get these students and they get me. I see they are smart and capable if given the chance

to show me in their own way. I let them demonstrate their knowledge through their strengths rather than their weaknesses. The best part is I am the only teacher who teaches History 113 and that gives me the freedom to experiment and explore the curriculum without having to answer to other teachers.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD TO DISABUSE A STUDENT OF PRECONCEPTIONS HE/SHE MAY HAVE HAD ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST?

Not in a serious nature. No student has ever told me they did not believe in the Holocaust. However, many were surprised about the Jews fighting back, such as the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Many thought the Jews went willingly. Also, many believed that the Holocaust and antisemitism were localized to Europe. They were not aware of the levels of antisemitism present in countries such as Canada and the United States during that same period ... and today, for that matter.

DO YOU STILL READ NIGHT TO YOUR STUDENTS? WHAT'S THAT LIKE?

I do not read *Night* in its entirety any more due to time constraints. At one time, I did take the first 15 minutes of each class during the Holocaust unit and read the novel. Now I read selected excerpts from it. The students always have a shocked look on their faces when I read it. The most profound experience my students had was shortly after Philip Riteman spoke at RHS. The horrors witnessed by Philip were relayed by Elie Wiesel as well. It really hit the students hard. However, when I teach about the Holocaust, I want the students to be hit hard. This is the one subject I do not pull any punches when I teach it. I am blunt. Reading *Night* supports this "no holds barred" approach and allows the lessons to be felt more deeply. ☺

If you happen to be in the Moncton area and would like to see the Holocaust Memorial project up close, please contact Mike at michael.flinn@nbed.nb.ca. He would be happy to have you visit his classroom, and to hear how important his work is to the Jewish community.

FREDERICTON NEWS

Revitalizing a Community

BY IVAN LEVINE, PRESIDENT, SGOOLAI ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

I became the Interim President of our Synagogue June 17, 2019 with great expectations of unifying, growing and breathing life into a dwindling state. I put forth a new vitalized Schul Officers and Board, which was readily accepted.

My first mandate was to create a new Jewish Interfaith Inclusive Cemetery as we had a burial awaiting. The Cemetery, has been accomplished called Beit Olam (Eternal Home) according to Halacha, Consecrated, with respect and dignity to all.

Secondly, we had to re-establish our Hebrew school with new teachers and increase students. The teachers are Rabbi Yosef Goldman, Shaindy Goldman and Ami Whitaker with backup if required. We will more than double our students with many more to come. Our objectives are inclusion, enjoyment, learning, moral values as in a good person, charity, and prep for Bat/Bar Mitzvahs.

Thirdly we had a tremendous Inclusive Celebration BBQ August 25 with approximately 100 people attending, including 20 children, who enjoyed the pool and bouncy castle. The energy, bonding and enthusiasm was overwhelming, with diverse people and origins. People came up to me who stated they wanted to rejoin or want to be new members of our shul. Almost everyone brought either salad or dessert. Unbelievable delicious ethnic eateries were served with Ovenhead cold smoked salmon (sponsored), hot dogs, sandwiches, and everything was kosher. The Sisterhood also sponsored the event.

My fourth mandate is a major capital expenditure to upgrade our neglected synagogue or to relocate. It appears at this point that we are best able to enhance our present shul, as relocating will not give us as good a building and depends on cash flow.


There are so many people in our community that are now stepping up, volunteering and participating with spirit and joy. For the High Holidays we have engaged an external choir especially for Neilah and Kol Nidrei with thanks to our worthy rabbi. There is now hope for minyans at shul with all the above. It is amazing to witness the elders, younger members and children heartily participating now. The proposed Annual General Meeting is to take place September 9th at our shul at 7 PM.

Congratulations to Jake Kranat for graduating high school and Jonathan Lazarev graduating UNB Science Degree with an acceptance to Dalhousie Medical School.

There were three passings: the loss of Byron z'l late husband to Shelley Stephens and father of Josh; the loss of Rozalia Giter, mother to Leon Gimshtein and two other sons in Israel; and the loss of Sylvia (Fransblow) Israeli, mother to Dr. Anne Israeli and mother-in-law to Anne's husband, Neil Brown. May they be comforted.

As this is my first Fredericton President's report in 30 years, it feels good again and timely. Gmar Hatima Tova to all for a healthy and content New Year. 🍷





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REPORT FROM THE SAINT JOHN JEWISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

BY KATHERINE BIGGS-CRAFT, MUSEUM CURATOR

Summer at the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum brings visitors by car, by bus, by cruise ship—people from all over the world or just down the street. We share the history of the Jewish community in Saint John and compare it with the stories brought by our visitors of how their families came to cities large and small across Canada and the United States and so many other countries around the world. It seems that no matter where people call home, the Jewish experience brings us all together.

We could not manage to share our stories without the help of our summer students. Elijah Wilcott, Nir Melech and Roni Friling, who were funded by grants from the provincial and federal governments and who gave wonderful and enthusiastic tours to our visitors. They were also able to share their varied experiences of growing up Jewish in Saint John and Israel. A fourth student, Annette Carhart, came to us through an internship program from the Saint John campus of the University of New Brunswick and she helped organize several boxes of archival photographs and do research on the Holocaust survivors who came to Saint John. Without the students our visitors would miss out on personalized tours of the exhibits and the opportunity to learn about Jewish life in Saint John.

This summer we brought back our popular exhibit on Jewish businesses in Saint John. From the late 1850s to the early 2000s there were as many as 200 different Jewish-owned businesses in the city. Most were in retail or were tailors, but there were also restaurants, furniture and appliance stores, accounting services, scrap metal dealers, and contractors, among others. One portion of the exhibit was devoted to business advertisements from the Saint John newspaper in 1958. Jewish merchants offered a wide range of goods... and at good prices. Who wouldn't want a pair of shoes for only \$8, a winter coat for only \$40 or a full living room suite for only \$220?

In addition to giving tours, we also experimented with some summer programming for children (ages 5 to 11) and teens (ages 12 to 18). Our summer students created the programs, planned the activities and carried them out. Several holidays were chosen—Purim, Passover, Chanukah and Sukkot—with stories and crafts. Although we had only a small number of participants, it was a good first effort and we look for ways to improve on this program in the future.

We have had a busy year with lots of events including a successful lecture series presented by Dan Elman and a book launch for *Dangerous Enemy Sympathizers* by Andrew Theobald in the spring. We are now ready to embark on a busy program with more events in October and November.

On Sunday, October 6 we will welcome Robert Katz with his video presentation *Were The House Still Standing*, which recalls the stories of sixteen Holocaust survivors who settled in Maine. Mr. Katz had made similar presentations to other communities last year—we are grateful that he has agreed to come back to share his presentation in Saint John. Thank you to the Atlantic Jewish Council for making this event possible. The presentation will run from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

The 6th Annual Saint John Jewish Film Festival will run from Saturday, October 26 to Thursday, October 31 with six films. The opening film—*The Keeper*—will be shown at the Mary Oland Theatre in the New Brunswick Museum for our sponsors, with the remaining films being shown at the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum from Sunday to Thursday evening at 7 PM. The films include: *Promise at Dawn*, *Leona*, *Shoelaces*, *The Tobacconist* and *My Polish Honeymoon*. Our new chairs for the event, Lorie Cohen-Hackett and Richard Osepchuk, are working hard to secure event sponsors and

complete plans for the event. Sponsorship is available at several levels: Editor—\$100, Director—\$250, Associate Producer—\$500, Producer—\$1,000 and Executive Producer—\$2,500. Contact the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum (506-633-1833 / sjjhm@nbnet.nb.ca) for sponsorship packages and tickets for the shows.

The Museum will be working with the Lorenzo Society at UNB Saint John to host a book reading by Ottawa writer, Natalie Morrill. She will be reading from *The Ghost Keeper*, which was the winner of the HarperCollins/UBC Prize for Best New Fiction. The story is set in Vienna during the 1930s and '40s and centres on a poignant love story and a friendship that ends in betrayal and the terrible choices we make to survive. This is a finely accomplished novel that introduces an exciting new voice to the Canadian literary landscape. The book reading will take place in the Museum on Sunday, November 17 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

The Museum will be open regular hours (Monday to Friday from 10 AM to 4 PM and some Sundays) until November 1. If you have not yet had the chance to visit this year, there is still time to do so before we close for the winter. ☺

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SAINT JOHN NEWS

BY SUSAN ISAACS LUBIN

Summer in Saint John has been relatively quiet, as usual. People are on vacation, and some are just taking advantage of the weather to explore the city or to barbecue at home.


In July, Eliana Davis had her Bat Mitzvah. Eliana is the daughter of Nathan and Candace Davis, and granddaughter of Gary and Lana Davis and Ron and Sandy Levine. Mazel tov to the whole family.

In August we held our annual Shaarei Zedek community picnic. We had a good turnout, and the barbecued hot dogs and hamburgers were delicious. A scavenger hunt added to the fun.

We are looking forward to Matt Goldberg, returning for the High Holidays. His parents and grandmother are also planning to return. Matt's parents, Marnie and Lindsay Goldberg are sponsoring an Erev Rosh HaShanah dinner for the whole community. We thank them for this wonderful gesture, and we also thank Uzi and Olga Michaelov, along with their volunteers for planning the menu and cooking the meal.

Hebrew School will start on September 8th, with several difference grades being planned to accommodate children's ages. In addition, we are looking into the feasibility of starting an adult learning class in Hebrew conversation. We have teachers lined up for all the classes, and are excited to begin.

The Jewish Museum held afternoon sessions for children to learn about the Jewish Holidays, and to make items, either baking or arts and crafts, to signify the holiday.

We want to express our sincere sympathy to the Goldsmith family on the death of Francine Calp Goldsmith. We also mourn the death of Evelyne Meltzer, who was brought up in Saint John. Our sympathy to Evelyne's family. We also extend sympathy to the Essing family on the death of Barbara Essing. 



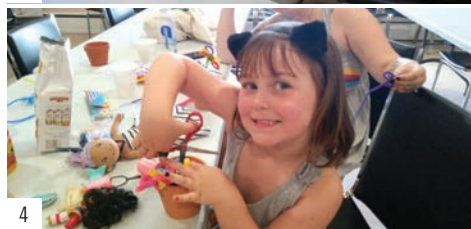
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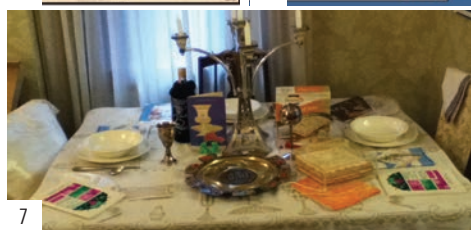
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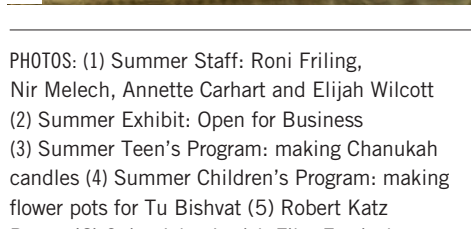
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PHOTOS: (1) Summer Staff: Roni Friling, Nir Melech, Annette Carhart and Elijah Wilcott (2) Summer Exhibit: Open for Business (3) Summer Teen's Program: making Chanukah candles (4) Summer Children's Program: making flower pots for Tu B'Shvat (5) Robert Katz Poster (6) Saint John Jewish Film Festival Poster (7) Summer Exhibit: Passover Table.



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PHOTOS: (1) Museum Arts and Crafts afternoon (2) Fun at the Museum learning sessions (3) Shaarei Zedek Community Picnic (4) Judging for the Scavenger Hunt at Shaarei Zedek Picnic (5) Buffet table at Shaarei Zedek Picnic

CAPE BRETON NEWS

BY SHARON JACOBSON

Summertime In Cape Breton & The Livin' Is Not Bad



“We Grow Good People In Our Small Towns, With Honesty, & Sincerity & Dignity.”

This is how I began my welcoming remarks to about 50 people that had gathered in the Glace Bay Jewish Cemetery on Sunday, August 18th, 2019. We had come together to dedicate two new memorials in the garden: one honouring Elliot & Helen Marshall; the other honouring Dr. Phil Simon. Both had served as presidents of the Glace Bay Congregation Sons of Israel for many years. They were Glace Bay Boys through and through!

As the *Cape Breton Post* reported in the following Tuesday's newspaper, “They came to remember two of their own but while doing so ended up celebrating Glace Bay's once vibrant Jewish community.”

One was a dentist, the other a business man; one mentored the other for this leadership job. They guided the community as it dwindled in numbers.

Viewing the headstones, with English and Hebrew names etched on opposite sides, I played a game trying to decipher from the “Hebrew side” who was buried there. As I did this, my mind went back in time. I was a schoolgirl, remembering my shul on the High Holidays filled with all these people. I could remember viewing the home movies my father took of my brothers' Bar Mitzvahs

when he panned the long banquet style tables that were set up in the Talmud Torah. The entire town had been invited. There was Mr. Simon, Mr. and Mrs. Bainus Lipkus, Mrs. Magnet; now it seemed that the whole town was here in the cemetery.

“We are proud of our small town and our Jewish Community. It's a big part of what makes us the people we are.” As I gaze at the newly dedicated memorial stones, I believe we still have Dr. Phil and Ellie to remind us of this.

This Glace Bay Jewish Cemetery contains the heart and soul of a community.

As we visit, we must never despair or say, “Alas, now we have nothing”—for they have left us with so very much.

The Simon clan flew in from Ontario—Ruth having celebrated her 90th birthday was accompanied by her children, Gary, Bruce, Mark, and Virginie, and grandchildren Leora, Robyn and Ila. 5-year-old Ila set down some painted stones her father Mark had collected in Cape Breton and Israel. Dr. Phil was energetic, approachable and always curious, as was Ellie. Both served the larger community in many ways.

Susan and Cheryl Marshall had “channeled” a poem about their dad and sent it along to be read. The last lines were “Though my bones they lay elsewhere, don't you be frettin' My heart will always belong to Cape Breton.”

Ellie was known for the lilt of his rhyme which he delivered with his winsome, boyish smile for every occasion. He even wrote a book, *Once Upon a Story* about small town life.

His niece, Enid Dubinsky Lief, and her husband Moe attended the service to represent Uncle Ellie. Rabbi Ellis conducted the Kaddish which we all recited for those buried in this tiny, tranquil, cemetery.

We must truly thank Betty Shore for orchestrating this beautiful occasion. She

was the curator of all that came together in a tableau of warmth and remembrance. She made it happen! As we congregated for lunch in the nearby Miner's Museum Village Restaurant we enjoyed the camaraderie of young and old sharing family ties.

Such deep feelings were unexpected. It was special.

Heidi Schwartz commented: “I feel so privileged to be part of the CB Jewish community. Today was another reminder of the strength of our ties. The families of community members who passed away and were buried elsewhere still felt the need to commemorate their loved ones' memories in the Glace Bay cemetery.”

The response from the greater Glace Bay community was equally surprising and sentimental. Strangers were stopping me in the street and calling me on the phone to reminisce after reading the newspaper article. They wished they had known about the ceremony so they could have attended! I heard stories about Rosenblums Ladies Wear and its Sale Day. People who went to the Kuma Haim and met their old high school friends Brenda Shore and her parents and Isaac Boniuk, others who lived in an apartment building owned by the Goldbergs and whose friend was Rabbi Kirschenblatt's daughter Shoshana? The detail with which they described each memory was even more amazing!

Another very warm example of a strong tie to the Glace Bay Jewish community, was the return of the Nathan Simon clan to bury their mother, Nettie, next to her husband in our little cemetery. Heather & Marty, Rhea & Paul, Lisa & Barry, Irwin & Lorne flew in to honour her request and say Kaddish with us before flying back home.

We were all raised to leave, but did we really ever truly leave?



Camp Kadimah provided a Milestone in our family's life this summer. Grandson Izzy Jacobson followed in the footsteps of his grandfather and father and mother. At the age of six years he joined the growing rank of kids signing up for The Legacy. We believe he must have enjoyed himself because he opted for the six week stint. Who knew when Moses shouted "Kadimah" to the Jewish tribes wandering in the desert, they would eventually end up at a camp in Nova Scotia?

After Visitor's Day, there were several private reunions. One group of Chevra met up at Barrie Carnat's home in Englishtown for a pool party. To quote Peshe Kuriloff, "Kadimah is about relationships!"

This brings me to our "Can you believe the Sydney Shul is still holding Shabbat services?" line.

Anita Schick wanted me to be sure and let the Atlantic Jewish community know that "the Shabbat Kiddish is a real treat for the majority of the summer regulars who did not grow up in the Sydney Shul." She goes on to add that "Shabbat is one of the highlights of our summer and the people we meet are wonderful!"

She reiterated (what many have already said to Stanley): "He deserves credit for keeping it going with his two emails a week." I would like to add that he is not unlike an auctioneer in countdown procuring the sale of 10 spots for minyan...not to mention his "who do I hear for egg salad?" Myrna Yazer's chocolate cake and Peshe Kuriloff's rhubarb dessert always add a few more congregants above the necessary 10!

Such "patisseries" were the Haftorah to our Kiddish Luncheon Mofitir.

And so it goes. We wish everyone a Happy New Year and an easy fast.

Next Year, if not b'Jerusalem, May it be the Sydney Shul... ⑤

PHOTOS: (1) Camp reunion of chevra: Steve Lecker, Toby Carnat, Murray Yazer, Joey Yazer, Michael Shankman, Aaron Lieff, Jason Jacobson, Jonah Jacobson and Uri Carnat. Missing from photo op is Gabe Kuriloff (2) Cemetery dedication (3) Betty Shore reading the newspaper with our event on the front page! Betty was responsible for organizing the whole cemetery dedication! (4-5) Cemetery dedication (6-15) Miners Village Restaurant.

NEWFOUNDLAND NEWS

News from the far east **BY RABBI CHANAN AND TUBA CHERNITSKY**

Though we can't always guarantee the weather here in Newfoundland, we can always guarantee the warmth!

Shavuot fell out in the beginning of June this year, as late as it gets. We gathered together for the reading of the Ten Commandments with a simultaneous children's program, both followed by our famous cheesecake and ice cream buffet. The cheesecakes received great feedback.

We were fortunate to have two rabbinical students visiting from Morristown, New Jersey: Zalmy Dick and Eli Kaltman. As it turns out, Zalmy's father, Rabbi Dovid Dick, was Rabbi Chernitsky's teacher many years ago. Zalmy and Rabbi Chernitsky enjoyed catching up together after such a long time. The lesson we learnt from Shavuot was to appreciate the values that we have received from Judaism, which enhance our life whether it be at work, with our spouses or with our children.

We were honoured to host Dr. Mark Biederman on July 25th at Holy Heart Theatre, here in St. John's. Mark is the son of two Holocaust survivors, each with a fascinating story of their own. Marks' father, Hirsch Biederman, was #3 on Schindler's list and his mother was Dr. Mengele's cook in

Auschwitz. Mark also has his own story to share—the search and finding of his father's gold coin collection which he had buried in Poland.

Mark shared these stories in front of a crowd of 500 people. Everyone was touched by his story and gave him a standing ovation at the end. The talk was followed by an extensive Q&A.

IN THE MAKING:

Did you ever wonder where honey comes from? Join us for a community wide visit to a local bee farm just before Rosh Hashana so we can dip the apples in locally produced honey.

On that note, we are getting all the resources ready for our annual community Rosh Hashana celebration. The briskets are already in!

For Sukkot this year we are starting a new initiative: Shabbat dinner under the sky. Stay tuned for the details. 📍

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. For discounted rates on hotel reservations, check out our website at www.chabadNfld.org.



PHOTOS: (L-R) Mark Speaking; MC Jordan Berson; The crowd at Mark Biederman's presentation

REPORT FROM BETH EL SYNAGOGUE

BY BARBARA GRANDY

Beth El continues to hold services every Friday evening and Saturday morning.

We are happy to report that we have welcomed a number of schools to the synagogue as part of their Religious Studies programs. It has now finished for the summer, but we are looking forward to having more school visits in the coming academic year.

We have been able to welcome a number of visitors for services over the summer.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 6th/19th: Beth El is hosting an Oneg Shabbat welcoming members of the Jewish Community Havura to the synagogue.

On September 8th, the three Jewish groups (Jewish Community Havura [JCH], The Chabad Jewish group, and Beth El synagogue) are getting together to have a Challah bake. Tuba Chernitsky, Elizabeth Spiegel and Barbara Grandy have organized it in the hope of teaching people how to make challah. To date, 25 people have signed up for it. The plan is to make two loaves each—one to keep and one to give away.

This year Beth El has decided to get the congregation to participate in the services and so each of us has a part of the service to prepare.

On the first night of Rosh Hashanah, Beth El is going to the Jewish Community Havura. Elizabeth Loder has accepted the responsibility to merge the two services. On Erev Yom Kippur, JCH has been invited to the synagogue for Kol Nidre. 📍

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY HAVURA OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

BY KATHERINE SIDE

Sadly, the Jewish Community Havura of Newfoundland and Labrador said goodbye to two families who left the island this summer to live elsewhere. Other small Atlantic Jewish communities will likely understand these losses and their effects. John and Ruth Noel were founding members of the Havura. They both had an in-depth knowledge of Newfoundland and its history and were regular participants in Havura activities. John Noel was instrumental in setting up the Havura's Constitution and kept us on top of its requirements. Ruth Noel was a long serving Board Member and had a hand in most community activities. Ruth read from the Torah at Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur and, at Shabbat services, she could always be counted on to recite the *Hatzi Kaddish*. John and Ruth also hosted many Shabbat services and dinners and Passover Seders at their home always welcomed newcomers. We wish them all of the best in Toronto.

Marc and Brenda Rishia also left the province to return to their home elsewhere. Brenda Rishia served on the Board as Treasurer and her meticulous accounting and record-keeping continues to set a high bar. Brenda also assumed the work of ordering, shipping and distributing the Passover order for all of Newfoundland's Jewish communities. Brenda Rishia could be counted on to provide poignant and timely *Dvar Torah*s services and to act as *Gabbai* for Torah readings. She was endlessly curious about community members' genealogical roots, some of which she wrote up for the newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society. Brenda and Marc Rishia also opened their home for Shabbat services and hosted community members and newcomers at Passover Seders. The special talents and consistent and valued contributions of these families will be missed by the Havura community.

On a happier note, there are a number of

new births expected in the coming year. As well, the Havura hosted its sixth Bar Mitzvah this summer. A (not-13-years-old) bar mitzvah was held for Justin Tobin whose Torah reading was a portion from *Parshat Naso*. The event was a community endeavour and was well attended including by family, Havura members, and out of town guests. It was a year of mitzvot, and Mazel Tov to Justin Tobin and Nathan Butt on their engagement. In addition to serving as a Havura Board member, Justin is also the Student President of Hillel at Memorial University and is involved in their many events. Justin Tobin was a *madrish* for Birthright in Israel in May-June 2018 and participated, as an Emerson Fellow, in the Stand with Us programme in Oxnard, California in 2018 and in Los Angeles, California in 2019. He participated in LGBTQ+ training with Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs in Halifax in 2018. Justin is a Council Member on CIJA's LGBTQ+ Advisory Board, and participated, along with other Havura members and their families, in the 2019 St. John's Pride parade in July.

The Jewish Community Havura of Newfoundland and Labrador continued to host Shabbat services and dinners throughout the summer months and our numbers have increased, temporarily, by returning university students and visiting family members from Israel. We are preparing for continued Shabbat services and dinners and for the approaching High Holidays. Havura member Elizabeth Loder will lead Erev Rosh Hashanah and Kol Nidre services which will be celebrated with members of the Havura and the Beth El synagogue, with full day services (and community meals and break fasts) to follow. If you're visiting St. John's during the High Holidays, know someone who will be visiting, or would like to connect us with newly arrived students, please feel free to get in touch with us for more information. We can be contacted at our website www.havura.org or by email at: info.havura@gmail.com. ☺



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PHOTOS: (1) Bar Mitzvah of Justin Tobin. Photo credit: Brad Gibb (2) Newfoundland Summer. Photo credit: Katherine Side



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PEI NEWS

BY JOSEPH B. GLASS

Our community was called upon to participate in a symbolic planting of a tree for peace on May 31st. People of different faiths took a stand against hatred and violence by planting a red maple peace tree in Charlottetown's Rochford Park. The ceremony was meant to remember those who have suffered from attacks of hatred upon places of worship, to promote peace and to recognize the diversity in the community. In the photograph are Leo Mednick, left, president of the Jewish Community of PEI, David Rashed, past-president of the Charlottetown Area Christian Council, Major Daniel Roode of the Salvation Army and Charlottetown Mayor Philip Brown.

Another event promoting intercommunal understanding was held on May 26th. The PEI Jewish community was invited to PEI Premiere of *Salaam B'yi*. This documentary film is about Muslim newcomers to Newfoundland.

The Jewish community met for a couple of social events. On June 2nd a farewell brunch was held for longtime Island residents Rosalie and Don Simeone. Bev and Leo Mednick warmly hosted this event in their home and served Leo's Island-renowned Montreal-style bagels.

During Rosalie and Don's some thirty years in PEI, they took active roles in promoting and organizing the Jewish community. Rosalie was president of the community a few times and held every position on the PEIJC executive board. She was involved and helped us with every community event that we held. Many members of the community came out to wish Rosalie and Don Simeone all the best in Winnipeg where they moved to be with their children and grandchildren.

Every summer, PEIJC organizes a community picnic. It is an opportunity for year-round residents and summer visitors to get together. The event was held at the home of Larry and Ayelet Stewart who graciously offered their home once again. The weather was perfect and about 35 people attended. All enjoyed

the great food of the potluck meal, interesting conversations, and a beautiful the view of Charlottetown across the Hillsborough River.

PEIJC celebrates the achievements of our Island-based musicians. Composer and producer Andrew A. Melzer landed two nominations in the 2019 American Songwriting Awards announced on July 3rd. The first song is "Out of the Cool" in the Jazz Category; the second is "My Love Can't Wait" in the Instrumental Category. The songs are from the album "Norm Amadio And Friends" which he also produced.

One of Jane Naylor's compositions, "Fathers and Sons" was performed during a choral concert entitled "Locavore's Delight" by the Luminos Ensemble on June 2nd. The concert was held at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Charlottetown. Jane, a long-term resident of PEI, is an award-winning composer. The poem used in her composition of the same name is by the late Joseph Sherman, z"l. He was a PEIJC member, who was awarded the Order of Canada in 2003, not only for his poetry, but also for his contribution to the arts in Atlantic Canada and Canada as a whole.

Members of the Jewish community are making efforts to learn and improve their Hebrew language skills. New full-time resident, Ilana Clyde, a native Hebrew-speaker born in Israel, has extensive experience teaching Hebrew and has been holding weekly Hebrew classes teaching beginners and intermediate Hebrew-speaking members of the community. She has separate sessions for children and upcoming Bar Mitzvah boys.

We also remember community members who passed away this year. On June 1st a memorial service was held for longtime resident Dr. Sol Feldstein. He died on January 19th at the age of 91 years old. Psychologist, poet, singer, tinkerer, francophile, humanist, Feldstein was born in New York and, together with his wife Evelyn (predeceased) and his children, immigrated to Canada in 1980. They settled on a farm in South Melville, PEI. and he adopted his beloved Island as his own. His three sons arranged for the memorial service. Many people attended, and some Islanders shared stories of his close relationships with Islanders.



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PHOTOS: (1) Leo Mednick, left, president of the Jewish Community of PEI, David Rashed, past-president of the Charlottetown Area Christian Council, Major Daniel Roode of the Salvation Army and Charlottetown Mayor Philip Brown at the planting of a tree for peace. (2) Ilana Clyde and Inna Korchak at the PEIJC Picnic. (3) The PEIJC Picnic (Left to right –standing: Michael Fleischmann, Larry Stewart, Victoria Bloom, Darryl Bloom, seated: Leslee Sack, Shamara Baidobonso).

On June 26th Barbara Parsons Munves passed away. She was preceded by her loving husband Jim who had passed a year earlier. Jim and Barbara were inseparable, they did almost everything together. They dealt with aging, Jim's health and Barbara's increasing dementia. Jim was her rock, her shelter and her home. Jim had been involved in a very public battle with social services to keep Barb and Jim together at home. Barbara had been a staunch environmentalist, a stalwart member of the Island Peace Committee, a volunteer at the Humane Society, a published author and an avid singer in both the Confederation Singers and Saint Paul's Anglican Church choir. ③

THE GREATEST JEW OF THE 20TH CENTURY

BY RABBI DAVID ELLIS, AJC REGIONAL CHAPLAIN

I have been asked by some local religious groups to participate in organizing resources and forming views to environmental issues. But I will be sharing these efforts around the region, as they are topics we must all become better informed about. And I will look for your suggestions and comments.

This will be an ongoing topic for everyone in the world. There is the usual buzz in the media, and we will have to sort out a variety of information. Yet it is no doubt that we must begin to join others on issues of climate change and the world we share.

Are there Jewish sources for such? Yes and no.

Yes, because we have some core ideas very relevant to this universal issue. We will be saying soon in our prayers on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur—*v'kulam y'asu l'agudah achat*—may all the creatures of the world, not only Jews, be made into one brotherhood. The goal of Judaism is for an eventual universal community. It takes time. We must be on the alert for idolatrous false world visions. But ours must be made clear. Of course there is the general understanding from Genesis that humans are responsible for creation. There are laws of *bal tashchit*—that we are forbidden to destroy anything of value. Many of our psalms give a love of nature and the created world. Yet we, and other religions and philosophies, will have to move into new territory. We exist in times of unprecedented challenges. We no longer live in small, organic societies. But thankfully we have a voice appropriate for these times, and a Jewish one—the late philosopher Hans Jonas. I direct you to the Wikipedia article on Hans Jonas for an introduction. His life was simply at the heart on Jewish world in the last century—in Europe, in Israel and in America. He was a German Jewish intellectual, a student of Martin Heidegger's and a contemporary of Hannah Arendt. With the rise of Nazism in the 30s in Germany, Jonas left for then Palestine. When World War II broke out, Jonas signed up for the British army. He could have had a choice to go into an intelligence unit. He specifically asked to be in a combat role. After the war he fought again in Israel's war of independence in 1948. Then, finding it hard to re-establish

his academic career in the nascent state, he moved to America, where he taught, with many other German Jewish refugees, at the New School for Social Research in New York. Jonas' philosophical work in the states continued from Europe, while opening new vistas. Much of the existential analysis of the human world situation he accepted from Heidegger. However, Heidegger's political affiliations with the Nazi party clearly were rejected. And as Jonas points out, Heidegger never developed an ethical system for his philosophy.

As Jonas became acquainted with America, he incorporated the naturalistic, organic philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead into his outlook. His writings turned to questions of modern science and technology, which were changing our entire world.

And so you get Jonas' eloquent book—*The Imperative of Responsibility*. It was published in the 80s, but it is even more up to date now than when he wrote it. The problems of mass use and exhausting of resources, destructive technologies, exploiting of natural environments, cyber manipulations—all of these present a potential to the threat of human existence itself. What do we do? Just look after ourselves? Do nothing? Jonas makes the moral argument that we must use the world so that it is usable and inhabitable for future generations. While he does not use explicit Jewish terminology, it is obvious that his philosophy is very much within Jewish tradition.

I had the rare privilege of seeing Hans Jonas in person, in Dallas in the 70s. He spoke at an afternoon seminar at Southern Methodist University and gave a public lecture at a synagogue that evening. You could sense as you heard him speak—the trials, the dedication, the commitment to integrity and excellence which characterized his life.

So as we start to think about the difficult problems our world is facing we will be confident Jewishly that we have a great resource in Professor Jonas.

By the way, there is a Halifax connection to Hans Jonas. Linda Schroeder of the Shaar Shalom is his niece. She met him many times over the years at family gatherings and holidays. 🕊



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HOW DO WE CHOOSE RIGHT FROM WRONG?

BY RABBI YOSEF GOLDMAN, SGOOLAI ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, FREDERICTON



Recently, I had a discussion with a Baptist friend about the nature of Miriam and Aaron's complaint about Moses, concerning the "Cushite (Ethiopian) wife that he took" (Numbers 12:1). Going back to my days in high school, and my memory of learning only one explanation to this very strange episode, I insisted that they were complaining about the fact that he *divorced* Tziporah (maybe 'being holier than thou'). The *Mechilta* (Halachic Midrash on the Book of Exodus) brings this explanation of Rabbi Joshua, based on the verse in Parashat Yitro (Exodus 18:2) where it states: "I am coming to you... with Tziporah and her two sons, after her being *sent away*."

The Talmud suggests in many places that there is more than one explanation to each verse; in fact, the language that's used is: SHIV'EEM PANIM LATORAH—there are (at least) seventy ways to explain the words of the Torah. The only restriction is that if you have a commentary that will go against our way of keeping the Law, you are allowed to say it, but not apply it to your way of observing the Commandments! For example, Rabbi Yochanan said that he could prove in 150 ways that lobster is kosher, but he will not do so, since his peers already discussed this and ascertained that lobster is a forbidden shellfish.

Now, back to Moses. Our Holy Sages wanted to fully understand this episode in our history, since we are commanded to remember (Deuteronomy 24:9) on a daily

basis what happened to Miriam. Because, if Miriam was punished for speaking about her brother, whom she loved so much from when he was a baby, there has to be something really important in this story. I believe that when our rabbis were discussing this issue, they had a hidden agenda. Until about 350 years ago, at the time of King Henry VIII, all priests were not married. I don't know much about Catholic Dogma, but what I was told is that the priest is "married to the Church", and this is why they take this vow of celibacy. Our sages wanted to ensure that rabbis in future generations knew that this is the reason for the criticism of Miriam about her brother. That no spiritual leader would ever think that they are as holy/special or unique at the level that Moses was, and choose not to have a wife and children. True leadership is being able to not only have sympathy when a member of the community has family/financial (or any other) trouble, but to have (most importantly, in my opinion) true empathy! The difference between sympathy and empathy is: did the person who's listening to the problem have their own personal (lived) experience with this kind of situation? For example, the reason why Aaron and King David were able to be such great leaders is because they both had experienced the death of their sons.

I will conclude with this idea. We are told by our parents and teachers that there is a certain purpose for which we have come to this world. In fact, most philosophers have said

this idea in many different ways, but I will quote two very similar ones. René Descartes said: "*Cogito, ergo sum*" usually translated into English as "I think, therefore I am;" while Rabbi Yosef Dov Ber Soloveichic (known as "The Rav") said: "I believe, therefore I am!" Recently, Rebbetzin Esther Wein explained the first verses of the Book of Numbers in a way that for me is a great revelation about how we make choices. Hashem commanded Moses to "lift up every person... TIFKOD OTAM"—have them know (make them aware) about the unique deposit (gift) that I have bestowed on them. The comparison Rebbetzin Wein makes is to the verse that we begin the Torah reading on Rosh Hashana (Genesis 21:1): "and Hashem PAKAD Sarah"—G-d revealed to Sarah of the special deposit (PIKADON) that has been entrusted with her. The reason why we read this torah portion on the Jewish New Year, when we declare Hashem as Sovereign of the Universe, is so we can tell G-d that we appreciate the gift of life, and are willing to do our best to not disappoint the One who gave us our own soul as a treasured deposit.

May we all be blessed with choosing the right way to living up to our full potential, and be inscribed for a very happy, healthy and sweet New Year! 🌟

JUST YOU AND I ALONE

BY RABBI MENDEL FELDMAN, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF THE MARITIMES



Rosh Hashanah, the Ten Days of Repentance, and Yom Kippur are described in Song of Songs by King Solomon as follows: "*The Almighty stands at the door of every Jewish heart and knocks, Open up for Me!*"

This can be explained with the following parable; a king gave the hand of his only daughter in marriage. He asked but one thing of his son-in-law, "wherever you may be, prepare a dwelling for me, a place where I can stay when I come to visit." The King is G-d,

the Torah is His only daughter, and all G-d asks of His son-in-law—the Jewish people—is to prepare for Him a habitation an environment of Torah and prayer where the *Shechina*, G-d's presence may feel comfortable. As King Solomon writes: *The voice of My Beloved knocks, "Open up for Me!"*

The Almighty taps at the heart of the Jew and pleads with him to open up the door even a tiny crack, even "*like the point of a needle*" to make even the smallest attempt at Torah-study

and prayer, and G-d promises, "*...and I will open (the door wide) for you as the opening of a hall.*"

King Solomon continues, *My Beloved has hidden, has gone away*. The "Beloved" is G-d; His intention in "hiding" is not to remain hidden and concealed behind the facade of nature, but rather that we should seek him.

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Man's search for G-d is very precious in the eyes of G-d; it is this quest which is the very purpose of His concealment.

This parable describes the pattern of the month of Elul, Rosh Hashana, the Ten Days of Repentance, and Yom Kippur up until the closing prayer of Neilah; during this period G-d is hidden tapping at the door of our hearts. Finally, during the Neilah prayer the close and climax of Yom Kippur we are described as having opened the door "*Our soul has found Him who she loves.*" At this point the facade falls; the concealment is no more. The Divine King and His people Israel are reunited.

In the time when the Beit Hamikdash stood, seventy oxen were offered on the altar during the seven-day festival of Sukkot, representing the 70 nations of the world. On the eighth day Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, just one ox and one ram were offered. The Midrash explains that this may be compared to a king who made a seven day feast and invited all the inhabitants of his country, when the seven days of feasting were over the king said to his beloved friend "now that we have fulfilled our duty for all the inhabitants of the country let us spend time together, just you and I alone."

Accordingly, the intense unity between G-d and Israel that occurs during Neilah carries over and finds full expression in the joy of Sukkot and especially on Simchat Torah when G-d says to His people "Let us spend time together...Just you and I alone."

As the New Year approaches let us open our heart to grow in our *Yiddishkeit* and in turn may we be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life and a prosperous year ahead. ❧

SHALOM

BY RABBI GARY KARLIN, SHAAR SHALOM CONGREGATION, HALIFAX



Since I arrived in Halifax just a few weeks ago, many people have asked me how I'm settling in. I have to admit that I have been at something of a loss to answer this question. In order to explain why, please permit me to go back in time many years before I assumed the religious leadership of Shaar Shalom Congregation.

First, a few words of admission: I'm a big-town rabbi. Even when I have served smaller congregations in the past, they have been in larger Jewish settings: the suburbs of New York City, northern New Jersey, and most recently, central Florida.

So when I moved to Halifax this past July, I thought I knew what to expect. After all, this is the capital of Nova Scotia, the largest city in Atlantic Canada, thirteenth in the country—almost a half million strong in the HRM. Researching the Jewish community and its history left me impressed; the Halifax Jewish community has grown steadily along with the municipality over the years to over 2,100 individuals, and is projected to grow in the future. It boasts a mikveh (plus a second ritual bath under construction), an eruv (which permits carrying objects on one's person on Shabbat) and a kosher bakery. Kosher meat is available, our joint religious school has instructed our children for many years, and prior to my arrival, our community boasted no fewer than five rabbis—all living and working within a couple of kilometres of each other. We have a *Hevreh Kadishah* to help families who experience the loss of death, and at least two vibrant regular Shabbat morning minyanim. Finally, we all know that Jews and universities go together like bagels and butter, and Halifax is home to Dalhousie, as well as Saint Mary's, King's, Mount Saint Vincent, and other schools as well.

Now, having been in Nova Scotia for almost two months, I have discovered two new-for-me things about my home:

1. Halifax is unlike any place that I have ever lived. We Haligonian Jews are "it;" the community cannot draw on a larger neighbour as I did, for example, when I lived in Hamilton (across the lake and just an hour from Toronto). We cannot "send out for our *Yiddishkeit*." It's all up to us.

2. Halifax is unlike any place that I have ever lived. We Haligonian Jews work together, we study together, we even *daven* together—Orthodox and Conservative, Chabad and secular, young and old, "born-heres" and "from aways." We always hear the cliché that we Jews are "*am ehad*" ("one, united nation"), but here in Atlantic Canada it is a way of life. I believe that this second point follows from the first. We need each other, so we must live together.

It is said that the opposing camps or schools of *Beit Hillel* and *Beit Shammai* disagreed about many, many matters of Jewish law some two millennia ago. According to the Talmud, these disputes numbered no less than 316! Nonetheless, in spite of their differences (and even though the law was usually decided in line with the view of *Beit Hillel*), *Beit Hillel* always cited the opposing view of *Beit Shammai* before asserting their own. In spite of their many debates, the respect they showed to each other was intrinsic to their teaching and to their character.

So too, as I am learning, here in the Atlantic Jewish community. We have our differences, but we never let them get in the way of the fundamental respect we have for each other, and the *menchlikh* way we treat each other. We cooperate through the AJC, at Camp Kadimah, to serve our students through Hillel, and even within our small but vibrant rabbinic and congregational circles. This pervasive atmosphere of mutual kavod, as I have come to learn, is one of the great defining strengths of our community.

Halifax's first Jews arrived in 1750, just one year after the founding of the town. Our forebears worked hard to make sure that one could live a full Jewish life here in Atlantic Canada. While I don't have the power to see the future, I pray that we merit to not only continue on their past successes, but that we leave it stronger and richer for our children and grandchildren than we found it. I'm proud and ready to work toward this end. ❧

FOOL'S GOLD

BY RABBI CHANAN CHERNITSKY, DIRECTOR, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF NEWFOUNDLAND



A very fortunate and unassuming Jew by the name Isroel was once summoned by the king. He had been working for His Majesty for many years but had never been accorded such an honour: to be invited to the king's chamber. To his surprise the king offered him a once in a lifetime opportunity: a chance to visit the king's treasure house and take whatever he wished. The only condition was that he only had one hour to collect the riches.

Isroel couldn't believe his luck. Sure enough, he made sure to buy 10 barrels to fill with the treasure house riches.

At the designated day Isroel dragged along the empty barrels and lined them up outside of the treasure house. When the clock struck 9, he was allowed in—as previously arranged—for only one hour.

It's hard to describe Isroel's emotions at that time. He had never seen such precious stones and so much gold. As he was going to get a handful of diamonds, he noticed a master

violinist playing in the room. Our Isroel loved music! He figured that he would spend a few minutes listening to the beautiful classical music and then he would go on to fill up his barrels. After all, he had one full hour, right? There would be plenty of time to amass riches later.

When the violinist finished the piece he was playing, Isroel got ready to fill his hands with precious stones—but—at that very moment the violinist started playing another beautiful masterpiece and Isroel froze to focus on the beautiful composition.

And so it happened, again and again, after the musician had finished a piece and Isroel got ready to become a wealthy man, the musician began to play another masterpiece. Before anyone noticed, the king came into the treasure house. "The hour is up" said the king.


Isroel trembled. "But, dear king, please let me take a handful of precious stones!" But the king refused to allow this request. "Your hour is up," he said. "That was the deal." So our

dear Isroel went home with 10 empty barrels.

The story didn't actually end there. It continues today and it's the very story of our lives.

Hashem, our king, in his great kindness placed us on this earth to connect with Him and make the world a holier and better place by studying His Torah and fulfilling His Mitzvot—the true treasures. Here's the catch—Hashem placed skilled violinists throughout the world, all the distractions that we face on a regular basis—the pursuit of money, a better career, fancy gadgets and so on—and it's up to us to regain our focus on what's truly important.

This Rosh Hashana as the previous year ends and the new one begins, let's stop and refocus on what's most important and renew our dedication to the path of our forefathers.

With warm wishes of Shana Tovah Umetukah! 

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR AND A SWEET NEW YEAR

BY CHANA YAGOD, DAUGHTER OF RABBI AND REBBETZIN YAGOD, CONGREGATION TIFERES ISRAEL, MONCTON, NB

Elul, High Holiday prayers, and honey.

It's Elul and almost Rosh Hashana. A chill has just crept up in the air for the first time, announcing the onset of fall and turning our thoughts to the next Jewish holiday, Rosh Hashana. Rosh Hashana means "Head of the Year," because this is the time when we are judged for the previous year and our fate for the next year is decided.

Elul is the month that precedes Rosh Hashana and makes us anticipate the upcoming holiday, getting new suits and attending High Holiday services with seriousness and earnestness and hoping for a good year, full of blessing and no misfortune. We don't know what the year will bring, but we pray that Hashem will give us a blessed one. As we dip our slices of apple into the new batch of honey, we say "L'Shana Tovah U'Metukah"—literally, "For a Sweet New Year"—because we are praying for a good year. We pray not just in shul but outside shul as well, at the Yomtov table with this statement of optimism, and when walking outside on the holiday and

warmly wishing our friends and neighbours "Gemar Chasimah Tovah"—may you be inscribed for good this year.

This is because prayer is not some archaic, rote and meaningless expression of ancient words we don't understand—prayer is the soul connecting to Hashem (God) above, in a way that's heartfelt, meaningful and awakens your inner sense of being a Jew, and this is why Tefillah (prayer) can be in any language you understand, because the heart of prayer is a meaningful connection to God. Of course, it is best conveyed through Hebrew as this is the Jewish language that connects to our neshama (Hebrew for soul) and links us all as the Jewish people and to our Heritage, the Torah. But it is still permissible to pray even in English, if that connects you most, because the most important thing is that your heart is in it.

And you can bring your heart into every part of observance of Judaism. When we get ready for the apples and honey dipping, for example, we love to go all out and make it really special. A month before we try to seek out all

the niche, artisan and exotic honey vendors we can find and when Rosh Hashana comes around and we set up the Yomtov table, we have a whole line up of something like 20-30 honeys (like last year—that was fun) ranging from the classic Clover and Honeysuckle to less common but tasty ones such as Acacia and Raspberry, to stranger ones such as Avocado, Bilberry, and Japanese Knotweed (as in "not weed"-y honey—just an outrageous variety. I was hoping it wouldn't taste like dandelions). This is a particularly delightful part of the holiday, and it's especially fitting since my middle name, Devorah, means "Honeybee" in Hebrew, so I am famous for delighting in all things honey and my honeybee collection. (I do actually have at home a collection of bee artifacts such as stuffed bumblebees, a dried real honeycomb and the like). We take special joy in spreading the round Challos (plural for challah) with the 30 different kinds of honey, saying L'shana Tovah U'Mesukah, and on the way to shul, wishing our fellow shul members

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and dear friends a Gemar Chasima Tovah! Say it with joy! Because while this is a serious time of year, it is also a time to be happy because it is an important mitzvah to be happy! Share it with others and they will be happy too! Think of honey as your marking symbol for the year: spread it liberally on your foods, take its sweetness as a metaphor to sweetening your own year and those of others, and then bring its golden light into your home to brighten up everything. Honey is one of the special foods we have on Rosh Hashana, and amazingly, is a sweet bounty which comes from a stinging bee, a contrast that is surprising.

And there is a theme in this. The high holidays is a time of paramount intensity and contrast: Rosh Hashana is a time to be serious and contemplative, but also happy; and on Yom Kippur we are sad and uncertain because if on Rosh Hashana we didn't remember what mistakes we did in the year then we surely do by now, and if anything we are more nervous than ever about the prospect of the Heavenly decree on our year ahead, but at the same we are also at peace because we know that with Yom Kippur comes a fresh clean slate to start the next year like a new person, without any of the old mistakes, patterns and habits that we can now leave behind. So Rosh Hashana is on the one hand serious and on the other hand happy, Yom Kippur both nervousness and peace of mind, and while we may dislike certain people we still forgive them and wish them a good year, and we don't feel great about the mistakes we made or habits we've decided to let go of, but we move forward with optimism and determination for better—to do better and become better. We both look backward and look forward. We remember and forget, let go and reinforce, decide and let be; and we discover how to be serious and joyful at one and the same measure, for this holiday is one where the two elements are not opposites but one seamless, rich approach; and by the same viewpoint, all these dichotomies are not really opposite after all, but can be entirely one, when held at the same time and precision-lazered toward the same goal. Like a glass blower applying both pressure and gentleness, so that he gets neither breakage nor an ugly blob—both results of extremes on either end—but a beautiful blown glass creation, the result of a perfectly balanced approach. When applying both opposites at once, you get neither opposite, but rather exactly the middle, which is the best place to be.

THE POWER OF WORDS

BY RABBI YAKOV KERZNER, BETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, HALIFAX

Our most common activity as human beings is speech. It distinguishes us from all other animals on Earth and elevates us to a degree just below the angels. An average person speaks 16,000 words per day, or six million words every year. What we say, how we say it and when we choose to say it are the defining features of our personalities. Yet, most of us are very cavalier with our words. We often speak before thinking and, many times, even without thinking. Words quickly dissipate into thin air but their effects can linger for a lifetime. The power of words to cause both harm and benefit are vastly underestimated. In the modern age of recordings, emails, texting and social media, the words themselves can be preserved forever and haunt us for many years. Over thirty years ago, I made what I thought was an innocent jocular remark to an acquaintance. But to the target of my offhand remark, the passage of time did not remove the harmful effect. For me, it was harmless and forgettable. To the recipient, it is still hurtful and fresh.

Our shuls and gathering places provide a place for community building, socialization and friendship. An ill-placed comment, a nonchalant shrug or indifference for a fellow human being can be the source of negative feelings that endure for years. Shuls are intended to be spiritual spaces where we grow as human beings. Sadly, all too often, they have become places where friendships have been destroyed rather than created.

Jewish law contains three categories of wrongful speech: *Rechilut* or neutral gossip, *Motzei Shem Rah* or false rumors and *Lashan Harah*, truthful gossip about wrongs committed by others. On the surface, rechilut seems harmless but it is a product of our competitive nature and our unhealthy obsession with our neighbours' behavior. Motzei shem rah takes gossip one step further, when we falsely accuse our friends of misdeeds. The most grievous form of forbidden speech is lashan harah. At first glance, your assumption would be that

lying about others would be much worse than telling the truth. The opposite is true.

A false accusation might superficially be a worse sin but its effect can be more easily removed and disproved. The harm has the potential to be only temporary. Lashan harah, on the other hand, hits home and hits hard. It undermines the role of the recipient. A parent, a friend or a community member will quickly and sometimes permanently lose their effectiveness when undermined by a juicy piece of lashan harah. Sometimes, it's warranted or even mandated. For example, everyone would need to know about a child molester in their midst. We definitely want their position in society to be permanently damaged. But your average person needs to retain their position and effectiveness even if they are flawed. For that reason, our rabbis tell us that accepting lashan harah is a worse sin than promoting it. It is when the facts are established that the greatest harm is done.

On the flip side, a kind word, a friendly gesture and a helping hand has the power to change a person's life in many positive ways. Even listening and just showing interest in another's life has an overwhelming power of positivity.

This is a simple message that we all know and understand, but human nature is to focus on others for many reasons. The solution to this difficult problem is not through self-control and isolation from others. We know how hard it is to exert self-control when it comes to our other poor habits. Rather, the best way to lose a bad habit is to create good habits as a replacement. If we can't talk or read about others' behaviors, how should we occupy our time? The answer is quite simple. Develop other interests. Replace people with ideas and gossip with philosophy or science or nature. Instead of destroying others, spend the precious time we have on Earth growing as human beings, bettering ourselves and creating pride in our community. 5

So with the fresh air and turning trees that invigorates us for the approaching holidays, which will bring with it setting up our Rosh Hashana apples & honey and wishing everyone a sweet new year, let us remember that a fundamental aspect of Judaism is that all things we do work when in harmony and balance!

Dichotomy is when you have both the serious and the happy, the tension and the peace; but harmony is when all of that flows seamlessly in one even ribbon. Like the flowing ribbon of honey.

Wishing you all a Sweet New Year! 5





PJ LIBRARY HELPS THE ATLANTIC JEWISH COUNCIL BUILD A RUSSIAN-SPEAKING JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ATLANTIC CANADA

Grants will strengthen social connections and engage Russian-speaking Jewish (RSJ) families in Jewish experiences and learning across the United States and Canada

Halifax, NS—Russian-speaking Atlantic Canadian families raising Jewish children will now have more opportunities to participate in Jewish life, thanks to the RSJ Engagement Grant recently awarded by PJ Library®, the flagship program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation that provides free books to families raising Jewish children all over the world. This competitive grant program is a partnership initiative of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and Genesis Philanthropy Group, a global foundation focused primarily, but not exclusively, on developing and enhancing Jewish identity among Russian-speaking Jews worldwide.

The Atlantic Jewish Council received \$10,000 to launch ABVGDeika, a new program of monthly Jewish experiences specifically geared towards



Russian-speaking Atlantic Canadian families raising Jewish children under the age of nine.

The winning initiatives are designed to build social connections among Russian-speaking Jewish families and engage them in Jewish life, programming, or learning. They range from Jewish holiday celebrations and outings to cultural institutions, to picnics and Shabbat dinners.

The Atlantic Jewish Council is honoured to receive this grant and is thrilled to be part of the global PJ Library® community reaching more than 640,000 subscribers across 21 countries,” said Naomi Rosenfeld, Executive Director of the Atlantic Jewish Council. “As we’ve seen from our experience with previous PJ Library® engagement grants, we are confident this opportunity will be revolutionary for our Jewish community in Atlantic Canada.”

The three winning grant proposals were chosen for their dedication to engage an underserved population in their community. They join four other communities in North America in creating engaging, cutting-edge programs to attract RSJ families raising young children.

Respondents to a survey of previous RSJ Engagement-grant funded projects reported:

- 90% of families connected socially during the programs
- 96% of families had conversations about Jewish traditions and values after attending programs
- 98% would recommend the programs to friends

“PJ Library®’s impact goes well beyond the more than 210,000 books we send out each month across the United States and Canada,” said Debbi Cooper, Director of Engagement for PJ Library®. “We have worked closely with our local partners for over a decade to help advance Jewish family engagement, and now we are grateful to be able to add financial support to help ensure the success of great initiatives.”

“We hope these grants will allow each community to create a program relevant for and welcoming to its local Russian-speaking Jewish families, creating connections between them, but also to families receiving PJ Library® books around the world,” said Marina Yudborovsky, Director of Strategy and Operations at Genesis Philanthropy Group.

**STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION
ABOUT OUR MONTHLY ABVGDEIKA PROGRAMS!**



Mazel tov our Fall 2019

Abraham Leventhal Memorial Scholarship Recipients



Netali Bar
Halifax
Dalhousie
University
Bachelor of
Commerce



Jenna Conter
Halifax
Nova Scotia
Community College
Public Relations



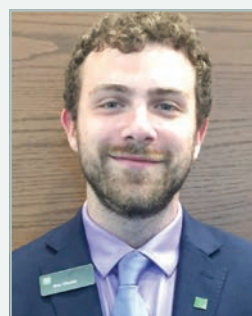
**Benjamin
Derible**
Dartmouth
Dalhousie
University
Bachelor of Arts–
Political Science



Ron Etin
Bedford
Dalhousie
University
Bachelor of Applied
Computer Science



Conor Falvey
Halifax
Dalhousie
University
Masters in Library
& Information
Studies (MLIS)



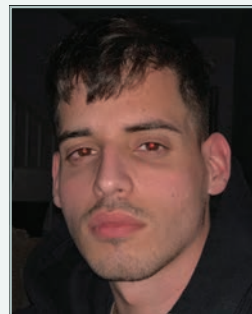
Ben Givner
Halifax
Saint Mary's
University
Bachelor of Arts



Hannah Givner
Halifax
Dalhousie
University
Bachelor of Arts –
Law, Justice,
& Society



**Joshua
Gummett**
Halifax
Dalhousie
University
Pharmacy
Professional's
Program



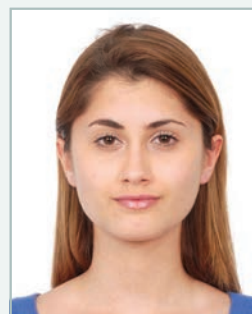
**Yonatan
Koknaev**
Bedford
Nova Scotia
Community College
Architectural
Drafting



**Bella
Kouznetsov**
Halifax
Eastern College
Accounting
& Payroll
Administration



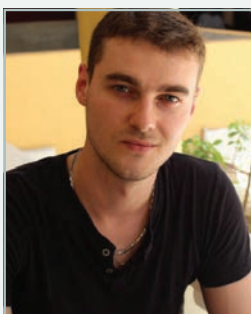
Meggie Laiter
Bedford
Dalhousie
University
Bachelor of Applied
Computer Science



Karin Reznikov
Bedford
Dalhousie
University
Bachelor of Science
– Chemistry



Flint Schwartz
Halifax
Dalhousie
University
PhD in Clinical
Psychology



Nikita Vedmid
Halifax
Saint Mary's
University
Bachelor of
Commerce

Application available online at:
www.theajc.ca/scholarships

Application deadline: November 30, 2019

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Council**

