

SHALOM! שָׁלוֹם!



Winter 2011 Vol. 36 No.3

Tevet 5772



GIMEL

DAVID SILVERBERG

- NS PREMIER LEADS TRADE MISSION TO ISRAEL
- NEWS FROM AROUND OUR REGION
- RABBIS' CORNER



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Atlantic Jewish Council /UJA of Atlantic Canada
5670 Spring Garden Road, Suite 508, Halifax, NS B3J 1H6
T 902.422.7491 F 902.425.3722

www.theajc.ns.ca

atlanticjewishcouncil@theajc.ns.ca



 UJA Federation of Canada
התנועה היהודית האטלנטית באזור קנדה

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Cover artist DAVID SILVERBERG

DAVID SILVERBERG B.A., R.C.A., F.R.S.A., an internationally acclaimed artist/printmaker, was born in Montreal in 1936. He studied with Arthur Lismer and received his B.A. from McGill University in 1957. That same year he studied engraving in Paris with William Hayter at Atelier 17 and was influenced by those around him, including Max Ernst, Mark Chagall and Matta.

Silverberg's passion for art and travel is legendary. He has worked in 86 countries. His critically appreciated work has been the subject of over 185 solo exhibitions around the world. His interest and research into his heritage is evident in many of his engravings and folios "The Song of Songs" and "The Psalms of David". After 32 years as a professor of Fine Arts at Mount Allison University, Silverberg was appointed Acadia University's first Artist in Residence in 1995-2000. He lives in and has his studio in Wolfville, N.S. He has been fortunate enough to have been to Israel on 6 occasions. Silverberg has many friends in Halifax, where he has exhibited often and given presentations both in galleries and synagogues and has contributed regularly to Shalom magazine.

שלום!

President: Shulamith Medjuck

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Executive Director:

Jon Goldberg

Editor:

Edna LeVine

Contributing Editor:

Joel Jacobson

Layout & Printing:

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Advertising

Ian Wiseman

Address all correspondence

including advertising enquires to:

Editor, c/o Shalom

5670 Spring Garden Road, Suite 508

Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1H6

Tel. (902) 422-7491 - Fax (902) 425-3722

elvine@theajc.ns.ca

atlanticjewishcouncil@theajc.ns.ca

www.theajc.ns.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.

President's Message

by Shulamith Medjuck

In our various communities, we have just commemorated Dignity Day. Dignity Day reminds us as Jews of Kristallnacht and how our rights as human beings were violated. In the past Shalom articles, I have raised the issues of the need for all of us to contribute to Jewish community life and of the various ways we can lend our support to Israel. Our lives however, in the Diaspora, pose different issues than if we were living in a Jewish state or in a large Jewish community such as Toronto or New York.

As many of you know, I grew up in a small Jewish community in Moncton. The challenges of being Jewish in such a setting are very different. Although there is in our society a commitment to multiculturalism, the holidays which were celebrated in the larger population were not mine. Though there might be some perception that holidays such as Christmas and Easter have been secularized and therefore more inclusive, it still is not my heritage. How to raise the profile of Judaism in this milieu is quite challenging. First it requires strength within ourselves to announce our Jewish identity. We must, as the saying goes, be comfortable in our own skins. Secondly, we must raise the awareness of our heritage. On every occasion, we must use the



Shulamith Medjuck lights a memorial candle during the Dignity Day ceremony in Grand Parade Square, Halifax.

opportunity to educate non Jews about our religion.

One might ask what are the benefits of investing in increasing the knowledge base of non Jews about us. For your friends and people who are open to understanding of minorities, it will mean a relationship based on information and openness. Equally and if not more important is the fact that when we are dealing with anti-Semitism, we will have knowledgeable people who may not be Jewish but who perceived the wrong. Anti-Semitism is not simply a Jewish offense but an offense against our society.

We have a multitude of tasks to build our Jewish community so that all Jews see themselves as part of it, to increase awareness of Judaism, and to speak out when the rights of others are being violated. We have chosen to live in small communities but we must commit to ensuring that we are doing what we can to enhance the respect of all to the values we adhere to.

The Canadian Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs has recently engaged Mark David to provide advocacy support to Atlantic Canadians. I welcome Mark in this new role. I invite you to share with him any constructive suggestions regarding how to pro-actively interact with the greater Atlantic community. He can be contacted at ajc@cija.ca

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you Happy



Joel Lion, Consul General of the State of Israel to Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces, met with AJC president Shulamith Medjuck and other community leaders during a one-day trip to Halifax.

Chanukah and that your celebration of the holiday is joyous.

The National Board of Directors and Staff extend to our Donors, Families and Friends a Warm and Festive

Chag Ha'Chanukah



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National President

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**ISRAEL CANNOT SURVIVE WITHOUT MAGEN DAVID ADOM
MAGEN DAVID ADOM CANNOT SURVIVE WITHOUT YOU**

From the Desk of Jon Goldberg, Executive Director

Welcome to our Chanukah edition of Shalom for 2011. By the time you read this, you'll be lighting the candles and celebrating our festival of lights and the freedom for the Jewish people. After that it's just a few days until 2012. The days fly by here on Spring Garden Road, just like that song from Fiddler on the Roof, "One Season Following Another." These past months have seen a number of our outstanding leaders pass away suddenly. Joe Naylor of P.E.I., Arnold Bennett of Newfoundland and Art Saffron of Springhill and Halifax. All of these men were recipients of the AJC Community Service Award and contributed not only to their communities but also to the Jewish people. Each in their own way has been a pillar of support to the AJC and the State of Israel. We will miss them. Yet life goes on and I am pleased to report that I attended a bris earlier this week of Amit Erlich, son of Sergey and Genny, their fifth child, first born in Canada. A brand new Jewish citizen of Halifax. I guess that is the circle of life happening before my eyes.

In November I attended our annual partnership meetings in the North of Israel. I was joined by Kathy and Arthur Zilbert, who have represented Atlantic Canada in various positions within our Coast To Coast partnership over the last number of years. Kathy served as National chairperson and Arthur as a committee chairperson during their tenure. Both brought credit to themselves and to Atlantic Canada. They will be retiring from their positions and I will miss them personally and want to thank them for their time and effort. Karen and Howard Conter will be continuing to participate in this program, representing Atlantic Canada, and if anyone else is interested in joining one of our most important and successful projects over the last 10 years, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Our UJA campaign is well underway, with each community endeavoring to finish their canvass before the end of the year. Preliminary results seem to be on par with last year and I want to thank everyone for participating in this most important area of our activities. I would like to point out that there are a number of special people throughout the region who give up their time and energy to help make our campaign a success. These are the "canvassers", both men and women. You are the engine that runs our campaign and without you it would be almost impossible for the AJC to serve both our communities here in Atlantic Canada and assist the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora and



in Israel.

As the days run down on 2011, I want to thank the Board of Directors of the AJC for their support and their ongoing efforts on behalf of Atlantic Jewry. In particular, the Management Committee, President Shulamit Medjuck, 1st V.P. Michael Argand, 2nd V.P. Joanna Wexler, Treasurer Mark Goldhar, Immediate Past President Howard Conter, Legal Counsel Jack Haller, Kathy Zilbert, Michael Pink, and Victor Goldberg.

I know that you will enjoy reading the news of the region and also the articles by members of our staff, who are so important to the operations of the AJC. My thanks to Edna LeVine, Director of Community Engagement and Editor of Shalom; Rabbi David Ellis, our Regional Chaplain; Bill Chernin, Director of Campus Services; Svetlana Ratchinski, Controller and Accountant for the AJC, Camp Kadimah and the Atlantic Jewish Foundation; Maya Moscovich, UJA Administrator and Programmer; Jared Goldlust, Camp Kadimah Director; and Ian Wiseman, AJC Administration and Programmer. My best wishes to Kayla Wexler, who is on maternity leave, and a welcome back to Mark David, in his new position as CIJA Coordinator for Atlantic region.

We are also fortunate to have the support and assistance of Linda Kislowicz, Perry Romberg, Daniel Stern and Mindy Eklove of UIAFC in Toronto. Also, Mila Voihanski, Executive Director of JIAS Canada, and a number of terrific people in our UIA Israel office. I look forward to working with Judy Zelikovitz and her staff at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

Happy Chanukah to all our readers and their families. May 2012 be a year of good health, prosperity and peace for our community, our country and Kol Yisrael.



Kathy and Arthur Zilbert make a visit to the Alei Givah School during the Coast to Coast partnership meetings.

From the Desk of

Edna LeVine, Director of Community Engagement

How we choose to react to conflict reflects our personal responsibility and this fall Holocaust Education Week in Halifax presented programs that explored how reaction translated into action. The film, *The Rescuers*, recounted the stories of several diplomats, who acted contrary to government policy and exposed themselves to personal danger when they chose to rescue Jews from the fate of the Nazi death camps. Their compassion for the human spirit was palpable and their unexplained actions resonated with hope. *This film is available from the AJC for screenings in other Atlantic Jewish communities.* Our Holocaust education programs this fall extended to Sydney, where local filmmaker Neal Livingston screened his film *Both Sides of the Wire* during a program for educators (read more about this program with keynote speaker Linda Hooper, in the Cape Breton section). Susanna Kokkonen, Director of the Christian Desk at Yad Vashem, delivered a message about the powerful action of silence during the Holocaust, which sealed the fate for millions of Jews. She was the guest speaker in Moncton and Halifax where she also met with local Holocaust survivors at an AJC luncheon. This year's partners and hosts for Holocaust Education Week included the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia Teacher Union,



Edna LeVine with Sylvia Parris, Multicultural Education Consultant, Nova Scotia Department of Education.

Azrieli Foundation and longtime supporter Leonard Preyra, MLA, Halifax Citadel, who brought a resolution before the House of Assembly to recognize Holocaust Education Week in Halifax.

This year the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program will be taught to students in our community and 10 participants from Halifax, Fredericton and Charlottetown will be studying, volunteering and then travelling to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in the spring. We are once again very fortunate to have Rabbi Yosef Goldman teaching the program in Fredericton and Judith Goldberg, Dawn Frail and Lysa Appleton teaching the program in Halifax. Their commitment to this program offers a valuable educational opportunity for our students.

Educators continuously request Holocaust education resources from the AJC and I had the opportunity this fall to present useful classroom resources to the all the Nova Scotia Department of Education Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights Coordinators. Resources included books of first-hand Holocaust survivor testimony published by the Azrieli Foundation, Fighting Anti-Semitism Together (with the outcomes for the NS curriculum), the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program and the books and films in the AJC library.

Welcoming newcomers to the community continued throughout the fall in Halifax and Saint John (read about Saint John immigration in the Around Our Region section). Since the spring Halifax has welcomed 17 families, with a wide range of skills and talents to enrich our community and this year's Dignity Day in Halifax was enhanced with newcomer Yulia Medvedchuk's performance on the violin. Settling in a new country is challenging and creating a welcoming community requires the commitment of community volunteers. This fall, passionate volunteer Ruth



Edna LeVine and Margie Casallas, Immigration Employer Support Coordinator, Greater Halifax Partnership, at the GHP workshop.

Goldbloom offered a special group tour of the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 for newcomer families. Their joy and appreciation was evident in the heartfelt notes she received.

The Greater Halifax Partnership is committed to immigration to grow the city by working to educate employers to hire new immigrants. At a workshop this fall the GHP presented a positive outlook for successful immigration in Halifax highlighting the demands in our workforce, a good match for our community program.

As the AJC representative for Partners for Human Rights, International Human Rights Day was celebrated on December 9th at Park West School in Halifax. This annual event presented the Nova Scotia Human Rights Awards and also showcased local youth talent revolving around the theme, *Celebrating 25 years of Partnerships in Human Rights: awareness through education in our communities.* This winter Partners will hold an annual professional development day to plan future events to educate about human rights in our community.

January 27th is International Holocaust Remembrance Day and information will be forthcoming for an event in Halifax on the evening of January 26th. Please remember to check the local Halifax community website for updates on local events. Joining is free and easy...

www.halifax-community.info

Holocaust Education Week: A review and a regret

by Laura Hubbard, University of King's College, School of Journalism

Holocaust Education Week has been prevalent in the Halifax community since 2004 and coincides with the anniversary of Kristallnacht, which, this year, was marked by a Dignity Day ceremony in Parade Square. This year's events ran from 24 October to 9 November and covered a wide range of topics and angles with regard to the Holocaust - offering something for all interested.

I was fortunate enough to attend two of the events happening throughout Halifax. As a university student interested in Holocaust studies and history in general, I tried my best to attend what I could: to further my knowledge, to be able to accurately educate others, and to pay my respects to the millions of stories we will never hear - the people who perished during this era. I regret I could not attend more.

I am thankful that I did attend what I did - Dr. Susanna Kokkonen's talk as well as a screening of the film *Saviours in the Night*.

Dr. Kokkonen spoke to many issues surrounding Holocaust Education and remembrance, providing a wonderful "overview" of the topic which was seemingly well received by those in attendance. While Dr. Kokkonen's talk included two short films on Yad Vashem and the type of work and education they do and offer, I found the discussion on the younger generation and the importance of Holocaust studies most interesting.

I have been asked questions on this topic before. The Holocaust was some 70 years ago. Why is it still relevant, today? Last May, my passion for Holocaust studies

became that much stronger and clearer. I traveled with 59 other Canadian post-secondary students to Germany and Poland on a Holocaust case study. Traveling with two survivors to these sites changed my life and world views. I ask questions about things now. I am more caring. I am more accepting.

And I have become an advocate - in my own public sphere and group of friends - for Holocaust education and acceptance of all. Hearing the importance of studying the Holocaust, especially for the younger generations, was gratifying for me. Through Dr. Kokkonen's talk, students were introduced to the terrors and miraculous stories of this era, the stories that I spent all summer studying.

The second Holocaust Education Week event I attended was the aforementioned film, *Saviours in the Night*. This film was a fantastic complement to Dr. Kokkonen's talk which included background information about the Nazi regime, response from the German public, and the tragedy of the extermination of the Jewish population in general.

The film, which I highly recommend, is



Dr. Yuri Leving, right, Chair of Russian Studies at Dalhousie University, hosted a public event in his classroom for Susanna Kokkonen, Director of the Christian Desk at Yad Vashem. Mary Ann Gilbert, left, Atlantic representative of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem and Edna LeVine, of the AJC, co-sponsored the event.

based on the memoirs and experiences of Marta Spiegel, a German Jew who was taken in by a neighbouring family of German gentiles. The film charts the fear and hardships by both Spiegel and her daughter (and husband, who hid elsewhere), but also of the German family who risked their lives in doing what they believed was right.

If nothing else, this film confirms that all Germans were not Nazis and that there were a few who risked their lives for the lives of others, who are recognized and remembered at Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

Holocaust Education Week was not only enlightening but also enjoyable and the events that I was able to attend were well attended by audiences that varied in age and backgrounds.

Laura Hubbard's blog, which charts her travels in Germany and Poland and ongoing Holocaust education, can be found at www.pilgrimagetopoland.blogspot.com



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Darrell Dexter Leads Trade Mission to Israel

by Joel Jacobson

If enthusiasm and optimism can lead to dollars for Nova Scotia business, the October week-long trade mission to Israel, led by Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter, will mean a boon for the province.

A group of a dozen business and educational leaders, from sectors representing education, technology, medical research, shipping and real estate, met Israeli business counterparts, as well as government officials who identified opportunities that exceeded original expectations.

In a wide-ranging interview with Shalom, a few hours after his return, Premier Dexter said, "It was extraordinarily positive, and certainly successful, as even those who went with modest expectations, learned much and made contacts through a great spirit of cooperation. The Israeli government went out of its way to accommodate us."

Dexter had been in Israel once before as part of a Canada-Israel week-long tour for political leaders. He was impressed during that trip two years ago but this time, had more wonderful things to say about the country and its people, and the way visitors are treated.



Darrell Dexter meets children enjoying their learning experience at Alei Givah School in northern Israel.



Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter and Victor Goldberg stand at Canada Center in Metullah.

He was particularly impressed with Israeli President Shimon Peres who, the Premier said, "was well-briefed on Nova Scotia, knew what we were about, and spoke in very visionary terms about what working together could provide. He was enthused about our technology and research opportunities and said, 'Bankers deal with yesterday's money. Research and technology deal with tomorrow's money.' I thought that was a visionary way of taking advantage of your research asset."

Meetings were held with officials at

Hebrew University, Technion and the Weizmann Institute who, Dexter said, "are masters at taking basic research and transferring it to commercial products. From them, we learned methods of doing this and hope to use it in our research areas."

Dalhousie's vice-

president of research, Martha Crago, signed a memorandum of understanding between Dalhousie and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, strengthening their commitment to explore opportunities for collaboration on international research.

When Dexter and the educational component of the mission met with Daniel Hershkowitz, Minister of Science and Technology, and he learned of Nova Scotia's 400 researchers and technologists in marine science, he immediately realized the chance to collaborate.

A follow-up meeting with the president of Haifa University resulted in an immediate plan. "He told us it was an opportunity that couldn't be lost (to work with our researchers) and scheduled to come to Halifax to meet with our marine research people next week."

Dexter met with a group of Palestinian-Canadian business people in Ramallah. "There is a lively business community there, looking to find business partners. One man out of Toronto, who has an olive oil business, is seeking markets and we suggested there were links that could be established in Nova Scotia.

"Even speakers we heard in Israel had a common theme: Creating an economy in the West Bank that would make life more hopeful and lead to better governance and a stable system for a better economy."

A visit to ZIM headquarters had positive results for Dexter and Karen Oldfield, president and CEO of the Halifax Port Authority. ZIM has a 40-year relationship with the Halifax port but, because of recent economic times, cut its traffic to Halifax a couple of years ago.

"They know of our new \$25 billion Irving contract to build frigates that will increase business in the port and now they expect to exceed the number of



Jim Spatz and Victor Goldberg show Canadian pride beside a Canadian consulate van used by the mission to Israel.



Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter presents hockey jerseys at Metullah (see story for details)

their containers currently going through the port,' Dexter said.

Meetings with telecom service provider Amdocs and security company Elbit Systems of Haifa were fruitful as well. Amdocs talked of bringing work to Nova Scotia. Elbit was excited about the Irving contract that could expand relationships the company already

has at Halifax Shipyards.

The Nova Scotians also visited Metullah and Canada Centre, a project supported by the Atlantic Jewish Council. "It was nice to see the support our local community provides Israel," Dexter said.

At Israel's only ice rink to date, Dexter

presented officials with a Sydney Crosby #87 hockey jersey and a Nova Scotia hockey jersey with #27, signifying Dexter is the 27th premier of the province.



Victor Goldberg, Darrell Dexter and Jim Spatz are part of a tour of a JNF forest during the mission to Israel.



Victor Goldberg, right, and Shimon Peres shake hands during a meeting between Darrell Dexter, left, and the Israeli President.



Members of the Nova Scotia Trade Mission to Israel gather at Elbit Systems of Haifa to discuss security issues.

Passion on Display at UJA Kickoff

by Joel Jacobson

PASSION!!

A simple word, but so meaningful on the night of October 23 at Pier 21 in Halifax.

Passion for Israel.

Passion for art.

Passion for music.

Passion for the spoken word.

All this passion was wrapped up in a tight package at the kickoff for the United Jewish Appeal in Halifax.

Tom Forrestall and his paintings of Israel, created during a three week period a year ago, were on display – originals and prints of Israeli scenes, done with a passion this world-renowned artist shows for everything he touches, and certainly evident in this specific work of 35 Israeli scenes. The art has been for sale for several months and both originals and prints continue to create interest inside and outside the Jewish community.

Havanel Edri, a 27-year-old Israeli from the north where AJC fund-raising has had such an impact, sang several melodies, enthraling the audience with his smooth baritone voice, his ease of holding a crowd in his hand, and a true passion for his native land.

Havanel is a graduate of the Theatre School at the internationally-regarded Julliard School of Music in New York, where he is now based and from where he travels to perform around the world. While pursuing a career in musical theatre, he has been in 30 countries, many times in Canada, singing about Israel to predominantly Jewish audiences. As an aside, he spoke of his sister Litaz's love of Halifax and Nova Scotia after she spent six weeks as a CIT at Camp Kadimah in 2010. His remarks drew warm applause from the crowd of more than 100.

Two young men from northern Israel spoke eloquently about Kav Hazinuk (the first steps), a program for youth between 15 and 25 years of age to develop community involvement and leadership skills. Kav Hazinuk is one of the pride and joys of the AJC's giving to Israel.

Howard Conter, Atlantic chair of the fund campaign, spoke with passion about all the programs in which AJC and Partnership 2PK and Coast To Coast are involved in Israel – from funding computers for a school autistic children's program to creating a hydrotherapy pool to expanding a school for severely



AJC executive director Jon Goldberg welcomes entertainer Havanel Edri, an Israeli living in New York, to the UJA kickoff in Halifax.

disabled children. He allowed a slide show to tell the story of what UJA giving from Atlantic Canada means to the Jewish homeland, of the dozens of projects that enable Israelis – from youth to seniors – live better lives.

Karen Conter, chair of the women's campaign, with Ruth Goldbloom, was emcee of the evening and emphasized the importance of women in the campaign. A group of American women, on video, stressed how they realized the importance of giving and could do so independently from their spouses while knowing they personally were contributing to a



Dan Stern, Director, Campaign and Regional Community Services, UJA Canada, guest speaker Judy Zelikovitz, CIJA, Nancy Bennett and Shari Ritter attend the St. John's, NL, UJA kickoff.



Event chair Howard Conter welcomes a large crowd to the UJA kickoff in Halifax



Karen Conter, chair of the Women's Division of Atlantic UJA, makes an appeal during the UJA kickoff in Halifax.

philanthropic cause and doing good work for others.

When Rami Milrid, a 24-year-old Israeli, finished speaking, he had the audience convinced that giving to the 2011 campaign was the right thing to do. He is in his ninth year of the 10-year Kav Hazinuk program,

having started as a teenager and carried on through high school, army service and now at the end of his time in university as he readies for a career in accounting.

"In my second year, when I was 16, I had to do a social project which enabled me to realize I could do anything in life," he said. "I learned to gain values I didn't think I had, to find the initiative to work, volunteer and do good things in the community."

He spoke of the project he did in university, teaching life skills to community women from lower economic and social classes. As an example, he said he taught them about investing wisely for their future and that of their children, something the women had never been taught, but which they grasped readily when given the opportunity.

Learning social action is the thrust of Kav Hazinuk. Giving young people the opportunity to become leaders in Israel's north, and to remain in their home communities, is the action being taken by



Rami Milrid, Israel, tells the audience about the good work UJA funding is doing in youth development in Israel.

UJA Atlantic Canada through Partnership 2000.

Howard, Karen, Rami, and his compatriot Uriah Ravid, 18, who also travelled from Israel to speak in Halifax and Sydney, all brought that message.

Giving is good for the soul, and with an emphasis on social action, good for Israel.

This Chanukah, your gift to CHW lights the future for a child in Israel - to reach *their* dreams.



Children
Healthcare
Women

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) wishes all our members and friends a very Happy Chanukah!

Thank you for your continued support of CHW's projects for Children, Healthcare and Women in Israel and Canada.

Your generosity effectively transforms lives and lights the way for so many.

Marla Dan, CHW National President
CHW Board of Directors
Alina Ianson, CHW Executive Director

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) is Canada's leading Jewish women's philanthropic organization. Founded in 1917, **CHW** is non-political, volunteer driven and funds programs and projects for **Children, Healthcare and Women** in Israel and Canada.

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Campus Life

by Bill Chernin, Director of Campus Services, Atlantic Provinces

So, you're wondering what's happening on campus - or maybe you turned to this page by mistake. Either way, I'll tell you.



We still have a lot of Jewish kids on campus, they're still young and smart, and possibly taller than they used to be, so rejoice, the next Jewish generation won't need footstools as much as your parent's did. Does taller mean they're closer to heaven? I hope so. I also can't think of a single Jewish student who smokes. This probably means prolonged public awareness campaigns work - Hurray! (or "oh-no," depending on your point of view). Are most of these young, smart, non-footstool dependant students still from Ontario? Yes, most, but not all.

What else has changed? Our Student Israel advocacy group is the strongest it's been in years. That's good. They've run regular programs with a core group of regular students and new participants have been coming out regularly, and they have an executive of new and older students. Also, a number of Jewish commerce students are participating who have not participated with the student community before. That's very good.

And we've had some very positive developments in the Jewish Student Association. Firstly, the student's are now officially calling their group Hillel Atlantic. Secondly, we started a chapter at University of King's College this year, for the first time, with 40 members. We've had other successes networking with non-affiliating student as well. We supported and helped organize a Rosh Hashanah dinner that had 42 non-affiliated students attend. We did the same for the students in the new King's branch, and we've made contact with two other students interested in being supported to do their own Jewish programming. This is a strong beginning for networking strategy. We also have good involvement with law students and other graduate students. In fact this year a medical student sits on the JSA board. Now we're looking for students we can work with in our basketball league, and elsewhere.

We have an executive of diverse students, and we've been working on developing their leadership and vision of the future. It's going very well. They're motivated and thinking strategically, producing some very good ideas and improvements. It's great to see a group of different people turning into a team. We are attempting to turn the Hillel house into a study hall for the exam season, we're looking at student-led programs on getting into law school and med school, dating has taken a high spot on the agenda, and students not involved on the exec are volunteering to participate in specific capacities. Two popular, local Jewish professors have also volunteered to give us our students lectures: Yuri Leving of Dalhousie will lecture on Jewish Life in Russia before World War I, and David Brandes of King's will lecture on the Jewish aspects of

Kafka. We're going to speak to other Jewish professors as well.

After the lessening of the Jewish student population in the past two years, we are reinventing ourselves to deal with the new challenges, and it's looking very promising. Also exciting is Daniel Pink's new role as a Campus Liaison for the AJC. Daniel was one of the best student presidents I ever worked with, and now he also brings his experiences in law school and other not-for-profit organizations back to benefit campus. Welcome back Daniel!

Our Social Justice group ROW has is also doing extremely well. It's difficult to elaborate on ROW's multiple objectives in this small column, and to explain that we have a non-religious, non-political, Jewish and non-Jewish student group on campus. But suffice it say that we have initiated an organization on campus that uses very few resources, and facilitated charity volunteering for 30 students this term. Next term should be even better as they prepare partnerships with the United Way, Out of the Cold, and LOVE (Leave Out Violence). ROW has excellent student leadership and I believe our community's role in initiating and supporting it should be a source of pride. We still have a Jewish society at Mt. Allison, but Acadia's little group is sadly on life-support. But, as a door closes a window opens, and we know of a couple of Jewish students elsewhere in Atlantic Canada, so other things might be possible.

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Consul Swings by Halifax

by Joel Jacobson

It was a drop-in visit, planned shortly before Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter departed for Israel as head of a seven-day trade mission.

Joel Lion, the newly-appointed Consul General of the State of Israel to Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces, met with Nova Scotia's top politician October 18 to offer a bit of advice on what approaches to make to Israeli politicians and who to contact to create business partnerships between the province and Israel.

Speaking to a small group of community leaders before his return to Montreal after the whirlwind one-day visit, Lion remarked, "I thought it would be a good thing for me to sit with him and talk of his aims for the mission."

Dexter's trip was postponed by a day because of a major ship-building contract announcement in Halifax on his planned day of departure. But he caught up with the Nova Scotia business group October 20 to bring the cachet of a major political leader to the mission.

Lion continued, "Mr. Dexter is meeting with Shimon Peres, and ministers in infrastructure, science and technology and business, as well as making a trip to Ramallah to meet with Palestinian business interests. My office helped plan the mission, so talking with him face-to-face was important. I told Mr. Dexter this is only the beginning (of trade relations between Nova Scotia and Israel). We want to show Israel in the light of business, education, technology and even culture, food and wine."

He added that the side trip to Ramallah is "a good sign. Anyone we can have there to help their economy takes the emphasis away from terror. It's a stage to having two countries, which we know will happen some day."

The mission includes various Nova Scotia business interests, including representatives of Dalhousie University, the Dal Medical School's brain injury



AJC 1st vice president, Michael Argand (l) and Atlantic Foundation Chair Kathy Zilbert, look at pictures of the historic prisoner swap on the iPhone of Consul General Joel Lion during the latter's one-day visit to Halifax October 18.

department, members of the Halifax Port Commission, a real estate developer, and two leaders of Nova Scotia Business Inc.

Lion, who assumed his new post in early September and is fluent in six languages, did an English radio talk show interview and an interview on CBC French television during the whirlwind trip. He also met with Atlantic Jewish Council president Shulamith Medjuck and AJC executive director Jon Goldberg.

In a lighter moment, he made a deal with Medjuck to come back and see Camp Kadimah next

summer when the weather is better and camp is in session, as she boasted about one of the AJC's jewels.

Earlier in the day, he watched with interest the swap of kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit for more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners held in Israel.

"While I can't comment directly on what I think of the swap because I'm just a civil servant, I see it as so interesting that we're celebrating life (with the happy return of Shalit) and they're celebrating death (with their celebration of the return of people whose role was to kill)," said Lion.

"It was courageous for our Prime Minister to make the decision (to generate the swap). Now 80 per cent of Israelis are behind him. Perhaps this shows we're ready to make other deals, that we want our neighbours to recognize the State of the Jewish Nation. When we're recognized as having a right to be there, perhaps that will be the end of the claims and the end of conflicts."

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The Atlantic Jewish Foundation Announces SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2012

All applications must be submitted by April 30, 2012

Scholarships will be awarded on merit and on the availability of funds.

Submitting an application does not confirm automatic receipt of scholarship.

Scholarships & Bursaries Available

The Noa and Sarah Heinish Foundation Trust

Throughout their lives, Noa and Sarah Heinish devoted themselves to the betterment of their community, their house of worship and the State of Israel.

Passover of 1943 found Noa and Sarah assisting in the preparation of a Seder for hundreds of young Jewish servicemen stationed in Halifax before shipping out to Europe.

At the end of WW II, Noa was one of a group of interpreters who met the ships which brought Holocaust survivors from Europe to the shores of Halifax. Speaking in Yiddish, he helped them transfer to the trains which took them to family members awaiting their arrival in upper Canada.

Noa Heinish was one of the founders of Shaar Shalom Congregation and served as its first president. Together with Sarah they lent their support to every arm of the congregation.

Sarah Heinish was an active member of Women's League, Hadassah, Neptune Theatre, the Soroptomists and the Nova Scotia Institute for the Blind. Both Noa and Sarah gave generously of their time and resources in the support of Israel Bond drives, United Jewish Appeal, Camp Kadimah and other groups and were leaders in the Canadian Jewish Congress. For many years they operated a successful clothing business on Gottingen Street in downtown Halifax which closed in 1972.

To carry on their good works, the Heinish family established the Noa and Sarah Heinish Foundation. This charitable foundation has provided endowments supporting Jewish educational and health care institutions in Canada and Israel. A portion of the funds has been allocated to the Atlantic Jewish Council Foundation to provide an annual merit scholarship for a student from the Maritime Jewish community to study in Israel. Dependent on the vagaries of the market, the scholarship should provide a stipend of several thousand dollars to the successful recipient.

***Noa and Sarah Heinish Foundation Trust -
One scholarship per year for study in Israel***

The Miasnik-Rein Trust

A limited number of scholarships of \$2,000 each are available to worthy students, one or both of whose parents profess the Jewish faith. The scholarship is open to students of the Atlantic Region for the purpose of establishing or continuing exposure to their Jewish heritage by means of study, travel, community service or other suitable means.

***Miasnik - \$2000 each.
Maximum 5 scholarships per year.***

Halifax Endowment Fund (Jayson Greenblatt Bursary)

A \$500 bursary awarded to a Jewish student from Atlantic Canada to further Jewish studies in Israel or in the Diaspora.

***Jayson Greenblatt Bursary - \$500 each.
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*For further information and applications please contact:
The Atlantic Jewish Foundation (scholarships and bursaries)
in c/o Jon Goldberg
jgoldberg@theajc.ns.ca*

*Applications are available online from our website:
<http://theajc.ns.ca/mission-statement/>*



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- The Atlantic Chaplaincy program
- Services for new immigrants to the Atlantic region
- Camp Kadimah
- Israel Experience programs for Canadian youth & young adults
- Programs and services to communities in northern Israel



For more information contact Perry Romberg
Director Financial Resource Development, UIA Federations Canada
Email: promberg@uiafed.org Tel: (416) 634-3070



*Atlantic Jewish Foundation Chair: Kathy Zilbert
Immediate past Co-Chairs: Victor Goldberg & Jim Spatz*



From the Desk of Jared Goldlust, Director of Camp Kadimah

It is application season here at Camp Kadimah and families are signing up their kids for what promises to be another fantastic summer at Camp. Many of these families recognize the tremendous value of summer camp for their child. From enjoying the great outdoors to forming lifelong friendships, it is an obvious decision. Yet, for many parents, deciding their child's summer plans is something they put off till the time is "right" or maybe leave it to their child to choose for themselves their summer plans.

Last year in my spring Shalom article, I pointed out the various benefits of Jewish summer camp. At that time, I highlighted

4-day colour war – campers are given leadership opportunities and the chance to feel like an important part of something larger than themselves.

In addition, interacting and living with peers of their own age and having big brothers and sisters (counselors) to guide them along the way in a safe environment, gives a child a high level of social confidence. These "intangibles" of developing a child's self esteem and building social confidence all happens in the confines of a place that promotes strong values. Kids



are able to grow over the course of their time at camp because they live in a community that is inclusive and appreciative of what every camper brings to this sharing community.

When my parents had to decide where I would go to school,

successful careers. Most of us also refrain from sheltering our kids in home schooling because we want our kids to have a positive social experience. But do we not also want the next generation to be individuals that have strong self esteem, high levels of social confidence and a dedication the people in the community they live in?

Why then, for some, is going to Jewish summer camp a decision that we sometimes do not care about or allow our children to make on their own? I know from many past campers and current campers that developing their "self" at camp has done them a lot more good than any of the social benefits they have received from school.

Perhaps our youth can see that they might have fun doing archery, going waterskiing, singing or dancing and playing sports. But all our children, understandably so, do not recognize the value in the intangibles they acquire at camp that will serve them well throughout their life. It is our job as their educators, their parents, and their role models to not ignore their development and take control of the decision-making process.

In a world of endless choices, it is easy to overlook the importance of sending your child to Jewish camp. If you are an alumnus of camp, take some time to think about

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Campers and staff symbolically show that Camp Kadimah is #1!

the extensive studies that emphasize the power of Jewish summer camp in building a child's Jewish identity and strong connection to the community. What is not the focus of the study, and perhaps even more important, is that summer camp provides a child with critical characteristics that I like to call "camp intangibles". Through various activities and programs that are not accessible throughout the school year, campers develop skills that allow them to build positive self-esteem. For instance, from daily activities such as evening programs to camp-wide programs like Maccabia – our

I was never asked to give my input, or better yet, I was never asked the question if I even wanted to go to school. Going to school and providing a child with formal education is a societal norm, because we want the next generation to be educated and have



Two campers express the warm friendship they developed at camp!

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Happy faces are typical on every one of Camp Kadimah's 42 days!

continued from page 14

what "intangibles" and values camp gave you. Do you not want your child to gain the same confidence, self-esteem and respect for others? If you do not know much about camp or Kadimah, inquire and ask questions because your child may be missing out on an extremely valuable experience.

Do yourself and your child a favour; do not be indifferent to your child's summer plans.

Give the decision the same care and thought as you would for choosing a school. Summer camp can be just as powerful in the long-term. Trust me, your child will thank you in the future. I know I will continue to thank my parents.

Camp Kadimah is now accepting applications online for the 2012 Summer at www.campkadimah.com. If you wish to speak with me about your child attending

camp or working through any barriers that might be in the way, please call me at 1-866-KADIMAH (523-4624) or email jared@campkadimah.com.

Also a reminder: If you are a first time camper from Atlantic Canada, you are able to receive a \$1,000 automatic savings off camp fees, through the One Happy Camper Program.

Camp Kadimah: Jared Goldlust's first year as director by Joel Jacobson

How would you be if you just spent six weeks running a summer camp for 218 campers while supervising a staff of 90?

Maybe a bit tired. Voice slightly low. But definitely relaxed and contemplative.

That's how Jared Goldlust, director of Camp Kadimah, seemed after his first year leading the camp where he has spent more than a decade as a camper and staff member.

"Kadimah has been the stepping stone for my life," he smiled. "I came from Toronto as a camper, stayed as a staffer and decided to attend Dalhousie University where many of my camp friends were and because I liked the area. I also recognized Kadimah's power of enabling me to be a mentor and role model to kids (when I was

on staff), and now it's what I do."

After earning his undergrad degree at Dal, Jared picked up a dual degree at Brandeis University in Waltham, MA with a Master of Business Administration in Non-Profit Management and a Master of Arts in Jewish Professional Leadership, with a specialty in Jewish camping.

All to Kadimah's advantage, because someone who loves the 68-year-old camp at Barss Corner, who has such close ties to and a wonderful affinity for it, is at its head for the future.

"It's a camp that has great value, to the Atlantic community and the wider community from where we are drawing so many of our campers now," he said. "It offers Maritime kids a chance for a Jewish experience with their own age groups

they might not receive in their home towns and cities where there are fewer Jewish socialization opportunities for them. At Camp, they meet other kids from Toronto, Israel and around the world who might have a stronger, year-round Jewish connection."

A challenge for Jared and the camp committee is to "sell the emotion and the feel of Kadimah if they don't have the friendships that have been developed there," the director said. "That's why our Gibby Day program (a one-day camp experience for children seven and eight years old to see if they like what's going on and to hopefully lure them for the next year) and our one-week program for children in the youngest age-group, is so important. They're immersed, even for a short time, and see what Camp life is like."

Kadimah 2011, with about the same number of campers as the year before, was termed "an overall success," by Jared. "I expected more stress because, with the change of leadership (after the previous five years under camp director Joanna Wexler), I wondered if the spirit of Kadimah would change."

But, he said, the unique camaraderie and strong feelings toward camp that had been built at Kadimah ensured the transition was smooth and things were comparatively uneventful – in a good way.

Of the 218 campers, 160 were repeats, meaning they were excited from Day One. "I probably knew all 160 by name. It's important for a good director to know each child by name and relate to them. They feel good about themselves that they're recognized. The new campers fitted in well from the get-go, too" – and it wasn't long before Jared also knew them by name.

Jared met with staff during a four-day pre-camp training period when he delivered the message – "Kadimah was special to me

in developing what I decided as a career. It's pivotal that counsellors be educators, motivators, role models and even parents for two months. It's an opportunity to positively develop these youngsters. Don't underestimate the impact you can have on them, Jewishly, socially and personally."

Yes, spoken like someone who has studied camping and its affect, but the emotion of being a Kadimah lifer was also there. It's something you can't teach.

He noted there are many positives to be taken from 2011, importantly the number of Maritime kids getting that one-week or even one-day taste of camp life. "Many will probably be back next year," Jared said. "We had about 30 per cent of all campers from the Maritimes, more than in recent years. And that figure can be grown. We have to convince parents that the Kadimah opportunity is unique and important for their child's social and Jewish development."

He stated the full facilities of the site were in use this year, maybe a bit more

than other years. "We used the mini-putt, shuffleboard court, tennis courts, tetherball, and the Chairman's Sport Field more than other summers. We wanted the kids playing outside during free time. Ensuring use of extra facilities made a difference."

He stressed that expenses shouldn't be a reason for Maritime parents to exclude their children from Kadimah. "The committee is very generous with scholarship money and we don't want money to be a reason they're not coming."

He said lots of tears flowed as kids said goodbye when camp ended. Since then, he's had feedback, from both campers and parents, that they're already counting the days until next summer.

Jared will spend his winter in Toronto at the Kadimah office spreading the word of camp, engendering its spirit, and building to an even better 2012 when again, after six weeks (plus one of staff orientation), his eyes will be tired, his voice quiet, but the inner glow warm.

Jacob Medjuck - A Winner at Canadian Comedy Awards by Jenna Conter

In 2008, Jacob Medjuck took a leap of faith. Ditching his doodles for Dream Works, Medjuck decided to take his childhood memories from Camp Kadimah and turn them into a movie. From the fellow that "Went to camp. Kissed a girl. And wrote a movie about it" came *Summerhood*.

"I'm a story teller, that's what I've done all my life," Medjuck said. "You hone your techniques and your interests and they grow from there." Though the film failed to be purchased by a mainstream production company, Medjuck pounded the pavement with his picture, placing it in a number of international film festivals which yielded great success. Unfortunately, *Summerhood* seemed to elude any Canadian accolades.

"We couldn't get any Canadian recognition or play and it was heartbreaking," Medjuck said. "Thankfully we had the chance to show at the



2008 Atlantic Film Festival and tap into their appreciation and home-town pride and took home our only prize in Canada at the time which was the audience's choice for best film which was great."

So when the modest Medjuck heard his film was nominated for four 2011 Canadian Comedy Awards, he didn't get his hopes up. "We had no expectations that there would be any celebration," Medjuck said. "We were competing with films from Ontario and

Quebec and they seem to carry the country and have the deepest pockets to support their industry."

Elated, Medjuck walked away with the award for Best Director and Best Film, the latter being voted for by the public.

"A film that has yet to have any public release, won the public award. That means that the people who did see it, really got behind it." This generous tip-of-the-hat from comedic colleagues was not lost on Medjuck.

"I started in comedy, I toured with Yuk Yuks around the country," Medjuck said. "These are my friends, this is where I started and to be welcomed back by that crowd is awesome." Now living "off the reservation" in the western United States, Medjuck continues to find an audience for *Summerhood*. The little-film-that-could has been paraded into festivals from Boston to Texas and Medjuck hopes will someday be seen in a theatre near you.

A Journey to Judaism and Voluntourism

by Beth Donald

In the autumn 2008, I made two very important decisions. It was time to convert to Judaism; and my next major travel would be to Israel, once my conversion was complete.

When people hear that I converted to Judaism and that I didn't convert because I'm in a relationship with a Jewish man, they almost always ask me why I converted. On some level, I've always known that I was supposed to be Jewish. I wasn't raised with any formal religious education, but my family was culturally Christian. I always had questions. During my twenties, I began exploring the world and its religions, reading about Buddhism, Wicca, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Although a good path to follow, the lack of God in Buddhism was problematic for me; Wicca was a bit too flighty; Christianity had already not met my needs, and the parts of Islam that appealed to me were those with a basis in Torah. By my early thirties, I knew that Judaism embodied my religious beliefs.

Although I didn't fully acknowledge it at the time, my decision to start attending services in December of 2008 had a lot to do with my father's ill-health. The reasons I offered Cantor Ari Isenberg when he asked, "why now?", were more based on



Beth Donald

where I am in my life. I'm not getting any younger and would like to start a family. It's important to me that I raise my children in a Jewish household. It was only after my father's death that I realised he was my main reason for starting the formal journey when I did. Although the Jewish observance in my daily life remained important to me in those early months of attending services, my need to talk to God, to pray in a meaningful way, and to be part of a community became more important.

One of the first people I met while attending services at Shaar Shalom was Molly Rechnitzer and we soon became friends, sharing Shabbat meals and the occasional game of Scrabble. Although

Molly is a seasoned traveller, she had never done the type of trip to which I have become accustomed, and when I told her of my plans to go to Israel, she asked if she could come with me. I like to travel with a British company, Explore Worldwide, and wanted to do their Prophets & Petra tour of Israel and Jordan. At first, I was a little apprehensive about travelling with Molly. I have always preferred to travel alone, using an organized tour that involves some camping and hiking. The nearly 35 year age difference between us was also concerning, but if you know Molly, you know that she has more energy than most people half her age. Once we worked out that we wouldn't need to be joined at the hip all day every day, we decided to do Prophets & Petra and volunteer for Sar-El.

In August 2010, I got an e-mail from the Beit Din in Toronto and my date was set. On 8 Elul 5770, I became a Jew. A few weeks later, Molly and I were looking at itineraries and flight times. We met with Jon Goldberg at the AJC for a required interview for first time Sar-El volunteers, and submitted our paperwork to the Canadian Sar-El office in Montreal.



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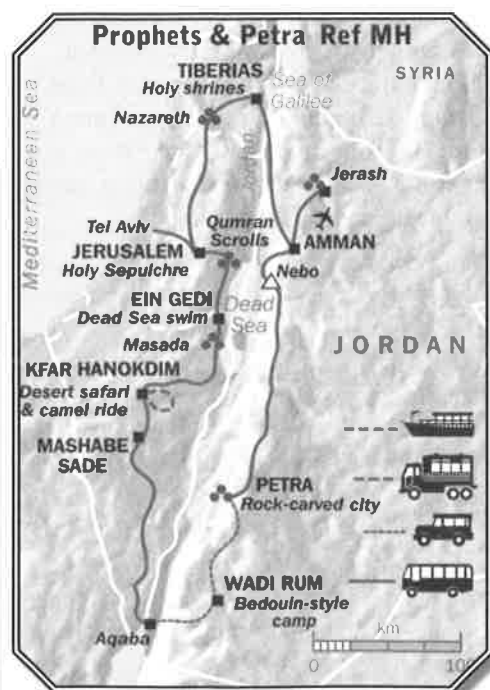
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Molly and I left on 21 May 2011. We spent a night in Tel Aviv, then flew to Amman, Jordan, to meet our tour group. We were the only Canadians travelling with four Australians and eight Brits, one of whom was our tour leader. The 11-day tour took us from northern Jordan back to Israel, where we explored Galilee and stayed on a kibbutz, then on to Jerusalem, Ein Gedi, Masada, and the Dead Sea. We crossed back into Jordan and stayed in Aqaba, where Molly went snorkelling in the Red Sea. From Aqaba, we were driven into Wadi Rum. Rather than driving us to our Bedouin camp, our camp-hands met us and took our luggage in their trucks while we walked for about 45 minutes to the camp. Although a large Bedouin tent was available, the heat inside was stifling, and most of us chose to pull our sleep mats and sleeping bags out onto the sand to sleep under the stars. We then spent two days exploring Petra before returning to Amman and then Israel to begin the second phase of our journey.

We explored Jerusalem more thoroughly than our tour had allowed. At 7:30 am on June 3rd we joined Nashot HaKotel, The Women of the Wall, for Rosh Chodesh services, after which we met with Cantor Isenberg, who was in the final weeks of his nine months in Israel as a rabbinical student. He suggested we attend Erev Shabbat services at a modern Orthodox synagogue near our hotel, where the women lead Kabbalat Shabbat and the men lead Ma'ariv. It was truly one of the most joyous experiences of our trip. The next morning, we attended services at the Jerusalem Great Synagogue, and

the contrast was striking. Although the choir was lovely, the experience was far less inspiring than that of the night before. After services, we met with Rabbi Chinitz, formerly of Shaar Shalom, for Kiddush at a nearby hotel. He was in good form and gave us a preview of his D'var Torah for the following week between jokes and songs.

From Jerusalem we returned to Tel Aviv, where we stayed in a backpackers hostel for a few nights before moving to a boutique hotel. Molly's cousins hosted us for a lovely meal and took us for a drive on Shavuot. On Erev Shabbat, we found the Conservative Synagogue, Kehilat Sinai, at its old location on Bograshov St.

On Sunday, June 12th, we began the Sar-El experience. I think we both had a moment of panic when we found about eighty volunteers in their late teens and early twenties. We were quite relieved when they were assigned to a base and a more mature group remained.

We were sent to the medical supply base at Matzrap, near Tel Aviv, with a mix of Canadians, Americans, South Africans, a Czech, Brit, Irishman, and Frenchman. Most were Jewish, but not all. Our base was considered a "day base", which meant that aside from a few duty soldiers, the Sar-El volunteers and their assigned madrichot (the IDF soldiers assigned to us) were the only people staying overnight on the base. There were 35 volunteers, ranging in age from 25 to 88.

Our accommodation was quite simple, with six beds to a room, women's bedrooms across from the men's, and washrooms in their own buildings at the end of each group of rooms. Molly and I were quite lucky to share our room with only one other woman and none of us snored. Meals were simple. Dairy was served for breakfast and supper, meat or vegetarian for lunch. All kosher, of course. Although breakfast and



The Sar-el experience was rewarding and valuable for Molly and Beth.

supper were always quite limited, lunch was usually very filling and I don't recall feeling hungry in the evenings or desirous of snacks. The coffee was very bad and there wasn't always milk at breakfast, so some of the volunteers bought good coffee and some UHT packs of milk on the first weekend away from the base. Our base also had laundry facilities.

Each morning after breakfast and flag-raising, we heard the news of the day before going to work. We unpacked old medical supplies to be sent to clinics and hospitals for use before their best-before dates, and packed new medical supplies that we hoped would meet the same fate in five years time. We worked again after lunch. Our work leader also had local volunteers, seniors who bussed in three mornings a week as a way for them to contribute and have social activity. For Sar-El, it meant that when foreign volunteers were scarce, work still went on.

Our evenings were filled with lessons in basic Hebrew (including Israeli slang), and we learned about the IDF from a new recruit's point of view, before having some leisure time.

Our group went on two field trips during the three-week session, one to Zikron Yaakov, the Tishbi Winery, and Apollonia; and the second to the IDF museum and the Carmel Market. During our weekends off, Molly and I chose to stay at Beit Oded, the Sar-El free hostel in Old Jaffa. On our final night with Sar-El, which was also our final night in Israel, our work leader hosted a potluck barbeque on the beach in Tel Aviv. The sunset was gorgeous!



Beth and Molly spent time with Cantor Ari Isenberg in Jerusalem.

AROUND OUR REGION: HALIFAX



Yulia Medvedchuk plays a solo violin piece during Dignity Day ceremonies in Halifax.



Holocaust survivors met with Susanna Kokkonen, Director of the Christian Desk at Yad Vashem during a luncheon at the AJC. From left are: Jacob Koren, Lillian Falk, David Korn, Marta & Steven Marcus, Susanna Kokkonen, Philip Riteman, Morris Strug, Natan Nevo and Helena Jockel.



Jacob Koren lights a memorial candle with help from Edna LeVine during Dignity Day in Halifax.



Philip Riteman is flanked by a pair of Conters, Karen, left, and Jenna, right, at Dignity Day in Halifax.



While their children attend Hebrew School classes, parents enjoy coffee and discussion in an on-going AJC-sponsored Sunday morning gathering.



Jim Spatz, Darrell Dexter and Victor Goldberg mug for the camera during the Nova Scotia Trade Mission to Israel.



Ruth Goldbloom, center front, the woman behind the development of Pier 21 as a Canadian museum, lead a special tour of the museum for newcomer families to HRM.



Atlantic P2K representatives Kathy and Arthur Zilbert, with Jon Goldberg AJC executive director, behind, pose with teachers and staff at Alei Givah School in northern Israel.



Chief Superintendent Jean-Michel Blais, Officer-in-Charge of Halifax District RCMP, Halifax MP Megan Leslie, and Leonard Preyra MLA Halifax Citadel – Sable Island, attended Dignity Day in Halifax.

A Life Well Lived

by Joel Jacobson

At a recognition dinner held in his honour in his hometown of Springhill, N.S. in 2004, Arthur Saffron was called "one of our finest citizens."

It was a tribute he shunned with his typical shyness. At the time, he told the Chronicle Herald in an interview, "I'm really pleased they're holding this dinner in my name but I really don't think I've done much to deserve such a tribute. I enjoyed my involvement in my business and the various organizations in which I was involved. It seemed the least I could do."

Arthur's "least" meant so much to so many people. He passed away in Halifax

September 20, 2011, at age 86, after retiring from his long-time and long-revered furniture business in Springhill and moving to the Nova Scotia capital city in 2004.

A generous contributor to the Atlantic Jewish community, in financial assistance to UIA and UJA, Arty, as he was called by those who grew up with him and knew him for decades, served his business community with equal enthusiasm.

He was president of the Springhill and Area Chamber of Commerce for 30 years and gave his extraordinary wisdom and advice to Cumberland County Family Planning, local Red Cross and Northern Regional Health Board.

Arthur carried on the family furniture business, started by his father in 1907, until he closed it in 2004. Always a stickler for providing good service, Arthur would somehow find whatever a customer requested, no matter how difficult, and no matter how far he had to go to get it.

Guy Brown, former MLA, and mayor of Springhill when the banquet was held, praised Arthur's ability to speak knowledgeably in any subject. Brown specifically mentioned Arthur's knowledge of issues in the Middle East which they'd discuss endlessly after Brown served with the United Nations in that area of the world.

Report from The Rock

by Claire Frankel-Salama

As clearly as the call of the Shofar, the beginning of September rouses us from our relaxing summer and reminds us that the New Year's Holy Days are upon us. The week before Rosh Hashanah, we held our annual Shacharit service at Cape Spear, the easternmost point of North America. Blessed with a windless morning, we davened at the barracks overlooking the mighty Atlantic Ocean. Of course, the beautiful weather meant that we received curious looks from some early-bird tourists. After that uplifting experience, we drove to the Jewish Cemetery on Blackmarsh Road where we held our annual memorial service.

Every year, in addition to the prayers which include, of course, "El Maaleh Rachamim", we visit the different graves of the former members. Sometimes these graves have not been visited for years or even decades. As we perform this mitzvah, we talk about the individuals, z"l, especially to any new people who may be joining us. While this ritual will never garner any attention from the media, we

feel that this new tradition is not only necessary, but pure, and part of the transmission of the history of our community to future generations.

Rosh Hashanah at Beth El was heralded by many heartfelt greetings from all over the world, including Israel (Yossi Abkin, Susana Loewenheim and Amnon and Rebecca Kohn), England (Jeremy and Lydia Goldbloom), Spain (Yehudit Luisa Conde of la Comunidad Xudia B'nei Israel de Galicia) and even Corner Brook (Mildred Leigh). We were also pleased to welcome visitors from Winnipeg (Morris Glimcher), Florida (Morris Rouah) and Montreal (Jamie Allister and his niece, Rebecca). The turnout was impressive, and everyone was invited to our traditional



Trudy Morgan-Cole & students from Brother T.I. Murphy Centre visiting Synagogue.

Kosher dinner marking the first night of 5772. A huge thank you to all who helped with the dinner and the clean-up, especially June Mercer, for her fabulous Challahs, and Betty Sidel. Minyanim were maintained throughout all the services. As usual, before Minchah on Thursday, we walked up the path at Rennie's Mill river to perform Tashlich.

Yom Kippur started with a soul-stirring Kol Nidrei chanted by Ernie Mauskopf. We were pleased to again have full minyanim starting at 9:00 a.m. and continuing throughout much of the day. After a moving Ne'ilah, chanted by Messod Salama in the Sephardic tradition, we were treated to the beautiful voice of Trina Rosenzweig who sang the Havdalah service. This was followed by a communal breaking of the fast with guests from Toronto who brought their sons for the national under 14 soccer finals.

Sukkot began on Wednesday, October 12th, aided by the timely arrival of our Lulav and Etrog from Montreal and the building of the Sukkah. At the same time we were thrilled to hear of the impending release of Gilad Shalit after five years and four months of captivity. As we recited the Prayer for the Soldiers of Israel which we dedicated to him, we were also reminded of those who have been killed and maimed in the defence of the State of Israel. Although we had a small turnout this

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year for Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, we were pleased to welcome Jackie Mills of Calgary to help us celebrate.

In October we began the first of our outreach and school visits. The first visitors were the Old Testament students from the Faculty of Theology from Queen's College, Memorial University. Always full of good questions and ready for discussion, they had their first look at a Torah and Tefillin, and finished off their visit with homemade honey cake and tea, as befits this time of year. In November the World Religions students from the Brother T.I. Murphy Centre visited together with their teacher, Trudy Morgan-Cole. The Murphy Centre provides an alternative high school credit programme to students over 18 who have been unable to complete their high school studies within the regular system. After a great afternoon session, they left with a box of matzah and a new outlook following their very first visit to a synagogue.

At the beginning of November we recommended our Sunday Hebrew School to the delight of our enthusiastic pupils and their parents. Unfortunately for us, we will be losing our beloved teacher, Michael Cooper, as he has completed his degree requirements for Veterinary Science, and is returning to Toronto to work before he begins Veterinary School in September. A huge Mazal Tov to a fine young man with a truly gentle soul. We know that he will make an excellent veterinarian and wish him the best in his new career.

On the Remembrance Day weekend we were pleased to hear a documentary by Heather

Barrett about Philip Riteman on Radio Noon on CBC radio.

Warm thanks go to our friends and visitors who have made donations to Beth El. They include Judy Wilansky, Dr. Doug and Ruth Wilansky, Mark Bulgatch, Jackie Mills and Dr.

Robin McGrath. Condolences to Evan Kipnis and his family on the loss of his father, Norman Kipnis, a former member of Beth El, on October 22nd in Kamloops, B.C. and to Nancy Bennett and the Bennett family on the sudden passing of Arnold Bennett.

I conclude this article with a message sent to us just before Rosh Hashanah by Israeli visitors, Dr. Amnon and Rebecca Kohn. May it serve to encourage those of us in small communities who are struggling to keep Judaism and Jewish life alive.

Yehudah Halevi wrote: "My heart is in the East, and I am at the end of the West"

We came back home before Rosh Hashana and on the Day of Remembrance we thought of you and your community holding on to its Jewish existence in the East in the end of the West.

We were very honored to join your Shabbat services and touched to see how you remember Tzion, thank you.

May it be His will to bless all of us together with a perfect blessing and may the Compassionate



Shacharit at Cape Spear

One renew this year for us for good and for blessing.

We had a wonderful stay in Canada.

We enjoyed the scenery – the space, the green and the water and also meeting people.

One of the highlights of our stay was joining your services in the synagogue.

We thank you for your hospitality.

Will you please pass our best wishes to the other people whom we met.

Shana Tova

Gmar Hatima Tova

Hag Sameah

Amnon and Rebecca Kohn

For those of you who are contemplating a visit to St. John's, you can read an excellent profile on our congregation on the local religions page hosted by the Department of Religious Studies at Memorial University at: http://www.arts.mun.ca/localreligions/profiles/beth_el.html

Special thank to Dr. Patricia Dold for her help and support.

Jewish Community Havura

by Ruth Noel

The autumn months brought both joy and sadness to the Havura.

The end of September ushered in 5772 and the New Year brought new people to the Havura.

Several students joined us from Israel and various parts of Canada. Services and community dinners were held for Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur. Keeping with our tradition, many of our members

actively participated in the running of the services and the readings from the Torah.

Noam Koubi said it was the best Sukkot ever, and I have to agree. The Feast of Tabernacles was held this year at the home of the Koubi-Bahar's, and the profusion of decorations hanging from the branches and sides of the Sukkah created a feeling of joy. Services were held in the Sukkah on Erev Sukkot, and the community was invited

there each day. The annual Sukkot brunch was held on the Sunday, and as in past years, it was well attended and enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Sharon, Inbal, Noam, Daphna and Ayalah for opening their home and back yard for this special time.

Thanks to Kari, Shamus, and Eli Brown and Paddy Mackey for hosting Simcha Torah. It was a special evening as our beautiful

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new ark designed and built by Jonathan Kitzen was used for the first time. While it was ready a little earlier in the month, we felt this was the appropriate holiday to begin to use it. Thanks to Jonathan for his dedication, determination and craftsmanship in constructing such a beautiful ark.

Thanks go out to Elizabeth Siegel and Arnold Bennett for organizing the services during the High Holy Days and to Elizabeth for taking the lead role in conducting services. Thanks also to Elizabeth Anne Malischewski who organized the community dinners during this time. Yasher Koah and thanks go to all who participated in the services, read from the Torah, gave D'var Torahs, helped with the preparation and set up of the community meals, and also helped cleanup.

Between Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, the Havura had the opportunity to participate in a multi-cultural event at The Rooms Provincial Museum, Art Gallery and Archives in St. John's. For about thirty minutes the local klezmer band entertained the audience before switching to Israeli music. Nancy Bennett introduced the event and Ruth Noel introduced and explained the origins of Hava Nagalia and Mayim Mayim before inviting the audience to dance. About twenty adventurous souls joined Ruth on the floor where she and other members of the Havura taught and lead the group in these two dances. The dancers learned quickly, danced well, shared our culture and enjoyed themselves immensely.

The Religious Social Action Coalition was very busy with the General Election



Some of the members at the Jewish Community Havura Brunch.

that took place in Newfoundland and Labrador on October 11th. In the lead up to the election, the Coalition once again resurrected its website candidatesagainstopoverty.ca which was designed to allow all candidates running for election to publicly pledge to work to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. Its members spent considerable time and energy contacting candidates and rallying religious leaders from all faiths and from across the province to publicize the coalition's aims among their congregations and to challenge their respective candidates to take the pledge found on their website. As part of these efforts, the Coalition also sent out a questionnaire to the leaders of the three provincial parties regarding their position on eliminating poverty and narrowing the gap between the rich and poor.

On Monday October 17th, the Jewish Community Havura welcomed both Judy Zelikovitz and Daniel Stern to St. John's for an update on Israel and the Middle East. Since the meeting occurred the night before the release of Galad Shalit, much discussion and anticipation surrounded this event. The discussion was lively and intense. Several guests from outside the Jewish community were invited to this forum and were impressed with the openness and honesty of all present. Thanks to Shari Ritter who chaperoned our guests during their visit.

On the evening of November 9th, 1938, in Germany, Jewish synagogues, businesses and homes were ransacked; so much broken glass was left on the streets that we remember this as Kristallnacht or The Night of Broken Glass. Seventy-three years later on the same night, Jews, Moslems and Christians sat in a room with people of

other faiths to discuss the topic "Is There a Conflict Between Religious Identity and Canadian Identity"? from their respective perspectives. One hundred people heard Dave Jerome of the Jewish Community Havura, Rev. Canon Frank Cluett of the Anglican Church and Dr. Mahmoud Haddara, former Imam, Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, present their thoughts and insights on this topic. The moderator was Gerry Rogers, newly elected MHA. All listened intently, asked many thought-provoking questions and then mingled afterwards over refreshments. It should be noted that Arnold Bennett initiated this dialogue initiative several years ago, and tributes were paid to him before and during the presentations.

News and notes:

Mazel tov to the Hon. Tom Marshall on his re-election as MHA for Humber East. Tom is now the Minister of Finance, President of Treasury Board and Minister Responsible for the Public Service Secretariat, the Public Service Commission and the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation.

Mazel tov to Suzanne Gulliver Conway on her recent convocation from Memorial University. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Certificate in Criminology.

Mazel tov to Elizabeth Siegel and Tom Loder on their recent marriage.

I shall be closing this article with sad news. On Saturday evening, October 29th, Arnold Bennett passed away from an apparent sudden heart attack. He and Nancy had been visiting their son Daniel and daughter-in-law Susan in Virginia when this tragedy occurred. Members of the Jewish Community Havura and members of other



Some of the members at the Jewish Community Havura Brunch. Last picture taken of Arnold Bennett at a community function



Children at the Jewish Community Havura Succoth Brunch

faith communities within the province are grieving over this loss. Arnold reached out to everyone and was a friend to all. Approximately fifty people attended the first Shabbat service after his death to say Kaddish for him for this first time. It was an emotional service and also a tribute to him: Arnold was a pillar of our community, and a founding member committed to including and welcoming Jews of various backgrounds into the Havura. Many of our members joined because of him. He held Torah lessons, coached our Bar Mitzvah boys and challenged all of us to treat everyone fairly and to live ethical lives.

To this end, he was a founding member of the Religious Social Action Coalition, an organization committed to the abolition of poverty. For a period of time, Arnold was on the Board of the AJC, and he received an AJC Community Service Award.

On Sunday, November 20th, more than 250 people gathered for a memorial service and a tribute to Arnold. Faith community leaders, political leaders, and other community and Havura members spoke about this man who had affected their lives. Matthew Bendzsa and Gil Shalev gave moving tributes, and Inbal Bahar lead us in the Mourner's Kaddish. The Hon. Tom

Marshall sent a moving letter praising Arnold and his work, while Premier Kathy Dunderdale sent her condolences. After the service, friends mingled over food and drink provided by the Jewish Community Havura. Thanks to our speakers, as well as Alison Corbett and Paul Bendzsa, who provided music before the service began. Yasher koach to Lisa Bendzsa and Elizabeth-Anne Malischewski who spent a great deal of time as logistics coordinators. It would not have run as smoothly without them.

A separate article about Arnold Bennett appears below. I urge you to read it. He will be missed.

Arnold Bennett, 1940-2011

by Ruth Noel, Past President, Jewish Community Havura

Arnold Bennett, a writer, filmmaker, social activist and founding member of the Jewish Community Havura, died suddenly of an apparent heart attack on October 29 while visiting his family in Washington, D.C. Arnold spent his lifetime working for the common person with the focus of making this world a just place. He was born in New York City and attended Cornell University, rooming at Telluride House, and the New School for Social Research.

Arnold began his career in politics in New York City, working on campaigns including Shirley Chisholm's in 1968, when she became the first black woman elected to Congress. During the 1970s, he and his wife Nancy had a political consulting firm in Washington whose clients included candidates for the U.S. Congress, Senate, Governorships and the Presidency.

In 1982, Arnold's documentary film, "Books Under Fire", about censorship, was nominated for an Emmy Award. In 1985, Arnold became media director for Families USA, a Washington-based foundation working on health and seniors' issues, where he worked for 10 years.

When Bill Clinton was elected, he asked Families USA to lend Arnold to the White House as a strategist in the fight for

universal health care. Much of his work involved corraling support for Clinton's healthcare plan, including helping to organize a national bus tour to promote this cause which was dubbed the "Health Security Express". Although the plan did not get passed, the Clinton Administration and Arnold can be proud of this attempt.

Arnold and Nancy visited Newfoundland in 1992 and liked the province so much, they summered here in 1995, bought a house, and moved here permanently in 1996. They became Canadian citizens in 2004.

In Newfoundland, Arnold wrote and directed two films for national television. The first was "The Newfoundland Passion", about Gerry Squires' paintings of the stations of the cross, which hang in Mary



Arnold Bennett, left, is presented the AJC Community Service Award in 2010.

Queen of the World church in Mt. Pearl. His second film was about the Montreal Jewish poet A.M. Klein and starred Al Waxman in what was to be his last role.

Arnold and Nancy became part of the Jewish community and they were very active from the beginning. Arnold served as Vice President of the Hebrew Congregation of Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2006, he was one of the founding members of the Jewish Community Havura and led many Shabbat Services, giving D'var Torahs, leading Talmud study and encouraging

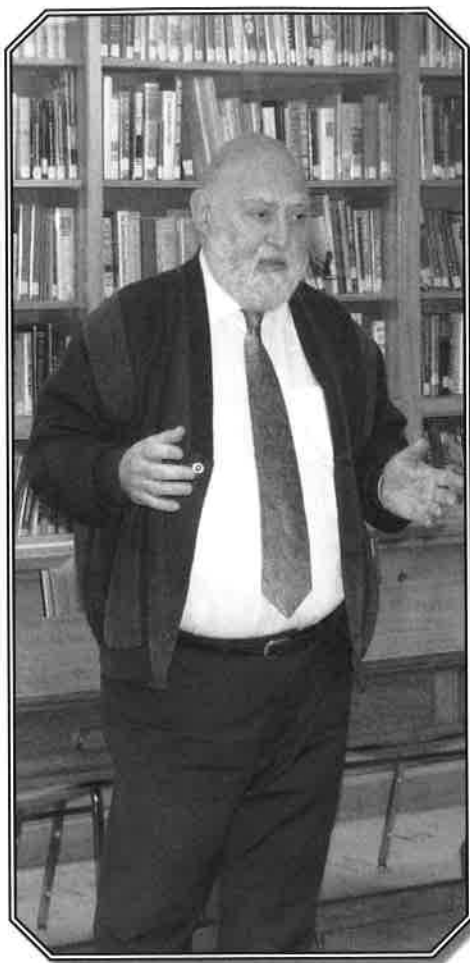
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people to come to the Havura if they had a Jewish connection. On more than one occasion he had the audacity to ask a newcomer to prepare a D'var Torah and, though surprised, they usually obliged. He coached Bar Mitzvah students in Torah studies and Jewish philosophy and ethics. He asked that they volunteer with an organization of their choice to perform Tzadaka and promote social justice. Arnold has also been the Jewish Community Havura representative on the Atlantic Jewish Council.

Outside the Jewish community, Arnold was equally active. He was determined to build bridges with other religions and did so two major ways. Firstly, he organized a Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue on themes common to the three groups. This encouraged the three groups to meet together, listen together and discuss together topics of common interest. This is how one builds bridges. I shall never forget the very first dialogue which was on the theme of Abraham. Arnold spoke for our community and talked about how Abraham argued with G-d. One of the other speakers commented that if he had done this he would be "quaking in his boots". The audience erupted in laughter as it brought home the differences between these three Abrahamic religions. Years later I still remember this evening.

Arnold was passionate about social action so, in his usually persuasive way, he started the Religious Social Action Coalition which is dedicated to eliminating poverty in Canada and reducing the widening gap between the rich and the poor. He threw out a challenge at the 2007



Dialogue to create such a group and have representatives of nearly all the religions in Newfoundland join the Coalition. During recent federal and provincial elections, candidates were asked to pledge to eliminate poverty and results were published on the Coalition's web site. Voters were encouraged to look at the results and then vote accordingly. In addition, the political parties were sent questionnaires with pertinent questions on the topic and these, too, were put on the web site. Coalition members have encouraged

religious leaders in communities across Canada to start similar groups and a number have taken up the challenge.

For his work and dedication, Arnold was given a Community Service Award by the Atlantic Jewish Council at the last bi-annual meeting, almost a year before he died. The words on the plaque are fitting tribute to a man who was so dedicated to his causes and to life: "In appreciation for your efforts as a founding member of the Jewish Community Havura of Newfoundland and Labrador and a leader in Religious Social Action and interfaith relations in your community. Your continual efforts to improve the human condition of your neighbours is indeed an inspiration for all."

He will be missed, but his legacy and dreams will live on. His friends throughout this province and elsewhere will ensure this.

Arnold and his wife Nancy were married for over 47 years. They loved each other, supported each other and were a team in every sense of the word. Arnold leaves Nancy, two children, Daniel, of Washington, D.C. and Jeremiah, of Toronto, two daughters-in-law, Susan and Marnie, and two beautiful granddaughters, Elorah and Serafina.

The family asks that if you would like to make a donation in Arnold's name, consider either the Stephen Lewis Foundation (StephenLewisFoundation.org), a wonderful organization that supports community-level organizations that are turning the tide of HIV/AIDS in Africa by providing care and support to women, orphans, grandmothers and people living with HIV and AIDS or the Jewish Community Havura (havura.org) or special projects.

Joe Naylor Did His Part to Keep Judaism Alive on PEI

by Henry Srebrnik

"Es iz shver tsu zayn a Yid," as the saying goes, and this is all the more true on Prince Edward Island, where the Jewish community is tiny, with fewer than 100 members, and its institutions fragile. The province

doesn't even have a synagogue.

In the major Canadian Jewish centres, such as Toronto and Montreal, PEI's Jews are usually an afterthought, barely noticed from one year to the next. To the larger PEI community, we are also almost invisible

– the island's two major newspapers rarely take notice of even the major Jewish holidays.

But Dr. Joseph Naylor, who passed away on 1 Cheshvan 5772 (29 October 2011) at age 71, was a long-time activist who



worked tirelessly on the community's behalf, editing, writing, teaching, and serving in many leadership positions. He was the first president of the community when it organized itself formally in 1993 and produced the community newsletter, HA-EE.

"We have learned a lot living on PEI," he told a journalist a few years ago, "and I thought I might pass on a bit of those lessons to you, in case you come from a small community to which our experience might be relevant and helpful."

In 1998, when Naylor was presented with the Atlantic Jewish Council's Community Service Award, he noted in his acceptance speech that "Jews don't come to Prince Edward Island for 'Yiddishkeit'." Joe was

Orthodox, and he and his wife Jane managed to keep a kosher home, though – not an easy feat on PEI. They had to "import" meat from Moncton.

Joe once tracked me down because he was short one man for a minyan. He did what he could in our small community!

Joe had a PhD in philosophy and taught at the University of Prince Edward Island in the 1970s when he first arrived here from Ontario. He later offered courses in Judaism at the Seniors' College of Prince Edward Island.

He had strong feelings about politics and religion and was not shy about expressing them. He was a committed Zionist and a strong supporter of the Jewish state.

I spoke to him at a Jewish community event two days before his death. We both



A PEI Jewish study group led by Joe Naylor, seated left.

expressed concern over the future of Israel, and he congratulated me on the publication of my new book on Canadian Zionism.

No one who was there imagined he would so soon no longer be with us. He will be greatly missed.

Henry Srebrnik teaches political studies at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown.

The Death of More Than a Friend by Alan Leith

Almost a year has passed since the death of Jack Columbus. I have tried, many times, to put into words the sense of loss I felt on that fateful day last December when I got the telephone call.

Jack was the brother I never had. We'd known each other for more than 50 years and it had been ham radio that brought us together. Besides our respective families, ham radio remained a passion for both of us until his illness got the better of his desires to communicate with others. However, his interest wasn't totally gone because we discussed ham radio issues even until a few days before he died.

His sense of wonderment with communications had led Jack into a

career in broadcasting that allowed his inquisitive nature some degree of satisfaction. Even after retiring from news broadcasting on radio and television, Jack worked part-time in radio in Sydney and was, by far, the best news broadcaster and reporter the area had. And he didn't stop there because he kept on top of politics social issues and technology. He seemed to never think of himself, preferring to know, instead, that his family and friends were OK.

At this time of the year (end of October), Jack and I generally travelled to the mountains of Vermont to participate in a worldwide amateur radio contest at his cousin's winter ski chalet. Ham radio friends from several parts of the east

coast would be with the "two Canucks" for a weekend of camaraderie that was unsurpassed. Every one of those guys (and a few ladies as well) were equally shocked when they learned of Jack's passing.

When we were kids, Jack was visiting my home one day and my mother, having invited him to dine with us, asked him if he'd like some borscht. Misunderstanding, Jack, thinking she had asked if he'd like some vursht, said yes, only to show the most disgusting questioning frown when the borscht was set in front of him. I don't think he'd ever tried borscht and was not going to. Of course, I will remember that look forever.

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AROUND OUR REGION: CAPE BRETON

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Jack's gastronomic tastes were, when he was younger, very narrow. It was a real job for me to get him to eat his first slice of pizza. Chinese food was even more difficult. Once, when we were in San Francisco, Jack ate nothing when we went to a Vietnamese restaurant (a first for me) and I nearly passed out when I dipped an appetizer into a devastatingly spicy sauce. He was completely flabbergasted at my reaction and I'm certain that is why he never tried much spice.

A few days later in our travels, however, we found an all-you-can-eat Chinese spot in San Luis Obispo where we ate heartily. The entire story of how he and I had gotten to California is one I would prefer to tell at a cocktail party. It is a riot.

A few years ago, in Halifax for another ham radio event, we stopped for breakfast at a little restaurant before our drive home to Sydney. Jack wanted toast and tea. This little spot didn't serve toast nor did it serve rolls. He got his tea and a small loaf of bread and I enjoyed Belgian waffles and a cup of coffee. Jack hadn't recognized anything on the menu and wouldn't try something he'd never had

before. I wondered if, indeed, I had broadened his tastes.

Always on the lookout for a bargain, I took advantage of one of Jack's airline deals when he called me one day to announce he had found a fare on one of his favourite websites for a flight to Iceland. In the end, the trip would cost airfare to New York to connect with Icelandic Air. The flight to Reykjavik was virtually nothing, except for the taxes. Sadly, at the very last minute, a business issue kept me from joining Jack (I still have the unused ticket) but he kept me informed and sent pictures by e-mail several times during his short visit.

Our families were friendly as well. When we lived in southern Ontario for more than a decade, Jack, Sharon and their kids Erin, Lauren and Jeff visited with us on occasion and each summer when my family returned to Cape Breton, we always spent time together. By then, Jack was eating pizza and Chinese food and we often barbecued together so that side of our social life was maintained.

Jack's interest in Jewish history, current social issues, Israeli politics and his

dedication to his Jewish community in Sydney, were nothing short of incredible. One could say that Jack was the go-to-guy for just about anything. He did his best to bring the members of the community together and was a regular for services every weekend. All said, Jack loved his Jewish heritage.

For months, and even now at least once a week, I want to pick up the phone to talk to Jack about a news item, a ham radio topic or a plan for dinner. I have never changed the ID on my telephone and when Sharon calls me, I see his name. People, almost a year later, still comment on his death and what it has meant for his family, and for me. To this day, I still think about the Saturday evening visit I made to see him in the hospital. I left his room and said, "I'll see you tomorrow. Rest well." "OK," he said.

Sadly, he had been moved to the ICU overnight and I never saw him again. A few days later I was helping to prepare his obituary. Jack Columbus, who had always bounced back from his illness, didn't. As I said in my eulogy at his funeral, "Jack Columbus was a mensch's mensch."

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Educators get lesson on teaching the Holocaust

by Chris Shannon

SYDNEY - The tiny town of Whitwell, Tenn., was the staging ground for a school project in 1998 co-ordinated by Whitwell Middle School principal Linda Hooper, which would take on a life of its own as it translated the world's worst genocide into a tangible form students could fully understand.

The project had students round up paper-clips, which were invented by Johan Vaaler, a Norwegian who was Jewish. Norwegians wore paper-clips on their lapels during the Second World War to protest Nazi policies, Hooper said.

"Our goal was to collect six million for the Jewish victims. When we reached six million, we decided to collect 11 million for all the victims. We stopped counting paper-clips at 30 million."

The school received paper-clips from other schools, communities, and even former U.S. presidents and Hollywood celebrities.

Now retired, Hooper trains other educators ways to teach acceptance of differences in daily life.

"We do teacher workshops to help people understand their prejudices and their stereotypes and to help people think what

they can do personally to make the world a better place and particularly make their community a better place," Hooper said during a break in a seminar.

She condensed a five-day training program into a daylong session at the Temple Sons of Israel Synagogue to give about 45 educators a sense of how to approach the topic of the Holocaust.

"(The Holocaust) is a way to help us recognize how cruel we can be but it's also a way to recognize the ongoing spirit of those people who perished in the Holocaust," she said.

Hooper also visited several schools as part of Holocaust Education Week in the province.

Diane Lewis, a teacher with the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board overseeing the committee's events, said this is the first year for the Holocaust education program in board's schools.

Formal education in the Holocaust begins in Grade 6, and many teachers are wary of such a heavy topic for the classroom, Lewis said.

"When you teach the Holocaust you have

to be careful. You can teach it in a way that actually creates more anti-Semitism, so the board tries to approach it from a human rights point of view," she said.

Membertou Elementary School Grade 4 teacher Maura Lea Morykot educates her students on the Holocaust, particularly on the persecution of people from different racial and religious backgrounds.

"I teach them all about the world, that there are many different cultures and I get them to connect it to themselves. Everybody eats something different, they wear different clothes, they follow a different faith," she said.

"I get them to understand that and explain to them that they have Mi'kmaq culture and it's beautiful and it's wonderful. It gets them all empowered and excited about it."

In 2004, the paper-clip project was turned into a feature-length documentary.

A memorial commemorating the Holocaust was created by the students of Whitwell where the paper-clips remain to this day.

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Cape Breton Marks Remembrance Day

by Avvie Druker

For many years, Cape Breton has paused on Remembrance Day to remember the Canadians and others who fought for our freedom, some of whom never came back.

Dr. Garson Lecker was posted to Sydney during World War II, married Edith Wolfson, and settled in Sydney. It became a tradition that he and Edith sponsored a kiddush on the Saturday closest to Nov. 11.

Garson always invited a veteran to the Synagogue, and about 11:00 am we would stand for a moment's silence, after which he would introduce the guest speaker. Unfortunately, we lost Garson this past year, but Edie was there on Shabbat and we had a representative from the Legion, Mr. Mike Fleming, tell us about his personal experiences during his 30 years in the Military. Since Garson and Edie's daughter Sherry was visiting with her husband and

children, we asked Sherry to introduce the speaker.

Some of our members who themselves were veterans, such as Dr. Jack Yazer and Ivan Ross were present, resplendent in their Veteran's finery and with their medals polished for the occasion.

Following services the 30 or so in attendance enjoyed some camaraderie at the kiddush which followed.

Moncton News

by Nancy Cohen, AJC Community Representative



Jack Haller working on the Sukkah



Watching the others work

A beautiful fall day brought out a lively crowd for our annual sukkah building and decorating event. While some agile young men climbed up on the roof to place the s'chach, the children had a great time adding the various decorations. This was followed by a barbecue.

On October 26 we hosted a lecture by Susanna Kokkonen, the director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem. Her talk entitled The Road to the Holocaust:

Taking the Steps from Hatred to Murder was very well attended with an audience of about 100, including many Christians. This event was part of Holocaust Education Week activities and was co-sponsored by the AJC, The International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem and Tiferes Israel Synagogue.

We look forward to celebrating the bar mitzvah of Pinny Yagod, the youngest son of Rabbi and Rebbitzin Yagod on November 26. Mazel tov to the entire family.

In addition to the graduates that were announced in my last report, I have two more to add: Michael Gorber, the grandson of Esther and Charlie Gorber, graduated from JMA Armstrong High School in Salisbury. He is presently attending Saint Xavier University.

Julie Arsenault, the daughter of Janice and Paul Arsenault graduated from Bernice McNaughton High School in Moncton and is attending UNB. Julie is the granddaughter of the late Norm and Adele Rubin.

Mazel tov to:

Peter Gergely on the birth of his first grandchild, Henry Liam Offman this past September. Liam is the son of Laura (Gergely) Offman and Andrew Offman (son of Wendy and Kenneth Offman of Halifax) Congratulations to the proud great-

grandmother Sarah Gergely.

Francis Weil who also became a grandfather for the first time in October! His new granddaughter, Ella Claire Célestine is the daughter of Sarah-Nadine and Laurent of St-Léon, France.

Harry (Tut) and Ann Gorber on the birth of their granddaughter Livia who was born on November 10. The proud parents are Lorne Gorber and Vanessa Savard.



Group photo with finished Sukkah



Putting on the roof

My Favourite Things at Camp Kadimah

by Lily Samuel

Camp Kadimah is a great place for kids from 7 to 16 to go for a summer and have a special experience!

Everything there is great, from the food to the activities, the staff to the other kids and the days to the nights. At camp, once you climb into your bed, the staff leave and it's just you and your cabin-mates. You can always say that you had the best day ever!!!

The whole camp eats its meals together in the chadar (dining hall). The food is really good. My top three favorite meals are:

- BBQ chicken
- Pizza
- subs

Every day, we are busy with lots of fun

activities, both indoor and outdoor (but mostly outdoor). My top three favorite activities are:

- Waterskiing (Kadimah has a beautiful waterfront on Lake William)
- Sports (dodgeball, soccer, kickball, etc.)
- Canoe

Camp lasts six weeks, and we have lots of days with special programs. My top three favorite days of camp are:

- Visiting Day (because I get to see my mom and dad)
- Hagana Day (campers pretend to be refugees trying to leave Europe and get safely to Palestine to escape the Holocaust)
- The day camp starts (because I'm so excited to see my friends and meet my



staff)

This past year, my cabin I slept in was cabin 9. The cabin contained seven girls my age and four staff; my staff were extremely nice and so were the girls in my

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cabin. My cousin Danielle from Toronto was in my cabin so that was nice for us. That year was the third year that I went to camp; I first went when I was 8 so I was a first-year Gibby (the Giborim section, ages

8-9), the next year I went I was a second-year Gibby, and then I went this year as a first-year Goshie (the Goshrim section, ages 10-11). My brother, Joseph, was in first-year Kochot (ages 12-13).

This year was an amazing year at camp

Kadimah; I'm really excited to go back next year and I hope every kid that is reading this will go next year!!!

For more information, check out the camp website at www.campkadimah.com

News From Fredericton

by Marilyn Kaufman, AJC Community Representative

AT Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kipper services this year, Matthew Chippin (son of Arnold and Rose), did an excellent job of assisting Rabbi Goldman. And as last year, Israel Unger did an admirable job sounding the shofar. On the Shabbat following Simchat Torah, the Synagogue played host to local Masons. A special thank you to Marilyn Kaufman, Ayten Kranat and Eileen Duguay for setting up the Kiddush.

Daniel Stern and Judy Zelikovitz (Canadian UIA), were welcomed to

Fredericton in October for this year's UIA campaign. They were hosted by Judy and Arnold Budovitch. Ms. Zelikovitz presented an update on the Mid-East situation and she responded to questions following her presentation. Refreshments and informal conversation with our guests followed.

Louis Budovitch, President of the Sgoolai Israel Synagogue, presided over the recently held AGM. A meeting of the Immigration Committee was held as well, chaired by Sydelle Grobe.

If you are thinking of sending your children to Camp Kadimah this summer don't delay.

Brochures are available in the Shul.

As a matter of fact, there are some women in our Fredericton Jewish community who would like to spend a week-end there toward the end of August (free of family obligations), as a way to connect with others across our Region. We are looking for other women to come on board to make this happen. If you are interested, contact Marilyn (Chippin) Kaufman, malkak@live.ca

On a mild, rainy Nov. 11th morning, some members



Simmy preparing Latkes for Chanukah!

of the Jewish community joined a large crowd at the Fredericton Cenotaph for the City's annual Remembrance Day ceremony. It was a more poignant service this year, with the recent return of our troops from Afghanistan, and remembering those who did not return.

Many parents present were accompanied by their young children. As the first round of the twenty-one gun salute was fired, I couldn't help but wonder, as I glanced around and saw people flinch or jump at the loud bang, "How fortunate we all are here, having the freedom to walk away without fear of an incoming rocket attack."

Sisterhood, under the leadership of Shelley Stephens, is preparing for our annual community Chanukah party. Once again before heading south, Simmy Airst, our chief latke maker for the past few years, was hard at it cracking eggs and blending potatoes for frying up the latkes

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with assistance from Shelley, Albena Lazarev and Yanna Tichonov. This year the Fredericton York Regional Library has extended an invitation to the Jewish community to join them in partnership to celebrate Chanukah with a story hour

at the library on Dec. 21st. What a great opportunity for others to learn about our Jewish culture!

There have been many notices sent out to members of the community via

e-mail regarding meetings, current affairs and general information to keep us well connected and up to date on a number of issues. A sincere thank you to Ellen Lupu for a job well done.

Fredericton Jewish Community Immigration

by Leonid Gimelshtein and Sydelle Grobe, Co-chairs,
Fredericton Immigration Committee

To date the Fredericton Jewish Community has welcomed 11 families under the Community Support Section of the New Brunswick Provincial Nominee Program (NBPNP). In addition there are two new families who arrived independent of the committee's Community Support mandate and one family that immigrated under the Entrepreneurial section of the NBPNP. In summary, 14 new families have joined the community since 2004 and more will be arriving next spring.

Our committee has been in existence for seven years. Membership has changed but the pattern of business has remained similar to the original plan established under the first chairperson. We have not recruited candidates but instead respond to interested persons who contact the synagogue website. There is customarily a committee meeting in the late fall or

winter where candidates are selected for visits in the spring. The webmaster issues invitations soon after the meeting so that families have an adequate period of time to reply and make plans for their visit. Visits are scheduled for late spring, summer or early fall. Personalized itineraries are prepared about a month before each visit.

One family who visited last May relocated here in June. Four more families are in the midst of the immigration process and three families who visited during the week before Rosh Hashanah have just submitted their initial immigration documents to the government.

Not every family we have assisted has chosen to become a member of the synagogue. However, there are more young families who are members now than there were before the immigration committee began its work under the NBPNP. Religious classes are once again filling with children who are instructed

by our enthusiastic Rabbi. Attendance at minyans has increased. Therefore, the committee is confident that the process of helping immigrants to settle in Fredericton has been successful and will continue to grow.

Looking Ahead

Lately we are aware of a gradual change in the pattern of growth. Friends and family of people who are now established here want to come and join them. We believe this is a sensible way to grow a community, and therefore we try to accommodate such requests to the website as long as the applicants conform to the requirements of the NBPNP.

The Fredericton Jewish community is pleased to welcome new families to our midst. Fredericton is a wonderful place to raise a family. The committee believes it is a worthwhile endeavour to ensure a Jewish presence in the city, a presence that dates back to 1896.

Saint John News

by Susan Isaacs Lubin

The Saint John Jewish Community has been active in the past few months. We once again welcomed Cantor Jeff Spitzer from Sharon, Massachusetts for the High Holidays. Jeff has been with us for approximately eight years and we look forward to his visit each year.

For many years Saint John holds a Break the Fast following Yom Kippur in the

Synagogue and this year was no exception. We had about 40 people attend.

Dan Elman, our lay leader, celebrated his 80th Birthday on November 13th. On November 12, the Congregation held a surprise Kiddush following Services. Dan was truly surprised - he thought that everyone was at Services for Remembrance Day!

Our condolences to the family of Helen Selick who died recently. Helen celebrated her 100th birthday a couple of months prior to her death. Her birthday was celebrated with an open house at Rocmaura Nursing Home and Helen was alert and aware of all who were there. We were grateful to three of our newcomers from Israel who helped out at the funeral.

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On Saturday, October 22nd, we unveiled a stone monument outside our building. The pink granite rock is inset with the Ten Commandments in Hebrew. This beautiful monument was donated by Elise Isaacs Weisbach and designed by Herzl Kashetsky. The unveiling was followed by a small Kiddush.

On Sunday, December 18th the Saint John Community will celebrate Chanukah with our annual luncheon. The luncheon is a full meal of chicken, tsimmes and, of course – latkes. Last year Shlomo and Esta Dekel and Svetlana Sheiman made the most delicious latkes and we are hoping they volunteer again this year!



A stone monument was unveiled outside Shaarei Zedek Synagogue in Saint John. Designer and artist Herzl Kashetsky and Susan Isaacs Lubin attended.

We have had more newcomers arrive from Israel. In October we welcomed two families – Kira and Slava Bader and their daughter Nikol and Hanan, and Alina Asor. Both families have settled into their new apartments and have been joining us at services and events.

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Saint John Jewish Historical Museum

by Katherine Biggs-Craft, Curator

What a summer it was! We greeted many hundreds of visitors from all over the world, celebrated a number of community events and reached out to new people through our new Facebook page. The summer tourist season may have gotten off to a slow start, but with as many as six cruise ships a week visiting through the months of September and October, we certainly made up for that. Thank you to all the visitors for their interest and their generous donations.

Over the winter months we will be working on organizing and adding new documents and photographs to our archival holdings, researching and preparing for our new 2012 exhibit, re-developing our bus tour for the cruise ship passengers, and reaching out to the community with our educational programs.

All of the things we do are made possible with the help of many hands and voices. Thank you to our summer students: Alex Donovan, Daniel Washburn, Kelsey Butler, Sydney Morse and Patrick Snelgrove. In addition to giving tours they helped with a number of archival and research projects.

A huge thank you to our faithful volunteers from the Jewish community who help make cruise ship days memorable for our visitors: Dr. Joseph Arditti, Phil Bloom, Gary Davis, I.J. Davis, Dan Elman, Norman Hamburg, Norman Holtzman, Susan Isaacs-Lubin, Lloyd Goldsmith, Marcia Koven, Ron Levine and Sandra Levine. Having you come in to share your stories of growing up in Saint John and your enthusiasm really makes the tourists' day.

An extra-large thank you goes to our newest volunteers – John and Dorothy McKim – they visited the Museum last summer and were so excited by what we do that they wished to be a part of it. They bring a new level of expertise to the visitors' experience along with a love for Judaism, for Israel (which they have visited many times) and for all people that is infectious. In addition to giving tours they have also organized our library and have willingly taken on any task or challenge set before them.

We also send our thanks to those providing annual grants for the operational, project and student funding which keep us going – the Atlantic Jewish Council; the Heritage Branch, Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport, Province of New Brunswick; the

Community Arts Board, City of Saint John; the Council of New Brunswick Archives; the SEED program and Canada Summer Jobs. Without the financial support and the advice of many officials, we would not be able to accomplish many of the things we do.

Coming in 2012

For its 2012 season the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum proposes to create an exhibition to recognize the artistic and creative works of present and former members of the Saint John Jewish Community including examples of painting, photography, architecture, writing, music and drama. There are many individuals who would be represented. Among the professional artists are Joseph Kashetsky, Herzl Kashetsky, Toby Graser, Sidi Schaffer, and Josh Beutel. Amateur artists include Frances Meltzer-Geltman, Gladys (Wiesel) Davis and Dr. Moses I. Polowin. Well known photographers include Clint Wiesel, Martin Grosweiner and Jerome Kashetsky. Industrial designer Sidney Bersudsky and architect Jan Davis offer a different perspective on visual art. Writers such as Lawrence Earl and Jon Everett have had interesting writing careers, while professional musicians, Louise Hoffman Milota and Robert Selby

are widely known in Saint John for their musical talent. The Jewish community was also known for skilled amateur theatricals under the direction of Mitchell Bernstein, Dr. Moses Polowin, Moshe Kotler, Anne Elman and, now, Kate Elman-Wilcott.

The Saint John Jewish community has had a long involvement with artistic endeavour in Saint John as promoters and preservers. Many remember the annual art shows and sales put on by the Saint John chapter of Hadassah which included the work of many of Saint John's most noted artists.

Others were involved with the Saint John Art Club and the New Brunswick Museum. Members of the Jewish community were also very much involved in the musical and dramatic heritage of Saint John including the New Brunswick Competitive Festival of Music, local theatre companies and high school dramatic and musical productions. The Jewish community was fully involved in the city's cultural life and it is a story that needs to be told.

You can help make this exhibition great with your contributions of financial support to cover the costs of exhibit

materials, printing, and publicity. You can share your story or that of a family member or friend

- Loan or donate artwork, posters, programs, memorabilia for the exhibit
- Attend the lectures / presentations
- Visit the museum

Join the Museum's Facebook page and keep up with the day to day events in the Museum and in the local Jewish community.

News from JNF Atlantic

by Lea McKnight, Atlantic Region Coordinator

In October Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter visited Israel with a delegation including Halifax community members Victor Goldberg and Jim Spatz. This visit was an opportunity to forge stronger ties between Nova Scotia and Israel in a variety of areas including academics, research and business. KKL/JNF was thrilled to host Premier Dexter and his delegation as he planted a carob tree in the Aminadav Forest in Jerusalem. He was presented with a certificate commemorating this event and several

other members of his delegation also planted trees.

When you go to Israel you can also plant a tree with your own hands. For more information go to: www.kkl.org and click on Planting Centres. Not only do your trees improve the environment but they also provide a lasting and living memory of your trip to Israel.

It is hard to believe that a year has gone by since the fires in the Carmel Forest and the devastating loss of forty-four lives, trees, flowers and animals but with the help of over 20,000 volunteers and the wonder of

nature the forest is renewing itself under the guidance of JNF. Many species of trees are sprouting up in the sunlight and especially one area of beautiful strawberry trees which will eventually cover an entire hillside.

Our annual JNF Tu B'Shevat Treeathon will be held on Sunday January 29th so expect our call and we hope you will support us once again in our important work in Israel.

Keep in touch with me at atlantic@jnf.ca or 902 444-4563 and follow JNF on Facebook and at www.jnf.ca.

Something to Think About

by Rabbi David Ellis, Regional Chaplain, Atlantic Jewish Council

I have shared with you for many years stories from around the Maritimes. Here is another.

Actually, it was a conversation I had several months ago in Grand Pre, on the annual commemoration of the Acadian expulsion from the region, with a leader of the Acadian community.

I have always noted the similarities between the Acadian stories and Jewish history, and it has been recognized from the Acadian side as well. The sense of a territory, their exile

and life away, their return--these are themes which are familiar to all Jews.

But are there differences as well?

I will reconstruct our discussion as closely as I can:

So you don't necessarily believe that all Acadians need to return to Grand Pre to maintain the Acadian vision?

No, that's not necessary.

You know that many say that all Jews should return to Zion, to the land of Israel. Have

your people come back here to live in Grand Pre?

It is inspiring to us, but we all don't necessarily have to live here. Moreover, the land and message are not only for Acadians.

How so?

Well, it is the vision we have, of not fighting evil. You see, you Jews did not follow this way that Jesus taught. You kept fighting an eye for an eye. Where did it get you? Into more trouble.

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But don't you have to stand up for yourself and defend yourself?

No. Once, I was walking down a street in a city. A gang of bullies approached me. I knew they were going to beat me up. Well, it was hard, but I let them do it, and made no response to them... Then a few days later, I walked by again. They knew if they beat me again, I would not give in to their provocation and reply to them... They were completely frustrated and let me alone.

But what if they were coming out against

others, don't you have to stop them...?

Ah, that's different...

Well, what do you think? Who was right?

I was again privileged to receive an invitation to the recent Halifax Security Forum. It was a marvelous opportunity to meet world leaders and share perspectives.

Rather than write a full report on the forum, I will mention it in the numerous travels I am planning for the winter months. The insights I gained on the Mideast situation, the emerging nations, the role of today's

military in times of budget cuts and what all these mean for Jewish concerns--these are all topics we should discuss at length.

I hope to see everyone soon!

Rabbi David Ellis is available for introducing persons looking for Jewish mates in the region.

All inquiries and discussions are strictly confidential.

Rabbi David Ellis

902-422-7491, ext. 228

rabbiellis@theajc.ns.ca

Message for the Dark Winter

by Rabbi Yosef Goldman, Sgoolai Israel Synagogue, Fredericton

Many words and ideas have been written about Hanukkah. I would like to talk about the Torah portions that we read on Shabbat during these cold dark days.

Joseph, the 11th son of Jacob, is the key figure during these dark cold weeks of the winter. In his life, Joseph was in the dark, but he tried to show others the light. Starting with two dreams that created hatred and animosity from his brothers, continuing with being sold as a slave to an Egyptian Minister, and, finally, being thrown into jail for thirteen years for a sin he did not commit.

Joseph teaches us that even in the darkest times, we can always find a way to shine the light of truth. When he went searching for his brothers: "ET ACHAI ANOCHI MEVAKESH" - I seek the welfare of my brothers, he knew that his brothers hated him, yet he proceeded since he thought he may have a positive influence on them.

In Egypt, he risked his life in order to 'tell off' his master's wife, and we have many more instances later where Joseph showed the people surrounding him that there is a different and positive way to live life.

It is not only about 'seeing the light at the end of the tunnel'. Joseph shows us the light of truth, honesty and integrity already in the beginning of the tunnel. For Joseph the 'tunnel' is not dark at all. We must appreciate this and aspire to live our lives

in that way.

Recently, I discussed with a friend the idea of 'hope'. She said, and I now agree, that the word 'hope', is not very positive, it sounds

as if we are expecting the worst, or just being a little desperate, but we hope everything will work out. Learning how to have faith in Hashem, and at the same time to know and be certain that our path and actions are the truth, is sometimes a difficult task, but very rewarding. We become partners with G-d in the creation of the world, and making the world a better place for future generations. This is the true meaning of Joseph's dreams. He was setting the future for the children of Israel to change their destiny from being shepherds and nomads to becoming settlers who grow wheat and barley.

When the Maccabees kindled the light of the Menorah on the first night, it was not hope that led their



actions, but, rather, certainty that the holy and positive light of the Menorah will shine because that is Hashem's will.

Our Rabbis, most famously, Rabbi Yosef Karo who wrote the SHULCHAN ARUCH - The Code of Jewish Law, asked the following question. Since the miracle of the oil was really for seven days only and not eight (there was enough oil for one night, so the miracle was really the following seven days), why do we celebrate for eight days?

Rabbi Karo gives ten different answers, but the one I like the most is, that without the belief and certainty that the Maccabees had in order for them to light the candle the first night, G-d would not have made the miracle last at all! Since they decided to be certain that this is the right thing to do, G-d continued the miracle.

Happy Hanukkah and "Let there be Light"!



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The Dreidel Manifesto

by Rabbi Ari Sherbill, Beth Israel Synagogue, Halifax

What do world peace, global prosperity and the dreidel have in common? You'd be surprised.

The dreidel seems to be a very simple and almost child-like toy for the Jewish people. A spinning top with a four letter acronym standing for "a great miracle happened there" is played to win chocolate or gelt. As with everything in Judaism however, there is a tremendous depth and wisdom for living, even in the dreidel.

Every year that the dreidel comes out to play, the Jewish people also read the story of Yosef in the weekly Parsha. The story is one of conflict between Yosef and his brothers. Yosef is a dreamer, youthful and open-minded while some of his brothers are the exact opposite. Shimon and Levi are inward, skeptical and against the outside world. Yosef inspires Egypt with his wisdom while Shimon and Levi attack Sh'chem. Two brothers, two different world views, one bitter conflict.

Shimon and Levi are so against Yosef that they keep themselves from killing him by selling him as a slave instead. Twenty-two years later they meet again, and while the brothers do not recognize Yosef, Yosef recognizes them. Yosef then arranges a situation where the brothers are tested in the same way that they failed 22 years earlier. Yosef puts a treasured goblet in Biynomin's sack and says that he will be imprisoned, allowing the rest of the brothers to return to Israel. The brothers have changed and instead of leaving Binyomin as they left Yosef, they offer themselves to be imprisoned. Seeing this self-sacrifice and growth, Yosef reveals himself to his brothers in their utter shock.

The story concludes with Yaakov and the remainder of the family moving to Egypt to live under Yosef's rule, wealth and success. Yaakov will live out his last years in happiness and ease, as the brothers have found compassion and peace.

"Pharaoh said to Yosef, 'Your father and

brothers have now come to you. The land of Egypt is at their disposal. Settle your father and brothers in the best area, let them settle in Goshen..."

Genesis Vayigash, 47:5,6

The place where the family dwells is called Goshen. In fact, the word "Goshen" is mentioned over and over with a constant and almost superfluous emphasis. If every letter in the Torah has meaning, and no word is extra, then there must be a deep significance as to why Goshen is emphasized to such a degree.

Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Shapiro (1783-1841, Dinov Galicia) explains the significance of the place Goshen. In his work the "Bnei Yissochar" he makes a brilliant and mind-blowing connection between Goshen and the dreidel.

You'll remember that the four letter acronym for the dreidel is "N-G-H-SH" or nun-gimmel-shin-hey, standing for a "great miracle happened there". These are the very letters of the place Goshen when it says that they went, "GoSHNaH".

Goshen is the place of unity from conflict. It is the place where the brothers who are so different and in divide come together and live as one. Goshen is the place of reconcile, of calm, comfort and consolation.

If Goshen is the place of unity, then the dreidel is the device of unity. The dreidel has four corners when still, but becomes one circle when spun. The dreidel is that which allows four different, separate and even conflicting corners to become one unified circle.

Rabbi Shapiro further explains that the numerical value of the four letters "nun-gimmel-shin-hey" add up to the same value



as "Mashiach", 358.

The Mashiach is the person in the world to bring about redemption. Redemption from illness to health, poverty to wealth, and bring upon a heavenly experience of life.

The wisdom in all this though is that we don't have to wait for all that to happen. Although it is a belief in Torah of world redemption, it is an even stronger calling to do it ourselves as best we can. This is the wisdom of the dreidel.

How do we deal with conflict? When someone is against us, if something doesn't go the way we wanted, when anything is painful - how do we deal with it?

The most common mistake we all make in situations of crisis and difficulty is dwelling on the conflict, on the negative - on the four corners. Unhappiness, worry and complaint is an expression of a mindset that is centered on the negative. That choice is a mistake. The solution is to not to focus on the four corners but the unified central circle.

Yosef went through a horrific time through his initial arguments with his brothers, almost being murdered, years of slavery and prison. Yet he never complained. Not only did he not complain, he succeeded at every point! How did he maintain such an outlook?

Yosef embodied the dreidel. In all situations, after the initial and significant pain, he centered himself not on the problems, but the opportunity. The word in Hebrew for crisis is the same as a birth stool: for every time of pain exists an opportunity to learn, to grow, to be reborn. Yosef was always focusing and speaking to God - for God is the unity in the world.

Yosef was being spun from place to place, but he centered himself on God at all times. He had no anger towards his brothers and had no need for apologies because he saw the bigger picture. "Don't worry or feel guilty...God has sent me ahead of you to

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save lives...it was not you who sent me here, but God." (Genesis 44:5-8) At all times, he saw the circle, he saw God's unity and presence and was living in a completely positive and happy way despite tremendous challenge.

This is why we spin the dreidel. This is why

we have this story every year at the same time. This is why we're alive.

Who knew? The dreidel, like all of Torah and all of life, is more than meets the eye. The dreidel and Yosef teach us not to be still or stuck – but to spin, to move, to grow, to evolve and always see the unity and bigger picture: to see God in all things, to

see good in all situations, to see opportunity for every challenge.

If we can uncover so much depth and meaning in a spinning top, imagine how much we can uncover in our own lives and relationships? Let us all continue to look deeper, to be deeper, to spin like dreidels. Happy Chanukah!

Bar Mitzvah Musings: The Rabbi's youngest son comes of age

by Rabbi Y.I. Yagod, Congregation Tiferes Israel, Moncton

Since my youngest son, Pinchus just celebrated his Bar Mitzvah this past week I figured I'd write about his Bar Mitzvah and include an article about the meaning of Bar Mitzvah from my 16 year old daughter who is a talented young writer (..I think she's better than her Dad..).

As I'm writing these lines we are basking in the afterglow of the bar mitzvah that we all shared together this past week in Moncton.

Pinchus read the whole portion of the Torah and haftorah flawlessly and also gave a small speech that he wrote. Of course the food, atmosphere and the ambiance was marvelous and the spirit in the room was absolutely inspiring. The bimah in shul was absolutely crowded with children. The spirit carried over after Shabbat when we had a full melaveh malka celebration the atmosphere was absolutely charged with

Russian Jewish music.

Most noteworthy was how the event developed into a Jewish Maritime event as various young families with their children from across the Canadian Maritimes joined us for Shabbat.

Pinchus is the youngest of eight children and his coming of age represents a significant and emotion-laden milestone.

I would like to share a surprising confession. I did not tell him that I wanted him to read the Torah and in fact, if he decided not to do so at all, I will not be upset. In fact, I told him he did not have to do it! He decided on his own to do it all, and that's the way I always raised him..

His Bar Mitzvah is indeed about his personally developed commitment to



Judaism and his drive to retain it all the way through his life.

Bar Mitzvah Reflections from the Rabbi's Teenage Daughter

by Chana Yagod

My younger brother, Pinny, just turned Bar Mitzvah a week ago. Bar Mitzvah is a special time. Plenty of people think that Bar Mitzvah is just a 13th birthday or a mere ceremony or a party with lots of presents or even an excuse to buy a new suit, invite friends over and play loud music.

It is really not any of these things. It's about accepting responsibility, making proper choices, understanding priorities and reaching spiritual awareness.

When a Jewish boy turns 13, he becomes an adult and is obligated to observe the commandments of the Torah. This event is a stepping stone to further Jewish education and a very often a meaningful Bar Mitzvah will lead to Jewish continuity later in life.

What Happened to the Darkness?

by Rabbi Mendel Feldman, Chabad Lubavitch of the Maritimes

A question has been asked by great Jewish thinkers of the past: When one lights a candle in a dark room, where does the darkness go?

The answer given is that darkness has no existence of its own. It is a non-entity because it is simply the absence of light. Once a candle is lit, the darkness disappears. It doesn't go into the closet, or

to the next room. It simply disappears.

When igniting a small flame in a dark room, the room immediately becomes illuminated with the light of the candle. The larger the flame, the more illuminated the room



becomes. Nevertheless, even the smallest flame is enough to expel the darkness, because darkness is merely the absence of light.

On Chanukah we light the Menorah. On the first evening of Chanukah we light one candle, the second night we light two, and so on, until the eighth night of Chanukah when all eight candles of the Menorah are lit.

We start with one candle, enough for the initial expulsion of darkness. Each day we go a step further in brightening our lives with another candle, until the light reaches its ultimate goal; to completely dispel the darkness.

Every year on Chanukah we celebrate the great triumph of the Macabees, led by the illustrious Judah the Macabee, over the vast Greek armies who invaded the Holy Land of Israel, and threatened to prevent the Jews from practicing their traditions. The Macabean army, small and weak as

they were, prevailed, with the help of G-d, over the intruding enemy.

Their victory is a symbol of a small glimmer of light being triumphant over the great darkness which seemed to be in command. With the notion that darkness is but the lack of light, the victory was easily attainable.

This is the ongoing battle we face every day.

In a world where G-dliness is not on everyone's prioritized agenda, one may feel at times that darkness is in fact

prevailing. It may seem that the mundane is sometimes taking more precedence in our daily lives and directing our everyday activities. To combat the darkness which conceals the G-dly light, we must light that small candle, bring that little bit of G-dliness back into our lives.

Once we begin the process, with one small flame within us, the process of ridding the world of spiritual darkness will increase, until we will be able to bask in the ultimate G-dly light.

A Message to the Atlantic Jewish Community

By Ari Isenberg, spiritual leader, Shaar Shalom Congregation, Halifax

I am writing to you from a café on Manhattan's Upper West Side, as I prepare for my exams. My journey through rabbinical school at the Jewish Theological Seminary is progressing, and I have a mere 18-months left in the program! Halifax's Shaar Shalom – a pluralistic, egalitarian, Conservative community – and I have reached a long-term agreement that will see me return to Halifax full-time in July 2013 to assume the rabbinic leadership of the congregation. In the interim, I visit Halifax roughly 20 times per year and invite you to come and join us in prayer, song, learning, and community programming.

There is one recurring question I am asked to answer every year around this season. It is a query equally puzzling to both Jews and people of other faiths.

Any guesses?

Indeed, the prominent concern of many at this time of year is how to accurately spell our forthcoming holiday, Hanukkah! Admittedly, my response is usually perceived as evasive, since I believe there is simply no one decisive phonetic spelling in the English language. After all, the word is most precisely spelled in its native Hebrew, and any attempt at reproducing the word in another language is, essentially, interpretation!

The etymology of the word Hanukkah is actually quite complicated. The complication arises from the various meanings of the root of the word. So, what is the root? In modern Hebrew it can mean "to educate" – as in chinuch. It can also mean "to begin or to initiate". We've always assumed that it means "Dedication" when referring to Hanukkah.

But, perhaps there is a very close link between the three. After all, the Temple had been desecrated – not destroyed, just desecrated. After the Macabees' victory, the Jews of that era needed to engage with their Temple once again. They needed to begin anew, to initiate their ritual practices once again, and perhaps it required a period of study – a period of re-learning how to embark on Temple ritual. By virtue of all this, it was a true and holy dedication.

Indeed, all of that meaning from one simple root – chinuch.

Perhaps the lesson drawn is this: We each have a home. We each have a place in which we feel most comfortable



surrounded by people with whom we feel most at ease. Our own personal holy places. Take stock, reflect, and go about a period of re-initiation, learning, and re-dedication of the places in which you feel most at home, and which you take most for granted.

As for the spelling... For those of you who will transliterate the word into English this year, your best bet is to utilize the English spelling that is most familiar to you. Honour your own custom and tradition, and don't be pressured into adopting someone else's.

Finally, staying true to the importance of the eight days of this holiday, perhaps your English spelling should have eight letters in total (or nine if you include the 'shamash').

With that, I wish you all a very happy, healthy and illuminating Hanukkah, Chanukah, Hannouka.

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Letters to Shalom

Editors Note: Gerda Jacobsson is the Field Coordinator for the Coast-to-Coast Panhandler Partnership, UIA, Canada. Lahav was one of six 16-year-old Israelis who came to camp through our partnership.

Dear Gerda,

I heard from my son, Lahav Gaster, that you asked him to write a few words about his experience in Camp Kadimah.

I would like to write some things as well, especially to thank the Halifax community for this wonderful opportunity they have given Lahav by financing this summer experience for him.

First of all, we are grateful for all you have done to make Lahav's dream of going to Camp Kadimah come true.

These six weeks in Canada contributed a lot to Lahav by giving him a chance to meet Jewish friends and see how much they have in common and that although living far away, they are so close by means of Jewish culture, fields of interest and traditions.

We followed the camp program and liked the way Jewish and Israeli historic benchmarks were delivered to the campers.

It was heartwarming to witness (over the net) the enthusiasm of the staff, as was reflected to us in the daily and weekly updates. Sending a teenager to the other side of the globe, for such a long time, was not easy for us, and we were happy to find out how professionally the camp was run and how much planning and creativity were put into it.

We will be happy to share our appreciation with others, and will remain Camp Kadimah fans for a long time.

Please forward our mail to the Halifax Jewish community!

Neri and Lev Gaster

Kibbutz Amiad, Upper Galile, Israel



Lahav Gester and two friends attended Camp Kadimah's CIT program in 2011.



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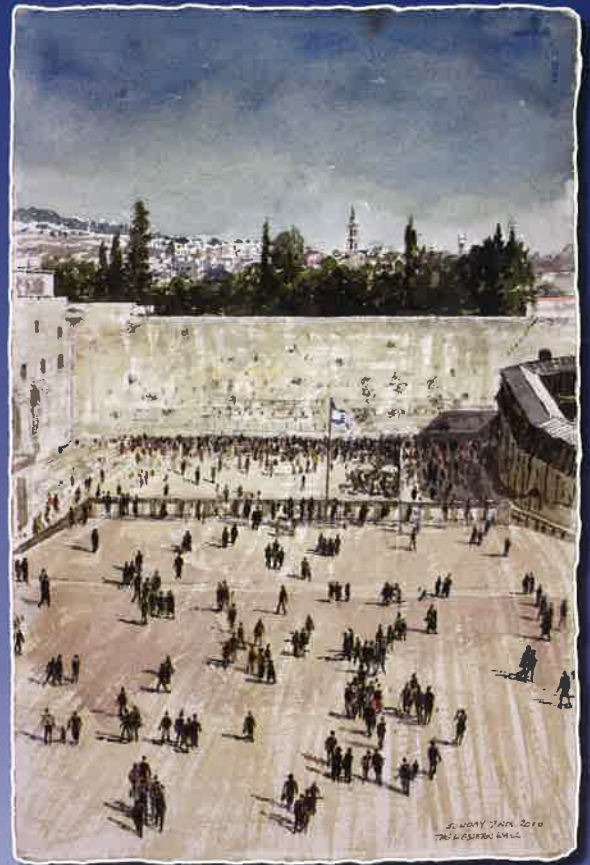
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