

Shalom

CONNECTING THE ATLANTIC JEWISH COMMUNITY



SPRING 2022

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MATTI FRIEDMAN**

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HERITAGE
MONTH**

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Art Exhibition JEWISH ARTISTS IN ATLANTIC CANADA

August 2 – September 4, 2022

The Sunroom, Halifax Central Library
Spring Garden Road,
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Are you a Jewish artist living in Atlantic Canada and interested in exhibiting your work at this show? How has being Jewish shaped you or your art practice?

The Atlantic Jewish Council is organizing a juried exhibition of artwork by Jewish artists in Atlantic Canada.

Call for Submission

To apply, please attach the following information in one email to j-art@theajc.ca

1. Contact Information: Name, Address, Email, Phone number.
2. Artist Statement: How has being Jewish shaped you or your art practice? (maximum: 250 words)
3. Short Biography: (maximum: 250 words)
4. Images: Please include a maximum of 5 jpeg images (no larger than 2 mb) of your work, hanging artwork only, with a corresponding image list including the: title, size*, medium, and price. **Please note this is a small exhibition space.*

The Sunroom exhibit space is located at the south end of the fifth floor of Halifax Central Library in the seating area adjacent to the café. It consists of one large wall and one small wall on the East side (Large: 70" x 137", Small: 70" x 70") and one wall on the North side of the space (70" X 157"). Exhibit space is not maintained, presented, or designated as an Art Gallery and is provided "as is," artists are responsible for insuring their artwork.

**Deadline for applications
June 30, 2022**

**Please email the above application
information with images in one email to:
j-art@theajc.ca**

Questions: Edna LeVine,
AJC Director of Community of Engagement
engagement@theajc.ca



SHALOM MAGAZINE

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Shalom

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ON THE COVER



*Thinking With
an Accent, Part 1*
by Margarita
Fainshtein

Legal documents from the past four generations of my family etched to the wood and plexiglass and layered on top of one another, combing, and thus creating, new identities in an attempt to free them from the constrictions of their context. Relief printing on canvas, laser etched wood and plexi glass panels emphasizing the idea of a space identified with home.

Born in Ukraine, Margarita Fainshtein repatriated to Israel, and immigrated to Canada. Fainshtein earned a BFA from University of Haifa, Israel, and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Exhibitions include: Artists' House, Jerusalem (forthcoming); Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago; Chicago Art Department, Chicago; Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax; and venues in North America and Europe. Fainshtein's work reflects the complexity of multi-cultural citizenship and immigrant status as it intersects with personal, political, and cultural relations. What relation do political movements have with individual histories? Is there a global citizen? Fainshtein lives and works in Halifax.
Artist photo credit: Ilgar Gracie



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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.



17



19



21

The Abraham Leventhal Memorial Scholarships

The Atlantic Jewish Council invites applications from residents of Atlantic Canada for Abraham Leventhal Memorial Scholarships towards tuition fees for future post-secondary studies in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

The award will normally be to a maximum of \$5000.00 for each application.

The biannual application deadlines are May 31st
(for studies beginning the following September, or later)
and September 30th (for studies beginning the following January, or later).

Applicants can apply once in any 12-month period. Abraham Leventhal Memorial Scholarships may be used towards either part-time or full-time studies.

In order to receive this scholarship, all successful applicants must agree to volunteer a minimum of 18 hours to a/several qualifying Jewish organization(s) in Atlantic Canada in the 12 months following receipt of this scholarship.

Up to 8 of these hours may be spent attending Hillel Atlantic Canada events for post-secondary students. Successful applicants will be provided more details about this volunteering commitment.

Applications available at: theajc.ca/scholarships



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יום השואה והגבורה



This program
is available
to view until
July 27



From The Desk Of

ARIK DRUCKER

President of the Atlantic Jewish Council

Dear Readers,

A humanitarian crisis is now unfolding in Ukraine affecting the 200,000 members of the Ukrainian Jewish community. The entire country faces chaos, scarcity and political violence and members of Ukraine's Jewish community are especially vulnerable.

Serious security threats—like the potential for looting or violence—now loom over Ukrainian Jewish institutions. There are a couple of updates we want to share with you about the situation and how you can help.

First, dollars raised through the UJA/AJC Annual Campaign are already being invested to support the Ukrainian Jewish community in their hour of need. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee directly supports tens of thousands of elderly Jews and other families—including nearly 10,000 Holocaust survivors—with food, medicine, homecare, and other necessities, among other crucial programs.

The Jewish Agency for Israel has already advanced \$1 million for the emergency response in Ukraine and is working around the clock to facilitate evacuation for Jewish families.

Second, together with federation CJA in Montreal, we are launching a Ukraine Emergency Relief Fund to provide urgent and additional support for our fellow Jews in Ukraine. For those who want to help, we invite you to donate now at: www.federationcja.org/en/ukraine-emergency-relief-fund/.

GIFTS TO THE UKRAINE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND WILL BE INVESTED IN THREE CRITICAL PRIORITIES:

1. Humanitarian relief: We will support the work of our partner, the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), in providing food and medical relief to those in need.
2. Protecting lives and increasing security: The Jewish Agency for Israel, one of our partner's, has mapped the Ukrainian Jewish community's infrastructure and is providing immediate security grants to ensure that the community is protected from looting and attacks.
3. Evacuation from conflict zones: The Jewish Agency for Israel is also arranging evacuation and Aliyah for Ukrainian Jewish refugees and will also provide additional relief for refugees in transit.



We are one Jewish people. It is thanks to your support that our global partners are in place today and able to protect and care for the remaining at-risk Jews of Ukraine. In these anxious days, your support is quite literally a lifeline.

Thank you for making this lifesaving work possible.

Arik Drucker, AJC President

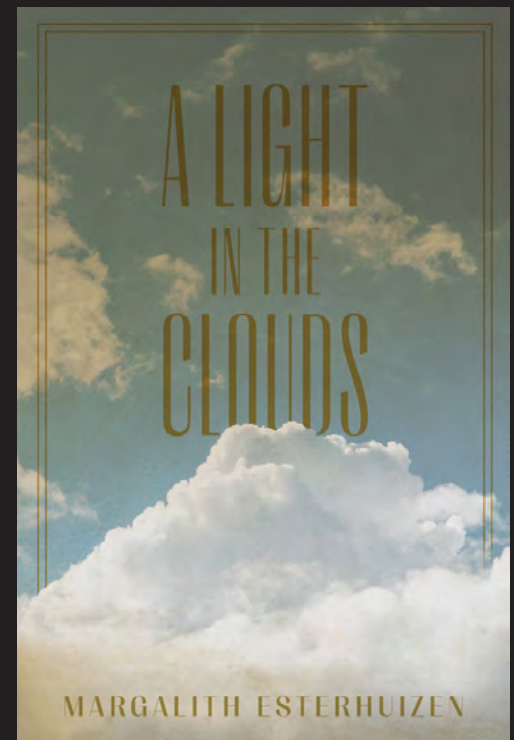
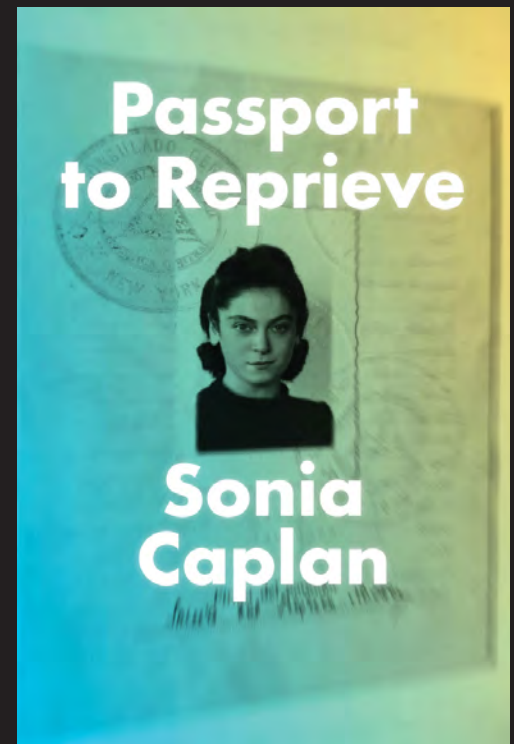


TO ADVERTISE IN
Shalom

Please contact the AJC:
info@theajc.ca

These true stories of love, despair and bravery show how families fought to stay together through some of the darkest moments in history.

Check out the Azrieli Foundation's incredible new spring memoirs.





From The Desk Of **EDNA LEVINE**

Director of Community Engagement

Our International Holocaust Remembrance Day program in Atlantic Canada featured a virtual screening of the Italian film “A Starry Sky Above the Roman Ghetto”—the story of how the discovery of a puzzling photograph sparked a student to probe the history of Rome’s Jewish ghetto and the fate of a little girl. This inspiring interfaith film interlaced the past and present emphasizing the importance of memory, coexistence, and reconciliation. The presentation attracted 200+ registrations as well as several school group viewings and was available to view on January 27 and 28 complete with virtual introductions from our partners, the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, and the Italian Canadian Cultural Association of Nova Scotia.

With the aim of building local Jewish community leaders and strengthening community ties Yulia Elgin launched in 2021, with a grant from Limmud FSU Labs, the inaugural grassroots program Limmud FSU Labs Atlantic Canada. The success of the program resulted in the renewal of a grant for 2022. Innovative programming continued this year focusing on Jewish history and holiday celebrations however, due to the war in the Ukraine all upcoming programs are temporarily on hold. It continues to be a pleasure to support program initiator Yulia Elgin in this endeavor.

The 9th Atlantic Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) committee is once again busy organizing to offer international award-winning films for four days, November 17-20. Working diligently behind the scenes with returning festival chair Lynn Rotin, and the organizing committee, Anna Hazankin, Jon Goldberg, Linda Law, Jordan Schelew, Flint Schwartz, Schuyler Smith, Ann Thaw, Howard Thaw, Kristina Wakfer, and Peggy Walt, to bring you a hybrid festival with an engaging line-up of films, relevant programming, presenting in-person screenings in Halifax, and virtual screenings to all in Atlantic Canada. Please refer to our

website www.AJFF.ca for information on how you can support and enrich the Atlantic Canadian arts community and help audiences discover the stories and histories that connect us all.

This year in partnership with the Montreal Holocaust Museum we presented a virtual Yom HaShoah commemoration. The program included Holocaust survivor Francis Weil, Moncton, lighting a memorial candle, and featured a riveting new chapter in the story of Holocaust survivor Maxwell Smart. The program is available to view until July 27, on the museum’s YouTube channel.

“Unto Every Person There is a Name,” the public reading of the names of victims of the Holocaust was hosted in partnership with, and outside of the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, details on this program are in the Around our Region section.

“Combating Holocaust Denial: Perspectives on the Criminalization of Holocaust Denial” was an informative webinar presented in late March by CIJA in response to rising antisemitism. Panelists included Michal Cotler-Wunsh, Head of the Nefesh B’Nefesh Institute for Aliyah Policy & Strategy; Dr. Carson Phillips, PhD, Managing Director of the Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre; and Sacha Ghozlan, French legal expert. The session explored the importance of government legislation to criminalize Holocaust denial with a focus on Canadian legislation as means to prevent an escalation of this form antisemitism. Discussions highlighted the disturbing increase in society to minimize the impact of the Holocaust, and how this type of antisemitism impacts our democracy. Conversations delved into what constitutes Holocaust denial/distortion, the effects of social media, while examining the legislation adopted in France almost 40 years ago.


The most important tool to recognize antisemitism, released by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)

and formally adopted by Canada in 2019 is the following non-legally binding IHRA working definition of antisemitism:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

In a joint event with the Nova Scotia Filipino Community and the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 we are excited to present a program about a mostly unknown and inspiring story of how a small Asian nation was able to save over 1,300 Jews as they fled the pogroms of Nazi Germany. While other nations refused to take in Jewish or other refugees, the Philippines led by President Manuel Quezon became one of the few to offer help. Please refer to our AJC newsletter for details on registering for this program in late spring.

This summer the AJC will host a month-long exhibit, Jewish Artists in Atlantic Canada, at the Halifax Central Library. Working with committee members and Halifax artists Margarita Fainshtein and Lynn Rotin, to organize this juried exhibition, artists will show their work along with a personal reflection on how being Jewish has influenced their art. The exhibit will be available to view throughout August, during the library’s opening hours. Application information is on the first page of this magazine, and the date for our opening event will be posted in the AJC newsletter.

Do you have a favourite Jewish food or family recipe that conjures up a memory—what does Jewish food mean to you? We invite you to share with us your recipes, stories, and photos in our new project “Breaking Bread, B’tayavon!”. Please contact me with any questions: engagement@theajc.ca. 



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We want to hear from you

Which issues are most important to you? What do you want to tell elected officials about antisemitism in Canada? How would you strengthen our community's advocacy efforts?



For more information visit cija.ca/you



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

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

BY JUDY ZELIKOVITZ, VICE PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY AND LOCAL PARTNER SERVICES AT THE CENTRE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH AFFAIRS

The pandemic has wreaked havoc for many—illness, anxiety, jobs loss, travel and family events postponed, sometimes cancelled. So, it was such a welcome relief that, this spring, many Jewish families were finally able to spend some time together celebrating Passover as it should be—around the Seder table, together with family and friends.

COVID-19 also brought change to the many agencies that support the activities of Jewish communities across the country. As the advocacy agent of the Jewish Federations across Canada, CIJA got to work. Staff and lay leadership rolled up their sleeves, supporting the work of the federations and their frontline agencies in any way we could. Thanks to CIJA's advocacy, funding for the charitable sector—protecting our most vulnerable during a terrible time—was included in the government emergency pandemic allocations, and the vital work of agencies supporting Jewish families continued.

CIJA itself also underwent changes, with staff working diligently but remotely, consulting for hours a day with each other and our stakeholders on Zoom or any other platform that could allow our work on important files to progress. Over that time, our National Board of Directors was led by Co-Chairs Joel Reitman and Jeff Rosenthal, both working tirelessly to ensure that the organization's important work continued uninterrupted and that the voice of Canada's small but vital Jewish community was heard.

Our National Board has now turned

over to a new slate of Directors connected to federations across Canada. The Atlantic Jewish Council now has a new representative on the CIJA Board. Joanna Mirsky Wexler of Halifax has taken the reins from Marilyn Kaufman of Fredericton—to whom we owe many thanks for her thoughtful, diligent, and enthusiastic leadership.

Our new CIJA Board Chair is Gail Adelson-Marcovitz, a veteran professional, lay leader, and philanthropist whose experience leading Federation CJA through the tumult of the pandemic will serve CIJA well. Her vast experience goes well beyond the Jewish community, with lay leadership roles at both McGill University and the Montreal General Hospital Foundation.

As Federation CJA President, Gail helped navigate not only the difficulties imposed by the pandemic but also by the alarming rise in antisemitism engendered by the conflict between Hamas and Israel in spring 2021. Gail has not just advocated for unity in the Jewish community, she has also shown the way. Of the work at Federation CJA at the height of the pandemic in 2021, Gail said:

"I have never been prouder of the interconnected network of community partners

and agencies who make up the fabric of our community, and who have worked together to address the most important challenges we faced. The pandemic along with the renewed antisemitism faced in the last three months has, in so many ways, united us as we faced the unknown together."

Gail's capacity to harness the resources and resilience of Montreal's vital Jewish community brought agencies and constituencies together, united in the cause of preserving and protecting the quality of Jewish life in Canada.

That is exactly CIJA's mission, and CIJA is ready to follow the paths and policies of our new national Board: combating antisemitism, strengthening the Canada-Israel friendship, and protecting the quality of Jewish life in Canada. This time on a national scale, Gail is up for the challenge. S

Judy Zelikovitz is Vice President, University and Local Partner Services at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs who also experienced a lot of change throughout COVID, becoming a Bubbie four times over! CIJA is the advocacy agent of the Jewish Federations across Canada.

SEND A Partnership2Gether GIFT CARD TO CELEBRATE!

HELP SUPPORT OUR VALUABLE PROJECTS IN NORTHERN ISRAEL

Contact info@theajc.ca

YOUTH AND FAMILY NEWS

BY MAYA LOTAN, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH & YOUNG FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



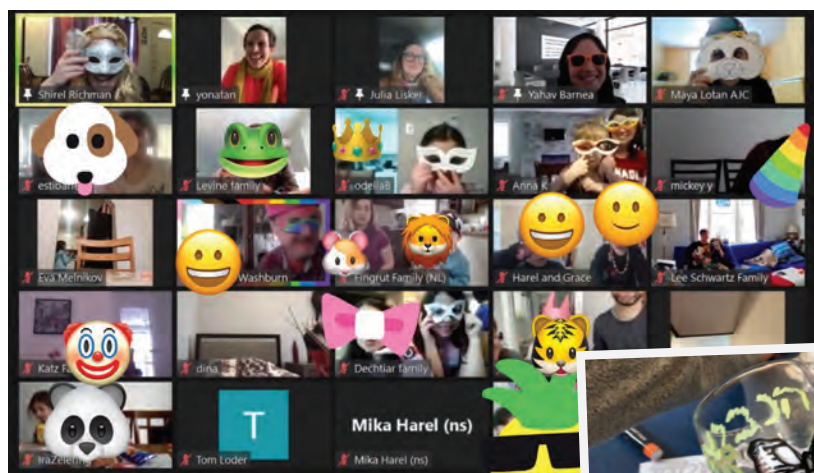
Maya Lotan

Hey families! So much as happened since the last *Shalom* magazine!

Our spring programming started with Tu Bishvat, celebrating the birth of the trees. At that time, we couldn't meet in-person and we had an on-line program with dry fruits from the land of Israel. We learned about the different fruits and the blessing that are part of the ritual of Tu Bishvat. With the support of PJ library and the Department of *Irgoon* and Israelis Abroad of the WZO we had a tri-language program and members from all our Atlantic communities.

Not long after we celebrated Purim. As part of our outreach to all Atlantic communities our Purim program was an on-line party with a professional team from NYC included singing, dancing, and learning about Purim.

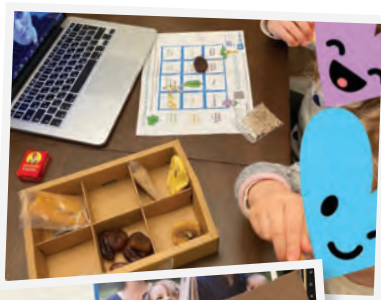
For Pesach we had the first in-person program since Hanukkah, and it was wonderful to meet again in person. We made our own kiddish cups and learned



the story of exodus and the order of the Seder. Now that covid restrictions have lifted slightly, I was able to go to Moncton and deliver the same Pesach program with the kids and families.—Meeting in person has been an amazing experience, I have been in touch with many members of the Moncton community in since I have started my roll as the Family Engagement Director. It was so much fun to be able meeting in person once again!

Our Jewish calendar plays a big part in our programming; however, we also have everyday life programming. Our CYJ group that has come back to life after many years. I have been delivering monthly programs (winter Olympic was a highlight), our *Ivrit* be *Ivrit* class for our Hebrew speaking students and the new added “littles club”—a new program that bring parents and babies together for an interactive play group. We chat, play, move and listen to songs. Our baby group is growing and is open to anyone to drop-in, let me know if you are interested and I will send you the information.

The weather is getting nicer, and summer is around the corner. Stay tuned for out-door programs that I am in full force planning. 🌞



CAMP KADIMAH 2022

From *Mifgash* (Encounter) To Relationship Building

BY SARAH ATKINS, DIRECTOR

After almost a three-year hiatus, in March of 2022 we were finally able to return to Israel and renew our relationship with the land and people. A strong connection to Israel has been a foundation of Camp Kadimah since our inception (5 years before the modern State of Israel was created). One of our primary goals is to enable our campers and staff to develop their own personal, deep and meaningful relationship with Israel and with Israelis.

We seek to accomplish this goal on four fronts. First, we bring Israeli *shlichim* and *shinshinim* to be fully integrated members of our staff team. Second, we bring Israeli C.I.T.s to be participants in our C.I.T. program. Third, we welcome Israeli campers to our community to develop relationships with their peers. Fourth, Israel education is a core component of our programming over the course of the summer.

These types of experiences have traditionally been referred to as *Mifgashim* (encounters), but a *mifgash* is time bound. Our goal is to go beyond the “encounter” component and leverage that opportunity to build longer, more meaningful relationships. Relationship building begins and ends with the campers and staff, and then continues moving toward building a collective community. This is truly one of the hallmarks of our camp community.

This past March we were fortunate to be able to begin this process in anticipation of the summer. For the first time in three years, we were able to attend, in person, the Jewish Agency for Israel *Shlichim* training seminar at Kibbutz Shefayim just north of Tel Aviv.



There we were able to meet face-to-face with our 2022 *Shlichim*, begin planning for the summer and begin to forge these lifelong relationships. We are blessed to have such an amazing group of *shlichim* joining us at CK this summer. Their enthusiasm, energy and love of community is truly contagious.



We were also able to travel north to our Partnership Together region in the *Etzba HaGalil* (Galilee Panhandle) and meet with our 9 Israeli C.I.T.s and their families in *Kiryat Shmona*. We are so excited to be bringing our largest delegation of Israeli C.I.T.s ever to CK this summer. The C.I.T. program will be a wonderful example of how we can further our goal of relationship

CHECK OUT CAMP KADIMAH ON FACEBOOK
AND INSTAGRAM FOR GAMES AND MORE!

CampKadimah campkadimah



building through a shared communal summer experience. The C.I.T.s are so excited to make the journey to Barss Corner and to become part of our community. They all hope to continue building those relationships next summer when our C.I.T.s travel to Israel for the summer. This program would not be possible without the support and vision of the Atlantic Jewish Council and their commitment over the years to create a *Gesher Chai* (Living Bridge) between Atlantic Canada and the Galilee Panhandle.



The excitement for this summer is growing by the day! Spending time in Israel with our community only added to this level of excitement. Being in Israel and spending time in the company of so many young and inspirational leaders reminds us how truly blessed we are to be returning to a place that offers so much, not the least of which is the opportunity to build deep and meaningful relationships with the land and people of Israel on the shores of Lake William.

יאללה קדימה 2022!
YALLA, LETS GO KADIMAH 2022!

NOW INCLUDES 1 BOOK PER CHILD PER MONTH!



**Know any children ages
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PJ Library is a program that sends free, award-winning books that celebrate Jewish values and culture to families with children from birth through 8 years old. In Atlantic Canada, PJ Library is sponsored by the Atlantic Jewish Council.

*Signing up is free, easy, and takes less than
3 minutes. Go to **pjlibrary.org**!*



**Know any kids ages 9 TO 12 YEARS OLD
living in Atlantic Canada?**

TELL THEM TO SIGN UP FOR PJ OUR WAY!

PJ Our Way is a program that offers the gift of exceptional chapter books with Jewish themes to kids ages 9-12—books that they choose themselves! Every month, kids visit the PJ Our Way website to choose a book from a selection of four high-quality titles that have been reviewed by a panel of PJ educators, parents, and kids.

*Signing up is free, easy, and takes less than
3 minutes. Go to **pjourway.org**!*



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*Fill out the sign-up form at
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to sign up the grandparents in your life for special mailings and
emails from PJ Library*

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

in Atlantic Canada



Shira D. Zipursky

BY SHIRA D. ZIPURSKY, DIRECTOR OF JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

Hello everyone! I would like to take this opportunity to formally introduce myself to you all. I am Shira, the newest member to the AJC staff family responsible for Jewish Family Services (JFS).

I have a background in Family Social Sciences and Psychosocial Care. As a practicing Child and Family Psychosocial Specialist who has worked in both the hospital and community settings, I am excited to be returning to the community not-for-profit sector and to also give back to the Atlantic Canada Jewish community.

I was hired as the Director of Jewish Family Services after an identified need for this type of support for the Atlantic Jewish Community and the subsequent formation of a volunteer based advisory committee. Prior to Naomi's departure, we had the pleasure of developing these services with the guidance of the advisory committee members. A lot of time and thoughtful discussion went into this development phase to ensure sustainable services will be offered to those in need. Now the focus is on implementation and rolling out these services to ensure the community is aware of what can be offered and strategies for community engagement.

Recently, some of you may have noticed the messages I've included in the weekly AJC Newsletter to further highlight what types of things I can assist with, such as service navigation, financial assistance, empowerment, and volunteer support. I am proud to share that to date we have been able to help several individuals and families with

grocery gift cards or an interest free loan. In addition to this, there have been several new immigrant families who have reached out for assistance with service navigation and to learn about who they can turn to for medical support, education programs, and employment. There have also been a number of individuals who have called for service navigation support, which resulted in them being connected to community services that could meet either their ongoing medical needs, housing needs, or long-term financial assistance. It has brought me much joy to be able to provide this help as I know asking for help is not easy. I see this as a sign of strength and am happy to be in a position where the AJC can make someone's struggle less of a burden and guide them to creating changes.

It has been an exciting quarter not only helping community members, but also with making new connections and networking. I participate in several weekly and monthly education affinity groups through NJHSA "The Network". This has inspired programs, such as Mitzvah Days which started at the beginning of April in an effort for us to be able to create opportunities to give back to the community and help others, as well as learn the important value of "doing good". There will be a monthly theme going forward. Families and individuals will be encouraged to send a photo to me showing what they have accomplished and with their permission, it will be shared with the community to help inspire others. We are considering partnerships to bring family friendly programs in the Spring and Summer. There will also be workshops on a variety of topics (such as, helping your children cope with stressors, anxiety management, how to explain a medical diagnosis to loved ones, and

an opportunity for open discussion), which hopefully will begin in May/June. I am also working towards setting up a JFS Facebook Page, which will further facilitate advertising upcoming events, sharing resources, and helping community members stay connected. Please keep an eye out for this update in our weekly newsletter.

I am also pleased to share that we were approached by Jewish Free Loan Toronto and are now developing a collaboration with them. This will allow me to refer individuals and families in need of larger loans to this organization.

I am excited by the progress that has been made during the short time I have been with the AJC. As I continue to have networking meetings and hear from community members about their needs I am encouraged by what is being accomplished and the potential that exists to help Jews living in Atlantic Canada feel more empowered in their day to day life. 🌟



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“ I will always be a Maritimer. I grew up in Moncton and attended Dalhousie University for my Law and MBA degrees. I spent 19 summers at Camp Kadimah and continue to spend my summers in one of my favourite places, Shediac, New Brunswick. I am always happy to connect with my fellow “East Coasters” to see how I can assist them with their legal and business needs. ”

—LEIGH LAMPERT



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CAMPUS NEWS

BY RAN BEN SHABAT, DIRECTOR OF HILLEL AND NEXT GENERATION ENGAGEMENT

Another academic year has come to an end, I can't believe how fast the year has gone by and here I am summarizing all the beautiful things we have achieved during this time.

LET'S PRESENT THIS YEAR IN NUMBERS

My main goal this year was to expand the numbers of students in Hillel Atlantic. We estimate we have 300 Jewish students around Metro Halifax Universities and Colleges and around 100 Jewish students all around Atlantic Canada every academic year. I engaged 210 Jewish students at least 1-3 times this academic year. Out of the 210 students, about 50% were engaged three times or more, and 40% were engaged six times or more in one of our education programs, holiday events, social events, Shabbat dinners, and volunteering opportunities. I met many first-year students that I believe will be the foundation for next year's operation in Hillel Atlantic, Canada.

I must admit there is one goal I didn't achieve this year: expand the Hillel in the universities outside of Halifax and open new Hillel branches, mainly at UNB and Memorial. Hopefully, we will find a better opportunity next year.

Hillel's activity is aimed at all Jewish students in Atlantic Canada. That is the main challenge! To reach and engage those Jewish students studying throughout Atlantic Canada and present them with the opportunity to participate in Hillel.

I have a personal request for anyone who may read my articles. If you are familiar with a Jewish student studying at one of the Atlantic Canada universities and you think they will benefit from taking part in the Hillel activity, please direct them to me (by email, by phone) so that I can get the chance to know them!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR!

I started my article that summarizes this year with a quantitative picture of the growth in numbers during this year. I am not that type of guy. Although numbers are vital, I am much more concerned with the quality of our content and the verities of program opportunities we present to our students. I

firmly believe that if we offer our students high-quality content-driven programs that challenge and interest them, they will show up.

Let me highlight some of those programs:

- **The Jewish Learning Fellowship (JLF)**, for the first time, Hillel Atlantic Canada took part in the JLF. The Jewish Learning Fellowship is an experiential, conversational seminar run on campuses consecutively for 8-10 weeks. By delivering a curriculum that speaks to students' abiding questions, JLF provides Jewish inspiration and a social basis for Jewish communal involvement. I plan to run the JLF "life's big questions" and the JLF Israel: Home & Homeland 8-10 weeks program during the fall and winter semesters.
- **Israel education program:** The Hillel Atlantic Israel Education Program, in partnership with *StandWithUs*, consisted of six sessions that allowed students to deepen their understanding of the Zionist movement and the establishment of the state of Israel, and the Israel-Palestine Conflict. We met with Prof Gil Troy (Professor of History at McGill University), Charlotte Korchak (Senior Educator at *StandWithUs*), and others during those sessions. This program was planned, organized, and coordinated with Julian Oxner, Hillel Atlantic, Emerson scholarship fellow. Thank you, Julian, for all the hard work and dedication you put into it.
- **Israel Book Club:** Hillel Atlantic's first-time book club focus on Israel's history, politics, and literature. I choose three books this year; each book had three discussion sessions. We started with Noa Tishby's book "Israel: A simple guide to the most misunderstood country on earth," followed by Micha Goodman's book "Catch 67" about the Legacy of the six-day war on the political discourse in Israel. And we will end with a Novel from the magnificent David Grossman, "To the end of the land." I see in this book club a rare opportunity to engage with Israel differently. Israel book club is a place to ask questions and participate in



RAN BEN SHABAT

group learning to widen our knowledge of various subjects around Israel.

- **Shabbat dinners and holiday celebrations:** We held a monthly Shabbat dinner at the Hillel space during the year. Our amazing Shabbat and holiday team students cooked delicious Kosher meals often around a theme (Italian, Israeli ex..). The Shabbat dinners are an excellent opportunity to engage with new and returning students and a great place to get to know one another. Each holiday we usually make an event that involves food and social activities around the holiday itself. It's an excellent opportunity to thank Bayla Dolman, our Hillel Atlantic Board president and VP Shabbat and holiday dinners. I wish you good luck in the future.
- **Social events:** after all the education programs and Shabbat and holiday events, we also provide social events purely for fun. Every month we decide on an activity we can do as a group to give our students a little fun break from all the study. We played bowling, Mini golf, Ice skating, and watched a Moss head Hockey game (first time seeing hockey! It's a weird game). Hopefully, we will find other relaxed and fun staff to do together next year.

I also like to thank all our students on the Hillel Atlantic Board who find the time to meet every two weeks to organize, plan and execute the programming. It couldn't work without the efforts you put into it.

HILLEL ATLANTIC VOLUNTEERING PROJECT

This year we launch a unique volunteering project: Challah baking for seniors in our community.

Last February, we started this project with two purposes: first, creating a volunteering platform for Hillel students. Secondly, to find

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God's Complaint

BY LARRY FINKELMAN

I couldn't believe it,
here I am, Me,
speaking as loud as I can,
and he still doesn't hear!
First, I put thoughts in his head,
but all the man thinks about
are multiplying his sheep:
where to pasture 'em,
when to slaughter 'em—
it's crowded in there.
I say, Hey,
this's more important,
things 're happenen' here—
like the cries of My people.
I hear them
all day, all night.
I can't sleep, I can't rest,
I can't enjoy a sunset,
I can't even snooze on Shabbat.
How can he not hear?
So I let loose lightening and rain and hail—
Yah, hail in the desert.
Only now, all he's thinking about
is multiplying his offspring!
Go figure.
Come on Moishe,

Pay attention here.
Your people are calling.
Pick up. Pick up already.
So then I give Tzippi the divine inspiration
and she gets after him,
but he gets mad, and,
wouldn't ya know it,
goes off to his sheep.
Who knew he didn't like being nagged!
So finally, while he's out wandering and
muttering to himself,
I set this bush on fire,
but really,
it's not very spectacular,
not even near the fireworks
I got planned for Pharaoh,
but it works.
Now, we can get on with it.
It's gonna be big. It's gonna be huge.
They'll even make a movie about it.
But hey,
I'm getting ahead of Myself.

Larry Finkelman lives in Fredericton, NB and
you can read more of his poetry and contact
him at: www.larryslinesofpoetry.com

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a particular activity that can contribute to our Jewish community in Halifax.

We decided on baking Challahs and putting together a Shabbat kit that we delivered every Friday to seniors in the community. We team up with the Shaar Shalom kitchen, where we bake every Thursday the delicious Challahs and deliver them on Friday morning. Each week ten students volunteered to help with this initiative, 'thank you for your time, with you this project was a wonderful success!' I would like to personally thank *Maayan Nurilov* for taking on such a wonderful Mitzvah and for coordinating the weekly operation.

Next year, Hillel Atlantic will introduce more volunteering projects and make our Hillel Atlantic more present and involved in our community.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Plan, prepare and build the next year! To achieve our goal, create a community of Jewish students in Atlantic Canada.

To all our college students, I would like to wish you a wonderful, fun and safe summer, I look forward to see you in the Fall.

Stay safe! 🍷

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WHO BY FIRE

WAR, ATONEMENT, AND THE RESURRECTION OF LEONARD COHEN

A Conversation with Israeli Canadian Author Matti Friedman

BY PEGGY WALT

"It is," he said, "as if you're walking in the desert and God comes down to you and starts speaking. I was like Moses hearing the voice, and I walked toward it. I'll paint the picture for you: A steel helmet on the sand. Sitting on the helmet is a figure with a guitar, singing 'Lover Lover Lover.'"

From *Who by Fire: War, Atonement, and the Resurrection of Leonard Cohen*

Matti Friedman is hard pressed to name his favourite Leonard Cohen song, but says "with a gun to my head, it would be *If It Be Your Will*, although *Anthem* is also incredible." Hearing his frustration that he missed interviewing and hearing the famed singer and poet in Israel, it's obvious that the Toronto-born, Jerusalem-based author and journalist is a big Cohen fan.

Friedman has a knack for bringing unknown history/mystery to life—his *The Aleppo Codex* won the 2014 Sami Rohr Prize and the American Library Association's Sophie Brody Medal for outstanding achievement in Jewish literature. He's excited about this story, which was almost unknown even to die-hard Cohen followers, and his impeccable research and writing skills shine in *Who by Fire: War, Atonement, and the Resurrection of Leonard Cohen*.

The book dramatizes the time in October of 1973 when Cohen left his home on the tranquil Greek island of Hydra to play for Israeli troops during the Yom Kippur War. The Introduction says it's about "the meeting of young soldiers at a moment of extreme peril with one of the great voices of the age."

It's a story Friedman's chased on and off since 2009; the first six months of the pandemic gave him concentrated writing time. Although "kind of stuck at home," he has four children, so it wasn't like he was "just relaxing."

In 1973 Cohen was thirty-nine with a one-year-old son and considering quitting music altogether. He arrived in Israel sans guitar with vague plans of freeing up someone on a kibbutz to go fight. Meeting Israeli musicians like Ilana Rovina and Matti Caspi, he abandoned oranges for concerts, knowing that his songs might be the last ones the soldiers would ever hear.

Israelis have talked about Cohen in the Sinai for years, but no-one knew many facts. The concerts happened in such chaos that there isn't even a list of where, when or how many of them took place. Fleshing

out the details, Friedman discovered a treasure trove: Cohen's forty-five typewritten and unpublished pages in McClelland & Stewart's archive at McMaster University, "a goldmine." Cohen wrote the manuscript a week or two after the war, everything fresh in his mind. His Los Angeles estate let Friedman also browse Cohen's pocket notebooks from the time.

Cohen's voice in these materials is very different from the "polished and evasive one he used in interviews." Friedman says it was thrilling "to see the raw and unpublished Cohen...it hadn't even been edited by Cohen, he'd just written it down in this kind of unfiltered way." It gave the author a better understanding of who Leonard Cohen was at that point in his life.

"(He) was the master interviewee, he was so good at the one liners, played cat and mouse with the reporter, never really giving in to





Author Matti Friedman

journalist inquiry, he doesn't like to be pinned down."

The manuscript was "completely different from that, he was just writing whatever came into his head...there are pages and pages of train of thought, often kind of obscene riffing with language and feelings, this is totally raw Cohen...you are given the impression of a guy who is very unhappy."

Was the singer feeling tied down with a young family? Friedman laughs when I recall women swooning at one of Cohen's five sold-

out shows in 2008 in Halifax, the start of the world tour that began in the Maritimes—intimate concerts in Fredericton's Playhouse, Halifax's Rebecca Cohn Auditorium—and ended in Israel (where Friedman, busy with newly born twins, had to pass up being in the 50,000-strong audience).

The unpublished manuscript is a different Leonard Cohen from the later tour years. "I don't think I understood how desperately unhappy he was at that time," Friedman says. "He was having a personal crisis. He's having a professional crisis, where he's saying he's retiring from music. It's all there. You see a guy who is much harder to love than the Cohen that you got to see in the Maritimes. We remember that guy with the fedora; this is not that Cohen. This is a young, angry, depressed Cohen, someone who is trying to escape himself, with substances, women."

This younger Cohen is harder to like: "The way he treats women is intolerable by any standards. What redeems Cohen is the fact that we know how he ends up at the end of his life, apologetic. He says later on that the first time he met a woman was when he was 65. (Then) he's self-aware, and he knows where he is, he's in the gutter. He's looking up, because he's Leonard Cohen. That also makes it easier to swallow. But people who read the book expecting to get this elegant elderly gentleman, this is a very different Leonard Cohen."

Cohen wasn't the only Jew to step up in 1973; Friedman's own father tried to volunteer from Toronto. What did Israel represent to Leonard Cohen?

Friedman responds, "He called it his 'myth home.' There's this idea embedded in Judaism, that people living in Warsaw, or Iran, or Halifax, your home is somewhere else, but your religion is oriented around Israel, you're praying facing Jerusalem, you have this mythical home somewhere else...which can be a bit upsetting, because it's an actual country, which can be a bit trying."

Does he think that sense of duty and patriotism in the diaspora has changed?

Friedman replies that Israel today "has become used as a symbol of what's wrong with people on the left—colonialism, militarism—all these things you're supposed to abhor as a liberal person. The opinion has changed so much of Israel...it was already changing in the 1970s, but his affiliation was strong enough that when the war broke out, he knew where he had to be." Cohen wrote in the unpublished manuscript: "I will go and stop Egypt's bullet."

Cohen's raw writing is paired with interviews and photos of former

IDF soldiers who were there in the Sinai. Since Israel "is still a small country," for the most part people were happy to talk to him, and Friedman finds Ruti, Pnina and Orly, young women and skinny-dipping soldiers at the time of the war. Pilot Shoshi remembers hearing Cohen: "We were two kids in flight suits...The war was at its height. We had losses...We didn't understand all the words, but it penetrated the heart."

The book opens with the dramatic story of young Israelis on a radar base beside the big air base at Sharm El-Sheik. The Egyptians surprised Israel on its holiest day; there was no time to prepare or hide from a devastating air attack. Israeli tanks manufactured in the Soviet Union and captured in the last war rolled into battle, mistaking guards at the radar base for the enemy and tragically killing two of their own. This "friendly fire" incident was not talked about for over thirty years, "for obvious reasons." One of the survivors told Friedman the story, which had come to life in a 2003 Israeli TV special. Before that, "even the families did not know what happened."

The interviewees aren't famous or particularly well known. Using their war stories, Friedman says, "offers us a new way to see Leonard Cohen, but at the same time Leonard Cohen allowed us to see the war in a different way. It's not generals, and it's not attacks and counterattacks, it's just these very young people in the desert who happen to meet Leonard Cohen...They are just marginal stories that didn't necessarily change the war in any way, or that don't matter in the historical sense, but those are the important stories."

Compelling photos of the concerts and the young soldiers are deliberately placed by the author "almost like a paragraph in the book...The photos appear in order to move the story forward...It drives the people who set the pages crazy...but I insist on it. You can bring real events to life in a way that words can't. It reminds you that there are real people."

Cohen wrote *Lover Lover Lover* in a break between shows at the Hatzor air base; Friedman discovered an extra verse which now only a few soldiers remember, including the line, "I went down to the desert to help my brothers fight."

But when Cohen recorded the song, the verse was dropped. A former soldier tells Friedman he never forgave Leonard Cohen for cutting it, "But the fact is he came. He didn't have to come. Very few other Jewish artists came to the Yom Kippur War. A few did, Danny Kaye came, but a lot of big Jewish names at Cohen's level did not show up at the front at Sinai. Israelis remember that, the fact is that he was here," so much so that "They consider him Israeli, really a status no other foreign musician has."

Who by Fire was published in Hebrew before last Yom Kippur, around the anniversary of the war and Friedman says it's selling well in Israel. "The reaction has been amazing. For Israelis this is still such an alive memory, a live wound in the Israeli mind. The soldiers in the book read it, other people who saw Cohen read it."

Leonard Cohen depicted the sordid side of life in songs like *Paper Thin Hotel*, and Friedman agrees that "Cohen lived in the sordid world. That was the Leonard Cohen condition, he's in the gutter, looking up. And in that you find the spark of the divine—that's the whole point to Leonard Cohen. That's what he's saying, 'there is a crack in everything.' We're going to live in this completely broken world." Sounds very Jewish. Friedman continues, "Cohen didn't think there was a contradiction between Buddhist practice and Jewish belief. He

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CAPTAIN GLOGAUER— THE FIRST JEWISH RABBI TO DEPLOY IN A RCN WARSHIP TO BETTER UNDERSTAND CHALLENGES SAILORS FACE

BY **BEN COSTEN**, ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY PUBLIC AFFAIRS
PHOTOS BY CANADIAN ARMED FORCES



Captain Glogauer was the first Jewish Rabbi to deploy on board a Royal Canadian Navy ship, which was HMCS Winnipeg during Operations Neon and Projection.

Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Winnipeg's Chaplain made a bit of history during the ship's recent deployment on Operations Neon and Projection in the Indo-Pacific. Captain (Capt) Rabbi Dr. Noteh Glogauer was the first Jewish Rabbi to deploy in a Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) warship.

While Capt Glogauer got to participate in the excitement of Ops Neon and Projection, including the occasional helicopter flight, the main reason the husband, father and grandfather requested to deploy was to better understand the challenges sailors face first-hand.

As the ship Chaplain, Capt Glogauer was the one many on board turned to for support with their most personal issues.

"The role of the Chaplain is to loiter with intent, drink lots of coffee and tell bad jokes," He said quoting one of his mentors, noting that it was his goal to be as visible as possible on the ship so that sailors would know he was available 24/7.

"I was the only Chaplain on ship. It was 259 other people, it was a privilege, and it was on me to develop the relationships and create the openness for people to see that they actually can come and seek support."

He served the sailors breakfast, lunch and supper daily to keep a pulse on the crew and checked in with those he noticed might be feeling down.

"It's not about me and where I am coming from," he says of his approach to counseling sailors. "It's about having empathy."

Empathy is about making a real emotional connection, says the Rabbi. It is the ability to understand the challenge that the person is experiencing, validate their feelings, and to walk with them so they know that there's genuine support to help them work through the issue.

"There is nothing more important than providing a safe environment where someone feels supported and not judged."

The Rabbi admits that he's not what most people typically expect from a Canadian Armed Forces member on board an RCN ship.

"I'm a Hasidic Orthodox Jew. I wear a camo yarmulke (Jewish head cover) and have an untrimmed beard because that is a tenet of our faith." But looking like someone who doesn't fit the mold makes him more relatable to someone who might feel like an outsider, he believes.

"I definitely don't look like the old military, because of who I am," says the Rabbi. "I'm a Hasidic Orthodox Jew. I wear a camo yarmulke (Jewish head cover) and have an untrimmed beard because that is a tenet of our faith." But looking like someone who doesn't fit the mold makes him more relatable to someone who might feel like an outsider, he believes.

"The military sees value in me being here, because of who I am, inside and out."

Rabbi Glogauer said the entire experience has been a real eye-opener, helping him better comprehend what deploying means for the RCN's sailors and their families and loved ones back home.

The Rabbi said that leading up to deployment he gained an understanding for that feeling where family members start to distance themselves a little bit, almost like a protective instinct, before the deployment. "I did notice I was distancing myself a little bit beforehand, too," he said.

He also realized that during the deployment a lot of the physical, mental and financial burdens were placed on his wife in taking care of their family.

Then there's the challenge of communication.

"Being cut off from family is really hard," said the Chaplain.

Rabbi Glogauer spoke about the longest leg of Winnipeg's



Captain Glogauer was the first Jewish Rabbi to deploy on board a Royal Canadian Navy ship, which was HMCS Winnipeg during Operations Neon and Projection.

deployment—24 days without ports and mail, and challenging communications with Wi-Fi.

“You begin to understand the stress that people start to have. That’s a huge strain.”

Maintaining his own relationships from afar helped the Rabbi learn more about what others on board were experiencing.

“My first grandchild turned one in November during the deployment. And for most of his milestones, my family could go and visit, but I couldn’t...so that feeling gave me a much better understanding of what our members are feeling while separated from their loved ones.”

And while time alone on ship can be a stressor for some, for others it represents an opportunity for personal growth, to work on their

relationship skills and to do things for their friends or loved ones.

One evening in the wardroom, the Rabbi and a few others noticed another sailor was crocheting. About three or four sailors joined in and started crocheting together once a week.

“I started to crochet something for my grandson. I learned a new skill here because of the amazing variety of people and the desire for personal connections.”

As one of the other members spoke Spanish, some sailors started to speak Spanish, too, to improve their language skills. Another sailor was an experienced guitar player. There were a couple of extra guitars on board, so people started jamming together to improve their playing.

One modification he had to make was to the name and format of the regular Sunday meetings, traditionally led by a priest or pastor and called “Church Services”. The Rabbi changed the name to Sunday Services. The format became an open discussion group focused on topics relevant to the members aboard, such as leadership in confrontational situations, building resiliency, and developing purpose in life, to name a few.

It’s more about the feeling of connectedness to others rather than preaching said the Rabbi. “The bond of collegiality where the value is in teamwork, strength in unity and relationships, that’s what fosters purpose in life.”

“I asked members for what do they want to be remembered? And have they made a mark in their day-to-day contribution to the good of their team, the ship, the Canadian Armed Forces and their family? That’s my role—to help them frame their life’s journey in as personal and meaningful way as possible.”

HMCS Winnipeg returned to its homeport of Esquimalt, B.C., on December 16, 2021, after transiting over 30,000 nautical miles on Operations Neon and Projection in the Indo-Pacific region. [S](#)

Reprinted with permission from Navy News.

Photo on page 3: Captain Glogauer blows the shofar (ram’s horn) in his Canadian Disruptive Pattern (CADPAT) prayer shawl and yarmulke in preparation for Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, on September 7 and 8, 2021.

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never really leaves Judaism. He never changes his name.”

Cohen’s *You Want It Darker*, (“kind of his farewell song”), incorporates “the cantor from his childhood synagogue from Sha’ar Hashomayim singing *Hineini*. A few months later he’s buried next to his parents at his shul, not only the shul where he grew up in Montreal, but the synagogue that was founded by his family.” It has a quote from the Mourner’s Kaddish, but Robert Kory, Cohen’s last manager, told Friedman that Leonard Cohen had expected to recover from his final illness and was talking about going on the road again.

What’s next for Matti Friedman? He says he needs to get Leonard Cohen out of his system before embarking on another project. He’s going to show his Israeli family rural Ontario, and kibbitzes that he’s visited Halifax—“one of the greatest cities in North America”—only once, twenty years ago. He’d love to come east; fitting since Leonard Cohen’s Rabbi grandfather possibly arrived from Lithuania through Pier 21 in the 1920s.

“*Who By Fire* is a very Canadian book, a Canadian-Israeli book.” Cohen, Friedman admits, “never claimed to be anything but a Jew from Montreal. He was always very upfront about being Canadian. He said Canadians are like Jews, people on the borders of the empire, and

only nationalism, very specific circumstances, produce art. Leonard Cohen’s art comes from Jewish Montreal.” [S](#)

Peggy Walt is graduating with a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Nonfiction degree from the University of King’s College with support from the Nova Scotia Talent Trust and the Abraham Leventhal Memorial Scholarship and is writing a book about her husband’s family during the Holocaust and her conversion to Judaism.



JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH **SAINT JOHN**



The Saint John Jewish Historical Museum is the only Canadian Jewish Museum east of Montreal. The museum shares the story of the Saint John Jewish community from the first arrival in 1783 and the establishment of a permanent Jewish community in 1858 to the present day.

The Museum is located in a former home built in 1897 by city merchant, Charles H. Peters and still features its elaborate woodwork and a Tiffany-style lamp.

The permanent exhibit in the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum is called “From the Cradle to the Grave” and features artifacts which explain the Jewish holy days and customs. Many of the items in the exhibit were donated by local families.



The Saint John Jewish Historical Museum hosts changing exhibits—the current exhibit is “The View from Damascus Gate: Travels to Israel, 1855 to 2018”. The exhibit includes stories from more than a dozen members of the community recounting visits to Israel made from the 1960s to 2018. Photographs of the Holy Land taken from 1855-1860 and artifacts from ancient Israel round out the exhibit.

The Saint John Jewish community was best known for its stores and businesses—over the past 170 years, more than 200 businesses were established. You can learn about some of these businesses by visiting our on-line exhibit at Digital Museums Canada:

www.communitystories.ca/v2/open-for-business_en-affaires



JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH **ART**



Tom Forrestall, River at Kibbutz Dafna, from the collection
35 Days in Israel, watercolour, 15" x 22" on paper, framed, \$4,100.

In 2010, famed Canadian artist Tom Forrestall, joined an Atlantic Canadian 8-day mission trip to Israel, organized by the Atlantic Jewish Council, and travelled to many parts of Israel from the Negev in the south, to the Northern Galilee Panhandle.

When the mission was completed, Tom spent 27 additional days in Israel during which he painted thirty-five watercolours, expressing his feelings and personal observations of many parts of the country.

"The watercolours I did in Israel are, I feel, some of my finest efforts. I was honoured and delighted for the opportunity to work and travel throughout this beautiful country. The sights and people of the land will continue to inspire me for years to come"—Tom Forrestall

11 watercolours from this collection are available for purchase

Each painting measures 15" x 22" on paper, framed, \$4,100.

Please contact the Atlantic Jewish Council for more information at info@theajc.ca. Complete online gallery of Forrestall's Israel paintings: theajc.ca/tom-forrestall-35-days-in-israel

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JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH **MONCTON**

The History of the Jewish Community in Moncton, NB

Moncton's Jewish history is the youngest of the three largest New Brunswick Jewish communities.

Moncton's first Jewish settlers were the Selick family, followed soon after the Rubin family, but it was the arrival of twenty-two families from Durbonne, Lithuania that actually established Moncton's Jewish community. The men arrived first and established themselves, and then sent for their wives and children in Europe (a fairly common practice among Jews and other immigrant settlers in the region). These Durbonners, as they were called, formed a very cohesive community and all settled on the same street. By 1910 the community was large enough to hire its first Rabbi, Jacob Hans. With about 15 families in 1914, the congregation began to collect 10 cents from each member each week until there was enough money in 1924 to purchase a plot of land. Jake Marks and Sam Borenstein purchased the present lot on Steadman Street at an auction for \$650. The cornerstone for Congregation Tiferes Israel was laid in 1926 and the building was completed by the following year. A cemetery for the Jewish community was purchased in 1930, prior to which Moncton Jews were buried in Saint John.

A sense of solidarity among Jews in Moncton is clearly evidenced in their response during and immediately after World War II. Moncton Jews readily welcomed the thousands of Jewish airmen stationed in their city. The community opened a serviceman's centre and it is estimated that over 23,000 men and women used these facilities. Home hospitality was provided for the holidays of Passover, Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur. After the war, when trains would pass through Moncton with Jewish immigrants on their way west, members of the community would meet the trains (often in the middle of the night) attending to any of their immediate needs.

As in many other Jewish communities across the region, the Jews of Moncton have penetrated many of the host society's institutions. From lawyers to doctors, from judges to university professors, to Michael M. Baig's two terms as mayor of Moncton, the Moncton Jewish community has contributed greatly to the city as a whole.

The Moncton Jewish community appears to have reason to be optimistic about its future. It is one of the few communities in Atlantic Canada that has experienced growth in its Jewish population, with an influx of young Jewish people attracted by the expanding government and university sectors. Moncton is now the second largest Jewish community in Atlantic Canada, boasting approximately 100 families.

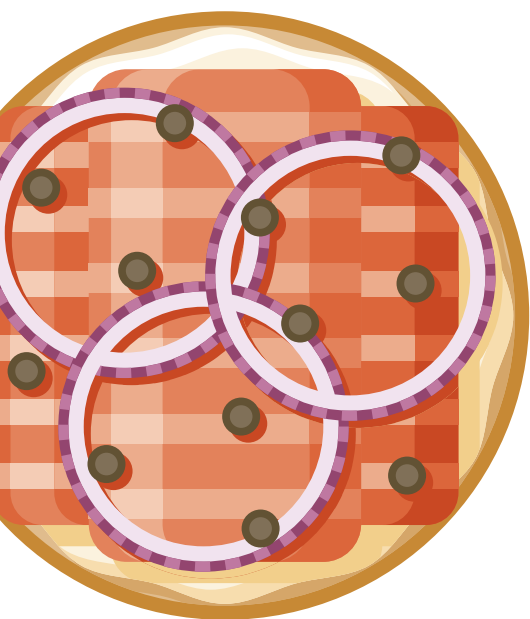
Reference: Medjuck, Sheva. (1986). *Jews of Atlantic Canada*. St. John's: Breakwater Books Ltd.



ADDITIONAL TEXT WRITTEN BY FRANCIS WEIL, 2022:

In the past 30 years, the community shrunk to about 50 families, including 5 former Israeli families and 2 from South America. In addition to these, between 20 and 30 Israeli families have settled in the area. Efforts are made to try to integrate them with the synagogue. The synagogue, on Steadman Street, has been extended; an addition to the building has been built in 1986 under the leadership of Betty Rubin Druckman. The mikvah has been restored and is fully operational and quite beautiful. Every Shabbat is observed with a full minyan and a pleasant Kiddush. 5

JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH **FOOD**



PHILIP RITEMAN'S PICKLED SALMON

BRINE INGREDIENTS

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

FISH

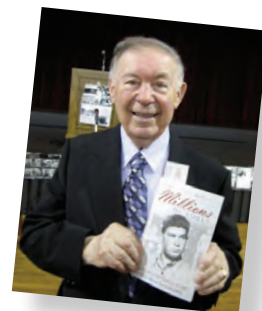
- 2kg salmon fillets

BRINE PREPARATION

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

SALMON PREPARATION

Remove skin and slice salmon fillets to the width into 2" strips then wash well. Uncover and return brine to high heat and boil. Add fish and boil on high heat for 5 minutes then reduce heat and continue to cook for 10 minutes. Cool completely and transfer to containers.



Philip Riteman (1922 – 2018) was a Polish Holocaust survivor of Auschwitz, who settle in NL and retired in NS. For over two decades Riteman educated Atlantic Canadians on the Holocaust and published his memoirs "Millions of Souls". Riteman was recognized for his educational contributions with the Order of NS and the Order of NL. Philip Riteman was well-known for his pickled salmon and his willingness to share his recipe and offer cooking lessons.



A CALL FOR RECIPES B'tayavon

The Atlantic Jewish Council food booklet "Breaking Bread" is looking for family recipes with stories and memories.

For more information or to submit:
Edna LeVine engagement@theajc.ca

REMEMBERING JERROLD SEARL BLUMENTHAL Z'L

FEBRUARY 2, 1940 – FEBRUARY 3, 2022



It is with deep sorrow and love that the family of Jerry Blumenthal (Mr. B.) announce his passing on Feb. 3, 2022 after a lengthy illness and surrounded by family.

Born on February 2, 1940, he was the son of Phillip and Ida (Smith) Blumenthal. He was predeceased by his parents and older brother Stuart. He is survived by his wife and best friend Nancy, brother Bob (Beverly), Halifax, beloved daughters Sheryl Harrison (Doug), Halifax, Andrea (Ed Lazear), Whitby, Ontario, son Darren (Becky), Halifax, and stepdaughter Jennifer Giffin along with ten much loved grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Jerry graduated from Dalhousie with degrees in science and education. He thoroughly enjoyed his students and being in the classroom and retired from St. Stephen's School in 1994 after 32 years of teaching and administration. Later that year he was elected as Alderman for Ward 5 in the city of Halifax. When HRM was amalgamated in 1995 he was re-elected and served until 2004 as

Councillor in District 11, Halifax North End.

Although he retired at that time, he felt that he had more that he wanted to give and was re-elected in 2008 for another four-year term. After his "final" retirement in 2012 he was appointed to and served a term on the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission.

Throughout his years as Alderman and Councillor, Jerry served on many Boards and Commissions including the Trade Board, Board of Police Commissioners, Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission, and others too numerous to mention. He also served a one-year term as Deputy Mayor and was elected to serve a term as President of the Nova Scotia Union of Mayors and Municipalities.

Jerry and Nancy loved to travel when time permitted. During their earlier years they travelled throughout Canada and the US taking in baseball games in more than a dozen Major League ballparks in various cities. Later in life they enjoyed cruising and explored places in five continents.

Daughter Sheryl often accompanied them.

Jerry loved seeing new places and meeting people everywhere. He had special memories of Northern Europe, South America, China, and numerous points in between.

Jerry was always larger than life. He was all about people. He was readily available and always an advocate for families, seniors, those with disabilities and anyone he felt needed a voice. Some of his smaller but most treasured accomplishments were free transit for seniors on Tuesdays, an award he received from CNIB for being the first Councillor in the Atlantic provinces to issue his newsletters and calling cards in Braille and his ongoing efforts to preserve and improve playgrounds, parks and green spaces in north end Halifax.

Once met, Jerry was rarely forgotten. He created a lasting legacy, whether it was in the classroom, in Council chambers or later in life as he walked the streets with his nordic poles, chatting with everyone along the way. He will be missed by family and friends and all of those he served in his beloved north end Halifax. ☺

REMEMBERING MARTIN WEXLER Z'L

DECEMBER 28, 1951 – DECEMBER 14, 2021

Martin "Marty" Wexler, born December 28th, 1951, in Montreal, Quebec died peacefully with his family by his side at the Victoria General Hospital in Halifax on Tuesday December 14th, 2021, following a brief illness. Loving husband of 47 years to Cheryl Klein Wexler. Devoted father of Ezra Wexler (Joanna) Kayla Wexler Robinson (Matthew). Beloved grandchildren, Boaz, Dov, Briella, and Zaven.

Marty studied sociology and philosophy at Sir George Williams University in Montreal and later went on to earn a Master of Social Work at the Maritime School of Social Work at Dalhousie University in Halifax. A registered social worker for forty-three years, Marty worked tirelessly for the rights of persons with disabilities to live in the community.

He began his career working to develop group homes with the government of New Brunswick, followed by several enjoyable years at the Nova Scotia Hospital as a psychiatric social worker. There he became involved in the Nova Scotia Government Employees Union, becoming their Vice President. He soon recognized the need for housing and community support for persons with disabilities, and in 1986 founded Community Living Centres Inc. where he oversaw and operated small option homes and supported apartments every day until his recent admission to hospital.

Believing strongly in the rights of all disabled people Marty was a founding member and Chairman of the Disability Rights Coalition, a cross-disability coalition of individuals

and organizations. Marty also served in various positions with the Continuing Care Association of Nova Scotia, including President, for many years. He also served as treasurer and participated on the human resources committee for the Shaar Shalom Synagogue, and recently accepted a position on the board for the Atlantic Jewish Council.

Marty was an avid sports enthusiast, with a particular passion for football and golf, and enjoyed participating in many tournaments and pick up games with friends and strangers alike over the years. Marty touched many lives throughout his own life, and he will be missed by all. ☺



“Unto Every Person There is a Name”



April 28, 2022: Yom HaShoah
—Holocaust Martyrs’ and
Heroes’ Remembrance Day

The Atlantic Jewish Council was proud to participate in the “Unto Every Person There is a Name” program in partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

B’nai B’rith International, the North American sponsor of the worldwide Holocaust memorial project “Unto Every Person There is a Name”, now in its thirty-third year, provided the opportunity to remember the murdered Jewish victims of the Holocaust, the six million, among them one-and-a-half million children, while the world remained silent.

We in Halifax joined with Jewish communities throughout the world in the public recitation of names of Jewish victims of the Holocaust. This reading aloud of the names of Jewish victims who were murdered by the Nazi regime has become a cherished ritual in our community.

We seek to remember them not only as a collective, but rather as individuals—one at a time—through the public recitation of their names and thus help to restore their identity and dignity.

For many on these lists, it is the only time their name will be said aloud as their entire family was murdered or there is no one left to remember them.

This world-wide project is coordinated by Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem.

Readers: Mark Stein, Schuyler Smith, Lynn Rotin, Joanna Wexler, Jerome Barkow, Michael Argand, Nancy Cieplinski, US Deputy Consul General Daniel Bingham-Pankratz, Ann Thaw, Sondra Rutman, Zane Brown, and Jason Brown. 📍

NEWFOUNDLAND NEWS

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

We had planned a number of powerful programs and we were caught by surprise with Omicron and new restrictions. Well, that wasn't going to stop us!

We offered a variety of Zoom speakers in January and February and, thank G-d, we were able to go back to in person programs in time for Purim!

On Sunday, January 9th we hosted over Zoom rocket scientist Ari Sacher.

Ari was involved in the development of the Iron Dome and is a dynamic speaker.

Ari has worked in the design and development of missiles for over twenty-five years and has briefed hundreds of US Congressmen on Israeli Missile Defense, including three briefings on Capitol Hill at the invitation of the House Majority Leader and the Israeli Ambassador.

On Sunday, January 30th we Zoom hosted Rabbi Mendy Sternbach, the Chabad representative to Lagos, Nigeria.

Rabbi Mendy shared what it is like to live in Nigeria, what Chabad does for the Israeli expat community and more interestingly, what Chabad does for all Nigerians. Chabad in Africa has a beautiful program of humanitarian aid.

On Sunday night, February 13th we heard from Danita Aziza. Danita Aziza is a Registered Health and Nutrition Counselor and holds a Master of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Education degree. She has worked in various capacities in both the public and private sectors and has sat as a member of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Health Involvement Group.

She delivered a talk titled "Preventative health", which is based on the premise that it is much easier and cost-efficient to prevent illness than to restore health when sickness and disease occur.

Kids in the Kitchen continues to be very popular and so is the Children's Book Club. Thank you to the Fishberg family for their continued sponsorship!

Two installments of Kids in the Kitchen took place over Zoom. We made ho-mentashen and chocolate chip cookies,

delicious!

This year's Purim theme was "Purim in the Shtetl", as you can see in the pictures.

We started with the traditional Megillah reading—for the adults that is! The children had a special Megillah video presentation in a side room.

After the Megillah reading, everyone got to check off on their personal menu what they wanted to eat from "Anatevka's Krechme(inn)". Whether someone had the knishes or the hilitchkes (stuffed cabbage) nobody left hungry!

After trying the foods of Anatevka we played a fun Kahoot! game with questions about the participants.

We finished off the evening with pickle making, everyone got to make and take home their own pickles!

The Friendship Circle (Chabad's subsidiary for special needs children) ran a most successful social event on Sunday, April 3rd at the Larkhall Academy Gym, with 39 families and 33 volunteers in attendance! You can see pictures and videos on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/friendshipcirlenl).

Last but not least is Passover. Definitely the nicest one yet. This year was the first community Passover Seder in two years. Everyone came together for the 1st Seder which went well into the night.

We invited everyone back on Shabbat April 23, the last day of Passover for Seudat Moshiah. An old Chassidic custom of eating Matzah, drinking 4 cups and bringing the inspiration and teachings of Passover into the daily grind.

As we submit this article we are preparing for our upcoming Holocaust speaker, Fishel Goldig. He will share his story over Zoom on Tuesday, May 10th.

Best Wishes for a healthy summer! ☺

We are open 24/7 (with social distancing practices). For more information you can reach us at 709-341-8770 or through e-mail at chabadofnewfoundland@gmail.com.



PHOTOS: (1) Crowd for Purim; (2) Friendship Circle; (3) Zoom Speakerst; (4) Rabbi Chermitsky Reading Megillah

The Hebrew Congregation of NL, also called Beth El Synagogue

BY MICHAEL PAUL

With the start of 2022 we welcomed yet another new family into the warmth of our Synagogue community. The family moved from Kingston and are making enormous efforts to become accustomed to their new place of living.

We continue to have regular in person services every Friday night and Shabbat morning. The Chazzanut on Friday nights for Kabbalat Shabbat is performed by Elizabeth Loder—who helps us welcome the Bride of Shabbat with her beautiful chanting of the service.

On Saturday mornings, we have services where we delve deeply into the weekly Parsha—where we discuss the deeper meanings of the messages brought to us by the study from the Torah. Our attendance numbers on Shabbat mornings continues to expand.

We are additionally proud that the daughter of one of our members is now starting her studies for her Bat Mitzvah in May 2023. Tis will be a most joyous event for our community.

We have received many calls from potential tourists from Canada and the US regarding the attending of services during visits this summer. We have told them that they are most welcome to join us for services.

We look forward to planning for the upcoming High Holidays at the end of September. ☺

PEI NEWS

BY JOSEPH B. GLASS

The Prince Edward Island Jewish Community (PEIJC) Executive established a “Newcomers Team” to reach out to recent Jewish arrivals to Prince Edward Island and connect with them. The team set the goals of: ensuring that the newcomers are on the PEIJC newsletter mailing list; requesting that newcomers write up a short greeting to the community with some information about themselves and their families (e.g. indicate school or high school grades their children are attending) and share in the community newsletter; and staying in contact with the newcomers and assist in whatever way they may need and facilitate their connecting with other Jewish families with kids or similar interests. Recent arrivals include a family from Mexico and a family from Israel.

The PEIJC participated in the World Religion Day 2022 on January 16. For more than 60 years, this day has been coordinated by members of the Bahá’í religion as a way to promote the similarities of our various faiths. Coordinated by a multifaith committee, it was hoped the event would be held by St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Charlottetown. Due to the Covid-19 situation, the event was hosted on Zoom and Facebook Live. The theme was “Children, Treasures for a Better World.” PEIJC president Leo Mednick shared a Jewish perspective on the theme.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Tu BiShvat sleigh ride and seder and the Purim gathering were not held this year.

After a two-year hiatus, the PEIJC organized its annual community Passover seder. Held on the second night, close to 50 people gathered at the York Community Centre. The seder was led by Leo Mednick with attendees reading sections from the Haggadah and singing various songs. Amalia Barbosa sang the MaNishtana (four questions).

The seder meal was prepared by PEIJC members and included chicken matzo ball soup, chopped liver, beef brisket, lamb, various side dishes and salads which were enjoyed by all. There was a noticeable increase in the number of children and

youth. They numbered sixteen including three lively toddlers. Leslee Sack delighted the attendees with a variety of desserts including a special treat for the children—green chocolate shaped like frogs. A special thank you to Lisa Kessler, Leo Mednick, and Leslee Sack for their hard work organizing the event and to Devi Clyde for his photos of the event.

OUR MEMBERS

Acting on the Island and Other Prince Edward Island Stories: New and Selected by fiction writer, playwright, and poet J. J. Steinfeld was recently published by Pottersfield Press. This is Steinfeld’s twenty-third book and fourteenth short story collection. It includes 21 stories set on the Island, gathered from the nearly 500 wide-ranging and eclectic stories that Steinfeld has written in his over forty years of living and writing on PEI. *Acting on the Island* is a thought-provoking collection of Island stories embracing and exploring the themes and the psychological terrain that has pervaded all of Steinfeld’s writing, from the absurd to the existential, the surreal to the spiritual, the realistic to the fantastical. Steinfeld is concerned in his work with the influence of the past and memory on the present; the significance of love, creativity, and madness in the lives of individuals as they attempt to deal with their lives on the Island and within the larger world. The painting on the cover of *Acting on the Island* is by Island artist Brenda Whiteway.

On May 3, Martin Rutte was the keynote speaker at the 2022 President’s Luncheon of the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce. His speech was entitled, “The Power of Story: Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work, Stories of courage, compassion, and creativity in the workplace.” Martin Rutte is a co-author of the *New York Times* business bestseller, *Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work*, with sales of over one million copies, and translations into fifteen languages. In advance of his keynote speech, he was interviewed by Matt Rainnie of CBC Radio’s “Mainstreet PEI.”



IN LOVING MEMORY

Susanne Manovill passed away peacefully at the age of 95, on March 13, 2022. Susanne was born in 1927, in Breslau, Germany. In 1938, Susanne and her family fled Nazi Germany. They escaped through Sweden and proceeded on to settle in New York. She later moved to Washington DC in her early 20’s where she met her future husband, Robert Manovill. In 1960, Robert and Susanne bought a farm as a summer home in Brackley Beach, PEI. They spent every summer on the Island and after falling in love with it, decided to move there permanently in 1971. She worked at UPEI as a librarian and taught a speedreading course. Susanne also devoted a lot of her time volunteering with organizations including Farmers Helping Farmers, Brackley Beach Women’s Institute and the MacPhail Homestead to name a few. Susanne was a long-time member of the PEIJC. Susanne will be remembered for her generosity and kindness. 5

FREDERICTON NEWS

It began as a seed of an idea, became a committee that expanded and developed thoughts, then mushroomed into a variety of projects positively impacting the Greater Fredericton community. The Sgoolai Israel Synagogue Antisemitism Committee in Fredericton, under the guidance of Larry Finkelman and Marilyn Kaufman, have established a model to get things done, in terms of combating antisemitism. The two leaders who had taken the national CIJA antisemitism training earlier this year, have sharpened their teeth on confronting the media on this issue and further pursued the issue with letters to and a meeting with The NB Commissioner's office on Systemic Racism. Commissioner Manju Varma is accepting suggestions of ways to combat forms of racism and discrimination from various ethnic communities until the end of May. She will then compile a report of all her findings with an action plan and submit it to the provincial government by the end of December for next steps.

Synagogue Purim services were held and groggers rang out renouncing the villain Haman. Political world events at the time unveiled for us another who would prove to be global enemy number one. With the recent lifting of the mask mandate, the community celebrated a quiet Passover with families at home this year. We had a good but limited assortment of Kosher Passover foods. It must have proven better than expected because a number of Halifax families through Rabbi Kerzner came our way to stock up.

"Take heed...lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and...teach them to your children and to your children's children" (Deuteronomy 4:9) The Holocaust Remembrance ceremonies were held once again at the Capital Community Church in partnership with the Sgoolai Israel Synagogue on April 24th. Organizers for the ceremony were Dr. Israel Unger, Dr. Cary Grobe, Pastors Jack Leaman and Raymond Woodward and Rabbi Yosef Goldman. After a heartfelt introduction by Pastor Leaman, in which he spoke about how important it is in the troubled world in which we live today, to remember

the past and use it as a lesson to direct our actions for the future, several members of the Fredericton Jewish community recited readings and prayers. The keynote address was given by Michelle Glied—Goldstein, the daughter of Holocaust survivor Bill Glied (z"l), with whom she co-founded Carrying Holocaust Testimony from Generation to Generation. Michelle has been involved in Holocaust education for a number of years through both the Neuberger Holocaust Centre and Friends of Simon Wiesenthal. She presented a very moving and emotional video of her late father, Bill. Both Dr. Cary Grobe and Dr. Israel Unger gave powerful talks on the significance of the day to all people, regardless of faith. Rabbi Yosef Goldman led everyone in prayer. Ricky Peled recited Psalm 23 in Hebrew, followed in English by Pastor Matthew Woodward. The service concluded with the lighting of candles by children from the Capital Community Church and Lotem and Dolev Peled, in memory of six million Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis. The respect and solemnity of the occasion was felt by all who gathered there.

Meanwhile, as many of you know, May is Jewish Heritage Month. What better way to promote the Jewish community than through education and engagement! Our committee met, brainstormed ideas, and looked for potential partners to assist us in this endeavour. We broke down the month into possible segments for activities. Jasmine Kranat did a mammoth job undertaking and implementing the Shoah Project, based on the Washington Holocaust Museum she had visited when in high school. This Holocaust Educational Interactive Exhibit in partnership with the Anglo West School District was a pilot this year for grade eleven students at Fredericton High in which Holocaust studies is taught. Great support was given by Eric Church from the District, to help this project come to fruition. The District, the NB Dept. of Education and the Municipality have encouraged Jasmine's idea to expand and to enhance the program for next year and to find a permanent home for the exhibit for future years. We received very positive feedback



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PHOTOS: (1) Ricky Peled (Fredericton AJC Rep), LIB. MP Jenica Atwin, Marilyn Kaufman (Fredericton Antiracism Task Force), Kelly Newman (Sgoolai Israel Synagogue Antisemitism Committee); (2) Fredericton's Mayor Kate Rogers with Marilyn Kaufman who represents the Fredericton Jewish Community on the Municipal Anti-Racism Task Force.

from Education Minister, Dominic Cardy, Mayor Kate Rogers, City Councillor Jocelyn Pike and MP David Coon. The exhibit was a prelude to Yom Ha Shoah, beginning with high school students the last week in April. Other group visitations have been arranged by members of the committee to take place in May, as well as a planned visit by MP Jenica Atwin the first week in May. Eileen Duguay, Kelly Newman, and Marilyn Kaufman along with Rabbi Goldman will be leading some of these tours. Larry Finkelman will be giving a few scheduled talks to small adult groups on antisemitism.

In partnership with the Fredericton Public Library, for younger children, Marilyn has provided paper activities dealing with Tu B'shevat, Purim and Passover and the link to the animated short film The Tattooed Torah, which can be scanned and watched at home. The library offered to put together a number of kits for pick up/take home. As well, both the children and adult sections of the library will feature books on Jewish content and Jewish authors throughout the month of May. We commend all members of the committee for their efforts, support and assistance with the planning, set up, organization and implementation of activities for Jewish Heritage Month.

Thank you to Shelley Stephens, Anita Adilman, Ivan Levine, Ricky Peled, Kelly Newman, Rabbi Goldman, Eileen Duguay, Jasmine Kranat, Larry Finkelman and

Continue on page 30

Continued from page 29

Marilyn Kaufman. As well, thank you to Dr. Israel Unger, Matthew Chippin, and Ayten Kranat, who were an integral part of the Shoah presentation. Also thanks to our ground crew, Marc and Jake Kranat, and Ilay Habz.

Mazel tov to Kelly Newman for receiving a scholarship to further studies in Israel with the Honest Reporting Canada Mission. In May, she will be spending some intensive days learning how to counteract bias regarding Israel/ Jewish Affairs in the media. Kelly is a member of the antisemitism committee and has written a number of letters to CBC re-biased reporting.

Mazel Tov to Ilay Habaz on graduating from Dalhousie Medical School, best of luck on your future endeavours.

Mazel Tov to Joshua Bernstein on graduating from the University of New Brunswick Law School, best of luck on your future endeavours.

Mazel Tov to Jasmine Kranat who will be pursuing her Master of Law Degree (Technology) in Ottawa. Prior to resuming her academic studies, Jasmine will be taking some much deserved time off to enjoy a trip to Israel in May.

Mazel Tov to Mercedes Lacusta for being one of the few students from Fredericton High School to be chosen by teachers to volunteer at the East Coast Music Awards being held in Fredericton in May, 2022. Bon voyage to Ayten Kranat and her son Jake who are leaving on a trip to Turkey to explore family roots. Be well and keep safe.

Best wishes to Seymour Kaufman for a speedy recovery.

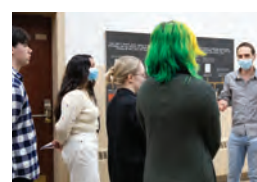
Welcome back to our snowbirds from sunny Florida. ☺

The Interactive Holocaust Educational Exhibit by Jasmine Kranat

During the week of April 25, 2022, the Sgoelai Israel Synagogue hosted over 200 Grade 11 students of Fredericton High School for an Interactive Holocaust Educational Exhibit. Jasmine Kranat, with the help of Ayten Kranat, created an exhibit, similar to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The students went through the exhibit with an ID booklet that talked about someone's life during the Holocaust. At the end of the exhibit, the students had the opportunity to write on the reflection wall, the comments left by the students was impactful and emotional. As part of the exhibit, the students had the benefit of hearing Dr. Israel Unger's story about him and his family during the Holocaust and Rabbi Goldman gave a talk to the students about Judaism.

The exhibit was visited by Mayor Kate Rogers, Minister Dominic Cardy, David Coon MLA and Councillor Jocelyn Pike and her husband. There are already talks with the City and the Minister of Education about expanding the exhibit in schools across the Province and developing it into a permanent exhibit in Fredericton. Additionally, the CBC will be doing a segment on the exhibit on the week of May 2, 2022.

A special thanks to the people who volunteered their time during the week of the exhibit, Rabbi Goldman, Dr. Israel Unger, Kelly Newman, Ayten Kranat, Matthew Chippin, Ricky Peled, Ivan Levine, Edward Mansfield, Shelly Stephenson, Jacob Kranat, Ilay Habaz, Nir Melech, Orly Melech and Whitney McCoy. ☺



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MONCTON NEWS

BY FRANCIS WEIL

The Greater Moncton Jewish community (Moncton, Sackville, Dieppe, Woodstock, Riverview, Miramichi, Salisbury, Johnston Point...) is happy to soon see the end the restrictions imposed by COVID. Since our last article in this Magazine we celebrated Purim and Pesach.

First of all, a very hearty Mazal-tov to Alan and Betty Hans. They soon will have their 95th birthday, Allan in May and Betty in August. Mazal tov and many happy returns! You both still live at home. The whole community sends its best wishes.

R. Pinchas has remained in town ever since and has given a dvar Torah each and every week. His father, R. Yagod came to attend Itay's Langleben bar-mitzvah.

As usual, the bulletins from the congregation can be seen and downloaded from www.tiferesisrael.com. Do not hesitate to go on this website to see more details.

A few sad news—Rubin Maklin, z"l and Heidi Cohen, z"l passed away.

Reuben (Rubin) Maklin, 83, passed away on February 11.

Born in Moncton, he was the son of the late Max and Ida (Savage) Maklin. Rubin was a people person having left school early before joining the military with the Royal Canadian Air Forces. After serving, he settled back in Moncton and began a long career with Hub Meat Packers, eventually becoming their General Sales Manager, as well as leading their Refrigerated Carry All Trucking Division until his retirement in the late 1990's.

He enjoyed playing golf. He equally enjoyed being social with others over drinks and conversation with a heavy dose of laughter. He cared about those around him from all walks of life and in return, they did the same.

Heidi Cohen, 52, the daughter of Sam and Marie Therese (Langis) Cohen, passed away on April 7.

Heidi was a flight attendant with Air Canada for many years and seized the opportunity to travel the world. She loved

travelling, sharing precious time with her family and friends, and her husband, Walter Taplin, and cruising on her 'mini hog' Vespa.

Heidi loved animals, and volunteered with the VON, joyfully taking seniors on errands and to appointments.

On a positive note, the community is welcoming two new families. Jorge and Andrea Hildalgo (daughter Barbara Adaia), as well as Elisheva Elbaz. Welcome to both families.

On Shabbat Acharei Mot (April 30) Itay Langleben became Bar-Mitzvah. It was a beautiful ceremony, Itay being perfect in the reading of the Maftir. Mazal Tov to parents Alina and Leonid, Grandmother Ludmila and brother/sisters Michal, Shelly and Liran. The reception was a beautiful affair. Excellent food and the most magnificent cake! Bravo Alina and your friends!

At Purim, we had two full readings of the Megillah. The evening reading was followed by a reception organised by Sisterhood. The sanctuary and, later, the kiddush room, were filled with noise made by over 70 participants, among them, many children. See photo... It was a pleasure to hear these children and we hope that the Israeli families living in the area will continue to participate in our social and religious events.

On Sunday afternoon, April 3rd, a good crowd gathered at the Trites Maple Sugar Camp near Indian Mountain. We all had a very enjoyable walk through the woods. Again, it was a pleasure seeing all these kids participating. Bravo Sisterhood!

Before Pesach, the children had the opportunity to participate to a pre-Pesach workshop given by Maya Lotan (of pjlibrary from AJC). A good number of kids, more than a dozen, came. They were all delighted. Thank you, Maya!

The community had its AGM in late January. Victoria is a new member of the



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PHOTOS: (1) Purim in Moncton, 2022; (2) A beautiful (and tasty) cake at Itay's Bar-Mitzvah, made by Alina; (3) At the maple farm, April 2022; (4) With Maya Lotan, pre-Pesach with the kids

board. Theodore is the new V.P. David Fishman remains as treasurer. Francis is the new president.

The community has been very sad to see the sufferings that the Ukrainian people have to endure. Two fund raising events have taken place and more than 8000\$ were raised to help the victims, both Jewish and non-Jewish, of the war.

Wishing all a very healthy and prosperous summer 2022. ☺

REPORT FROM THE SAINT JOHN JEWISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

BY KATHERINE BIGGS-CRAFT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CURATOR

REMEMBERING MARCIA KOVEN, FOUNDER, SAINT JOHN JEWISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

There are no words to express how I felt at receiving the phone call to tell me that Marcia Koven, Founder and Curator Emeritus of the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum had passed away at age 95 on March 4, 2022.

...but I am going to try.

Marcia Koven was my boss, my mentor, my friend...

We met as students at UNB in 1985 in a history class taught by Prof. Bill Acheson. She had finished a BA degree in Sociology and was seeking to go on in history as part of her plan to collect artifacts and create a museum to tell the Jewish story of Saint John. One day during the mid-class coffee break she spoke up as part of a discussion of summer plans to say something along the lines of—she was applying for a grant to hire a summer student and to open a museum. I was looking at something else in the room and at the moment, I turned and immediately asked if I could apply for the position. My application was accepted on the spot.

The term ended, the grant came through and in May 1986, I found myself sitting at a small wooden desk in a second-floor studio at 49 Canterbury Street. There was a table with papers and photos and an ancient wall safe where she was storing the audio cassettes of about 40 oral interviews she had done with older community members.

My first task—transcribe (summarize really) those oral interviews. That was my introduction to the Jewish history in Saint John and the subtleties of Yiddish vocabulary—I was two weeks in before I figured out what a shul was.

I remember so vividly that first day in the space that would become the museum—a dingy basement office at 29 Wellington Row with an even older desk and chair combination—and that even in mid-June required the electric heat.

Somehow those dark rooms filled with

light and stories and people—and the first 300 visitors saw the beginnings of Marcia's dream come to life. We even held a grand opening—on the rainiest day of that summer—July 22, 1986—we invited every important person in Saint John and beyond to attend the first Museum event.

Obviously, it was a success!

I returned to UNB and got my Master's degree in history—and even as I researched and wrote my thesis, I never got far away from the Museum—anything I found I sent back to the Museum. In February 1989, my thesis still struggling to find its way, I came back to the museum and picked up where I had left off. I catalogued, researched, organized—I worked alongside Marcia to build exhibits, supervise dozens of summer students, create a library, and tell stories to visitors who came from all over the world.

I learned a lot from Marcia—about meeting high standards (you need to look professional and know what you are talking about), about how to talk to people (even the ones you didn't like!), about the importance of family and community, about life and about never giving up.

No one ever imagined that "Marcia's Museum" would turn into the best thing to happen to the Saint John Jewish community. It is still thriving—collecting, preserving, sharing—36 years later—that's double chai (and thanks to Marcia I know that the number means life and that multiples of 18 are even better)!

When she retired for the first time in 1998, and then again in 2008 (after coming back to help re-create the Museum at 91 Leinster Street), she left enormous shoes for me to fill. She watched over me—even after moving to Toronto to be nearer to her children.

I hope I have been able to fill those shoes.

Marcia, you gave life to the Saint John Jewish community—even as the families who created and nurtured it passed on or moved away. You have left a legacy for the generations—no one will forget what this



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PHOTOS: (1) The View from Damascus Gate Exhibit—Israeli artifacts; (2) Katherine Biggs-Craft and Marcia Koven; (3) Marcia Koven leading a museum tour

little community did or could do—and no one will ever forget you.

My heart is broken...my heart is full...I will never forget all that you have meant to me and to so many others. I know that you will still be watching over me and I will feel your spirit with me every time I share the stories that you made sure never got lost.

Rest well my friend—with your husband Jerry (whose support of you and the Museum never wavered) and all whom you loved.

Marcia was pre-deceased by her parents, Jack and Rose Freedman, her husband, Jerry and two brothers—Dr. Lewis H and Bernie. They were her best supporters. Her four children—Diane, Charlotte, Andrew and Sherry, with their children—chose to sit the first two days of shiva in the Museum, in a space that was close to Marcia's heart and legacy. They were joined virtually by Marcia's sister, Edythe, and many nieces, nephews and friends.

Marcia Koven's legacy will live in the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum and its on-going efforts to collect, conserve and share the history of the Saint John Jewish community.

SAINT JOHN JEWISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The Saint John Jewish Historical Museum will open for its 37th summer season on Monday, May 30 and will be open for tours from Monday to Friday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, until Friday, November 4. The exhibit “The View from Damascus Gate: Travels to Israel, 1855 to 2018” remains in place for visitors and includes photographs taken in and near Jerusalem in the 1860s, middle eastern clothing, ancient Israeli artifacts and contemporary stories of travel. We anticipate a much busier summer with about 70 cruise ships expected from May to November.

The museum will be hiring four students for July and August to help with greeting visitors, giving tours of the exhibits and research projects including transcribing oral interviews, researching and writing short essays on Jewish holy days and customs and helping to develop a lesson plan on children’s experiences in the Holocaust.

Ove the past few months, the Museum has been working on a number of outreach programs. Several groups have experienced our Zoom presentation “A Glimpse into Jewish History in Saint John”—a one hour presentation with slides that provides an overview of the community’s history and the Museum’s activities. It has been well received—“I cannot thank you ENOUGH for your wonderful presentation and you do it with such warmth and enjoyment.”—Maureen—and we would welcome the opportunity to share it with community groups in the Atlantic Provinces.

Outreach into schools in New Brunswick is on-going—several in-person sessions to share the celebration of Chanukah were held in December and more recently classes have joined us virtually to celebrate Passover and to learn about other holidays and customs.

The Museum Board is planning a trip to Minto, NB in early June to visit the NB Internment Camp Museum and the site of the camp. For most it will be their first visit to the community and the opportunity to learn more about the Jewish men who were held at the camp in Ripples for two years in the early 1940s. If anyone would like to join them, please let us know.

Planning is in the early stages for the 9th annual Saint John Jewish Film Festival to be held October 22 to October 27—mark your calendars and plan to attend or become a sponsor. More details will be shared in the next issue of Shalom. 📍

SAINT JOHN NEWS

BY SUSAN ISAACS-LUBIN

With COVID regulations relaxed, the Saint John Jewish Community has awakened from a two-year hiatus.

We came together at Purim with a reading of the Megillah, and a full congregation, with many dressed in costume for the occasion. There were many children present, in costume, and making noise with their gregors at the mention of Haman!

Our snowbirds have arrived home and we welcome them – Phil and Diane Bloom, Linda and Norman Hamburg, and Lloyd Goldsmith. I am sure they all had a good winter and are looking forward to joining our community for the summer.

On April 23rd, we celebrated Mimouna at the Synagogue. This was a first for the Saint John Community and was introduced to us by our Israeli families. Mimouna is

traditionally a Moroccan celebration at the end of Passover. Esti Bar Levy and her volunteers worked very hard to bring us a wonderful feast of sweets. We had a full house in our reception area. The tables were laden with sweets and other delicacies. I am sure this will become a tradition in Saint John.

On Friday evening, April 29th, on the one-year Yartzheit for Ron Levine, the Congregation unveiled a rock on our Tree of Life in the entrance to the Synagogue. The presentation was made by our President, Bruce Washburn, to Ron’s widow, Sandra Levine, and his daughters, Tammy Earle and Candace Davis. Ron was a driving force during his life in Synagogue life, looking after our buildings, and also as President. 📍



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PHOTOS: (1) A sampling of some of the sweets enjoyed at Mimouna in Saint John; (2) Some of the families enjoying Mimouna; (3) Enjoying Mimouna; (4) Group photo of some of the colourful blouses during Mimouna; (5) Purim group—many in costume—in Saint John

CAPE BRETON NEWS

BY SHARON JACOBSON

I am Ukrainian?!! What a revelation that was when it dawned on me that 2 of my grandparents were from Tolchin, a village north of Odessa, in the Ukraine.

There was a moment of bonding with a small country that was battling for its life.

The proverbial David against Goliath, the Little Guy against the Bully; a nation subject to blatant tyranny from an oppressor in a suit. Indeed, The Bad Guy looked like a diplomat; but Jews have been there...albeit with no social media or daily news coverage as they trudged to the gas chambers.

Ambassador Mark Regen states that you cannot equate this tragic war with the Final Solution. Nonetheless, Putin's dream is a nightmare for Ukrainians.

Someone had reached out to the Sydney Jewish community at the time of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting by placing flowers on our Shul steps. I called the wonderful Father Roman of the Ukrainian Church in Whitney Pier. (He previously spoke at our Holocaust Education ceremonies). I asked if it would be appropriate for me to do this as well. His reply, of course, was "what could possibly be wrong with that?" I placed the flowers between the front door handles of the little church. It was a stormy rainy day. He told me they survived the challenge. I replied, "just like the Ukrainian people"...the note was inscribed with a Mogen David and a Catholic Cross and the words—Together Against Inhumanity. Despite the history of the Jewish people with various nations, I suppose the only way forward is with small gestures. Israel, as well as other Jewish organizations are helping Ukraine with humanitarian aid.

Our organizations have the machinery in place to respond well. They have done so.

For me, the problem really lies in the Future. Young people are infused with high ideals they have learned in school. The Age of Enlightenment, the age of reason, and other noble pursuits, but they, like us, and the generations before, will learn that the darkness cannot be lit that easily...Nevertheless, Holocaust Education Week and Yom HaShoah provide programs of film, art, literature, and various forms of media journalism that attempt to reach out to all.

I applaud the AJC and CIJA, CIPAC, CJFC, and the many groups who are not defeated or sullen about bringing to light the incomprehensible rise of Anti-Israel and Antisemitic sentiment in the world of today. It appears we have gone from the days of human sacrifice to animal sacrifice, to prayer, and now back to human sacrifice? The biblical concept of "the scapegoat" is still with us.

"Woke" is the new buzzword for being alert to racial and social injustice...for all peoples.

I know, as Jews, we believe we are so woke as to have insomnia...Yet "The Eye Should Learn to Listen Before It Looks". Robert Frank, photographer.

On Feb.26/22, there was a resumption of services in the synagogue .it was like "oiling a squeaky machine" but the enthusiasm reminded me of Jewish immigrants applauding each other that we had made it through the Red Sea. (The 4th wave?)

Alas, it was a disquieting winter in our Cape Breton Community as its older population dwindled.

Shirley Dubinsky, wife of the late Dr. Harry Dubinsky passed away. We joined her sons, Lonnie, (Bridgette) who came in from Montreal, and Philip, (Diane) as they buried their mother in the Sydney Hebrew Cemetery. Those gathered were invited back to The Triangle Pub for a private repast. Diane's kugel was a wistful delicacy.

Vita Land, formerly of Sydney, and her husband, Harold returned to CB from Chicago for the graveside funeral of her brother, Ronnie, who had passed away at 75 years of age in Pugwash, N.S. Those attending were invited back to the Cambridge Suites where Vita had set up her laptop with photos and information on her Family Tree. It was heartwarming to see, as my mother was a cousin to the Gold family. Barrie Carnat led the funeral services with his gentle touch.

Bella Shore, wife of the late Archie Shore, passed away this April, pre-Passover and 3 months prior to her 100th Birthday. She was the last of that elder generation of the Shore Family. She had just become a great grandmother to Lyra, her 7th great grandchild! According to Judaic law, there was no shiva, which would have met with her approval, as



she wanted "no fuss". She passed away in her country home on the Mira River. The congregation joined her daughters, Lani Cohen, (NYC) Sybil Fineberg, with husband Victor and daughter Lauren, (Halifax) and Susan Abramovitch (Toronto) at the Glace Bay Hebrew Cemetery. The oldest daughter, Marni Mednick and her husband Sol, (Toronto) had visited her mom in October 2021, and not being able to attend the graveside funeral, watched on Zoom. Marni had sent a personal eulogy for her mother, which was read by her sister, Susan, to augment the portrayal of their mother who certainly seemed to have been an inspiration for their culinary abilities!

David Ein officiated the service, (Paula assisted by his side). It was a compassionate gesture from a close family friend. Paula and David invited the family to their Seder the next evening. Reminiscences ensued, a healing moment. Delicious food and good friends... Marty and Gail Chernin, Betty and Jerry Shore and Stanley and I joined the table. Always good...

Other community news: A reminder that Louis Alan's Unveiling is to take place over the Long Weekend in May.

Enie and Moe Lief have moved to Toronto. Their sons, Josh and Aaron have welcomed them with great enthusiasm! Barrie Carnat enjoyed Passover with his family in Toronto. Bethsheila Kent organized a Shul hike on the Olde Towne Trail in Louisbourg. Sandra Wajstaub, Lani Cohen, Susan Abramovitch, Paula and David, Stanley and I enjoyed a brisk walk by the ocean and fortress in the morning sun. Wandering Jews, sort of...Four of us also hiked part of the Gardiner Mines, Coal

Town Trail Line, (13.5 km) and plan to finish the rest of it at a later date. Judy and Arnold Budovitch from Fredericton made it to The Island; they visited brother and brother-law Martin Chernin. Gail was cooking in Italy! Spaghetti with “matzo” balls anyone?

I must salute the St. John Jewish community! They have proposed 3 quite inspirational and creative projects. It would be a great idea for our community as well... For example, using their template, the first project would be a Cape Breton Jewish Family Tree. It would share the stories of at least 20 families in an online blog. Sydney, Whitney Pier, Glace Bay and New Waterford. A lot of this information has been collected already by Steven Nathanson.

The second one: Following Their Footsteps would be a walking tour past former Jewish homes in the various towns and the business locations found on their main streets. Incidentally, a former Glace Bay Junior High school teacher sadly commented to me that the town declined when the Jewish merchants left or passed away!

The third one is titled: Every Stone Tells a Story. It would explore the stories to be found in the Sydney & Glace Bay cemeteries.

It would look into the lives of many of those who were once a part of these Cape Breton communities.

Apparently, passengers from cruise ships who were curious about Jewish life on the island, used to be greeted by Shirley Chernin who, no doubt delivered a very interesting history. Most people could not believe that Jews had wandered “this far”?!

On Pesach, I attended a very different type of Zoom meeting! It was an interactive graphic version of “Find the Afikomen”.

Everyone participated. An afikomen was hidden in each of 5 rooms. Each person searched for it and clicked on where they thought it might be... and, like exuberant kids, shouted with glee if they were right—or not!

The 2nd part was a video of an interview with 4 children, ranging in age- 3,4,6 & 9. They were asked the question: WHAT IS FREEDOM?

The answers ranged from roaming freely like the deer, going on vacation and throwing your cell phone in the ocean, to doing nothing like a sloth hanging in a tree. One little girl said, “Freedom is when you have no wife, (pause) no children, no family—no one

to take care of... I think she was either very intuitive or ahead of her time? I will add it to The Four Questions next year!

Freedom means so many different things... in Russia, Masha Gessen stated, “There is no Public; there is no Opinion.”

Despite the reports that antisemitism is off the charts and “online hate” is soaring... Whoopi Goldberg was censured, Anne Frank was betrayed, the myriad of minorities seem to share our feeling about being “guests in our own country”. (Alan Dershowitz), There was a Zoom Meeting from the Office of Equity and Antiracism Initiatives comprised of Indigenous, Black, Acadian, Jew.

Sharing collective history, these peoples wish to inform a governmental strategy that would educate, change, listen and learn,—to be accountable.

When I viewed buildings and monuments, from the UN to Niagara Falls, in various countries around the world being gloriously lit with colour in remembrance of The Holocaust, I felt my heart lighten a bit.

As William Butler Yeats wrote: “...tread softly because You tread on my dreams.”. 5

THE TIME OF THE GIVING OF OUR TORAH

BY RABBI GARY KARLIN, SHAAR SHALOM CONGREGATION, HALIFAX, NS

I write these words in that wonderful period between Pesah and Shavuot that we call “*Sefirat haOmer*.” What is this, you may ask? Torah does not specify a date for the latter holiday, but commands us to count seven complete weeks (*sefirah* means “counting”), forty-nine days, from Passover. The next day following the completion of the count, the fiftieth, is to be the holiday of Shavuot.

So, this time of year we are in transition. We have left Egyptian bondage, and are on our way to meet God, face-to-face, as it were, receiving Torah at Sinai. And we count down (actually, up) the days to this momentous occasion. Each day of the Omer period we come closer and closer to Torah and God. We may have emerged from Egypt as a people newly born, but our mission and character will be centered and affirmed when we arrive at Sinai on Shavuot. At the conclusion of *Sefirat haOmer*, we will have arrived.

As Jews, we seek to make so many transitions holy, kadosh. Whether moving from single life to shared, married life in *kiddushin*, holy Jewish marriage, or going from childhood to responsibility as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, or turning from ordinary to sacred time when we light the Shabbat candles and make *Kiddush* over wine, Judaism is rich in many ways we make what could be ordinary changes, we all take for granted, sacred.

Of course, this transition is one of many in our lives as Jews and as Canadians, then and now. And just now, many of us feel the long-anticipated transition from the COVID pandemic to a widespread but endemic disease.

So much of our focus these past two-plus years has been taken up by COVID. We’ve focused on health directives, on our emerging knowledge about the virus and its transmission, and on what we must do to stay

healthy and keep others out of harm’s way.

Very “unreligious” stuff, indeed. And no doubt, the tenor of modern life—Jewish and general—is quite secular. But the fact that you are reading these words, the words of a rabbi, show that you understand that Jews cannot live as Jews without God and Torah, and perhaps most crucial of all, a connection between the two. Shavuot, *Zeman Mattan Toratenu*, The Time of the Giving of Our Torah, marks this link, and we will have a chance to explore it, to relive it, to celebrate it, to understand it better, beginning on the evening of June 4—likely in a fuller, more joyous way than we have in what seems like a very long time.

I look forward to celebrating with you—*Hag same’ah*. 5



UKRAINE AND THE JEWS

BY RABBI YAKOV KERZNER, BETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, HALIFAX, NS

As I sit down to reflect on the war in Ukraine, the Jewish calendar directs my attention to two important events in modern Jewish history. Last week we remembered the Holocaust on Yom Hashoah and this week we will celebrate Yom Haatzmaut, the day that Israel declared its independence.

Ukraine and the Shoah are clearly linked. An estimated 1.5 million Jews perished in Ukraine. Between 1918 and 1921, approximately 100,000 Jews lost their lives in a series of pogroms, 600,000 Jews were forced to flee and many more were internally displaced. My own grandparents fled to Vienna from Ukraine during this time and my grandmother described what seemed to be a pogrom when she was a young girl growing up in Galicia, part of modern-day Ukraine. Going back to 1648-1649, Bogdan Khmelnytsky lead a massacre of another 100,000 Jews and displaced hundreds of thousands more. As is well known, the Ukrainians were not only innocent bystanders during these tragic events. Many of them aided and abetted the murderers.

How do we, the survivors of Ukrainian antisemitism, relate to the suffering of today's Ukrainians. The Torah tells us, "Parents shall not be put to death for (the sins of their) children, nor children be put to death for (the sins of their) parents." Two generations

have now passed since the last of these horrific events. The experience of the thousands of Jews and 200 rabbis that are presently in Ukraine are far different than my grandparents' experience. Stereotyping and attaching national guilt to present day Ukrainians will not benefit us in any way nor will hate and revenge make our lives any richer.

Last week I was fortunate to take part in a Holocaust Memorial on Yom Hashoah in a most unlikely place, Bass River, Nova Scotia. The people of Bass River have no direct experience with the Holocaust and do not have a Jewish community in their midst. They have a basic human need to make the world a better place. They have the capacity to see beyond their local history. They are able to see human beings through an empathetic lens and view and judge others only as fellow human beings. We can not expect or celebrate their kindness without creating the same empathetic attitude within our own community.

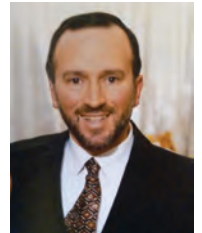
The next important celebration on the Jewish calendar is Yom Haatzmaut. A mere three years after the Holocaust, the Jewish People were blessed with the opportunity to re-establish our homeland. From one perspective, it was an unbelievable miracle that followed the greatest tragedy in Jewish history. But it was not born solely out of a

passive hope for salvation. It was our collective understanding that survival is not sufficient. We must not forget the past but can not live in the past. Dedication

to our future, a vision of an independent people and a strong desire to thrive were essential ingredients in the establishment of the State. Seventy-four years later, Israel is a clear proof that survival was not the goal but an intermediate step towards a thriving, bustling, democratic and strong state that will defend and support Jews worldwide. My grandparents' stateless status in Vienna post World War 1 no longer has to be a reality of Jewish existence.

Does antisemitism still exist in Ukraine and, for that matter, in Canada and the United States. Of course it does. But we should not and can not be defined by others' hatred of us. We must rise above our own past tragedies and create a brighter future for us and the world at large. We have an obligation to fulfill the prophesy of Isaiah to be "A Light Unto The Nations".

We must stand up for the rights of Ukrainians and not be silent when any nation, race or ethnicity is jeopardized by the hate and greed of their enemies wherever they might be. In that merit, will we finally arrive at the point that we can proclaim as Isaiah prophesied, "For the land shall be filled with the knowledge of G-D, as the water covers the sea." 5



THE TORAH AND THE WILDERNESS

BY RABBI MENDEL FELDMAN, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF THE MARITIMES

The Torah portion "Bamidbar" (in the desert), is read in preparation to the festival of Shavuot (usually on the Shabbat that precedes it).

How is a desert associated with the holiday of (Shavuot) receiving the Torah?

The Midrash gives several explanations as to why G-d chose to give the Torah to the Jewish people in the desert.

1.A desert is an abandoned space that has no designated owner, it belongs to everyone equally. So too, the Torah is not the exclusive property of an elite group of individuals. It is the inheritance of every

single Jew; every Jew has equal rights and is equally entitled to the Torah and all its blessings.

2.A desert is free of any distractions that comes with an established civilization, similarly, we must not let anything distract us from our dedication to the Torah and its values. Additionally, the Torah is relevant and applicable in every generation and in every location one may find himself.

3.The Torah was given to us in the desert—a lifeless and dangerous place—to

underscore that the Torah empowers us to transcend all obstacles that may arise enabling us to transform even a desert into a hub of life.

4.A desert is a place devoid of life, there is no water readily available in a desert and little can grow in it. The message is that although one may be destitute (as a desert) one still has an obligation to follow the directives of the Torah.

As the holiday of Shavuot approaches may we internalize these messages with true dedication to the Torah, its principles, and values. 5



KEEPING OURSELVES HEALTHY & SAFE

BY RABBI YOSEF GOLDMAN, SGOOLAI ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, FREDERICTON, NB

A few months ago, I had a very interesting discussion with friend in New Jersey. She attended her eldest Grandson's Aufruf (the Shabbat prior to his wedding) and was flabbergasted that most of the men in the Synagogue were not wearing facial masks. Their explanation/excuse was that "COVID is over"! There are a few points of view from the Torah and Halacha perspective that shared with her (not that she could have influenced their behaviour) which I believe are true and must be taken into consideration.


One—the Talmud tells us on many occasions that DINA D'MALCHUTAH DINA—loosely translated, it means that the law of the government takes precedence over the law of the Torah (almost always) except in cases that there can't be a way to make the Two (law) systems work together. The example I was taught in Yeshivah is that of something that happened in the 18th Century. The queen had a dream that her son was buried alive and demanded that they take the coffin out of the ground. Sure enough, there were scratch marks on the inside of the casket, but he was already dead from suffocation! As a result of this terrible mistake—the king ordered that nobody shall be buried until 72 hours after the person died (from the medical point of view). As Orthodox Jews living at the time, they could not postpone burial like that—as it is against our Halacha! The way to reconcile this clash was a suggestion of a very smart Jewish person—to tie a string to the deceased which would be connected to a small pole above the grave that would be attached to a bell. If the person buried was still alive—they would pull on the string and draw attention to them being still alive...

Two—we have a rule in the Torah (*taken out of context deliberately*) that we must take care of our physical & mental well-being, and this is as important as taking care of our spiritual well-being! Not all codifiers of the 613 commandments count this one as one of the Commandments, however, it is mentioned several times in our very rich Halacha literature. The most common (nowadays) application of this rule is that we don't eat fish and meat with the same utensils, because: SAKANTA CHAMIRAH ME'ISSURAH—physical danger is more stringent than something forbidden in the Torah!

Here is a quote from one of our greatest, the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (Siman 32): "Because the maintenance of a complete and healthy body is a G-dly path — since it is impossible to understand or apprehend any knowledge of the Creator when one is sick — therefore you must keep away from things that damage the body and develop habits that improve the body and heal it. Similarly, it is said: "You shall guard yourselves very well." (Deuteronomy 4:15).

Lastly—it is a very good deed to pray in a Minyan, but the Shulchan Aruch only mentions this Halacha in the context of comparing it to praying alone in your house. This is what he wrote in Orach Chayim Siman 90: "A person should make an effort to pray in the synagogue with a congregation, and if he is unable to, due to an extenuating circumstance [such] that he is not able to come to the synagogue, he should intend to pray at the time that the congregation is praying".

What I learn from this (taking into account points 1 & 2)—is that if praying in a Synagogue is preventing people (who are older or immunocompromised) from attending because there are other people who may be risking their life (and yours)—it is an AVEIRAH (transgression) to pray in such a community!

May Hashem accept our prayers and we shall not know anymore illness and suffering! Amen! 



WHAT IS LAG BAOMER?

BY RABBI PINCHAS YAGOD, SON OF RABBI YITZCHOK YAGOD, CONGREGATION TIFERES ISRAEL, MONCTON, NB

Roasting Marshmallows. Bonfires. Bow and arrows. Wonderful songs. But what is Lag Baomer truly?

What is meant to be symbolized and taught to us each year by this beautiful holiday?

Let us examine the background of the holiday to get a better understanding.

It all starts with a beautiful story about true kindness, devotion, and personal sacrifice.

There was once a rich man by the name of Kalba Savua. This man's greatest hobby was inviting and feeding hungry people. Kalba Savua had a daughter by the name of Rachel. Rachel was a very kind person with a wonderful heart, and a very unique ability to see beyond the surface in people.

One day, Rachel noticed a worker on her father's estate, by the name of Akiva. Now, Akiva was a man of no great aspirations or deeds, but his simplicity itself was quite charming. Now, Rachel was no fool. She wasn't just charmed by his simplicity. There were many like that which would come and dine at her father's table. What stood out to her about Akiva was that she saw that he had so much potential locked inside which many including himself did not believe in. She realized that all he needed for this great power to be released was for him to have someone who believed in him.

Now, her father was a very practical person. He felt that Rachel deserved someone on her level. A man who cared for her, respected her, and could speak with her in intelligent matters.

As far as he could tell, Akiva carried none of those traits, for he was but a simpleton.

But Rachel, like a real Jewess, persisted in her conviction, and though her father banished her and Akiva from the grounds, and their livelihood became quite challenging, she still persisted.

Finally, Akiva saw a stone, where water dripped into it, long enough to bore a hole through it. Now, Akiva knew more than he gave himself credit for. He knew that Torah is compared to water. He also knew that he could not live forever as an ignoramus. He also knew that G-d guides every step and shows us lessons in every encounter. Based on this knowledge he said thus: "Just like this water has achieved an opening in the hard rock, so too, the Torah will achieve an opening in my stubborn heart."

And with that, he went and joined a preschool for the Hebrew alphabet.

It wasn't easy at the beginning, but eventually he began to rise meteorically in Torah knowledge and insight. After 12 years he had 24,000 students. One day,

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he decided to travel back to see his wife.

But Rachel was not satisfied. She insisted that he study for another 12 years before he made his return home. So he turned around and went right back to the yeshiva.

After 12 years, he made the trip all over again. Upon his return, he was standing in the street, surrounded by all of these thousands of students. All of a sudden, a woman whom none of the students recognized came walking over to Rabbi Akiva. So, some of them tried to block her, perceiving this as socially unacceptable. But Rabbi Akiva forestalled them saying: "had it not been for this great woman's toil, not I, nor any one one of you, would have ever seen any of our accomplishments."

Several years later, after Pesach had commenced, several students died. This was a terrible tragedy in the community of Rabbi Akiva. And if he'd thought this, was it, the next day, several more passed away.

All of a sudden, hundreds of them were dying. Finally, the 2,400th student died, on the day of the 32nd of the Omer counting, 4 and a half weeks after Passover had ended.

Can you imagine the amount of mourning and trauma Rabbi Akiva must have suffered!

Finally, on the 33rd day, Lag Baomer, Rabbi Akiva gathered his strength, and with

all the faith that only a person of his stature could have done, he turned to heaven and said: "thank G-d that I am not suffering another loss on this day.

And with that, he gathered as much wherewithal that he could muster, and he sought out 5 students whom he knew were capable of replacing the entire Torah loss between themselves.

And so, Rabbi Akiva taught them. And he taught like he'd never taught before. And with the strength of teaching 2,400 at once, he taught these 5 with the same, if more, intensity. And these 5 students blossomed. Soon they captured the entirety of Rabbi Akiva's greatness between themselves. One day, the time came for Rabbi Akiva to leave this world. And he took his leave while being tortured by the Roman Empire for the crime of teaching Torah under ban. But, of course, he was punished only after having accomplished wonderful, irreversible, eternal effects.

And so, the 5 students rose to the task. Between themselves, they took up the mantle of Torah leadership, and began to also teach Torah under ban.

After some time, the Emperor died, and a new one arose.

This new Emperor relaxed the previous measures, and it became a very peaceful time

for the Jews of the Roman Empire.

Finally, that dreaded day came, when one of the students, Rabbi Shimon, was to take his leave of this world. It was Lag Baomer, and everyone was incredibly sad to see him leaving. But Rabbi Shimon decreed upon his deathbed: that his day of departure be forever marked as a happy day of festivity, and a day of appreciating our beautiful Torah.

For Rabbi Shimon saw how much of Rabbi Akiva's tremendous toil had given fruit by that day. And therefore, he said, his day of passing was to be considered less about his leave but more about what had been accomplished, by contrast of what it could so easily have been.

It is for this reason that we celebrate with some fire. For the fire symbolizes the light of our Torah, the light of our dreams and hopes, the light of our tradition, and most of all, the light of our Jewish Pride.

The bow and arrows depict for us the sense of seeking out one's dreams and pursuing what is right. And the songs are the symbol of our soul. For whatever we seek to accomplish, we can never be truly successful without that wonderful G-d given soul deep within us.

May we all merit to have a very wonderful and uplifting and fun Lag Baomer this year, and I wish you all great and wonderful days until next time! 🕊

IT'S TIME TO LET GO

BY RABBI CHANAN CHERNITSKY, DIRECTOR, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF NEWFOUNDLAND

There's an old joke about a "Yekke" (German Jews, known for their attention to detail and punctuality) who had a flight to Switzerland in six months time.

Three months before the flight he calls the airline to confirm and make sure his seat will be the window seat, he can't have it any other way. To his joy and satisfaction, the service agent on the other end of the line confirms that he will indeed have the window seat of aisle 35.

One month before the flight our friend calls the airline again, to make sure he will get the seat he needs. And again, he is overjoyed to hear from the service agent that he will have the window seat in aisle 35.

To his dismay, when the day of the flight arrives and he goes to the airport, he is informed that he will have to sit in the aisle seat.

He is fuming mad. All he wants is to start a class action lawsuit against the airline.

They land in Switzerland and he calls his wife from his cell phone, letting her know of the safe arrival.

His wife asks him over the phone: "How was the flight, honey?"

"It was terrible. This airline is the worst in the history of aviation. They had promised me the window seat and they ended up giving me the aisle seat."

"But honey, why didn't you ask the person sitting in the window seat to swap with you?"

"ASK WHO?? THERE WAS NOBODY THERE".

Isn't this the story of our lives? The joke is funny but we do it in more subtle ways so we might not even realize.

We are coming now from Passover, "Zman Cheruseynu" (The time of our Freedom) as we say in the traditional liturgy.

We aren't just celebrating freedom from

Egyptian bondage.

We are celebrating freedom from anything that holds us back from growth, advancement, happiness and bliss. Whether it be psychological, spiritual, physical etc.

We are empowered on Passover to truly be free. We can let go of old hang ups, grudges and plans of revenge. It's not easy but we know we will be lighter on our feet and live better once we take the plunge and forgive or let go.

There was a Holocaust Survivor who came by the Lubavitcher Rebbe on his 75 birthday and he told this to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe told him that Avraham was also 75 years old when he left the land of "Charan".

The Rebbe shared that "Charan", our sages tell us, means "Charon Af Shel Makom" - G-d's anger, so to speak. The Rebbe told this survivor that you too should leave your anger and let go.

The survivor shared later that this was a transformative moment in his life. Let's not wait until we are 75. It's time to let go. 🕊



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Chag Shavuot Sameach!

