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SHALOM MAGAZINE

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NOTE TO OUR READERS

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

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

Shalom

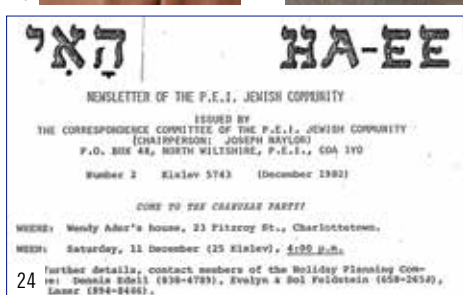
FALL 2022
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The Atlantic Jewish Foundation

SCHOLARSHIPS

All applications must be received by March 31, 2023

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

Submitting a scholarship application does not confirm automatic receipt of a scholarship.

Priority will be given to first-time applicants. Scholarships are only available to residents of Atlantic Canada.

Applications available at: theajc.ns.ca/scholarships

The Noa & Sarah Heinish Scholarship

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

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

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

Noa Heinish was one of the founders of Shaar Shalom Congregation and served as its first president.

Together with Sarah they lent their support to every arm of the congregation.

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

To carry on their good works, the Heinish family established the Noa and Sarah Heinish Foundation. This charitable foundation has provided endowments supporting Jewish educational and health care institutions in Canada and Israel.

A portion of the funds has been allocated to the Atlantic Jewish Foundation to provide an annual merit scholarship for a student from the Maritime Jewish Community to study in Israel.

Noa and Sarah Heinish Foundation Trust—\$1,000-\$2,000 each. One scholarship per year for study in Israel.

The Miasnik-Rein Trust

A limited number of scholarships of \$2,000 each are available to worthy students, one or both of whose parents profess the Jewish faith. The scholarship is open to students of the Atlantic Region for the purpose of establishing or continuing exposure to their Jewish heritage by means of an organized Jewish experiential education program that includes study, travel, community service, or other suitable activities. Examples of appropriate programs include Holocaust Education tours, organized Israel trips, Jewish teen tours, Jewish summer programs etc. If you are unsure about the eligibility of a program, please contact executivedirector@theajc.ca for more information.

Miasnik-Rein Trust—\$2000 each. Maximum 5 scholarships per year.

Halifax Endowment Fund (Jayson Greenblatt Bursary)

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

Jayson Greenblatt Bursary—\$500 each.



From The Desk Of

ARIK DRUCKER

President of the Atlantic Jewish Council

Shalom to our friends and families here in Atlantic Canada.

On behalf of the Atlantic Jewish Council, as the High Holidays approach, I would like to wish you an upcoming *שנה טובה ומתוקה* (a happy and sweet New Year) and a meaningful Yom Kippur and day of fasting.

We have had a very busy year throughout our region. As I write this, we continue to search for an Executive Director, to continue outreach and build bridges with other minorities, and partner with local police and city governments in ongoing efforts to fight antisemitism and develop mutual understanding. These have resulted in our initial meeting between the AJC Board and community members, rabbis, and The Nova Scotia Office of Equity and Antiracism (virtually—due to Covid). We have also met with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in this regard. Furthermore, the Halifax Police has established relationships and safety protocols between local synagogues, the AJC, and Jewish-related events, and they remain vigilant when we provide notice or concern.

This summer we have finally re-opened

the doors to our beloved Camp Kadimah after a two-year hiatus. This is an immense achievement by the camp committee and staff. They have worked tirelessly and have contributed significant personal time and sacrifice to make Camp fun and successful despite many formidable post-pandemic challenges.

Next summer is Israel's 75th Independence Day. Many of us have friends, close, and extended family in Israel and are looking forward towards celebrating this momentous and against-all-odds achievement. Despite numerous wars and conflicts, located in a hostile region, Israel has had almost a dozen Nobel laureates, numerous Rhodes Scholars, Turing Award winners, and is consistently one of the leading countries that submits IPOs to the NASDAQ exchange; this has earned Israel the nickname "Start-Up Nation" after the book on its high-tech sector by Dan Senor and Saul Singer. The AJC is working to make next summer's "Israel 75" a celebration that reflects our resilience and ingenuity as a people. We invite volunteers and those interested in this endeavour to contact us with their hearts and hands.

Finally, the AJC is readying for our Annual



Joanna Mirsky Wexler, AJC board member, with the team of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, who are working to build National standards and training to address Hate Crimes in Canada. CJA and UIA have successfully advocated for Jewish communities to be included in the National Anti-Racism strategy and legislation to address Anti-Semitism across the country. Pictured Left to Right: Mohammed Hashim, Joanna Mirsky Wexler, Angela Lee, Ohana Oliveira.


Campaign starting in November. Community programs, events, exhibits, and volunteer driven celebrations, like this May's Yom Ha'Atzmaut at the Saraguay House, are all benefits from your donations and time. The desire and motivation many of us have for Jewish community engagement, camaraderie, and social ties is one of the principle aims for the AJC in building and strengthening the Atlantic Jewish community. The AJC is your federation. 5

Shana Tova!



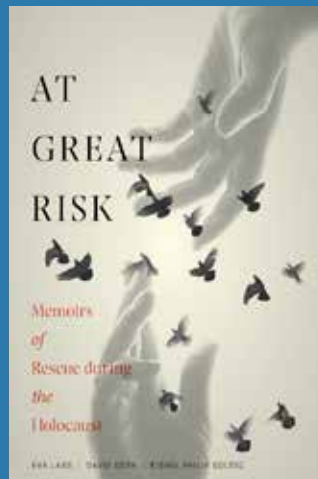
*The Atlantic Jewish Council
board of directors and the staff
wish all our readers and their families
good health, happiness and peace
in the new year.*





At Great Risk Education Program — exploring the theme of Holocaust rescue in the classroom.

This unique program, based on the memoirs of Eva Lang (Toronto), David Korn (Halifax) and Fishel Philip Goldig (Montreal), examines the dynamics of Holocaust rescue, the diversity and complexity of rescuer motivations, the dangers faced by those who chose to help Jewish people during the Holocaust and the designation of Righteous Among the Nations.



During the program, students will:

- Learn about the historical context of the Holocaust
- Read one memoir on the theme of Holocaust rescue
- Engage in meaningful discussions with peers
- Thoughtfully reflect on personal opinions and feelings

Learn more about the program online:
memoirs.azrielifoundation.org/education/programs/at-great-risk



From The Desk Of **EDNA LEVINE**

Director of Community Engagement

On June 12 the AJC co-sponsored a special film presentation, *Rescue in the Philippines*, with the Filipino Cultural Society of Nova Scotia and hosting organization the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. The film depicted 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.

From July 31–September 4, in partnership with the Central Library, Halifax, we hosted a month-long exhibition *Jewish Artists in Nova Scotia*, at the Sunroom Public Art space at the Central Library. It was a pleasure to work with co-organizers, and Halifax-based artists, Margarita Fainshtein and Lynn Rotin to organize this juried exhibition. We were excited to present the works of twelve artists, along with their personal Jewish stories. Please see the centrefold in this magazine for highlights on the opening event.

The annual Nova Scotia Social Studies Teachers Association Conference returns to an in-person conference this October, providing the opportunity to meet with a wide cross-section of teachers in Nova Scotia and showcase valuable Holocaust educational resources. Partnering with Marc-Olivier Cloutier, Manager of Education Initiatives, Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program, The Azrieli Foundation, we will host a session for educators including a resource display.

The U.S Consul General Halifax, Lyra Carr will open the 19th annual Holocaust Education Week (HEW) on November 1 with special guest Menachem Kaiser, author of *Plunder—Family Property and Nazi Treasure, a memoir*. Kaiser was the recipient of the 2022 Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature. HEW programs include speakers, films, live streamed events, and a

student program, presented in partnership with the Central Library Halifax, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, University of King's College, and The Azrieli Foundation. The HEW schedule is online at: HolocaustEducation.ca.

Our 9th annual Atlantic Jewish Film Festival (AJFF), November 17–20, offers viewers in our region the opportunity to attend screenings in Halifax theatres, and a special virtual film package is available to all in Atlantic Canada.

Israel Consul General Paul Hirschson will open the AJFF on Thursday evening, November 17, Cineplex Cinemas Park Lane, with the screening of the Israeli romantic-comedy *One More Story*.

On Saturday night we are delighted to host filmmaker, producer, and director Tamás Wormser for the screening of *Shalom Putti—A Long Way to Jerusalem* (documentary), at the Bronfman Theatre, Pier 21. Wormser will host a Q&A after the film, followed by our gala reception.

Our enriching festival offers us the opportunity to share our culture with the broader community while providing



This spring I attended a small luncheon with Lyra S. Carr, U.S Consul General, Halifax, centre, pictured with Lynn Rotin, left. Carr expressed a strong interest in our community engagement programs and a willingness to participate in our cultural events. Carr will open our 19th annual Holocaust Education Week on November 1.

programming that would otherwise not be available in our area. Behind the scenes are 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. For the AJFF film line-up and information on purchasing tickets: AJFF.ca.

Wishing you and your family a sweet new year filled with good health and peace, Shana Tova. 🍷

A heartfelt thank you and much gratitude to co-organizers Margarita Fainshtein and Lynn Rotin for their dedication and efforts in organizing the exhibition.

A special thank you to the students who helped with hanging the exhibition and coordinating the opening reception:

AJC OFFICE SUMMER STUDENTS:
Yarden Gedalia / Tomer Reznikov

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS:
Ronen Franzman / Ron Levit / Anastasiya Gurevich
Alexander Oxner / Naomi Vogt / Naomi Black

**JEWISH
ARTISTS
IN NOVA SCOTIA**



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SHANA TOVA!

As we look ahead to the New Year, we want to know the issues that matter most to you.

Tell us at cija.ca/you

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ROSH HASHANAH: A TIME TO LOOK AHEAD

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

As we look toward a new year, one with renewed opportunities to connect with loved ones and colleagues, we must reflect on the past to appreciate what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.

5782 continued to be a year of unprecedented times, one that imposed and rescinded lockdown rules and where science brought hope, but that also saw dark times with the war in Ukraine, continued violence in Israel, and a disturbing uptick in antisemitism and other hate here at home.

Through it all, the CIJA team pivoted and came together to continue our important work protecting the quality of Jewish life in Canada. After more than two years of isolation and working from home, the CIJA team across Canada and in Israel returned to full operation with a hybrid model of work from home and office that has allowed us to meet in person with partners, stakeholders, and political leaders once again, helped us to move key priorities forward, and energized our agenda advocating for issues of greatest concern to our community.

Among these many tasks were finding support for bills to ban Holocaust denial and symbols of hate, as well as to combat online hate. We secured funding to support important Jewish community priorities including \$20 million for the Montreal Holocaust Museum; \$2.5 million for the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre in Toronto; \$5.6 million for the Office of the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism; \$30 million for the Centre for Aging and Brain Health Innovation, established by Baycrest Health Sciences in Toronto; and \$25 million for the

Vancouver JCC redevelopment project.

We are tackling antisemitism head on: We promoted the use of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism to guide the policies of governments and provincial agencies and educated law enforcement services across the country about antisemitism, providing advice and guidance on the development of effective hate crime units. We are working with school boards to develop educational curriculums, for various levels of learning, to teach students about antisemitism, how to identify it, and how to reject it.

We are extending our hands to partners: We led a multi-partner coalition to eliminate the discriminatory policy limiting blood and plasma donations from members of the LGBTQ2+ community. We sought funding for Jewish immigrant agencies, other Federation-sponsored charities, synagogues, and individual Canadians to welcome Ukrainians, find them supplies, and support them in their new homes.

We celebrated Judaism and Zionism: Working alongside Federations across the country, we helped ensure that holidays and events, including, among others, Yom HaShoah, Pride, Walk with Israel, Calgary Stampede, and Edmonton Heritage Days were commemorated and celebrated by our community.

We are delighted to have restarted our phenomenally effective Missions program,

where we show (mostly non-Jewish) Canadian cultural, business, political, academic leaders, students, and various influencers the reality of life experienced by diverse Israelis so they can appreciate first-hand the only liberal democracy of the Middle East and the world's 'start-up nation.'

And, as always, we spent last year, as we will this one, advocating for Canada's vibrant Jewish community.

Feedback is central to ensuring that we are effective in our advocacy, so CIJA has undertaken a new set of public polling to measure Canadians' response to our priorities and our messaging. The results are both intriguing and helpful as we assemble a plan to address the issues that most affect our community—one that will carry us into the next year and beyond.

But, we need to hear from you too! Your feedback guides us in all that we do. Please visit www.cija.ca/you and tell us what matters to you. As we step into the new year, reflecting on the progress made, we are committed to bringing projects to completion and advocating for new priorities based on issues of concern to you, our community.

We look forward to continuing to work for Canadian Jewry and wish you and your families a sweet, healthy, and happy 5783.

L'Shana Tova! 🍷

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JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

in Atlantic Canada



Shira D. Zipursky

BY SHIRA D. ZIPURSKY, DIRECTOR OF JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

As we near the end of summer and move into the Jewish High Holiday season, which is typically a time for reflection, I take pause to acknowledge the struggles that were overcome, and also celebrate the accomplishments that have been achieved over this past year.

The Director of Jewish Family Services position has celebrated its first anniversary! As the lone service of its kind for the Atlantic Canada region, I have strived to support Jewish individuals and families through life stressors, whether it be a financial, housing, medical, or employment need. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact how we gathered and approached programming. We danced through each wave, moving back and forth between adjusting to a new normal and being hesitant, unsure of what to expect. Restrictions have eased, and with this new normal came an adjustment period of our own comfort levels, we looked inwards and were encouraged to 'be kind'. Due to this new catch phrase constantly circulating throughout the Maritimes, I joined Action for Happiness (actionforhappiness.org). This enabled me to share monthly themed calendars and inspirational messages to help us refocus and find joy in the smallest

of places. Feeling grateful and reflecting on what gratitude looks like for each of us, helps us reduce

stress and incorporates mindfulness into our daily practice.

I was also reminded of resiliency. I had the pleasure of meeting several community members and hearing their stories, who showed their amazing courage and ability to be resourceful. Sometimes we surprise ourselves with what we can accomplish and how we can rise above life's most difficult challenges. In my practice, asking for help is a sign of strength and recognizing you cannot do it alone should be celebrated as opposed to being discouraged. With this mindset, I feel I have been able to create a safe and supportive environment which allows individuals and families who are struggling to come forward and seek support, whether it be through financial aid, a listening ear, service navigation, or problem solving.

It is important to acknowledge the community at large partnerships that have been made, which allow for service delivery to be offered more widely. I am proud of the collaboration that has taken place with Jewish Free Loan Toronto, which has given Jewish individuals and families an opportunity to seek financial aid on a larger scale (for personal loans, education loans, fertility support, etc.) than the AJC can offer alone. This has positively impacted our community and the feedback has been encouraging. Further to this, online programming has been offered with the Reform Jewish Community of Atlantic Canada and together the first virtual workshop was delivered. I am also constantly learning from CIJA and JIAS on ways to support the Ukrainian families coming to our region. This work has led to meetings and conversations with other organizations,



such as YReach, Senior Support, Shelter Services, and Mental Health to name a few, to better understand what is not only available to newcomer families but to all those in the region in need of ongoing support. Over the last several months, due to these across Canada meetings, I have learned that some of the issues facing Atlantic Canada residents are not just areas of concern for our region but sadly widespread across Canada. Being a one-person program, so to speak, it has been inspiring and helpful to talk with other like-organizations to come together to discuss ways around the issues so we can better help and support our clients in need. We cannot fix every problem over night, but I believe there is strength in numbers.

With this work it is important to recognize limitations—as much as I want to, I cannot do everything. I am grateful for the other organizations available to fill the gaps and to support me in my role at the AJC. I also send the message this season to practice self-care, take time to pause and reflect, acknowledge all that you have been through and where you are going. Wishing you and yours a Shannah Tova U'Metukah. 5



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CAMPUS NEWS

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

NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

After a long summer of planning and preparation, I am excited to open my second (complete) Academic year at Hillel Atlantic. I cannot wait to meet our returning students and welcome our first-year students. This year we will present a bunch of new programs and activities. Hopefully, our students will find them exciting and engaging. They will lead the foundation for a solid and vibrating Jewish student community, where they can explore their Jewish identity, grow as individuals, and make new meaningful relationships. In other words, the main purpose of Hillel.

What is new this year at Hillel Atlantic:

MOVE TO A NEW SPACE:

After three years of renting an apartment at the Beth Israel Synagogue, I decided to move the Hillel Atlantic space to a new location. This new space will provide us a greater horizon to conduct Hillel Atlantic programs, events, and activities. From September 1st, the new Hillel Atlantic space will be at the newly renovated apartment at the Shaar Shalom Synagogue. I want to thank all the people at Beth Israel for their warm hospitality over the last three years!

NEW PROGRAMS:

As part of our ongoing activities and events at Hillel Atlantic, we also celebrate the Jewish holidays, host monthly Shabbat dinners, and provide a variety of social events throughout the year. Another significant part of Hillel Atlantic is the educational programming to engage our students with the Jewish content and deepen their connection to Israel. Last year we presented three new educational programs:

1 JLF life's big questions: An eight-to-ten-week program that explored our student's Jewish study and helped them address life's biggest questions.

2 Israel education course: Six sessions that allowed our students to deepen their

understanding of the Zionist movement, the connection of the Jewish people to the land of Israel, and an observation on the origin of the Israel-Palestine Conflict until the present times.

3 Israel Book-Club: Presented our students the opportunity to read books by Israeli authors and discuss them in a group setting.

We experienced great success with these programs and will continue to run them this academic year. On top of that, we are launching more new programs:

"Kol Yisrael" program: A six session program that elevates Israeli voices with contemporary case studies, ensuring that when we teach about Israel, we do so via stories, words, and experiences of Israelis themselves. Each session presents competing, value-based narratives that help students to have a more comprehensive understanding of the society in Israel.

Hillel Atlantic will run two "Kol Israel" curriculums during the year:

Kol Yisrael: Zionism (Fall Semester) and **Kol Yisrael: Ethnic Minorities** (Winter Semester). I want to invite our students into a cohort of Kol Yisrael. It will be a great way to facilitate pre-and post-Birthright trip learning, explore topics being discussed in other forums, and within our Hillel, deepen the understanding of students already engaging deeply with Israel.

Tachles

Hebrew lessons:

A conversational Hebrew program that will teach practical and modern Hebrew for everyday life in Israel. Sessions are conducted in fun, game-based, and interactive role-play methods.



Beit Ha'am—Israeli Music: In this program, we will gain new perspectives on Israeli society by listening to new and old Israeli music hits, exploring the lyrics of the songs, and discussing the deep meanings of the melodies and how they connect to various developments in Israeli society.

I hope these programs will be successful, and our students will find them valuable and enriching.

One of our goals this year is to expand our operation to other campuses, such as UNB, Memorial, Acadia, and others. To do so, I need to establish connections with students that attend those universities. I plan to tour those campuses during September and set the table for Hillel Atlantic. Hopefully, I will see five to six students on each campus willing to create a Hillel branch with our help and guidance. Please let me know if you are aware of any students on those campuses that likely would be interested in participating with Hillel.

I want to send all students best wishes for the new academic year. Let us welcome this brand-new year with novel energies and hope; to experience new things and learn things you never knew before. Shana Tova to all! 🍷



SHANA TOVA

"I would like to extend warm greetings to the Atlantic Jewish Community and wish everyone good health, peace and happiness in the new year."




Darrell Samson
Member of Parliament • Député
Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook
902-861-2311
Darrell.Samson@parl.gc.ca

“ 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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CAMP KADIMAH 2022

A SHEHECHEYANU SUMMER

BY SARAH ATKINS, DIRECTOR

RENEWAL

It is customary in Judaism to recite the *Shehecheyanu* when you are marking an important moment or doing something for the first time. After being unable to open for the past two summers, the start of CK 2022 was most definitely a *Shehecheyanu* moment. It was a truly magical moment, one that marked a new beginning to an old tradition.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, שהענינו לנו
והגיענו לזמן הזה

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech
haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiymanu,
v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign
of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us,
and brought us to this season.

It was the senior staff who arrived first, followed shortly by the rest of the staff team. On July 2nd our Israeli campers joined us and on July 3rd we were whole again as bus after bus drove through the gates. The long absence was erased in a matter of minutes and the longing to return finally became a reality. CK 2022 was destined to be one of the sweetest summers in our almost 80-year history.



THE TIMELESSNESS OF CK

Everything that was old was new and everything that was new came from before. None of our *Macharniks* had spent a summer in Machar and so the ritual of *Rad Ha'Yom* was new, but at the same time rooted in timeless tradition. Campers arrived to explore our new Giborim playground which now provides a new face to the center of camp.

We had so many new campers attend this summer, new campers who instantly became part of an almost 80-year-old community. To a casual observer, one would not be able to tell who were new campers and who were returning campers.

COMMUNITY

It is clear that the strength of our community not only survived the past two summers of closures, but it returned as strong and connected as when we last departed. We learned that the strength of our community is based on our relationships and that special Kadimah essence that is so hard to describe. While our relationships are nurtured when we are together on Lake William, they can endure months and years of being apart and remain completely intact.

Community serves as the foundation upon which Camp Kadimah is based and like so many times in Jewish history, we long to be reunited in a place that we call home. "Next summer at Camp Kadimah!" became a refrain of our communal desires and has kept our community largely intact over the past 34 months.

GRATITUDE

Above and beyond anything else, this summer can be characterized by gratitude to our campers, staff, families, and community. While we always appreciated the role that CK plays in our lives, our

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CampKadimah campkadimah



return this summer was filled with so many emotions of appreciation and thanks.

It has been the small but special moments that make all the magic of this place. The creativity of the program team, making sure all of the fine details make the difference in programs, seeing the staff dress up and get into character with so much enthusiasm and excitement, really brings the *ruach* we are all used to. We were all so delighted to be

>> page 17



FOUR GENERATIONS AT CAMP KADIMAH

Karen (Abramsky) Conter
1977/78

Shirley (Borden) Abramsky
1945/46

Adam Conter
1991-2002

Reuben Conter
2022

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CAMP KADIMAH 2022

<< page 15

together enjoying all of the things we perhaps didn't notice the last time we were at camp but missed dearly when we weren't able to be there.

Sometimes, you need to go away and look at things from a different vantage point to

deeply appreciate what you have. We returned in summer 2022 with a renewed appreciation of Camp Kadimah. You can take the camper out of Kadimah, but you can never take the Kadimah out of the camper!

Wishing our community, a sweet and

healthy *Rosh Ha'Shanah* filled with many *Schehecheyanu* moments.

2023 יאללה קדימה! Yalla, Lets Go Kadimah 2023! 🍀

THE PEI CAMPER: A FAMILY REPORT

RAQUEL HOERSTING BARBOSA

We were welcomed by the Camp Kadimah staff at the bus drop-off in Halifax on a Sunday in July with, "Joel and Amalia! You must be the Brazilians from PEI. Welcome! We have not had any children from PEI for many years. It is wonderful to have you."

The counselors and staff began to take our bags, and I suddenly realized there was one last task to complete before loading the duffle bags onto the truck. I quickly crossed out "Palter" from the duffle bags with a permanent marker and replaced it with "Barbosa."

When Rachel Kassner and Joel Palter heard that our children were going to Camp Kadimah this year, they reached out to Rafael and me to offer some of their son's camping gear. They shared a few of their own experiences as parents of a child who had attended Camp Kadimah. They explained that at first, the letters they received were "Pleeeeeease, get me! I am homesick." Rachel and Joel reassured us that the tone of the letters would quickly change to "Please send me more candy" and "Don't come pick me up! I want to stay a few more weeks."

It was a bit like this for our ten-year-old daughter Amalia and seven-year-old son Joel who both went to overnight camp for the first time. The letters they sent began arriving and the "I miss you so much!" quickly changed into "I am having soooooo much fun!"

For Amalia, the camp experience meant making new friends, swimming, boating, Maccabiah, new words, Arts and Crafts, Haganah, EP (evening programing), and much more. She thoroughly enjoyed her

summer experience. For Joel, camp was all about soccer and sleeping late! Amalia and Joel both won awards in Arts and Crafts.

When we moved to Prince Edward Island four years ago, we were told that with our two children, we had doubled the population of Jewish children on the Island! As parents we were nervous that our children might become disconnected from Judaism without the Jewish community and educational supports that we were accustomed to in Brazil. However, we have found a way forward which has included in-person and then online Hebrew lessons with "ha-morah" Ilana Clyde and participation in Jewish community events. The community Passover seder and other festivals gave our children opportunities to prepare Hebrew songs and lead a few prayers. Amalia recited Hanukkah blessings at the inauguration of the Prince Edward Island Jewish Community (PEIJC) Hanukkah Menorah in front of the Provincial Legislature in 2021. We've made more intentional efforts to be involved and connect with our Jewish community on the Island (Rafael is the Secretary on the PEIJC Executive).

Camp Kadimah was a special event because it gave our children a chance to be surrounded by many other Jewish children. They were able to connect with their Jewish heritage and engage with their Jewish peers, the future generation in the Atlantic region.

In the last four years, we have seen an increase in the Jewish population on PEI. The number of Jewish families with children has grown such that Amalia and



(Top): Left to right: Amalia, Rafael, Joel, and Raquel
(Bottom): Joel and the Palter Barbosa duffle bag

Joel are no longer make up half of the Islands' population of Jewish children. With the growing number of Jewish children here, Camp Kadimah will surely be welcoming many other children from our Island in the coming years.

my face in the light

An interview with Author Martha Schabas

BY PEGGY WALT

Canadian author Martha Schabas's new novel *My Face in the Light* was published in April to great acclaim. The granddaughter of notable Jewish Canadian Ezra Schabas (former Royal Conservatory of Music principal) is the *Globe & Mail's* former dance critic and also wrote *Various Positions*. Martha was raised in a secular Jewish home where a great emphasis was placed on art, music and theatre. Her new novel centres around protagonist Justine, an actor, and her mother Rachel, a well-known artist. *Shalom* asked Martha Schabas about the book and the ways she sees Jewish culture as being inextricably tied to art.

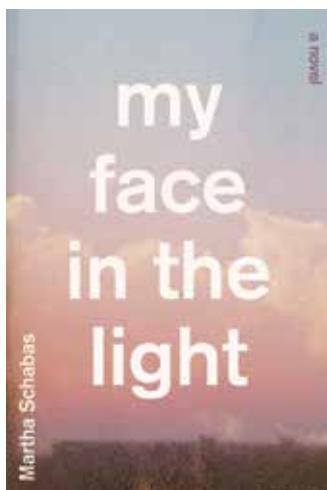
Shalom: The narrator of your new book is described as “a young Jewish woman named Justine Weiss, who feels uneasy in her marriage, her theatre career and her relationship with her estranged mother, a famous painter.” The novel focuses on Rachel and Justine's relationship, with very little about any other relatives, such as grandparents. Did your own grandfather influence you to go into the arts?

MS: My upbringing was, the arts were always sort of a background, but a very important one. I have a big family on my dad's side; Ezra was my paternal grandfather, and the notion that you sort of grow up reading, and listening to classical music, studying classical music for my siblings (I had no talent as a musician, I was a dancer). The arts weren't just to be enjoyed, they were to be studied and taken seriously. That kind of cultural foundation really informed my childhood and my sense of values.

My grandfather really encouraged me to write and to pursue the arts. He had this sort of famous (in my family) line, he would say “you must suffer,” whenever we were going through sort of a rough time in terms of making ends meet or finding the confidence and conviction to keep going. It's hard to put my finger on. My upbringing was completely secular. But this attention to community and to arts and culture, felt very connected to a Jewish perspective, and to the tradition in the 19th and 20th century of Jewish artists and Jewish thinkers.

Shalom: Why do you think there is such a big emphasis on arts and culture in Jewish families?

MS: I don't know, it's actually something I've discussed with my father a few times. What it is about shtetl life in Eastern Europe (we're Ashkenazi Jews, that's our background), what it is that really prepared Jews to make such a rich contribution to the arts, to science, to psychiatry at the beginning of the twentieth century. We haven't come up with a good answer. There's definitely an introspective quality to Jewish culture, to the religion itself, and I guess that sort of liberation, that sort of sensitivity to thinking about the world, your place in the world, it's the response of an artist, an artist's mission, so there's probably a good through line there. It feels like something that was



very organic in my childhood.

Shalom: Was your grandfather serious or lighthearted?

MS: He was a bit of both. He definitely had a serious side, but he was also quite a jovial guy. When I was older, a young woman in my twenties, we'd talk, I'd come over and he'd say, “do you want a martini?” He'd have his *New Yorkers* out. My grandparents were very left wing; they subscribed to *The Nation*. He wanted to talk about politics. Like many people of his generation, he was completely beside himself with the rise of right-wing populism in the States.

He wanted to hear about what I was seeing in the dance world, in theatre. Always very interested and wanted to have serious discussions, but he would enjoy a good laugh, he had a good sense of humour.

Shalom: Did he read things you'd written?

MS: Absolutely! He didn't read this one, but he read my first novel. Both of my grandparents would clip whatever I had published. My grandmother would have a stack of my *Globe and Mail* articles! He came from the States, he was born in New York. His parents were from Europe, he became a naturalized Canadian because he married my grandmother.

Shalom: Did he lose people in the Holocaust?

MS: Yes, but since his parents moved in the 1920s—they were Ellis Island immigrants, so it was cousins, people at a remove.

My grandfather was very genuine. If he was angry, you would know. He wasn't someone who minced his words. You would feel his anger, but then he would come back, and he would apologize, and it would feel very heartfelt.

Shalom: Justine reveals in the book that she's Jewish and covers a mirror and reflects on this being a Jewish ritual, there are these references, but it's clear that she's secular. She refers to her marriage as “the only really sacred thing in her life.” What did these moments tell us about Justine and Rachel?

MS: It was definitely not planned, it happened very organically. My aesthetic objective with this novel was writing a lot of emotional

candour and psychological candour on the page, to capture the depth and precision of Justine's thoughts. These very vague, small Jewish references happened naturally, the way that being a secular Jew and growing up in a family that felt very community oriented, or in a political way connected, which is when I feel Jewish.

When we're talking about the way I think about the Middle East, or the way that I think about social justice, that's what ties back to my understanding about Judaism. Especially on my mother's side, because the Jews all became Communists when they came to Canada. So, when Justine references this, she's put in situations where people ask about your background. It's like the way when I'm travelling, e.g., in the UK, the question of identity and ethnicity comes out when you leave your sphere of comfort in Canada. That's really interesting to me. I usually say I'm an atheist, I'm not religious. But I say I'm ethnically Jewish, which opens up many questions, Is Judaism a religion, is it an ethnicity? It happened very naturally, giving Justine that background. How that might make her feel different, how it situated her, for example, meeting Max Haleemi, a man from Lebanon. In the scene where Max Haleemi asks her, "Oh, Weiss, is that a German name?" They're both trying to place each other.

Shalom: Do you consider yourself a Jewish writer? How has Judaism influenced your writing?

MS: It's a tough question. My instinct is to say no, because Judaism is not at the forefront of my mind, really ever. It's something that's there, at the periphery. However, I would interrogate that. Identify is so complicated. I often don't know how to answer the question, "are you Jewish?" What does that mean? It's a conversation that is very alive in my family. Judaism is definitely a part of our identity, but others feel it's not relevant anymore, I'm an atheist, I'm a Canadian. It's definitely not a comfortable no. I wouldn't say that Judaism has influenced my writing, but I'm really interested in European history, modern European history, I'm very interested in Freud, in many Jewish writers, and their influence, that reading and that curiosity, has certainly influenced my writing.

The current book is definitely informed by history. It takes place in Europe. I've spent time in London, in Berlin, the history of Jews really interests me. It's a complicated answer.

Shalom: What about Jewish book prizes?

MS: I'd think that's wonderful! I'm so proud of my Jewish heritage. Jews have an enormous influence on modern society, and there's something wonderful about that, and I couldn't be more proud of that. I'd be very happy about that. That said, my politics are complicated. I believe very strongly in Palestinian self-determination. I really align myself with a new group of North American Jews who wants freedom and rights in the Middle East for all people. That's a complicated point as well. It shouldn't be. I think that conversation is changing.

Shalom: There's a lot of themes of immigration, of searching for home in your book. One character says that "everyone lucky has left," referencing her home. You have this theme about the immigrant experience, about being in exile. Why is this important to you now?

MS: Topics of migration, of asylum seeking are obviously on everyone's mind. I started this book before Syria. There's so much on a personal level about our responsibility to other people. I was really playing with these ideas of responsibility and what we need to give other people



Martha Schabas

in an ethical way. And yet everybody that Justine meets in London is a migrant. I wanted to play with this idea of London as a crossroads, people are crossing through, meeting each other on somewhat neutral territory.

Shalom: What is home for you?

MS: I'd say it's my family. I have three kids, two little ones, the youngest is almost one, my son is two and a half, and I have a stepson who's eight. My husband and I look at each other many nights, and say how did we survive this day? It's go go go.

I have a love-hate relationship with Toronto. I grew up here. Toronto has that sort of neutrality of home. I feel very comfortable here (but) I love travelling. I lived in Montreal, Kingston, London, Norwich, Paris, Berlin, but with a young family, we're very stationery right now for the time being.

Shalom: What are you working on?

MS: Another novel. With some related themes about art, history and identity. I've learned that talking too much about a book in process might kill the joy of it a bit.

Shalom: How has it been writing and getting this book out during the pandemic?

MS: This book was mostly finished by the time the pandemic started. I haven't done that much writing during the pandemic; I've been pretty distracted with babies.

It was a little frustrating at first, but I feel pretty fortunate. Books that did come out at the beginning of the pandemic I think have suffered. I've done some in person events, and a few online ones.

Shalom: In closing, could you speak about the title?

MS: The title is about Justine, *My Face in the Light*, referencing her scar. Figuring out her truth. Coming to terms and figuring out what she wants.

You sort of hinted that the fact that Rachel is also a protagonist. Rachel has her own scars, her own delusions about what happened. There's also the notion that art, the painting that is so integral to the book, is the thing they come to understand each other through. A huge thing was thinking of the way art is the most powerful way for this mother-daughter to communicate, and the way that many characters communicate better through art. It's really a celebration of the power of art. 5

Peggy Walt graduated 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.

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A MAGAZINE CRITICIZING AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERSHIP

BY HENRY SREBRNIK

The digital magazine *White Rose* is a non-partisan periodical dedicated to exposing extremism and reteaching classical liberalism. The spring 2022 issue deals with the failure of the American Jewish leadership to deal with the major problems facing America's Jewish community today. Some of these critiques could also apply to the Canadian Jewish community.

Guest editors Avi Goldwasser and Charles Jacobs, long time Jewish social activists, introduce the 16 essays and poems. "In what seems like a perfect storm, Jews face assaults simultaneously from four major ideological camps," they state.

White nationalists attack them in the name of white supremacy. Radical black nationalists attack Jews in the name of black liberation and "equity." Many progressives and segments of the Democratic Party promote the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel and anti-Jewish critical race theory, in the name of "social justice" and Palestinian nationalism. Finally, radical Islamists, many from anti-Semitic cultures, preach incitement against Jews.

Yet, the editors contend, those Jewish establishment organizations whose mission is the defence and well-being of the community—the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the American Jewish Committee (AJC), the Jewish Federations, and the networks of Jewish Community Relations Councils (JCRCs)—are failing to protect American Jewry.

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) is the national umbrella organization of the local JCRCs. But it has become overwhelmingly aligned with the agenda of the Democratic Party, assigning Jewish and Israeli interests to secondary status.

Indeed, as Joanne Bregman, a Nashville attorney engaged in advocacy for Israel and the Jewish community asserts, JCPA's leftward orientation is demonstrated by its membership in several leftist groups. These alliances, she writes, "leave little doubt that JCPA has chosen a self-serving interpretation of 'Jewish values of fairness and justice' to justify shaping the Jewish community relations field into a partisan instrument of the left."

Rebecca Sugar, another of the contributors, asks if Jews are getting the leaders they deserve. "What most American Jews are really shocked by, but couldn't see until it became inescapably obvious, is the fast-growing, unabashed anti-Semitism of the American political left."


Why has this been happening? It's because these leaders often seem more preoccupied by their social standing than demonstrating real concern for the Jewish community's predicament. They also seem to have missed the dramatic shift in America's cultural and political landscape, which has taken place over the last several decades.

Historian Richard Landes maintains that this blind spot also

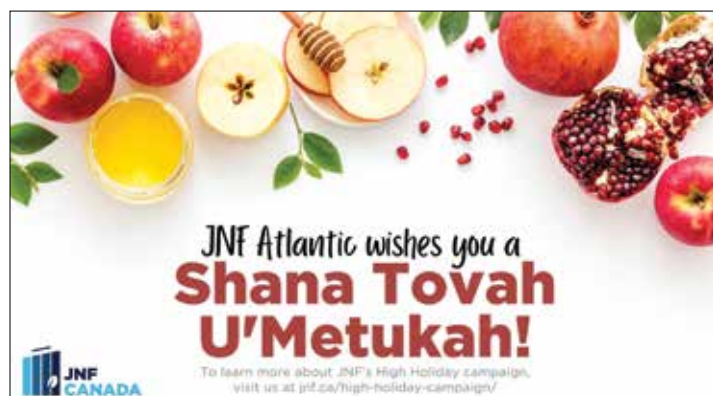
emanates from a larger world view shared by Western elites, which is best described as "utopian universalism," a vision of a peaceful world, rid of oppression and discrimination; a world with no borders and with freedom and human rights for all.

These sentiments, he contends, have trapped many Jews, and especially most of their leaders, "in a rhetorical cage with few venues for escape because defending specifically Jewish interests now is, by definition, parochial and anti-universalist. Trying to square the circle of defending Jews and their traditions, yet being in synch with the wider, now anti-traditionalist society, is nearly impossible."

Anti-Zionism in particular, has made Jew-hatred culturally and socially acceptable under the guise of human rights and free speech. Yet almost every major Jewish legacy organization failed to see the long-term consequences. This has especially been an issue on college and university campuses and has contributed to the fact that 50 per cent of American Jewish students now feel that "they must hide who they are out of fear," according to an American Jewish Committee poll.

There is increasing hostility toward and marginalization of Jewish students on campus. Those interviewed related invasive experiences, such as receiving mock-eviction notices beneath dorm room doors, intimidation from fellow students or faculty and even episodes of physical violence. These are described as almost regular occurrences. The survey was included in the Committee's annual "State of Antisemitism in America" report, released on October 25, 2021. The report showed deep anxiety among Americans about its severity. As a vulnerable minority, Jews have usually made public criticism of their leaders a near taboo. But this must change. Jewish leaders, the editors conclude, need fresh ideas. The American Jewish community must engage in open discussions, by encouraging broad community participation about the crisis they face. Some of this holds true in our community as well. 

Henry Srebrnik is a professor of political science at the University of Prince Edward Island.



Art Exhibition JEWISH ARTISTS IN NOVA SCOTIA July 31–September 4, 2022 Central Library



The evening of August 4th saw the opening of the first exhibition of Jewish artists in seven years. The crowd (over 60 people!) was greeted by Arik Drucker, president of the AJC. Special guest Jill Chatt followed, delighting the audience with a performance of belly dances choreographed to the music of Israeli singer Ofra Haza.

It was exciting to see such an enthusiastic turn-out and talk to so many people. After some schmoozing and snacks, guests proceeded to the fifth-floor café to view the artwork and schmooze some more!

Twelve artists are represented in the show with work ranging from painting to photography to rug hooking. One or two are exhibiting for the first time. They make their homes in Nova Scotia now but have roots in Israel, Ukraine, Crimea, the U.S.A, Montreal, and Toronto.

An artist statement and a bio accompany each work. These personal essays give insight not only into the artwork but reflect on the artist's relationship with Judaism now and in the past. Philosophies, world views, personal stories, techniques, and art practices are all touched upon. The writings are as individual as the works. They make for a compelling read.

Thanks to Edna LeVine for her brilliant ideas and Margarita Fainshtein for collaborating with us again. And, of course, huge appreciation goes to all the participating artists.

I encourage you to visit the exhibition on the 5th floor of the library. And, while you're there, grab a coffee and pastry at Ampersand, the café run by MetroWorks—a local non-profit that believes in second chances and helps people discover their employment potential through work—which has excellent coffee and delicious pastries (try the vegan chocolate mousse—my favourite!).

Lynn Rotin, volunteer co-organizer

P.S. Please sign the guest book when you go!

Artists

RANDY ENGELBERG
MARGARITA FAINSHTEIN
ADRIAN FISH
MICKAEL GEDALIA
IRENA KAZATSKER
ALEXANDER KOLTAKOV
HILA PELEG
SERGEI RATCHINSKI
JENNIFER RAVEN
LYNN ROTIN
AMY RUBIN
JANE SCHLOSBERG





1) Arik Drucker, AJC president, right, with Judith Goldberg and Dave Hanson. (2) Art activity for youth at the opening, with instructor Ariel Geifman, left, standing, and volunteers Naomi Vogt, Anastasiya Gurevich, seated, and Naomi Black, rear, standing. (3) Artist Mickael Gedalia, centre, with Joanna and Ezra Wexler (4) Belly Dancer, Jill Shireen (5) Stephen and Linda Sandler and Anna Fried enjoying the exhibition. (6) Artist Jennifer Raven. (7) Lynn Rotin, exhibition co-organizer, embraces the mother of co-organizer Margarita Fainshtein. (8) Opening (9) Rabbi Gary Karlin and the Ratchinski family, Svetlana, son Alex, and artist Sergei. (10) Rabbi Yakov Kerzner, Josh Judah, at the reception. (11) Schmoozing! (12) Volunteers at opening reception, L-R: Ronen Franzman, Alexander Oxner, Ron Levit, Tomer Reznikov and Yarden Gedalia. (13–14) Volunteers hanging the artwork. (15) Co-organizer Margarita Fainshtein, far left, directing exhibition set-up.

The Jewish Community of Prince Edward Island 40 years ago as reflected in *HA-EE*

BY DR. JOSEPH B. GLASS

First published in Cheshvan 5743 (October 1982), *HA-EE*, the newsletter of the PEI Jewish Community, was part of an initiative to eventually, formally organize the Island's Jewish residents. *HA-EE*, Hebrew for The Island, served as a medium for sharing information about past and future community events, relations with regional and national Jewish organizations, and contemporary Jewish issues of interest to its subscribers. It is important to underscore that the Internet did not exist. (January 1, 1983 is considered its official birthday). Some information about Jewish issues could be found in the national and local printed newspapers and magazines. Jewish newspapers, such as the weekly Canadian Jewish News, and Jewish magazines were available by subscription, but it would appear that few PEI Jewish residents subscribed to them in the early 1980s.

The newsletter was intended to have six to eight issues a year and the annual subscription fee was \$3.00 to cover duplicating and postage. The newsletter aimed to communicate information, views, notices, etc. and call meetings. The Correspondence Committee of the PEI Jewish Community was established in 1982 with overseeing the newsletter as one of its responsibilities. The committee consisted of the chair Joe Naylor, treasurer Jim Thorkelson, and members Anca Laxer and Joe Sherman.

HA-EE shared with the community its recommendations for other more abundant sources of Jewish news and information. An annual subscription to the Atlantic Jewish Council's *Shalom* magazine was a voluntary contribution of \$20.00 for six issues. "Shalom is highly recommended" asserted the editors of *HA-EE* and highlighted that the November/December 1982 number discussed regional and national Jewish issues and addressed topics including Israel and the West Bank and the War in Lebanon. This number had reviews of the books *None is Too Many* by Irving Abella and Harold Tropper, and *Righteous Gentile: The Story of Raoul Wallenberg* by John Bierman. In 1983 a special subscription rate to the Canadian Jewish News was offered to Atlantic Canadians. *HA-EE* quoted rates of \$7.50 for one year or \$18.00 for three years.

This review of the first year of the *HA-EE* newsletter identifies the interests and concerns of many Jewish residents of the Island 40 years ago. The 1981 Census of Canada estimated approximately 90 persons of Jewish ethnicity in Prince Edward Island but did not provide an estimate for Jewish persons by religion. The July 1, 1982 population estimate for the province was 122,800. The Island was accessible by ferry or by air. The land link with the mainland, the Confederation Bridge, opened to traffic in 1997.

Part of the Island's Jewish population gathered for various holidays and celebrations. A Jewish Sunday school had been active for a few years, and it brought together children, their parents, and persons who volunteered to help. On Simchat Torah (October 1982) a community meeting was held in conjunction with the Jewish Culture

and Hebrew Language Sunday School's celebration of Sukkot. An outcome of the meeting was the establishment of the Communication Committee. This committee oversaw the new newsletter and dealt with correspondence with organizations, governments, and the press.

Most of the information in *HA-EE* was specific to PEI. The dates and locations of community and other gatherings, holiday celebrations, and meetings were announced (Figure 1). Often photocopies of maps were included with the directions to the events. (The integration of GPS technology for navigation in cars started in the late 1990s).

Congratulations were extended to parents and grandparents on the births of children; best wishes for the speedy and full recoveries from illnesses were conveyed; and condolences on the passing of relatives of community members were offered. There weren't any felicitations for Bar Mitzvahs, Bat Mitzvahs, or marriages in the 1982-1983 newsletters. *HA-EE* also had a local dining recommendation. "Eating Out? Mr. and Mrs. Jan Diamant are now owners of Café Europa (Kent at Prince St.) —recommended by several members as a nice place to nosh or dine!"

HA-EE announced the formation of an Adult Jewish Study Group. The first meeting discussed selections from Hugh J. Schonfield's *The Passover Plot*. The discussion was described as "lively". In the September 1983 newsletter readers were asked whether they had an interest in organizing Adult Hebrew classes.

One of the primary concerns for many Jewish residents was the Jewish education of the Island's children. The Jewish Culture and Hebrew Language Sunday School was active in 1982-1983. Myra Thorkelson directed the school and taught together with Jane Naylor. The school had community support. For example, Dorothy Whitehead (formally Rachmel) donated books and records, including Hebrew readers, to the school. Institutional support came from the Atlantic Jewish Council and Canadian Jewish Congress. In addition, funding for Hebrew classes was provided, thanks to the efforts of Myra Thorkelson, by the Canadian Secretary of State under the Heritage Language Program. For more details see Figure 2.

In the second issue of newsletter, the Correspondence Committee addressed concerns raised after the publication of the premier issue. What were the functions of community organization going to be? cultural, religious, political, Zionist, etc.? There were supporters and opponents to involvement in one or more of these functions. The Correspondence Committee addressed the concern that "the positions of individual members might be confused with those of the community as a whole, or that statements not agreed to might be representative of the community as a whole." Jewish residents were encouraged to share their opinions in the newsletter. The Correspondence Committee was cautious to ensure that comments, opinions, and beliefs were properly attributed.

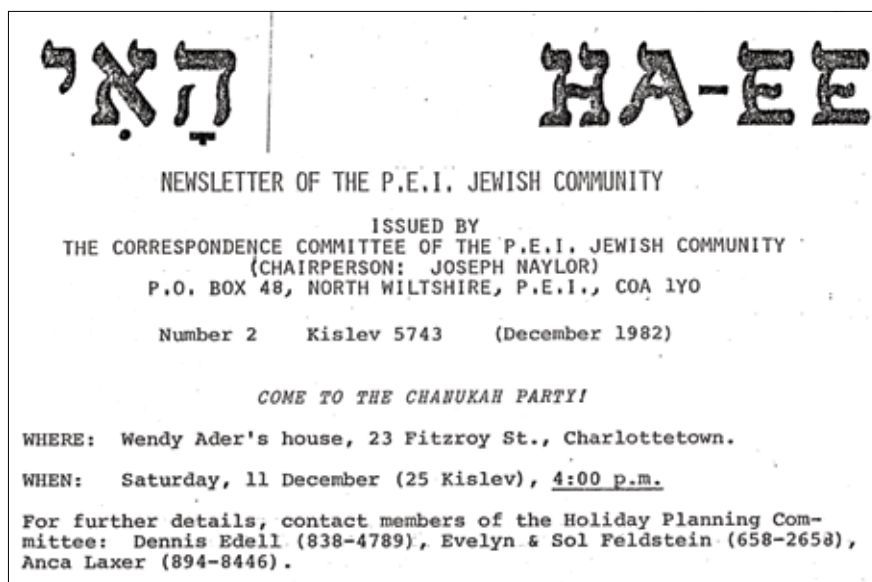


FIGURE 1

The Communication Committee connected with various regional and national Jewish organizations which provided newspapers, magazines, and books to be shared with the community. They included the Atlantic Jewish Council, Canadian Jewish Congress, Soviet Jewry Committee, Canadian Zionist Federation, Canada-Israel Committee, Friends of Pioneering Israel, and Congregation Tiferes Israel in Moncton. A concern was the circulation of the material among community members. There was no central location for the storage, pick up, and drop off of materials from the collection.

The 1982-1983 newsletter highlighted a few issues of concern to Jewish community members. They included the PEI provincial election dates, antisemitism in Canada, and Nazi war criminals at large in Canada.

Several Jewish residents expressed their disappointment in the selection of the 1982 Prince Edward Island provincial election dates. The advanced polls were on Rosh Hashanah and the polling day was on Yom Kippur. Earlier in 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was signed into law by Queen Elizabeth II on April 17. It guaranteed the fundamental freedom of conscience and religion as well as the democratic rights of citizens.

HA-EE addressed antisemitic issues in Canada. Reported antisemitic incidents in Canada increased in the second half of 1982 but their number dropped in 1983. One occurrence reached national attention in December 1982. Jim Keegstra, a junior high and secondary school teacher in Eckville, Alberta told his students that Jews were evil, and he doubted the occurrence of the Holocaust. Keegstra was warned to stop teaching his racist, antisemitic views, and conspiracy theories but he refused. He was dismissed from teaching and expelled from the Alberta Teachers Association. In 1985 Keegstra was found guilty of a hate crime. The newsletter reprinted a Kensington resident's Letter to the Editor of the *Guardian* from April 26, 1983 that condemned this and other acts of antisemitism.

In April 1983, MLA Stephen Stiles apologized in the Alberta legislature for statements which questioned whether Jews were persecuted and murdered during World War II. *HA-EE* reprinted a

It's Happening in Prince Edward Island

The Jewish community of the Island, although not large in numbers, has been conducting a Hebrew school for the past few years. Under the direction of local teacher, *Myra Thorkelson*, nine children meet on Sunday mornings. *Mrs. J. Naylor* shares the teaching of the children with Mrs. Thorkelson. The Atlantic Jewish Council provides Jewish Holiday Kits as does the Small Communities Department of Canadian Jewish Congress. Wherever possible the Council tries to provide other material and information.

The community gathers together on a regular basis to celebrate Jewish holidays and an adult discussion group is now beginning.

FIGURE 2

section of PEI Minister of Education Leone Bagnall's address to the PEI Multicultural Council on May 28, 1983. Bagnall referred to Stiles' statements.

It will take a long time to forget Alberta and what has recently happened there. And as a teacher, as a parent, and as a Minister of Education, that has caused great concern, and I would certainly hope that no teacher in any classroom in Prince Edward Island would ever try to influence the thinking of young people in such a negative way. To me, that's totally unacceptable.

The Canadian Jewish Congress circulated a petition in 1983 that called on the Government of Canada to bring Nazi war criminals, who were living freely in Canada, to justice. Five completed pages of the petition were returned from Prince Edward Island. The number of signatories per page is not known but it appears that there was a high signing rate of the petition in PEI. In April 1983, the *Canadian Jewish News* reported that the petition only resulted in "a puny few thousand signatures."

Noticeably missing was a discussion of the War in Lebanon. After continued hostilities, the war broke out in June 1982 with Israeli armed forces crossing into Lebanon and attacking Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) forces. In September, Israeli forces allowed the Phalangist militia into two Palestinian refugee camps, Sabra and Shatila, where they massacred hundreds of men, women, and children. Apparently, there wasn't a consensus among Jewish residents of PEI and the Correspondence Committee didn't express an opinion on behalf of the community. When some Liberal MPs expressed their support for the recognition of the PLO, the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) requested that the PEI Jewish Community send a telegram supporting the CIC's attempt to present its concerns to the Liberal leadership. There was no indication that a telegram was sent.

HA-EE during its first year focused on local issues and its connection with regional and national organizations. Forty years ago, the main concern was formal and informal Jewish and Hebrew education for children and adults. To facilitate the distribution of information on various Jewish topics, *HA-EE* reported on the resources acquired from

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<< page 25

various sources that were to be shared with all in the community. The newsletter announced the dates and locations of community events and had social notices about births, illnesses, and deaths. There was consensus on certain issues such as combating Holocaust denial and antisemitism as well as bringing Nazi war criminals in Canada to justice.

Another issue was the constituting of a Jewish community organization in Prince Edward Island and defining its functions. The Prince Edward Island Jewish Community was formally established in 1993 with Dr. Joseph Naylor elected its first president.

HA-EE continued to be distributed until at least April 2001 (the last issue that I've seen). For almost twenty years, the newsletter reached Jewish households on the Island. It provided information of interest to the Jewish community that was mailed out at least six times a year.

Today announcements, invitations, and other communications are shared by e-mails sent to the PEIJC membership. Some issues that the Jewish community faced 40 years ago are still relevant today. With the recent growth in the number of Jewish children in PEI, the question of Jewish and Hebrew education on the Island has reemerged. Today's approach is different given the technological advances in

communication and lessons learned from on-line learning and meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Another issue of continued concern is antisemitism with incidents having been reported in Canada including PEI. The PEIJC has condemned acts of violence and hate perpetrated against Jews and other religious groups in Canada and abroad. The Jewish community continues to commemorate the Holocaust through its annual observance of Yom HaShoah and endeavors to combat Holocaust denial.

HA-EE was an important medium for communication within the Jewish community of Prince Edward Island. The first year of the newsletter provides insights into Jewish life and concerns 40 years ago. 5

Dr. Joseph B. Glass is the PEIJC representative to the Atlantic Jewish Council. He is researching the Jewish history of Prince Edward Island. He can be contacted at: josephbglass@yahoo.com

Correction to my speech that appeared in the Winter 2022 issue, page 18. The Hebrew School was first organized in the mid-1970s and not started by Jane Naylor and Rosalie Simone. The two taught at the school in various years including the mid-1980s.



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REMEMBERING HARRIETT “RUTH” GARSON Z’L



Age 90, passed away peacefully on June 20, 2022 (her late husband's birthday) after a brief illness, with her family and personal caregiver Doreen by her side.

She was the youngest daughter of the late Charles and Rose Migdol of Detroit, MI. Born and raised in Detroit, MI, she met her husband Ralph while he was working in Detroit.

They soon married and moved back to Halifax in the early 1960's. She was warmly welcomed into the large "Garson Family" and was heavily involved in the Halifax Jewish Community in which she remained active throughout her life.

She held several positions with Hadassah Wizo, including President of the Avivah

Chapter.

In 1973, once her children were in school, she began a successful career in real estate that spanned over 20 years. Throughout the years she loved to play bridge (and catch her husband cheating), have family and friends over for meals, and most recently spend any time she could with her children and grandchildren. She will fondly be remembered by many for her words of wisdom, quick wit, and as a woman of many sayings, her most favorite being "you can't go wrong on right street".

She was predeceased by her husband, Ralph Garson; sisters, Esther Nessel and Lil Tolchin from Detroit; 10 brothers-in-law; and four sisters-in-law.

She is survived by her sons Craig (Cathy), Halifax and Marc (Karen), London, her daughter Andrea, Halifax; her six granddaughters, Ellen (Nate), Brooklyn, NY, Rose (Greg), Boston, Mass, Marybeth, Halifax, Sara and Erin, London, and Madison, Kingston; her sister-in-law, Goldie Rubin, Toronto; dozens of cherished nieces and nephews, and her great-grandson, Irving Mihalovich who she regrettably was only able to meet virtually.

Donations may be made to Camp Kadimah, the Shaar Shalom Synagogue, or a charity of your choice. 🕊

REMEMBERING ZACHARY RUBIN Z’L

MARCH 29, 1944–JUNE 7, 2022



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Zachary Edward Rubin on June 7th, 2022 in his seventy eighth year. He died as he lived with strength and dignity, surrounded by his loving family at The Victoria General Hospital in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Born in Halifax, Zack was a Maritimer at heart. He was a sports enthusiast from a young age and played baseball, basketball and football. As the years progressed he became an all around fanatic for all sports. He was also a trivia connoisseur, a crossword pro and a book maven.

Following in his father's footsteps, Zack moved to Montreal as a young man to start a career as a menswear salesman where he met the love of his life Myrna Rubin (Steinberg). After a short engagement they were married six months later on June 1st, 1969.

His love for Israel started in his teens and eventually led him to make Aliya with his young family in 1979. It is there that he lived out his lifelong dream of joining the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Aside from the birth of his three daughters, one of his proudest moments was when he put on his IDF uniform.

After seven memorable years in Israel, Zack moved his family to Montreal where he continued a successful career as a travelling salesman in the Maritimes for the next forty years. He spent countless seasons 'schlepping' on the road and could have written a book with all of his stories about travelling from Newfoundland to New Brunswick. In 1993 he then moved his family back to Halifax where he resided for the next thirty years.

Son to the late Nathan Rubin and Bertha Lazar (Jacobson), brother to the late Marc

Rubin and survived by older sister Judith Shek. Beloved father to Shira Rubin and father and father-in-law to Aviva Rubin Schneider and Jonathan Schneider and Carmi Rubin and Zev Gitalis. Proud Zaydie of Nathan Handley, Gabriella, Danielle and Joseph Schneider and Rubin and Jasmine Gitalis.

Beloved uncle to his nephew and many nieces. He will be greatly missed by all who loved him so dearly.

The family would like to acknowledge, with the deepest of gratitude, the staff at the Victoria General Hospital, for their exceptional care and compassion.

Contributions in Zack's memory may be made to:

P2G (Israel Partnership Region) through the Atlantic Jewish Council. 🕊

Neila—Closing

BY LARRY FINKELMAN

My aged soul is cracked and filled with flaws,
while anguish, doubts, and conflicts give me pause.
And so, I stand before You at this hour.

Please hear my plea and that for which I pray
before You close the curtain on the day,
though I am undeserving at this time.

For after wand'ring all eternity,
I heard the yearning of my soul for thee:
an ache, for finding favor in Your eyes.

Oh G-d, don't take me yet before I know
that which You gave, and meant for me to show
has been expressed, that it may draw me near.

For I am not afraid of being bound,
but fear the end before my purpose found.
Let me use it, overcoming doubt.

You took our people in their distant day
with fire and cloud and signs that led the way,
but now, what do we have to know the path?

A sailor on the sea who's lost his way,
I travel on and on and on each day.
Guide me safely to the distant shore.

What is the destination of Your will?
What is the destiny that I fulfill?
Please help me find the answers that I seek.

Until the hollow in my soul is filled,
leave me not alone to live unwilling:
Your holy presence don't forever hide.

Please help me do Your work with trust,
and let me be then wise and kind and just,
and carry on for yet another year.

But if somehow I managed not to see,
or got it wrong, what I was meant to be,
I beg you please, have mercy on this man.

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

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

CAPE BRETON NEWS

BY SHARON JACOBSON

Ah yes! Our Cape Breton Community these past months.

We have managed minyans and services in the Shul quite well, with everyone knowing what is expected of him or her or them.

Beth Sheila Kent does Shachrit and David Ein reads the Torah while, Barrie Carnat is “a Chaim of all trades” and does Torah and Musaf or fills in where needed. Martin Chernin and Stanley Jacobson are Essential Bimah assistants.

Our new congregants are Rachel Higgins, Nathan MacDonald and Clinton Rice. They are a well-informed, interesting addition to our lively group.

The Kiddish Lunch is prepared and partaken of by everyone, and might I add—with gusto!

* * *

Our summer residents arrived and each week presented a fresh colourful palette.

David and Anita Schick (Florida), Heidi Schwartz and Rose Schwartz (Toronto), Leslie Dubinsky (Halifax), Peshe and Peter Kuriloff (Philadelphia), and the Yazers (Halifax).

Everyone picked up where they left off in the scheme of things—they knew and know “the drill”!

David Schick slipped into his Haftorah readings with the grace of a Chazan—we are grateful for the added pleasure.

Speaking of “cantor”, Leslie Dubinsky did his research and our High Holiday services will be decanted with the honeyed tones of Cantor Sidney S. Dworkin who “possesses a pure lyric tenor voice blessed with nuance, flexibility and extraordinary range. His singing and interpretation has brought him the highest acclaim from his peers and endeared him to his congregants.” To further quote his bio-

“Cantor Dworkin was born in Montreal in 1951 and has been singing professionally since the 1970’s—he earned a Bachelor of Music from McGill University, majoring in voice, violin, and music education.” He has been invited to participate in numerous concerts and to lead showcase Maariv services at yearly Cantorial conventions. Cantor Dworkin was appointed Cantor Emeritus of Shar

Hashomayim in Montreal where he served as Cantor from 1987 to 2003.”

Leslie Dubinsky added that the few present members of the Sydney Choir will contribute to the service, inviting all former Cape Bretoners and Maritimers, or those who are visiting or even living in various locations in the Atlantic provinces, to attend. Indeed, The Fall Colours at this time of year provide a festive atmosphere to our New Year! So you see, there will be “fringe” benefits to donning a tallit with us on Rosh Hashonah!

MEMBER NEWS:

The community commemorated 3 venerable members with 3 unveilings. Louis Allen, Herman Nathanson, and Bella Shore had stone—settings, in the Sydney and Glace Bay cemeteries; families, friends and relatives flew in to attend, reminisce and reconnect.

* * *

Great Uncle Stanley and Great Aunt Sharon Jacobson attended the wedding of a Great nephew in Toronto, Sam “Señor” Berns (Kadimah). “Yesterday his mother was the Flower Girl at our wedding! How did this happen?”

* * *

An email from Shayna and Darren Strong delivered exciting news about their son Manny:

“We are currently in San Diego watching Manny compete in the Maccabi games in hockey. He is playing for team Vancouver with Nate Brown (Lorne Brown’s son). Sam Ross, from Halifax is also competing in baseball for the St. Louis team.” How great is that!

JUST IN FROM HEIDI SCHWARTZ:

“Leslie Dubinsky and Josine Boucher hosted a Goldman get-together in Englishtown this summer. Leslie’s mother Esther Dubinsky was the oldest of the ten children of Louis and Dora Goldman of Glace Bay. Three of the four remaining Goldman siblings Inez Schwartz, Raymond Goldman, and Shirley Weingarten were present, along with many nieces and nephews. In honour of the D. Goldman & Sons tradition, fish was prepared

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and served with beautiful St. Ann's Bay in view."

Visitors to Cape Breton flocked back to visit their families—David Ein & Paula Michalik, Peshe & Peter Kuriloff, Anita & David Schick, the Jacobsons, and Barrie Carnat, all had "come from away" guests! Hailing from Toronto, Philadelphia, Boca Raton, Montreal, Halifax, Fredericton, New Jersey, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Boston, they all converged on The Island!

I would list everyone but alas, you might not be interested in a phone book of names?

Indeed, Cape Breton pulls us back.. home.

And, as we age, we are practically living backwards. Call it nostalgia, or simply the result of getting older, we obtain fresh insight into our lives and what shaped us.

But, as to living backwards, we are constantly looking for our keys, glasses, and phones, and trying to remember names, places, what we did yesterday, the film we saw

or that book we just read.

We backtrack—to remember. Cape Breton we never forget.

"In the days of our fathers", Glace Bay would hold their summer Minyans on the Mira.

On July 16th, we held our first Kiddish on the Mira!

After Shul, each person transported his usual contribution for the Buffet Luncheon to our Table in Marion Bridge. We made the blessings for wine & challah while gazing upon the Mira River. Dining inside and al fresco we could have been Israelis on the Galilee. *Just to note—There were about 20 people in Shul that day and 17 at the Kiddish!

On August 6th, there were 24 people attending Shabbat services! We were incredulous as it was not a High Holiday!

Maritime connections spread far and wide.

Upon attending the Bat Mitzvah of Lily (Offman) Strug (Kadimah) with Jamie Levitz (Cornerbrook, Nfld.; Kadimah) and his wife, Doreen, I learned that Temple Isaiah in L.A. has hosted in its day, Eleanor Roosevelt,

Martin Luther King Jr., and Cesar Chavez. Equally noteworthy was the design for the Ark of the Torah. The Rabbi pointed out that it requires 2 people to open and close the Ark—sort of a bridge to peace. It brought to mind an idea someone once espoused to me. Before one gets married, a couple should be required to put a piece of IKEA furniture together!

As to the various types of synagogue congregations now available...

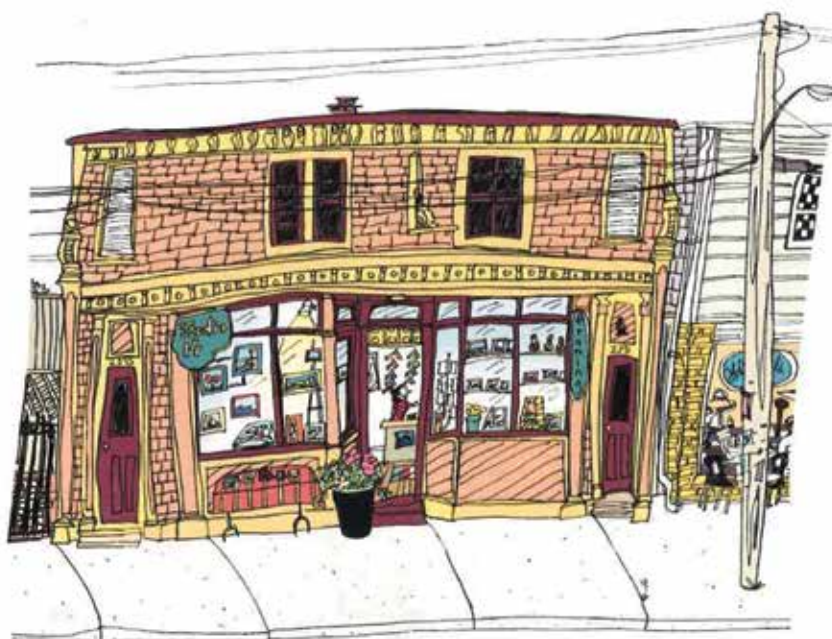
I remember when a woman never dreamed of wearing "pants" to Shul, and here I am—on the Bimah no less!

Survival tactics?

The Shul's heart beats on... 5

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FREDERICTON NEWS

BY **SHELLEY STEPHENS AND LOUIS BUDOVITCH**, CO-PRESIDENTS, SGOOLAI ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

Visitors from Israel, Sharon and Matthew Ainsap, were hosted in Fredericton for Shabbat, July 2, 2022.

Mazel Tov to Rabbi Yosef and Shaindy Goldman on the occasion of the marriage of their daughter, Aviva to Baruch Belfer, which took place on July 3rd in Israel.

Wishing David Aranoff a happy 75th birthday. His brother Michael accompanied by wife, Judy, came in from Ottawa to help him celebrate.

Best wishes to Rhoda Budovitch on the occasion of her 65th birthday.

Best wishes to Edward Budovitch on his 70th birthday.

Welcome back to Arnold Chippin and daughter Michelle who made a summer visit to Turkey and Israel.

Welcome back to Ayten Kranat and son Jake, who made a summer visit to family and friends in Turkey.

Best wishes to Jasmine Kranat as she pursues a course on antisemitism at Yad Vashem in July.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Jake Budovitch.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Seymour Kaufman.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery Brenda Purdy.



Shelley Stephens, Co-President of Sgoolai Israel Synagogue with Matthew and Sharon Ainsap

Wishing the Fredericton Community Happy Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, Chag Sameach, Shelley Stephens and Louis Budovitch Co-Presidents, Sgoolai Israel Synagogue. 🌟

Tree Planting

The Sgoolai Israel Synagogue and the Capital Community Church (CCC) in Fredericton have developed a close, warm and friendly relationship. The CCC hosted a Kristallnacht service several years ago and has hosted the annual Holocaust Commemoration since then. On July 24th, 2022 the CCC held a tree planting event honoring Holocaust survivors, Jews and Christians. The plaque describing the honorees reads:

This grove of trees was planted by Dr Israel Unger on July 24, 2022.

In memory of Hinda and David Unger (his parents). Holocaust survivors. They never

gave up, never gave in. Rescued their children, Charles and Israel, along with five other Jews and themselves from the Nazis.

In memory of Marlene Unger (his wife). Extraordinary daughter, wife, mother, grandmother and teacher. Indomitable, courageous fighter against antisemitism and supporter of human rights and social justice.

In memory of Raymond F Woodward (his friend). Teacher. Principal of Fredericton High School. Treasurer of Capital Community Church. Marlene Unger stated that he was always the first to assist any student or teacher that had a serious personal crisis.

In honour of Raymond A Woodward and



John (Jack) E Leaman (his friends). Pastors of Capital Community Church. Friends of the nation of Israel and the Jewish community in Fredericton. An example of friendship in leadership, and a model for transition from generation to generation. 🌟



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

MONCTON NEWS

BY FRANCIS WEIL

Since our last article in this Magazine we celebrated Lag Ba'Omer and Sukkot.

First of all, a very hearty Mazal-tov to Goldie Johnston who has recently entered her 90th year. Goldie has long been President of Sisterhood of Tiferes Israel Congregation and has spent many many hours doing all kinds of things for our Shul. Thank you very much Goldie. Our best wishes and may you live till 120!

Same hearty wishes and Mazal-tov for Harry (Tut) Gorber who has entered his 91th year. May you also live till 120!

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

The synagogue has been able to maintain a minyan every Shabbat Morning (with one exception).

The community is happy to welcome new families. Three new families can be mentioned. Darcie and Leigh Lampert with their three children, the Shmueli family with their five children (two sets of twins!) and Rhoda and Steven Fransblow. Welcome to all three families.

We still hope that some of the other Israeli families who recently came to the area will join us. Quite a number of them do participate in our social events.

On Shabbat Balak (July 16) Ethan Tolmasov, son of Arik and Kati become Bar-Mitzvah. A special kiddush, with beautiful food prepared by Sisterhood, followed the religious services.

On Shabbat Nachamu (August 13) Noam Shmueli is becoming Bar-Mitzvah.

At Lag Ba'Omer, a large group got together for a bonfire on the property of Betty Rubin-Druckman. It was a beautiful affair with lots of joy. It was nice to hear the

noise made by over 70 participants, among them, many children. See photo. Thank you, Emmanuel Maicas, for setting up the bonfire!

On the second day of Shavuot (June 6), a large crowd gathered in the Shul. Aviya Kohn had prepared a beautiful event with activities for children and scrumptious food—see the pictures!

JIAS asked us to look after a Ukrainian Mother who has escaped the war and came with a 4-month-old baby as well as a 2-years old daughter. The community has been very generous. A good amount of money was raised and people have come forwards to help with furniture and baby items. Thank you to the Maicas family for lodging them. Thank you to all those who contributed to the items donated.

Mona Vender organised a beautiful reception for the unveiling of the monument for Joe Vender, z"l. Sisterhood prepared the reception that took place in the lobby of the Shul.

Eitan Izichkis, Ury El and Arik Talmasov have been very generous with their time to prepare the weekly Torah readings. Toda raba to all three.

The community can be very proud of its children. Here is a brief review of their accomplishments.

Bryson R.-J. and Eli D. are in Israel with Canadian Young Judea (Biluim).

Sophia, Benjamín and Bella M. as well as Samuel H, Ketorah R.-J, Chloe R., two Waks kids and Noam & Livi S. all went to Camp Kadimah this summer.

Quite a few young people graduated: Julie Arsenault from U de Moncton (law), Joshua Makarov from UNB (economics), Liel Izichkis from U de Moncton (premed.), Shelly Langleben from college, Joshua Weinberg-Filmore and Zev Davidson from High School.

Samuel Haller was selected by his



PHOTOS: (1) Lag Ba'Omer; (2-4) Shavuot celebration

teachers as valedictorian of the grade 8 graduating class. He is MVP of his basketball team.

His brother, Joshua, attended a basketball camp in NYC and was chosen (among 170 kids) as the recipient of the coaches' award.

Mazal Tov to all! You kids are great!

Wishing all a very healthy and prosperous year 5783. שנה טובה ומבורכת 🌿

SAINT JOHN NEWS

BY SUSAN ISAACS-LUBIN

The Saint John Jewish Community has been busy since the last edition of Shalom Magazine.

We held an online trivia quiz for Yom Ha'atzmaut—Israel's 74th Independence Day. The winners are:

1st place Olga Levine and Leah
(\$50 Amazon gift card)


2nd place Alma Barlevy
(\$30 Amazon gift card)

3rd place Kineret Ben Meir and Dori
(\$20 Amazon gift card)
Congratulations!

Shavuot saw a fun celebration at the Synagogue. We started with a Bikkurim ceremony with 24 children receiving a Certificate. Upstairs, a hands-on rolling and braiding of dough for Challah was taught to all those who wanted to learn. There was a Master Chef contest, with prizes for the most popular dishes. First place went to Jenny Kalandadze for her delicious profiteroles. Second place went to Kineret Ben Meir with her yummy Gnocchi, and Third place was awarded to Yael Fisher who made a dairy version of Alchabaz Blidem—a savoury Moroccan dish. Thank you to Costa Levine who made a beautiful video of the activities.

We also presented the first annual Acker Awards. The Acker Awards focus on the youth in our community with monetary awards to graduating high school students planning to attend post-secondary education or those currently pursuing post-secondary education in a recognized university, college, or school of higher learning. Students were awarded \$1500.00 each. The winners of this scholarship this year were: Nir Melech, Eldar Barnea, Mickey Or, Roni Friling and Amit Friling. Congratulations to all. We wish you the best as you continue your studies.

Our Annual Summer Picnic is scheduled to be held this year on August 14th at the newly renovated Meenan's Cove facilities in Quispamsis. There will be fun activities for the children, with a magic show and a balloon artist! There will be a barbecue as well as potluck dishes from our fabulous community chefs.

We are planning our Hebrew School year which will open in the Fall with new format, and a new teacher. We are also planning for Rosh Hashanah and the other High Holidays this autumn. 

REPORT FROM THE SAINT JOHN JEWISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

BY KATHERINE BIGGS-CRAFT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CURATOR

The Saint John Jewish Historical Museum is sharing the exhibits with larger numbers of visitors than in the past two years. It is very exciting to see visitors coming from across Canada and the United States, and even as far away as Norway and Vietnam. We have introduced many people to Jewish culture and history. Our five summer students have fit in well—for some this is the first summer job they have had—and are giving tours and doing research with enthusiasm. In between visitors they are learning about some of the

community history through transcription of oral interviews recorded in the 1980s.

The Museum will be open until Friday, November 4 with regular hours from Monday to Friday from 10:00 to 4:00. Until the end of August, the doors will also be open on Sunday afternoons from 1:00 to 4:00. If you haven't had a chance to visit, please do so.

September and October will be busy with fifty cruise ships docking in Saint John and the expectation is that many will want to

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PHOTOS: (1) Certificates for the children for the Bikkurim Ceremony; (2) Children receiving their certificates at Bikkurim; (3) Learning to braid dough for Challah; (4) Learning to roll and braid dough for Challah; (5) Receiving Acker Award cheque from Norman Hamburg, Chair; (6) Receiving Acker Award Cheques

<< page 33

visit—we are actively seeking volunteers to assist on those days. Volunteers will be given training and comment positively on the interesting people and conversations that fill the day. Contact the Museum to become a volunteer tour guide.

For the first time, we expanded our offerings beyond the walls of the Museum, to offer a series of “Wednesday Walks” along four nearby streets during July and August—Orange Street, Leinster Street, King Street East and Elliot Row to tell the stories of almost twenty-five Jewish families that lived there from the 1920s to the 1980s. Each person who took one of these walks, left knowing much more about the community and a number of the prominent families and were eager to learn more. The development of these walks was made possible with funding from the Saint John Community Arts Board.

The 9th Annual Saint John Jewish Film Festival will be held from Saturday, October 22 to Thursday, October 27 at the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum. The event co-chairs, Lorie Cohen-Hackett and Richard Osepchook, along with committee members, have planned an interesting series of films. It will be presented as a hybrid festival this year. We are offering you the choice of watching these films in your own home or in-person with all in-person showings being held at the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum at 91 Leinster Street. You can also do a combination of in home and at the Museum—the choice is yours.

The event relies on the generosity of our sponsors. You can choose the sponsorship that suits you: Executive Producer—\$2,500; Producer—\$1,000; Associate Producer—\$500.00, Director—\$250.00 or Editor—\$100.00. Sponsors will be able to attend the gala opening film on Saturday evening, along with a set number of additional films through the remainder of the week. A tax receipt will be provided. Sponsors can also choose to send their logo or business card, which will be added to the Festival programme as further recognition of support.

Individual tickets for the films are available at \$10.00 per film or with the purchase of a “Reel Pass”, you can see the films shown from Sunday to Thursday for \$40.00.

THE FILMS SELECTED FOR THIS YEAR ARE:

Saturday, October 22—Opening Film and Reception—Sponsors Only—Lost

Transport—2022, Dutch and German. The story, set in the last days of the Second World War, is inspired by true events. In the spring of 1945, a train deporting hundreds of Jewish prisoners is abandoned by German soldiers near a small German village occupied by the Red Army. Condemned by each other and in a context of deep mistrust, desperation and revenge, an unexpected friendship emerges between fearless Russian sniper Vera, distrustful German village girl Winnie and courageous Dutch Jew Simone.

Sunday, October 23—Haute Couture—2022, French. Esther is at the end of her career as Head Seamstress at the Dior Avenue Montaigne workshop. One day, she gets her handbag stolen in the metro by a 20-year-old woman, Jade. Instead of calling the police she decides to take care of Jade herself. She sees in her the opportunity to pass on her skills, the craft of dressmaking, her only wealth. In the frenetic world of Haute Couture, Esther will give Jade la beauté du geste, a way to reach beyond herself.

Monday October 24—The Conference—2022, German. On January 20, 1942, 14 high-ranking representatives of the Nazi regime were invited by Reinhard Heydrich, head of the security police and SD, to a “meeting followed by breakfast” in a villa on the Great Wannsee in the southwest of Berlin. The exclusive topic of the 90-minute discussion is what the National Socialists called the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question”—the bureaucratically planned organization of the systematic mass murder of millions of Jews from all over Europe. The Wannsee Conference marks a pivotal point in human history.

Tuesday October 25—Trust—2022, English. Kate returns home from college to honour her deceased mother and reconcile with her siblings. But when trust is already breached, inheritance destroys the family. Between meeting with the Rabbi, funeral preparations and sitting shiva, Kate has no time to process her mother’s absence. In fact, Kate’s not sure if she is crying because her mother is dead, or because she’s related to the freaks: an adulterous father Damien, and a histrionic sister Trini. Kate finds an ally in her brother Josh who spearheads funeral arrangements.

Wednesday October 26—Neighbours—2021, Kurdish and Arab. In a Kurdish village in northeastern Syria in the seventies, Sero is entering first grade. The new teacher is determined to instill Ba’ath Party



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PHOTOS: (1) Museum Visitors – Guss family; (2) July Museum Visitors, Class of 1971, Saint John High School 50 year reunion

Arab nationalism and suppress any feelings of Kurdish cultural identity in his students. Sero and his uncle act as the Sabbath goy’im for their Jewish neighbours, an old couple and their daughter Hannah. The situation becomes increasingly precarious for the Jewish family as all Jews have been stripped of their Syrian citizenship, unable to leave the country. When Sero’s mother is accidentally shot by a Turkish border guard, they turn to Sero’s father to help Hannah flee using the dead wife’s papers. Years later, Sero is languishing with his family in an Iraqi refugee camp when Hannah comes looking for him. This is based on a true story.

Thursday October 27—Schachten—2021, German. The film is set in Vienna in the 1960s, and explores themes of law, justice and revenge. Victor, a young Jewish businessman, witnesses how the prosecution of a Nazi crime against his family fails. The political and legal system is still controlled by former Nazis with large parts of society being entangled in the past. After Victor loses his grief ridden father, and his girlfriend’s family opposes their relationship, Victor begins to lose faith in formal justice and takes matters into his own hands.

With the support of the community, we hope to continue the success of the Saint John Jewish Film Festival and with that to carry on the work of collecting and sharing the stories of the Saint John Jewish Community. 🕊

NEWFOUNDLAND NEWS

News from the far east BY RABBI CHANAN AND TUBA CHERNITSKY

SUMMER IS FINALLY HERE!

After an amazing Passover holiday, we were treated to Fishel's story over Zoom on Tuesday May 10th. Fishel was born in Mielnica, Ukraine in 1933. His father had a grain export business but it all came to a halt in 1942 when Fishel and his family were forced into a ghetto near the town of Borszczow, Ukraine.

When the Nazis started liquidating the ghetto, the family managed to escape to a nearby forest and was later hidden by a farmer until the end of the war. Fishel had us all glued to the screen for 2 hours which included copious questions and answers. Despite everything he lived through, he is a man of faith and has a positive outlook in life.

The "Friendship Circle" (Chabad's branch catering to children with special needs) activities are going strong. We hosted an inclusive Drum Circle and social in May and a complimentary Photo Shoot at the end of July. We are looking for sponsors for our dedicated website and hope to have it up and running before September.

After Passover we started a monthly Shabbat service followed by a lavish Kiddush. Before praying Mussaf we sit together for a brief class on the Parsha of the week which was greatly

enjoyed. Thank you to the Barnes family for sponsoring the last Kiddush!

The community was eager to come together after years of Covid restrictions and Chabad was able to host once again the community Lag B'omer BBQ. Besides the great food, everyone loved the company even more. Rabbi Chernitsky shared a Lag B'omer positive thought to take home and we finished the evening by roasting marshmallows, yum!

Another tradition we hadn't been able to celebrate is the Shavuot Ice Cream Party.

Thank G-d, once again we were able to have everyone over for the reading of the Ten Commandments, cheesecake and ice cream. This year we were joined by Rabbis Schneur Ehven and Mendy Uhrmacher, both students at the Morristown, New Jersey Yeshiva. They were sent to Newfoundland to help with the minyan and Shavuot festivities.

Have a healthy fall! ☺

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.



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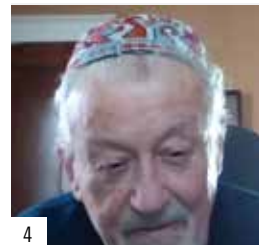


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PHOTOS: (1-2) Lag B'omer BBQ; (3) Friendship Circle - Drum Circle activity; (4) Holocaust survivor, Fishel Goldig



4

News from the Hebrew Congregation of NL

BY MICHAEL PAUL MD, PRESIDENT

With the summer months in full swing, many of our members are away on holidays.

We are actively planning our High Holiday services in conjunction with the Havura.

Over the Labour Day weekend, we will be celebrating the conversion of Esther Herat, who has studied under the supervision of Rabbi A Bright of Montreal. Whereas the conversion will be occurring in Montreal, the celebrations will happen in St John's. Mazal Tov to Esther—for your long years of studying and devotion to your plans.

Recently much energy has been spent dealing with potential / threatened attacks on the Synagogue, and an Anti-Semitic ad campaign on the local buses. We have had the assistance of CAEF, Bnai Brith and the AJC.

We wish everyone a Happy New Year, an easy Yom Kippur fast and an enjoyable Sukkot and Simchas Torah. ☺



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PEI NEWS

BY JOSEPH B. GLASS

With the relaxing of Covid-19 public health restrictions, the Prince Edward Island Jewish Community (PEIJC) started to return to its regular activities. The renewed in-person meetings were a welcome change and community members came out in greater numbers to different programs.

The community started to gather for films of Jewish interest. On May 29, the film at the City Cinema in Charlottetown was “The Automat”. The movie was a wonderfully entertaining documentary of how Joseph Horn and Frank Hardart created a chain of cafeteria style restaurants in New York City and Philadelphia. The first opened in 1902 and the last one closed in 1992. The personal commentaries of Mel Brooks, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Eliot Gould, Colin Powell, Carl Reiner, and others about the Automat “were wonderful” according to Leo Mednick. Following the screening, the participants were treated to dessert at Lisa Kessler’s house. Leo shared that it had been a comfortable event that just allowed members of the community to just get together and talk. Thanks to Lisa for setting it all up and for taking the initiative for planning future Jewish movie nights.

Canada Day was celebrated at Debra Buckler’s farm. She invited members of the PEIJC to join her and her friends for a barbeque. Held on her farm in the Wilmot Valley, on the outskirts of Summerside, participants had

a chance to reconnect with each other and to get to know the hens and other farm animals. Debra, the owner of a hobby farm, sells produce, eggs, and baked goods at the Summerside farmers’ market and from the “Rustic Cart” at the entrance of her farm.

This summer, Jewish children from PEI returned to Camp Kadimah after a long hiatus. Joel spent two weeks and Amalia spent a month. The family’s experience is shared by Raquel Hoersting Barbosa in this issue of Shalom Magazine.

The annual summer picnic was held on July 31 with community members sharing a potluck meal on the shores of the Hillsborough River. The weather was ideal. Although it was hot, there was a refreshing breeze blowing off the water and large shade trees. The picnic brought together some 50 permanent and summer residents. We were very glad to welcome some newcomers to the Island as well. Thank you to Ayelet and Larry Stewart for hosting this event again.

The PEIJC annual general meeting was held in conjunction with the picnic. The President and Treasurer shared their annual reports. Elections were held and the members of the PEIJC executive for 2022 to 2024 are: President—Leo Mednick, Past President—Winston Macgregor, Vice President—Lisa Kessler, Treasurer—Shamara Baidoonsonso Fleischmann, Secretary—Rafael Baliardo, Summer Resident Representative—Michal Goldman, and Representative to the Atlantic Jewish Council—Joseph Glass.

NACHAS NOTES

Congratulations to Shamara Baidoonsonso



PHOTOS: PEIJC summer picnic

and Michael Fleischmann on the birth of their second son Max Myer Sigmund on May 18. Max’s brit milah was held on June 21 with grandparents, friends, and Jewish community members welcoming “Yitzhak Meir ben Michael David ve-Rut Shamara” into the Hebrew covenant. Michael, the father of the infant, gave a short talk about the significance of ritual circumcision and the choice of the names. In celebration of this momentous occasion, Max was inscribed in the Jewish National Fund’s Sefer HaYeled.

As the number of participants was capped for public health reasons, the ceremony was also livestreamed for those who couldn’t attend. The in-person attendees shared in a festive meal in honor of the circumcision, and they were treated to Michael’s home-smoked salmon and Leo Mednick’s Montreal-style bagels. 5



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JEW-HATRED

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

There is an old joke that every Jewish holiday is about the same story: *They tried to kill us, we prevailed, let's eat!*

Of course, the humour hides a kernel of truth. Even on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year, a time devoted to self-reflection, repentance and improvement in our behaviour, we listen to the *hazan* chant the *Eleh Ezk'ra* in the *Musaf* service, detailing the violent persecutions that our Sages and others suffered long ago, and to the present day.

We all know that battling Jew-hatred is an ongoing and vital struggle, and one which is our duty to make our neighbours aware of. And it is clear that we have a lot of teaching to do; this year I participated in a forum between Jewish leaders and an agency of the government tasked with "Truth and Reconciliation," that is, battling racism and prejudice in this part of our country. Incredibly, our interlocutors seemed dumbfounded that we, the Jewish community, felt under attack by those who wish us harm!

I am sure that all my readers have heard sermons and speeches, and have read articles and even books, arguing the truth that a focus

on the negative, on preventing something, cannot take the place of an active, creative and meaningful Judaism. If Judaism is to have power, it must enthusiastically enrich our lives, and not simply be a call to battle an enemy.

But there is something else. Focusing overly on identifying and rooting out antisemitism, concentrating narrowly on the hatred directed against us, is unhealthy for the Jewish community, and for the individual Jew, because it changes us—and not for the better.

In *Parashat BeHukotai*, the final portion in the third book of the Torah, we read a long series of awful things that will transpire if we are not loyal to God and Torah. In Leviticus 26:36, near the end of these *tokhehot* we read the ultimate curse, *"As for those of you who survive, I will cast a faintness into their hearts in the land of their enemies. The sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight. Fleeing as though from the sword, they shall fall though none pursues."*

Rashi, the great medieval French exegete emphasizes *"as if they were pursuing to kill them."* In other words, living with ongoing

fear can result in the inability to distinguish between things that are truly dangerous, and those which pose no threat at all. The blow to the human psyche is that such a person lives with terror that can never be quelled.

Certainly, antisemitism is on the rise worldwide, as it is here. In April 2022, the CBC reported that "record levels of antisemitism were recorded in Canada last year," ranging from "an employee at an Ontario liquor store [assaulted] by a customer who called him a 'dirty f---king Jew,'" to the firebombing of a Montreal kosher bakery this past June. This makes it more urgent than ever to distinguish between real and imagined hatred.

As we head into the High Holidays and the year 5783, let me wish all my readers a year of peace within our community and with those outside it, a year of a joyful Judaism, and a year of meaning, staying alert to manifestations of hatred, but never letting that vigil overwhelm the beauty of Jewish living. 🕊



A TALE OF TWO BANK MANAGERS

BY RABBI MENDEL FELDMAN, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF THE MARITIMES

During the ten days from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur, known as the "Ten days of Teshuvah" (repentance), we recite during the morning service one of the most moving chapters of Psalms, ch. 130. It contains a most enigmatic verse, which is repeated many times during the prayers of Selichot, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

כִּי עָמַד הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּירָא
"But you offer forgiveness, so that we might learn to fear you."

The logic is counterintuitive. People who offer forgiveness are less feared, not more feared. If I know that you are the "forgiving type," I fear you less, not more. What then does King David mean "But you offer forgiveness, so that we might learn to fear you?"

A TALE OF TWO BANK MANAGERS

Rabbi Schnuer Zalman of Liadi (1745-1812), known as the Alter Rebbe, the founder of the Chabad philosophy, explained it with a metaphor from the world of economics.

Imagine, you took a million-dollar loan from the bank to renovate a complex into nice condos which you will sell and earn half a million in profit. All of a sudden, the market collapses, you can't sell your condos, and you are left with a major debt. You meet with the bank manager. He declares: We want the entire debt paid up, the million with all the interest, as per the schedule we agreed upon. On the 15th your first payment is due.

You go home, and you know in your mind, there is no way that you can come up with the money, so, mentally you give up, there is simply nothing you can do.

But suppose another scenario: The bank manager says, okay, we all got hit badly. We are all in a big mess. We all need to bite the bullet. You were wiped out; we were also wiped out. Let's work this out fairly, how about, we cut the loan by 30 percent. We remove all interest. Let's make this work for both of us. I need you to work with me. What would be a feasible schedule of payment?

Now you get scared... Now you need to figure it out. Now you need to come up with some money. He is being such a mentch, you can't betray him. You need to show up with payment.

The Alter Rebbe explains that this is the meaning of the verse, "But you offer forgiveness, so that we might learn to fear



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KNOW YOUR GREATNESS

BY RABBI CHANAN CHERNITSKY, DIRECTOR, CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF NEWFOUNDLAND



The story is told about the great German rabbi, Shimshon Rafoel Hirsch, that he visited the Swiss Alps in order to be ready for the Day of Judgement. What does that mean?

He explained that, after life in this world, G-d would interrogate him and ask: "Have you seen the beauty in my world? Have you seen my Alps in Switzerland?".

What is it about the wonders in nature that enthrall us?

Why do we run to watch the waves crushing in the ocean?

Why do we find mountains and peaks breathtaking?

The Chassidic master, the Sfas Emes, explained that when we see the vast ocean and great mountains, it reminds us of our grandeur and potential. G-d planted these beautiful vistas all over the world to serve as a reminder of our own unlimited potential granted by the Creator who is infinite.

Why would G-d care if you saw the Swiss Alps?

The story of Rabbi Hirsch isn't tongue in cheek. There is a profound message here.

Have you seen the Alps? Translation—Have you seen your own greatness? Are you aware of your infinite power and possibility? Do you think you have to be small and petty?

Do you really think you are an insignificant collection of atoms in an infinite universe?

You have strengths and skills you don't know you have.

You have the power to affect change in

ways you have never considered.

Look at the tall mountains! Look at the mighty ocean! You are also mighty, you are also powerful!

I recently heard a story about a troubled young man. He was 15 years old and had been kicked out of dozens of Yeshivas in the US.

His father, frustrated, sent him to Israel praying and hoping he would shape up.

In Israel, the young man stopped by a Shul in Bnei Brak. It was almost noon and the shul was understandably empty. One man was still praying, wrapped in his Talis and Tefillin. This man was a 95 year old Holocaust survivor. He noticed the young man and addressed him in Yiddish. "What's a young man like you doing here? Don't you study in a Yeshiva?". The young man explained his life situation and concluded that, no, at the moment he wasn't in a yeshiva.

"Let me tell you an insight from the Maggid of Lechovitch" said the Holocaust survivor.

"The Maggid said as follows. Why is it that our prayers are full of G-d's praises, again and again? Do you think G-d needs it? No! It's not for Him, it's for us—as we say in Ashrei (Psalms 145:11): "They will tell the glory of Your kingdom, and they will speak of Your might."—why-

"To make known to the children of men His mighty deeds and the glory of the majesty of His kingdom" (Psalms 145:12).

"The Magidd gave a deeper explanation of this verse. "To make known to the children

of men His mighty deeds"

could be translated as "To make known to the children of men their own mighty deeds"—so, said the Magidd: It's a mitzvah to let every person you meet know their strengths, their potential!. Young man, I don't know where you are coming and I don't know where you are going, but never forget you have potential and strengths you know nothing about. Have a good day!". And with that, he left the shul.

A year goes by. This young boy has been kicked out of dozens of Israeli Yeshivas. He feels he has nowhere to turn and that the world has no place for him. He decides to do the unthinkable—he will jump off the roof of one of the buildings in Jerusalem and end his life.

He climbs on the roof. He starts pacing back and forth before he jumps. He gathers the courage to jump—BUT—suddenly he remembers that a 95 year old Holocaust survivor told him that he has potential and strengths he knows nothing about. And he stopped himself. He doesn't jump. He thinks he needs to find those strengths before giving up on life.

Fast forward 20 years. This young man is now married with 3 children, runs a successful business and has recently donated a kidney.

Do you know your strengths? When's the last time you reminded someone else of theirs?

Have a healthy summer! Shana Tovah Umetukah! ☺

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you." If G-d demanded full compensation for all our mistakes, if He demanded that we pay up in full, with interest, then we would not fear Him; we would give up.

It is like the child who can never please their parent. Whatever they do, it is never enough, and every mistake is highlighted. At some point, such children give up completely. "If I have no hope of ever getting it right, why try? If I will always be criticized, why bother?" The child will just sever the relationship.

"But you offer forgiveness, so that we might

learn to fear you," King David says, G-d is forgiving. He never asks us to be perfect, only to be accountable. He asks of us to meet Him halfway. He tells each of us on Yom Kipur: I want to make this work for you, I yearn that you help Me make your life the ultimate success story.

Now we really must dig into our hearts and mend our mistakes and resolve to live a purer and holier future.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. ☺



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RETURN, REPENT, AND REGRET

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

The Jewish month of Elul and the High Holidays are reserved for repentance. The origin of that word is to “to have remorse or regret”. In the original Hebrew, the word for repentance is Teshuvah, “to return” based on verses in the Torah which suggest that we “return to G-D”. It is not feelings of guilt or despair over your past choices but a conscience decision to create a new path in life, to change direction, to return to the ways of G-D.

Yet, Maimonides incorporates both ideas in his concise but detailed steps to Teshuvah (Laws of Repentance, Chapter 2). “He should conclude in his heart that he will no longer act in that way..... And he should also regret the past..... He who knows our innermost thoughts will attest to the fact that he (the sinner) will never return to this sin again.” Return, then Regret. It is notable that our expectation would have the order reversed. Before you decide on your future, you would evaluate your past. But Maimonides had deep psychological insight into human behavior. He realized that actions are tied to our emotions, and that it is most difficult to emotionally regret our past and disassociate ourselves from our previous actions. Therefore, Maimonides prescribes a different approach to change. First, we should temporarily cease

our sinning action, similar to a cease fire. Cease fires are more easily attained than peace treaties. Our gut might tell us that overeating is harmful. We can stop for a few days but long-term healthy eating is a greater hurdle to overcome. The step following a cease fire is to intellectually grapple with our poor behavior. Think long and hard about the negative effects of our previous poor choices. Sitting in a doctor's office, reading the literature or even hearing a lecture on overeating outside of the kitchen or restaurant will allow us to assess the issue rationally. After understanding that certain foods are our enemy, it is easier to decide both intellectually and emotionally to cease those behaviors going forward. Only after stopping the bad behavior are we ready for the next step, to re-evaluate our past and make an emotional break not only with the actions but with the associated feelings. It is not sufficient to just avoid chocolate cake, we must regret and even be shameful of our past indulgence. At this point, we become a “new person” in the eyes of Maimonides. We are no longer the sinner of the past. That new person “will never return to this sin again”. If you do return, you are reverting to your old self and have never successfully completed the Teshuvah process. In another passage, Maimonides suggests that we should be embarrassed of our past actions.

Imagine feeling shame for indulging in the past just as you would be embarrassed to revel in the fact that you once shoplifted.

The final step is to confess with actual words. To verbalize your actions and feelings. To state clearly before G-D that you have done wrong in the past, have decided to change direction and are embarrassed of your past actions. To say “I’m sorry” and truly mean it is harder than it sounds. We all know people who can never utter those words. We also know people who use those words as an empty gesture. A true confession is the ultimate goal and the mitzvah of Teshuvah. It solidifies and finalizes our sincere repentance. Our Yom Kippur prayers are replete with confessions of every type. The trick is to focus on just a few with serious consideration.

Lastly, it is important to realize that the prayers on Yom Kippur are between you and your Creator. The more difficult task is to use this process with family and friends. To honestly say you are sorry to someone you have offended after sincerely doing Teshuvah will clearly be the most fulfilling part of this year's Teshuvah process. 🕊



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PRAYING FOR THE WELFARE OF THE GOVERNMENT

BY RABBI YOSEF GOLDMAN, SG00LAI ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, FREDERICTON, NB



Recently, I was told that if I want a certain situation or problem to go away—I must pray that this person will receive from Hashem everything that I wish for myself! At first, this made very little sense to me, but then I remembered what Shmuel HaKatan (literally, Little Sam) had said in our Pirkei Avot (Ethics of our Fathers): “we should pray for the welfare of the government” (Chapter 3 Mishnah 2). What is included in welfare? And, to make things more complicated, Abarbanel asks the following question about the continuation of the Mishnah: “for, if not for the **fear** of the Government—each (bad) person would swallow (harm) another (innocent) human-being”?! Are we talking about a good, well-functioning, Government; or, G-d forbid, an evil ruler (such as Nazi or Fascist)?

From my study of Jewish history, it seems like we always prayed for the welfare of the Government! Even in Germany, as long as

there were public Services in Synagogues and Temples—there were prayers said for the welfare of the Third Reich, well into 1939 and maybe even the High Holidays of September 1939 (Rosh Hashanah was on September 14th and 15th). I believe that we need to “dig deeper” into what Shmuel Hakatan meant! Some historical background, he was the Rabbi who was tasked to compile a special prayer against those who were handing over to the Romans Jewish (and early Christians) who were teaching Torah in public (which was against the law). Even he understood that if it weren't for a functioning government—there would be anarchy and absolute chaos! Until this day, instead of having 18 blessings in the Daily Amidah Service (AKA Shmoneh Esreh—literally, Eighteen), we have Nineteen.

Going further back in our history, Rabbi Shraga Kallus (and others) explain that the reason the Jewish People cried out to Hashem

after The Pharaoh died (Exodus 2:23), was because during the “limbo state” that Egypt was in, between kings—there was complete anarchy! A Hebrew would be on his/her way home from the long day of slavery in the field, and an Egyptian would demand, taking the Hebrew kicking & screaming, that they make them dinner or clean up or any other menial job—and they couldn't refuse in any way, because there was no one upholding the law!

We are experiencing a time when there are so many uncertainties! We have a very hard time knowing what the future will bring; however, we are promised by G-d that: “on that day Hashem will be (the) One and True G-d” and that's why we conclude every Service with these words in the Aleinu Prayer!

Wishing you all a Very Happy & Sweet New Year! 🌟



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WHY WE HAVE A 2022 TISHA B'AV

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

Dear friends, This week Sunday was the week of Tisha B'av, 2022.

What is Tisha B'av?

What are the 9 days? What are the 3 weeks?

Why must we be sad?

What is the relevance of all these matters in the year 2022?

To understand, let us start out with the back story.

The Talmud paints the picture for us with the following story, into which the Talmud inserts two observations, one at each bookend. Here are the sequence of events, the way the Talmud describes it:

Over the Kamtza/Bar Kamtza confusion we lost our Holy Temple and were exiled from our land.

What happened?

A wealthy man once celebrated a beautiful event and invited all the respected people of his time.

He also asked his attendant to invite his good friend Kamtza, but his attendant mistakenly invited his sworn enemy Bar Kamtza, who due to a twist of irony, had a confusingly similar name. The erroneous invitee was told by the celebrating host, upon arrival, to get lost. (You can imagine, of course, that Bar Kamtza probably came under the impression that he was being invited back for the purpose of making peace. Imagine if the host had decided on the spot to change his mind for the good, perhaps the redemption would have taken place, instead of what eventually happened.)

But Bar Kamtza stood his ground, and begged to stay, offering to pay for his portion, but his request was denied. He offered to sponsor a quarter of the entire expenses of the event, a very large sum indeed, but was refused. He upped his offer to 50 percent but was still refused. Finally, he upped his offer to the cost of the ENTIRE event, but he was refused, and was forcibly removed from the hall.

He was so bitter at being treated thus, and the fact that not a single important person had made a stance against his public humiliation, that he decided to travel out to Rome, the tax capital of Israel.

He sent a message to Emperor Nero stating that the Jews were organizing a rebellion,

and that if Emperor desired to prove it, a calf could be sent to Jerusalem, to be brought up in the Jewish Holy Temple, and it that would not be accepted. (You can imagine that he probably never thought his actions, however bitter, would remotely have such terrible effects on the entire nation. For whom could have assumed, at the time, that the most wonderful Synagogue, was soon to be destroyed. He was simply acting out of blind bitterness.)

Rome sent a calf to Jerusalem, to be carried by Bar Kamtza, who took the time to carefully cause a minute injury to the animal, one which the guards wouldn't notice. The reason they wouldn't notice, is because they were familiar with the Roman standards for sacrifices, which was that they never brought up an animal which was missing a limb.

The Jewish standard, however, is even the smallest of injuries, including what he did, which was a slit in the lip. (Some say it was a slit in the eyebrow.)

When this unfit calf arrived in the Temple to be brought up, the Kohanim, the Jews specially in charge of what takes place in the Holy Temple, were conflicted as to whether to bring up the animal anyway or not. The general thought was to bring it up, due to the imminent danger.

But a man named Zecharya Ben Avkilus, (who had been at the original party where Bar Kamtza had been thrown out of, without protesting) stood up and said: "This will mess with the standard. People will be upset that their imperfect animals will be refused, even though Bar Kamtza's was not, it will be seen as favoritism".

The other Kohanim countered, "Let us put Bar Kamtza to death, after all he is an active threat to everyone's lives, by letting his personal feelings get him carried away and thus lying to the Roman government that we're rebelling. This way his game ends."

But Zecharya Ben Avkilus countered: "We can't put him to death, because people will erroneously conclude that tampering with animals to be brought up in the Holy Temple is punishable with death, which it isn't".

Ultimately, Bar Kamtza went back to Rome with the animal still in hand as "proof" that

the Jews were indeed rebelling, and that therefore they would not remotely consider taking a government-sent animal.

This caused a whole spiral of events to take place, ending in the Holy Temple being destroyed.

Emperor Nero came down to Israel with a huge army, and laid siege on the city of Jerusalem. While he was visiting, he went walking around to see where the weaknesses were (a war tactic).

He suddenly felt a certain apprehension grip him, and he couldn't shake it off. So, he performed a test that was done often in those days. One would stop a Jewish child in the street and ask the child to tell them the Torah verse he or she had learned that day. When Nero did this, the child told him the verse, "I (G-d) will place my vengeance against Edom (Rome) in the hand of my nation Israel." (Ezekiel 25:14).

Nero suddenly realized that even though Hashem is punishing the nation of Israel through a king, that king in question, though being an important element in this punishment, is still but another human being, who must make moral choices, and will get judged as well. The fact that G-d was punishing Israel didn't mean that he himself had to be the harbinger.

(You might ask: but isn't this unfair? G-d is sending us a punishment via a person who will get punished for fulfilling the Divine Will? Why should he get punished? Here are 2 answers:

1. If no one chose to be the harbinger, G-d could always perform it directly by miracle.

2. Everything in the world happens by Divine Will. Our free choice ultimately plays into the Divine Will, though it doesn't necessarily have to be accomplished through sin. But even if it was a sin that was committed, the same ultimate outcome will always be there.

We all are judged in heaven, not by the ultimate outcome, but rather by our intentions and choices.)

So, Emperor Nero hid himself away and converted to Judaism, abandoning his stationed group of soldiers at Jerusalem.

Now, you see, nobody could enter or leave

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Jerusalem because of the siege. But there were necessary reparations that some of the Rabbis needed to make, and no time could be lost. In the meantime, the people were starving. (Initially they had enough, to eat and survive comfortably for 20 years, but a Jewish gang, called "The Biryonim", took matters into their own hands, and decided that the Jews should be coerced into chasing off the Roman armies, hand-to-hand. To accomplish this, the gang burned down all the storehouses of food and supplies, so that the people would not be comfortable in their state).

Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakai realized something had to be done. What did he do? He asked his nephew, Abba Sikra, who was the gang leader, to change his gang's ways in this regard. But Abba Sikra couldn't do anything because he was now only their leader in name. His life was in danger if he told them anything. Instead, he advised his uncle to fake his own death, and by doing so be able to have a word with the Roman General. And that is exactly what he did!

He was escorted in a coffin with a very convincing procession, to the wall of the city. At that moment they were stopped by a guard. The coffin-bearers told the guard that they were conducting a funeral for their esteemed Rabbi, but they can't bury him inside the city (we don't hold burial services within the walls of Jerusalem).

Suddenly, there was a holdup. The guards wanted to pierce or shake the great Rabbi. Abba Sikra who was standing there said to the guard: "What's wrong with you? rumors will be flying that the Romans treat Holy Rabbinical funerals with disdain". The guard held off. As they were approaching the guard's encampment, they stopped in front of the army general. Suddenly, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai jumped out and said, "Peace be

upon You O Emperor".

The General was very incensed! He said, "I should put you to death for addressing me incorrectly as Emperor! I am but a General, so the honor is beyond my title!".

Almost at once, a messenger arrived from Rome, stating: "The Emperor has died, and you, General Vaspasian, have been elected Emperor".

Vespasian was incredibly amazed at Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakai's wisdom. He said, "Rabbi, I will grant you any wish".

Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakai knew he couldn't ask for retreat or to spare Jerusalem, so he wisely asked for the one thing he knew would be granted: that the University Town of Yavneh, the world Capitol of Torah's scientific research, be spared along with all of its professors and students. The newly instated Emperor granted his Rabbinical wish, from Dean to Dean, with grace.

It was after Vespasian went back to Rome, that Titus was elected as the new General of the royal army, and it wasn't long before the Holy Temple was destroyed, and Jerusalem was in ruins.

Several centuries later, another Rabbi who had a similar name, Rabbi Yochanan, observed: "Due to Zecharya Ben Avkilus's timidity to act in the moment, we lost our Holy Temple, and we were exiled from our Holy Land".

Now let me ask you: was it because of the Kamtza/Bar Kamtza confusion, or was it because of Zecharya Ben Avkilus's timidity? The answer, dear friends, is that it was both.

On the one side, there were people who fervently persecuted others for not being in line, like this wealthy host who refused to let in Bar Kamtza, over some past misdemeanor. While on the other side, there were people like Zecharya Ben Avkilus who were too timid to respond to situations like this, even

though it could have been done. The second directly enables the first.

Let us return to the original question: What is the relevance of the history and customs of Tish B'av, in 2022?

To answer, I will cite a Midrash, which says as follows: every generation in which the Holy Temple has not been rebuilt yet, it's as though it's been destroyed during that generation. Though on the surface this midrash appears to be harsh, it is actually bearing a very deep message:

The original instigator to the destruction is something which somehow, we still carry on, in each generation, until this very own.

What was the destruction factor? An imbalance of Religious-minded, civil persecution, preserved by a sense of approval.

Dear friends, the message of Tisha B'av today is how sad it can become, and how long a time can be taken, when we live with disunity and disrespect for each others' differences, without check.

We must unite together in harmony and peace, for persecuting others is not truly a mark of religiosity, but rather the very opposite.

As the Baal Shem Tov said: if you hold others to a high standard, in heaven you are being held to that very standard as well.

Additionally, he said, that the mark of a great leader is not one who passionately points out everywhere that you went wrong, but rather a gentleness and sweetness of relating with others, with peace. As the verse in proverbs says: the words of the Wise are satisfying to be heard.

May we all merit to have a wonderful and meaningful Tisha B'av, as well as the following seven weeks of comfort, with sweetness and harmony, and may we merit that the complete redemption shall come speedily in our days! ❧



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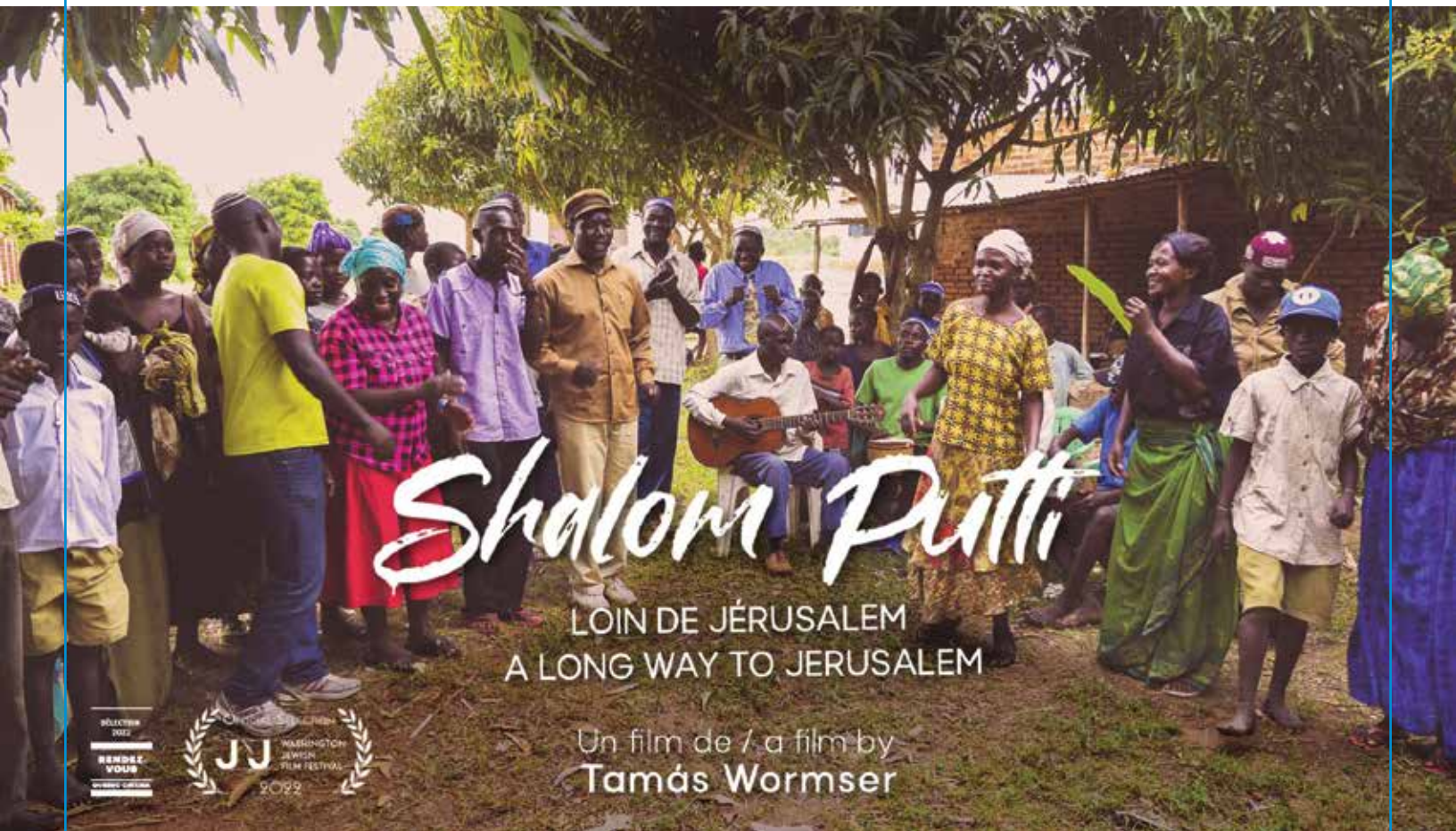
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