

Hamilton Jewish News

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UJA Campaign Results Demonstrate Solid Community Commitment

UJA Israel Emergency Campaign Approaches Goal

With 20 days to go, the UJA 2007 and Israel Emergency Campaigns have combined to raise more total dollars than in any previous year in history. According to UJA Men's co-chair Larry Levin "the combined total now projects to go well past the \$1.5M mark by the end of March. This is an unprecedented success for our Hamilton community."

However, our local campaign results may fall short of our goal. Both campaign workers and contributors are asked to renew their energy and commitment in support of our local UJA Campaign.

Our local Hamilton beneficiary organizations are counting on all of us.

According to UJA Federation Executive Director, Gerald Fisher, "with three weeks to go we may still have a shot at reaching last year's record total for distribution to meet both domestic needs and our share of national collective responsibility for regular overseas needs. But it has been the community response to the Israel Emergency Campaign that has been so heartwarming."

The final tally will be announced at the Federation Annual General meeting, taking place

in late May. Between now and then, every effort is being made by community volunteers and staff to reach every single donor from last year's record campaign.

In some cases this means waiting for "snowbirds" to return.

In closing, Levin wanted to assure the community and all of the beneficiary agencies that

depend on UJA that "Whatever it takes, we will remain focused in our responsibilities until this campaign is complete."

Jewish Social Services Bids Farewell To Bea Matchen



JSS staff gather to bid farewell to Bea Matchen, who is retiring after 23 years with the agency. Pictured above are (back row, l to r) Suzanne Goldflus, Chris Nusca, JSS Director, Carol Krames, (front row) Bea Matchen and Terry Nyp. See page 5 for story.

JCC Consultation Process Nears Conclusion

The community consultation regarding the JCC is nearing conclusion.

The team of professional consultants from the Jewish Community Centers Association and United Jewish Communities are returning to Hamilton to deliver the results of their research at the end of March.

The major components of the research included six formal focus groups, a deposition from a group of seniors who conducted their own focus group, three hundred individual surveys, individual interviews with community philanthropists and individual interviews with community rabbis. Other important information was gathered locally by Federation and JCC staff.

Conducted over sixteen months, the process took longer than expected. At this point, the major aspects of the research are concluded and community leaders are anxious to read the results. According to UJA Federation President David Somer "I appreciate the time and effort of everyone who participated in the focus groups, in the surveys and in the individual interviews. I am confident that the results of the research will be a valuable asset as community leaders review the realistic options and make important decisions."

Recently elected JCC President Joel Feldman amplified Somer's remarks. "Despite what we might wish, the result of the research will not be a specific decision on the future of the Center. The research results are not going to tell us what we should do, but will inform us and guide us toward choosing the best available option to meet community needs within the resources available. The results will assist the JCC and Federation Leadership in making major decisions that will affect the future of the JCC."

Federation Executive Director Gerald Fisher remarked that "Regardless of the reasons, the study took too long to complete. Over this long period some people became frustrated with the process and suggested we were wasting our time, that we could already guess what the research would reveal and we should just follow our instincts and get going... but that would have been a mistake." Volunteer JCC consultant Larry Szpirglas, has played an integral role in sustaining and developing JCC programs over the past seven months. In his view the research has been very useful.

"This consultation has provided the community with an opportunity to be engaged in a process that will directly affect the decisions regarding directions for future JCC programming and possibly the JCC venue itself. Whatever the research reveals, it will have the imprint and the credibility of having been based

on a true consultative process." One of the major issues addressed in the research is the viability of the current JCC venue. The current facility requires significant capital repairs and improvements. It is unclear whether the community, already burdened with major funding challenges at all the schools, synagogues and Shalom Village, will be prepared to assume this additional financial obligation.

Because of this, perhaps the most critical aspect of the research has been the private interviews with the community's major philanthropists. Without their support, the range of realistic options narrows significantly. We don't yet know what they said. As of this writing, the community has not yet received a draft of the research results or the interpretation of the results by the consultants. A first draft is expected before the consultants return at the end of March.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The HJN invites members of the community to contribute letters, articles or guest editorials. Written submissions and advertisements must be forwarded by the deadline indicated in each issue. This newspaper reserves the right to edit, condense or reject any contribution for brevity or legal purposes.

Deadline for submissions for the next edition of the HJN is **April 16, 2007.**

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UJA Canada Lends a Helping Hand...

UJA Canada has offered Hamilton additional support in an effort to close the 2007 Israel Emergency Campaign. Brenda Kaman will be calling community members who have not yet been contacted to enlist their support of the 2007 campaign. Brenda began as a volunteer with UJA and has been associated with the organization on many different levels. Ms. Kaman has just returned from Israel where she spent some time touring the Galilee and seeing how northern Israeli communities are still struggling on a long road to economic recovery from last summer's war. She hopes to communicate to donors the urgency of supporting UJA Canada's reconstruction efforts in the north through the Emergency Campaign.



Brenda Kaman

ERRATA

In the February 2007 Issue of the Hamilton Jewish News, the following names were inadvertently omitted from the article about the Hamilton Maccabees: Morley Balinson had three volunteers helping: Joe Cohen, Bill Silverns & Larry Bieber. Shirley Scholes, whose late husband, George, was a veteran, has been a volunteer with the Maccabees. Anne Kwitco, whose late husband Harry was a veteran and did an outstanding job when he was able, has also served as a volunteer. Julie Spiegel was also a member and both he and his wife have volunteered. Len Miller, also a veteran, has volunteered. M. K. Leibow was also a member.

Help Strengthen Our Jewish Community!

Part Time Position Available (15 hours/week)

UJA Federation seeks an energetic and creative person to join the professional team.

This administrative/clerical person will be primarily responsible for maintaining the community data base, issuing community mailings, maintaining the community calendar, managing tribute cards, preparing material for meetings, updating committee records and providing support to various program initiatives.

Successful candidates will demonstrate competence in Microsoft Word and Excel, be eager to learn GT Pro, be experienced in basic office protocols and hold strong organizational skills.

This position is available immediately. Please direct expressions of interest or request for further information to:

Gerald Fisher
905-648-0605
gfisheruja@on.aibn.com



The Annual General Meeting of UJA Federation of Hamilton

will take place on

Sunday, May 27, 2007

at

Temple Anshe Sholom

Reception 7:00 pm Proceedings 7:45 pm

- presentation of committee reports
- presentation of year end audited statement
- Asper Graduation Ceremony

Community members wishing to view the statements prior to the AGM call the UJA Federation for pick up. Nominations for the 2007 board must be submitted in writing to David Somer, one week prior to the AGM.

For more information call Gerry Fisher at 905-648-0605



Travelling With The Hamilton Jewish News



UJA Federation staff, Elaine Levine and Chris Nusca (far left) and Susan and Paul Roth at Ben Gurion Airport last month with a copy of the Hamilton Jewish News.

On your next trip away from home, have a picture taken of you with your latest copy of the Hamilton Jewish News. We'll do our best to publish it in a subsequent issue of the paper.

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UJA Federation

Federation Staff Return From Mission Enthusiastic and Empowered

“The experience of a lifetime” is how Christine Nusca and Elaine Levine described their recent UJA Federations Canada staff-training mission to Israel. The purpose of the mission was to expose staff members of Federations across Canada to the myriad of social service and education projects funded by Canadian UJA dollars. Both Ms. Nusca and Ms. Levine were especially appreciative of the opportunity to network with their counterparts from Federations across the country and to witness the impact that Canadian dollars are having on the lives of Israelis.

Both spoke with great enthusiasm about their desire to channel their renewed sense of purpose towards benefiting Hamilton’s Jewish community and Israel.

For Ms. Nusca, who has worked for the Jewish community for over 30 years, and who was recently promoted to the position of Assistant Campaign Director, the trip provided an opportunity to develop her own emotional connection to a place she has heard so much about over the years. “I came away feeling more connected to Israel and understanding the role we play in the lives of people in Israel.

The whirlwind nine-day itinerary, which took mission participants from Israel’s most northern town of Metulla to Eilat, located at the country’s southern tip, left them with a combination of feelings. They often felt as if they were on an emotional rollercoaster, moving from elation and delight at a meaningful exchange or encounter with beneficiaries of successful projects to being moved to tears at the realization of the heavy toll taken on the lives of those most affected by last summer’s hostilities.

Ms. Nusca was particularly moved by an encounter with people in Kiryat Shmoneh, a town close to the Lebanese border that bore much of the brunt of the war. “Here we were, walking the streets, seeing how buildings and streets had been repaired. Then we met the people. Many



Chris Nusca (centre) and Elaine Levine (far right) pose with their Coast to Coast colleagues. Jessica Steinberg from Vancouver, Sandra Czarny from Ottawa and Richard Goldhar from the Atlantic Jewish Council

looked so tired and worn out”, she said, as the painful truth hit her that while physical damage can be repaired, emotional scars take much longer to heal.

For Ms. Levine, an emotional moment on the trip occurred when she noted the sharp contrast between our Canadian high schools with walls of honour for academic excellence compared to the walls of honour for Israeli high schools honoring the memory of fallen students lost due to war. It was a small detail that spoke volumes about the contrasts differentiating Israeli life from life in Canada, evidence, as well, that while the immediate crisis has passed, the needs are still overwhelming as agencies and individuals struggle to cope with the economic and psychological fallout from the war.

“Professionally and personally it was an outstanding mission for both of us. We have a clearer picture and we’re able to connect more with Israel. With Hamilton rejoining the nation-wide ‘Coast to Coast’ initiative for the purpose of distributing dollars raised during the current Israel Emergency Campaign we were able to see first hand how our partnership with Israel has made a difference in the lives of people living in communities hit the hardest during the summer war. Our on-

going support to the Emergency Campaign is our greatest connection to Israel as a community.

Most significant for both were visits to the many funded programs by other Canadian communities and seeing their relationship with named projects on all levels. Through these projects participating communities are able to feel a strong connection to Israel by visiting the projects and developing ongoing relationship with local agency workers as well as following the ongoing success of the program.

Hopefully, Hamilton’s participation in “Coast to Coast” will have the same effect on our community.

Both Ms. Nusca and Ms. Levine expressed the sentiment that the mission empowered them to realize how important it is for our community to have the opportunity to develop a more focused partnership with Israel through a specific project(s). It is equally important, they stressed, that we need to continue to build on the success of the ongoing annual UJA campaign to meet the growing needs of local beneficiaries.

UJA Federation is hoping to organize a local mission to Israel some time next year. Interested community members should contact Chris Nusca at 905-628-9965 or Elaine Levine at 905-627-9933.

Dialogue with Muslims Ongoing

The dialogue initiative between local Muslim, Arab and Jewish leaders, begun in September 2005, goes forward with a meeting of the executive committees of the participating organizations planned for late March.

The Dialogue Committee has arranged for the leaders of the Muslim Association of Hamilton, the Hamilton Chapter of the Council of Canadian Arabs, the National Association for Spiritual Revival, SISO and UJA Federation of Hamilton to meet on March 22 to consider a fairly broad based agenda.

According to Lorne Finkelstein, co-founder of the dialogue and chair of the Dialogue Committee

“All of the committee members are volunteers. None of us are intending to remain in place forever. If the dialogue is going to have a future, then one of the matters to address is familiarizing other leaders with the agenda, with the tone and with the spirit on which it was founded. We hope to begin to accomplish that by bringing Executive Committee members together to meet. This was done a year ago and was a successful ‘ice-breaking’ mechanism”.

There may be more than “a little ice to break” this time. Relationships were severely strained as a result of the summer war and its aftermath. Ali Cheaib of the Arab Council was in Lebanon during the war and came under fire from Israeli warplanes. Javid Mirza of the Muslim Association and Gerald Fisher of UJA Federation exchanged heated – if barely respectful points of view on national television.

The crush, however, was the result of comments allegedly made by certain Muslim leaders and others at a summer, pro-Lebanese

rally held at City Hall. As a result, a concerted effort was made by some members of the Jewish community to terminate the dialogue altogether. Additionally, efforts were made by those same few in our community to cancel the very successful November program with Dr. Judea Pearl and Dr. Akbar Ahmed that had been planned by the Dialogue Committee.

After series of debates, the UJA Federation Board of Directors voted to continue participation in the dialogue and to support the Judea Pearl program. An Executive Committee review, subsequent to the Pearl Program endorsed the work of the Dialogue Committee and expressed the wish that the work continue.

A meeting with Federation President David Somer and Executive Director Gerry Fisher, along with Lorne Finkelstein, was recently requested by current President and Vice-President of the Muslim Association. Mr. Ejaz Butt, the President of the Muslim Association acknowledged that his participation as a speaker at the City Hall rally was a mistake and that he regretted the pain it caused the Jewish community. He expressed the conviction that such mistakes would not be repeated. Rather, he looked forward to more communication – especially in difficult moments – and a greater level of mutual cooperation.

Federation President Somer appreciated the gesture of their having initiated this meeting and especially the conciliatory message. Dr. Finkelstein suggested to Mr. Butt that true leadership implies ‘leading’ the members of an organization, not allowing the emotions of ‘the street’ to ‘lead’ one’s actions.

REGISTER NOW FOR MIDRASHA HEBREW HIGH!

Amid the success of their current academic year, registration for Midrasha Hamilton Hebrew High will soon open for Fall 2007 classes. As a fully accredited high school program with the Ontario Ministry of Education, Midrasha has attracted 30 students from the broad spectrum of Hamilton Jewish life. By enrolling in Midrasha courses, students not only gain socially and culturally but they are often able to lighten their course load at their home secondary schools.

Courses range from Grade 12 Philosophy, taught from a Jewish perspective by three esteemed university professors, to Hebrew Language and Judaic based courses.

Yaakov Morel, teacher and Event Coordinator at Hebrew High, says that the success of the program can be best gauged by the diverse backgrounds of its student population. “To see high school students from all Jewish walks of life come together and learn more about their culture is a sight of beauty.”

The aim is to connect Jewish teens to their heritage in a relevant and hip way. Beyond the classroom, Midrasha fosters a teen culture in Hamilton that includes Friday night dinners, trips, retreats, concerts and events.

To learn about courses or upcoming events please call Lanie Goldberg at 905-524-2663.

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Ontario Jewry and the Labour movement Keeping our seat at the table

Over the last year, a very difficult and significant issue has come to the fore in the Ontario labour movement that has, on two specific occasions, shaken the sensibilities of Canadian Jewry.



Len Rudner

In May 2006, the Ontario branch of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE Ontario) endorsed the now-notorious Resolution 50 that condemned Israel as an "Apartheid nature of the Israeli state" and called for CUPE to support the international movement of boycott, divestment and sanctions against the Jewish state. The resolution also called for the full right of return of Palestinians to pre-1967 Israel. While the Jewish community took a measure of comfort from the near-universal condemnation of the proposal, we were left with the very real fact that a major Canadian union had adopted a position that was one sided, inaccurate, injurious and did everything but explicitly call for Israel to be dismantled. What did this say about the relationship between the Jewish community and the Labour movement and the state of a partnership that extended back to the early days of the twentieth century?

It is unlikely that any organization felt this seeming rupture as keenly as Canadian Jewish Congress. Our membership has deep traditional roots in the labour movement and strong memories of the way in which leaders such as the late Louis Lenkinski were able to combine their Jewish and labour experiences to develop strategies for communal advocacy and defence.

For this reason, we did not see Resolution 50 as the labour movement's judgment on the Middle East. Instead, we viewed this as an object lesson of what can happen when individuals with inaccurate and highly critical views of Israel are not effectively countered, and when the majority of the membership, focused on other matters, is not provided with alternative perspectives.

In December 2006, we had an opportunity to test our learning when we were informed by teachers in the District 12 (D12) unit of the Ontario Teachers Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF) that two of their colleagues in the bargaining unit had put forward a resolution focused solely on Israel as the root of the conflict in the Middle East. We determined we would provide concerned teachers in D12 with the tools they would need to mount a proper case for Israel. Over the course of six weeks, that group of teachers grew until more than 30 were committed to providing clear and articulate response to D12's entire membership.

We recognized this anti-Israel motion was not, first and foremost, a "union problem," but rather the product of two teachers - all that was required to bring any motion forward. While we clearly and passionately disagreed with the content of the motion, we neither demonized the individuals nor the union. We focused on the motion itself.

This situation led to lively debate among D12 teachers. Was this motion, or indeed any motion focused on events outside the classroom, appropriate fodder for their union? Following much debate, the teachers came to agree among themselves that the long-standing tradition of true trade unionism requires such involvement. But these same teachers also recognized that such involvement could not be capricious, but should be balanced, fair and constructive. Here, CUPE Ontario's Resolution 50 provided a cautionary example of how not to proceed.

Over the next few weeks, there were a number of procedural manoeuvres in D12 as resolutions were withdrawn, resubmitted and altered. At D12's January 18 meeting, two anti-Israel motions were defeated, as was a motion, proposed by our teacher's group that was more balanced in its perspective.

We are under no illusion that this matter will not come up again in union and other environments. Those who wish to spread the canard that Israel is an Apartheid state have not moderated their views, and they will continue to seek opportunities to advance this perspective. It is our job, as an organization and as a community, to meet this challenge in a clear and intelligent way. We can do this by speaking to our friends who are union members to ensure that debate on these matters is informed and balanced. As union members, we can ourselves become involved in the democratic process to achieve the same result. CJC would be pleased to hear from union members who are ready to become engaged on this matter.

The labour movement has played an important role in the development of this country. Jewish values and labour values are not inconsistent with each other. We must maintain a place at the table.

Len Rudner is the National Director of Communications for Canadian Jewish Congress.

Jewish Social Services

JSS Theatre Club

If you have not signed up for the JSS Adult Theatre Club what are you waiting for? The summer of 2007 includes six outstanding trips (all trips include orchestra seating at matinees.) The cost includes transportation and ticket.

Schedule of Shows

Tuesday, June 5: To Kill a Mockingbird at Stratford.

Cost \$52;

Thursday, June 28: Camelot at the Hummingbird Theatre in Toronto. Cost \$69.

Wednesday, July 4: Patsy Cline – A musical at Port Dover. Cost \$42.

Wednesday, August 8: Circus Soleil Avaia: The World's greatest acrobats and Russia's rarest horses at Niagara Falls, Ontario. Cost \$78.

Thursday, September 6: Mac and Mabel at Niagara on the Lake; Cost \$57

Thursday, October 18: Oklahoma at Stratford; Cost \$52

These shows make great presents for birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's day or Father's Day. They are also a way to spend the day with a child or grand child. Call Carol Krames at 905-627-9922 for reservations or to put your name on the Theatre Club mailing list. Reservations can only be confirmed after receiving a cheque, mailed to Jewish Social Services at 30 King St E. Dundas, Ontario L9H 3G6.

Line Dancing

The JSS is starting classes on **Thursday, March 14, 2007 from 10:30 to 11:15 am.** A great way to have fun, meet people and keep fit. Call 905-627-9922 for details.

Computer Classes

We have a class on Monday afternoon from 12:30 to 2:00 pm Call 905-627-9922 to register.

Do you know someone who is lonely or would like to receive a phone call from someone who cares? Please let us know. Everything is confidential. Are you interested in calling someone on a regular basis? Call us at 905-627-9922.

JSS Cookbook

Jewish Social Service's cookbook committee is meeting regularly to put together recipes. If you or a family member have a recipe you would like to share email CarolKramesJSS@hotmail.com or mail the recipe to Hamilton Jewish Social Services, 30 King St E., Dundas, On L9H 5G6.

Bea Matchen Retires after 23 years

BY
WENDY SCHNEIDER

Bea Matchen, 80, is one of those lucky individuals who can look back on their lives and know that they have made a difference in other people's lives. After 23 years at Jewish Social Services where she has devoted herself to offering comfort to the most vulnerable and lonely members of our community, she is stepping down to free up time to spend with her family.

Bea finds it ironic that, when considering what career to pursue after high school she was told she had an aptitude for social work. Unfortunately her parents were unable to afford the cost of sending her to university for the six year program but years later she found herself in the right place at the right time, when Carol Krames, director of Jewish Social Services, happened to be looking for a case-worker who could speak Yiddish to work with elderly immigrants from the Former Soviet Union.

At the time Hamilton's Jewish community was witnessing an influx of immigrants from the F.S.U., many of them elderly, whose knowledge of English was limited. Bea, who knew many of them from the JSS workshop, provided comfort and a familiar presence when any one of them would find themselves hospitalized with an illness.

"To them I was very important and I was happy to be in that situation where I could help out", she said.

Bea has many stories to tell of how simply showing up made all the difference to so many of her clients. On hearing that the wife of an elderly couple had fallen and



Carol Krames presents Bea with a plaque in her honour

broken her hip she made it a point to stop in. She found the wife in bed with the husband sitting next to her. When he saw Bea he brightened up, saying "You see? I told you Bea was going to come."

"That was a very fulfilling situation," she explained, "because these were people who were pretty much isolated in the community and I knew that visit made a difference to them."

Bea recently visited another elderly woman who was recovering from a second hip replacement surgery. When she saw Bea, she said, "I'm so happy to see you. Six years ago when I had the other hip replaced you came to

see me and now you come again." These are special moments.

During her years at JSS, Bea was also responsible for supervising the JSS Theatre Club summer excursions. The Theatre Club outings' value lies in how they provide opportunities for an outing to destinations such as Stratford, Niagara On the Lake and Port Dover, which, on their own, they would be unable to arrange on their own.

"These are people who physically could not handle it in any other way and they are so grateful for this opportunity."

A high point in her 23 years at JSS occurred just a few years ago when the Kosher Food Bank was in serious financial trouble. Shocked to hear that it might be necessary to take out a bank loan Bea asked Carol if she'd allow her a few weeks to raise funds to save the Food Bank. In just one week she single handedly raised \$20,000. "I had no refusals", she said, with pride.

There's a saying in the workplace that no one is indispensable. But Bea Matchen's contribution to the community, measured in the hearts and minds of those whose lives she has touched, surely proves an exception to the rule.

UJA Federation seeks volunteers for:

- Board of Directors • UJA canvassers and program developers • Women's Campaign • Holocaust Education Committee • Public Affairs/Israel Advocacy/Campus services • Community Planning /education planning/ allocations • Human Resources/board and leadership development

Interested parties should contact Gerald Fisher at 905-648-0605 gfisheruja@on.aibn.com

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UJA Federation

Federation Campus Services Committee Assists Mac Students

As campus environments grow more hostile to Israel and Zionism, UJA Federation has accelerated its planning to bring greater support to the Jewish Students Association at McMaster University. Federation's Campus Services is a sub-committee of the Federation's Community Relations portfolio, and is chaired by Hanna Schayer. Other members include Barry Yellin and Shelley Rochweg, plus JSA coordinator Judy Schwartz and members of the JSA student executive. It is Schayer's intent to broaden the committee to include university faculty and administrators as well.

Much like other campuses and communities of like size, the McMaster JSA is supported directly by locally raised UJA dollars. In addition, JSA receives annual grants from United Israel Appeal to cover program costs, administration costs and a generous grant to send students and the JSA coordinator to conferences for training in Israel advocacy, outreach and program development.

In keeping with the tradition at other universities, UJA Feder-

ation has respected the right of JSA students to independently develop their own programming without Federation involvement. However, recent developments at Mac have brought Federation and JSA together, to jointly address the problem of growing anti-Israel and arguably antisemitic hostility.

The situation was further catalyzed by the recent lecture by Professor Norman Finkelstein of Depaul University. Professor Finkelstein has a long history of criticism of Israel, delivered on behalf of the most extreme anti-Israel campus groups across the continent. At McMaster, Professor Finkelstein was sponsored by the "Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights Campaign," a radical and anti-Zionist student group.

Professor Finkelstein – a child of survivors – has earned his reputation by suggesting that the Jewish community has created a "holocaust industry" designed to elicit endless sympathy from the world and use it to deflect criticism of Israeli policy. His expressions of contempt for the Jewish communi-

ty's embrace of Holocaust survivors are interpreted by many as expressions of antisemitism.

Knowing well what to expect, both JSA and Federation leaders consulted with national advocacy groups for strategies to address his presence. All of the advocacy groups gave the same message; do not attend the program, do not publicly confront him, do nothing that would bring media attention to his presence and be prepared with a response should he receive media coverage.

In addition, Hamilton Police Service was asked by Federation to attend the event to ensure that the event was safe for any Jewish students who managed to show up. Equally important, the Police service was present to monitor the event for the expression of anything that could be criminally actionable under exiting hate speech legislation. The Police Service also advised JSA students to stay away from the event.

There are some students and others who didn't agree with the advice and attended the program anyway. They felt

the Jewish community should have been present to confront the speaker. These students, in fact, have organized a community meeting for later this month to share their views.

JSA Coordinator, Judy Schwartz, defended the decision to boycott the program saying

"I understand the feelings of those who wanted to confront Finkelstein. His presence is a serious provocation to Jewish dignity. Nevertheless, experience and research has shown that his message affects only a small number who are already hostile to Israel. A public confrontation only results in greater public exposure and enhanced credibility.

UJA Federation Executive Director Gerald Fisher supports Ms. Schwartz's position.

"Federation respects the independence of JSA students to make their own decisions. Due diligence required JSA to consult with our advocacy agencies and that was done. On the basis of dealing with Professor Finkelstein over many years, CJC, NJCL and Hillel International delivered a very consistent message about boycotting the program.

Fisher further explained that "dealing with antagonists like Finkelstein is only one small, part of what must be a much larger agenda. I am less concerned about dealing with people like that and more concerned with how we deliver a clear, articulate and consistent pro-Israel message – not just on campus, but across the general community.

Wanting to address any misimpressions, Ms. Schwartz added that although they did not invest in bringing many speakers with high public profile to campus this year, JSA has done a great deal in the area of Jewish advocacy in terms of student training, regular Hasbara (helping people understand Israel better) sessions, providing a regular information table at the campus student center about various as-

pects of Israel and building alliances with other student groups such as Christians for Israel.

Nevertheless, problems do remain on campus. Dr. Lawrence Hart's recent article in the Canadian Jewish News quantifies what he sees as a dangerous and growing concern at McMaster and has rightly challenged the community to do more to address it.

In fact, more is being done by Federation and especially by the national advocacy agencies. For example, CIJA, the national umbrella advocacy group has recently established a new University Outreach Committee, specifically mandated to advocate, not with students, but with university faculty, administrators, and donors. This initiative was launched in December 2006.

On a local level, our community leadership has brought our concerns to the attention of the University President. JSA is working with the university's Human Rights Coordinator to consider allegations that certain faculty are using their classrooms as podiums for anti-Israel propaganda.

Campus Services Chair, Hanna Schayer, whose daughter Sarah Cuneo is a student activist at Mac, identified the mandate of her committee as assisting JSA to develop a strong organizational structure, measurable goals and objectives and a much stronger link back to the Hamilton Jewish community.

"The situation on campus can be quite stressful and we have reason to be concerned. We want our students to feel assured that they are not alone and that their concerns are a vital priority on our community agenda", she said.

These are major and complicated issues. Addressing them will require the good will and cooperation of campus and community leaders across the political and religious spectrum.

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THANKS

for living generously

UJA Federation of Hamilton is grateful to you!

Here is what we accomplished together:

Together we sent \$150,000 in cash to Israel within the first weeks of the war through the Israel Emergency Campaign. 600 members of the community gathered for the Stand with Israel Rally/UJA Campaign Opening last July.

You gave more time this year. The energy and enthusiasm of our many lay leaders, volunteers and donors was phenomenal. We held more planning meetings and more fabulous campaign events than ever before. (Charles Krauthammer and Alan Der-showitz in Toronto, Brigitte Gabriel in Hamilton.)

We have shown that we are a generous and unified community and together we can achieve great things.

Living Generously for the future:

We have raised \$900,000 for the UJA campaign and are quickly closing in on our \$1.1 million target. We have also raised \$500,000+ for the Israel Emergency Campaign. Combined, we will raise a record setting \$1.5+ million!

Your contributions have reached so many in need.

Over 1,000 donors, 150 volunteers and lay leaders will continue to help 12 local, 6 national and 2 international agencies.

The world's 13 million Jews depend on your commitment and support. By contributing to the UJA and Israel Emergency Campaign campaigns, you confirm that **TOGETHER WE KEEP THE PROMISE!**

**WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL
BUT WE ARE NOT FINISHED YET!**

**WHEN YOUR CANVASSER CALLS,
OPEN YOUR HEART AND GIVE GENEROUSLY**

**THANK YOU FOR STANDING TOGETHER.
THANK YOU FOR GETTING INVOLVED.
THANK YOU FOR CARING.**



**ISRAEL
EMERGENCY
CAMPAIGN**

Local Events

Noah Richler Headlines Na'amat Luncheon

BY
WENDY SCHNEIDER

Noah Richler, son of Canada's iconic novelist, Mordecai Richler, was responding to an inner yearning when he returned to Canada in 1998 after a 14 year stint as a prize-winning producer and host of documentaries and features for BBC Radio. He subsequently joined the staff of the fledgling National Post, where he was the paper's books editor and literary columnist.

"I had in my mind to write a book about Canada through the different types of work we do," he told the HJN in a recent interview. "But then in July 2001 my father died so I took steps to get out of the grief and embark on a project. Instead of looking at all sets of work I relied on the work I do best which is the work that novelists do."

His years at the BBC, during which he traveled the developing world to research ideas for his series, had demonstrated to Mr. Richler that stories are the best way to know a place. Using a similar approach, he set out on a journey across Canada seeking the stories that would reveal the true nature of Canada. Over two years, he interviewed close to one hundred authors – a who's who of Canadian literature including Wayne Johnston, Alistair MacLeod, Gil Courtemanche, Jane



Noah Richler

Urquhart, Yann Martel, Fred Stenson, Douglas Coupland, and Rohinton Mistry – about the places and ideas that are most meaningful to their work.

The result of this labour of love is the recently released, *This Is My Country. What's Yours?* A Literary Atlas of Canada, an impassioned literary travelogue and a vivid portrayal of our society, the work of Canadian authors, and the idea of writing itself.

The act of researching and writing the book was, for Mr. Richler, a journey of discovery, a journey that in the end confirmed his original notions about the nature of Canadian cultural identity. "The really big discovery", he was quoted as saying, "was just how extraordinary this country is physically, and how rich are its re-

gions and the people who inhabit them. I found myself stunned, time and again, that I was in this same, mysterious place called 'Canada'...I am constantly telling friends that in Europe any one of these places would be a nation's treasure. Here the experience and the variety of the land is endless but because the country is so large we tend not to have to meet. In a way, one of the things I was trying to do with the Atlas was to force that meeting upon us. I love this country, I really do."

Among Mr. Richler's passions is a belief in the value of a strong literary arts education. His vision is that the book's accompanying DVD and website www.literaryatlasofcanada.ca will be used by teachers in far flung regions of the country as a resource that will enable students to have direct access to Canada's literary greats.

Noah Richler will speak on the topic "*Stories and How We Use Them*" at Na'amat's 22nd Celebrity Author Luncheon on **Tuesday, May 1 at 12 noon at the Adas Israel Synagogue**, 125 Cline Avenue South. Advance Tickets are \$20; Students and Seniors are \$17 (\$25 at the door for all). The ticket price includes a light lunch and door prizes. Tickets can be purchased in advance at Bryan Prince Bookseller or by contacting Jan Hastie at 905.627.9796.

Leonard Cohen Fever Hits Hamilton This September

The secret is out. It's happened in Australia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, the U.K., the U.S. and in at least 5 Canadian cities. It will soon be happening here. Yes, as in other parts of the world, Hamilton will be hosting its own very special Leonard Cohen sanctioned gala songfest tribute on September 9th, 2007. Peggy Walt, manager of singer/actor Cliff LeJeune, pianist Paul Simons and members of the acclaimed Symphony Nova Scotia Blue Engine String Quartet, confirmed these astonishing musical innovators and impeccable artists will be performing their sublime rendition of some of Leonard Cohen's most popular songs for local Cohen fans.

This spectacular gala, with a theme of the works of beloved Canadian poet and songwriter Leonard Cohen, is the brainchild of local Hamiltonian Andy McDonald, who has partnered with Hamilton Health Sciences to make this festivity truly memorable. Andy, "a life-long die-hard Cohen fan", will be donating funds from donors and sponsors and proceeds from this gala to doctors doing mitochondrial research at local hospitals. States Andy, "I struggle with mitochondrial disease every day in my own tower of song filled with cold, lonely, broken and holy Hallelujahs, and so can relate to the naked humanity in

Mr. Cohen's lyrics." He credits doctors at McMaster University Medical Centre with prolonging his life, and people in the Jewish community with strengthening and nourishing his spirit.

Among the gala's highlights are Master of Ceremonies Louis Greenspan, a cocktail reception hour featuring soloists Tracey

Benoit Haynes and Patricia Nadine Currie singing haunting and hypnotic Cohen melodies, a silent auction that includes Leonard Cohen memorabilia, a full banquet dinner complete with complimentary wine, a meet 'n greet opportunity with Ms. Walt and the artists from Halifax, and a door prize trip

Help The Jews Of Cuba Celebrate Passover

As Passover approaches, our thoughts often turn to friends and loved ones, as well as the fortunes of worldwide Jewry. For many, the time-honoured tradition of Maot Chittin - providing assistance to Jews in need to meet the holiday's special requirements - remains an integral part of the Pesach tradition.

This year is no exception. Continuing the relationship started in 1961 by Ontario's Jewish communities, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, in partnership with Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee - Ontario, is sending Kosher-for-Passover food and wine to Cuba's Jewish community. But we need your help.

By supporting our efforts, you can help nurture Jewish life for Cuba's 540 remaining Jewish families, representing 1,500 community members, who have no access to Passover food.

Please call 416-631-5705 to make a financial donation. Your generosity is essential to help sustain Jewish identity in Cuba.



Canadian Jewish Congress
Congrès juif canadien

The community is invited to attend

I Never Saw Another Butterfly

A play by Celeste Raspanti, based on the journals, diaries and poetry of the children of Terezin, a small town northwest of Prague, that was converted by the Nazis into a transit concentration camp for Jews in 1941.

Hamilton Holocaust survivor Nadia Rosa will be speaking at both performances about her personal experiences at Terezin.

Produced by special arrangement with
The Dramatic Publishing Company of Woodstock, Illinois
By the Adults and Children of
Philpott Memorial Church
84 York Blvd., Hamilton
March 30, 31, 2007
at 7:30 pm

Tickets: \$7:50 adults; \$5.00 (seniors, students)

Thursday, March 29

Non-stop dress rehearsal, \$5.00 for all
Tickets are available at the door or in advance at
905-527-4802 or greencl@mcmaster.ca

Hamilton & Area
Shoah Memorial Project

"Unto every person there is a name given to him by God and given to him by his parents".

Our community gathers annually on Yom Hashoah to remember our loved ones who were killed in the Shoah. This year community members of the Second Generation will be presenting a memorial tribute to those who perished in the Shoah. The Yom Hashoah committee has, for a number of years, been gathering names in order to create a permanent memorial to honour and preserve the names of relatives, friends, and loved ones, who were related or connected to members of our community, of those who perished in the Shoah.

The memorial will consist of panels that will permanently display their names, and will be presented in a manner to which further names can be added.

The presentation of the Memorial during this year's annual Yom Hashoah Memorial service, is a Special Project of current and past members of the Second Generation who are or were resident in Hamilton & Area. We invite each and every member of the Second Generation, to participate in this project, by immediately contacting the JCC at 905-648-0605, the Shoah Memorial Project Committee, or Abe Szpirglas at 905-627-7462 to offer your assistance and generosity. In this way we will honour the strength, courage, dignity, and determination of our parents and relatives who survived the Shoah, and to assure them that the lives that were taken, will always be remembered.

In future years we will welcome the participation and generosity of the larger community. We will continue to let the world know about the enormity of our loss and the tragedy of the Shoah.

The Jewish Community Centre Pages

HONOURING THE MEMORY OF ALLEN HARRIS



Adam Dembe and Jennifer Gilbert are the first recipients of the Allen Harris Youth Awards. Pictured here are (l to r) Adam Dembe, Julie Cassavia, Maureen Harris, Jennifer Gilbert and Suzanne Thifault with her baby daughter.

Upcoming Programs

Hamilton and Area Jewish Community's

Yom HaShoah Memorial Service Sunday, April 15th, 2007

Beth Jacob Synagogue

375 Aberdeen Avenue, Hamilton

6:30 p.m. Memorial Room open

7:30 p.m. Memorial Service

*This year's theme will be the **Kinder Transport** featuring **Ruth L. David**, author of the autobiography, "**A Child of our Time**"*

Candles will be lit in memory of the six million who perished, Jewish veterans and Israeli soldiers

Please note that young children must be supervised by their parents

For further information call 905 648-0605, extension 308.

Tuesday, April 24, 2007 Yom Ha'atzmaut

Celebrating Israel's 59th Year of Independence

A community celebration beginning at 6:30 pm

*Price: \$45 Immediate Family (\$15 per adult; \$10 10 yrs-17 yrs) \$5 4 yrs - 9 yrs; Free 3 yrs & under) **Sorry... no tickets available at the door or on the day of the event.** All tables must be reserved prior to Wednesday, April 17.*

Call 905-648-0605 to reserve.

TENNIS

We have had a very well attended JCC Fall/Winter junior instructional tennis program. We have returning for the second year Josh Altman, Noah Deskin and Amir Mesterman and they are all steadily improving their tennis. In the older age group, we have our stronger youth players. Adam Zur, Josh Friedland and Ori Mesterman all hitting good strong ground strokes with lots of topspin.

SPRING SESSION DETAILS

Sunday Starts: April 29th - June 10th (6 wks) Monday Starts: May 7th - June 11th (5 wks) Tuesday Starts: April 17th - June 12th (8 wks)

Wednesday Starts: April 18th - June 13th (8 wks)

Jewish Community Centre of Hamilton & Area

Dinner Anywhere In The World Lottery

Grand Prize:

Enjoy dinner anywhere in the world

Cash Value - \$8999.00
5 (five) Additional Draws - \$200.00 each

Draw Date:

April 24, 2007

At the Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebrations!



**Only 500
Tickets Will
Be Printed!**

Tickets:

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Phone:

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Were You There?

JCC PURIM CARNIVAL



Approximately 100 people came together Sunday March 4th, for a pre-celebration of Purim that began the evening of March 3th. Lots of thank you's to this year's chair Racheli Chaimovitz and her committee including Marlene Altman, Nicole Feldman, Laura Langerer and Lisa Zaitchik and for planning an outstanding program. The day was filled with fun activities that over 100 people participated in, from pony rides, jumping castle, decorating cookies, basketball toss, Velcro toss and many more. In the spirit of the Purim we sold Mishloach Manot-O-Grams for the participants to give a little something to others. In addition to all the wonderful games for the children, the adults were able to indulge in a silent auction and a 50/50 draw. None of this would have been possible without our fabulous volunteers who helped at the carnival. A special thank you to Annie Shinehoft JCC Program Director for her tireless efforts in helping the committee members and volunteers in planning this fabulous community celebration.

THE BIG PARTY

The Big Party, a summer themed party in mid-winter, was a great success, with over 250 people attending a fun filled evening of song, food, and entertainment. The party took place in a Mediterranean Garden setting provided by Harper's Garden Centre, with lighting by Electromart Lighting. Mediterranean themed music was played in a lively and energetic mood by Zarabanda, the band featuring Gary Santucci and Jordan Abraham. The success of the evening was due to the generous contributions of: Harper's Garden Centre, Electromart Lighting, WRL Vasco Travel, Strubs Foods, Budget Car & Truck Rental, Crown Bench Winery and Cruikshanks of Dundas; the enthusiastic work of a large corps of volunteers, who brought energy, enthusiasm and a huge effort to make the evening a success; and the JCC staff who were magnificent in their countless hours of work to ensure the success of the evening. Howard and Shelley will be flying to Italy this summer. Other prize winners received gifts from Crown Bench Winery and Cruikshank's of Dundas. Hope to see you all at the Big Party next year.



Howard and Shelley Brown receiving their flight to the Mediterranean

JCC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Hamilton Jewish Community Centre and Jewish Communal Projects was held at the JCC on January 24, 2007. Approximately 60 people were in attendance. We were entertained by the choir of the Kehila Day School, who performed several numbers to the delight of the audience. There was the conduct of the usual business, presentation of the Annual Financial Statements, "a state of the JCC" from the outgoing president Howard Eisenberg, words of hope from incoming President Joel Feldman, and the induction of the new Board for 2007: Vice Presidents, Ed Zaltz and Lowell Richter, Treasurer, Jonathon Fleisch, Secretary, Racheli Chaimavitz, and the Board of Directors, Barbara Abraham, Simon Gencher, Mark Gould, George Johnson, Cindy Kam, Barbara Laskin, Mike Malka, Laura Langerer, Susan Bayla Waxman, and Warren Waxman. Honours went to Cindy Kam as volunteer of the year for her exceptional work as a Board Member and in particular her efforts as Chair of the Camp Committee which led to a revitalized Camp Kadimah.

MUSIC SERIES SUCCESS

The Fern Lindzon Trio graced the JCC on Jan. 17. She was joined by Andrew Downing on bass and Lorie Wolf on drums. This concert marked the third in a series of four evenings planned to provide listeners with a variety of professional performers, cabaret styling and camaraderie, wine and delicious desserts. Each concert has been a wonderful success. As much as the audience appreciated Fern's presentation and energy, so too, was Fern taken by the warmth and attention from her JCC fans. Fern said she would love to play the venue again. Many thanks to the JCC staff, Annie Shinehoft, Program Director, Brent Morrissey and Matt Szpirglas for their wonderful organization and operational support for the project. Abe Szpirglass must be lauded as the man not only making sure the logs were lit in the fireplace to make the performers and audience cozy, but for keeping the fires lit under all the volunteers involved so that this series was professional, uplifting and fun for everyone involved.

The Jewish Community Centre Pages

Camp Kadimah

K'TANIM – Children turning 3 in 2006

This program is specifically designed for children entering nursery school by a team of educators and parents. This program will run as a 3/4 day – from 9am – 1:30pm, with an extended care option. K'Tanim provides a secure and nurturing environment as an introduction to the camping experience. All activities are educationally stimulating and age appropriate. **SPACE IS LIMITED.**

BINONIM UNIT – Children turning 4 or 5 in 2006

This program introduces campers to a full day of camp for the very first time with many fun and educational activities. This program is designed to meet the needs of pre-school aged children with a focus on promoting independence and meeting new challenges on a daily basis.

GADOLIM UNIT – Children turning 6 or 7 in 2006

Gadolim campers are presented with an independent camping experience filled with challenge and adventure. Campers in the Gadolim Unit will have the opportunity to be involved in the Kadimah Tennis Academy and the inline skating elective. These campers will be included in the in-house overnights. Children entering grade 2 will have the opportunity to go on all **OVERNIGHT ADVENTURES**** with the Gadna Unit.

GADNA UNIT – Children turning 8 – 11

This program has been carefully designed with a great deal of focus on outdoor activities appealing to our more seasoned camper. Each week the Gadna campers will venture off site to new and exciting places, including three fantastic **OVERNIGHT ADVENTURES****. These campers will also have the opportunity to be involved in advanced specialty programs, such as orienteering, the Kadimah Tennis Academy, the Inline skating elective, Trail Hiking, and on-site overnights.

LIT/CIT (Leader/Counselor in Training)

Entering Grades 7 – 9

Our LIT/CIT program develops leadership skills, builds self-confidence, initiative and camp spirit through an intensive hands on learning experience. The goal is that everybody has fun during this unique summer experience.

****OVER NIGHT ADVENTURES FOR CAMPERS ENTERING GRADE 2 AND OLDER**

CAMP GEORGE

In session 2 (July 10-12), campers will have the opportunity to participate in a three day two night overnight at Camp George in beautiful Parry Sound, Ontario. During their stay, Kadimah campers will participate in a multitude of activities; including water skiing, sailing, canoeing, beach front swimming, ropes courses, and much more.

TORONTO ZOO BUSH CAMP

In session 4 (July 23-24), Kadimah campers will have a once in a lifetime opportunity to spend the night in the African Savanna. Campers will meet the animals, spend the night under the stars, and make smores by the campfire. The overnight will be followed by a full day of sightseeing at the zoo including a trip to the newly opened Splash Park.

CAMP RAMAH

In session 7 (August 14-16) campers have the opportunity to participate in a two night, three day overnight at Camp Ramah, located on Skeleton Lake in beautiful Muskoka, Ontario. During their stay, Kadimah campers will take part in a multitude of activities including: canoeing, kayaking, beachfront swimming, water-skiing, ceramics, Israeli dancing, to name a few.

CAMP KADIMAH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

No child will be denied a camp experience for financial reasons. If your financial circumstances are limiting your access to Camp Kadimah, please contact Carol Krames at Jewish Social Services (905-627-9922). All inquiries will be kept confidential.

A Message from JCC President, Joel Feldman

I am writing this article as the newly elected President of the Jewish Community Centre.

I am proud and honored to have this opportunity. When I look at the pictures of the past presidents on the wall at the Jewish Community Centre, I have a sense of the tradition that I follow and I am humbled to see those that I consider the

leaders of our community. I will work my hardest to live up to this great tradition and I hope to make them proud. Over my term as president, I hope to foster a dialogue with many of the past presidents to share their knowledge, experience and vision.

I want to develop a JCC that moves from an organization that looks for justification of its existence, to an organization that is viewed by the Jewish community as a truly vibrant centre of our community.

I understand that this is not an easy task and I understand that there are many in our community that questions the value of the current JCC. I hope to have an open and honest discussion regarding what the JCC does and does not offer. I promise to be open-minded and appreciate all points of view.

Personally, the JCC has played an important part in my life. I remember growing up and attending Sunday activities on Delaware Avenue. When I first came back to Hamilton, after years away at University and working in Toronto, I joined the JCC Board of Directors, which provided me an opportunity to get involved. When I met my wife Nicole, our first date was at Yom Ha'atzmaut over 11 years ago. Our children Bryanna and Ethan have grown up playing at the JCC and look forward to attending the various programs that take place.

I know there is a lot to do at the JCC to ensure it is relevant in today's community and will be attractive for people to become members. Although there are a lot of improvements to be made, there is still a tremendous amount that is going on at the JCC. Annie Shinehoft, Program Director, is working hard to ensure there is an abundance of programs being offered. From the recent success of the Big Party and the Jazz Series to our regular programs as Yom Ha'atzmaut, Yom Hashoah, Purim Party, Chanukah Party, Lag Ba'Omer, Tu Bi'Shvat, Morris Black, Max Rotman, Sunday Funday and Bidy Basketball to name a few. Camp Kadimah has certainly experienced a huge resurgence; much of the credit for the Camp's success has to be given to Cindy Kam for her hard work and dedication.

I thank Howard Eisenberg for his hard work and dedication during his presidency. He has been a mentor and confidant to me and I look forward to his continued support. I would also like to thank Larry Szpirglas who has served as the JCC consultant over the past year. His caring and tremendous dedication to the JCC is commendable and serves as an example for us all to follow. I thank the people that have agreed to serve on the current Board of the JCC with me. I most importantly thank Nicole, who has supported me in my decision to become president. She knows it will affect the time I have to spend at home, yet she understands how important the JCC is to me.

I will do whatever it takes to achieve my goal of the JCC becoming an accepted, vibrant Center of our Community. To do this I need your help. I need you to share your views, volunteer for various programs and committees and most importantly become a member of the Jewish Community Centre. The JCC is a membership driven organization. An increase in membership revenue, will allow us to put more money into the Facility and into the programs that we offer. This is your JCC, be a part of it.

I appreciate when people share their ideas and views about the JCC with me. The only way I can ensure we meet the needs and desires of the Community, is to know what they are. If you are a member of the JCC, let us know what we can do better. If you are not a member, let us know what we have to do for you to join. This is a partnership and we are in it together. We all deserve a strong JCC and together, I know we can achieve it.



Joel Feldman with his wife, Nicole, and children, Bryanna and Ethan

JCC TRIBUTE CARDS

**In Memory Of
BERNARD BAUM** from Irma Perlgut

Thinking of You

To: **LISA AND BARRY ZAITCHICK** from Howard Eisenberg and Family

Feature Stories

Funding For Jewish Day Schools: A Question of Fairness

BY
WENDY SCHNEIDER

Ontario is home to over 40 Jewish day schools, including two in Hamilton. Most of them are in Toronto, but there are other excellent schools serving students in London and Ottawa as well. Together they educate some 13,000 students.

For many, these schools offer the greatest hope that Jewish heritage can be retained to benefit both the Jewish community and society at large for generations to come.

However, faith based schools require a long term funding solution to sustain and strengthen them, so that our children can continue making their unique contributions to Ontario and Canada. Our objective is the extension of public funding to Ontario Jewish day schools and other faith based schools that meet government standards.

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in the western democratic world to fund one school system – the Catholic system – to the exclusion of all others. It's really a question of fairness. As long as there is a constitutional obliga-

tion to provide financial support for Catholic schools, which provide an excellent education, the same support should be extended to other faith based schools.

For nearly 40 years, our community has been working toward government funding of faith-based schools and, with the exception of the short-lived Ontario tax credit, these efforts have been largely unsuccessful. Now, in cooperation with the Hamilton Jewish Federation and others, we've built consensus around a new approach to fair funding, which centres on five principles.

- Education is a core Jewish value and Jewish education is essential to the strength and vitality of the Jewish community, which is an integral component of the Canadian mosaic. Jewish day schools deliver high quality education that ensures our community's significant and unique contribution to society.

- Jewish day school education, like public school education is part of the public trust. To underscore this common characteristic, Jewish day schools should be within Ontario's public sphere of education.

- To best ensure that all students are positive and effective contributors to society, Ontario faith-based schools should be treated in an equitable and fair manner, regardless of religious affiliation.

- Just as schools in the public sphere follow criteria established by the Ministry of Education, Jewish day schools would also meet appropriate approved provincial criteria.

- Public funding requires that schools adhere to accountability standards. Jewish day schools would meet appropriate approved provincial accountability requirements.

Developing principles is, of course, only one component of effective fair funding advocacy, which we have been practicing on three separate tracks involving political leaders, Ontario's Jewish community and the general public.

After meeting regularly with senior political leaders, we have developed a solid working relationship with individuals in all three parties who understand the importance of fair funding.

We have also been consulting consistently with Ontario's

day schools in Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton and London, which, as key stakeholders, helped to formulate our core principles. We will soon be enhancing our dialogue with day school parents as well, and we would be happy to meet with any school group to discuss our approach.

Finally, we have been promoting our principles, both publicly and privately, well beyond the Jewish community through the media, discussions with school representatives from other faiths and on our Web site, www.fundingfairness.ca. However, your participation will significantly strengthen our stand.

We would like to hear directly from you, whether you are a past or present day school parent, a school board member, a school official or just concerned about fair funding for faith-based education in Ontario. Please let us know your thoughts and your

experiences so we can incorporate them into our advocacy efforts, by contacting Jonathan Schwartz, our education policy advisor at 416.635.2883 ext. 265 or jschwartz@on.cjc.ca. For our part, we will be forwarding articles of interest as they appear in media across the province to your attention and include a set of talking points with which to respond.

By working together toward the undeniably just cause of fair funding, we can sustain and strengthen Jewish day schools for generations to come, and help our children make significant contributions to Ontario, Canada and the Jewish world.

Jonathan L. H. Schwartz is Education Policy Advisor for Canadian Jewish Congress Ontario Region. He can be reached at <mailto:jschwartz@on.cjc.ca> or by calling 416-635-2883

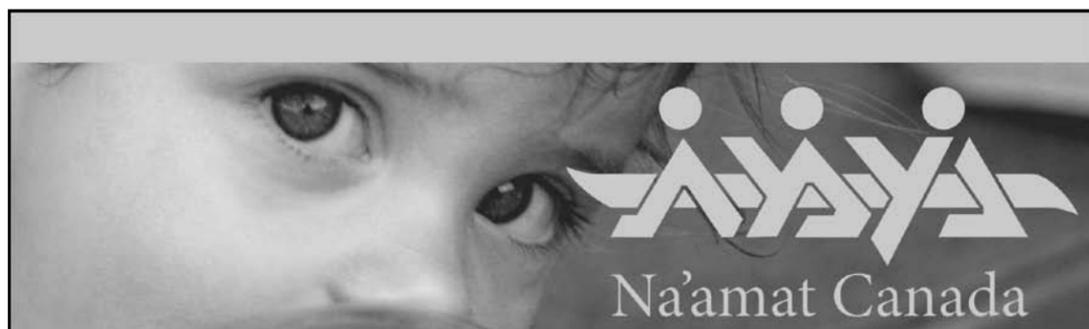
Let Us Help You Get To Israel This Summer

The Ralph Travis Israel Experience fund was established by family and friends of the late Ralph Travis to honor his deep commitments to Israel. The fund provides financial support to students participating in a myriad of wonderful education programs designed to meet practically every interest and time frame.

Students intending to participate in short term education programs in Israel in 2007 may be eligible for financial support through the Ralph Travis Israel Experience Fund.*

Application deadline for summer 2007 program is April 16, 2007. For more information about our local scholarship initiative, or to receive an application, please contact the UJA Federation of Hamilton office at 905-648-0605 or cnuscauja@on.aibn.com.

* Families applying are expected to be in good standing with the UJA annual campaign.



Why Are These Children Hiding?

If you think this photo is from a recent Purim party, you're wrong! In fact, these children are in hiding and this is the only way we could show them to you. These kids are victims of abuse. They live with their mothers at the Na'amat Canada Glickman Centre for Family Violence Prevention, in Tel Aviv. You can help provide a bedroom for these children and their mothers by supporting Na'amat Canada today!

Think Israel Think Na'amat

Na'amat Canada Toll Free: 1.888.278.0792 E-Mail: naamat@total.net Web: www.naamat.com



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Feature Stories

Key organizer of Operation Solomon tells compelling story

BY STEVE ARNOLD

For 3,000 years the Jews of Ethiopia were taught a legend that one day eagles would descend from the sky and carry them home to Jerusalem. In 1991 that legend became reality through a historic rescue effort mounted by the government of Israel. The adventure known today as Operation Solomon saw the Israeli air force and El Al airlift more than 14,000 people to a new life in a new country. In just over three hours, those men and women were taken from 8th Century to the 21st, and a life of challenges they never imagined. At the heart of the mission was Asher Naim, Israel's ambassador to Ethiopia. Today, long retired from the foreign service, he is a roving champion for the troubled people he helped to save.

Ambassador Naim told his story at Beth Jacob Synagogue's Jewish Film and Speakers series recently. In 1990, after serving in in diplomatic posts in Japan, Kenya, Uganda, the United States, Finland, the United Nations and Korea, Naim was sent to Ethiopia by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to rescue the country's remaining Jewish population. Ethiopia then was ruled by military dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam, but his government was being hard pressed by a rebel army. Complicating the problem, the communist Mariam had lost his source of weapons when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989. To solve that problem, Naim explained, the African strongman wanted to copy the former Soviet puppet in Romania and sell his Jewish population to Israel. Where Romania only demanded \$1,000 a head, Mariam wanted weapons and a package price of \$100 million for 14,200 people. Naim was dispatched to offer aid, and cash, but not arms.

"I'm from the Middle East, I know how to bargain," Naim said, explaining how over two long weeks he haggled the "ransom" for the Ethiopian Jews down to \$35 million. Before the deal could be clinched, however, with the rebel army closing in on the capital, Mariam fled the country. More intense negotiations followed, leading to a deal that would allow the Jews to be evacuated as long as it was done quickly, and quietly. From that challenge was born Operation Solomon.

Starting on Friday May 24, 1991, using 36 El Al jumbo jets and IAF Hercules C-130 transport planes, all stripped down to hold as many people as possible, more than 14,000 people were flown to Israel in the space of 36 hours. The only "hitch" was that records showed nine more people arrived in Israel than had left Ethiopia — the result of women giving birth during the three hour flight. "The Israeli Air Force was A1 on this operation. I don't know if there is any better in the world," Naim said. As great a triumph as Operation Solomon was, it wasn't the end of the story. For the 15 years



Former Israeli ambassador to Ethiopia, Asher Naim

since, Naim and a group of other retired Israeli ambassadors have been working to help the Ethiopians integrate into their new home.

"In three and a half hours they went from the 8th Century to the 21st Century and it wasn't easy for them," Naim said, noting the Ethiopians arrived in Israel with an illiteracy rate of 85 per cent. Since arriving, adult men have struggled with a lack of education and skills to market in a modern economy. Women and children, he added, have had a slightly easier time. "We had to start teaching them from the beginning," he said. "The lower down in age you go, the better chance you have. "The women are very pretty and that doesn't hurt," he added.

Those chances are being improved through agencies such as the Florida-based Scholarship Fund for Ethiopian Jews which pays education costs for promising students. This year the fund will support 200. The 2007 UJA campaign was to have backed that effort, but it was derailed by the need to repair the damage after a summer storm of terrorist rockets in northern Israel. Such education and settlement efforts, Naim said, have produced a success rate of 85 per cent — "but you only hear about the failures. We are only failing with 15 per cent of them, but they are the ones on the news all the time." The effort, he added, must continue because "We cannot afford to have a black ghetto in Israel."

The full story of Operation Solomon is told in Naim's 2003 book Saving the Lost Tribe: The Rescue and Redemption of the Ethiopian Jews (Random House). Copies can be found online at abebooks.com. Ambassador Naim's talk was co-sponsored by Beth Jacob Synagogue and UJA Federation.

Jewish Youth and Internet Safety

BY BRUCE ROSEN

Google Rabbi Elisa Koppel and you will quickly see that there are few individuals with her credentials on the topic of Jewish youth and internet safety. So how was it that during a cold weekend in February that such a well-versed individual found herself in Hamilton? Well, you can thank our educator Laura Wolfson, and the support of the Temple Board for the foresight in having made the arrangements for Rabbi Koppel to speak both to our youth and to members of the Temple Anshe Shalom congregation at large.

Rabbi Koppel starts the discussion by asking those in attendance to imagine for a moment, life before computers — it's not easy for some, but for many of us parents of teenaged children it only requires that we think back to our youth. For others, like the current elementary and high school student population, they don't know life without a computer. Since the early days of computers, many things have changed, and aside from the technological advancements to both hardware and software it is important to note that almost nine out of ten youth regularly use the internet. Nearly half of these users are online on a daily basis. These are active, not casual, users for which we all have a moral responsibility to both encourage and educate them on the do's and don'ts of cyber security.

If we look back over the centuries, the world has continually become a smaller place; first it was horses, then boats, then trains, planes and automobiles. With each generation, and the advent of new technology, the youth of the era were exposed to more parts of the world than the generations that came before them. But at no time did anyone bring strangers into their homes until the launch of the internet, where users young and old expose themselves to virtual strangers on a regular basis.

As parents of 'cyber kids', it's difficult for my wife and I to monitor every piece of communication that they engage in — especially over the internet. Get too close and they even have codes to protect their conversations from parental supervision, like "POS - parent over shoulder".

Some of our faith in their activities therefore must rely on trust and good judgment. However despite everyone's best intentions, a random visit to an off-color website is not only a probability, but is more likely a reality. With the hectic lives that we all lead, compounded by extracurricular activities, long work hours and travel, the internet has become both one

of our best communication methods and one of our worst. Human interaction tends to take a backseat to the virtual kind these days. All the more reason to ensure that cyber security is managed with every interaction along the way.

There's no escape. Between "My Space" personal websites, Instant Messenger and email exchanges, it's hard to imagine anything that our youth send over the internet is safe and secure. However, it is imperative that we manage the safety and security of our youth on the internet through good guidance and parental controls.

As Jewish youth engage in internet activities, there is in fact an additional danger for the unsuspecting mind. Prior to the widespread use of the internet by our kids, there was more face time when it came to engaging in conversation. This meant that they had the ability to read body language and to see who it was they were communicating with. Unfortunately, the internet does not provide this level of transparency, and in some instances, the fingers on the other end of the keypad may not be exactly who they think they are. Moreover, not knowing the end-user's disposition and/or religion could be a very dangerous assumption. These situations could easily put our youth in compromising situations and we need to be very aware of these interactions.

Social e-networks expose our youth to many predators, sometimes without anonymity. Kids are naturally trusting. It's part of their general psyche and something that we as parents cannot change, we can only educate them on the perils that might exist through the exchange of personal information over the internet. Despite the fact that chat rooms are a good place for kids to confirm that they are normal, by asking questions without repercussion, it is also a place for others to prey upon their weaknesses. This raises the question as to whether or not virtual friends are friends at all, or are they simply "acquaintances". Rabbi Koppel points out that "the days of friends passing notes in class has now gone from paper to electronic". This is all fine, except that the whole notion of note passing was to relay secrets amongst friends, and you knew exactly who you had

passed the note along to. Today, through the passing of electronic notes, they can be unknowingly forwarded to an infinite number of individuals, or passed along under the false pretense of their secrecy.

Even bullying has gone high-tech. In the "old days" groups of kids would gang up on other kids, but they knew who was confronting them and could respond either immediately by choosing fight or flight, or diplomatically through the use of debate and dialogue. Now the internet allows anonymous groups of kids to bully other kids, seemingly without reprisal. Unsuspecting kids find out the hard way that their innermost secrets have been exposed through improper and immoral electronic exchanges.

It's reality, and it's all around us...imagine the surprise for a group of unsuspecting high school students from Caledon East who 'dissed' their principal over the internet recently, when they were 'found out' in cyber space and suspended for bullying. Again, the students thought that their comments in a social networking site were anonymous, unfortunately their luck ran out and they were suspended.

In the end, it is up to all of us as parents and guardians to police what our children are communicating in cyber space. It is our responsibility to establish regular and open dialogue with our youth, and to potentially ascertain an internet ethics system as well. It is no longer acceptable to take for granted that all is secure on the internet, on web pages or in chat rooms, it is time to be proactive to ensure internet security with our youth. Rabbi Koppel suggests that in order to build the foundation for internet security in our homes, that families should take the time to:

1. Establish family rules for internet information exchanges
2. Reevaluate the placement of computers in your home to make their presence more noticeable and to reduce the tendency for "secret" internet activities
3. Open up dialogue in your homes to ensure that your children have a portal in which they can confirm their thoughts and fears as they relate to internet usage

If this is the very least that we do to establish internet security for our youth, then we are all off to a good start.

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Community

St. Joseph's Healthcare Beneficiary of Golf Tournament



St. Joseph's Healthcare receives \$3000.00 cheque as one of the beneficiaries of the proceeds from the Barry Foster Memorial Golf Tournament. From l to r: Larry Szpirglas, Stanley Tick, Dr. Kevin Smith, Joy Foster, Michelle Foster, and Robert Donelson

Kehila Community School

February was another busy month at Kehila Jewish Community Day School in Hamilton. The school's choir was one of the nineteen Jewish school choirs that took part in Toronto's Zimriya festival on February 4 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. The school's choir, under the direction of Jessie-Ann Bradshaw, performed "Al Shlosha Devarim," "Lu Yehi," and "Eileh Chamda Libi." The song "Lu Yehi" was composed by Naomi Shemer, one of Israel's greatest songwriters who wrote the song during the Yom Kippur War. The school's choir sang without accompaniment but still filled the large concert hall with beautiful vocals.

Kehila also held their annual Avigail Presentations in February, this year in conjunction with Tu B'Shevat. The Avigail Presentations are held each year at Kehila as a way for the students to share with the community some of the lessons they have learned and art they have created. The event is named in honour of Avigail Ra'anana (Va'anunu), friend and neighbour to Kehila founding board member Daniel Kollek, who recalls Avigail as "a believer in the importance of people in communities helping each other on the lines of 'Kol Yisrael arevim zeh lazeh'." At this year's event, Kehila students sang songs and presented stories and artwork which all reflected what they had learned about the trees of Eretz Israel. Each of the

classes, from JK to Grade 5, had worked hard learning the facts and significance of Israel's trees and each group found creative ways of sharing their work with the assembled audience of family and friends. The school has produced a DVD of "Trees in Israel" which they are sharing with the JNF. The Tu B'Shevat holiday was also noteworthy for Kehila as one of its students, Alexander Tessier in Grade 1, had won the JNF Tu B'Shevat poster contest; this was the second year in a row that a Kehila student had won the contest.

The school is now busy preparing for its Theatre Night fundraiser, which will take place on April 17. The evening features a wine and cheese reception, a silent auction, and a performance of Norm Foster's comedy "Looking". The event will be held at Theatre Aquarius in Hamilton. For more information, call the school at 905-529-7725 or visit the Kehila website at www.kehilaschool.ca.

Kehila Jewish Community Day School is committed to providing a full Jewish experience for girls and boys within an egalitarian environment. The school reflects an appreciation of the pluralism of contemporary Jewish life by celebrating all forms of Jewish belief and observance while being respectful of tradition. Kehila Jewish Day School is committed to academic excellence while developing strong Jewish identity through Jewish values and literacy.

An Evening at the Theatre

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Community

Jewish Genealogical Society

BY
STEVEN BROCK

Go get a pen and mark these dates on your calendar. **March 14, April 25, May 31, June 10, 2007**

You are not going to want to miss our last four lectures in this year's series of speakers at the Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton & Area. Our roster just keeps getting better and better.

On March 14 we are pleased to once again to be hosting **Dr. Louis Greenspan**, esteemed member of the Department of Religious Studies at McMaster University. In a slight change to the topic he was to speak on, Dr. Greenspan will lead us through the recently published book *The Lost* by Daniel Mendelsohn. This book is Mr. Mendelsohn's own story of how he set out to find the remaining eyewitnesses to his relatives' fates during the Holocaust. This quest eventually took him to a dozen countries on four continents and forced him to confront the many discrepancies between histories as he'd heard them and reality. Finally it led him back to the small Ukrainian town where his family's story began and where the solution to a decades-old mystery awaited him.

On April 25th, we are very excited to welcome professional photographer and author Jill Culliner. Speaking about her book *Finding Home: In the Footsteps of the Jewish Fusgeyers*, Jill will bring us through her journey of discovery of a largely forgotten corner of Jewish history. The Fusgeyers were Jews who fled persecution in Romania in the early 1900s in order to find refuge, ultimately in the New World. Destitute and desperate, but resolute, they crossed the country on foot, supporting themselves by giving theatrical performances. One hundred years later, Culliner, an intrepid walker, retraced their steps across Romania on foot in the search for lost remnants of this epic journey. She pursued her quest along the former immigrant trail from Budapest, through Vienna,

Frankfurt, Rotterdam, London, Liverpool, through the Canadian gold and silver boom towns and on to the Jewish farming communities of the western prairies.

We then wrap up the season with two mammoth lectures, featuring two of the biggest names in genealogy today; Stanley Diamond and Stephen P. Morse.

On Thursday, May 31st, Mr. Diamond, president of the Montreal JGS; and co-founder of the Jewish Records Indexing Project – Poland; will reprise his presentation entitled **Medical & Genetic Family History; the Role of the Genealogist**. Because of the demand Mr. Diamond consistently elicits, this lecture will be held as part of the a Ben Meyer Memorial Lecture series and a joint venture between the JGSH and the Herb and Cece Schreiber Foundation. The lecture will take place at the Jewish Community Centre of Hamilton. Dinner will be served at 6:00 pm. The lecture will begin at 8:00 pm.

We then close our lecture season with a special Sunday session on June 10th and a presentation by Stephen Morse whose work on the Ellis Island immigrant databases, has become world renowned. Mr. Morse will speak on his **One-Step Searching for the Genealogist**. The innovative development of his web-site and its inherent researching resources has once again placed him in the forefront of genealogical research today. Again, because of the popularity of Mr. Morse wherever he speaks, we will be hosting this lecture as a joint meeting with both the Jewish Genealogical Societies of Toronto and Buffalo.

As always we welcome all who are interested in these presentations although a small fee is sometimes charged. For more information about these lectures or any of our activities, please check our website at www.jgsh.org. You can also contact **Hazel Boon** directly at president@jgsh.org or **by phone at 905-524-3345**. We look forward to seeing you there

Medical Detective Work Added Benefit of Recording Family Histories

BY
WENDY SCHNEIDER

Stanley Diamond is a medical detective. Eight years ago the retired businessman and self-appointed family historian discovered that his family was an unsuspecting carrier of a genetic condition called thalassemia, or Cooley's anemia, previously thought to affect only Greek, Italian, Asian, and Sephardic Jewish families. Mr. Diamond is Ashkenazi. Driven by a desire to warn other unsuspecting family members that they, too, might be carriers, he launched a project for which he sought the participation of genealogists, the press, and the medical and scientific community around the world.

Mr. Diamond will be the speaker at an upcoming lecture on Thursday, May 31 jointly sponsored by Hamilton's Jewish Genealogical Society and the Herb and Cece Schreiber Ben Meyer Memorial Lecture Series. In his talk, titled, **Medical and Genetic Family History; the Role of the Genealogist**, Mr. Diamond will use his own personal journey to illustrate the importance of documenting one's family medical and genetic history. In a telephone interview with the HJN he said that Jews carry genetic traits that can be debilitating.

"We all have something, whether it's arthritis, heart disease, or the breast cancer gene. In my case, knowing my family carried a genetic trait unusual for Ashkenazic Jews, it became very important for me to warn them." Mr. Diamond said that documenting one's family medical history is empowering in that it can provide a person's medical support team with invaluable information.

"You go to Emergency and they ask does your family have a history of breast cancer, diabetes,

Genetic traits manifest in different ways. Doctors aren't necessarily looking for genetic traits but if you go in with the information about your own family history, it can be very useful", he said.

Dr. Diamond thinks that people should make every attempt to contact uncles, aunts and cousins and compile lists that document medical conditions and causes of death. While this information may provide no immediate benefit it may be invaluable to future generations.

Asked to speculate on what inspires an individual to delve into his or her family history, Mr. Diamond said,

"In general, something happens in their life. They come across an old document. What is this? What's the story behind it? Of they come across an old photograph. Who is in the photograph? You're a certain age and a parent dies and all of a sudden you become aware

that you've lost a connection to your heritage and you didn't ask your parent a question you should have." He said it took him ten years to reconstruct the history of his own family, something it may have taken only ten minutes to do had he thought to interview his grandmother before she died.

Mr. Diamond is the founder and president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal, a member of a genetic research project team with McGill University, Montreal Children's Hospital and Hebrew University at the Hadasah Hospital in Jerusalem; and the Project Coordinator of the Jewish Records Indexing in Poland.

His lecture will take place at the JCC on **Thursday, May 31**. Dinner will be served at 6:00 pm. (cost, \$10) Mr. Diamond's presentation will begin at 8:00 pm. RSVP by contacting the JCC at 905-648-0605.

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Community

Great Ideas Abound At The HHA

BY
RYAN KRAFTCHUK

Recently on primetime CBC television, science reporter Bob McDonald hosted a voter's choice program 'The Greatest Canadian Invention'. Fifty of this country's most celebrated inventions and innovations were posted on the CBC.ca website for viewers to cast their individual votes. Which choice would go down in history as The Greatest Canadian Invention? As you may already know, Insulin was voted #1, followed closely by the telephone and light bulb. All three were brilliant ideas, and have made worthy contributions to the lives of millions of people worldwide.

Even more recently, following the snowday on February 15th, the Hamilton Hebrew Academy held its annual 'Invention Convention' to showcase the creative invention projects of students in grades two through six. Fifty inventions were registered in the event, and each project was displayed for the school's extended community to view. Attendees had the chance to mingle and engage with the enthusiastic young inventors about their projects. In addition, each inventor was interviewed by a member



Tali Wiesenthal and Lauren Shuman were among the award winners

from a panel of judges, and asked to explain both how their invention solved a specific problem they had identified, and to describe the process that they had followed to create their invention.

All fifty projects represented the end-point of a creative thought journey the students followed known as the design process of technology. The process began with students identifying everyday-use items that we now take for granted, but which all began with a spark of an idea or as a result of some inconvenience in life which represented a unique niche opportunity challenge. By broadening their focus

from the invention itself, students identified the key features of the end-products, and the processes by which they had come into existence. It quickly became apparent to the young enquiring minds that each invention that they identified and discussed had, at its source, a need that was being met, a problem being addressed or a very specific consumer market for the invention.

Each student's project began by identifying a problem to be solved or niche opportunity to be met. Students were guided to select a testing population to provide constructive feedback on their models and chosen names. Finally the inventions were tested and modified where necessary to meet the initial design goal. The end-products impressed the judges who had the challenging task of choosing the 'Greatest HHA Inventions' from each grade.

Congratulations to the following award winners: **Simcha Sehayek, Sam Kahn, Michael Woolfson, Jarred Gaffe, Tali Wiesenthal, Lauren Shuman, Zack Kahn, Rachelle Zalter, Sarah Waxman, Ariel Lavin, Jonah Leibtag and Amanda Katz.**

At The Hebrew Village



Participants in the Alef Champs program

Sunday morning in our house is much the same as the rest of the week, only it's different. On Sunday in our house we get up early and drive into Hamilton to the Adas Israel not because we have to, but because we want to. My sisters and me go to a program called the Hebrew Village. Its tons of fun! Most of my friends are there from school too. We start off learning Hebrew in really small groups. Sometimes it just me and one of my friends and some times there are lots of us in my group. We get to play games and build words with the Hebrew letters and I like that. My sisters get to learn their letters in a different group. After we do Hebrew we get together with Rabbi Amar and we sing all kinds of great songs. We sing them in the car all week long because we drive in from Oakville every day, so we have lots of time for singing. Rabbi Amar tells us a story and it usually has to do with the weekly parsha. Then for the last hour we make some cool things. A couple of weeks ago we made Challah boards for Shabbos, we made Chanukiahs for Chanukah and we made mezuzahs for our house. My sisters made a plaque with their names on it in Hebrew. We have a lot of fun on Sundays at the Hebrew Village. For me it's the easiest day of the week to get up!

BY BENJAMIN HARA AGE 7

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Temple Anshe Sholom Honours Volunteers

BY
JANIS CRIGER

So many members of the Weddum family have volunteered their time and energies to our Temple, and to the wider Hamilton community, for many years.

The story begins in the mid-1970's, when Stanley Weddum served on the Temple Board, and Shirley Weddum was a loyal member of, and volunteer with, Temple Anshe Sholom's Deborah Sisterhood.

Through the 1980's and 1990's, the Weddum commitment stayed strong. Norman Weddum served as a Board Member at the Temple, then took on the always challenging job of Education Committee Chair. From 1999 to 2001, Norman was President of Temple Anshe Sholom. Norman continued his Temple volunteerism by assuming the position of Chair of the House Committee.

Shirley has continued her commitment through the years as well. In the 1980's and 1990's, Shirley generously gave of her time to help our office staff carry out their important tasks. Shirley still serves as a volunteer for the Deborah Sisterhood, making sure that Sisterhood functions go smoothly at our Temple.

The Weddum commitment to our Temple's and community's welfare continues today. In addition to all the other things the Weddums do, they run the Temple Anshe Sholom sponsored Bingo at Delta Bingo for two sessions every other Tuesday. Norman is currently President of the Delta Bingo Sponsors Association,



Pictured above, (from left to right) are Alan Weddum, Shirley Weddum and Norman Weddum

tion, which consists of 56 varied groups which use Bingo as one of their fundraising endeavours.

At the Bingo, Shirley, Norman and Alan are now assisted by their children, the next generation of Weddum volunteers. The net result to our Temple has been \$30,000.00 in average yearly fundraising. Norman and Alan also work as volunteer firefighters, both answering emergency calls, and assisting the Hamilton Police Service with crime scene investigation. Alan is President of their Volunteer Firefighters Brigade this year.

All members of the Weddum family donate freely and generously of their time and services, to help make Hamilton and Temple Anshe Sholom the outstanding communities we live and worship in. Please join us as we thank the Weddum family for their longstanding commitment to Temple Anshe Sholom and to the Hamilton Community.

The event will take place on April 29, 2007, beginning

with a reception at 6:00 pm, followed by dinner at 7:00 pm. The guest speaker will be Mayor Fred Eisenberger. Tickets go for 125.00 each (charity receipts will be available for a portion of the cost). We look forward to seeing you there.

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Community

Wow! What a Tu Bi'Shevat!



All ages enjoying the Festival"

It started on January 28th at Shalom Village. The Jewish National Fund, in partnership with the community's schools, synagogues, the JCC, Federation and Shalom Village held a community

Tu Bi'Shevat Festival. Children, parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents joined in ... games, arts and crafts, food and even a lesson about olive oil. A group of teen volunteers, adults and dedicated staff made it come together. Everyone had a great time!

Then, on February 11th, 80 plus people were treated to an absolutely delectable, delightful and delicious gourmet offering prepared by three chefs; Chef Oved Alfia and Chef Arik Porat of the Dan Hotel Chain in Israel and Chef Dwayne Rutledge of the Beverly Golf and Country Club combined forces to create a food extravaganza. Besides the outstanding food and beautiful setting, everyone had a chance to socialize and chat. This inaugural event; the Taste of Israel was made possible with the leadership of Jocelyn Katz, Louise Algranti and Danna Horwood.



Diners enjoying the cocktail reception before dinner

Chabad Hosts 2nd Annual Shabbat 100 at McMaster

BY
MICHELLE RODAK

On February 9th, McMaster Jewish students gathered for the biggest Shabbat dinner of the year. It was the second time in McMaster history that a Friday night dinner had been served on campus. Holding Friday night dinners on university campuses was developed by Chabad across North America. It is a unique opportunity for students to experience their Judaism on Campus. Because of its availability, students from all backgrounds feel comfortable attending. It provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere to learn and experience who they are and where they come from. For many, this was their first taste of Shabbat in a traditional atmosphere. The evening began with intro-

ductions and icebreakers, and eventually relaxed into a beautiful meal, complete with challah, soup, chicken and meatballs --all prepared by students at the home of Rebbetzin Fajgi Itkin. The warm atmosphere made it easy to make conversation with old friends and meet some new people as well. One of the highlights was when some students who had been inspired by Chabad and the Jewish Students Association stood up to speak about their experiences as Jews on campus. As the evening came to a close, we did the Birchat Hamazon-grace after meals- and sang songs that most hadn't heard in years. It was a night that none of us will ever forget.

All I can say is that the second Shabbat 100 was an enormous success.

To the Hamilton Community;

Words cannot adequately express my deep sense of gratitude and thankfulness for all you have done and continue to do for my family and myself during this most difficult and challenging time in our lives.

It is your outpouring of love, warmth, caring, kindness, generosity and friendship that sustains me and will continue to do so in the future.

May we only have to share good times together and may Hashem repay each and every one of you at least a thousand fold for everything you have done for my family and myself.

Fajgi Itkin

MAGEN DAVID ADOM

BY
HILDA C. ROSEN

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Executive of Canadian Magen David Adom for Israel, please accept our grateful appreciation for your most generous donations received for the Magen David Adom of Israel - the Ambulance Corp of the State of Israel

You can be rest assured that your benevolent contribution to purchase much needed life-saving equipment and medical supplies for these ambulances will make a huge difference in saving lives in Israel. It is through the generosity of friends like yourselves that we are able to help the people in Israel. You can all be justly proud of the vital role you are playing in the creation of a strong life-line for all the people in the State of Israel.

As chairman for CMDA in this area, I am proud to announce that \$74,500 was the total amount I was privileged to forward to purchase this much-needed equipment. I thank you personally for your cooperation in making this emergency campaign a 100% success. Your response to my phone call was truly amazing. Thank you so much. I am truly privileged to be chairman for this area. Let us pray that no such emergencies shall arise again. Let us continue to support those in Israel who need our help with Shalom and G-d's blessings.

The Jewish National Fund of Hamilton
Negev Dinner
 Hamilton Convention Centre
 June 3, 2007

• Cocktails: 5:30pm • Dinner: 6:30pm

Featured Keynote Speaker

General Colin Powell, USA (Ret.)



Invitations will follow

For more information, please call our Jewish National Fund office: **1-866-527-5516**



Please
mark your
calendars!

in Tribute to Sasha and Tom Weisz

Community

Beth Jacob Synagogue

Beth Jacob Synagogue is about to embark on an event filled spring season. On Saturday, April 28, the Beth Jacob family invites the entire community to attend a special Shabbat service and luncheon in honour Matt and Fay Schmerling, who have been stalwart long-term supporters of the synagogue for the last 40 years. The special Shabbat service and luncheon following the service will give community members whose lives they touched the opportunity to express their love and gratitude to both Fay and Matt for their devotion to the well-being of the shul. Community members are invited to express their appreciation to Matt and Fay by making a contribution to the synagogue's Matt and Fay Schmerling Beth Jacob Education Fund, the proceeds of which will be earmarked towards funding the renewal of our Hebrew school. To contribute to the fund and to RSVP to the luncheon please call the shul office at 905-522-1351.

On Sunday, May 13, from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm the entire community is once again invited to attend Beth Jacob Hebrew school's Open House, that will include a community-wide multi-generational art project entitled, Israel: Memories and Longing, and a preview of She'arim, the new school and bar mitzvah program, and brunch. Come with your entire family and bring any Israel



Matt and Fay Schmerling

memorabilia that you're willing to part with. For more information call Karen Selsberg, Education Director at 905-522-1351. The community is also invited to experience an evening of laughter and hope at The Laugh In Peace Tour, otherwise known as One Muslim. One Jew. One Stage. Two Very Funny Guys, on Wednesday, May 2, 2007 at 7:30 pm at Beth Jacob Synagogue. The show features two stand-up comedians Rabbi Rob Alper and Azhar Usman in a three part show, that has met with universal acclaim in venues across North America (see accompanying article) The dual act, which Alper and Usman describe as "comedy in the service of world peace," is expected to sell out, so don't delay. Tickets are \$36 each. Chai tickets that include a post-performance 'Meet and Greet' wine and cheese reception are \$54. You can order tickets by calling the synagogue office at 905-522-1351.

Breaking down barriers, one laugh at a time

BY
WENDY SCHNEIDER

Bob Alper was at home in Vermont when he received a phone call from his publicist in Los Angeles. It was December, 2001, just three months after the destruction of the Twin Towers.

"I have this great idea," she said. "Why don't you do a show with an Arab comedian?"

"Do you have any other ideas?" was his response. Alper, an ordained Rabbi who had left the pulpit after 14 years to pursue a career as a stand up comic, wasn't acting out of prejudice. He simply wasn't interested in being part of a two-comedian act.

But the publicist was not to be dissuaded. She had seen a Muslim Arab comedian by the name of Ahmed Ahmed and, in her opinion, a joint act featuring a Rabbi and a Muslim would be a great sell. When she sent them videotapes of each other's act, Rabbi Alper was sufficiently impressed that in April of 2002 he invited Mr. Ahmed to share the stage with him at a Philadelphia synagogue.

"We tried it out to see how it would work," he said in a telephone interview with the HJN. It worked. Their act played to rave reviews and since then, they've taken their show "One Muslim. One Jew. One Stage" to synagogues, churches, mosques, community and corporate venues on hundreds of occasions.

Rabbi Alper became a rabbi in 1972, serving congregations in Buffalo and Philadelphia. In 1986, he left the full-time rabbinate to become a counselor, a profession he never actually pursued because he answered an ad for a comedy contest. When he came in third place, he decided to pursue his dream of becoming a stand-up comic.

Rabbi Alper, 61, is always the "One Jew" of the partnership. His original partner is Ahmed Ahmed, 36, an actor and comedian whose Egyptian parents immigrated to California when he was a month old. Usman, 31, a native of Skokie, Illinois, is a community activist who writes and lectures on a wide variety of topics.

"People are a little skeptical when they hear about it [the unusual pairing of Jew with Muslim]" he said in a telephone interview. "But then when they see the show, they greet it with a sense of relief."

Why relief? "They see a guy who, as Azhar says in the show, 'When you see me in the airport I'm your worst nightmare.' For some members of the audience, it's their first intimate exposure to a warm, friendly, affable Muslim. And people are relieved."

Does it work the other way around?

"I did an Iranian mosque in Los Angeles," he said. "I found that mosques and syna-

gogues have a lot in common. In both places, the lay people don't have a clue where the light switches are or how to adjust the sound system. Everyone's inept."

Given the tensions between Jewish and Muslim students on Canadian campuses, it came as a pleasant surprise to hear that their show has been enthusiastically received at college campuses throughout the United States. He and Mr. Usman are taking their act to New York University in Manhattan, where they will perform at a fund raiser to establish a prayer space for Muslims. The Muslims are funding the event and Hillel is a co-sponsor.

At a performance at the University of Pennsylvania that was sponsored by Hillel, the rabbi recalled, "The place was mobbed with [students wearing] Kipot and hijabs. They were introduced by three students: the president of Hillel, the president of the Muslim Student Association and the president of the Pan Arab Student Society."

"The key to the show," he said, "is that it's totally non-political." He has seen the unifying impact of laughter and has coined the following expression: "You can't hate someone with whom you've laughed."

The Laugh In Peace tour takes place at Beth Jacob Synagogue on May 2 at 7:30 pm.

The "Laugh in Peace Tour"

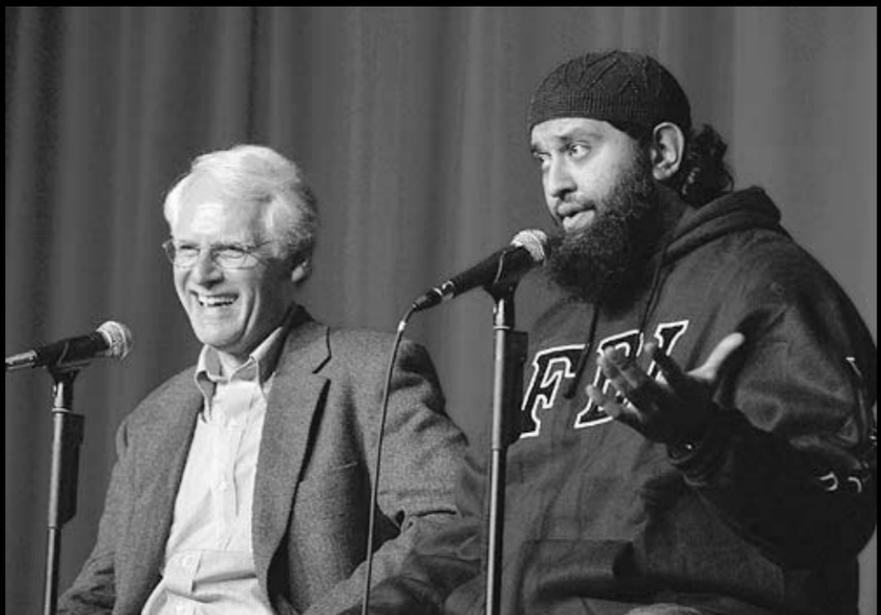
An evening of non-political laughter starring
Rabbi Bob Alper and Azhar Usman.

"The world's only practicing clergyman doing stand-up comedy...intentionally," Rabbi Bob Alper performs all across North America, London, and even at The Hollywood Improv. Heard regularly on XM and Sirius Radio, and seen on Showtime, Good Morning America, CNN, and Extra.

Azhar Usman is perhaps the world's most famous American Muslim comedian. He was the subject of an entire episode of ABC Nightline, and was interviewed on NPR's All Things Considered. He hails from Chicago, with roots from the Indian subcontinent, and has performed all over the US and in several foreign countries.

AN IT ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTION

One Muslim. One Jew. One Stage. Two Very Funny Guys



Wednesday, May 2nd at 7:30 pm
Beth Jacob Synagogue
375 Aberdeen Avenue, Hamilton
Tickets: \$36.00

For tickets call 905-522-1351

CHAI CLUB: \$54.00 (Includes priority seating and admission to after show "Meet and Greet" reception. (A limited number available.)

Admission restricted to persons 12 and older.

