

Hamilton Jewish News

SERVING HAMILTON WENTWORTH AND AREA

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AGREEMENT #40007180

Financial concerns hit home

All of the wishful thinking we can muster will not prevent the Hamilton Jewish Community from the effects of the current financial downturn. The same issues facing other communities, both large and small are now on our doorstep.

Coming off its most successful campaign in history, the UJA 2009 Campaign Cabinet set the goal for this campaign at 18% over last year's totals. But that was before the current economic meltdown. At this late date, the campaign result is significantly below the goal—both in card for card totals – about even with last year – and in the percentage of the campaign completed – 30% of the donors have yet to make their commitments.

Of greatest concern to Gerry Fisher, executive director, UJA Federation, is a lack of a sense of urgency in successfully closing the campaign. "We have a critical problem.... Our campaign team and philanthropic leaders really need to pull together right now to get us past this difficult moment."

According to a recent article in the Hamilton Spectator United Way campaign volunteers worked feverishly, right to the last moment, to bring the campaign to its goal. Fisher is hoping that UJA volunteers and donors will devote the same passion for a successful campaign conclusion.

He pointed out that the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton managed to surpass its campaign goal in the same economic climate as the one UJA works in.

According to a recent article in the Hamilton Spectator United Way campaign volunteers worked feverishly, right to the last moment, to bring the campaign to its goal. Fisher is hoping that by the end, UJA's volunteers and donors will devote the same passion for a successful campaign conclusion.

The economic slowdown – or fear of it – has affected our community in two important ways. According to UJA Federation Treasurer Jacki Levin, "Of immediate concern is the willingness and ability of donors to last year's campaign to fulfill their commitments and pay their pledges. UJA has assumed significant financial obligations, based on last year's campaign pledges and the expectation

that most people would pay them on time. The reality is that payments are somewhat behind. Although we still expect to be able to meet our commitments, we may need to draw down on our reserves to do it."

Levin continued by saying "The anticipated shortfall in the UJA 2009 campaign may result in reduced allocations to our beneficiary agencies in the next fiscal year. The Federation Allocations Committee will be meeting this month to review the latest data and to initiate its consultations with local and national agencies. At a minimum, we will be asking ourselves, as well as those who count on our support to review each expenditure and to take every possible step to reduce costs wherever they can."

In terms of actually closing the current campaign, UJA Women's Chair Lisa Morris informs us that the Women's Campaign is close to completion. "The UJA Women's Campaign is one of the best organized components of the Federation. I am grateful for all of the hard work of

my captains, canvassers and especially Women's Division Director Chris Nusca. We were organized on time. We started on time and we are proud of the result, especially in this difficult period." At this point, the Women's Division is showing a card for card increase of +9%. In addition, four new "Lions" have been inducted into the Lion of Judah Division.

Men's UJA Chair David Horwood is in a somewhat different position. Most of the donors who have not yet committed are in the Men's Campaign. "The key issue is that many of our most generous supporters are waiting for a better indication of how the economic situation is going to affect their businesses over the next 12 – 18 months before they make their decision on UJA. I'm counting on a better result by not pressuring those I know are committed to UJA and will do the best they can."

Hamilton rallies for Israel



Hundreds of community members assembled at the Adas Israel on January 8 as an expression of solidarity with Israel during the war with Hamas in Gaza. See story, page 11.
Photo by Lawrence Yanover

Another casualty of war Federation withdraws from dialogue

After three years of working to improve relationships between Arab, Muslim and Jewish communities, UJA Federation has withdrawn its support for the local dialogue initiative. Dialogue Committee founder Dr. Lorne Finkelstein and Federation representative Les Lasky have resigned.

The actions were taken immediately following a January 14th Spectator "Op-Ed" article written by Dialogue member Ali Cheaib. Cheaib is the President of the Hamilton Chapter of the Council of Canadian Arabs. The article was widely interpreted across the Jewish community as an expression of real hostility and demonization of Israel.

According to Finkelstein "I was as devastated by this column as everyone in the Jewish community. As the founder of the Dialogue Committee, I have attempted over the past 3 ½ years to ensure that our committee members' role was solely to promote respectful behaviour between our communities in Hamilton regardless of our political differences regarding Middle East events.

Ali Cheaib's column violated the fundamental precepts of the Dialogue Committee by publicly writing about his personal views regarding the Middle East, and especially by the nature of the language used in that article. I take these transgressions seriously, and personally."

Immediately following the Federation Executive Committee meeting of January 20th,

Federation President Dr. David Somer wrote to the committee with the following message:

"I write to advise that the UJA Federation of Hamilton Executive Committee has accepted the resignations of Lorne Finkelstein and Leslie Lasky as its representatives to the Dialogue Committee and has voted to withdraw its support and participation in further activity. These unanimous decisions have been taken as a direct result of the publication of Mr. Ali Cheaib's recent "Op-Ed" piece in the Hamilton Spectator.

Regardless of his intent, Mr. Cheaib's article was interpreted by the entire Federation Executive Committee as inflammatory and demonizing. We have received many letters of complaint. We have an obligation to our constituency to consider and act on them.

Ironically, several people have demanded that the Dialogue Committee issue a letter condemning the article as damaging to local community relations. Had this article been written by someone else, we would likely pursue that course. That Mr. Cheaib is himself a member of the committee has only served to fundamentally undermine the credibility that we have all invested in this

important initiative.

These resignation decisions were taken on the day the article appeared and were taken by those individuals at their own initiative. As expressed to us, these decisions were taken because Mr. Cheaib's article, in both tone and content, was inimical to the very purpose for which the dialogue committee was created. To suggest, as Mr. Cheaib has done, that

UJA Federation's decision to withdraw its support is because we are "propagandists and apologists for Israel" is simply false and only serves to deflect attention away from the true issue; namely the inexcusable demonization of Israel in the first few paragraphs of his article.

This letter is being written with regret. Our involvement with the committee has been a valuable experience. Our commitment to seek methods to improve understanding between all of Hamilton's diverse communities, including the Arab and Muslim communities remains strong. It is unfortunate that the existing dialogue committee can no longer fulfill that function.

Respectfully,
Dr. David Somer, President

Please see DIALOGUE page 2

Larry Levin is new Federation VP

UJA Federation President Dr. David Somer is pleased to announce the election of Dr. Larry Levin as Vice-President of the Board of Directors. Levin, who currently serves as President of the Ontario Dental Association, is also a member of the UJA Federation Executive and the UJA Campaign Cabinet. Levin has previously served as Chair for the 2006 and 2007 UJA Campaigns, and has been a Federation Board member for 5 years.

Dr. Levin is putting his name forth for the presidency of the Federation at the Annual General Meeting on May 26, 2009.

“It is important to have an open, transparent and inclusive Hamilton Federation in which all members of the Jewish Community feel represented”, said Levin. “I will begin immediately with the task of overseeing a reconstruction of UJA Federation’s Public Affairs Committee.”

The Public Affairs portfolio includes Israel Advocacy, Community Relations, Communications, Anti-Semitism and Campus Life. These are five of its most important areas of responsibility.



Larry Levin will oversee new Public Affairs Committee.

Levin states that he intends to lead a broad process of consultation with various community stakeholders, such as Hamilton’s Rabbinic and Synagogue leadership, leaders of our and other Jewish communities, and many other local and national groups.

Said Levin of his new role, “Hamilton has a wonderful Jewish Community with tremendous potential, and I can’t wait to get started.”

Pro-Israel community in high gear

Community asked to attend upcoming campus programs

The struggle against those who demonize Israel on university campuses will grow a lot stronger over the next few weeks as McMaster students, faculty staff and the Hamilton pro-Israel community gear up for another episode of “Israel Apartheid Week.” This annual event, which was launched in Canada several years ago, now takes place on campuses around the world.

The event took on greater notoriety at McMaster last year as a result of student protests against the hateful and inflammatory anti-Israel language being used to promote the programs. An ambivalent response from university administration led to serious verbal clashes between students.

A campus sponsored “Free Speech Forum” to discuss the relative merits of unrestrained “free speech” vs. the social responsibility to abide by established university codes of conduct quickly deteriorated into a dangerous situation. An impromptu anti-Israel demonstration following the forum led to a serious hate crimes investigation by Hamilton Police Service.

As a result of last year’s difficult experience, the entire community is rallying around the McMaster Jewish Students

Association (JSA) and Israel on Campus (IOC). A recent UJA Federation Campus Services Committee meeting brought the Jewish Faculty Association, the JSA Director, community volunteers and Federation professional leadership together to consider a broad range of programs and related activities to combat the relentless and hateful anti-Israel invective that will arrive during the first week of March.

Preferring to keep the program content a surprise the student and faculty groups are working very hard to ensure that the campus community has access to quality programming and resources that paint an accurate picture of Israel, Zionism and the inherent right of the Jewish people to self determination.

All Jewish Students Association programming is open to the public. It is especially important for the Jewish and pro-Israel communities in Hamilton make the effort to come to campus to participate with the students. The programs are great and the students are entitled to see our support by standing with them during difficult times.

Specific information with program details will be circulated closer the events. Please watch your emails and make every effort to join with our students.

Day schools apply for Avi Chai grant

Foundation encourages creative approaches

Kehila Jewish Community Day School and Hamilton Hebrew Academy have come together to jointly apply for a substantial grant from the Avi-Chai Foundation in New York.

Avi Chai Foundation is one of the most generous supporters of Jewish Day School education in North America. Their granting projects often challenge day schools and Jewish communities to consider new and creative approaches toward the delivery of Day School education. In this case, Avi Chai is providing grants to support individual day schools that team up to cost share various aspects of their operating expenses. The Hamilton grant application is seeking Avi Chai’s support in three specific areas:

1. Creation of an independent Jewish Middle School comprised of grades 6,7 and 8. This school would provide two tracks of Judaic Studies, traditional and non-traditional, aimed to appeal to all religious schools of thought. The school would be run by a board, including an education and finance committees among others, etc.

2. Securing a technology teacher who could teach technology and support the technology requirements of the schools, including hardware and software management.

3. Developing a joint shuttle service to ensure all three schools can attract students from Oakville, Burlington and other areas outside the Hamilton community.

The grant application was accompanied by a letter, jointly signed by Mario Stolar, Chair of the Kehila Board of Directors and Rabbi Daniel Green, Dean of HHA. The letter states in part that “the intended cooperation is in the

Corporate / Administrative and Educational areas. The plan is intended to not only strengthen the current level of education in the Jewish community but to establish a path that provides students with more concrete options to lengthen their Jewish education as they grow up in the community.”

The letter further states that “It is our belief that this foundation will not only yield cost savings in the long term, but also provide students with the opportunity to become leaders and important members of not only the Jewish community but the whole community in which we live.”

UJA Federation leadership is delighted with this new initiative. According to Federation Executive Director Gerald Fisher

“This wonderful initiative addresses two very important issues for our community. The 2004 Federation Education Planning Report envisages ‘A single Jewish day school. There are a variety of ways this could be organized (ie: separate streams or programs) within a single integrated administrative framework and facility for some, if not most of their activities.’ If this joint initiative with Avi Chai is even a single simple step towards greater cooperation between our two day schools, it is a step well worth taking.

Fisher further stated that “in an environment of economic uncertainty and a likely flat UJA campaign, every single dollar brought in to the community in support of Jewish education becomes precious. UJA Federation fully supports this initiative and is grateful to the leadership of Kehila and HHA for their foresight and willingness to cooperate in this unique endeavor.”

DIALOGUE cont’d from page 1

A final meeting of the dialogue committee took place on January 28th. At that time the Muslim members urged Finkelstein, Lasky and Federation to reconsider. It was in response to that request that the other members began to realize the full measure of harm that this article has perpetrated against local community relations.

The committee members acknowledged that the issues and challenges that first brought them together still remain. Dialogue members are now asking their sponsoring organizations to consider

whether – or how they want to maintain communications

As a final comment, Federation Representative Leslie Lasky offered the following. “Regardless of Middle East events... and that we may understand them so very differently, we still need to find methods and language that will allow us to live together in Hamilton. That cannot evolve in our isolation from each other. What, if any next steps are taken to break down that isolation remain to be seen.”

UJA Federation of Hamilton joins Partners for Life



UJA has formed a partnership with Canadian Blood Services (CBS) to demonstrate their commitment to saving lives by donating blood as a team. Dr. Cheryl Greenbaum, our CBS Champion stated, “As a physician, I understand that the gift of blood save lives every day. Our sages tell us that saving one life is like saving a whole world. Donating blood allows us to fulfill this mitzvah, and at the same time strengthen the bonds within our community.” Please join us in our partnership for life with CSB. register on-line at: www.blood.ca/partnersforlife. Our Partner ID is UJAF009824

INSIDE HJN FEBRUARY 2009



MOSHE RONEN IN HAMILTON

PICTURED ABOVE: Moshe Ronen, Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress and National Chair of the Canada-Israel Committee met with community leaders at the Adas Israel prior to his keynote address at an Israel solidarity rally on January 8.



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PASSOVER ISSUE	
• Deadline for booking ad space	Feb 27, 2009
• Deadline for receiving editorial copy	March 5, 2009
• Deadline for receiving ad copy	March 15, 2009
• Estimated Date of Arrival	March 27, 2009

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Canada Israel Committee establishes new advocacy initiative

In an ongoing effort to strengthen the Israel Advocacy capacity of smaller communities, Canada Israel Committee and United Israel Appeal of Canada have joined forces to create a pilot program in local "advocacy training." Participants in the program have been chosen from Kingston, Calgary, the Atlantic provinces, Winnipeg and Hamilton.



Hamilton's participant in the new CIC - UIA advocacy training initiative is Jeffrey Shinehoft. Jeff is an associate with Shinehoft Law and is an active member of UJA's "YAD" initiative as well as an active member of the UJA Lawyers Division.

This program is designed to provide high-level, detailed, practical training and development to local professional and lay leaders from medium and smaller communities across Canada. In three day-long workshops and a week-long advocacy mission to Israel, participants will be provided with the skills and knowledge to enhance their local Israel advocacy activities within both the Jewish community and the local community at large. While the material will focus on Israel issues, many of the themes apply equally to areas of local government and community relations.

The first seminar took place in Toronto in early December. The group will reconvene in Ottawa to greet the return of Parliament on February 23rd and 24th. The group will reconvene in June of 2009 in Toronto to coincide with the national CIC and UIA meetings. The group will also participate in a special week in Israel from April 25th to May 4th, 2009.



Building community across the country

ELAINE LEVINE

There is a renewed sense of hope that Canada's young adult divisions (YAD) will take ownership for the generations to come in the smaller communities across Canada now that United Israel Appeal Federations Canada has provided increased support to ensure Coast to Coast has the resources to succeed.

The opportunity to participate as a panelist in the Young Leadership Symposium at the Atlantic Jewish Council (AJC) 16th Biennial Convention, in Halifax from November 28-30th, gave me insight into their unique challenges faced by their geography and small demographics. The challenges of each community breeds opportunity for growth using the technology of the times. As Linda Kislowicz, Chief Executive Officer, United Israel Appeal Federations Canada commented during



Pictured above, from left to right: Mindy Eklove, Steven Farber, Shayna Strong AJC Young Professional coordinator and Hamilton's Elaine Levine.

her keynote presentation, the old saying, "if it ain't broke don't fix it, doesn't apply today, we have to break it in order to build it to meet today's needs.

This past July, Judi Price-Rosen previously from Hamilton, was brought by United Israel Appeal Federations Canada in her capacity of Director, Leadership Development in Winnipeg to discuss with us how she started YAD from scratch out west. Now Hamilton has had an instrumental role in walking staff at the AJC through the steps to build YAD in a small community. As Steven Farber commences his two year term as Chair of National Young Leadership I know that the spirit of collaboration among lay and professionals throughout the

country will flourish.

Mindy Eklove, Director, National Young Leadership Development UIA Federations Canada, commented "we're very proud that Hamilton has become a model of inspiration for the AJC to start building their young adult division".

We have great volunteers in Hamilton and it is their vision, passion and commitment that makes our programs a success. I would like to thank everyone involved in planning or participating in YAD so far and look forward to what we can accomplish together, both locally and nationally. Special thanks to Mario Stolar, our first YAD chair, your dedication has been instrumental in our launch.

Cuba's Jewish community - a vibrant treasure



PICTURED ABOVE: Participants in the UJAF National Initiatives for the Next Generation Professional Development Mission to Cuba.

ELAINE LEVINE

While participating in the UIA Federations Canada, National Initiatives for the Next Generation (NING) Professional Development Mission to Cuba, from January 20 - 25, 2009, I saw first hand the passion of keeping the flame alive among Cuban Jewry.

Around 1959 Cuba was home to approximately 15,000 Jews in a population of 16 million. Today, it is home to approximately 1,500 Jews in a population of 11 million. The majority of Jews are in Havana; however there are some in Guantanamo, Camaguey, Santiago, Santa Clara, Sancti Spiritu and Cienfuego.

During Fidel Castro's regime, it was very difficult to openly show an affiliation toward religion.

Although it was not abolished outright, if you wanted to belong to the Communist party, enroll in university or get a government job, it was not recommended that you reveal a religious affiliation.

After 1991 Castro changed his policy on religion, allowing everyone to worship openly. During the past 17 years the younger generation has taken

ownership of rebuilding a vibrant Jewish community for themselves and those that follow. Their passion was evident as we participated with them in Israeli folk dancing, Shabbat Services, visits to shut-ins, a Jewish identity exercise as well as touring and enjoying meals together.

The Patronato is the centre of Jewish life; it houses a Conservative synagogue, an ORT computer lab, a pharmacy, and a multipurpose room used for the Sunday school, youth and adult activities and community meals.

The pharmacy plays a very crucial role in the lives of both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities in Cuba.

Essential to the Cuban Jewish community is the annual container shipment of kosher food, which permits the community to fully participate in Pesach. In 2006 more than 11 tons of food and wine were sent to Cuba.

All mission participants brought a suitcase of donations, which we sorted for distribution to the pharmacy, Sunday school and elderly shut-ins.

The level of volunteer leadership and commitment to their survival among the young Cuban Jewish community was truly inspirational.

Meeting with them face to face was a valuable reminder that a portion of our UJA dollars, through the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) support the critical and ongoing needs of Jewish communities across Eastern Europe, the Former Soviet Union, East Africa, Cuba, Morocco, Yemen and anywhere else where a Jewish community may be in danger.

JDC was also there to provide support to Georgian Jews during the recent civil war and relief during the Indonesian Tsunami of 2007 and JDC is the bedrock of support for the Jewish community in Cuba.

UIA Federations Canada is planning another mission to Cuba at the beginning of 2010. If you are interested in participating please contact elevine@jewishhamilton.org

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**UJA Walkathon
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UJA Dollars at Work

JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES

As part of a series on how your UJA donations make a world of difference to our community's beneficiary agencies, the HJN focuses its attention this month on Hamilton Jewish Social Services and the important work it does on behalf of our community's most vulnerable population.

WENDY SCHNEIDER

Its bright and cheerful walls are decorated with original photographs; its spacious rooms are flooded with natural light, its central Dundas location is fully accessible to those coming from near or far ... Welcome to Hamilton's Jewish Social Services (JSS), located at 30 King Street East in Dundas, one of the many jewels in the crown of our community's social service network. Supported by your UJA dollars, JSS provides an inviting and sympathetic ear to those among us who are struggling to make ends meet in these challenging economic times.

Jewish Social Services is on the front lines of providing assistance and activities to the most vulnerable in our community – the poor, the elderly and new immigrants. JSS director Carol Krames



PICTURED ABOVE: Seniors from the Former Soviet Union enjoy participating in the Jewish Social Services sheltered workshop, offered four days a week.

A large part of the JSS budget is funded by the UJA campaign, with additional funding coming

try to treat people with dignity by letting them choose what to buy", said Roth. Donations to the Food Bank can also be made through the purchase of tribute cards or gift basket centerpieces.

Volunteers form the lifeblood of any organization and JSS is no different. They are using this opportunity to invite lawyers, dentists, physicians and tutors who would be willing to donate their services to contact Carol Krames. They would also be most appreciative for the occasional use of a truck and driver.

Finally, Jewish Social Services extends an invitation to the entire community to attend its upcoming kosher wine tasting event on Sunday, February 22, sponsored by Simcha Wines of Toronto. Your participation will support the K kosher Food Bank and give you an opportunity to enjoy Hamilton's Jewish Social Services' beautiful facility. For more information call Carol Krames at 905-627-9922, ext 21.



PICTURED ABOVE: ESL instructor, Louise Klinghoffer with some of her students

oversees a staff of 5 and reports to a dedicated Board of Directors headed by Susan Roth.

The HJN dropped by JSS on a wintry afternoon last month to sit with these two dedicated women and give them an opportunity to speak about the current challenges facing the agency. Krames framed her comments by presenting an overview of the state of affairs for Jewish Family Services across the continent: Not only has been a marked increase in those seeking assistance, a number of agencies south of the border have been forced to close their doors because of the drying up of traditional sources of funding. While no Canadian agencies have had to close, there is, nevertheless cause for concern that either in response to current difficulties or uncertainty about the future, people may not be forthcoming in paying their UJA pledges.

"It's a snowball effect," said Roth. "Foundations no longer have the money and individuals don't have the same access to funds anymore.

"But the cornerstone of Judaism is giving to charity", she added, "and when this happens it's like pulling the rug out from under us."

in from the United Way. Last year's UJA allocation of \$145,000 was used to provide short and long term relief for those in financial crisis and fund the agency's many day programs, including a seniors workshop, ESL and literacy classes and administrative expenses. Almost half of the UJA allocation goes towards providing direct relief.

"There will always be a segment of the population who require relief," said Roth, "... the disabled, seniors without any income, immigrants who didn't acclimatize. But what we are seeing now is an increase in people who are living on the edge, who have been cut back or laid off and whose situations are very vulnerable. Too many things have tipped the balance and now they can't make ends meet. We have to help them."

JSS's K kosher Food Bank, which supports 34 families on a regular basis, (with more than that seeking assistance during periods coinciding with the Jewish holidays) receives all of its funding from direct donations. While donations of kosher food products are welcome, the agency has a preference for gifts of cash or gift certificates bought at your local supermarket are preferred. "We

McMaster JSA



McMaster students Ron Levitin, Anna Kos and Rebecca Cherniak address the community at an Israel Solidarity Rally at the Adas Israel Synagogue held on January 8. (See story page 11.) Photo by Lawrence Yanover

JUDY SCHWARTZ

The Jewish Student Association, Israel on Campus Club and the Jewish Faculty Association have been working hard to be proactive and bring to students a more objective view of Israel. We appreciate the cooperation of the Community in our endeavours to produce balanced views of the Gaza situation. The anti-Israel factions on campus which includes CUPE, The Independent Jewish Voices, Muslims for Peace and Justice and many others speak of Israel as a demonic and detestable state. They use speakers whose biases and loathing of Israel is well documented, Mac professors whose agenda is that of hateful rhetoric, whose facts are twisted, distorted and untrue. They practice "educational malpractice" in their classrooms, using classroom time (no matter what the given subject) to delegitimize the State of Israel and they offer no opportunity to present an opposing view point or allow the presenting of a balanced analysis of the situation.

This is the atmosphere on our campus and through it all our students have committed themselves to the task at hand; to present a deeper understanding of Israel's problems and to accept the many challenges that the People of Israel and we are facing.

Some of our programming this term has included a workshop by Dr Lawrence Hart that was so well received that the students did not want to leave at the end of the evening and an evening with Leo Adler, Director of National Affairs of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies. Our students also participated in the RISE Conference in Niagara Falls that brought together students from across Canada to explore the future of Israel activism on campus. We had the opportunity to meet expert speakers, participate in intensive skill-building workshops and network with fellow Israel activists. This initiative is part of the work supported by the Abella Task Force on anti-Israelism on Campus and represents a new partnership among UOC / NJCL and non-federated organizations.

Ongoing programs include the Roots Program, a 10-week program that discusses the difficult questions about Israel, Zionism, Jewish Leadership and Jewish Ethics. Special thanks to Rabbi Green for his involvement.

There are many more plans in the works for speakers and Israel Appreciation Week and we will continue to inform you of the situation on campus.

Hamilton Jewish Social Services invites you to

An Evening of Wine Tasting

In support of the

Hamilton Kosher Food Bank

on

Sunday, February 22, 2009 at 7:30 pm

\$18 a ticket A donation of \$100 to the Food Bank is tax deductible and includes two free admissions

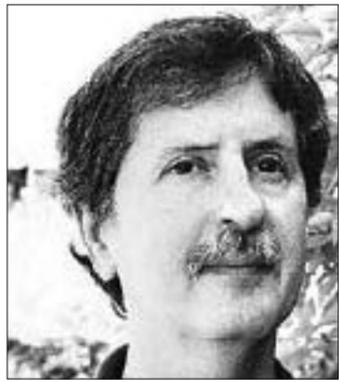
Refreshments and Entertainment

Enjoy Kosher Wines from around the world hosted by Simcha Wines of Toronto

Order ahead for Passover. For tickets or donations e-mail carolkramesjss@hotmail.com or call 905-627-9922 ex 21 or 25. Visa is accepted. If you are unable to attend the evening, you can still support the Food Bank by ordering your wine through Jewish Social Services. Simcha Wines will give JSS a portion of the proceeds from every bottle of wine purchased through us. Call 905-627-9922, ext 21.

Jewish Literary Festival

From Sinai to the Shtetl and beyond:
Where is home for the Jewish writer?



J.J. Steinfeld lives in Charlottetown, P.E.I. and writes fiction, plays, and poetry. His latest novel, *Word Burials*, will be launched at this festival.



Edeet Ravel has lived in Israel, and now works in Guelph. Her novels include *A Wall of Light*, *Look For Me*, and *Ten Thousand Lovers*, a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award.



Steve Stern teaches at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York State. He is the author of several short story collections, including *The Wedding Jester* (winner of the National Jewish Book Award), and the novel *The Angel of Forgetfulness*

Growing up as the only child of Yiddish-speaking Holocaust survivors, and with the knowledge that I had been born in a Displaced Persons Camp in Germany, I was confronted very young with difficult if not unanswerable historical questions about suffering and the destruction of lives that has affected my world view and caused me to search for purpose and meaning through creativity. While my writing deals with many aspects of the human condition, certain themes weave through my imagination's desire to confront what had happened to my family and the Jews during the Second World War: The influence of the past and memory on the present, especially on how the Holocaust affects subsequent generations. Another aspect of this theme is the effect of personal and historical trauma on individuals; how the turmoil and struggle of existence stir some people to rage while paralysing others. In my fiction, poetry, and plays, I attempt to have a dialogue with the Divine, with the past, with what was displaced, stolen, destroyed, but still exists in memory, in the desire for some connection to the past, for an understanding of the present, and in the hope for a less damaging future.

I'm an Israeli and I feel most at home in Israel, though, as it turned out, I ended up living most of my life in Canada. To some extent I feel displaced here, or maybe misplaced. There are an estimated 750,000 of us and I think that feeling of displacement is common. As a friend of my parents once said, we're only ever happy on the plane.

I've written about Israel and I'm now writing about my early years on the kibbutz. I have also written about Montreal. We're drawn to subjects that have affected us deeply, and our writing will often take us to our own past and to our experiences growing up.

I wouldn't like to leave any part of me behind, and I'm sure I wouldn't manage it even if I tried – though I can't imagine wanting to try. I value everything that has made me who I am. I'm so grateful for the richness of my cultural background. But there's more to being Jewish than the shtetl. Not all Jews have roots in Europe. And not all Ashkenazi or part-Ashkenazi Jews have recent roots in Europe. Israeli Jews have created a unique Jewish and Arab-influenced culture which is wonderfully heterogeneous and in many ways new. I feel most at home in that mixed culture.

I grew up in a Reform Jewish congregation in Memphis, Tennessee so divested of tradition that I might as well have been a Methodist. When I began to write fiction in my mid-20s, however, my characters surprised me by insisting on having Jewish names. Washed up again in Memphis in my 30s, I took a job at a folklore center, where I was assigned the task of researching the roots of the local Jewish community. Its origin, as I discovered, was a blighted stretch of North Main Street known as the Pinch – a vanished East European ghetto community. The oral histories I harvested from the old survivors of Pinch revitalized the neighborhood for me, an experience like raising the Titanic from the bottom of the sea. I called the event a spiritual homecoming and proceeded to set three subsequent books of fiction in the Pinch. Later books have ventured beyond those original boundaries, but the culture, history, and traditions of that place have continued to inform and define everything I write.

Are you interested in learning more about Jewish writers and their work? Where is home for the Jewish writer? Some answers – and more questions – will be provided at Hamilton's second Jewish Literary Festival, to be held June 5 to June 7, 2009 at Temple Anshe Sholom. This event is open to all interested people, Jewish and non-Jewish. In reading contemporary novels, poetry, and plays, festival organizers Lil Blume and Ellen S. Jaffe noticed that, although Diaspora Jews have found a place in their various communities, many of our writers look back to the culture of their grandparents for inspiration: the food, the theatre, the folklore, and the language. One of the features of the literary festival will be a panel discussing the conference theme. Here are a few initial statements from our participants to whet your literary appetite; they will explore these ideas further in their discussion.



Sharon H. Nelson. Sharon lives in Montreal; her poetry books include *A Broken Vessel* (1972), *Mad Women & Crazy Ladies* (1983), *The Work of Our Hands* (1992), and *This Flesh These Words* (2003).



Isa Milman, a poet and visual artist who lives in Victoria B.C., won the Poetry Prize at the Canadian Jewish Book Awards, 2005. Her latest poetry collection, *Prairie Kaddish*, is published by Coteau Books.

Some days, I'm not sure whether I'm channelling Fanny Brice or Dorothy Parker, whether my syntax is Yiddish or English, whether what I've imported from Bubbie's kitchen will clog our arteries irreparably or create a brilliant and heart-warming cultural collage/collusion/collation. Jewish culture conflates food, spiritual nourishment, and language: the Word is sustenance. The need to cooperate to acquire food was a driving force in the development of human societies; the ability to communicate determined survival. Sharing food and poems, stories and recipes, cooperating, nourishing, communicating, remain human survival skills. By sharing nourishment, we build communities and create culture.

I was born into a family that lost almost everything. Our inheritance was a few photographs, an ancient tradition, and memory. My mother kept our family history and tradition alive – and though she passed this on through stories, teachings and songs, she didn't write it down. From a very early age, I felt that it was my mission to do so. How else to acknowledge my parents' and grandparents' lives? It's a comfort to me to think that in my small way, during my time on earth, I can contribute to the discourse, add my few pages to the astonishing history of human letters, and hope that here and there, a spark flies, a heart opens, souls meet. We're here but for an instant, but we've left a memento of ourselves behind. That's why I write.

WORKSHOPS

The workshop feature of our festival, in particular, gives participants a more personal experience of Jewish writers, their works, and the creative process. Some workshops will guide participants in their own creative endeavours. There will be two workshop sessions (Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning) and about five workshops in each section to choose from. Although things are still subject to change, plans are shaping up for the following workshops:

- Barry Rosen on Jewish storytelling. What is Jewish storytelling? What can we learn from it? How can we be good storytellers?
- Edeet Ravel will discuss the writing of her award-winning novels.
- Steve Stern will read from his works and discuss the process of finding inspiration in the stories and folklore of the shtetl.
- Isa Milman will talk about the making of *Prairie Kaddish* – the story of Jewish immigration to the Canadian prairies. This is an illustrated lecture, with poetry and slides.
- J.J. Steinfeld will read from and discuss his new book, *Word Burials*, which deals with a character's attempt to flee his Jewishness and then being forced to confront it again.
- J.J. and Isa might team up to talk about how their births in displaced persons camps after WW2 has affected their writing and their lives. Is a DPC a metaphor for the diaspora?
- Lil Blume will hold a writing workshop on Jewish family stories and memoirs.
- Karen Shenfeld, award-winning poet and film-maker, will explore how and why poets mine the memories of their childhoods and how they recreate and re-imagine their childhoods in their works. Karen will show participants how to connect with their senses to find transcendent moments in childhood that could spark the writing of poems.
- Twyla Hendry will talk about being a Leonard Cohen Fan, the popular workshop she led at our previous festival.
- Elana Wolff, a Toronto poet and writer, will lead *Art and Renga*, a workshop helping participants experience the potency of group energy and the power of watercolour painting to create collaborative writing.
- In "And You Thought You Were Just Cooking/Writing?" Sharon H. Nelson explores the parallels between recipes and poems and between cooking and writing as cultural expressions
- Ellen S. Jaffe will read from her young-adult novel, *Feast of Lights*, and talk about writing for children and ways of passing on culture and heritage to children from various backgrounds who live in a modern, multi-cultural society.
- Ron Ruskin will lead a workshop on humour and its value as a survival tool.

JEWISH LITERARY FESTIVAL

JUNE 5-7, 2009

Registration Form

Name: _____

email: _____

Address: _____

Please write name and contact information for each person included in this registration. Registration includes all sessions plus Friday Oneg, Saturday lunch, Saturday evening desserts, and Sunday bagel breakfast. You will be asked to choose workshops at a later date. Please consider making a donation to the festival. Tax-deductible receipts will be issued for donations of \$10.00 or more above the registration fee.

Registration: \$20 x ____ = _____

Donation to Festival: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Please make cheques payable to Temple Anshe Sholom, with "Jewish Literary Festival" in memo line. Mail or bring to Temple Office: 215 Cline Ave. N., Hamilton ON L8S 4A1. Please contact Ellen Jaffe, ejaffe@sympatico.ca or Lil Blume, lilblume@rogers.com for more information.

McMaster acquires Holocaust material

Brisebois collection lays groundwork for virtual Holocaust online museum

WENDY SCHNEIDER

Last January 21 a large gathering assembled at McMaster University's Convocation Hall to celebrate the university library's recent acquisition of the Michel Brisebois Collection, an extensive archive of World War II memorabilia, whose primary focus is on the French Jewish resistance, German propaganda and the Holocaust. Among those present were members of the Jewish community, university faculty, government officials and the Consuls General of Israel, France and Poland.

The Brisebois Collection includes air-drop leaflets from both the Allies and the Germans, diaries, letters from concentration camp internees, posters and a huge collection of reference books and underground literature.

"It's not just the documents and books [that make the collection so impressive]. It's what they represent," said Carl Spadoni, Research Collections Librarian in Archives and Research Collections at McMaster University Library in an interview with the HJN. "This material was created at a particular time of terrible conflict of war and genocide, and it's extremely important," he added.

The official launch of the Brisebois Collection coincided with the establishment of the Virtual Museum of the Holocaust and Resistance and an associated post-doctoral fellowship, an initiative funded by Madeleine and Monte Levy. The two are closely interconnected: Funds provided by the Levy family will be used to embark on an ambitious project: – the digitalization of the Brisebois collection, so that it is readily accessible to scholars and students of the Holocaust from across the globe.

To say that Alan Mendelson, professor emeritus of Religious Studies, is pleased by the course of events would be an understatement. "This is a new direction for McMaster. It's nothing I ever would have dreamed of the library doing...It will bring scholars and other collections here," he said, further speculating that potential donors will be more likely to make donations when they see an established and active collection and a website presence.

For Levy, the bigger vision has two components: the



Alan Mendelson, Madeleine Levy and McMaster Research Collections Librarian, Carl Spadoni, examining some of the archival material from the Brisebois collection.

establishment in Hamilton of an actual Holocaust museum that would share and exchange collections with similar institutions around the country and an eventual chair in Jewish Studies at McMaster.

An additional aspect of the launching of the Virtual Museum of the Holocaust and the Resistance will be a public lecture by Dr. Deborah E. Lipstadt, Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish and Holocaust Studies at Emory University in Atlanta, that will take place on March 19 at 7:30 pm in the CIBC Centre. (see advertisement below)

Levy sees the Lipstadt lecture in the context of a wide ranging and conscious effort to increase educational activity at McMaster whose intent is to combat the misinformation about Israel, Zionism and Jewish history circulating on campus.

"We think that by educating people and providing lecture opportunities...maybe people [at McMaster] will reconsider the positions that they have", she said.

Ms. Levy's concerns are shared by many in the North American Jewish philanthropic community, who have responded to the alarming increase in anti-Israeli activism on college campuses with a call to increase the number of course offerings on modern Israel.

McMaster Library is open to receiving additional archival material relating to World War II and welcome additional donations to help underwrite the costs of the digitalization of the Brisebois Collection. For more information please contact Carl Spadoni at spadon@mcmaster.ca or call 905-525-9140 ext. 27369.



The above items, depicting antisemitic children's literature from Nazi Germany, are on loan to McMaster library from Madeleine Levy's personal collection.

Bringing the community together

www.jewishhamilton.org

JOIN US FOR A SUMMER OF FUN & GROWTH!



THE MAX AND BEATRICE WOLFE CAMPUS

2008

First Session: June 24 – July 19 **Second Session:** July 20 – August 17
Grade 3 Two-week Special: August 2 - 9 or August 2 - 17
Grade 2 Taste of Ramah: August 3-10 or August 3-18

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Camp Ramah in Canada

491 Lawrence Ave. West, Suite 400, Toronto, ON M5M 1C7
 Tel: (416) 789-2193 • Fax: (416) 789-3970
info@campramah.com • www.campramah.com



Ramah – The Camping Arm of Conservative Judaism

Camp Ramah welcomes campers from Grades 2 through 10

Join our director, Michael Wolf, for a special presentation on Sunday, March 8 from 11:45 am to 12:30 pm at Beth Jacob Synagogue, 375 Aberdeen Avenue

McMaster University is pleased to announce a lecture entitled



Holocaust Denial and the New Antisemitism: A Personal Perspective from the Courtroom

by

Professor Deborah E. Lipstadt

Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish and Holocaust Studies
 Emory University

March 19, 2009 at 8:00 pm

CIBC Hall, McMaster University Student Centre

Free and open to the public



This lecture is sponsored by Madeleine and Monte Levy
 McMaster's Department of Religious Studies and McMaster University Library

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HIGHLIGHTS

Community Events

CABARET SERIES – GABI EPSTEIN:

A little Broadway, a little Jazz on March 7 @ 8:00 pm

One of the joys we have at the JCC is to present exciting, young performers, as they earn their stripes in the arts world. Gabi is already, at a tender age, a seasoned performer, having performed at well known venues in Toronto: Tickets: JCC Members: \$10; Non Members: \$15. For more information please call Annie Shinehoft at 905-648-0605

ODESSA HAVANA with David Buchbinder & Hilario Duran (The explosive Jewish/Cuban musical mash-up) **March 14, 2009 8:30 pm** at Redeemer College Auditorium; Reserved seating or at the door if available; Premium: \$33 General: \$27.50 Student: \$17.00; Order tickets from the JCC or www.ticketwindow.ca For more information call 905-648-0605

A NIGHT OF LAUGHTER AND MUSIC

featuring comedian Larry Smith and Musical entertainment by The Dunn Brothers on **Saturday March 28 @ 9:00 pm at the JCC**; JCC Members \$15 Non Members \$20; Call Laura to reserve your seat!!!

Would you like to be a member of the **JCC Yiddish Club?** If so please contact Laura Laengerer. We would like to have a get together in March.

Youth Activities

MORRIS BLACK PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST SUNDAY MARCH 1, 2009 @ 2:00 pm.

The contest is open to Jewish Students for Grades 4-9 in the Hamilton and surrounding area. Register By: February 16, 2009; Registration forms are and topics are available. Please call Annie Shinehoft for more information at 905-648-0605

KIDS IN THE KITCHEN for Grades 6-8

Tuesday Feb 24, March 10, 24 and 31 from 7:00-8:30 pm. JCC Members \$40 Non Members \$50. Maximum 10 students, please register by February 17th, 2009.

BOYS CRAZY MINI MACCABI SPORTS DAY

For boys in Senior Kindergarten – Grade 2; **February 22** from 4:00 -6:00 pm. Basketball, volleyball, gaga, soccer baseball, dinner and more! Cost: JCC Members \$5 Non Members \$10; (In order for adequate supervision pre registration by Feb 18.

JCC PURIM CARNIVAL

Sunday March 8, 2009
from 4:00-6:00 pm

Games, Magic, Prizes, Food & More!
JCC Members 3yrs+ \$12 per person
Non Members 3yrs+ \$15 per person
JCC Members: Family \$30;
Non- Members Family \$40

Living it up at the JCC



Winter Camp



The Apel Family shopping at the Chanukah Vendors Marketplace

Ice-Skating Rink



the JCC is not responsible for any personal injury)

We would like to give a special thank you to Ollie Laengerer for his dedication and community spirit, in building the JCC an outdoor ice rink. (Please note that skating helmets must be worn and all children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Please use the rink at your own risk as

"From babies to Bubbies", the past few months have been immensely exciting for everybody.

The Hamilton Jewish Film Festival was well received by all. With an overall attendance of 250, guests enjoyed viewing the critically acclaimed films "Schmelvis", "It's Not in Heaven" and "Noodle" at the Westside Concert Theatre. Accompanying the films was the rhythmic sounds of "Touch of Klez" and a discussion led by Rabbi Dan Selsberg. A special thank you to our four major sponsors, Effort Trust, The Richter Group, Yves Apel and The Hamilton Spectator. Thank you to our co-chairs, Larry Szpirglas and Willie Steen and the committee Diane Brunetti, Joyce Dain and Sharon Hart whose tireless efforts helped make this a wonderful event.

A sell out evening for the third installment of the Cabaret Series proved to be a success. Harrison Kennedy warmed everybody as his voice made us all forget the terrible snow storm outside. Thank you Abe Szpirglas for your passion of music and making this Cabaret Series tremendous. Ballroom dancing was such a hit that we had no choice but to have our instructor Nicky Morgan teach another session. To find out more please call the JCC.

There are ongoing activities for children, including Kids Sport, coached by Geoff Zalter, Kids In The Kitchen with head chefs, Charles Kravetsky and Eva Raphael, Table Tennis facilitated by Adam Dembe, Girls Just Want to have fun led by the sister duo Shari Raphael and Laura Laengerer and our ever so fantastic Youth Casino Night led by Howard Katz. The themed Brunches and Chanukah Party have been lively. As you can see we are very busy here at the Centre and we look forward to meeting many new faces at our upcoming programs in 2009.

Winter camp was full everyday and Sari Meyerson did another fantastic job as the Director. The counsellors were imaginative and implemented great activities to keep the children busy!

The JCC has been very busy with all of our programs, birthday parties, holiday events and social gatherings. If you would like to book your next event here at the JCC please call to book now!!!

Congratulations to
Joanne & Howard Bernstein
on winning the JCC Lottery



Joel Feldman

President's Message

As I sat by the pool on my holiday on December 28, I received an e-mail from the JCC stating that the bubble had come down in a windstorm. This was certainly not the news I had hoped for, especially as I was looking forward to implementing plans and goals for the JCC in the new year.

Presented with this troubling news, I was impressed with how quickly the JCC Board of Directors and other community members were able to join together and work tirelessly with bubble suppliers and our insurance company to review alternatives and enter into a contract to replace the bubble. I am happy to say that we should have a new bubble up in the next couple of weeks. I thank our members for their patience and look forward to their continued support.

I had never fully realized just how important the bubble was for so many groups in our community. Not only have our tennis players been affected, we have had to cancel our annual social event, youth sports programs, day school programs and the winter camp's usage of the bubble.

It has become clear that the future of the JCC cannot rest on a bubble that could easily be burst. We have to have a building substantial enough to withstand a windstorm and attractive and useful enough to excite and activate our community for generations to come.

I have spoken about the redevelopment of the JCC so many times, that I am getting tired of hearing my self talk about it. I understand that the time for talking has ended and it is now time to achieve something. As the world is watching President Obama enter the White House, there has been a lot of talk about the first 100 days of his presidency. As I have already had my first 100 days of my presidency, I can focus on my next 100 days, in which I plan to hold a series of meetings to strengthen the business plan, consult with groups, organizations and members of our community, to ensure all their voices are heard and their needs are worked into the re-development plan.

The past months have been busier than ever. Laura and Annie continue to implement successful programs, including the Film Festival, Music Series, Winter Camp and many youth programs. I am looking forward to the upcoming JCC Odessa / Havana concert on March 14, 2009. As I have asked on so many occasions, please open your eyes to see what is going on at the JCC and open your hearts to participate and join.

CAMP KADIMAH IS LOOKING TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

CAMP DIRECTOR*
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR*
SUMMER COUNSELLORS

All applicants must have experience working with children, programming and *administration. Please fax your resume attention Laura Laengerer and Annie Shinehoft at 905-648-8388 or apply within.

Jewish Community Centre & Beth Tikvah Foundation

Ski-a-thon

March 12th & 13th, 2009
at HoliMont, Ellicottville, NY

Over the past 17 years due to the efforts of participants and the generosity of donors a net amount of close to \$200,000 has been raised to further the good work of the Beth Tikvah Foundation, a residence for developmentally handicapped adults and the Jewish Community Centre. When combined with the proceeds from the Barry Foster memorial Golf Tournament that has been held annually for the past 13 years, these two tremendous events have raised over \$500,000. If you require additional information on how to participate and/or donate please call Annie Shinehoft or Brent Morissey at 905-648-0605

JCC of Hamilton and Area Presents:
David Buchbinder's
Odessa/Havana
The explosive Jewish/Cuban musical mash-up
March 14, 2009 8:30pm
Featuring Juno winners and nominees
David Buchbinder
& Hilario Durán
"...an evocative combination of two celebratory traditions."
— San Francisco Chronicle
"Odessa/Havana is an absolute cooker... that produces a seamless [blend] of Cuban and Jewish forms, that makes the mesh seem like the most natural thing in the world. Oh man, this is a good one!"
— L.A. Weekly
★★★★ (of 4)
— Globe & Mail
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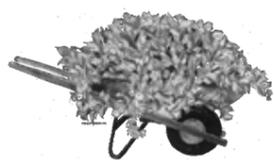
SHALOM VILLAGE

www.shalomvillage.on.ca



Pat Chat

with Pat Morden



Life Club builds leadership

LEADERS SHAPE VISION

Shalom Village exists because from idea to inception to growth it has been sustained by effective, passionate leaders in the community and within the organization. Leaders come in many shapes and sizes. Regardless of their title, leaders inspired by a vision, help make the vision a reality. Leaders continue to be needed to ensure that Shalom Village continues to meet the needs of our community, our parents, our spouses and ourselves.

COACHING

Internally at Shalom Village we provide our formal leaders with access to an Executive Coach who helps them bring their best to their leadership. Their vision is that each person who calls Shalom Village a part of their lives – home, home while away from home, place of work or

place of volunteering - feels connected to our organization: is A.T. H.O.M.E.

THE SHALOM VILLAGE LIFE CLUB

This year we will offer all our teams the opportunity to join the Shalom Village Life Club. This will be a weekly 90 minute educational opportunity open to all our team members with a focus on learning leadership skills that will serve their whole lives, including the part of their life they share with us at Shalom Village. We will be the first organization in Canada to provide Life Clubs. We are very excited about the possibilities!

Your leadership as a community through the generosity of your financial and time support has provided amazing expansions to Shalom Village. Our Possibilities Fund created our Coach of the Deeper Experiences – leading enthusiastic (and even the skeptical) residents in amazingly

fun and creative dance, drama and improv classes! Our volunteers continue to find new and inspiring ways to help us all be more A.T.H.O.M.E. Watch here for more information about our Hospice Care Program and how this will help us lead the way to more comfort and support when our residents are journeying at the end of their lives.

ACCREDITATION

This year we will be visited by the Canadian Council on Health Facilities Accreditation and we look forward to be recognized by them for our leadership in our field and for inspiration to look further and go deeper!

We are grateful to leaders across our community who have helped us celebrate a year of continued growth and to herald yet another! We look forward to your continued support and encouragement.

The Power of Possible Thinking!

It has been a year of possibilities at Shalom Village—possibilities realized, possibilities underway and possibilities yet to be imagined.

This past year saw the launch of the Supper Club, an innovative new program designed to address the needs of residents with challenging behaviours related to cognitive impairments. We added a “Coach for the Deeper Experience” to bring the joys of music, drama and dance into the lives of our residents. This was the year that the Jewish National Fund honoured Shalom Village for its service to the community at their annual Negev Dinner. This was also



the year that residents, staff, family members and volunteers came together to “Wake up the Gardens”, fulfilling a dream that started at Light up the Future

last year when Eugene Levy kicked off the bidding to refurbish our outdoor spaces.

The community came to Shalom Village to Walk for Israel’s 60th birthday and to unveil the mosaic created to mark our support of the Shechafim School in Northern Israel. Your support helped our Ladies Auxiliary raise a record amount at this year’s tea and more people than ever participated in the 7th annual Hannukah Hustle.

There is more exciting news to come as we explore new possibilities in 2009. Thank you for your support—we couldn’t do it without you!



Joan Ulrich



Kathleen Thomas

Want to learn more?

Give Joan or Kathleen a call!

Would you like to learn more about Shalom Village and the many ways you can help us make possibilities possible? Give Joan Ulrich or Kathleen Thomas a call at (905) 529-1613. Kathleen can be reached at extension 264 or by e-mail to kathleen@shalomvillage.on.ca and Joan can be reached at extension 231 or by e-mail to joan@shalomvillage.on.ca.

Shalom Village Tribute Cards

Shalom Village will send beautiful tribute cards on your behalf to acknowledge life's milestones and special occasions. Cards are sent directly to the recipient and include your own personal message.

All it takes is a phone call to Kathleen Thomas to set your card in motion. Kathleen can be reached at (905) 529-1613 ext. 264 or by e-mail at kathleen@shalomvillage.on.ca.

Funds raised by card sales help us make possibilities possible at Shalom Village. Many of the wonderful things that make home at Shalom special would not be possible without your support. Please give Kathleen a call. She would love to hear from you!

The following have been honoured by family and friends with a donation to Shalom Village:

Remembering: Dorothy Mercer; Allen Rosen; David Elkine; Tina Kligman; Alex Cherns; Dr. Gerald Loft; Dr. Steve Lichtblau; Margaret Crusoe; Harold Sutin; Georgette Gauthier; Solly Goldberg; Goldie Cohen; Father of Debbie Damsky; Morris Siegel; Mother-in-law of Irene Jamieson, Sister of Peggy Martin; Wife of John Evans; Bertha Ortmann; Muriel Stolman; Chester

Waxman; Gert Roher; Dr. Walter Cohen; Frank McDonnell; Norman Prachter; Elaine Sister of Ann Silverman; Sam Silberg; Sita Van Asselt; Lawrence Zeller; Fay Kushnir; Marcia Maslov; Mother of Jack Miller; Gloria Silverman; Mother of Gill Leon

Get Well: Sheila Levitt; Joan Silverman; Gloria Lax; Lotti Redner; Michael Seigel; Frank & Rita Shapiro; Harold Segalowitz; Tommy Weisz; Judith Senior; Lily Schwarz; Harold Rochweg; Ethel Levy; Pak Pashkow

Happy Birthday: Barbara Katz; Anita Smurlick; Arthur Weisz; Michael Mason; Minna Loewith; Shirley Molot

Thank You: Kathy Aussem; Sylwia Pawlowski

Mazeltov/ Congratulations: Sandra Feldman; Bessie Goldblatt; Marvin & Lorraine Cohen; Aaron Shiffman; Shani & Harry Loewith; Minna Loewith; Donna Waxman; Mr. & Mrs. Tommy Weisz; Mr. & Mrs. John Griffith; Mr. & Mrs. Brian Albert

Devoted Service to Shalom Village: Leslie Lasky

New Home: Mr. & Mrs. R. Hoffman

Yahrzeit: Anne Freedman

Thank You

Thank you to the families of Joe Rochweg, Tina Kligman, Bertha Ortmann, Gertrude Roher and Sam Silberg for choosing to honour the memory of their loved ones by requesting donations to Shalom Village in lieu of flowers.

This is a wonderful way to honour a person's memory while helping others at the same time. All it takes is a phone call to Kathleen Thomas at (905) 529-1613 ext. 264.

Together we make possibilities... possible!





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Strengthening the ties

Shechafim staff look for networking opportunities

LAURA WOLFSON



Laura Wolfson at the Shechafim school in northern Israel last November

Last November, Temple educator and cantorial soloist, Laura Wolfson and Hamilton Spectator reporter, Steve Arnold, visited the Shechafim School in the Galilee Panhandle, a school for special needs students, with which Hamilton's Jewish community has formed a partnership. Below, Wolfson reports on an idea for a joint initiative between our community and the school.

Katia Cohen, one of two occupational therapists working at Shechafim School, contacted me after my first visit to the school during the UIA Federations' Coast to Coast Mission last November. While Katia was not there on the day of my visit, she was very moved by the video and the Mosaic Mitzvah in Motion Project, both created by members of the Hamilton Jewish community.

Katia and the other staff of Shechafim Regional School are excited by the prospect of developing a real connection and partnership with the Jewish community of Hamilton. In our correspondence, we have talked about various ways of making this happen. Our ideas have included: a professional networking liaison between their staff and corresponding professionals in our community, e-mail exchanges between their parents and parents of children with special needs in our community, and hooking up through Skype to hold conferences between their students and our own.

Katia also described the frightening days in early January when students and staff spent several long days in the school's bomb shelter after rockets fired from Lebanon landed in the vicinity of the school. Several staff members had sons and sons-in-law fighting in Gaza and while they were there, they asked for our prayers for their safe return home.

After careful consideration it was decided that our first initiative will be to create a professional networking group – in response to becoming aware that Shechafim's staff are very interested in networking with pediatric physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, music therapists, special ed teachers and special ed sports teachers. If you or someone you know are one of these people and would be willing to participate in an internet meeting of the minds, please contact me by email at lwolfson@anshesholom.ca and I will facilitate that connection.

The school principal, Ishai Adler, has sent us an informative video about the school, and this will very shortly be accessible by a link on our Jewish Hamilton website. I urge you to watch it, to see the amazing work that Adler, Cohen, and the other staff are doing with the students of Shechafim School. You will surely be pleased to know that your UJA donations are being spent to support this school.

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An Open Letter to A citizen Of Gaza: I Am the Soldier Who Slept In Your Home

Hello,

While the world watches the ruins in Gaza, you return to your home which remains standing. However, I am sure that it is clear to you that someone was in your home while you were away.

I am that someone.

I spent long hours imagining how you would react when you walked into your home. How you would feel when you understood that IDF soldiers had slept on your mattresses and used your blankets to keep warm. I knew that it would make you angry and sad and that you would feel this violation of the most intimate areas of your life by those defined as your enemies, with stinging humiliation. I am convinced that you hate me with unbridled hatred, and you do not have even the tiniest desire to hear what I have to say. At the same time, it is important for me to say the following in the hope that there is even the minutest chance that you will hear me.

I spent many days in your home. You and your family's presence was felt in every corner. I saw your family portraits on the wall, and I thought of my family. I saw your wife's perfume bottles on the bureau, and I thought of my wife. I saw your children's toys and their English language schoolbooks. I saw your personal computer and how you set up the modem and wireless phone next to the screen, just as I do.

I wanted you to know that despite the immense disorder you found in your house that was created during a search for explosives and tunnels (which were indeed found in other homes), we did our best to treat your possessions with respect. When I moved the computer table, I disconnected the cables and lay them down neatly on the floor, as I would do with my own computer. I even covered the computer from dust with a piece of cloth. I tried to put back the clothes that fell when we moved the closet although not the same as you would have done, but at least in such a way that nothing would get lost.

I know that the devastation, the bullet holes in your walls and the destruction of those homes near you place my descriptions in a ridiculous light. Still, I need you to understand me, us, and hope that you will channel your anger and criticism to the right places. I decided to write you this letter specifically because I stayed in your home.

I can surmise that you are intelligent and educated and there are those in your household that are university students. Your children learn English, and you are connected to the Internet. You are not ignorant; you know what is going on around you.

Therefore, I am sure you know that Qassam rockets were launched from your neighborhood into Israeli towns and cities.

How could you see these weekly launches and not think that one day we would say "enough"?! Did you ever consider that it is perhaps wrong to launch rockets at innocent civilians trying to lead a normal life, much like you? How long did you think we would sit back without reacting?

I can hear you saying "it's not me, it's Hamas". My intuition tells me you are not their most avid supporter. If you look closely at the sad reality in which your people live, and you do not try to deceive yourself or make excuses about "occupation", you must certainly reach the conclusion that the Hamas is your real enemy.

The reality is so simple, even a seven year old can understand: Israel withdrew from the Gaza strip, removing military bases and its citizens from Gush Katif. Nonetheless, we continued to provide you with electricity, water, and goods (and this I know very well as during my reserve duty I guarded the border crossings more than once, and witnessed hundreds of trucks full of goods entering a blockade-free Gaza every day).

Despite all this, for reasons that cannot be understood and with a lack of any rational logic, Hamas launched missiles on Israeli towns. For three years we clenched our teeth and restrained ourselves. In the end, we could not take it anymore and entered the Gaza strip, into your neighborhood, in order to remove those who want to kill us. A reality that is painful but very easy to explain.

As soon as you agree with me that Hamas is your enemy and because of them, your people are miserable, you will also understand that the change must come from within. I am acutely aware of the fact that what I say is easier to write than to do, but I do not see any other way. You, who are connected to the world and concerned about your children's education, must lead, together with your friends, a civil uprising against Hamas.

I swear to you, that if the citizens of Gaza were busy paving roads, building schools, opening factories and cultural institutions instead of dwelling in self pity, arms smuggling and nurturing a hatred to your Israeli neighbors, your homes would not be in ruins right now. If your leaders were not corrupt and motivated by hatred, your home would not have been harmed. If someone would have stood up and shouted that there is no point in launching missiles on innocent civilians, I would not have to stand in your kitchen as a soldier.

You don't have money, you tell me? You have more than you can imagine. Even before Hamas took control of Gaza, during the time of Yasser Arafat, millions if not billions of dollars donated by the world community to the Palestinians was used for purchasing arms or taken directly to your leaders bank accounts. Gulf States, the emirates - your brothers, your flesh and blood, are some of the richest nations in the world. If there was even a small feeling of solidarity between Arab nations, if these nations had but the smallest interest in reconstructing the Palestinian people - your situation would be very different.

You must be familiar with Singapore. The land mass there is not much larger than the Gaza strip, it is considered the second most populated country in the world. Yet, Singapore is a successful, prospering, and well managed country. Why not the same for you?

My friend, I would like to call you by name, but I will not do so publicly. I want you to know that I am 100% at peace with what my country did, what my army did, and what I did. However, I feel your pain. I am sorry for the destruction you are finding in your neighborhood at this moment. On a personal level, I did what I could to minimize the damage to your home as much as possible.

In my opinion, we have a lot more in common than you might imagine. I am a civilian, not a soldier, and in my private life I have nothing to do with the military. However, I have an obligation to leave my home, put on a uniform, and protect my family every time we are attacked. I have no desire to be in your home wearing a uniform again and I would be more than happy to sit with you as a guest on your beautiful balcony, drinking sweet tea seasoned with the sage growing in your garden.

The only person who could make that dream a reality is you. Take responsibility for yourself, your family, your people, and start to take control of your destiny. How? I do not know. Maybe there is something to be learned from the Jewish people who rose up from the most destructive human tragedy of the 20th century, and instead of sinking into self-pity, built a flourishing and prospering country. It is possible, and it is in your hands. I am ready to be there to provide a shoulder of support and help to you.

But only you can move the wheels of history.

Regards, Yishai, (Reserve Soldier)

This letter which was published in various Israeli newspapers and websites. It was written by Yishai G., who is one of UIA Canada's March of the Living guides in Poland and Israel.

Community rallies for Israel

WENDY SCHNEIDER

"We're fighting two wars. One is in Gaza; the other is the war for public opinion." Those words, spoken by Consul General of Israel for Toronto, Amir Gissin, at an Israel solidarity rally held at the Adas Israel on January 8, resonated deeply for 400 community members who had gathered together to express their unwavering support for Israel and to find comfort in the presence of like-minded people at a time when world wide criticism of Israel had reached a feverish pitch.

They found that comfort in the unequivocal expressions of support from MP's Harold Albrcht of Kitchener and Terrence Young of Oakville. They found it in a comment made by Moshe Ronen, Chair of the Canada-Israel Committee, who said, "When we are at one with Israel, we are strong and we strengthen. When our political leaders here in Canada join themselves to the war against Islamic terror and extremism, we are strong and we strengthen each other. When we affirm life and repudiate the hatred and toxicity that characterizes those who glorify men who use children as human shields and schools housing refugees as launch sites for rockets... we are strong and we strengthen each other."

They found it in the words of Yossi Tanuri, Director General, United Israel Appeal Canada who spoke via a live webcast from a Beersheba kindergarten, recently bombed by a Qassam rocket, saying "This is a war we have no choice but to win. We need help from our friends in the world. You have a wonderful heart, you're wonderful people Thank you." And they found it in the words of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who sent a direct message to Canadian

Jewry saying: "You can rely on the determination and sense of duty that characterizes the people of Israel. We will overcome. We will bring safety and security to the people of Israel. We'll always remember in our time of need that you were with us in your hearts and thoughts."

Among those who undoubtedly found comfort during the evening were the dozens of McMaster Jewish students whose struggle was acknowledged by Rabbi Daniel Green as he introduced three representatives from McMaster's Jewish Student Association (JSA) and Israel on Campus (IOC). He bemoaned the fact that, during their first week back after the winter break, 20-year old students had to confront such horrific demonstrations and still hold their heads high as Jews and grow intellectually in an increasingly hostile academic environment.

JSA president, Anna Kos, expressed deep concern about Jewish students "who are uninformed - and even misinformed - about the current situation, and those that know very little about any Israeli or Jewish history." IOC president, Rebecca Cherniak expressed her outrage at a recent anti-Israel resolution championed by Sid Ryan, president of the Ontario section of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) that called for a boycott of Israeli academics from teaching, speaking or doing research work in Ontario universities.

The evening ended with closing remarks by Rabbi Dan Selberg who used the Hebrew phrase "Yorim v'bochim", meaning "we shoot and we cry," in articulating the reluctance with which Israel engages in wars of self defence.

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The "Matisyahu of Stand Up", Yisrael Campbell at Beth Jacob Synagogue, Sunday, February 15; Silent auction at 7:00 pm; Performance at 8:00 pm. Tickets are \$36. Call 905.522.1351. For more information visit www.bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

JSS invites you to An Evening of Wine Tasting on Sunday, February 22; 7:30 pm; \$18 a ticket. 30 King St. E., Dundas. A donation of \$100 to the food Bank is tax deductible and includes two admissions. For tickets or donations call 905-627-9922 ex 21 or 25.

Bach Elgar Choir and the Hamilton's Children's Choir - February 28;

Hamilton Place at 8:00. In commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Bach Elgar Choir will perform Oratorio Terezin by Ruth Fazal with guest artists, the Hamilton Children's Choir, outstanding Soloists and the Talisker Players Orchestra under the inspired direction of our conductor Howard Dyck CM. This concert is presented in association with the Hamilton Jewish Foundation and the UN Association in Canada, Hamilton Branch. Composed by Ruth Fazal, the Oratorio is set in the context of the Holocaust, using children's poetry, which miraculously survived from the ghetto of Terezin and woven together with passages from the Hebrew Scriptures. Adults: \$29.00 - \$49.00; Seniors: \$24.00 - \$44.00; Students: \$10.00 Children: \$5.00. Tickets are available from the Hamilton Place Box Office or from the Bach Elgar Choir office, (905) 527 5995, www.bachelgar.com.

Kehila presents A Night at the Theatre featuring Having Hope at Home on Tuesday, March 3;

a comedy by David S. Craig at Theatre Aquarius. The evening includes a wine and cheese reception and silent auction followed. You can participate through sponsorship opportunities, advertising in our programme and donating Silent Auction items. Charitable tax receipts will be issued when a purchase receipt or an invoice showing the retail value is provided. Tickets may be purchased at \$40.00 for this exceptional evening of networking, gourmet food and wine and wonderful entertainment. For more information contact Julie Dembe at 905-648-5665 or email jdembe@primus.ca

Beth Jacob Israel Film Festival, March 21, 22 & 29

Beth Jacob Synagogue presents its annual Israeli film festival on Saturday, March 21 at 8:30 pm with The End of the World, Turn Left; Sunday, March 22 with The Secrets, at 11:00 am, followed by lunch. At 2:30 pm, enjoy the Ran Tal's brilliant documentary about Kibbutz life, Children of the Sun followed by the 2004 tragicomedy Metallic Blues at 5:00 pm. On the following Sunday, March 29, treat yourself to a five hour miniseries called A Touch Away, a modern day Romeo and Juliet tale about the forbidden love between an orthodox girl and a secular Russian immigrant, beginning at 11:00 am. Cost of the entire festival is \$36 or \$15 per film. Free children's programming provided. For more information visit www.bethjacobsynagogue.ca or call 905.522.1351.

The spirit of defiance

STEVE ARNOLD

Sometimes, being Jewish means living in defiance.

In defiance of political opponents screaming half-truths and hatred on the campus of a university; defiance of religious zealots trying to lure us away from our spiritual traditions and sometimes, of those who want to end our lives.

I've been chewing on those ideas ever since returning from Israel in November, but a theme for them only took shape while watching the recently-released movie Defiance and being moved by the testimony of three extraordinary McMaster University students at a community rally.

For those who haven't seen it yet, Defiance is about the compelling story of Tuvia, Zus and Asael Bielski, three Belorussian brothers who defied the Nazi-killing machine to hide more than 1,200 Jews in the vast forests of their country during the Second World War.

From their base, they not only gathered the remnants of shattered villages into a new community featuring a hospital, schools and even a synagogue, they also mounted resistance raids on the invaders and cooperated with Russian partisans.

As portrayed by actors Daniel Craig, Liev Schreiber and Jamie Bell, the Bielski brothers burn with life, with resolve and passion to cling to their essential humanity in a world made inhumane by Nazi terror. The film is certainly not an attempt to whitewash what was a brutal time and is uncompromising in portraying how the grip the refugees held on to that humanity slipped on occasion -- the treatment of a captured German is one example. Another is a scene in which some of the resistance fighters take advantage of the weaker members of the community.

In watching the film, I recalled seeing that same spirit of defiance in one of the many people I met during my Israel tour last year.

Down on the northern edge of the Gaza Strip we were introduced to Glen Eilon. Born in South Africa, he had farmed first in the



One of the armed guards who accompanied Canadian tourists through southern Israel looks out over Gaza from moshav Netivat Ha'asara. The communal farm is located barely two kilometers from where Hamas terrorists launch rockets against Israel.

Photo by Steve Arnold

Sinai before the area was turned back to Egypt, then relocating to the moshav of Netivat Ha'asara. The security fence separating Israel from Gaza runs along the moshav's boundary and Eilon's home is only two kilometres from where Hamas terrorists then stationed their home-made rocket launchers.

In one breath he speaks with utter disdain of the people on the other side of the concrete barrier, describing them simply as "the enemy" and promising a quick death for anyone from the other side who dares to break into his home. "I wouldn't hesitate," he promises. "I'd give him three in the head and drag the body outside for the dogs."

Despite the near daily attacks by crude terrorist bombs, Eilon is determined to stay in his home and he and his neighbours continue to hope for peace.

"If they'd chosen to be good neighbours," he said of the people on the other side of the fence, "we would have opened our hearts and wallets for them. Now, we just live in hope that something will change."

Israel may have purchased some of that peace Eilon so desperately wants with its recently-concluded incursion into Gaza.

There is something of the Bielski courage in Eilon's act of defiance, his refusal to be subdued

by those whose only guiding principle is hatred. I saw that spirit again at the community-wide rally held in January at the Adas Israel. Rebecca Cherniak, Ana Kos and Dustin Shulman, leaders of the Israel on Campus group and Jewish Students' Association, spoke eloquently of the almost daily act of defiance they are forced to commit in simply walking through the McMaster campus, past the signs and hate-filled rallies of those who mask anti-Semitism in a stream of half-truths about "justice for the Palestinians."

A university campus should be a place of reflection, of thought and learning. Jewish students shouldn't have to fear for their safety in such a place. Cherniak and her friends are continuing that spirit of defiance shown by the Bielskis and Glen Eilon. It's the same spirit that fuelled Moses when he stood before the most powerful man of his day and demanded freedom. We're all still living in defiance of those who would deny us that freedom, but in the Bielskis, Glen Eilon and Rebecca Cherniak, among others, we have fine examples for living that spirit.

Steve Arnold is the Business section reporter for The Hamilton Spectator

AN INVITATION TO OUR PREMIER PERFORMANCE OF THE SEASON!

In commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Bach Elgar Choir will perform Oratorio Terezin by Ruth Fazal with guest artists, the Hamilton Children's Choir, outstanding Soloists and the Talisker Players Orchestra under the inspired direction of our conductor Howard Dyck CM.

This concert is presented in association with the Hamilton Jewish Foundation and the UN Association in Canada, Hamilton Branch.

Over 15,000 children passed through Terezin of whom only 100 survived. This is their story written in poetry by the children themselves. Dana Robbins, Publisher of the Hamilton Spectator, and Dr. Nadia Rosa, a Terezin survivor, will bring opening remarks prior to the performance.



The Bach Elgar Choir presents

Oratorio Terezin

Ruth Fazal

Howard Dyck, CM conductor

with guest artists

The Hamilton Children's Choir and soloists

Sheila Dietrich, Soprano

James McLennan, Tenor

Nathaniel Watson, Baritone

Talisker Players Orchestra

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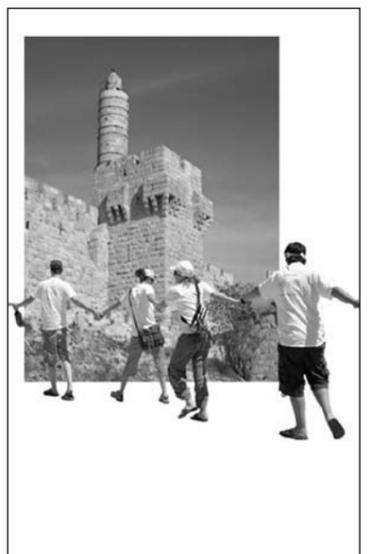
Tickets are available from the Hamilton Place Box Office or from the Bach Elgar Choir office, (905) 527 5995, E-mail: bachelgar@bellnet.ca www.bachelgar.com

Israel Experience Scholarships

Financial support is available to Hamilton students intending to participate in extended programs in Israel in 2009 through the Ralph Travis Israel Experience Scholarship Fund. This scholarship fund was created to honor the life, generosity and memory of Ralph Travis; a community member who was truly devoted to Israel and to strengthening Jewish identity in our community's children. The scholarship is awarded as an entitlement to Jewish students from Hamilton, sixteen years or older, enrolling in recognized "Israel Experience" programs. Applications for other education programs in Israel may be considered on an individual basis. For information regarding recognized Israel Experience Programs, please go to www.canadaisraeexperience.com.

The scholarship will be up to \$500 per student, depending on the number of applications and availability of funds. Participating families are expected to be in good standing with United Jewish Appeal. Application deadline for summer 2009 programs is April 30th. Applications available at 905-648-0605, ext 306.

The Ralph Travis Scholarship fund is an important part of the Federation's Legacy Endowment Fund. Additional contributions are welcomed. Please contact the federation office to learn how you can help support this wonderful initiative.



Lives Remembered

GLORIA SILVERMAN

*Wife, Mother, Grandmother, Friend and Extraordinary Educator
Born, December 28, 1936; Died December 10, 2008.*

Our mother and grandmother, Gloria Silverman, died at St. Joseph's Hospital at age 71. She was born in Chelsea, Massachusetts, and grew up with her parents, Benjamin and Ella, and her two siblings, Howard and Alan, mostly in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

As a teenager, Gloria was deeply involved as a camper and staff member at Camp Ramah as a counselor, Rosh Edah (Unit Head), recruiter, and Yoetzet (Advisor). She was also active in the Leadership Training Fellowship. She learned with and from the best, and caused more than a ruckus or two along the way.

As Gloria grew up, she continued living as an adventurer. She loved to travel. From a young age, she would bike around town with her friends and hike in the mountains and fields in the neighborhood. Soon after high school, she traveled to Israel as a young independent woman, living there for a year on a kibbutz, in the newly founded state. Years later, she trained hard and proudly ventured to the Grand Canyon, Alaska, Morocco, and Utah.

Gloria also had many hobbies. Most notably, she was a voracious reader and a lover of all books. Gloria would even impart this dedication to literature upon her grandchildren by selecting books as afikoman presents every Pesach seder. She also tried her hand at bird watching, pottery, meditation and playing bridge. She dabbled in needle-pointing, embroidering a pillow case with each grandchild's name in celebration of each baby naming.

Gloria was an innovative educator. She developed and expanded the Beth Jacob Hebrew School into a large outstanding model of a synagogue afternoon school. She initiated Beth Jacob's 16 and over group which grew into a program that drew teens back into Hebrew School and the Jewish community. Her involvement with Jewish youth in Hamilton led to an entire bus that went to Camp Ramah in Canada every summer for many years. Those teenagers that became involved in Ramah eventually sent their own children to the camp, a testament to Gloria's contribution to Beth Jacob, Camp Ramah, and Jewish education.

She was also the first woman to wear a talit in Beth Jacob, leading the way for so many others to do likewise. She was a Jewish feminist and a feminist Jew.

The Out of the Cold program in which she was integrally involved continues to serve Hamilton's neediest while providing opportunities for families and individuals to be actively involved in Tikkun Olam.

Gloria relished all of the traditional aspects of being a rebbetzen to Rabbi Israel Silverman, inviting people to her home for Shabbat and holiday meals, helping out at the shul in any way she could, supporting her husband. She would be especially proud inviting the Hamilton community to her sukkah for a Kiddush-luncheon. Even those who did not have a sukkah could experience the magical warmth Gloria's sukkah radiated no matter how cold the temperature outside.

But it did not end there. In so many ways, she was Rabbi Silverman's intellectual equal and partner – encouraging him, challenging him, questioning him, listening to him. When he delivered a particularly brilliant sermon or taught an extraordinary class, she was the first to let him know. And when he didn't... well....

Yael Smiley described her grandmother as a matriarch of the Silverman family: "Savta could have been Sarah preparing feasts for weary travelers at her tent. Every Sukkot she opened her home for Kiddush to the whole Beth Jacob community. Savta could have been there as Rebecca, there to water Eliezer's camels. Out of the Cold was such a deep manifestation of her kindness that all of us spent time rolling meatballs. I have no trouble envisioning Savta as either of the wives of Jacob. In fact, Savta was the wife of Israel, and she watched her extended family develop into a pseudo-nation of their own. And then Miriam, the one who led all of the Israelite women in song and dance, is another leader Savta took after. Much like her namesake, women saw in Savta a strong leader, a powerful influence."

Her daughters Riva and Devorah both recounted that throughout their lives, various people made comments like, "Gloria changed my life." "I owe who I am today to Gloria." "She was an important influence on me when I was young..., when I was old..., a long time ago..., yesterday...."

Gloria was first and foremost a family woman. Though her family consists of five children and sixteen grandchildren, her infectious caring and devotion to her friends and students pushes 'family' far beyond the typical definition. She was loved by all who knew her and will be missed dearly. May her memory continue to be an inspiration for Jewish learning, leadership, and tikkun olam. Yehi Zichra Baruch.

Judah and Margo - Daniel, Tova, Leah, Ilana and Joel - Rina, David and Rebecca, Joshua, Sarah, Aviva and Mark - Yael, Dov, Benjamin, Riva and Abram - Naomi, Jacob, Adina, Devorah and Reuben - Zachary, Dalia, Maya



Gloria Silverman

Hamilton Health Sciences honours Dr. Mark Levine

Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) is home to many young, bright, talented researchers. Each year, a gala is held to raise money for HHS' New Investigator Fund, which offers new researchers financial support to assist them in advancing their research careers and improving delivery of patient care.

This year's gala "Sparkle: An Evening of Diamonds and Jewels" will be held Saturday, February 21, 2009 at the Hamilton Convention Centre. Guests will enjoy a gourmet meal with fantastic entertainment including the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, Hamilton's very own Sarena Paton, and an electrifying evening band that will have everyone dancing.

Hamilton Health Sciences' own Dr. Mark Levine will be honoured at the event for his prominent research. Over the past 25 years, Dr. Levine has been an active researcher in clinical trials and health services research. He is recognized as a world leader in breast cancer research and in venous thromboembolism (blood clots). A number of the trials he has conducted have impacted health care in both Canada and internationally.

Dr. Levine served as the CEO of the Hamilton Regional Cancer Centre in 1992 (now the Juravinski Cancer Centre) and still currently practices as a medical oncologist. He helped establish the Ontario Clinical Oncology Group (OCOG) in 1982 and is currently the Director of the Clinical Trials Methodology



Group (CTMG) of the Henderson Research Centre, where he is not only known as a leader in research, but for his commitment to mentoring new researchers.

Dr. Levine is the Chair of the McMaster University Department of Oncology and Professor in the Departments of Oncology and Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics. He holds the Buffett Taylor Chair in Breast Cancer Research at McMaster University and received the O. Harold Warwick Prize (1999) from the National Cancer Institute of Health Canada's Steering Committee on Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Care and Treatment of Breast Cancer and is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Clinical Oncology.

To find out how you can join Dr. Mark Levine at this year's research gala, visit www.hhsgala.ca or call Amanda Moore at the Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation at 905-521-2100, ext. 76871. Tickets are \$300 per person.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR



The HJN congratulates Madeline Levy for being named the 2008 Royal Bank Distinguished Citizen of the Year. In the general community, Levy has been involved in Out of the Cold, the United Way, Strengthening Hamilton Community Initiative, Martin Luther King Jr. Day commemorations and Ronald McDonald House. Levy's passion for Holocaust education is widely known in the Jewish community. In 2005 her efforts raised \$50,000 for a Federation endowment that provides funding for students to attend the bi-annual Asper Foundation for Human Rights and the Holocaust program in Washington, D.C. of which she currently holds the position of local chair. Most recently she has been instrumental in laying the groundwork for the establishment of the Virtual Museum of the Holocaust and the Resistance. (see page 7)

Employment Opportunity

Office Secretary

Position at Beth Jacob Synagogue available; Excellent computer skills a necessity; Good organizational skills; Ability to work with the public; Salary commensurate with experience.

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KEHILA JCDS



Kehila students celebrate Hanukkah

Kehila Jewish Community Day School celebrated Hanukkah with an afternoon event filled with singing, eating, and the performance of the play "Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins". The Hanukkah party at Kehila is traditionally a time when the school invites people from outside the school to join in. This year, in addition to the families of Kehila students, residents of Shalom Village and a group of students from George R. Allen elementary school attended the party. All of the teachers at the school worked with the children in order to help them prepare performances and demonstrations that reflected what they had learned in their recent Judaica classes – the story of the holiday and the various foods and traditions we associate with it – and in their Global Education classes – how to say "hello" in fifteen different languages. The centerpiece of the party was a performance of "Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins" by the students from

Grades 3-6. "Hershel" is a playful and instructive drama that adapts the basic elements of the Hanukkah story. It takes place in a small village where goblins have prevented the Jews from keeping a synagogue or celebrating holidays. The Jews are saved through the work of Hershel, who resists the king of the goblins and ultimately tricks him into lighting all the candles on the Hanukkah on the eighth night, thereby breaking the spell by which the goblins had their power. Hershel was acted by Jordan Sne, while Spencer Smyth played the part of the king of the goblins. The performance was directed by Paula Baruch, one of the most recent additions to the Kehila staff. The Kehila students put a great deal of work into the whole event and gave the attending families and friends a memorable performance that expressed the many ways in which the school coordinates learning, creativity, and tradition.

MIDRASHA HAMILTON HEBREW HIGH

This past Shabbat Hamilton Hebrew High hosted 40 young teenagers from Toronto for an amazing Shabbat experience. We all welcomed Shabbat in together with a beautiful Friday night Carlebach service and ended the weekend with an uplifting kumzitz. It was amazing weekend filled with home cooked food, song, dance, stories, new faces and by the end of the weekend new friends. It was inspiring to see so many young vibrant Jewish teenagers coming together and experiencing a great Shabbat together. Stay tuned for more amazing programs including our Tu' Bishvat dinner on



Midrasha students laughing it up

February 8th @ 6:30 at the Morel hangout. For more information contact Yaakov.morel@gmail.com.

HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY

At the Hamilton Hebrew Academy we emphasize that our tradition teaches and gives us the tools to help make the world a better place. Each of us has the potential to contribute to the betterment of our world through our choice of words and through daily actions.

Our grade six students recently enhanced our ongoing work on this theme by launching a "Wall of Goodness" at an assembly to mark the fast day of the Tenth of Tevet.

In their choral speaking presentation to the entire student body, the grade six students explained that we mark this day not only to remember the sad events of the past (the start of the Babylonian Siege of Jerusalem in 425 BCE that culminated in the first Temple's destruction thirty months later) but also and importantly to get us to reflect on how we can make positive changes. These changes will result in taking away the reason for the fast in the first place.



HHA student council president, Rafi Zians and vice president, Amanda Katz pose in front of the Wall of Goodness.

Our students explained that since the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 CE because people couldn't get along, each one of us should try to do more acts of goodness and kindness today. This will enable us to better get along with each other and will create a gentler, kinder and more positive atmosphere wherever we find ourselves.

To this end here at the Hamilton

Hebrew Academy we've started building a "Wall of Good Deeds". The student body and their parents are being asked to write down something kind that someone has done for them or that they have done for someone else. These notes are being placed on "bricks". Our wall is steadily growing since the launch of this project.

BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE

After spending the whole day at school, which children want to then shlep to synagogue to attend supplementary Hebrew School? The kids at Beth Jacob She'arim Enrichment Program do! There is something intriguing going on Tuesday afternoons and Sunday mornings. How can they acquire Hebrew reading skills, knowledge of Jewish holidays, prayers and customs, Israel, current events, and history in five hours per week and actually enjoy it? Under the direction of

Ms. Aviva Hermannoff, M.Ed., the techniques of education have entered the 21st century. The children use computers, role-playing, games, meaningful textbooks and participate in synagogue-based activities to develop their sense of love of being Jewish. Experienced teachers offer the foundations of literacy using innovative methods. Interested parents may feel free to make an appointment with Aviva and tour the school on a Tuesday afternoon or Sunday morning:

905-522-1351 ext. 18.

Beth Jacob is extremely proud to invite the community to sign up for the first Family-Inclusive Shabbat Retreat to be held February 27-28. Coinciding with the inter-city USY Shabbaton for teens to be held at Beth Jacob, the Retreat is entitled: Yes We Can: Rekindle the flame and discover new paths to meaningful Judaism. From Friday afternoon through the end of Shabbat on Saturday night, very stimulating programs have been planned for adults with parallel programs for children. Text study, facilitated discussions, experiential activities, meaningful prayer services and delicious meals are promised. Parents can relax and participate while their children and teens are engaged in their own meaningful programs. A small cost is involved to cover the cost of the meals. To register call Maria in the shul office: 905-522-1351 ext. 10. Seniors and others who need a ride to attend services and programs are encouraged to inform the office.

On Sunday, February 22nd, at the Soul, Body and Mind prayer, breakfast and lecture series, Aviva Hermannoff will speak on the questions, "Who was the Pagan Messiah, and why is he important for the story of Purim?" On Sunday March 22nd, Hamilton Spectator investigative reporter, Wade Hemsworth will speak on the topic, "Know your Neighbours: Surprising lessons from the Somali Refugees." Readers of the Hamilton Spectator will also know Wade Hemsworth as the writer of the outstanding 2004 special report on "The life and death of Morris Lax." Minyan is at 9:00 am followed by breakfast, and the speaker will talk at 10:00 am. There is a cover charge of \$5.00 per person. For reservations please phone 905-523-8067.

CHABAD LUBAVITCH HAMILTON

You always find yourself coming back to tradition. For many students at McMaster University, that manifests in a steaming bowl of chicken soup on a Friday night at Chabad. Regular Shabbat dinners are well attended. We add some spice with an International-themed special dinner once a month. Whether a blend of Ashkefardic (Ashkenazi and Sephardi) foods or a Greek dinner co-sponsored with the local AEPi chapter, the ethnic foods of various countries are enjoyed in the trademark Friday night atmosphere at Chabad.

Chabad emphasizes the joy of life, but we have been touched by mourning as well. In the wake of the tragic massacre in Mumbai, India, where Chabad emissaries Rabbi Gaby and Rivky Holtzberg, along with four other Jews, were murdered by terrorists, two new initiatives aimed at strengthening our connection to G-d and the light of the Torah have been put into action. The weekly Tefillin club on Tuesday mornings invites the guys to drop by the Chabad House, put on tefillin and stick around for a chat. For the girls, Chabad hosts Shabbat candle lighting each Friday night at sunset. These programs were unveiled at a memorial service held at McMaster University in honor of the victims of Mumbai. This coincided with the

commemoration of the second yartzeit of Rabbi Zalman Itkin, founder of Chabad of Hamilton. Those of us who came together at the service felt the urgency to channel our emotions toward strengthening everything these special people stood for and perpetuated - a love for G-d, love of Torah and love for one's fellow Jew.

The annual Chanukah Lego-Land program held at Fortino's had adults and children building menorahs out of lego, eating chocolate gelt, singing songs, and joining in the grand menorah lighting. This year we were honored with the attendance and participation of Mayor Fred Eisenberger.

In support of our Jewish brothers and sisters in harm's way, Chabad hosted a Student Solidarity Shabbat after the winter break. Thank you to Rebecca Cherniak of Israel on Campus for lending a hand. The local Bnei Akiva representatives, Uriel and Elkana, spoke about their experiences in the IDF and living under rocket fire in southern Israel.

There's always more to come. Join us on Tu b'Shvat, Purim, and a special Pesach Seder for students. Not to mention the highlight, Shabbat 100 on March 6 – looking forward to seeing you there!

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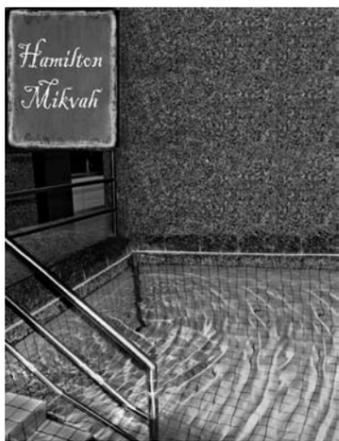
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ADAS ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

Water is the symbol of life and the embodiment of cohesion. As such, it is appropriate that the image of clear water is binding the Hamilton Jewish community together as one.

On Thursday, March 5th, our community will be hosting an elegant dessert reception, and concert, featuring internationally acclaimed pianist, Shoshana Telner, and renowned violinist, Evgenia Epshtein. The concert, benefiting the Hamilton Mikvah Ritualarium, will be co-hosted by Tova Green of the Adas Israel, Karen Selsberg of the Beth Jacob, Faiji Itkin of Chabad Lubavitch, and Paula Baruch of Temple Anshe Sholom. This joint initiative, spanning all denominations, underscores the centrality of the Mikvah and its timeless place in Jewish life.

From time immemorial, the Mikvah has been a powerful symbol of life and rebirth. The word Mikvah itself means "hope." It is an affirmation of Jewish continuity and is a central feature of Jewish family life.



Adalia Schweitzer Photography

The evening's music ensembles will capture these themes of life and resilience.

Pianist Shoshana Telner, who recently moved to Hamilton with her husband Dr. Herbert Brill, was described by Hamilton Magazine as one of the city's, "most fascinating people and inspired individuals." At age 16, Shoshana made her solo orchestral debut with the National Arts Centre Orchestra. Since that time, she has been awarded numerous honours in both national and international

competitions. Her solo and chamber music performances have been broadcast on CBC Radio.

Shoshana received her Master's degree from the prestigious Juilliard School in New York and a Doctorate in performance from McGill University. She has taught piano and coached ensembles at several prominent universities across North America.

Violinist, Evgenia Epshtein began her violin studies at age 6 in Sverdlovsk, Russia. She later immigrated to Israel where she studied at the Tel Aviv Academy of Music and the Rotterdam Royal Academy. At the Academy, she was the recipient of various prizes in violin and chamber music and took part in the Master Classes of Isaac Stern. Evgenia will be playing a seventeenth century violin by Ruggeri granted by the American-Israeli Cultural Foundation.

The concert reception is open to all and will be held at the Adas Israel Congregation, 125 Cline Avenue South, Hamilton. Tickets are available for \$25 at 905.528.0039.

JEWISH NATIONAL FUND



KKL-JNF builds security and agricultural roads near the Gaza border

For nearly two years now, Israel has found itself in the throes of a serious security crisis. The situation has taken its toll on the normal lives of everyone in the country, and the sense of a lack of personal security has resulted in a high degree of fear and anxiety. Security is, now more than ever, at the top of Israel's national priorities. The Jewish National Fund - Keren Kayemeth L'Israel is aware of the country's special needs at this time, and its projects directly impact the complex security situation Israel is now facing.

Together with the ministries of Defense and Agriculture, the National Road Company and relevant regional councils, KKL-JNF builds security and agricultural roads. These vital roads ensure safe passage for IDF soldiers as they go about their daily task of protecting lives in communities throughout Israel. Since farmers,

civilians and school children also use these roads as well, they make a tremendous difference in the struggle to maintain a normal course of life.

KKL-JNF works on security projects throughout Israel. The work includes earthworks, drainage, foundations and paving.

In the western Negev, in the region bordering on the Gaza Strip, but no less in other areas that are within missile and artillery range, our security roads are a vital component in day-to-day life. Military patrols regularly use the roads to keep the local communities safe, farmers could not tend their crops without them (particularly in times of war) and children would not reach school safely. Thanks to KKL-JNF's road building activity, the difficult situation residents of the western Negev now find themselves in, can be improved.

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Preparation is the key to all good research. Begin with what you already know, and write it down. You can always edit or make corrections later. Ask key family members what they remember about the person you are researching, especially their birth, marriage, and death dates and locations of each. Any accompanying stories about family members or events are also valuable to jot down. Your family may hesitate at first, thinking that they don't "know anything", but with a little prompting and a few well-placed queries, you can find out a lot more than you expected.

Old photographs can help jog a memory. Ask questions about the persons in the photo, such as how old they were, where was the photo taken, what year, what their names are. Even the reverse side of a photograph can yield missing facts. Other papers such as ketubas, diaries, landing

records, naturalization papers, and civil or religious birth/marriage/death certificates can lead an astute researcher to a fuller picture of their family history. Sometimes recording (on tape or on film) a person's experiences will yield a treasure-trove of helpful information. Always be sensitive to their feelings, especially if they have survived the Holocaust, as this can dredge up painful memories. Interview the person in small stages so that they will feel comfortable with you. Have specific questions on hand, so that you are not tongue-tied. It is surprising how tiny tidbits can help to put together the entire picture. For example, one of our relatives used to say that his father was born in Hastings, Ontario, near Niagara Falls. But Hastings isn't anywhere near Niagara Falls. Could it be located near some other "falls" and he has confused the two locations? The 1901 census record showed the

family definitely living in Hastings. In fact, his father often used to visit his sister who happened to live in Niagara Falls, and this is where the mix-up occurred. After searching unsuccessfully for over twenty years for near-relatives, we have finally met with a cousin from the Niagara Falls family!

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton & Area (JGSH) meets on the last Wednesday of every month at Temple Anshe Sholom. at 7:30 pm.

Our February 18 meeting will feature Ralph Bloch, explaining how to choose genealogy software to meet your specific needs. On March 18, Alan McKenzie will discuss "DNA for the Genealogist". Additional Information can be found at www.jgsh.org or by contacting Hazel Boon at president@jgsh.org or phone 905-524-3345.

Current Activities and Issues
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Hold the Date!
Sunday, May 24, 2009

Hilton and Shirley Silberg
2009 Negev Dinner honourees



The Board of The Jewish National Fund of Hamilton is pleased to announce that the 2009 Negev Dinner will pay tribute to Hilton and Shirley Silberg. Both Hilton and Shirley have been very active in the community over the years and Hilton is the immediate past President JNF in Hamilton. The Dinner is scheduled to take place on Sunday May 24th, 2009 at the Hamilton Convention Centre.

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