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Farber: 'Never again' has become 'again and again'

Holocaust Education Month launch event keynote speaker **Bernie Farber** describes Canada's treatment of First Nations peoples as "genocide" and asks, "Is our conscience clear?" **Louise Rachlis** reports.

"Tonight my own thoughts are laced with tears, confusion and questions about human kind," said Bernie Farber as he spoke about Kristallnacht and the Holocaust. "There have been things in Jewish history too horrible to be believed, but not too horrible to have happened."

Farber was the keynote speaker, November 9 at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre, for the official launch of Holocaust Education Month in Ottawa.

Farber, who grew up in Ottawa, is the

son of a Polish Jew who lost his first wife, two children and other family members in the Holocaust.

He said up to one-and-a-half million Armenians were murdered in the first genocide of the modern era, and Hitler said, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

The "book on the Holocaust of the 20th Century that should have closed, is still open," he said, mentioning later genocides in Cambodia, Kosovo, Darfur, Rwanda, and "casting our eyes to the present day," massacres in Africa and

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PHOTO: FRANCIE GREENSPOON

Keynote speaker Bernie Farber (second from right) at the launch of Holocaust Education Month with (from left) Jewish Federation of Ottawa President and CEO Andrea Freedman, Israeli Ambassador Rafael Barak, Shoah Committee Chair Mina Cohn, and event MC Laurence Wall.



Kevin Vickers at the Knesset

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (left) met with House of Commons Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Vickers at the Knesset in Jerusalem, November 12.

Vickers told Netanyahu about the events in Ottawa on October 22 and how he stopped the terrorist who shot Cpl. Nathan Cirillo at the National War Memorial and then entered Parliament's Centre Block.

Netanyahu praised Vickers on his bravery and quick response, which saved the lives of many.

"This terror attack in Ottawa proves, once again, that Islamic radical terrorism has no limits and respects no borders. Israel and Canada stand side-by-side in the international effort to eliminate terrorism," said Netanyahu.

Vickers, who was in Israel for an international security conference, was honoured in the Knesset for his actions.

PHOTO: HAIM TZACH/GPO

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Launch: 'We are living in a time of outrage after outrage'

Continued from page 1

Syria. "Never again' has, sadly, become 'again and again.' While we have a tendency to look over there, it is here as well."

He said, "The question for tonight is 'Is our conscience clear?'"

Farber, the former CEO of the Canadian Jewish Congress, is now senior vice-president for government and external relations at Gemini Power Corporation, which helps First Nations reserves in Northern and Northwestern Ontario build sustainable industries.

He said it's time for Canadians to "accept the sad truth" that the Canadian government engaged in genocide of First Nations people during the 19th and 20th centuries. What has been done in Canada fits the definition of genocide, he said, citing nutrition experiments, residential schools, adoption by non-aboriginal families and being allowed to die from tuberculosis.

Canada recognizes five genocides, he said, citing the Holocaust and the Ukrainian, Armenian, Rwandan and Yugoslavian genocides.

"The time has come for Canada to recognize the sixth genocide, in search of a name but not of historical facts," he said, referring to Canada's First Nations. "A national conversation is now engaged."

CBC Ottawa radio news anchor Laurence Wall was the evening's MC.

"What do we do about the short attention span of the world?" Wall asked Farber during the question period.

"We are living in a time of outrage after outrage," Farber said. "We have done as Jews an exceptionally good job of educating about the Shoah. This is what has to be done. There is only one antidote, and it is remembering history. Education is paramount ... We are teachers and we have long, long memories. We will continue to teach those lessons, and it's the only way forward."

To a question on anti-Semitism in France, he replied, "Despite how you feel about the French government or the U.K. government, they do take this seriously. It is not Hitler ... We are certainly not turning our backs. Democratic nations will protect their citizens."

To another question on Iran's nuclear capability, he said, "I believe one thing: the State of Israel is very focussed on this. The Jews fully understand the lessons of 'never again.'"

Mina Cohn, chair of the Shoah Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, and Karen Palayew, Ottawa chair of March of the Living, presented Queen's University student Nathan Cantor with special recognition for Outstanding Student Leadership in Holocaust Education and Remembrance.

Cohn said Cantor returned from the March of the Living and organized two



PHOTO: FRANCIÉ GREENSPOON

Nathan Cantor (centre) receives special recognition for Outstanding Student Leadership in Holocaust Education and Remembrance at the launch of Holocaust Education Month, November 9, from Shoah Committee Chair Mina Cohn (right) and Ottawa March of the Living Chair Karen Palayew.

events for Jewish and non-Jewish students: a screening of the film *Paperclips*, which uses individual paper clips to represent each of the six million Jewish lives lost during the Holocaust; and a student assembly on the Holocaust at Sir Robert Borden High School.

Seven March of the Living alumni – Madeleine Burke, Jordan Geist, Abby Greenberg, Rachel Kardish, Joshua Kofsky, Jacob Melamed and Matthew Silverman – presented a timeline of some

of the hundreds of little steps leading up to the Holocaust and compared them to events like the wave of anti-Semitism in Europe this past summer.

"We feel it is our duty to make sure 'never again' doesn't become 'again and again,'" they said.

In attendance were many Holocaust survivors as well as dignitaries, including community rabbis, Israeli Ambassador Rafael Barak, MPPs Yasir Naqvi and John Fraser, and MP Royal Galipeau.

End of an era as 153 Chapel Street comes down; Beth Shalom to find temporary home at SJCC in April

BY ANITA ALMSTEDT
CONGREGATION BETH SHALOM

The redevelopment of the property at 151-153 Chapel Street – the site of Congregation Beth Shalom's synagogue building and the former Jewish Community Centre (JCC) – began October 29 when Trinity Properties Investments Inc. and Forgestone Capital Management GP Inc., which bought the property last year, began to demolish the former JCC building at 153 Chapel.

Beth Shalom services and other communal activities will continue as usual at 151 Chapel Street over the next few months during the first phase of the demolition.

However, by the time the second phase

of the demolition begins in May, Congregation Beth Shalom will have moved to our temporary new home on the Jewish Community Campus, where we will have office space in the Soloway JCC and hold weekly Shabbat services in the main social hall. The daily minyan will be held in the chapel at Hillel Lodge.

Beth Shalom has signed a one-year lease at the Soloway JCC, with options to extend the lease, should that be necessary.

A preservation task force has been assembled and is currently deciding which artifacts of religious or historical significance will move with the congregation to the Soloway JCC and which will be put into storage.

Both Barry Sohn, president and chief operating officer of the Soloway JCC, and Stephen Schneiderman, executive director of Hillel Lodge, have been extremely supportive and have made this emotionally challenging time in the shul's history much easier.

Beth Shalom's first service at the Soloway JCC will be held Friday, April 3,



Demolition begins at 153 Chapel Street, the site of the former JCC. Congregation Beth Shalom will continue to hold services at 151 Chapel Street until the end of March before temporarily moving to the Jewish Community Campus.

Correction

In the *Emerging Gen* column (print edition, November 10), Esther Peters' synagogue affiliation was incorrectly identified. In fact, she attends Ohev Yisroel, the Orthodox congregation in downtown Ottawa.

which, fittingly, is the evening of the first Passover seder. The holiday, which, among other things, marks the renewal

of the people of Israel, this year, will also symbolically mark the renewal of Congregation Beth Shalom.

Tel Aviv University president touts innovation at Ottawa conference

BY MONIQUE ELLIOT

Tel Aviv is the capital of the start-up nation, and Israel is actively seeking to improve its academic and entrepreneurial relationships with Canada and beyond, said a prominent Israeli innovation expert.

Joseph Klafter, president of Tel Aviv University (TAU) in Israel, was in Ottawa, October 28, to share some of his university's best strategies about how to boost the innovation industry at a conference hosted by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC).

"The university is a huge portfolio, a huge start-up," Klafter said of TAU's unique position as a leading global innovation hub.

"We are among the top 10 [universities in the world] for nurturing entrepreneurs," he said.

Klafter said the university has been successfully merging academics and entrepreneurship by allowing students to focus their studies between subjects which, at first glance, are completely unrelated.

This strategy has allowed students to bring their distinctive skill sets and ideas to industries that often may be lacking interdisciplinary perspectives.

The university also offers optional courses in entrepreneurship, where no academic credit is given, but the lessons are invaluable.

The result, Klafter said, has transformed Tel Aviv into the "Silicon Valley of Israel."

"The world is watching Israel in terms of the start-up nation, and how ... you bridge from the university environment to entrepreneurial start-ups," said AUCC president Paul Davidson.

This gathering was the second of a series of AUCC innovation conferences, as Israeli and German academics and industry leaders were invited to share their approaches and collaborate with their Canadian counterparts. The two countries were selected to participate specifically for their track records of producing successful entrepreneurs.

"In particular, we're drawing on Germany and Israel because each of their systems is similar to ours but have very pronounced differences," Davidson said. "We want to learn from those differences and see where there are ways we can collaborate effectively."

Some Canadian and Israeli universities have already established strong academic partnerships in the fields of medicine, engineering and technology, biology, law, and business.

The University of Ottawa represents Canada's capital with the LL.M law exchange program between itself and Haifa University, dating back to 2011.

Martha Crago, vice-president of research at Dalhousie University in Halifax, said Dal's research partnerships with seven other Israeli universities, primarily Ben-



PHOTO: MONIQUE ELLIOT

Tel Aviv University's innovative merger of entrepreneurship and academics has helped make Tel Aviv the capital of the 'start-up nation,' says university president Joseph Klafter, seen speaking at a conference in Ottawa, October 28.

Gurion University, in the field of ocean studies have been an incredible opportunity for Canadians and Israelis alike.

"At the grassroots level, it gives people new partners," she said. "And Israeli partners are a lot more prone to think about commercialization than Canadian partners might have been."

The effects of academic collaboration, especially between Canada and Israel, are far-reaching, said Israeli Ambassador Rafael Barak.

"The fact that so many Israelis have come especially from Israel to attend this conference is their proof of confidence in the possibilities and the co-operation between Canada and Israel," said Barak, who attended the conference.

Among the broader initiatives being pursued at such conferences is the attempt to bring together Canada and Israel's respective scientific communities and increasing trade between the two countries, he added.

"Science is becoming one of the backbones of our relationship with Canada," Barak said. "I encourage the Jewish community to try to bring together some Israeli and Canadian universities with their support."

LETTERS WELCOME

Letters to the Editor are welcome if they are brief, signed, timely, and of interest to our readership. The *Bulletin* reserves the right to refuse, edit or condense letters. The *Mailbag* column will be published as space permits.

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Our 'sacred responsibility' to stand up to hatred and discrimination

Andrea Freedman, president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, reflects on Holocaust Education Month and the need for all of us to 'fight every form of discrimination.'

When I was in my 20s and a graduate student at Carleton University, I vividly recall my roommate – who came from a small town in Alberta – when opening a box of laundry detergent and noting the measuring scoop was missing, casually remarked, "We got Jewed."

As the words escaped her mouth, she immediately realized that a mistake had been made. Whether her mistake was having assimilated hurtful language that had been widely accepted and part of the local vernacular where she grew up, or her mistake was inadvertently saying what she really believed in front of a proud Jew, I can never be certain. We did however engage in a lengthy discussion about anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, how words matter and the need for vigilance against all forms of hatred.

Organized by the Shoah Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, November is Holocaust Education Month, a fixed and important time on our community calendar to honour the victims, reflect on the horror, and make actionable the words *Never Again*. At the launch of this year's Holocaust Education Month, keynote speaker Bernie Farber's address asked the provocative question "has never again become again and again?"

I would posit that, with the last generation of eyewitnesses to the Holocaust slowly slipping away, we will each play a role in determining the answer to this question. For example, the onus is now on 25-plus years of March of the Living (MOL) alumni educating their peers and speaking about the Holocaust and other genocides.

On the MOL website is a pledge to



PHOTO: ASHLEY FRASER

Holocaust Education Month is an important time in the community, says Federation President and CEO Andrea Freedman.

amongst other things: keep alive and honour the legacy of the multitudes of our people who perished in the Holocaust; fight anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism, Holocaust denial and all other forms of hatred directed towards the Jewish people and Israel; fight every form of discrimination manifested against any religion, nationality or ethnic group; and create a world where *Never Again* becomes a reality for the Jewish people and, indeed, for all people.

This sacred responsibility is shared by all of us; by the organized Jewish community and through individual efforts. The Jewish Federation of Ottawa embraces our duty to organize Holocaust

education initiatives, primarily through the work of the Shoah Committee, by funding and organizing the March of the Living, and to promote the efforts of others who engage in educational pursuits and advocacy initiatives. We are proud to work with and fund our national advocacy partner, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, in educating other communities and elected officials on the horrors of the Holocaust and the necessity of practising tolerance.

As the leadership of the Shoah Committee undergoes change, and dialogue between Federation's Board and members of the Shoah Committee is ongoing about how Holocaust education can best be accomplished, this is a good opportunity for those with passion and knowledge to bring their skills and join others already engaged in Holocaust education.

If you are interested in exploring this opportunity, please contact Benita Siemiatycki at 613-798-9818, ext. 227 or bsiemiatycki@jewishottawa.com.

We all have a responsibility to educate (as I tried to with my university roommate so many years ago), to participate in educational activities so we are in a better position to do so, and to fight discrimination and hatred of any kind.

Recently, the North Delta Minor Hockey Association of British Columbia did not hesitate to fire one of its coaches when it discovered he had posted pro-Nazi, revisionist remarks on Facebook. As a parent remarked to the *Surrey Now*, "You can't be a Nazi and coach kids hockey."

As a proud Canadian, it is heartening that this type of hatred and anti-Semitism is not tolerated in our country. It is up to all of us to ensure that it never will be.

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Sunday, November 23: Rabbi Steven Garten, rabbi emeritus, will review *Jews and Words* by Amoz Oz and Fania Oz-Salzberger. Bagels, 9:30 am; review 10:00 am.

Sunday, December 7: Angus Smith will review *A Replacement Life* by Boris Fishman. Bagels, 9:30 am; review 10:00 am.

Books are available through the Ottawa Public Library and the Greenberg Families Library at the SJCC. The Malca Pass Library and the Temple Israel Library also carry some of these titles. For information please contact Shayla at Mindell@rogers.com

Norman Klein, Interim Rabbi

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Breaking news at www.ottawajewishbulletin.com

JFS outreach worker was friend and advocate for street people

BY ANDREA GARDNER
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES OF OTTAWA

Jewish Family Services of Ottawa (JFS) lost a friend, a colleague and an advocate for street-involved people in our Jewish community and the broader Ottawa community when Pete Cassidy passed away, November 8, from natural causes at age 54.

Cassidy was a perfect advocate. He knew all too well the life of a street-involved person with addictions. Those were his roots.

Pete was introduced to JFS Executive Director Mark Zarecki 15 years ago by Natalie Gussman.

A number of Jewish people with street involvement felt there was a need for a Jewish presence for Jews on the street, and Gussman and her crew approached Zarecki to advocate for JFS to support a street outreach program.

At the time, Cassidy had been clean for just one year from an addiction and was living in a recovery house. Prior to his recovery, he'd spent his days and nights injecting drugs and living on the street in Ottawa. After waking up in a jail cell one

morning, charged with attempted murder (he was not convicted) after a drug-filled night he had no memory of, Cassidy walked into detox, went into rehab and made a commitment to give back to those he had spent so much time taking from.

In 2001, the conversation began between Zarecki and Cassidy about helping Jewish street-involved people and the broader street population. A consensus was reached. Cassidy was pleased JFS was not evangelizing and this appealed to him as many of the religious outreach groups operating on the streets were intent on converting people.

Coming from the Yiddish term *sachele fun* (street wise), the JFS StreetSmarts program was born with Pete as the team leader and, more importantly, its soul. He knew what the homeless needed and he reached out every day to Ottawa's homeless and street-involved, providing crisis intervention, advocacy, referrals and essential items – including non-judgmental support – to those hardest to serve. Cassidy kept to his word and created the Jewish street presence in Ottawa.

To the homeless, Cassidy was often their only friend and the only person who would reach out and hug them. He believed in all people regardless of where they were or what they had done. He believed each homeless person deserved respect and deserved to be hugged. A hug from him was no small thing as the homeless are feared and often have no physical contact.

For many in the community, he was the link between family members and their son or daughter living on the streets.

For the mayors, city counsellors and funders, and for the concerned people who accompanied him on his nightly outreach walks, he would share the reality of the vulnerable, the addicts and the indigenous who survived on the fringes of the community. He wanted to make a difference, and he did. He did that quietly, consistently and without the need for recognition for 15 years.

Pete Cassidy's work had an impact on all who met him. His passion for street outreach and his larger-than-life presence have left a lasting impression



Jewish Family Services StreetSmarts outreach worker Pete Cassidy is remembered for the compassion he provided to the homeless and street-involved people in Ottawa.

on the homeless community of Ottawa and with all who worked with him.

"The next time you see somebody who is homeless, just remember that person could be your son or your daughter, or your mother or your father, or your grandparent. More importantly, it could be you," he said. "That's the reality. It doesn't take much to become homeless."

How wonderful it is that
nobody need wait a single
moment before beginning to
improve the world.

Anne Frank

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FEDERATION
REPORT



STEVEN KIMMEL
CHAIR

Coming together as one when we have a common need or goal

activities – from Challah baking, to Shabbat dinners and Shabbat lunches and special lectures. More than 475 people gathered at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre to participate in a unity Havdalah Service and concert. Additionally, many people invited guests to their homes for intimate Shabbat dinners. Shabbat rocked in Ottawa!

It is clear to me that we are a community of committed individuals, synagogues and organizations and, collectively, we roll up our sleeves and take actions that strengthen our community.

The motivation to make this materialize started when one individual's passion to participate in the *Shabbat Project* was shared with community rabbis and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa. From that point, three weeks before the scheduled event, we witnessed harmony, co-oper-

ation and unity, powered by Federation serving as the convener and chief marketer.

I am proud Federation brought hundreds of Ottawans together, joining a global movement, to experience the joy and power of Shabbat.

It is truly amazing how we come together as one when we have a common need or goal.

Over the summer, we had similar experiences, when the Federation, in conjunction with CIJA and synagogues, gathered our community to show support for our brothers and sisters in Israel when

they needed us most. Our community has a proud tradition of coming together during difficult times, and, as many observed at the unity Havdallah, it felt good to do so in the positive celebration of Shabbat. It just felt right!

How many of us make the extra effort and drop everything to attend a funeral or shiva, but think twice about travelling for a simcha? In Jewish communal life, we need to support Israel in times of crisis and we need to be vigilant against the scourge of anti-Semitism. However, equally important to living a full Jewish life, we have to celebrate Shabbat, enjoy the sweet taste of honey on Rosh Hashanah, and participate in fun, engaging and spiritually uplifting events. It is the balance that makes Federation programs such as the March of the Living so effective – from the depths of despair and suffering to the wonders of modern day Israel.

The Jewish Federation of Ottawa's mission "to advance and promote an exceptional quality of Jewish life" spans the entire spectrum of community-building activity from the PJ Library program, providing free Jewish-themed books for young families, to Israel solidarity rallies and everything in between. And, on Saturday night, October 25, I am proud that Federation brought hundreds of Ottawans together, joining a global movement, to experience the joy and power of Shabbat.

Am Yisroel Chai, B'Shalom.

I am writing this column just 48 hours after Ottawa's first ever participation in the *Shabbat Project*, an innovative program with the goal of getting individuals and organizations to experience Shabbat in some meaningful manner.

Did you know it is estimated that more than one million individuals around the world took part in the *Shabbat Project*?

In Ottawa, our numbers exceeded all expectations! More than 1,000 people participated in a variety of Shabbat

FROM THE
PULPIT



RABBI BARRY SCHLESINGER
AGUDATH ISRAEL

A letter to Dov, my imaginary friend

28:10-12, "And Yaakov left Beersheba, and he went to Haran. And he arrived at the place and lodged there because the sun had set, and he took some of the stones of the place and placed [them] at his head, and he lay down in that place. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the ground and its top reached to heaven; and behold, angels of God were ascending and descending upon it."

The next nighttime event appears in Parshat VaYishlach (Bereishit 32:25-29): "And Yaakov was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. When he saw that he could not prevail against him, he touched the socket of his hip, and the socket of Yaakov's hip became dislocated as he wrestled with him. And he (the angel) said, 'Let me go, for dawn is breaking,' but he (Yaakov) said, 'I will not let you go unless you have blessed me.' So he said to him, 'What is your name?' and he said, 'Yaakov.' And he said, 'Your name shall no longer be called Yaakov, but Israel, because you have commanding power with [an angel of] God and with men, and you have prevailed.'"

Dov, the Rabbis have taught us *Maase Avot Siman L'nbanim*, the actions of the fathers are a sign for the children. We are the offspring of Avraham and Yitzchak, but I believe we are most like Yaakov and

it is based on Yaakov that we developed as a people. Like him, we have always dreamed for our homeland; for redemption; and for better times. We have never given up the dream and, although we dreamed and continue to dream, we aren't "pipe dreamers"; our feet stand firmly on the ground. Realizing the dream is often a difficult task and it seems we are asked to wrestle and struggle "until dawn," we must persevere and believe dawn will come – and with it, a blessing.

Dov, like Yaakov, we must struggle for the Land of Israel, and this means we often must deal with deceitful enemies. I understand that the anti-Israel, anti-Zionist campus voices are very loud and that Israel Apartheid Week is going to be distressing.

Dov do not despair! Your presence on campus is vital and your advocacy for Israel is needed. Just remember the Torah commands us "not to stand idly by," when Israel is attacked. You are on the campus frontlines. Stand proud! You and your fellow Jewish students are our ambassadors on campus. I spoke with a rep from Hillel and she assured me they will help and guide any student interested in strengthening the Zionist, pro-Israel voice in your university. Shalom and Kol Tuv, Barry

Dear Dov,
Thank you so much for your post-Rosh Hashanah email. It was wonderful hearing from you. I'm so sorry that you couldn't get home for the High Holidays, but I'm happy to have heard that the *tefillot* at Hillel were beautiful. How was the food you prepared in your Alpha Epsilon Pi Jewish fraternity house? Did you use Shira's tzimis recipe? Has your girlfriend Liat finished her service in the Israeli army?

Now, regarding your question about why we are called Bnei Yisrael, the Children of Israel, and not the Children of Avraham, I'd like to suggest it all begins in this coming week's parsha with the first of Yaakov's two dramatic nocturnal events.

Parshat VaYetze opens with Bereishit

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FROM THE EDITOR



MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

New film explains connections between Judaism, the Jewish people, and the Land of Israel

explain the ongoing centrality of the Land of Israel, and of Jerusalem, to Judaism and the Jewish people, the constant presence of Jewish people there from ancient biblical times to the present, and the legal case for the modern state.

Earlier this month, I attended the Canadian premiere of *Body and Soul*, presented by the Free Thinking Film Society at the Library and Archives Canada auditorium – an evening that also included a question-and-answer period with Greenfield and Rabbi Reuven Bulka.

Although there is little in *Body and Soul* that will surprise anyone who has studied Jewish history seriously, the commentaries are fascinating. Among those interviewed in the film are such religious experts as Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the former chief rabbi of the United Kingdom, and Rabbi Jeffrey Woolf, an authority on the relationships between Judaism, Christianity and Islam; renowned academics, including historian Jonathan Sarna of Brandeis University and Robert S. Wistrich of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, probably the world's leading expert on anti-Semitism;

and legal experts, including MP Irwin Cotler, a former minister of justice of Canada, renowned Harvard professor emeritus Alan Dershowitz, and Alan Baker, a former Israeli ambassador to Canada.

The evidence these and the other experts in the film cite – including religious texts, archeology and historical records – is compelling, and Greenfield has woven all of the various strands and commentaries together beautifully in the 65-minute presentation. This is a film I strongly encourage all in the community to see at the earliest opportunity. It seems to me this is a film that should be shown at schools, synagogues and community centres. It is also available on DVD. Visit www.bodyandsoulthemovie.com for more information about the film and to view the trailer.

MAZEL TOV, HARVEY GLATT!

As some know, I have long been active in the Canadian folk music scene. So, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I extend a hearty mazel tov to community member Harvey Glatt, who will receive the

Unsung Hero Award at the 2014 Canadian Folk Music Awards ceremony on Saturday night, November 29. The annual event moves from city to city and region to region around the country and takes place this year at the Bronson Centre in Ottawa.

The Unsung Hero Award is presented in recognition of “the exceptional contribution of an individual, group or organization to any aspect of the Canadian folk music scene.”

That Ottawa, today, boasts one of the most active folk music scenes in Canada is, in many ways, due to Harvey's pioneering efforts as a concert producer, artist manager, record store owner and radio station owner. For many decades, he, along with his wife Louise, has been one of Ottawa's most important and influential patrons of the arts. Their patronage, I would add, is equally significant in the folk, classical and jazz worlds, and in the theatre scene, too.

There are three major awards of this type on the Canadian folk scene, and, with the Unsung Hero Award, Harvey will have received all three. Just last month, he received Folk Music Ontario's Estelle Klein Award, which is presented annually for “significant contributions to Ontario's folk music community,” and he was the 2010 recipient of the Ottawa Folk Festival's Helen Verger Award, which is presented annually to “an individual who has made significant, sustained contributions to folk/roots music in Canada.”

One of the ugliest aspects of the movement to delegitimize the State of Israel is the denial of the deep historical and religious connections of Judaism and the Jewish people to the Holy Land – a denial that also seems to be at the root of the Palestinian Authority's refusal to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, the nation-state of the Jewish people. The late Palestinian Authority (PA) president Yasser Arafat, for example, rejected the historical existence of the ancient Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, a deceit that seems to remain as PA policy.

American filmmaker Gloria Greenfield has responded brilliantly to this effort at delegitimization with *Body and Soul: The State of the Jewish Nation*, a documentary in which 36 talking heads – including academic, religious and legal experts –

IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS



JASON MOSCOVITZ

Jean Charest: The first person to ever make me feel old

teen and I would be reporting on TV, his father would say, “Pay attention, that Moscovitz guy is good.”

When we met, he was in his early-20s, I was in my early-30s, and we'd both just had our first children. Both baby girls. We hit up a friendship that would last as long as he was only moderately successful in politics. When he became a Mulroney cabinet minister, the active friendship ended. It was not healthy for a minister to be too friendly with a reporter.

But, professionally, we watched and were interested in each other's careers, and relations were always good. I remember his run for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative party in 1993. He put on a great campaign, but could not beat the establishment-backed Kim Campbell. He was heartbroken, and political fate had a far worse turn for him.

After the 1993 election, Charest, by default, became the Tory leader with a measly two MPs elected from across Canada: himself and another lonely soul from New Brunswick. His dream was to be prime minister of Canada, but, from a base of two, that was impossible.

When we met a few weeks ago, he was 18 months into a law career begun after serving as Quebec premier for nine years. I'd had no contact with him in those years. In fact, he became premier after I had left journalism. We had a lot of history to catch up on.

After the Parti Québécois was beaten seven months ago, a strong consensus developed that Quebec separatism had suffered its worst electoral defeat in four decades and it was a great victory for a united Canada. While Charest was not part of that election campaign, his footprints were all over it.

He left his dream to be prime minister of Canada in 1997 because the federalist side in Quebec was in desperate need of a leader after its near-defeat in the 1995 referendum. He reluctantly took up the call and then spent almost 15 years passionately working to help change the mindset in Quebec.

Sure we talked politics when we met, and I told him that, as legacies go, his will remain intact as a politician who, from start to finish, was true to his own personal brand. Charest always believed

in a strong Quebec within Canada and fought for that his whole political life. When his career was over, he could proudly say that mission was accomplished with flying colours.

Now, an interesting question would be whether he would like to renew that other dream of becoming prime minister. My instincts told me not to ask the question, despite knowing politics is a career where dreams never die.

My guess is that he would love to try again. And, while his heart may tell him to go for it, his head tells him the odds would be a few million to one. Although still relatively young, his days in politics are done, and he knows it.

How is it we met after all these years?

Well, I wasn't alone. My daughter, Hannah, was visiting from Israel. The doctorate thesis she is working on is about national identity, and post-secondary education in Quebec is one of her case studies. She had written to Charest requesting an interview and he replied favourably, with one request: that I would be there to say hello.

Hannah was thrilled to interview a former premier and that I could be there to share her happiness and make her visit from Israel that much more memorable.

An old friend with a good heart made it happen.

Former Quebec premier Jean Charest is a lot greyer than I remembered, but that radiant smile is still intact, as is his good nature and outlook on life. I hadn't seen him in a very long time.

We met recently at his law office in Montreal and instinctively embraced each other. We go back a long way. It was 30 years ago, when he was first elected as a member of Parliament from Sherbrooke, Quebec, in the 1984 Mulroney sweep.

I will always remember him as the first person to make me begin to feel old. I was standing outside the House of Commons, when he introduced himself. He told me that, when he was a young



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RESPONSE TO STEPHEN L. HARRIS

The letter from Stephen L Harris about Barbara Crook's October 22 *My Israel* column (*Mailbag*, November 10) demonstrates a lack of basic understanding.

Firstly, it is true that the settlement policies in the disputed areas, which Harris chooses to call "occupied territories," have become an obstacle to a two-state solution, but only because Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority and its supporters have recently chosen to make it so, and because many Israel bashers accept this view uncritically. There is strong legal and political evidence that they are not occupied territories, and the open-minded can find this evidence, supported by some 1,000 legal scholars referenced at <http://tinyurl.com/legal-scholars-on-settlements>.

Secondly, equating ISIS inhumanity to Israel's attempts to prevent ferocious rocket attacks (more than 4,000 missiles launched) and tunnel building – all of which were aimed at civilian areas with no military value – is an obscenity. To even suggest Israel was targeting Palestinian civilians is simply a lie. To raise the disproportionality canard is disingenuous in the extreme. Does Harris seriously believe we should have eased up on our efforts to take out Hamas' offensive capability so as to ensure an increase in the number of Israeli deaths in the name of proportionality? Has he not seen the videos and reports of those few courageous journalists who established definitively that Gazan casualties were caused essentially by the disregard of Hamas for the lives of its own citizens in order to maximize disproportionality?

Thirdly, what can he mean by a more balanced Israeli approach? Should we have turned the other cheek when Hamas was working furiously to kill us? Did Israel violate any of the ceasefires with Hamas? Did Israel not offer emergency medical and food assistance to the enemy in the midst of a war? Does the fact that we are militarily stronger dictate that therefore we should simply sacrifice more of our children to their maniacal strategy of sacrificing their own children?

As for his call for Jews to work harder to achieve peace, does he not know about Arafat rejecting Barak's concessions during Clinton's efforts at mediation, or Abbas' not even acknowledging Olmert and Livni's generous terms? It is time for those who love peace so much that they want us to commit suicide so as to ease their troubled consciences to read and think more, and preach less. Our ongoing efforts in Israeli hospitals to treat the family members of Hamas leaders and

casualties of the brutal Syrian war, to aid victims of natural disasters abroad, and so many more humanitarian activities, says more about Israel's commitment to peace than the blame game played by those who are wedded to the fatal illusion of a "peace process."

We know our neighbourhood rather better than those who do not live here, and the vast majority of Israelis support what our government is doing. That is what democracy is all about. But, then, maybe Israel's democracy, our rule of law and our free press and enviable civil rights are not so precious to those on the sidelines who are trying to help us be their kind of better Jews, while avoiding any of the consequences.

**Harvey Lithwick
Metar, Israel**

(Harvey Lithwick, still an Ottawa Jewish Bulletin subscriber, and his wife made aliyah from Ottawa 25 years ago.)

KOSHER MEAT AT LOBLAWS

It's encouraging to read that Dave McDonough, manager of Loblaws College Square, is committed to taking action to better serve the Jewish community (*Mailbag*, November 10). But the proof, as they say, "will be in the kugel."

To the store's credit, the quantity and variety of kosher items has expanded in recent years to the extent that I rarely seek kosher groceries elsewhere, even when I happen to be in Montreal.

On the other hand, the Ottawa store is apparently subject to its kosher meat suppliers' rationing system, especially before the holidays. More than once, I have been told that a meat or poultry order could not be guaranteed, and "we just get what we get." To make matters worse, Loblaws staff doesn't know what they will have for sale until the total meat order arrives at the store and is unpacked!

This is not an acceptable way for a major retailer to run a butcher shop in 2014.

If the current meat suppliers treat the Ottawa store as a second-tier customer, one has to ask why Loblaws continues to do business with them. Surely there are other kosher meat suppliers who would be happy to expand their customer base and fill orders to the convenience of Ottawa purchasers, and not just to suit themselves.

Vivian Astroff



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On October 24, 2014 in Toronto, Sylvia, beloved wife of George. Devoted mother of Howie (Heather Belfer), Paula and Carol (David Finkelstein). Cherished grandmother of Jordan, Jacob, Mitchell, Kayla and Jaime. Sylvia will be missed by her sister Anita (Mendel Shore), and predeceased by her brother Jerry. Donations may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, 1-888-473-4636.



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Herzl's leadership legacy explored in Ottawa

Theodore Herzl, the founding father of modern Zionism and visionary for the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland, was a leader whose influence is the topic of an assignment at the Ottawa Jewish Community School. Thanks to longtime Hebrew teacher Ruth Leibovitch, students will take a deeper look at the person whose vision laid the foundation for the Jewish National Fund and the modern State of Israel.

Students will consider Herzl's reaction to the land of Israel today. What would he say to the pioneers who emigrated to the Ottoman- and, then, British-controlled Palestine from the anti-Semitism of Europe? Do other world leaders – past and present – share Herzl's values and vision? What makes a leader? How do the pioneers of Israel compare to the pioneers who built Canada?

At a time when emigration to Israel has increased as a result of the latest wave of anti-Semitism in Europe, Herzl's vision for a Jewish homeland is a lesson in leadership for every generation to learn. Although he never saw Israel himself, Herzl's grave is visited by every IDF soldier to learn about the man that gave the Jewish people a dream to behold and believe in for all time. Kudos to the Ottawa Jewish Community School for bringing this lesson to life in our community.

JNF teaches Ottawa students about Israel's environment

When Herzl raised funds from European Jews to purchase land in Israel – many of whom would later perish in the Holocaust – we are sure he never imagined the transformation to lush green spaces from arid desert and malaria-infested swamps. Hadar Epstein, JNF's Education director, visited Ottawa Jewish schools in November to talk about how JNF cares for Israel's natural environment and its people. Topics included:

Water – Many challenges in Israel exist today – as do JNF solutions for Israel's water shortage problems and unpredictable rainfall. Students learn about from water reservoirs to effluent recycling plants;

Accessibility – JNF creates special accessible playgrounds for children with a variety of physical disabilities. Students learn and are then tasked with designing an accessible playground;

Sustainable Development – JNF is preserving Israel's environment and land for the next generation. The focus is on learning about clean energy, including the creation of solar power fields (miles of desert upon which are placed hundreds of solar panels that soak up the sun and produce solar energy), as well as using recycled water for agriculture;

Kehila (community) – The quality of life in small Israeli communities (especially those in need in the south of Israel) is enhanced by financial assistance from Canadian Jewish communities. The focus is on making positive change;

JNF Blue Box – A fun interactive program introduces young students to the JNF Blue Box. Using a large floor map of Israel and hidden blue boxes, students find the box and learn how blue box donations helped to develop the area of Israel the box was hidden in.

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Jewish university students need community now more than ever

First, there was the difficult summer when fallout from the war in Gaza wasn't limited to Israelis alone. Jews in many parts of the world felt a new wave of anti-Semitism rise in their own neighbourhoods.

Then, we learned of the beheadings perpetrated by the terrorists of ISIS – one of their victims a Jew. With calls from ISIS for increased terror around the world, it became clear the threats were real and could hit very close to home. And, last month, the unthinkable happened here in Ottawa: a terrorist attack that took the life of a soldier and thrust much of our downtown area into lockdown.

It's at times like these when people turn to family and community for comfort, reassurance and support. But, for many Jewish university students in Ottawa, their families are a flight or long bus ride away.

It wasn't surprising, then, for us to see a spike in attendance this year at the holiday gatherings for students organized by the Rohr Chabad Student Network of Ottawa. Every available chair and prayer book was taken at the Yom Kippur services we held on the University of Ottawa campus. Every slice of the 30 kg of brisket was gone by the end of our Rosh Hashanah dinner for students. And the Sukkah that always seemed to stretch to make enough room for all the students who've shown up in past years, just couldn't stretch enough this year, so we had to have students come back for second and third shifts.

There is a saying about one Jewish observance that can really be said about all Jewish observances: "More than the Jewish people have kept the Shabbat, the Shabbat has kept the Jewish people." It's the rituals and the traditions, especially during the holidays, that have brought Jews together and strengthened our peoplehood and Jewish identity. But, especially in today's turbulent times, young Jews far from home are desperately in need of this belonging, and it is our job as a community to provide it for them.

"During this time of rising anti-Semitism, Chabad provides a support system for students where we are able to feel truly comfortable," said Rosalie Springer, a law student from Toronto.

This support system is especially crucial for students



who find themselves in new surroundings without family nearby.

"It can be really difficult to maintain your Jewish identity when you are living in a new city away from home," said Jeremy Halpern of Toronto, a first-year medical student. "Chabad has truly become a second home for me, and I really enjoyed celebrating the Jewish holidays there."

Our Jewish peoplehood defines us and brings us together. Our peoplehood is marked by hallowed traditions that have been observed for thousands of years. They have given us hope, comfort and strength in the most difficult of times. The world is far from the bright, peaceful utopia we pray for every day. We need to bring ourselves closer to that point by strengthening our Jewishness and by reaching out and providing for those in the community who need it the most.

Yocheved Boyarsky is co-director of the Rohr Chabad Student Network of Ottawa.

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Three Ottawa mohels help families keep the ‘eternal covenant’

BY LOUISE RACHLIS

Ottawa’s three mohels all fit their special duties into their very busy lives as a labour of love of Judaism.

Rabbi Sender Gordon, Dr. André Engel, and Dr. Lisa Rosenkrantz perform *brit milah* (ritual circumcision) in Ottawa and sometimes travel out of town to do the mitzvah.

This month, Rabbi Gordon flew to Nunavut to perform a brit milah.

The Ottawa mohel, 26, has a young family, a full-time job in real estate, and he and his wife Sarah also run a program called Israel Connect, which pairs retirees in North America with children in Israel for 15-minute weekly conversations via Skype aimed at helping the children with their English-language skills.

Nevertheless, he made time to serve as mohel for the Iqaluit family who had contacted him.

“I feel there is one mitzvah that took people for generations through all kinds of hardship,” he explained. “From the most religious to the unaffiliated, this mitzvah reaches across to them. This plays a very important role in Jewish life, and I want to be part of it.”

Male circumcision is prescribed in the Book of Genesis as a mark of the covenant between God and the descendants of Abraham: “Throughout all generations, every male shall be circumcised when he is eight days old ... This shall be my covenant in your flesh, an eternal covenant.”

“I don’t do it as a job per se, and it’s not for the income,” Rabbi Gordon said. “I try not to go out of town to cities where there is already a mohel. I just travel for family or special request. That’s why this week I’m flying to Iqaluit; it’s something special. If they have the will to take part in this mitzvah, then I will travel to help them do that.”

Rabbi Gordon, who is from Ottawa, holds a bachelor of Talmudic Law from the Central Yeshiva Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch in Brooklyn, New York, and received his mohel training and certification in Israel from Rabbi Yackov Shechter, a veteran expert mohel endorsed by the Israeli Health Ministry.

In 2011, Rabbi Gordon returned to Ottawa with his wife, Sarah, and their two children, Yitzy and Chava.

For Dr. André Engel, being a pediatrician and a mohel is a great combination.

“It was a very natural thing to train as a mohel, allowing me to combine my pediatric expertise with my love for Judaism,” said Engel, who has been a pediatrician for more than 37 years.

“As a pediatrician, I deal with babies on a daily basis and I also perform



Rabbi Sender Gordon (right) prepares to perform the brit milah of eight-day-old Yitzchak Bregman, July 29, at Congregation Machzikei Hadas. Grandfather Paul Bregman holds the baby as Rabbi Reuven Bulka looks on.

medical circumcisions on non-Jewish babies in my clinic,” he said. “I also have a very strong Jewish background. I was brought up Orthodox in Montreal, and I’m a graduate of Herzliah High School.”

Engel has been a member of Congregation Machzikei Hadas for the past four decades.

Over the past 25 years, he has been a mohel for several hundred babies, using what he calls his “kinder, gentler approach.”

“I do three different things to minimize discomfort for the baby,” he said. “First, I treat the baby with Tylenol prior to circumcision, offer him sweet wine during the circumcision, and we do a ring block, using a local anaesthetic injected into the base of the penis.”

Dr. Lisa Rosenkrantz, a family physician, who has also flown to Iqaluit for a brit milah, made the decision to become a mohel about 18 years ago.

“It came to me as a perfect opportunity to combine my religious life and my medical life.”

She said there are no barriers to a woman being a mohel, except for Orthodox tradition.

“In the Talmud, it says anyone can do it as long as they have knowledge and are skilled at it. Even if you have no other option, the most important thing is to have it done. I have done a circumcision

for an Orthodox couple when there was no one else to do it. I did the procedure, and the cantor did the ceremony, and it was lovely.”

Rosenkrantz estimated she performs a brit milah about 10 to 20 times per year. She has also travelled to a variety of locations in response to requests for her services. In addition to Iqaluit, she has gone to Halifax, Peterborough, Belleville



Dr. Lisa Rosenkrantz says having a brit milah is the “first important Jewish decision” parents make for their child.

and Kingston.

“I love being asked,” she said. “I feel honoured to be asked to participate in the ceremony.”

“Especially for unaffiliated Jews and mixed marriages, I really view it as an opportunity to open the door to Judaism. It’s the first important Jewish decision they are making for their child. With the ritual and the ceremony, I try to impress upon them what a great choice they are making and I talk to them a bit about it as an entranceway to finding their place in the Jewish community.”

In a mixed marriage, she tries to make sure the non-Jewish family members feel equally involved, and, with the family’s permission, she gives their name to Shalom Baby, the Soloway Jewish Community Centre’s initiative to welcome babies, which re-enforces the way into Judaism.

A long-time member of Temple Israel, Rosenkrantz has been a family doctor for 35 years. She still does house calls, delivers babies, and provides palliative care. It’s very busy, she said, “but good busy.”



Dr. André Engel (right) with parents Kayla Estrin and Wayne Moore and their sons, Isaac, Jonah, Evan and Sascha. Engel performed the brit milah of all four boys.



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New Torah dedicated: Jacques Shore (left) and Pesach Nussbaum carry the new Torah dedicated by Chabad of Centrepointe in memory of the late Rabbi Mordechai Berger, November 3. Rabbi Berger was spiritual leader of Young Israel of Ottawa for many years and founded École Maimonides and Yeshivas Ateres Menachem. After the final letters were inscribed under the watchful eye of an experienced scribe, about 300 people celebrated with a parade, singing and dancing on Centrepointe Drive, which was blocked from traffic for the occasion.



Canadian Magen David Adom for Israel Concert: Cantor Daniel Benlolo leads the Tamir Neshama Choir at a concert, October 27 at Congregation Beth Shalom, which raised funds and awareness for Canadian Magen David Adom for Israel. Visit www.ottawajewishbulletin.com/2014/11/cmdai/ for a report and more photos from the concert.



Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation: The Ottawa chapter of the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation (CICF) presented Israeli pianist Yishai Rubin, a recipient of the CICF's Sharett Scholarship, in concert at Temple Israel on October 26. Visit www.ottawajewishbulletin.com/2014/11/cicf for more on the concert and other CICF activities in Ottawa.

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Parent ambassadors program revitalized at OJCS

BY SARA-LYNNE LEVINE
OTTAWA JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Under the leadership of Head of School Marlene Wolinsky, the parent ambassadors of the Ottawa Jewish Community School (OJCS) have begun working on many new initiatives to provide opportunities for OJCS families to become more involved in our school, partner with community organizations and institutions, and communicate with existing and potential families.

"We are so pleased with the innovative and excellent work our parent ambassadors have accomplished to date," Wolinsky said.

"Their vision and creativity have led to many wonderful new ideas that we look forward to implementing and sharing with our community."

Wolinsky unveiled her vision for a revitalized parent ambassador program in September. Since then, our ambassadors have met and divided into working groups tasked with different themes including understanding child and

adolescent development, improving school-to-home communications, increasing volunteer opportunities, and establishing meaningful partnerships with community organizations.

"I think the new parent ambassadors' initiatives are a great way of engaging our parents in a proactive manner by allowing parents to take on leadership roles in offering programs, services and information," said parent ambassador Leila Ages, a mother of three children attending OJCS.

"This will help parents feel better connected to the OJCS family as well as outreach to the community-at-large."

On November 13, our ambassadors hosted a newcomers' get together at a Starbucks location to welcome new parents to the OJCS family. This was a great opportunity for new families to meet and get to know current families and establish connections and new friendships.

Upcoming activities include OJCS participation in synagogue Shabbat

services, targeted volunteer opportunities in school and at home for our working parents, and involving school alumni to share our good news stories and showcase OJCS within the

community.

To learn more about OJCS and why it is the place for your child to thrive and succeed, contact Andréa Black at 613-722-0020 or andrea.black@theojcs.ca.



Remembrance Day: Ottawa Jewish Community School students participate in the school's Remembrance Day ceremony, November 11. The ceremony included presentations from several classes as well as wreath-laying, the lighting of memorial candles and an address by Major David Wood of the Canadian Forces, a veteran of the war in Afghanistan.

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As many of you know, I am a proud, lifelong resident of Ottawa, growing up in McKellar Park. My roots are firmly established. I attended Broadview Avenue Public School, Nepean High School, and the University of Ottawa, where I received a Bachelor of Administration in 1981. I remember the Westboro of my boyhood with great fondness and after raising my kids in Barrhaven, I moved back to the area where I now work and live (well, close by - I now split my time between a home on Meech Lake and a condo loft in Little Italy). I have never found a better place than Ottawa. I've never grown tired of this community and I get a real buoyant feeling from my deep connections to Westboro, West Wellington, Hintonburg, Alta Vista, South Nepean, Kanata and other parts of this fabulous city.

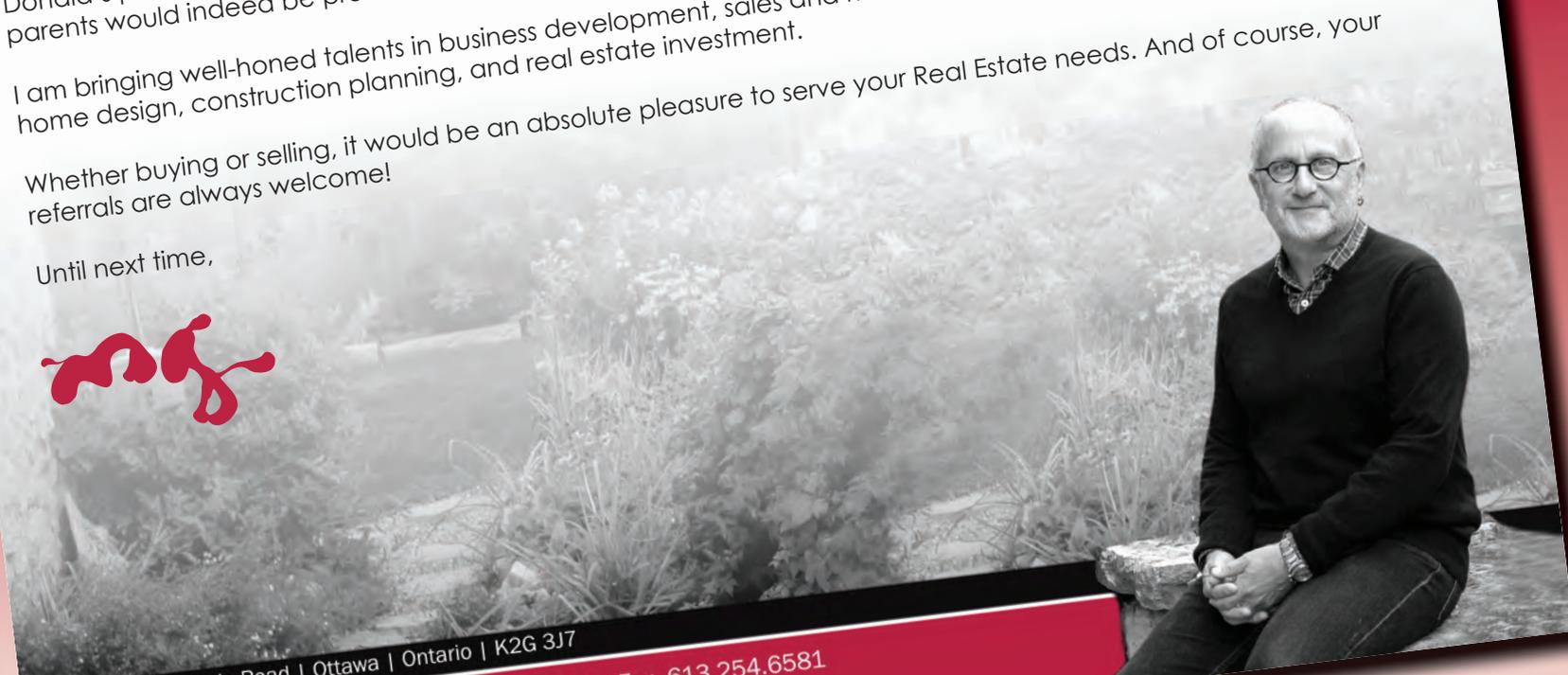
In addition to raising two amazing children (whom I like to call my greatest accomplishments) I have enjoyed a multi-phased business career - 27 years in telecommunications and the IT industry, followed by the opening of the Michael Gennis Gallery, a contemporary art gallery, in Westboro. Following the closing of the gallery in 2013, I set my sights on a career in Real Estate. See for me, this is simply 'doing what comes naturally'. I grew up immersed in Real Estate trading - my late father Max, whom some of you will remember, was a top agent in the 50s, 60s and 70s. My dad sold Real Estate for some of Ottawa's then top builders/developers - Bill Teron, JP Chenier, Robert Campeau, and Bernard Garand. While trading within my own portfolio, I have honed and demonstrated a natural sense for investment value, neighborhood fit and good design. In fact, three of my properties have captured the eye of people in the industry, and were featured in local media. I believe all of these outcomes, combined with a positive, helpful, and outgoing nature, have always served me well.

Earlier this month, I joined Sutton Group Premier Realty, working with Donald Abraham, who is a seasoned veteran in the Ottawa market. Interestingly, Donald's and my roots have been intertwined for years. My dad Max and Donald's parents were treasured friends. It seems only fitting that we work and generate success together. Our parents would indeed be proud.

I am bringing well-honed talents in business development, sales and marketing to the table, along with a passion for home design, construction planning, and real estate investment.

Whether buying or selling, it would be an absolute pleasure to serve your Real Estate needs. And of course, your referrals are always welcome!

Until next time,



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Limmud Ottawa conference discusses variety of Jewish topics

BY MONIQUE ELLIOT

More than 250 people converged on the Soloway Jewish Community, November 2, to spend their Sunday immersed in a variety of Jewish topics at the Limmud Ottawa conference.

The event was sanctioned by Limmud International, a 30-year-old organization, based in the United Kingdom, whose goal is to strengthen Jewish identity free from politics, hierarchy and denominational bias.

All opinions and interests are welcome at Limmud, with the exception of “anti-Israel propaganda,” said Limmud Ottawa organizer Jenny Roberge.

“It’s to create a community of learners,” she said. “It’s also an opportunity to celebrate the diversities within any Jewish community at any given time.”

One of the unique aspects of Limmud is the hosting of simultaneous panels and sessions in order to force people to make a choice about what they want to learn, and where instructors are participants and vice versa, she said.

Diversity of opinions at Limmud is encouraged, with this year’s topics ranging from media bias, and the naval blockade of Gaza, to Jewish feminism, and whether Satan is a misunderstood character in theology.

Fred Litwin of the Ottawa-based Free Thinking Film Society presented his documentary about bias against Israel in the media, specifically in CBC reporting.



Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton discusses Jewish feminism in a presentation at the Limmud Ottawa conference, November 2, at the SJCC.

The compilation of a selection of the national public broadcaster’s television and radio clips was underscored with Litwin’s commentary in the form of captions throughout the video, which drew varying reactions from the session participants.

“It’s very hard to document bias,” Litwin said. “Part of the problem is the rolodex of experts and commentators at the CBC.”

The session was one of four available during the morning time slot, and Roberge said the topics of discussion change each year.

The reality of life as a Jewish woman and Jewish feminism was discussed by local experts, including Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton of Or Haneshamah; Deidre

Butler, director of Carleton University’s Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies; and Peggy Kleinplatz, a professor of psychology and sexology at the University of Ottawa.

Both men and women filled the audience as each of the three gave a short presentation and then participated in a panel discussion on lived experiences and feminist history.

Ander Moss, 14, took notes during the presentation.

“I came with my family and I just wanted to cover everything,” he said, adding that each family member went to different sessions.

Patricia Dunphy said her experiences at Limmud taught her that she is “barely scratching the surface when it comes to Judaism,” adding that she has so much more to learn and has been inspired to further her Jewish education.

The opportunity for Jewish learning also extended to appreciation of the arts, with many local artists displaying their works throughout the day. Limmud Ottawa closed in the evening with the Israeli Tafillat ensemble performing its first Canadian concert at Carleton University.

Limmud Ottawa, like the dozens of affiliated conferences worldwide, is run entirely by volunteers.

For more information or to get involved, visit www.limmudottawa.ca.

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Members of the Ottawa-Toronto group in Regensburg. (From left) Karen Zunder, Ian Zunder, David Appotive, Sharon Appotive, Brenda Nadel, Randi Sherman, Michael Polowin, Rhoda Miller, Ian Sherman, Heidi Pivnick, Melanie Polowin, Jeff Miller and Jonathan Pivnick.

Ottawa celebration of Shabbat Project reaches Regensburg, Germany

BY MICHAEL POLOWIN

As communities all over the world gathered to celebrate Shabbat on October 24 and 25 as part of the *Shabbat Project*, our hardy band of travellers from Ottawa and Toronto found ourselves in Regensburg, Germany.

Seventeen people were part of a group of about 150 travelling together on Avalon Waterways Jewish Heritage River Cruise on the Danube. Organized by Heidi Pivnick, our group included Ottawans Heidi and Jon Pivnick, David and Sharon Appotive, Jeff and Rhoda Miller, Ian and Randi Sherman, Ian and Karen Zunder, Norman and Elaine Wolfish, my wife, Melanie, and me; and Torontonians Brenda Nadel and Nathan and Barbara Haber.

Our tour had begun with three days in Prague, exploring the city and its Jewish heritage. We visited its wonderful Jewish quarter, Josefov, and elements of its past and present. We saw a variety of shuls, including the 700-year-old Old-New Synagogue, which is at the heart of the Golem legend, and kosher restaurants promoting themselves with cartoons of the Golem. Remarkably, with a current Jewish population of 5,000, we saw at least five kosher restaurants!

In a tremendously moving afternoon, we visited both the Small Fortress and the Ghetto of Terezin, accompanied by a survivor of the ghetto, Inge Auerbacher. We visited Nuremberg, the site of the rise of the Nazi Party, and the post-war trials of some of its war criminals. We saw the

Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds, which tells the entire story from start to finish, and exists to transmit the horrors of the story to German youth.

After Nuremberg, we arrived on the morning of Friday, October 24 in Regensburg, a small German city of about 150,000 people and only about 500 Jews, many of them Russian immigrants. It has a rich history, however, and a Jewish presence in the city stretches back more than 1,000 years. We saw much of it, culminating with a visit in the afternoon to the small prayer room and community centre on the site of the former synagogue, built in 1926 and destroyed in 1942.

Most of our group decided to return for Kabbalat Shabbat. It was a unique experience, sharing in the Shabbat Project, and welcoming Shabbat with a small group of Germans, Russians, an American and some of our fellow river cruisers. The siddurim were in Hebrew, of course, but the translations were either in German or Russian. Many, though not all, of the melodies were familiar to us, and for those that weren't, we caught on fast.

After services ended and Kiddush made, the Chabad rabbi thanked us warmly, as we bade our farewells and wished all a Shabbat Shalom.

From Regensburg, we continued on, exploring our history and heritage in Salzburg, Vienna and Budapest. The trip was at once solemn, fascinating and wonderful, and our group enjoyed it immensely. A similar trip will go in 2015, and is a worthwhile endeavour.

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SJCC to screen new documentary on Canada's Jewish farmers

BY ROSLYN WOLLOCK
SOLOWAY JCC

It seemed like a good fit. In the 1880s, Canada was seeking new immigrants to settle the land, and the Jewish Colonization Society, a project initiated by Baron Maurice de Hirsch, was looking for new venues for its able-bodied recruits.

Through the project, many Jews from Eastern Europe seeking a better life and relief from re-emerging anti-Semitism, settled in Canada, prepared to till the soil in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec and Ontario. A total of 31 Jewish farming colonies were established in Canada.

The story of Canada's Jewish farmers is told in an informative documentary, *A New Life on the Land: Jewish Farmers in Canada* by Montreal-based director-producer Dov Okouneff and co-director-editor Janet Best.

Woven together with photographs, interviews and narratives, the film tells of the seemingly insurmountable challenges faced by the first settlers and those who followed.

Conditions for most of the Jewish farmers were primitive with harsh winters, crude or non-existent roads, and towns that were often far away. There



Photo from the film *A New Life on the Land: Jewish Farmers in Canada*.

was no running water and, for observant Jews, the additional challenge of trying to respect dietary laws with no available kosher meat nearby.

The film's interviewees include descendants of the early Jewish settlers and some of the few Jews still farming today.

A New Life on the Land: Jewish Farmers in Canada will be shown Sunday, December 7, 1:30 pm, at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre. Dov Okouneff will be present to discuss the making of the film and answer questions after the screening. Tickets (\$5) will be available at the door.



Claims Conference ועידת התביעות
The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

Holocaust-Era Assets in Former East Germany Deadline December 31, 2014

The Claims Conference has established a Late Applicants Fund ("LAF") of €50 million in order to accept applications from certain heirs of a former Jewish owner ("persecutee") of property/assets in the former East Germany for which the Claims Conference received proceeds as Successor Organization under the German Property Law of 1990.

The heirs of a persecutee who can make application to the LAF are:

- (a) The immediate testamentary heir of the persecutee;
- (b) Children, grandchildren, or great grandchildren of the persecutee;
- (c) Siblings of the persecutee;
- (d) Children of siblings listed under (c);
- (e) Spouses of persons listed under (b), (c) and (d).

The Claims Conference has published on its website, www.claimscon.org, a list of the properties/assets received by the Claims Conference as of the date of publication, and such assets for which claims by the Claims Conference are still pending under the German Property Restitution Law, including the name of the former owners and/or businesses, as well as the addresses of the properties/assets.

Applications can be filed directly with the Claims Conference for no fee. There is no need for applicants to pay a fee to any party. **The LAF will accept applications through December 31, 2014.**

The detailed rules of the LAF, applications, and other information are also on the Claims Conference website, www.claimscon.org.

All applications and communications regarding the Late Applicants Fund must be submitted to:

Claims Conference Successor Organization, Sophienstrasse 26, D-60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Fax: +49-69-97-07-08-11. Email: claims-conference-laf@claimscon.org

After the application deadline, the Claims Conference shall determine the payment that each eligible heir will receive. This determination will be based on a number of factors detailed on the Claims Conference website.

To aid applicants who do not have complete information, the Claims Conference has a Department for Property Identification. If you believe that you or your relatives may have owned Jewish property in the former East Germany, please include as much information as possible in your application and the Department will endeavor to identify such property. Please write to the above address. There is no charge for this service as well.

The Claims Conference has an Ombudsman. To contact the Office of the Ombudsman, please email Ombudsman@claimscon.org or write to The Ombudsman, PO Box 585, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113, USA

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THE WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE PHILANTHROPY PROGRAM

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WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE ENDOWMENT FUND

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Contributions may be made online at www.OJCF.ca or by contacting the office at 613-798-4696 extension 274, Monday to Friday or by email at tribute-cards@ojcf.ca. Attractive cards are sent to convey the appropriate sentiments. All donations are acknowledged with a charitable receipt.

Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation Legacy Challenge Fund



Everyone has the ability to create a Jewish legacy

The OJCF Legacy Challenge asks you to consider making a gift to the Foundation in your estate plans and wills. Leaving a gift in a will or as part of your estate plans helps ensure the vibrancy and long-term sustainability of our community for years to come, creating a lasting and personal legacy.

The OJCF Legacy Challenge is your chance to personally commit to the ongoing growth and vitality of our shared community. We hope you will accept this challenge.

What is the OJCF Legacy Challenge Fund?

If you decide to name the Ottawa Jewish Community

Foundation as recipient of a bequest through your will, the OJCF Legacy Challenge Fund will pay for the professional/legal services to help create this bequest or codicil up to a maximum of \$1,000.

Who is eligible?

All donors choosing to leave \$10,000 (or more) or 1% (or more) of their estate to the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation are eligible to participate in the OJCF Legacy Challenge.

For more information on how this challenge program works, please visit www.OJCF.ca or contact Arieh Rosenblum at 613-798-4696, ext. 270 or email arosenblum@jewishottawa.com.

Donating made easy at www.OJCF.ca

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Use our online donation form to send one or multiple tribute cards to your friends and loved ones in one secure transaction.

Charitable receipts are issued and sent directly to your email account.

Try it TODAY!

Chanukah Gift Fair

Get great gifts and everything you need for an unforgettable Chanukah celebration plus an entire day of fun for the whole family!

Sunday, December 7

Soloway JCC, 21 Nadolny Sachs Private

10:00 am – 4:00 pm (Gym)

Pick up your holiday gifts, decorations, candles and everything you need for a happy Chanukah. **Admission:** Free

10:00 am – 12:00 pm (Social Hall)

Kid's Chanukah Party

- Chanukah themed craft
- Menorah lighting
- PJ Library story time by Rabbi Schlesinger
- Little John Clown Show
- Salsa Babies® and Salsa Tots® demo by Dancing Mama starting at 10:30 am
- Chanukah themed goodie bags from OJCS
- Chanukah snacks



1:30 pm

Film Screening: *A New Life on the Land – Jewish Farmers in Canada*

Admission: \$5

Information: Roslyn Wollock (613) 798-9818 ext. 254

Some of the 2014 Vendors include:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| • Red House Honey | • Camp Geshher | • Salsa Babies And Salsa Tots By Dancing Mama |
| • Violeta Borisonik Jewelry | • Vered Hebrew Books | • Ottawa Jewish Historical Society |
| • B'nai Brith Youth Organization | • Boutique Judaica – Agudath Israel | • Camp B'nai Brith Of Ottawa |
| • Camp George | • Save A Child's Heart Foundation | • Barbaroza Beads |
| • Tricot Roses (Handknit Items) | • Machzikei Hadas Synagogue | • Camp Rama In Canada |
| • Lord Elgin Hotel | • Mitzva Knitters And Alexandra Kronick | |
| • Scentsy (Martine Waisvisz) | • Creations Omani | |
| • Union For Reform Camp | • Marvalee Designs | |

Visit jccottawa.com for a full list of vendors

For more information contact Ella Dagan at (613) 798-9818 ext. 243, edagan@jccottawa.com

SJCC Adult Educational & Cultural Programs Department
Presents

A New Life on the Land: Jewish Farmers in Canada



Film screening with filmmaker Dov Okouneff

In the early twentieth century, Jews fleeing persecution and poverty in Eastern Europe came to Canada as homesteaders and built Jewish lives in Western Canada, Ontario and Quebec. Filled with archival materials and personal stories of hardship and joy, this fascinating documentary explores an important aspect of Canadian Jewish history and identity. A Lesson in optimism and hard work.

Sunday, December 7, 1:30 pm

Admission: \$5 at the door

Contact: Roslyn Wollock, Adult Education & Cultural Programs Manager
(613) 798-9818 ext. 254



Inaugural Commemoration of Jewish refugees from Arab and Muslim Countries

Sunday, November 30, 2014

6:30 pm

Soloway JCC, 21 Nadolny Sachs Private



800,000 Jews from Arab lands were forced from their homes when the State of Israel was established and continued to fight wars of survival. The Israeli Knesset declared *November 30th* as a day to commemorate the flight of these Jewish refugees. The Sephardi Association of Ottawa in partnership with the Embassy of Israel and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), with the support of the SJCC, present this untold story.

Keynote Speaker: His Excellency Rafael Barak, Ambassador of Israel to Canada

Documentary film: *The Forgotten Refugees* – Jewish Refugees from Arab and Muslim Countries

First-hand accounts from the Ottawa Sephardi Community

Remarks: David Cooper, CIJA

Free admission.

For information contact ottawasephardiassociation@yahoo.com



Winter Break Camps

Winter Wonderland

Join us for fun field trips, special guests, swimming, art, science, cooking and more.

December 22, 23, 24, 29, 30 31 & January 2

SK – Grade 5 (full days only)

8:30 am – 4:00 pm

\$45 M/day • \$55 NM/day

Additional Child: \$35 M/day • \$45 NM/day

After-care is available from 4 - 6 with the exception of December 24 & December 31 and from 4 - 5 on January 2.

\$15 individual child • \$25 family rate. No Charge for *Just 4 Kids* participants.

Contact: Gail Lieff 613-798-9818 x303 | glieff@jccottawa.com

Coach Brown's Happy Holidays All Star Basketball Camp

A daily free swim is part of the fun.

December 22, 23, 24

Grade 1 – 6

9:00 am – 3:30 pm

\$120 M • \$150 NM

Early drop off 8:30 am, after - camp care 3:30 – 5:00 pm included

Contact: Jon Braun 613-798-9818 x267 | jbrown@jccottawa.com

Holiday Break Sports Camp

Swim and play all kinds of sports every morning and spend the afternoons bowling, playing mini golf, skating and more.

December 29, 30, 31

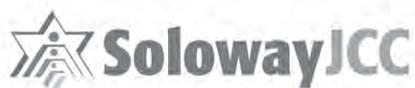
Grade 1 – 6

9:00 am – 3:45 pm

\$55 M • \$65 NM per day

\$150 M • \$180 NM all 3 days

Contact: Jon Braun 613-798-9818 x267 | jbrown@jccottawa.com



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Sunday, November 23

Monday, December 29

\$85 per person

(min. of 10 participants required)

Contact: Gail Lieff (613) 798-9818

ext. 303, glieff@jccottawa.com



National Arts Centre Orchestra's UK tour takes on new meaning following terror attack at home

London, England – It was to be a celebration of partnership, of the bond between two nations that came together 100 years ago to fight “the war to end all wars.”

It was to honour the 600,000 Canadian soldiers, nurses and chaplains who volunteered to join the British in the First World War, and to mourn the 61,000 Canadians and the more than 888,000 British and colonial soldiers who never made it home.

And it was to be a showcase of brilliant classical and contemporary works by British, Canadian and German composers, as well as a testament to the healing power of music.

The National Arts Centre Orchestra's United Kingdom tour last month was all these things.

But, because of two acts of terror – and countless acts of bravery – back home in Canada, the artists and the audiences shared an immensely powerful, emotionally charged experience beyond anything that could have been anticipated.

My husband and I participated in the orchestra's tour of Scotland and England with NAC patrons and board members from across Canada. We attended the five major concerts and took in some of the 50 educational events – including master classes, chamber performances and workshops – led by music director and violinist Pinchas Zukerman and the 80 musicians.

Dan and I were exploring the streets of Edinburgh on October 22, a few hours before the tour's official start, when friends started texting us about the terror attack in Ottawa.

The messages were frequent, contradictory and confusing. There were two shooters – or three. Shots had been



fired in the Rideau Centre. A shooter had been killed. Two soldiers were wounded. Ottawa was in lockdown. The lights were out in the west end.

It was hours before we learned that there had been only one shooter, a radicalized convert to Islam with a history of mental illness, and one dead soldier, Cpl. Nathan Cirillo. It was not until the next day that we heard about the remarkable bystanders who fought to save Cirillo's life, and the decisive actions by House of Commons Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Vickers and the security team to kill the gunman.

But it's no exaggeration to say that the tour took on a new level of meaning after the attack. Every event began with a moment of silence, and the tour was dedicated to the memory of Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, who had been run down and killed by another radicalized Islamic convert in Quebec two days before the Ottawa attack.

The British media were all over the story. And the Canadian visitors suddenly became unwilling members of a club that was all too familiar to our British hosts, who had decades of experience with terror attacks on their own soil.

The music that was to honour those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom 100 years ago was no longer an

emotional abstraction. It was an aching, immediate tribute to the lives of two soldiers – one just beginning his career, the other about to retire – who died in a new kind of war, one fought not by armies but by fanatics in thrall to religious propaganda and hatred.

Though every performance was stellar, my heart and mind keep returning to that first concert in Edinburgh.

Never had I heard Canadian composer John Estacio's *Brio* performed with such passion. Maestro Zukerman's violin performance of Max Bruch's *Violin Concerto No. 1* was an inspired, almost defiant celebration of life.

After the concert officially ended with a magical rendition of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7*, a visibly moved and exhausted Zukerman returned to the stage and addressed the audience.

“The way I like to remember a life, to people and to peace, is through music,” said the Israeli-born musician. “And the best way to do it is through [British composer Edward] Elgar.”

He then conducted the orchestra in Elgar's *Serenade for Strings*, a piece that had been rehearsed only once before the tour but that flowed flawlessly.

A week later, we stood in London's Royal Festival Hall, in the presence of Prince Charles, and sang *O Canada* and *God Save the Queen*, accompanied by the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the glorious London Philharmonic Choir.

The evil that had always seemed to be happening somewhere else had struck not just our country, but the capital city in which we live.

But, surrounded by fellow Canadians, and by Britons who all but physically reached out to us in our time of grief, the horror receded and the healing began.

Overcoming the lack of cultural understanding on campus

What does it mean to have a Jewish identity? How may we accurately represent our Jewishness and be the very best ambassadors we can be to our fellow students?

I am a proud member of the tribe. I do my part daily in advertising my Jewish identity by sporting a Magen David necklace, a Hadaya bracelet, and what seems like a stockpile of *chamsa* everything.

I have taken on an active Jewish student leadership role on campus. I hold Israel incredibly near to my heart and I am prepared to support the country in a heartbeat. Partaking in Jewish traditions and culture is amongst my top priorities. I am a regular speaker of *Henglish*, incorporating any and all Hebrew words that I can in my daily vocabulary.

I am fortunate enough to have grown up in the Jewish day school system and spent summers at Jewish camps. Judaism has always played a central role in my identity, and I have no intention of discontinuing that in any aspect of my future endeavours.

When I began my university experience in Ottawa, I became aware of the lack of cultural understanding on campus. Having grown up in Canada's multicultural mosaic, it was surprising to come across the reactions I did. I have received quite the array of responses to my being Jewish.

“You're Jewish? You don't seem Jewish.”



Is that supposed to be a compliment? I always thought my being Jewish was blatantly obvious.

“Wow, I've never met a Jew before!”

Glad I can be your first?

“How long have you been Jewish?”

Really?

It's no secret there are many stereotypes out there involving Jewish people. These stereotypes, some negative, others positive, are essentially the expectations of sheltered non-Jews who have never met one of us before. They have a sort of “Jewish standard” they apply, embedding deep sets of expectations within us. And, let me be clear, they set higher expectations than some of your relatives might. So let's all do our part in making us look good.

The late Joan Rivers had it right. She said what was on her mind, and, if anyone had a problem with that, it was their problem and definitely not hers. She was honest,

but she was not mean – a very important distinction. Her bluntness was something I have come to admire greatly.

My aim is to encourage Jewish students on campus to feel comfortable enough to do just that. Let out your inner Joan Rivers and don't shy away from speaking your mind.

Your neighbour in res doesn't understand the concept of keeping kosher? Tell them about it, and speak about it with a sense of pride. If that fails, just use the term “flexitarian.”

Your new friends don't get why you're going out to a “Jewish dinner” every single Friday? Tell them about it, even invite them! Everyone deserves the Shabbat experience at least once.

You're judged by some for eating (and obsessing over) gefilte fish? It's a delicious food, and they probably have never tried it, so their opinions shouldn't affect you.

We will always come across people, students and professionals alike, who are less knowledgeable about Judaism and Jewish culture than others. There will always be those who possess senseless ignorance. If they can't respect you for who you are then they'll miss out on a really great friend – so, *yallah*, onto the next one.

You're Jewish. Own it.

I dedicate this column to the memory of Joan Rivers, a great entertainer and a proud Jew.

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Happy Chanukah!

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It was warm, but no one got burned; intense, but not too tense

A few weeks ago, I designed an experiment in my living room. The combination of ingredients had to be precise; my lab skills needed to be honed; and it had to be executed very carefully, lest it exploded. The task? Hosting a wide-ranging, salon-style discussion about Israel.

In the end, it was warm, but no one got burned. It was intense, but not too tense. It was lively, but not explosive. In short, it was a success.

Here, then, is a personal “how-to” on hosting an “Israel salon” in one’s living room, along with some reflections of particularly revealing points in our conversation that evening.

I invited around 18 people with the expectation I’d have 14 or so attendees. Some had PhDs, some had rabbinic ordination, but knowledge and immersion in the issues varied. Ages ranged. I wanted to ensure political diversity, so we weren’t all simply bound to agree with one another. I had gleaned potential participants’ views either from my own previous discussions with friends in passing, and/or friends’ posts on social media.

Second, I wanted to be sure that these individuals were ones I could trust to dialogue respectfully. I had to feel each was a mensch. Third, I didn’t simply want a clique. So, while I had some sort of relationship with each guest, and there were some cross-cutting friendships, others were new to one another. Some of the guests arrived in couples, others, solo. As for my own partnership, my husband offered to clean and cater (desserts, cheese and wine), while I led the proceedings.

I began the evening by handing out blank cards on which participants were invited to write a word or phrase that occurred to them about Israel and/or its conflict with the Palestinians. Cards were placed face-up



MIRA SUCHAROV
**VALUES, ETHICS,
COMMUNITY**

on a table, and participants were asked to choose one that spoke to them somehow (not the one they’d written). We formed into groups of three or four and discussed the issues spurred by the cards.

The task? Hosting a wide-ranging, salon-style discussion about Israel ... Judging by feedback I received, I think we had a deep discussion about an issue that is too often polarizing and unproductive.

Next was our group-wide discussion. For this, I actively facilitated the conversation, posing questions, mirroring ideas back to the group, adding facts or analysis where helpful, and, perhaps most importantly, keeping tabs on who was going to speak next. I began by asking the group to suggest things, ideas or places in Israel that gave them pleasure. We then offered up aspects of Israel that cause concern (the guidelines made clear that this need not be the “fault” of Israel). Then the meat of the discussion began.

We covered the ground of occupation; how we, as Diaspora Jews, relate to Israel as a home; whether Israel is or isn’t an apartheid state; whether Israel is held to a double standard; and the meanings and implications of the concept of *Chosenness*. Particularly fascinating were the varied reactions some participants had to the famous quote attributed to Golda Meir: “We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We can never forgive them for forcing us to kill their children.” The rest of the quote, which we didn’t actually cover, but probably should have, continues: “We will only have peace with the Arabs when they love their children more than they hate us.”

Some of us thought that the quote is “ghastly” in its dichotomous moral stance on who is right and who is wrong in the conflict. Others viewed it as wise. One could imagine holding an entire evening unpacking an evocative phrase like that one.

At the end of the evening, I invited guests to provide brief plugs for any related groups or initiatives they were involved with. However, it was important to me that guests felt they were there to grapple with questions around Israeli policy, morality, and the Diaspora Jewish role in all of this, rather than to be spun in any way.

Judging by feedback I received, I think we had a deep discussion about an issue that is too often polarizing and unproductive.

I look forward to the next opportunity, and hope others in the community might decide to take the model and run with it. Hint: email me – mira_sucharov@carleton.ca – for my husband’s to-die-for rugelach recipe. Munching on rugelach while debating Israeli policy tends to soften positions.

Mira Sucharov is an associate professor of political science at Carleton University.

Some thoughts on Jewish fitness

I opened my talk on Jewish Fitness at Limmud Ottawa on November 2 by quoting from the *Guide to Health* by Maimonides, the 12th century physician, rabbi and scholar.

“If only a person would care for himself the way he cares for the animal he rides on, he would be saved from many bad illnesses. You will not find anyone who gives his animal more food than necessary. He measures out the animal’s feed according to what the animal can take, but he himself eats to excess without measure and without a thought. Similarly, he calculates how much exercise and activity his animal needs to keep fit and not become sick.

“But the person himself does not apply this to his own body, and gives little thought to exercise, even though it is the key to maintaining health and avoiding most illnesses, and there is no other substitute whatever for physical activity and exercise.”

How many times have you said to a family member, “Don’t feed *that* to the dog!”? Maimonides noted that people carefully measured out their work animals’ feed to prevent overeating, yet they themselves ate mindlessly. Today, most of us also give more consideration to our pets’ dietary intake – both the quality and quantity of their food – than to our own consumption.

Why do we forget about portion control, when filling our own plates? We go for second helpings before we’ve given our brains a chance to register that we’re full. We say blessings over food, even when the food is unhealthy.

We are a nation plagued by preventable, lifestyle-related health issues. We want instant gratification. We



GLORIA SCHWARTZ
**FOCUS ON
FITNESS**

want the pleasurable feelings – whether physical or emotional – that we get from food.

Maimonides’ progressive observations ring true today. We attend to our animals’ needs for adequate exercise, while neglecting our own such needs. Even if we don’t have pets, we often focus our energy on caring for others, such as our children, spouses or elderly parents. We also devote much of our time to our careers, housework or volunteer work. We then feel zapped of energy or lack the time needed to take care of ourselves.

Some people are very health conscious, consistently making smart choices about diet and exercise. If you’re one of them, you’re in the minority.

If we continue to neglect our health, we run the risk of becoming sick. When we are not well, it’s difficult to be a good parent, friend or colleague.

In the *Mishneh Torah*, the code of Jewish religious law, Maimonides advocated good hygiene, exercise and healthy eating habits: “Since by keeping the body in health and vigour one walks in the ways of God – being impossible in sickness to have any understanding or knowledge of the Creator – it is a man’s duty to avoid

whatever is injurious to the body and cultivate habits conducive to health and vigour.”

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch wrote in *The Nineteen Letters* (1836): “Respect your own body as the receptacle, messenger, and instrument of the spirit.”

If you think that changing your deeply ingrained bad habits and improving your health is unrealistic, take note of the advice Maimonides offered 900 years ago in the *Guide for the Perplexed*: “It is not impossible to conquer a bad constitution by training ... The well-being of the soul can be obtained only after that of the body has been secured.”

The key to success is to make one small change at a time. Pick your pain points. If you have a sweet tooth, instead of jumping on the anti-sugar trend by banishing all sugar from your diet – a sure-fail strategy – pick one sugary food that you can eliminate from your diet. As you begin to accumulate small successes, you’ll feel more motivated to further challenge yourself. And, when you falter, remind yourself that you are not a failure. No one is perfect.

Jewish fitness encompasses a strong mind, body and spirit. When one part of a machine is damaged, the other parts become taxed and may end up breaking too. Physical activity and sensible eating can prevent further damage.

Some Jews think that sports and exercise are a waste of Torah study time. I believe God wants us to nurture and strengthen our bodies and minds so we can lead fulfilling, meaningful, spiritual lives. Maimonides believed this is our religious obligation.

Gloria Schwartz is a personal trainer at the Soloway JCC and the author of Personal Best: Train Your Brain and Transform Your Body for Life.

Paving the way for post-survivor storytelling

Paper Love: Searching for the Girl My Grandfather Left Behind

By Sarah Wildman
Riverhead
400 pages

As the last generation of Holocaust survivors ages, efforts to capture their final, untold stories have abounded. But, in *Paper Love: Searching for the Girl My Grandfather Left Behind*, Sarah Wildman has turned instead to the future, asking what it means to bear witness in a world without Holocaust survivors.

Paper Love chronicles the author's long and labyrinthine search for the fate of the woman whose black-and-white photos she finds amid her late grandfather Karl's belongings. Wildman knew only the woman's name, Valy, scrawled across the back of the photos, and that her grandmother bitterly called the mysterious dark-haired woman "your grandfather's true love."

It is only after her grandmother dies that Wildman discovers a trove of letters that her grandfather, a dashing physician who fled Vienna in 1938 for the United States, kept hidden and mislabelled.

"Correspondence: Patients A-G" reads the carton containing Valy's letters, written in German from war-torn Berlin, as well as angry correspondences from extended family members who would never make it out of Hitler's Europe.

Wildman's hunt for Valy's story takes her to far-flung cities, tiny villages and concentration camps throughout Europe, as well as to Ann Arbor, Michigan, searching for people who may have known Valy, for documents that might refer to her, for experts who might shed light on her



fate. She combs the archives for information and walks the streets of Vienna and Berlin in search of scraps of information about Valy's life.

But *Paper Love* branches out at every turn – enfolding into its net more historical details, more stories, more locations, more human lives that vanished into the Second World War, never to be heard of again until now.

The book weaves together the historical with the intensely personal, redefining what counts as appropriate archival material, and elevating intimate aspects from Valy's life, and Wildman's own, to new importance.

In the six years it took to complete *Paper Love*, Wildman gave birth to two daughters. The transition into new motherhood accompanied the one from consumer of Holocaust history to producer of it.

It's a transition that took place in the shadow of loss – specifically the deaths of her grandparents, and also the gradual loss of the last generation of survivors.

Equal parts history, detective story, memoir and romance, Wildman's book provides an absorbing account of what it was like to live in (and write from) Berlin as the Nazi grip tightened and conditions for Jews became increasingly worse – city by city, day by day.

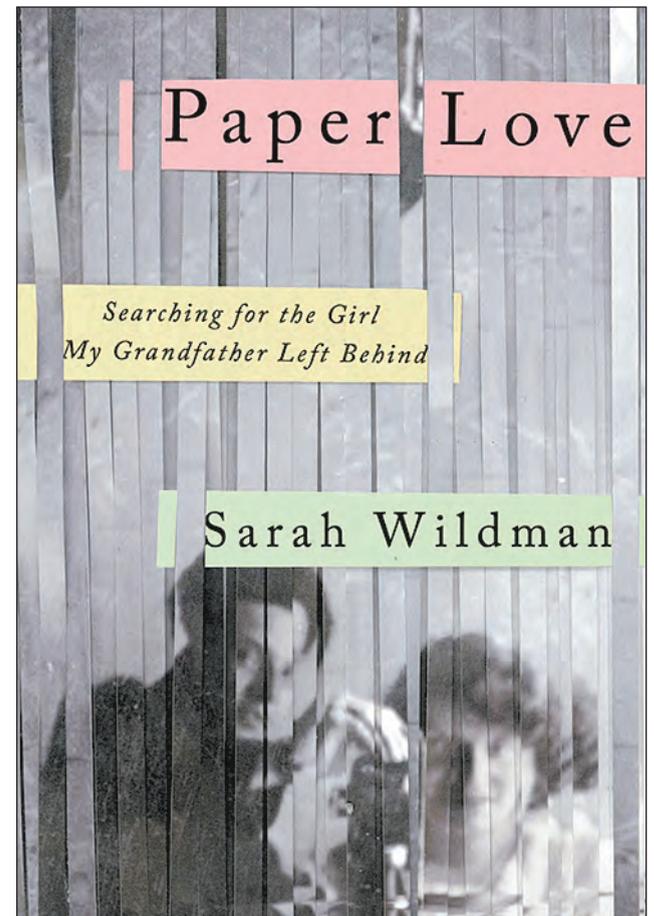
Valy's letters smolder with desperation, both to see her lover again and to survive the horrors that have befallen

her city, country and continent. Most of the letters are reproduced in the text, alongside which Wildman decodes the writer's attempts to fool the censors who were reading trans-Atlantic correspondences.

But they are also magical, magnetic and playful.

Valy writes to Karl from Berlin in April of 1940:

I lead my life the way I've been doing for the past 2 years: in a spirit of waiting, without much joy or hope. But, my darling, don't feel sad for me; I want you to know that I have people around me – women, – you know that only women are left here?!, who still have



something to say, who like me, who help me and who want to make life pleasant for me. But I do not succeed very often, and they never will be able to replace you, my boy! You are and remain far, far away, out of my reach, you exist only in my memories, wonderful, beautiful 'sunny past.' ... You are no longer even a letter, such as tiny, modest piece of the present. Why don't you write?

Why didn't he write?

Among the things Wildman discovers is how sanitized the story she had been told of her grandfather's miraculous escape and instantaneous success in America. And *Paper Love* is also its author's attempt to come to terms with her grandfather's actions and the guilt that she suspects plagued him for the rest of his life.

And, although her grandfather never spoke to his granddaughter about Valy, he unwittingly created an archive for her to plunder, turning himself into a partner in the creation of *Paper Love*.

As Wildman asked herself, "If the Nazi project was to erase these people, to render them unmemorable, to be wiped away from the rolls of history, was there some way that my grandfather had thwarted that by saving these letters, and was there some way I, with the privilege of having stumbled on them, could give this woman back her voice?"

Indeed, Valy comes to life on the page, and her story will haunt those who read *Paper Love* for a long time to come.



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WHAT'S GOING ON | November 24 to December 7, 2014
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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27

International Coffee Break:

Join the Federation's Emerging Generation Division for an evening of international and specialty coffees and desserts. An excellent opportunity to make new friends, network and sample delicious treats! Grounded Kitchen and Coffeehouse, 100 Gloucester St., 7 to 10 pm.

Info: Ariel Fainer, 613-798-4696, ext. 241, afainer@jewishottawa.com

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Kabbalat Shabbat and Dinner:

Services include song, mediation and learning. Then we gather for a dairy vegetarian potluck. Please bring something to share and/or a donation. We are a Big Tent community, welcoming of all. The Glebe Minyan, 91A Fourth Ave., 6 to 9 pm.

Info: Anna Maranta, 613-867-5505, glebeminyan@gmail.com

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Musica Ebraica choir presents:

Jewish music "From East to West in Song," joined by Cantor Jeremy Burko, with conductor Gloria Jean Nagy, accompanied by Carol Gurofsky. Temple Israel, 1301 Prince of Wales Dr., 2 to 3:45 pm. Info: Patsy Royer, 613-233-3099, www.musicaebraica.ca

Agudath Social Action Committee film night "Girl Rising"

An inspiring film on the power of education, especially for girls, to change the world, "Girl Rising" journeys around the globe telling the stories of nine ordinary girls who overcome nearly impossible odds to pursue their dreams. Followed by panel discussion. Agudath Israel Congregation, 1400 Coldrey Ave., 7 to 9 pm.

Info: Paula Agulnik, 613-236-6636, paulaagulnik@reach.ca

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

Chanukah Gift Fair:

Get great gifts and everything you need for a Chanukah celebration, plus an entire day of fun for the whole family, 10 am to 4 pm.

Info: Ella Dagan, 613-798-9818, ext. 243, edagan@jccottawa.com

Chocolate Chances:

Torah Academy of Ottawa fundraiser featuring raffle draws and silent auction, as well as a Viennese table of delicious desserts. Prizes include airfare for two to Israel, iPad, jewelry, artwork, gift certificates valued up to \$500, furniture, books, games and much more. Torah Academy of Ottawa, 1119 Lazard St., 7 to 9:30 pm. Info: Rabbi Zischa Shaps, 613-274-0110, torahacademyottawa@gmail.com

COMING SOON

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17

OJCS Story Time: Morning of stories, songs and snacks, revolving around a PJ Library book of the month. For toddlers (four and under) and parents. OJCS Library, 31 Nadolny Sachs Pvt., 9:30 to 10:30 am. Also February 4, March 25, April 22. Info/RSVP: Andréa Black, 613-722-0020, andrea.black@theojcs.ca

Jewish Youth Library Chanukah Benefit Concert:

JYL and Friendship Circle of Ottawa present musical artist Benny Friedman. GCTC, 1233 Wellington St. W., 7 to 10 pm. Info: Devora Caytak 613-729-7712, dev18@sympatico.ca

CANDLE LIGHTING BEFORE

NOVEMBER 28	4:02 PM	DECEMBER 26	4:05 PM
DECEMBER 5	4:00 PM	JANUARY 2	4:11 PM
DECEMBER 12	3:59 PM	JANUARY 9	4:18 PM
DECEMBER 19	4:01 PM	JANUARY 16	4:27 PM

BULLETIN DEADLINES

JANUARY 7	FOR JANUARY 26
JANUARY 21	FOR FEBRUARY 9
FEBRUARY 4	FOR FEBRUARY 23
FEBRUARY 18	FOR MARCH 9

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ACTIVITIES TAKE PLACE AT THE JOSEPH AND ROSE AGES FAMILY BUILDING, 21 NADOLNY SACHS PRIVATE

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Condolences are extended to the families of:

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Lillian Evenchick (née Berlin)

Béla Gelbman

Abraham Murray

Jean Naemark

Howard Osterer, Israel

Irving Rosenthal, Montreal (father of Mark Rosenthal)

Pauline Stone, Winnipeg (sister of Evelyn Krane)

May their memory

be a blessing always.

The Condolence Column is offered as a public service to the community. There is no charge. For listing in this column, please call 613 798-4696, ext. 274. Voice mail is available.

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