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‘Tree of Kindness’ blooms at Mitzvah Day

“You brought smiles to many faces,” **Naomi Mitchell** told the crowd of enthusiastic doers of good deeds. **Matthew Horwood** reports.

More than 400 community members of all ages gathered at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) and Hillel Lodge, February 3, for the Jewish Federation of Ottawa’s annual Mitzvah Day of doing good deeds.

On Mitzvah Day, the community gathers to volunteer time and energy in the spirit of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) and to give a helping hand to those in need in Ottawa’s Jewish and broader communities.

At the opening ceremonies, which followed a free breakfast for all participants provided in part by the Friends of Mitzvah Day, Federation Vice-Chair Michael Polowin, who is also the Ottawa Jewish Community School board president, told participants he was amazed to see the number of children and adults who come to Mitzvah Day every year.

“The Federation is proud to host this event that brings together people from all parts of our community. It is a perfect example of the Jewish Superhighway we



(From left) Jewish Federation of Ottawa President and CEO Andrea Freedman; Ontario Minister of Children, Community and Social Services Lisa MacLeod; Annual Campaign Co-Chair Karen Palayew; and Ottawa Deputy Mayor Lisa Dudas braided challahs for the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank to help launch Mitzvah Day, February 3, at the SJCC. See page 8 for more Mitzvah Day photos.

are all building together,” he said.

Federation President and CEO Andrea Freedman said the theme of this year’s Mitzvah Day was “making kindness bloom.” After the first mitzvah session, participants signed their names on paper ‘leaves’ which read, “I performed a Mitzvah today!” which were then placed on the Tree of Kindness at the end of the event to make it ‘bloom.’

After the second mitzvah session, participants could write what they felt

made the day special on a ‘Future-self Mitzvah Day Postcard,’ which would be mailed back to them in a few weeks. Sarah Beutel, Federation vice-president of community building, said the cards were meant to “remind people of the activities they did and some of the Jewish values they took away from it.”

Before participants dispersed throughout the SJCC and over to Hillel Lodge to begin their mitzvahs, elected officials in attendance – including Min-

ister of Children, Community and Social Services Lisa MacLeod, MPPs Joel Harden and John Fraser, and Deputy Mayor Laura Dudas – participated in a friendly competition to see who could braid the most challahs, which were then donated to the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank.

Also in attendance was former MPP and cabinet minister Yasir Naqvi and former deputy mayor Mark Taylor.

New Mitzvah Day activities this year included a cultural scavenger hunt, workshops to create fleece-tie blankets for CHEO and T-shirt tote bags for personal use, Shabbat story and craft, and ‘caring for animals and the environment’ with Little Ray Nature Centres.

Among the favourite returning Mitzvah Day activities were the singalong at Hillel Lodge, assembling soup kits for the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank and birthday party kits for families living in shelters.

Mitzvah Day Co-Chairs Naomi and Jonathan Mitchell thanked participants for their efforts at a wrap-up party at the end of the morning in the SJCC social hall.

“You brought smiles to many faces and comfort to people in need. Today has been an absolutely amazing day of volunteering, and you can continue to build on this experience by getting involved throughout the year,” Naomi said.

“There are many volunteer opportunities available, whether it’s once a week, once a month or offering your skills for a one-time project,” she said.

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Guests attending the International Holocaust Remembrance Day event at Library and Archives Canada, January 27, hold signs reading “We Remember.”

CJIA/FACEBOOK

‘We Remember’: International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration

BY MATTHEW HORWOOD

The Nazis based their hatred of Jews, which led to the Holocaust – the genocidal murder of six million European Jews – on a “pseudoscience of inherited differences between Jews and everyone else,” said Eli Rubenstein.

Rubenstein, a Holocaust educator and national director of March of the Living Canada, was speaking at Ottawa’s International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration, January 27, at Library and Archives Canada. His keynote lecture was “Nazi Germany’s Global War Against the Jews: Responding to Implacable Hatred without Losing our Humanity.”

Rubenstein said when he read the *None Is Too Many*, Irving Abella and Harold Troper’s book about Canada’s restrictive immigration policy towards Jews in the 1930s and ’40s, he was “never more ashamed to be a Canadian.”

However, when the Canadian government apologized in November for turning away Jewish refugees, Rubenstein said he had “never been prouder to be a Canadian.”

To illustrate his point about Nazi anti-Semitism, Rubenstein told a story about a German midwife who strangled Jewish newborns to death in a displaced persons camp in the years after the war had officially ended.

“The war is over. Hitler is dead. Germany is in ruins. Sixty million people have lost their lives, and this German midwife is still strangling minutes-old infants. Can you come to grips with that evil?” he asked.

Rubenstein then switched gears and discussed some of the Righteous Among the Nations – non-Jews who

risked their lives to save Jews from the Nazis – in order to give the audience a “measure of optimism.”

Examples of these stories included a German man who saved a Jewish woman from being arrested by pretending to be her husband, and a monastery that hid 200 Jewish boys and girls even though women were normally forbidden from entering the building.

“This is the side of the people who resisted Nazi Germany. This is the side of people who stood up against injustice in ways that are probably more shocking than the brutality I’ve just referenced,” Rubenstein said.

“These righteous people deserve to be heard, because we don’t want the next generation to be misanthropes. We want people to understand there’s also goodness in humanity.”

On display publically at the event for the first time was Hitler’s personal copy of *Statistik, Presse und Organisationen des Judentums in den Vereinigten Staaten und Kanada* (*Statistics, Media, and Organizations of Jewry in the United States and Canada*), a 1944 report which lists census information for Canadian and U.S. cities, including their Jewish populations. The book offers a glimpse into what might have happened to North American Jewry had the Nazis won the Second World War.

“It’s up to archives and libraries everywhere to educate and to advocate for the most complete historical record possible, no matter how controversial or contentious,” said Librarian and Archivist of Canada Guy Berthiaume as he explained why the document was acquired by Library and Archives Canada.

Michael Kent, curator of Library and Archives Canada’s Jacob M. Lowy Collection, said preserving Holocaust memory is something in which Library and Archives Canada has a role.

“We believe that given rising xenophobia, the decline of Holocaust knowledge and the rise of Holocaust denial, it was essential for us to acquire this item and bring it into



KAREN PALAYEV

Holocaust survivor Elly Bollegraaf (left) and keynote speaker Eli Rubenstein at the International Holocaust Remembrance Day event at Library and Archives Canada, January 27.

a public institution where it could contribute to Holocaust memory,” Kent said.

The event was MCed by March of the Living participants Neilah Shapiro and Anne Khazzam and featured music by violinist Ralitsa Tcholakova. Kaddish was led by Rabbi Idan Scher of Congregation Machzikei Hadas.

Attendee Lynda Margeson said her “skin crawled” when she saw the display containing the book once owned by Hitler.

“This was unbelievable and I’m still in a state of shock,” she said.

Margeson said she believes it’s important to keep controversial historical documents around, because “if we don’t learn from the past we won’t do any better in the future.”

“It’s very important to know about everything, especially the things we don’t want to know about,” she said.

At the end of the event, audience members held up small signs reading “We Remember” for a group photo posted on the Internet as part of the World Jewish Congress’ International Holocaust Remembrance Day social media campaign.

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Volunteers honoured at Soloway JCC AGM

BY PAMELA ROSENBERG
SOLOWAY JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) honoured three outstanding community members at our annual general meeting, February 4.

Rabbi Steven Garten received the Ben Karp Volunteer Service Award which honours a volunteer who best exemplifies communal ideals and sets an ongoing example for others. Barry Karp, son of the late Ben Karp, was on hand to present the award.

Best known in the Ottawa community for his 19 years as spiritual leader of Temple Israel, Rabbi Garten has been the director of the SJCC's Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning for the past five years. A member of the SJCC Board of Directors, he is chair of the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee. He has also been involved with several other organizations in the city including the Multi-Faith Housing Initiative and Faith Partners.

The Grossman-Klein Teen Leadership Awards, for male and female teens who have shown outstanding dedication and service to the Jewish community and the community at large, were presented to Dahlia Belfer and Jonah Leinwand.

Dahlia, a graduate of the Ottawa Jewish Community School (OJCS), is a

Grade 11 student at Sir Robert Borden High School (SRB). She is a member of A Ripple Effect and a junior adviser and board member for NCSY. Dahlia is an active member of the SRB Jewish Culture Club and has volunteered for the Food Bank, Breast Cancer Action, ME to WE, and Relay for Life cancer research.

Jonah, also an OJCS graduate, is a Grade 12 student at Lisgar Collegiate High School and is president of the school's Jewish Culture Club, which recently partnered with the Muslim Student Association to raise funds following the Tree of Life Synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh. Jonah is a regular participant in the Jewish federation of Ottawa's Mitzvah Day and has attended Torah High. He plays in the Lisgar band, is a math tutor; and is head of the Lisgar Society of Debate where he organizes a speaker series which welcomed MP Elizabeth May, leader of the Green Party of Canada. During winter break, Jonah and his family volunteered to serve Christmas dinner to those in need at a Shepherds of Good Hope facility.

Jonah has worked at JCC of Ottawa Summer Camps and is plays in the SJCC Jewish Men's Basketball League. He has spent two years in the HeadStart program at University of Ottawa where he takes university math classes and, this past summer, attended Mt. Allison



Ben Karp Award recipient Rabbi Steven Garten (centre) with Grossman-Klein Teen Leadership Award recipients Jonah Leinwand (left) and Dahlia Belfer at the SJCC AGM, February 4.

University in New Brunswick as part of SHAD program focussing on STEM-based learning and research. Since his return from Mt. Allison Jonah has been working with a professor and grad stu-

dents to develop his invention, AirTree. During the AGM, retiring SJCC Board members Jack Shinder and Dana Geber were thanked for their service and Lisa Rosenkrantz was welcomed to the Board.

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Netanyahu has been unbeatable – retired general Benny Gantz could change that

BY ELI KOWAZ

TEL AVIV (JTA) – In just over 20 minutes, Benny Gantz cemented himself as the most likely candidate to defeat Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the upcoming Israeli elections.

“I thank Netanyahu for his 10 years as prime minister. We’ll take it from here,” Gantz declared in front of hundreds of supporters and journalists here on January 29.

In the hours after his speech, Gantz’s popularity skyrocketed: A poll by Hadasht 13 found Netanyahu and Gantz tied, at 42 per cent each, for most preferred prime minister and that his newly formed Israel Resilience party would pick up 24 seats, more than double recent estimates and just six seats behind Netanyahu’s Likud party.

Gantz drew praise from large parts of the Israeli media. Political commentators including Reshet’s Barak Raviv and Hadashot’s Amnon Abramovitch compared him to former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. Haaretz editor-in-chief Aluf Benn wrote that “for the first time in a decade, the opposition has someone with authority and military experience, and Gantz’s speech showed he can lead

the anti-Netanyahu camp.”

In addition to the spike in the polls, the best indication that Gantz’s speech struck a nerve was the Likud’s panicked response. Ministers Gilad Erdan and Miri Regev struggled to present talking points they were handed earlier that day on primetime news. They both tried to paint Gantz and his new partner, the one-time chief of staff and defense minister Moshe “Bogie” Ya’alon, as leftists in centre-right clothing, but their arguments came off as desperate and incoherent. Regev embarrassingly waved a paper with talking points she had written down.

We’ve known for months that Gantz would enter Israeli politics, but his electoral potential remained uncertain – until now. After his blockbuster speech, in which he revealed his political views for the first time, Gantz made clear that he poses a credible threat to Netanyahu, a feat no candidate has achieved in the past decade.

Netanyahu and his party had hoped that Gantz would present a leftist agenda. The majority of the Israeli public identifies as either centre or right, and a challenge from the left would be much

easier for Likud to dismiss. But the centre is precisely where Gantz is positioning himself.

Gantz placed a special focus on security, calling out Israel’s enemies by name: President Rouhani in Iran, Hezbollah leader Nasrallah in Lebanon and Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar in Gaza, warning Sinwar, “I suggest you not test me again,” referring to the blow delivered by the Israeli army to Hamas during the 2014 Gaza war while Gantz was chief of staff. Gantz criticized the Netanyahu government for its Gaza policy in particular, especially for allowing \$15 million payments from Qatar into Gaza in suitcases to fund Hamas salaries.

At the same time, Gantz promised his government will “strive for peace” and “not miss an opportunity to bring about regional change,” giving credit to prime ministers Begin, Rabin and even Netanyahu, labelling each of them “patriots.”

By the looks of things, Gantz will do his best to avoid specifics on the Palestinian issue, which only got a brief mention in his opening speech. From the little he said, we can surmise that Gantz will advance gradual separation

from the Palestinians rather than annexation of the West Bank. He promised to bolster all the settlement blocs and that Jerusalem would remain Israel’s undivided eternal capital, and assured listeners that Israel’s eastern border will remain the Jordan Valley.

Of course, none of this stopped Netanyahu from tweeting that Gantz is a “weak left[ist].”

But more than anything, Gantz called for national unity among Israelis.

“The struggle between left and right rips us apart,” he declared, referring to the growing divide in Israel, an issue that is particularly important to Israelis today. The 2018 Israel Democracy Institute Index found that for the first time in 16 years, Jewish Israelis view the friction between the right and the left as the No. 1 tension within Israeli society – above that between Jews and Arabs.

Gantz’s criticism of Netanyahu focused on the incumbent’s legal issues. He noted that no prime minister should serve under indictment, referring to Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit’s expected recommendation to indict the prime minister for corruption before

See Gantz on page 5

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All Community Service Award nominees must be members in good standing of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa (minimum gift to the Annual Campaign) and cannot previously have received the award for which they are nominated.

To be considered, nominations must include 2 letters of support, including one from an organization.

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Nominations for all awards will be considered for the year in which they are received and will be carried over once.

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Gantz: Israelis go to the polls in national elections on April 9

Continued from page 4

April's election, and lambasted Netanyahu's public showcasing of covert military operations for political gain. Gantz also criticized Netanyahu's divisive targeting of Israel's leftists and minorities, referring to the Nation-State Law and Netanyahu's infamous fabricated 2015 story that the left was sponsoring buses sending "droves" of Israeli Arabs to the polls.

Gantz addressed nearly every issue in the public discourse: security fears on the northern front near the Syrian border, Gaza, the Israel Defense Forces, treatment of Israel's minorities, the increasing divide between the right and left, the relationship between religion and state, LGBTQ rights, public corruption and the importance of pursuing peace with the Palestinians.

Though the official campaign period is 90 days, campaigns only start to heat up about 45 days before the April 9 election, when the party lists are confirmed. Nonetheless, it now appears that Netanyahu will face a formidable challenger with a strong security background.

To win this election, Gantz must take more seats than the prime minister's Likud, which controls 30 seats. To do this, Gantz will need to convince other prominent politicians to merge into his party.

Hours before the event, Gantz reached an agreement to join forces with Ya'alon, welcoming him to the

stage near the end of his remarks.

Ya'alon resigned as defence minister in May 2016 in response to political pressure for defending the decision to prosecute Elor Azaria, a soldier that executed an incapacitated Palestinian assailant in Hebron. Ya'alon remains widely respected in Israeli society and cements Gantz and Resilience for Israel, or Hosen LeYisrael, as a centre-right party with a strong security portfolio.

It's unlikely that the rest of Gantz's coalition will be built from members of opposition parties, such as Labor head Avi Gabbay or Hatnuah's Tzipi Livni, two of Netanyahu's most outspoken critics. Neither are doing well in the polls, and being branded as a leftist would be nothing short of a death knell for Gantz.

Yair Lapid, leader of the secular, centrist Yesh Atid party, has said that he won't be anyone's No. 2, making Orly Levy-Abekasis the most likely candidate to join Gantz. Her Gesher party's social-economic agenda complements Gantz's security focus and addresses criticism that Resilience for Israel lacks female representation.

No matter who Gantz chooses to join him, the road ahead is a long one. But if Gantz can reproduce more moments like his January 29 speech, and if Israelis can't keep his catchy jingle out of their heads, then he just might be able to pull this off.



Benny Gantz (right) with Moshe Ya'alon at the opening campaign opening of the Israel Resilience Party in Tel Aviv, Jan. 29, 2019.

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We are Grade 7 students in Morah Ruthie's Advanced Hebrew Class. We have been studying this term a unit about Haifa, Israel. We have come to discover that Haifa has a major problem with air pollution. Although we are only 12 year-old students, we have come to realize that this issue can not be dismissed. While conducting our research, we found that this pollution in Haifa has grave consequences such as cancer, disease, death, as well as many other security issues. There have been threats to bomb the oil refineries, and if they make good on their threats there will be an enormous explosion. We took it upon ourselves to contact experts with key information that could take our un-

derstanding to the next level. After video chatting with Liad Ortar, professor at the University of Haifa, we were amazed by how much we learned! Professor Ortar answered many of our questions and shared with us some knowledge of life in Haifa. We also video chatted with chemist Moti Blitzblau, who is also head of the Green Party in Israel. He gave us lots of useful information about the current situation with oil refineries in Israel.

As part of the Jewish community in Ottawa we have learned to support, help, and protect our homeland, Israel. We could not have done this project without the guidance, wisdom, and support

of our teacher, Ruthie Lebovich, who introduced and led this project. With her help and permission, we have turned our classroom into a safe place to share our ideas and develop new projects. At first our class members (Talia, Jessica, Kiera, Nir, Lior, and Aidan) thought air pollution in Haifa would be comparable to other major cities around the world. In fact, the oil refineries in Haifa pump out as much pollution as in the city of Toronto, Canada.

With a class as innovative as ours we hope that we can take this project **all the way** to Israel!

Written by: Nir Sufa, Aidan Baker, Lior Waldman,
Kiera Vered, Jessica Ages, Talia Cherun,
Morah Ruth Lebovich

FEDERATION
REPORT



NIKKI SHAPIRO, CHAIR
SHINSHINIM COMMITTEE

Shinshinim program is a bridge between Israel and Canada

culture, history, tradition and Hebrew language with everyone they meet. They work six days per week all over the community – at the Ottawa Jewish Community School, at five supplementary schools, leading youth programming, delivering D’var Yisrael at five synagogues, and leading programs for agencies including Hillel Ottawa, the Bess and Moe Greenberg Hillel Lodge, Limmud, AJA 50+, and The Ripple Effect. Their dedication is evident, as they took part in an impressive 14 Chanukah events with over 1,100 community members!

Liam and Inbar’s energy is contagious. Both can be spotted smiling from ear to ear.

Seeing how maturely they represent Israel, we forget that they are young themselves. Only 18, and months after high school graduation, they packed up and left their family, friends and comfort zones behind to share their lives with us. Both Liam and Inbar have grown so much, and we provide a safe space to build their leadership and discover who they want to be.

Liam has learned much about Jewish life in the Diaspora. He recognized early on that Jews in the Diaspora must make a conscious choice to choose to be Jewish, paying extra for kosher food, for Jewish education whether it be day or afternoon school, and even having to take unpaid or vacation days off work to observe Jewish holidays. In Israel, being Jewish is just part of life, it is not a choice.

Inbar said that the Ottawa Jewish community has taken her under its wing and made her one of our own. In six short months, she has been able to teach (and learn) about Israel, her home country that she loves so much. She feels that this program is like a bridge between two countries and she can act as a representative for not only Israel, but also for Canadian life when she returns home at the end of her service.

Liam and Inbar feel privileged to be in Ottawa. It has been a tremendously warm and welcoming community, allowing them to express themselves and be heard. Both of them comment-

ed that their confidence has grown, and they feel they can contribute with meaning.

The shinshinim are each hosted by up to three local families. Despite their busy schedule, a special bond often forms between the shinshinim and host families. Keren Rabin, a host parent, says that hosting has been one of the most rewarding experiences they have had as a family.

“Through the program my children were exposed to new music, foods, traditions, we learned about how Liam’s family celebrates the high holidays, politics and Hebrew. It was a wonderful experience that gave my children a pride in their heritage that I am trying to foster,” she said.

The next six months of Liam and Inbar’s year of service is surely to be equally impressive. They will be spending the summer at Camp B’nai Brith, sharing their lives with host families, in addition to community engagement and programming.

It has been six months since Israeli Shinshinim Liam Afota and Inbar Haimovich assumed their roles. Already they have made meaningful connections and have made lasting impressions with many in our community. The Jewish Federation of Ottawa’s Shinshinim program is a valuable tool to impress upon our community the importance of our connection to Israel, and our fellow Jews.

Liam and Inbar interact with over 500 youth monthly, providing fun, interactive and diverse programming about Israel and Jewish pride. Primarily working with school-aged children as trained facilitators, they share Israeli

FROM THE
PULPIT



RABBI S. ROBERT MORAIS,
TEMPLE ISRAEL

Engaging with Israel

that that the Wall was just a wall. What makes it special, he said, was that you must make it your own. We all looked at him with blank teenaged stares. He went on to say that it was his hope that this trip would only be our first of many visits to Israel. He then suggested that we find a distinctive stone in the wall, one that we would be able to remember, in a sense, make our own, so that when we returned in the future, we would be able to revisit our personal stone.

I have used this story with many of the groups I have led, giving people the opportunity to really claim the Kotel as their own. When I was there this evening, I stood at my stone, reflecting on the many trips I have taken and the strong sense of connection I feel to Israel, its land and people. I quietly, offered my own personal prayers, standing alongside Jews of every denomination and observance.

After the Kotel we made our way to the pedestrian mall on Ben Yehuda Street. If, at the Kotel, we experienced the Israel of our spirits, it was here that we felt the Israel of our souls. The vitality of an Israel filled with young people, some native Israelis, others studying here for a few months or a year. What

everyone had in common was joy – everyone seemed happy to be out and celebrating life.

This trip is an opportunity to engage with the Israel of today, a place of constant innovation, change, and creativity in areas including food, wine, start-ups, art, and culture. We are visiting the real Israel – the Israel that leads the world in ideas and start-up companies. The Israel that is on the leading edge of technological innovation. The trip is an opportunity to gain new insights into the Israel of today and the people behind these innovations.

We are also meeting with leaders of Reform Judaism in Israel, to show our support for their continued struggle for religious equality for non-Orthodox Judaism in Israel. They need to know that they are not alone; that we are fully in support of the important work they are doing, both to bring liberal Judaism to as many people in Israel as possible, and also to oppose the government’s biased policies.

During our time together we pray, explore what is new and innovative and, I am sure, deepen our connections and commitments to this incredible land and its people – our land and our people!

What is Israel? All too often we are consumed with a conversation about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As I write, I have just returned from a walk in Jerusalem. We walked from the hotel and made our way through the gates of the Old City, winding our way through the Jewish Quarter until we reached the Kotel, the Western Wall. The site of our ancient temple and today the place known as Judaism’s most sacred locale.

I have been to the Kotel many times before. In fact, this is probably my 15th trip to Israel. On my first trip, we had a wonderful guide who brought us to the plaza in front of the Kotel and told us

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FROM THE EDITOR



MICHAEL REGENSTREIF

According to Leo Rosten in his 1968 book, *The Joys of Yiddish*, “A mensch is someone to admire and emulate, someone of noble character. The key to being ‘a real mensch’ is nothing less than character, rectitude, dignity, a sense of what is right, responsible, [and] decorous.

Canada lost a real mensch on February 6 when Paul Dewar, the member of Parliament for Ottawa Centre from 2006 until 2015, passed away following a year-long battle with Grade 4 glioblastoma, a type of brain cancer. He was just 56.

Dewar’s family – wife Julia Sneyd, and sons Nathaniel and Jordan – were with him when he died. His mother, from whom he inherited his commitments to social justice and public service, was the late Marion Dewar, mayor of Ottawa from 1978 to 1985.

While I didn’t know Dewar well, he was always friendly when I’d encounter him at Mitzvah Day and other Jewish

Paul Dewar will be ‘sorely missed’

community events, or occasionally at music events like the Ottawa Folk Festival. And during election campaigns when the Jewish Federation of Ottawa would hold round-table discussions with Ottawa-area candidates, I always found Dewar to be one of the best informed and most articulate representatives of any of the parties.

Although there were some New Democratic Party MPs who were hostile to the State of Israel, Dewar, the NDP’s foreign affairs critic for many years, joined party leaders Jack Layton and Thomas Mulcair in expressing a principled stand that maintained support for the country and people while sometimes diverging from policies of the Israeli government.

While an NDP government would maintain Canada’s strong friendship and support for Israel, government-to-government relations, when necessary, would be more nuanced than they were under the then-current Conservative government, Dewar said at a Federation round-table meeting with NDP candidates on September 3, 2015.

“Friends, sometimes, should be able to criticize friends,” said Dewar, saying an NDP government would be “constructively critical” when necessary but would certainly maintain and expand Canada’s strong diplomatic and trade relationships

with Israel. The NDP, he added, supports Israel’s right to defend itself from regional threats – including terrorist attacks.

During that meeting, Dewar also expressed support for community agencies like Jewish Family Services of Ottawa, Tamir and Hillel Lodge which are on the frontlines of providing social services.

Dewar was also a strong advocate for Holocaust survivors.

“Canada has a clear and proudly multi-partisan tradition of supporting Holocaust victims and survivors,” Dewar wrote in a 2014 letter to then-foreign affairs minister John Baird urging him to encourage his counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe to commit to restitution and compensate survivors and their families for property seized during the Holocaust.

“Canada has both the ability and the responsibility to play a leading role in advocating for prompt and proper restitution or compensation, in accordance with internationally recognized standards of justice,” he added.

Despite often profound policy differences, Dewar was one of those rare politicians who was universally respected by his political opponents in the Liberal and Conservative parties.

“Devastated to learn of the passing of my friend and former colleague Paul Dewar. An incredibly decent guy and

great parliamentarian and champion for Ottawa. He was caring, companionate and competent. Thinking of his family at this difficult time,” tweeted Baird, the former foreign affairs minister and Conservative MP.

“Paul... challenged us all to dream bigger and do better to care for the people around us... He distinguished himself as a community builder, an advocate for young people, and a tenacious voice for human rights around the world. He lived up to everything a leader should be – principled, compassionate, and brave... He will be sorely missed,” said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, leader of the Liberal Party.

In a final message posted to his Facebook page on the day of his death, Dewar continued to inspire.

“In the stoic stillness of my journey, I have found my way to peace,” he wrote near the end of the message. “May you keep building a more peaceful and better world for all. Let this sacred ground be a place for all. Let the building of a better world begin with our neighbours. May we dream together. May we gather our courage and stand together in moments of despair, and may we be bound together by joyous celebration of life. We are best when we love and when we are loved... My love to you always, Paul.”

IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS



JASON MOSCOVITZ

This week Canada marked National Flag of Canada Day. Not a statutory holiday, Flag Day commemorates the moment in 1965 when Canada began to fly its new flag which was another important symbolic step away from Great Britain.

For most Canadians, Flag Day comes and goes every February 15 without much thought. But there are at least three Canadians who won’t forget the first officially declared Flag Day in 1996. I am one of them.

February 15, 1996 was a miserably cold day. That morning I got to the warmth of the CBC parliamentary bureau on Wellington Street and was

Remembering Canada’s first Flag Day

told prime minister Jean Chrétien was giving a morning speech to mark Flag Day at a park in Gatineau.

As the reporter who covered the prime minister, it was usually my job to go where he went. But when the events were not considered newsworthy, the assignments were usually given to more junior reporters to cover. Flag Day was left to my discretion and I chose not to go. No other reporter was assigned. The camera crew went alone.

Journalists know that something untoward can happen at any moment, at any time, and in any place, but being human means any professional can make a mistake. For almost 25 years, I have known I made a mistake that freezing cold day. It’s obvious in retrospect: I should have gone to Gatineau to hear Chrétien’s Flag Day speech.

As expected, there was nothing newsworthy in the speech. But who knew there would be so many angry unemployed demonstrators shouting down Chrétien as he tried to speak? That, too, is not necessarily newsworthy until something more unusual happens. And happen it did.

Now etched forever in political his-

tory, Chrétien finished the first-ever Flag Day speech and charged across the park with his RCMP guards to get to his warm car. He was a fast, determined walker and it is no exaggeration to visualize him charging across the park.

Following him were the demonstrators who weren’t anxious to see him depart because that meant their fun was over. A demonstrator tried to block the prime minister’s path and an angry, frustrated Chrétien reached out, grabbed the man by the throat and forced him to the ground. They called it the “Shawinigan handshake.” I called it my nightmare.

It is not every day a prime minister chokes a demonstrator all by himself in broad daylight. No question it was breaking news and a terrible blunder for a reporter not to be there. I had to rely on the camera crew to bring me hopefully great video of the instantly unforgettable Shawinigan handshake.

But the CBC camera crew was nowhere close to the choke. The camera and sound people were not well positioned and got the back of people’s heads. Global News got the video and won an award for it. A still photographer from the Toronto Star got it, too. My day

from hell kept spiraling downward.

It was my job that night to do the lead story for The National telling Canadians how their prime minister choked a demonstrator on the first-ever Flag Day. We had to credit Global News and the Toronto Star for the images and as humiliating as that was, it was just the beginning.

The story wouldn’t go away. An old friend in government used to say when newspaper is used to wrap rotting fish it means the story is dead. The Shawinigan handshake just kept smelling and there was a columnist from the Toronto Sun who for months always found a way to remind his readers how the CBC, the state-funded CBC, missed such a big story.

Then the demonstrator, Bill Clennett, sued Chrétien because he claimed his denture was broken in the altercation. As for Chrétien, he tried to use choking Clennett as a positive sign of how tough and no-nonsense he could be. Chrétien’s critics, though, saw it as a window into his nasty side which, they claimed, he tried to keep under wraps throughout his political life.

I don’t know about Chrétien and Clennett, but every mid-February I remember Flag Day and wished that I didn’t.

Mitzvah Day 2019



PHOTOS BY HOWARD SANDLER
AND ISSIE SCAROWSKY



Dan Mader
Board Chair

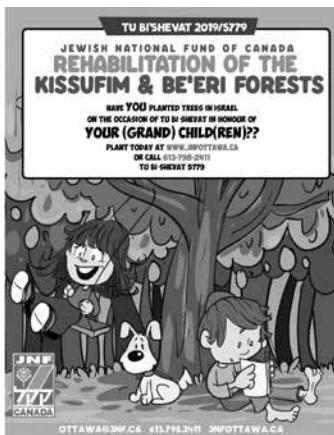


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Tu Bishvat Wrap-Up and Sderot Mayor, March 3

Thank you!! Snow and blowing winds did not deter the generosity of donors or volunteers during this year's Tu Bishvat Telethon in support of rehabilitating the Bee'ri and Kissufim Forests in the Negev. Thanks to our volunteers, Dan Mader, David Baker, Alan Blostein, Margo Blostein, Rabbi Bulka, Merle Haltrecht-Matte, Naomi Krym, Mitchell Novick, Cindy Poplove, Danielle Schneiderman, Harold Schwartz, Lauren Shaps, Roz Taller, Penny Torontow and Renee Greenberg.



Festive JNF Certificates

This year, as in the past, JNF has created a festive certificate to commemorate the 2019 Tu Bishvat Tree planting. There's still time to order for children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews... or anyone!

A visit with Yifat Bear-Millar and Sustainable Nation partners

At the time of writing, JNF Canada's Education Shlichah Yifat Bear-Millar is planning an amazing visit to Ottawa (story and photos to follow) to meet with students and educators. Born in Haifa, Yifat has a master's in Education, taught at both Israeli and U.S.-based schools and is very passionate about JNF's environmental work. Her programs focus on recycling, environment and sustainability. One of the programs she is bringing is the documentary "Sustainable Nation" on Israel's global water leadership, the Israeli entrepreneurs behind the water revolution and how Israel, a desert, is becoming a lead exporter in water. Thank you to our partners **Ottawa Torah Institute** and **JWRP** for help in making the program a success!

March 3: Sderot Mayor Alon Davidi. Buy tickets at JNF Ottawa

Be inspired by the dedication of Sderot Mayor Alon Davidi who will visit Ottawa on March 3. Mayor Davidi is an enigmatic leader and father of five children. Not only is he championing the economic "boom" in Sderot, he is actively encouraging residents – both adults and children – to live as normal a life as possible despite living under constant threat of attack. We hope you come out, listen and support Mayor Davidi in his journey to build a better life for his constituents. Tickets are \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door. Donations to the Sderot project are welcome. Thank you to our partner **Congregation Beit Tikvah** for helping JNF Ottawa make the evening a success!

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RECORDING EULOGIES

I am writing to inform the community that the Ottawa Jewish Historical Society (OJHS) will no longer be recording eulogies at Jewish funerals in Ottawa.

The OJHS Board of Directors made this difficult decision because we can no longer continue to maintain the service free of charge.

We have notified Jewish Memorial Gardens, the

Chevra Kadisha, and the Ottawa Jewish Archives that the recording equipment is available should another organization wish to take on this task.

It has been an honour for us to have been able to provide this service to the Ottawa Jewish community for the past 20 years, but it is now time for the baton to be passed.

Teri Levine, President
Ottawa Jewish Historical Society

Netanyahu rivals take top spots in Likud primary



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

BY MARCY OSTER

JERUSALEM (JTA) – Benjamin Netanyahu will continue to lead the Likud Party, and he will be followed on his party's list for the upcoming Israeli elections by four lawmakers that he has clashed with in recent months.

More than 69,700 Likud party members voted, February 5, in the party's primary elections at 587 polling places around the country, or 58 per cent of party members. The results will be finalized later on Wednesday afternoon.

The top four slots after Netanyahu will be held by Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein, Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz, Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan, and Gideon Sa'ar, former interior minister, according to reports.

In his first run for national office, former Jerusalem mayor Nir Barkat came in the top 10 in the primary vote.

Others likely to appear in the top 10 are Culture Minister Miri Regev, Social Equality Minister Gila Gamliel, Tourism Minister Yariv Levin, Home Front Defense Minister Avi Dichter, and Immigration Absorption Minister Yoav Gallant.

Controversial lawmaker Oren Hazan, as well as current lawmaker and Temple Mount advocate Yehuda Glick finished below 30 and will likely not make it into the next Knesset. Some 15 seats of the top 40 are reserved for regional candidates, Netanyahu has three other seats that he can appoint, and there are four other seats reserved for a woman, a new immigrant, a young candidate and a minority candidate which could push some of Wednesday's winners into lower positions.

National elections are scheduled to be held in Israel on April 9.

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Jordan Geist hopes to secure funding to build a Jewish student centre in Waterloo.

Ottawa student Jordan Geist leads Hillel Waterloo

BY MATTHEW HORWOOD

Jordan Geist, an Ottawa Jewish Community School graduate, was a Grade 12 student at Sir Robert Borden High School when she received the Grossman-Klein Teen Leadership Award from the Soloway Jewish Community Centre in 2016.

Three years later, her leadership skills intact, Geist is a major force behind a thriving Jewish student life at the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University as president of Hillel Waterloo.

Geist, now in her third year of management engineering at the University of Waterloo, said when she first came to Waterloo, she was surprised to learn the school has over 1,000 Jewish students.

"It's quite a large Jewish community that I didn't even know about," she said.

Geist – the daughter of Allison Gefen, a family physician in Ottawa, and Michael Geist, a law professor at the University of Ottawa – said she initially became involved at Hillel Waterloo when she joined the Holocaust Education Week Committee.

As president, Geist oversees Hillel operations at Waterloo and Laurier and manages an "amazing team" of 12 individuals on the executive board.

In the past year, Hillel Waterloo has hosted numerous social events, such as the Jews & Brews pub night, Campus Sukkah movie night, and the 2019 Bar Mitzvah Bash, which sold over 200 tickets.

Hillel Waterloo also coordinates with Chabad of Waterloo/Laurier so that Jewish student activities and Shabbat dinners never overlap. Geist said attendance at Hillel's Shabbat dinners have "almost doubled" from 40 to 50 people last year to nearly 100 now.

Geist says she has been so busy as president of Hillel Waterloo that she has had to step back from other leadership opportunities on campus, such as the management engineering-focused design team she founded.

According to Geist, Hillel Waterloo has opened up a "whole community of like-minded people" to her, both at Waterloo and Laurier.

"People think it's funny, but I honestly feel like I have a huge Jewish community here that [seems] larger than my Jewish community back home."

Geist said her primary goal at Hillel Waterloo is to secure funding to build a Jewish student centre, as they are the "only Hillel in Ontario that doesn't have a permanent space."

Hillel Waterloo also plans to "grow out" the community by providing more support for students, "whether it's celebrating holidays, bringing in different guest speakers, or helping students with their education through study spaces or resumé critiques."

Geist said she takes pride in the expansion of Hillel Waterloo and in the "growing community of students we are continuing to build."



Since 2016, Jonah Sohmer has sent more than 60 bags of hockey equipment to Israel and another 50 bags to other countries.

Team Jonah: bar mitzvah project still going strong

BY MITCH MILLER

In 2016, cousins Jonah Sohmer of Ottawa and Jason Kornbluth of Cleveland were planning to celebrate their bar mitzvahs in Israel. They both love hockey, so it was natural that they wanted to incorporate two of their passions: hockey and Israel.

For their bar mitzvah project, Jonah and Jason decided to collect hockey gear in the fall of 2016 which they brought with them to Israel when they travelled there for their bar mitzvahs in December of that year. Now, though, a simple equipment drive from Jonah's garage in Craig Henry has grown from a one-time bar mitzvah project into a meaningful gift that keeps on giving.

When Jonah and his family returned from Israel, they were motivated to do more to help provide youth in Israel with hockey equipment. In Israel, they had met boys and girls – Jewish, Christian, and Druze – who all played hockey at the Canada Centre in Metulla – but there are no hockey stores in Israel. Jonah and Jason had the opportunity to skate with the hockey youth and light the Chanukah candles with them. It inspired something in the boys and their families.

Jonah's father, Ben, and his uncle, David Lisbona, put a plan into action helping him launch "Team Jonah." Jonah's mother, Ali, happily stored hockey bags in their garage and basement (and when more storage was

needed, they called on Uncle Jack and Aunt Helaine to join the team). To date, Jonah's project has sent well over 100 hockey bags filled with quality equipment around the world – including more than 60 bags to Israel, 20 bags to India, and 30 bags to Greece. They have also connected with Hockey Without Borders to continue helping young people around the world share their passion for the world's coolest sport.

Uncle David also initiated "Operation Jock Strap" and collected over 350 brand new jocks and jills to send to Israel (not an item you want to receive used).

Keeping with Jonah's original idea of connecting Israel and hockey, through his gift of giving, Hockey Without Borders has connected with the Canada Israel Hockey School in Metulla and is now looking at the possibility of organizing a trip to Israel from another non-traditional hockey country – exposing more young people from around the world to the beauty of the Holy Land.

What is inspiring is that Jonah and his family have not asked for recognition. They do what they do from the goodness of their hearts in the space provided by their garage and basement (and occasionally the front hallway). If you have hockey equipment (in good condition) that you would like to donate, contact Team Jonah at bensohmer@yahoo.ca.

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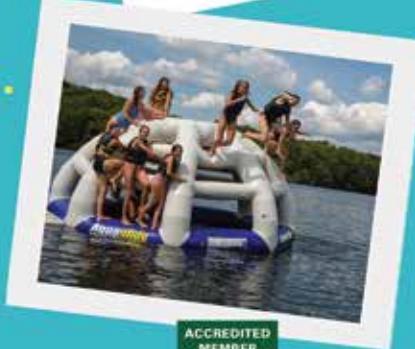
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Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein 1951-2019

Interfaith activist who raised millions in Christian donations for Israel grew up in Ottawa

BY CNAAN LIPSHIZ

(JTA) – To the many colleagues and supporters of Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, who died February 6 at the age of 67, he was a man of vision whose enormous drive to succeed both facilitated and complicated his relentless efforts on behalf of the Jewish people.

As head of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, or ICFJ, the New York-born rabbi raised hundreds of millions of dollars in donations – mostly from Christians – for projects benefiting needy Jews and Arabs in Israel and beyond.

Yechiel Eckstein's childhood was spent in Ottawa. In 1952, when he was just one year old, his father, Rabbi Simon Eckstein, became the spiritual leader of four Orthodox congregations in the city: Adath Jeshurun, Agudath Achim, Machzikei Hadas and B'nai Jacob. In 1956, when Adath Jeshurun and Agudath Achim merged to form Congregation Beth Shalom, Rabbi Simon Eckstein became spiritual leader of the merged congregation, serving until 1975.

To many thousands of ordinary Jews and Christians whose lives he touched without ever meeting them, Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein was something of a guardian angel, heading a powerful machine that offered everyday assistance and was able to intervene quickly in emergencies, in creative ways cutting through the red tape characteristic of some other Jewish aid groups.

The impact left by Rabbi Eckstein, who died of cardiac arrest at his home in Jerusalem, was reflected in the glowing eulogies that mainstream Jewish groups offered within hours of his death.

"He was a tireless worker for the Jewish people and for Israel, and he made

significant contributions by fostering evangelical support for Israel," wrote Jonathan Greenblatt, director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).

Rabbi Eckstein, who moved to Israel in 1999, began his involvement in interfaith dialogue with the ADL in 1974 and started the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (IFCJ) in 1983. Using television advertising, his tremendous charisma and tireless outreach legwork in the United States, he made unprecedented headway in raising funds for Israel and Jews in crisis situations among evangelicals.

Eckstein served as a member of the board and executive committee of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and in 2014, together with IFCJ, received its highest honour, the Raoul Wallenberg Award.

He also pushed back against Jewish leaders who distrusted evangelical support of Israel.

"The majority of evangelicals are passionately pro-Israel because it is part of their theology to love and support the Jewish people," Eckstein wrote in 2002. "I could not accept the conditional love of those who expect a payback on behalf of my people. I could not embark on a relationship that would compromise my personal integrity and ideals or that of the Jewish community I represent. But having been the first – and most often the only – Jew to build bridges with the right-wing Christian community, I have a view and understanding of their pro-Israel fervour that most people 'on the outside' lack."

Israel's influential Tzohar rabbinical group called him a "visionary whose leadership enabled tremendous support



INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS
Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein arriving in Israel with the first group of immigrants brought by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, Dec. 22, 2014.

for the state and people of Israel, and his actions bettered the lives of countless people all over the country."

Isaac Herzog, chair of the Jewish Agency for Israel, wrote on Twitter that the Jewish people have lost "a leader who worked tirelessly on their behalf."

Rabbi Eckstein was ordained at Yeshiva University in New York, and held master's degrees from Yeshiva University and Columbia University, where he also completed studies for his doctorate.

One of his three daughters, Yael, works at the ICFJ as global executive vice-president.

Despite the posthumous embrace, Eckstein had a thorny relationship with the Jewish establishment most everywhere he went. Critics considered him a manipulator of public opinion with a mercurial temper and an overgrown ego.

Most recently he clashed publicly with the Jewish Agency, to which his

group had donated many millions of dollars over the years. The funding stopped in 2014 amid a fight over recognition for the ICFJ by the agency and Rabbi Eckstein's long-held reservations about the agency's efficiency in fulfilling its main task: facilitating immigration of Jews to Israel, or aliyah.

That year, Rabbi Eckstein had the ICFJ start its own aliyah operation. He offered every new immigrant a \$1,000 grant on top of benefits offered by the Jewish Agency. And he helped bring thousands of immigrants from Ukraine, during its conflict with Russia, France, Venezuela, Yemen and other trouble spots for Jews.

But Rabbi Eckstein's outreach to Christians to make that happen made him a pariah for many years for Israel's Chief Rabbinate.

In 2001, Israel's then chief Ashkenazi rabbi, Avraham Shapira, published a letter condemning Eckstein's use of Christian money to "expand Christian missionary propaganda." Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, an influential haredi Orthodox Talmud scholar, signed a letter forbidding cooperation with Eckstein, calling it "close to idolatry."

Rabbi Eckstein, who dismissed the Chief Rabbinate's attacks as not worthy of a response, angered some of his nationalist critics with his group's support to the tune of millions of dollars for Israeli Arabs, Christians and Muslims.

Despite repeated conflicts over the years with establishment figures and bodies, the scale of Rabbi Eckstein's work made his organization too big to ignore or sideline, forcing even his most outspoken critics to work with him or get out of his way.

Thanks to Rabbi Eckstein, "today so many Christians from around the world stand in fellowship with Israel," Rabbi Tuly Weisz, an author and publisher of the Israel National News website wrote in an obituary. "We, Jews and Christians together, mourn the tragic loss of a true bridge builder."

The Ottawa Jewish Bulletin contributed to this report.

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Other texts give new insight into Second Temple period

**RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN
THE REPORTER, VESTAL, NY
BOOK REVIEW**

Discovering Second Temple Literature: The Scriptures and Stories That Shaped Early Judaism

By Malka Z. Simkovich
Jewish Publication Society
384 pages

Imagine a time when writing appeared in scrolls rather than in book format. Each of these scrolls contained one book. That meant that if one wanted to read Jewish religious writings, one had to decide which scrolls were holy and worth reading. During Second Temple times, there was still a debate about which books would be entered into the canon, especially since there was a wide variety of material circulating.

In *Discovering Second Temple Literature: The Scriptures and Stories That Shaped Early Judaism*, Malka Z. Simkovich, the chair of Jewish studies and director of Catholic-Jewish studies at the Catholic Theological Union, discusses works from this time period that didn't make it into the traditional Jewish canon, but which give insights into the lives of Jews from the period.

Simkovich notes that over the centuries both Jews and Christians have generally ignored this literature, most of which didn't make it into either canon. Rabbinic writings speak as if nothing of importance appeared between when the book of *Chronicles* was written to the compilation of the Mishnah. The works featured reflect Jewish groups that did not support the followers of what was later called rabbinic Judaism and the books they produced were, therefore, ignored in rabbinic writings. These works show a Judaism that contains many different facets and ideas – not all of which were accepted by the ancient rabbis.

The four sections of *Discovering Second Temple Literature* focus on different aspects of this period. "The Modern Recovery of Second Temple Literature" speaks of the discoveries of scrolls from

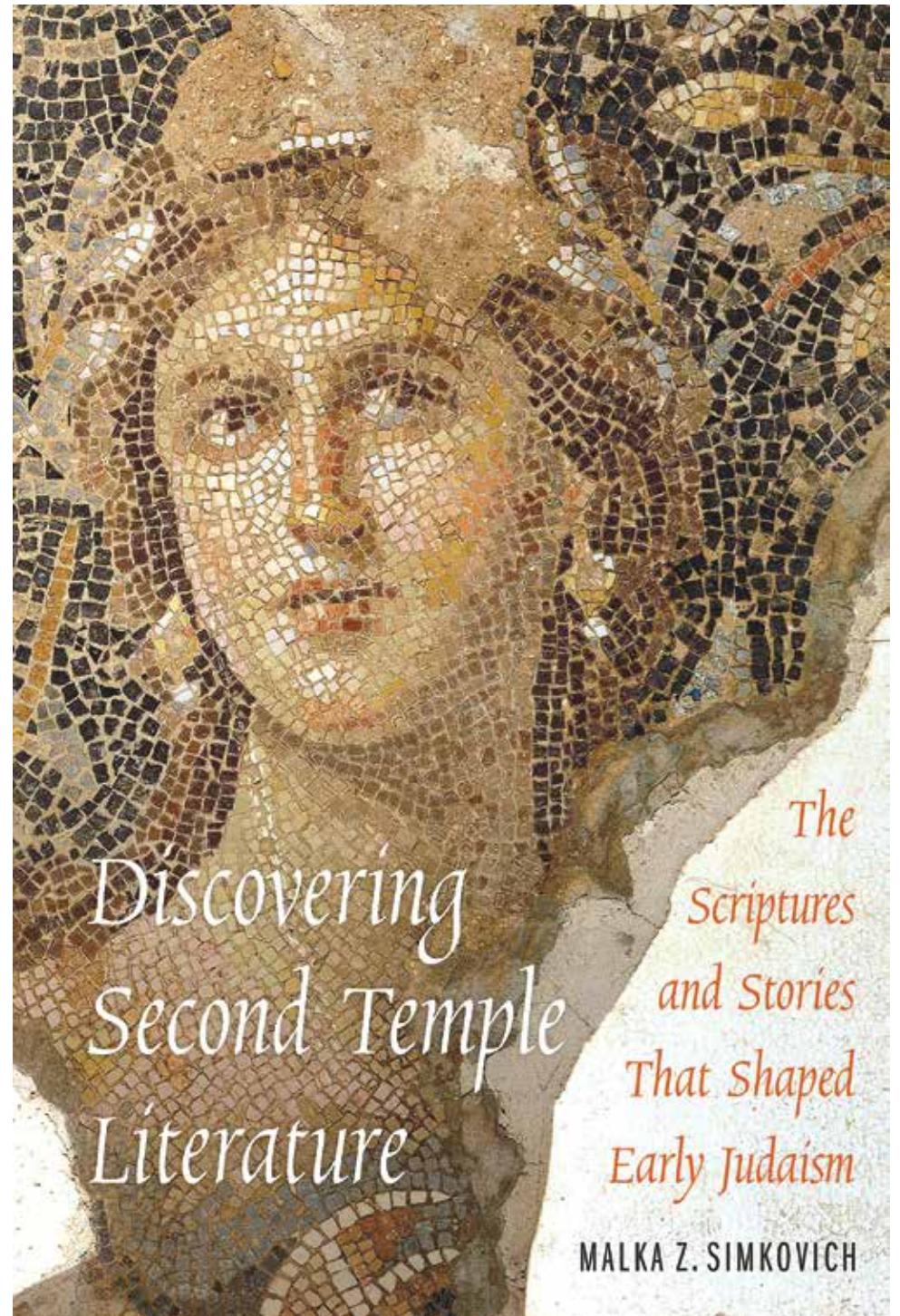
this time, including those found in the Cairo Genizah, in Christian monasteries and in caves near the Dead Sea. While this section offers new material for those unfamiliar with the recovery of these works, those interested in Jewish life during this period will find the other sections of greater interest. For example, in "Jewish Life in the Second Temple Period," Simkovich talks about life not only in Jerusalem, but in two other, if lesser known, centres of Jewish life: Alexandria and Antioch.

The history of Jerusalem – the war with Rome and the destruction of the Second Temple – may be familiar to many readers. Simkovich does an excellent job reviewing what occurred, which helps place the writings from that place and period in context. Jewish Alexandria is less well known because the ancient rabbis did not accept works from the city's writers into the Jewish canon. One reason may be that most of these texts were written in Greek and echo Greek works.

The best known of these writers is Philo of Alexandria, who, according to Simkovich, "offers fascinating details about the Jews of his city, their internal organization of limited self-leadership, and their synagogues." While there were problems, this community thrived for almost four centuries.

Different Jewish sects are discussed in "The Worldviews of Second Temple Writers." Simkovich also speaks of those who did not belong to any sectarian group and notes the sectarian groups did not represent the majority of Jews. This large group practiced "what scholars call Common Judaism, which comprised a common set of practices, including the regular reading of the scriptures, observance of the Sabbath, dietary laws, and circumcision." Simkovich suggests the Pharisees became popular because they made Judaism accessible to the common people. It was they who believed "that one could worship the Jewish God through the study of scriptures and the observance of a set of laws outside of the Temple."

In the work's final section, "The Holy Texts of Second Temple Judaism," Simkovich explores the codification of the canon. She notes that during Second Temple time only the Chumash, the first five books of the Bible, were con-



sidered sacred scripture by all Jews. The discussions of works that translated and interpreted the biblical text, or which rewrote biblical stories, were accepted by some and discarded by others. Many of these books did not make the canon. It was fascinating to read about such works as the Greek *Esther* (in which God plays a major role in the story) and "Joseph and Aseneth," a novella about the biblical Joseph and his wife.

In her introduction, Simkovich writes about how *Discovering Second Temple*

Literature can be used in college and religious school courses, but her clear, easy-to-read prose makes this book accessible to non-scholastic readers. For those unfamiliar with the many divisions within Judaism at that time, or with Jewish life in other parts of the Roman Empire, this book offers an excellent introduction to a little-studied time period.

Readers of Jewish history will definitely want to add this work to their shelves.

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The Shalva Band had a shot at becoming Israel's representative at the Eurovision contest.

Shabbat observance stops disabled band's bid to represent Israel at Eurovision

BY MARCY OSTER

JERUSALEM (JTA) – The Shalva Band, a group of musicians with various disabilities, didn't expect to advance so far in the competition to represent Israel in the Eurovision Song Contest in May.

But they made it all the way to the finals – and won't find out if they could have won.

The band has decided to pull out of the Keshet network's "Hakoachav Habah," or "The Next Star" – its winner becomes Israel's entry to Eurovision, being held this year in Tel Aviv – rather than be faced with having to perform on Shabbat as part of the international contest.

Several members of the band are Sabbath-observant and Eurovision holds its final dress rehearsals on Friday night and Saturday, complete with recording and filming, according to Hadashot News, which airs on the Keshet network.

Band members said they were aware of the rules but had not expected to advance so far in the competition, according to the report. On February 2, the band became the first of four acts to qualify for "The Next Star" finals.

Eurovision said the final rehearsals are vital because the performances are filmed and sent to international judges for use in scoring, and so the contest has a backup in case technical issues arise during the live performances on Saturday night.

Israel's culture minister, Miri Regev, appealed to Eurovision to be more flexible but reportedly was rebuffed.

"The question at stake is not hypothetical but is rather a matter of principle, underlying the very foundations of equal opportunity and true acceptance of the concept of diversity that the Eurovision Song Contest proudly symbolizes," she wrote in a letter sent Monday to Eurovision organizers.

Eurovision said it could not make a final decision on how to handle the Shalva Band until and if it was named Israel's selection. The band reportedly decided

to drop out rather than spoil the chances for other competitors.

It had turned to the Tzomet Institute, which helps to create workarounds for Shabbat that adhere to Orthodox Jewish law, or halachah, to explore the possibility of Sabbath-friendly microphones and instruments. The institute reportedly was reluctant to take on the project due to the "mass desecration of Shabbat" that the rehearsals would entail, Israel Hayom reported.

Shalva rapidly became a favourite of the audience and viewers of "The Next Star." Judges praised the band for their professionalism and clean, pure sound. The contestants advance with scores from the judges, along with cellphone and online voting from viewers.

Both of the band's lead singers – an immigrant from India and another from France – are blind. One member has Williams syndrome, a developmental disorder; two have Down syndrome; one is visually impaired; and one is a disabled war veteran.

Shalva, the Israel Association for the Care and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, provides services and programming for thousands of people with disabilities from infancy to adulthood and their families, including therapies, educational frameworks, social and recreational activities, employment training, independent living and family respite.

Last month, Israeli pop star Omer Adam turned down an offer to perform at Eurovision over the Sabbath work requirement. Adam, 25, is not religiously observant but makes it a point of not working on Shabbat.

Israel won the right to host the 2019 Eurovision Song Contest after singer Netta Barzilai won the 2018 competition in May. Israel, which has won the contest four times, will host for a third time, having previously staged Eurovision in Jerusalem in 1979 and 1999. Israel has participated in Eurovision 42 times since its first appearance in 1973.



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Israeli TV shows offer different view from nightly news

On April 8, 1903 – Easter Sunday – a pogrom started in the small Russian city of Kishnev. At the end of three days, 49 Jews had been killed, 600 Jewish women had been raped, and hundreds of others injured. The Jewish world would never be the same.

The aftermath of the pogrom is brilliantly analyzed in *Pogrom: Kishnev and the Tilt of History*, by social historian Stephen J. Zipperstein. Among many outcomes of Kishnev, Zipperstein tells of two that continue to resonate throughout the Jewish world. Russian Zionists, were horrified by what appeared to be the almost universal lack of resistance of the Jewish community. Chaim Nachman Bialik, the most important of the first generation of Hebrew poets, wrote his famous “In the City of the Killings,” a poem that mobilized many Zionists to action and helped lead to increased aliyah to Palestine.

Then, in September 1903, just five months after the pogrom, a group of Russian extremists began a protracted campaign of anti-Semitism with the publication of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which purported to be the minutes of a secret 19th century meeting where Jewish leaders discussed their goal of global Jewish hegemony through subversion of the morals of Gentiles and by seizing control of the world press and the world economy.

The Protocols found a willing audience. American entrepreneur Henry Ford funded an English translation and distributed 500,000 copies throughout the United States in the 1920s. For the Nazis, it was a foundational text. It is still available in many languages, including Arabic. It has an unlimited shelf life and its poisonous words live on through the missives of white nationalists,



RABBI STEVEN H. GARTEN
A VIEW FROM THE BLEACHERS

What is it about this country of fewer than nine million inhabitants that captures the imagination of the world?

anti-Semites, and Israel-haters throughout the world.

If you have any sense of irony, you will note that at least one claim in *The Protocols* claims has [seemingly] come to fruition. We Jews have, indeed, begun a steady march to *control* the media. Nowhere is this more obvious than on Netflix, a service that streams a wide variety of television series, movies and documentaries. Netflix’s offerings come from many different countries but no country, beyond the United States, is as widely represented as Israel. At last count there were 13 Israeli television shows and multiple Israeli movies available to Netflix subscribers. Amazon Prime and Hulu, two other streaming services, also provide access to Israeli film and television shows.

What is it about this country of fewer than nine million inhabitants that captures the imagination of the world? The cynic looks to *The Protocols* and says, “See I told you they want to control the media.” But

the inquisitive mind recognizes that there is a hunger to understand this small country whose continued existence remains a source of wonder and hate. Israeli shows such as “Fauda,” “Hostages,” “Mossad 101” and “Prisoners of War” – upon which the American-Israeli blockbuster “Homeland” is based – provide a glimpse into the lives of those charged with protecting the State of Israel. It is not a pretty world, but one full of moral ambiguity that comes by living on the verge of extinction.

Shows such as “Srugim,” “Shtisel,” “Beauty and the Baker,” “Angel,” and “The A Word” offer a window into the everyday lives of ordinary Israelis revealing an Israel that “The National” and CNN never show.

“Shtisel” is a soap opera following the lives of an Ashkenazi yeshivish family. If you believe that frum families are monolithic and insulated from the craziness of the modern world, this show will disuade you. “Beauty and the Baker” is a Cinderella-like story about a wealthy Israeli woman falling in love with a baker. Fluff, yes, but Israeli fluff. Even when living under the threat of annihilation, Israeli television recognizes that fantasy is often as important to survival as a well prepared IDF.

I could continue to elaborate on the Israeli shows available, but I’m not a shill for any particular streaming service. But I do encourage those with access to these services to take a peek at the Israel that lives behind the headlines. It is often an Israel that even the most attuned student of Israeli society does not really see. As for the anti-Semites, well, let them continue to believe that we are controlling the media. Maybe all these Israeli movies and shows will help our survival more than AIPAC or CIJA.

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For more information contact Sarah Beutel at sbeutel@jewishottawa.com or 613-798-4696 x253



The life-changing magic of turning 40

I ran into someone the other week who I went to high school with. I probably hadn't seen him since graduation day.

When I called out his name, he turned and I could see that split second where he wasn't sure who I was – but then recognition dawned. "Steph," he said, "you look exactly the same."

I'm 40. Do I look the same as I did then? For one thing, I had way nicer skin at 18. And for another, I've lived a half-dozen different lifetimes since prom at the Château Laurier. I like to think I've aged well and respectably since that time, and that I'm the very picture of wisdom and sophistication. Basically Meryl Streep. I don't want to look like my 18-year-old self. I like who I am now much better.

But I suppose you could look at it another way, through the lens of the expression "life begins at 40."

If that's true, maybe I do look as I did on the cusp of adulthood and independence at 18, because my last birthday did feel like the start of a new phase of life.

Could be just the round number, the cultural zeitgeist connected with being a 40-something, etc. But there are tangible markers than I'm entering a new phase.

Take membership fees. While my salary is not a dollar higher at 40 than it was at 39, I'm suddenly above the cut-off age for all the young family/professional discounts on offer across the community.

More broadly, at 40, I am technically no longer part of the so-called "Emerging Generation (EG)," the name given to the division of Jewish Federation of Ottawa programming focused on young adults just finding their way into independent community life.



STEPHANIE SHEFRIN
**MODERN
MISHPOCHA**

All of us need different things at different stages in our lives. How and what we are looking for from community isn't static or attached to how old we are.

The name has always brought to mind caterpillars turning into butterflies, the idea that through its efforts with EG, Federation will help people find their Jewish wings and soar into community living and giving.

Perhaps we should have a bat mitzvah-type ceremony for this milestone. It makes me think of a great kids' book, *Zog*, where a dragon learns to do things independently with a refrain, "Now that you've been shown, you can practice on your own."

I may be 40, but on this, my second maternity leave, I find myself often in situations where many of the babies I meet have parents who are five or six years younger than me, sometimes even more. Yet, because of the age of our kids, we have a great deal in common.

Conversely, in my professional life, I've arrived at a stage in my career where my seniority and experience create different requirements than those of a newbie and I realize how apart our lives really all.

All of us need different things at different stages in our lives. How and what we are looking for from community isn't static or attached to how old we are.

To borrow a phrase from the trend of the moment – what matters is finding ways to engage that spark joy.

And in the spirit of the magic of tidying up, I have some loose ends to mention when it comes to the Modern Mishpocha column.

First, I'm heartened by the feedback I receive. Whether you agree or disagree with what I say, I'm glad what I write sparks debate and dialogue. Keep writing those letters to the editor (bulletin@ottawajewishbulletin.com) or to me personally (stephshefrin@gmail.com).

Second, to follow up on my November 12, 2018 column where I mused about Jewish education for parents, I'm pleased to let you know that wheels are turning to bring a popular course called "Foundations" to Ottawa. It is a curriculum that uses PJ Library and other resources to help educate parents about Jewish themes, so they can in turn talk about them with their kids. Stay tuned for more.

Finally, I bid a fond farewell to Emma Mallach, who wrote several interesting columns for Modern Mishpocha over the past year. I'll miss her writing and insight. Over the course of the next year, I'll be joined in this space by a variety of other members of our community, sharing their perspective on being a modern mishpocha with you. Happy reading.

OTTAWA JEWISH BULLETIN

Employment Opportunity **Summer Intern Ottawa Jewish Bulletin**

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Canada's new dietary guidelines provide food for thought

The 2019 version of "Canada's Dietary Guidelines," previously known as "Canada's Food Guide," was released in January. The nutritional guidelines are intended as a resource for policy makers and health professionals as well as individuals with an interest in making healthy food choices.

The guide was originally published in 1942 to address widespread nutritional deficiencies caused by wartime food rationing. The guide has changed over time to reflect the needs of Canadians and the latest research in nutrition science. Sometimes food industry lobby groups have influenced the content and not always in ways that are in the best interest of Canadians.

In the 1940s, iodized salt was recommended to combat iodine deficiency. Today we consume too much sodium because of the abundance of processed foods. The 1949 guide reflected the end of war-era food rations and recommended avoiding excess food intake. Margarine, which had been illegal except during wartime butter shortages, became permanently legal in 1948 and was added to the guide. <https://tinyurl.com/y9gy5xbn>

The 1961 guide reflected the changes in food processing, shelf life and transportation as well as types of food more readily available to Canadians such as citrus fruit. By 1977, the guide removed the recommendation to eat potatoes daily, it included meat alternatives and enriched products (e.g., enriched white bread as an alternative to whole grain bread; this is no longer recommended) and other dairy foods besides milk. By 1982, the guide considered the impact of diet on chronic diseases, and the concept of energy balance was introduced.

The 1992 guide included information about energy requirements based on age, gender, body size, activity level and conditions such as pregnancy and nursing. The guide suggested the number of servings per day for each



GLORIA SCHWARTZ
FOCUS ON FITNESS

food group, which sounds logical, but made it challenging to adhere to and may have encouraged caloric intake that exceeded requirements, leading to weight gain.

The 2007 guide included guidelines for limiting added fats and oils and other foods and beverages and it recommended drinking water. It also emphasized eating a variety of foods, whole foods, colourful foods and whole grains.

Most Canadians today consume too many calories and unhealthy foods high in salt, sugar and saturated fat. Sixty-two per cent of Canadian men and 46 per cent of Canadian women are overweight or obese and many Canadians suffer from preventable lifestyle-related chronic diseases. <https://tinyurl.com/y7ulnsh3>

The 2019 version includes three major guidelines: 1) Nutritious foods are the foundations for healthy eating; 2) Processed or prepared foods and beverages that undermine healthy eating should not be consumed regularly; and 3) Food skills are needed to navigate the complex food environment and support healthy eating.

More specifically, the guidelines include:

- Replacement of the four major food groups (vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives) with three groups (1-fruit and vegetables, 2-whole grains, nuts and seeds, and 3-protein). The protein group includes meat, poultry, fish, dairy products and legumes;

- Eating fewer and leaner meats and replacing dairy products high in saturated fat (cream, butter, high-fat cheese) with fewer and lower-fat dairy and with unsaturated fat (nuts, seeds, avocado), fewer processed meats such as hotdogs and deli meats, and a higher proportion of plant-based foods which are high in dietary fibre;
- Avoiding foods high in saturated fat, sodium, sugar and other real and artificial sweeteners;
- Avoiding foods containing and trans fat;
- Water as the beverage of choice and avoiding sweet drinks such as sports drinks, soda, fruit juices and chocolate milk – and limiting alcohol;
- Daily servings from each food group and portion sizes have been removed;
- How to eat, such as cooking more at home and dining out less, being aware of deceptive food marketing, using nutritional information on food labels and developing good habits;
- Avoiding restrictive fad diets that can lead to nutritional deficiencies.

According to a 2012 survey of 10,000 Canadians, less than a third of respondents had seen the last guide and just nine per cent said it was their information source for healthy eating. However, 25 per cent of those who used that guide reported better eating habits than those who used other sources. <https://tinyurl.com/y7xgjk3>

Focusing on improving one's eating habits should be balanced with enjoying food and not feeling stressed, guilty or ashamed.

While the guidelines are intended to be helpful, I think Canadians may find them more confusing than practical. The complete 2019 guidelines as well as what I think are its shortcomings are available on my website. www.personalbestthebook.com

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WHAT'S GOING ON | February 18 to March 3, 2019

FOR MORE CALENDAR LISTINGS, INCLUDING ONGOING EVENTS, VISIT WWW.JEWISHOTTAWA.COM/COMMUNITY-CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

Crime & Consequence - Jewish Wisdom on Criminal Justice

7 - 8:30 pm. Tuesdays until March 12, 2019
Ottawa Torah Centre Chabad
111 Lamplighters Drive

Contact: Rabbi Blum, rabbi@theotc.org
Cost: \$ 90. A six-week course that explores 3000 years of Jewish wisdom in criminal justice. This course will challenge our thinking, help us discover and recover the humanity within criminals, question practices that seem unethical and unfair, and explore ways to prevent crime from ever taking place.

OTTAWA ISRAELI DANCE 2018-2019

6:30 - 10 pm, Tuesdays until June 25, 2019
Ottawa Jewish Community School gym
31 Nadolny Sachs Pvt.

Contact: Judy
judy@ottawaisraelidance.ca
Contemporary Israeli dances. Old favourites. Great music. Exercise. All in a fun and friendly atmosphere.

JBaby Oneg Shabbat at Hillel Lodge

10:30 am - 12:30 pm, monthly on the 1st Friday until June 2, 2019, 10 Nadolny Sachs Pvt.

Contact: Ranit Braun, ranitb@hotmail.com
An inclusive baby and parent Shabbat morning program. Music, song, play, snack and kvell. Meet others with babies and toddlers roughly under 24 months. Everyone welcome! Sponsors: Temple Israel & TIRS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Family Fun Day at Machzikei

10 am - 1 pm, Congregation Machzikei Hadas, 2310 Virginia Dr.
Contact: Lianna Krantzberg

lianna@cmhottawa.com

Register: cmhottawa.com/events
Indoor fun on a cold winter day! Bouncy castles, movie, craft, hair braiding workshop, uOttawa MakerMobile workshops (Codemakers Programming for ages 4-7, Micro:Bits for ages 8-14) Dairy Lunch BuffetIn partnership with PJ Library

TUESDAY, FEB. 19

Beit Ha'am Talks

7 - 8:30 pm, Kehillat Beth Israel Congregation, 1400 Coldrey Ave.
Info/RSVP: droytenberg@yahoo.com
A program of the World Zionist Organization devoted to discussing the relationship between Canadian Jews and the State of Israel. February 19 Topic: Leadership Near and Far: The Right to Doubt

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 20

Caregiver Group - Connecting with your Loved One

1:30 - 3 pm, 10 Nadolny Sachs Pvt.
Contact: Lisa Rossman
lrossman@jfsottawa.com
This discussion and supportive group offers family members and caregivers encouragement, comfort and self care techniques.

FRIDAY, FEB. 22

Family Shabbat Dinner at Kehillat Beth Israel

6 - 7:30 pm, Kehillat Beth Israel Congregation, 1400 Coldrey Ave.
Contact: Deborah Zuker
rabbizuker@kehillatbethisrael.com
Cost: \$18. Families with kids age 6-12 are invited to this new family-centered program. Enjoy an abridged Friday night service, followed by a casual dairy dinner

(BYO kosher mevushal wine). Open to the community.

SATURDAY, MARCH 2

Movie: Heading Home: The Tale of Team Israel

7 - 9 pm, Kehillat Beth Israel Congregation, 1400 Coldrey Ave.
Contact: Deborah Zuker
rabbizuker@kehillatbethisrael.com
Cost: \$10 members/\$12 non-members.
A stirring story of sports, patriotism and personal growth, charting the underdog journey of Israel's national baseball team competing for the first time in the World Baseball Classic.

EG Casino Night

8 - 11 pm, Orange Art Gallery
290 City Centre Ave
Contact: Jordan Waldman
jwaldman@jewishottawa.com
Emerging Generations annual casino event! Raffle prizes, open bar, delicious food.

SUNDAY, MARCH 3

JNF Ottawa presents Sderot Mayor, Alon Davidi

7 - 9 pm, Congregation Beit Tikvah
15 Chartwell Ave.
Contact: Ilana Albert-Novick
ottawa@jnf.ca
Alon Davidi founded the "Headquarters for the Security of Sderot" to restore security to the residents of Sderot. and was elected to the city council in 2008 and since 2013 serves as mayor of Sderot.

My Journey From War To Peace - David Sussman

7 - 9 pm, Ottawa Torah Centre Chabad
111 Lamplighters Dr.
Contact: Rabbi Blum, rabbi@theotc.org

Cost: \$10. Former IDF soldier & one of Israel's most popular tour guides, David will share his personal story as a combat fighter in the IDF where he almost lost his life during the 2nd Lebanon War in 2006. Learn about the journey that led him to his Jewish roots and to becoming an advocate for Israel. David is an international motivational speaker and host of popular TV show "Land of the Bible."

COMING SOON

Wednesday, March 6: The Rise of Anti-Semitism and Fascism

7:30 - 9 pm
Contact: Roslyn Wollock
rwollock@jccottawa.com
Talk by Professor Jan Grabowski. Nationalism is on the rise around the world, but what may be a revolt against the European Union in England with Brexit, nationalism in other parts of Europe is giving rise to fascism and anti-Semitism that, left unchecked, might endanger NATO and the western alliance. Professor Grabowski is an expert on Polish, European and Holocaust history What he is seeing over the last ten years is the rise of a renewed fascism with an accompanying anti-Semitism that reminds him of the similarity with Nazi Germany.

CANDLE LIGHTING BEFORE

FEBRUARY 22	5:22 PM
MARCH 1	5:32 PM
MARCH 8	5:41 PM
MARCH 15	6:51 PM

BULLETIN DEADLINES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27	FOR MARCH 18
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13	FOR APRIL 1
MONDAY, MARCH 25*	FOR APRIL 15
MONDAY, APRIL 15	FOR MAY 6

*Community-wide Passover issue

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

CONDOLENCES

Condolences are extended to the families of:

Gordon Byer

Kenneth Freedman

Belle Gitterman

Armin Klein

Dr. Sydney Kronick

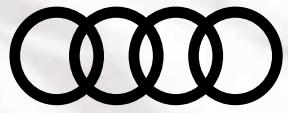
Annette Millstone

Bryna Monson

Sharon Wasserman

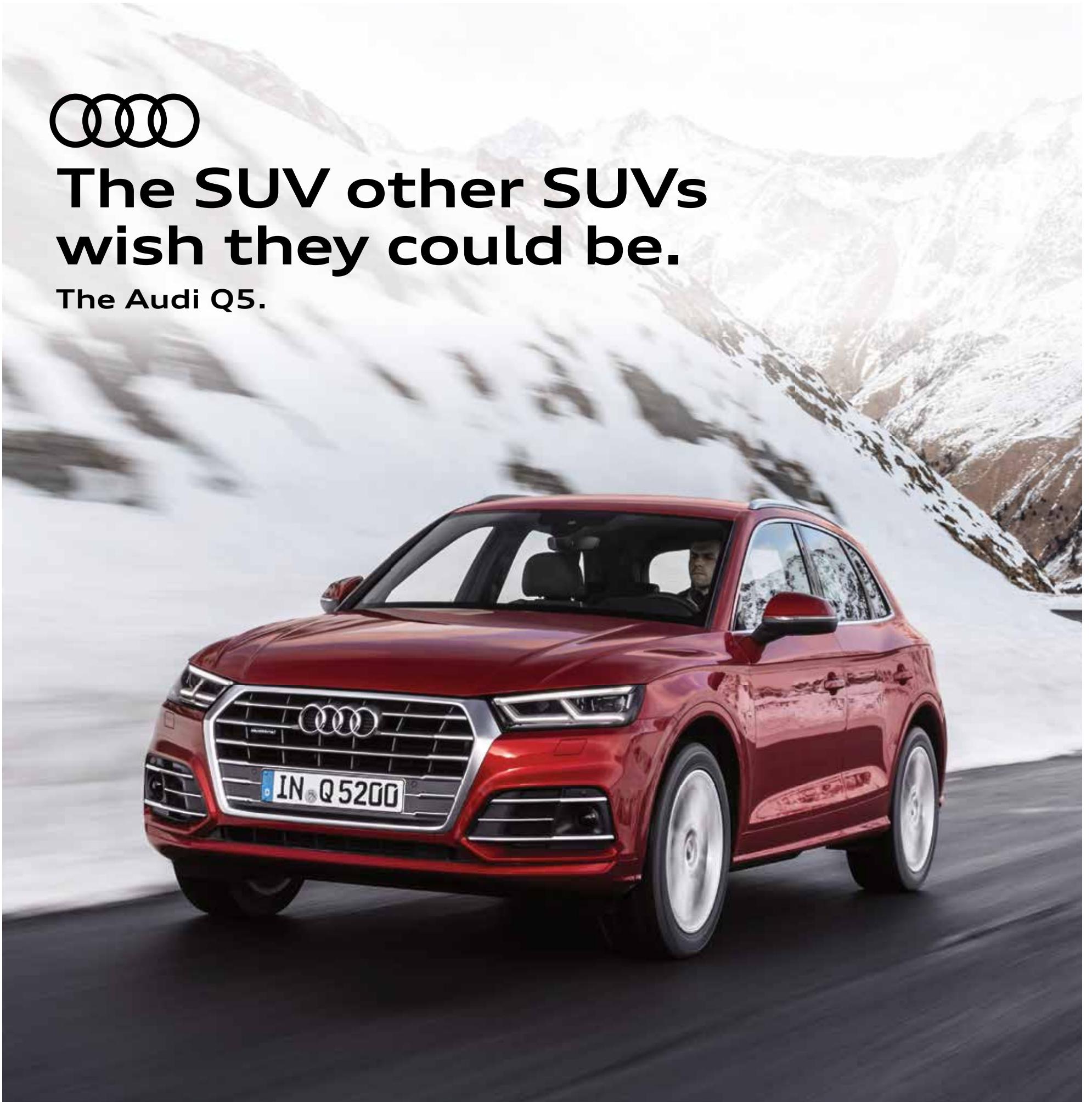
May their memory be a blessing always.

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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