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NISSAN 5779

Hamilton
Jewish

News

The voice of Jewish Hamilton April 2019

AGH TO HOST MILLI RETROSPECTIVE

Exhibition brings together ensembles that span fashion trailblazer Milli Gould's first half century in business

STORY BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**,
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

I FELT A STRANGE exhilaration when I heard the news. While enjoying a moment with Milli, Mark and Ben Gould at the recent YWCA Women of Distinction gala, I watched as Ben Gould reached into his pocket and handed me a postcard. Beneath a photograph of a rack of elegant women's clothing, I read that the Art Gallery of Hamilton was hosting an upcoming exhibition titled, "Milli, A Celebration of Style." Looking back to see all three of them smiling at me in confirmation, memories of my mother's, grandmother's, and my own special occasion visits to Milli's iconic boutique on Main St. West flooded back to me. What more fitting tribute could there be, I thought to myself, to see a museum exhibit honouring Hamilton's most famous fashion legend?

MILLI ARCHIVE ON DISPLAY CONTINUES ON P4



PHOTO CREDIT: THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

Milli Gould pictured in 1967 in a dress by Swiss designer Marty Modell. The bow was moved at Mrs. Gould's request from the back to the front.

PAS DE DEUX

Hamilton based actors, Howard Jerome and Daniel Schneiderman will co-star in *Visiting Mr. Green*, a poignant drama about an elderly Jewish widower and self-absorbed corporate executive who come to understand each other.

WENDY SCHNEIDER REPORTS: **P6**

“Hamilton was where my fondest hopes were realized.”

On the eve of his 99th birthday, Rabbi Bernard Baskin reflects on a life well lived.

GUEST EDITORIAL: **P2**



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Howard Jerome and Daniel Schneiderman will co-star in *Visiting Mr. Green*.

Hamiltonjewishnews.com

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JEWISH FEDERATION

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Hamilton was where my fondest hopes were realized. Isn't Hamilton where I belonged until the end?" **RABBI BERNARD BASKIN**

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GUEST EDITORIAL

RABBI BASKIN'S SECRETS TO LIVING A LONG LIFE



BY **LAURA WOLFSON** AND **RABBI BERNARD BASKIN**

My mother, who lives in Toronto, attended a series of lectures this past fall - given by our very own Rabbi Baskin at Holy Blossom Temple. Having moved to Toronto over the summer, Rabbi Baskin wasted no time getting involved and offering to do what he does best. When I visited him recently at his new home, he reminisced fondly about his beloved Hamilton Jewish community. If I could summarize for you what we talked about, I'd say "You can take the Rabbi out of Hamilton, but you can't take Hamilton out of the Rabbi!" We got together shortly before his 99th birthday. "Rabbi Baskin," I said, "You are looking very well and you will soon turn 99. What are your secrets to living a long and healthy life?" I confessed to him that I'd been invited to write an article for the Hamilton Jewish News on that topic. In true Rabbi Baskin style, he wrote the article for me. Here is what he had to say:

When I reached 98, my family urged me to forsake Hamilton for Toronto. It was a heartbreaking decision. After all, Hamilton was my community where I had served a congregation and the Jewish community for 60 years.

It was where my children were born and reared and where Marjorie and I shared 56 happy married years. It was where my fondest hopes were realized. Isn't Hamilton where I belonged until the end?

But logic and cogent argument suggested otherwise—and I will celebrate my 99th birthday in Toronto, a metropolis engulfed by countless shining spires that reach heavenward.

I am now ensconced at The Russell Hill retirement home. It is a comfortable, well organized residence where two-thirds are women. They manage their walkers with astonishing agility. I'm holding out as long as I can.

My two lectures a month on a variety of themes have been well received, as have been my brief talks on the meaning of the Jewish holidays. I guess that a rabbi finds enough to keep involved wherever he is.

I have been told that in the monthly residents' bulletin of forthcoming events my name is mentioned as the next occupant of suite 706. Evidently some residents anticipated an elderly gentleman with a long white beard, black vestments and a haughty manner. They were disappointed when I arrived looking, talking and dressing like everyone else.

I am asked, "How do you achieve old age?" I don't know but suggest that you choose your parents very carefully. It might also be helpful to follow the advice of Hillel who declared, "In a place where there are no men, try to be a man."

In addition, there is the advice of the Talmudic sage Ben Zoma who asked and answered four questions:

Who is wise? He who learns from everyone.

Who is rich? He who is satisfied with his lot.

Who is strong? He who can control his emotions.

Who is honoured? He who honours others.

There are also these criteria for measuring success:

— If you can find the resources, regardless of age or position, to keep your mind alive, vital, active and curious.

— If you are able to get along in mutual understanding with your spouse and your children.

— If you are able to accept the good and the bad in life with equanimity and are not made arrogant by the former or embittered by the latter.

Finally, there is the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah that Moses Maimonides, 800 years ago, found the best guide for the achievement of character, "Thus says the Eternal One: Let not the wise glory in their wisdom, let not the mighty glory in their might, let not the rich glory in their riches; but let those who glory, glory in this...that I am the power that makes for love, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these things I delight".

I extend my fondest wishes to my friends and acquaintances in "The Ambitious City."

On the occasion of Rabbi Baskin's 99th birthday, we in Hamilton wish him continued health and happiness, strength and wisdom ... until 120!



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WESTERN STAR

APRIL 2019

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Uncovering Spain and Portugal's Jewish past



PHOTO COURTESY OF HARTLEY GARSHOWITZ

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Are you new to Hamilton or thinking of moving here? Do you know someone who is considering moving to Hamilton or has recently arrived?

Grow Hamilton is a new initiative sponsored by the Hamilton Jewish Federation, to provide first contact information and make connections within our Jewish community that are welcoming and useful for newcomers. In addition to offering personal contact, a Welcome Package will be available online shortly.

Caring local residents are also asked to add your name to our list of community members who are available to host newcomers to your home for Shabbat dinner or meet someone new for coffee. To discuss these opportunities, please contact Laura Wolfson, Grow Hamilton committee chair, at byrnewolfson@gmail.com or leave a message at 905-541-2889.

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Wendy Schneider, pictured here with her Federation colleagues and friends, was one of more than 70 women honoured at the YWCA Women of Distinction awards evening for their contributions to the Hamilton community. Pictured here, l to r, are Elaine Levine, Cindy Richter, Wendy Schneider, Gustavo Rymberg, Christine Nusca and Marisa Rymberg.

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COMING UP

SUMMER ISSUE

- Deadline for booking ad space April 25, 2019
- Deadline for receiving editorial copy May 15, 2019
- Deadline for receiving ad copy June 6, 2019
- Estimated date of arrival June 22, 2019

HJN

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Hers isn't the typical retail role ... For her it was all personal. The value she added to the experience is why she lasted so long." **BEN GOULD**



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MILLI ARCHIVE ON DISPLAY AT THE AGH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

LONG BEFORE customer service became a standard in the fashion industry, Milli had perfected the art: Toronto clients who had booked off entire days to spend at her store knew they could expect an elegant lunch served in one of its spacious dressing rooms, a wide range of outfits specifically set aside for them and expert tailoring services by in-house seamstresses. Milli's Hamilton clients, arriving unannounced or by appointment, knew they could expect no less. For many members of my own generation, it was a rite of passage following an engagement announcement to be taken by our mothers to Milli's to buy the wedding dress and be outfitted for a trousseau.

In 2004, Milli fulfilled a lifetime dream by opening a second location of her store in Yorkville. Ben Gould, who works at the Toronto location, said his mother's longtime customers would often stop in and wax nostalgic about the good old days of driving into Hamilton.

"You could see the joy when they talked about it. There was a lot of emotion to it," he said. Quite a number of them would add that they still had a particular dress or outfit that they just couldn't part with.

That got the family thinking about what their store had come to mean to their customers after 55 years in business, said Gould. With many of their clients downsizing, the idea of starting a kind of clothing archive began formulating in their minds.

"We thought maybe we'll just hold them until we knew what to do with them. Otherwise they would just end up in a vintage store and not mean anything," said Gould.

Those were the beginnings of an archive that would grow to 100 pieces, some of which go back to the early 1960s. As many of the outfits were purchased for special occasions, the Goulds also asked if donors could include a photographs of themselves wearing the outfit, complete with all its accessories, and tell the story of that special day.

Art Gallery of Hamilton CEO Shelley Falconer was invited by the Goulds to see the Milli archive when they put up a small exhibit at the Hamilton store in 2017. "What is all this," Gould remembers her asking in amazement, before saying in the next breath, "This would make a great exhibit."

The AGH hired Globe and Mail journalist Nolan Bryant to curate the show. Bryant has put together a collection of nearly 50 significant Milli ensembles and artifacts that he's matched with 25 works, including painting, photography, prints and sculpture from the AGH collection. The exhibition also includes the photographs of the previous owners wearing their favourite Milli garments.

From Shelley Falconer's perspective, it was clear from her first viewing of the archive that the AGH would be the perfect venue to host it. "The breadth and depth of the Milli Archive was evident with my first visit," Falconer wrote in an email to the HJN. "From the luxurious fabrics and skilled craftsmanship to the numerous stories throughout the past five decades, Milli's oeuvre tells the shifting story of women's needs and roles and fashion's connection to the Hamilton community."

The family, said Gould, is "pretty excited about the whole thing," not least because the opening



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ART GALLERY OF HAMILTON

From the AGH's upcoming exhibition, Milli: A Celebration of Style. A silk taffeta evening dress, with sable trim designed by Bill Blass. Collection of Debbie Kimel, worn in 2007 to her eldest daughter's wedding.

takes place the day before Milli's 86th birthday.

"I don't know if there's ever been an exhibit that captures the role that my mother played," said Gould. "Hers isn't the typical retail role. For her it was all personal. She wanted everyone to look great, she hunted for products, she tweaked every garment that came in. The value that she added to the experience is why she existed for so long."

Taking the archive into a new venue essentially takes the focus away from the commercial aspect of Milli's contribution to Canadian fashion to what Gould says is "the right place for us."

"Any woman that I ask about what they were wearing at any important time in their life, they can tell you, from the shoes to the bag to the jewellery and the dress ... so these items are critical in people's lives. They're not just clothing. These are time capsules of an event and a very emotional time in peoples' lives."

Milli: A Celebration of Style will be on view at the AGH from April 13, 2019 through Feb. 9, 2020. Admission is free. A curator's talk given by Nolan Bryant and book signing with Milli Gould is planned for Thursday, May 2. More details and tickets can be found at artgalleryofhamilton.com.

As for Milli herself, Gould says his mother still comes to work every day and her boys are "always happy to have her."

"She corrects us all the time. She's lost a little bit of strength but she hasn't lost her eye or her determination, that's for sure."

Wishing Milli, Mark and Ben Gould Mazel Tov and Yashar Koach
on the upcoming exhibit:

Milli: A Celebration of Style
at the Art Gallery of Hamilton



“The striking element of my father's artistic creation was that the menorahs he designed had no base.” RABBI DANIEL GREEN

TRIBUTE GALA IN MEMORY OF RABBI MORTON GREEN

BY RABBI DANIEL GREEN

ON TUESDAY, May 28, 2019 our community will host a Memorial Tribute Gala for Rabbi Mordechai Green z"l and the establishment of a legacy endowment in his memory. All those who he has touched over six decades and the beneficiaries of his accomplishments are invited to participate in this historic gathering.

Nearly 60 years ago, a new, magnificent, Adas Israel synagogue was dedicated in Westdale. At that time, my father designed two cast-bronze menorahs to frame the imposing marble ark. The striking element of his artistic creation was that the menorahs had no base, but simply dangled in the air with no foundational pillar or pedestal. What message was my father trying to convey?

I believe my father left these menorahs without a base to remind us that it is our responsibility to carry the torch. Our tradition is an "eternal flame" but its base is ever-changing. The foundational pillars are those in each generation who yearn to hold high our timeless menorah with pride.

My father raised the torch of Judaism in our community. Along the way, he inspired and supported countless individuals, connecting them with a deeper sense of inner purpose and meaning. He has now passed on to us his menorah and it is our moment to raise it high.

In his memory, we will be fabricating a foundational pillar and base to be placed beneath his menorah, on a new dedication wall to be erected in our main sanctuary. Upon the pillar and base will be etched the names of those who are partnering to perpetuate his legacy. Our goal is to strengthen our future with the establishment of the Rabbi Mordechai Green Legacy Endowment Fund of \$1.8 million, to strengthen Jewish education in our community and ensure that his



Rabbi Morton Green designed two of these bronze menorahs at the Adas Israel.

great legacy continues.

In his artistic portrayal, Rabbi Green merged three interwoven "Shins," the second to last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The three-pronged letter is adorned with crowns that represent the harmony of all three levels of knowledge and the attribute of splendour, which balances kindness and discipline.

When Rabbi Green arrived in Hamilton 61 years ago for an audition at the Cannon Street Shul, the weekly Torah portion, remarkably, described the kindling of the Temple's menorah. At the age of 24, the aspiring rabbi described the deeper symbolism of the seven-stemmed menorah and how the flames of the six outer branches pointed towards the central stem. The seven branches, he explained, represent the totality of human existence as expressed in the seven days of the week. The central stem, towards which all branches point, is Shabbat, the focal point of our life. The theme of the menorah served as the bookends of his great legacy.

May we be able to perpetuate the great foundation he has left for us and enable his great menorah to illuminate for generations. For more information on how to be included in this historic event, please visit www.jewishfuture.ca.

AUTHOR TO SPEAK ON THE ETERNAL APPEAL OF ANNE FRANK

IN JUNE 2019, Anne Frank would have been 90 years old. Anne and her family's hiding place, now a museum, is still one of the top attractions in Amsterdam, with long line-ups of young people and adults waiting to enter. At the same time, studies show that 50 per cent of millennials in North America don't know what Auschwitz was and 20 per cent can't tell you what the Holocaust was.

To that end, author Menno Metselaar and the Anne Frank House Museum have created the book, *All About Anne*, which contains the most frequently asked questions posed by children and young people visiting the Anne Frank House Museum in Amsterdam.

Menno Metselaar will be in Hamilton on Monday, May 13, when he will speak on the topic, "Anne Frank at 90 — Why Is the Diary Not Enough



Today?" The event, sponsored by the Hamilton Jewish Federation, will take place at the Art Gallery of Hamilton. There is no charge, but space is limited. Reserve a seat by calling 905-648-0605 or order online at <https://www.picatic.com>.

JAZZ CONCERT



The Barry Livingston Group

MCMaster LIVELAB presents The Barry Livingston Group with special guests FreePlay Duo and Darcy Hepner, April 28 at 7:30 p.m. at the LIVELab, McMaster University. The evening features some of Canada's best musicians from the jazz and global music scene, as well as well known Hamilton saxophonist Darcy Hepner. Tickets: 905-525-9140, ext. 25483

AUTHOR LUNCHEON



TREVOR COLE, author of *The Whiskey King*, will headline Na'amat Hamilton's Author Luncheon on Tuesday, May 14 at noon at the Adas Israel. Cole's book delves into the true story of Hamilton mobster Rocco Perri and his Jewish business partner Bessie Starkman, whose murder attracted thousands. Tickets can be ordered at authorluncheon@cogeco.ca.



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This is where I really belong. I am thrilled to be supporting seniors in the Shalom Village community." **RENEE GUDER**

NEW HIRES AT SHALOM VILLAGE AND JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES

Caring for seniors is Renee Guder's passion

BY **ABIGAIL CUKIER, HJN**

AFTER WORKING IN community and acute care settings, Renee Guder found her passion in long-term care.

"This is where I really belong. My passion is care for seniors. I am thrilled to be supporting seniors in the Shalom Village community," says Guder, who became CEO of Shalom Village in November 2018.

Married with two children, Guder grew up on Hamilton's east Mountain and has lived in Dundas since the 1990s. She graduated as a registered nurse in 1996 from Mohawk College and also earned her Masters of Arts in Leadership from the University of Guelph.

"I am enjoying learning about the Jewish community and culture, its customs and stories. Everyone has gone out of their way to make me feel welcome and I really appreciate that," Guder said, adding that Shalom Village staff look forward to continuing to provide the range of services they have for many years and finding innovative ways to build on those services.

These include long-term care, with 24-hour nursing and personal care led by registered nurses and a staff doctor. Its At Home approach to care aims to help residents maintain their quality of life and continue to participate in activities that are meaningful to them. The Club Fitness Centre is designed for seniors and is open to Shalom Village residents, as well as all community members over age 70 with the goal of helping



Shalom Village's new CEO, Renee Guder.

reduce falls and improve mobility. Goldie's Place is a day program for adults living in the community who have physical or cognitive impairment, providing a secure, friendly environment with social and recreational activities. Goldies2Home is a day program for patients returning to independent living at home after discharge from acute care or rehabilitation and includes nursing, physiotherapy, recreational activities and at-home support.

"We have a terrific board of directors and team of volunteers. We are looking to the future and setting our strategic direction to ensure the campus is positioned well in light of government changes and healthcare system reform. We are working to be ready to respond to function in whatever the new environment looks like," said Guder.

"We feel great pride in being that place to come home to and to come together and I look forward to continuing to build a relationship with the Jewish community. I feel like I am part of the Shalom Village family. It didn't take long for Shalom to capture my heart."

Hustle 4 Health

The 18th Annual Shalom Village Hustle 4 Health takes place on Sunday, May 26 at 9 a.m. Participants can run, walk or jog to raise funds to support Shalom Village health and wellness programs and the Club Fitness Centre. Celebrate the people and programs that make Shalom Village the Jewish Community's gift to all Hamilton area seniors. For information, visit shalomvillage.ca/news-events-2/hustle4health.

Alexis Wenzowski takes up new post in April

BY THE JSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HAMILTON JEWISH SOCIAL

Services is delighted to welcome Alexis Wenzowski as its new executive director. Wenzowski comes to JSS with extensive experience working in education, and child and family services, as well as a passion for family-centred care.

Born and raised in Hamilton, Wenzowski has extensive experience in the field of social services. As a program supervisor with ROCK (Reach Out Centre for Kids), she was integral to the success of programs that championed family-centred care.

Prior to this, Wenzowski worked as a teacher on an Aboriginal reserve in northern Saskatchewan, where she developed partnerships with national publishers to create a community literacy program, a scholastic improvement program, and increasing overall high school graduation rates.

Wenzowski, who starts working at JSS on April 22, said she is excited to carry on the legacy of longtime executive director, Carol Krames.

"I'm delighted with this opportunity. Hamilton Jewish Social Services has been active in supporting the Jewish community for so many years and continues to be a vital player. The programs they offer are all signs of a caring responsive community."

JSS president Susan Roth said, "We are thrilled that Alexis



Alexis Wenzowski

will be joining Jewish Social Services. Alexis is a creative thinker, filled with love and enthusiasm in her work with people of all backgrounds. She is excited to begin her new role and to network with the Jewish community at large."

Wenzowski believes that a community model of care is necessary for supporting families. "Far too often, the expertise of the family is overlooked in our current system, and it's disheartening. By empowering families to utilize their formal and informal supports in conjunction with each other, truly transformational things can happen."

Wenzowski looks forward to meeting members of the Jewish community at the JSS office in Dundas. "I want to hear your ideas on what issues matter most to you and your families so that we can ensure that JSS remains vibrant and responsive to the community. Let's begin this dialogue."



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In 13 years as an educator, this has been one of the best professional development opportunities I have experienced." ROMY FRIEDMAN

CONFERENCE INSPIRES LOCAL EDUCATORS

Federation funding sends Jewish day school educators to innovative conference

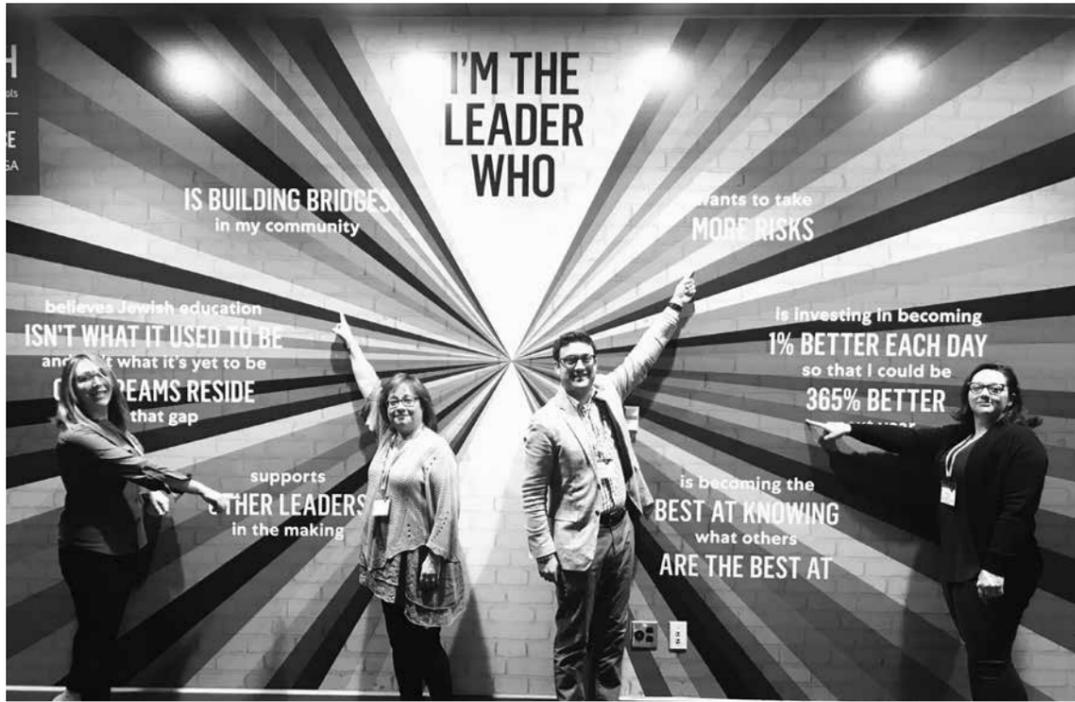
BY ALICE MENDELSON,
SPECIAL TO THE HJN

IMAGINE A PLACE where 1,100 people who are passionate about the future of Jewish education gather to share insights, ideas and resources. Thanks to the generous support of Hamilton Jewish Federation, Prizmah and the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), members of the Hamilton Jewish community were able to experience this first hand.

Representatives from the Hamilton Hebrew Academy, Kehila Heschel School and the Hamilton Jewish Federation recently travelled together to take part in the Prizmah conference for Jewish Education in Atlanta. The conference hosted close to 300 school participants and offered more than 210 sessions and excursions.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation recognizes the vital importance of our community's Jewish schools in helping to foster Jewish identity and in developing our leaders of tomorrow. To that end, Federation created an education committee in 2017. One of the committee's first mandates was to meet with all of the schools and after school programs and hear from them how Federation could be of further support. Aside from the need for continued funding, school leaders discussed their need for professional development opportunities that were tailored to their needs.

In response to this need, our committee arranged for our day schools to secure a membership in the Prizmah Education Network for the 2018-2019 year. Prizmah is



Hamilton educators at the Prizmah Conference in Atlanta included, from l to r, Alice Mendelson, Anita Bernstein, Rabbi Yaakov Morel, and Romy Friedman.

a centre for Jewish Day Schools in North America, and is responsible for research, publications and programming across 600 schools. Prizmah offers annual conferences where educators gather together to share in professional development.

This year, Prizmah offered targeted workshops for many types of schools.

Small school sessions were planned throughout the conference, so our school leaders were able to access planning and development specific to their needs.

Attending the conference allowed our schools to experience and network with a broad spectrum of ideas and people.

The conference was filled with new ideas for teaching and learning. Prizmah hosted the Dream Lab, where participants could experience innovative and accessible ideas to bring back to their schools and communities. From puppetry workshops, to various Hebrew language programs, to reimagining how Tefillah (prayer) is approached in schools, the conference offered an incredible variety of topics and presenters. In fact, it was so challenging to keep on top of all of the available sessions, that there was a Prizmah app to keep participants informed and engaged. Educators left with new ideas and Federation members came away with a better

understanding of how JFNA can facilitate ongoing learning.

Our education committee hopes to continue our work together to ensure that our schools thrive, not just now, but for future generations as well.

Strong schools strengthen our community. They foster relationships and a connection to the larger Jewish community that will last a lifetime.

Through continued collaboration with Prizmah and JFNA, we hope to help ensure the continuity of our community. In helping students and their families access quality Jewish education, we hope that they will feel a deep connection with their community and

feel empowered to give back. Our work in Jewish education today means that our children will be able and willing to do the work of tomorrow.

The following are some reactions to the Prizmah Conference from Hamilton participants.

Rabbi Yaakov Morel, principal, Hamilton Hebrew Academy: "Prizmah has given me the time to connect with educators and organizations, and reflect on teaching practice. I found the sessions on Jewish values, rethinking how to teach *Tefilla* and the love of Israel, to be particularly helpful in supporting student success that continues beyond our school."

Romy Friedman, education committee member, Hamilton Jewish Federation: "I have been overwhelmed by the scope and quality of the sessions and Prizmah overall. In 13 years as an educator in the public and international systems, this has been one of the best professional development opportunities I have experienced."

Anita Bernstein, director of education, Kehila Heschel School: "This gave me the opportunity to see where all day schools intersect, in terms of values and the desire to serve our populations. Prizmah also provided us with an opportunity to see how each school is unique and special and fulfills the need in their community. We were also provided with valuable tools, connections and resources to continue to grow our programs."

Alice Mendelson is a member of the Hamilton Jewish Federation education committee.



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We must remember everything they sacrificed so that later generations continue to live in peace." STEVEN BROCK

D-DAY 75TH ANIVERSARY

Remembering Hamilton's Jewish servicemen

STORY BY **STEVEN BROCK**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Seventy five years ago, on June 6, 1944, in an attempt to break the Nazi stranglehold on Western Europe, Allied forces invaded the coast of occupied France with nearly 150,000 troops. The D-Day invasion was finally underway and in less than a year, Germany would be defeated.

Under the code name Operation Overlord, Allied troops from eight nations, including 14,000 Canadians crossed the English Channel and hit the Germans with everything they had. By the end of the battle, 359 Canadian troops had been killed and another 715 wounded.

Throughout our country's history, the members of Hamilton's Jewish community have repeatedly stepped up to do their part in maintaining peace and democracy here at home and around the world. Over the years, thousands have served and many have died for the greater good.

Near the entrance of Beth Jacob Cemetery, there is a cenotaph commemorating 19 Hamilton Jews who died while serving our country.



The cenotaph in Hamilton's Beth Jacob cemetery commemorating Jewish Hamiltonians who sacrificed their lives serving in Canada's wars.



Aircraft wireless radio operator Albert Garshowitz was killed when the Lancaster bomber he was flying in was shot down over Germany during the famous Dam Busters raid on May 16, 1943. He is buried in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery in Kleve, Germany.



Flight Sergeant Alexander Balinson was killed during a bomb raid in Malta on April 24, 1942. He is buried in Malta's naval cemetery.

Emblazoned with the motto, "They Died So that Freedom Might Live," the monument is a permanent reminder of the sacrifice they made on our behalf.

Among the honoured is Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Warrant Officer, Class 2 Abram Albert Garshowitz. A wireless radio operator for a Lancaster bomber crew, Garshowitz died on May 16, 1943, during the famous "Dam Buster" raid. Prior to embarking on that historic mission, Garshowitz chalked this fitting inscription on one of the

bombs that would severely cripple the German war industry in the Ruhr Valley, "Never has so much been expected of so few."

As the last of the "greatest generation" pass through the twilights of their lives, it is important to not only commemorate them, but to appreciate their heroic actions. Whether we reflect on the bravery of Canadians at Vimy Ridge, Dieppe, on Juno Beach, in Korea or more recently in Afghanistan, we must remember everything they sacrificed so that later generations continue to live in the peace

and security they fought so hard to ensure.

Events and ceremonies will be held here in Hamilton and around the world commemorating the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landing. From a gala celebration at the local Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum to various excursions to the Normandy battlefields, including several focusing on the contributions of Jewish soldiers, there are so many ways to remember this important time in history.

YASHAR KOACH (WAY TO GO!) TO THESE SPECIAL MENTSCHEN

STORY BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

THE LOOK ON Leah Klein's face says it all. The nine-year-old won first place in her age group at JewQ Chabad-Lubavitch's international Torah competition held in Brooklyn, N.Y. on March 3. An initiative of the Chabad Children's Club, the competition is designed for students who do not attend Jewish day schools, but learn independently under the guidance of Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries. Leah and her brother Adam represented Chabad Niagara on the encouragement of their teacher Perla Zaltzman, and were among hundreds of students from 77 locations who participated. After receiving the highest score in a Grade 4 division written test,



ABOVE LEFT: Leah Klein with her first place trophy; ABOVE RIGHT: Mac student Zachary Levine on a break from his busy schedule.

Leah was invited to compete in the final round before a live audience. Watching a livestream recording from their home were Leah's parents, who were thrilled



and amazed to see their daughter win. Leah's mother, Elissa Press, said her daughter was "so excited" to win. In a text message Leah sent her that night, she wrote, from

their daughter. "This has been the best day of my life so far."

ZACHARY LEVINE, 19, found a way to combine his love for singing and his desire to help people in an extraordinary way by creating Hamilton's only choir for people with Parkinson's disease. The second year McMaster Arts and Science student, who hails from Toronto, but whose grandparents, Jerry and Roz Zikman are long-time Hamilton residents, says that Tikkun Olam (the Hebrew expression for healing the world) "was definitely part of my upbringing."

Levine recruited his first participants through Shalom Village and St. Peters Hospital, but word of

mouth and referrals soon saw his choir grow from an initial seven participants to 17.

Singing in a choir is especially beneficial for people with Parkinson's, says Levine. "When you sing with other people, you sing louder," he said. "You can do more complex things and exercise your vocal chords more."

The work involved in preparing binders for each participant and maintaining a website where people can practice in between rehearsals takes up a lot of Levine's free time, but he wouldn't have it any other way.

"It's all worth it," he said. "It's enough for me to see everyone singing together."

Wishing the Hamilton Jewish Community a Happy Passover. Next Year, Invest In Jerusalem.

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This community is very engaged and passionate about its issues." STEVE MCDONALD, CIJA

RISING ANTI-SEMITISM TOPS COMMUNITY CONCERNS

BY **STEVE ARNOLD**,
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

PROTECTION FROM anti-Semitism and the scourge of anti-Israel campaigns topped the list of concerns on which Hamilton Jews want more action from their chief advocacy agency.

Those were among the issues raised in a community consultation session at JHamilton on March 11, led by Steve McDonald of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

"This community is very engaged and passionate about its issues," McDonald said in an interview after the session. "The need for more advocacy here is very gripping and alive."

McDonald said underlying many of the specific concerns is the need to build alliances with other minorities. Specific examples of that alliance building include supporting Indigenous communities in efforts to travel on their own passports, rather than Canadian documents and supporting the Roma community in preserving the tale of their own Nazi holocaust.

The same thinking, he said, applies to alliances with African-Canadian and LGBT communities.

"Building alliances like this is an absolute priority for us," he said. "It's not just a strategic obligation, it's a moral obligation as well. We have an experience that teaches what can be done in situations like this."

In a presentation before the community discussion, McDonald said anti-Semitism is a growing problem for Canadian Jews.

Statistics Canada, for example, reported a 60 per cent increase in hate crimes between 2016 and 2017. Despite the net increase in hate crimes, McDonald added Canadian Jews are still safer than their relatives in other countries.

"By any standard we are safe and secure here in Canada, not like Sweden where a Jew is 20 per cent more likely to face

anti-Semitism or France where you're 13 per cent more likely to be assaulted," he said.

Canadian Jews may be safe, but they still face a wide range of negative social attitudes, he added.

New, unpublished, research concludes 21 per cent of Canadians still think Jews are too focused on the Holocaust; 23 per cent think we have too much political power and 25 per cent think Jews hold too much economic weight; 27 per cent think Jews have too much influence on Canadian media; 34 per cent think we are too focused on Israel and 47 per cent see us as stand-offish and more interested in helping our own than others.

Not all views are negative however. The same research suggests 87 per cent of Canadians have a positive view of Jewish contributions to the economy; 74 per cent like our support for social programs, 76



CIJA's Steve McDonald.

per cent praise Jewish cultural contributions and 58 per cent think we face unfair prejudice.

"Canadians recognize that anti-Semitism exists and are disgusted by it," McDonald said.

McDonald said the ideas raised in community meetings such as the Hamilton

event will be used to prepare CIJA's positions for the federal election to be held this year.

Gustavo Rymberg, Hamilton Jewish Federation CEO, said the purpose of the gathering was to identify the top concerns of the local community, and to draw more attention to the issue of anti-Semitism.

CHW Children Healthcare Women

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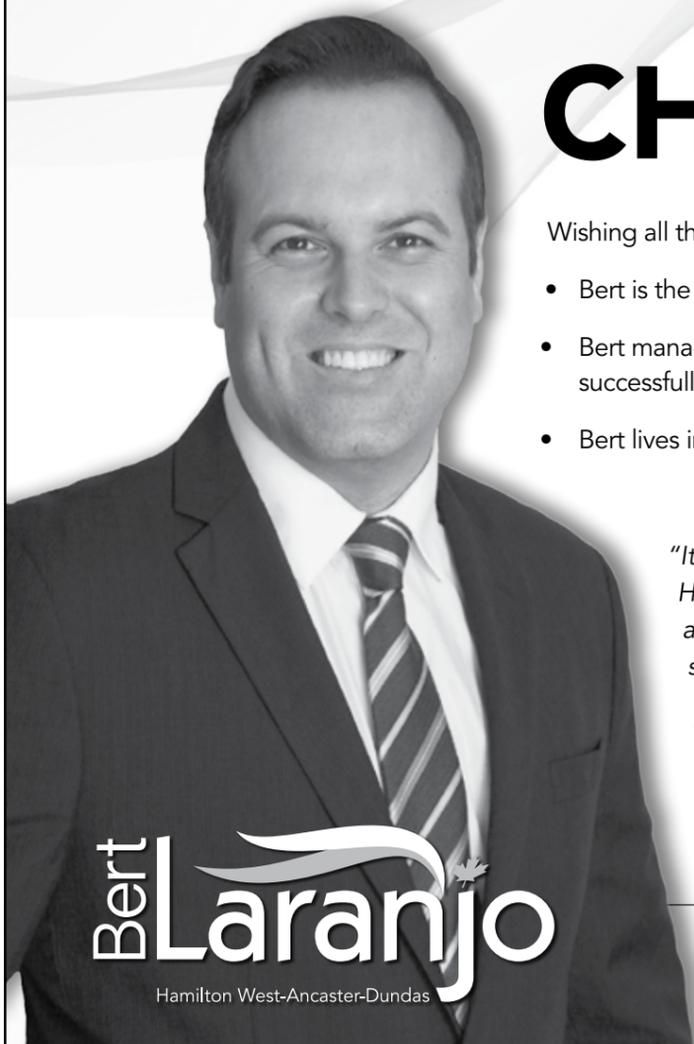
CHAG SAMEACH

Wishing all the Jewish families in Hamilton-West-Ancaster-Dundas a Happy Passover celebration.

- Bert is the Federal Conservative candidate for Hamilton West-Ancaster-Dundas (HWAD).
- Bert manages a busy Southern Ontario hospital emergency department where he has worked tirelessly and successfully with his team to improve wait times for patients to receive emergency care.
- Bert lives in Dundas his wife Joanna and their two young daughters Kylie and Iyla.

"It has been an honour to know Bert Laranjo for many years as a hard-working, caring individual in HWAD. I look forward to having Bert Laranjo as an energetic colleague in the House of Commons after the federal election to help me continue to advocate for the Hamilton Jewish Community, stand with Israel and speak out against anti-semitism in our community and across the country."

David Sweet, MP for Flamborough-Glanbrook
and Vice-Chair of the Canada-Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group



Bert Laranjo
Hamilton West-Ancaster-Dundas

BertLaranjo.ca

CONSERVATIVE

Authorized by the CFO for the HWAD Conservative Association



At Hebrew school, kids said, 'I need to go home and talk to my grandparents about this.'" DANNA HORWOOD

THE STORY BEHIND MARGARET'S LEGACY

A Holocaust education program built on a granddaughter's devotion

STORY BY **ABIGAIL CUKIER**,
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

WHEN DANNA HORWOOD was going through a difficult time, her grandmother told her to find something that makes her happy and use her passion to make a difference in the world.

It is fitting then, that her passion ended up being sharing the story of her grandmother and grandfather, Margaret and Arthur Weisz, to educate children and youth about the Holocaust and help foster tolerance, respect and inclusiveness.

When Margaret died in 2009, Danna's daughter, Sari, who was 11 at the time, asked "Why don't I know grandma's Holocaust story?"

Horwood decided to sit with her grandfather, who was 92, and get him to share as much he could about their story. Arthur was in the Hungarian army. He was a mail carrier and then sent to a labour camp after Jews were forced out of the army. Of the 1,000 men in his group in the forced labour camp, he was one of only 30 who survived. Margaret and her family were taken to Auschwitz and she never saw her brother or mother again. At the end of the war, Arthur and Margaret were reunited and eventually immigrated to Hamilton. In 1978, the family founded the property management company Effort Trust. Married for 65 years, they had two children, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Arthur died in 2013.

Horwood spent two full days videotaping and listening to her grandfather speak about his early life, surviving the war and immigration

NEED TO KNOW

Margaret's Legacy invites community members to share stories of how a mentor changed their world for the better and how that person inspired them to carry on their legacy. Submitted stories will be part of the #LegacyInspiration blog series, which includes stories of courage, strength, survival and other inspirational qualities. To submit a story, email media@margaretslegacy.com.

Margaret's Legacy recently opened an endowment fund to benefit Hamilton Jewish Federation programs in support of Holocaust education.

to Canada. She found a director and produced a 37-minute video, entitled Margaret and Arthur's Story.

"When I showed it to my kids, I realized it was not only important for my kids. I realized I wanted a lot of people to see this movie," said Horwood, who called schools to ask if she could share the film.

Calling the initiative Margaret's Legacy, Horwood started visiting schools to show the movie, followed by a Q&A session with her and a lesson on the Holocaust from a history educator. The video aims to teach about tolerance and the baseless hatred that led to the Holocaust. Geared toward an elementary and middle school level, it has been shown at many public



Danna Horwood with her grandmother, the late Margaret Weisz.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARGARET'S LEGACY

and private schools around the world. Today, Margaret's Legacy works with educators and other professionals to develop curriculum for classes to use before and after viewing the documentary.

"From the beginning, we received amazing reactions. At Hebrew schools, kids said 'I need to go talk to my grandparents about this.' At other schools, some kids didn't know about the Holocaust and had so many questions. I would hear back from teachers later that they were still having discussions and including topics like bullying and how to make sure something like this never happens again."

Rebecca Shapiro, Margaret's Legacy director of communications and media, said children don't necessarily connect with history but with people and stories, so this story of Margaret and Arthur and their family really draws them in.

"I have seen Danna deliver this program and when you watch the kids, you can see they have connected with her and with Margaret and Arthur," said Shapiro, adding that she was alarmed by a 2018 survey that found that two-thirds of American millennials could not identify what Auschwitz is.

"Right now, survivors are able to share their stories, but what will

happen when they are gone? We have to take another approach to connect kids to the messages of tolerance, of being an upstander and identifying your own core values."

Horwood is dedicated to sharing these messages and teaching about these values.

"My grandmother was my inspiration. She went through so much and was so kind and caring," said Horwood. "Everything she taught me was about needing to make a difference in this world.

"I just made a movie to show my kids and now it is changing the lives of other children. It is so important to me and I am thrilled that it is making an impact."

The lawyers and staff at Ross & McBride LLP wish the entire community a happy and healthy Passover.

Happy Passover.

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Lawyers in your Corner



For me, being a grandparent is the opportunity to be a kid again, and to, accidentally on purpose, break a good number of the rules." MARK EISENBERG

THE JOYS OF BEING A GRANDPARENT

There once was a Zadie named Marcus
Whose grandkids raced all round the parkus
As he climbed through the trees
With kids hugging his knees
Exhausted, he fell on his carcass.

— MARK EISENBERG

STORY BY **MARK EISENBERG**,
SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

ANY OF US OVER the age of 65 know that nature was wise in making child rearing the domain of the young. As much as Bubbies, Zadies, Sabas and Saftas, Grandpas, Grandmas and Papas who have been blessed with grandchildren love them to bits, it is with a smile of relief that we bid them farewell at the end of the day.

Yet the magic of that sacred bond that reconnects us to days gone by is a priceless gift indeed. It is a gift to the sometimes beleaguered parents juggling mile long to do lists, and to our grandkids who delight in the anticipation of being spoiled while regular routines are occasionally thrown to the wind, and for us *alter kackers*, it's an opportunity to share a small bit of the substance of our wisdom we've gleaned over the course of a lifetime. That wisdom can take a myriad of forms.

Whether the grandkids live in Vancouver or Vienna, between the yearly visits perhaps it's a delicious dose of a bedtime Skype or Face Time story. In our prehistoric pre-internet era, we could scarcely have imagined seeing one another as we shared time together online.

As my wife and I are blessed with children and four grandchildren who call Hamilton home, for us and our *machatonim*, the joy is in being able to pick up the monkeys at daycare, sharing a spontaneous dinner or running to the rescue.

For me it's the opportunity to be a kid again, to invent goofy games, to build a fort with the sofa cushions and to, accidentally on purpose, break a good number of the rules.

Last summer, with my son and son-in-law, we led Talia — age 5 and Mataya — age 2 on a four-day



Camping with the grandkids; Mark Eisenberg (centre) in Killarney Provincial Park with his son Joda (far left), son-in-law Mitch Ritter (right) and grandchildren Talia and Mataya.

wilderness canoe trip to Killarney. Memorable is an understatement.

If you are of the "glass half empty" persuasion, you'll relish the story of our rolling down the van windows and cranking the rock music way up to drown out the screaming of an overtired toddler.

If on the other hand, when camping, you tend to pitch your tent in the "glass half full" camp site, I'll bet you'll smile from ear to ear knowing that the bonds of trust, camaraderie and love nurtured during those four perfect summer days, will last a lifetime.

You will also tend to focus on:

The yelps of delight on catching and releasing your first fish; the realization that courage in the face of the unknown opens you to new vistas of endless possibility; the truth that heaven on earth is bathing in the mystery of a star-studded sky after a fire-roasted feast of steak and 'taters and a healthy dose of s'mores; the freedom of tossing aside your diaper while scrambling down the rocks into the cool, crystalline water.

Raise your glass (preferably a fine single malt) to chapter two of a

summer saga that will become an enduring family tradition, as you intone the elder campers prayer: "Lord, spare me the burden of the ignoble diaper, as I traipse humbly and incontinence-free through the forest forever."

Whatever your personal heaven may entail, here's to sharing it with your children and grandchildren, or simply volunteering with one of our fine community organizations who will appreciate your unique take on life.

Bill Shugar travels 3,000 miles to babysit his grandchildren, but he'll tell you it's well worth it.

STORY BY **BILL SHUGAR**,
SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

THE TOYS HAD been played with, the tie-dyed shirts painted, the cheese pockets baked and eaten, 312 books read. The baths were all done, tall towers of blocks stacked and knocked over with great laughter and 728 photos taken. I looked at my watch and it was only 10 a.m. and we had

already completed everything on our list of fun things to do on the first morning of our week-long stay with our two delicious granddaughters. We had traveled 3,000 miles to babysit, allowing Mom and Dad to house hunt in another city, with a new job bringing the family back to Canada.

Thank goodness, there was still plenty from our emergency bag of tricks: the 4H fair with its cows, sheep and dog shows, rides and mountains of French fries, menus for breakfasts, lunches, and dinners to be discussed, walks to the neighbourhood park with its swings and teeter-totters and climbing structures, laundry to be washed, folded and put away, toy pickup, sweeping under the dining room table



Bill Shugar clowns around with Ansel and Juniper

and two-hour bedtime routines to look forward to. More books to be read, lots of wild running around, contests as to who could scream the loudest and the occasional

realization that the day was over, with wails of "I want my REAL parents" surely to follow. Six days to go. Safta and Zaida love it.

Wishing you a Happy Passover!



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Very often while teens are differentiating themselves from family, they still seek connection." GARY DIRENFELD

PASSOVER INSOMNIA



PHYLLIS SHRAGGE

MYEYESPOP OPEN. I see nothing. Not a shadow, not a sliver of light. My black-out curtains have done their job.

I reach for my bedside clock and flip it around so I can see the time. It's 3:30 a.m. and I'm wide awake. Insomnia has reared its ugly head once more, but this isn't the usual insomnia that I can challenge by imagining myself on a sandy beach in sunny Mexico. And this isn't the typical insomnia that I can beat by counting to prevent thinking. Thinking about what I have to do the next day. Thinking about what I should have done yesterday. Thinking about what I regret. Thinking about what I should regret.

No, this is the dreaded Passover insomnia that's almost impossible to defy. Passover is just days away and the logistics are overwhelming. Why am I stressed every year? It's not my first time on this rollercoaster.

I turn on my side and realign my pillow. I paid \$149.99 plus tax for this pillow which is designed to help muscle tightness in the neck. It doesn't. Now I have excessive muscle tightness when I realize how much I spent on a pillow.

My mind races. I am obsessed with the four questions:

Why are this year's seders different from all other seders? (They aren't. I worry about them every year.)

On all other seders, I make gefilte fish from scratch. The procedure is time-consuming and the kitchen smells of fish for days. Dare I buy pre-made gefilte fish this year? Will anyone care?

On all other seders, I cook most of the meal, supplementing my creations with some prepared dishes courtesy of our local kosher butcher shop. For many years, I pass off the butcher's fabulous sweet potato kugel as my own. I get rave reviews. Should I buy the chicken soup as well, or make it myself?

On all other seders, I either buy desserts or bake them. The store-bought desserts taste like sawdust, so I guess the answer to this question is clear.

On all other seders, I manage to squeeze the family into the dining room by adding an extra table, but it's a tight fit and there is little room to walk. Is there another configuration that would be better?

My thoughts turn to shopping. (Did I buy enough matzah? How about eggs?) I worry about doing dishes until the wee hours of the morning. I'm too old for this. "Enough!" I mutter. I need to turn my thoughts to something else.

I decide to force my mind away from Passover and drift into the past, into the less stressful time of years gone by. I will think about myself as a young girl, when my only responsibilities were school work and keeping my room clean. I remember my 10-year-old self, with long, brown hair pulled into a ponytail. I have braces on my teeth and I'm tall and skinny. Not exactly a knockout.

I remember my days in elementary school. Suddenly, I recall that once a year, each fifth-grade student had to read a portion of the Bible at the weekly assembly in the auditorium. This assignment is a daunting task for any 10-year-old, but for shy me, it is terrifying. Weeks before my turn, I can think of nothing else. I'm sure that I will stumble over the words.

As the day approaches, I am determined to do something to give myself more confidence. I decide that since this is my last year of elementary school, I will get rid of the ponytail.

The day before it's my turn to read the Bible at the school assembly, I go to the hair salon feeling optimistic that a new look will transform not only my appearance, but my shy demeanour as well.

The hairdresser asks how I want my hair cut. "Short," I say.

"Would you like a perm?"

My answer is yes. Big mistake. Huge mistake.

I leave the salon with short, tightly-curved hair. I am a 10-year-old girl with the hair of an 85-year-old woman. I look terrible.

The next day I stand in front of the entire school and read a jumble of words that aren't nearly as relevant to me as my disaster of a hairdo. I want to be invisible, or as an alternative, I consider throwing myself off the nearest cliff.

I need to stop thinking about the past. It's now 4 a.m. My mind flashes forward to my worries about Passover. I realize that no concerns about cooking, shopping or seating can compare to the stress of being 10 years old with an awful perm.

I promptly fall asleep.

Phyllis Shragge is a writer, mother of five, grandmother of four and a long-time Hamiltonian.

IT'S PASSOVER! SO WHAT!



GARY DIRENFELD

FOR SOME, PARENTING at Passover can be a challenge. On the one hand, there are the younger school age kids for whom concepts of oppression may be beyond their comprehension. On the other end, there are teens who are in the process of differentiating themselves from the family. On both ends, our children may experience a disconnect to the relevancy of Jewish history.

It is important to note that teens' desire to differentiate themselves is a normal developmental process, even though a challenge in some families.

The key to surviving teen challenges, and particularly at Passover time is realizing, this too shall pass.

Oppression and freedom from oppression are the themes of Passover, much like the teen may see themselves as hard pressed to conform to the expectations of parents and family.

Rather than dismissing, minimizing or arguing the teen's point of view, the parent need only draw parallels to Jewish history and ask the teen how or where they identify themselves in view of Jewish stories.

Very often, while teens are differentiating themselves from family, they still seek connection, but are often loath to let the parents know this. Whereas anger and lectures push away and undermine connection, curiosity and wonder can be used to draw in. Hear your teen through, continue to be curious, value their input and wonder if they would like to share any of their thoughts come the Seder to make Jewish history current and relevant.

With that, we not only can facilitate and improve our connection with our teens, but their connection with Jewish identity and history.

As per the younger school age kids while it may be a challenge to comprehend the larger issues of oppression, on a more personal level, they likely understand what it means to be bullied, especially based on a visible difference. One need only ask the younger child if they have seen a friend or classmate picked on, called names, singled out, treated harshly for somehow being different.

The key with the younger child is simply to wonder about their experience

with this; to wonder about who was involved; to wonder what happened; to wonder if anyone, including another child did anything; to wonder if other kids stood by. If happily there is not a personal experience, then you can wonder about that theme in a movie or TV show; how it made them feel; what they might have done given the example and experience.

The objective is to seek a real or even fictional example of oppression at an individual level based on a person being different. Even Beauty and the Beast can serve as this example.

From there the parent can enlarge the concept to big groups of similar people and smaller groups of dissimilar people and how larger groups of people can also pick on smaller groups of people.

From there, it is not so much a stretch to make the Passover story come alive.

With these discussions, we can also address the concept of resiliency – the ability to overcome adversity. We can talk about the role of even one person standing up for someone bullied and how in Jewish history, that someone was Moses.

For these younger kids, it is not necessary to explain Moses as the tragic hero whose own earlier deeds forbade him passage to the Promised Land. It is enough to appreciate the heroism, tempered by fear and pain as he stood for what was right.

Jews have a tremendous legacy of social justice and helping others. Starting with the personal and moving to the group and then to overcoming adversity by addressing principle and serving others, our young children can be invited into the story making it relevant on a level that works for them.

Jewish history is paradoxically current history. When we the parents make it relevant on a personal level, it comes to life with meaning for our kids. It is this relevancy to the lives of our children that can maintain their interest and connection hopefully to serve yet another growing generation.

It's Passover. That's so what!

Gary Direnfeld is a social worker, formerly in Dundas, Ontario, now living in Keswick, Ontario. In addition to his private practice, Gary is a media personality, columnist for the Hamilton Spectator and court recognized expert in parenting. For more information, go to: www.yoursocialworker.com.



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Our challenge is to lead, using an evolved model that engages, connects and reaches out to Jews who have become estranged." REBECCA SHAPIRO

ALL WHO ARE HUNGRY



REBECCA SHAPIRO

THIS PAST WEEK, I sat at the funeral of a friend, Susan-Bayla Waxman a'h. The sanctuary was full of hundreds of those whose lives she touched. I knew she was an incredible person, but I had no idea how far reaching her impact was. Her influence seemed to transcend generation gaps and religious affiliations. She related to everyone, with no judgement. When her son Lucas got up to speak, he said something that I have not stopped thinking about. As he talked about her kindness and generosity, he made sure to highlight that his mother valued community and having guests. And not just any guests, she made sure to include people who didn't have anywhere else to go at all her holiday meals. As Lucas said, "My mother always said, no one should ever have to be alone."

It got me thinking of our community, and a line in the Haggadah that has gnawed at me throughout my life.

Towards the beginning of the Passover seder we read the phrase "All who are hungry, let them come and eat. All those in need, come celebrate Passover."

As a child, it was the timing of this paragraph that felt off. Like if I really wanted these people to come to my seder, if I really cared about them, wouldn't it make more sense to invite them in advance?

The aforementioned line is from the famous "Ha Lachma Anya," which begins by referring to *matzah* as the "bread of affliction." I never thought of this line in conjunction with its preceding line. Considered together, they can be loosely summed up as "come on over and join me in my affliction."

Figuratively, we can all relate. Everyone has struggles. We may not be literally hungry, but we are all "hungry" in some way.

In my childhood and egocentric innocence, I thought this paragraph to be insensitive. As I evolve in my understanding of myself and the needs of others, I see this paragraph as introspective and quite unifying.

Personal needs evolve over time, and so do communal needs. Having grown up in this community, I have watched the evolution of "hunger" and "need."

Many of the founders of our synagogues and community organizations were peddlers who built themselves up after the Great Depression. Many came with nothing, after surviving the Holocaust. The community became their family and they poured their efforts into it and their children equally. They turned their hunger into passion.

Their children, my parents' generation, took up the mantle, inheriting this community and its volunteerism. Today, with dual-income families becoming a necessity for most, many in my own generation are burning the candle at both ends. As a result, financial support for community institutions has become watered down due to inflation and family obligations.

Most of my contemporaries moved away, and those of us who are left, have

been trying to balance between wanting to be as generous as the older generations (both in time and money) while keeping up with challenges of a fast paced world.

Many young families today choose to pour all of their efforts into spending quality time with their nuclear family whenever they have a spare second in their day. In this fast paced, over-programmed society, that face-to-face social element is at risk of being lost. Since social media is fulfilling many communal needs, even Jewish ones, people feel they can afford that luxury of solely focusing on family. In past, Jewish day schools, summer camps and youth groups were of primary importance. As I said before, community was family. Today, family is community.

But each generation, and each individual, is hungry in their own way. I was talking to a group of millennials with young children who said that after they are done work and carting their children to extra-curricular activities, getting dinner on the table and homework, they are done. They know it's a self-inflicted social isolation but the last thing they want to do is go to an event or board meeting.

I am participating in Hamilton Jewish Federation's YESOD leadership development course, developed by the Florence Melton Adult Mini School. This course, facilitated by David Shore, is attended by a cross spectrum of "the next generation" of Hamilton's Jewish leaders. It is a fantastic opportunity to sit at the table and discuss issues facing our community, as demographics and circumstances shift.

One of the topics that comes up quite often is community engagement, work/life/community balance and apathy.

While evaluating how to empower a new generation of leadership, we look at past generations for inspiration. We look back to the evolving communal leadership structures as they evolved in biblical times. What worked for one generation, does not necessarily work for the next.

Each generation brings something unique and valuable to the table. Our challenge is to lead using an evolved model that engages, connects and empathizes, and reaches out to Jews who have become estranged, who don't even know they are missing out.

The "bread of affliction" is all of ours to bear, but so is our liberation and our hope.

People like Susan-Bayla Waxman embodied the value of "all who are hungry, let them come and eat." Our community leaders work tirelessly to make sure that everyone has a seder to go to, and a community to grow with. They provide a strong foundation for liberation and hope. But again, everyone needs something.

There are many people who are hungry, both literally and figuratively. This Passover, let's remember to look inward and outward at the same time. What will you do to be a part of this evolving story?

Rebecca Shapiro is a communications and marketing consultant. She's also a co-founder of Project Proactive, which helps break mental health stigmas in the Jewish community and the community at large.

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The Hamilton Jewish Federation wants to hear from you!



We are planning for our community's future and this can only be done with you!
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Even after all the ballots are counted, it's not at all certain that a 'victor' will be declared." PAUL MICHAELS

A GUIDE TO THE UPCOMING ISRAELI ELECTIONS

Polls show Netanyahu's Likud party running neck-and-neck with new centre left alliance

BY PAUL MICHAELS, SPECIAL TO THE HJN

THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS for the 21st Knesset (or Parliament), will be held April 9. Much can change between now and then.

Nonetheless, a few trends have emerged.

All eight major Israeli opinion polls have consistently shown that the centre-right and the centre-left are running nearly neck-and-neck.

The "centre-right" is led by the Likud Party of Prime Minister Netanyahu. Together with other right-wing and religious parties, it has held a bare majority of 61 seats in the 120-member Knesset.

The "centre-left" is led this time by the newly formed "Blue & White" Party, an alliance between Yair Lapid of Yesh Atid and political neophyte Benny Gantz. It hopes to undermine Netanyahu's previous monopoly on security issues because three of its top five leaders are former IDF chiefs of staff, including Gantz himself. Despite its well-publicized security bent, Blue & White hopes to garner the support of the traditional left-wing parties and the tacit support of some of the Arab parties.

Israeli voters cast ballots for parties not (directly) for individuals, though the leader of the party, together with the party's platform, often determines the vote.

Astonishingly, 47 parties are registered to participate in the

elections – a reflection of Israel's vibrant democracy. However, only 10 to 12 parties will actually contend for seats in the Knesset. Following a law passed in 2014, parties need to pass a 3.25 percent vote threshold, which translates into a minimum of four seats.

About six million Israelis — two-thirds of nine million Israeli citizens over the legal age of 18 — are eligible to vote. Of these, about 70 per cent will likely cast ballots. In the 2015 election, 72 per cent of eligible voters participated.

Unlike Canada, where there are 338 constituencies (represented by that number of seats in the House of Commons), Israel treats the country as a single constituency where Knesset seats are apportioned according to the proportion of the vote each party receives.

The votes cast for parties that do not make it past the 3.25 per cent threshold are divided, according to a complex formula, among those parties that were more successful.

What's crucial is that the party that gets the most votes does not necessarily lead the next government. Every Israeli government is, essentially, a federation of minority parties. Unlike in Canada, no Israeli party has ever acquired a majority in its parliament. Following the past elections, Likud held only a quarter of the Knesset seats. As a result, Israelis may switch their party vote but keep it within the bloc that will



Will he win again? Benjamin Netanyahu, shown here at the General Assembly of Jewish Federations last November, has been elected Prime Minister of Israel four times, matching David Ben Gurion's record.

propose to President Rivlin who should be allowed to try to form the next government.

Blue & White is an exception to what has been this hard and fast rule. Its list of candidates includes both a former left-wing Meretz politician and two strong right-wing nationalists formerly from Likud. That is because, according to most pundits, this election will be determined not by economic, social or security proposals, but by whether people are for or against extending Netanyahu's term in office.

Even after all the ballots are counted, it is not at all certain that a "victor" will be declared. In 2009, Tzipi Livni got one more Knesset seat than Netanyahu but,

after consulting with all the parties, then-President Shimon Peres decided that the bloc backing Netanyahu was larger than the one supporting Livni. Netanyahu was, therefore, given the first chance to try to form a government, which he did.

With that historical precedent in mind, Blue & White is putting its entire electoral effort into winning at least three seats more than Likud. Yet even that might not guarantee Gantz the opportunity to form a governing coalition.

A poll conducted in early March provided the following tantalizing data:

1. Who is more suited for the position of Prime Minister?

42 per cent Netanyahu, 38 per cent Gantz, 20 per cent Don't Know

2. Did the Attorney General's decision (his intention to lay corruption charges against Netanyahu) cause you to change your vote?
75 per cent — No; 12 per cent — Yes; 13 per cent — Don't Know.

One thing is certain: Many Jewish Canadians will be closely following Israeli news on April 9, proud of the Jewish State's dynamic democracy and keenly interested in the democratic decision of the people of Israel.

Paul Michaels holds the position of Research Chair at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)

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Not only is this play filled with laughter, but both characters get to reveal something deep about themselves, learn, and grow." HOWARD JEROME

TWO LOCAL ACTORS CO-STAR IN JEWISH THEMED PLAY

Visiting Mr. Green opens at The Pearl Company in May

BY WENDY SCHNEIDER,
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

AN ELDERLY Jewish gentleman is almost run down by a careless driver, also Jewish, who is subsequently ordered to perform community service by making weekly visits with the man he injured. Their relationship, hostile and wary at first, evolves into something beautiful. That's the premise behind the upcoming production of *Visiting Mr. Green* at the Pearl Company the first week in May.

That Hamilton audiences are getting an opportunity to see the highly acclaimed play, penned in 1997 by Jeff Baron, is thanks to local teacher and Montreal native Daniel Schneiderman, 41. Schneiderman has harboured a secret desire to perform the lead role since first seeing the play 15 years ago while working as an usher at Montreal's Saidye Bronfman Centre.

"The show just blew me away," he told the HJN. "It's funny and moving and touching. Every chance that I got to go in to see the show it got me every time."

In those days, Schneiderman was an aspiring young actor with dreams of making it professionally. Fate intervened the following year when a testicular cancer diagnosis had Schneiderman think seriously about changing course. After creating a one-man show about his cancer experience that he brought to high schools, cancer organizations and retreats, he decided it was time to adopt a more stable lifestyle.

"After the cancer experience I didn't feel as passionate about auditioning for a Burger King commercial, (asking myself) how is this really making a difference or making an impact? I was ready to move on and change careers."

Schneiderman had been in Hamilton for seven years teaching French immersion, when "Mr. Green" surfaced once again in his consciousness. Two years ago, he reached out to Dan Penrose, who was then president of the Players Guild. Penrose expressed interest, but when nothing came of it, Schneiderman assumed that was the end of it. But something made Schneiderman reach out to Penrose again last September. At their scheduled meeting, Penrose brought along local producer Enid Aaron. By the end of the meeting, Schneiderman had found his producers. Within a few short weeks, they had a director in Sandi Katz Loewith and the Pearl Company booked as a venue. Now they only had to find their Mr. Green. Enter Harold Jerome, who could have come out of central casting. Like



Howard Jerome and Daniel Schneiderman co-star in *Visiting Mr.*

the Mr. Green character, Jerome, 79, is Brooklyn-born, speaks a little Yiddish, can pass for 86 years old, and lives in Hamilton.

Howard Jerome Gombert is a professional actor who was among thousands of Americans who moved to Canada during the Vietnam War. A self-described "hard-core socialist," former Greenwich Village folk singer, Greenpeace activist and atheist, Jerome (who prefers to go by his stage name) is a spiritual seeker who's practiced Buddhism, Hinduism and Kabbalah Judaism. You've no doubt seen him or heard his voice in any number of character roles in movies such as *Barney's Version*, *The Outside Chance of Maximillian Glick* or the animated series, *Dog City*. Jerome is also an accomplished theatrical actor, who played the iconic role of the grandfather in the musical *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* that premiered in Montreal in 2015.

Jerome said he's very excited to be playing Mr. Green. "I saw Theodore Bikel in a production and fell in love with the show, and even more importantly, the part," he told the HJN. "We are both 80-year-old Brooklyn Jews with tsuris and heartbreak in the family. This is a wonderful challenge for a senior actor."

NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: *Visiting Mr. Green*, a production produced by Enid Aaron and Dan Penrose, and directed by Sandra Katz Loewith.

WHEN: May 2, 3, 4, 9, 10 and 11 at 8 p.m. Matinees May 5 and 11 at 2 p.m.

WHERE: The Pearl Company, 16 Steven St., Hamilton

TICKETS: \$20 at The Pearl Company box office, 905-524-0606 or email info@thepearlcompany.ca

Visiting Mr. Green may be a small production, but it's also a symbol of the resurgence of energy and creativity taking place in Hamilton, driven by our city's newest arrivals.

"Daniel is the reason this show is happening," said Jerome of his co-star. "Nothing ever happens without passion and it is his passion that is driving this production. One of the beautiful aspects of this play is that, not only is it filled with laughter, but both characters get to reveal something deep about themselves, learn and grow."



Beth Tikvah is seeking board members on a volunteer basis.

Founded in 1990, the Beth Tikvah Foundation of Hamilton continues to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities with cultural sensitivity as the primary focus of service delivery. We are currently looking for individuals who would like to make a difference in our community and be a part of our board on a volunteer basis. There are no requirements for staff, volunteers and board members at Beth Tikvah to be Jewish or to have any previous knowledge of Judaism. However, there is a requirement for all Beth Tikvah staff and volunteers working with Jewish clients, to have an open mind with respect to learning about Judaism.

If you are interested in applying to be a board member or would like more information, please contact Executive Director Chris Barone at cbarone@bethtikvahhamilton.org or (905) 523-0411 ext. 308.

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The Hamilton Jewish Federation, the Canadian Zionist Federation - Department for Diaspora Activities, WZO are delighted to welcome Adi Biton to Hamilton as the Hamilton Jewish community shlichah, or emissary, from Israel for the next two months.

Adi, 21, who lives in Holon, has volunteered throughout her high school years in Israel and prides herself on having served as a combat soldier during her compulsory military service in Israel.

"Choosing to be a combat soldier was a life changing decision for me," Adi says. "The hardships I went through on my training and service, the variety of people I met, and seeing what happens on the borders with my own eyes, changed my perspective and made me appreciate everything I have so much more."

Shortly after she finished the army, Adi worked at a Jewish summer camp in Ohio as a counsellor and horseback riding specialist. "I fell in love with the customs of singing the blessings, with each song having its own melody and choreography. Because of my background, I was asked several times if I had killed someone or had any moral dilemmas that made me want to deny a command. I always loved to answer the questions and have an open discussion about it, so I can see and understand how it looks from a different perspective."

Adi also has extensive experience as a field coordinator for Birthright, where she met young Jews from all over the globe. She is currently travelling throughout North America on a gap year before starting her degree in philosophy, economics and political science at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Adi says, "I can't wait to meet you all and get to know each other while spending weekends, holidays or just one on one coffee together. I hope you are excited too."

We sure are Adi.

**SHALOM ADI!
WELCOME TO
HAMILTON.**



MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019 | 7PM
Art Gallery of Hamilton | Free event

Anne Frank at 90 – Why is the diary not enough today?

Keynote Speaker | Menno Metselaar

Menno Metselaar has been working at the Anne Frank House since 1990. Currently he is Project Manager at the department of Publications and Presentations. Over the years he has written extensively on Anne Frank, her Diary and the Secret Annex for various age groups, contributing to the development of publications, exhibitions, educational materials and websites.

There is no charge, but space is limited.

Reserve a seat by calling 905-648-0605 or order online at <https://www.picatic.com/anne90>



JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE



BY AIMEE WIGLEY,
JCC OF HAMILTON AND AREA

SPRINGTIME BRINGS with it many things: Warmer weather, longer days and perhaps most important of all, new life. When Family Day arrived, JHamilton was prepared for a very special visit from some newcomers to this world—a handful of baby goats! The back room of the "J" was transformed, with tarps, hay and a little fenced area set up for our fuzzy visitors, who wanted nothing more than to be snuggled by anyone who came their way! Along with face painting and two separate crafts, it was a JCC event unlike any that has come before it.

The children of our community, for whom this event was created, filled JHamilton with laughter and excited chatter. To hear that we would be visited by newborn kids (the youngest being only three weeks old) was one thing, but getting to see and snuggle with them was something else entirely. With visitors coming in from Burlington, Oakville and one family all the way from Niagara, it is safe to say that Furry, Family Fun was a complete success. Big thanks to Triple C Farms, who supplied our fuzzy friends and left our back room immaculate, as well as to Glitterbug for their constant creativity. You helped make this event so beautifully memorable.

A few weeks later was the eagerly anticipated 'Princess and Me High Tea', an event that completely transformed the "J" into a lovely tea room, complete with scones, finger sandwiches, baked goods and all kinds of delicious treats. The event sold out quickly, with people in attendance both from our vibrant community, as well as the wider Hamilton area.

With the Feast of Esther quickly approaching, what better time to celebrate with goodies and royalty? We welcomed princesses, Elsa and Anna from Arendelle, who read a Purim story from our very own PJ Library along with their own "Frozen" tale. There was even a musical performance



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE JCC

Recent JCC programs were a big hit with families, who enjoyed a pre-Purim program designed for all the princesses in the community and a Family Day program with baby farm animals.

by our visiting monarchs; the children were completely spellbound!

When running such a spectacular event, it would be impossible to do so without a strong team. Catering was done by the incredible Elie Ferguson and Jacki Levin, two professionals in the area of high tea and treats. Clare Gajdo and Jenn Laslo worked tirelessly throughout the whole event; deepest gratitude to you all. Thanks also go to Forever Fairest, who provided us with the princesses who made the morning truly magical.

Finally, to the families in our community who keep up their support and kind words, thank you. These programs are always designed with you in mind. I can hardly wait for you to see all that I have planned for the coming months.

TEMPLE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

BY DORA-ANN COHEN ELLISON

AT **TEMPLE Anshe Sholom**, we believe that students who are engaged in hands-on experiential activities, and have fun while learning about Jewish culture and values, will continue to love being Jewish as they grow and mature. In March, our students participated in three experiential learning projects about love and respect: love between two people, love for others in our community, and love and respect of our elders. In March, our Grade 2/3 class pretended to be the parents of our mock wedding couple, Laura Wolfson and Tish Byrne, and witnessed the ceremony under the chuppah that the students created for the special day. Rebecca W. described the meaning of some of the pictures they drew on the *chuppah* saying, "There is a rainbow for faith, a house for a loving home and a cake for sweetness in life." Junior students created the *ketuba* and sang Dodi Li, as the couple walked toward their *chuppah*. Our second lesson comes from the *megillah* where we are instructed to give gifts to the poor. Students created bags to hand out to those in need, filled with socks, soap, washcloth, water, and granola bars. They also filled each bag with messages of hope and love, such as "you matter" and "courage." Our last lesson was very personal for our students, as we worked on a special project to celebrate the 99th birthday of Rabbi Baskin. After a lesson about *hiddur p'nei zaken*, honouring the elderly, students created a list of words that would show Rabbi Baskin that we are thinking of him. They lovingly created 99 hearts, decorated with words in Hebrew and English, tucking them inside a giant birthday card. We hope that Rabbi Baskin feels the students' love on



PHOTO BY DORA-ANN COHEN ELLISON

Tish Byrne and Laura Wolfson (far right) pose with teacher Hannah Byrne-Wolfson and students Rebecca W. and Tesla S.

his birthday and knows that we are thinking of him!

What is up and coming? A four-week art project with Laura Wolfson to create a school *hag-gadah* and family program "Make and Takes for a Fun Family Seder." It is never too late to join us! Temple Religious School offers programming for students in JK-Grade 10, as well as free Shabbat drop-in programs for families with young children. Please email Dora-Ann Cohen Ellison at dacellison@anshesholom.ca or call for more information; 905-528-0121, ext 29.

GET READY FOR CAMP KADIMAH

BY AIMEE WIGLEY,
JCC OF HAMILTON AND AREA

WITH THE SUMMER of 2019 set to be Camp Kadimah's best yet, make sure that you register early to avoid disappointment. Each of our staff has their own unique skill set that help make Kadimah the jewel of our community. Bring on July!

Our 2019 specialities include nature, sports, science, arts and crafts, drama, swimming at the Dalewood Recreation centre and Judaism.

Some of the trips your children can look forward to this summer are excursions to Wild Waterworks, Lil Monkeys, Niagara Safari, Adventure Village, Bingemans and so much more!

Better yet, we will have an eclectic variety of professionals coming directly to us, putting on one-of-a-kind specialty workshops, tailored exclusively for Camp Kadimah. One thing is certain; there will never be a dull moment all summer long.

With our base of Temple Anshe Sholom surrounded by some of Hamilton's best



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HJN

Camp Kadimah brings lots of smiles.

trails, Camp Kadimah offers one of the strongest nature programs out there. We will get some fresh air and experience the world around us as we go on a summer-long journey of exploration and discovery.

For more information about Camp Kadimah and JCC family programs call child, family and camp program coordinator Aimee Wigley at 905-648-0613 ext. 307 or email aimee@hamiltonjcc.com.

WE WISH YOU A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PEACEFUL PASSOVER.



The Hamilton Jewish News is grateful to the Allen and Milli Gould Family Foundation for their generous sponsorship of its Jewish Life section.



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Kehila Heschel's co-founders Daniel and Julia Kollek and longtime supporters, Sasha and Tom Weisz were honoured at a celebration brunch held on March 24 at Temple Anshe Sholom.

KEHILA HESCHEL HAMILTON

BY ANITA BERNSTEIN

RABBI ABRAHAM JOSHUA Heschel lived his life by the values that he exposed – the integration of Jewish learning, Jewish ritual and social justice. At Kehila Heschel, the curriculum implements this educational philosophy by integrating all learning, Judaic and secular. It is intentionally difficult to separate the different academic expectations, as all learning is integrated, relevant and transferable to students' everyday lives.

How do Kehila Heschel students experience this learning? The school wide focus for the Passover unit was Masa'im - Journeys. Students learned that people move from place to place for a variety of reasons and that their struggles and triumphs are similar yet different. While learning about the Passover story and the journey from Egypt to Eretz Israel, the students in the lower grades compared and contrasted their personal journey experiences. The upper grades studied about early Canadian settlers and the Chalutzim, pioneers to Israel. They examined and compared the reasons for these

groups to move to a new country and the triumphs and hardships they faced. Using maps of Europe, Canada and Israel, the students recreated the journeys taken by the pioneers. They shared their findings in English, Hebrew and French and illustrated these by using Venn diagrams.

Students, across grade-expectation levels, explored how difficult it was to build the pyramids in such heat and without modern machinery. Using mathematical concepts they were learning, students built models of pyramids with Lego or 3D geometric shapes. They estimated the number of bricks needed to complete their pyramids and then measured to see how accurate they were. In the upper grades, students discussed simple machines that could have helped Hebrew slaves and created some with blocks or found objects. All students wrote and illustrated their own Haggadah to share at their family's seders.

Come see Kehila Heschel for yourself – book a tour today at info@kehilaschool.ca

BETH JACOB HEBREW SCHOOL



PHOTO BY EINAV SYMONS

Jack and Rosa enjoy building Hebrew dialogue at the Beth Jacob Hebrew enrichment program.

BY EINAV SYMONS

BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE Hebrew School is having a wonderful year! Students in all grades are engaged and happily learning.

This year, the school is revamping the curriculum and expectations. Successful school-wide programs in collaboration with Temple Anshe Sholom included a program on Beresheet, Chanukah at Shalom Village and a Tu Bi'shevat school trip to Eco House. At our first wine-tasting *havdalah* program, adults learned about how kosher wines are made and how they should be paired with delicious foods, while the youth learned about the deeper meaning of the Shema and painted pottery mezuzot. Our new initiative of online conversational Hebrew is moving "kadima" as students are creating

and performing skits in Hebrew.

Some of our upcoming programs and events include the Purim carnival and a visit from the children's books author Karen Rostoker-Gruber. We will be holding our first Siddur dedication and Friday night dinner. Yom Hashoah for our middle-school students will include a visit and program with a guest from Margaret's Legacy. We are looking forward to celebrating Yom Ha'atzmaut with the greater Hamilton Jewish community.

Registration for next year, as well as further information, is available at bethjacob-synagogue.ca. If you are interested in a tour of the school, contact Einav at school@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE



PHOTO BY JASON LEIZER

Senior students from the Hamilton Conservatory for the Arts perform at Beth Jacob's Marvin Caplan Memorial Concert.

BY THE BETH JACOB SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

BETH JACOB AGAIN opened its doors on Feb. 3 for a charity concert. Thanks to generous sponsors and dedicated volunteers, staff, performers and vendors and our talented MC Layne, The Auctionista, the second Marvin Caplan Memorial Concert, this year in support of Empowerment Squared, generated close to \$6,000 by drawing around 400 audience members – Jewish and not. A large portion of the attendees expressed excitement at being in a synagogue for the first time. Besides supporting a worthy tzedaka, the successful concert promoted our goal of raising awareness of what Jewishness means to us: bringing dignity, opportunity and human rights to all.

Leo Johnson, executive director of Empowerment Squared wrote in a letter to our Social Justice committee, "We are thankful to Beth Jacob Synagogue for selecting us as this year's beneficiary of the Marvin Caplan Memorial Concert. We deeply appreciate Marvin's dedication

and legacy of making Hamilton an inclusive community for all regardless of political, religious, cultural or socio-economic status. Empowerment Squared espouses these values everyday through our work with newcomer youth and families, many of whom have fled war, poverty and persecution in search of peace and security. This concert is a reminder of the great things that happen when we celebrate the beauty of our diversity."

Sharon Denise van Es, head of the Dance Department at the Hamilton Conservatory for the Arts who herself performed in the concert, wrote, "I am so grateful that I was asked to be a part of this amazing project. Working with Rabbi Hillel was a powerful and meaningful exploration of music and dance. I'm honoured to have been able to take the stage with some of the humblest and most dedicated people I know in honour of such a beautiful charity event in Hamilton."

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE JEWISH NATIONAL FUND

BY ALI MARTELL AND GERALDINE KATZ-ROSE

WHEN YOU THINK of the Jewish National Fund, you may immediately think of trees. You may fondly remember receiving a certificate stating “A tree was planted for you in Israel,” now tucked away in a drawer somewhere, remnants of a Bar Mitzvah or graduation gift. You can tell stories of your first hands-on tree planting experience in Israel. You can recall the little blue tzedakah box with JNF’s tree logo on the front.

Over the years, JNF’s role has evolved to reflect Israel’s needs, as well as the preferences of JNF donors. In the 21st Century, JNF is partnering with social service non-profits and NGOs to fund projects for at-risk youth, victims of domestic abuse, special needs children, and the impoverished, among others. Together with our donors, we are providing infrastructure to move important programs forward. All projects funded by JNF Canada are open to all sectors of the population, regardless of ethnic or religious background. Following are just a few examples.

JNF is collaborating with Herzog Medical Centre to help fund construction of treatment rooms at the Israel Centre for the Treatment of Psychotrauma (ICTP). The ICTP is internationally recognized for its substantial expertise in treating post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health issues brought on by natural disasters, domestic violence, sexual assault and school bullying, as well as war and terrorism.

In partnership with the Jaffa Institute, JNF shows its commitment to at-risk youth. The Institute provides after-school educational, nutritional, therapeutic and social enrichment programs that develop children’s positive attitudes and skills to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

Retorno is an organization for the prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol addiction. It has become a leader in rehabilitation and recovery from substance abuse, as well as prevention through outreach programs and



Animal assisted therapy at the Retorno Treatment Centre.

treatment of the mental health challenges that can lead to addiction.

Ilanot is a public school for special needs students with severe motor and cognitive disabilities. JNF Canada funded the specially designed therapeutic playground, which offers an accessible and stimulating environment where students can develop their motor and cognitive skills while fostering social and emotional growth.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, JNF has been a critical component in building necessary infrastructure projects, including land reclamation and environmental protection, reforestation, agricultural innovation, technical research and development, water management and recreational parks throughout Israel.

Now, by supporting important social projects to help the people of Israel, as well as continuing to plant trees, build water reservoirs, etc. to help protect the land, JNF Canada truly is building the foundations of Israel’s future.

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MCMMASTER HILLEL



Mac Hillel students Max Greenberg, Shlomo-Eli Schweitzer, Rebecca Starkman, Shirelle Belmont, and Pam Schimmer.

BY THE **MCMMASTER HILLEL EXECUTIVE**

ON FEB. 26, McMaster Hillel, in partnership with StandWithUs Canada, ran an event called Gratitude Days in the McMaster University Student Centre. Spearheaded by the McMaster University StandWithUs Canada Emerson Fellow, Shlomo-Eli Schweitzer, the event corresponded with Israel's "Ten Days of Gratitude." In the 10 days between Holocaust Remembrance Day and Israel Independence Day, chalkboards are set up across the country encouraging Israelis to reflect on gratitude and

celebration of Israel's existence. Schweitzer set up a chalkboard near a popular coffee shop and engaged with students who were waiting in line. Diverse groups of McMaster students wrote what they were thankful for on the chalkboard and were then given boxes of chalk as a gift. Reflecting on the event, Schweitzer commented, "It got students to stop what they're doing and take a moment to think about what they are grateful for. It also hopefully gave insight about some good things that come out of Israel when people read the pamphlets attached to the chalk boxes."

JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES

CHRISTINE NUSCA

JEWISH SOCIAL Services (JSS) celebrated its 10th annual wine tasting event in support of the kosher food bank on Feb. 24. Thank you to all our sponsors, raffle prize donors, volunteers and attendees who helped to make this year another success. The JSS kosher food bank is the only kosher food bank in the area and helps more than 40 families a month. In addition to providing non-perishable food to individuals and families, JSS serves daily hot lunches to seniors who attend our day program. The JSS Kosher food bank is volunteer driven; volunteers shop for food, stock the shelves and deliver food to those unable to come to us.

Collectively, we can help fight hunger.

You can support the kosher food bank in a variety of ways:

- Include extra items on your shopping list.
- Donate grocery store gift cards.
- Join our "Chicken Club" for a minimum donation of \$25 a month, that ensures a family will receive a chicken for Shabbat.
- Organize a food drive at your next simcha or community meeting.

Jewish Social Services always sees a rise in our food bank clients during the holidays. As Passover is quickly approaching, we would really appreciate community support to help us meet the needs of those less fortunate at this time. Contact Christine Nusca at 905-627-9922, ext 23.

HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY



HHA students interacting with Knesset members via live feed at a special assembly.

THE HHA held an incredible assembly on March 13 that celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Israeli Knesset. Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein and Chairman of the Jewish Agency, Isaac Herzog interacted directly with our students via live-feed.

The HHA was one of seven schools chosen for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to connect with the Israeli government.

Special thanks to Netta Asner, counselor at the Knesset Visitors Centre, Perry

Romberg, Gustavo Rymberg, Jacki Levin and the Jewish Federations of Canada for making this experience possible.

Our students prepared for the live feed with Neta leading a variety of interactive sessions teaching the students about the upcoming Israeli elections. As well, our students learned about the voting process in the Knesset with ballots and a mock Knesset debate.

Our students are preparing for another live feed discussion with Isaac Herzog.

Chag Sameach!

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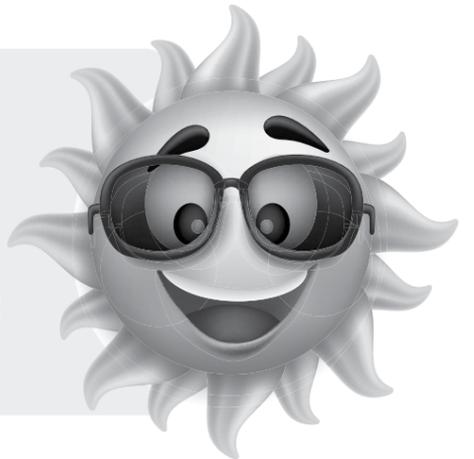
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At first, I had no idea what a bagel was." JEET GANDHI

AUTHENTIC MONTREAL BAGELS MADE IN DUNDAS

Owner Jeet Gandhi learned his craft from a Holocaust survivor in Montreal

BY **STEVE ARNOLD**,
THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

BAGELS AREN'T the first food idea to pop into your head when you first meet Jeet Gandhi and his partner Jerry Rai.

In fact, bagels were among the first things they learned about when they arrived in Canada – 30 years ago for Rai and 22 years ago for Gandhi.

Gandhi arrived in Montreal in 1997 to study electronics and worked part-time at the city's famed St. Viateur Bagel Shop, learning the secrets of the famous Montreal-style bagel.

(For the uninitiated, Montreal bagels contain malt and egg but no salt and are boiled in honey-sweetened water before being baked in a wood oven. The chief varieties are poppy and sesame seed. New York bagels are made without sweetened water.

Devotees of Montreal bagels can be passionate about their treat.

Gandhi was mentored in the bagel business by a Holocaust survivor in Montreal, and while their relationship was one of sharp ups and downs, "after a couple of years we had a father-son thing happening."

"At first I had no idea what a bagel was," he said. I think I fell in love with the fire first," he said, speaking of the fire in the store's wood oven. "By a stroke of luck, it all worked out."

Initially assigned only to preparation work in the store, he taught himself the art of bagel-baking, eventually convincing his mentor he was ready for more challenging tasks.

With time, thoughts of working in electronics faded and Gandhi devoted himself to the bagel business, eventually moving to Toronto and opening a store on Yonge Street near St. Clair "where people knew only Tim Hortons."

During that time, he also connected with



Dundas's Old Bagel House owners Jerry Rai and Jeet Gandhi

Rai who stepped up to help him when his home was damaged by a fire in a neighbouring building.

"A couple of years back, he picked me up when I was really vulnerable," Gandhi said. "I'm an old school person who remembers things like that."

Rai had learned the bagel business working for a brother-in-law in Toronto.

The two quickly became closer than brothers and then business partners looking for places to expand their businesses beyond Toronto and Mississauga. They thought about St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Burlington or Oakville and one day started out to scout locations, but an accident on the

highway forced them off the QEW and into Dundas.

While driving around utterly lost, they came across University Plaza and the site of the former Great Canadian Bagel shop.

Their original plan was for a \$200,000 renovation of the store – but a misunderstanding about the floor's ability to support the massive wood-fire oven they wanted to install turned the project into a \$500,000 deal.

"We had to just go ahead and do it," Gandhi said. "If we can't put the oven in, then we can't make bagels."

The oven was installed and the store opened in September. Today, like all

newly-minted entrepreneurs, the partners basically live in the store, leaving for quick showers at a health club before returning to work.

"It's a very hard life working morning until night," Rai said. "We start at 5 a.m. every day."

Today, the business has grown to the point where they sell more than 2,600 bagels a day – 220 dozen to a customer base sometimes coming from as far away as Kitchener and Brantford for the menu of 14 different kinds of bagel, plus sandwiches and pastries.



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In Seville, a Jewish tomb from the pre-Inquisition period is relegated to an underground parking lot."

HIDDEN GEMS: THE LOST JEWISH HERITAGE OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

In Lisbon, Seville and Barcelona, three dedicated guides are working hard to reveal their countries' rich Jewish heritage.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY **WENDY SCHNEIDER**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

PICTURESTANDING In a museum before an empty display case while trying to piece together the history of the imagined object that lies within. Jewish heritage tours in Spain and Portugal can often feel like that, but thanks to three energetic guides offering Jewish tours in Lisbon, Seville and Barcelona, history buffs stand to learn a great deal about seven centuries of Jewish life on the Iberian Peninsula. Paolo Scheffer, Moises Hassan Amselem and Dominique Tomasov Blinder share a passion for informing the world about the legacy of a people whose history their countries once worked hard to erase.

Lisbon

Our family trip to Lisbon and Southern Spain last May began in the Portuguese capital, where we were met by Paolo Scheffer, historian, master storyteller and descendant of 15th century Portuguese Crypto Jews. Crypto Jews, as the name suggests, were Spanish and Portuguese converts to Catholicism who continued to practise Judaism in secret. Skillfully weaving details about his own story into an overview of post-Inquisition Jewish life, Scheffer walked us through streets where much of that history took place.

Standing before a stall at an outdoor market, Scheffer introduced us to the alheira, a type of Portuguese sausage made with chicken rather than the more common pork variety. Its origin dates back to when New Christians (as they were called by their contemporaries) would hang these sausages outside their doors to dispel any suspicion that they were anything but good pork-eating Christians. Despite such subterfuge, both New Christians and Jews who did not convert often shared the same horrible fate. By way of illustration, Scheffer told us of a 1496 incident in which 2,000 children of Spanish Jewish refugees were torn from their parents' arms and deported to the Portuguese colony of Sao Tomé, where most died of exposure and starvation.

Standing at the threshold of the Saint Domingos Church, Scheffer described a four-day orgy of violence that happened there in 1506 when a frenzied mob of worshipers and foreign sailors tortured, murdered and burned between 1,000 and 4,000 New Christians.

Ironically, this same period saw the rising influence of astronomer, mathematician and rabbi Abraham Zacuto, an advisor to Christopher Columbus. Zacuto plotted Columbus's route to the



The precariousness of Jews in medieval Portugal is reflected in this bas relief carved into a tomb bearing the remains of King Fernando I. The carving depicts his Jewish physician chained to a heavy object in a secured palace room.

New World in 1492, the same year that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella expelled him and his fellow Jewish citizens from Spain. Taking refuge in Lisbon, Zacuto was made Royal Astronomer by Portugal's King John II. There, his astronomical tables, together with the astrolabe, a navigational instrument Zacuto refined and perfected, helped make Portugal the age's preeminent world power.

Centuries later, supposedly neutral Portugal played host to both Nazis and Jewish refugees desperately trying to escape Europe during the Second World War. Standing in Lisbon's popular Rossio Square, Scheffer pointed out the Café Nicola, a favoured spot with Nazi generals. Sitting in a cafe on the opposite side of the square, Jewish refugees watched them warily.

Seville

Brass plaques indicate the location of absent Jewish buildings while a Jewish tomb from the pre-Inquisition period is relegated to an underground parking lot. This strange juxtaposition hints at Seville's ambivalence towards its Jewish past, an impression we were left with from our half-day tour with Moises Hassan-Amsalem.

The native-born son of Moroccan Jews who immigrated to the city in the 1960s, Hassan-Amsalem made frequent use of his iPad* to illustrate what was a 700-year power struggle between North African Moors and European Catholics for control of the Iberian peninsula. Depending on who was in power, the Jews of the period enjoyed relative autonomy as "dhimmis" (protected non-Muslims) under the

NEED TO KNOW

For a Jewish tour of Lisbon, Paolo Scheffer can be contacted at totallyjewishtravel.com or info@lisbonexplorer.com

In Seville, Moises Hassan Amselem can be reached at jewishsevilla.com or info@jewishsevilla.com

Dominique Tomasov Hassan offers an academic perspective of Barcelona's Jewish past. Find her at urbancultours.com or info@urbancultours.com

tolerant Caliphate of Cordoba, suffered persecution under the Almoravids, a puritan Muslim sect from Morocco or forced conversion when the Spanish Inquisition spread to Portugal in 1496.

LOST JEWISH HERITAGE CONTINUES ON P24

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Barcelona was home to one of Spain's most robust Jewish communities until a 1391 pogrom completely ethnically 'cleansed' the city."

LOST JEWISH HERITAGE

CONTINUED FROM P24

The important role Jews in Spain played as money-lenders and occasional advisors to royalty gave them unusual influence and power, but also made them subject to anger and resentment. Massacres in Seville and Barcelona in 1391 would mark the end of the age of tolerance and set off a cycle of violence that culminated a century later in the Inquisition.

Walking us through Seville's Jewish quarter Hassan-Amsalem made a detour into the Church of San Nicholas. Inside, a shrine dedicated to a child said to be ritually murdered by the Jews of 12th century Zaragoza was once accompanied by a plaque that said as much. While the sign has since been modified, the shrine itself stands as a chilling reminder that the blood libel accusation still has currency.

An underground parking garage just beyond the Jewish quarter was the final stop on our tour. As we looked at each other uncomprehendingly, Hassan-Amsalem walked us to a back wall partially obstructed by parked cars. Behind a glass enclosure lay a Jewish tomb, one of 182 discovered during the car park's construction in 1997. There being no chief rabbinate in Seville to decree otherwise, the municipality's solution is less offensive than it at first appears. One thing was certain. Hassan-Amsalem gave us a glimpse of Seville's Jewish history that we would never have found in any guidebook.

Barcelona

"Where are your people from?" Dominique Tomasov Blinder seemed genuinely interested in hearing about our genealogical roots before sharing her own—Russian Jewish heritage, born in the United States, raised in Buenos Aires and residing in Barcelona where she is an active member of the Jewish community. Putting down roots in a country that once expelled your ancestors cannot be easy, but Tomasov Blinder is a fighter. When 500 Jewish tombs were unearthed during a 2001 construction project she persuaded a reluctant municipal government to recognize the cemetery as an historic landmark.

Barcelona was home to one of Spain's most robust Jewish communities until a 1391 pogrom completely ethnically "cleansed" the city. As in Seville, six centuries of absence has wiped out most traces of Jewish life, but visitors to the Jewish quarter, called El Call, from the Hebrew word kahal, meaning community or congregation, will find a number of places of interest. Hebrew inscriptions dotted along the quarter's walls are actually blocks of



Paolo Scheffer gives Jewish tours of Lisbon.



Tour guide Moises Hassan Amsalem in Seville



Barcelona's Dominique Tomasov Blinder.

stone taken from the city's old Jewish cemetery of Montjuïc (literally, the Mountain of the Jews). Once the community disappeared in the 14th century, its stones were used as construction material. The quarter is also home to the tiny Sinogoga Major de Barcelona, Europe's oldest synagogue and a little treasure of a visitor's centre where multi-media presentations give an overview of Medieval Jewish life.

In recent years, Spain and Portugal have sought to rectify an historic injustice by offering citizenship to the descendants of the once robust Jewish community forced into exile during the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions. Each of these three guides represents the revitalization of Jewish life in his or her respective city. Time in their company is time well spent.

*Wishing the community a
Happy Passover*



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