



P10



P11

INSIDE

The Israel-diaspora relationship • 10
The incomparable Max Mintz • 11
A woman's journey of strength • 13



P13

Hamilton Jewish

News

ADARI 5779

The voice of Jewish Hamilton Feb. 2019

THE ENDURING LEGACY OF A MAN NAMED MORRIS BLACK

A bequest from a Peterborough clothing merchant spawned this community's most beloved public speaking contest

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

Morris Black left his family way too soon. A soft-spoken, scholarly Peterborough clothing merchant, Black passed away in 1970 at the age of 54, leaving his family and community bereft of one of its most respected leaders. Rick Black still vividly recalls the family's surprise at discovering their father's unusual bequest towards the creation of a Jewish essay contest. "A wonderful heritage has been given to us," Morris Black had written in his will. "Forsake it not." Less than a decade later, his son, having recently established a medical practice in Hamilton, adapted his father's original concept into a Jewish public speaking contest. Now in its second generation, the Morris Black Public Speaking Contest is regarded as one of this community's most valuable — and popular — educational programs.

MORRIS BLACK CONTEST CONTINUES ON P4



A new generation of children participated in the 40th annual Morris Black Public Speaking Contest in December. Pictured above, from the top clockwise, are Adam Klein, Yehudi Gawek, Alex Black, Baila Meira Mendelson and Miriam Biro.

PHOTOS BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Author Jennifer Teege and Dana Horwood share a moment after her keynote address at the Hamilton Jewish Federation commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27.

A COURAGEOUS CHOICE

Jennifer Teege shared her struggles coming to terms with her family's Nazi past and about the terrible consequences of hate and how we can work to eradicate it.

STEVE ARNOLD REPORTS: **P5**

BEN SHRAGGE ON BEING A MINORITY **P14**

“I want to role model someone who is not fad-dieting.”

Brenda Burjaw took up powerlifting to get stronger and feel awesome - should you?

STEVE ARNOLD REPORTS: **P13**

Hamiltonjewishnews.com

PM Agreement # 40007180

JHAMILTON
learning | meeting | growing | schmoozing

1605 Main St. West | Hamilton, ON | 905.648.0605

TD Wealth

Fowler and Associates

TD Wealth Private Investment Advice
Complete Investment and Estate Planning

Scott Thomson
Investment Advisor

905-528-6349

Dwight A. Fowler
Vice President,
Investment Advisor

905-528-4254

Shane Fowler
Investment Advisor

905-528-0113

Toll Free: 1-800-775-0037
Fax: 905-528-6897

Fowler & Associates



Fowler and Associates consists of Dwight Fowler, Vice President and Investment Advisor, Shane Fowler, Investment Advisor and Scott Thomson, CFA, Investment Advisor. Fowler and Associates is part of TD Wealth Private Investment Advice. TD Wealth Private Investment Advice is a division of TD Waterhouse Canada Inc., a subsidiary of The Toronto-Dominion Bank. TD Waterhouse Canada Inc. — Member of the Canadian Investor Protection Fund. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. ®/The TD logo and other trade-marks are the property of The Toronto-Dominion Bank or a wholly-owned subsidiary, in Canada and/or in other countries.

GUEST EDITORIAL

CHOOSE LIFE: JEWS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

BY **MIRIAM SAGER**, SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

THIS LAST SUMMER and fall have seen an increase in scientific and public understanding that we are facing a climate crisis and that urgent, decisive action is necessary if we hope to avoid the worst of its consequences for organized human life on earth.

While of course Jews everywhere will be affected along with the rest of humanity, we are also guided by calls for tikkun olam and bal tashchit — the commandment not to destroy or waste. In this case, the world needs an actual physical, not just spiritual, halt to destruction, and repair of the damage already done. As well, the impacts of the climate disruption will be — and already are profoundly unjust, with the most destruc-



tive impacts falling on those who have contributed to it the least: the young and the unborn, Indigenous nations, the poor, and impoverished nations that have been most heavily exploited by the developed countries.

As a people who have not shied away from taking on the largest issues facing humanity, one might wonder where is our Jewish voice on what is being named the biggest challenge and moral issue to have ever faced humanity.

“Decisive action is necessary if we hope to avoid the worst of its consequences for organized human life on earth.

MIRIAM SAGER

We humans have been slow to rise to the challenge. For a small minority of people who make huge profits by pouring the largest amounts of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere, it is about greed for fortune and power. But for the rest of us it may be because of lack of awareness, addiction to convenience, or denial of what feels too unbearable to face. Many feel powerless, discouraged and incompetent. Indeed, no one really has a firm grasp of the whole picture or knows quite how to fix it, but some specific reasons might be making it particularly difficult for us to look squarely at the problem, to own it, and to organize against it.

For a people who have been living out of suitcases between one expulsion and the next, it can be hard to feel connected to the environment, or to the rest of humanity, a connection that is crucial for us to be emboldened and energized to take the decisive action required to organize for swift, large-scale and unpopular change. And then, organizing with others in the general community can sometimes feel uncomfortable. Will we run into unaware anti-Semitism? Will we have to challenge it, which can be a scary thing to do, or painfully assign our own liberation to the back burner? A valid concern indeed. We could organize as Jews on climate change, but we must collaborate with others in the broader movement. Given that isolation is a key component of anti-Jewish oppression, I am inclined to think that it would be good to work within existing groups, and, if presented with anti-Semitism, figure out how to take it on and train our potential allies. In either case, as an activist, I would love to have a safe Jewish space where we can support each other and look at what it's like to be doing this work — and to be adjusting to a rapidly changing (and possibly disintegrating) world. We must also prepare ourselves, and our allies, for growing expressions of anti-Semitism, which typically happens at times of social unrest.

One way or another, we cannot afford to stay away from this climate tikkun olam work. The threat to human life from climate breakdown is existential. “We are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are we free to desist from it”. And, to quote Hillel, “If not now, when?”

Miriam Sager works at the Hamilton Sexual Assault Centre, and organizes with hamilton350.org and Extinction Rebellion Hamilton. She can be contacted at mirsager@yahoo.ca.



THE RICHTER GROUP

Proudly serving the Greater Hamilton Area since 1957







“Experience the trust, dependability and accountability that over 50 years has provided at any of the Richter Group stores”



Hamilton Hyundai
324 Parkdale Ave N
905 545 5150
www.hamiltonhyundai.



Eastgate Ford
350 Parkdale Ave N
905 547 3211
www.eastgateford.com



Bay King Chrysler
55 Rymal Road, Hamilton
905 383 7700
www.bayking.ca



WESTERN STAR

FEBRUARY 2019

LOCAL NEWS

5 HER FAMILY'S NAZI PAST
Jennifer Teege shares her life story

ISRAEL

10 GROWING APART?
Renewing the Israel/diaspora relationship

OBITUARY

11 REMEMBERING MAX MINTZ
Iconic restaurateur was one of a kind

FEATURE

12 LESSONS IN SURVIVAL
Elizabeth Albano's survival story



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MINTZ FAMILY

PAGE 11

COURAGE IN MOTION



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEIT HALOCHEM

Allen Greenspoon of Dundas was among the more than 100 Canadians who cycled alongside 120 Beit Halochem disabled members on a five-day ride through southern Israel in a fundraiser for Beit Halochem Canada last October. The organization raised \$850,000 last year towards purchasing much-needed equipment and to support ongoing cycling programs at Israel's leading-edge Beit Halochem Centres.

DEPARTMENTS

Guest editorial	2
Cover Story	4
Local News	5
Upcoming Events	6
Profile	7, 13
Federation News	8, 16
JCC	9
Israel	10
Obituary	11
Feature	12
Voices	14
Jewish Life	15

COMING UP

PASSOVER ISSUE

- Deadline for booking ad space
Feb. 26, 2019
- Deadline for receiving editorial copy
March 5, 2019
- Deadline for receiving ad copy
March 18, 2019
- Estimated date of arrival
April 1, 2019

HJN

PLEASE RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:

1605 Main St. W.
Hamilton, ON L8S 1E6
Agreement # 40007180

The Hamilton Jewish News is published four times a year by Hamilton Jewish News Inc. and funded by the Hamilton Jewish Federation
CIRCULATION 2,000

EDITORIAL POLICY

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

PUBLISHER

Hamilton Jewish Federation

EDITOR

Wendy Schneider

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Abigail Cukier

DIGITAL EDITOR

Ben Shragge

HJN CONTRIBUTORS

Steve Arnold, Steven Brock, Abigail Cukier, Barry Rosen, Simone Rotstein, Ben Shragge, Phyllis Shragge

HJN ADVISORY BOARD

Aviva Boxer
Wade Hemsworth
Celia Rothenberg

CONTACT INFORMATION

w Schneider@jewishhamilton.org
905-628-0058

HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION

PRESIDENT

Jacki Levin

CEO

Gustavo Rymberg

BOARD MEMBERS

Janis Criger
Mike Dressler
Howard Eisenberg
Gerald Fisher
Daniel Hershkowitz
Lester Krames
Larry Levin
Ben Levitt
Alice Mendelson
Arie Pekar
Josh Rauchwerger
Sandee Smordin
Peter Smurlick
Laura Wolfson

ONLINE
Dog Training

McCann Professional Dog Trainers
In just a few weeks, your dog will become a good family member!

Come!

COME when called, the first time, every time.

Heel!

WALK on a loose leash without pulling.

Stay!

STAY reliably despite distractions.

Take the FREE TRIAL today at
www.McCannDogs.com



McCannDogs.com

More than 80,000 4-legged family members trained since 1982!

Charred



Charred Chicken

Fresh BBQ chicken cooked on our charcoal rotisserie with our signature home made piri piri sauce

244 James St. N.,
Hamilton, Ontario, L8R 2L3
(289) 396-0662

@charredchicken
charred.ca

Delivery and catering available

“We came from the outside and we never saw anything like the Morris Black anywhere else.” ALICE MENDELSON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

To understand what lay behind Morris Black's passion for furthering Jewish learning, one need look no further back than his father, a Lithuanian Jewish immigrant who settled in Peterborough in the early 1900s to serve as the tiny Jewish community's kosher butcher, cantor and educator.

“Philip Black was Peterborough's first Jewish spiritual leader,” said Louise Klinghoffer of the ancestor she and Rick Black share. “He was a very spiritual man, a leader. Morris was the same way.”

Rick Black remembers his father as “quiet, contemplative, with a strong sense of community, family and Israel.” He was also a gifted musician and songwriter, once sending an Israel-inspired song to Israeli Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion. The note he received in reply is a treasured family possession.

Rick Black was a recent graduate of McMaster University's Medical School when he inaugurated the first Morris Black competition, then, an essay contest, at the Adas Israel 40 years ago. He was soon persuaded by the late Rose Lax and Larry Levin to change it to a public speaking contest. This decision probably ensured its popularity and longevity. For most of the last four decades, the annual event was held at the Jewish Community Centre, until recently, when it has alternated between different locations. Its costs, about \$4,000 a year, are shared between the JCC and the Black family.

Participation in the Morris Black contest has been consistently high throughout the years, with both the Hamilton Hebrew Academy and Kehila dedicating curriculum time towards helping children prepare their speeches and the Beth Jacob and Temple afternoon schools encouraging student participation.

This year, a record 62 children from Grade 3 to 8 enrolled in the contest, which took place on Dec. 16 at Beth Jacob Synagogue. Every available space in the building—classrooms, library, chapel, sanctuary and social hall—were occupied by small groups of students, their family members and 21 designated judges. After delivering their speeches, participants, parents and siblings assembled in the social hall to

THE MORRIS BLACK IS A LONGSTANDING JEWISH HAMILTON TRADITION THAT BRINGS TOGETHER CHILDREN FROM ACROSS THE COMMUNAL SPECTRUM



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS



PHOTO COURTESY OF RICK BLACK

Morris Black, a contemplative man with a strong sense of community.



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER

Rick Black has dedicated himself to perpetuating his father's legacy.

NEED TO KNOW

The annual Morris Black Public Speaking Contest is open to all Hamilton and area Jewish students from Grades 3-8. For information about next year's contest, contact Rick Black at 905-648-5080 or the JCC at 905-648-0613.

A sampling of this year's Morris Black speeches can be found at hamiltonjewishnews.com/young-voices.

Vancouver is also home to a Morris Black Public Speaking Contest initiated by Rick Black's brother, Larry Barzelai.

for more photographs, the joy and pride they felt was palpable, as their parents snapped photos and younger siblings hopped around in excitement.

Among the parents in the room that day was Alice Mendelson, a Montreal native whose family moved to Hamilton in 2015. Mendelson remembers the first time her children entered the contest without any idea of what it was all about. “We came from the outside, and we hadn't seen anything like that anywhere else,” she said.

Now, she said it's become an important part of her family's “Jewish calendar,” even for her boys who no longer attend Jewish

Morris Black judges (l to r) Naomi Loewith, Sandy Katz and Laura Barzelai confer with each other.

day schools. “They look forward to it and devote time to working towards it. It's a uniquely Jewish Hamilton experience,” she said.

What impressed Mendelson, a long-time educator, more than anything, was seeing how intently children listen to each other.

“They're so interested in each other's topic... the kind of active, engaged listening which you don't see so often.”

Among the biggest beneficiaries of “engaged listening” are younger siblings, like Yishai Shapiro, for instance, a Grade 3 student at the Hamilton Hebrew Academy who placed second in his age group.

“He's been watching for years,” said his mother Rebecca, “noticing what types of speeches work and which ones don't, so he has a natural flair now.” Finally reaching the age of getting to participate in his first Morris Black contest was “really amazing,” said Yishai.

Yishai's older brother Yonah is another astute observer of speaking styles. “I go with a different technique every year,” said the Grade 7 student, whose speech topic was Tikkun Olam, the Jewish imperative to improve the world.

“I liked it better this year because I was just able to say my thoughts and experiences. It was something I could connect to,” said Yonah.

Grade 6 student Ma'Ayan Kirat, also enjoys speaking on topics close to her heart. Three of her four Morris Black speeches have been about family members, and she was thrilled when this year's speech about her grandmother's struggle during the Holocaust won first place.

As hard as students work at their speeches, it's fair to say that it's the judges who may face the most difficult challenge.

“It's very difficult to be a judge,” said Dave Loewith, who has been involved with the Morris Black contest for 30 years. “You get a little kid up there trying her best and it's very difficult to choose.”

As the most veteran judge, Loewith reminds his colleagues every year to keep in mind that “this is a public speaking contest, not an essay contest. A kid can get up there and read their speech but that's not what we want,” he said. “We want the person to make eye contact, to have appropriate volume for their age, to try and sound enthusiastic about what they're talking about.”

Many of his fellow judges are Loewith's family members and other close friends of the Black family who have been getting together for a post-event dinner for the last 30 years—a celebration that holds as much significance for their families as a major Jewish holiday event.

Rick Black had even more reason to celebrate this year. It was the first year in which he had a grandchild participating. Alex Black, a Grade 3 student at Oakville's Sha'arei Beth El Synagogue and the son of Rick and Wendy Black's son Morry, who said his father was “over the moon” to have a grandchild among the participants.

“We're talking about another generation of people who get to participate, and I think he was really happy ... because ultimately it's going to be on me and my brothers to keep the light going.”

That light shows no sign of dimming anytime soon. “The Morris Black is a big thing for the Hamilton Jewish community,” said Loewith, “and full marks to the Black family because they funded it for a long time on their own and are very low key about doing it.”

PARKWAY MOTORS HAMILTON PROUDLY SUPPORTS THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS





The world is going in a direction that's very scary." JENNIFER TEEGE

A WRITER CONFRONTS THE DARK SIDE OF FAMILY AND HISTORY

Jennifer Teege is on a mission to educate and illuminate the truth about the Holocaust

BY STEVE ARNOLD, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

JENNIFER TEEGE is afraid.

She is afraid of a world where Nazis march through the streets of a quiet Virginia college town, where Jews are attacked on the streets of New York and Paris and worshippers are gunned down in a Pittsburgh synagogue. She is afraid of a world where the President of the United States says it is alright to hate some people because of their religion or skin colour.

In all of that Teege sees the roots of another terrible time in history, a time when her grandfather oversaw thousands of concentration camp murders and, for sport driven by fanatical hatred, would shoot prisoners from the balcony of his villa or unleash his specially trained guard dogs to tear out their throats.

That grandfather was the Nazi war criminal Amon Goeth, commandant of the Plaszow concentration camp in Poland. Teege told an audience at the community commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day they only need cross the border into the United States to see the seeds of another Shoah taking root.

"I think we are living in very dangerous times, not only in the United States where it's very clear what direction they are heading, but also in Europe and other parts of the world," she said.

"I see that there are threats and

I think it is important to speak out loud and warn people and teach them what I have to teach from my point of view," she added. "Most important for me is the importance of empathy, all these things that were missing in historic times in Germany."

Teege's view of the world was borne of her own search to understand her Nazi past. She discovered her personal connection to that history entirely by accident after randomly picking a book off the shelf of Hamburg's public library.

"There was a tiny little picture of my mother on the cover but I did not recognize her immediately," Teege said. "If I hadn't been in the library that day or the book was not on the shelf I probably would not know. Really I just found out by finding the book."

(Teege's grandmother had an affair with Goeth while he was in command at Plaszow. Her mother later became pregnant by a black Nigerian man. Teege was raised in orphanages and although she had periodic contact with her mother and grandmother she was never told anything of her lineage.)

Discovering she is a direct descendant of one of the most evil men in history sent Teege into depression, therapy and, eventually, to writing her bestselling book "My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me: A Black Woman



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Discovers Her Family's Nazi Past."

"In the beginning it was something I kept secret because I was so overwhelmed by it. I needed some time to come to terms with what I found out," she said. "At first I thought it was like I had lived a double life, like I had been living a lie. It has a lot to do with your identity and who you think you are because suddenly everything collapses."

That process of discovery, Teege said, left her with the feeling she could not hide the truth of her past but had to share the story as

a way of remembering what can become of a world where hate is seen as legitimate. It is especially important as the world's direct connection to the Holocaust fades—a stone monument is all that remains of the Plaszow camp today and the ranks of Holocaust survivors thin with every passing year.

"This is a story I am not allowed to take to my grave. It has to be told," she said. "The world is going in a direction that is very scary. It's a global development where things you were not allowed to say just a

Jennifer Teege addressed a sold-out crowd at the community commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day at the Art Gallery of Hamilton on Jan. 27.

couple of years ago are now completely legitimate again in the eyes of some.

"It's not too late to change yet, it's 5-to-12 or may be even 3-to-12, but we can change."

WESTDALE OPTICAL boutique



Have fun with your glasses!

1050 King St. W., Hamilton, ON
www.westdaleoptical.com
 info@westdaleoptical.com
 905.525.0788

trend LIVING



TRENDLIVING.CA

CONDOS IN WATERDOWN
FROM \$239,990

SALES BEGIN
THIS SPRING

NEW HORIZON
 DEVELOPMENT GROUP





VINE and PARTNERS LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants

- Audit and Review Engagements
- Not-for-Profit and Charity Engagements
- Corporate Tax and Reorganizations

A Partner to Grow With
Brock Whitwell, Partner, CPA, CA, B.Comm
(905) 549-8463 Ext. 243 • brockw@vine.ca

  vine.ca

Visit Dr. Larry Levin at City Place Dental

Proudly serving the
**Hamilton Jewish
community**

CALL US TODAY
**WE WOULD LOVE
TO SEE YOU!**



905-529-2421
cityplacedental.ca

105 Main St. East, Ste. 1115
(located in effort square)



Canadian
MAGEN DAVID ADOM
Canadien

**CMDA National Board of Directors,
Members and Staff**

extend heartfelt condolences to
Reesa Rosen and Ira & Sarah Rosen
on the passing of

Hilda Rosen z'

beloved mother and mother-in-law
and CMDA Hamilton "Ambassador" and Board Member.

Hilda's dedication and commitment to CMDA and
her love for the people of Israel will never be forgotten.

Michael I. Levine,
National President

Sidney Benizri,
National Executive Director

May her memory be for a blessing

TREVOR COLE HEADLINES NA'AMAT AUTHOR LUNCHEON

DEENA SACKS, NA'AMAT HAMILTON

TREVOR COLE will be the featured speaker at Na'amat Hamilton's 34th annual Celebrity Author Luncheon on Tuesday, May 14, 2019.

An award-winning journalist, novelist, and writer of non-fiction, Cole has won nine National Magazine awards, and writes for Report on Business Magazine, Canadian Geographic, Macleans and Toronto Life.

Cole's first two novels, Norman Bray in the Performance of His Life and The Fearsome Particles, were both short-listed for the Governor General's Literary Award and long-listed for the International Dublin Literary Award. The former was based on the life of his father, actor and singer Bill Cole.

Trevor Cole's third novel, Practical Jean was a finalist for the Rogers Writers'

Trust Fiction Prize and won the Leacock Medal for Literary Humour in 2011. Hope Makes Love, his fourth novel com-

bines comedy and tragedy through complex characters.

Na'amat is a non-profit charitable organization whose mission is to enhance and safeguard the status of women, children and families in Israel and in Canada.

The luncheon will take place at the Adas Israel Congregation at noon. Tickets can be purchased at Epic Books at 226 Locke Street South; 905-525-6538, at naamat.com/hamilton or by contacting authorluncheon@cogege.ca.



PHOTO BY FERIN FOSS

JNF NEGEV DINNER FETES YVES AND LUBA APEL

GERALDINE KATZ-ROSE, JNF

THIS YEAR JNF Hamilton is thrilled to honour Luba and Yves Apel, the youngest-ever Negev Dinner honourees, and a couple who personifies communal commitment, at the 67th annual Negev Dinner. The dinner will be co-chaired by their dear friends, Danna and David Horwood, with honorary co-chairs Bonnie and David Loewith and Sasha and Tom Weisz.

While devoting their time and attention to raising their three children, Luba and Yves have found the time to give back to the community at large. Luba's skills and talents have benefited programs for the Kehila School, Temple Anshe Sholom, the Hamilton Jewish Federation, the Flamboro Skating Club, and many JNF Negev Dinners.

Yves has built a successful financial advisory practice and became a member of the TD Wealth President's Council. Alongside his professional practice, Yves has been treasurer and board member of Temple Anshe Sholom, co-chair of JCC Walkathons, president of the Kehila School board, chair of the Hamilton Jewish Federation allocation committee, co-chair of the annual Community Campaign, Shalom Village board member, and an active contributor

to numerous professional and community committees.

This year's dinner will support The Israel Centre for the Treatment of Psychotrauma (ICTP) at the Herzog Hospital in Jerusalem. According to the World Health Organization, one in four people in the world will be affected by mental illness at some point in their lives. Herzog Hospital has become the leading treatment facility in Israel to provide services to individuals living with mental health conditions initiated by traumatic experiences, including natural disasters, domestic violence, sexual assault, war, and school bullying. The ICTP is recognized world-wide for providing innovative, research-based, and individualized treatment to anyone, regardless of ethnic or religious background.

Promising to be an exceptional evening, entertainment will be provided by Israeli singing sensation, Omer Shaish, who, with award-winning pianist Hila Kulik, will perform his show, "From Israel to Broadway."

For advertising and sponsorship opportunities, tickets, or more information, please call the JNF Hamilton office at 905-527-5516 or go to jnfhilton.ca.

MORE DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Jewish Social Services Wine-Tasting Event**, Sunday, Feb. 24, 7 to 9 p.m. at 30 King St. E., Dundas. Call 905-627-9922, ext. 23.

- **March of the Living Community Open House and Information Session**, Thursday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. JHamilton, 1605 Main St. W., Hamilton.

- Engaging the Grassroots and Fighting Anti-Semitism: **A Briefing from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Advocacy**. An inside look at CIJA's efforts to combat the world's oldest hatred. Monday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m. at JHamilton, 1605 Main St. W. Hamilton.

- Temple Anshe Sholom's **Purim Shpiel "Chamilton"** based on the hit Broadway sensation, "Hamilton", on Wednesday, March 20 at 6 p.m. at 215 Cline Ave. N.

- **Kehila Heschel Brunch**, a fundraiser on Sunday, March 24 at 11:30 a.m. at 215 Cline Ave. N. The event honours Tom and Sasha Weisz, Daniel Kollek and Julia Kollek. For tickets, call Michele at 905-529-7725.

- **Camp Kadimah Registration**. Register before March 1 and receive 10 per cent off at info@hamiltonjcc.com or call Aimee at 905-648-0613, ext 307.

HJN EDITOR NOMINATED FOR A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION AWARD

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

IF YOU ASK Wendy Schneider what her role has been in Jewish Hamilton, she would say to tell and preserve the stories of this community and its people. And while this is an extremely important role, Schneider goes beyond sharing and safeguarding our history to tirelessly contributing to it.

And now she is being recognized for her dedication. Schneider is among the 73 nominees for the YWCA Hamilton's 2019 Women of Distinction Awards. Across Canada, YWCAs honour the achievements of those who have made an impact on their communities. Hamilton award recipients will be announced at the awards evening on Thursday, March 7. Schneider is nominated in the Community Leadership category.

Gustavo Rymberg, CEO of the Hamilton Jewish Federation, who nominated Schneider, said she enriches the lives of others "with every program, lecture, picture or event she touches."

"Wendy never stops. She shows ongoing initiative, leadership and dedication," he says. "She learns and she shares. She demonstrates innovation and creativity in delivering lasting results."

Schneider said she was completely surprised by her nomination. "I was deeply touched that the Hamilton Jewish Federation chose to honour me in this way," she said. "I'm also really proud to see Hamilton's Jewish community represented by such a significant organization as the YWCA. It's a huge honour."

The list of Schneider's contributions is long, but she is particularly proud of the Jewish Hamilton Project, which she collaborated on with (now retired) McMaster sociology professor Billy Shaffir in 2004-2005. They fundraised to cover the costs of producing a DVD documentary that presents an extensive oral history in which old-time community members recorded their memories of Jewish life in Hamilton.

When Beth Jacob Synagogue was going through a difficult transition, Schneider and co-president John Levy were instrumental in hiring a dynamic rabbi and fundraising for a major renovation to build the Richter chapel. Schneider also spearheaded the shul's 125th anniversary celebration, produced an oral history documentary about Beth Jacob and contributed to publishing the keepsake Beth Jacob Family Album. Funds raised from that project were used to transform the shul's former



PHOTO BY KHALM SMIDERLE

Wendy Schneider was nominated in the category of community leadership.

NEED TO KNOW

YWCA Hamilton's Women of Distinction Awards will be announced on March 7, 2019 at the Hamilton Convention Centre by Carmen's. Tickets available at ywcahamilton.org.

chapel into the Rose and Phil Rosenshein Museum at Beth Jacob, which promotes understanding and respect for the history of the Hamilton Jewish community through research, stewardship of collections and public outreach.

"I feel very blessed to have been raised in a family where generosity and philanthropy were core values. My own way of giving back has been about illuminating for others the fascinating history, personalities and institutions that have always defined Jewish Hamilton. It's been incredibly rewarding," said Schneider.

In her nomination letter, recently retired Beth Jacob executive director, Hanna Schayer, wrote, "There is a thread that runs through Wendy Schneider's volunteer community engagement that can be summarized in three small words, Service not Status."

"The tapestry of our communal lives is enriched by every volunteer commitment Wendy has made. She is our advocate, a documentarian of our lives, the storyteller of Jewish Hamilton. We are stronger because of her, and more confident of our place and purpose in the larger Hamilton community which we call home."

JNF
777
JEWISH NATIONAL FUND
CANADA

JEWISH NATIONAL FUND OF HAMILTON
- 67TH ANNUAL -
NEGEV DINNER
HONOURING
LUBA & YVES APEL
JNF HAMILTON'S YOUNGEST HONOUREES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2019
COCKTAIL RECEPTION 5:30PM DINNER 6:15PM

LIUNA STATION
360 JAMES ST. NORTH, HAMILTON

**IN SUPPORT OF THE ISRAEL CENTRE
FOR THE TREATMENT OF PSYCHOTRAUMA
AT HERZOG HOSPITAL**

AN EVENING OF MUSIC FROM ISRAEL TO BROADWAY
FEATURING
OMER SHAISH AND HILA KULIK

HAMILTON@JNF.CA 905.527.5516 JNFHAMILTON.CA

Because knowledge and experience matter.

Ross & McBride LLP

1 King Street, 10th Floor
Hamilton, ON L8P 1A4

TEL: 905.526.9800
FAX: 905.526.0732
www.rossmcbride.com

Jeffrey Manishen Hon. David Steinberg Barry Yellin Joshua Perell Brad Wiseman

Lawyers in your Corner

Hamilton Jewish Federation & Margaret's Legacy



MARCH OF THE LIVING 2020 | COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE AND INFORMATION SESSION

Learn how you can take part in this meaningful program and travel to Poland and Israel with Holocaust survivors. This is a great opportunity to meet with our staff, inquire more about the program, and find out what makes this trip so unique.

THURSDAY, FEB. 28 | 7PM

J Hamilton | 1605 Main Street West | Hamilton, ON



For more information and registration please contact Jonathan Riaboy at jriaboy@jewishhamilton.org | 905.648.0605

SAVE THE DATE

HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION, MARGARET'S LEGACY AND JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE OF HAMILTON

YOM HASHOAH COMMUNITY COMMEMORATION

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2019 | 6.00 PM | HAMILTON CITY HALL

EVERYONE IS WELCOME | Free parking available at the Hamilton City Hall | 71 Main Street West



For more information and registration please contact Jonathan Riaboy at jriaboy@jewishhamilton.org | 905.648.0605

Discover the new **Hamilton JCC**



Princess Tea Party

SUNDAY, MARCH 10 | 11 AM - 1 PM
AT JHAMILTON

Princesses Anna and Elsa will be joining us from Arendelle, hosting a high tea for the whole family!

Come dressed in your most magical attire for what is sure to be an enchanted event unlike anything you have seen before. There will be singing, stories, crafts and so much more. Everything you could wish for a magical morning!

Ticket prices are:

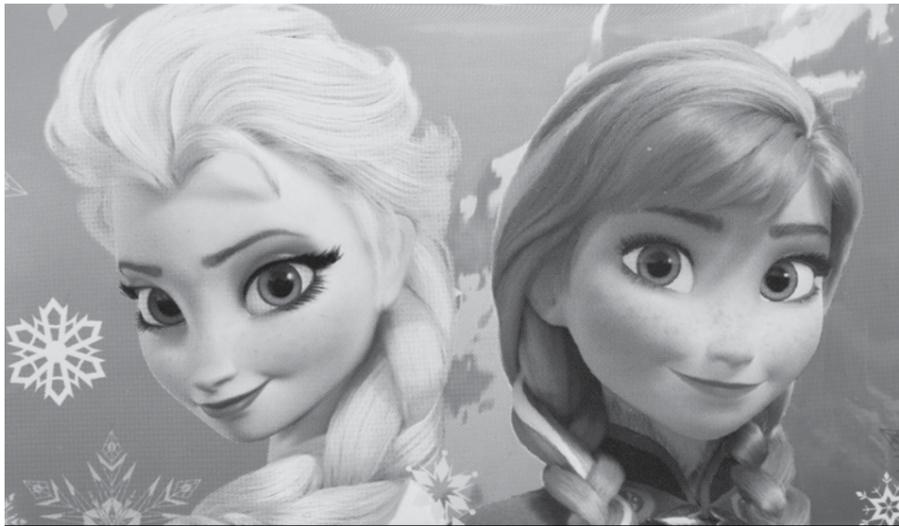
\$60 for a family of 4 | \$35 for a family of 3

(one adult, two children),

\$30 for a single adult and child.

Additional Adult tickets are \$25 and Children are \$10.

For more information and registration please contact Aimee at aimee@hamiltonjcc.com | 905.648.0613



Join HPO Composer-in-Residence Abigail Richardson-Schulte for an entertaining and informative journey featuring music history's best stories highlighted by piano performance:

Classical 101 | Friday, March 1 | 2-3pm

Starting out with the Baroque period's famous J.S. Bach and onwards to the Classical Period's brilliant trio of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven and the rise of composer as respected artist and businessman. The presentation ends with the Romantic Period's most dramatic story: the love triangle of Clara and Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms.

From Broadway to Tin Pan Alley Wednesday, May 1 | 2-3pm

From early ragtime with Scott Joplin, Tin Pan Alley's famous philanthropist Irving Berlin, through to the extravagant lifestyle of Cole Porter and finally to the wealthiest composer of all time, George Gershwin.

Registration per program \$20 p/person

Registration for 2 programs \$35 p/person

For more information and registration please contact Jonathan at jonathan@hamiltonjcc.com | 905.648.0613



HAMILTON
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

Birthday Parties @ the J

STANDARD PACKAGE - \$150 for 2 hrs

Like a blank canvas, your party is what you make it. We'll provide the room; the rest is up to you.

DELUXE PACKAGE - \$300 for 2 hrs

We'll provide and set up the room with decorations and tableware. Just bring the food and entertainment.

DELUXE PLUS PACKAGE - \$500 for 2 hrs

Just bring the food. Leave the experience to us.

For more information and registration please contact Aimee at aimee@hamiltonjcc.com | 905.648.0613



The Hamilton JCC is a beneficiary agency of the Hamilton Jewish Federation
JHamilton | 1605 Main St. W. | Hamilton, ON | L8S 1E6 | 905.648.0605

“North American Jews are feeling increasingly frustrated and angry over recent decisions made by the Israeli government regarding religious pluralism.” JACKI LEVIN

STRONGER TOGETHER BUT GROWING APART?

Jewish Federations gathering addresses growing rift between Israelis and North American Jewry

BY JACKI LEVIN, SPECIAL TO THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

THE GULF BETWEEN North American Jewry and Israel is wide and growing wider. It seemed wise then, that last October's annual General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America (GA), was dedicated to the theme of "Let's Talk." Hamilton representatives — Hamilton Jewish Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg and his wife Marisa, JNF Hamilton president, Chaim Goldstein, my husband Larry Levin and myself — were among the 90 Canadian Jews out of a total of 3,500 North American Jews in attendance at the GA. I found it fascinating, informative, often emotional and often overwhelming.

Why do we need to talk? Look at these results of JFNA research into the views of Israeli and North American Diaspora Jews:

Asked if Israel and an independent Palestinian State could co-exist, American Jews polled at 61 per cent compared to 43 per cent of Israelis; 66 per cent of American Jews see security as Israel's most challenging problem, compared to 38 per cent of Israelis, who are much more concerned about the economy. North American Jews are feeling increasingly frustrated and angry over recent decisions made by the Israeli government regarding religious pluralism, 73 per cent of the latter support an egalitarian prayer space at the Western Wall, compared with 42 per cent of Israelis.

Politically, the two groups are even wider apart, with 50 per cent of American Jews labelling themselves as liberals, compared to 8 per cent of Israeli Jews; and 34 per cent of American Jews approving Trump's handling of US-Israel relations compared to 73 per cent of Israelis.

Many, especially the younger generation, who often express their Jewishness through social justice projects, are upset with the recently passed Nation State Law. Conversions and weddings



PHOTO BY DIANA KALEF



PHOTO COURTESY OF JFNA

Hamilton GA participants (l to r) Marisa Rymberg and Federation CEO Gustavo Rymberg, Haim Goldstein and Jacki and Larry Levin.

Left: Israeli president Reuven Rivlin addresses GA participants.

performed by non-Orthodox rabbis are not recognized in Israel and last year, Israeli police detained a Conservative rabbi for performing a non-orthodox wedding. With 85 per cent of North American Jewry identifying as non-orthodox, it's no wonder that a great many feel unaccepted in Israel.

The Assembly began with an address by Israeli president Reuven "Ruviv" Rivlin and closed with a talk by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Attendees were treated to a wonderful reception at the Knesset, where we were addressed by Speaker of the Knesset, Yuli Edelstein, a supporter of non-Orthodox prayer at the Western Wall, and listened to a panel of Knesset members, among them, former foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, who committed to raising the issue of the Nation State law again in the Knesset.

Many of the speakers offered interesting and innovative suggestions regarding the need for

dialogue. President Rivlin suggested a reverse Birthright trip for Israeli Jews to learn about the diaspora much as millions of diaspora Jews have visited Israel on Birthright trips. McGill University Professor Gil Troy and former Jewish Agency head Natan Sharansky put forward a recommendation that a Jewish People's Council be formed, which would include representation from the broad Diaspora community and help bridge controversial issues.

The three day conference was filled with exciting, interesting and fun-filled experiences. Highlights included an emotional presentation by Thailand's ambassador to Israel, Penprapa Vongkovit, who thanked Uzi Hanuni of Maxtech Networks for using his company's communication technology to help in the rescue of a youth soccer team stranded in a cave earlier this year; We heard from Israeli Flying Aid, whose more than 1,000 volunteers provide mass feeding centres, medical aid, and train

medical personnel in many countries, and make prosthetic hands and even work in Syria to help sworn enemies; We heard from Miriam Peretz, whose two sons were killed in the army. She dedicates her life to educating soldiers and students and lectures on Zionism around the world; We heard from Arab-Israeli entrepreneur, Imad Telhami, who is working to empower and advance the Arab community in Israel and especially Arab women.

We participated in a mass singing event arranged by Koolulam, a joint event with Masa Israel Journey, whose participants spend a year in Israel volunteering or interning. The Koolulam experience brought more than 3,000 of us together in Tel Aviv's Hayarkon Park, to learn a song that would then be recorded. It was exciting to be a part of it.

Aside from the presentations in the plenary sessions, there were many small breakout sessions covering topics such as religious pluralism in Israel, the security of

the Jewish state in a tempestuous region, Israeli medical breakthroughs, and Israel's societal challenges, including integration of the haredi and Arab communities. In the breakout sessions I attended, the pervasive feeling was that change in Israel has to come from the grassroots as no one can see change coming anytime soon through the political system. In order for this to happen more Reform and Conservative congregations must be established, in order for there to be a groundswell of demand for pluralism. This is happening but will take time.

There was one glaring omission from the GA: a discussion of the Palestinian problem and the settlements of the West Bank and Gaza. The only speaker who raised the issue was Ambassador Lyons whose speech was well received by the assembly. This is an issue which is very important to many North Americans and it was not discussed.

Finally, it was Prime Minister Netanyahu's turn to speak to the diaspora Jewish leaders in the audience. He began by expressing concern at the loss of Jewish identity among diaspora Jews, while promoting education, study of Hebrew and trips to Israel targeting young Jews as ways to protect Jewish identity and the continuity of Jewish communities. Netanyahu was challenged on his failure to embrace religious pluralism. He answered that Western Wall politics and conversion issues will be overcome in time but the loss of Jewish identity in the Diaspora was the critical problem.

"It's protecting Jewish identity and developing Jewish consciousness that is the most important thing. It transcends politics; it touches on the foundations of history," he said, imploring, "We're one people. Let's make sure that every Jewish child in the world knows how proud they should be to be Jews."

To hear some of the speakers at the General Assembly, visit jewishfederations.org/events/general-assembly-2018

More importantly, whenever you have the chance, go to a GA. You will find it stimulating and thought-provoking, and connect with the Jewish world in a way that you can't by sitting at home.

TICK Investment Group

The Wealthy Invest Differently.
Access through Mandeville.

Ask us how to access opportunities typically reserved for the wealthy.

Tick Investment Group
100 King St. West, Suite 5708
Toronto, Ontario M5X 1B1

Tel. (416) 304-9440 ExL.2005
www.investdifferently.ca

Robert Tick, PFP®, CIM®, FCSI®
Investment Advisor
rtick@mandevillepc.com

MANDEVILLE
PRIVATE CLIENT INC.

“My parents felt that we should all know what it was like to work in a restaurant. You learn teamwork.” CYNTHIA MINTZ

FROM THE CHICKEN ROOST TO MAXWELL'S

Iconic restaurateur and caterer Max Mintz created Hamilton memories

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

FOR ALMOST 40 YEARS, Hamiltonians made their downtown plans with the simple phrase, “Meet me at the Chicken Roost.” When iconic restaurateur Max Mintz died on Sept. 29 at the age of 96, Hamilton lost one of the most colourful characters in its history.

To say that he packed a lot of living into his 96 years is to underestimate Max Mintz’s impact on the city and especially its Jewish community. Running no fewer than four restaurants and a premier catering company, Mintz was involved in just about every life event throughout the community for more than half a century.

Mintz was born in Poland. His father, Morris, decided to get his family away from growing anti-Semitism sweeping across post-First World War Europe. Venturing on his own, Morris made his way to Canada, hitching a ride on a herring boat. Scouting the new world, he settled in Toronto and sent for the rest of his family. Soon, he was reunited with his wife Mary and four children—Gert, Benny, Max and Faye.

As a young man in the 1940s, Mintz frequented the Chicken Palace restaurant on Yonge Street near Gerrard. He was captivated by the owner’s beautiful daughter, Samieth Ber. Mintz courted her with his ample humour and charm and they married on Oct. 1, 1946.

Not long after, Mintz accepted a job at his in-laws’ restaurant. Thinking he was well positioned to learn the business and eventually take over the establishment, reality crept in when his father-in-law made him a bus boy.

Toiling in the restaurant all week, Mintz spent his days off swimming with friends at Crystal Beach in Fort Erie. On the long drive home, he would be starving and wanted to stop off in Hamilton for a bite to eat, but was disappointed by the lack of good restaurants. Not about to miss an opportunity, Mintz left the Chicken Palace after one year, and with his older brother Benny, opened their own Chicken Roost in 1948. Located in the heart of downtown Hamilton on Main at John Street, they introduced a popular menu with “Chicken on a Bun” and ice cream puffs. The Roost quickly became a local favourite.

Hot on the heels of the Roost’s success in the mid 1950s, the brothers opened up the Jet Restaurant on the corner of King and James. Boasting a revolutionary open kitchen concept, with food preparation done right



PHOTO BY STEVE ARNOLD



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MINTZ FAMILY

Left: This photo of Mintz at his elegant new restaurant Maxwell’s appeared on the June 1982 cover of the Canadian Hotel and Restaurant Magazine.

in front of the customers, the Jet became another local winner. After tragedy struck in 1957 with Ben’s unexpected passing, Max continued running the restaurants on his own.

Building on the momentum of success throughout the 1960s, Mintz opened a third restaurant. Away from the downtown core

near McMaster University, the Colony Family Restaurant offered many of the Chicken Roost’s favourite dishes.

Working the restaurants became a family affair, with the Mintz’s four daughters, Cynthia, Nancy, Sharon and Joanne, all helping with the businesses.

“My parents felt that we all

should know what it was like to work in a restaurant,” said Cynthia. “You meet people from all walks of life and you gain a respect for everybody’s efforts. You learn teamwork. If a dishwasher isn’t doing his job, then the dishes don’t get out. It’s a cycle of people helping people.”

Mintz’s restaurant endeavours took an upscale turn in the 1980s. While visiting daughter Nancy, who was living in California, Samieth and Max liked the innovative concept of a neighbourhood restaurant with small private rooms, enclaves and alcoves providing an intimate dining experience. Not long after their return to Hamilton, Maxwell’s on Jackson Street was born.

Always on the lookout for the latest trends, Mintz kept a close eye on what other establishments were doing. The family ate in fine restaurants whenever they travelled, with Max always making his way into the kitchen. If he liked something special, the chef would show him how to prepare it. When he got home, he would

Max Mintz poses with memorabilia from his iconic restaurant, The Chicken Roost in this 2012 photo.

introduce a similar dish in his restaurants.

While operating the restaurants, Mintz Catering was also developing. As early as the 1950s, customers would often ask the Chicken Roost to provide the food for their life cycle events. By the ’60s, Mintz was among the most popular Jewish caterers in Hamilton.

By the mid 1980s, Mintz was beginning to feel his age and getting tired of the hectic restaurant pace. The Jet and Colony had closed years before and Max decided to sell the Chicken Roost and eventually Maxwell’s. Maxwell’s was sold and became Lo Presti’s at Maxwell’s, while Cynthia took over the catering side of the business. While Mintz backed away from the day-to-day operations, Cynthia said, “He never really got out. He was a great front man and often helped out on specific occasions.”

A gifted athlete, Mintz found a new passion in tennis in his 50s. He played regularly for years and was almost 91 when he played for the last time. As his final years became more difficult physically, Mintz enjoyed spending time with family, including his seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. When his daughters were growing up, Mintz worked 70-hour weeks and was not home a lot. So now he made up for the lost time.

Mintz passed away two days before his and Samieth’s 72nd wedding anniversary. “He really tried to hang on”, remembers Samieth. He maintained his eternal optimism to the very end. Believing that every day was as important as the day in front of you and the day behind, he often said that every day was his birthday, because each day was a gift. Appreciating having gone through his early years without anything, he used his good fortune to give back. “He went out of his way for people, doing things you wouldn’t have expected. Especially for the people he worked with. He often played major roles in other people’s lives.”

“He always went out of his way to help people out,” said Samieth.

Cynthia recalls, “when my dad did a job for you, he always gave 110 per cent. He knew that he was making memories — Bar Mitzvahs, weddings or even simple occasions.”

Rest in peace, Max. Hamilton thanks you for the memories.



The girls assumed the camp was on fire. Later, Elizabeth would discover that the flames were shooting from the chimney of the crematorium."

LESSONS IN SURVIVAL

Elizabeth Albano tells of Auschwitz at 15 and her miraculous survival.

STORY BY **PHYLLIS SHRAGGE**, THE HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

LUCK AND CIRCUMSTANCE contributed to Elizabeth Albano's survival during the Holocaust. However, being a self-described "tough cookie" helped her endure during that dark period.

Elizabeth Albano, nee Stern, was born in 1928 in Kisvarda, a small town in Hungary. She grew up in the nearby town of Nagyecsed with her parents and older sister, Vera. The family was poor, living in a town where anti-Semitism was the norm. When the Germans occupied Hungary in 1944, Jews were stripped of their properties, denied access to higher education and ordered to wear armbands with yellow stars indicating they were Jews. When Elizabeth's family and the other Jews in the community were forced out of town to a nearby ghetto, Elizabeth's neighbours ran after them, shouting: "Good riddance, you dirty Jews!"

In the ghetto, people lived in squalid conditions, a few families packed together in one room. They were wary of the Hungarian police who made frequent raids. One day a policeman, who was greatly feared because of his cruelty, stomped into the room where Elizabeth was now living with her parents, her sister and a couple of other families. Elizabeth was alone at the time. She was frightened, but when he scowled at her,

demanding to know why the room was untidy, Elizabeth angrily retorted: "How can we keep this place tidy? There are so many of us in the room. We do the best that we can." The policeman was startled at her rebuke and warned that they must improve in the future.

After about a month in the ghetto, Elizabeth's family was among the many Jews forced into cattle cars of a train bound for Auschwitz-Birkenau. The hundreds of people in each car had little room to breathe and virtually no water to drink. A makeshift latrine with no privacy contributed to the distress.

Elizabeth was 15 years old when she arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau. That was the last time she saw her mother and father who would perish in the Holocaust.

Soon after their arrival at the camp, men and women were separated from one another. Elizabeth and other girls were stripped naked, shaved from head to toe and ordered to step into a solution of disinfectant before showering. They were terrified and humiliated. After donning clothing picked from a discarded pile of garments, they went to a holding area where they had to sleep on the floor. Elizabeth fell into a fitful sleep, only to be woken by the sound of the girls screaming at the



Elizabeth Albano at her home with a cherished photo of her sister and herself, finally reunited after a seven-year separation.

sight of shooting flames nearby. The girls assumed the camp was on fire. Later, Elizabeth would discover that the flames were shooting from the chimney of the crematorium which was used to burn bodies.

Having survived the selection process in Auschwitz-Birkenau, she was sent to Plaszow concentration camp in Poland where she

worked in a quarry splitting rocks with a pick ax. She remembers the crushing weight of the rocks she was forced to carry. Each day was a nightmare and she lived in constant fear and misery. One saving grace was that her sister Vera was by her side, but when the sisters were sent back to Auschwitz-Birkenau, they were separated.

From Auschwitz-Birkenau, Elizabeth was sent to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Starving and emaciated, the prisoners lived day to day with little and sometimes no food. She recalls the barracks being so crowded that the skeletal figures would have to sleep sitting on the floor, propped up against one another. At the time of the camp's liberation, she weighed about 48 pounds, was ravaged by lice and was deathly ill with tuberculosis.

After an arduous and slow recovery, she ended up in Sweden where she met the man she would marry, an Italian named Gino Alvano. She and Gino wanted to leave Sweden and move to the United States because Elizabeth had discovered her sister was living in Queens, New York. Elizabeth hadn't seen Vera since they were separated at Auschwitz-Birkenau. When it turned out that moving to the United States wasn't an option because they couldn't get a sponsor, she and Gino decided that Canada would be a viable second choice. After Elizabeth and her husband moved to Ontario, the sisters were reunited. They had not seen one another for seven years.

The Alvanos initially worked on a farm near Niagara Falls, then moved to Hamilton where Gino became a chef at the Hamilton General Hospital. Elizabeth would eventually work in food services at the hospital as well.

Gino died in 2012. Elizabeth and Gino had two children, a daughter and a son. Their son is no longer living.

Elizabeth says: "This is just one of the many stories... We always say, never again. I hope that (wish for the future) becomes true."

PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Wishing you a safe and happy winter!



Jordan Guest
Sales Representative



Tanis Hall
Sales Representative



Judy Rosen
Sales Representative



Larry Szpirglas
Broker



Christine Kiriakopoulos
Sales Representative

Helping you is what we do.™

905.648.4451



1122 Wilson Street West
Ancaster, On L9G 3K8



I want my daughter to be an active kid who is happy about being strong and not worry about what size she is wearing." **BRENDA BURJAW**

A WOMAN'S JOURNEY OF STRENGTH

Seven years ago Brenda Burjaw could never have imagined where her quest for a healthy lifestyle would take her

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

BRENDA BURJAW'S STRENGTH is obvious from the first handshake.

It's a firm, confident grip that says whatever the hurdle, this is a woman who doesn't back down from a challenge. Whether it's cobbling together financing for a multi-million dollar real estate deal, or hoisting more than her body weight off the floor in one quick, clean movement, anything can be overcome with the right combination of focus and discipline.

Burjaw's ability to harness the power of focus and discipline was highlighted recently when she placed in the top three performers at the Canadian Federation of Powerlifting's women's open competition. Beyond a shiny trophy, however, that ability is also paying dividends as she faces the challenges of life.

That competition was one way station of a journey toward better health that started seven years ago.

"I watched my father deal with some critical conditions and now my husband is dealing with fibromyalgia," she said, a chronic condition that has destroyed his physical strength. "I faced that and realized since we have a young kid we needed one parent who was strong and healthy."

Those factors led Burjaw to a health and fitness boot camp with a group of girlfriends. As the other women dropped out one-by-one, Burjaw tried training for a triathlon, before deciding "I'm not made for running and I don't like it." Then, with the help of personal trainer Jim Lam she discovered weight training.

"It might seem a little strange for a mid-40s mom who's a banker by day to be doing powerlifting, but it works for me," she said. "I have that typical Jewish woman's thigh syndrome and I'm a little bottom heavy so this is something I can do."

"I wanted to do something kind of different," she added. "I'm not a follow-the-stream sort of fish, and I'm not a cardio person either."

In her recent competition, Burjaw managed to hoist 255 lbs of weight from the floor to her waist before putting it down. It was one of nine increasingly heavy lifts she performed that day, failing only when the weight was increased to 265 lbs. The effort was good enough to place her third overall in her age and weight class.

Yes, she admits, it hurts to lift that kind of weight, but there's a huge psychic payoff in accomplishing a goal she has been training toward for a year. In addition to her time at a Burlington gym, Burjaw has turned the family's garage into a gym. She trains at least three times a week.

"Testing my physical limits that way is a huge thing for me," she said. "Every time I lift like that I remind myself that I'm alive. The adrenaline rush you get from this is beyond any drug you could take."

"I needed to find an activity that exhausted me when I'm stressed out. You go and lift heavy, heavy weight and throw it down on the ground. There's something cathartic about that," she added. "That fact, that it's so basic, it's the basic human exertion of doing. It gives you that immediate feeling of accomplishment."

"Really, this is a lot healthier than Prozac and less time consuming than going to a therapist," she added.

The endurance she gains from powerlifting, she added, spills into the rest of her life. Her family are fourth-generation members of Beth Jacob and Burjaw will be the congregation's treasurer after the next annual meeting. By day she is director of commercial services for Meridian Credit Union.

Beyond helping with her own life, Burjaw said, she dearly hopes the lessons will be an example to her 11-year-old daughter



PHOTO BY WENDY SCHNEIDER, HAMILTON JEWISH NEWS

Rebekah of the benefits of focus and discipline.

"I grew up in an environment of fad dieting where how you looked and how you presented yourself was fundamental about who you were as a person," she said. "I earnestly don't want Rebekah growing up with those kinds of image issues."

"I want to role model someone who is not fad dieting... and I want her to learn lessons about discipline. I want her to be an active kid who is happy about being strong and not worrying about what size she is wearing and if she is going to look like the girls in the magazines. I want her to be able to see that strong is the new beautiful."

The lessons are starting to take root – Rebekah has already dropped dance lessons to study taekwon do

Jim Lam, who has been teaching Burjaw in the sport at Burlington's Elite Performance Centre, praises his student as someone who "puts her whole self" into achieving her goals.

"The main thing I could say about Brenda is that she put her whole self into it. In the beginning I saw she had a real focus, more so

than anyone I've ever known," he said. "She wanted to get herself healthy so she set goals for herself and achieved them."

"It was just amazing to watch how much she has grown into that area of strength training," he added. "Now she has a taste of it and is training for the next one."

While women in the powerlifting field are still rare, Lam says it's a field of exercise they could benefit from.

"Women, as young girls, aren't really introduced to strength training. A lot of girls play sports with their legs, it's almost always soccer

Brenda Burjaw trains several times a week at her Burlington gym.

or running, and getting into the gym can be threatening for them," he said. "Especially as you get older you develop (osteoporosis) and that sort of thing. You should have strength training and weight-bearing exercise so the bones keep strong. They get very spongy and soft if you don't put weight-bearing exercise on them."

Show Israel you care

Volunteer as a civilian worker for 2 or 3 weeks at an Israeli army base

Free: accommodations, kosher meals, trips, events
Cost: airfare, \$100 registration, weekend expenses



www.sarelcanada.org

Call 416 781-6089 or email toronto@sarelcanada.org
Programs start approximately every three weeks

TICK Investment Group

MANDENVILLE PRIVATE CLIENT INC.

Invest in one of the world's R&D leaders: Israel Access through Mandeville.

Ask us about investment opportunities in Israel's groundbreaking technology sector.

Tick Investment Group
100 King St. West, Suite 5708
Toronto, Ontario M5X 1B1

Tel. (416) 304-9440 Ext.2005
www.investdifferently.ca

Robert Tick, PFP®, CIM®, FCSI®
Investment Advisor
rtick@mandevillepc.com

Mandeville Private Client Inc. is a member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada and a member of the Canadian Investor Protection Fund.



Older Jews use the continuity argument to pressure the young to maintain Jewish traditions and marry each other." **BEN SHRAGGE**

A MINORITY OF ONE



BEN SHRAGGE

GREATER BOSTON, where I now live, has approximately 62 times the number of Jews as Hamilton, where I grew up. To put it another way, 0.7 per cent of Hamilton's population is Jewish, while 7 per cent of Boston's population is Jewish.

Outside of Israel (and a few outliers like the all-Jewish town of Krasnaya Sloboda in Azerbaijan), Jews are everywhere a minority. But there are different degrees of minority.

In Hamilton, I was usually the only Jew in my public school class. I was often the first Jew my friends had ever met. I was the one kid sitting silent while everyone else sang Christmas carols. Of the Jews in other grades, most were my siblings. There's being part of a minority community, and then

there's being alone.

I'm still impressed that in Boston, there are circles of Jews unaware of each other's existence. There are minorities of a minority—Russian Jews, Israeli Jews, gay Jews, social justice Jews—greater in number than all the Jews in Hamilton. Youth organizations can hold competing events on the same night, and there's enough critical mass for both to have a high turnout.

Critical mass is a key term for any minority. After 9/11 brought that country into the news, I was struck by a story about the last two Jews in Afghanistan, neither of whom spoke to each other. Two Jewish men, incommunicado, living in an Islamic theocracy in Central Asia: barring some incredible proselytizing, that is the definition of a minority below critical mass.

Older Jews use the continuity argument to pressure the young to maintain Jewish traditions and marry each other—if you don't, this argument goes, Jews will disappear, and the sacrifices of your

ancestors will have been in vain.

But Jews in general are well above critical mass. We're not the Yezidis (numbering about a million, indigenous to Mesopotamia, persecuted by the Islamic State) or the Samaritans (numbering about eight hundred, descendants of ancient Israelites, prone to genetic disease). The success of Israel, a concentration of more than six million Jews living in an indelibly Jewish context, guarantees continuity.

Beyond Israel, Jewish life will never sink to Afghan status in places like New York, Boston, and Toronto, because there are enough Jews there for Jewish life to continue. Some will immigrate, some will emigrate; some will marry in, some will marry out; some will join, some will abstain. The net result might be more or less Jews than before, but on balance there'll be a critical mass. It's the places below critical mass, but above two old men living under the Taliban, where continuity is a question.

Hamilton is clearly not Kabul, but it's also clearly not Boston. A

top university and health system, plus the overpriced unlivability of Toronto, will ensure a steady influx of diverse professionals into Hamilton, Jews included. And Jewish Hamilton certainly has strong institutions and dedicated individuals. But are those individuals enough to form a critical mass, especially among the young? Because, as much as we love and respect our elders, a young person's life is shaped by peers, not by dedicated sixty-somethings.

I know what it's like to attend after-school Hebrew classes, and be the only kid in your grade to show up. I know what it's like to grow up in a kosher home, and then have lunch in a school where nobody even knows what kosher means. I know that in those circumstances, something has to give, and it's going to be separating meat and dairy, because being a minority of one is unsustainable. We're social animals, after all.

But I will say something positive about growing up as an absolute minority. You can live a shallow Jewish life in Thornhill, miming

along to ritual without thought or intention. You can do so because of social pressure flowing in the opposite direction: from a majority minority. You can do so because everyone around you is doing it, not out of any passion or conviction or reflection. Continuity then becomes inertia, a passive going through the motions.

That's not possible in a place like Hamilton. If you're being taught and pressured to do what nobody around you is doing, you're going to ask a lot of questions, and struggle with it, and maybe ultimately stop doing it. But whether you end up embracing or rejecting tradition, you'll be doing so consciously in a way that makes you a deeper and stronger person for the struggle.

Maybe that absolute minority experience is truer to the Hebrew meaning of Israel, "struggle with God." Then again, maybe life is struggle enough.

Ben Shragge is the digital editor of the Hamilton Jewish News. He currently resides in Boston.

DAVID SWEET
Flamborough-Glanbrook

Proud to stand with Israel and in support of the Hamilton Jewish Community

David Sweet, M.P | 1760 Upper James St., Unit 4 | Hamilton, ON L9B 1K9
905 574 0474 | DavidSweet.ca

Scarfone Hawkins LLP
Lawyers and Trade-Mark Agents

"Making a transaction work for a client is like making a painting look good. The art, for us, is doing our work in the most skillful way possible to get the best result."
Joseph G. Speranzini, Partner
speranzini@shlaw.ca

"The comparison doesn't have to be to visual arts. Process is art—how you accomplish your goal, how you do it differently from everyone else. It's about creativity."
Danielle Iampietro, Partner
iampietro@shlaw.ca

"When we talk about the art of law, we're really talking about excellence. It's elevating the practice of law to an art form. That's what makes us stand apart."
Jim Mahler, Partner
jmahler@shlaw.ca

Scarfone Hawkins LLP
1 James St. S., 14th Floor
P.O. Box 926, Depot 1
Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3P9
Phone: 905-523-1333
Fax: 905-523-5878
www.shlaw.ca

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



The Reptile Store entertained children at the JCC/JNF's joint Tu B'Shevat program held in January at JHamilton. Right, Dafna and La-El Bener enjoy a craft activity.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HAMILTON JNF

JCC PROGRAMS IN FULL SWING

AIMEE WIGLEY, JCC CHILD, FAMILY AND CAMP KADIMAH PROGRAM COORDINATOR

JEWISH LIFE IN Hamilton is teetering on the verge of something amazing. With four organizations now under one roof in a building known as JHamilton, it is an exciting advent of unity. Saturday the 19th of January brought a blizzard, but in spite of the cold, spirits were high for the first major event of 2019 — Tu B'Shevat. The Jewish National Fund and Jewish Community Centre collaborated on an exciting program designed to celebrate the birthday of trees, with two different animal shows offered alongside a festive planting and a winter bird feeding activity. More than 60 people "came to the forest" with their friends and family, seeing "the J" transformed into something truly magical. After decorating pots and planting parsley and making fully biodegradable winter bird feeders for our feathered friends, the first show began.

Conservation Hamilton brought along three very special raptors for us to meet, in the form of two owls and a falcon. We were taught about their lifecycles and changing habitats, along with all the things we can do to aid in their continued survival. Next came the eating of delicious dried fruits and dates, all washed down with grape juice. In

NEED TO KNOW

PJ Library, and other JCC family programs are open to everyone in the community. A new JCC website is currently under construction. For more information contact Aimee Wigley at 905-648-0613 ext. 307 or check out Hamilton JCC or Doing Jewish in Hamilton on Facebook.

between shows, the families who visited mingled in the created forest, sharing stories from our PJ library and spending time with friends. We even had visitors from as far away as London, ON!

The final presentation was offered by The Reptile Store and consisted of several scaly visitors (and a couple of furry ones) among them an Argentine tegu and a gargantuan boa! Unlike the raptors, the reptiles were approachable and the bravest of our children (and adults!) even had the chance to pet them. It was a truly unforgettable experience.

We are so grateful to Laura Laengerer, who organized all of the programming, and Damien Anders who ran the planting table and our many other volunteers.

Time and again the community has proven that, when we come together, there is next to nothing that we cannot do.

OUT AND ABOUT

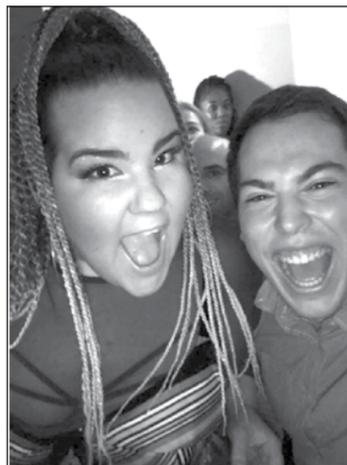


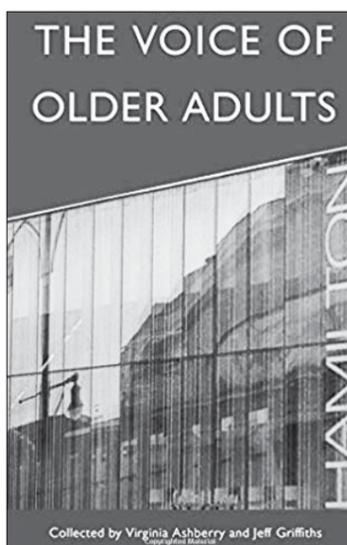
PHOTO BY MAX LIBRACH

MACHILLEL'S EPIC LIP SYNC

MCMMASTER HILLEL was proud to perform in Out of Sync, Hillel's premier fundraising event on Jan. 24 at Toronto's Isabel Bader Theatre. Jewish student leaders from universities across Ontario lip synced their hearts out to support Hillel's campus based programming with celebrity performer, Netta Barzilai closing out the show with her 2018 Eurovision winning song "Toy". McMaster Hillel director Judith Dworkin reported that more than 100 students participated in the big event including 21 Mac students (including Hillel president Max Librach, pictured left). This was Barzilai's first Canadian appearance.

BOOK LAUNCH

IN THE SUMMER of 2015, as part of a study on aging, McMaster professor James Gilbert began several memoir writing opportunities for older adults, facilitated by Jeff Griffiths, a writer and teacher of creative writing. Several writers soon began meeting on their own on Friday mornings at the Hamilton Central Public Library, when they share some of their work for feedback from other members. The time together, according to participant Simone Rotstein, "affords contributors the opportunity to express themselves and reflect on their lives." The group launched its first publication in January. Among the 17 writers included in The Voice of Older Adults are Gloria Geller, Judy Mendelson and Simone Rotstein. Copies can be ordered through amazon.ca.



STUDENTS BRING SMILES TO SHALOM VILLAGE RESIDENTS



PHOTO BY DORA ANN COHEN-ELLISON

Temple Anshe Sholom and Beth Jacob schools recently donned clown noses to spread laughter and smiles among the residents of Shalom Village.

HJF | Annual General Meeting | 2019

SAVE THE DATE

HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 29 | 7PM

The Hamilton Spectator Auditorium

44 Frid St. | Free parking

RSVP preferred at 905.648.0605 x 303
elevine@jewishhamilton.org



TRANSFORMING JEWISH LIFE IN HAMILTON | JEWISHHAMILTON.ORG

CONGRATULATIONS!

TOGETHER WE RAISED \$1,156,751

THE HIGHEST AMOUNT EVER
RAISED BY OUR COMMUNITY

2019 CAMPAIGN CABINET AND CANVASSERS

- Luba Apel
- Yves Apel
- Judy Bennett
- Jerome Bergart
- Howard Brown
- Lorraine Cohen
- Dora-Ann Cohen Ellison
- Janis Criger
- Michael Dressler
- Howard Eisenberg
- Mel Enkin
- Raefie Epstein
- Gerald Fisher
- Jonathan Fleisch
- Irwin Fuss
- Sandy Fuss
- Elena Goldblatt
- Marcia Halpren
- William Halpren
- Daniel Hershkowitz
- Danna Horwood
- David Horwood
- Eli Jakubovic
- Amy Katz
- Harvey Katz
- Rhoda Katz
- Oded Klinghoffer
- Carol Krames
- Lester Krames
- Jennifer Laslo
- Larry Levin
- Elaine Levine
- Mark Levitt
- Terri Lewis
- Carl Loewith
- David Loewith
- Helen Metz
- Lisa Morris
- Sandy Morris
- Christine Nusca
- Julian Orgel
- Bev Orman
- Jo-Ann Pomerantz
- Annette Richardson
- Orna Richter
- Judy Rochweg
- Susan Roth
- Louise Rotman
- Gustavo Rymberg
- Fay Schmerling
- Wendy Schneider
- Sandy Seigel
- Anna Shkolnik
- David Shore
- Carrie Sniderman
- Jay State
- Cecile Steinberg
- Andrea Stringer
- Larry Szpirglas
- Liz Tick
- Stan Tick
- Steve Varadi
- Sasha Weisz
- Janet Weisz-Asa
- Aimee Wigley
- Laura Wolfson
- Allen Wynperle
- Lawrence Yanover
- Joel Yellin
- Shirley Zucker



Thank you to our hard-working campaign cabinet, our dedicated canvassers, and to everyone who made a donation to the Together Campaign.

WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!