



No place else they'd rather be

Israel is where these young Jews want to be **P18**

Harvey Sobel remembered

Trend setting decorator was ahead of his time **P20**



Hamilton Jewish News

THE VOICE OF JEWISH HAMILTON

SEPTEMBER 2014 VOL 29:1/ TISHREI 5775

AGREEMENT #40007180

Community rallies in support of Israel



The community came together in July for a solemn gathering at the height of Operation Protective Edge. Photo by Wendy Schneider

In a show of community unity and support for Israel, approximately 300 people came out to the Adas Israel Congregation on July 30, a date that marked the shloshim of the three kidnapped Israeli teens whose murder precipitated the war with Hamas.

The solemn gathering featured remarks by the three community rabbis and a moving speech by McMaster medical fellow and former IDF soldier, Elli Rosenberg, who spoke about the fact that so many among Israel's

fallen were officers. The reason, he said, can be summarized in the Hebrew word, "acharai", best translated as "follow my lead." The word, said Rosenberg, "represents a set of values embedded deep in our history and culture, echoing the sacrifice made by our people over the generations to ensure our very survival." The Hamilton event was one of several community rallies held throughout the country last summer to show solidarity with Israel.

The rise of anti-Israelism on Canadian campuses

Pro-Israel Jewish student groups are bracing themselves for an increase in anti-Israel activity on Canadian campuses this fall. The fallout from the summer's war between Israel and Hamas is almost certain to bolster an already robust BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement against the Jewish state. For their part, national organizations Hillel Canada and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), the advocacy arm of the Jewish Federations of Canada, have been focused on providing campus professionals with the tools to face the coming challenges. [Read more on page 17](#)

COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN 2015

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Fighting poverty, building Jewish identity, ensuring the continuity of Jewish life, supporting families in crisis, funding special needs education. These are just some of the ways in which Federation's Community Campaign transforms Jewish lives in Hamilton.

The annual Community Campaign is the primary instrument by which Federation raises funds for the beneficiary agencies and community programs that strengthen Jewish identity, assist the vulnerable, and rescue those in danger in Hamilton, Israel and overseas.

This year's Campaign Cabinet, headed by Yves Apel, has set a goal of \$1.6 million. "The quality of life for the vulnerable members of our community depends on the success of the Campaign," said Apel. "We really need people to open their hearts to the critical needs in our

community by giving responsibly."

"The annual campaign is the lifeline of our Jewish community," said Federation CEO Barb Babij. "When someone steps forward to help, either through a donation or through the gift of time, it can make a world of difference."

We hope the stories that fill the pages of this issue inspire you. Please support the community by living generously. For you. For our children. For all of us. To learn more about Federation and the Community Campaign, please call 905-648-0605, ext.305 or visit www.jewishhamilton.org



On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Hamilton Jewish Federation we wish you a

Happy and Healthy New Year

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REFLECTIONS

Rabbi Jordan Cohen
Temple Anshe Sholom



**A TIME FOR WAR AND
A TIME FOR PEACE**

The topic of study this summer for the Rabbinic Torah Seminar at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem was, ironically, 'A Time for War, A Time for Peace'. The topic proved to be prescient as Operation Protective Edge commenced just as the course began. The opportunity to study war and peace with some of Israel's greatest scholars, political figures and social commentators, along with 170 rabbinic colleagues from across the denominational spectrum, certainly gave context to the situation.

I have accumulated years of time spent in Israel. I've witnessed intifadas and horrific acts of suicide bombing and terrorism. The greater impression, however, has always been Israel's extraordinary growth and development, transitioning from an agriculturally-based economy to a global center of technology, science and culture. In 67 short years, out of the ashes of the Holocaust and through innumerable conflicts, Israel as a nation has triumphed. Israel is strong, Israel is thoughtful and Israel is, effectively, normal. It is the struggle to maintain that normalcy that drives most Israelis on a day to day basis.

This is what struck me most about being in Israel during a time of war: how utterly normal life seemed. Sirens cry out and everyone flees to their shelter. Then, half an hour later, the streets were again busy and the cafes and shops are full. While cautious and ever mindful of the costs and conditions that such a conflict creates, Israelis were resolute that neither Hamas nor any other aggressor will have the victory of disrupting their lives.

The conflict revealed an extraordinary unity among Israelis, who have lost patience with the continued rain of missiles, with renewed conflict every few years and with the hypocrisy of the radical agenda which excuses Hamas for their aggression while singling Israel out for blame. There is a deep passionate desire for peace among Israelis, as embodied in their government's acceptance of every opportunity for a ceasefire. However, there is also a prevailing sense of Israel's own vulnerability in the shifting political environment in the Middle East. Israelis also understand that there is a time to fight and a time to process the implications of fighting. Israel's moral edge lies in its commitment to evaluating its own conduct.

Now that the ceasefire is holding, there will have to be a serious consideration of Israel's actions during the conflict and the narratives that will be created. The Palestinians are going to see this war one way and the global community is going to see this war another. These positions will likely never be reconciled with our own. What is important is how Israelis and world Jewry understand our own involvement in this conflict as we move together into the future. Despite the unity of war, there are deep divisions in Israeli society and these rifts need to be healed. Israel needs to come to terms with its severe move to the right and the social divisions that result.

The vengeful and horrific murder by Jews of Muhammad Abu Khadeir haunts the Israeli conscience perhaps even more than the deaths of Hamas' human shields. A reckoning remains to be made. Israelis see themselves as a moral nation and, as such, see a great need to regain their moral edge in the wake of all the destruction in Gaza. That is the difficult path that lies ahead and this is where the texts and teachings of our tradition become our greatest weapons. May Israelis and Jews throughout the world have the same strength to reengage with the core Jewish values that define who Israel is as a nation and who we are as a people.

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PJ LIBRARY EXPANDS

PJ Library books celebrate important aspects of Jewish culture, values and tradition, and become the vehicle to create Jewish moments that last a lifetime. These Jewish-themed books or CD's are mailed monthly to the child's home. **Our program is expanding to eliminate the waiting list and is now available to enrolled children through age 6!** PJ Library programs will be taking place at a variety of venues beginning this fall starting with PJ Stories and Crafts on October 12 at the JNF Community Sukkot Festival at the Loewith Farm. Watch for more details at www.jewishhamilton.org. To add your family to the PJ Library email group or if you have PJ Library books your family has outgrown, contact Elaine at 905-627-9922 Ext. 24 or elvine@jewishhamilton.org. This free gift is possible through the generosity of our donors and partners, including the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, Hamilton Jewish Federation, Shirley and Morris Waxman Family and our Lions of Judah Division. **PICTURED ABOVE:** Parents and children at the JCC welcome BBQ gather at the PJ Library booth. Photo by Wendy Schneider

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COMING UP

CHANUKAH ISSUE

- **Deadline for Booking Ad Space**
Oct. 22, 2014
- **Deadline for receiving copy**
Nov. 3, 2014
- **Deadline for receiving ad copy**
Nov. 14, 2014
- **Estimated Date of Arrival**
Dec. 2, 2014

Hamilton Jewish News

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Hamilton Community News

Changing of the guard

At the Hamilton Jewish Federation's Annual General Meeting on May 29 we said farewell to five board members and welcomed four new members. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Larry Szpirglas, past Federation president; Lorne Finkelstein, who chaired the Public Relations Committee; Cindy Mark, who chaired the Admin Committee; and members at large Allen Fein and Paul Roth. Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your commitment and dedication to the Hamilton Jewish Federation. We are better because of your service.

We'd also like to extend a warm welcome to Howard Eisenberg, Vadim Gershkovich, Tzion Naftali and Yael Reznick DeMarco.

Finally, Hanna Schayer stepped up as chair of the Public Relations Committee and Janis Criger has taken on the role of chair of the Admin Committee. We thank them both.

Federation's Public Relations Committee is grateful for the contributions of our retiring member, David Somer and welcomes new members Jason Ohayon, Aimee Wigley, Ira Rosen and Steve Arnold, who join Hanna Schayer, Len Ritter, Ron Richter and Janet Weisz. The committee thanks Lorne Finkelstein for his leadership and dedication as retiring chair of the committee and for his untiring efforts to champion the cause of Jews locally, and for his outstanding support of the State of Israel.

FEDERATION REPORT

BARB BABIJ, CEO
HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION



Community without walls Community with open doors

On July 22 more than 65 people representing every facet of Jewish Hamilton, participated in a community planning session at Beth Jacob Synagogue, hosted by Hamilton Jewish Federation. This meeting was designed to build on the theme "Community Without Walls", and its purpose was to ultimately arrive at consensus of what a community without walls would look like, and identify the top challenges we face in "getting there". What are the issues that most concern Jewish Hamilton? And what are the biggest obstacles in getting there? Here are some of the themes that emerged and a sample of what people said. Those statements beginning with "Wouldn't it be nice if" represent the aspirations. If we were to solve the "how might we" questions, we would have the beginnings of a plan to get there.

Community
"Wouldn't it be nice if there was co-operation and respect among all the diverse groups?"

A number of folks spoke eloquently about the generosity of spirit that exists in Jewish Hamilton; we are indeed fortunate to live in such a diverse community. Yet, this remains the foundational question. We benefit greatly from the creative tension inherent in our differences just as we are handicapped by the negative tension. "How might we bond as a community outside our religious observances?"

Jewish Education
"Wouldn't it be nice if we had free and excellent Jewish education."

It should come as no surprise that Jewish education was very much on the minds of Jewish Hamiltonians, both as an ideal for the community in terms of access and resource sharing, and in terms of the obstacles preventing us as a community from giving our kids excellence in Jewish education and the tools they need to compete. "How might we provide inspirational education?"

The JCC
"Wouldn't it be nice if we had an active and supported JCC?"

This past summer the JCC once again coordinated a Jewish summer day camp. Kids from across Hamilton had the opportunity to meet and play together. Indeed, four children had their first overnight ever away from parents at Camp Kadimah. These kinds of experiences create lasting memories and help to cement an early link to Jewish identity. Increased Jewish cultural programming, emotional ties to past incarnations of the JCC, a more central location, are potentially all part of the mix. "How might we create a strong, vibrant JCC supported by the whole community?"

Financial Sustainability

"Wouldn't it be nice if we had all the resources we need?"

There are essentially only two ways to achieve financial sustainability. One can either grow revenue streams or compress the scope of needs; there are many ways to do each of those things. "How will we meet the financial needs of the community?"

We've already begun to act on the output from this meeting. On July 30, the Adas Israel Synagogue held a memorial service for the three murdered Israeli teens. Rabbi Green graciously offered to expand the scope to include a rally in solidarity with Israel. With more than 300 in attendance, and participation from all three synagogues, it was an unqualified community success.

And based on input from a number of participants at the July session, going forward, we will be using the name "Community With Open Doors" rather than "Community Without Walls".

A community of inclusion; excellence in Jewish education, accessible to all; a thriving JCC; and financial sustainability – these are some of the elements of a vibrant and thriving Jewish Hamilton that were identified on July 22.

"How might we bond as a community outside our religious observances?" "How might we provide inspirational education?" "How might we create a strong vibrant JCC supported by the whole community?" "How will we meet the financial needs of the community?"

The answers to these questions will get us there, and those answers are only possible with the cooperation of us all. We are all part of the solution, and our community would benefit from your participation. Please consider helping us open doors; call me at 905-648-0605, ext 305 and offer to continue working on these challenges.

Last year, thanks to community generosity, Federation allocated **\$1,154,801** towards

assisting the vulnerable **\$329,633**
Beth Tikvah, Jewish Social Services

strengthening Jewish identity **\$457,988**
Day Schools, Afternoon Schools, Midrasha McMaster Hillel, Camp Kadimah, Kashrut services, Holocaust Education, March of the Living

community programs **\$227,118**
High school shuttle, Jewish Community Centre, Hamilton Jewish News, Young Adult Division

supporting Israel **\$140,062**
UIA Jewish Federations Canada, CIJA, Jewish Agency for Israel, Birthright

This year, you can help us do even better. Please give generously to the Community Campaign.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation Holocaust Education Committee presents its 9th annual

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK

November 2-9, 2014

Sunday, Nov. 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Shalom Village, 70 Macklin Street North, Hamilton

50 Children: The Rescue Mission of Mr. and Mrs. Kraus

In the spring of 1939, Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus left their comfortable lives and embarked on a daring mission: the rescue of 50 Jewish children from the horrors of the Holocaust. This emotional documentary weaves present-day interviews with old family photos and dramatic archival footage, spanning the decades from the 1930s to the present. RSVP's required: 905-627-9922 Ext. 24 or elevine@jewishhamilton.org

Thursday, Nov. 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Temple Anshe Sholom, 215 Cline Ave. N., Hamilton

Blue Tattoo

Blue Tattoo is a documentary that relates how folksinger/songwriter Joe Crookston of Ithaca, NY and Holocaust survivor Dina Jacobson of Elmira, NY came together to form a unique friendship with a common sense of purpose. After meeting Dina at her home, Joe crafted the song Blue Tattoo based on her life experiences. Co-producer Marty Kerker, Dina's great nephew will introduce the film and will be available for Q&A after the screening.

Sunday, Nov. 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Adas Israel Congregation, 125 Cline Ave. S., Hamilton

Survivor Memoirs Kristallnacht Commemoration

A selection of films produced by the Azreili Foundation. In the films, the authors reflect on their histories from childhood through to their experiences during the war to their present lives in Canada. The community Kristallnacht commemoration will feature Rabbi Daniel Green and local alumni of the 2014 March of the Living.



and suddenly, life changed

One in eight people among us lives in poverty, a number that may surprise you. Hamilton's Jewish poor do not attend our synagogues or our schools. We do not see them at community events or shopping malls. They are invisible.

Marci and Mark (Their names have been changed to protect their identity) were busy young parents whose days revolved around their two young sons—when the unexpected happened. Both of them were laid off from their jobs within months of each other, and have been unable to find any other employment.

"This is a new reality," said Marci. "We're trying to adjust. We have good days, we have bad days. We've had to move out of the house we were living in before. We've had to tighten our purse strings."

Marci and Mark turned to Jewish Social Services, which was able to provide them with food vouchers and a loan to help them through the crisis. JSS also helped them update their resumé and navigate through the province's social service network, leading to their receiving additional funding and employment retraining.

Their children's principal was equally sympathetic. "No child should be denied a Jewish education," she said, reassuring the couple that bursary funding was available to enable them to keep their sons in day school.

Without the allocation provided by Federation's Community Campaign, neither Jewish Social Services nor the couple's Jewish day school would have been able to offer Mark and Marci the support they so desperately needed. Thanks to that support, Mark and Marci have been able to keep things as normal as possible for the family.

"I know that the Federation raises funds for families like mine who never expected to be in a situation where they really even needed financial aid. It just wasn't the plan. But the plan changed."



"Federation raises funds for families like mine, who never expected to even need financial aid. It just wasn't the plan. But the plan changed."

**To make it possible for families in crisis
to find the support they need ...**

Count yourself in and give generously!



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Make a donation to the Community Campaign. Call 905.648.0605 ext 306 today.



Shalom Village

shalomvillage.ca

**Shana Tovah
from your friends
at Shalom Village**



Rosh Hashana is a time to celebrate new beginnings.

We wish you and your loved ones the sweetest of new years!

Mark October 26 on your calendar

Celebrating 40 years!

Shalom Village is hosting a special celebration on October 26 to mark our 40th anniversary, and you're invited!

Forty years

It was forty years ago, in the early 1970s, that a group of forward-thinking visionaries established the Hamilton Jewish Home for the Aged with the mission of *Honouring our Fathers and our Mothers*.

Growth

Since that time Shalom Village has grown to include 112 long term care beds, 15 convalescent care beds, and 81 apartments. People from the community join us every day to participate in the *Goldie's Place* day program or to work out at *The Club* fitness centre. Hundreds more attend special events, such as the Hannukah Hustle or our annual tea. They come to enjoy coffee or a light lunch at *Bubbi Bessie's Café*, a full-course meal at *Samuel's*, or a movie in the *Classic Theatre*.

Exemplary standing

Shalom Village is affiliated with McMaster

University's Faculty of Health Sciences, the Ontario Long Term Care Association, and is accredited with exemplary standing by Accreditation Canada.

Humble beginnings

From its humble beginnings to the comprehensive community of services we offer today, the secret to Shalom Village's success has been the AT HOME approach to care that enables our residents to get the most out of life.

Help us celebrate

Of course, community support has made this all possible! Please mark October 26 help us celebrate our first four decades. Details of the celebration will be released shortly. We hope to see you there!



Shalom Village is hosting a special celebration on October 26 to mark our 40th anniversary, and you're invited!

Hannukah Hustle November 16

Time to get your hustle on!



Mark your calendar for the 13th annual Hannukah Hustle happening on November 16, 2014.

Some people run the entire 10k course in less time than it takes

many of us to drive to work. Others push themselves triumphantly over the finish line, leaning on canes or supported by walkers. As different as these two groups are, they have two things in common: they enjoy

getting outside for some fresh air and exercise on a beautiful fall day, and they support active living at Shalom Village.

The Club

The Club fitness centre for people over the age of 70 grew out of a research project we conducted in partnership with the McMaster University Department of Kinesiology. The study demonstrated the dramatic impact active living has on the quality of life experienced by older adults. Not only was it easier for them to manage everyday tasks like getting in or out of a car and bathing, but there was also a marked reduction in falls, the number one cause of hospitalization for seniors.

Scenic route

The Hannukah Hustle follows a scenic route from Shalom Village along Hamilton's waterfront trail, before looping back to finish at Shalom Village. Hundreds of runners and walkers are joined by residents, their friends and families, volunteers, and spectators, for a fun-filled day

outdoors. After the race, participants enjoy Kosher hot dogs and latkes before heading inside for the presentation of medals and prizes.

Be part of the fun!

If you would like to participate as a runner or walker, or pledge your support, visit shalomvillage.ca or call Kathleen Thomas at 905-529-1613 ext. 264.

Sponsorship

Corporate sponsorships are available with a variety of advertising benefits. Call Kathleen for more information.

Hannukah Hustle details

What: The Hannukah Hustle is a 10k/5k run and a 5k/1k walk in support of active living at Shalom Village

When: Sunday, November 16, 2014 at 9 a.m.

Where: Shalom Village

Thank you!

Thank you to the walkers, runners, donors, corporate sponsors and volunteers who help make the Hannukah Hustle possible.

Rosh Hashana Cards

Beautiful greeting cards feature resident art

You can send Rosh Hashana greetings to your family and friends and help support Shalom Village possibilities at the same time!

Just send us your list and we will take care of the rest for only \$10 per card.

We are offering four beautiful cards featuring original art created by our residents. You will be proud to have your friends receive these attractive and colourful cards.

All proceeds from card donations support the Possibilities Fund at Shalom Village.

Just send us your list and we'll take care of the rest!

Thank you

Grateful thanks to the families of **Peggy Martin, Ken Rowe, and Lina Bisulca** for requesting donations to Shalom Village in lieu of flowers.

Memorial donations support the *Possibilities Fund* at Shalom Village, making many special programs and services possible for our residents.



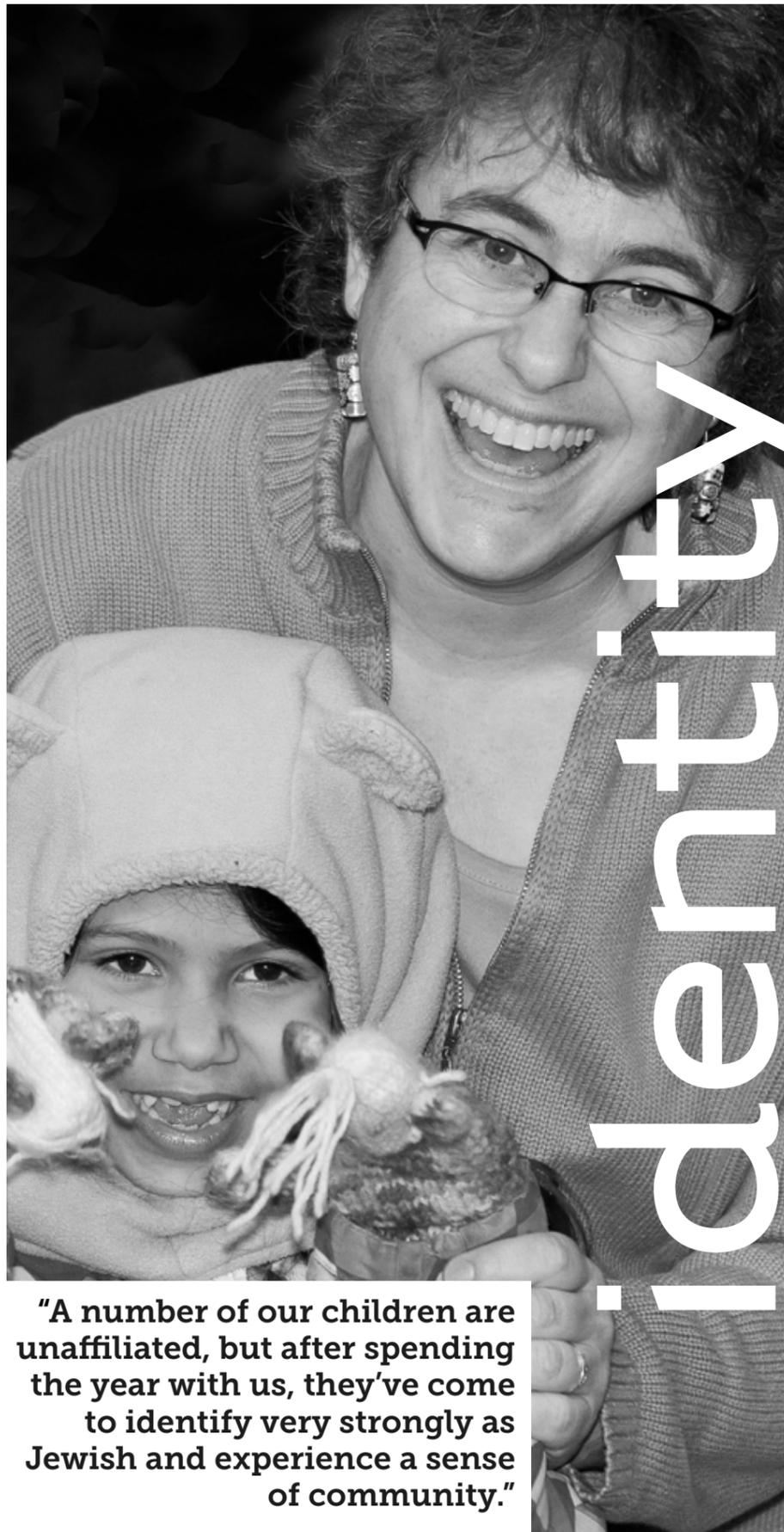
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Making possibilities possible



collaboration is the name of the game

Beth Jacob and Temple Anshe Sholom Hebrew schools are turning to experiential learning, novel collaborations and new technologies to strengthen their educational programming. The methods may vary, but their goals are the same: to make Hebrew school a place that students want to be, and a place in which they love to learn.

“A lot of the kids coming into our program are completely unaffiliated. Some of them have never stepped foot in a synagogue before,” said former Beth Jacob education director Milena Romalis. “Others come from more traditional families. The challenge is bringing kids from divergent backgrounds together. It’s after school and they’re tired. They come together at the beginning of the year and they’re strangers to one another ... but by the end of the year they’re seeing themselves as Jewish and experiencing a sense of community.”

At Temple Anshe Sholom, the magic happens through technology in the classroom according to educator Laura Wolfson. “We’ve developed listening centres using ipads where kids are learning Hebrew language or Torah trope individually or in small groups. They’re definitely more engaged.”

Their individual successes aside, Romalis and Wolfson understood that their students would stand to benefit from an experiential learning project that would be a collaboration between their two schools, as well as Kehila and the JCC’s Mitzvah Mission Youth Organization.

“We came up with the idea of a tzedakathon,” said Wolfson. “Everyone brought \$2 and it all went into a pot. The older kids made presentations from a hypothetical Israeli organization, Canadian Jewish organization and a local non-Jewish organization and facilitated discussions among the younger kids ... Every group had their hands in a pile of loonies, and had to decide whether to come to a consensus about whom to support or give on their own.” The entire exercise was framed by a text study on tzedakah. Both Romalis and Wolfson said the event was “extraordinarily successful,” and are planning for two such programs in the coming year.

“A number of our children are unaffiliated, but after spending the year with us, they’ve come to identify very strongly as Jewish and experience a sense of community.”

**To sustain the tradition of creating
positive Jewish learning experiences ...**

Count yourself in and give generously!



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MMYO PUTS JEWISH VALUES IN ACTION

How do you teach kids Jewish values? How do you break down the barriers of different community affiliations? How do you build tomorrow's Jewish leaders. The answer could be MMYO, a weekly JCC program for youth in Grades 6 to 8, that stands for Mitzvah Mission Youth Organization. Conceived by community member, Danna Horwood, managed by JCC coordinator, Laura Laengerer, and run by Mara Waxman and Geoff Zalter, the program has been an outstanding success. "The Out of the Cold program was a real eye opener," said Laengerer. "Cindy Richter did such an excellent job of explaining the program in the context of Jewish values like *bachnasat orchim* (welcoming of guests) and *tzedakah* (charitable giving)." Given the responses of three MMYO students to the question of what they most liked about the program, the program appears to be having a very positive impact. "We wake up every day and have a routine," said Ethan Feldman, 12, "like eating breakfast, but some people don't have food to eat," he said. "We made food and we gave it to them. (Doing that) impacted their life, as well as ours." "It was really fun that we got to work with Out of the Cold, that we got to speak to the mayor, and play Bingo at Shalom Village. It really touched my heart," said Daniel Laengerer, 11. "It was a great experience to see all the different organizations you could be helping," said Dorothy Paling, 13. "To hear what the volunteers do for people made me want to volunteer more and impact people's lives," she said. Next year's MMYO program will take place at the JCC on Monday nights from 7 to 8 p.m. beginning Oct. 20. For more information call Laura Laengerer at 905-648-0605.



MMYO students at the Max Rotman Awards: (From l to r), Ethan Feldman, Mitchell Horwood, Daniel Laengerer, Dorothy Paling, Michaella Woolf and Addi Arnold. Photo by Laura Laengerer

Hamilton Hebrew High

Who said there's nothing to look forward to on Mondays? Certainly not if you're a Jewish high school student in Hamilton. This upcoming year, Hamilton Hebrew High will be offering a "triple header" of classes on Monday evenings, with three dynamic master teachers: Rabbi Yaakov Morel, Rabbi David Teller and Mrs. Goldie Weiser. The combined energy of these three educational titans, cou-

pled with the enthusiasm of our community's teens, will create an impactful Jewish experience each week. HHH is accredited by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

Classes include:
Community and Individuality (open to grades 8 and 9);
Biblically Speaking (open to grades 10 and 11) and
Canadian and World Politics (open to students in grade 11 and 12). In addition to formal

classes, HHH will re-launch culture clubs at Westdale and Highland secondary schools during lunch hours and host Friday night dinners.

Upcoming events also include an evening at the Air Canada Centre with the Toronto Raptors in December and a blowout event in the spring. For more information visit www.hcubed.ca or call Yaakov Morel at 905-512-1960.

jcc programs

call 905.648.0605

Babysitting Course

Sunday, Sept. 21
 Age: 10 years + (must be able to read at a Grade 5 level)
 M \$55; NM \$65

Israeli Dancing with Anita Millman

Every other Monday evening beginning Sept. 29 from 7 - 8 p.m.
 M \$2; NM \$5

Mah Jongg

Tuesdays from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
 \$5/week or purchase a value membership and play all you like.

Boot Camp for Kids

Call 905-648-0605 if interested

Yoga for Kids

Wednesdays 4:30-5:30 p.m. beginning Oct. 22
 Members \$56; Non members \$80

Bridge (unsupervised play)

Thursdays at 10 am beginning Nov. 6
 Bring your team and your game \$5/week or purchase a value membership and play all you like.

JCC Film Festival

Nov. 22 and 23



Mark your calendar for the 64th Annual B'Nai Brith Hamilton Sports Celebrity Dinner - Monday January 26, 2015!

Local hockey heroes, Stanley Cup Champion Dave Andreychuk and Olympic gold medalist Laura Fortino, will lead another star-studded head table!

The success of the dinner - and the much needed funds for local charities - depends on corporate sponsorships and table sales. Be part of the largest charity dinner in Hamilton with a corporate sponsorship that includes:

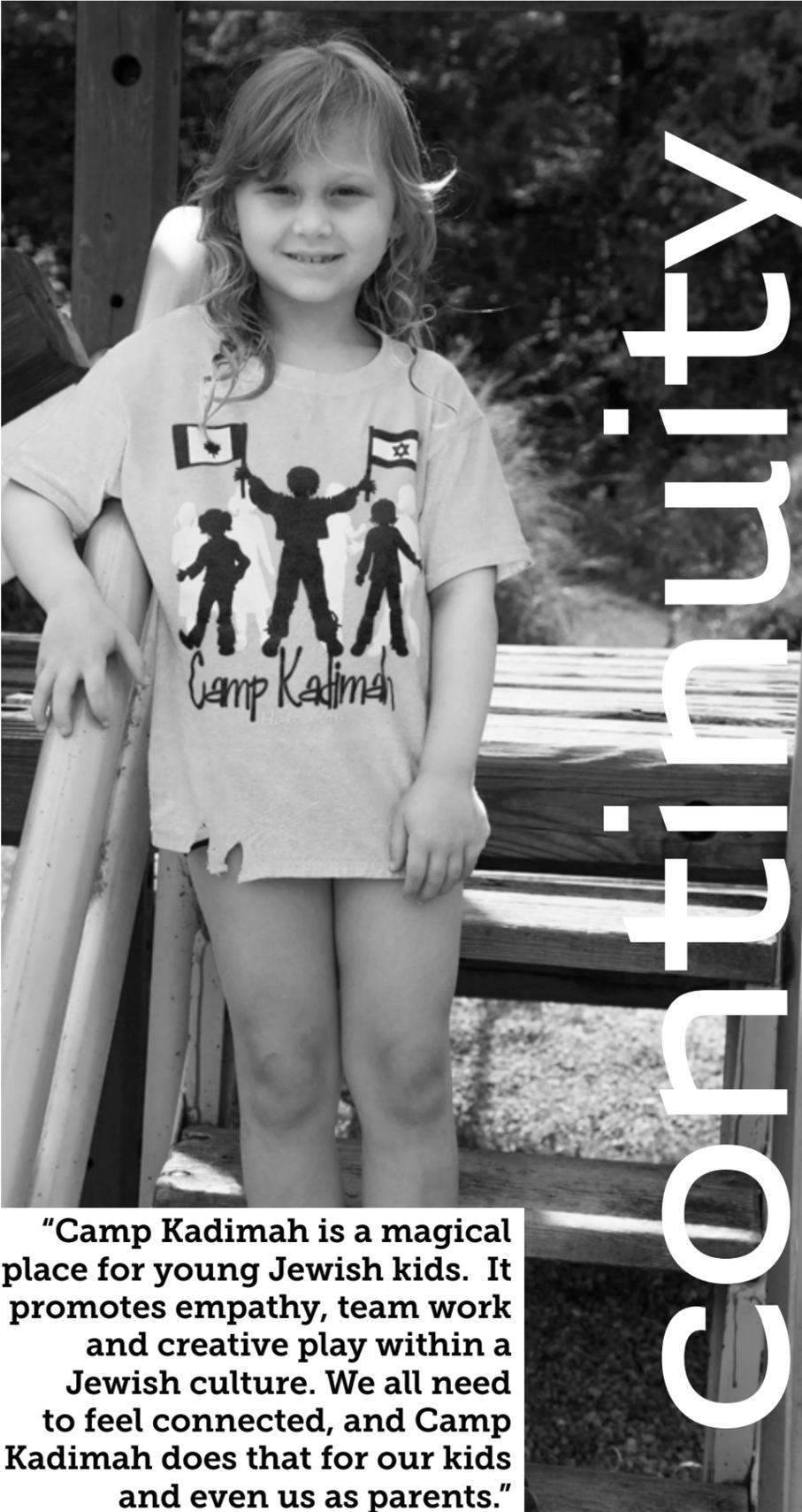
- Table of 10 for the 2015 B'Nai Brith Sports Celebrity Dinner
- Access to private reception with the head table celebrity guests
- Logo recognition in our full colour souvenir program
- "Sponsorship" of one of our head table guests
- Video Board recognition during dinner
- Logo and company recognition on our website

Contact Brent Clifford for full details:
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www.bbsportsdinner.com



"Camp Kadimah is a magical place for young Jewish kids. It promotes empathy, team work and creative play within a Jewish culture. We all need to feel connected, and Camp Kadimah does that for our kids and even us as parents."

a special place in our hearts

Meet Rebekah Burjaw, 7, who represents the third generation of one Hamilton family's involvement with Camp Kadimah.

"Camp Kadimah holds a special set of memories and experiences for me and my family," said Brenda. "My parents were part of the original staff that created the beach at Dunmark Park — the first Camp Kadimah ... My brother, Arie, and I, as well as my husband spent our early childhood summers with other Jewish children there. "

Burjaw said she has vivid memories of making Judaic crafts, singing Hebrew songs and gathering to sing Hatikvah together.

"For me, Camp Kadimah was the start of learning how to be part of a community, and it gave me a foundation from which I went on to attend Jewish overnight summer camp for 10 years and then return to Kadimah as staff."

Last summer was Rebekah's third summer at Kadimah.

"She eagerly awaits the start to camp ... She looks forward to meeting new kids and reconnecting with others she's met along the way."

One of Rebekah's closest friends is Sydney Snajdman. "These two girls have come to learn that they represent the 4th generation of friendship between families. Their great grandfather's were best friends and used to go swimming at Dalewood together in their old age. Now Rebekah and Sydney attend Kadimah and swim at Dalewood ... now that is full circle!"

To ensure that every Jewish child has the benefit of a summer camp experience ...

Count yourself in and give generously!



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Celebrate Sukkot with JNF!



Something for everyone: Last year's Sukkot event at the Loewith farm.

Photo by Carl Cuneo

SUZY POLGAR

Hold the date, Sunday, Oct. 12 for JNF's Amazing Blue Box Race and Sukkot celebration at the Loewith farm in Lynden. The Blue Box event begins in the morning (time and place to be determined.) Decorate your cars, grab your family, give your team a name and be prepared to have the time of your lives, while collecting blue boxes along your route. In one hour, complete challenges, answer mind-boggling questions, collect blue boxes. The race will end at the Loewith farm for fun and games with the whole community. Decorated cars will be judged by everyone at the event and winners will receive prizes.

There will truly be something for everybody at the farm, including friends and

family members with special needs. This year we are thrilled that the residents of Beth Tikvah will join in the celebration and we're sure that they, like everyone else who has attended, will love the bonfire, hayride down to the barns to see the cows and be delighted by watching the cows during their milking times. Who knows, perhaps we will be lucky enough to catch the birth of a new-born calf! Kosher hot dogs and marshmallows cooked over the bonfire and crafts in the sukkah are only some of the events that we have planned. Thank you to the Loewith family for allowing us to use their site for our programming. For more information please contact the JNF office at 905-527-5516, extension 402.

JNF's most precious resource

SUZY POLGAR

JNF Hamilton has always been successful because of its lay leadership and volunteers. We plan a variety of events that will attract people with different interests so that we can reach as many people as possible. Events take a great deal of effort and we depend on our volunteers to help make the programs successful. They work with our staff to plan and execute events from concept through to the actual event or program. Volunteers are a precious resource that we could not do without.

Over the last few years we have broadened our reach within the Hamilton community to try to include everyone – both young and old. We've even put a new twist on old events, like our amazing Blue Box Day which has gathered the interest of teenagers, and our Tu Bi'Shevat telethons where we have received help from our preteens as well as from McMaster students in Jewish clubs such as AEPI. One of our recent events was Beauty 360, a "women only" event, designed to raise money for a women's shelter in Ashdod.

JNF has evolved over the 113 years since its inception from an organization that

raised funds to purchase land for settlement by Jewish people in Eretz Yisrael. The little Blue Box that Jews all over the world had in their homes provided the means to purchase the land. It quickly became synonymous with Israel and the



The iconic Blue Box

Jewish people everywhere. The needs evolved. To make the land more arable for farming for Israel's pioneers, trees needed to be planted. Trees became forests and JNF was called on to develop recreation sites and bicycle paths. With water being such a scarce commodity in the land of Israel, JNF became involved in rehabilitating polluted rivers and streams, treating and recycling

waste water and building water reservoirs to store the water for agricultural use. JNF is currently involved in agricultural Research and Development to develop more efficient methods of farming in a country where water is at a premium.

One hundred per cent of the monies raised (after expenses) go to fund our projects in Israel. Money placed in Blue Boxes goes towards maintaining our forests and recreation sites. When tree cards are purchased on-line or by calling our office, the money goes towards planting more trees in Israel. Periodically, we are called on to help with special emergency campaigns such as the Carmel fires in 2010 and the recent war against Hamas in Gaza. These campaigns provide a tangible way for people living in the Diaspora to support Israel in dire times. And of course, when the call comes during our Tu Bi'Shevat telethons, your generosity is always appreciated when you answer the call.

Volunteers, donors, participants in events – precious resources here so that JNF can continue to work on precious resources in Israel.

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2014 YIZKOR/HIGH HOLIDAY APPEAL

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“Our role as educators is to facilitate a child’s learning, regardless of their learning style.”

Technology is providing more powerful and efficient tools to teachers who work with children with disabilities. Mary Martha Starkman, coordinator of the Hamilton Hebrew Academy’s Diverse Learning Centre, said that devices like “Livescribe pens,” which transcribe a child’s thoughts to paper, are having

an enormous impact on the students that she sees.

“It’s very difficult for some children to get their ideas down on paper,” she said. “So technology like the Livescribe pen and the “voice to text” app allow them to verbally record what they know, so that the teacher can replay

that when she’s marking their tests.”

The days of relegating special needs children to the margins are long gone. “Our role as educators is to facilitate a child’s learning, regardless of their learning style,” she said. “We’ve seen great gains in children using these tools, but they cost money.”

**To ensure that no Jewish child
is left behind ...**

Count yourself in and give generously!



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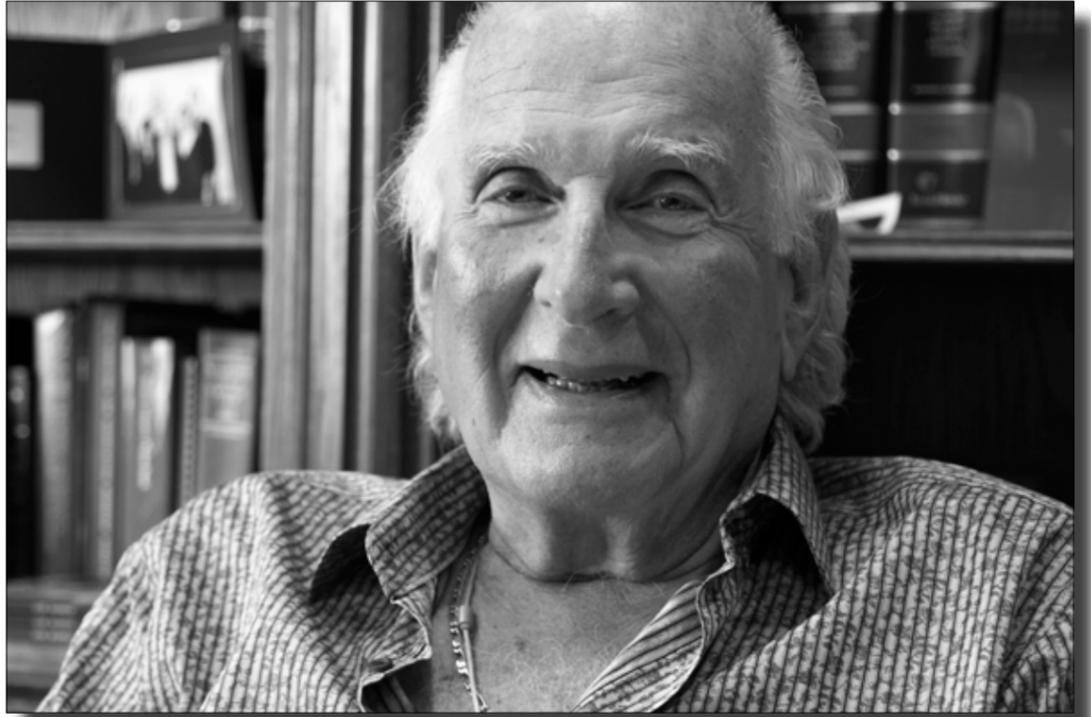


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When it comes to mentorship, Bill Morris has spent a lifetime paying it forward.

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GENEROUSLY

portraits in giving

A series that offers a glimpse into the generous habits of Jewish Hamiltonians, who, in their own words, explain why they give. In doing so they open our eyes wide to what people and organizations in our community might become. To what we might become.

Who were your mentors in living generously?

Max Stein. He was one of the finest leaders this community ever had. He taught me patience. He taught me how to listen to people. He taught me how to be kind. He taught by example.

Whom have you mentored?

Many, many people. I was president of the Council of Jewish Organizations (Federation's predecessor) when I was 32 years old and I brought in many of our presidents after that. I believe in leadership development. I learned a lot from the organizational work.

How does one cultivate leaders?

I don't think that you can develop good leadership unless there's some form of mentoring. You've got to discern who are the people interested in helping others, the people who are selfless as opposed to selfish. And they have to have some ability and it's nice if they're kind.

Are you an optimist or a pessimist?

To me the glass is always half full. I have difficulties in dealing with the people who are pessimistic.

Are you optimistic about the future of Hamilton's Jewish community?

Yes and I'll tell you why. My daughter Lisa, and Danna Horwood were co-chairs of the UJA Campaign and they

Max Stein used to tell me he always made a point of giving more than he could afford. He said it always came back. I started doing that and it's very true.

did very well. We've got excellent people leading the Federation, the Campaign and the synagogues. Where did they come from? We seem to have a knack of developing leaders.

Do you worry about Israel's ultimate survival?

Yes, but I'm optimistic. We've been around for so many years you have to wonder how can such a tiny group of people survive. You know we've been very fortunate because we've been resourceful. We're prepared to work hard.

Do you have a personal philanthropic philosophy?

Yes. I have always been what I consider to be a generous giver, in that I give beyond my means. One of the things I feel most proud of is that all of my children are givers. All the women in my family, my wife Eva and my daughters Lisa and Lori are Lions of Judah. And they do it because they want to.

What was the most important thing you learned from your mentor?

Max Stein told me he always made a point of giving more than he thought he could afford. He said it always came back. And I started doing that and it's very true. And those people who I became able to convince of the veracity of that statement, they echo it all the time. It comes back.



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ADAS TRIP TO ISRAEL



Jason Ohayon, Rabbi Daniel Green and Marty Strub will lead a trip to Israel in November
Photo courtesy of the Adas Israel

Now, more than ever is the time to join us in a trip to Israel this November. Come see Israel from a different perspective. Meet iconic Israeli leaders and rabbis that most read about only in the media.

We will visit the south to show solidarity with the Israelis who were constantly bombarded recently in the Gaza operation, including Sderot, Beer Sheva, a Negev winery and Mitzpe Ramon. We will also explore re-developed areas of Tel Aviv including its first train station, have lunch at the top of the Azrieli Towers, dinner at a microbrewery and visit the new Rabin Museum.

In Jerusalem, we will visit the excavations of the City of David and travel on the new LRT with stops at the Herzl Museum, Ammunition Hill and the labyrinths of Jerusalem's famed outdoor market, Mahane Yehuda.

The trip will culminate with an inspirational Shabbat in the old city of Jerusalem. Join Marty Strub, Jason Ohayon and Rabbi Green and allow us to inspire you on a unique Hamilton trip to Israel! For more information contact Marty Strub at mstrub@gmail.com.

HHA's "Adopt a Classroom"

MARINA TCHERNER

Several years ago, I was inspired to adopt a classroom at the HHA. My motivation was to honour the person who has been my life's inspiration; my son Maxim, who inspires me to be better and to do better.

A couple of years ago, I dropped by the Adas to talk to someone at the office. It was midday and the building was alive with the sounds of children. Looking at the little ones, I remembered my then three-year-old who was so kindly welcomed to the Academy's nursery school. The year was 1992. In my mind's eye, I saw my cute toddler sitting on the carpet amongst his new friends; and now, 20 years later, my handsome 23-year old was conquering the business world.

His late father and I always believed that education was the key to success. The timing was perfect; Maxim was graduating

with honours from the most challenging business program in the country, the Richard Ivey School of business. Perhaps, that first educational experience at the HHA set him up for his achievements. I decided to make a gift to his old classroom, which was now called the Montessori Casa.

I recently learned that the school is launching an "Adopt a Classroom" program inspired by my support of the Montessori classroom. This is a wonderful way to earmark a gift and strengthen the foundations of the next generation. Our children rely upon the generous support of our community. Recognition will be showcased in each classroom featuring the name of the adoptive patron. To partner in this important program please contact Rebecca Shapiro at admissions@hamiltonhebrewacademy.ca.

Kehila Appreciation Event

Kehila has been providing excellent Jewish education for the past 15 years. This represents thousands of education hours. Our alumni have gone on to great things in high school and university. This has only been possible with the continual support of our donors. We would like to bring together those who have been

educated and those who made the education possible, in an evening full of reflection and rejoicing. Please mark your calendars for this event, which will take place on Thursday, Nov. 27. If you have not yet become involved with the school, but want to, please contact Michele at office@kehilaschool.ca.

Beth Jacob welcomes new education director

Beth Jacob's Keshet Hebrew School is delighted to announce the appointment of Rina Rodak as its new education director and youth advisor. Rodak has many years of experience in the field of formal and informal Jewish education. Professionally, Rodak has served as Camp Kadimah director, Temple Playhouse teacher and as a past administrator, teacher and youth advisor at Beth Jacob. Her many volunteer commitments in the community include a recent stint as co-chair of Kehila's board of directors.



Rina Rodak Photo by Jack Ogus

Rodak looks forward to continuing the excellent programming put in place by her predecessor Milena Romalis.

"Our Wednesday program will focus on four specific areas," said Rodak. "Reading and Writing with Mrs. Schmerling, Prayers, Blessings and More led by Cantor Eyal Bitton and Judaism through the Arts with Morah Gila Lawton. I will be teaching the Jewish Ideas class for the younger students, while Rabbi Selsberg will teach the pre- and post-Bar Mitzvah group. We will also be serving a healthy and kid-friendly dinner each week." Children of all ages are invited to attend the main Shabbat service

every week, but once a month there will be a special Shabbat event specifically for them.

On Sunday, Sept. 14 families are invited to participate in an apple picking program with Temple Anshe Sholom at Meyer's Farm in Copetown. Beth Jacob invites families to participate in a musical interactive service with David Gershon on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. Please call the shul office at 905-522-1351 to reserve.

For more information about the Keshet Hebrew School and family programs contact Rina Rodak at school@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

TAS Religious School

This year, students at TAS Religious School will have the opportunity to connect with Jewish kids in other parts of the world, through weekly video conferencing and email exchanges. The purpose of this activity will be to help our students explore what it means to be Jewish, in different communities throughout North America, Great Britain, Australia and Israel. We will explore the history and culture of our own Jewish community and compare it to other cultures, while considering what unites us all as Jewish people. Hopefully, we will make some new friends and new connections along the way!



Hannah Byrne-Wolfson creates a video tour of the chapel. Photo by Laura Wolfson

This is just one of the activities aimed at our overall goal of building strong Jewish identities. Current trends, particularly in relation to the far-reaching effects of social networking, show that young Jews are forging a new Jewish future that may look very different from the Jewish lives of their parents and grandparents. In order to do that, what young

Jews need most is a strong Jewish identity. TAS Religious School is a place where the focus is on helping our students to discover what it means, and what it can mean, to be Jewish in this world, now and in the future. We make connections with the past and with the future by making it real for our students for right now.

For information please contact Laura Wolfson at (905) 528-0121 or visit our website at www.anshesholom.ca (click on Education.)



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The 2014 Lillian and Marvin Goldblatt Lecture in Jewish Studies

McMaster University's Department of Religious Studies presents

Shaping Jewish Identity Through Mass Tourism: How Do (or Don't) "Birthright Israel" Trips Actually Work?

by

Professor Shaul Kelner
Vanderbilt University



Thursday, October 23
7:30 p.m. Ewart Angus 1A1
McMaster University Health Science Centre
Refreshments served

Since 1999 hundreds of thousands of young North American Jews have visited Israel on an all-expenses-paid 10-day pilgrimage tour known as Birthright Israel. The most elaborate of the state-supported homeland tours that are cropping up all over the world, this half-billion-dollar venture seeks to deepen the ties binding the Jewish Diaspora to Israel. But unlike Jewish pilgrimages of millennia past, Birthright Israel adopts and adapts the practices of modern mass tourism. What happens when a state looks to tourism to create a new pilgrimage ritual for the 21st century? How does the act of touring shape identity? How do the organizers of Birthright seek to turn the identity-shaping potentials of tourism to the service of building Jewish identity, and how are their efforts complicated by inherent aspects of tourism itself?

For more information contact
Sheryl Dick
dickshe@mcmaster.ca
905-525-9140 ext 24567



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CHRIS BARONE

“Your residents and staff are so much a part of our neighbourhood.”

That sentiment, expressed in a recent email to Beth Tikvah, meant more than you can imagine. For the individuals who live on 81 Arkell Street it means that they’re accepted and valued as an integral part of their neighbourhood.

Through my years of working in the non-profit service sector I have grown to understand that one of the biggest obstacles that individuals with disabilities face is not being seen as contributing members of their community. On the contrary, they are often labeled as aggressive, mentally ill or deviant, and regarded as a burden on society. Each one of these stereotypes has the impact of placing a brick on the backs of people with disabilities.

Beth Tikvah’s dedicated staff, volunteers and board members are committed to changing that mindset, brick by brick. They understand that being seen as a brother, sister, uncle, aunt, employee, volunteer and neighbour brings meaning to a person’s life whether you have a disability or not. They understand that for individuals with disabilities, these roles need to be supported and advocated for.

Volunteer Opportunities

Your skills, experiences and interests can be used to help enrich the lives of those people we support. By volunteering for any one of the following tasks, you can make a world of difference in making a person feel accepted and valued:

- befriending a person we serve (going out for coffee, to the library, to the movies or attending synagogue)
- sharing time and talents to help someone pursue his or her talents
- creating volunteer opportunities for those we serve.



The Beth Tikvah Family. Photo by Chris Barone

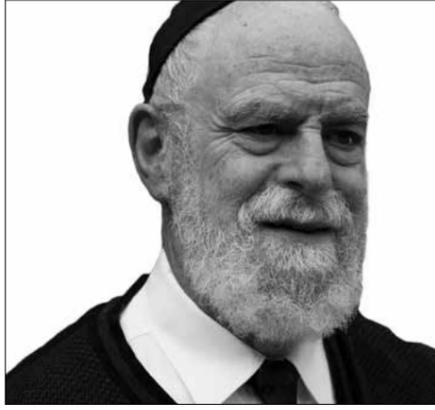
- assisting with recreational activities
- being a member of a personal support network by helping an individual identify dreams, needs and ways to achieve these)
- offering donations through services (landscaping, cutting the grass, painting, upkeep of our home.)
- helping out with special events as part of our outreach programs
- helping plan and implement Jewish holiday traditions

Hamilton’s Jewish community is a vital resource to Beth Tikvah. If you’d like to get involved, contact me or Olthia Adili by calling 905-523-0411. For more information please visit our website at www.bethtikvahhamilton.org

Chris Barone is executive director of the Beth Tikvah Foundation of Hamilton

MINDFULNESS

Self-acceptance can be healing



Lester Krames is a clinical psychologist, whose work has been influenced by his exploration into mindfulness and self-compassion. His mindfulness column will be a regular feature in the next three issues of the HJN.

The new trend of bringing mindfulness to the study of psychology has encouraged psychologists to address the “whole person” by promoting self-exploration. Mindfulness is not a remedy for suffering, but rather a strategy for dealing with the good and the bad that life has to offer. In mindfulness we learn to accept that sometimes there are no words or actions that erase the horror or fix the damage.

Mindfulness teaches us to be careful observers of our own thoughts and actions. We learn that in gentle observation and loving self-acceptance there is a safe place where healing can occur. Mindfulness is a path towards accepting fully who we are.

Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan noted that the human mind seems to have a mind of its own, operating beyond the will of the thinker. Our minds are constantly chattering bringing thoughts and emotions from the past and/or the future often unrelated to each other. The human mind functions like a boisterous committee with many dissenting voices. This can be confusing. Mindfulness teaches us to never be afraid of any of those thoughts. Just because we think something doesn’t mean we have to believe it. We should never be afraid of thoughts such as

anxiety, fear or shame. Mindfulness teaches us to allow ourselves to passively be aware of these thoughts without resistance.

Karl Jung pointed out what we resist persists; trying to push thoughts out of our mind only makes them stronger.

When the negative chatter becomes too strong, mindfulness teaches us to STOP.

S – Stop what you are doing put things down for a moment

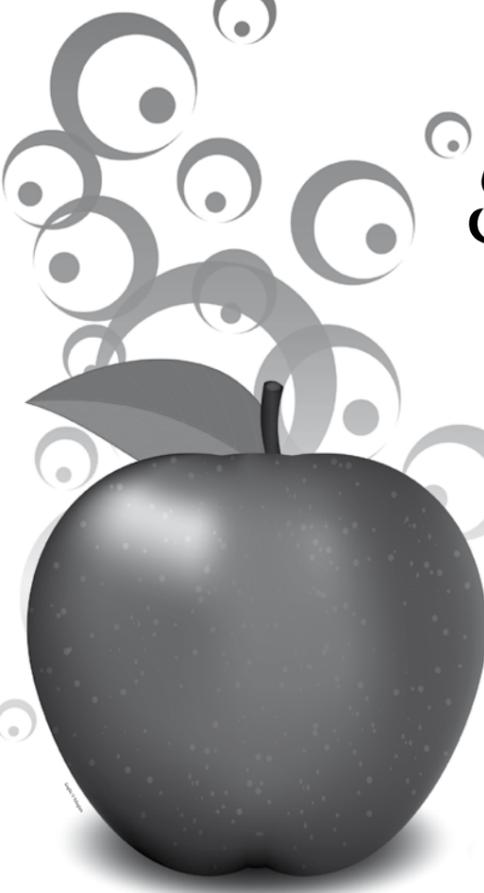
T – Take a slow deep breath a few is better. Pay attention to your breath as you extend your breathing back to your normal pattern. You can even count to yourself saying “in” as you breathe in and “out” as you breathe out.

O – Observe your experience for what it is – label the chatter thought and notice your feelings, and emotions. Remind yourself the thought is only part of the background chatter. Thoughts are not facts, and they are not permanent. By recognizing the background chatter for what it is you can turn the volume down on the fear circuit in the brain and have a calming effect.

P – Proceed, move on to what needs to be done or to something that will offer support for you in the moment.

Mindfulness and self-compassion can create the awareness that sometimes the most powerful thing we can *do* is to fully *be*. Mindfulness is that tool that allows us to create an open and accepting awareness on the present moment while acknowledging and accepting one’s feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations. Our thoughts are often the source of our worries and anxieties. Mark Twain pointed out that 90 per cent of the things we worry about never happen.

The topics I plan to explore in the future will demonstrate the benefits of mindfulness and self-compassion including how to stop being so hard on yourself, how to handle difficult emotions with greater ease, how to motivate yourself with encouragement rather than criticism and how to become your own best teacher. I will also examine how mindfulness and self-compassion are rooted in Judaism.





CHW Children Healthcare Women

Shana Tova!

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) wishes our members and friends a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year!

Thank you for your continued support of CHW’s projects for Children, Healthcare and Women in Israel and Canada.

Marla Dan
CHW National President

CHW Board of Directors

Alina Ianson
CHW National Executive Director

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INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF



Challenging times for Jewish students

New semester likely to bring increased tensions

Story and photo by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News



Students from McMaster Hillel and Israel on Campus during Israel Apartheid Week last year at their Israel Peace Week booth.

“Jews fear campus nightmare,” screamed a Times of Israel headline this summer, after the University of Cape Town’s umbrella student organization adopted a proposal pushing for BDS measures against Israel for all student-run organizations and events. Closer to home, this August, the Ontario branch of the Canadian Federation of Students, a body that represents more than 300,000 university students in the province, unanimously passed a resolution to boycott Israel.

Even before this summer’s war between Israel and Hamas, a growing number of university student unions across the country had either passed, or, in the case of McMaster, come close to passing, BDS resolutions. It’s no wonder the Jewish community is concerned about how an increasingly anti-Israel and antisemitic environment on campus is affecting Jewish students, and asking itself what steps are being taken to empower those involved in Israel advocacy.

Those concerns were the central focus of a professional development training organized by Hillel Canada and CIJA in August, the purpose of which was to prepare 50 campus professionals from across the country for what executive director of Hillel Ontario, Donald Sylvan anticipates will be “a much more hostile climate than they’ve encountered before.”

The need to create a safe space in which students of all political viewpoints can freely express their anxieties and questions dominated discussions on the first day, with participants role-playing scenarios likely to come across their desk.

“I see dead children in Gaza on the television, and the announcer is saying they were killed by Israel. I don’t know what to

think,” wrote Sylvan, by way of illustration in a recent article that appeared in the Canadian Jewish News. “I see photos of demonstrators with signs that say, ‘kill Jews.’ I’m scared,” was another.

“Our role is to comfort and educate our students – not to criticize or judge them.”

Donald Sylvan,
Executive Director, Hillel Ontario

“Our central advice,” wrote Sylvan, “was to legitimize the concerns of every student – to talk through the underlying issues without being judgmental. We believe our role is to comfort, educate and prepare our students – not to criticize or judge them. Within the walls of our Hillels, this discourse is crucial.”

The need for inclusivity was also raised during a telephone town hall meeting organized by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto at the end of August, in which Mark Newburgh, executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto, said, “We need to be an open tent ... (in which students can express) their anxiety, their fear, their anger, so that we can nurture them, steward them and encourage them.”

The second day of the workshop focused on Israel advocacy.

The approach focuses on having Jewish students strive to engage in civil discourse – in contrast to the often guerilla theatre tactics taken up by BDS supporters.

Coalition building is another area seen as critical to Israel advocacy work on campus. Partnering with other student groups in social action initiatives, for instance, is not only important in terms of building friendships, but in finding shared values, said Newburgh.

That approach appears to resonate with Raphael Szajnfarber, director of Jewish Student Life at McMaster Hillel, and Alon Coret, a third year Arts and Science student and a member of the executive committees of both McMaster Hillel and Israel on Campus.

“The strategy that we’re going with is ‘hope for the best but prepare for the worst,’” Coret told the HJN.

And what does it mean to prepare for the worst?

“Essentially preparing our connections and our allies to help us out if things take an ugly turn.”

Sounding calm and confident, Coret was quick to reassure readers that “everything always looks worse from the outside.”

“I don’t think that community members should be alarmed ... but if things do happen, the best support that can be given is to work in coordination with McMaster Hillel or IOC.”

Szajnfarber was also reassuring. “Fortunately, the Jewish community on campus is more united now than ever, drawn together by a shared sense of purpose and corresponding pride,” he said. “Led by a very committed and sophisticated group of student leaders, the Jewish students at Mac refuse to be intimidated by the anti-Israel movement’s deplorable and unproductive tactics.”

A personal solidarity mission to Israel

JASON AND EVELYNE OHAYON



Jason Ohayon (pictured right) and a Golani soldier with wounded soldier Ben, whom they visited at the Barzilai hospital in Ashkelon. Photo by Evelyne Ohayon

On July 8, Israel initiated Operation Protective Edge to remove and neutralize Hamas’ rocket launchers and tunnels continually threatening Israeli citizens. Many of us in Hamilton watched, waited and worried about all Israelis, in particular, the young IDF soldiers who have been courageously protecting our homeland. After one month of combined air and ground excursions and repeated ceasefires, rockets and mortars have resumed.

On the spur of the moment, we decided to fly to Israel to show our solidarity with our people. Our goal was to visit our soldiers and thank them for their bravery and courage. Our hope was to connect with them and the people of the south sharing with them our concerns and love. We visited soldiers at Asaf Harofeh, Tel HaShomer and Barzilai hospital and presented letters of thanks from our community attached with sweets to nosh on. A visit to an Iron Dome installation revealed how fortunate we are for the “Kipat HaBarzel” Iron Dome and as one proud Ashkelonite said to us working under the Divine guidance “Kipat HaZahav”. We thanked the soldiers who were keeping watch of this installation 24/7.

Having installed the “Red Alert” app on our phones, we experienced the sudden chills when our phones would alert us day or night, realizing that, depending on their location, many Israelis only have between 15 to 60 seconds to seek shelter. During our time in Ashkelon, we learned first-hand what it felt like to have 40 precious seconds to run for cover when the car we were travelling in stopped suddenly and we followed others to the nearest tree for cover. Fear gripped us with the realization that we were now living the same fear as our brothers and sisters in the south. The unity we witnessed under the tree was inspiring to

us and brought us to tears. How can a nation continually live like this? What is the impact on the emotional wellbeing of the children growing up with this fear? Thank G-d, after the Iron Dome successfully intercepted the rocket, we returned to our hosts Doron and Batchi Mantzur for Shabbat. We replayed this experience in our minds for hours later.

During our mission we also visited the military cemetery in Haifa, where three of the 64 soldiers who died were laid to rest. We visited the grave of Sean Carmelli, a lone soldier from Texas, USA. Doron was also able to arrange a visit to the Bach Golani base where we were able to meet, address and thank the new Golani recruits for their mission in defending the Jewish nation. Fittingly, the last encounter with a young Golani soldier before returning to Canada was at synagogue, where we heard him recite the Birkat HaGomel, for returning him home safely from Gaza.

On our return, we made contact with the Association of Soldiers of Israel (ASI) Canada to arrange an evening at our home where we shared our experiences with our Hamilton Jewish community. Liora Katz and Henry Silberman were invited to explain ASI’s mission and how 92 per cent of every dollar raised is used to provide provisions for soldiers and much needed appliances for their bases and recreation centres.

The evening ended with our stated goal to bring two IDF soldiers to Hamilton this fall. Through the auspices of ASI, our community will have an opportunity to meet IDF representatives up close, hear about their lives and thank them for defending our nation Israel.

If you wish to arrange a meeting with the IDF on their arrival, please contact Jason Ohayon at ohayonj@gmail.com. ASI Canada can be reached by emailing Liora_Katz@rogers.com.

Nowhere else they'd rather be

ISRAEL REMAINS A MAGNET FOR YOUNG, IDEALISTIC JEWS

Story and photos by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

Amidst the unrest in Israel last summer, Israeli-Canadians Alon Coret and Stav Pinthus were exactly where they wanted to be – Pinthus in Ashdod, where she was volunteering with elderly shut-ins and house-bound children whose summer camps had been canceled, and Coret in Haifa, where he was volunteering as a first aid provider with Magen David Adom (MDA). Geoff Zalter spent the summer working as Camp Kadimah director, but at the end of August, he too, left for Israel where he will be spending the year teaching English in Rishon Le'Tsiyon.

The phenomenon of young Jewish adults heading to Israel in search of adventure and a sense of purpose is nothing new, and it bears noting that the current uncertainty appears to have done nothing to diminish that trend.

Stav Pinthus, 18, was eight years old when her family immigrated to Canada, but she has never thought of herself as anything but Israeli. Pinthus returned to Israel last year in order to take part in a Mechina, a year-long pre-army community service program that many Israeli high school graduates choose to participate in prior to joining the IDF. When the HJN caught up with her in the early days of Operation Protective Edge, Pinthus sounded buoyant.



Stav Pinthus at the community's Israel solidarity rally last July.



Geoff Zalter is spending this year teaching English in Israel.

"It's really great (being) in Israel. Especially now," she said. "All of a sudden people care more about communities in the south and are volunteering."

Asked to comment on the difference between Israeli and Canadian 18-year-olds, Pinthus said, "It's completely different ... In Israel, the thing that occupies us the most is getting an interesting job in the army. In Canada, it's to get into a good college." As a result, she finds her Israeli peers have a higher level of maturity "because going into the army, there's a lot more responsibility (placed) on them." Pinthus is back at her parents' Ancaster home for now, but returns to Israel in November to begin her IDF service.

Born to Israeli physicians who moved to Burlington when he and his sister were children, Alon Coret, 21, is accustomed to straddling his dual identity as both Israeli and Canadian. The fourth year Mac student told the HJN that the question of doing IDF service has long been something "that's been confusing and messing with me, these days especially."

"I'm very happy to be (volunteering with) MDA and feel as if I'm able to contribute and help out a little bit during this tough time," he said. While Haifa remained out of rocket range, Coret said the impact of the conflict was brought home with every hourly news broadcast. "It's often very tense listening to the next name (of fallen IDF soldiers)," he said, as he watched ambulance drivers hold their breath in anticipation that they might know one



Alon Coret in Haifa, where he was volunteering last summer with Magen David Adom.

Photo courtesy of Alon Coret

of them. Coret was particularly moved by the Israeli public's show of support following the deaths of two American lone soldiers. "Thirty thousand people came to these funerals, which is just an incredible show of support and compassion for the families and love for these young men who sacrificed themselves."

Geoff Zalter, 23, of Dundas, was deeply affected by two prior trips to Israel – one with his family several years ago and the second with Birthright. "Both times I went I had amazing time ... I love the lifestyle there and I knew that I wanted to go back," he said. Zalter, who has a large extended family living in the Tel-Aviv area, said that his motivation to spend a year there comes from

a desire to strengthen his Hebrew and reconnect to his cultural roots. After undertaking a long Internet search, Zalter, who has both a B.A. and a teaching certificate, came upon the Masa Israel Teaching Fellows program, a joint initiative of Israel's Ministry of Education, Masa Israel Journey and The Jewish Agency, that places Jewish college graduates from English-speaking countries in schools around the country. It felt like a perfect fit. But when the war with Hamas erupted last summer, it seemed that everyone around him was questioning his decision.

"People started asking me, 'are you still planning on going'," he said. "But for me that was something I didn't think twice about."

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

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Is Birthright working?

Shaping Jewish identity through mass tourism

by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News



Photo courtesy of the Jewish Agency for Israel

It has become as much a rite of passage as a bar or bat mitzvah: Birthright Israel, now in its 15th year, has sent more than 400,000 college-age North Americans on an all-expenses paid 10-day trip to Israel. A half-billion dollar venture jointly funded by private philanthropy, the Jewish Federation system and the Israeli government, Birthright was originally conceived as a way of battling rising assimilation rates among North American Jews. But according to Professor Shaul Kelner, associate professor of sociology and Jewish studies at Vanderbilt University, the featured speaker at this year's Goldblatt lecture, Birthright has surpassed its founders' expectations by its evolution into a leadership development program that is creating tens of thousands of young Jewish leaders.

Among the topics that Kelner will address is how the act of touring can shape identity, a uniquely Jewish phenomenon that dates back to the first Israel experience trips of the 1950s. But Birthright broke new ground, Kelner told the HJN in a telephone interview last summer, in three essential ways: By innovating a form of entrepreneurial venture philanthropy intimately tied to the rise of family foundations, by gearing its trips to college-age students (unlike earlier programs tailored for high school-aged participants) and by presenting the trips as a gift from the Jewish community.

"The question of whether the trip should be free was incredibly controversial ... In Israel the thinking was, why should we spend our tax shekels on these affluent North American Jews when we have pressing needs at home?" Eventually, both the Israeli

government and Federations were persuaded to come on board. "They each had their own reasons for investing in it. Just as the Federations were interested in what Israel could do for North American Jews, Israel was interested in what North American Jews could do for Israel."

"Birthright alumni come away feeling simultaneously rooted and uprooted in both places."

Shaul Kelner,
Vanderbilt University

The potential of Birthright Israel to further the cause of Israel advocacy in an increasingly anti-Israel world seems a no brainer, but Kelner said that when the program was created in the mid 1990s, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was irrelevant to what the program was about. "Peace was on the horizon, and Israel was essentially seen as a means to the end of diaspora Jewish continuity and revitalization," he said. But when the peace process collapsed and the second intifada began, "then you had a debate within the program itself about whether the program would also have as a goal creating goodwill ambassadors for Israel who were going to speak up for Israel in the diplomatic front."

Kelner believes that, from both the Israeli and North American perspectives, Birthright has proved its worth.

"Think about it this way," he said. "You're sending hundreds of thousands of young North American Jews right at the point when they're making their career and life decisions ... Even if only two people on each bus devote their lives, either as lay leaders or Jewish communal professionals, you still have a transformational potential for the North American Jewish community because it's these leaders who will do the work of leading and building Jewish life."

One of the most interesting, and poignant of Kelner's conclusions is his observation that many young Jews return from their Birthright trip feeling unsettled in both Israel and back home. Kelner explains: "Participants are encouraged to talk about their feelings about being an outsider in the countries that they live in ... It creates a sense, on the one hand, I'm fully Canadian and I especially feel it when I'm in Israel because I don't speak the language and the culture's different ... And at the same time, I'm a minority in the country that I live in."

His conclusion? That by thinking about what their connections are to Israel and what their connections are to Canada, Birthright alumni come away feeling simultaneously rooted and uprooted in both places. Could this, one wonders, be a sign of the times?

NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Goldblatt Lecture at McMaster by Professor Shaul Kelner on "Shaping Jewish Identity Through Mass Tourism: How Do (or Don't) Birthright Israel Trips Actually Work?"

WHEN: Thursday, October 23 at 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Ewart Angus 1A1 (in the McMaster University Health Sciences Centre.)

CONTACT: Sheryl Dick at dickshe@mcmaster.ca or call 905-525-9140 ext 24567.

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A man for all seasons

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF HARVEY SOBEL

by JOHN BEST, special to The Hamilton Jewish News
Originally published in the Bay Observer Photos by Martin Tosolian

Harvey Sobel who died in June at the age of 80, wasn't exactly born with a silver spoon in this mouth but his family was better off than most Jewish families in Hamilton in the 1930s and as a result he was able to develop a sense of style and taste that set him apart from his peers; although arguably Harvey Sobel had no peers. Sobel was not much of a student — one of his friends said he didn't finish high school. As a teen he told his father that he wanted to work his way over to Europe on a steamer; but his dad, a sometime prosperous clothier who made and lost three fortunes due to gambling, said "no, the only way would be to go first class on the Queen Elizabeth." The passage ended up being on the Empress of Australia, but once in London, Harvey headed for the Kensington Palace Hotel in the middle of London's art gallery district. This was the beginning of a career in home design and antiques that would make Harvey Sobel a sought-after consultant in North America and Europe. On the first of what would be numerous trips to Europe, young Harvey went on a buying spree for antiques and textiles — all of which were charged to his father back home. Sobel brought his new taste for all things French back to Hamilton. For the rest of his life Harvey would surround himself with French Empire furniture, textiles, porcelain and art works. Sobel's fancies were indulged by his parents. When they went away on holidays they would return to find parts of the house unrecognizable after Sobel had finished decorating them. One story goes that his parents purchased a piano hoping Harvey would take lessons; something Sobel had no intention of doing. When the senior Sobels went away on another holiday, they returned to find the piano gone (Harvey had sold it) and instead a staircase had been installed where the instrument had been.

In the mid 1950s homosexuality was unacceptable virtually everywhere and, to put it mildly, Hamilton was no exception. As many gay men did in that era and much later, Sobel tried marriage and he and his wife had two children. But the union ended and Sobel found himself starting over again, essentially broke. He had started his working life as a florist and later he opened an antique store on Augusta Street. Soon the store became a Mecca for the matrons of wealthy Hamilton families.

The antiques, though, were a sideline to his career as a decorator. "He was a terrific businessman," remembers Roger Inglis, a friend and one-time next door neighbour who is also co-executor of the estate. "He used his world travels intelligently. He would find people in India who would manufacture rugs to his design, or furniture makers in Europe who would create period pieces that were more affordable to his clients."

In his career, Harvey Sobel developed an elite clientele, mostly by word of mouth; designing homes for the wealthy in Hamilton, but also in Toronto, Montreal, New

York, the south of France and Florida. Sobel wryly described himself as a "social worker for the rich and the very rich." As his business prospered, it enabled him to create a lavish home in a converted carriage house on Chilton Place in Hamilton's fashionable South end and fill it with exquisite furniture, artwork silver and porcelain. In the winter months the house was decked out in rich colours — burnt orange and royal blue, but when spring arrived, Sobel would drape the interiors with white linen and fill the house with glass and crystal. The house became the site of some of the most extravagant parties Hamilton has seen or is likely to ever see again. "He used to throw a dinner party at the end of the Opera Hamilton season," said Roger Inglis. "You've never seen anything like it — a tent in the backyard, everything catered with more serving staff that you'd normally see at these kind of events, unbelievable food and drink for 120 people — but those opera get-togethers ended after Sobel had gone to bed on an occasion and woke up to find that his wine cellar had been looted." Still there were countless other dinner parties at his home on Chilton Place. Roger Inglis recalls one intimate party that Sobel staged for a prominent Canadian art historian. "There were only 12 of us and Harvey ordered five kilos of beluga caviar ... We couldn't finish it off so the next morning Harvey had us all back for scrambled eggs and caviar."

"When people would come and visit, instead of showing them Niagara Falls, I would take them to see Uncle Harvey."

Barry Sobel
Nephew

Long time friend Sondi Goldblatt remembers the many exotic trips she and her husband took with Sobel. "They were wonderful trips — India, Russia...Thailand," she recalls. When Sobel and his spouse Michael Sahakian married it was at Sondi's house in Dundas and was presided over by Rabbi Bernard Baskin.

Sobel was the personification of extravagance. On his 50th birthday Harvey chartered a plane to take a group of friends to Detroit, whence they were all flown to the Riviera for a celebration at Sobel's favourite restaurant in Beaulieu-sur-Mer. On a trip to Turkey, Sobel came across more than a hundred children who were shoeless and in an act of tzedakah, bought shoes for them all.



Harvey preferred burnt orange and blue in winter but re-did his house in white linen in spring.



Harvey at home on Chilton Place.

Sobel generously supported many charities and arts endeavours. In addition to Opera Hamilton, he was also a major booster of the Art Gallery of Hamilton. He was a staunch supporter of heritage building preservation.

With his high visibility in Hamilton it came as something of a surprise in 1996, when Sobel abruptly announced he would sell his home on Chilton and his Augusta House store, auction off all his treasures and move to Palm Beach Florida to what was supposed to be semi retirement. Sondi Goldblatt recalls that Sobel used to chide her and her husband for going to "flat, drab" Florida every winter. But when he eventually relocated there himself Sobel easily blended in with Palm Beach society including the many wealthy Canadians who had homes there. Spouse Michael Sahakian says he was able to entice Sobel to join the Palm Beach Yacht Club only because he loved the steak tartare served there. In his first years in Florida he also continued his work as a designer.

Sobel never forgot losing out on a decorating job early in his career because he was a few minutes late for the appointment. Similarly Sobel would refuse to receive latecomers. As generous as he was, Sobel would

nonetheless expect a hand-written thank you note in return — nothing less. A phone call or even a reciprocal gift wouldn't cut it.

In something of an understatement, Harvey Sobel lived life to the fullest. "There is no second act," he told friends. Whether it was cooking (he was described as cutting edge — one of Canada's best a friend said), decorating — "one of the most refined senses of beauty that I ever met," said Inglis, or travelling to Mexico to try out hallucigens as a younger man; reading palms and tarot cards — Harvey Sobel lived on the edge. He was one of the first prominent Hamiltonians to be openly gay; and because of his incredible talent, wit and forceful personality, and because, as a friend put it, "Harvey didn't take s.t from anybody," he generated a level of acceptance that would still take years to evolve in other communities. Martin Tosolian, who as a student photographer, took Harvey Sobel's portrait in 1977 said, "Harvey Sobel was very kind, very generous, a man of exquisite taste who went for the spectacular." Echoing that sentiment was David Vukmanich who worked in Sobel's shop, sometimes as a driver, from his teens onward. "There was no bucket list for Harvey. He lived life on his own terms — he probably packed two lifetimes into one." But Vukmanich who got to watch Sobel work, also recalled a thoroughly professional consultant and a generous mentor. "If Harvey saw the least bit of talent (in a person) he would take time to...share his knowledge." "He was out of a movie, said Barry of Sobel, "when people would come and visit from far away, instead of showing them Niagara Falls, I would take them to see Uncle Harvey."

In declining health over the past three years Harvey Sobel celebrated his 80th birthday with a serving of steak tartare at the Palm Beach Yacht club. He died a few weeks later in his home. His ashes will be scattered in Palm beach, Versailles and in Hamilton — a place Harvey Sobel — despite decades of travel to some of the most glamorous places in the world — never forgot.

John Best is the publisher and editor-in-chief of The Bay Observer.

Art in her soul science in her brain

Carol Rossman's raku art comes to the Carnegie

by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

Carol Rossman was as surprised as anyone to discover, well into her 30s, that she had artistic talent. In those days, it was her clinical research on genetic lung disease for which she was known. But the Dundas raku artist's first pottery classes at the Dundas Valley School of Art revealed gifts about which she had previously been completely unaware — a steady hand for throwing pots (the process of shaping clay on a potter's wheel) and an eye for colour and design. But it was her methodical and scientific way of problem solving honed from years working as a medical researcher that has led to Rossman's being acclaimed internationally as a pioneer of new raku techniques.

In November, the Carnegie Gallery in Dundas is hosting a solo show of Rossman's raku pots, marking the first time her pottery will be available for purchase outside the London, Ontario gallery that has exclusive rights to her work.

The term "Raku" refers to a unique firing process where pieces are brought up to very high temperatures very quickly, then pulled from the kiln and placed in an air-tight metal container filled with combustible material like straw or sawdust. Upon contact with the vessel, the material bursts into flames which quickly become starved for oxygen creating a smokey, carbon-rich "reduction" atmosphere that gives Raku pottery its very distinctive, one-of-a-kind character.

What sets Rossman's work apart are her attempts to impose control on a medium known for its unpredictability. She does this by using her pots as a canvass upon which she "draws" her distinctive designs with thin black masking tape, and meticulously applying her glazes to the uncovered parts. During the firing process, she is constantly covering and uncovering until her glazes take on the colour variations she wants. It's a technique that has taken her years to perfect.



Carol Rossman with one of her raku pots.

Photo by Michael Dismatsek

**"It's trial
and error.
Taking notes.
Precision.
That's my
science
background."**

Carol Rossman



Rossman "draws" her designs using masking tape.

Photo by Wendy Schneider

"It's trial and error," she said. "Taking notes. Precision. That's my science background."

Every artist needs a muse, or a source from which he or she draws inspiration. For Rossman, it is the American Southwest, a place she returns to again and again on annual trips with her husband to Arizona and for horseback riding trips in Utah. "A part of me needs to see it all the time," she said.

Rossman's pots are a paean to the timeless beauty and complex patterns of the red rock mesas and canyons of Arizona and Utah. Seeing them displayed in Rossman's sunken living room amidst the photographs that inspired them, one feels immediately transported to another place.

In his book about her work, Jonathon Bancroft Snell describes Rossman's work as "freeze framing moments in nature," allowing the viewer to see things as they were at a particular moment before the erosion process transforms them into something else. Rossman herself, he writes, is a study in contrasts, a technician "both consumed with a rigorous attention to detail" and a spiritual being willing "to accept nature as it is." The scientist and the artist.

For more information about Rossman's show, visit the Carnegie Gallery website at <http://www.carnegi-gallery.org>. Her work is also available at Jonathon Bancroft Snell Gallery in London, Ontario.



O-ma-noot committee members (l to r) Mina Ao, Chani Pinthus Rotchild, Tzvia Devor and Cindy Richter. Absent: Melinda Richter and Robin "Tziporah" Zilberg.

O-MA-NOOT Gallery an oasis of connection

Story and photo by WENDY SCHNEIDER, the Hamilton Jewish News

The first time Chani Pinthus Rotchild stepped foot into Beth Jacob Synagogue several years ago, she thought, "There needs to be a gallery here." It took the convergence of a newly renovated space with the desire of longtime member Charlotte Price to use funds donated in memory of her husband, Sam, to purchase a work of art for the synagogue, for the Israeli artist's vision to become a reality.

The seeds of the O-MA-NOOT Gallery go back to a conversation between synagogue president, Cindy Richter and Pinthus Rotchild two years ago.

"I asked Chani where she thought we could find a piece of art to hang in our new foyer," said Richter. "But Chani said, 'Why don't we make a living wall of rotating exhibits that will change with the holidays and bring people into the synagogue for cultural and artistic reasons?'"

Richter loved the idea and the two women went about recruiting a committee that included artists Tzvia Devor and Robin Zilberg, photographer Mina Ao and curator Melinda Richter. Before long they had a name — O-MA-NOOT, the Hebrew word for "art", a mission statement — a creative and spiritual art sanctuary that reflects Jewish values and promotes community collaboration.

Of the six exhibits presented since the gallery's inception, two have been juried shows based on themes relating to Passover and Rosh Hashana. Both shows featured work by both Jewish and non-Jewish artists.

"The themes originate from Jewish culture," said Ao, "but we're trying to show how these values are universal so that

participants can find their own meaning in the themes ... There's a yearning to understand one another that we hope to trigger through our shows."

In fact, committee members say that one of the most rewarding aspects of their efforts has come from witnessing the connections formed among the artists themselves and among people from both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities who have attended the shows' opening receptions.

"I find it really satisfying (to see members of the public at the openings) because there's a lot of curiosity about Jewish people and a lot of misunderstanding," said Tzvia Devor.

"People who have never been to a synagogue before came to our exhibits," said Pinthus Rotchild, "The gallery has become what we wanted it to be — a place of interaction and communication where people are sharing their curiosity and love of art."

The community is invited to attend the opening of the next O-MA-NOOT exhibit, titled "In celebration of the Pomegranate," on Sunday, Sept. 14 from 2 to 3 p.m. If you're unable to attend the exhibit, the art can be viewed during Beth Jacob Synagogue office hours. For more information visit the group's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/omanoot.gallery or subscribe to their newsletter by emailing o-ma-noot@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.

The O-MA-NOOT committee prides itself on the harmonious and creative way in which it operates. New volunteers are welcome. Please email the committee at o-ma-noot@bethjacobsynagogue.ca.



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TALK POINT

Wendy Schneider, long-time editor of Shragge, contributor and one of the few to stay in Hamilton, recently sat down on James Street North to discuss the community. Below is an excerpt from

by BEN SHRAGGE, Special to t

How has living in Hamilton shaped you?

WS: Growing up in a small Jewish community, where everybody knows who you are and where you come from, has been an advantage for me. I did live away for 11 years (in Montreal and Israel) and I think that was important too, but I feel that it's easier to make an impact in a small community. Dundas was a wonderful place to raise my family and my kids liked growing up here.

Hamilton, there was a Talmud Torah at the Delaware Avenue JCC, which almost everyone attended. And, even though my family didn't live in a Jewish neighbourhood, I knew a lot of people because that's where all the kids went on Sundays. We went there for Hebrew school in the morning and then stayed all day for activities. Everything was centered in that building. It was kind of a melting pot.

BS: Hamilton is a little rougher around the edges than, say, Toronto, and having gone to public school here and lived in the city itself, as opposed to a suburb, I've known a lot of people from different socioeconomic backgrounds than my own. I come from an upper middle class background, but I think that having grown up in Hamilton, which is still traditionally a blue-collar town, has made me grounded. You meet some people who only have friends from their own class or background, and they have a very narrow view of the world. Living in Hamilton has been an education in how different kinds of people live that I wouldn't have gotten had I grown up in another community.

The 1960s, however, ushered in a sea change in the way Jewish kids were educated, with the establishment of the Hamilton Hebrew Academy and Beth Jacob Synagogue's subsequent opening of its own supplementary Hebrew school. Those two events combined spelled the end of the Talmud Torah, longtime Jewish Hamiltonians often point to those years as the beginning of fragmentation in our community,

Another big change I've seen is in the realm of affiliation and identification. When I was a kid, the Jewish Community centre was a focal point for practically everything relating to Jewish life — education, socials, sports. There was even a youth club next door called The Hub, where Jewish high school kids from all over the city would spend their Saturday nights. We live in a different world today, where people are not necessarily looking to do the activities they

What changes have you seen in the community?

WS: When I was growing up in



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KING NTS

the Hamilton Jewish News, and Ben
y Jewish young adults who has chosen
n at the Mulberry Street coffee house
changes affecting the city and Jewish
their conversation.

the Hamilton Jewish News

enjoy in a Jewish setting. The
same seems to be the case when
it comes to Jewish education and
synagogue affiliation.

BS: A lot of people my age have
moved to Toronto. I grew up going
to Beth Jacob Hebrew school,
and even from when I started to
when I finished, there were a lot
less students. It seems that there's
a demographic decline or at least a
demographic hole in the commu-
nity. There are older people and
some families with kids, but there
are very few of us people in the
middle. And for that reason maybe
it becomes a cycle in that the more
young people move away, the less
the people who are left see Hamil-
ton as a place to be, certainly if
they're interested in being part
of a Jewish community that isn't
skewed to an older demographic.

**Do you see a bright future
here?**

WS: I worry about the future of
Jewish institutional life in this city.
And I know that Hamilton is part of
a trend. Whatever's going on here
is a microcosm of what's going
on everywhere in North America
where Jewish institutional life is
declining. Because I'm so active
in my synagogue and Federation,
I see that people aren't feeling as
much of an obligation to support
Jewish institutions. People who
want to live a Jewish life want to
make it up as they go along, or do

things on a personal and not insti-
tutional level. The feeling that you
have to support institutions, that
obligation that I inherited from
my parents and they inherited
from their parents, I don't think
is there anymore. I doubt any of
my four children will join a syna-
gogue. That's a worrisome trend.
However, having said that, it is
what it is. You can't change these
things. Fifteen to 20 years from
now, it's not going to look like
what it looks like today. The syna-
gogues are not going to have an
easy time paying their bills, unless
they do resource sharing. Beth
Jacob recently struck a deal with
Montessori to rent out space. That,
I think is the future.

BS: I see some of the stereotypes
about Hamilton slowly being
changed. There's more vibrancy
downtown, more construction,
more creative industries flourish-
ing. Hamilton is well-situated to
pick up people who want to live
in an established city in south-
ern Ontario but are priced out of
Toronto. The Jewish community
would stand to benefit from that
simply because the more people
who come to Hamilton, the more
economic activity there is, the
more it'll attract all kinds of people,
including Jewish people. I don't
know if the Jewish community
is really involved in the Hamil-
ton revival we're seeing as much
as it could be. Certainly there are
opportunities, which is positive.



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