

Calgary Jewish Federation wants you!
We have lots of exciting information to share about upcoming programs and events. If you are not already receiving our publications, please send us your contact information and we will be sure to bring you up to date on happenings in Jewish Calgary. To sign up today, please contact Janene Puffer at 403-444-3157 or jpuffer@jewishcalgary.org.

Pomegranate

NEWS, VIEWS AND SCHMOOZE WITH THE CALGARY JEWISH COMMUNITY



A MESSAGE FROM DREW

On the evening of June 3, we will observe the festival of Shavuot, or the 'Feast of Weeks' as it is otherwise known, which is celebrated exactly seven weeks after the second day of Passover each year.

This counting of days and weeks is understood to express anticipation and desire for the giving of the Torah. On Passover, the people of Israel were freed from their enslavement and on Shavuot they were given the Torah and became a nation committed to serving God.

As we prepare to celebrate the holiday in the accepting environment of Canada, we think about the Jewish community of the Ukraine, where civility and religious freedom are in serious jeopardy.

While the Jewish community has not been specifically targeted in the current unrest, there is concern that rising nationalism could result in rising antisemitism.

There have been some troubling incidents, however. Earlier this month, Gennady Kernes, the Jewish mayor of the Ukraine's second largest city, was shot and nearly killed in an assassination attempt. Kernes is currently recovering in Haifa.

Rabbi Alexander Dukhovny, who has served the Progressive movement in Kiev and Ukraine for 15 years, noted that Kiev's Jews are afraid of future antisemitic incidents. Anatoliy Gendin, Chairman of the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Crimea and the Chairman of the Community of Progressive Judaism, expressed concern over the local Reform Rabbi leaving the region, as well as the Chabad rabbi fleeing Crimea for New York – taking the Torah scrolls with him.

Gendin said that the overall financial instability of the region increases the risk of harassment of all minorities, including Jews.

Of course, the Jewish community suffers the same economic challenges as all people in the region. From

February 1 through the beginning of April, the price of gas has increased 20%. Prices for the 25 most frequently purchased medicines have increased up to 71% since mid-January. Food prices have increased as much as 55%. Job layoffs abound and continue to grow throughout the Ukraine.

In Crimea, Ukrainian banks and ATM machines are shut down. There is growing anxiety among the elderly, some of whom have started to receive their pensions in Russian rubles. Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) staff confirm that the lines for cashing pension checks are very long and sometimes there are insufficient funds to cash the checks.

Workers with the JDC's Hesed centres report that clients are suffering increased psychological stress due to the current situation and the uncertainty of the future.

Stepping in

With the outbreak of the conflict in the Ukraine, it became clear that immediate attention and support was required to assist our fellow Jews as they are weathering the physical, financial and emotional burdens of this highly unpredictable and potentially dire situation.

So, despite the difficulties and very real dangers of working in the area, our partners, the Jewish Agency for Israel and the JDC are providing essential humanitarian assistance and security to thousands of impoverished Jewish elderly and at-risk children and their families.

Emergency first aid kits and fire extinguishers were purchased for 10 JDC Hesed and Jewish Community Centers in the region.

The Jewish Agency's Emergency Assistance Fund, which helps provide security guards, bulletproof windows, and other security resources, has also transferred over \$350,000 to more than 100 organizations and Jewish communities in

35 Ukrainian towns and cities.

Extra security measures have been implemented at several Jewish institutions in the Ukraine, including expanded security guard hours overnight.

In Crimea, security has been provided to 13 Jewish institutions in several towns, including about six Hessed centers, two Chabad centers, and three progressive Judaism community centers, among others.

JDC is operating 32 Hessed relief centers across the Ukraine. They are serving more than 60,000 elderly and close to 9,000 children and their families with food, medicine, homecare, winter relief and other essential services.

In response to the needs brought about by the crisis, JDC provided some 27,500 of their most needy and vulnerable clients with at least one supplemental service during March and April.

Let us act together to support our Jewish families in the Ukraine and Crimea. To make a gift to the special fund for this important need, contact Irena Karshenbaum at ikarshenbaum@jewishcalgary.org or 403-537-8594 or donate online at www.jewishcalgary.org. One hundred percent of the funds will be forwarded.

There is a custom on Shavuot to stay up all night studying Torah, known as Tikkun Leil Shavuot. This tradition evolved from a Midrash that says that on the morning the Torah was given, Moses had to awaken the children of Israel, who had overslept, and alert them that God was waiting for them on the mountaintop.

When it comes to our fellow Jews in the Ukraine in this Shavuot, we cannot afford to oversleep.

B'Shalom,

Drew Staffenberg, CEO, Calgary Jewish Federation

PLEASE JOIN US!

Fifth Annual Popsicles in the Park

Sunday June 8
11am - 2:00pm • Calgary JCC

Bring your picnic, enjoy an afternoon with family and friends and welcome summer with PJ Library® and Calgary YLD. You don't want to miss the fun activities: *Butterfield Acres Petting Zoo*, face painting, mini golf, obstacle courses, and of course, free popsicles!

For more information contact Diana Kalef at 403-444-3154 or Kathie Wainer at 403-537-8592.

Yom HaShoah Service Recalls Names and Faces

While every Holocaust Remembrance Day service seeks to memorialize each of the six million Jews who were murdered in the Shoah, this year's event paid particular attention to placing names and faces to the victims.

With a theme of *Unto Every Person There is a Name*, the event featured a speech by author and educator Ann Weiss, the daughter of two survivors, who, has spent many years trying to identify the people in 2,000 photographs confiscated from Jews killed in Auschwitz. Prof. Weiss told the stories of some of those photographs and the people in them. The beautiful images, which she has since compiled into a book and a film, illustrate the contented lives destroyed by the Nazis.



Survivor Benny Katz and family



Survivor Henri Mydlarski and family

As it usually does, the Yom HaShoah remembrance began at the JCC's Holocaust Monument, with remarks and prayers by local clergy and survivors. Participants were then invited to lay a stone near the monument's memorial wall. The memorial service then shifted to the Beth Tzedec. As is the custom every year, the service began with the survivors and their families lighting memorial candles.

One highlight of the service was greetings from Andy Amour, president of the Rwandan Canadian Society of Calgary. The Rwandan community is this year commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the genocide it endured in the mid-1990s.

Casino Volunteers Needed!

Calgary Jewish Federation now has the opportunity to access much needed casino revenue to fund our critical services and programs. And we need volunteers! Calgary Jewish Federation's casino will be held on Sunday August 17 and Monday August 18 at the Deerfoot Inn and Casino, at 11500 35 Street SE. Shifts are from 10:00am to 8:00pm, 7:15pm to 3:45am, or 11:45pm to 3:45am.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Irena Karshenbaum at 403-537-8594 or ikarshenbaum@jewishcalgary.org.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY JUNE 25
CALGARY JCC 1607 - 90 AVENUE SW
6:45PM - CALGARY JCC AGM
7:15PM - CALGARY JEWISH FEDERATION AGM



SHEM TOV AWARDS FOR COMMUNAL LEADERSHIP WILL BE PRESENTED

THIS PJ LIBRARY® CELEBRATION REALLY HAD LEGS!

Not even an early May snowstorm could stop about 50 children and their parents and grandparents from celebrating Sammy the Spider's 20th Birthday and Israel's 66th anniversary at Jewish Family Services on Sunday May 4.

Morah Avi Sherman from The Calgary Jewish Academy read the newest Sammy Spider book, *Sammy the Spider's First Trip to Israel*, to the kids.

The kids then enjoyed birthday cake and treats and filled birthday bags with everything a child could want – cake mix, candles, decorations, snacks, and of course, presents. More than a dozen "Birthday-Party-In-A-Bags" were donated to Jewish Family Service Calgary for distribution.

Photos from top: 1. Ariella Ksienski holds on to Sammy, 2. Seth Nagan enjoying Sammy's birthday cake, 3. Eli and Adam Falk with Sammy, 4. Sheldon and Karen Roth with Benjamin



Save the Date

Sunday September 21

Lion of Judah honours
Jenny Belzberg, Myra Paperny and Faith Riback

UJA Women's Division Event with Guest Karen James
A member of Canada's Olympic Swim Team, Karen James participated in the 1972 Munich games, where Israeli athletes were kidnapped and murdered. This experience had a deep impact on her life and Jewish identity.

Watch for details.

Bruchim Habaim... Welcoming Newcomers to Calgary



Calgary Jewish Federation's Shalom Calgary program is launching a new initiative to welcome newcomers to our community and ease their transition into a new city.

Bruchim Habaim, as the program is called, is looking for volunteers who will invite newly-arrived individuals or families into their homes for a Sabbath or holiday meal.

Bruchim Habaim is modeled after the core Jewish value of inviting guests into your home and making them feel welcome and comfortable. The tradition extends back to Abraham and Sarah in the book of Genesis.

Shalom Calgary – and its new program Bruchim Habaim – would like to thank all the volunteers who opened their homes and offered a place at their Pesach seder tables to newcomers.

If you are new to the city and would like to connect with the Jewish community or if you would like to be an oasis of welcome to a newcomer, please contact Karina Szulc, Shalom Calgary and Inclusion Coordinator at 403-444-3158, or karinas@jewishcalgary.org.

March IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS...

ADULT MARCH OF THE LIVING

APRIL 12-26, 2015*

An opportunity to join students and adults from around the world on a journey of remembrance and renewal. Join together as we travel through time and history. First to Poland for Yom HaShoah, then to Israel for Yom HaAtzmaut. The dramatic contrast between the anguish of our past and the hope for our future is the central theme of this journey. Educational sessions on the Holocaust and the birth of Israel will be provided.

INFORMATION SESSION: Tuesday June 24 • 7:00pm • Calgary JCC

Adult MOL Chairs: Bonny and Eric Babins • Educator / Madricha: Riki Heilik

For information contact Riki Heilik at 403-816-1918 or Bonny Gold-Babins at 403-819-1620 or Judy Shapiro at 403-444-3153.

The March of the Living program is funded by Jewish Federations of Canada-UJA and by Calgary Jewish Federation.
*dates subject to change

Calgary Jewish Federation welcomes and supports children and adults with special needs. If you or a loved one needs special accommodations to participate in any of our events, please contact Karina Szulc at 403-444-3158 or karinas@jewishcalgary.org.

All events on the Pomegranate pages are supported by UJA dollars.

KESHER KLUB IS READY FOR SUMMER!

Kesher Klub – the social, cultural and recreational program for Jewish adults (18+) with disabilities – is planning programs for the summer. This fun-filled club brings participants together on the first and third Sundays of each month.

This year, Kesher will have a Shavuot ice cream party in June, a Stampede kosher breakfast in July and an outing to Heritage Park in August.

New members and volunteers are warmly welcomed!

Calgary Jewish Federation reaches out to children and adults with disabilities and their families.

For information contact our newly appointed coordinator of Shalom Calgary and Inclusion Programs, Karina Szulc, at 403-389-6994 or karinas@jewishcalgary.org.



MAKE YOUR CHILD ONE HAPPY CAMPER

One Happy Camper provides grants of up to \$1,000 to children attending Jewish overnight camp for the first time.*

Visit OneHappyCamper.org to find your camp and apply.

For more information, contact Judy Shapiro at 403-444-3153 or jshapiro@jewishcalgary.org

*Some conditions apply

