



From the Desk of the CEO:

This week there has been no shortage of news on which to comment. A humanitarian crisis in Haiti, wildfires in the hills of Jerusalem, and antisemitic incidents in Canada and abroad with the murder of a Yeshiva student in Denver, swastikas drawn on campaign posters in Montreal as well as outside a synagogue in Toronto. These events are all disturbing and all being addressed by our sister agencies.

There is one catastrophe that is truly disturbing to me – the crisis in Afghanistan. As if the images of people clinging to the outside of a transport plane, desperate to leave the country were not enough, the sheer dread of walking on the streets and encountering the Taliban is a state of fear unfathomable to those of us who live in freedom and safety. As the mother of 3 young women, I pray for the girls who are being denied schooling and even worse taken as child brides, as young as 12 years old.

Why do I raise this? Beyond the obvious disgust and sadness, I realize how truly privileged we are to have been born in a free and democratic country, and that we have the right to vote. Not just the right, the responsibility.

Furthermore, we also have the opportunity to make an impact, to be involved in the political process and engage with candidates directly. Throughout the year, the Jewish Federation of Edmonton leadership meets with political leaders and candidates, bringing issues of concern on behalf of the community. Find out how YOU can get involved as a volunteer or contributor and strengthen your impact beyond the vote at our event this Wednesday with CJPAC and CIJA, Elections, The Jewish Community and You. You can register here. <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/elections-the-jewish-community-and-you-tickets-165337989377>

We look forward to a community wide forum with all mayoralty candidates after the high holidays, with more details forthcoming.

Summer is coming to a close but is not over. Our last 'Jkids' drop off day brought a bus load of kids to Camp BB-Riback. They enjoyed a fun filled day of sports, swimming, arts and crafts and OF COURSE- Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup, a Camp BB tradition! It was such a joy to wave the kids off and see their excited faces on their return!

Join us in welcoming Mira Campbell as she will be working with us part time on PJ Library programming! We know that her many years of teaching and programming expertise in a Judaic context will only serve to enhance our PJ Library program.

The Shalom Baby program on our balcony this week welcomed 4 additional babies to the fold. Seeing 12 babies – and their parents- connect over lunch was a highlight!

This weekend I hope to see you at the Edmonton Corn Maze on Sunday from 2-5, a fun outing for all ages and sponsored at only \$5 a person!

Shabbat Shalom,

*D. Lewitt*