



THE BULLETIN

Congregation Agudas Israel
Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky

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President: Kevin Sharfe

Silver Spoon Dinner 2023 Is Coming On In Style !

by *Linda Shaw & Robin Sasko, Co-chairs*

Ladies get ready for an unforgettable evening of friendship, fun, and fine dining at the Silver Spoon Dinner charity gala. We are proud to announce that our guest speaker for the night is none other than the renowned interior designer, television personality, and author **Sarah Richardson**.

Join us as we gather to raise funds for Congregation Agudas Israel, Hadassah-WIZO, Saskatoon Interval House and Ronald McDonald House, while enjoying a night filled with an amazing silent auction, a chance to win fantastic prizes, and an open bar. Sarah will be sharing her insights on creativity, design, and entrepreneurship. With her unique approach to design and her passion for empowering women in business, Sarah is sure to inspire and motivate you to pursue your own dreams.

The event will take place on Monday, May 8th at TCU Place, with doors opening at 6:00 p.m. for a champagne reception. Our four-course meal will be followed by Sarah's keynote presentation, the Sterling Award presentation and our fabulous Silent Auction. You'll have the opportunity to network with other like-minded women, to learn from one of the most successful designers in the industry and to enjoy a wonderful evening of food, drink, and conversation.

Not only will you have a fantastic time, but you'll also be giving back to the community by supporting our four charities. So why not bring a friend and enjoy a night of generosity and good company?

Several Major Sponsors are already on board and many dozens of companies are donating awesome prizes.

Seats are limited, so be sure to secure your spot today and join us for the Silver Spoon Dinner charity gala. We can't wait to see you there!

Holocaust and Human Rights Virtual Symposium
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023 | 11:00 TO 12:45 (SA TIME)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Pinchas Gutter

Free registration:
jewishheritage@jhcwc.org

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Get Ready To Party in Style at the
31st Annual Silver Spoon Dinner
Monday, May 8, 2023
The Silver Spoon Dinner, famous for bringing celebrity speakers to Saskatoon, is thrilled to announce this year's special guest, Internationally Acclaimed, Award-Winning Designer, Dynamic HGTV Canada Host, Best-selling Author, named one of Canada's Most Powerful Women in 2019 by the Women's Executive Network

photo credit HGTV Canada
photographer: Erich Saide

Sarah Richardson
Tickets go on sale on-line at www.silverspoondinner.com/ticket-information.html starting at noon on Thursday, January 19th.
Ticket price: \$250

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Congregation Agudas Israel
PASSOVER Seder
SAVE THE DATE!
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5TH, 7PM

This page is sponsored by Gladys Rose of Toronto

Deadline for the next Bulletin is May 20, 2023

FROM OUR CONGREGATIONAL FAMILY

The Mission Statement of Congregation Agudas Israel

Congregation Agudas Israel is a spiritual, religious, educational and social home committed to deepening the quality of Jewish life in Saskatoon and district. We are an evolving link in the historical traditions of the Jewish people. We are a progressive, democratic and sensitive congregation responding to the widest spectrum of Jewish thought and practice.

Written at the 2002 Kallah by the members of Congregation Agudas Israel

Mazel Tov to:

Zara Gurstein, Call the Midwife - creator Heidi Thomas has been awarded an Order of the British Empire at Windsor Castle on February 14 by King Charles 111rd. In attendance her son Dom and fiancé Kimberly Glassman (Zara Gurstein's great granddaughter) and Heidi's husband Stephen McGann (who played the role of the MD). The BBC series has played for several years and continues.

Matthew Steen and Gina Martin n the birth of their new son Maxwell.



Eli Rubenstein on his appointment to the Order of Canada for his significant contributions in Holocaust education. He was a long time leader associated with the March of the Living since its inception in Canada in 1988. Many of our own children benefited from the March experience and Eli was a frequent visitor to our community.

Centennial Kitchen and Bath upon receiving the Bathroom Renovation Award at the recent 31st Annual Housing Excellence Awards sponsored by the Saskatoon and Region Home Builders Association.

Ron and Jan Gitlin on receiving the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Saskatchewan) for their many contributions in serving the Saskatchewan community,

David Katzman on being awarded the Queen's Jubilee award for volunteerism. David Katzman has been an enthusiastic, dedicated, and devoted volunteer for decades and is well deserving of the award!

Condolences To:

Gladys Rose and her daughter and son in law Toby Rose and Les Klein on the loss of Les' father Rabbi Joel Klein on his 100th birthday on January 1st, 2023

Debbie Broudy-Dubinsky and Sandy Broudy and all their family and friends on the death of their mother Rhoda Broudy on February 12th, 2023 in Saskatoon.



Please join us for the reception and opening of **“Remembrance”** an artistic photographic show of the Lipton, SK Jewish cemetery by Lisa Shiffman.

Snacks provided by the B'nai Brith and an opportunity to view the art and chat with Lisa to follow the presentation.

Agudas Israel main hall,
Monday, March 13, 7pm.
The show will remain in the hall until early June.



Quarterly **QUIZ!**

by **Kaiti Hannah**
Answers on page 9

Quarterly Quiz
Kaiti Hannah
Passover and Purim

1. In most of the world, Purim is celebrated on 14 Adar, but in Jerusalem it is celebrated on which date?
2. In the Hebrew calendar, leap years have an extra month. Which month repeats in these years?
3. What is the scroll from which we read the story of Esther called?
4. What is a Purim Shpiel?
5. What are the four mitzvot associated with Purim?
6. Which number appears most frequently in the Haggadah?
7. In which language was the popular seder song “Chad Gadya” originally written?
8. At a seder, the middle of 3 pieces of matzah is broken in half. The larger half is then hidden away until later. What is this piece of matzah called?
9. What does the word “seder” mean in English?
10. What does “maggid” refer to at the seder?

THE BULLETIN

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This page is sponsored by Steven, Leila, Sarah and Shaina Goluboff and families

From the President



Kevin Sharfe, President, CAI

A new calendar year brings renewed optimism and a fresh start. In thinking ahead, I want to reflect on the recent past and provide some context to where we are currently. The long list of activities and accomplishments at Congregation Agudas Israel in recent months are best understood when viewing them through a lens of time.

The past few covid years were challenging, and Congregation Agudas Israel's unprecedented journey throughout was made even more difficult because of a lengthy pandemic building project. The shutdown magnified our dire financial situation, and the emotional strain of covid isolation forced many people to question the resilience of our Jewish com-

munity and the future of member engagement at Congregation Agudas Israel. For all intent and purpose, the building remained empty and under construction for the better part of two years. It wasn't ideal, but I believe the Board made thoughtful and appropriate decisions during what were extraordinary times. Equally important to me is that you, our members, our greater Jewish family at Congregation Agudas Israel, united once again with strength.

When it came to our financial situation, the Board led with compassion during the pandemic and didn't press members to pay their dues for two years. In addition, the Board also decided to put a hold on a capital fundraiser throughout that time. These decisions were made in consideration of insecure household income during covid together with the knowledge that Congregation Agudas Israel had just come off its own Legacy Proj-

ect fundraiser, which raised a staggering \$3 million (approximately). The Board believed that not pressing our members and friends for additional funds during the pandemic was the appropriate decision during a time when empathy was the greatest currency. Although this heady restraint came at a price, I am proud of the choices.

In the months leading up to January 2023, there has been much talk about member engagement. Do we do enough? Are we offering relevant content? Indeed, there is always room for improvement, and space for thoughtful consideration regarding how to address member interests will be ongoing. Considering where we were, and even in comparison to many years past pre-pandemic, I believe Congregation Agudas Israel is delivering an outstanding bundle of events and activities for

continued on page 10



by David Katzman, President – Saskatoon B'nai Brith Lodge 739

Camp B'nai Brith has been foundational to the Jewish life of many of our congregants and to leadership of our community. B'nai Brith will provide up to one half the cost of registration for any Jewish camper from our city. Just notify the camp office that you wish to have this support. We also are providing \$20,000 to refurbish one of the cabins.

Our sincere congratulations to Joel Bernbaum as he steps down from the leadership of SUM Theatre in order to pursue other equally impressive accomplishments. SUM Theatre brought free, live performances of drama, music and dance to thousands of children (and to seniors during the worst of Covid). Dozens

B'nai Brith Report



of actors and theatre staff received opportunities to develop their craft and grow a resume. B'nai Brith was the first major funder of SUM Theatre because supporting important, new, child-oriented services is a priority. As a bonus, we were also supporting a member of our own community! As an investment, this one paid the highest dividends.

BB was also the sponsor for the reading/workshopping of Jenna Berenbaum's "18 Jewish Order Chinese Food" and we look forward to seeing the full production at a future Saskatchewan Jewish Arts Festival.

We also wish to congratulate Lisa Shiffman for her important artistic and historical contribution "Remembrance" which will open at CAI on March 13 at 7 p.m. The reception is sponsored by BB. And our thanks to everyone

involved in the community Pesach meal. It is a lot of work to organize, and we are pleased to be the wine sponsor for that event.

All of what we do is possible because of the B'nai Brith Silver Plate Dinner. Michael Shaw, Dinner Chair, attended to many of the details that must be considered and, if you haven't been actively volunteering for the dinner but wish to do so in the future, please let him know (MSHaw@centennialyxe.com).

Our next meeting is Sunday, April 2. The meeting is open to all Jewish adults and to those who have Jewish partners. At this meeting we will be welcoming our newest member, Lisa Shiffman. Please contact me (dl.katzman@sasktel.net) if you would like to know more about BB.



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SYNAGOGUE
 GRAND RE-OPENING
 WEEKEND OF JUNE 23RD, 2023
 MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON

This Page is sponsored in memoriam to David Taras of Calgary, Alberta



Divrei Harav – Rabbi Claudio’s Message

Do we know why we are all here?

By Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky

For this edition of the Bulletin, I want to share with you a story that is very dear to me and bring me memories of my first years in the rabbinate. It requires a careful reading. I invite you to read it and if you enjoy it and want to discuss it, let me know and I’ll invite you to coffee. The story it’s about the urgency of a sincere self-awareness on what we are called to do as Jews. Here it is:

The auditorium was full and completely silent. Young and old, rich and poor, people of faith and agnostics, men and women, the happy and the hopeless, those who were joyful and those who felt depressed... cynics and idealists, those who felt lost and those who loved a moment in their lives. They had all congregated that night without actually knowing why, to listen to the words of The Leader who had just come up the stage to share his message with his followers.

The Leader was a person who for some mysterious reasons had the reputation of being a mystic, an illuminated, someone who had acquired the knowledge of essential and

transcendent matters. Someone who had approached the mystery of humanity, even the universe in its wholeness.

However, The Leader’s reputation was fake. Because he knew that indeed everything that others thought he knew, was actually false. He himself knew that he did not have big things to say or to teach. Nevertheless, whenever he addressed a group of people, they listened to him believing that he had important and mysterious things to say. He knew, however, that he didn’t.

That night, The Leader looked around at each of those present, with an intense sight, and then he began with a tenuous but impassionate voice: “I guess that if you all came here on this night, you already know what I have to say”. The people were silent. After a few second someone responded: “No Leader! Tell us what you have to say!”. And The Leader continued: “If you all came here without knowing what I have to say, that means you are not prepared to hear it”. And he left.

The people were in shock. They were all there to hear the wisdom of The Leader, but he said only a few words and left. The occasion would have been a total disaster if it wasn’t

for one person who intervened: “What a wise man! What an intelligent person!” And others followed suit: “Yes, what an intelligent man, what a deep lesson...”. Until another person said “Yes, very intelligent, but very brief...”. And someone responded: “He has the briefness and the clarity of an illuminated. The Leader is right: How dare we to come here tonight without even knowing what we are going to listen? We have lost a wonderful opportunity.... So much mysticism, so much wisdom!!”. The people were so impressed that they began to believe that The Leader’s wisdom was so enormous that it couldn’t be transmitted on just one night, so they asked him to return the following day for a second talk. The Leader, however, replied that he didn’t have enough knowledge to give a second presentation. But the more The Leader refused, the more people admired him. At the end, he accepted to come back the second night.

For the second event, there were even more people present. The Leader, once again, walked up to the stage, stared at everyone

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Editorial

by Matthew Taras, Editor-in-Chief

When I think back on my time in Saskatoon it has been a time of highs and massive changes. I arrived in this city a decade ago as a relative neophyte in the ways of life. I find myself in a very different position as I make my exit.

My son, Thaddeus, was born in this fine city. I became a commerce, and then law, graduate at University of Saskatchewan. I leave in a fundamentally different place than I entered.

In many ways I grew personally in tandem with my responsibilities in Jewish community leadership. It has been my honour to serve first as Finance Committee member, then as Board member, and finally as Editor-in-Chief of the Bulletin. It has been my very real pleasure to serve and aid the Jewish community of Saskatoon in my time here.

It is with a heavy heart but a hopeful eye to the future that I make my exit as a member of the Saskatoon Jewish community. I know I leave the Bulletin in the capable hands of Lisa Shiffman and Jan Eklund. I’m confident the community will be well served by them.

I have lived in many cities in my life, but I can’t say that I’ve ever been more welcomed and integrated into a Jewish community than I was in Saskatoon. I believe that prairie Judaism is it’s own special brand, and I have all of you to thank for opening my eyes to the way a small community comes together and keeps itself vital and alive.

I want to leave a personal thank you to Rabbi Claudio, Kevin Sharfe, and Steven Goluboff.

Rabbi Claudio brought me and my wife into the community and aided my family in their many journeys: that of my son in his early Judaism, and my wife and mother towards their B’nai Mitzvot, and my late father towards his final destination. Saskatoon is lucky for having Rabbi Claudio.

Kevin Sharfe, our President, has always treated me as a trusted and competent member of the Board and made me feel valued both within community leadership and more importantly, within the community proper. I always felt that he encouraged me to have a role and a voice.

Finally, and appropriately, I wanted to say thank you once again to Steven Goluboff. He has championed my presence on the board and

committees more than anyone, and has always provided me with counsel and insights into the Saskatoon Jewish community. Ultimately, he trusted me with the Bulletin, in many ways his Bulletin, and it has been my privilege to serve the community for the last two years as Editor-in-Chief. It is appropriate to make my last act as steward of the Bulletin to thank him once again for the trust he placed in me.


It is with sadness that I leave Saskatoon. I wish I could have served longer. I will miss the city and its people greatly.

You are invited to
Congregation Agudas Israel

BOOK CLUB

Tuesday March 28th, 7pm

Book: *Survivor Cafe: The Legacy of Trauma and the Labyrinth of Memory* by Elizabeth Rosner



Registration required

This page is sponsored by Dr. Alan Rosenberg & Dr. Lesley-Ann Crone and family

Bar Mitzvah



by Lisa Shiffman

On the 25th of February, my youngest child had his bar mitzvah. His Torah portion was Terumah, which means “gift” or “offering”. In his D’var Torah he mentioned that these gifts could be physical, such as the items needed to build the tabernacle. Another aspect of gift giving could be personal time and labour. What I saw from my family and friends over the bar mitzvah week fully embodied this element of Terumah.

When planning for the bar mitzvah, we were unable to get a caterer due to the overwhelming amount of previously postponed weddings – a result of moving out of the pandemic. Family and friends helped set up tables, prepare food and stayed to clean it all

up after the lunch. Our coming together did not feel like a chore. In fact, it added a special unexpected element to this bar mitzvah. Though we worked very hard, it did not feel like a burden because the conversation was light and taking care of these tasks together became an event of its own.

Community members helped in other ways as well. Poor Simonne, our Gabbai (who was also one of our aliyot), was stranded in various airports over the bar mitzvah weekend so Robert Engelbert took the aliyah without a moment’s hesitation. We had a lot of trouble finding someone to be hagbah as everyone had physical prowess issues as to why they could not take on this role but Steven Goluboff informed Harold that he had been “working out” and could do the job. He then went on

to ask, “how many columns do you want”?

Ellie Israel, a friend, and Kosher meat distributor from Montreal, worked hard to make sure we got the deli meat we needed. Getting Kosher meat in Saskatoon is always a huge process, so I appreciate the effort she put in. She is an extension of my personal Jewish community so I was sorry she couldn’t make it out.

I was happy that we could bring everyone together. I felt a parent’s pride in the accomplishments of my youngest child, and an overwhelming sense of family and community. The Terumah that was offered by all those who helped was heart-warming and I thank those of you who made this day a success, from the bottom of my heart.



by Ryan Jacobson

For those of you who do not know me, I am a grade 12 student and I am one of the Presidents of Leonard Lanada’s BBYO chapter. My BBYO experience has been anything but typical. In my first year, I had no idea what BBYO was all about. There wasn’t even a chapter for the Saskatoon teens. Then in my second year, Leonard Lanada was on a rejuvenation mission which was led by a very passionate and loving Malvina Rapko. I took the risk and joined BBYO in my second year, however it was also abnormal as the world was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. Joining BBYO in 2019-2020 was one of the best decisions I could have made. When my third year rolled around I was becoming more involved in our chapter and I finally got to experience my first

BBYO convention! What an amazing experience, I was able to catch up with old Jewish friends and meet new people who I will now have long-lasting relationships with. That takes us to this year, my fourth year, I decided to run for our Chapter’s President position which is called N’siah and was elected by our board members. Being the chapter President has been so fun and I have really enjoyed watching our chapter slowly grow. Leading a chapter has helped me enhance many important life skills such as time management skills, leadership skills, and it taught me how to organize and lead events and board meetings. BBYO has given me a way to connect back to my heritage and I have appreciated getting to know Jewish teens from Saskatoon that I normally wouldn’t cross paths with. If you would have told me 8 years ago that I would be a chapter N’siah I probably would have looked at you with confusion because

BBYO was something pretty foreign to me. However, I am so thankful for the opportunity and I am glad that I took time out of my busy schedule to make time for BBYO. My goal this year as a fourth year is to leave the chap-

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Grateful for BBYO



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Book Reviews by Dan Ronis

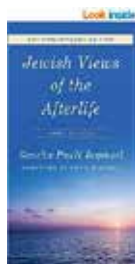
Views of the Afterlife

As I am currently taking the STM course titled 'Life After Death in World Religions', I thought that this would be a good topic for a book column. My understanding is that this topic is not well-developed nor discussed in most branches of contemporary Judaism except in the Kaballah and related mystical literature

Jewish Views of the Afterlife

by Simcha Paull Raphael

As both a scholar and pastoral counselor, Raphael guides the reader through 4,000 years of Jewish thought on the afterlife by investigating pertinent sacred texts produced in each era. Through a compilation of ideas found in the Bible, Apocrypha, rabbinic literature, medieval philosophy, medieval Midrash, Kabbalah, Hasidism and Yiddish literature, the reader learns how Judaism conceived of the fate of the individual after death throughout Jewish history. In addition, this book explores the



implications of Jewish afterlife beliefs for a renewed understanding of traditional rituals of funeral, burial, shiva, kaddish and more.

This newly released twenty-fifth anniversary edition presents new material on little-known Jewish mystical teachings on reincarnation, a chapter on "Spirits, Ghosts and Dybbuks in Yiddish Literature", and a foreword by the renowned scholar of Jewish mysticism, Rabbi Arthur Green

<https://www.amazon.com/Jewish-Views-Afterlife-Simcha-Raphael/dp/1538103443>

Beyond the Threshold

by Christopher M Moreman (textbook for STM course RLST 237)

Christopher M. Moreman offers an introduction to afterlife beliefs in ancient cultures, which are essential to understanding the roots of many modern ideas about death. He examines the folklore and doctrines of major world religions, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religions, and several African traditions. He also discusses psychic phenomena across traditions, such as mediums, near-death and out-of-body experiences, and past-life memories <https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Threshold-Second-Christopher-Moreman/dp> For those interested in learning about different afterlife beliefs that exist in the world, this is a quite good book being academic, neutral and highly readable. (DR)



Proof of Heaven

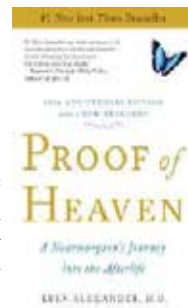
Eben Alexander, M.D. (Agudas library)

Near-death experiences, or NDEs, are controversial. Thousands of people have had them, but many in the scientific community have argued that they are impossible. Dr. Eben Alexander was one of those people.

A highly trained neurosurgeon who had operated on thousands of brains in the course of his career, Alexander knew that what people of faith call the "soul" is really a product of brain chemistry. NDEs, he would have been the first to explain, might feel real to the people having them, but in truth they are simply fantasies produced by brains under extreme stress.

Then came the day when Dr. Alexander's own brain was attacked by an extremely rare illness.

The part of the brain that controls thought and emotion—and in essence makes us human—shut down completely. For seven days Alexander lay in a hospital bed in a deep coma. Then, as his doctors weighed the possibility of stopping treatment, Alexander's eyes popped open. He had come back. <http://ebenalexander.com/books/proof-of-heave>



I would welcome feedback, comments, suggestions. dan.ronis55@live.com



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CIJA | Community Column

Where are we today? Let's take stock.



by **Judy Zelikovitz**

Vice President, University and Local Partner Services, The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)

Passover is one of the most widely observed of Jewish traditions. Looking back at our long history, we gather around the Seder table every year to celebrate our ancestors' freedom from slavery in Egypt. At that same Seder table, we look forward, retelling the story for our children of our exodus from Egypt to Israel, which, since Roman times, has been a communal, unfulfilled aspiration.

The Passover story is one of survival and courage. Led by Moses, the Jewish people wandered the desert for 40 years, choosing to face the unknown over further persecution and oppression by the Egyptians.

At the heart of the story, over these 2,000 years, are our tenacity as a people and our willingness to stand up to those who would do us harm.

Passover is also a time to take stock of where we are today.

Sadly, in 2023, even in Canada, Jew-hatred is still very much a reality. Only now it manifests not only in the streets but also in the virtual world – where social media has created a breeding zone for hate that has gone almost unchecked. And, as we have seen here and across the globe, what happens online can be an indicator of what is to come in the real world.

As online technology continues to develop and expand and the lines of our public and private worlds blur, hate is finding new means of expression.

In Canada, we have a Charter protecting, among many treasured freedoms, our freedom of expression. But Canada's Charter of Rights is also our Charter of Responsibilities, and all freedoms come with limits. Dictating

responsible use of our freedoms, those limits must apply to online communications.

Social media platforms both spread hateful ideas quickly to large groups of followers and mobilize those followers. The results are indiscriminate yet organized campaigns targeting, among others, Blacks, Muslims, LGBTQ2+, women, or Jews, who are trolled online, and, offline, threatened with violence.

In 2018 a man entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh during Shabbat Saturday morning services, murdering 11 innocent Jewish worshipers and injuring six more – the deadliest attack on Jews in US history. His own online history indicated strong ties to online antisemites.

This surge in online antisemitism has taken a celebrity turn with ignorant and hateful comments from Kanye West. His tweets do not just light up the internet. They engender real-world incidents of violence and hate, including spurring a group to fly a banner proclaiming "Kanye is right" over a busy Los Angeles highway and an attack on a Jewish New Yorker who was assaulted in Central Park by an individual yelling "Kanye 2024." West has also defended basketball player Kyrie Irving's promotion of a film linking Jews to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Weeks later, police officers arrested two young men who had threatened New York synagogues. Just hours before his arrest, one had tweeted "Jews owned the ships."

Canada is not immune. In May 2021, during the Gaza war, online hate spilled onto the streets of Montreal when two young men were arrested after driving through a Jewish neighbourhood yelling slurs and threatening Jews – after posting their actions on TikTok.

Yet another Canadian example is the disturbing case of Laith Marouf, who has become infamous across the country for virulent, hate-filled tweets. They were disturbing enough that the government not only disavowed any future interaction with him but also sought to claw back previously distributed grants and change the responsible department's funding process.

These are just a few of the many reasons CIJA has been advocating for legislation to address online hate. The time has come to tell online platforms that, if they cannot moderate online hate by shutting down those who post it, the government must step in. CIJA has demanded accountability. Freedom of expression is a cherished Jewish and Canadian value. But messages aimed at harming identifiable groups is not legal in the real world and it must be legislated against in the virtual realm.

We are hopeful that the government will indeed tackle harms from online hate with legislation, forcing platforms to take accountability for the content they leave up. We have advocated for a third-party regulator and that platforms become responsible for capturing, removing, and preserving – for prosecution – content that violates Canada's hate laws.

Oppression comes in many forms. As we recall the story of Passover at the Seder table once again, let's take a moment to remember our ancestors' journeys and our personal responsibility to ensure that their will to fight oppression will sustain us today as it has for countless generations.

Judy Zelikovitz is Vice President, University and Local Partner Services at The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

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by Amil Jodorkovsky

Arevim – Masa Year of Service

I've made it to the half-way point of my gap year in Israel, where I have been volunteering, traveling, and connecting more to my Jewish identity. Here is a recap of some of the things I have experienced in the past couple of months.

One of my favorite things I have done in probably my whole life was going to the army for a week. Gadna, a short program to experience what army life in the IDF is like, was so enlightening and impactful. I learned mental, physical, and emotional skills, as well as challenged and pushed myself on all levels. We were woken up to start the day at six in the morning, and we finished at around nine. Throughout the day we would learn about the IDF through classes, and we completed a small version of the physical tasks that soldiers in the field do. Some examples are; classes about different roles of soldiers, arms they carry, as well as army crawling, physical tests, drills, and workouts. At first, I was not sure if I would like it but I ended up having such an amazing time that I did not want to

leave. It was truly unbelievable to see soldiers in action and to meet so many people in different positions and roles. It made me feel proud to see my brothers and sisters serving the state of the Jewish people.

On a different kind of note, being in Israel has been amazing for me, but there are and always have been attacks and conflicts with other groups and countries and I have had to live through them like any another Israeli citizen. The closest I have come to an attack is an incident while I was at my nearest walk-in clinic, where someone pepper-sprayed people and staff in the clinic and attempted to stab the doctors. I was lucky enough to be in a different room hidden behind it, but the aftermath and feeling of just escaping something like that is a feeling I will never forget. And yet, my situation is so miniscule to the other horrible things that happen here. The nonstop terror attacks on the Jewish people, citizens being scared to leave their houses, the crazy protests regarding the government, and the overall feeling of fear is something very new to me, as it is for the rest of my program; but it is something that every Israeli has to deal with. Its truly sad and scary but the country itself, its

history, its land, and its people make it easier.

A little while ago I was able to have a meeting with the Hebrew School classes and share my experience on Israel. It was so nice to see everyone again after so long since I have been with them for so long, and it was so fun to hear their excitement to hopefully come to Israel in the future.

I've unfortunately been very sick for the past couple of weeks, I think I might be not used to the weather, and living with so many people, that it keeps happening. First I hurt my foot, then I got a virus, then a kidney infection, but I am so much better now! I am back at volunteering, and I have missed it so much. Words can't describe how amazing the daycare I work at is. The people are amazing, and the kids are the sweetest. I have made so many connections and strong relationships with not only the staff but the kids too. I am so excited for what is to come as I have decided to study Disability Studies in university and work towards my bachelor's in social work.

I miss Saskatoon, and the Synagogue, but I cannot wait for these last couple of months I have left, and to come back and share my experience with everyone.

The Saskatoon Jewish Foundation

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*As my father planted
for me before I was
born,
So do I plant for
those who will come
after me.*

from the Talmud

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Biography of the Month: Ze'ev Jabotinsky

by Stan Schroeder

In April 2015 **Rick Richman** spoke at our Brunch and Learn on *Israel at the Crossroads*.

He gave us his insights on the recent election in Israel and talked about three important Jewish leaders from British mandate Palestine who visited the

U.S. in 1940 to raise awareness of the plight of the Jews in Europe. They were **Chaim Weizmann**, **Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky**, and **David Ben-Gurion**. Weizmann and Ben-Gurion are well known and I have written about them before. Jabotinsky is less well

known, often misunderstood, and I haven't written his bio in this column.

Jabotinsky was born **Vladimir Yevgenyevich Zhabotinsky** October 18, 1880 in Odessa (modern Ukraine) into an assimilated Jewish family. His father, **Yevno** who hailed from Nikopol, was a member of the Russian Society of Sailing and Trade that was primarily involved in wheat trading. His mother **Chava** opened a store in Odessa selling stationery, and enrolled young Vladimir in the city's gymnasium. Raised in a Jewish middle-class home, Jabotinsky was educated in Russian schools. Although he studied Hebrew as a child, he wrote in his autobiography that his upbringing was divorced from Jewish faith and tradition.

In 1896 he began writing articles for a major local Russian newspaper, the *Odessa Leaflet*, and was sent to Italy and Switzerland as a correspondent. He also worked with another newspaper, the *Odessa News*. Jabotinsky wrote under the pseudonym "Altalena" ("swing" in Italian). He graduated from the Sapienza University of Rome law school, and qualified as a lawyer when he returned to Russia. He married Yohana in late 1907. They had one child, **Eri**, who became a member of the Irgun-inspired Bergson Group and briefly

served in the Knesset.

Prior to the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, he joined the Zionist movement and soon became known as a powerful speaker and an influential leader. With more pogroms looming on the horizon, he established the Jewish Self-Defense Organization, a militant group to safeguard Jewish communities throughout Russia. He became the source of great controversy in the Russian Jewish community as a result of these actions.

Around this time, he began learning modern Hebrew, and took a Hebrew name: *Vladimir* became *Ze'ev* ("wolf"). During the pogroms, he organized self-defense units in Jewish communities across Russia and fought for the civil rights of the Jewish population as a whole. His slogan was, "*Better to have a gun and not need it than to need it and not have it!*" Another slogan was, "*Jewish youth, learn to shoot!*"

In 1903, he was elected as a Russian delegate to the Sixth Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. After **Theodore Herzl's** death in 1904, he became the leader of the right-wing Zionists. That year he moved to St. Petersburg and became one of the co-editors for the magazine *Yevreiskaya Zhyzn* (Jewish Life), which after 1907, became the official publishing body of the Zionist movement in Russia.

During World War I, he had the idea of establishing a Jewish Legion to fight alongside the British against the Ottomans who then controlled Palestine. In 1915, together with **Joseph Trumpeldor**, a one-armed veteran of the Russo-Japanese War, he created the Zion Mule Corps, which consisted of several hundred Jewish men, mostly exiled from Palestine. After the Corps was disbanded Jabotinsky went to London. In 1917, the



British government agreed to establish three Jewish battalions, initiating the Jewish Legion. As an honorary lieutenant in the 38th Royal Fusiliers, he saw action in Palestine in 1918. His battalion was one of the first to enter Transjordan.

In 1920, Jabotinsky was elected to the first Assembly of Representatives in Palestine. The following year he was elected to the executive council of the Zionist Organization. He left the mainstream Zionist movement in 1923, however, due to differences of opinion between him and its chairman, Chaim Weizmann, and established a new revisionist party called Alliance of Revisionists-Zionists and its youth movement, Betar. During the 1920s he openly trained Jews in warfare and he and his fighters were imprisoned after the 1920 Arab riots involving attacks on Jewish settlements.

During the 1930s, Jabotinsky was deeply concerned with the situation of the Jewish community in Eastern Europe, particularly Poland. In 1936, he prepared the so-called "evacuation plan", which called for the evacuation of the entire Jewish population of Poland, Hungary, and Romania to Palestine. It was vetoed by both the British government and the Zionists.

He was trying to drum up support for a Jewish Army when he died of a heart attack in New York, on August 4, 1940, while visiting a Jewish self-defense camp run by Betar. 12,000 people stood outside the chapel in New York City at which 200 cantors sang the ancient ritual chant. In 1964 he and his wife were reburied in Mount Herzl Cemetery in Jerusalem.

Editor's Note: Stan Schroeder is the Editor of Congregation Shir Ami's "Shir Notes" in Los Angeles which also won a Gold Medal for "Bulletins." He writes biographies of famous Jews and has offered to share them with us. This article was first published in the Shir Notes. Steven Goluboff, former Editor and Stan met each other in Jerusalem to discuss their community Bulletins many years ago.

BBYO... continued from page 5

ter in good hands and ensure that the chapter has enough active members to sustain its involvement in the region for many years to come. Some of my favourite parts of this year have been becoming closer with the Regional Board teens, connecting with Malvina more, and getting to Co-lead the chapter with one of my best friends Adam Simpson. If there is one piece of advice I could give to an up incoming BBYO teen it would be to step out of your comfort zone and come to a BBYO program and get involved in our little but

mighty chapter. BBYO allows you to connect with your Jewish culture and can act as an escape outlet from your stressful lifestyle. The organization of BBYO is very unique and it is an organization that can provide you with endless opportunities, the effort you put into it will truly be reciprocated back. I am very excited to see how the rest of the year plays out and what our chapter will accomplish. Always remember everyone has a place in BBYO and the everlasting memories you will make will be worth it!



Answers

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. 15 Adar | special meal, and giving tzedakah. |
| 2. Adar | 6. 4 |
| 3. Megillah | 7. Aramaic |
| 4. A dramatic and humorous retelling of the Purim story. | 8. Afikomen |
| 5. Reading the megillah, giving gifts of food to friends, eating a | 9. Order |
| | 10. The telling of the Passover story. Literally "narrate." |

Sponsored by Michelle Bobowsky in honour of her late parents Yitzhak & Jennie Bobowsky.

Divrei Harav ... continued from page 4

and asked with a powerful voice: "I guess that if you all came here on this night, you already know what I have to say". The same question he did the day before. But this time, people had been warned about not offending The Leader with the same childish answer, so they replied: "Yes Leader! Of course we know! That's why we have come here". The Leader waited a few seconds, looked at them and said: "Well, if you already know what I've come to say, I don't see the reason to repeat", and he left.

The people were paralyzed... Until somebody yelled: "Brilliant!". And when others heard that they had said "brilliant", they said "Wonderful! So much wisdom! The perfect complement to yesterday's teachings". But somebody said: "Yes, wonderful, but very brief...". And other replied: "He has the

briefness of the wisest people!". Immediately, voices were heard in the auditorium: "We want more!! We want this man to give us more of his wisdom!"

The third day, a delegation went to see The Leader in order to ask him for a third and definitive address. But The Leader refused, he said that by no means he would do it again, that he didn't have enough knowledge for three presentations. But the delegates implored him again and again, until he was persuaded.

For the third time The Leader stood in front of the audience, now multiplied by those who hadn't been present but heard about his wisdom. Trembling, The Leader approached the podium, waited a few seconds, looked at everyone and said: "I guess that if you all came here on this night, you already know

what I have to say". Once again, the same question. But for this time the people had made an agreement: Only the chief delegate would answer the question of The Leader.

The dignitary, who was sitting in the first row, went up to the stage and with a clear voice responded: "Leader: Some of us know, but others don't!". There was a long and deep silence. Everyone carefully followed the movements of The Leader. They were all eagerly waiting, impatient for the final words of wisdom of The Leader. The Leader took his time, stared at everyone, and slowly, but with confidence, responded: "In that case, if some of you know and some don't, then those who know, tell those who don't know!". And he left.

From the President... continued from page 3

our members to connect.

Below is a summary of happenings over the past many months:

- Summer member BBQ that welcomed new members and old friends.
- Renewed in-person Jewish holiday celebrations, from Rosh Hashanah to late night learning with Rabbi Claudio on Shavuot. Many new members attend shabbat morning services as well and we appreciate your presence.
- We launched a capital fundraiser with the Jerusalem Foundation. The Board determined this foundation met the current needs of Congregation Agudas Israel due to its breadth of outreach within Jerusalem and because of the foundation's financial commitment to Congregation Agudas Israel. In our first year back, we raised almost \$30,000. Yasher Koach! This is a significant accomplishment for year one, and 50% of the money raised stays with Congregation Agudas Israel.

Additional community celebrations and happenings have included:

- Community Passover Seder
- Erev Rosh Hashanah community dinner, with over 60 people attending
- Channukah party, with over 70 people attending
- Community Shabbat dinner, with over 70 people attending
- Saskatchewan Jewish Arts Festival – First ever and a huge success. This festival included live theater showcasing Jewish culture, and a spectacular community Friday night Shabbat service at Congregation Agudas Israel
- Torah In the Park, with Rabbi Claudio

- Hebrew language lessons, with Rabbi Claudio
- Weekly shabbat services followed by an after services kiddush lunch and catch-up
- Planning ahead – save the date! Grand re-opening of our beautiful building on June 23 – 25, 2023
- We enjoyed a Channukah crafting event
- Ongoing Hebrew School, and Hebrew School led Friday night Shabbat services
- An uplifting and fun (and adorable!) Hebrew School Talent Show and fundraiser
- Book Club
- Game Day
- Bike Club
- Coffee Klatch
- A new volunteer librarian with a planned book exchange program
- Community gardening was offered last summer and hopefully again this year
- First aid and CPR training was offered
- Silver Spoon Dinner. This longstanding annual dinner fundraiser is crucial to supporting our finances
- Silver Plate Dinner. This longstanding annual dinner fundraiser is crucial to supporting our finances
- Success in the gifts shop during the Channukah Party. We are planning to bring you more chachkas to choose from. Stay tuned!
- Sisterhood is back and involved with community events

While balancing everyday commitments to our members and friends, Congregation Agudas Israel has been licensing the use of its newly designed hall. Recent licensees include SUM Theater and the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, we are working to renew our license agreement for events, meet-

ings, activities and simchas like b'nai mitzvot, and weddings, among others. Please reach out to Rosy Kreindel, our Event, Membership and Volunteer Coordinator, with your upcoming celebration to reserve the space.

Congregation Agudas Israel represents Saskatoon's largest synagogue and Jewish community center. We have always appealed to the widest variety of Jewish people in Saskatoon, and we have always done so with a strong commitment to Jewish identity. Individuals and families connect with Judaism in many ways, and we strive to appeal-to and foster connections through a variety of activities and celebrations. As such, we understand the importance of delivering though educational programs, and Jewish holiday celebrations, and simple get-togethers throughout the year.

Evidently, we have a lot to be proud of. As President, I am inspired by the resiliency of our members, volunteers, and colleagues alike. Your enthusiastic return post-pandemic has demonstrated a strength of spirit that could light the halls of a much larger community. That should be an inspiration to us all.



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SUN	MON	TUES	Wed	THURS	Friday	Saturday
			1 Adar 8 Prayer Book Hebrew Class 7:00 pm	2 Adar 9	3 Adar 10	4 Adar 11 Tetzvah Shabbat Zachor *Zoe Litman
5 Adar 12	6 Adar 13 Purim Celebration 6:00 pm Fast of Esther	7 Adar 14 Purim	8 Adar 15 Shushan Purim	9 Adar 16	10 Adar 17 Hebrew School Family Service 6:15 pm	11 Adar 18 Ki Tisa Shabbat Parah *Simonne Horwitz
12 Adar 19	13 Adar 20 Remembrance Art Show Reception 7:00 pm	14 Adar 21	15 Adar 22 Prayer Book Hebrew Class 7:00 pm	16 Adar 23	17 Adar 24	18 Adar 25 Veyakhei Pekude Shabbat Hachodesh *Seth Shacter
19 Adar 26	20 Adar 27	21 Adar 28 Board Meeting 7:00 pm	22 Adar 29	23 Nisan 1	24 Nisan 2	25 Nisan 3 Vayikra *Malvina Rapko
26 Nisan 4	27 Nisan 5	28 Nisan 6 Book Club 7 pm 	29 Nisan 7 Prayer Book Hebrew Class 7:00 pm	30 Nisan 8	31 Nisan 9	Apr 1 Nisan 10 Tzav Shabbat Hagadol *Jan Gitlin
2 Nisan 11 B'nai Brith Meeting 7:30 pm 	3 Nisan 12	4 Nisan 13	5 Nisan 14  7:00 pm	6 Nisan 15 OFFICE CLOSED Service 10:00 am Passover	7 Nisan 16 OFFICE CLOSED Passover	8 Nisan 17 Intermediate Day Passover *Joel Bernbaum
9 Nisan 18	10 Nisan 19	11 Nisan 20	12 Nisan 21 OFFICE CLOSED Passover	13 Nisan 22 OFFICE CLOSED Yizkor Passover	14 Nisan 23	15 Nisan 24 Shemini *Grant Scharfstein
16 Nisan 25	17 Nisan 26	18 Nisan 27 Board Meeting 7:00 pm	19 Nisan 28 Prayer Book Hebrew Class 7:00 pm	20 Nisan 29	21 Nisan 30 Hebrew School Family Service 6:15 pm	22 Iyar 1 Tazria Metzora Rosh Chadesh *Robert Englemart
23 Iyar 2	24 Iyar 3	25 Iyar 4	26 Iyar 5 Prayer Book Hebrew Class 7:00 pm	27 Iyar 6	28 Iyar 7	29 Iyar 8 Achrei Mot-Kedoshim *Kevin Sharfe
30 Iyar 9	May 1 Iyar 10	2 Iyar 11	3 Iyar 12	4 Iyar 13	5 Iyar 14 Hebrew School Family Service 6:15 pm	6 Iyar 15 Emor *Michael Scharfstein
7 Iyar 16	8 Iyar 17 	9 Iyar 18	10 Iyar 19 Prayer Book Hebrew Class 7:00 pm	11 Iyar 20	12 Iyar 21	13 Iyar 22 Behar-Bechukotal *Marsha Scharfstein
14 Iyar 23	15 Iyar 24	16 Iyar 25 Board Meeting 7:00 pm	17 Iyar 26	18 Iyar 27	19 Iyar 28	20 Iyar 28 Terumah *Harold Shiffman
21 Sivan 1	22 Sivan 2 OFFICE CLOSED	23 Sivan 3 Book Club 7 pm 	24 Sivan 4 Prayer Book Hebrew Class 7:00 pm	25 Sivan 5	26 Sivan 6 OFFICE CLOSED Service 10:00am Hebrew School Graduation 5:00 pm	27 Sivan 7 Yizkor Shavuot *Zoe Litman
28 Sivan 8	29 Sivan 9	30 Sivan 10	1 Sivan 11	June 1 Sivan 12	2 Sivan 13	3 Sivan 14 *Steven Simpson