

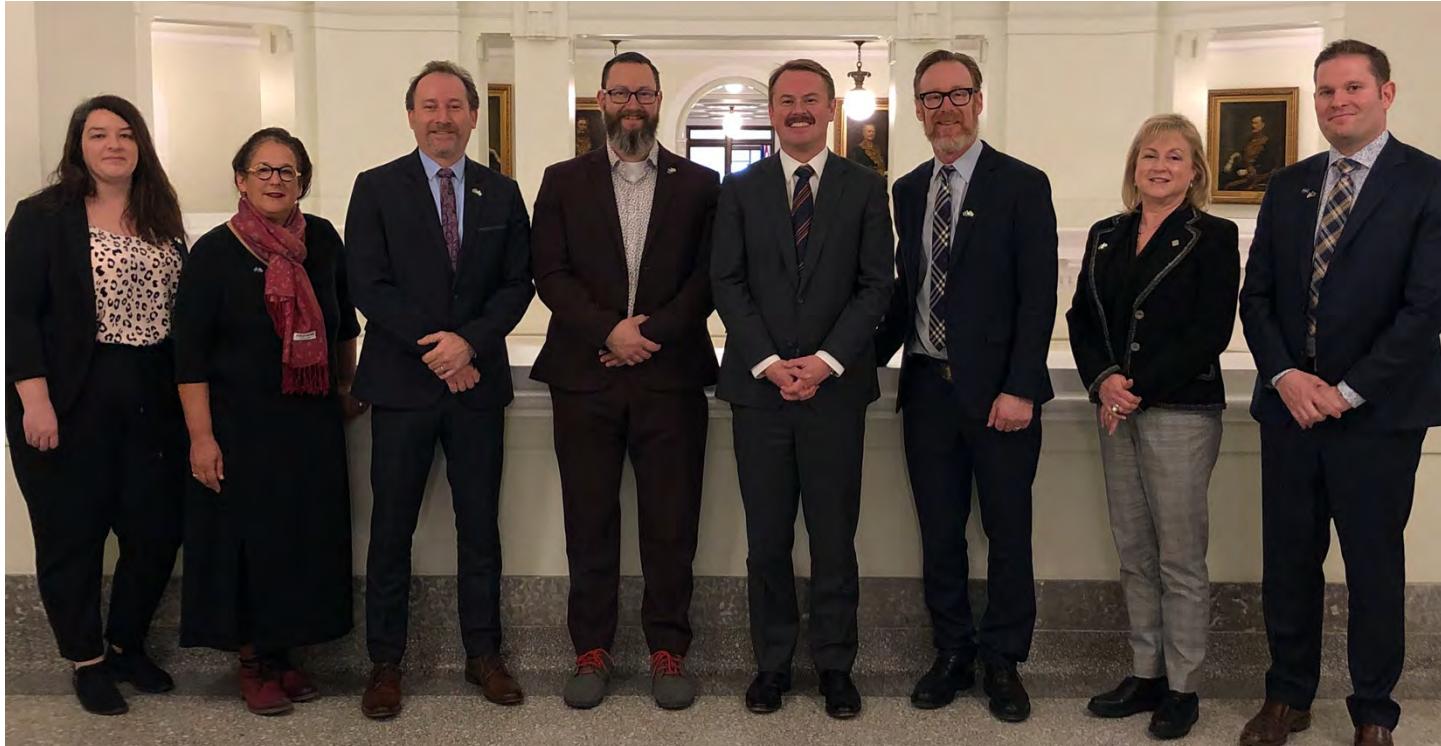
# HaKol

The Voice of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton

VOLUME 7, #2

FEBRUARY 2020

## Community Advocacy 2020



Members of the Calgary and Edmonton Jewish Federations meet with Tyler Shandro, Minister of Health

Every year, we plan an event together with Calgary Jewish Federation, CJJA and CJPAC to host Provincial politicians at an "Israeli Wine meets Canadian Cheese" evening at the Matrix Hotel in downtown Edmonton. This event is a chance for community leadership to meet with as many provincial politicians and staffers as we can get to attend, so that they can get to know our community. It is always preceded by meetings with individual politicians and members of our two communities throughout the day. This year, the event took place on November 25th.

The day included a number of very successful meetings with politicians, including Minister of Health Tyler Shandro, Leader of

the Official Opposition Rachel Notley, Doug Schweitzer, Minister of Justice, and Nate Glubish, Minister of Service Alberta. The meetings were very successful, and we got a chance to follow up on a couple of them at a later date with key players and other politicians. We also got to sit in on Question Period, which is always interesting.

Thank you to all who attended these meetings, including Adam Silver, Jared Shore and Yanai Segal from Calgary, as well as Steve Shafir, Lisa Miller and Debby Shoctor from Edmonton and Alyson Grant from CJJA. Topics raised with the Ministers included genetic discrimination, anti-Semitism, Casino funding, funding for renovation of the Holocaust Monument,

Holocaust Education and support for Israel and our community.

After the meetings, the Wine & Cheese event was held at the Matrix hotel, attended by approximately 100 community members, government staffers and staff from many organizations, and politicians. This is always a very heymish event where people get to meet, mingle and get to know one another in a more casual and relaxed setting. We appreciate all who attended on behalf of Federation and other community organizations. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year.

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## President's Message from Annual General Meeting



Thank you for coming this evening to the AGM. I have some brief comments to make regarding a couple of things that have highlighted our year at the Jewish Federation of Edmonton.

The first item that I want to discuss is the current situation regarding the state of a JCC. We have met with tax lawyers to determine the best course of action for us to take in order for us not to incur severe tax penalties for non-use of the funds. We are currently engaging with CRA to extend the time for use of the funds from our nearing deadline and we hope to provide a further update on this to the community within the next 2-3 months. In the interim, we do not believe that we will be able to build a JCC at this time as we do not have the adequate financial resources to purchase property and to build a building. Therefore, the Federation Board will, over the next few months, determine the best course of action for investment of the funds on a long-term basis, including discussion of whether the interest on those funds can be or will be used to help fund JCC operations, including payment of rent in our current location.

Another priority of mine is to look at our annual campaign and to look at how we can try to invest in our future by moving toward larger, endowed gifts from our donors so that our campaign is secured into the future. I hope to meet with the board of the Charitable Foundation over the coming year to discuss how this can be coordinated.

Over the last two years, I have tried to make it our goal to stand-up and speak out on behalf of the Jewish Community of Edmonton. Together with our advocacy partners, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, we have been outspoken in the face of anti-Semitism both in Edmonton and abroad. We took the fight to the Edmonton Journal this summer when they published an anti-Semitic cartoon, and we held them to account until they met most of the commitments, they promised to us when we met with them. We continue to fight for the Jewish community in meetings with politicians, including with Councillor Hamilton and the Mayor's office to discuss security concerns we have; with the Premier and many members of his cabinet to discuss issues of concern to our community including Holocaust Education, genetic discrimination, security and health care services. We also met with almost every local candidate in this past year's Federal Election.

Every year, we pay a significant amount of money to UIA Federations Canada for support for various things. A large percentage of those funds go to the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs - CIJA. CIJA provides our community with programming support, as well as with security support, advocacy support and training. They act as a PR firm for our community and have

ammunition at their fingertips that help us when we are in need. An example of this occurred just last week. A University of Alberta professor spoke out stating that the Holodomor did not exist. We were asked to comment. Knowing nothing about the intricacies of the politics surrounding the Holodomor, we reached out to CIJA. Within an hour, they had vetted our proposed statement, which was run by the CIJA's internal PR team and legal team. They had also reached out to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to solicit their opinion. We issued our statement. We would not have been able to do so without the support provided by CIJA. We continue to maintain an excellent relationship with their staff and lean on them on a regular basis to assist us with our needs.

Over the next year, I intend to re-constitute the Council of Presidents so that we can have an open and productive dialogue with the Presidents of all of the Jewish organizations throughout the city. I hope we can all work together to further enrich this community.

We continue to try to find individuals from various backgrounds and affiliations to join our board and committees. If you or anyone else you know is interested in joining us, I ask that you reach out to me. We are continually looking for people to sit on our various committees and to assist with programming including Good Deeds Day and Heritage Days, with Holocaust Education and advocacy. Without the volunteers that we have, we would not be able to function. The current volunteer base continues to shrink and we need your assistance to make sure that we fulfil our purpose.

I would be remiss if I did not take the last part of my report to you to thank the tireless staff of the Federation for everything that they do. Debby Shoctor, our CEO, has been extremely dedicated to enriching Jewish life in Edmonton for numerous years. Susan Schiffman has brought a level of professionalism to the UJA campaign and the film festival. Tal Toubiana has provided an essential resource to the community with respect to his security knowledge and also provides invaluable support to programming. Dani Uretsky continues to work on programming and does excellent work on Holocaust Education. Yaara Shabtai works on outreach, an area that we are hoping to grow in the coming year. Elianna Lisan provides enormous support to UJA and IBP. And Jennifer Brownbridge provides bookkeeping support for the Jewish Federation, JCC and the Endowment Fund.

Thank you all for attending tonight.

Steven Shafir  
President  
Jewish Federation of Edmonton

## HaKol

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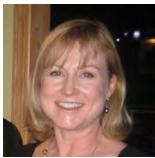
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## CEO's Speech from Annual General Meeting



This has again been one of the busiest years I can remember. After last year's very long December AGM, we were very surprised to learn that the vote on the JCC had been nullified, and there had to be another vote at TT in February. On that occasion, also a very long and contentious meeting, the plans that we had been working on for several years to build a JCC at Talmud Torah were voted down. Since then, we have had to regroup and examine what our next steps will be on this front, and we are still in the process of that, as Steve has explained. We held a very successful Holocaust Education Symposium with a new speaker and format, Renee Goldman, author of "A Childhood Adrift," winner of the CBC Canada Reads contest. This program, which is funded by CIJA and the Dianne and Irving Kipnes foundation was very well-received, as it always is. In April, due to the election and the bad weather, we held the Yom Hashoah ceremony indoors at the Beth Shalom Synagogue, and showed an award-winning movie, "Who Will Write Our History." We were pleased to have the newly-elected Minister of Culture, Leela Aheer, speak to us, and the program was very well-received. Next April, we are already booked to host the event back at the Legislature, indoors, which is a good location for our older members and survivors, who have suffered in recent years outdoors from the inclement weather. We thank Minister Aheer and her staff for making that happen. We are looking into the restoration of our Holocaust memorial, on the grounds of the Legislature, which has deteriorated somewhat in recent years, and MLA Lorne Dach is helping us with that. We thank our Holocaust Education Committee, under Chair Shane Asbell, as well as Dani Uretsky, who staffs that committee, and all of its members, for these great programs.

In April, we held our fourth annual Good Deeds Day, run by Cheryl Goldstein, Lauren Tankel and the rest of the committee, and staff member Elianna Lisan, which was a great success, benefitting the Food Bank and Canadian Blood Services. Events continue throughout the year under the Good Deeds Day banner, including the recent community Bissell Centre Thanksgiving lunch.

IBP adjudications took place shortly after that, and I would like to thank our IBP Committee, under chair Lisa Miller, and staff Elianna Lisan, for their efforts on that. We reviewed 47 applications and gave out 19 scholarships to Camp, 33 to Talmud Torah, and two to March of the Living, 5 to Maccabi and 6 to BBYO.

This year we celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut at Snow Valley, a wonderful event enjoyed by everyone, organized by staff member Tal Toubiana and his committee, and attended by Premier Jason Kenney. Yom Hazikaron was celebrated at



Edmonton Jewish Federation AGM, December 2019

Beth Israel Synagogue, thanks to Rotem Lavy and Tal.

Close on the heels of that came the 23rd annual Edmonton Jewish Film Festival, held over two weeks at the Landmark Cinema Downtown. This annual event is looked forward to by a large number of our community, and is a fundraiser for our P2G program, which sends students on an exchange to Israel each year. Thanks to Sam Koplowicz for chairing this event, and his entire Committee, along with Susan Schiffman, who work so hard on this event each year.

In the summer, we sent 36 students on Birthright Israel trips, a joint US-Canada-Israel program which offers young people their first taste of Israel.

In June, we hosted the P2G Canada Coast-to-Coast Steering Committee meetings here in Edmonton. About 50 people attended from across Canada and from our partnership region in the Northern Galilee. The conference discussed issues of mutual concern to the Partnership community, including student exchanges, teacher's conference, High Priority projects and governance. Thank you to Ivan Steiner for chairing this program for the past 22 years, and to Rebecca Asbell for stepping up to take over from Ivan.

At the end of summer, it was again time for Heritage Days, which has hosted the Israel Pavilion for over 35 years. Once again this year, the Aviv and Shiru Hashir Dancers performed, we had cultural displays and sales of Judaica, offered your name in Hebrew bracelets, sold falafel and blintzes. This year, we won three awards - our most ever: for Entertainment, Arts and Crafts, and Vignette. Thank you to past-Chair Christina Reboh for continuing to help with this event, and to Tal Toubiana, Catering by Ed and everyone who volunteered.

Later that month, the Maccabi Alberta Delegation left for the Maccabi Games and Artsfest in Detroit under the guidance of Barry Pechet, and Joey Tappenden, and the 10 participants

had an awesome time. This was Barry's last games, so we sincerely thank him for his service. This year, the program will be run out of Edmonton, and Marit Abrams will lead it with the help of staff Dani Uretsky. In the Fall, JCORE and Hillel started up again after taking the Summer off, and we are very fortunate to have Yaara Shabtai and Sapir Fellus heading up these two younger divisions of Federation. They do an excellent job and host many interesting programs throughout the year, including the JCORE B'nai Mitzvah class, which was very successful last year, and the Hillel lunch and learns.

Fall is also the start of our UJA campaign, the lifeblood of this organization. This year, we were fortunate to have Howie Sniderman and Ron Sorokin as UJA Co-chairs, supported by Past Co-Chair Karen Oshry for major gifts, Susan Schiffman, our Director of Development, and Elianna Lisan, our Database Manager and IBP administrator. We started off with a Canvasser Training BBQ at our offices, at which Dirk Bird, a member of JFNA's consulting team from Denver, gave us some inspiring words. The Opening event held at the Club at the Citadel featured Yiddish singer Eleanor Reissa in "Hip, Heymish and Hot." It was very well-received, as was guest speaker Sherri Wise, from Vancouver, who spoke about surviving a terrorist attack in Jerusalem. We also gave out the inaugural Dianne & Irving Kipnes Kavod award for generosity to our community. Other Campaign events this year included a dinner for top donors before the Yonah Bob Israel update at Beth Shalom synagogue and a Young Leadership Networking event held at the home of Howie and Debbie Sniderman, co-hosted by Ari Sniderman and Faren Hochman. We also held a telethon at our offices, manned by Hillel and BBYO students and others, who did a fabulous job of getting a large group of cards done who we did not have canvassers for, so thank you to all who participated in that.

**Continued on Page 6**

## 2019/20 UJA Campaign Report

BY SUSAN SCHIFFMAN



Our Edmonton Jewish Community showed exceptional support for UJA once again this year. It has been a challenging Campaign, as key donors have retired, moved away, or experienced financial difficulties. Yet, we have been fortunate that many generous donors throughout the Community have stepped in and raised their gifts to counterbalance some of the shortfall. To date, the UJA Campaign has raised nearly \$1 million. The Campaign team is hopeful that we will receive a few more large gifts over the coming weeks, to end the Campaign closer to our target of over \$1 million.

In the year ahead, Federation will continue to invest UJA funds in an array of fine programs and services to connect, inspire, and enhance Jewish Edmonton. Through The Edmonton Jewish Film Festival, Yom Ha'atzmaut, and the Israel Pavilion at Heritage Days, UJA funds will be used to showcase our heritage and culture to a wide audience. We will offer PJ Library and Holiday Programming to connect our children to our Jewish stories, traditions and celebrations. Fulfilling our promise to remember the Holocaust, we will deliver educational programs for Edmonton high school students and commemorative ceremonies on Kristallnacht and Yom HaShoah.

Our children and teens will strengthen their ties to Israel and to Judaism, through UJA-funded bursaries to Talmud Torah, Camp BB Riback, BBYO, March of the Living, and Maccabi Games. Our neediest members will continue to receive support through Jewish Family Service's bereavement, resettlement, and advocacy services, while seniors will benefit from a

host of cultural and fitness programs at the Jewish Seniors' Drop-in Centre.

In Israel, UJA funds will support projects in our partner region in the Upper Galilee and will help new immigrants find homes and jobs through the Jewish Agency. Around the globe, we will work towards Tikkun Olam, bringing food, medicine and shelter to vulnerable Jewish communities in dozens of countries through the Joint Distribution Committee.

In the face of the many horrific anti-Semitic attacks in recent months, as well as anti-Israel activities on campus through Hillel and beyond, we will continue our strong advocacy efforts, together with our partners at CIA and JFC-UJA, fighting Anti-Semitism and defending our community interests at the local and national levels. We will continue to make our community's security a top priority, as our dedicated staff member works closely with law enforcement officials and provide security training and consulting to the leadership of our schools, synagogues and partner organizations. Thanks to a new major gift from an outstanding donor, all Jewish Community organizations will now be eligible for grants from Federation for security measures, in addition, to our grants to synagogues for High Holiday protection.



UJA Co-Chair Ron Sorokin at the AGM

We extend our deep gratitude and warmest thanks to our UJA co-chairs, Ron Sorokin and Howie Sniderman, whose leadership, drive, and enthusiasm have made the Campaign possible. Warmest thanks also go to Karen Oshry, outgoing UJA Co-chair, for her special role as steward to major donors.

Our very sincerest thanks are extended, as well, to our outstanding team of volunteer canvassers who are the force behind our UJA Campaign. This year, once again, they took on their assignments with terrific energy, enthusiasm and professionalism. We are truly grateful to all of them for a job so well done.

Above all, we thank the hundreds of donors whose generosity and devotion to our Edmonton Jewish Community, and to Jewish people worldwide, are unmatched. Your support of Edmonton UJA allows great progress and strategic investments that transform Jewish lives at home, in Israel and across the globe.

As the 2019/20 Campaign nears its close, we begin to look towards the upcoming Campaign. We will continue to work hard to bring events and leadership opportunities that engage supporters in Federation and in the UJA Campaign. Yet, we anticipate that the difficult fundraising environment will continue. To sustain Jewish community life, as we know it, our existing donors will have to give even more generously than before.

We urge you to help us keep Jewish Edmonton thriving, safe and strong now and in the future. Please give generously, attend Federation events, and volunteer your time. Participation not only enriches your life, it improves the lives of Jewish people in our Community and around the globe.

To make a gift or become more involved, please contact Susan Schiffman at 780-487-0585 x 206 or at [susans@edjf fed.org](mailto:susans@edjf fed.org).



Federation delegation meets with Leader of the Official Opposition, Rachel Notley

## JCC Update

BY STEVEN SHAFIR, PRESIDENT



We continue to explore options for a Jewish Community Centre in Edmonton. We are taking into account consultations made with the community and will proceed accordingly based on the community's wishes through those consultations.

We continue to explore options for a Jewish Community Centre in Edmonton, however, at this time there is no solution foreseeable that would make sense for our community. Therefore, we have retained legal counsel to assist us with obtaining a further extension from CRA for use of the sale proceeds. At the same time, the Executive of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Edmonton and the Board of Directors of the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton have unanimously passed a motion regarding the use of the JCC funds that can be found below.

To date, the funds from the sale of the JCC have been held in very conservative investments that have realized an average of no more than 2% annually in interest. Funds were held in a manner in which we could easily liquidate in order to build. Now that we are in a period whereby we do not know when a JCC will be built, we have decided to move the funds into investments that will yield a higher return. At the same time, we want to maintain the generation of 2% interest to be held in the fund for a future JCC. Additional funds over the 2% interest earned will be used to pay the debts owing by the Jewish Community Centre to its creditors, toward shortfalls of revenues of the JCC over and above JCC expenses and lastly toward the annual United Jewish Appeal campaign.

The entire text of the motion passed can be found on the right.



Steve Shafir and Mor Barzel at the ACM

## Motion Passed Regarding JCC Funds

*WHEREAS the Jewish Community Centre of Edmonton (the "JCC") currently has on account four (4) GICs representing the savings of principal and interest from the sale of the lands and building previously owned by the JCC;*

*AND WHEREAS the GICs have a value of \$5,392,137 plus residual interest (the "Proceeds");*

*AND WHEREAS the GICs are currently returning between 1.25% and 2.89% in interest annually;*

*AND WHEREAS it remains the desire and goal of the JCC, the Jewish Federation of Edmonton (the "Federation") and the entire Edmonton Jewish Community to build a Jewish Community Centre for the benefit of the entire community;*

*AND WHEREAS the finalization of a Jewish Community Centre cannot be achieved in the near future;*

*AND WHEREAS the Proceeds will continue to be invested for the benefit of building a Jewish Community Centre in Edmonton;*

*AND WHEREAS the Board of Directors of the JCC acknowledges that conservative investments, other than GICs exclusively, should yield a higher investment over the long term;*

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. *The JCC shall divest the Proceeds from the GICs;*
2. *The JCC shall invest the Proceeds from the GICs with a wealth management company at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors of the JCC;*
3. *The JCC shall re-invest the first 2.0% earned from the Proceeds annually into the fund held for building a new Jewish Community Centre in Edmonton;*
4. *The JCC may then distribute any net return (after management expenses) over and above 2.0% earned annually as follows:*
  - a. *Firstly, toward any debts owed by the JCC to third parties, including, but not limited to the Federation;*
  - b. *Secondly, toward shortfall in revenues available to pay expenses; and,*
  - c. *Thirdly, to the annual United Jewish Appeal campaign.*
5. *Notwithstanding paragraph 4 herein, on an annual basis, the JCC Board of Directors may elect to hold any amount of return earned that is greater than 2.0% in a contingency fund to be distributed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 herein in future years;*
6. *The JCC shall pay management fees as necessary for the investment of the Proceeds and any additional return hereafter invested;*
7. *The Board of Directors of the JCC shall strive to ensure that all investments are in corporations or entities that are consistent with the purposes of the JCC and the Federation; and,*
8. *If the JCC is mandated by any governing body, including, but not limited to the Canada Revenue Agency, to distribute more than what may be available on an annual basis in accordance with the mechanisms set out in this resolution, then the mandated amount shall be distributed notwithstanding what is set out herein.*

## Hillel Edmonton 2020: Connecting to Three Different Plugs

BY SAPIR FELLUS



When I was in my 2nd year of undergrad, I decided to take a Canadian Judaism class. My professor, Dr. Margolis, had a nose piercing and purple hair, and is probably one of the most memorable professors I have ever had. She asked us one day, "How do you think Jewish people in Canada relate to their Judaism?" Some people suggested we connect through food, others said through shared history, or through ritual. Well, according to research, Jews connect to Judaism through three different "plugs": Israel, Religion, and the Holocaust. "The Holocaust?" I was surprised. Is attaching oneself to a deeply harrowing event, and nothing else, the best way to connect to one's identity as a Jewish person? And more importantly, is it enough to sustain the next generation of young Jews?

This past month, people all over the world commemorated the Holocaust. It is so important to remember the past. However, it is also important to look towards the future. Why choose only one way to connect? Wouldn't it be better to enrich our lives by seeking to connect to our Judaism, and to each other, in as many different ways as possible? I challenge our students, and anyone reading this, not to pigeon-hole themselves into one certain definition of "Jewish". If you are from Israel, then share your passion for Israel with an Edmontonian Jew, and let them talk to you about their Jewish ancestors who settled in Western Canada 100 years ago. If you connect through spirituality, then invite your

friends over to make hummus and talk about Israel, or take a seminar on Jewish philosophy. We are all diverse, so let us connect in diverse ways, in order to enrich our lives.

This is the goal of Hillel Edmonton: to let students explore different ways of connecting to their Judaism. Earlier in November, we partnered with Chabad Student Network of Edmonton by sending ten of our Hillel student leaders to Crown Heights, New York, to spend shabbat with 1,000 other students from all over the world. This was a unique opportunity to delve deeper into their Judaism. They came back recharged and inspired from this incredible weekend, and are looking forward to bringing some of that energy to the University campuses.

Recently, we hosted a Birthright-themed Jews & Brews at the University of Alberta student bar, where Jesse Primerano, the Birthright Israel recruitment director, came to answer all of our questions about how to get to Israel for free. Later this month, we are partnering with the Jewish National Fund (JNF) University branch to bring to students an educational expert who will discuss feminism in Israel over a Lunch & Learn. Also in partnership with JNF University, we will hold a Tu B'shvat dinner, where we will enjoy an eco-themed dried fruit seder as well as a DIY terrarium workshop. In March, we will join our friends at JCORE to celebrate Purim, so make sure to bring your costumes! Also, a representative from CIJA will come to speak to us about Israel Advocacy. Finally in April we will energize students with our crowd-favourite shabbat dinner, and at the end



Members of Hillel Edmonton

of May we will celebrate the end of the semester together with Hillel Calgary through Jews, Schmooze and Canoes at Camp BB.

If you know a University-aged student who would like to join and take up a leadership role within Hillel, please direct them to Sapir at [sapirf@edjfed.org](mailto:sapirf@edjfed.org).

## CEO Speech

Continued from Page 3

Also this Fall, there were the annual P2G community meetings held in Israel, which were attended by volunteers Ivan Steiner and Rebecca Asbell, and staff Tal Toubiana. And the P2G exchange students from Israel just left after another successful visit to our City hosted by the Committee and parents who generously billeted the students.

I recently attended the JFNA FedLab in Washington, D.C., a gathering of Jewish Professionals and leaders from all across North America. We were also invited by Louis St. Laurent Catholic School to tour the Anne Frank Exhibit which they had brought in from the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. Many community members attended this wonderful exhibit and met the student guides and their teachers who worked hard to put it all together. For Kristallnacht, we hosted Ellin Bessner, author of a book about Jewish veterans of World War II. Remembrance Day at the Cemetery was well-attended by our community organizations, as always.

Most recently, we held our annual Wine & Cheese with Provincial politicians at the Matrix Hotel, as well as had private meetings with them during the day prior along with CIJA and Calgary Federation members, thanks to those who attended.

Other things that took place throughout the year included PJ Library holiday celebrations and programs held jointly with other community organizations, many Board and Executive meetings, our annual Chanukah meeting with Archbishop Smith of the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton, quarterly meetings of the Jewish Community Relations Committee of the Edmonton Police Service and the Chief's Advisory Council, thanks to Tal Toubiana and the members who attend these meetings along with myself; two separate security events, with Magen Dovid Adom, at Beth Israel, and Stop the Bleed, at Talmud Torah, hosted by CIJA, numerous meetings with the Hate Crimes Unit, Interfaith groups, and politicians. The Free Loan Society continues to operate, giving interest-free loans to those in need, we continue to publish the HaKol and the JFED e-weekly, monitor our Facebook,

Twitter and Instagram accounts, update the website including the Community Calendar, and continue to advocate on behalf of the community through our Community Relations Committee, speaking out about things like the anti-Semitic Cartoon in the Edmonton Journal, the Imam preaching hate at an Edmonton Community League, etc. Thank you to Steve Shafir for chairing this committee, something he feels very passionately about.

In conclusion, I would like to thank our entire Executive, Board, Committee Chairs and members and the Staff, for all of their efforts, and for making this year a memorable one for us all.

*Debby Shafir*  
CEO

The Jewish Federation of Edmonton

## Kristallnacht 2019

BY DANI URETSKY



This year we commemorated Kristallnacht on Thursday, November 7 at the Beth Shalom Synagogue. We were joined by MLA Lorne Dach. The service was a little different this year as we recognized and honored March of the Living participants and alumni, survivors, second generation survivors, children, grandchildren, and anyone who is against anti-Semitism and hatred. We recognized them by rising and lighting a candle in their memory. We would like to thank Rabbi Steven Schwarzman for his Dvar Torah, Cantor Mannes for the El Moleh and Mourner's Kaddish, and Shane Asbell for being our emcee that evening.

Following the service, we were joined by author and Canadian journalist Ellin Bessner. She is the author of a new book about Canada's Jewish servicemen and women who fought in the Second World War. The book is called "Double Threat: Canadian Jews, the Military, and World War II". Ellin was born in Montreal and graduated with a degree in journalism and political science from Carleton University. Her career as a journalist has taken her across Canada and around the world, working for *CTV News* and *CBC News*, and also stringing for the *Globe and Mail*, *The Canadian Press* and other organizations. As a foreign correspondent based in Rome, Italy, during the 1990s, aside from reporting on the Vatican, the Mafia, Italian food, fashion, opera, and of course, on Italian soccer, Ellin also covered several brutal civil wars in Africa. She's interviewed Prince Phillip and the Dalai Lama. She was a business anchor



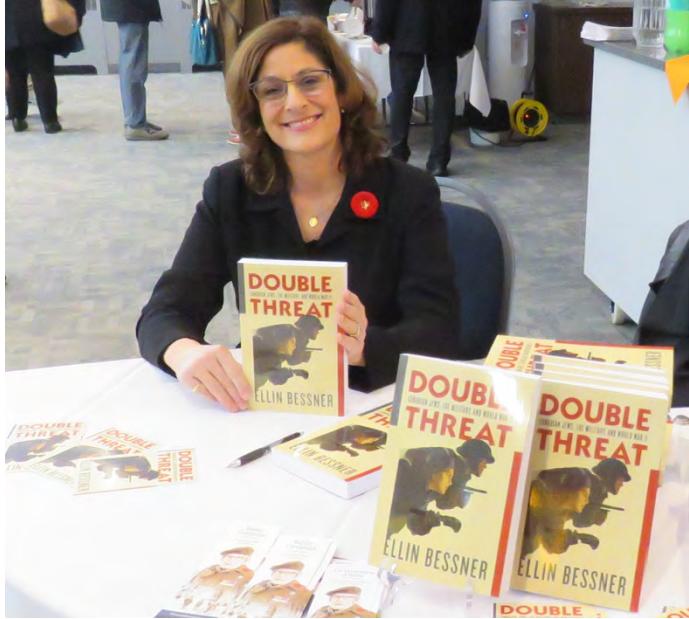
Staff and members of the Holocaust Education Committee with MLA Lorne Dach

for many years at *Report on Business Television*, now *BNN*. Ellin has also taught hundreds of budding young journalists, in her capacity as a professor at Centennial College Journalism School in Toronto, and before that, at Seneca College and Ryerson University.

Ellin was a delight to have with us, and her stories were amazing, including the ones about

Edmontonians. Thank you for being our guest Ellin.

Thank you to the Jewish Federation's Holocaust Education Committee for their guidance, participation and continued support. Thank you to Shane Asbell for chairing the committee, and all who attended.



Speaker and author Ellin Bessner



Minister of Culture and Status of Women Leela Aheer

## PJ Library

BY DANI URETSKY



On Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup> we held a Chagim Celebration Party at Talmud Torah. We came together to celebrate the beginning of school and all the holidays that were in October. We made crafts, painted, ate, and had a lovely story read to us.

Together with Beth Shalom Synagogue and Temple Beth Ora, we celebrated Chanukah at Beth Shalom.

We had a great meal prepared by Beth Shalom staff, made menorahs, did science experiments, and decorated Chanukah cookies. Thank you to Rabbi Schwarzman, Rabbi Caine, and Yaara Shabtai for their hard work in planning and executing that program. A great time was had by all.

Keep your eyes and ears open for our Purim Carnival together with Beth Shalom and TBO on March 8<sup>th</sup> at Beth Shalom.

We would also like to welcome our newest subscribers to PJ Library Edmonton. If your child is **6 months to 8 years old** and you wish to start receiving these wonderful books please go to:

<https://pjlibrary.org/enroll-in-a-community?id=209201> to subscribe. However, there is

a cost to these subscriptions. Currently they are covered by Edmonton UJA and the Green-spoon Foundation, but we would be happy for individual local sponsorship if you are interested. PJ has recently expanded this program to include all children in a household, so please contact Dani for more info about that.

We are also happy to welcome our community PJ Partners. If you are one of our partners and would like to plan to holiday-themed program, please do not hesitate to contact me. We love having programs with partner organizations, and bringing the community together.

Sign your child up for a **FREE** monthly, Jewish-themed book or CD. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at 780-487-0585 ext. 205. This is an opportunity for engagement not to be missed!



PJ Library Chanukah Party

## JCORE Connections

BY YAARA SHABTAI



In 2019 JCORE continued to build community, connections and enhance those connections within the Jewish community in Edmonton.

In the month of September, we launched the 5780 B'nai Mitzvah project. As the group was formed, the children began with the missions. For the first mission, the B'nai Mitzvahs learned independence skills by planning an urban route navigation. This series of meetings was concluded in an exciting, nighttime initiation ceremony at Hawerlak Park with all the families.

The second mission was to understand how everyday community services work behind the scenes, in order to learn to appreciate how complex the services we sometimes take for granted are. The group visited STARS Air Ambulance, where they learned a fascinating lesson about the role of airborne medical professionals, the complexity of multi-casualty situations, and finally got to visit the helicopters and learn how they operate.

The group has also visited the fire station, where they learned about the work of fire fighters, fighting uncontrolled fire spread, rescuing trapped people in various situations, animal rescue and more. The tour was unbelievably fascinating and ended with learning about the fire trucks, how the equipment is operated, and how teamwork is necessary for lifesaving.

On the third mission, the B'nai Mitzvah and their families embarked on the Roots Mission, designed to deepen the familiarity of each child with their family's history. Some families have found information going seven generations back! Now the children and their families are working on researching the stories behind the names and pictures. At the end of the project, each family will receive a bound book with their completed work.

The fourth mission began in January, by learning about our diverse Jewish community in Edmonton. As part of this mission, the group will be visiting all our local synagogues for Kabbalat Shabbat to learn about the different and similar practices among local communities. These visits will continue until April.

More from JCORE programming: We've renewed our all-time favorite program - The Pub Nights. The first Pub Night was very successful, and well-attended. We are currently working on strategizing and re-developing the young adult programming.

Furthermore, we've had another one of our favorite programs - The Israeli Sing-Along. This year, we changed the format a little and it is now home-hosted. The first event was so successful! It started at 8 pm on Saturday night, we sang and danced for hours, it was early Sunday morning when we decided to call it a night. This evening was one that will be remembered for many years to come.

Lastly, we're working on an exciting, surprising, thrilling and unique Adult Purim Party that will take place on March 14th. The party is being organized by collaboration of few different community organizations. Save the date, this is a Purim party you don't want to miss! Stay tuned to hear more about the upcoming projects and events. Don't forget to follow us on Facebook. For questions, clarifications and volunteering please contact Yaara by e-mail at [yaaras@edjfedor.org](mailto:yaaras@edjfedor.org)

## P2G "Gesher Hai" Delegation trip to Edmonton

BY OFRI ZIONI HIGGER

During the Sukkot holiday, a group of eight students from Emek Hahula high school, together with two teachers arrived in Edmonton as part of the P2G, "Gesher Hai" program. We were there for almost two weeks, getting to know your kind and lovely community. When I was asked to write a few words for Hakol, I thought to myself that I will mainly focus on the experience and the activities that we took part in. But almost two months later, I realized that I want to write about LOVE, because this is what it is all about. We can teach our children about the Jewish life in the Diaspora in our classes, explain and celebrate our tradition and holidays or talk to them about Israel and its importance, but by creating the opportunities to meet Jewish people from the other side of the world can really teach them about the strong, unexplained Jewish connection that can exist within minutes, and isn't it "Ve'Ahavta"?

The visit in Edmonton taught us all what real, pure love is. Our generous host families opened their hearts and houses without any questions, your amazing community accepted us with open arms and took care of all our needs, your amazing Rabbis invited us to take part in the Sukkot ceremonies, making us feel as much a part as everyone else. You taught us not to be judgmental, you reminded us how beautiful our tradition is when it does not involve politics, that there are many ways to show our belief in God and to be part of the Jewish people - no way is better than the other as long as we accept each other. You also taught us



Mifgash participants in Jasper

about the strong Jewish connection that can bring together people from all around the world, and make them feel like family without using many words. Living the stressful life of Israel can make one forget these things sometimes,

but two weeks in Edmonton can bring you back the faith and make you a better person. We were all hopeful, but I also know that each of the Israeli students returned to Israel a little bit different, more open-minded and open-hearted, knowing that we are one big family, and that we will always be there for our people around the world. Understanding that we need to fight and protect our messed-up country and make it a better place, not just for us and for our children, but for our big family around the world that prays for us and wants the best for us.

I want to thank the Edmonton P2G committee, the Edmonton Jewish Federation, the hosting families, Rabbi Gila Caine and Rabbi Zolly Claman, and all the volunteers who worked very hard and made this an unforgettable experience for us. A special thank you to Tal Toubiana who couldn't refuse any of our requests, to Robin Marcus and last but surely not least to Dr. Ivan Steiner and his wife Ruthi for making this important tradition happen every year. We don't take anything for granted and I am sure that we will carry this entire experience and the dear people we met in our heart for many, many years. Thank you for teaching us love. You all have a home in Israel.

*On behalf of Lev Haemek Elementary School, Elior Perlshtain and on behalf of the Emek Hahula Regional High School delegation, Ofri Zioni Higger*



Mifgash participants

## Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation (EJCCF) Report

BY STEPHANIE HENDIN



I would like to thank our small but mighty Board that includes Michael Paull, Catherine Miller and Michael Zabludowski. This group including the Chair, were nominated and approved by the Jewish Federation Board at the September Federation meeting.

**MOTION:** to accept the nominations to the Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation Board.

Stephanie Hendin – President  
Michael Paull – Past President  
Michael Zabludowski  
Catherine Miller Dolgoy

Motion made by Stephanie Hendin, seconded by: Francie Nobleman. Motion **Carried**.

This approval allows the Board to act in its decision-making capacity of the EJCCF. We are always looking for others to join our team – lawyers and accountants are especially welcome – but for those that have an interest in the long-term financial security of our Edmonton Jewish community – the EJCCF could be the place for your volunteer efforts.

The Foundation continues to grow – both by establishment of new endowments and through growth of the Fund itself. The fund balance, as you saw earlier in the financial statements, was \$1.1 M as of August 31, 2018 and at year end August 31, 2019 was \$1.4 M.



Gillian Horwitz, MP Tim Uppal, Debby Shotor, and Judy Zelikovitz of CIJA

Annually, the EJCCF gives out grant monies through an application and grant review process. Last year funds were distributed to over a dozen Jewish organizations in our community, totalling approximately \$40,000.00.

For example, this year the EJCCF was pleased to provide funds to the Jewish Federation of Edmonton to support the expenses of the Heritage Festival Days Israel Pavilion and to the Talmud Torah Society for funding an all new guitar program for the students. For the first time the EJCCF gave support to NCJW for the

community lunch held last month as part of their National Conference. This was an important community wide event that The Foundation was pleased to play a role.

Canada Revenue dictates that 3.5 % be distributed annually and that is what the EJCCF has been able to do over many years. The more Funds available – the more to distribute.

The item of importance this evening will be discussing and voting on, is the move of the EJCCF to the Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF). The Board of the EJCCF has met several times with the ECF to research a move like this which will provide many advantages to the EJCCF. The administration burden, such as formalizing agreements with donors, the professionalism and long history of the ECF and their experience and management of endowments has much to offer the EJCCF. We will remain an entity within the ECF and will continue to distribute funds as we have been through own granting process. Give. Grow. Transform is the ECF mission and the EJCCF Board concurs that the EJCCF can improve on what we do with their expertise and strong foundation. Donor stewardship, credibility and raising the EJCCF profile are advantages that can be achieved through a partnership with the ECF because as the expression goes - "together – we are better".

**MOTION:** To approve the transfer, investment and administration of EJCCF endowment funds to ECF, while retaining control of disbursements of said funds.

Motion made by Michael Paull, seconded by: Howie Sniderman. **Motion carried with one Nay vote** – Lawrence Rodnunsky.

Thank you for your attention and support.



Participants from Federation, CIJA, and CJPAC, and MLAs

## Jewish Free Loan Association (JFLA): A Community Partnership

What comes to mind when we think of charitable donations? We might consider monetary and material donations, or donations which support organizations that make a significant impact on quality of life. A loan, however, is unique and considered a greater mitzvah than giving charity. In fact, Hebrew free loans were referred to as "gemachs" (an acronym for "gemilut chasadim" - act of bestowing kindnesses - central in Jewish thought and practice) or "mutual aid societies". These organizations were essentially regarded as partnerships and endeavours to improve quality of life and foster self-sufficiency by offering access to affordable credit in the form of interest-free loans.

Our Free Loan mandate is based on the Torah portion, Parshat Mishpatim (read on February 22nd this year), which teaches the mitzvah of showing sensitivity by lending money without charging interest. The JFLA, since inception on August 15, 1927, has fulfilled this directive by providing Jewish Edmontonians interest-free loans in times of need. A loan, as opposed to a "hand-out", is of special importance because the lender provides support and demonstrates confidence in the borrower's ability to overcome temporary financial setbacks. Borrowers can turn to Jewish Community assistance and not be forced to accept loans with compounding high interest rates which, unfortunately, are prevalent and leave individuals and families in greater debt.

Every applicant is met with understanding, and confidentiality is maintained in our efforts to help in times of need. If you, or anyone you know, could benefit from a "hand-up" in the



Bnai Mitzvah Class

form of an interest-free loan, please refer to the Jewish Federation website [jewishedmton.org](http://jewishedmton.org)

for loan eligibility and ways to contact us. Our email address is [jewishfreeloan@edjf.org](mailto:jewishfreeloan@edjf.org).

## Developing a Culture of Security

BY TAL TOUBIANA



Whenever "something happens," safety comes more clearly into focus and sparks debate. How do we implement security measures without stretching the budget too thin, or how do we become more secure, yet maintain a warm community feeling? These are some of the questions currently being asked in communities across the country.

Security can be a major investment, and it is not surprising that the biggest concern for many organizations these days is what can be done with limited resources. The answer for many is to get creative. There is so much we can do! start by focusing on the basics of security - the easy-to-understand concepts of security are the ones that people embrace quickly. Invest in security awareness training. Make security personal and valuable - security should not be presented as an obstacle but rather as a way for employees to bring value. Exercise a top-down

approach, make sure your directors and management are leading from the front and driving the initiative(s). Just like with your children, positive reinforcement goes long way: reward your staff when they notice (and report) suspicious emails or activity in the perimeter. Apply for grants and wisely use the expertise and resources available to you in your community.

Research has shown that the best way to influence security culture is to create one. This is not an easy task as one must change what people think and believe, not only how they behave in the moment. The utmost transformation occurs when people behave in the desired way even when no one is observing them. Leaders cannot expect to execute security strategies if the organization's security culture remains a secret. As Peter Drucker said, "culture eats strategy for breakfast" - no matter what strategic plan you try to implement at your organization, its success will be held back by the people implementing the plan if the culture does not support it. In addition, the entire organization

needs to perceive security as bringing value, as opposed to being an obstacle, preventing staff from doing their jobs. It's about how these things tie together to create, encourage and maintain a culture of security. When you integrate these elements successfully, you will stand a legitimate chance.

Developing a strong security culture takes lots of work, but it is a step towards a positive change. Many communities are already working on making this cultural shift because they recognize they must approach security with the same level of a financial responsibility as they do the other parts of the organization. Security culture can positively change how the community approaches security, but culture shift takes time, so don't expect the members of your community to become experts overnight. An old African proverb says, "It takes a village to raise a child." The same can be said for adopting a culture of security. Security reflects the beliefs and values of the members that make up your community.

## Holocaust Education

BY DANI URETSKY



The Holocaust Education Committee would like to update the community on all our activities for the start of the year. We began with Kristallnacht (see article), followed by Remembrance Day at the Jewish Cemetery on November 11th, where the community gathered to remember those Jewish Edmontonians who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our Canadian freedoms. Thank you to Rabbi Dreilich for his D'var Torah, Cantor Mannes, Ben Comer, our bugler, and Beth Shalom for their lunch afterwards. A special thank-you to Ken Wasserman, Don Charnaw, Dave Marcus and Murray Glick for their annual contribution to running this service.

Please join us for Yom HaShoah on Tuesday, April 21st at 12:00pm at the Federal Building, 9820-107 St. We will be joined by City offi-

cials, and members of the Federal and Provincial government. Thank you to the office of Leela Aheer, Minister of Culture and the Status of Women for helping us arrange this event. There will be a bus that will pick up from Beit Horim at 11:15.

In the Spring of 2020, we will be fixing and cleaning our Holocaust Monument on the grounds of the Provincial Legislature. It has been a few years and we are due. We have spoken with the government about this, and are applying for a grant.

On March 17th and 18th we will be holding our Annual Irv and Dianne Kipnes Holocaust Symposium for high schools at the Orange Hub on 156th St. This year our guest will be survivor Leslie Mezei. For the second year in



Remembrance Day commemoration

a row, we will be partnering with the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Memoirs Program.

This year we are sending eight students on the March of the Living. The trip will be led by chaperone Eliyanna Forbes. Eli is a native Edmontonian, who joined the Israeli Army, and lived there for a few years. The trip leaves April 18th and goes through to May 3rd. The students will be joined by Holocaust survivor Angie Richt, who was a baby born in Auschwitz. Preparatory education sessions will be starting soon. This will be a journey of a lifetime for these students.

On Sunday, April 26th, Beth Israel is bringing you "The Girl from Treblinka", a play in one act by Leonard David Stone. Very generously, 15% of the proceeds will go towards the Holocaust Education Committee, so be sure and purchase your tickets from Beth Israel.



Remembrance Day at the Jewish Cemetery

## Upcoming Events:

March 8 - PJ Purim Party  
Telus World of Science

March 10 - Purim

March 11 - JFED Board Meeting

March 15 - JCORE Adults-Only Purim Party  
Continental Inn

March 17-18 - Holocaust Education Symposium  
Orange Hub

April 8-16 - Pesach

April 21 - Yom Hashoah Commemoration  
Federal Building

April 26 - Girl From Treblinka Play  
Beth Israel Synagogue

April 27 - Yom Hazikaron Commemoration  
Beth Shalom Synagogue

April 29 - Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration  
Beth Israel Synagogue

May 5 - Anne Frank Statue Unveiling  
Light Horse Park

May 3-11 - Edmonton Jewish Film Festival  
Landmark City Centre

May 12 - Lag B'Omer