

*Vol. 61 | No. 3 | June - July 2014 / Sivan - Av, 5774*

Schedule Of Services And Events

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|---------------|----------|---|
| Sat, Jun 7 | 10:00 am | Bat Mitzvah of Danielle Roth, daughter of Susan & Nathan Roth |
| Sat, Jun 14 | 10:00 am | Bar Mitzvah of Eric Kerbel, son of Carrie Smith & Jeff Kerbel |
| Sat, Jun 14 | 5:15 pm | Bar Mitzvah of Evan Quinten Wechsler, son of Adele & Len Wechsler |
| Thurs, Jun 19 | 7:30 pm | Annual General Meeting - All Members Welcome – Annual Reports – Entertainment – Refreshments (see formal notice in this Bulletin) |
| Sat, Jun 21 | 11:00 am | Bat Mitzvah of Skylar Banks, daughter of Faith & Jordan Banks. (Belleville, Ontario) |
| Sat, Jun 21 | 6:00 pm | Bar Mitzvah of Eitan Rosen, son of Galia & Dan Rosen |
| Fri, Jun 27 | 8:15pm | Kabbalat Shabbat service – Cantors: Aviva Rajskey & Lisa Kent Pot Luck Dinner for this service |
| Sun, Jul 20 | 8:00pm | World Premiere of: Political, Polish Jew: The Story of Pinchas Gutter |

**The 2014 High Holiday service schedule will be posted on our website in August.
Members will be notified when online ticket orders may be submitted.**

**Those who do not use the internet or do not have email addresses will be mailed ticket order forms.
Please watch for further information during the summer.**

Annual Meeting of Congregation Habonim Thursday, June 19th at 7:30 p.m.

Please join us at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 19, 2014 for Habonim's annual meeting which will be held at the synagogue. Aside from electing directors, we will discuss the Congregation's cemetery planning and enjoy entertainment and light refreshments.

Morry Edelstein will be stepping down from the Board of Directors after several years of service. We thank him for his strong contribution and hope he will remain active in the affairs of the Congregation in the years to come.

Habonim needs to elect two new directors. Members of Habonim may nominate themselves or other members to be directors on the Board. Please contact the president of the Congregation, Ted Rechtshaffen, at ted@tridelta.ca if you have someone in mind and he will advise you how to make a nomination.



Mazal Tovs on Recent Bar/Bat Mitzvahs

- ❖ Naomi Azrieli & Francois Blanc on the Bar Mitzvah of Gabriel (see photos below)
- ❖ Gayle Nathanson & Simon Hitzig on the B'nai Mitzvah of Noah & Matthew

מזל טוב!



Photographs courtesy of Eric Benchimol

Donations

In support of the Habonim/Ve'ahavta Seder

- ❖ Sue Bochner & Ken Armstrong
- ❖ Dora Fong
- ❖ Anonymous (Habonim members)

Plaque in Memory of Barbara (Bayla) Buim

- ❖ Lawrence Buim (nephew)

Do you have a family member at Baycrest?

I do Kabbalat Shabbat in the Apotex building on Friday afternoons—different floors each week-- and I would love to say hello. In addition to welcoming Shabbat, I work at Baycrest every week, as a Spiritual Care Volunteer, and I would be happy to visit with members of our congregation.

Feel free to contact me directly: email: avivar@rogers.com; phone: 416-932-8004. —Cantor Aviva Rajskey

Your Thoughts Requested on Cemetery Planning

Be on the lookout for an email survey from Habonim about new cemetery options. It would be very helpful if you can please take two minutes to complete the survey when you receive it. We need a quick response as we want to be able to address this at Habonim's annual meeting on Thursday, June 19th.



From the Corner Office

by Jeff Levy, General Manager

This is a regular feature of the Habonim Bulletin.

We hope you enjoy reading about your shul from the administrator's perspective.

- ❖ We came through the harshest winter in memory and it seems we have gone right to summer, missing spring altogether. Our gardens have sprouted beautiful tulips, but aside from that quick burst of colour, we have a monolith of green shrubs and some of them are in rough shape. If you have a “green thumb” or just like to putter in the garden and would like to volunteer to plant some flowers at your synagogue, please let me know and we’ll make a plan.
- ❖ The Annual General Meeting of Congregation Habonim is to be held Thursday, June 19, 2014 at 7:30 pm. There will be presentations of annual reports and an opportunity to ask questions. There will be entertainment (by our cantors) and refreshments. We hope all members will attend this very important annual review of Habonim’s activities. (If you have a transportation issue, please notify me as soon as possible and we will endeavour to assist you with a ride to and from the meeting).
- ❖ High Holidays are again fast approaching. We will be sending the schedule of services and the information on ticketing procedures by email to most of our members and by regular mail to those who do not use the internet or don’t have email. Our electronic ticketing system worked extremely well last year and we will issue tickets electronically again this year. Please watch for the announcements.
- ❖ You might be interested to know that Habonim is a member of STAT (Synagogue Temple Administrators of Toronto). As the professional administrator of your synagogue, I attend monthly meetings and special events. The group is made up of the Executive Directors and managers of most of the major synagogues in the GTA and we share vital information on synagogue management. We have benefitted from surveys on several topics and have contributed our experiences as well.
- ❖ Habonim has had a full schedule of B’nai Mitzvah in 2014. We are currently booking 2015 and 2016. If you, or families you know, have children approaching Bar/Bat Mitzvah age, please consider celebrating this momentous event at Habonim. Many non-members choose Habonim based on our reputation for being a warm and welcoming congregation. We accept “non-member” bookings 18 months in advance. Members may book anytime. If you wish to discuss further and/or start the booking process, please contact me any time and I will send you a package of information. We offer several options and full support in planning your family’s simcha.





Studying Politics & Our Jewish Community - *By Avrum Rosensweig*

Like most Canadians, I have had very little interest in politics throughout my life. The whole notion of it seemed terribly dreary and the occasional click on the Parliament channel, with its repetitive “Mr. Speaker, my honorable opponent seems to be misguided,” confirmed my lack of interest.

From what I could deduce, the parties didn’t seem to be very different and a vote for the Conservatives over the Liberals or vice versa likely wouldn’t change the country or my life. The NDP - well, if they were a hairdo - would be antiquated and bobbed. I really ignored them.

I have always voted, as Judaism and our culture encourage civic responsibility, but I quickly flipped past the articles in our local and national media having to do with deficits, unemployment, immigration and refugee policy, and the relationship between the governing party and the judiciary.

I was surprised when I met Canadians smitten by the political process but avoided them at parties when they would engage me in conversation about the recent budget or the Constitution’s notwithstanding clause. Canadian politics seemed as tedious as reading Targum Onkelos, an interpretation of the Torah from the Tannaic times.

Then along came the Harper government, a majority in Parliament with uninhibited ideological underpinnings and the ability to pass laws almost uncontested. I started to watch, listen and read different newspapers. I even secured the National Post app.

As I studied, I was introduced to the passing of omnibus bills, a whole smattering of hopeful laws shelved from the Harper Government’s days as a minority government. I saw that our country passed a law implementing minimum sentences, a move discouraged by the state of Texas. Bill C-31 came along designating certain countries as “safe,” thereby disqualifying their citizens as refugees to our land. I wondered how this worked, knowing the Roma are terribly persecuted in Hungary, a country on that “safe” list. I thought, “Doesn’t the Harper Government know this?”

My education continued and I learned that the PM and his party seemed to ignore important facts about issues as well as advice from independent experts and standing committees. I questioned what the opposition party was doing while all of this happened around them and I was curious about the democracy of a majority government.

I then watched even closer and saw our community dancing at the centre of a proverbial ball with Stephen Harper and that a corsage of support had been pinned to our very puffed-out chest. Like never before, at least in my history, were we the Jewish people and the State of Israel so passionately embraced by a Canadian leader. We were being courted and blushing at Harper’s touch. And we returned the caress.

A love affair was unfolding and as it did a phenomenon occurred. Nationalism overtook much of the Jewish community. Whereby we were once ardent supporters of liberal values and the troubles of the “stranger,” Harper’s support of Israel became the prime or, to some, the only focus of our politics. Our grave concern with the plight of refugees seemed to dissipate and major Jewish organizations remained quiet when Harper cut refugee health care (essentially translating into hospitals having to refuse care to denied refugee claimants who were experiencing problems with their pregnancy or who had a child needing a puffer for her asthma). It was as though we forgot about our past - that we were refugees too.

The men and women at parties chatting about politics no longer bore me. I want to know what they are thinking. My appetite for political knowledge is insatiable. If the person next to me is Conservative, I ask what drives them. If they are Liberal, NDP or members of the Green Party, as an ardent Zionist, I want to know their position on Israel.

I have ensconced myself, as a Jew, in refugee issues and have begun writing about what I feel are injustices within our political system and country. With all of this, though, my knowledge of politics is still very minimal. I am not clear on how politicians operate and what changes I, as a voting citizen and tax payer, can make. I don’t have a sophisticated understanding of the history of our nation, and how, as an example, the Liberal Party performed when they were a majority.

Finally, I am still very unclear how it is that so many mainstream Jews have abandoned liberal values, those that seem so in sync with our Jewish faith, and have become one-issue voters. The security of Eretz Yisrael is paramount, but a Canada unsympathetic to the “stranger” cannot help to ensure that in the long run.

Mr. Speaker, my education continues. Any advice or insight appreciated.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org



Announcing the World Premiere of:

Political, Polish Jew: The Story of Pinchas Gutter Directed by Zvike Nevo

Sunday, July 20th, 2014. 8:00pm Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Avenue

Pinchas Gutter, Gal Yaniv, Film Producer & Director, Multi Media Department, Hebrew University & Dr. Sharon Kangisser Cohen, Expert on Child Survivor Testimonies, will be in attendance.

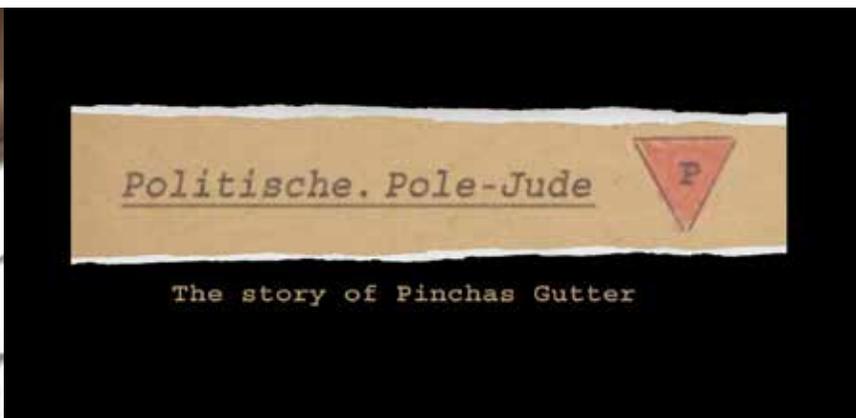
Pinchas Gutter, a native of Lodz, Poland, was only seven years old when the war broke out. He and his family escaped to Warsaw, where they were witness to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, before being deported to Majdanek, where his entire family was murdered. Pinchas was liberated in 1945 and taken to Britain with other children for rehabilitation. One of the most sought after Holocaust survivor speakers and blessed with a sweet, melodious voice, Pinchas Gutter has traveled the world sharing his story, often accompanying himself with songs that he learned as a child growing up in a Chasidic environment.

A frequent speaker for the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Centre, as well as the March of the Living and March of Remembrance and Hope programs, Pinchas Gutter has even been quoted by President Barak Obama.

By keeping the memories alive, by telling stories, by hearing those stories, we can do our part to fulfill the mitzvah, the commandment of saving a life. I think of Pinchas Gutter, a man who lived through the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and survived the Majdanek death camp..... "I tell my story," he says, "for the purpose of improving humanity, drop by drop by drop. Like a drop of water falls on a stone and erodes it, so, hopefully, by telling my story over and over again I will achieve the purpose of making the world a better place to live in."

Those are the words of one survivor -- performing that "sacred duty" of memory -- that will echo throughout eternity. Those are good words for all of us to live by.

—President Barak Obama, USC Shoah Foundation 20th Anniversary Dinner, Los Angeles, California, May 7, 2014





Habonim Youth Choir Performs at Benefit for Israeli Blind, Opening for Jose Feliciano

At the end of May, the Habonim Youth Choir performed at a Benefit Concert for the Israel Guide Dog Centre for the Blind. Conducted by Kim Doron and Aviva Rajsky, and accompanied by Tom Bellman and Josh Engel, the choir moved the packed house at the Toronto Centre for the Arts with their melodic and pitch perfect performance. The evening also featured the inspiring music of legendary blind performer, Jose Feliciano, as well as a stirring speech from Liron Artzi, a young blind woman from Israel, about her quest for independence and how her relationship with her guide dog Petel helped her achieve that goal.





Habonim participants in UJA's Walk with Israel! May 25th 2014





In Memoriam:

Mourning those who passed away in the last year:

**Lotty Rozendaal
Toby Levy
Sarah Isenberg
Phyllis Mint**

**Joan Lax
Harold Grammer
Mildred "Bucky" Myers
Lillian Harris**

**Rozanne Isen
Ernestine Justitz
Beatrice Kuretzky**

Yahrzeits

The complete Yahrzeit list for all loved ones from Congregation Habonim who passed away since the Congregation was founded may now be found on line at:

www.congregationhabonim.org

Please click on the CALENDAR tab.

If you do not have access to the internet, please call the Habonim office 416-782-7125 and the General Manager, Jeff Levy, will assist you with the information. Thank you.

Information and contributions to THE BULLETIN.

Contact: Paula Schipper, Editor - pfschipper@gmail.com

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.congregationhabonim.org

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL: www.jewishheritageschool.com

To SEND TRIBUTE & CONDOLENCE CARDS

and to MAKE A DONATION:

Call Rhoda Sion at (416) 782-9663 or write to:

716-660 Eglinton Ave. W., Toronto M5N 1C3

Are you MOVING, CHANGING your ADDRESS,

PHONE NUMBER OR EMAIL?

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