



THOUGHTS FROM ELI RUBENSTEIN: _____ MEDICINE, THE HOLOCAUST, AND COVID-19

As we were listening to the March update on COVID 19 vaccines by Dr. Michael Silverman, Chief of Infectious Diseases at the University of Western Ontario and a former Habonim member (before he relocated to London), like many of you, I found his scope of knowledge and ability to so clearly explain complex medical and social issues most illuminating and informative.

At one point in his presentation, I was also reminded of the high level of involvement of our people - the Jewish People - in the medical profession. Dr. Silverman gave us a short history lesson in efforts to combat the polio epidemic in the 1950s, and how two Jewish doctors, Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin, led the way in developing two exceptionally effective vaccines, an injectable and oral vaccine respectively. Sabin was especially admired because he refused to seek a patent for his vaccine. Indeed, our small synagogue has over the years itself proudly counted many accomplished members of the medical profession in our membership, as our President pointed out in the last bulletin.

Earlier this month, March of the Living commemorated Yom Hashoah, with a special program on medicine and the Holocaust. To view [click here](#)

The basic premise was that medicine should be used to

protect the most vulnerable in our society. But Nazi doctors and others corrupted their mission and not only failed to protect the most vulnerable, they actually targeted the disabled as their first victims of genocide. Of course, the Nazi doctors infamous medical experiments on prisoners in Auschwitz and other camps will be listed as among the most shameful chapters in the history of the medical profession.

However, much of the focus of the program was not on the grievous medical crimes of Nazi Germany, but rather on those in the medical profession who courageously resisted Nazi policies.

The program honored heroic medical figures who risked and often gave their lives, both Jewish and non-Jewish, to try to save their fellow human beings during the Holocaust, as well as the modern day heroes battling COVID-19 in the front lines, often risking their own lives to save humanity. Dr. Anthony Fauci was presented with a "Moral Courage in Medicine" award for his decades of service to humanity in fighting infectious diseases - [view here](#). Dr. Albert Bourla, Pfizer Chairman & CEO talked about the importance of his work, in light of the fact that he was son of Holocaust survivors from Thessaloniki, Greece - [view here](#).

THOUGHTS FROM ELI RUBENSTEIN (cont)

There was also a great deal of local Toronto content in the programs.

Toronto Holocaust survivor Max Eisen described his rescue in Auschwitz at the hands of a courageous Polish doctor - [view here](#) - and Toronto family doctor Jordana Sacks movingly described her emotions as she gave the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to her Holocaust survivor grandmother - [view here](#).

As part of the 2021 March of the Living programming, our own Aviva Rajsky, Tom Bellman and Jim Gelcer recorded three songs: [Mi Shebeirach](#), [Heal Us Now](#), [Olam Chesed Yibaneh](#)

Let me leave you, with one story among the many featured in the program - [view here](#) - that especially stood out because of its poignancy.

Dr. Benedykt Ziemilski (brother in law of famed classical pianist Stefan Askenase) was a prominent Lvov doctor with a respected medical practice. He also worked in a hospital doing scientific research to combat hypoglycemia and pulmonary diseases, especially tuberculosis, which the German company Bayer expressed interest in.

In 1942, Dr. Ziemilski and his family tried to escape by train to Warsaw, where they had relatives. A passenger recognized the doctor and denounced him. He was arrested at the Lublin station and taken to Majdanek. The family never saw him again.

Among the letters that arrived in his Lvov apartment after his death, were two letters in German: one from Majdanek informing the family that Benedykt Ziemilski was dead, the second, a short letter from Bayer (at the time part of the cartel IG Farben) referring to an important component of a drug invented by Dr. Ziemilski.

In effect, one German letter recognizing his brilliance, the other German letter announcing his murder.

As we grieve the loss of 6 million of our Jewish brothers and sisters during the Holocaust, we also mourn the loss of the enormous contributions they might have made to humanity.



Dr. Benedykt Ziemilski (1892-1942) as a young man.



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As we approach our second Covid spring, despite my best efforts, my thoughts and conversations always return to Covid. After 13 long months of living with uncertainty and fear in a prolonged lockdown, it is impossible to push aside the loss and suffering that we collectively and individually have experienced and its life altering implications. But spring is a time of hope and renewal, and there are tangible signs that this time the end truly is near. As we tentatively edge towards some new version of normalcy, I am perpetually grateful and in awe of the sacrifices that our researchers and medical staff and other front-line workers continue to make day in and day out, they are true heroes.

I am also struck by something that is rarely noted but that I think is also noteworthy and that is the sacrifices of our youth and young adults. An article in the Globe and Mail in December noted that while young people were being blamed for the 2nd wave, and now the 3rd wave, this is misleading and unfair.

I know some may disagree, but the article suggests, and I concur, that the "opportunity cost of compliance" for many people over 60 living independently is relatively low, while for young people it is incredibly high. The benefits of compliance for this group (not getting Covid and being hospitalized) generally far outweigh the sacrifices of staying home. This demographic is also more likely to have a home that is comfortable, and a lifestyle and life experience that can more easily weather the storm. If you weigh this against the high cost of compliance for people under 30, the equation is reversed.

It is not only normal but also absolutely necessary for young people to socialize. Achieving independence is an essential part of a teenager's journey to adulthood, and to be successful, youth need the freedom to try new things and form their own identities. For university and college students, this is the time in their lives when they begin to make their own decisions and mistakes and solve problems without constant input and oversight from their parents. They take risks and test new abilities and boundaries and build social

skills and confidence. All of this is pretty hard to do when you're in 24/7 lockdown with your family and can't attend classes or participate in activities or socialize outside your immediate household. It is an enormous sacrifice for our young people, and one that has the potential to have long lasting repercussions if we ignore it.

Young working adults are in no better shape. This is the time in their lives when they are looking for life-long partners, building professional networks and forming the relationships that will allow them to succeed in life. Asking them to stay home is asking them to hinder their long-term prospects, and this doesn't even consider the financial impact of our spiraling deficit. And the benefit of doing so is marginal at best since they are the least likely to become seriously ill. Their sacrifices are for us and the broader good of their community and country, not themselves. Young people are also more likely to live in shared or crowded accommodations, work in front-line jobs that require a high degree of face-to-face contact (assuming they stay employed), use public transit, and work in relatively cramped conditions even in offices. Even if they follow all the rules, they are still at much higher risk of contracting and spreading the disease.

In light of all this, the truly remarkable thing is not that a handful of young people have disregarded the rules, but that the vast majority have not. Most have been observing guidelines on physical distancing and masking not because they are afraid of contracting or dying from the disease, but to protect older and more vulnerable family members and the community at large. I know that this is true for my three adult children, and I think this generational sacrifice deserves to be recognized and acknowledged. Our children and grandchildren have put the common good ahead of their individual interests, and this fills me with pride and encouragement. I believe our future is in good hands, we just need to give them the chance to prove it.

*Cheryl Grammer,
President*



THE JEWISH HERITAGE SCHOOL UPDATE

In the past few months we've been very busy finding new ways to learn and enjoy! Every student and their families have risen beautifully to the challenge of the times and continue to participate together. We've tackled topics such as: Jewish views on environmentalism, how sacred texts like Torah and Talmud have enriched Judaism, how to greet each other and have basic conversations in Hebrew, and how feminism presents in Judaism in both ancient days and today.

In addition to their classes which are divided by age, students are also able to choose electives which they attend for 30 minutes of class time every week for 4-5 weeks and create a project which they then share with the community. This semester, students chose from two amazing electives: Jews in Ink or Mitzvah Tree. In Jews in Ink, Yonah led the students in learning about the Jewish roots of superheroes, the power of the visual language of comics, and they tried their hands at writing their own comic strips! In Mitzvah Tree, students joined Summer in learning about Jewish values and how to bring more mitzvot into our homes.

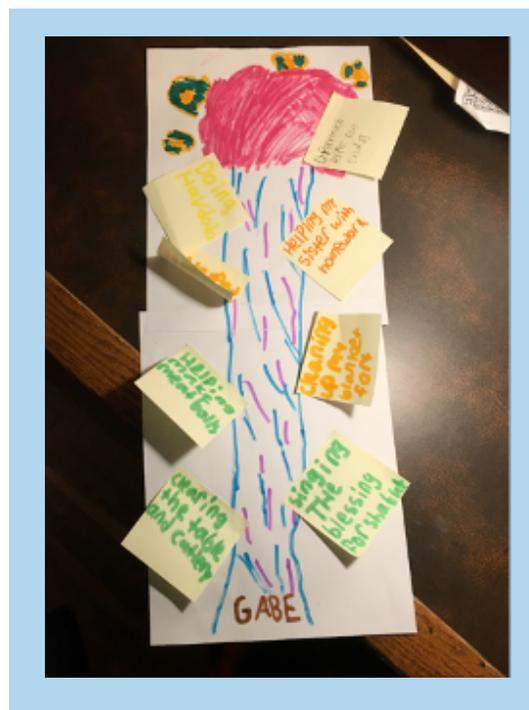
We've also had some wonderful events together, especially as we've celebrated our winter and spring holidays. First we had a special Tu B'Shvat Seder, tasting different foods and learning about their symbolisms – for example, fruit with pits in the centre represent the power that is within all of us and emanates out. We hosted the first-ever Habonim virtual Purim Carnival, playing games and winning prizes, putting on a Purim shpiel together, and a costume contest! Then a few weeks ago we held our Chocolate Seder, getting ready for Pesach by indulging in delicious treats that represent the items on the Seder Plate. We also ran a successful virtual Open House for our families to learn about their options for Jewish summer camps, making sure that everyone can bring Judaism into their lives in new ways.

We are looking forward to a wonderful spring as we begin enrollment for next school year, make a difference in our community, and continue to engage in learning together! Please always feel free to be in touch.

Mira Lyonblum
 Director of Education
habonimschool@gmail.com



One of the comic strips drawn by a student in the Jews in Ink elective



A Mitzvah Tree made by one of our students – the leaves are different ways they've been able to help out in their family and community.

PROGRAMMING

COVID-19 has created a seismic shift, but programming has remained a top priority and an important part of our synagogue. We've continued to host a diverse number of activities, many virtually and some in-person with COVID-19 safety protocols in place.

In partnership with the Jewish Heritage School, we ran a virtual Purim Party to celebrate the holiday. We presented virtual yoga and meditation sessions and continued our popular speaker series with Rabbi Ilyse Glickman about the Jewish afterlife, as well as virtual art tours with Hildi Wolfish. We welcomed back Dr. Michael Silverman, Infectious Disease Specialist, to discuss the latest scientific information about the COVID-19 vaccines in Canada.

In partnership with other Toronto synagogues, we brought you a virtual talk with Gil Troy about Biden versus Trump and who is better for Israel and the Jews. We've continued running our well-attended Kabbalah Shabbat webinars and hosted three Passover seders, one of which was a children's service. As we head into the spring, we will continue to offer dynamic, interactive and diverse programs that bring our congregation together. We look forward to seeing you there!

If you have any suggestions for future programming please contact Michelle Goldman at michelle@congregationhabonim.com



UPCOMING EVENTS

UPCOMING SERVICES/EVENTS

Tuesday, April 20th, 1:30pm
"THE ART OF THE LENS" WITH HILDI WOLFISH

Wednesday, April 28th, 12:00pm
MUSSAR: FINDING YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL PATH WITH RABBI ILYSE GLICKMAN

Friday, April 30th, 6:00pm
KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE

Thursday, May 6th, 3:00pm
LIBERATION 75. ERADICATING SURVIVOR POVERTY: PROVIDING FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AROUND THE WORLD WITH Yael Eckstein & Eli Rubenstein

Tuesday, May 18th, 10:00am - 12:00pm
SHAVUOT YIZKOR SERVICE

Wednesday, May 19th, 12:00pm
MUSSAR: FINDING YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL PATH WITH RABBI ILYSE GLICKMAN

Friday, May 28th, 6:00pm
KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE

Sunday, May 30th, 8:00pm
SHTISEL: A DISCUSSION WITH ELI RUBENSTEIN AND AVRUM ROSENSWEIG ABOUT THE ACCLAIMED ISRAELI TELEVISION SERIES ON THE LIFE OF ONE ULTRA ORTHODOX JERUSALEM FAMILY.

Friday, June 25th, 6:00 pm - 7:00pm
KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE

Wednesday, June 9, 12:00pm - 1:00pm
MUSSAR: FINDING YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL PATH WITH RABBI ILYSE GLICKMAN



CONGREGATION HABONIM
PRESENTS:

Hildi Wolfish B.Sc., M.S.W.

“The Art of the Lens”

TUESDAY APRIL 20th
1:30 pm – 3:30 pm (via Zoom)
Zoom link to follow upon registration.

FREE ADMISSION

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

About Hildi Wolfish....

A lifetime ago, Hildi did her M.S.W at the University of Toronto and practiced marriage and family counselling for many years. Then, after travels to Europe and the U.S., her eyes were opened to the beauty, pleasure and wonder of the visual arts and she became a docent at the Art Gallery of Ontario, where she has been conducting tours and talks for over 20 years. As well, she is the director of The Art of

Looking, her independent business out of which she does art tours, talks and workshops at galleries around town. Hildi's number one priority is to engage participants in a fun and exciting discussion about what we see. As she says at the beginning of every tour, "there are no right or wrong answers when it comes to our own responses to art"!

Join Congregation Habonim as **Hildi Wolfish** takes you on a virtual art tour called **The Art of the Lens**:

When photography was first introduced in the early 19th century, it wasn't considered an art form. Fortunately, this is no longer the case! Over the years, so much beautiful, provocative and interesting art has been created with the camera. As is always the case in Hildi's tours, we will discover a diverse range of artists, and we'll also look at other art mediums that have been inspired by the photograph. You will be surprised, stimulated and delighted to discover and discuss these varied images

Be prepared for a lively, creative discussion!



Congregation Habonim
Speaker Series Presents:

Rabbi Ilyse Glickman

Mussar: Finding your Spiritual
and Ethical Path

April 28th, May 19th, and June 9th

12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Let's explore this ancient practice of examining our Soul Traits (Middot) to discover the balance that works for our souls. We will learn about the history and current practice of Mussar and explore a few Middot in an interactive and accessible way.

Biography:

Rabbi Ilyse Glickman recently moved back to her hometown of Toronto after several years in NY. Most recently, she was the Director of Congregational Learning at Scarsdale Synagogue Temples Tremont and Emanu-El in Westchester, New York. Rabbi Glickman received rabbinic Smicha from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City and has Masters Degrees in both Jewish Literature and Jewish Education. She has previously worked at Am Shalom Congregation in Barrie, the Canadian Council for Reform Judaism, Hillel, and Shaaray Tefila in Manhattan. Rabbi Glickman is currently the coordinator of Toronto's Reform conversion program, which is a product of the Reform Rabbis of Greater Toronto. Rabbi Glickman is married to Cantor David Rosen of Holy Blossom Temple and together they are raising a delightful 8-year-old named Joel.

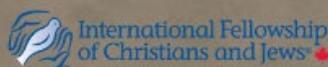


VIRTUAL | WORLDWIDE | FREE

Join us for a once in a lifetime event to commemorate the 75th anniversary of liberation from the Holocaust.

MAY 4-9, 2021

ERADICATING SURVIVOR POVERTY
PROVIDING FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AROUND THE WORLD



Yael Eckstein
Eli Rubenstein
Thursday, May 6th
3:00pm (ET)



LIBERATION75

Global Gathering of Holocaust Survivors, Descendants, Educators and Friends

REGISTER NOW!

LIBERATION75.ORG

ERADICATING SURVIVOR POVERTY: PROVIDING FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AROUND THE WORLD Yael Eckstein & Eli Rubenstein

This program is sponsored by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (IFCJ) of Canada.

Seventy-five years ago, one of the greatest atrocities in history came to an end. And 75 years later, countless survivors of the Holocaust still live in obscurity, poverty, and isolation. Join us as Yael Eckstein and Eli Rubenstein explore the work that still needs to be done to address the tremendous damage that Nazi brutality inflicted on these survivors. This session will explore how the

mission of building bridges between the Christian and Jewish communities has created a ground-breaking alliance raising thousands of Holocaust survivors out of poverty today.

It is only through creating bonds of understanding that people of every background and faith can assure that "never again" remains a clear and pressing priority.

[**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**](https://events.eply.com/liberation75)

Click button above to visit site or copy and paste this link:
<https://events.eply.com/liberation75>

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Habonim Annual Meeting of Members

Tuesday June 15, 2021 at 7:30 PM

The Congregation's Annual Meeting of Members will be held on Tuesday June 15, 2021 at 7:30 PM.

We are holding the Meeting as a completely virtual meeting, which will be conducted via live video webcast online. Members will not be able to attend the Meeting in person. The virtual Meeting is being held in light of the unprecedented public health impact of COVID-19, and to mitigate risks to the health and safety of our members, communities, clergy, employees and other stakeholders.

A Notice of Meeting will be sent to Members in advance of the Meeting, in accordance with our by-laws, outlining how to attend the virtual-only Meeting and how to vote, as well as the agenda for the Meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING



LOOKING FOR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



The Board of Directors is Seeking New Finance/Accounting Director Candidates

The Governance Committee of the Board continually evaluates the composition, skills and experience of our directors, having regard to the Congregation's current and future plans and objectives.

We are seeking candidates with experience in financial accounting and reporting (familiarity with financial statements and IFRS), and business, economics and finance. Younger members are invited and encouraged to volunteer. Our bylaws express a preference for two directors under the age of 35 (including one under 30).

If you are interested in learning more or discussing the opportunity, please contact:

Alexis Slatt, Chair of the Governance Committee
alexisslatt@gmail.com or at (647) 405-9162.

NEWS

CONGREGATION HABONIM MEMBER NEWS

What our amazing congregants have been up to.

DANA BOOKMAN M.S.M.



We are so proud of member of Congregation Habonim member Dana Bookman on being the recipient of The Meritorious Medal (Civil Division) MSM.

Officially created by Her Majesty The Queen, it's presented by The Governor General of Canada to celebrate and thank extraordinary people who have set an example for others to follow and those who have improved the quality of life in a community.

Dana was nominated and recognized for founding the Canadian Girls Baseball and championing the expansion of women's and girls' baseball leagues in Canada.

Dana is a founder of CGB, a grassroots non-profit organization, working tirelessly to advocate and advance girls and women in Canadian sports. Under her guidance and leadership, girls across Canada have an opportunity to develop resiliency and gain confidence through baseball and learn how to play, how to win and how to lose. Canada Girls Baseball is changing the game and inspiring the next generation of girls to excel, on and off the field.

NOAH COLE

Hats off to Congregation Habonim member Noah Cole on publishing his Book: Ontario Wildlife Photography.

From the Ottawa Valley and the Frontenac Arch to beyond the shores of Lake Ontario and Lake Huron, Ontario Wildlife Photography takes you to lakes and wilderness canoe areas north of Lake Superior and to the most southerly destination in Canada on Lake Erie.

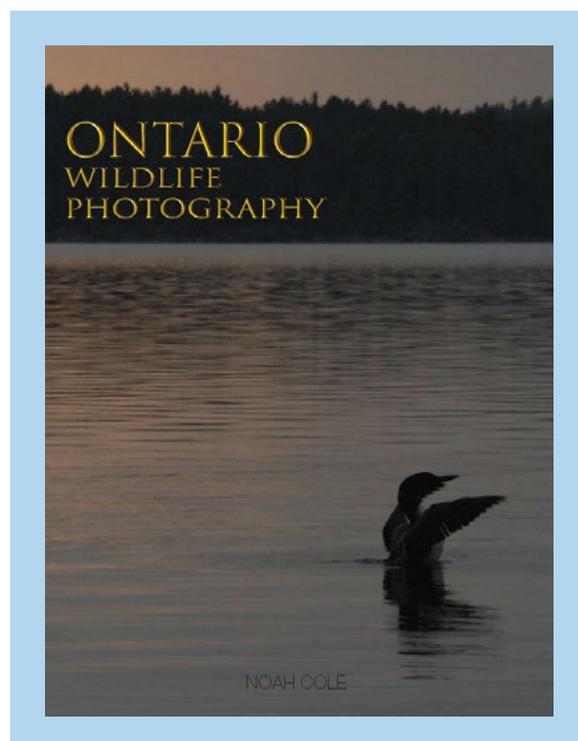
Enjoy reading about dragonflies from your living room, or enjoy new shared moments by looking at beautiful songbirds with loved ones or friends. Your family will love learning about why trout

depend on healthy forest watersheds, the impressive secrets of colourful salamanders, where to find shorebirds and herons and so much more.

The book includes over 15 years and 160 curated images and memories of wildlife in wild and natural areas, testimonials, index and artist bio. It is a great way for you, children and grandchildren to escape and appreciate Ontario's diverse wildlife.

For more information visit or email:

GreenRavenPhotography.com
GreenRavenPhotography@gmail.com



NEWS (cont)

CINDY BERG

Congratulations to Congregation Habonim member Cindy Berg. Cindy Berg and her daughters Emily and Sophie Berg and Emma Freed Berg were inspired to launch Pivot Skincare during the pandemic, around the spring and summer of 2020.

Cindy Berg had developed a nourishing plant-based facial oil while working in a dermatologist's office as a skincare consultant. Cindy had been putting together DIY facial kits for a distanced spa experience, and noticed many people were reaching out requesting her

oil specifically.

"Once we had that operation set up, we just kept going and are now developing more plant-based products. All of our products are hand-produced in small batches right in the heart of Toronto. All materials and ingredients are ethically sourced from local vendors, and all our packaging is recyclable."

To read more about their new venture [click here](#)

Visit their website: www.pivotskincare.com



PEARL RICHMAN



Kudos to Congregation Habonim member Pearl Richman in creating The Haggadah Collective. The Haggadah Collective was curated in order to reflect old traditions and create new ones. Together with her daughter, Maxie, they released a modern and meaningful take on a traditional Haggadah. They had an overwhelming response and went on to launch the children's companion version, HUG-IT-OUT, A Li'l Haggadah for Kids so everyone can be on the same page.

The project is infused with a chic,

contemporary aesthetic and is grounded in the ever important concepts of diversity, equality, and acceptance. "As teachers, our love for childhood education inspired us to create a vibrant companion Haggadah, called Hug-It-Out, A Li'l Haggadah for Kids. This book is a love letter to the children who sit at our Passover table and who learn about Judaism from us with great curiosity and awe."

To learn more visit their website: www.thehaggadahcollective.com

MELISSA LANTSMAN WINS THE CONSERVATIVE NOD IN THORNHILL

We are pleased to share with you that Congregation Habonim member Melissa Lantsman has won the conservative nod in Thornhill.

Melissa Lantsman will be the Conservative candidate in the federal riding of Thornhill in the next election. Lantsman defeated Gila Martow, currently Thornhill's MPP, for the nomination.

Melissa was chief spokesperson for Ontario Premier Doug Ford during his 2018 election campaign. From 2007 to 2015, she served as communications director for federal ministers of finance, foreign affairs, trade, and environment. Currently, she is an executive at Enterprise, a strategic communications firm.



Mazel Tov!

Lauren and Thomas Black on Avner's Bar Mitzvah

Lauren Fishman and Matthew Rubin on Jacob and Madeleine B'nei Mitzvah

Elise and Robert Nicolson on Aiden, Karly and Liam's B'nei Mitzvah

Betsy and Daniel Sauder on the Marriage of their daughter Sarah to Leo Truffa



Black Family at Avner's Bar Mitzvah

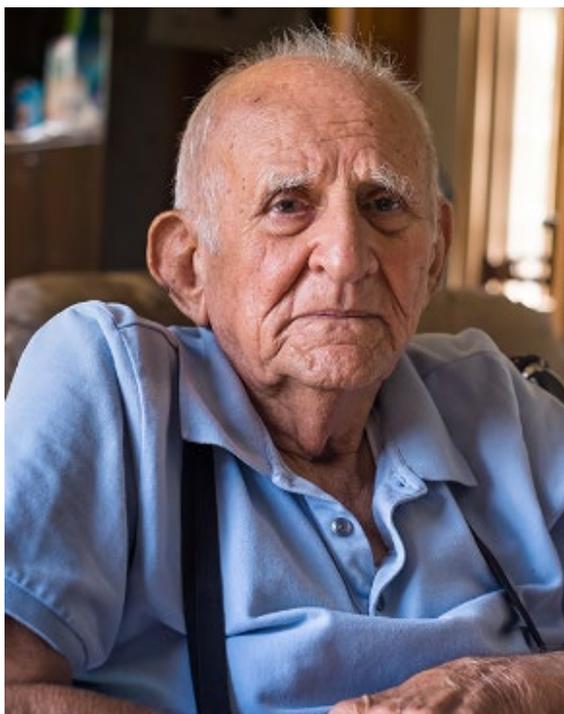


WANT TO JOIN US IN OUR ACTS OF KINDNESS?

PLEASE HELP US HELP THEM

Click button above to visit site or copy and paste this link:
<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E343708QE&id=60>

The Jewish value of gemilut chasadim (loving kindness) is a driving force behind the important work that we do.



"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am not for others, what am I? And if not now, when?"

Rabbi Hillel



We have seen a dramatic increase in the need for food from our Emergency Food Drive. Just in the last month, we have had a 30% increase in requests for assistance.

We already have delivered more than 6,500 boxes into the hands of the needy since the beginning of the pandemic. With rising cases of COVID-19 coupled with the restrictive lockdown, the dangers remain real, and countless vulnerable members of our community still

worry about finding safe access to food.

B'nai Brith's COVID-19 Emergency Food Drive is funded 100% by donations from caring people like you! We have not missed a single week of delivering essential food items to the doorsteps of those in need - all free and all in a safe manner. This program has had an enormous impact on seniors, Holocaust survivors, veterans, and people with disabilities.



PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

DONATE TODAY
 Help us help them
 B'nai Brith's COVID-19 Emergency Food Drive

For \$75, buy food for one person for a week.
DONATE TODAY





In Memoriam

Mourning those who passed away in the last year

Shirley Cadesky
Pauline Milrad
Cecile Metrick
Patricia Singer
Gerald Cooper
Dorothy Dime
Sally Levin
Benjamin Alexander Sutin
David Dime
Ruth Edelmuth
Norton Medline
Dr. Harold Kimelman
Jack Olin
Dr. Vivian Rakoff
Ora Lantsman

Ursula Leinung
Mendel Good
Willy Gnat
Joel Greenberg
Bert Stitt
Mary Pearl
Marilyn Anita Berger
Kaylee Miller
Seymour Saitowitz
Frank Fleisher
Naomi Hecht
Evelyn Wolfe
Eleanor Cohen
Hanna Drukmalder
Susan Gorewich

May their families be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Yahrzeits

Yahrzeit reminders are now being sent. To receive your reminder please update your family Yahrzeits by contacting the office.

Honour the memory of your loved one.

Memorial Plaque \$360
Oval Shaped Eitz Chaim Tree leaf \$180

Please contact the office for more information or to send tribute and condolence cards.



ANNUAL DUES

2021 Annual dues are now due:

Family Membership (including children up to 25 years) \$1200
Single Membership \$600
Young adult Membership (26-30 years old) \$290

All membership dues must be paid by July 31 to ensure tickets for the High Holidays.
Please inform the office if you are not renewing.



**Information and contributions to
THE BULLETIN**

Contact: Michelle Goldman,
michelle@congregationhabonim.org

**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

www.congregationhabonim.org

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

www.jewishheritageschool.org

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**Are you MOVING, CHANGING your ADDRESS, PHONE
NUMBER OR EMAIL?**

Contact the Habonim office:
Tel: 416-782-7125 or
Email: office1@congregationhabonim.org