



ON LOVE AND HOPE – AND THE HOLOCAUST BY ELI RUBENSTEIN

As we begin 2024, I would like to bring your attention to three recently released Holocaust related films, all bearing a similar theme.

If We Never See Each Other Again

The first film is called "If We Never See Each Other Again", and features survivor interviews of the Kindertransport gleaned from the USC Shoah Foundation. (A number of Habonim members from Germany and Austria were rescued by the Kindertransport.) The film, which I worked on together with Toronto film director Naomi Wise, was released by International March of the Living in December of 2023. It commemorates the historic rescue of Jewish children on the Kindertransport which took place over 85 years ago, starting in December of 1938 after the horrific Kristallnacht pogrom. The Kindertransport was the largest rescue effort of WWII, resulting in the saving of some 15,000 Jewish children from the genocidal actions of Nazi Germany.

The film is especially touching in light of the events of October 7 and the multiple stories of the separation between parents and children during the aftermath of this horrific attack on Israel.

In doing my research for the film, I came across a story featured in the 2000 film called "Into the Arms of Strangers", which won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.

In the story, a woman recounts being put on a train by her father, as part of the Kindertransport rescue mission. As the train slowly begins to leave the station, her father is overcome by emotion and love for her, and cannot bear the thought of parting with her. So, at the last moment, he runs over to the train and pulls her out from the window. As a result, she remains in Germany during the Holocaust, eventually being deported to the camps and suffering, tremendous pain and anguish during these years.



ON LOVE AND HOPE – AND THE HOLOCAUST (CONT.)

But perhaps the most telling part of the story is what she said next: even though one would think she would be angry at her father for what she endured, when she became a mother, she understood the dilemma he faced. She was now in his shoes, and fully recognized the agony that as a parent he must have felt as the train began to leave the station. As the famous quote goes: "To understand all is to forgive all."

Anybody listening to the story cannot help but also reflect on the current parallel with the events in Israel after the October 7 massacre by Hamas. How many parents, and how many children, have gone through similar anguish as a result of the terrorists' actions?

Even today, families are undergoing unbearable agony, as mothers and fathers are still separated from their beloved children. The Kindertransport may have happened 85 years ago, but once again today Jewish parents and children are being separated from each other, for only one reason: Because they are Jewish.

We hope and pray that all the hostages in Gaza will be reunited with their loved ones as soon as possible in the days ahead.

In the film, "If We Never See Each Other Again", we tell another equally moving story about Mona Golabek. Her grandparents, Abraham and Malka Jura, were only able to secure one spot on the Kindertransport – and the choice was between her mother Lisa and Lisa's younger sister Mona. Every time Lisa heard her parents argue over who should be rescued, Lisa, a piano prodigy at age 14, played Claire de Lune by Debussy on the piano to drown out their conversation. In the end, Lisa was chosen for the Kindertransport. Later, Mona, Lisa's younger sister, was also able to board the last Kindertransport from Vienna. Their parents, Malka and Abraham, were murdered in Auschwitz.

"Promise me that you will hold on to your music" – were the last words that Lisa's mother Malka said to Lisa before Lisa boarded the Kindertransport.

After the war, Lisa became a concert pianist, as did her daughters, Mona Golabek and Renee Golabek-Kay.... thus fulfilling Malka's last wish.

The Power of One

Another film addressing the Kindertransport, a full length feature film that premiered at TIFF in Sep. 2023, is The Power of One, starring Anthony Hopkins. The film depicts the heroic story of Sir Nicholas Winton who rescued 669 children, most of them Jewish, from Czechoslovakia on the eve of World War II. He later said, "I only wished I could have saved more."

Winton's efforts went largely unheralded until he appeared in 1988 as an audience member on a BBC television programme called That's Life!

At one point, the host asked if anyone in the audience was saved by Winton. The woman sitting to the left of Winton indicates that she was saved by him – and then the man next to her, and the woman to the right said the same. Eventually, the entire studio audience stands – all owing their lives to this one brave man. Winton turns around and faces the audience and wipes the tears from his eyes – as anyone who watches this scene unfold will no doubt do as well.



SAVE ONE LIFE, SAVE THE WORLD.



ANTHONY
HOPKINS

JOHNNY
FLYNN

and HELENA
BONHAM CARTER

ONE LIFE

ON LOVE AND HOPE – AND THE HOLOCAUST (CONT.)

Irena's Vow

One last Holocaust film which also premiered at TIFF 2023, and is very much worth seeing, is the Canadian production of "Irena's Vow", which tells the story of Irena Gut Opdyke, a Polish nurse and a Righteous Among the Nations. (A number of people involved in the film are Canadian, including director Louise Archambault, writer Dan Gordon, and producers Jeff Sackman and Berry Meyerowitz.)

In 1942, the young Irena witnessed a German soldier brutally murdering a Jewish infant – and she vowed then to do whatever she could to save the lives of others. Irena later rescued a group of desperate Jews by hiding them in the cellar of the home where she was employed as a housekeeper by a Nazi officer. When the officer discovers the Jews, he agrees to keep silent only if Irena agrees to be his mistress. Irena consents and thereby saves all of the lives of her Jewish charges.

On Friday March 23, 2001, after the publishing of her biography, Habonim was privileged to host Irena Gut Opdyke in person when she gave a moving personal account of her wartime experience. It was a touching and unforgettable evening for all who attended the event in our old building.

One final personal connection to the film is that of my dear friend David (Dudi) Abadi Z"L, the late Director of the March of the Living in Poland. David passed away last year, in Poland, the day after the March of the Living from Auschwitz to Birkenau took place. David joined us on the first March 36 years ago, and worked with the March right up until the conclusion of the 2023 ceremony in Auschwitz-Birkenau on Yom Hashoah. He was an exceptionally positive, empathetic and optimistic person – who cared deeply about Polish Jewish relations. In fact, David was the first person who informed me about the making of Irena's Vow, when the film began shooting in Poland in April 2022. Because of his commitment to enhancing Polish Jewish ties, Irena's Vow was a project David felt very passionate about and he was instrumental in making sure the production was successfully implemented in Poland. This remarkable and timely film is a lasting legacy to the goodness and kindness that David represented to me and so many others who were fortunate to work with David on the March of the Living.

As you will note, all of the above three films represent an alternative side to the history of the Holocaust - stories of exceptional, courage, bravery, altruism, and heroism.

As we study the Holocaust and come across the stories of unending barbarism and cruelty, we are grateful there are those who show us about this other face of humanity - the shining points of light in a bleak landscape, that remind us that even in the darkest times there is reason to hope.



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

I am a proud Jew. Through Habonim, I am connected to our Jewish heritage and to the world's Jewish community.

I thought these things when I became President of our synagogue six months ago. Habonim is a community with a rich history and a culture that is vibrant and alive. From the start, I thought that it was important that we find more ways to get together.

This year's High Holidays felt rich and joyful. I remember being moved by the beautiful prayers, feeling inspired by our leaders, smiling while tapping my foot to the music that I know by heart, and holding hands with my family.

I remember meeting so many fellow Habonim members. The High Holidays, and my term as President to date, has been so rewarding because of the personal connections that I am making with my Habonim community.

The engagement and momentum of our membership was highlighted by the incredible participation in our 2023 high holiday fundraising campaign. Habonim raised almost \$500,000 thanks to the generosity of our community and the leadership of our matching donors.

While the High Holidays now feel like they are from another time, community remains at the core of who we are at Habonim. Perhaps now more than ever.

Since October 7th, I have been shocked, sad, angry and scared. Instead of instant world support and sympathy, we faced worldwide visceral antisemitism. Women's groups around the world deny Hamas sexual violence. Israel is blamed for its own slaughter. We have been attacked by people we thought were friends. It is as if my understanding of our place in the secular world was completely wrong. How could this be?

By working hard, Habonim has helped me to find solid ground. I have found stability and comfort in the opportunities to grieve together, to celebrate together, to be together. I hope it is the same for you.

Here are some things that we have done.

We started collecting and sharing information with our members from sources around the world.

We participated in Simchat Torah on October 8th with Rabbi Audrey Kaufman. Our children danced with plush Torahs and flags, as we rounded the sanctuary with song.

We joined thousands at Mel Lastman Square for the Solidarity Rally on the first Monday after the terrorist attack. We hosted a Special Habonim Get Together – We Stand

with Israel, led by Avrum Rosensweig and Religious Leader Eli Rubenstein, to share our thoughts and feelings about the war in Israel.

We were briefed by a former member of Israeli intelligence who did his best to answer our questions about what happened.

Religious Leader Eli Rubenstein, Rabbi Cantor Aviva Rajskey and Cantor Kim Doron, together with musicians Tom Bellman and Jim Gelcer organized a Kabbalat Shabbat service and potluck Shabbat dinner that was very well attended. We will do this more often.

We sponsored a Habonim bus to the Rally for the Jewish People in Ottawa. Our group was led by Cantor Kim Doron and Habonim member Eynat Katz. Habonim proudly joined 20,000 Canadians on Parliament Hill in solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people.

We offered other opportunities to connect and have been rewarded by the engagement and vitality of our members and the larger community. These opportunities included:

Two congregational visits to the Toronto Holocaust Museum. The attendees were greeted by the museum's Executive Director Dara Soloman and Architect Tony Reich, both Habonim members.

The formation of Habonim's NextGen Committee for community members in their 20s and 30s led by Habonim members Devyn Olin and Jake Salsburg. The Committee's first event, "Combating Anti-Semitism on Social Media" was held in October and over 500 people registered to attend.

The Mitzvah Market organized by Habonim member Erica Godfrey and community member Kailee Mecklinger where over 500 people came to Habonim to purchase Hanukkah gifts in support of United Hatzalah.

Hanukkah Lights for Israel organized on the last night of Hannukah by congregants Leah Weisz and community members, Zoe Mandel and Bonnie Bloomberg. Guests were invited to bring their own menorahs to light in solidarity with the people of Israel.

We have taken a practical view of our need for increased security. We have increased security guards patrolling our synagogue. We have had our security infrastructure professionally reviewed and made enhancements to our monitoring and response systems. We are visited by the Toronto Police on a frequent basis. The support of the Toronto Police to the Toronto Jewish community in general should be broadly commended. They have made us feel safer and made us feel that our city supports us.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT (CONT.)

We remember those who were murdered in Israel on October 7th and all those who have been killed since. Through our prayer, through our learning, through our celebration of our Jewish lives, we honor them, and the hostages and people of Israel who are fighting.

My Jewish world has expanded as my secular world has seemed to shrink. I have become disassimilated. The hands that I reach for to help me deal with my feelings

about being Jewish, my connection to Israel, my grief for the victims and worry for the hostages, are all Jewish hands. I need my Jewish community and it is there for me through Habonim.

Thank you for being part of my community,

Alexis Slatt
President

HABONIM WELCOMES RABBI AUDREY KAUFMAN

We are thrilled to welcome Rabbi Audrey Kaufman to Habonim. While some of our members may have had the chance to meet Rabbi Audrey at Habonim services over the last six months, she has officially joined our clergy team as of January 1st, 2024!

Rabbi Audrey is a long-time colleague of our Religious Leader Eli Rubenstein and Rabbi Cantor Aviva Rajskey, who she will be joining on the Bimah, together with Associate Cantor Kim Doron. She is a strong leader, and we can expect that she will add immeasurably to the Habonim experience. Our members will be impressed by her warmth and her ability to make connections with our entire congregation, starting with our youngest members.

Rabbi Audrey was born and raised in Ottawa, Ontario where she and her family were active members of Agudath Israel, a traditional Conservative synagogue. Rabbi Audrey developed a love for Chazanut from her family's beautiful Shabbat z'mirot sung every Friday night, as well as listening to her father lead Shabbat and Yom Tov services at the synagogue.

Rabbi Audrey moved to Toronto to study nursing and has enjoyed a diverse and interesting career as a Registered Nurse. She worked for many years in the Intensive Care Unit at Mount Sinai Hospital which ties in well with her role of pastoral care.

Rabbi Audrey retained her passion for Chazanut, joining several Jewish choirs when she moved to Toronto, including Beth Sholom Synagogue, which her late uncle, Rabbi David Monson, led for decades. She received her cantorial training from distinguished cantors including Cantors Louis Danto and David Bagley, both of blessed memory.

Rabbi Audrey was affiliated with Temple Sinai Congregation and led cantorial services for 10 years. She also officiated as High Holiday Cantor in Canada and the United

States, leading Reform, Reconstructionist and Conservative synagogue services for over 16 years.

Along with Eli Rubenstein, Rabbi Audrey accompanied a March of the Living Toronto contingent as their musical leader of "Expression through Song." She has performed numerous times at Baycrest Centre, entertaining residents and their families with Yiddish melodies, Cantorial selections, Broadway tunes and contemporary Hebrew pieces.

Rabbi Audrey was ordained by the Mesifita Adas Wolkowisk Rabbinical Academy in New York on June 18, 2019.

She has been affiliated with Am Shalom Congregation since 2004 in Barrie serving in the capacities of Cantor, Rabbi and Spiritual Leader. Rabbi Audrey worked closely with Am Shalom's Jewish Heritage School as well as the synagogue choir, sharing her teachings and music.

One of Rabbi Audrey's passions is contributing to building a strong and vibrant Habonim community. Please accept this as her personal invitation: "Come for the service and stay for the community." She is looking forward to meeting you and your family at an upcoming event.

Please join us for a special Shabbat morning service, Shabbat Shira, on Saturday January 27th at 10:00am as we officially welcome Rabbi Kaufman into our community.



UPCOMING EVENTS

JOIN US FOR SATURDAY MORNING SHABBAT SERVICES!

Community is at the core of Habonim. We are making connections with each other more than ever before because we understand each other in ways that are essential to our identity and our values.

A beautiful way to come together is for Saturday morning Shabbat services. All Habonim members are invited to join in celebrations of our community's B'nei Mitzvot.

Shabbat services take place at 10 am on those Saturdays when a bar or bat mitzvah is scheduled. Share in your fellow members' life cycle simchas, experience the strength and support of the Habonim community and join us for uplifting music. Complete your Shabbat experience by joining in a congregational Kiddush hosted by our clergy.

BELOW IS THE SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING SERVICES:

Saturday, January 27, 10:00 am
Special Shabbat Shira Service Welcoming
Rabbi Audrey Kaufman followed by Kiddush

Friday, March 1, 6:00 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat

Saturday, March 2, 10:00 am
Bat Mitzvah of Shira Bennett

Saturday, March 16, 10:00 am
Bat Mitzvah of Olivia Weinstock

Friday, March 22, 6:00 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat

Saturday, April 6, 10:00 am
Bar Mitzvah of Oliver Segal

Friday, April 19, 6:00 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat

Saturday, April 20, 10:00 am
Bar Mitzvah of Jadon Hornberger

Tuesday, April 30, 10:00 am
Passover Yizkor Service

To adhere to our security protocols, you must register by 10 AM on Friday to attend a Saturday service. Please be prepared to provide your name to security at the door.

We hope to see you soon.

THE JEWISH HERITAGE SCHOOL UPDATE

Shalom Habonim,

The difficult and challenging times that the people of Israel and Jews around the world are experiencing these days strengthen the importance of Jewish education for the next generation, and I wish to take this opportunity and thank you for the partnership and for allowing us to be a part of the Jewish identity of your children.

A lot has happened at HJHS so far: Students are reviewing Hebrew letters and vocabulary in a creative and experiential way, singing HaTikva and Am Israel Chai together every Sunday and exploring a variety of ideas and topics. Through electives students learned Hebrew songs, explored the art of Israeli artist Hanoach Piven and were inspired by him to create their own interpretation of a portrait. They learned about ancient architectural structures in Israel, such as the Kotel and the water tunnels under Jerusalem. The Shinshinot, Raz and Shelly, are doing great work with the students, teaching them about Israel in a creative way. They learned about Israel's borders, Jerusalem and its walls and gates, Tel Aviv, the Shuk and much more. Students wrote their wishes on notes that our Shinshinot took with them

to the Kotel recently, they have designed their own gates to the city, and explored the flag. They also journeyed in cities and sites of Israel and will continue in the teaching of Ahavat Israel after the winter break.

The entire school was involved in Tzedakah activities and fulfilled this Jewish value, and during our Hanukkah celebration, following Tzedakah initiatives with our B'nai Mitzvah program, students and families prepared sandwiches for VeAhavta, wrote letters to IDF soldiers and wishes to sick kids, and donated to a food drive. I would like to thank all of you for your help and contributions.

I wish you and your dear ones a good and safe 2024, and hope to hear better news from Israel.

Am Israel Chai,
Regards,

*Guy Mannheim,
Director of Education*



Hanukkah Party

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Habonim has been busy with song, prayer and tzedakah this fall! It has been energizing and enriching to see so many of our members, as well as the broader community, come together in our beautiful synagogue. Here are some highlights.



SIMCHAT TORAH WITH HABONIM'S JEWISH HERITAGE SCHOOL



HANUKKAH PARTY WITH HABONIM'S JEWISH HERITAGE SCHOOL



SOLIDARITY RALLY - DECEMBER 4TH CANADA'S RALLY FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE



On December 4th, 72 buses arrived in Ottawa from all over Canada, including one bus from Habonim. Our group was led by Cantor Kim Doron and Habonim member Eynat Katz and joined with approximately 20,000 Canadians on Parliament Hill in solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people. Speakers included Holocaust Survivor Nate Leipziger, and Habonim member and MP Melissa Lantsman, relatives of the hostages and other important dignitaries.

<https://youtu.be/-Ckgk91N4AQ>
https://youtu.be/_9phcSwkHe0

SOLIDARITY GATHERING WITH ISRAEL MARKING 100 DAYS IN CAPTIVITY FOR THE HOSTAGES:

On Sunday, January 14, Habonim hosted an evening of solidarity and unity with Israel, facilitated by the Hostages and Missing Families Forum – Toronto. The gathering marked the solemn occasion of 100 days since October 7. In this emotionally charged event, we paid tribute to those who tragically lost their lives and remembered the hostages still held in captivity, vowing to exert every effort to bring them home NOW.

The lineup of speakers included family members of hostages, prominent dignitaries, multi-faith leaders, and community activists. The evening was enriched by moving musical interludes featuring Rabbi Cantor Aviva Rajskey, Cantor Kim Doron accompanied by Tom Bellman and Jim Gelcer.

Video

<https://youtu.be/6IsuHoS1wBk>

Photos (Ella Langer & Sharon Ross)

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10LLOjFLA2uWvTb-zDFVF3vXPIoTTz6pZO>



LIST OF SPEAKERS:

Idit Shamir - Consul General of Israel in Toronto and Western Canada

Marco Mendicino – Member of Parliament for Eglinton-Lawrence

Maayan Shavit – Family of the hostage – Carmel Gat

Deborah Lyons - Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism

Pinchas Gutter - Holocaust Survivor and Educator

Raheel Raza - Director of The Council of Muslims Against Antisemitism

Maureen Leshem - Executive Director for the 482 Collective. Family of Hostage – Gonen Family.

Avideh Motmaen-Far - President of the Council of Iranian Canadians and Conservative Nomination Candidate for Oakville - North Burlington

Sabrina Maddeaux - A National Magazine Award-winning journalist and political commentator for Canada's top radio and TV programs

Maya Fitzpatrick - Content Creator @mayahoodblog

Rafi Yablonsky - National Executive Director of Shaare Zedek Canada

Eynat Katz - Member of Congregation Habonim, a Representative of the Hostages and Missing Forum in Toronto and Co-Chair of The Solidarity Gathering - Marking 100 Days in Captivity program

Eli Rubenstein - Religious Leader of Congregation Habonim - Remarks delivered by Rabbi Cantor Aviva Rajskey.



THE MITZVAH MARKET - ALL PROCEEDS WENT TO UNITED HATZALAH

The Mitzvah Market, held on November 30, 2023, illuminated the spirit of Hanukkah as it united over 600 attendees in a celebration of community and charity. This remarkable event served a dual purpose by not only fostering a sense of togetherness but also championing small and local Jewish-owned businesses.

Amidst the festive atmosphere, participants contributed to the success of the gathering by raising over \$10,000 in support of United Hatzalah of Israel—a testament to the generosity and solidarity of the community. The Mitzvah Market stands as a shining example of how a shared commitment to philanthropy and local entrepreneurship can create a meaningful impact.

United Hatzalah of Israel is a volunteer-based EMS organization headquartered in Jerusalem. Its mission is to provide immediate medical intervention during the critical window between the onset of an emergency and arrival of traditional ambulance assistance. United Hatzalah, which was founded in 2006, and has over 6,500 volunteer medical first responders nationwide, played a critical role in providing medical assistance in the aftermath of the tragic events of October 7.

The event in support of United Hatzalah of Israel was organized by Habonim member Erica Godfrey.



THE KABBALAT SHABBAT POTLUCK REVIVED – PRAYERS FOR THE SOLDIERS AND HOSTAGES

Habonim held a Kabbalat Shabbat and Hanukkah service, followed by a potluck Shabbat dinner on December 8th. Eli Rubenstein delivered a moving sermon, titled "[Stories of Light & Hope During Difficult Days for the Jewish People](#)", about acts of heroism and defiance related to the events of October 7th. The service focused on prayers for Israel, the

IDF and the remaining hostages. Following the service, over 65 Habonim members sat down for Shabbat dinner together, reviving the longtime Habonim potluck tradition. Posters featuring images of all the Israeli hostages held in Gaza were posted on the wall of the Habonim sanctuary.





HABONIM

HANUKKAH LIGHTS FOR ISRAEL

Hanukkah Lights for Israel was a special event held December 14, 2023 on the last night of Hanukkah. Guests were invited to bring their own menorahs to light in solidarity with the people of Israel. The keynote speaker was Michael Levitt, President-CEO Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center. Special thanks to Habonim member Leah Weisz and her friends Zoe Mandel and Bonnie Bloomberg, for organizing the program.

See short videos from this inspiring event along with [images](#) taken at the evening.

Recap: <https://youtu.be/ac4eDB6-vG8>

Opening Remarks: <https://youtu.be/Fv8p1okKN4A>

Images: <https://melanieschwamphotography.pixieset.com/habonimchanukahcelebrationdec2023/>

Gallery Password: glenparkave

4-digit PIN to download photos: Download PIN: 3479

Photo Credits: Melanie Schwam photography,
Michelle Goldman



Joanna Fine & Ian Richler on Rachel's Bat Mitzvah

Leslie and Jay Hershfield on Ellie's Bat Mitzvah

Romy Terkel & Dan Sankar on Ruby's Bar Mitzvah

Gennady and Rachael Ferenbok on Samuel's Bar Mitzvah

Kevin & Mony Nimchonok on Jay's Bar Mitzvah

Sonya Pfeiffer and David Rudolf on Zayne's Bat Mitzvah

Lauren Laskin Gluck & David Gluck on Romy's Bat Mitzvah

Jordana Huber & Daniel Debow on Harper & Jonah B'nei Mitzvah

Rebecca Dworkin & Amie Khondo on Gabriel's Bar Mitzvah

Calen Freeman on Gaven and Nathan's B'nei Mitzvah

BOOK NOW

**BAR/BAT
MITZVAH
BOOKINGS**

We are now booking into 2026 for Bar and Bat Mitzvahs.

Please contact the office to secure your preferred date.



ANNUAL DUES



Our Board of Directors, led by the Finance Committee, oversees a planning process for both our Operating Budget and our Capital/Debt Budget.

Membership fees are our main source of revenue for our Operating Budget. The level of these fees is determined after careful consideration of our financial position and a thorough review of projected costs and revenues. At our December 2023 Board meeting, we approved the 2024 membership fees for returning members of \$1,550 for families, \$775 for singles, and \$370 for young adults. Our Operating Budget generates a small operating surplus.

In response to rising threats against the Jewish community, Habonim has incurred significant incremental costs in upgrading the synagogue's security measures and protocols. Our efforts include increasing private security personnel for all services and programs, upgrading our emergency communications systems and ensuring preparedness for a lockdown scenario. To help defray some of these costs, we have applied for multiple grants through various levels of government and Jewish organizations. The safety of our members,

visitors, and staff is our highest priority and we anticipate that the cost of increased security will be ongoing.

Inflation over the last year has continued to have a significant impact on other non-discretionary costs, including operating, staffing and maintenance. Many of our costs have also increased because we have enhanced our services and other programming recently. We are thrilled by the engagement and energy of our members, and we will continue to offer meaningful shared experiences for our community in 2024.

We made tremendous progress in reducing our debt in large part due to the incredible generosity of our members in our 2023 High Holiday Campaign, including our matching donors. In just six months, we have reduced our debt from \$2.9MM as at June 2023 to a \$2MM balance on our two-year mortgage and have built a reserve fund. Our Capital/Debt Budget will continue to be focused on building the foundation of Habonim's strong future.

Should you have any questions, please contact the office at 416-782-7215 or office1@congregationhabonim.org.

NEWS FROM OUR CONGREGATION

CONGRATULATIONS TO STEVEN SHULMAN

Habonim has a diverse membership comprised of many notable and exceptional individuals.

Recently, our own member, Steven Shulman, President and CEO of Jewish Federations of Canada – United Israel Appeal (JFC-UIA), was named to The Jerusalem Post's 2023 list of "50 Most Influential Jews."

JFC-UIA strengthens Jewish communities in Canada and the engagement of our Canadian Jewish federations and communities with Israel and overseas communities, particularly through opportunities for connection and increased philanthropy. JFC-UIA has been particularly active since the

events of October 7th, helping mobilize support from the Canadian Jewish community, working with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, and Jewish federations across Canada on behalf of Israel and her people during these difficult days.

Steven Shulman's recognition by The Jerusalem Post comes after decades of dedicated service to the Canadian Jewish community - and it is an honour that is richly deserved.

Mazal Tov Steven!

[LEARN MORE](#)



MOMENTS: THE STORIES THAT MAKE A LIFE

I was at the Starbucks drive-through, waiting for my decaf latte, making idle conversation with Paolo, the young man from the Philippines taking my order. It turned out, he was studying graphic design, and was hoping to make a career out of it. He asked me if he could send me his LinkedIn profile, so I provided him with my email address.

A few days later I received his invitation on LinkedIn - when I clicked on the first design project he was commissioned to do, it turned out to be a beautifully designed cover for a book called, "Moments: The Stories That Make a Life", authored by Raynia Carr.

"Wait," I thought to myself. "This can't be the same Raynia Carr who I taught Bat Mitzvah at Temple Sinai some 40 years ago and is now a member of Habonim with her own family?" A quick phone call later revealed indeed this was the one and the same person, and within a few short days the book was in my hand.

I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Each story that Raynia shared, from early childhood to adolescence to her own experience with marriage and motherhood - each one was a shining gem, a carefully crafted and polished moment which we can all relate to and learn from. Each account brought a sense of immediacy and familiarity as we follow Raynia, a trained social worker, through her life's journey.

Why do we write? Why do we read? One answer given by poets is this - to know that we're not alone. As I read her work, I felt the same way. I felt a keen sense of "I've been there too, and so recognize those distinct moments, both mundane and profound!"

In her work, Raynia deftly and artfully captured the universality of the diverse yet similar journeys we all take in life, the moments of pain and pleasure, of joy and sadness, all sprinkled with insight, intelligence, wisdom, warmth and humor.

I warmly and happily suggest you read, "Moments: The Stories That Make a Life". Not only will you gain insights into Raynia's life - no doubt you will also find yourself reflecting on the many discrete yet parallel moments that make up your own unique life.

-Eli Rubenstein



Buy 'Moments: The Stories That Make a Life'
on [Amazon](#) or [Indigo](#)

EYNAT KATZ - RED CROSS PROTEST

A group of Torontonians led by Eynat Katz, a Habonim member and a March of the Living alumna from 1988 (when she was a teen) and then in 2015, 2018 and 2019 (when she was an adult), organized an important demonstration at the Canadian Red Cross office in Mississauga.

They went there to protest the inaction of the Red Cross regarding the release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas and the lack of humanitarian and medical aid being given to the hostages. The group delivered packages of humanitarian aid meant for the hostages and letters to every single hostage. They also placed posters with images of the kidnapped Israelis in the reception area and on the outside of the building (all of which were removed the next day).

[LEARN MORE](#)



CONGREGATION ISRAEL EMANUEL IN CURACAO PRESIDENT ALEXIS SLATT

Alexis Slatt, Habonim's President, visited Curacao and Mikve Israel Emanuel, the oldest synagogue in continual use in the Western Hemisphere.

Please see link below to discover more about the congregation.



[LEARN MORE](#)



IN MEMORIAM

Mourning those who passed away in the past year

**Dr. Norman Bogo
Helen Karney
Sandra Silver
Emmanuel Elnekave
Sam Stein
Bala Jaison-Rosen
Arturo Mundigo
Aaron Bregman
Ellen Joan Bregman
Donald Resnick**

**Norman Schipper
Rose Slavin
Fred Metrick
Syd Gladstone
Dr. Leslie Stephen Landecker
Barbara Soskin
Rachel Sliwowicz
Isaac Sliwowicz
Sarah Glatt
Esther Cole**

**Jacob Gwartz
Ernest Jack Rashkovan
Leon Bernstein
Naomi Kassie
Barry Ganz
Michael Lantsman
Larry Clements
Judith Loeb Cohen**

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

Yahrzeits

To receive your reminder please update your family Yahrzeits by contacting the office.

Honour the memory of your loved one.

Memorial Plaque \$360

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