

## CONGREGATION HABONIM HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES 2008

Once again, High Holiday Services will be divided into separate early and late services on the first day of Rosh Hashana, on Kol Nidre and on Yom Kippur. We do this to provide seating for everyone without going off-site.

The times of the services will be:

Monday, September 29 8:00 pm Erev Rosh Hashana

Tuesday, September 30 8:30 am Rosh Hashana early service  
11:00 am Rosh Hashana late service  
9:00 am Children's service

Wednesday, October 1 10:00 am Rosh Hashana second day

Wednesday, October 8 6:00 pm Kol Nidre early service  
8:30 pm Kol Nidre late service

Thursday, October 9 8:30 am Yom Kippur early service  
11:00 am Yom Kippur late service  
9:00 am Children's service  
5:00 pm Neilah (services resume)

Saturday, October 18 10:00 am Sukkot-Yiskor service

Tuesday, October 21 7:15 pm Simchat Torah

We will provide you with tickets for the same services you had ordered last year. Should you wish to order tickets for family members, please use the form which was provided to you last month.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

#### **BREAKFAST CLUB REVIVAL:**

The Board and Erdos family would like to thank Roger DeFreitas who has stepped forward to start up the Breakfast Club again. Stay tuned for further details...thank you Roger!!

#### **VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED:**

#### **President:**

Habonim is one of North America's most unique synagogues. We have a rich history and a strongly committed congregation. For the past 4 years, I have been honoured to be the president of Habonim and am proud and excited about the strides we have made to strengthen our shul through creative programming, increased Bar/Bat Mitzvot and some wonderful services on the Shabbat and especially the High Holidays.

---

As my tenure is coming to an end, the position of president is now open. This exciting volunteer opportunity requires an individual with a great love of Habonim and of course the Jewish people and will require that she/he be able to steer us through the next 3 years, a journey I foresee as a most promising one.

Please contact me at sgoldman@microsoft.com with any questions about the presidency and its job description or to let me know you are interested in the nomination. The new president will have the privilege of working closely with our religious leaders, Eli & Avrum. One of the real pleasures of my tenure at Habonim, was to be in touch with Avrum & Eli on a regular basis, and to help them express the creative energy they both bring to Habonim.

I thank everyone on my team and my family, and all of those I worked with throughout my presidency. It has been wonderful. I look forward to supporting our new president and working toward an even greater environment and more awe inspiring shul.

Samantha Goldman

#### YAHRZEIT COORDINATOR:

We require an individual to co-ordinate the monthly mailing of Yahrzeit reminder letters to our congregants. This responsibility takes a couple of hours each month. Should you be interested, please connect with Linda Brager:  
lindabrager@hotmail.com or 416-488-0282

#### BOARD MEMBERS AS OF JUNE 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

President	TBD
Vice-President	Andrew Szende
Vice President	Rhonda Page
Treasurer	Ted Rechtshaffen
Secretary	Dianne Erdos-Rush
Past President	Samantha Goldman

Lottie Watson	Fred Levy
Tom Bellman	Paul Kuttner
Morry Edelstein	Saundra Levy

#### BUILDING COMMITTEE

We are in the process of creating a building committee. This committee will review all options which are available to the synagogue with our current properties. They will then come back to the congregation with the options and recommended next steps during the course of this year.

#### THANK YOU

I would like to thank the following individuals for their continued support and dedication to Habonim over the past year: Eli and Avrum for their inspiration, Esther, Larry, Ilan and the High Holidays choir for their music, Elizabeth Takacs for her wonderful cooking filled with love; Erika Erdos for the bulletin; Miriam Ostrow for Eitz Chaim; Linda Brager for Yahrzeit reminders; Blima Firestone for the school; Saundra Levy for keeping us up to date with receivables and payables; Walter Steuerman for cemetery care; Ted Rechtshaffen our treasurer; Dianne Erdos-Rush our board secretary; all board members = Andrew Szende, Rhonda Page, Fred Levy, Morry Edelstein, Lottie Watson, Tom Bellman; Victor Goldman and George Popper for the buildings maintenance.

Thank you all for your support,  
Samantha Goldman

Please note that the Chair of the Cemetery Committee has now been taken over by Ms. Penny Balberman,  
Tel: (416) 663-9060 E-Mail [penny275@hotmail.com](mailto:penny275@hotmail.com).

Thank you all for your past assistance.  
Walter Steuerman

---

#### THOUGHTS FROM AVRUM

My Mother, Gitel Rosensweig, until 120, just celebrated the yahrzeit of her father, Moshe Chaim, a very gentle and good man, who died in 1973, two weeks before my Bar Mitzvah. She just called me to tell me the yahrzeit candle was still flickering, 25 hours after the yahrzeit began."I love when it does that," she said.

---

We talked about her father's life, and the fact that I was named after his father, Avraham Yitzchak. My Mother talked about how Avraham Yitzchak, his wife, children and grandchildren were taken out of their homes by the Nazis at the start of the war, shot and killed. She said the only redeeming thing about their demise was that they were not shipped off to Auschwitz. Isn't it amazing how we try to find a way of feeling a bit better about something so horrendous?

I wanted to share with you, a short story I wrote a while back titled: 'A Sunny Day in Auschwitz' to remember Moshe Chaim's father, mother and all the family we lost, and you lost in the Holocaust. God bless their souls. Have a sweet summer and work toward a better world wherever you are, whenever you can.

---

### A SUNNY DAY IN AUSCHWITZ

*By Avrum Rosensweig*

It was a cool spring day, and the sunlight shone kindly down on Auschwitz. Beyond the barbed wire, villagers walked briskly to church in their Sunday finest.

Eva walked in queue with the other women and children toward "the showers," a place the adults knew, was the gas chamber. They were 200 meters away.

A beautiful, young Hungarian Jewess took a rebellious step sideways, and the guards yelled, "Keep the line straight."

Eva considered the peculiarity of the guards' demand while people walked to their death. It was exaggerated and reminded her of the chastising she had received from her German music professor in Budapest for scratching her nose during her finest piano recital ever. "What a strange culture," she thought.

Eva felt a tap on her arm. She looked down and saw the cherubic face of a most disheveled little boy. He didn't want to be alone in Auschwitz.

"Have you ever wanted to fly like a bird?" Eva asked in Yiddish.

The little boy looked up at the hideously gaunt woman. He nodded his head and said, "I've always wanted wings, but never knew how to get them."

Eva hid her giggle.

"Here's what you do," she replied. "When you're in the shower and it starts getting hard to breathe - you know like when your head is stuck in a pillow - take the biggest breath you can [she showed him], and soon afterwards you will find your wings. Okay?"

The little boy assured her with an impish wink he would do just that. They were 100 meters away from the showers.

Eva lifted her eyes up to the sun and remembered the warm waters of the Danube flowing through her toes. She could hear her mother's and sister's embarrassingly loud laughter as they splashed about in the waves. Her father's dignified and splendid face appeared to her and she smelled the familiar aroma of vanilla and cinnamon on his hands. His fingers touched her face.

"Eva," the baker said to his daughter, "one day when you need to be protected and I cannot be there to help, promise me you will say the words of the Shema in my place."

The proud daughter promised the noble man, and kissed his hands.

The shower was 50 meters away. The little boy squeezed Eva's hand. She knelt down so as to become small and caressed his muddied forehead. "Vos is dine nomin? What is your name?" she asked.

"Sol," the little Jewish boy replied.

"Well Sol, pleased to meet you. My name is Eva and I'm happy to be your friend."

Sol seemed quite pleased to have made a new friend and skipped and hopped, quite undisciplined, in and out of the line. The guards missed Sol's outburst.

They reached the showers. Eva directed Sol inside and turned for a moment searching for a glimpse of feminine humanity in the eyes of the guard. The doors closed and women cried. The air became thinner and Sol breathed as hard as he could. Eva raised her head and sang - "Shemah Yisrael HaShem Elokeinu HaShem Echad."

The doors swung open and Eva glided out into the fresh air. Sol flew by her at top speed and shouted to his new friend that he had followed her instructions and found his wings.

"Wow, Sol. You look like you've been flying forever," she yelled back.

A peacefulness began to settle into Eva's soul. She

flew past the showers, the barracks and the train tracks and saw everyone who had ever come to Auschwitz and their lives before. Eva sobbed for the Jewish people. She cried for humanity and she roared furiously - "I know we can do better."

Her spirit rose above Auschwitz. It had done so in life and it did so in death.

It was a sunny day in Auschwitz and children played beyond the barbed wire.

---

## **MY ANCESTRAL JOURNEY....TO FORT WILLIAM, ONTARIO**

*by Ted Rechtshaffen*

For many members of Congregation Habonim, the journey back to your roots leads to Europe and a world that has largely disappeared. In my case, I had a very rare opportunity to go back – not just to a place but also to the people of my father and grandparents.

A couple of months back, I received the following email invitation:

Please attend our special celebration of 100 years of Jewish life in Thunder Bay. Everyone with ties to the community was invited to attend.

I immediately recognized that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me.

Here is my Fort William/Thunder Bay, Ontario family history.

In 1913 my grandfather Abraham Rechtschaffen came to Canada from Slivky, Poland (now part of the Ukraine). Along the way, two significant events happened. The first is that the last name somehow lost the 'c' in the middle, and the second was when he arrived at Pier 21 in Halifax, he was told that he would be going to Fort William, Ontario.

In Fort William, he found a cold town, with lots of trees and a thriving port on Lake Superior. He also found a small Jewish community of probably 25 families.

As the town grew, so did the Jewish community. Abraham worked a variety of jobs to make ends meet, and was very pleased to welcome his sister Matel to Fort William in 1923. She was also joined around the same time by her good friend (and possibly cousin) Clara Hausler from the nearby town of Prislop, Poland. In short order Clara and Abraham were married, and in 1925 my father Irvin

Rechtshaffen was born. In 1927 my aunt Edith (Abramson) was born, followed by my uncle Oscar in 1931.

By the early 1950's Fort William had a thriving Jewish community of over 250 – including a synagogue, community hall, and several vibrant community groups such as Young Judea, B'nai B'rith, Pioneer Women. Among a large group of very successful businessmen, lawyers, and medical professionals – Fort William was also home to Bora Laskin – former chief justice of the Supreme Court, and also Paul Shaffer from the David Letterman show.

Like many families, my grandparents urged their children to get an education, and one by one they left for university, my father to University of Toronto, my aunt to University of Manitoba, and my uncle to U of T and law school. In 1950 my grandfather passed away, and my father returned to Fort William to become a local Optometrist and even ran as a Liberal MPP in 1955. After another Conservative victory in Ontario and a couple more years, my father and grandmother also made the move to Toronto.

So....after 44 years, there were no more Rechtshaffen's in Fort William, Ontario. Their story was repeated by many Jewish families, and the community has been getting slowly smaller for the past 50 years.

Today, just 20 Jews remain, many of them quite old. This forms the background to my journey.....

In mid-June, I went to Thunder Bay for the first time since 1974. At that time my father took his young family to see his childhood home. This time, things were very different.

Shortly after arriving at the hotel, I ventured to the hotel dining room in search of people whom I didn't know, but whom I was sure I would recognize.

Sure enough, I found a table of older Jewish men and women and I introduced myself. At each introduction, I was met with shock, surprise, joy and tears – as most of these people had not seen anyone from my family in over 50 years.

Along with my cousin Lanny Abramson, what we found over the weekend was a group of people who grew up in a warm, thriving and dynamic Jewish community. They were thrilled to be back, and marveled at what a unique time and place their community was.

This type of community just isn't found in a large, urban setting, but it was more than just that. This was

---

a community made up of first and second generation Jewish Canadians who knew that to be Jewish and free was a rare treasure. This is something that they didn't yet trust – given the world that they had recently left behind. I think it brought them even closer.

On a more personal note, the trip had added meaning. In the 50 plus years since the family left Fort William, my grandmother, my father, aunt and uncle have all passed away. As a result, there is no living connection for our family back to Fort William – and the weekend allowed us to discover and rediscover a part of our family history from those who knew our family first hand.

I heard many stories about my grandfather (whom I never knew), his famous truck that was used for hauling, construction, shipping goods, and anything else that could be done to earn money. I heard stories from many 70-something women who thought my uncle was "the most wonderful man – so smart, so handsome, my first crush". I heard about my grandmother being "very smart, collecting rent from all the tenants, and quite serious". I heard about my aunt, the red haired beauty. And I heard stories about my father – a good athlete and student, a little quiet, more like his mother than his father.

One favourite memory from the weekend was when a younger member of the community (probably in his late '50's), asked how to spell my last name. Before I could answer, 3 others who grew up with my family spelled it out. This was, without doubt, the first time that has ever happened to me.

In summary, I had the opportunity in 2008 to return to my father's childhood, my grandparent's first years in Canada, and to a community that is fondly remembered by those who once lived there. This type of community will likely never be seen again.

---

#### FROM A MEMBER...

Come and join the few members who enjoy the refreshing atmosphere of our services with Eli and Avrum. Be a part of, not apart from Habonim- you will be glad you did.

Last Yizkor was a wonderful experience with Eli leading the group. We sat together quite casually and got to know one another better, as well as being invited to share certain experiences in our lives.

I want to share that morning's service with the Congregation via the Bulletin. I would never have believed I could enjoy anything so informal.

The energy exuding from this small group was so intense and exhilarating, I am sure by the time it concluded we all felt more spiritually connected.

LOTTIE WATSON

---

#### DONATIONS

Bala Jaison - in memory of her father Louis Fischoff , from Bala, Marc and Evany Rosen.

---

#### **OUR WEBSITE:**

[www.congregationhabonim.org](http://www.congregationhabonim.org)

#### **OUR E-MAIL ADDRESS:**

[office@congregationhabonim.org](mailto:office@congregationhabonim.org)

**To SPONSOR AN ONEG SHABBAT** call  
Saundra Levy at (416) 665-5595

#### **To SEND GREETING CARDS and DONATIONS**

call Rhoda Sion at (416) 782-9663 or write to  
716 - 660 Eglinton Ave. W., Toronto M5N 1C3

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

Call Dianne Erdos-Rush at (416) 630-7921  
or e-mail to: [dijer@sympatico.ca](mailto:dijer@sympatico.ca)

**TO BUY A LEAF FOR EITZ CHAIM** for any  
occasion call Miriam Ostrow at (416) 661-0949  
Leaf \$175

**QUESTIONS OR NOTICES RE JAHRZEITEN?**  
Call Linda Brager at (416) 488-0282

---

## JAHRZEITEN

*To be read at the July and August 2008 Services*

Otto Fleischer	Sivan 28	July 1
Sally Egnal	Sivan 28	July 1
Nigel Walsh	Sivan 28	July 1
Sen. David Croll	Sivan 29	July 2
Saul A. Junger	Tammuz 1	July 4
Nellie Sperlinger	Tammuz 1	July 4
Jack Jacobson	Tammuz 2	July 5
Dorothy Pecaut	Tammuz 2	July 5
Celia Kofman	Tammuz 2	July 5
Michael Szende	Tammuz 2	July 5
Marie Schwartz	Tammuz 3	July 6
John Pachner	Tammuz 5	July 8
Stuart Allan Roebuck	Tammuz 7	July 10
Ben Levy	Tammuz 7	July 10
Miriam Burrows	Tammuz 8	July 11
Margot Cige	Tammuz 11	July 14
Feri Knapp	Tammuz 12	July 15
Leo Lowenthal	Tammuz 12	July 15
Franz Joseph Weiner	Tammuz 12	July 15
Gabriela Sara Kacer	Tammuz 13	July 16
Mendle	Tammuz 15	July 18
Louis M. Schwartz	Tammuz 15	July 18
Edward Harris	Tammuz 16	July 19
Elise Marx	Tammuz 16	July 19
George Bernard Sion	Tammuz 17	July 20
Alan Wayne	Tammuz 18	July 21
Ruth Libman	Tammuz 18	July 21
Matthew John Silver	Tammuz 18	July 21
Fannie Saslove	Tammuz 18	July 21
Sadie Scudwick	Tammuz 18	July 21
Mendel Bain	Tammuz 19	July 22
Joseph Lees	Tammuz 19	July 22
Milton Alexander		
Cadsby	Tammuz 19	July 22
Joseph Blum	Tammuz 19	July 22

Esther Storm	Tammuz 21	July 24
Harry Mendell	Tammuz 22	July 25
Karl Adolph Marx	Tammuz 24	July 27
Litzie Binder	Tammuz 25	July 28
Regine and Samuel		
Platschek	Tammuz 26	July 29
Florence Yazer	Tammuz 29	August 1
Leo Kohn	Av 1	August 2
Barbara Gaspard	Av 1	August 2
Henry Rosenberg	Av 1	August 2
Lupu Buium	Av 3	August 4
Tamara Goldman	Av 7	August 8
Erna Neubieser	Av 8	August 9
Darran Soskin	Av 9	August 10
Rachel Stern	Av 9	August 10
Susan Feuer	Av 9	August 10
Irving Glatt	Av 11	August 12
Sarah Stein	Av 13	August 14
Vera Spitz	Av 13	August 14
Marvin Hochman	Av 14	August 15
Albert Weinberg	Av 15	August 16
Bessie Goldberg	Av 15	August 16
Judith Lengyel	Av 17	August 18
Philip Dickman	Av 17	August 18
Willie Fleischeer	Av 18	August 19
Schlomoh Leufer	Av 19	August 20
Valerie Fine	Av 21	August 22
Amalia Silberstein	Av 23	August 24
Martha Weinlaub	Av 24	August 25
Jacob Cohen	Av 24	August 25
Ottilie Weiss	Av 25	August 26
Millie Lindsay	Av 25	August 26
Esther Vijevano-Blom	Av 26	August 27

### **In mourning:**

Otto Fleisher, Rachel Stern, Richard Morton, Percy Weinstein, Sydney Kuttner, Naomi Wilson, David Kachuck, May Marx, Ken Kagan, Mary Slomen; Abraham Nachamovitz

Information and contributions to THE BULLETIN?  
call Erika Erdos at 416-787-0527  
e-mail eerdos@sympatico.ca

Deadline for contributions to the next Bulletin:  
Wednesday, August 27, 2008

Beth Habonim	5 Glen Park Ave. Toronto, ON M6B 4J2	416-782-7125
President:	Samantha Goldman	416-483-1277
Religious leaders	Eli Rubenstein	416-398-2615
	Avrum Rosenzweig	416-964-7698
Cantor:	E. Ghan-Firestone	416-665-6927
Treasurer:	T. Rechtshaffen	416-322-0749
Editor:	E. Erdos	416-787-0527