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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hope you are enjoying all the natural beauty of the fall season. Let's enjoy it while we can!!

Here's what's happening at Oraynu in the next two months: On Nov. 4th Rabbis Eva and Denise will lead a discussion on parenting and grand-parenting in inter-married families. It's being held in the morning at the School, so hopefully some of our school family parents will attend as well. Then on Nov. 6th, we once again partner with Don Heights Unitarian Congregation for a Holocaust Education Week event, to present filmmaker and award-winning author Max Wallace who will speak on a secret deal to end the Holocaust that has a Toronto connection. This year we are hosting it at the Borochov.

On Nov. 30th, thanks to a generous donation once again from Sue and Rod McLeod, we are presenting an important public event with noted broadcaster, advocate and pop culture philosopher Jesse Wentz, best known for his commentaries over 20 years on CBC's Metro Morning radio show. He will speak on a very timely topic, "Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Multiculturalism." Rabbi Denise will deftly tie his topic to the holiday of Chanukah which we will celebrate that evening in advance of the first night on Dec. 2. It takes place at the Borochov in the Social Hall. We hope you can attend

and help make this a full-house event. Spread the word to friends and family.

Also, two days later in the same location will be our annual Family and School Chanukah Festival. It promises to be lots of fun, and, of course, there will be latkes!!

Rabbi Eva Goldfinger's winter adult education series begins on Dec. 20th. This year her topic is "MeToo vs. NotMe: Relevance of Jewish Teachings Through the Ages for Jews Today." Intrigued by the title? See the full course description on p. 4 and then plan to join us for one, two or all of the sessions.

Check out Board President Mark Brender's High Holiday remarks on the topic of 'community.' You will also be interested to read about one of our Grade 6 students, Rachel Mednick, who spoke at a Baycrest gala about a wonderful tzedakah project she created to honour her grandmother. See p. 10.

We are also pleased to acknowledge all the generous donations made to Oraynu this fall, including a list of our Sustaining Members.

There are other bits and pieces to enjoy as well. Look forward to seeing you at an Oraynu event soon. Enjoy the holidays — whatever and wherever you celebrate.

Sandi

Sandi Horwitz, Editor

Members and guests are welcome to submit articles and letters and photographs. Please email: horwitz@rogers.com/ or mail to: Sandi Horwitz, 5 Bruce Farm Drive, Toronto ON M2H 1G2. Generally submissions should be no more than 1000 words and should reflect a secular humanistic perspective. Please note that Oraynu reserves the right to decline or edit submissions in order to maintain the mutual respect our members enjoy and our reputation for fairness.

Letters and articles printed in this newsletter reflect the opinions of their writers and are not necessarily those of Oraynu Congregation.

RABBI'S MESSAGE

Rabbi Denise Handlarski



Imagine a world in which we all helped one another live out our beliefs and values, even and especially when they contradict our own, in the spirit of co-operation and caring.

I was recently at a retreat for Rabbis Without Borders. This is a program that offers rabbis, selected for their innovative work, training, opportunity for study, and the chance to form collegial relationships with rabbis across the Jewish spectrum. I knew I would be the only Humanistic rabbi there. I approached the first retreat last spring with a little bit of trepidation. Sometimes people, especially rabbis, in other movements, are not very friendly to us. I can take it — Humanistic Jews are built tough. But, still, four days of it (and these days run from 7:30 am - 9:30 pm) could be a little wearing.

The rabbis, however, were overwhelmingly kind. And curious! The truth is, they know a lot of their own community members are more like us than like “them” in some ways. There are so many people who don’t find prayer meaningful. So many Jews who would call themselves atheist/agnostic/cultural/secular/spiritual but not religious. They want to learn from me how we do what we do. I’m proud to represent us.

I also learn so much from them. There is so much creativity and innovation out there. I hope you’ll come to upcoming programs where I get to showcase some of what I’m learning and put it into action.

One thing that has been especially touching, is that I have formed a bond with an Orthodox rabbi named Isaiah. He is a really interesting guy — he grew up in the Chasidic community as a Jew of colour. He is a fantastic musician (you can check out his band Zayah online). He runs programs for Jews and for rabbis to try build bridges in the Jewish world. What he sings, and teaches, is very theistic in nature, of course, but he is often driving at the same overall messages as I am/we are at Oraynu. It’s all about kindness, tzedakah, joy, meaning, beauty.

I was voluntold to lead a service at this past retreat. The idea is to showcase how one’s movement does it, or highlight one’s particular style. At the spring retreat many rabbis said they’d love to see Humanistic Judaism in action. So I agreed to lead a morning service this time around.

As you likely know, I am not a good singer. I see this as a strength; you should always feel comfortable singing if I’m around because you’ll never be the most tone deaf person in the room! However, when leading a service, I need back up. I asked Isaiah to help me by playing guitar and singing. The songs were *Hine Ma Tov* and the Humanistic version of *Refuah Sheleimah*, the song we sing to wish others healing.

Isaiah didn’t plan to subvert my message or anything. As I mentioned, the days at the retreat are long. And so he rolled out of bed and put on a shirt without much thought. The shirt said: “I (heart image) Hashem”. So there we were, co-leading the service, a Humanist and a Hashem-worshipper. The service itself was completely secular and in our style.

Afterwards, some people asked me if I was offended. I said, of course I’m not offended!! I’m delighted! Imagine a world in which we all helped one another live out our beliefs and values, even and especially when they contradict our own, in the spirit of co-operation and caring. I think Isaiah did something wonderful: he showed others what it looks like to be a helper, a friend, and a *mentsch*.

As we move into the colder winter months, and we begin to hunker down and hibernate, remember Isaiah and me, up there on a *bi-mah*, singing (one of us badly) together, delivering a message of hope and healing. Who can you reach or reach out to in the same spirit?

**Unless otherwise indicated, kindly RSVP for ALL EVENTS:
416-385-3910 | robby@oraynu.org | via Oraynu website Event link**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Nov. 4
10:15 am

**Oraynu Children's
School**
131 Fenn Ave.
(Bayview/York Mills)

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT: PARENTING AND GRAND-PARENTING IN INTERMARRIED FAMILIES

Join Rabbis Eva and Denise to discuss strategies and success stories about parenting and grandparenting. We will share from our experiences working with families — Eva having counselled and officiated hundreds of intermarrying couples, and Denise working in the community and being intermarried herself. Hot topics may include: how to address family concerns/kvetches, hot-button issues such as circumcision, how to create "shalom bayit" - peace in the home, and much more.



Everyone welcome; no charge to attend. Kindly RSVP.

Tuesday, Nov. 6
7:30 pm

Borochov Centre
272 Codsell Ave

NEUBERGER HEW 2018 **HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK**

*Co-sponsored with
Don Heights Unitarian Congregation*

"In The Name of the Humanity: The Secret Deal to End the Holocaust" with Max Wallace

A previously-unknown audacious scheme, a surprising Toronto connection, and a daring rescue by a committee of ultra-Orthodox Jews led by a remarkable woman named Recha Sternbuch. Holocaust historian Max Wallace will reveal newly discovered archival documents proving that the Orthodox Committee enlisted a former Swiss President to deceive SS chief Heinrich Himmler into terminating the Final Solution in November 1944, a full six months before the end of the war, thus saving approximately 300,000 Jews.

Speaker: Filmmaker and New York Times bestselling author Max Wallace worked for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation. The CJN described his book *In the Name of Humanity: The Secret Deal to End the Holocaust* as "an impressive piece of historical scholarship and a very compelling chapter of Holocaust history."

Everyone welcome; no charge | Kindly RSVP

Join us as Oraynu proudly presents

AN EVENING WITH JESSE WENTE

Broadcaster, Advocate & Pop Culture Philosopher

"Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Multiculturalism"

Friday, Nov. 30 @ 7:30 pm | Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave.



Rabbi Denise will begin the evening with a Chanukah candlelighting and brief discussion of the holiday and what it teaches us about minorities and multiculturalism.

Mr. Wente will discuss Indigenous and Newcomer relations in Canada, including the complexities for minority groups, such as Jews, who have their own histories of oppression. He will enlighten us about challenges facing Indigenous communities and some ways we can work to foster reconciliation. His talk will be followed by a Q+A.

Jesse Wente has appeared on CBC Radio's Metro Morning as film and pop culture critic for 20 years. He previously served as Director of Film Programmes, at TIFF Bell Lightbox, where he oversaw theatrical, Cinematheque and Film Circuit programming. A self-described 'Ojibwe dude' with a national and international lens, he encourages audiences to consider diversity and inclusion into the future view of their organization, industry and country.

This event is generously sponsored by Susan and Roderick McLeod.

Non-members welcome: \$20

Sunday, Dec. 2
10:00 am

Borochoy Cultural
Centre
272 Codsell Ave.
(Wilson Hts/Sheppard)

FAMILY CHANUKAH FESTIVAL

Come celebrate Chanukah at the School!!

Fun activities, singing and lots of latkes & nosh, too
*Our holiday party is a wonderful way to bring light
into the start of the dark and cold season!*



☆ CHANUKAH TZEDAKAH ☆

- Collection of small women's toiletries to be donated to Nellie's.
- Fundraising activity in aid of Heart to Heart

Families: Bring REFRESHMENTS (no nuts or shellfish) e.g. whole, pre-washed fruit/veggies, or cheese, crackers & nut-free baked goods for all to share.

Guests welcome: \$8/Adult, \$4/Child, \$20/family

This program is part of Oraynu's commitment to Family Education

Thursday, Dec. 20
7:00 pm sharp
(plus Jan 24,
Feb. 21, Mar. 21)

Borochoy Cultural
Centre
272 Codsell Ave.
(Wilson Hts/Sheppard)

WINTER 2019 ADULT EDUCATION SERIES

with Rabbi Eva Goldfinger

"MeToo vs. NotMe: Relevance of Jewish Teachings Through the Ages for Jews Today"



Jewish biblical and rabbinic texts, stories, poetry, and laws from ancient to contemporary times are filled with do's and don'ts for appropriate and ethical Jewish behaviours. Join Rabbi Eva as we study and examine Jewish texts through the ages that purport to tell us what is and isn't ethical and how we should and should not behave in our everyday lives. Join the discussion on which rules of behaviour are ethical or unethical, and meaningful or irrelevant for us today. Then let's create and share with others our Mini-Humanist-Talmud on what is and isn't ethical 'For Me/For Us' today. Feel free to suggest specific issues you would like to discuss in our final session.

Four Thursdays, starting at 7:00 pm sharp and ending about 9:30 pm:

Dec. 20: MeToo vs. NotMe: Relevance Today of Biblical Do's and Don'ts

Jan. 24: MeToo vs. NotMe: Pros and Cons of Rabbinical Teachings and Laws

Feb. 21: MeToo vs. NotMe: Meaningfulness of Modern Interpretation of Jewish Laws and Customs

Mar. 21: Contemporary Ethical Revolutions: Which are MeToos and Which are Not-Mes?

What kind of Jewishness has relevance and meaning for you? Come and study with Rabbi Eva and have a say in the present and future of Judaism. For you, what is and is not worth doing and passing on to future generations? Come and dissect Jewish texts and writings from ancient times to today and join our open discussions on why the teaching is or is not relevant or ethical for us. **Your voice counts. Come and be heard!!!**

Kindly RSVP: 416-385-3910 | robby@oraynu.org | via Oraynu website Event link

Non-members always welcome for a nominal fee



MARK YOUR NEW CALENDARS!

Plan to join us for our

FIRST SHABBAT CELEBRATION OF 2019 with Rabbi Denise

Program: Get Clear on Your Jewish Year

When and Where: Jan 11 @ 7:30 pm at the Borochov Centre

More details will follow in next issue.

PRESIDENT'S ROSH HASHANAH MESSAGE

Mark Brender

When I think about this time of year – or really when it comes to anything related to Oraynu -- I often find myself returning to the idea of community. When I was a kid and we went to Rosh Hashanah services, the apples and challah dipped in honey were really great – but I'd be lying if I said I was excited to be sitting there for a few hours, repeating the same words as I repeated the year before, most of which I didn't believe any more than when I said them the first time.



But now I do look forward to this day. I appreciate the time to be together with others who may think about the big questions in life and about what is important in the same way as I do – and to have those thoughts reflected in our words.

So there is indeed **comfort in community** – at a time when I imagine, for many of us, both have been desperately needed given current events far away and near. It felt like a difficult summer. For our family, the shootings on the Danforth hit close to home – just as too many shootings in other parts of our city hit close to home for so many others.

There's a phrase I returned to often in my head when I needed to get pulled out of a funk. It has been said in various forms by a number of thinkers, and it goes like this: 'Optimism is a moral choice.' In other words, in our context, it's saying that if we're actually going to make good on the promise of tikkun olam, we cannot afford to be anything other than optimistic.

Being here and being involved in Oraynu is a microcosm of the optimism we need. It makes me feel better and it's something to celebrate – if not every day, then at least every time we get together. And celebrating is exactly what we'll be doing just over a year from now in November 2019, on the occasion of Oraynu's 50th anniversary. We will have food and wine and community and comfort and optimism overflowing, and I'm looking forward to it already. More details to come in months ahead.

Nizkor - Let Us Remember

We acknowledge these memorial anniversaries (yahrtzeits), to be marked by our members:

- Nov. 6 Martin Shaw, brother of Warren Shaw
- Nov. 13 Seymour Hersch, father-in-law of Ann Hersch
- Nov. 27 Thelma Wingert Kay, mother of Katherine Kay and Patricia Kay
- Dec. 8 Israel Ehrlich, father of Ann Hersch
- Dec. 12 Jeannette Horwitz, mother of Robert Horwitz
- Dec. 15 Molly Feldman, mother of Elaine Feldman
- Dec. 30 Davida Glazer, daughter of Gitty and the late Gabe Glazer



Members are encouraged to add the names of family members to this list. Please email the information for inclusion (date, name and relationship) to Roby Sadler at: robby@oraynu.org

MITZVAHS & MILESTONES

We are saddened to report the passing of member **Joe Koenig** on October 9th at the age of 88. Joe and his wife Miep joined Oraynu more than 10 years ago, and following her death in 2010, he remained an active member and generous supporter of Oraynu. Joe was a gentle and sweet man, with a heart of gold and a quietly brilliant mind. His family left Germany just before the war started and he was raised in a farming community in Galt, Ontario. He began his career at the National Film Board and, during almost 15 years there, directed and produced dozens of films. Joe was always interested in using multi-media as an educational tool and, after leaving the NFB, founded a company that produced educational materials for numerous clients throughout North America including Sesame Street. Recognizing the value of simulation software, especially for teaching electronics, he formed a new company and with a partner developed the award-winning Electronics Workbench, and its accompanying education program which grew to become the largest electronics distance program in the world. His employees recall him as a warm and caring boss, a wonderful mentor, and in the words of one, a "true mensch." Joe was a visionary, almost a Renaissance man, who was interested in all aspects of science plus creative exploits that included writing, painting and music. At his memorial service, officiated by Rabbi Denise on Oct. 21st, we learned from his three daughters Anne, Nina and Debbie what a loving husband and doting father (and father-in-law) he was, and how he loved being Zayde to his four grandsons. He will be sadly missed by all. (See a special tribute from Steve Shabes on p. 8.)



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SAVE THE DATE!!

Oraynu's 50th Anniversary Celebration
Saturday, November 2, 2019

More details to follow in the coming months

ORAYNU CHILDREN'S SCHOOL REPORT

**Principal
Steve Shabes**

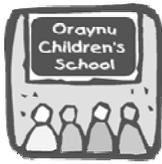
"Create the kind of self that you will be happy to live with all your life." When Golda Meir said this, she linked human creativity to the ability to find the kind of internal inspiration that sparks the potential for achievement. Educators often deliberate on how to assess achievement. But, at a school that promotes personal connections to one's own Humanistic Jewish culture and identity, how do we measure success? Can you measure an internal spark, a potential for achievement. At Oraynu, experiential learning is our preferred mode to motivate self-development and growth. Questioning and critical thinking are encouraged along the way. There is neither a singular curricular map nor a hard and fast method to evaluate progress when it comes to succeeding at our central focus, *g'milut hassadim* (acts of loving kindness) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). We are, therefore, more concerned with the sparking of internal inspiration than the empirical measurement (and who knows if that could ever really be done) of achievement. For a so-called "evaluation" of our students learning, we look to their thoughts and actions themselves.

A lovely look at our students' meaningful actions and the kindness they bring to the world takes us back to our annual apple picking day in September where we collectively filled bags with over 150 pounds of apples for the North York Harvest Food Bank. Although 150 pounds is an impressive quantity and, therefore, truly an achievement, the most valuable measure of success is the lifelong lesson on helping others.

As for an "evaluation" of their thoughts, I can, at best, be an observer and reporter. We started our tzedakah morning of children helping children with apples with a *kindness sayings* activity. Each family received a card containing an inspiring Anne Frank quote: "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." Then, our students and their families were asked to share their thoughts by creating their own kindness sayings. Enjoy reading their inspiring kindness sayings below (no "evaluation" required!):

There's always time for a hug!
Treat others the way you would like to be treated. (3 families wrote this one!)
Make sure everyone is included.
One smile makes someone's day.
Help those in need.
Kindness must be spread.
Know what to say and when to say it.
Be kind.
Like chopping firewood warms you twice, kindness makes two feel nice.
Thou shalt be kind is the 11th commandment.
Always treat others the way you would want to be treated...with kindness.
Kindness is a tune we can all dance to.
It doesn't matter if you have a lot of money, it only matters if you're rich in kindness.
If it doesn't put a smile on someone's face, think if it needs to be done.
Kindness makes others and you feel good.
Be nice to each other! (Darn it!)
I believe the only true religion consists of having a good heart.
Be respectful even to the most mediocre.
Be kind now.
Don't not be kind.
Kindness costs nothing, yet it has so much value to the one who receives it.

As we look forward to Chanukah, more opportunities for our students to share their humanity and compassion emerge. At our activity-based Chanukah Festival, we will be contributing to Heart to Heart, an organization which supports a new generation of young Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel to become leaders who recognize the importance of building a shared society. We will also be collecting toiletries for Nellie's, a women's shelter, up to and including



the Chanukah Festival. We hope you will participate in our children's tzedakah efforts, as I believe their involvement helps them create the kind of selves they will be happy to live with throughout their lives!

See you at the school!

Steve

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Sunday, Nov 4: *Bnai Mitzvah Tzedakah Project—Stephen Lewis Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign*. Grade 6 & 7 Lunch 'n Learn. 12:15—2 pm. Staff room. (Students only).
- Friday, Nov 9: *Pyjama Party Oneg Shabbat*. JK, SK, Grades 1 & 2. 7-8 p.m. Borochov Centre.
- Sunday, Nov 11: *Grade 1-2 Grandparents' Torah Story Party*. 10:00 am -12:30 pm. Oraynu Children's School, Foyer.
- Sunday, Nov 25: *Grade 3-4 Family Day—The Jews of Spain*. 10:00 am – 12:30 pm. Room 105. (Parents and students)
- Sunday, Dec 2: *Family Chanukah Festival*. 10:00 am – 12:30 pm. Borochov Social Hall followed by *Grade 7 Tzedakah Project—Packing Toiletries for Nellie's Shelter*. 12:30 - 2 pm.
- Sunday, Dec 16: *Grade 5 and 6—Fam Ed: Virtual Tour of Israel and Jewish Immigration to Canada Project*. 10:00 am-12:30 pm. Staff Room
- Sunday, Dec 16: *Young People's Theatre—Mary Poppins!* 2:30 pm showtime. Limited seating available. Ticket purchase deadline is Nov 5.

PAJAMA PARTY ONEG SHABBAT

For children in JK, SK, Grade 1 & 2 AND their families

(Members with children or grandkids in these age groups welcome)



- Participate in a Shabbat ceremony with your Oraynu friends
- Bake challah, sing songs, hear stories!
- Kids, wear your pyjamas and bring your teddy bears.
- Everyone, bring pillows to sit on.

School families, RSVP to Steve. Non-school families ONLY, please RSVP to Roby.

Funded with support from



**Friday, Nov. 9
7:00-8:30 pm**

**Borochov Centre
272 Codsell Ave.
(Wilson Hts/Sheppard)**

Milestones at the School: A Tribute to Joe Koenig

By STEVE SHABES

In the life of a school and congregation, we may not always be aware of those who support us from afar. This month, we lost a fine man, **Joe Koenig**, a longtime congregant, great friend to Oraynu and avid supporter of the school. We honour and remember him as a kind and very generous man whose contributions have a particular special place at the heart of our educational program. Joe led an interesting life and I feel privileged to have spent quite a lot of time with him to learn firsthand about his meaningful life's journey. To speak with him was to benefit from his humanity—his humble, gentle and caring nature and his brilliant mind. It was an honour to have listened to him tell of his own pre-Holocaust history, the effects of the war on his cherished wife Miep's family, as well as his first years in Canada. He patiently answered my many questions. Our conversations were also filled with stories of his many creative pursuits: his NFB educational films and documentaries, his development of educational tools for learning, his interest in education and art, and his love for his family. His recounting to me of his childhood in Nazi Germany, as well as the Holocaust books and videos he shared, have shaped and will continue to inform my teaching of this calamity. I will tell our students of his journey for years to come.

SUKKOT FESTIVAL'S NEW LOCATION & FORMAT Reported by Principal Steve

The Sukkot Festival was a fun, interactive and innovative celebration. It was the first time at Borochov and the first fully interactive Sukkot. The grade 5 and 6 families and staff arrived early to build our sukkah in the centre of the Borochov Social Hall. After a short "traditional" welcoming ceremony introducing our newest students to the community, our families were divided into teams. Each team visited a circuit composed of five activity stations. At Garry's *Sheltering Sukkot*, we learned that the sukkah also represents shelter and understood that it is our responsibility to help all of humanity achieve shelter, especially those who are homeless. Tony's *Shanghai Sukkah Lantern* station began with a story book about a boy who sought shelter from the Holocaust in Shanghai. When he was lonely at Sukkot, his new Chinese friends brought paper lanterns representative of their own culture to his sukkah and decorated it. We then decorated our Sukkah with the Origami Chinese-style lanterns made at his station. At Jenny's *Ushpizin* table, we were asked: "Who would you invite to be guests in your sukkah?" Our participants made paper chains and on each link, they wrote the names of their guests, focusing on a one of several categories—fictional, familial, historical and any other type of guest they could think of. At Miriam's *Arba Minim*, we focused on the environmental message of Sukkot and made our own lulavim. Etti and Yuval got us up on our feet and rockin' to the beat of the song *Livin' in a Sukkah* (a Sukkot parody of Bruno Mars *Marry Me*) at our *Dance, Dance Sukkot Dance* booth. It was tremendous fun to shake a lulav, sway, dip and box step to the Sukkot beat!



Thanks to Larry Kline for the great fotos. Also special kudos to Shofar blower Jennie Morris, and our teen volunteers Sarah, Jennie, Kiernyn and Lasha.



RACHEL MEDNICK'S AMAZING TZEDAKAH PROJECT



Rachel, in Grade 6 at our Children's School, spoke at Baycrest's 100th Anniversary Gala on October 14th about a unique project she undertook. Here is the text from her outstanding presentation:

Hi, I'm Rachel Mednick and I'm 10 years old. Tonight, you'll see how Baycrest touches the lives of people at different ages and different stages. It's a real honour for me to be here so I can tell you how supporting Baycrest starts with me.

You see, I have been visiting my relatives at Baycrest since I was a little girl. My great-grandparents, Albert and Millie Soren, lived here and, my Bubbie Fern lived here since she was 65 years old. Even though there was a 30 year age difference, we often visited my Grandma Millie and my Bubbie Fern at the same time

Both of my grandmothers loved the Donald and Elaine Rafelman Creative Arts Studio. My Bubbie Fern and my Grandma Millie made ceramics, necklaces and watercolour paintings at the Studio. Even the tie dyed scarves that me, my mom and my sister Amy are wearing tonight were made there!

One weekend when I was visiting my Bubbie Fern, I thought about how much fun it was to do arts and crafts with my Bubbie at the Studio on PA Days. I thought, what if I could help raise money for the Studio so that other residents could do arts and crafts with their family members, too?

I talked to my mom and dad about it and they helped me organize the "Swim for Bubbie" fundraiser. We picked a swimming event because everyone in my family loves to swim. My Bubbie Fern was a lifeguard, and me, my Saba, my Dad and my sister are all competitive swimmers. I thought maybe we could raise \$50 or \$100. That's a lot of money! But guess what? So many people wanted to help and we raised more than \$10,000 for the Studio!

My Bubbie Fern was able to be at the event that weekend and the team from the Baycrest Foundation even came to the pool in Thornhill to support us! I never thought I could raise so much money, but I am so happy that I did it!

I know how happy my grandmothers were when they got to be creative and make beautiful art at the Studio, especially on PA Days with their grandchildren! This is how giving back to Baycrest starts with me.

EASY POTATO LATKES *(no peeling required!)*

Although the end result is always delicious, no one enjoys peeling and grating all those potatoes. Here's a quick way to make latkes using frozen hash browns that will give you a "made from scratch" taste without all the work. And the best part is—no one will know the difference!

- 450 gr. shredded hashbrowns (defrosted, if frozen)
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- Black pepper (to taste)
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt (optional)
- Vegetable oil for frying

Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl until well combined. Heat oil in a large skillet. Drop large spoonfuls of mixture into the oil and fry until golden brown on both sides. Serve warm with apple sauce or sour cream.

Note: McCain's makes shredded hashbrowns. Found several variations of this recipe on the internet and haven't tried it yet, but it looks like a winner!



**Chanukah
from a
Humanistic
Perspective**
From shj.com



This year, we light the first candle of Chanukah on Sunday, December 2nd. Throughout the eight-day celebration, the flickering lights are a reminder of the struggle, courage, and fragile triumphs of the Jewish people.

Chanukah, a Hebrew word meaning "dedication" is said to refer to the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem by Judah Maccabee and his followers in 161 BCE. The basis of Chanukah is the story of a Maccabean victory embellished by Talmudic legend. This legend tells us that a small band of Jews led by Judah Maccabee and his family rebelled when the Greek King Antiochus Epiphanes sought to impose Greek culture and religion upon his Syrian empire, which included Judea. Following their recapture of Jerusalem, the victorious Jews rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem and decreed an annual celebration of Jewish independence. Some 600 years after the Maccabean victory, the rabbis, seeking to claim Chanukah as their own, added the legend of the flask of oil that miraculously burned for eight days.

The story of the Maccabees is a story of human courage, integrity, and hope. The success of their revolution is rooted in the people's desire for religious, political, and economic freedom. Their desire to choose their future for themselves was accomplished, not by pious pleas or tearful entreaties, but by decisive action, expert planning, and sheer guts. The values of the Maccabean revolution are as important today as they were centuries ago. We, too, must take the future into our own hands. We choose how we shall live, seeking to behave courageously to preserve our integrity. Chanukah is a valuable holiday for Humanistic Jews, as we celebrate the courage of authentic heroes, articulating the values we must have if heroism, humanity, and the natural order are to survive.

Families often retell the ancient stories, share the rich symbols, and connect these with modern concerns and issues. Chanukah celebrations are festive occasions, marked by the lighting of the candles of the *chanukiah*, which serves as a connection with our past, as a link to other Jews. Foods cooked in oil, such as latkes or sufganiyot, are shared and there are games, songs and Chanukah "gelt" or gifts.

A Simple Humanistic Candle Blessing for Chanukah

As we light our Chanukah candles, let us say:

<i>Baruch ha-or ba-o-lam.</i>	ברוך האור בעולם	Blessed is the light of the world.
<i>Baruch ha-or ba-a-dam</i>	ברוך האור באדם	Blessed is the light within humanity.
<i>Baruch ha-or b'Chan-u-kah.</i>	ברוך האור בחנוכה	Blessed is the light of Chanukah.

The Eight Lights of Chanukah

By Marilyn Rowens

First printed in the journal *Humanistic Judaism* in 1979.

The first light is the light of REASON.
It is the light of reason which helps us to see the difference between right and wrong.

The second light is the light of SELF-ESTEEM.
It is the light of self-esteem which keeps us proud.

The third light is the light of COURAGE.
It is the light of courage which gives us strength to stand up for what we believe in.

The fourth light is the light of FREEDOM.
It is the light of freedom which reminds us to take responsibility for our own lives.



The fifth light is the light of LOVE.
It is the light of love which enables us to care for those who suffer.

The sixth light is the light of LOYALTY.
It is the light of loyalty which makes us keep our promises to those who trust us.

The seventh light is the light of GENEROSITY.
It is the light of generosity which encourages us to give even when we do not receive.

The eighth light is the light of HOPE.
It is the light of hope which leads us to the vision of a better world.

THE "SOCIETY PAGE"



SAVE THE DATES:

1) A World of Jewish Music – January 18-20, 2019 – La Quinta Inn in Hayward, CA

The International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism is sponsoring a fantastic weekend of **Jewish culture through music!** From Jewish Musical Theater to Unknown Jewish Composers to Social Justice Music, and more. Featuring Cantor Jonathan Friedmann, Ph.D., Professor of Jewish Music History; Dr. Andrea Fishman, founder and director of Flor de Kanela Sephardic Music Ensemble; Dr. Ezra Donner, composer, conductor, pianist and teacher; Cantor Deborah Davis, lead singer for Second Avenue Klezmer Ensemble; and more!

REGISTER NOW! Full weekend includes Friday dinner, two full days of conference events and meals, and evening entertainment. **Individual day registrations** also available. **For more information or registration:**

<http://bit.ly/JWest-2019>



2) The 2019 HuJews Conclave is coming on March 1-3 in Boston MA

The **HuJews Conclave** is an annual North American teen and college conference sponsored by the Society for Humanistic Judaism. Conclave brings together teens in grades 8-12 and college students from across the United States and Canada for a weekend of fun, service, insight, and discovery. Conclave empowers young Humanistic Jews to connect with their peers and engage in thought-provoking discussions, fun-filled workshops, rewarding community service activity, and much more.

Registration opens soon.

Any questions? Contact Anna Goldberg, HuJews Co-ordinator, at: anna.hujews@gmail.com

3) SHJ'S 50th Anniversary Celebration Weekend Apr. 26-28 in Michigan

2019 marks fifty years since the Society for Humanistic Judaism was founded by Rabbi Sherwin Wine in Farmington Hills MI. There is a huge celebration being planned which will take place at the Birmingham Temple.

More details coming soon.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend one or more of these fantastic weekends.



For more Oraynu news and conversation, log onto our FB page.
It's a great place to connect with fellow members, share ideas,
and stay up-to-date on events.

We'll be posting frequently and hope you chime in with
opinions and relevant links of your own.

ORAYNU CONGREGATION FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

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WHAT WE BELIEVE ...

- ◆ A Jew is someone who identifies with the history, culture, and fate of the Jewish people.
- ◆ Judaism encompasses the civilization created by the Jewish people. It includes art and music, folk culture, and the treasured masterpieces of our great writers and thinkers, from the Bible to the present.
- ◆ We have the power and responsibility to shape our own lives independent of supernatural authority.
- ◆ Our ethics and morality serve human needs. We participate in *tikkun olam* (building a better world) for all people.
- ◆ We strive to express our Jewishness in a manner consistent with our beliefs.
- ◆ We stand in solidarity with the State of Israel and with Jewish communities in Toronto and around the world.
- ◆ The freedom and dignity of the Jewish people must go hand in hand with the freedom and dignity of all people.
- ◆ We warmly welcome into our community all those who share our values and who are connected to the Jewish people, whether by birth, adopted identity or by family relationship.

ORAYNU TRIBUTE DONATIONS/CARDS

Members and friends can choose to honour a person or an event (memorial, birth, birthday, bar/bat mitzvah, marriage, anniversary, achievement, etc.) by making a tax-receiptable donation of \$18 or more to Oraynu. An **Oraynu Tribute Card** will be sent to the person or family of the honouree and the donation will be also recognized in *The Shofar*.

To arrange this, please contact Roby at:

416-385-3910 | roby@oraynu.org

PASTORAL AND EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Jewish Guidance is a service that many of our members expect from their congregational leaders. Oraynu provides part-time services of:

- Steve Shabes for guidance about Jewish education for children and youth
- Rabbi Eva Goldfinger, for guidance regarding life cycle transitions and conversion
- Rabbi Karen Levy, Rabbi Eva Goldfinger and Rabbi Denise Handlariski for pastoral guidance regarding intermarriage, Jewish practices, adult education and ethics

Guidance is offered, but not counseling or tutoring, which can be provided on a fee-for-service basis. **For referral to the appropriate person, contact Roby at: 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org/**

GET INVOLVED!

- Chesed Circle (Sunshine Committee) - Roby Sadler: roby@oraynu.org
- Fund Raising Oraynu (FRO) - Contact either Mark Brender: mbrender11@gmail.com OR Steve Shabes: stevenshabes@yahoo.ca
- Tikkun Olam Oraynu - Rabbi Denise: rabbidenise@oraynu.org
- New Member Welcome – Rabbi Denise: as above
- School Committee - Chair, Erin Winocur: ewinocur@rogers.com

THE SHOFAR is a bi-monthly publication of Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism. EDITOR: SANDI HORWITZ

Oraynu Congregation is part of a worldwide movement, affiliated with Society for Humanistic Judaism and the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism.

Oraynu Children's School gratefully acknowledges funding support from:



Check website
for updates:

oraynu.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Nov. 4 at 10:15 am **DISCUSSION: THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT** (More info: p. 3)
Location: Oraynu Children's School @ St. Andrew's JHS, 131 Fenn Avenue (Bayview/York Mills)

Tuesday, Nov. 6 at 7:30 pm **HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK EVENT** (p. 3)
"IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY ~ THE SECRET DEAL TO END THE HOLOCAUST"
Location: Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. (Wilson Hts/Sheppard)

Friday, Nov. 9 from 7:00-8:30 pm **PAJAMA PARTY ONEG SHABBAT** (p. 10)
for JK, SK, Gr. 1, 2. Non-school families welcome
Location: Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell

Friday, Nov. 30 at 7:30 pm **AN EVENING WITH JESSE WENTE** (p. 3)
Topic: Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Multiculturalism
Location: Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. (Wilson Hts/Sheppard)

Sunday, Dec. 2 at 10:00 am **FAMILY CHANUKAH FESTIVAL** (p. 4)
Location: Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. (Wilson Hts/Sheppard)

Thursday, Dec. 20 at 7:00 pm
WINTER 2019 ADULT EDUCATION SERIES with Rabbi Eva Goldfinger (p. 4)
Location: Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. (Wilson Hts/Sheppard)

Friday, Jan. 11 at 7:30 pm **SHABBAT CELEBRATION & DISCUSSION** (p. 5)
Topic: How to Get Clear on your Jewish Year
Location: Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. (Wilson Hts/Sheppard)

Unless otherwise indicated, for all events kindly RSVP to Roby:
416-385-3910 | robby@oraynu.org | via Oraynu website event link
Non-members welcome at most events; nominal charge may apply



LAST WORD: Topics for Dinner Table or Car Talks

Want to inject a little more Judaism into the life of your family?

These are suggestions for a topic of conversation for your next dinner party, around your family table or in the car.

Here is this issue's suggestion:

Research/discuss as a family/friend/group one's practice on Chanukah — why do we play dreidel?

Eat latkes? Light candles? You might find the answers surprising!

Learn more at our Chanukah celebrations on November 30th and December 2nd!

