

SENIOR LINE

MAGAZINE OF THE JEWISH SENIORS ALLIANCE OF GREATER VANCOUVER



VOLUME 28(2) - JULY 2021

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Aunts, Uncles, Cousins & Friends
Retainers of our community's collective wisdom.

You Are



We honour the memory of our parents Harriet and Arnold Shine^{z1}, Babs and Ted Cohen^{z1}
~ Gary and Linda Cohen



Jewish Seniors Alliance of Greater Vancouver

949 W. 49th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.
V5Z 2T1 | 604.732.1555
office@jsalliance.org | www.jsalliance.org
CHARITABLE REGISTRATION
#88362 1401 RR0001

THE TEAM

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dolores Luber

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dolores Luber, Ken Levitt, Rita Roling, Shanie Levin, Tamara Frankel, Bob Markin, Tony DuMoulin, Binny Goldman, Serge Haber, Anton Grunfeld, Larry Shapiro, Michael Geller

CONTRIBUTORS

Gyda Chud, Larry Shapiro, Serge Haber, Dolores Luber, Tamara Frankel, Shanie Levin, Rita Roling, Robert Matas, Anthony DuMoulin, Margot Beauchamp, Kenneth Levitt, Grace Hann, Charles Leibovitch, Lilian Wang, Anton Grunfeld, Karon Shear, Susan Rogers, Jennifer Friezen, Jocelyne Hallé, Sylvie Hutchinson

LAYOUT, DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Jennifer Propp, Dolores Luber and Ken Levitt
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BACI Team, Serge Haber, Gyda Chud, Jackie Weiler, Rita Roling, Larry Shapiro, Rita Propp, Ken Levitt, Toby Rubin, Lyle Pullan

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

The good news is that we have received our first dose of a vaccine and have a date for the second shot. Seniors are no longer bearing the brunt of the pandemic and BC is doing well in fighting the “third wave” of the pandemic. The joyful image of the sunflowers on the cover is our way of expressing happiness and relief—we made it! Notwithstanding that we continue to mourn and remember those who did not. This long, painful stretch of time has altered us forever. We have come to appreciate people and conveniences which perhaps we had taken for granted in the past. And, many of us have acquired new skills—in the use of the Internet, Facetime, Skype, food shopping and, of course, Zoom. *Kol Hakavod!*

Confession: I read nine magazines. I always read what each editor has to say. In this way I join the community of editors in order to learn and to appreciate the concerns and points of view of others. The *Senior Line* magazine brings together an array of voices, words, and images to engage one another and to entertain, educate and advocate; in that process, we are building a community. Where that conversation goes or how it unfolds depends on how readers respond and support the magazine. The last issue had 20 contributors. So over to you. Subscribe, submit, and comment.

BUILDING SOLIDARITY IN DIVIDING TIMES

Written by Dolores Luber

We appreciate the fact that you are taking the time to read our magazine. When you read our magazine, you support us. Please show your appreciation for our advertisers by frequenting their places of business and services.

SPONSOR A PAGE IN SENIOR LINE

You will notice something new—people have chosen to sponsor an article by donating \$180 to Jewish Seniors Alliance. Their names are mentioned as sponsors at the bottom of the page. We appreciate the recognition and the financial support. Feel free to contact us, mentioning which article you would like to sponsor in the fall magazine. All our writers are volunteers; they receive no compensation for their efforts; your kind words and support are welcome.

We at JSA reach for what fulfills us, what is objectively humanly good. ”

The Great Debate continues with the topic of Medical Assistance in Dying. Larry Shapiro and Ken Levitt take on the “pros and cons” of this important topic. Anton Grunfeld writes about Vertigo, a medical condition which affects many seniors. Our guest columnist, Robert Matas, will inform you in *The Centerpiece* article of a case study of a vicious scam directed

at a senior. Beryl Israel has been a tireless and vivacious volunteer in the Vancouver community, read all about her in Karon Shear’s article. Our Co-Presidents present a new model for Long Term Care facilities. Fascinating reading, get started!

I recently read a review in the *Jewish Review of Books*, written by Robert P. George, about Rabbi Jonathan Sacks last book, *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times*. It came to me that the programs and events of JSA “are certain basic aspects of human well-being and fulfillment that, when rightly understood, provide the basis for human solidarity.” Our organization is open and available to all ethnic and religious groups. The volunteers in our Peer Support Services come from the various communities of Greater Vancouver, and they provide services to all who ask for assistance and guidance. In a society which values individualism, the “me, myself and I,” and polarization; we at JSA reach for what fulfills us, what is objectively humanly good. Our goal is solidarity for the common good. We aim for what Rabbi Sacks advocates, we must move from the “I society” back to a “We society”. Join us as a volunteer and as a supporter. YES WE CAN!

Dolores Luber MS is a retired psychotherapist and family counsellor. She taught psychology for many years, and loves to learn. Researching, writing and organizing JSA’s *Senior Line* magazine is her passion.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR...

Write to Dolores at: editor@jsalliance.org

I hope you are doing well despite the current restrictions due to Covid-19. I wanted to drop you a line to thank you for always thinking of me, and giving Marisa a copy of *Senior Line* magazine to bring to me. You and your team do an excellent job of putting out a very professional magazine with interesting articles and helpful information.

Even though I am not Jewish, I enjoy reading the articles and have always appreciated the spirit of volunteerism and service the Jewish community provides to the people of Vancouver.

Julie Uvancigh

Editor's note: Julie is the mother of Marisa Mae, my physical trainer.

I just received my copy of *Senior Line* in the mail - I always look forward to receiving a new issue, and I liked this issue very much. I saw that you wrote a very positive book review of *A Promised Land*. I have not read the book myself. I am also not an expert on the history of Israel, but I just thought you should know that there are some people who are concerned with some of the things that Obama wrote in his book - please see the attachment to this note. Best wishes for good health, and as always, I'm looking forward to the next *Senior Line*.

Larry Meyer

Editor's note: Thank you for the informative article by the Zionist Organization of America. It is of great interest and is important for the understanding of Barack Obama's legacy.

I am not a politician, nor am I an expert on political matters between Israel and other countries. I profess to be neither! I appreciate the feedback.

For those interested, the article can be found at <https://zoa.org/2021/03/10442516-zoa-letter-to-publisher-of-obamas-a-promised-land-citing-numerous-anti-israel-errors/>

Another exquisite magazine. I celebrated the *Seder* in Whistler with my family and what a surprise it was to be greeted by *Senior Line* upon my return.

I loved your Editor's message. I also loved Serge's history of JSA and look forward to reading more. I also enjoyed Larry's story about Michael Cohene. I look forward to reading the magazine in its entirety.

In your article *Lost in Translation* you mention the series of *Doc Martin*. It was highly recommended to me by a friend in Israel but alas, it doesn't appear on my Netflix. Any advice?

Kol Hakavod, Dolores, you have risen to the challenge/opportunity and published an outstanding magazine. I received a lot of wonderful positive comments even before I saw it myself.

Tamara Frankel

Editor's note: *Doc Martin* is on Amazon Prime. If you haven't already joined, Amazon Prime provides free, fast delivery on everything and excellent streaming of movies and TV series. The magazine is always a work-in-progress, it evolves and develops. It is a creative endeavor.

Do you have any info on retirement homes? You provide much valuable info on living a good life and staying healthy but we have to stay somewhere, so some help and guidance in this regard would be beneficial. We really enjoy your publication.

Hugh Nathan

Editor's note: It just so happens that Michael Geller, the well-known architect and developer, is now a member of our editorial committee and will be contributing to *Senior Line* on a regular basis. His topic is "housing for seniors" in all its various types; retirement homes, condos, shared dwellings, etc. Coming in the fall edition.

Throughout my life I have been spitting against the wind and will likely continue just that until the end. Of course I like the gathering of the dark figures under the storm clouds. This describes what we have all been going through this last year but we are not alone; it is the community that holds us together and all of us can see the small clearing in the sky. On the other hand all the art is beautiful and meaningful.

Rita Roling

Editor's note: Rita was asked which painting of Delores Anderson Bird she preferred for the cover.

**JSA WELCOMES
NEW SUPPORTERS**

Larry & Margo Jacobson
Diane Wood
Nancy Bell
Lynn Szabo
Yossi Havusha
Lorna & Larry Krangle



A CALL TO ACTION: NEW MODEL TO REPLACE THE LTC SYSTEM

Written by Larry Shapiro and Gyda Chud

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Dear *Senior Line* Reader,
Gyda and I have chosen to use our Presidents' message to launch the impetus required to jump-start an action plan designed to replace and rebuild our broke-beyond-repair LTC system. We have chosen this particular venue for the following reasons: one, to introduce to you this ambitious goal while at the same time inviting you to share your opinions of the plan, and participate by suggesting any improvements or additions that may have been overlooked. Secondly, during my short but pointed discussion with the Honourable Deb Schulte, our Federal Minister of Seniors, discovering that she is an avid reader of the *Senior Line*, I told her to expect to see an open letter addressed to her describing the vital components of the best LTC model we can imagine.

The idea is to combine all the elements required for guaranteeing a steady stream of highly trained staff and an ideal living environment for all LTC residents.

DEAR MINISTER SCHULTE,

The national outcry for national standards for the entire LTC (Long Term Care) sector presents a unique and timely opportunity to take the bold step of responding to that cry for a remedy with a working model encompassing all the elements of the future LTC with all the requisite quality control systems built in.

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW

This project could present the best possible use for the recently announced three billion dollars to Health Canada over the next five years to ensure the new national standards for long term care are applied and permanent changes are made. With the political will and your guidance, it is not unreasonable to have a shovel-ready project ready for construction in each of our provinces and territories within a year. How wonderful would that be Minister Schulte? A turnkey, state-of-the-art facility along with a fully-operating instruction manual containing all the new national standards.

The scaled model will include an integrated LTC Workers College staffed with the best available teachers for each specialty, be it geriatric nursing, social workers, physiotherapists, dieticians, recreation specialists, management, administrators, maintenance crews, nurse's aides and kitchen staff. All graduates will be certified as LTC specialists and they will be supported by regularly scheduled annual refresher courses which will serve to re-energize them and introduce them to any new or updated methodology relating to their disciplines. Upon graduation, these LTC graduates will be rewarded with a secure job in a growing field offering a good salary and benefits that befit them and recognize the unique aspects of their working conditions.

One of the first steps for the special education portion of our planned model will be to work with specialists to prepare a syllabus for the envisioned courses. This element of our model will serve to stabilize and support the ever so essential front line work force we all count on and thereby allow us as a nation to be ready and able to respond to the demand created by any future medical catastrophe. Minister Schulte, when we succeed in putting all the elements together, our government's plan of bringing in 500,000 new immigrants over the next five years can prove to be a valuable source of LTC worker candidates who would surely be happy to receive a specialized

This is a snapshot of our vision and what we are committing to forge ahead with to see our aspirations come to fruition. ”



education leading to secure well-paid employment.

SELF-CONTAINED AND SELF-SUFFICIENT SMALL SCALE MODULES

Reinventing the LTC facilities by replacing many of the current models with self-contained and self-sufficient small-scale modules accommodating no more than 14 people each will have the result that older adults are recognized as the unique individuals they are with their own personal history, preferences, and ability to make choices. This model will enable the residents to function as autonomously as possible, each module offering a common living room and dining room, encouraging input into the daily menus, private bedroom with bathroom ensembles, a front door for each home, balconies and accessible outdoor spaces that are easy to navigate.

Each self-contained module will have dedicated staff, separate kitchen, laundry, recreation, and space for other related activities. There will be a great deal of flexibility in daily living activities such as hours of meal-times, bedtimes, etc. Residents would even be

encouraged to participate in all work activities according to their abilities and inclination. This is a snapshot of our vision and what we are committing to forge ahead with to see our aspirations come to fruition.

For those readers who are unaware of the Minister of Seniors Mandate's letter signed by the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau on December 13, 2019, please be aware that it states that as Minister of Seniors, Deb Schulte, will help the government better understand and make decisions on the needs of Canadian seniors and ensure that programs and services are developed that respond to Canada's aging population thus providing Canadian seniors and future retirees greater security and a better quality of life.

Gyda Chud's lifelong passion is her career in Early Childhood Education which she teaches at Langara and VCC. She serves on the Boards of numerous organizations including JSA and President of the Peretz Centre which her parents helped establish in 1945.

What better way to fulfill this mandate than to lead the way toward a first class LTC system for the provinces and territories to emulate. In the welcoming letter from your deputy ministers, they defined your key responsibility as Minister of Seniors as being to enhance the well being and quality of life of Canadian seniors.

As you are also directly responsible for the New Horizons for Seniors Program which provides funding for projects that benefit seniors (70 million dollars annually) for community-based projects as well as pan-Canadian projects, collaborating with the not-for-profit/community-based sector will be one of the main avenues for reaching target populations and ensuring Canadian seniors have access to the supports and services they need.

Justin Trudeau chose you, Deb Schulte, for this daunting task, no doubt because he believes you are the best person to execute it. We, the seniors of this great country are behind you and are here to help in any way we can. Please consider spending some of that three billion dollars tagged for LTC on building the best model we can. Again, the time for action is now and we are all counting on you.

Be well and stay safe,

Larry Shapiro and Gyda Chud
Co-Presidents

Larry Shapiro studied accounting and worked at major firms as well as with the Federal government. In 1977, he studied real estate and opened his own business. Since moving from Montreal to Vancouver, Larry has been an active member of the JSA Board.



SERGE HABER'S MESSAGE

CREATING EXCELLENCE: A FOUNDER AND PAST-PRESIDENT REMINISCES, PART 2

Written by Serge Haber

The duty of a President is to find himself a replacement, someone to continue the work that was started. Jerry Kushner followed me as President in 2006 for a two year period. Ed Rothman became Vice-President. Jerry Kushner declined to continue. Sadly, as JSA was a young organization, no one wanted to take on the role of Presidency. The nominating committee asked me to run again as President, which I accepted.

I was determined to take JSA to new heights, producing programs that would provide help and support to an aging seniors' population. I had several crucial problems to confront: a) finding more people willing to assume responsibilities on the Board; b) funding was scarce; c) limited recognition in the community; d) no financial help from the Jewish Federation; and e) finding younger seniors for the Board. This was a difficult task. It takes time, sometimes years, not only to get the people but to instill in them the values of the organization so that they have an understanding of the work that confronts them.

We, the Jewish population of approximately 26,000 in Greater Vancouver, did not have enough political power to oppose or to change any of the decisions affecting seniors by the Municipal or Provincial Governments. It was necessary to partner with other organizations in order to create political power and work for systemic

changes. Thus the birth of the Advocacy Committee; I was the Chair. I attended monthly meetings with organizations such as 411, The Metro Vancouver Cross Cultural Network (MVCCN), Council of Senior Citizens Organization of BC (COSCO), and BC Health Coalition. But I had to choose between being the President of JSA and being the Chair Person of the Advocacy Committee. I chose the Presidency. We are fortunate today to have our Board Member, Tony DuMoulin, as Chair of the Advocacy Committee. He has had a phenomenal success in advocating for seniors and looking after their interests.

Geri London, Board member, came to me and said, "Serge, the Jewish Community at large is honouring every year, two or three donors to these community organizations at evening galas, charging as much as \$275 for attendance." These gala evenings were beautiful, meaningful events. But we did not have the kind of members who could approach these big money donors. Geri suggested that we could honour seniors who have donated their lives to volunteering for senior organizations. I agreed. At the next AGM, we asked three organizations in the community that dealt with seniors to nominate a person that is worthy to be honoured for his or her volunteer work. Thankfully, this program continues to date very successfully.

JSA was publishing a bulletin every month, keeping in touch and informing seniors in the community about JSA functions as well as other activities in

the community. Edith Shier (z'l) made a suggestion: "Serge our bulletin as a paper is not worth very much. Do I have your permission to produce a magazine for JSA?" It was a controversial decision because the Federation and Louis Brier had just discontinued their written publications. I realized that the publication of *Senior Line* magazine was necessary because many seniors were not well-versed with the computer. They preferred the printed word. *Senior Line* magazine was published in the spring of 2009. It was an immediate success. It was the only magazine that was published in the Jewish Community, exclusively for seniors, written by seniors, mailed to approximately 2200 families, and shared by close to 5000 seniors in the Greater Vancouver area, through distribution at community centres, organizations and businesses that deal with seniors.

Karon Shear offered to learn the Adobe InDesign software program. Sylvia Hill (z'l), a Board member, donated \$1000 specifically for Karon to take the training and to purchase the necessary creative suite programs. Karon took over production of the magazine with Edith Shier (z'l) as the Editor-in-Chief. In 2015, Dolores Luber took over from Edith and then Jennifer Propp took over from Karon. The professionalism of Dolores and the artistic talent of Jenn created a stunning, comprehensive, entertaining magazine which became full colour, cover to cover, in 2017. People started calling us to tell us how wonderful the magazine was and what a good read it was. They recognized and identified themselves with the JSA.

The expanding use of the computer and digital media did not escape our attention. We realized that while the older seniors would read the magazine, in the future we had to provide an Internet presence. Our website, www.jsalliance.org is excellent, with a large amount of material related to the fine work of JSA, entertaining articles and videos, and an archive of *Senior Line* magazines. Creating the magazine turned out to be a sound decision.

The Provincial Government, through its Gaming Commission allocations, recognized the value of the magazine by supporting us financially in order to continue publishing the magazine.

We now have an outstanding Outreach Program that educates and entertains seniors at seminars, workshops and major Spring and Fall events. We have the ability to establish in the community, programs that did not exist before. Seniors are capable and willing to deliver excellent programs.

I wish that many more members of the senior population would realize what a remarkable impact they can make and have in politics today and tomorrow, to make better use of their future.

The Covid-19 pandemic has proven the inadequacy and underfunding of services

geared to seniors by the Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments of Canada. Finally there is a realization that seniors programming and the financial support of seniors are totally ineffective and unsafe. Seniors paid the ultimate price with their lives.

Serge Haber

President Emeritus

Serge Haber is the founder and President Emeritus of Jewish Seniors Alliance. His vision, his determination and his continuing commitment are crucial to the development of the organization and its services.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE FOR JSA

Written by Gyda Chud

Always and forever, our beloved JSA focusses on the present and of course the future! In this regard we participated in our Strategic Planning Session, where 30 of our Board and Staff engaged ourselves in this initiative, facilitated by Dan Levitt. Dan is the Executive Director of Tabor House, a care residence, Adjunct Professor in Gerontology at SFU and an acclaimed international Guest Speaker, as well as the son of our Past-President Ken Levitt.

In planning for this event Dan offered us a creative assignment for thinking ahead. He asked us to submit what might be a *Vancouver Sun* headline article about JSA in 2026. A number of uplifting and inspiring suggestions came forward, highlighting our Peer Support Services success, our magnificent *Senior Line* magazine, our Advocacy on behalf of Older Adults and our recognition

as one of Canada's leading non-profit organizations providing outreach, education, support and activism.

Clearly, these headlines served as an exciting starting place for our gathering! Thanks to Dan, we focused on SOAR—the acronym for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results. We were immediately able to identify numerous Strengths, some of which have been at our core since our founding 15 years ago, and others which have grown over time with longstanding initiatives and the building of new ones. Opportunities and Aspirations took us to our future where we listed any number of potential possibilities including building our numbers of supporters and members, more partnerships and collaborations, all the critical Advocacy efforts which we are now pushing forward, new ideas for Fundraising, increasing our

Staffing, satellite offices throughout the lower mainland and province to provide accessible support and services, more media profile, increased communication and recognition with all levels of Government and ways to spread the word and work of JSA, both nationally and globally.

Results will be noted in concrete ways, the outcomes we hope for will be measured through statistics, qualitative and quantitative surveys that demonstrate how our Clients benefit from the work of Peer Support Services and our program events, sustainable funding, growth in the number of supporters within the 55–75 year age range and Long Term Care improvements. We intend to travel along many pathways; thus serving a more diverse inclusive community of different cultural backgrounds.

It was a superb, stimulating and generative retreat that will shape our journey going forward and require action plans to meet our goals. Should you have ideas to share with us, we would appreciate hearing from you as we chart our future together. With endless thanks to our Board, Staff and Dan Levitt, we move upwards and onwards!

MEET THE STAFF

INTRODUCING ROCHELLE GARFINKEL

Interview by Tamara Frankel

Jewish Seniors Alliance is thrilled to introduce the newest staff member, our manager of Donor Relations and Philanthropy. In this new position, Rochelle Garfinkel will expand our capabilities by carrying out fundraising activities and by increasing the current base of supporters. Many of these activities have been done until now by the extraordinary Serge Haber. “I am stepping into big shoes,” says Rochelle.

Rochelle has worked as Executive Director at Temple Sholom Synagogue, Interim Executive Director at Schara Tzedek Synagogue, and helped Beth Israel transition to a new database. She is enthusiastic about putting JSA on the map, implementing new philanthropic support, retaining past donors and reaching out to new ones. She is determined that every donor will have a high-quality interaction with the organization and will develop a long-

term engagement and investment in the mission of Jewish Senior Alliance.

She feels that our flagship is the *Senior Line* magazine which reaches more than 2,000 households. She plans to reach out to the readership to get them more involved in JSA. Rochelle also points out that JSA’s *raison d’être* is the Peer Support Program which makes a significant impact on improving the lives of seniors. She emphasizes that the success of the program is the trained volunteers and the support that they receive through Grace Hann and Charles Leibovitch. “Clearly the heart and soul of the program is the high quality of training and support that the volunteers receive.”

In the area of donor relations, Rochelle would like to create activities for different age groups among seniors, some social/pub nights for younger seniors and perhaps some other regular monthly programming for the older group of seniors. She feels seniors of different age groups have different interests.

“There is incredible synergy at Jewish Senior Alliance in that seniors are doing it for themselves and the impact is exponential.” Rochelle is thrilled to be working with such an empowered and dedicated group of people.



Rochelle remarked that JSA is uniquely positioned in that it is the only organization in the Jewish Community that has its ear on the pulse of all issues that affect seniors, those living independently or in care, those that are connected to family and friends, and those that are more vulnerable. JSA has an affiliation with over 100 organizations that work with seniors. The network needs to be nurtured and the work of JSA is always evolving to meet the emerging issues of seniors.

The expression “we should fear Ageism but not Aging” will guide her as she makes the journey together with JSA.

Finally, Rochelle would love to hear from our readers about ideas and interests. She can be contacted at rochelle@jsalliance.org or 604-732-1555, ext. 3.

SMILES ARE
FLOWERS.
PICK ONE FOR
YOURSELF
EVERY MORNING
AND WEAR IT
ALL DAY!



Tamara Frankel serves on the Executive Board of Jewish Seniors Alliance and is a member of the Editorial Committee of *Senior Line* Magazine.





CAN I TRUST THAT?

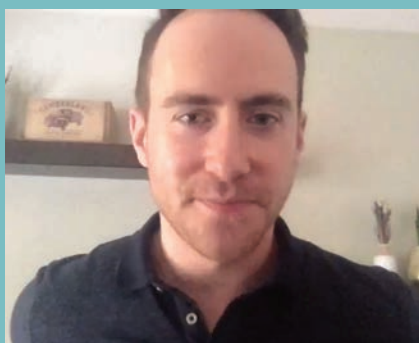
Evaluating health information online

Written by Shanie Levin

Can I Trust That? Evaluating Health Information Online, was the theme of the Jewish Seniors Alliance Spring Forum, held virtually on Sunday, March 21st. **Gyda Chud**, Co-President of JSA, reminded us of the four foundational elements of JSA: Outreach, Education, Advocacy and Peer Support. **Tamara Frankel**, a member of the program committee, then introduced the guest speaker, **Dr. Noah Alexander**.

Dr. Alexander is a practicing emergency physician at Vancouver General Hospital. Although he usually works on the front line, he is excited to empower patients to care for their own health through education on digital health literacy. He accomplishes this through his role as the Associate Director of Digital Health Literacy at the InterCultural Online Health Network. This organization helps multicultural community members understand and manage their chronic health conditions.

Dr. Alexander stated that his goal was to provide a systemic approach to health



Dr. Noah Alexander

education. We were introduced to the six elements that he wished us to use in order that we learn how to benefit from digital health education.

The first was to state the problem as follows: How do you know who to trust in this information age?

Next he planned to give us the tools in order to evaluate this information and enable us to choose when using a search engine (he likes to use Google Chrome) and to use keywords or short sentences.

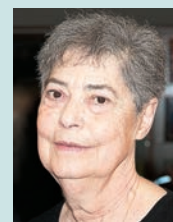
Look at exactly whose website it is, and watch for credibility and content. These two elements are the key to the whole process. For example, who wrote it; how old is the entry; is it relevant to the question; is there a peer review and/or accreditation? In terms of content, is it believable, do you trust the logo; check the URL (i.e. .com entries are usually commercial and profit based, whereas those ending in .org, .gov, and .edu are not-for-profit).

Check the credentials of the authors and find out if they are being paid and by whom. If the entry has ads there is likely to be a bias involved. A video walk-through provided examples of various types of health information online. Do not trust Wikipedia as anyone can add their own comments to the post. Use a credible health website such as Centre for Disease Control, Health Link B.C., Vancouver Coastal Health, or another government agency. Then scroll down to narrow down the topic. To check

accreditation see if the articles are peer reviewed. Is the content accurate and transparent? If there are links to other websites, there could be a conflict in that they may be selling merchandise. Red flags should be raised when cures are being offered and sold online. Do not trust simple not medically-proven solutions, or help from group chats. Make sure that there is a privacy policy.

Dr. Alexander then presented ten questions in an interactive quiz. The idea was to answer using the tools and red flags he had outlined in his presentation. The participants did very well in identifying the correct answers. Gyda Chud thanked Dr. Alexander for clarifying the elements involved in seeking health information online in a clear and understandable format. Dr. Alexander then answered a number of questions. This was followed by the JSA evaluation questions projected online. The results indicated that the participants had learned a great deal and that they would be more careful and more comfortable checking medical information online. The conclusion to the question posed, “Can I Trust That? Evaluating Health Information Online” is Yes—if you follow his suggestions!

Shanie Levin is an executive board member of JSA and on the editorial board of *Senior Line* magazine.



THE BULLETIN BOARD

COMMUNITY MEETINGS, CONFERENCES AND WEBINARS CONCERNING SENIORS' ISSUES

Written by Shanie Levin

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF OLDER ADULTS IN THE CANADIAN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The Forum took place on April 23th, sponsored by the **Council of Senior Citizens Organization of B.C. (COSCO)** and the **National Pensioners Federation**. The panel consisted of **Andre Picard** of *The Globe and Mail*, as host. His recent book, *Neglected No More: Canada's Ongoing Battle to Fix Long Term Care*, was crucial to the organization of this meeting; **Margaret Gillis**, President, International Longevity Centre Canada; and **Dr. Claudia Mahler**, U.N. independent expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

Andre pointed out that failures in the long-term care system are often blamed on systemic problems. He sees this as a cop-out, an excuse not to fix things.

Life for elders should have dignity and we must delve into the philosophical underpinnings rather than the political ones in order to solve the problems. Covid has shone a light on what he calls "elder apartheid".

Long term care should be a last resort and much of the money should be shifted to home care and seniors housing. In terms of long term care there needs to be a definite shift to pods and single rooms, as well as appropriate care for seniors with dementia. This type of housing should be part of the community where it would be visible

and residents would be able to interact with community members. We need to start with staffing and staff training. Seniors organizations must put pressure on government to enact these measures.

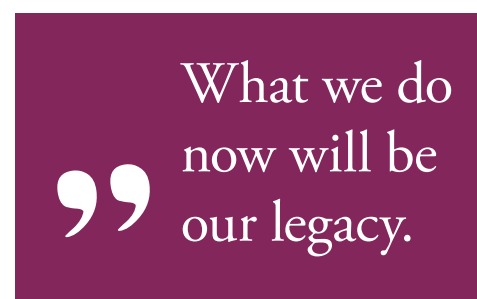
OLDER RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

Andre then introduced Dr. Claudia Mahler, who spoke from Germany. Dr. Mahler felt that the two key elements of importance are dignity and a person-centered care system. Human rights must be made primary. In the U.N. System they use the term "older persons". Her group is part of the Human Rights Council, but are not employees of the U.N. and are not paid by them. They are now working on a report on ageism and age discrimination in a number of countries.

The report will be presented to the Human Rights Council and to the General Assembly. The U.N. has no specific article in its constitution on the older person such as the one on the rights of the child. We need a convention of the rights of the older person. Older persons need to be included in these plans as they are the experts. Covid has shone a spotlight on the issue and 146 countries have pledged to take action. A universal convention would put pressure on countries to not only to pledge but to act.

Margaret Gillis, of the International Longevity Centre stated that ageism takes many forms but that Covid has emphasized the problems in long-term care homes. Unless there are dramatic changes the scenario that we have just seen will repeat itself.

We need to support a UN convention of the rights of the older person. Focus needs to be placed on health and economic and physical abuse that can occur in the long term care system. The older person must be at the table and a part of such deliberations. Gillis pointed out that this is also a feminist issue as most of the staff involved is female.



All three speakers agreed that pressure must be put on national governments and that seniors' organizations can be an active part of this. Andre then asked what gave them hope. They responded that seniors are becoming more active and angry and are making sure that their voices are heard.

Sheila Pither of COSCO pointed out that there should be nothing about us without us, and what we do now will be our legacy.



COSCO:
<https://coscobbc.org/>



National Pensioners Federation:
<https://nationalpensionersfederation.ca/>

TOWN HALL WITH SHIRLEY BOND AND ISOBEL MACKENZIE

On Wednesday April 21st the **South Vancouver Seniors Network** and **Jewish Seniors Alliance** sponsored a Town Hall featuring **Shirley Bond**, Opposition Critic for Seniors and **Isobel Mackenzie**, Seniors Advocate for British Columbia. Mackenzie had been named CEO of the year in the non-profit sector, focusing on the Vancouver Health Region as well as presenting province wide statistics.

The statistics show that there are 1,023,741 (19.7%) seniors in B.C., out of a total population of 5,197,224. 93% are over 65; 72% are over 85. Only 5% are in long term care (LTC). Their median income is \$29,630. 28% are receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement. 27% earn less than \$20,000. More and more

of those 65 to 69 are employed and over 40% over 65 are volunteers. While 91% of those over 65 have driver's licences, this changes to 36% of those over 85. This represents a significant problem in rural areas where there is poor public transportation.

In spite of all the attention given at present to long term care, 41% of those over 85 live alone and this population has been steadily increasing. Only 20% of seniors suffer from dementia but many have other chronic conditions. During Covid-19 many people have been unable to access their usual socialization outlets such as libraries, and senior centres. The community has responded with help through volunteering and the 211 telephone line.

Care home issues have to do with staffing issues and visitation. It is a question of rights versus risks and quality of life. In B.C. there are 296 LTC facilities; 109 are operated directly by a health authority and 187 are operated by a contractor with funding from the health authorities. Of these homes 51% had outbreaks, but 77% of these were in the Lower Mainland. As of the end of March, 51% of Covid deaths were in long term care.

Mackenzie then spoke about changes needed post Covid. She stated that most seniors would prefer to remain at home, but income affects these choices and there is no government subsidy for remaining in your own home. Shirley Bond thanked Isobel Mackenzie for her information and her insights. She mentioned all the important work being done by JSA and by Michael Lee in the area of seniors' needs.

SPONSORED BY **GYDA CHUD**



JSA Snider Foundation Virtual Empowerment Series #3 2020-21

DISCOVER THE POWER OF YOUR BREATH

Written by Tamara Frankel

Don't hold your breath. Breath is life, and each breath we take optimizes our health. This is what I learned at Jewish Seniors Alliance's third empowerment session *Discover the Power of your Breath* on May 4th. **Gyda Chud**, Co-president of JSA, warmly welcomed the 75 zoom participants, explaining that the overarching theme for the empowerment series is 'Be Inspired'.

Fran Goldberg introduced the speaker, yoga therapist and teacher **Tianne Allan**, who was involved for two decades in the world of aquatics and high-performance athletics. After a car accident, her yoga practice became her pathway to healing, both physically and emotionally. She

now specializes in pain care and in the treatment of anxiety and insomnia.

Allan guided the group in movement, breathing while opening the arms and bringing them back to the chest. She explained that the foundation of our breath is comprised of three steps:

1. Sit up straight and breathe through your nose.
2. Low and slow, take a breath down into your belly.
3. Smooth and steady, inhale and exhale.

Other types of breathing are the relaxation breath where you sit back, relax and exhale with a sound; and the humming breath to relieve anxiety, where you inhale through the nose and exhale through a hum.



Tianne Allan

Correct breathing can also help ease pain. And it can help us sleep better. The sleep exercise involved imagining ourselves looking through the ceiling to the blue sky and letting the sun fill our bodies with warmth. This exercise actually lulled some of us to sleep.

Shanie Levin thanked Tianne for getting us involved in using our bodies and minds. For more information on Tianne Allan, visit www.yogatianne.com.



DELORES ANDERSON BIRD

Written by Rita Roling

Have you ever wondered what life in a world void of art would be like? We certainly can exist without it, but life in itself would likely be mundane and drab. The first known piece of art is a Namibian cave painting which is estimated to be approximately 50,000 years old. Living in the 21st century we do not need to go into a cave to create or to view art. We are surrounded by artistic creations and their many formats. Art has the capacity to touch all our senses and emotions, it gives us insight of the world around us and an understanding of ourselves. People are all human beings but they are also individuals; therefore each and every one of us views artistic creations from their own unique life experiences.

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to see some of Delores Anderson Bird's portfolio and became enamoured by her water colour painting of Sunflowers. The immediacy of the media and the luminosity of the bright yellow flowers hit me like a punch. Not a painful one but one that demanded attention now.

Portrait



Watercolours require perfection. Anyone who chooses to work with this media has to be courageous and have a preformed image of the creative process from the beginning to the end, as water colours do not allow for mistakes. Oils and acrylics build texture so it is fairly easy to paint over an errant drop of paint. The paper used as a water colour base absorbs each paint layer and thus produces the dreamy lace-like impression. When I asked what inspired her to choose sunflowers as a subject Delores said that she has always liked their boldness and showy attitudes. This artist looked the blooms right in the face and it is this authenticity that produced the “punch”.

A different point of view comes from her memories of a retreat held in Whistler. She was one of a group of artists who attended a workshop led by the renowned water colourist Michael Reardon. One of her works from that event is intriguing. A vague outline of a gated road appears to lead to an estate, but on second thought maybe it goes to an old church yard. Muted colours blurred with misty rain evoke an eerie feeling. Delores leaves it up to the viewers to ponder where the road is going and what is hidden at the very end. The hues in this piece of art are in total contrast to the vivid colours of the sunflowers. The polarization puzzled me so I asked her if its dark mood is an expression of a Nordic melancholic heritage. “No,” she said, the soft greys and the light produced by the mistiness inspired her.

Delores is a second and third generation Canadian from all Finnish ancestors. Her grandparents led a life of hard work but also one of joy as homesteaders on the prairies of Alberta. Her childhood was full of happiness growing up on the farm. Delores cannot remember a time when she did not draw or



paint but life circumstances led her to put her artistic creativities on hold when she divorced and became a single parent. She worked hard to establish herself in a successful career until she retired and her children were well into adulthood. Now there is ample time for her to devote to creative artistry.

It was on the prairies that she developed her love of nature. Growing up in the western part of Alberta with its rolling park lands, big skies and mountain views, her vistas were a mixture of trees, ponds and fields. Now a greater Vancouver resident, Delores’ memories from the Alberta landscape have become immortalized in oil on canvas. Ironically a painting of a solitary, gnarly tree with outstretched branches found itself nestled among the Albertan scenes. This weather beaten creation is an olive tree from the plains of Spain that caught Delores’ eye while on a visit.

When asked about the developmental process of her art she said: “when I started painting our teacher told us to think about how we wanted our paintings to be remembered or maybe honoured is a better term. Your talent comes from your family.” Yes Delores, you do honour your family.

If you are interested in learning more about Delores Anderson Bird and her



Page 12 Top: *Fall Majesty*, 10”x10”, Oil on canvas

Left: *Whistler #1*, 9”x12”, Watercolour

Right: *Lilacs*, 10”x14”, Watercolour

Page 13 Top Left: *The Olive Branch*, 7”x10”, Watercolour

Top Right: Photo credit John Lee Images

Bottom Right: *My Yard*, 11”x14”, Oil painting

paintings, you will find her on FaceBook. Some of her art can be viewed at the Convivial Café in Vancouver. She can also be contacted via e-mail at dbird@telus.net.



Rita Roling

worked in the social service field for over three decades. She is a firm believer in volunteerism and has for many years been actively involved with JSA. She is an executive of JSA and a member of the editorial committee.

SPONSORED BY LEAH & KEN LEVITT

SENIORS AT THE MOVIES

Written by Dolores Luber

During the last four months I have become an expert at finding and watching brand-new Oscar-nominated movies, thanks to streaming. I discovered TIFF (Toronto International Film Festival) and VJFF (Vancouver Jewish Film Festival), along with Kanopy.com, Amazon.ca Prime Video and Netflix. And, I could pay \$6.00 to \$15.00 at other sites. Here are some of my favourites.



THE GLORIAS 2020



Gloria Steinem is one of my heroines; my life changed forever due to the activists and feminists in the Women's Movement of the '60s. Gloria has lived such a long and significant life

that it takes four actresses to play her. Multiple performers portray the veteran journalist and activist. This technique is an effective element of director Julie Taymor's effort to encompass a whole, complicated life. Julianne Moore plays Gloria from her Ms. Magazine years and beyond, she radiates both indignant idealism and world-weary wisdom. Alicia Vikander plays the younger Steinem, from her time at Smith College through her travels in India and her groundbreaking, undercover Playboy Bunny article in 1963. She resists marriage (to the horror of all the male journalists who interview her) until the age of 66. At 2 ½ hours, it is long and, for me, wonderful! (Available on Amazon.ca Prime)



MANK 2020

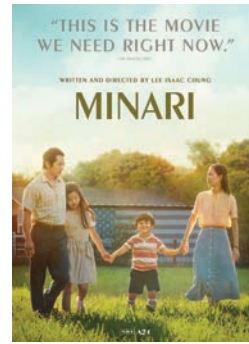


David Fincher's love letter to classic Hollywood is a wonderfully crafted and well-acted ode to a bygone era carried by Fincher's vision and Gary Oldman's standout

performance. Oldman stars in *Mank* as screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz, who is brought on by Orson Welles to write the script for *Citizen Kane*.

I interrupt: I had never seen *Citizen Kane* (1941). I was one of the many—'Citizen Kane is the greatest movie you've (probably) never seen!' I found it (on Prime Video.com, \$14.95) and watched it. It is a stunning, thinly-veiled portrait of the newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst, acknowledged as Orson Welles' masterpiece but banned from all theatres at the time.

Now I was prepared to appreciate *Mank*. In a series of flashbacks, the story is told in exquisite black-and-white, paying homage to Welles' *Citizen Kane*. The film requires your full attention. (Available on Netflix.ca)



MINARI 2020



Minari is a leafy green vegetable popular in Korean cooking which flourishes in an Arkansas creek bed, supplying a title, and also a metaphor for the film. Like the minari, Jacob

and Monica and their two children, Anne and David, are transplants. The family, originally from South Korea, has left California to take up farming near the Ozarks in the 1980s. Jacob wants to grow the kind of produce that will give the 30,000 Koreans who arrive in the US each year, a taste of home. Soonja, Monica's mother, arrives. It is a struggle to get the business off the ground. The film is modest and straightforward, the impression is that it operates at the true scale of life. In Korean and English with English subtitles. (Available on Amazon.ca Prime Video)



THE WHITE TIGER 2021



Ramin Bahrani directs a barbed rags-to-riches tale of modern India. The movie is part satire and part melodrama, a crime-tinged parable that uses the story of Balram's (a

wealthy young Bangalore businessman) improbable rise to indict the iniquities of the society that created him. Balram employs cunning, desperation and a cold-bloodedness that can masquerade as servility to succeed. He is that rare, once-in-a-generation phenomenon, the white tiger. In a country defined by rigid inequality, a self-made man is that kind of beast. It is playful and oh-so enjoyable. (Available on Netflix.ca)

FOREIGN FILMS



DEAR COMRADES!

2020



In 1962, Soviet government forces violently suppressed a strike against rising food prices in Novocherkassk in southern Russia. The slaughter was obscured from public view.

The Novocherkassk massacre is dramatized by director Andrei Konchalovsky, viewed through the eyes of Lyuda (Julia Vysotskaya), a city official at the local Communist Party headquarters. Everything shown before and after the violence constitutes the bleakest of bleak comedies, as bureaucrats try to square the emergence of a strike with the state's narrative of socialist prosperity. With a claustrophobic visual style, the sense of lives lived furtively is emphasized. Outstanding! In Russian, with English subtitles. (Available at TIFF Bell Lightbox)

TELEVISION SERIES



LUPIN

2021



I wanted to watch *Lupin* because I love the work of actor Omar Sy. So, first watch him in *The Intouchables* (2012), available on Netflix.ca. This is a charming comedy of cross-racial

friendship between a paraplegic aristocrat, Philippe (François Cluzet) and his newest employee, a streetwise hoodlum named Driss (Omar Sy). Under his boss's stern gaze Driss starts to acquire a work ethic and a sense of discipline. In exchange, he helps Philippe discover his appetite for life and his capacity for joy.

Lupin is a stylish five episode caper. Assane Diop (Omar Sy) who idolizes the fictional thief, Arsène Lupin, is an elite member of the gang of delightful rogues known as gentleman thieves. He prefers disguise and persuasion to violence. You will love the tricks and the cons. (Available on Netflix.ca; both are in French with English subtitles)

HOLOCAUST/ WORLD WAR II



THE TOBACCONIST

2018



The focus of the film is on Franz (Simon Morzé), a 17-year old who has recently moved to the big city of Vienna. His whimsical enlightenment comes with him

appreciating his dreams thanks to his new friend Sigmund Freud (Bruno Ganz) and the pleasure of a cigar, thanks to his boss Otto and his cigar shop. When Franz falls in love with Anezka, he turns to Freud for advice. When the Nazis move into Vienna and anti-Semitism gradually takes over the city, each has to decide to stay or leave. In German with English subtitles. (Available on Vimeo.com)

DOCUMENTARIES



THE BEIRUT SPY: SHULA COHEN

2017



Shulamit Kishik-Cohen spied for Israel in Lebanon for 14 years from 1948 to 1961. She was forced to marry a much older wealthy man,

Joseph Cohen, and moved from Jerusalem to Beirut. Beirut in mid-1930 was referred to as the "Paris of the Middle East".

Due to her prominence in the local Jewish community, Shulamit managed to develop good relations with the Lebanese authorities and to gain the confidence of key people in the country's leadership. She had access to valuable intelligence information. What she heard forced her to act. This is an amazing and true story. In Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles. (Available at Al Jazeera World, YouTube)

SPONSORED BY

MARIE DODUCK

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: DEMENTIA PORTRAYED IN FILM

Written by Dolores Luber

Several years ago I reviewed three beautiful films about people struggling with dementia: *Away from Her* (2006), *Still Alice* (2014) and *Amour* (2012). These films opened my eyes not only to the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, but also to the repercussions on loved ones and family members. After watching the four movies which are described in this column, I feel like I have taken a graduate course in how dementia evolves, and how it feels to suffer through the gradual deterioration of the self. I have been educated and enriched by these moving works of art. They "accurately depict the aging and dementia experience, confronting the poignant finite reality of life, a truth we all may one day face, part of the human condition" (Dan Levitt, *Toronto Star*, April 2021).



FALLING

2020



Viggo Mortensen writes, directs and stars in this lacerating drama about a son dealing with his father's mental decline. Lance Henriksen plays the father Willis, a foul-tempered, bigoted

man, filled with intolerance and invective. His meanness is hard to watch. The flashbacks inform us of the subdued menace of Willis, they scrape your senses like sandpaper. John, the son (Viggo) must call on all his reserves of patience, understanding and love to withstand the onslaught. (Available to rent on Apple TV, Google Play)



THE FATHER

2020



French writer and first-time director Florian Zeller presents a frightening new angle with this movie, which aims to mirror the confusion and discomfort of encroaching dementia.

Anthony Hopkins, 83-years old, takes us from the realm of sympathy to empathy. It is disturbing and brilliant. Hopkins, the father, nails the way in which people learn to cover for their mental mistakes. The supporting cast is excellent, Hopkins won an Oscar for his depiction of a mind in decline. (Available to rent on Amazon Prime, Apple TV, Google Play)



SUPERNOVA

2020



Stanley Tucci and Colin Firth dazzle as a couple facing their fears. Tusker and Sam have been together for decades. The careers of both have been put on hold because Tusker has

been diagnosed with early-onset dementia. They set out on a road trip. Harry Macqueen, the director, has created a drama about love and mortality. The northern English scenery is stunning, as are the performances of these two people stoically accepting mortality. (Available to rent on Google Play)



TWO OF US

2019



An older lesbian couple is met with unexpected devastation in the aching romantic drama by Filippo Meneghetti. Nina (German actress Barbara Sukowa) and Madeleine

(Martine Chevallier) have waited decades to love one another freely. They are preparing to leave France for new beginnings in Rome. First Madeleine must come out to her children before realizing her dream, but tragedy strikes before she can speak her truth. Sukowa is ferociously great as a woman whose devotion is as fierce as her determination to drag her lover into a more honest life. This is a film of profound intimacy between two people. In French with English subtitles. (Available to rent on Apple TV, Google Play)

How to communicate with a loved one with Alzheimer's

1. Never demand. Instead *ask*.
2. Never argue. Instead *agree*.
3. Never reason. Instead *divert*.
4. Never shame. Instead *distract*.
5. Never force. Instead *reinforce*.
6. Never lecture. Instead *reassure*.
7. Never say, "I told you!" Instead *repeat*.
8. Never condescend. Instead *encourage*.
9. Never say, "you can't."
Instead *focus on what's possible*.
10. Never say, "remember." Instead *reminisce*.

CURL UP WITH A GOOD BOOK

Written by Dolores Luber

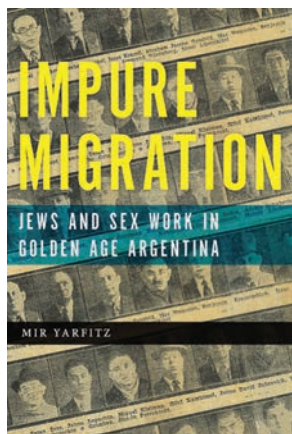
Do you read at the table while you eat? I do, all the time. My books and magazines become soiled with traces of food and coffee. This is a problem because I donate the books and the magazines to the Isaac Waldman Jewish Public Library. It took me this long to find a solution to the problem: Buy a book stand. There are many choices on Amazon.ca. Problem solved.

Send me (editor@jsalliance.org) your recommendations of a good book or write a couple of paragraphs about the book. Be a contributor to the magazine as well as a reader.

Here are two books on the same topic, one by an historian, the other by a novelist. I read *Impure Migration* first, then *The Third Daughter*. The first gave me a huge amount of information and a wide perspective on the issue; the second allowed me to empathize with the victim, creating an emotional experience.

IMPURE MIGRATION: JEWS AND SEX WORK IN GOLDEN AGE ARGENTINA

Written by Mir Yarfitz

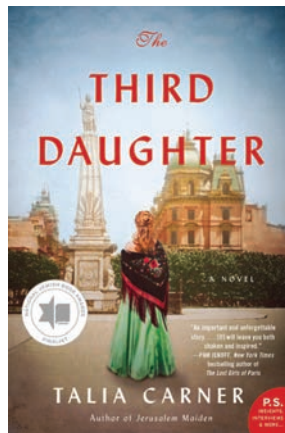


The author expertly situates his study of the Jewish sex trade in turn-of-the-century Argentina (1890-1930) within the interlacing contexts of global migration patterns, gendered labor choices and political and social anxieties involved in negotiating conditions of belonging. The book is a scholarly examination of 150 years of contentious arbitration of Jewish

involvement in sex trafficking and prostitution in Argentina, as revealed in prolific productions of culture, the press, and scholarship within that country and abroad. We learn of the exploitative and violent reality that dominates sex work. Some will be shocked at the truth, Jewish pimps and prostitutes dominated the legal institution of prostitution in Argentina. Available at the Isaac Waldman Jewish Public Library.

THE THIRD DAUGHTER: A NOVEL

Written by Talia Carner

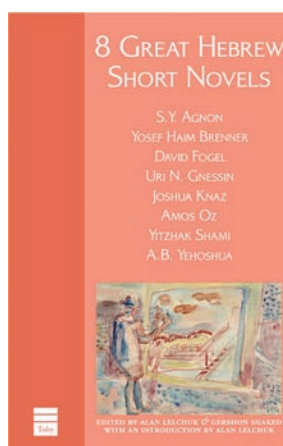


Inspired by real events, the author paints a disturbing picture of one woman in 1889, fleeing the pogroms in Russia with her family and ending up in Argentina as a sexual slave. The novel exposes a ring of legal sex traffickers called *Zwi Migdal*, Yiddish men who lured hundreds of thousands of Jewish women from their Eastern

European communities to fill their coffers with a lucrative ongoing income from forced sex in brothels. A powerful story of finding courage in the face of danger, and hope in the face of despair. Sometimes brutal and shocking to read. At the end of the book is an extensive glossary of Yiddish, Hebrew and Spanish words and an article about the historical background of the novel; I appreciate them both. Available at the Isaac Waldman Jewish Public Library.

8 GREAT HEBREW SHORT NOVELS

Written by S.Y. Agnon, Yosef Haim Brenner, Nissan Gnessin, Yehoshua Kenaz, Amos Oz, Yitzhak Shami, David Vogel, A.B. Yehoshua. Edited by Alan Lelchuk and Gerson Shaked.



I will have a hard time curbing my enthusiasm for this book, an anthology comprising 8 complete novellas of the finest Hebrew writers of the past century. These novels portray the Jewish experience including family life, the experiences of new immigrants, the misery of war, and the difficulties of Israeli-Arab relations. They represent a literary history

lesson of Jewish life and thought. Although I have studied Modern Hebrew for over 20 years, I would never have been able to access these works of fiction in the original Hebrew—the translations are superb. Available at the Isaac Waldman Jewish Public Library.

PROFILE: ISRAELI TELEVISION SERIES

Written by Dolores Luber

Headline: Long-awaited *Shtisel* season three brings more faith, grief, family to its global fan base. You're kidding, right? But no, *Shtisel*, שטיסל, a Hebrew/Yiddish language TV series about *Haredi* Jews living in Jerusalem, a series with no sex and no violence, is a worldwide success phenomenon. Let us start at the beginning.



I have been a fan of Israeli cinema for the last 15 years! I have seen and bought every Israeli television series that I can get my hands on. Here are some of my favorites. Most of these are available at the Waldman Jewish Public Library, in Hebrew and Yiddish with English subtitles. Israeli producers of television series, in both Hebrew and English, are at the top of their game.

My initiation to Israeli television series began with *A Touch Away*, מרחק נגיעה, 2006, created by Zafir Kuchanovsky, Ronit Weis-Berkowitz and Ron Ninio. The focus is on the tumultuous relationship of a young non-religious male Jewish immigrant from Russia who falls in love with a young woman who is part of the Bnei Brak's ultra-

orthodox community. The Romeo and Juliet romance is enthralling and even better is the wonderful subplot of Russian Jews, recently arrived in Israel, with no language skills, advanced education, who are rejected by Israelis as not Jewish enough. Eight episodes, binge worthy.

In Treatment, בטיפול, 2007, written by Ori Sivan and starring Assi Dayan revolves around the personal and professional life of an Israeli psychologist, Reuven Dagan. He treats patients at his clinic five days a week and then seeks psychological treatment for himself. As a retired psychotherapist, I was in seventh heaven! I used the Hebrew text as my textbook for months with my Hebrew teachers. The acting, directing and writing of this dramatic series are superb. There are two seasons.

An American adaptation entitled *In Treatment* premiered in 2008 to critical and audience acclaim. Hagai Levi, co-creator of the original show, is executive producer of the series. (Adaptation available on Crave)

Gideon Raf, the director, produced *Prisoners of War*, חטופים, in 2010. The series emerged as a vicious and heart-rending account of three Israeli prisoners of war who return home after a 17-year incarceration by the Palestinians. I watched season one and season two, my heart in my mouth, brutal and fascinating.

The series was acquired by 20th Century Fox Television and was adapted by

Gideon Raf into the eight seasons of *Homeland* in English. Intrigue, violence, shocks! I quit after season two. I couldn't take any more of the brutality.

Srugim, סרוגים, 2008, directed by Eliezer Shapiro, depicts the lives of five religious Zionist single men and women, in their 30s, who reside in Jerusalem. The title is a reference to the crocheted skullcaps worn by men of that segment of Israeli society. The series deals with controversial issues in the religious Zionist society of Israel. Their problems, both professional and religious, come to life in an original and humorous way. Informative and entertaining. There are three seasons.

Shtisel, שטיסל, 2013, portrays a fictional *Haredi* (ultra-Orthodox Jewish) family living in Geula, Jerusalem. It is created and written by Ori Elon and Yehonatan Indursky. The series follows the lives of Shulem Shtisel, the Shtisel patriarch and a rabbi at the local *cheder*, as well as those of the other members of his family. The community follows strict *Haredi* customs and violating the norms often causes chaos within the family. However, the characters are more open to a secular lifestyle, especially Akiva Shtisel, a 26-year old, single man who is under pressure to marry. His artistic talent is frowned upon. A brother-in-law disappears in America. Rules are broken,



consequences ensue. You get the idea! A dramedy, funny and wonderful. There are three seasons. (Available on Netflix)

Autonomies, אוטונומיות, 2018, is a dystopian drama directed by Ori Elon and Yehonatan Indursky. The six-part series is set in an alternate reality. It's the same as our world, only 30 years ago there was a civil war in Israel when the state pressed more firmly to force the ultra-Orthodox community into the IDF. Jerusalem is established as an independent area, walled in, with the rest of the country more aggressively secular than it is now. Our bridge between the two worlds is Broide (Assi Cohen) whose job is to transport the bodies of Jews that have died in the

'State' (outside Jerusalem) into 'the Autonomy'. He dabbles in smuggling illicit materials, like pornographic DVDs, non-Kosher books or pork loins into the Autonomy. There is the search for a child switched at birth. Darkly funny and compelling as a tragic possibility. Streaming on several sites.

ABSOLUTELY WORTH WATCHING

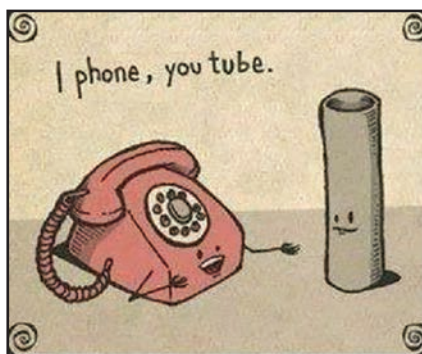
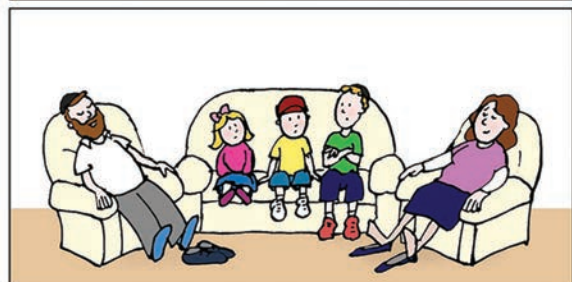
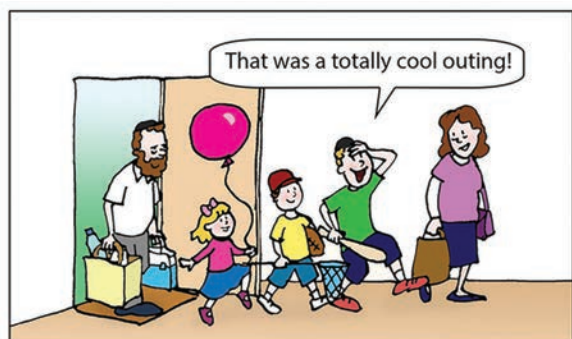
Dig, 2015, directed by Gideon Raf and Tim Kring is a 10-part thriller which revolves around a complicated plot to destroy Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock. A murder investigation takes an apocalyptic turn. A fabulous scenic tour of Jerusalem. In English.

Fauda, 2019, created by Lior Raj, is an espionage thriller which looks at Israeli operatives who go undercover to track down Palestinian terrorists. Controversial because of the racism and xenophobia plaguing Israeli culture, it matured, showing sensitivity to both sides. Graphic violence.



SPONSORED BY **LYLE PULLAN**

HUMOUR!



✿ Sometimes
I pretend to be
normal ✿
But it gets boring so
✿ I go back to
being me

Don't Be Hoodwinked!

A CASE STUDY OF SCAMMING ON THE INTERNET

Written by Robert Matas

The scams never stop. An official sounding caller asks for your credit-card number because a suspicious charge may have been made on your account; an angry caller demands money for unpaid taxes before police arrive at your door. How do you know if you can trust them? They sound authentic. Sometimes even savvy seniors are duped.

Anne Lerner, a retired nurse in her seventies, unwittingly allowed fraudsters to gain access to her computer, dip into her bank account and transfer funds to a Bitcoin trading platform. Microsoft people had taught Lerner how to use a computer in Seattle, when the company in 1997 was developing software for hospital operating rooms. For more than 20 years, she had no problems from scammers. But even she was hoodwinked.

When I sat down with Lerner (outside, socially distanced) to hear about her experience, a friend who was also scammed joined us. The friend said she was fooled by a call offering to fix a

problem with her computer coincidentally at the time when she was struggling with a problem. However the “fix” locked the computer. She was required to pay a ransom in order to use the computer again. She should have known better. She had recently given a talk on fraud. She frankly admitted she was embarrassed by her mistake and did not want to be identified in this article. Lerner, on the other hand, had no hesitation in allowing her name to be used. “I want people to know what could happen,” she said. “It is very important for people my age to understand how easily you can be hacked.”

The RCMP anti-fraud centre reports that fraudsters across the country have taken more than \$50-million through various types of fraud in the first three months of 2021. Seniors are particularly vulnerable.

The scammers nabbed Lerner’s personal information as she had just finished typing in her user-name and password into her RBC Royal Bank account. A red box popped up on her screen, saying

they had identified fraudulent activity in her account and urged her to call immediately. They provided the phone number to call. It seemed reasonable to assume the message was from the bank.

As the conversation began, she thought she was speaking with a bank employee. The caller asked for access to her computer to check the fraud. She followed their instructions to let them in. The caller asked her to scan her driver’s license to confirm her identity, and to plug her cell phone into her computer. She followed their directions.

It was taking a lot of time. She thought it would be quicker to just go into the bank. With Covid-19, we would prefer to do it this way, she was told. She was running late in her day. Don’t call, she texted her son, because I’m busy with the bank.

Abruptly, the caller, sounding irritated, told her to stop messaging her son. Don’t text while we are investigating this, the caller said.

Wow. How did that happen? How did they know she was texting?

Her son phoned. What are you doing on the phone with the bank, he asked. She described what was going on. Turn off your computer immediately, he said.

So what do you do now? Lerner immediately phoned the bank. She was told the bank was familiar with that pop-up scam.

The bank advised her to check her history of payments in her online account. She discovered the bank webpage had her full Social Insurance Number, not just the last four digits. Did the scammer see that? She now feared she would be a victim also of identity theft.

Her bank history showed that \$2,350 had been transferred to Coinberry, a trading platform. It took several tense

WHERE TO REPORT A SCAM OR IDENTITY THEFT

- Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre: 1-888-495-8501
- Services Canada for SIN-related matters: 1-800-622-6232
- BC Securities Commission for financial fraud: 604-899-6854
- The phone number on the back of your credit card

conversations before the bank finally reversed the debits.

But her concern of identity theft remained. The scammers had enough information to take out new credit cards in her name, possibly even enough for a cushy mortgage.

Lerner threw away her cell phone, wiped her laptop and installed new programs with new passwords. Cost – around \$700.

The bank urged her to arrange for a credit-rating company (Equifax Canada or TransUnion Canada) to put fraud alerts on her account. But the bank refused to pay the monthly fee for the service. The bank also refused to hide her SIN on the webpage. Months later, she continues to live in fear of identity theft. (The bank's media office did not return a call requesting an interview on the subject.)

Lerner went to the local RCMP station, armed with computer codes that she believed might identify the scammers' computer. She did not find much interest. Local police detachments do not have resources to investigate scams originating from across the world. (RCMP told me later the police want to hear about every incident. Even if the case is not investigated, they could issue public warnings where warranted.)

So what will it take to restore Lerner's trust in the new technology? She'll never call a phone number in an email or phone message related to bank accounts or credit cards. She is pressing for government action to force financial institutions to be liable for breaches of privacy related to our personal and financial information. Her most far-reaching initiative, however, has already been done. She has shared her story in an effort to raise awareness of the pervasive Internet scams that threaten all of us.



Robert Matas is a retired *Globe and Mail* journalist.

Tips FOR HEALTHY DIGITAL HYGIENE



Don't pick up if you don't recognize the phone number; hang up if anyone asks for your credit card or bank details, or starts threatening you.



Don't click on links in email or text from unknown senders. Ignore attachments and pop-ups. Go to the website to check out information instead of clicking on the link in email or a text.



Set up alerts on bank accounts for withdrawals or transfers over a set limit. Don't use the same passwords on different sites. Change passwords regularly.



Install anti-virus/malware software and spyware blockers; update operating system whenever available.



Scammers play on your fear or appeal to greed. If it seems too good to be true, it probably is. Be suspicious about anonymous callers who want to give you something for free. Resist pressure to act immediately.



If you are a victim, don't be too embarrassed to report it. Sunshine is the best disinfectant.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: SEARCH ONLINE FOR THE WEBSITES

- **Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre** should be your first stop if you are a victim of fraud.
- **The Little Black Book of Scams** is an easy-to-read booklet setting out what to watch for and where to report the scams.
- **Canadian Bankers Association** put together an informative cyber security toolkit.
- **RCMP** has a guidebook on security, and how to avoid frauds.
- **British Columbia Securities Commission and BC Seniors Advocate** have a five-minute video - *Understanding Elder Financial Abuse* - on how seniors could recognize, reject and report fraud.

PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

DID YOU KNOW?

Jewish Seniors Alliance Peer Support Program provides services to over 200 seniors with varied needs, from diverse cultural backgrounds. Services are delivered in multiple languages by highly trained and motivated volunteers, who receive certification after 55 hours of training.

SENIORS STRONGER TOGETHER



YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF SENIORS



"Being able to help someone else through a crisis also helps me. As a senior, I sense the loneliness and the invisibility people experience. I know when I have left a client or hung up the phone that I have made a difference!



ESTHER, VOLUNTEER



Connecting with other peers has been a true blessing in my life. It gives me a sense of purpose. My listening skills became a part of my life. Not only have I helped others but I have received many benefits for myself. "

AUDREY, VOLUNTEER



JSA has initiated several supportive and distinct peer services offered to all seniors in the lower mainland, promoting self-empowerment, volunteerism and seniors helping seniors.

Peer support is a one-to-one service provided by specially trained volunteers who are supervised by professional staff.

JSA Peer Services include: **Weekly Peer Support Sessions, Friendly Phone Calls, Home Visits, and Information Referrals.** These services are provided free of charge.



Jewish Seniors
Alliance

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

To continue this needed service **PLEASE DONATE TODAY!** Show your support, become a member/supporter of Jewish Seniors Alliance. Donate by phone at 604-732-1555, online at www.jsalliance.org/donate/, or fill in the form on the opposite page.

OUTREACH



JSA provides annual programs to empower, inform, and educate, which are designed to enhance and improve the quality of life for seniors, including our **Spring Forum**, **Fall Symposium** and **Empowerment Series**.

Three times a year the **Senior Line Magazine** will come to your door, chock full of informative, innovative, and cultural articles. Our website **www.jsalliance.org** is bursting with useful information, including an up-to-date calendar listing senior events, articles, videos and much more. Follow our **Facebook Page** for curated articles on topics about seniors.

ADVOCACY



Advocating for the needs of seniors and seniors' organizations in the Lower Mainland, JSA responds to concerns with governments, public agencies and funding groups, including at this time:

- Advocating to both levels of government for an overhaul of the Long Term Care system.
- Urging the federal government to implement a national, universal pharmacare and dental insurance program for seniors.
- Participating in webinars and zoom meetings to share information that focuses on issues seniors are facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Combatting Ageism in all its forms.



Jewish Seniors Alliance
SENIORS STRONGER TOGETHER

RETURN TO:
Jewish Seniors Alliance
949 W 49th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 2T1

Name		Telephone
Address		City
Postal Code	Email	
I would like to make a gift of:		
<input type="checkbox"/> \$18 <input type="checkbox"/> \$36 <input type="checkbox"/> \$54 <input type="checkbox"/> \$72 <input type="checkbox"/> \$180 <input type="checkbox"/> \$360 <input type="checkbox"/> Other: \$ _____		
Set up my Monthly Recurring Support in the amount of:		
<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Other: \$ _____		
Cheque enclosed for \$ _____ payable to Jewish Seniors Alliance of Greater Vancouver		
Credit Card # (Visa/MC)		Expiry Date /
Signature		CVV Code
Please help save costs by signing up to receive tax receipts by email <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
A Donation of \$18 or more will recognize you as a Member/Supporter of JSA which will allow you to vote at our AGM. A tax receipt will be issued for a donation of \$18 and up.		

CURRENT INITIATIVES OF THE JSA ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

Written by Tony DuMoulin

Older persons are the fastest growing demographic cohort in Canada, and should have a corresponding increase in political influence. Older persons should have a strong, clear and LOUD voice at the table, to ensure that our needs are taken into account when political decisions are being made. It is a sad truth, however, that ageism continues to pervade societal and political decision-making, so without a strong, clear, loud voice, older persons' needs are frequently either ignored or forgotten.

One example is the recent Federal budget, which allocated \$30 billion for affordable universal daycare, a laudable commitment, enabling working women to better focus on their careers. But at the same time, the Federal budget allocated just one tenth of that amount, \$3 billion, for the care of older persons, even though women spend more time caring for the elderly than they do caring for children.

What follows is a selection of some initiatives the JSA Advocacy Committee is currently pursuing:

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR LONG TERM CARE

The Covid pandemic has highlighted the inattention to, and underfunding of, long term care facilities right across Canada. The challenges which caused a tragic outcome for long term care residents and staff include:

1. a shortage of direct care staff, leading

to grossly inadequate personal care and to staff burnout

2. lack of decent pay and benefits for many care workers, leading to high turnover and a resulting lack of continuity for the residents, and with care aides needing to work in multiple facilities, increasing infection risk

3. outdated, badly designed and poorly maintained facilities

4. lack of adequate standards for many LTC residences; and where standards did exist, a lack of enforcement of those standards through a comprehensive and well-funded inspection program

While the operation of long term care facilities is the responsibility of each province, the adoption of national standards under federal legislation could set a new, higher bar which operators in every province, whether they are government, not-for-profit, or for profit operators, must meet in order to continue receiving public funds.

PROPOSED U.N. CONVENTION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

There is currently considerable support at the United Nations, including in the office of the U.N. Secretary General, for the proposition that a Convention on the Human Rights of Older Persons is needed in order to fill a gap in current international human rights protections. Right now, women, children, the disabled and Indigenous persons all have U.N. recognized human rights,

but older persons have no such protections. The importance of a Convention is that, once it has been passed into law by a member nation, it becomes enforceable in that country through legal claims of human rights violations which are heard in the courts, and in this way, attract public attention.

Some of the Rights of Older Persons to be protected by a UN Convention would include: quality health and residential care, housing, transportation, access to justice, freedom from abuse and protection from scams.

Adoption by the U.N. of a Convention requires the action of member nations. Sadly, our federal government has not seen fit to support a Convention on the Human Rights of Older Persons, and so the government, through our local MPs, needs to be pushed and prodded by older persons until it appreciates the importance of establishing this new international recognition of human rights.

ALL CANDIDATES TOWNHALL MEETINGS ON OLDER PERSONS' ISSUES

In anticipation of the Prime Minister announcing a federal election sometime this year or in early 2022, the JSA Advocacy Committee intends to be ready to challenge candidates on issues of concern to older persons. We are in the early stages of finding co-hosts to hold two or more town halls in the weeks after the election is called, one in Richmond, and one or more in Vancouver. The idea is to invite candidates from each party in several ridings in Greater Vancouver to answer a range of questions posed by older persons about issues important to them.

Depending on the election date, and on the time it takes to tame the pandemic,

the town halls could be held either in a live venue or via zoom. Final plans must await these determinations, as well as the selection by the political parties of their candidates, but some important planning can begin right now, including: finding partners to co-host the event, and developing the questions to ask the candidates. National LTC Standards, A U.N. Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, and a national universal Pharmacare program would all be good topics for questions and, of course, there are many more.

USER FRIENDLY PACKAGING

How many times have you struggled, with risk to your personal safety, to open various types of packaging, especially medications and food? Packaging is designed by packagers for the well-being of suppliers, not of consumers. I first looked at this as an issue only for

the dexterity-challenged, like me and many other older persons suffering from arthritis and other similar ailments. But in talking to those in my daughters' age cohort, I have learned that much packaging is challenging, that is, it is a fight to open for almost all age groups. In general, many items today are simply over-packaged.

We must once again use our strong, clear, loud voices, this time to protest the tyranny of packagers. With this in mind, our Advocacy Committee has submitted a proposal to the National Research Council's Aging in Place Project to identify, through a survey of users of all types of packages, the best and the worst of existing packaging choices, and, if necessary, to design new forms of packaging that don't require power tools to open. At the end of the research, a "friendly package" label -

like the "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" from bygone days, or like labels identifying food items to be "Certified Organic" - could be adopted for use on those items identified as having "user friendly" packaging. Then we would all boycott those goods which will not earn this label until their suppliers change their poor packaging habits.

As older persons, we ALL need to become advocates, and speak out whenever our needs are falling on deaf, or simply ageist, ears.

Tony DuMoulin is a JSA Board Member and Chair of its Advocacy Committee.



SPONSORED BY **DOLORES LUBER**

JSA ORGANIZATIONAL SURVEY: SUMMARY REPORT

Written by Margot Beauchamp and Ken Levitt

QUANTIFYING OUR OUTREACH SERVICES

It is imperative that not-for-profit organizations evaluate, objectively and subjectively, what services and programs they provide. The Board of Directors needs to know that what their organization claims to be doing is actually being carried out. Stakeholders, sponsors and donors need to have an accounting from the organization to ensure what they are supporting is taking place and is making a difference for the persons being served.

INITIATING THE SURVEY

Liz Azeroual, Rita Propp and Rochelle Garfinkel were asked by the Outreach Committee to develop a survey for event participants. Margot Beauchamp developed questions on demographic and loneliness. Liz added more questions with Margot. JSA was interested to know if we (JSA) were meeting planned outcomes and how we could make improvements going forward. Were our social media platforms and *Senior Line* magazine valued by our readers; what were the most important issues for seniors; what advocacy issues need to be addressed; where are we perceived as strong and where can we be more effective?

TARGET GROUP FOR SURVEY AND WHO RECEIVED IT

The intended target group was all persons who participate in our Outreach programs and who receive our e-mail newsletter. The survey was sent to 879 individuals. One hundred and sixty-seven persons responded, just under 20%. An incentive

prize in the form of a gift certificate was given to five individuals for completing the survey.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDERS

- 80% were ages 65-85; almost 10% were 86 years and older
- 93% live at home alone or with a partner
- 78% live completely independent lives without the need for assistance in activities of daily living (ADL's)
- 15% rely on some assistance with ADL's from a family member
- 93% have a television
- 92% have a computer
- 61% have iPads
- 84% have moderate to advanced technical skills

These demographics indicate that the responders were older adults, who lived independently and have access to social media. This suggests that JSA can develop more Outreach programs using social networking.

FINDINGS

a. Loneliness

- 12% indicated loneliness was an issue in their lives

b. JSA Programs of Value and Interest

- *Senior Line* magazine was of high value
- Greatest interests were Health, followed by Education and Current Events

c. Outreach Satisfaction

- 76% responded positively in terms of feeling a greater sense of belonging and being connected
- 24% responded negatively

d. Social Media

- 70% indicated they "never" use social media while 27% indicated they use social media "sometimes"

These findings suggest that JSA needs to have a better understanding on how to decrease the number of persons responding negatively. They also suggest that more education and special programs need to be scheduled to assist older adults to develop a greater level of accessing/using various social platforms.

e. Advocacy Issues

- free high dosage flu vaccine for persons 65 years and older
- universal Pharmacare and Dental Insurance Plans
- higher staffing ratios in Long Term Care facilities
- food security
- increased home care hours

Many of the above noted concerns are actively being addressed by JSA.

KUDOS FOR JSA FROM RESPONDERS

- addressing many issues affecting the senior population
- meeting the needs of seniors who are isolated and lonely
- advocating for seniors in the Jewish community and for seniors in the larger community
- volunteer driven, accessible, inclusive, no cost for the services or programs and seniors who are peer to peer volunteers
- strong emphasis on volunteer training and programs
- a good feeling to be in the Zoom Room
- reaching, seeing and connecting with seniors who may be unable to reach out themselves

The Responders indicate a positive understanding of who JSA is and what is being accomplished.

HOW CAN JSA IMPROVE

- expand Outreach to communities outside Vancouver and Richmond
- maintain the central core of being a Jewish organization
- focus on younger seniors who are able-bodied and still in the workforce
- expand Peer Support including the recruitment of more volunteers
- increase cultural and tech (how to do it) programs
- partner with other agencies to make programs more robust
- increase the number of Outreach programs

Responders indicated the need to expand JSA's profile, present more virtual programs, increase JSA's media/social platform connections and work more cooperatively with other community organizations.

OBSERVATIONS

These findings are significant for future planning, activities and programs. We know that our Outreach has a significant audience that is cognizant and supportive of what we are doing. We also know that much still needs to be done and there is important work ahead.



Margot Beauchamp is a senior management professional with over 35 years of experience in diverse nonprofit organizations. Margot works for JSA as the Quality Assurance Liaison and the Advocacy Coordinator.



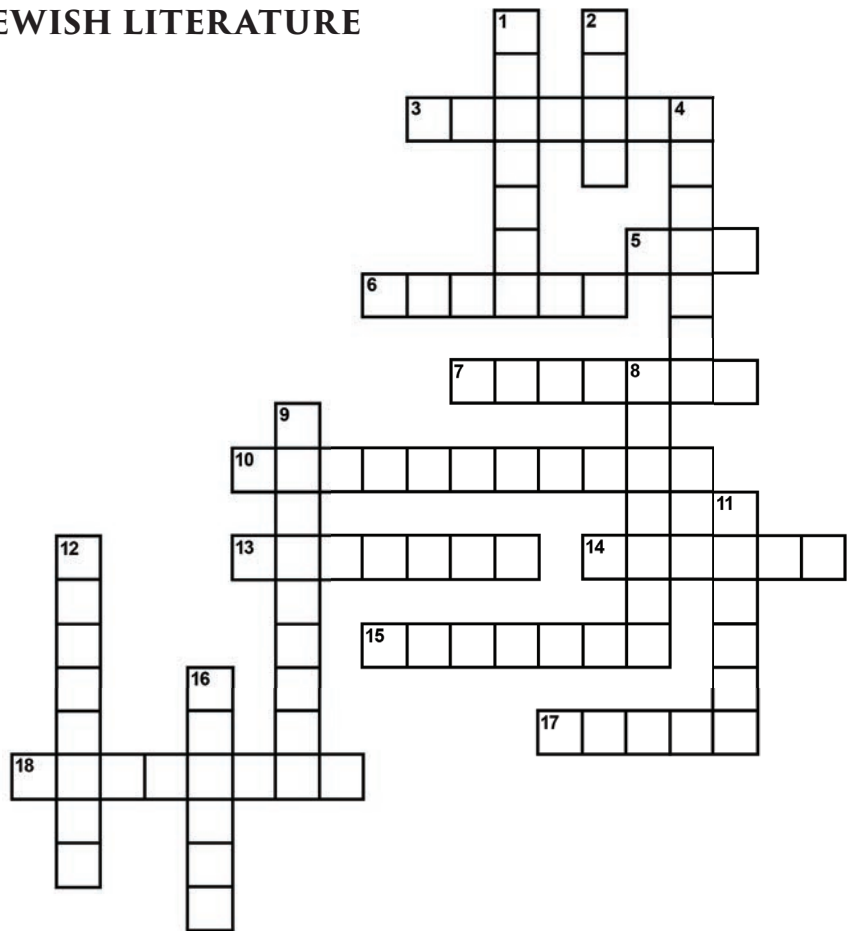
Ken Levitt is a Past President of JSA, former CEO of Louis Brier and a past Chair of Camp Miriam. In 1985 he co-edited, *The Challenge of Child Welfare*, the first textbook on child welfare in Canada.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

<https://crosswordhobbyist.com/589370/Jewish-Literature-Crossword>

For Solution See Page 28

JEWISH LITERATURE



ACROSS

- 3 Commandment in Hebrew
- 5 Torah pointer
- 6 Jewish sacred scripture that comes after the Bible and contains discussions of Jewish Law
- 7 Redacted (edited) in about 200 CE, this is one part of the sacred scripture that comes after the Bible
- 10 The fifth book of the Torah, called D'varim in Hebrew
- 13 The genre of Jewish Literature that includes stories that fill in gaps in

- the text of the Hebrew Bible
- 14 Redacted (edited) in about 500 CE, this is a part of the sacred scripture that comes after the Bible
- 15 The first book of the Torah - B'reishit in Hebrew
- 17 Jewish sacred scripture also called the Pentateuch
- 18 Rabbis' or rabbinic committees' answers to questions of Jewish Law

- 2 How many books are in the Torah?
- 4 Jewish Law
- 8 The fourth book of the Torah - Bamidbar in Hebrew
- 9 The third book of the Torah - Vayikra in Hebrew
- 11 The acronym for the Hebrew bible
- 12 Neviim in Hebrew - the second part of the Hebrew Bible
- 16 The second book of the Torah, also, how the Israelites got out of Egypt

DOWN

- 1 The Writings section of the Bible

PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: RHODA TAFLER

Interview by Grace Hann

Rhoda grew up in Montreal, completed high school at a young age and went on to university, pursuing a major in Economics and a minor in Accounting at Loyola College.

Rhoda's life would never stand still, as exploration and travel ran through her veins. Off she went to Israel, where she spent about a year on a kibbutz, studied Hebrew half time and worked in the fields and in the kitchen the rest of the time. During her days off, she enjoyed travelling around the country to places like Masada and Jerusalem. Exploring the different cultures and observing how other people lived was fascinating. However, after one year of cleaning chickens and lettuce leaves, Rhoda decided she would be much better suited to a career in Education!

Once back home, it was time to put down some roots and establish a career. In the early '60s, after she completed her Masters at McGill, Rhoda was recruited by Simon Fraser University to set up a teacher training program for French Immersion and French mother tongue teachers. Rhoda has considered Vancouver her home since then, she loves the West Coast. Rhoda's career veered into Modern Language Administration, setting policies and guidelines for second language educators.

Life was not without excitement and travel! Rhoda took to the high seas and loved cruising. Her favourite was going through the Panama Canal and marveling at the magic and history of the locks. Sitting on her outside ship balcony with a good book and being on the water was pure joy. There were

many things about cruising that attracted Rhoda, the ports of call, the theatre and loads of onboard activities.

After retirement, Rhoda settled into a life of bridge, travel and yes, casinos, with the annual flight to Las Vegas with a friend. As time went on, Rhoda felt as if she wanted to do something to help others. She had heard about the Senior Peer Support training provided by Jewish



Seniors Alliance. It was to be the first course taught by Grace Hann for JSA. Rhoda thought, "I know most of these things, how difficult can this be?" However, the training was profound. It challenged her to learn to listen without offering solutions and/or suggestions.

Throughout the past 8 years, Rhoda has conquered the listening process! When asked what was most valuable for her in her volunteer work, she responded, "I appreciate how fortunate I am to be happy living independently, but with the knowledge of strong family support, even though they're in Montreal. When I get off the phone I am usually smiling – and that makes me feel good."

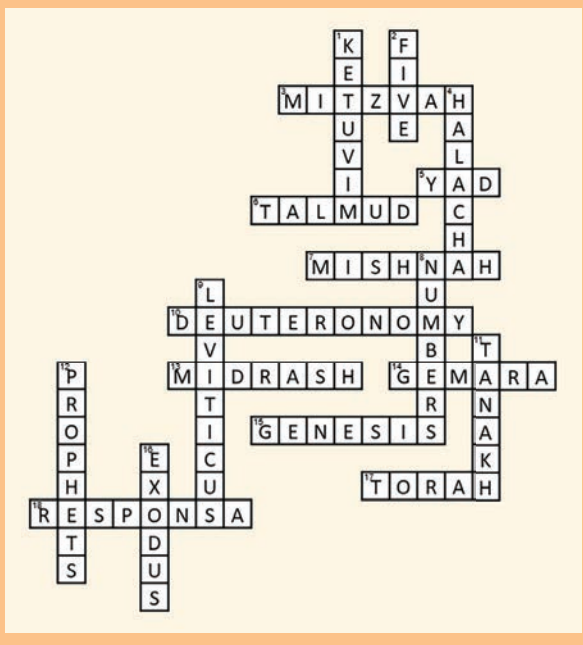
Rhoda's sense of humour and her dedication to helping others is an incredible blessing to all who know her. JSA is truly grateful and honoured to have her as a part of our great team!

Grace Hann

is the trainer of volunteers of Senior Peer Support Services. She has been training volunteers and supporting seniors for over 20 years.



CROSSWORD SOLUTION - PAGE 27



PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: DAVID PATRICK

Interview by Charles Leibovitch

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, David grew up in a small college town in Ohio. He was fatherless for two years during World War II when his Dad was overseas with the US Army Air Corps. His first role model was his mother, a strong humanist.

David pursued an education initially in psychology (M.A. Social Psychology). He wrote his thesis on Ordinal Position of Birth, Need Affiliation and Level of Conformity. He then taught introductory and intermediate level courses in psychology in both an African-American University (now Clark Atlanta University) and at Georgia State University while completing his pre-med academic requirements from 1963-1966. During this time, he met a therapist, Dr. Tom Malone, who became his mentor and influenced his decision to pursue a career as a physician.

He completed his medical degree at Medical College of Georgia in 1970; graduating the same year his mother received her B.A. in education! He completed his medical internship at



San Francisco General Hospital; then worked at the Alaska Native Medical Centre, in Anchorage, Alaska, for two years. There he was assigned to a mental health unit where duties included emergency room calls, working in obstetrics and relieving physicians at remote bush hospitals from 1971-1973.

David then completed his psychiatry residency at UBC in Vancouver from 1973-1977 and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada in 1977. Several of David's professional mentors over time were Jewish and that left him a lasting impression which helped contribute to his conversion to Judaism twenty years ago. He was further mentored by psychiatrists, doctors, nurses and social workers at UBC, including Drs. Milton Miller, David Freeman and Robert Krell, professor of Child and Family Psychiatry at UBC.

From 1977-1981, David pursued his psychiatric practice at the West Side Community Care Team, a psychotherapy practice in Kitsilano and as a psychogeriatric consultant at the UBC Extended Care Unit in Vancouver.

In 1981 he moved back to the US with his wife, Betsy, and organized and worked for a variety of community based mental health clinics in Oregon, as well as starting a private mental health clinic together with Betsy. Betsy would die from cancer in 1991, and together with his children, David

returned to Canada in 1995. He worked in community psychiatry in Vancouver's Downtown East Side; and also did private practice and psychotherapy with individuals, couples and families in several locations in the Lower Mainland.

From 2001 to 2006, together with his second wife, he led weekend workshops for doctors and their partners in "Making a Good Thing Better." In 2007 his wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. David cared for his wife; the emotional journey saw David writing a book from both a professional and personal perspective, about caregiving for his wife (*Neither Married Nor Single: When Your Partner Has Alzheimer's or Other Dementia*).

David retired from his professional career as a psychiatrist and psychotherapist in 2017. A year later he saw an advertisement for Senior Peer Support training, and took the training with Jewish Seniors Alliance Volunteer Supervisor and Trainer Grace Hann. He continues to be impressed with the quality of the training and information that Ms. Hann oversaw and continues to provide as a teacher, mentor and role model. David continues his lifelong passion to help others, now with the Jewish Seniors Alliance Peer Support Services. He appreciates the challenges and the rewards embodied within the aging process, both in his clients and himself. Thank you David!!

Charles Leibovitch, MSW, is JSA's Senior Peer Support Services Coordinator. He initiated the Program in December 2011. He has a long history of caring for seniors.



MY EXPERIENCE AT JSA'S VIRTUAL SENIOR PEER SUPPORT TRAINING

Written by Lilian Wang

When Grace first extended the offer to support JSA's first virtual senior peer support training, I felt honoured, albeit daunted at the prospect of joining such an intimate peer support training as someone who was not themselves a senior. The role I was originally assigned was to provide technical support during our weekly four hour Zoom meetings, and I was determined to do this well. I found myself wanting to give something back to a group of people that have already given so much to the community, and who had the courage to take on such an intensive training program during the already difficult circumstances of COVID in order to give even more of themselves to others.

This training held by Grace was not my first experience with learning in a virtual format. As a current Master of Arts Counselling Psychology student, I am quite familiar with Zoom as an online learning platform. Yet, the interpersonal distance that some might associate with connecting virtually was quick to fade away, and aside from some initial technical difficulties, the unique presence and warmth of each member of the

group was felt throughout the training. As a group, we were able to unite in times of joy and laughter, like on Hat Day (!) when we each showed up in Zoom wearing the coolest, funkiest, or silliest hats we could find.

Each week was an exercise in facing what it meant to be human. ”

In other times of sadness or grief, we united instead in mutual love and support for one another. Rather than Zoom being a barrier to connection, I witnessed it as a way for people to foster connection. It was a safe space for the good times, and for the bad times. For contemplation, and for change. Each week, I found myself sitting in front of the smiling faces of people who were brave enough to step outside of themselves and their comfort zones to learn to support others, and who gave it their all, sacrificing four hours of their time each Sunday to do so. Not easy to do! Especially when many of those

hours consisted of beautiful sunny days (of which you don't get many in Vancouver).

As time passed, I realized that Grace had never intended for the training to just be



about learning the information required to support others. Instead, each week was an exercise in facing what it meant to be human, to form connections and be transparent and vulnerable with one another, and to learn just as much from each other as we do ourselves. With Grace as a skillful guide, I witnessed each one of us not only grow in our capacities to support seniors in the community, but in our desire to become more understanding and knowledgeable human beings.

As the group evolved, so did my role in the group, and I became more involved in participating and sharing my own experiences. A theme that continuously emerged was the wisdom in the group, and of each member within the group. We all came with our unique histories, experiences, and ways of seeing the world. Rather than there being one "expert" from which to learn from, my experience of being in the training was that of equals lifting each other up and building on one another's expertise. It is now after the training has ended that I realize that the group has provided me with infinitely more than I could have ever given them, and for that, I am grateful.

Lilian Wang is a M.A. Counselling Psychology Student at Adler University and Practicum Student at South Vancouver Neighbourhood House

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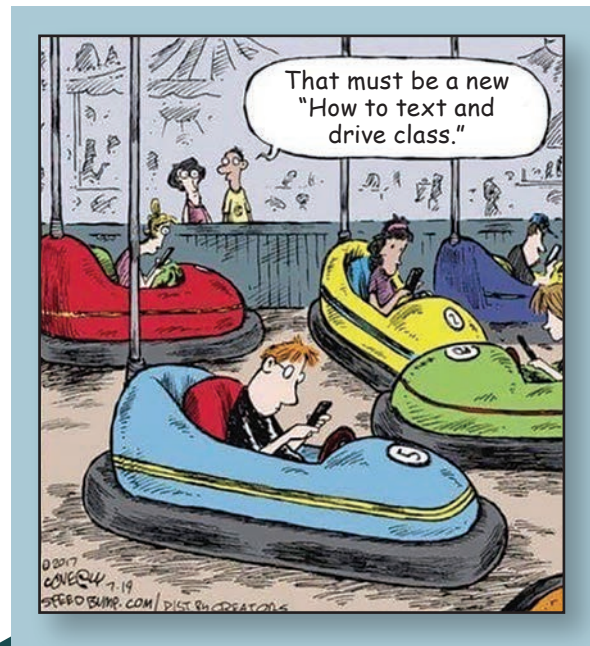
You mean you failed your driving licence!
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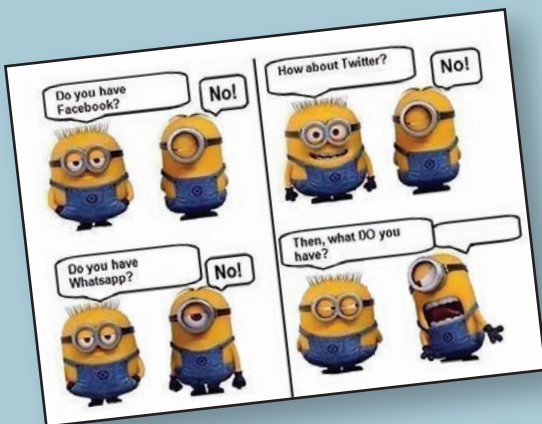
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I love asking kids what they want to be when they grow up because I'm still looking for ideas.

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THE GREAT DEBATE

MAID, MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING



We continue with our series of debates on important topics. Ken Levitt presents arguments against MAiD, Medical Assistance in Dying; Larry Shapiro supports MAiD. These are personal opinions, JSA does not have a position on MAiD.

RETHINKING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING (MAID)

Written by Kenneth Levitt

This is the second ‘debate’ with my venerable friend and associate Larry Shapiro. We have chosen a salient subject that is divisive within our society and which deserves discussion. These articles allow us to speak to the issues that many of us will face sooner or later, preferably much later.

Medical Assistance in Dying is a euphemism for Medical Assistance in Suicide.

Fact: In 2019 there were 5,631 recorded deaths or 15 deaths per day by MAiD in Canada.

Fact: Governments have programs to prevent suicides but are making it easier for persons who have chosen a premature death by unnatural means.

My task in this essay is to present some caveats for an imperative to reconsider seeking help in dying. It was Benjamin Franklin who coined the phrase, “Nothing is certain except death and taxes”. The latter is a requirement that

happens once every year while the former happens only once and it is final. How we die or choose to die has many options but MAiD may make it too easy to exit.

A former colleague of mine in her 80s decided to end her life via the Dr. Kevorkian (Dr. Death) style of assisted suicide. She was physically healthy and sound of mind. She felt she did not want to be a burden on her family should she lose her cognitive and/or physical abilities. Her suicide was successful. There were no checks or balances in this person's situation. In her view, her life had no meaning and she cared little about her family.

In another situation, a man in his thirties who was chronically depressed and had many physical challenges decided it was time to end his life. He was accepted by MAiD. During the waiting period, with the help of a psychologist, he decided to rethink his decision and considered other options. He determined he had much to live for and chose to reside in a ‘communal residence’ for physically challenged persons.

Euthanasia is from the Greek meaning “good death”. In essence it is medically assisted suicide; intentionally ending the life of a person experiencing long term illness. The federal government has recently broadened what is acceptable

in requesting MAiD. The change has removed the requirement that death be “reasonably foreseeable”.

What does this mean? It is open to philosophical understandings about the value of life, how we appreciate or do not appreciate persons with severe challenges, persons who we may feel have the right to seek euthanasia. Should we allow persons with chronic illness or disabilities to request MAiD or euthanasia when there is no evidence that their death is not close? We should be concerned about persons who request MAiD or euthanasia because they feel they are a burden to their family.

There is a slippery slope when we broaden the eligibility for MAiD. In the USA there is a move to allow oral ingestion of lethal drugs which we can call Physician Assisted Suicide. This move also seeks to widen the definition of ‘terminal disease’ to include “a degenerative illness that at some point in the future” might cause death.

“Some time is the future” has not been defined! In the Netherlands and Belgium MAiD and euthanasia are permitted with the latter predominating. Criteria have broadened to include persons with depression, dementia, or being ‘tired of life’; all eligible to be euthanized. Is this the kind of permission we want for persons who wish to end their lives? Is

this what we can categorically say, “They had a very dignified death.”

Physician assisted death with dignity may not necessarily be with compassion. We should not view death as a treatment for human suffering. Nor should we see a planned death as therapeutic when treatment is a viable option. Does physician assisted suicide undermine efforts to provide persons with more and better compassionate and ethical end-of-life care? We need to make sure that physician assisted suicide does not become a blasé substitute for palliative or hospice care.

We need to ensure the poor, the elderly, the lonely, the isolated, the marginalized and the physically and emotionally challenged are not seen as “throwaways”. If we regard life as something sacred then we need to have legal safeguards to prevent unnecessary physician assisted suicide when there are viable options.

The Fifth Commandment: “Thou Shalt Not Kill”. “Therefore, love them and respect them as a treasure, the guardian of which brings you only joy.”

IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Written by Larry Shapiro

There are precious few issues that are more contentious and emotionally charged than the topic of MAiD (medical assistance in dying) or as some prefer to call it, assisted suicide.

For those who are not aware, the Parliament of Canada passed Bill C-14 back in 2016 which served to amend the criminal code making medical assistance in dying legal in Canada.

The legislation allows for two types of MAiD. One being the self administration of medications or substances by a person to end their life and the second being the direct administration of medications or substances by a health-care professional to end the life of a person at their request. Both types of MAiD are intended to relieve suffering and ensure quality of living and dying.

I would like to begin by saying that a person's wishes, values and beliefs often change over time along with changing circumstances. We are unable to predict the pain and suffering inherent in many diseases and medical conditions. As individuals living in Canada, we have the right to participate in decisions about our life and death. End of life care should be the choice of the individual affected – nobody else.

Life is a precious gift like no other. We have no input into the circumstances that lead to our conception and entry into this world. Whatever the particular situation in which we find ourselves at the beginning of our journey through life, there are many things that happen, mostly beyond our control, that will determine the path we follow and the direction we will take. What will those 23 pairs of genes that we inherit have in store for us going forward? These are basic questions that have a profound effect on our lives. Notwithstanding inherited genes, there will be choices that we make that will have a major influence on our physical and mental well-being; for example, such damaging behaviors as smoking, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, reckless physical activities, disregard for nutritional foods and stressful occupations.

We have all heard the expression, “man plans and God laughs.” Plans are forward looking and life is what happens, often in spite of those plans. In looking back on

our lives, we realize that most of the major events or directional changes occurred by happenstance and are not related in any way to original plans. Faced with choices when we encounter obstacles or unimagined opportunities in the paths we laid out for ourselves, we make choices which will determine the outcome until the next obstacle, set back or opportunity at which point we again are forced to choose an alternate course. Life goes on bearing fruits both sweet and bitter and we persevere to make the best out of what we have. No doubt, we all have scars to show from our long journey, but we take comfort in all of the good things we have experienced along the way, like family, friends and personal accomplishments that have made life worthwhile.

END OF LIFE DECISIONS

We are generally unprepared to deal with the end of our life journey. Although we had no say in our entry into the world, we sure have or should have a say in our departure. True, we have mandates to indicate our predetermined wishes in order to instruct the medical people on performing heroic practices or alternatively not to; or signing a DNR order to be acted on by the same medical practitioners. But what about “a say” on how long we wish to endure unbearable constant pain that the prognosis determines as chronic and progressive. Once this gift of life no longer produces anything but intolerable pain and suffering, perhaps it is time to return the gift and be liberated from the suffering with no chance or hope of relief. I believe, if we are honest with each other and ourselves, the answer is clear. Yes, we should be able to determine when we call an end to our life journey and rest in peace. Philosophical opinions from those who have not experienced the pain

Continued on page 35...

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LIFE AND DEATH

...Continued from Page 33.

and suffering by witnessing that state in a relative or friend have no place in this discussion.

I will share with you a personal experience which involves a high school friend. This friend, as a child contracted polio. When we met in grade 10, the only vestige of the disease was a mild limp. He moved to Nanaimo many years ago. I always planned to visit him if I ever came to Vancouver. As time passed, we maintained contact through the internet and then 7 years ago I moved to Vancouver with my wife. Another high school friend living in Vancouver and I decided to contact our old buddy in Nanaimo to make plans for us to visit him. I proceeded to email him our intentions and a timetable. He responded with a request for me to call him that evening, which I agreed to do.

The conversation began with my friend expressing his gratitude for our willingness to make the trip to Nanaimo to visit him and then went on to relate the following. He described his life as having been filled with things he had accomplished and how content he was with his life. He then described a current incident where upon exiting his vehicle he collapsed to the ground and was unable to right himself, forcing him to call for help. This was a harbinger of his future. He decided that rather than allow himself to succumb to the predictable physical deterioration he was facing, he made up his mind to arrange for a physician-assisted death which was to take place in a matter of days. Many thoughts of what to say in response raced through my mind and when I opened my mouth to speak, I heard myself say, “friend, I’m sorry we missed our chance to see you after all

these years but let me wish you an easy passing and a bon voyage.” He thanked me and expressed his gratitude for me not criticizing his decision or trying to talk him out of it or judging him in any way. In retrospect, I am happy with what my response was and have come to respect that particular alternative.

I have come to believe that Canadians who choose to exercise their constitutional right to a medically assisted death should be able to do so. Furthermore, Canadians who are waiting to access their right to end of life choice means they are facing a prolonged period of intolerable suffering that is totally unnecessary. Quality of life affects only one person, the choice to end it should only be made by one person – the one suffering.

SUMMATION OF NEW LAW MAiD BILL C-7

The new law governing MAiD Bill C-7 came into effect after receiving Royal Assent on March 17, 2021. It allows both those people requesting MAiD whose natural deaths are considered reasonably foreseeable to be able to move forward with their plans and has additional safeguards in place for those whose natural death is not reasonably foreseeable.

In both cases, a person must be in an advanced state of decline that cannot be reversed, must be suffering intolerably and must have a disease, illness or disability.

The new rules regarding capacity and MAiD allow, in limited cases, an individual who loses capacity prior to their MAiD procedure the ability to move forward with MAiD. This option can be opted for only under the following conditions:

- The person applying for MAiD must have a natural death that is reasonably foreseeable.

- The person must have gone through the mandatory assessments and been approved for MAiD by at least two independent assessors.
- The person is at risk of losing the decision-making capacity prior to their preferred date.
- The person must have completed a written agreement with their MAiD provider.

This written agreement known as a waiver of final consent (advanced consent) must include a date on which the person wants to have MAiD. This waiver of final consent is NOT available to people whose death is not reasonably foreseeable. The waiver of final consent will not be valid if the person shows any signs of refusal or resistance such as gestures or sounds, when MAiD is being administered.

This option to waive final consent is commonly known as Audrey’s Amendment, so named to honour Audrey Parker. Audrey Parker was a 57 year old woman with metastasized cancer and who had been approved for MAiD. In 2018 Audrey had expressed her desire to experience one more Christmas with her family before her scheduled MAiD procedure. Due to her fear of losing capacity to provide consent at the time of the scheduled MAiD procedure as required by law, she made the decision to die earlier than she wanted with medical assistance on November 1st of that year. In her final weeks, she fiercely advocated for Canadians to have the option of consenting in advance to MAiD so that they could live as long as possible without the fear of missing their chance for MAiD.

Thank you, Audrey, from all those who will benefit from the new law you, so bravely fought for until the very end.

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VERTIGO AND ITS MANY FORMS

Written by Anton Grunfeld

Dizziness is a common condition that most of us have experienced at one time or another. Just think of having car sickness or sea sickness as examples. But what if you are, say, a 70 years old and while at home, as you turn over in bed, the room starts spinning around you? Even if the spinning stops when you are still, it then starts again when you move your head. What if you feel nauseated and start vomiting? This is called vertigo and it can occasionally be terrifying, although in the majority of cases it is harmless and will get better with simple treatment or even without any treatment.

While dizziness is a non-specific term used to describe all sensations related to lack of balance, vertigo is the illusion of movement of the body or its surroundings. Over half of cases of dizziness are due to vertigo. Vertigo often feels like a spinning or swaying movement and may be associated with nausea and vomiting, sweating, or difficulties walking. It is typically worse when the head is moved. Vertigo is more common with age and affects women more often than men.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF VERTIGO?

Our sense of balance depends on the signals that our eyes, sensory nerves, and inner ear report back to our brain. If the signals from our inner ear don't match up with what our eyes and sensory nerves are reporting, our brain has to sort through the confusion, causing vertigo. It is good to remember that vertigo is not a diagnosis but a feeling or symptom indicating an underlying problem. It can have a variety of causes and determining the cause may occasionally be difficult.

The common causes of vertigo are typically problems originating in the inner ear such as Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV), Vestibular Neuritis or Labyrinthitis and Meniere's disease.

BENIGN PAROXYSMAL POSITIONAL VERTIGO

BPPV is the single most common cause of vertigo. It is a mechanical problem of the inner ear. Calcium crystals in the inner ear become dislodged, sending false messages to the brain that you're

in motion. These inner-ear signals cause jerky, uncoordinated eye movements, known as nystagmus, which conflict with the brain's other movement signals. People experiencing BPPV have repeated attacks of vertigo, usually lasting a few seconds to less than 1 minute. The attacks are precipitated by head movements including rolling over in bed or looking up.

The good news about BPPV is that it is usually easy to diagnose and to treat. The head positional test (Dix-Hallpike maneuver) typically reproduces the vertigo and the associated characteristic eye movements. Treatment consists of a series of specific sequential head movements that result in repositioning the loose calcium crystals back in their original place. These maneuvers have a high success rate and can be used again if the condition recurs.

VESTIBULAR NEURITIS AND ACUTE LABYRINTHITIS

These conditions are thought to be due to inflammation of the inner ear following respiratory infections. In acute labyrinthitis the onset of vertigo is sudden, is associated with nausea and vomiting, with buzzing in the ear and hearing loss and spontaneous jerky eye movements even when lying still. In this condition vertigo can last for days.

Vestibular neuritis is caused by inflammation of the vestibular nerve and is similar to labyrinthitis in that it usually follows a recent respiratory infection. The main characteristic of vestibular neuritis is an acute onset of vertigo without hearing loss or buzzing in the ears. Initially, the vertigo is severe, lasts for two to three days and is followed by gradual recovery, which may take two to six weeks.

While dizziness is a non-specific term used to describe all sensations related to lack of balance, vertigo is the illusion of movement of the body or its surroundings. ”

For both labyrinthitis and vestibular neuritis the treatment mostly addresses the symptoms, which will improve with time. Prolonged bed rest is not recommended and return to normal life is advised as the brain learns to compensate for the vertigo.

MÉNIÈRE'S DISEASE

Ménière's disease is commonly seen in women, and the incidence increases in men and women after the age of 60 years. This is a classic inner ear disorder caused by too much fluid in the inner ear and characterized by episodic spinning dizziness, nausea, ear pressure, decreased hearing and ringing in the ear, with episodes lasting from more than 20 minutes to several hours. The spinning sensation starts and stops spontaneously. Episodes

of vertigo occur without warning. Hearing loss in Ménière's disease may come and go, particularly early on. Eventually, most people have some permanent hearing loss. There is no known cure for Ménière's disease and treatment primarily addresses the symptoms, although some people opt for surgical treatment.

VESTIBULAR MIGRAINE

Vestibular migraines usually consist of recurrent episodes of vertigo lasting minutes to days. In at least half of these episodes people are also very sensitive to light, sounds or smell or have a headache with a visual aura. The treatment for these episodes is focused on avoiding triggers and treating migraine with appropriate medications.

WHAT ELSE CAN IT BE?

Potentially more dangerous causes of vertigo, although rare, should also be considered. This is especially true if other problems such as weakness, headache, double vision or numbness occur. People with such complaints will need further tests, scans and consultations with specialists. These conditions include multiple sclerosis, stroke, brain tumours or head injuries as well as drug and toxin exposures.



Anton Grunfeld is a retired emergency physician. He is a board member of the Janusz Korczak Association of Canada.

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This was made possible by a group of primarily senior volunteers who contributed their talents in singing and dancing. Beryl has worn the hat of producer, director, choreographer, teacher, costume designer, seamstress and PR relations in staging the show for the last 17 years, and 230 concerts: approximately 44,000+ hours volunteering together with *Showtimers*.

She has touched thousands of people's lives and stands out like a shining diamond through her formation of *Showtime*. She also teaches Tap to seniors, which is as rewarding and stimulating for the brain, as playing a game of chess!

Kol ha kavod and may she continue for many years!

MURIEL MORRIS (*pianist*):

Beryl came into my life shortly after Ben my husband died. Meeting her was so fortunate for me. *Showtime* filled a great void in my life, as pianist of the group, giving pleasure to all our audiences and giving myself a true feeling of wellbeing, and fulfillment.

DEBBIE COSSEVER (*singer*):

I love the costumes, the rehearsals, being on stage, singing, dancing and entertaining folks. Beryl gave me the opportunity to use my talents bringing joy to the lives of seniors. I have been with her troupe for 17 years because I love it! I am so proud I am a *Showtimer*.

SARA BERNSTEIN (*dancer & singer*):

Beryl has enhanced my life and my dreams have been fulfilled. It has been an honour over the 17 years being part of *Showtime*. I witnessed how people sprung up from wheelchairs in elation of the dance, costumes and musical joy, seeing stroke victims joyfully tapping a finger or toe in unrestrained elation. The residual energy of the shows carried on for days. Memories indelibly printed in my mind.

ARNOLD SELWYN (*singer*):

My acting and singing go back over 75 years, but the 16 years performing with Beryl's *Showtime* group has given me the most satisfaction and pleasure. Her professionalism, choice of content, and

skill of program arranging, makes each show run smoothly and, enjoyable for the varied audiences. It is a joy to work with her and watching her dance is a delight.

NASSA SELWYN (*singer*):

Since 2004 Beryl has been an inspiration to my life. Her enthusiasm for helping me achieve performance potential and enjoyment in giving this gift to others has enhanced my life. *Showtime* performing has proven to be the most fun volunteer activity that I am involved in and has given me immeasurable pleasure watching our audiences react to our show.

MAURICE MOSES (*singer*):

I want to thank Beryl for inviting me 13 years ago to join *Showtimers*. Ever since

retiring from the CBC I felt singing and dancing would perfectly fill the void. She encouraged me to sing my favourite songs and re-united me with my lifelong pianist/accompanist Muriel Morris as well as introducing me to new lifelong friends.

RONA BLACK (*dancer*):

Thanks to Beryl for making *Showtime* an opportunity to bring joy by entertaining seniors. Beryl has used her considerable talents to put together a wonderful show that makes it as enjoyable for us performing as it brings joy to those watching. She encourages us to improve our performance. Her dedication and patience are remarkable. Who knew volunteering could be so much fun!

TAMAR GLASER (*dancer*):

Showtimers has satisfied my inner dance dream of performing! Beryl is committed to taking a group of individuals from all walks of life and turning them into singers and dancers. From being a shy individual, I became a confident speaker and performer. Every performance has brought joy; with smiles, clapping or simply watching. I am proud that I am a dancer in an outreach program for seniors.

DANIELLA GIVON

(*Singer and dancer*):

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to do a mitzvah while I do the things I love most, singing and dancing. It is a pleasure to bring light and colour, music and movement to those who are wheelchair-bound, who cannot live on their own. Every time I see our audience smile, nod their head, clap their hands, and sing with us, I know this *mitzvah* counts.

LISA CONN (*dancer*):

Sixteen years I have volunteered with *Showtime*. I loved it all but in particular

how the audience reacted with such love and appreciation. It was gratifying for me to know that the benefits were truly reciprocal.

SUSAN GOLDSTEIN (*dancer*):

My experiences were amazing and included the opportunity to befriend and perform with a group of the most talented and dedicated volunteers in the Vancouver community who were tirelessly committed to bringing smiles and a little fun to seniors all over the city.

JOCELYNE HALLÉ

(*singer & photographer*):

I met Beryl when she first came to the JCC and started *Showtime*. I loved watching the rehearsals and secretly wished I could join! Upon my retirement from the JCC, she insisted I could sing and perform in public, something I never thought I would have the confidence to do. Thanks to Beryl, my confidence has grown so much.

DAWN HURWITZ (*singer*):

When I am feeling low (especially during these difficult Covid times) I think how I have contributed in a small way to the enjoyment of Seniors, by participating in *Showtime*. It gives me a feeling of fulfilment.

KARON SHEAR (*dancer*):

Beryl inspired me to revive some of the little dance talent I enjoyed as a child. What fun to be on stage performing in a group with fabulous people entertaining and bringing joy and laughter to seniors. Dancing in senior years wins first place in promoting brain health. Beryl through *Showtimers* has given me the gift and opportunity to have my cake and eat it.



Co-ordinated by **KARON SHEAR**

Digital design by **SUSAN ROGERS**

Photo of Beryl by **JENNIFER FRIEZEN**

Photo of group by **JOCELYNE HALLÉ**

BACK: Jocelyne Hallé, Debbie Cossever, Nassa Selwyn, Susan Goldstein, Arnold Selwyn, Karon Shear, Marshall Berger

MIDDLE: Beryl Israel, Maurice Moses, Daniella Givon, Muriel Morris, Dawn Hurwitz, Rona Black

FRONT: Sara Bernstein, Tamar Glaser



CHANGING TIMES: OPENING UP TO APPROACHING RETIREMENT

Written by Sylvie Hutchinson

What next? What now, you may ask yourself as you approach retirement, are you in the throes of post retirement, changing Covid-19 times or both? Legitimate questions. Your life as you knew it is gone, the tower of Lego building blocks topples. Leaving the last 40-50 years of your working days behind, you may feel bewilderment, confusion, grief and possibly terror at facing the unknown. Untethered to the world of work, you might feel unhinged, as if floating in space. A compulsion to fill the void with mindless activities or a pressure to live someone else's life through TV may arise. I urge you, instead, to open the door to other possibilities, to discover yourself - not who you were at 30, 40 or 50 - but who you are today.

Who is this new, mature, retired person free of the responsibility of work? What will enhance your life in this next phase? What is lying dormant, waiting to mushroom? Is it self-expression through watercolour or a musical instrument, helping others, building a birdhouse or furniture, taking a tech course? Is it finding your voice, horseback riding or birdwatching? These answers are purely yours to discover. Everything qualifies, for it is not what you do, but how you engage and bring vibrancy to your life. I invite you to reinvent and unearth yourself, to live the life yet un-lived. Be like the clouds—shape shifting.

Some people may know or think they know where to start, but others may

need to sit quietly and take time to explore their inner world. Take a minute right now. Sit down, close your eyes, and ask yourself, “What will enliven my life, how do I want to be in the world?” Allow possibilities to float into your consciousness. No need to censor; simply allow them to bubble from your deep well. Brainstorm, giving every idea and thought presence. Write them down. If nothing surfaces, do not despair, but hold awareness in the next days and see what appears.

It is not what you do, but how you engage and bring vibrancy to your life. ”

Whether we slide into retirement gently with part time, contract work or get tossed off the cliff, we have two choices - to resist it or embrace it. With your working identity stripped away, what will you choose? Scared or feeling stuck? Don't worry. Take even the smallest step, explore, and it will lead to the next step. Sometimes we choose to do nothing because the road map is eclipsed, but an idea is enough. Part of the fun is in the discovery. If need be, search out ‘tools’ to help you along. Ask yourself “*what is the worst that can happen if I try this?*” Or gaze down from a 100 foot vantage point and ask, “*what legacy do I want to leave?*”

You can linger on the railway platform, unsure, waiting, or you can step off, grab a different train, and try something new.

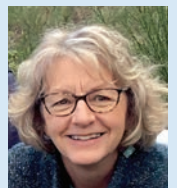
This is retirement, freedom to choose this last third of your life.

More than ever, during these changing Covid and retirement times, it is important to not live in the past, wishing - if only I could go here, go there; if only things would go back to normal; if only my body was 40, 50 or even 60. If only... It is also important not to live in the future. It is unknown. Covid surely has taught us that. Our choices may appear only pocket size, constricted, but possibly they are merely different, needing clarity and conscious awareness to surface.

One gift of retirement is time. Time for friends and family, time for introspection, time for discovery. Look for the window, open it and dive through. You might be surprised! When Covid cancelled my pool swim program, I bought a wetsuit and took myself to the clear water of the local lake, surrounded by forest. With trepidation and yes, some fear, I dunked in and propelled my body through the first onslaught of cold. Immersed and buoyant, amazement and wonder flushed my body, the sheer joy of it, floating on my back beneath a canopy of blue sky dusted with billowy white, shape shifting clouds.

I changed my reality and you can too.

Sylvie Hutchinson is retired from a lifetime of various working engagements. Her latest gig is as a Life Coach.



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SOCIAL ISOLATION AMONG OLDER ADULTS



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21ST
AT 1:00 PM ON ZOOM

Dr. Kristen Haase,
Assistant Professor Faculty
of Applied Science/School
of Nursing, and colleague
Dr. Megan O'Connell from
the University of Saskatchewan,
present the findings from their
study about virtual socialization
amongst older adults
during the pandemic.

For information on how to join, visit www.jsalliance.org or join our email newsletter to receive the link.

604.732.1555 office@jsalliance.org www.jsalliance.org  

The Fall Symposium is funded in part by the Province of BC, the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver, and various other Foundations and private donors

SAVE THE DATE!

JSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, September 23rd at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom

Sender:
 **Jewish Seniors Alliance**
949 West 49th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 2T1

