

# SENIOR LINE

MAGAZINE OF THE JEWISH SENIORS ALLIANCE OF GREATER VANCOUVER



VOLUME 29(1) - MARCH 2022

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# A Tribute To Seniors

**We share our thoughts about who you are  
and what you have accomplished.**

You are wise, thoughtful and giving;  
Artistic, musical, athletic and poetic  
Entrepreneurs, leaders, activists,  
Founders & Builders of our Community Organizations  
Volunteers, donors and philanthropists  
Educators, authors, thinkers and healers.  
Mothers, Fathers, Grandparents,  
Aunts, Uncles, Cousins & Friends  
Retainers of our community's collective wisdom.

We honour the memory of our parents Harriet and Arnold Shine<sup>z'l</sup>, Babs and Ted Cohen<sup>z'l</sup> ~ Gary and Linda Cohen



# Jewish Seniors Alliance of Greater Vancouver

949 W. 49th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 2T1  
Office: 604.732.1555 | Peer Support: 604.267.1555  
office@jsalliance.org | www.jsalliance.org  
CHARITABLE REGISTRATION  
#88362 1401 RR0001

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Dolores Luber

### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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### CONTRIBUTORS

Dolores Luber, Larry Shapiro, Gyda Chud, Serge Haber, Sheila Delany, Shanie Levin, Eric Schwartz, Tamara Frankel, Kenneth Levitt, Michael Geller, Connie Bradley, Michael Seelig, Rita Roling, Anthony DuMoulin, Charles Leibovitch, Grace Hann, Sylvie Hutchinson, Dan Propp

### LAYOUT, DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Jennifer Propp and Dolores Luber  
Advertising Solicitor: Violeta Esquinazi  
Thanks to all contributors...and editorial team  
Thanks to Copytek Printers, Sarj and Bal

### DISTRIBUTION

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

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# SURPRISE, WE DO NOT HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS!

Written by Dolores Luber

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Slowly but surely, the reality of the situation is sinking in—we humans do not have the power that we thought we had. This pandemic is challenging the best scientific minds as it continues to beleaguer humans around the world. We in British Columbia have experienced the worst weather ever, from heat domes, raging wildfires to atmospheric rivers.

I am reminded of the myth known as *The Tower of Babel: Genesis 11:1-9*:

1. And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech.
2. And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.
3. And they said one to another: 'Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly.' And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.
4. And they said: 'Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, with its top in heaven, and let us make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.'
5. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.
6. And the LORD said: 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all

one language; and this is what they begin to do; and now nothing will be withholden from them, which they purpose to do.

7. 'Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.'
8. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city.
9. Therefore was the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

This story appears to be an attempt to explain the existence of diverse human languages. For me, it represents much more than that. According to the text, the Babylonians wanted to make a name for themselves by building a mighty city and a tower "with its top in the heavens". God disrupted the work by so confusing the language of the workers that they could no longer understand one another. The city was never completed, and the people were dispersed over the face of the earth. The lesson I am learning from this story is that humans were full of excessive pride and haughty arrogance—hubris; so they were punished in the hope that man would become more humble and more compassionate towards his fellow man and the earth on which he lived.

**The 1st-century Jewish interpretation found in Flavius Josephus explains the construction of the tower as a hubristic act of defiance against God ordered by the arrogant tyrant Nimrod.**

I agree. It seems to me that our less than effective response to Global Warming, after years of warnings, e.g. Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, 2006; Leonardo DiCaprio's *Before The Flood*, 2016; and the recent movie *Don't Look Up*, have led us to an imminent disruption of life on our planet.

Globalization has led to a wider gap between the less-fortunate and the wealthy. ”

The number of climate refugees has risen exponentially. And, after several bouts with nasty viruses, e.g. H2N2, 1957-1958; H3N2, 1968; and H1N1, 2009; we are now dealing ineffectively and inefficiently with the fourth wave of the Covid-19 virus. Globalization has led to a wider gap between the less-fortunate and the wealthy. Vaccines are not being distributed to those countries and peoples who are unable to provide for themselves. Wealth inequality is rampant.

The painting by Pieter Bruegel illustrates the Tower of Babel and the imbalance of power and inequalities of life which the



artist condemns. He lived from 1525 – 1569. We humans are slow learners.

Dear readers, I am now more anxious, more frightened, by what the future may hold for us, as senior citizens, and for our children and grandchildren. You also may be experiencing sleepless nights, anxiety attacks, feelings of alienation, and even hopelessness. We at Jewish Seniors Alliance can offer you some assistance in this difficult period of time. We have trained volunteers who will connect with you and support you. You have only to reach out, to us, or to a friend or relative who will contact us. Grace Hann and Charles Leibovitch, along with their team of experienced, especially-trained volunteers, are ready and able to offer you support and guidance.

Did you notice that our November magazine was the largest yet? There were 44 pages to entertain, amuse, educate and enlighten you. Our advertisers have supported us with their informative and useful advertisements—please thank

them for their generosity by frequenting their shops and using their services. We continue to offer you the opportunity of sponsoring an article—in this issue there are five sponsored articles. Contact me to join those who support JSA and our *Senior Line* magazine.

In this issue we introduce two guest writers, Sheila Delaney and Sylvie Hutchinson, who will entertain you with their adventures, on the streets of Vancouver and in the frigid waters off Vancouver Island. We welcome your articles and ideas for articles. Just send them in to me. Dan Propp is back with his *Nostalgia* article—oh for the good old days! Follow Serge Haber as he describes his hip-replacement surgery at the age of 94. In her article on sleep, Rita Roling will try to assist us all in getting a good night's sleep.

Our cover image is by Ben Levinson, an architect/artist who creates charming drawings and watercolours. Ken Levitt had this wonderful idea of writing about his favourite sports movies and Michael

Geller gives us the information we need to seek out assisted-living facilities. Thanks to all my writers for their loving attention to their articles! And to you, dear readers, enjoy and relish their hard work and creativity.

Late Breaking News: There is a new BC program which adds much needed home support workers by making training accessible. The program is designed to address a province wide shortage of home-support workers and health-care assistants. This new provincial aid program covers tuition and pays students \$21-an-hour to attend the nine-month program to become a home support worker. The Health Career Access Program (HCAP), launched by the Ministry of Health last summer, is designed to address a province wide shortage of home-support workers and health-care assistants for long-term care and seniors' assisted living facilities. Last year's provincial budget provided \$195 million a year (for three years) to the HCAP program to recruit, train and employ approximately 3,000 health care workers annually. As of February 9th, 2,254 recruits were in the midst of their training or had completed training through the program. Home care is what keeps frail seniors and people with physical or cognitive challenges living in their community. There is a burgeoning percentage of the senior population that require home care. Is this enough? These are relatively early days, but the concept is good and the intent excellent (G. McIntyre, 11/02/2022).



Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Tower of Babel*, 1563, oil on panel, 114 × 155 cm (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

**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...

To my readers, you are making my world and the magazine better;  
keep sending in your comments and suggestions.

Write to Dolores at: [editor@jsalliance.org](mailto:editor@jsalliance.org)

## WORDS OF THANKS

When you assemble 12 strangers in a Zoom room it's by no means a slam dunk that a cohesive group will form or even that much learning will take place. But for us, a cohesive group did form and an amazing amount of learning happened.

And while, to a great extent, this is because of the wonderful participants, I think we all agree it's mainly down to Grace. For the ten weeks of our training she generously shared her incredible skill and wisdom even though at times it must have felt to her like herding cats. She's truly an inspiration. We owe her a huge thank-you and also to Vicki who handled the technical part of our meetings with such good humour. And thanks to the JSA for giving us the opportunity to participate in the program.

I think I speak for all of us when I say the training has been a transformative experience. We've learned skills that we can use in our personal lives as well as out in the community. I know we're all looking forward to making a difference in the lives of seniors.

**Joan Robillard and Cathy Moss**

Two recently-graduated Senior Peer Support volunteers.

Dear Dolores,

Many thanks for sending me the new issue of *Senior Line*. Of course I started with the piece on Sutton Hoo, so well written by Rita Roling. She brought out details I hadn't been familiar with, and the photos are wonderful. The rest of the magazine was also interesting and valuable and I look forward to seeing future issues. I know you plan to use one of my pieces from the SFU Retirees Association newsletter next time, and please feel free to use others later on if you wish. À propos, I was in a car accident recently and have given up driving, so I wrote the new column about that—it might be of interest to an older audience.

**Sheila Delany**

*Editor's note:* Yes, Sheila, send me the article! We are interested. Sheila's article *Living on the Edge* is in this magazine.

To *Senior Line*,

Thanks to every contributor, *Senior Line* is getting better and better. I want to express my thanks especially to Dolores Lubber, Larry Shapiro and Tamara Frankel for their always excellent and informative articles. With best wishes for continued success.

**Al Stein**

*Editor's note:* We love the appreciation! Thank you.

מקווה שאת בטוב ובטוחה אם כל מה שמתרחש.

רציתי להודות לך מכל הלב על הכתבה המדהימה שכתבת עבורי ועבור הפאונדטיישון. כל כך ריגש לקראו ולראות, וזה כבוד עצום בשבילי. אני מודה לך ולכל הצוות מכל הלב, ומאחלת לך, למשפחתך ולכל צוות JSA שנה אזרחית מדהימה, רגועה, בטוחה, עם המון בריאות ואושר!

תודה מכל הלב!

**איילת כהן וייל**  
**Ayelet Cohen Weil**

Hello Dolores and the rest of the *chevra*,

The editorial meeting satisfied a need in me to see your faces, hear your voices, and feel your zeal and eagerness. You lead a joining of hearts and minds whose aim it is to continue to better the situation for those who turn to us, and to make others aware that they can also. My neighbour has just expressed the desire to join us after reading our latest issue.

*Kol HaKavod.*

**Binny Goldman**

Hi Dolores,

Thank you so much for sending a copy of the magazine. I think that it is amazing and you should be so proud of the work that you do. Please feel free to send me copies in the future as I found it so interesting to see and read.

**Sherri Lemcovitz**

*Editor's note:* Sherri is my accountant at Ernst & Young, Montreal.



Hello and Happy New Year,

I picked up a copy (Nov 2021) of your magazine at the Dunbar Community Centre. I enjoyed browsing through it and especially reading the article on Sutton Hoo. Reading the article I realized the movie *The Dig* that I had watched on Netflix was based on this true event and story (see link below). Given this feature article I thought it was unfortunate that the movie *The Dig* was not included in the very next article of the magazine, *Seniors at the Movies*. Perhaps your readers might appreciate a note about this in a future issue.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sutton-hoo/features/digging-the-dirt-the-true-story-behind-the-dig#:~:text=The%20Dig%20is%20a%20film,Dig%2C%20written%20by%20John%20Preston>.

### Ross Nichol

**Editor's note:** I agree, we should have mentioned the movie! After all, that is what led me to read more about the event, to buy two books about it, and to request permission from the British Museum to use their images. The movie *The Dig* is an excellent, mostly factual telling of the story of the discovery of the treasures of Sutton Hoo. \*\*\*\*\*

Hi Dolores,

Thanks very much for the magazine. You did a great job with the layout and I love your use of colour. I really appreciate it that you covered my book. Your magazine is wonderful, very informative. Thank you!

### Olga Campbell

**Editor's note:** Jennifer Propp, our graphic designer, gets all the credit for her work on layouts and colour.

Dear Dolores,

I only got to read your last magazine yesterday and found it very impressive. You are essentially carrying it on your shoulders, but you also have a great team to work with. David Litvak, my publicist, is working on the media for my new book and has already lined up some interviews and articles, I have a date for a book launch at the Jewish Book Fest, February 9 at the JCC library. Be well and best wishes,

### Pinna Granirer

**Editor's note:** We will review Pinna Granirer's new book *Garden of Words* in the next issue of *Senior Line*. It is available at Waldman Jewish Public Library at the JCC.

Hi Dolores,

I just read your latest issue of *Senior Line*. It's great. Now that I am most certainly a senior I should be reading it every issue. Do you leave copies at the Peretz Centre? *The Jewish Independent* does. How about Omnitsky's? Thought you might run an article on *Beep Beep Bubbie* by Bonnie Sher Klein. It was short-listed for the BC Book Prize and the OLA Blue Spruce awards. It is also a PJ Library book. I've attached it here and I can drop off a copy for you.

### Mike Katz

**Editor's note:** I received the book, loved it, and wrote a review for this edition of *Senior Line* (see *Curl Up With A Good Book*). Thank you Mike for the suggestion. And, yes, we deliver *Senior Line* to Peretz Centre and Omnitsky's. How about joining Jewish Seniors Alliance for \$18 and supporting our work with seniors?

Hi Dolores,

I glanced at the magazines you sent. Thank you. After really spending time viewing and reading one through, I found it to be of fantastic quality, interesting with a variety of subjects that would be interesting to many but especially to seniors. I truly appreciate the content and quality.

That said I am honoured that you wish to publish my images and I am also fine to publish my name as the photographer. Thanks again for your consideration and appreciate that you enjoyed viewing my photos enough to publish in your quality publication.

### Diane Grenier

**Editor's note:** Diane is an accomplished photographer living in White Rock. Her stunning images will grace our cover and *Portrait of an Artist* column in the near future.

## JSA WELCOMES NEW SUPPORTERS

### NEW LIFETIME MEMBER

Glenn Bullard  
Michelle Mina

### NEW MEMBER/SUPPORTER

Kenneth Bradley  
Cecille Cohen  
Joan Cohen  
Michael & Mary Cohene  
Violeta Esquinazi  
Elecia Hart  
Michael Lam  
Janet Nicol  
Aubrey and Shirley Schneider  
Beryl Tovim





# SEARCH OUT THOSE SENIORS WHO NEED OUR ASSISTANCE

Written by Larry Shapiro and Gyda Chud

## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

How has the New Year been treating you so far?

This question is by no means meant to be rhetorical. The inspiration for the posing of this seemingly simple and even mundane question is a letter I recently received from my 10 year-old grandson Jacob who lives in Montreal. Jacob, along with a greeting card expressing how much he's thinking about me, wrote a beautifully decorated letter asking me several questions; one that read "what has changed from Covid-19"? It suddenly struck me that the question is far from a simple one. I understood that my grandson was asking, not so much as to how the pandemic is impacting me personally, but rather how I see it changing the world around us. I'm going to respond, after I make it clear to him that one of the most important changes that I have experienced is the health danger in travelling that has kept me from visiting him.

I believe that the majority of those reading this article have been mostly inconvenienced in their daily routines rather than are suffering any major discomforts due to the pandemic. We are fortunate to have a reliable support network available when and where we need it.

But then there are those who, through no fault of their own, find themselves

alone and isolated, facing increasing difficulty in meeting their most basic needs. Lacking are the emotional support and social connectivity; because separation and seclusion are being promoted and encouraged by our health care authorities as the best way to avoid becoming a victim of Covid-19 and its variants. Ironically, the toll the virus has taken on our seniors, particularly those living in the long term care homes that continue to experience outbreak after outbreak, has shone a bright spotlight on the negative effect the disease has had on the quality of life of our senior population, mentally, physically and emotionally. Awareness of the impact of the pandemic has been raised to the highest level ever—we must never again forget the scale of the decimation this pandemic has caused to the most vulnerable people in our community. We must do all we can to avoid that "out of sight, out of mind" syndrome that can easily develop and dissuade us as we eventually beat this virus and return to some semblance of normalcy.

Here at JSA, our Peer Support Services recognised first hand that the isolation policies of our Government were exacerbating the loneliness and despair that comes with being socially disconnected. We immediately increased what was a one hour a week visit to multiple weekly telephone calls to our clients. When it became impossible and unlawful to continue our in person volunteer training programs, our resourceful trainer and coordinator, Grace Hann and Charles Leibovitch,

went to work and developed an online training program that has proven to be highly successful. We were able to graduate 40 new volunteers in 2021. The demand for more volunteer training required us to search for someone qualified not only to teach but to be able, through a full understanding of what JSA stands for, instill our values into all our new recruits. Lady luck smiled on us and rewarded us with a perfect candidate to fit the bill in the person of Andrea Krombein. We couldn't be happier with this outstanding addition to our team.

Servicing those who can most benefit from the peer support services that we at JSA offer is one side of the equation at which we do very well and continue to improve. The other side is locating those isolated and lonely seniors whose situation makes them virtually invisible. Try to imagine yourselves, dear readers, as being invisible in a sea of humanity unable to be seen or heard, languishing alone with little or no social contact. These unfortunate folks feel the despair of abandonment, disconnected from their community and left adrift waiting for the end of their lives.

We as a community are responsive to those who reach out for help in many areas, but what about those from whom we neither see nor hear? What can we, each and every one of us, do in order to discover them and offer them the emotional support they crave through

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# DEALING WITH SURGERY AND POST-OP RECOVERY IN YOUR 90S

Written by Serge Haber



## SERGE HABER'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,  
Several days ago I received a phone call from Dolores Lubber, our editor-in-chief, suggesting that my experience with hip replacement surgery might be of interest and a source of information for many senior individuals who have to make similar decisions in regards to their own life. Four years ago I started suffering from pain in my right hip. I should have done something about it at that time but the pain was bearable and I let it go.

Fifteen years ago I had had an operation on my left hip and the memories of those days seemed quite fresh in my mind. I remember looking from my room in the Richmond Hospital and watching the enormous amount of snow on the roofs of the lower floors. How coincidental that I'm again looking at snow from my window.

I had to make a decision because, for the last three years, I was in extreme pain and living on six maximum-dose Tylenol daily, which was helping me only up to a certain point. The pain limited my movements but I made sure that I walked at least one kilometer a day.

The question came up, what do I do? Have an operation at age 93 that could endanger my life, or continue in the same way with the pain and Tylenol, which eventually would kill my kidneys and cause more problems. So I began to consider an operation. The reality was that the waiting time for an operation such as mine, was a minimum of 3-4

years. What... am I going to have an operation at 98? So I called my Doctor and friend. I said, "Doctor, put yourself in my shoes, what would you do?" His answer was, "Look Serge, it depends on what quality of life you want to have. Do you want to continue suffering then go ahead, but if you really want to operate, let me see what I can do."

Dr. Kendall was asked to check what the possibilities were to advance the operation to more or less immediately. Dr. Kendall was kind, understood my age and my problem, and after a personal visit, he decided that he would make space for me to proceed with the hip replacement operation.

There is no question in my mind that my attitude and mental state helped me.

Finally, on October 26th I was operated on at the Richmond Hospital. My stay in the hospital was supposed to be three days, instead, upon my insistence, it was seven days. I had a miserable experience with one of the nurses in the middle of the night—I truly felt that my life was in danger. It was Halloween night, maybe she was angry because she had to work. Her resentment and anger was directed at me. I followed it up by reporting the incident with the nurse to

her superiors. After seven days I came home, and the Doctor told me to get myself someone to be with me for the first night, then I would be okay. If I had not taken those words seriously, I probably would not be able to dictate this article at this moment. My luck came when speaking to Larry Shapiro, our Co-President, he suggested that I hire Ruby Boychuk, an experienced JSA Peer Support volunteer, 80 years of age, and a retired nurse. Of no small consequence is the fact that I had the physical and emotional support of my beloved lady friend Sheila. And the support of my daughter Wanda who visited here for three weeks, and a visit from my son, his wife, my granddaughter and her husband and my newest great grandson Oliver.

I frankly must admit, if I didn't have Ruby coming every night at 9:30 p.m., sleeping at my place and going at noon next day, I don't think I would be alive today. She is a wonderful friend, nurse and supporter. Every time I was awake during the night using the facilities, she would be up and watching how I am doing. God bless her! But I had some additional support because the Vancouver Coastal Health assigned a team of nurses, an Occupational Therapist and a Rehabilitation Assistant, who, for the next month and a half, came to me every second day, did

**Continued on page 8...**



# SEARCH OUT THOSE SENIORS WHO NEED OUR ASSISTANCE

...Continued from Page 6.

our dedicated and well-trained senior volunteers?

If each and every one of us, through a phone call to an acquaintance with whom we have lost contact over the years, could find one of these lonely souls and help them reconnect by simply offering JSA Peer Senior Services as a way of alleviating their loneliness, we will have made someone happier and more hopeful of a more fulfilling quality of life. A very small effort can produce enormous results; let us all make that effort.

Just so you know, the 40 new volunteers who graduated in 2021 are ready and willing to serve all those seniors wishing

to avail themselves of the services we are able to offer, thanks to all of our kind and generous supporters. Let's bring dignity back into the lives of those in our community whose golden years have lost their lustre because of becoming disconnected from a community that is willing and able to help. It is said that necessity is the mother of all invention. Let us then recognize the necessity of discovering

**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.

and helping that currently invisible segment of our community.

So let's all resolve to make an effort to uncover those unfortunates who are faceless and voiceless and bring them out of their darkness and silence into the welcoming light of empathetic support. I promise that the wonderful feeling you will get from helping someone will be very rewarding.

Until the next issue, stay healthy and be 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.

# DEALING WITH SURGERY AND POST-OP RECOVERY IN YOUR 90S

...Continued from Page 7.

exercises and supported me mentally. This was something new which I did not have fifteen years ago. It's a blessing, it is remarkable that the Vancouver Coastal Health is able to provide this kind of support to patients in need.

I am finally making tremendous progress, slowly but surely I started walking with a four-wheel walker, advanced to a cane and hopefully by the end of January I will be totally recovered.

Should I have made that decision at age 93? It is easy to say it now. I am alive and I am well. But I have something in my favour—yes, I am really 93, but in my mind, I am in my forties. Frankly, with the exception of the hip problem, I feel in my early seventies. There is no question in my mind that my attitude and mental state helped me with the decision to go ahead and my recovery to date.

I am telling you this story because there are many of you out there that may be in similar situations and make similar

decisions. I hope you make the right decision and I hope and pray for you, for good luck in whatever decision you make.

God Bless you,

**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.

Sponsored by LEAH & KEN LEVITT

# LIVING ON THE EDGE: STREET PEOPLE

Written by Sheila Delany

Writing on the edge is well and good (whatever it may mean); living on the edge not so much. I see a few people living on the edge in my neighborhood; the regulars are Jim, Larry and Stefan. Jim and Larry beg at their regular spots as often as health and weather permit, but aren't homeless; Stefan, homeless, doesn't beg. My residential street is off a busy small-shop thoroughfare: cars and pedestrians Chinese, Indian (Muslim and Hindu), Filipino/a, Latino/a, various European faces and accents, though fewer than when I moved in 33 years ago. The MacDonald's on the corner was replaced by Dairy Queen, the Legion hall by Tim's, St Vincent de Paul by an MCC thrift shop. Dozens of tiny cheap-clothing stores have come and gone; in their stead new dosa, dim sum or pho spots have sprung up. It was only a few years ago that homeless and beggars appeared.

Not everyone agrees about how to treat them. Giving money is the obvious thing, and many people do. Giving food is another option: a soup or sandwich bought to give, or the half of your Indian or Vietnamese dinner you couldn't finish, the homemade bread your neighbor gave you, etc. Some people don't give: they are in principle opposed to private charity, believing (not incorrectly) that it's a government's job to look after its poor. Others opine that what matters most is acknowledgment of personhood: a greeting, a direct look, a smile. (In case anyone's wondering, I

give food or money and, as below, have short conversations.)

Stefan, youngest of the three at about 40, with neatly tied-back black hair and beard, sits occasionally in various places: Subway, Starbucks a few blocks up, or the corner DQ, his presence indicated by a blue-tarp-covered shopping cart parked outside. It's loaded with neatly stacked items: a few pots, suitcases, boots. I think there's a subvisible economy in which such goods are circulated among the poor, bought for cheap or found and sold for a little less cheap. At the DQ, Stefan sits at the last table by the back door and big window where he can keep an eye on the cart. Often he sleeps, head on the table; sometimes I leave food there. Once I asked where he goes when not at the DQ. "Anywhere", he said laughing. He's polite, even somewhat courtly in manner. I saw him shirtless in a nearby park last summer and was surprised at how fit he looked. Occasionally another person, man or woman, joins him at his usual table. He flirts a bit: "Lookin' good, girl" is the usual hello.

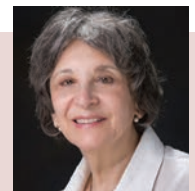
The other two regulars are older. Jim, maybe 50, pale and thin, sits outside the Buy-Low next to the curb, with a hat for money. He used to have a room on Fraser but there was a fire a few years ago, the landlord had no insurance, Jim had to move, the projected class-action suit came to nothing. His daughter, Jasmine, a pretty, overweight girl in nurse's training, lives with him; she joined him once or twice as he sat. He's

often sick, uses a cane, he sometimes sits shivering under an umbrella. Recently he was absent for a month or more; then Jasmine was there with a friend whom she introduced as her wife, Eli. She said that Jim had been run over by a car that mounted the sidewalk; he had a lot of broken bones. An accident: the car skidded in the snow.

Larry, 60 (he's not shy about talking about himself) is thin, white-haired, cheerful, diabetic. He sits on a plastic box in front of Maxim's Chinese bakery blowing random notes on a harmonica. He agrees he'd get more money in the hat if he learned a tune. He has a car parked around the corner and recently gave someone a jumpstart. People often stop to chat with him. "Thank you, darlin', god bless" is his usual goodbye. He mentions Jim's accident. I say I hope there's money in it for Jim; "It'll all go to the dealer", Larry replies.

I asked all three whether they prefer food or money. No contest: Money for sure! I observe that the food someone leaves is worth much more than the loonie they might give. But Larry wants to buy food he really likes (pizza from across the street); Jim says he'd never spend that much on a meal anyway and has to feed his daughter; Stefan mentions possible digestive consequences. Now Jim is back but Larry's missing—hope he's OK.

**Sheila Delany** is Professor Emerita of English at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia and the author of *Medieval Literary Politics*, among other books. She now writes for SFURA, the online publication of SFU Retirees Association.





# THE BULLETIN BOARD

## COMMUNITY MEETINGS, CONFERENCES AND WEBINARS CONCERNING SENIORS' ISSUES

Written by Shanie Levin

### COSCO CONFERENCE: LIVING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A SENIORS' STRATEGY

#### THE FIRST DAY

The Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO), together with cosponsors, BC Retired Teachers Association, BC Government and Service Employees Union, BC Retired Government Employees Association, and New Horizons for Seniors Program, presented *Living in the 21st Century: A Seniors' Strategy* virtually on September 27th and 28th. Garnet Grosjean did a marvellous job as conference facilitator throughout the two day event. The participants were welcomed by Sheila Pither, president of COSCO, Deborah Sparrow from the Musqueam Nation, and Malcolm Brodie, mayor of Richmond.

The first keynote speaker was David Eby, Attorney General of BC and Minister responsible for Housing. Minister Eby outlined the government's plans for increasing affordable and rental housing. They have increased the rental supplements through the SAFER program, as well as providing help to retrofit homes to accommodate the ability of seniors to remain in their own homes.

Then keynote speaker Isobel Mackenzie, Seniors Advocate, spoke about "Hope and Opportunity in a Post Covid World". Most seniors in BC continue to live independently well into their eighties.

The issues of concern are: ageism, poverty, isolation/loneliness, resources to stay in your own home, shifting labour market in health care, and long term care issues (exacerbated by COVID). Mackenzie feels there is strong public support for change.

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**What can we do?  
Mobilize, advocate,  
promote, and  
recognize our  
contribution. ”**

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There was a panel discussion of the Rights of Older Adults presented by Alison Leaney, BC Public Guardian and Trustee; Sherry Baker, Community Response Networks; Connie Newman, Canadian Deprescribing Network; and Andy Yan, Urban Studies, Simon Fraser University. They focussed on: What you need to know: rights, responsibilities and roles under BC's adult guardianship laws; preventing and dealing with elder abuse; championing medication safety; and seniors' housing needs.

Adrian Dix, Minister of Health gave a short introduction. Mable Elmore, MLA and Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors Services and Long Term Care,

highlighted issues in long term care as well as the need for development of more home support and care for the caregivers. She hopes to build more community engagement through collaboration with seniors' organizations.

A panel discussion followed: Jim Sinclair, chair of the Fraser Health Authority, spoke about the "Challenges in providing community health care to older adults." Andrew Wister, Director of the Gerontology Research Centre, SFU, spoke of "Social isolation among older adults due to the pandemic." Jay Chalke, BC Ombudsperson, focussed on "Status of Ombudsperson recommendations for seniors care." Peggy Edwards, Consultant and Writer on Healthy Aging, spoke on "Reimagining healthy aging: where to from here?"

#### THE SECOND DAY

Shirley Bond, Interim Leader of the Opposition, raised the issues of isolation, the need for more home help, housing and elder abuse. There are many challenges and gaps in the system. Seniors are a diverse group, therefore they must be involved in the planning, including the different needs of rural vs urban seniors.

Kasari Govender, BC Commissioner of Human Rights, focussed on the Human Rights of older adults. She pointed out the difficulties brought to light by the pandemic. We need conversations about racism and ageism. National Strategies for Living in the 21st Century were addressed by Andrew Sixsmith, of SFU's STAR Institute, who spoke on "Seniors and Technology." Linda Fawcus, Founder of Gluu Society ([www.gluusociety.org](http://www.gluusociety.org)), spoke about "Helping older adults stay connected." Sixsmith emphasized that we are living in a digital age and everyone must adapt. Many seniors have already

done so. The Age Well network can help with this. Two-thirds of seniors use the Internet daily and this percentage will increase. The Gluu Society offers free technology training to both organizations and individuals. As many seniors fear technology, Gluu members assist in building seniors' confidence.

The topic of Long Term Care and Ageism was approached by Pat Armstrong, Professor Emeritus, York University. She spoke on "Guidelines for changing long-term care in a positive direction." Armstrong outlined the important issues in long-term care: location, size of facility,

standards regarding staffing and training, accountability, reports and regular inspections, food, housekeeping and clothing. There should be no contracting out of services, nor should profit be a factor. Martine Lagace, University of Ottawa and LIFE Research Institute, dealt with "Ageism". Lagace focussed on the stereotypes of seniors that lead to the prejudice of ageism. These must be dealt with through education.

Peggy Edwards closed the conference with a summary, titled "What do we hear?" A few speakers mentioned a quote from Mark Twain: "Age is an

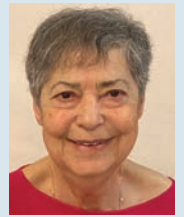
issue of mind over matter; if you don't mind, it doesn't matter." What can we do? Mobilize, advocate, promote, and recognize our contribution.

<http://www.coscoconference2021.com/>



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

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



## THE FOOD4THOUGHT SENIORS PROJECT

Written by Eric Schwartz

**D**o you have space for a garden? Do you wish to share in fresh garden vegetables and the companionship of friendly gardeners? Did you enjoy gardening?

**The Food4Thought Seniors project pairs seniors living alone in homes with volunteer gardeners who live in apartments.**

For three years the Food4Thought garden project has grown over the West Side of the city. Last year 50

apartment dwellers were matched with homeowners with land. This season, we are expanding to offer this connection to seniors with land, and an interest in sharing space and produce.

The volunteer does the preparing, planting, maintenance, and shares the organic produce with the homeowner. The senior agrees to have a volunteer gardening in their yard a minimum of twice a week. The project encourages social and community connections. The homeowner can be involved in planting, watering, and harvesting, or take a less hands on approach and simply enjoy the growing, interactions with the gardeners and sharing of vegetables and herbs.

One senior who shared her garden last year said, "I agreed to share my backyard because there was lots of unused space. I didn't realize how much I would enjoy seeing the vegetables grow

and getting to know my gardeners - they did all the work, and I got to eat fresh vegetables all summer!"

All gardeners are interviewed, have criminal record checks. Most are younger folk who rent, and do not have access to land, yet want to grow healthy food. Please consider offering some space, it can be as little as 10'x10'. Another way to get involved is to share your tools! Do you have an extra hose, or nozzle, or rake, or trowel, or wheelbarrow? We will distribute them to those with land but not supplies.

If you believe in this local community building project, we are accepting donations of gardening tools and funds to support purchasing compost, transport, garden bed construction, etc.

**Please contact Eric at 604-724-7589**  
<https://garden4food4thought.com/>



**Eric Schwartz** - A Friendly Home Visitor since 2015, Eric enjoys outings with seniors with limited mobility.







# Triumphs and Trials Using Technology

## SOCIAL ISOLATION AMONG OLDER ADULTS

Written by Shanie Levin



At the Fall Symposium of Jewish Seniors Alliance on November 21st, **Dr. Kristen Haase**, Assistant Professor of Applied Science/ School of Nursing, at University of British Columbia, and **Dr. Megan O'Connell**, Professor of Geriatric Psychology, at the University of Saskatchewan, presented their findings in the study of “Social Isolation among Older Adults” during the pandemic. Drs. Haase and O'Connell were welcomed by **Gyda Chud**, Co-President of JSA who spoke of the key pillars of JSA: 1. **Outreach**—to seniors in the community. 2. **Education**—We can learn from their results. 3. **Peer Support**—Projects to help with loneliness and isolation.

Dr. Haase explained that they wanted to study socialization during the pandemic and how the inability to interact in person impacted seniors. She mentioned that two scientific journals, *The Lancet* and *JAMA*, had commented on the detrimental effect of isolation on seniors. They wanted to look at what is the

impact of social isolation and what can be done to alleviate it.

There is empirical evidence that social isolation impacts mental, physical and cognitive health. The pandemic has intensified these problems. Technology facilitates social connection. The idea was to use basic technology to train older adults to use these tools to lessen their isolation. Using the telephone and Zoom was embraced by many older adults, including those with some cognitive impairment.

They reached out to groups (including JSA) and individuals in B.C. and Saskatchewan for participants. Four hundred individuals and forty-one seniors groups were involved in the study. Some of the questions were: How did they change their programs? How did they maintain social connections? Some groups opted to meet outdoors. The advent of the vaccine helped to alleviate some fears. One of the findings was that introverted and rural people and those who had family nearby

fared better than the more extraverted. Community groups rose to the challenge and introduced new technology to their members. They provided training, as well as keeping in touch with frail members. Broad-band access in rural areas is problematic, so these groups had to make major use of the telephone. A 1-800 line was purchased to facilitate contact with rural areas. These types of disparities (rural vs urban) were highlighted by the pandemic.

A few community groups closed, but many rose to the occasion by staying in regular contact, providing iPads to clients and helping them to learn how to use them. Drs. Haase and O'Connell then turned to the audience for any questions and information that would help with their research.

One of the questions was: How do we find the truly isolated? We usually rely on people to self-identify if they are in need. **Larry Shapiro** pointed out that in the United Kingdom, they use the postal service to check on isolated individuals. Another issue raised was, do we need to repeat the tech training and in the future should we continue with a hybrid model of services. This would involve in-person events plus a Zoom possibility. Many older adults are still fearful and need help to re-enter society. Funding will be needed to facilitate hybrid models of programs. Hybrid models also help to include the ill and the disabled. **Tammi Belfer** thanked the speakers for helping to improve the lives of older adults.



Dr. Kristen Haase



Dr. Megan O'Connell

# REVIEW: JSA SNIDER FOUNDATION EMPOWERMENT SERIES

## INSPIRED BY STORY AND SONG

Written by Tamara Frankel

**I**nspired by Story and Song: This was the topic of the Empowerment series offered by JSA, in partnership with Louis Brier. **Gyda Chud** welcomed the 45 Zoom participants, as well as the 35 Louis Brier residents, who enjoyed **Shanie Levin's** stories and **Myrna Rabinowitz's** singing.

Myrna opened with a Hanukkah song in Yiddish *Drei Zich Dreidele* (*Spin Yourself Dreidel*), which was followed by Shanie reading a charming *Shalom Aleichem* story *Hanukkah Gelt* (*Hanukkah Money*). Motl and his brother take part in the beloved customs of a favorite holiday: the lighting of the Hanukkah menorah, the traditional eating of potato latkes, playing dreidel, and the gift of Hanukkah money.

In the course of the program Myrna delighted the audience with songs in Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino. She sang *Oh Hanukkah*, a song in Ladino about eight candles, as well as more personal songs—one that she wrote on the occasion of her grandson's birth, as well as a song for her father. She offered her audience a special treat by singing the classic and sentimental Yiddish song by the Barry Sisters from the 1950s *Wie Nemt Men a Bissele Mazel* (*Where can you get a little luck*).

Shanie chose a story by Abraham Karpinowitz titled *Jewish Money*, from a book called *Vilna my Vilna*. Karpinowitz was known for his detailed and vivid descriptions of the city of Vilna and the

odd characters who lived there.

*The Spice Box* is an anthology of Canadian Jewish Writers. Shanie read an illuminating story written in 1968 by Larry Zolf who was well known as a CBC personality and writer for the popular program *This Hour has 7 Days*. The story, *Boil Me No Melting Pot, Dream Me No Dreams*, deals with the difference between the American and Canadian immigrant experience.

*Preposterous Papa*, the final story read by Shanie, was a heartwarming and delightful excerpt from a book by Lewis Meyer. Meyer's father grew up in a small town in Oklahoma with very few Jewish families. Unable to commute to the synagogue in the larger city, his father bought a house and converted it into a chapel,



Myrna Rabinowitz and Shanie Levin

enabling the few Jewish families in nearby towns to socialize and pray on high holidays. This story exemplifies the soulful and communal spirit of Judaism. Myrna ended the program with an upbeat song in Yiddish, *We are all Brothers and Sisters*.

**Nathalie Jacobs** of Louis Brier thanked the performers and expressed her wish to partner with JSA in the future.

### Tamara Frankel

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



Be Inspired

JSA Snider Foundation  
Virtual Empowerment Series 2022

**RETIRED, REWIRED, AND INSPIRED!**

SAVE THE DATE!

TUESDAY, APRIL 26TH AT 11:00 A.M. ON ZOOM

Cospponsored by Jewish Family Services (JFS)





# PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST

## Ben Levinson: An Artistic Architect

Written by Kenneth Levitt

**L**eah and I lived in Victoria from 1967-1972. During those years we became and remain close friends with Carla and Ben Levinson. I was fully aware of Ben's work as an architect, but it was some time before I became aware of his passion as an artist.

Ben was born in Medicine Hat, Alberta. At age 8, his parents enrolled him in an art class. He was active in many sports including becoming a Queen Scout and being a member of B'nai B'rith Youth Organization. He entered architectural school at the University of Manitoba where classes included studies in sculpture, interior design, graphic design and sketching.

Ben met Carla Israels at UM in 1964. Ben and Carla were married prior to his graduation in 1966. He had many job offers across Canada but decided to take an offer from Victoria where they made their home. The first job Ben had in Victoria was to do design work and

preliminary drawing for University of Victoria projects. From 1972-1980 Ben was a partner in a thriving architectural company working on apartments and various housing initiatives all over Vancouver Island.

From 1980 until his retirement in 2010, Ben had his own practice and his work included provincial and municipal government office renovations, designing fire halls, city halls and hospitals. Ben is a Member for Life of the Architectural Institute of BC and a Life Member of the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada.

Since his adolescent years, Ben would doodle in his school note books. When he was on a Boy Scout hiking trip, he would sketch the hike and trails they took. In his own architectural practice he would sketch the structure to be built so the client could better understand what was to be built rather than looking at blueprints. Also, in his practice he preferred to sketch out the plan and



have a technician transfer or modify the plans on the computer.

Ben and Carla loved to travel. Sketching became an integral part of their travels. Ben would sit on the patio or look out a window and sketch whatever he could see. Ben has 40 sketch books, each with 30 sketches for a total of 1200 sketches representing their trips. Arriving at a destination, the first thing they would do is to search out all the museums and art galleries. Ben's favourite artists include Vincent Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, Wassily Kandinsky, Claude Monet, Amedeo Modigliani, Jozef Israels, and Marc Chagall.

As Ben noted, "When I retired, I spent time sketching and did not do any architecture. I went from being a hobby artist when working as an architect to being a professional artist when I retired."

His work can be found in many homes across Canada. He created a rendering of Temple Emanuel Synagogue in Victoria as part of a fundraiser for the synagogue's restoration. For the re-dedication the drawing was presented to Premiers, the Prime Minister, and dignitaries by the board of the synagogue in 1982. A copy of this work is hanging in the Jewish Senior Alliance office.

There have been many exhibits of Ben's work including Wings of Peace Gallery and Gallery 1248 in Victoria and in the Amati Art Gallery in Vancouver. Two years later in 2013 Ben published his memoirs, *Small Town Architect*. Most recently, in 2018, Ben had an exhibition of his synagogue drawings from around the world. His artistic technique: he starts with a blank sheet and an ink pen. He draws the sketch in ink and never erases. He adds watercolours free hand.

The paintings shown in *Senior Line* represent the authentic, creative Ben Bryce Levinson. There is a wonderful

peace and tranquility in Ben's artwork. One rendering of Victoria's Inner Harbour was a view from Ben and Carla's condo that overlooks the Inner Harbour. The painting captures a moment in spring when a tree is in full blossom and the earth re-awakens from dormant winter. Locals can be seen enjoying the ambience and one cannot but smile while gazing at this most joyful painting.

It is my singular pleasure to be longtime friends with Carla and Ben

and to be an admirer of the original works of the artist, Ben Levinson.

**Ben Levinson can be contacted at: [benlevinson@telus.net](mailto:benlevinson@telus.net).**



**Ken Levitt** is Past-President of JSA and served as Administrator of Louis Brier Home and Hospital from 1985-2002. He has a background in recreation, corrections, child welfare and services to seniors.



*Inner Harbour View from our Balcony*



# SENIORS AT THE MOVIES

Written by Dolores Luber



## QUEEN BEES

2021



There will always be a place in the world for older-skewing movies as pleasant as *Queen Bees*, a light-weight but likable comedy set primarily in a retirement community, Pine Grove,

where close friendships are forged—sometimes reluctantly, sometimes immediately—and autumnal romance can blossom. Ellen Burstyn and James Caan head an unusually strong cast of familiar faces with potent chemistry between them. Burstyn plays Helen who is forced to move out of her lovely home by circumstances. Director Michael Lembeck and scripter Donald Martin avoid most of the usual booby traps, emphasizing the rueful self-awareness of those Pine Grove residents who want to enjoy their twilight years to the fullest. This is a gentle romantic comedy. Enjoy!



## DON'T LOOK UP

2021



This is a brash, absurdist satire about the incapability of our political and media classes to respond appropriately to impending, world-ending disaster. Throughout its 2

hour, 25 minute runtime, writers Adam McKay and Davie Sirota repeated and angrily skewer the personalities and the structures that help prevent our status-infatuated, profit-obsessed society from taking climate change seriously. It does this whilst being extremely funny and making me, personally, very upset! It is offensive and means to be so. “There is a reason every disaster movie starts with the government ignoring a scientist,” says Peter Gleick, winner of the Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization. When you degrade, ignore, and dismiss the warnings of science you threaten all of us.” Yes, sir! Watch it and be angry.



## THE POWER OF THE DOG

2021



In Jane Campion’s staggering take on the western, a cruel cowboy meets his surprising match. This drama tells a story that is subdued and brutal. It is 1925. The acting is incredible, the score is hauntingly beautiful, and the cinematography captures the isolation and harshness of the landscape and the characters; the Burbank brothers, Phil (Benedict Cumberbatch), the masculine and abrasive rancher and George (Jesse Plemons), the more reserved and emotionally attached of the two. For decades, Phil has been raising cattle on his family’s Montana ranch, a parched expanse ringed by jagged mountains. Phil and his brother George have kept the cowboy ethos alive at the ranch their parents gave them. They break horses and corral cattle in a world of rough men, but at night, they retreat to their large, sepulchral Eastern-style house with its carpets, filled bookcases, waiting chess board and menagerie of animal heads lining the dark, wood-paneled walls. When George marries a widow, Rose (Kirsten Dunst) and moves her and her son, Peter (Kodi Smit-McPhee), to his family ranch, Phil starts to push back and mentally torment Rose and Peter. The plot is mostly hidden away until the final moments. You may have to read about the movie or watch it again. But don’t let that stop you from experiencing the loneliness, emotional subtleties and desperation of the characters. A stunning performance.



## PASSING

2021



Rebecca Hall has created a piercing drama starring Tessa Thompson and Ruth Negga as old friends navigating the colour line in 1920s New York. Exquisitely filmed in black and white, Irene Redfield, the restless heart of *Passing* has a beautiful dream of a life. She also has a handsome husband who’s a doctor, a pair of well-behaved children, an elegant townhouse and a maid to help keep the domestic churn in check. A childhood friend, Clare enters the dream, disturbing its peace

and threatening its careful illusions. Like Irene, Clare is a light-skinned African American living in Jim Crow America. Unlike Irene, Clare is living as white; “passing”. She has a wealthy, white husband John, who is oblivious to her history. He also—as he tells the startled Irene as Clare watches—hates Black people, unaware that he is speaking to one. Although Irene is the protagonist and the story is organized around her, the character’s complexities largely emerge in her relationship with Clare. This is a deceptively simple story of two women whose lives intersect in ways they don’t or can’t fully grasp. They are forced to exist in that not entirely friendly space, with its cruelties, appearances, ambiguities and hard, merciless truths. A breathtakingly beautiful film.

## FOREIGN FILMS

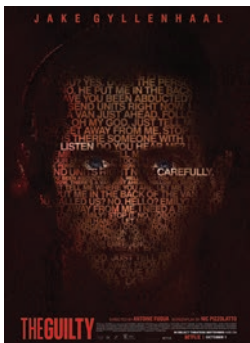


### THE GUILTY Danish Version - 2018



*The Guilty* is a crime thriller film written and directed by Gustav Möller, his debut film. The genesis of the film was a YouTube clip of a kidnapped woman calling an

emergency dispatcher while her kidnapper sat nearby. Möller was struck by how much an audio clip could convey on its own with no visual accompaniment. He did research at Danish dispatch centers. The characters of the movie emerged from there, including the idea of the main character being a police officer under investigation, who had been reassigned from the field to desk duty. Everything takes place in a drab, small dispatch center. It is riveting, the acting is superb, the unravelling of the situation fascinating and realistic. The movie was the Best Foreign Film Danish submission to the 91st Academy Awards, making the shortlist. A masterpiece.



### THE GUILTY American Version - 2021



Jake Gyllenhaal and Ethan Hawke star in the American version of *The Guilty*. Beautifully done. No major changes.

## HOLOCAUST/ WORLD WAR II



### ANOTHER MOTHER'S SON 2017



This is a moving drama, based on a true story, which takes place during the Nazi occupation of British territory, the Channel Islands. Louisa

Gould (Jenny Seagrove), a Jersey woman, shelters a fugitive Russian POW slave-worker, nicknamed Bill (Julian Kostov). There is a suggestion that Louisa shelters Bill as a quasi-son figure, after her own son is killed in the war. The depiction of life on the island under the Nazis, with its dilemmas of resistance and collaboration ring true. She is a true heroine as her fellow islanders suffer under the occupation.

## WATCH WITH THE GRANDKIDS



### CRUELLA 2021



Did you ever wonder how Cruella De Vil, the vampy fiend from Disney’s *101 Dalmatians* became evil enough to want to kill puppies and skin them for fur coats? You didn’t? Ah, well—there’s a movie about it. Estella is a

young and clever grifter who’s determined to make a name for herself in the fashion world. She soon meets a pair of thieves who appreciate her appetite for mischief. Estella befriends fashion legend Baroness von Hellman, she embraces her wicked side to become the raucous and revenge-bent Cruella. There’s no denying that *Cruella* is stylish and kinetic, with a nasty edge that is unusual for a Disney live-action feature. The plot is confusing, exhausting and frustratingly inert, considering how hard it works to assure you that it’s thrilling and cheeky. But I hung in there and watched the whole 2 hours and 14 minutes of it because of the acrobatic camerawork, the stellar performances by Emma Stone and Emma Thompson, and the parade of eye-popping costumes. Give it a chance.



# PROFILE: DOCUMENTARIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Written by Dolores Luber

One of the best jobs I have as editor of *Senior Line* is watching all the movies, television series and documentaries. The worst part is having to eliminate many of them because of space constraint. I just could not make these six documentaries disappear.

## JUST AS I AM

2021 ★★★★★

Evan Beloff's documentary on Montreal's Shira Choir is a musical testimony to togetherness. This is a little film with a big heart. It follows the lives of several members of the Shira Choir, comprised of an exceptional group of singers with special needs, and the choirmaster, Daniel Benlolo, who unites them, in a touching journey through sorrow and joy, life and death, during a global pandemic. Choir members and their families rehearsed weekly online. What unfolds is an extraordinary testament to perseverance and musical unity as they all share their weekly fears, hopes, songs and dreams. *Just as I Am* reveals intimate snapshots of the lives of the choir members, as they deal with their own set of intellectual and physical challenges. It highlights choirmaster



Just as I Am

Daniel Benlolo and his unique charismatic vision for enabling members to fully participate in society and to feel a sense of communal belonging and enhanced self-esteem. Available on CBC GEM.

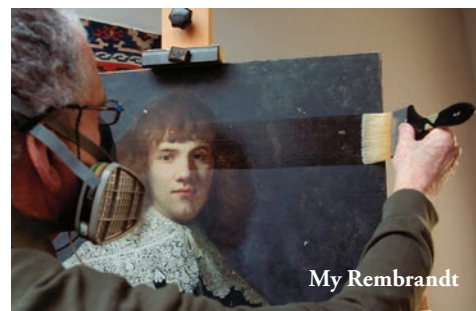


Marianne & Leonard

## MARIANNE & LEONARD: WORDS OF LOVE

2019 ★★★★★

This is a story of enduring love between Leonard Cohen and his Norwegian muse, Marianne Ihlen. Filmmaker Nick Broomfield chronicles their relationship, from the early days in Greece to how their love evolved when Leonard became a successful musician. Marianne lived with Cohen in the mid-1960s on the Greek island Hydra, where they met. She eventually traveled to join him in Montreal and New York. She famously inspired many of his songs, including *Bird on the Wire*, and of course, there is *So Long Marianne*. I loved the sun-drenched home movie footage from Hydra showing Ihlen on a boat, golden and gleaming in what looks like a paradise. All is not nirvana, but the film is a pleasure to experience. Leonard was a mensch in my opinion! Come to your own conclusions. Available on Netflix.



My Rembrandt

## MY REMBRANDT

2019 ★★★★★

This film is about those who live with masterpieces, in particular works of Rembrandt, the ultimate 17th-century Dutch Golden Age master, and their intense, maniacal feelings about the works of art on the wall at home or at the museum. Who exactly are the buyers of some of these historically important artworks? The director Oeke Hoogendijk has convinced several top collectors, who tend to be extremely private, to allow us into their fabulous homes, and be willing to discuss their beloved acquisitions. The stories of these six collectors reveal not only a love of Rembrandt's paintings, but also their obsessions, power, greed and competitiveness. We have incredible access to a world of extreme wealth and privilege. *My Rembrandt* is dotted with anecdotes that snowball into lively art-world clashes of ego—I loved every second of it. Available on Prime Video.

## COLLECTIVE

2019 ★★★★★

*Collective* is a documentary about what happened after a horrendous fire at Bucharest's *Colectiv* nightclub in 2015 which killed 64 people. It wasn't simply official laxity about inspecting fire exits and building materials; the majority died later, not of their injuries but of hospital infections. A heroically tough investigation led by Cătălin Tolontan, a reporter at *Gazeta Sporturilor*, showed

that the disinfectant supplied to state hospitals was useless due to being secretly diluted. The resulting surplus of taxpayers' money lined the pockets of certain individuals. Tolontan discovered it was just part of Romania's widespread corruption and gangsterism. The cynicism and indifference to suffering is truly horrible, and a kind of insidious evil rises from the screen—and also a terrible sadness. The film could be seen as a warning to us and our federal and provincial health systems. The film is gripping, insightful and shockingly powerful. Available on Netflix.



## TURNING POINT: 9/11 AND THE WAR ON TERROR 2021 ★★★★★

This hard-hitting five-part docuseries is hard to watch. We know what happened. We know how many people died and how they died. We hear flight attendants trying to understand what is happening. We hear the terrorists telling people to “Just stay quiet and we’ll be okay.” It is an intensely foreboding story that unfolds here. The viewer, seeing it pieced together like this, in the form of audio recordings, fresh video clips, and new interviews, experiences it again as if it is the first time. This is the backstory of that awful day. A day which altered the course of US history. Watch it; but not before bedtime. Available on Netflix.

# WHERE TO STREAM MOVIES AND TELEVISION

Thanks to Bob Markin, I can now share with you some excellent streaming sources of movies, television series and documentaries:

**CHAIFLICKS** at <https://chaiflicks.com> and **IZZY** at <https://www.streamisrael.tv> are both outstanding, offering a large number of classic and recent Israeli and Jewish movies, in all genres, streaming on all platforms (computer, TV, Smartphone, iPad) and available for free trial and then monthly or yearly subscriptions, with the option of cancelation at any time.

**TUBITV** at <https://tubitv.com> is free and has a large number of outstanding films. Typing ‘Jewish’ into the search bar brought up 149 movies; ‘Israel’ had 144 entries, ‘Holocaust’ had 33 entries.

**NETFLIX** and **AMAZON PRIME** have dozens of entries when typing ‘Jewish’ into the search field. And don’t forget the **National Film Board of Canada (NFB)** at [www.nfb.ca/channels](http://www.nfb.ca/channels) with a free, amazing selection of films, animation, and documentaries.

## UNTOLD: CAITLYN JENNER 2021 ★★★★★

At the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal (I was there), a little-known American athlete rocketed to international fame by winning the gold medal in the decathlon, an event traditionally considered to represent the “greatest athlete in the world.” Caitlyn Jenner (then competing under her name given at birth, Bruce Jenner, which is used contextually throughout the documentary) quickly became a star, and it’s a spotlight that she would rarely cede over the coming decades. This documentary rewinds the story

to the beginning. It is sensitive, honest and sincere in showing the evolution of her struggle as a transgendered woman. There is no sex and no violence; just one person’s struggle to live the life she was meant to live in the appropriate body. Available on Netflix.





# IN THE SPOTLIGHT FIVE GREAT SPORTS MOVIES

Written by Kenneth Levitt



## THE BABE RUTH STORY 1948

Living in Newton during the 1940's meant a trip to New Westminster to see *The Babe Ruth Story*. Intrigued by the movie, from that moment on Babe Ruth became my hero. William Bendix portrayed Ruth well despite a badly-written script. Other actors

of note were Charles Bickford and Claire Trevor. The movie alleges to portray a real person but portrays Ruth as child-like, grossly unsophisticated, semi-literate and boorish. But Ruth is the favourite of his juvenile fans. There are fictional scenes that contributed to the making of this American Icon; Ruth walks by an ill boy sitting in his father's care and miraculously cures him; Ruth visits a sick child in hospital whose illness is cured. The timing of the production was problematic because Ruth was dying from cancer. There was pressure to finish the film. He died in August, 1948, at the age of 55. The movie is more fiction than fact. If you wish to know more about Ruth and his baseball legacy, seek out other sources. I suggest Ken Burns' video series, *Baseball: The 4th Inning: A National Heirloom*. Of the five books about Babe Ruth that I have read, the most appealing biography was *The Big Fella* written by Jane Leavy, published in 2018.

### Trivia

Ruth hit a record 60 homeruns in 1927 as a New York Yankee. That record stood for 34 years. He still holds records as a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox 1916-1919. *The Babe Ruth Story* is available on Turner Classic Movies and on YouTube.



## THE HUSTLER 1961

If you are a fan of Paul Newman, Jackie Gleason and George C. Scott you will want to see this movie. The movie is about the seedy world of pool and the people who are involved in it. The movie received 8 Academy Award nominations and won in two, Best

Art Direction in Black and White and Best Cinematography in Black and White. Newman plays 'Fast' Eddie Fenson, a small-time pool hustler who believes he can beat one of the world's best pool players, 'Minnesota Fats' played by Gleason, a hustler at the top of his game. He challenges Minnesota Fats. Eddie's unscrupulous manager, Bert, played by George C. Scott, stakes Fast Eddie who beats Fats who is forced to quit. When Bert requests his share of Eddie's winnings, Eddie refuses. Bert threatens Eddie and warns him never to enter a big-time pool hall again. End of story. *The Hustler* is a great study of human character; personal greed, the sleaze that can be involved in professional sports and the personalities who look to take advantage of others for their own personal gain. Newman's raw talent helped to spark his extraordinary career, which began with his starring role in *Exodus*.



**Trivia** The bartender in the movie is played by Jake LaMotta. Available on Prime Video or purchase on Amazon.

## CHARIOTS OF FIRE 1981

*Chariots of Fire* is set in post-World War I in England and culminates in the 1924 Summer Olympics in Paris. It has many elements that make up an award-winning movie: intrigue, real drama, superb acting and a non-fiction story to tell. The

story is focused on Harold Abrahams, a Jewish student at Cambridge who is dealing with anti-Semitism. It also centers on a Scottish athlete, Eric Liddell, who wishes to do missionary work in China. Abrahams and Liddell are sprinters who eventually compete against each other.



Abrahams is a good sprinter but needs to upgrade his skills, so he hires a professional trainer, Sam Mussabini, played by Ian Holm. Hiring a professional trainer was frowned upon by the Cambridge administration but Abrahams who sees this as subtle anti-Semitism is not discouraged. Liddell and Abrahams are selected to represent Britain in the 1924 Olympics. Abrahams loses in his first final, the 200 meter race but wins gold in the 100-metre race. Meanwhile Liddell wins gold in the 400-metre race. *Chariots of Fire* won four Academy Awards: Best Picture, Best Screenplay written directly for the Screen, Best Costume Design and Best Original Score.



**Trivia** LaMotta won the world Middleweight championship in 1949. The movie can be purchased on Amazon and it is streamed on 'Virgin TV Go.'

**Trivia** During the 1924 Olympics, Canada won four medals; three silver and one bronze. Johnny Weissmuller won three gold medals in swimming and would become the quintessential Tarzan in movies and played Jungle Jim in the television series. Available on Prime Video or purchase on Amazon.



## FIELD OF DREAMS 1989

"If you build it, he will come." If we heard a voice commanding us to do a certain undertaking, we might be in the need for some kind of mental health intervention. Not so! That is what makes *Field of Dreams* a feel-good movie. The story: Kinsella, a

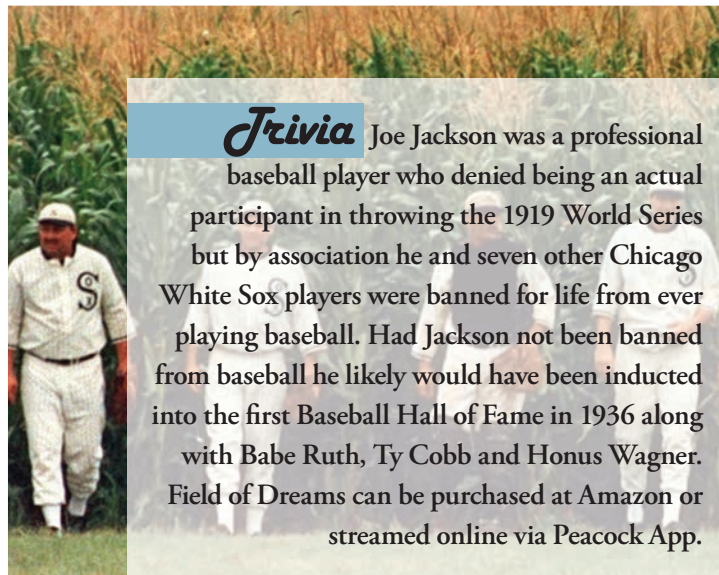
corn farmer in Iowa, has some unresolved issues with his late father. In his corn field he hears a voice saying, "If you build it, he will come". He decides to build a baseball diamond. Joe Jackson appears with members of the 1919 Chicago Black Sox players, Kinsella is not sure if they are ghosts or are real. Back at the baseball field the next day when all the players have disappeared, one player, a catcher, is on the field. The catcher is the answer to "If you build it, he will come." Kinsella recognizes his father, and they play catch. This is an emotional scene. Kinsella who never really knew his father, now has these moments together.



## RAGING BULL 1980

The last professional boxer to be taken seriously was Cassius Clay, better known as Muhammad Ali. Boxing was on the agenda for my family during my growing up years. We listened to the fights on the radio and later watched on our black and

white television. There were great boxers; Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson, Jersey Joe Walcott, Jack Dempsey and Rocky Marciano—and Jake LaMotta, portrayed by Robert De Niro in the 1980 movie, *Raging Bull*. The film co-stars Joe Pesci as LaMotta's brother Joey and was directed by Martin Scorsese, adapted from LaMotta's memoir, *Raging Bull*. Oscars went to De Niro as Best Actor and to Thelma Schoonmaker for Film Editing. *Raging Bull* is more a character study than a film about boxing. The movie follows LaMotta from his early days as a middle weight prize fighter until the days in Florida where he is the owner and headliner in his own nightclub. Robert De Niro makes a good movie great for his portrayal of LaMotta with all the fighter's nuances, his paranoia about his wife's unproven adultery, his need to prove himself in the ring and his obsession to be the best. He lived a tumultuous life. Jake La Motta died in 2017 at the age of 95.



**Trivia** Joe Jackson was a professional baseball player who denied being an actual participant in throwing the 1919 World Series but by association he and seven other Chicago White Sox players were banned for life from ever playing baseball. Had Jackson not been banned from baseball he likely would have been inducted into the first Baseball Hall of Fame in 1936 along with Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb and Honus Wagner. *Field of Dreams* can be purchased at Amazon or streamed online via Peacock App.



# Options

## ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES & CAMPUS OF CARE

Written by Michael Geller

I was recently surprised by a Facebook post from an acquaintance, a few years younger than me. She owned a beautiful home on the waterfront in Victoria, but announced she was moving into a new ‘retirement residence’. She was not ill or requiring care. She was moving because she was lonely. Reading this, I couldn’t help but compare her with my late mother whose greatest fear in later life was one day “she might have to be put into a home.”

In the 1970s I worked for CMHC, the federal housing agency. At the time, we funded independent living apartments like those described in the last issue of *Senior Line*, and personal care facilities. The latter offered a room with a private bathroom, but no cooking facilities, in a building with communal dining and other shared spaces. No health care services were provided. Health care facilities, generally known as intermediate care and extended care, were funded by the Ministry of Health. Since CMHC funded housing and personal care, and the Ministry funded intermediate and extended care, these accommodations were always separate from one another. Consequently, if one spouse was capable of independent living but the other needed care, they had to live in separate buildings.

As a young architect with little appreciation of the complexities of government funding programs, this did not seem right. Fortunately, my manager at CMHC agreed it would be desirable to combine different types of accommodation in one building. This led to an experimental ‘continuum of care’ facility developed in partnership with representatives of Vancouver’s Jewish community. It was called Haro Park.

Today, Haro Park Centre continues to be a ‘Campus of Care’ community, providing independent housing, assisted living and residential care, sometimes referred to as complex or long-term care. This arrangement allows residents to ‘age in place’. As needs change, residents do not have to move away from the home they have come to know and relationships they have developed.

‘Assisted living’ is the term used to describe a hybrid form of accommodation between independent living and long-term care. The typical unit is a studio, one or even two-bedroom suite with a bathroom and kitchen. Often there is no stove, although in at least one facility with which I am familiar, a fancy stove was provided to give residents the sense of independent living, but not hooked up to avoid burns! Services offered can vary depending on need, but usually include meals in a communal dining room,

The philosophy is that assisted living should be just that, and not a care facility. ”



**'The Village' in Langley is a cluster of six 'cottages' linked by walkways to a barn and garden. It is Canada's first such residence for people living with dementia and memory-related conditions, based on a concept developed in the Netherlands. (Photo courtesy of the Village)**

housekeeping, laundry, emergency response, and occasionally assistance with bathing and medication.

Care facilities offer a single or shared room and bathroom, but no kitchen facilities. However, services include nursing and physician care, and access to physio and other medical specialties. Care needs are provided by aides, supervised by registered nurses. While care facilities are always designed to be fully accessible for those in wheelchairs, this is not always the case with assisted living buildings. While this might seem surprising, the philosophy is that assisted living should be just that, and not a care facility, in order to attract people like my acquaintance.

Covid has shone a spotlight on the terrible problems that can be encountered at some care facilities, especially those in older buildings. To avoid similar problems in the future, many new facilities are being designed with smaller living units accommodating approximately 12 residents. Just as all seniors are different with varying needs and wants, various accommodation options are increasingly becoming available. For those seeking companionship and light care, but preferring to avoid a larger facility, Abbeyfield Houses can be an attractive alternative. Today there are more than 800 around the world and approximately 19 in Canada, with 12 in BC. Typically, a group of 8 to 12 residents live together with a House Manager. Rooms are usually private, and housekeeping and meals are provided by a small staff in the common living space. Each House is a non-profit, registered charity. House ownership and support are undertaken by community volunteers. Abbeyfield is non-denominational and does not

discriminate against race, gender, or background.

As more seniors experience dementia and other memory-related conditions, other alternative accommodation choices are being offered. One concept, initially developed in the Netherlands and now available in US cities, is a village-like environment on a larger property. 'The Village in Langley' is Canada's first such residence for people living with dementia and memory-related conditions.

It offers independent, cottage-style living, surrounded by five acres of grounds. Residents enjoy accessible walking paths, a vegetable garden, farm animals and water garden, all within a safe and secure environment.

Just as Haro Park brought together independent living and care facilities, many campus-style communities offer an even greater continuum of care, ranging from bungalows and duplexes to Long-Term Care facilities all on the same property. While some are faith-based, such as Elim Village, others are non-denominational.

No discussion about care facilities in Vancouver would be complete without reference to the Snider Campus that comprises the Louis Brier Home and Hospital and Weinberg Residence.

Initially built to accommodate 13 residents in 1946, today Louis Brier accommodates 215 residents. Funded by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, it offers three levels of residency: extended care, intermediate care, and specific support for residents with dementia and other special



Louis Brier Home & Hospital offers three levels of residency. (Photo: Michael Geller)

care needs. The adjacent Weinberg Residence contains 40 Assisted Living suites and 20 Multi-Level Care rooms, along with a variety of excellent amenities, programs, and services.

While there is no doubt new care facilities are becoming increasingly attractive, many seniors worry whether they can afford their hefty price tags. Fortunately, while some are publicly funded, if you own a house or apartment in Vancouver, the investment income derived from its sale will likely be sufficient to cover the cost for the rest of your life. May you live to 120!



**Michael Geller**  
FCIP, RPP, MLAI,  
Ret. Architect  
AIBC is a Board  
member of JSA  
with five decades'  
experience in the planning, design,  
and development of seniors housing.

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# CONNIE BRADLEY

## WALLS TO WALL ART

Written by Connie Bradley

Retirement was unplanned and hit fast. I'm Connie Velestuk Bradley. Born in Vancouver, I taught elementary school in Burnaby. Teachers are always thinking about lessons even when they don't have to. It takes a long time to transition out of it, at least, for me. Although I always dabbled in some sort of art expression like decoupage, pottery and stained glass over the years which I really enjoyed, suddenly I had plenty of extra hours to do whatever I want. I chose painting and it became my passion! I'm kind of a jump in and get going person. I like to learn the basics and then experiment as I go making mistakes and trying new things along the way. Painting is something everyone can do. Almost

all my paintings are full of color and are vibrant. It's a challenge for me to leave white space. I feel most comfortable doing abstracts and find it meditative and rewarding. Many hours can pass quickly if you are doing something you like. I don't have a studio. I work in a small closet or on my dining room table or in the garage on nice days. I started with acrylic paints, then encaustic wax (which is melted beeswax mixed with oil paints, heated and applied with a brush and torched with a heat gun). You have to be careful. I mix beeswax and oil paint in tin cans and heat up on a skillet. It melts and blends to create beautiful effects. You can add materials to give texture or use tools to scratch or make lines.



*Abstract*



*Wolf*



Then I started to resin (I only do on hot days in the garage as it requires good ventilation and heat). You mix resin and a hardener together plus your paints if you like and then work very quickly as it dries fast. This medium is so much fun as the resins keeps moving even when you finish and you don't always know what you'll get. If you don't like the result, you can sand it and resin over it again.

I began to paint on canvases, then wood panels and after all the walls were covered and the closets full, I moved on to my dining marble table which was getting worn and scratched. Although a bit nervous as this was my first attempt, I applied resin to it! And really liked it. Then I looked at the white bathroom doors and took them out to the garage and did the same! Then I looked for anything I could find. I applied resin to cupboards, glass, Plexiglas and anything old that needed a lift (maybe not everything). I loved it all.

I also enjoy painting abstract animal faces as they make me smile and they are a challenge as I can't draw very well. My favorite are painting Eagles. I love creating textures, layering, mixing and scratching, adding materials and I use a lot of paint.

Who decides what is good art. For most of us our taste in art is subjective. Art appreciation is in the eye of the beholder. We like what looks good to us or if we want to keep looking at it and that's okay.

There are so many possibilities working and playing with paints. There's always more to discover. If you keep at it, you will even improve. Our place is full of my art work with no empty spaces but, luckily my husband supports and enjoys my art! Give it a try. It's a great hobby and loads of enjoyment.

See more at [www.bradleycreations.com](http://www.bradleycreations.com)



*Joyful*



*Bird Head*



# The Covid Cloud's Silver Lining

FIFTEEN MONTHS IN  
THE LIFE OF JULIE  
AND MICHAEL

Written by Tamara Frankel  
Photography by Michael Seelig

Below:  
*Brass band called Horn  
on the Cob*



We all remember March 2020 as the date the COVID virus pandemic turned our daily lives upside down: no more heading to the office in the morning, no more dinner parties, no more social gatherings, no more travels, no more life as we knew it. Most of us were shocked, paralyzed, even depressed. The world seemed to have collapsed. The lockdowns and social distancing presented us with a harsh reality.

And yet there were also some small, delicate treasures waiting for us. It would take some courage, ingenuity, and a whole lot of presence of mind to make something new of our lives.

Michael Seelig began to document some of the unexpected gifts that the pandemic ushered in during the fifteen months from March 2020 to June 2021. He compiled a pictorial essay in which he recorded his and his wife Julie's lives during this challenging time. He produced a book for his family titled *The Covid Cloud's Silver Lining*, consisting of short vignettes, photographs, and drawings.

The chronicle is written as a series of "surprises," starting with Michael and Julie's hurried departure from Israel to Toronto to attend their grandson's Bar Mitzvah. The celebration was planned for March 19th in Israel but was swiftly relocated to Toronto where it was transmitted from the family living room via a new platform called Zoom.

Surprise #2 came a few weeks later: the birth at home (rather than in the hospital) of a beautiful and healthy





Left:  
*Surprise #10 – Michael and Julie, still best friends*

Below:  
*Bar Mitzvah Celebration*



new grandchild, who did not wait for the midwife to arrive and trusted his father to handle the delivery.

With lockdowns and quarantines in effect all over the world, Michael and Julie were “stuck” in Toronto for some time. While living there with their daughter and her family, they re-discovered the meaning of neighborhood — another delightful surprise. As urban planners, they had always known that while we may be residents of a metropolitan area, our sense of “home” is defined by a more intimate geographical scale — the local and a sense of community.

Furthermore, their son and their two grandsons gathered every evening on their front porch in Toronto’s Annex area with their brass instruments. They played a new tune nightly to salute the front-line workers. What started as a threesome soon became an eleven-person brass band called *Horn on the Cob*. Each night the street, sidewalks and windows filled with people as the group performed for 100 consecutive nights.

Michael and Julie usually spend the winter and spring in Israel, but as Israel was in lock down, they returned home to Vancouver. Their own garden surprised and delighted them — they were seeing the spring blooms for the first time in several years. Daily walks in their neighbourhood extended to exploring the entire city.

Michael and Julie are people who think food is important. They upped their cooking efforts and surprised themselves with an array of culinary delights. Some meals were elaborate, and some were simple, but they were all served with attention to detail and a sense of fun.

This renewed burst of creativity was not limited to cooking. Michael, who has a passion for art and painting, spent the solitary months of the pandemic on some exciting artistic projects. He produced

illustrations for a children’s book written by his daughter and son-in-law, illustrated and printed the weekly Torah portion readings as a gift to his synagogue, and prepared an inventory of both his own artwork and his father Heinz Seelig’s paintings.

Michael Seelig has discovered a beautiful and poignant way to find the silver lining in the past two difficult years. Perhaps the most delightful surprise that has come from the “sacred pause” engendered by this global pandemic has been a deeper relationship with those nearest to us. As Michael writes on the final page beside a photo of him and Julie together: “Surprise #10 – Still best friends”.

Sponsored by **DOLORES LUBER**



# CURL UP WITH A GOOD BOOK

Written by Dolores Luber

All books available at the Waldman Jewish Public Library  
We welcome book reviews by our readers, send them  
in to me (editor@jsalliance.org).

## EVERYDAY EVIL: WHY OUR WORLD IS THE WAY IT IS

Written by Monique Layton



Anthropologist Monique Layton argues that evil is intrinsic to our humanity, constantly evolving with modern notions of morality. Much of the world's suffering can be traced back to the individual actions of ordinary people trying—and failing—to maintain a static social order. She connects questions about the nature of good

and evil with insights into the origins of heroism, moral and ethical perceptions, and the roots of evil deeds. Her research was not without its lasting impact on the author, which is starkly noted towards the end: “At that point in my research, I still wondered whether we might progress over time...hoping to see some improvement through the Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment and our modern humanism, despite mankind’s ever-present temptation to sell its soul to the Devil in exchange for knowledge and power.” The book tears at your soul, but I would rather know the truth, rather than remain in denial.

### CAMPBELL, SAUNDERS & CO.

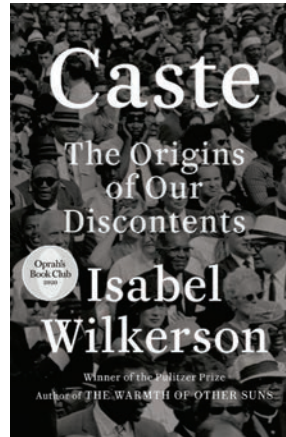
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Tel: 604 681 5500 Ext. 314 Fax: 604 685 7100 Cell: 604 763 1406  
Email: rfarrier@campbellsaunders.ca  
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## CASTE: THE ORIGINS OF OUR DISCONTENTS

Written by Isabel Wilkerson



Beautifully written, original, and revealing, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* is an eye-opening story of people and history, and a re-examination of what lies under the surface of ordinary lives and of American life today. She explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America, today and throughout its history, has

been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings. She shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day. She documents how the Nazis studied the racial systems in America to plan their out-cast of the Jews. Thousands of case studies convey the barbarity and perversity of the caste system. These truths, this dark study of violence and power is hard to internalize, difficult to accept; but I persevered and am wiser for it.

## ADVANCED STYLE: OLDER AND WISER

Written by Ari Seth Cohen

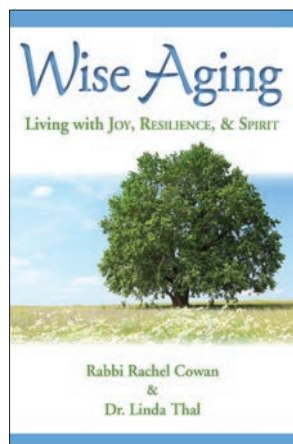


And now for a change of pace—*Advanced Style* is a colourful, joyous celebration of those seniors who love to dress up and make a statement, whether in good taste or just for fun sophistication. This is Ari Seth Cohen’s second book which features senior street style and inspiration from around the globe. Ladies and gentlemen parade on the

streets of their city, dressed to kill! They are colourful, bold and adventurous. The charm of this book of wisdom and photographs is the potential to be fantastic, chic, elegant, and stylish even in old age—a fashion book, with plenty of visual inspiration and life advice to boot.

## WISE AGING: LIVING WITH JOY, RESILIENCE & SPIRIT

Written by Rachel Cowan, Linda Thal

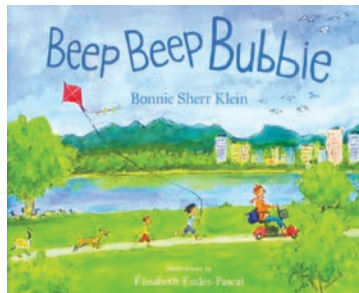


This book is a deeply spiritual and eminently practical resource on dealing with the blessings and the setbacks of aging. *Wise Aging* gives us the tools we need to live with renewed energy, intention, and joy even as we navigate the challenges of aging. Cowan and Thal explore a wide range of issues including: relationships with adult children and spouses, body image, romance and

sexuality, living with loss, and cultivating well-being. They accentuate aging as an opportunity for growth, discovery, and meaning. I enjoyed it very much.

## BEEP BEEP BUBBIE

Written by Bonnie Sherr Klein



Kate is thrilled that Bubbie is taking her and her little brother, Nate, to Granville Island Public market to shop for *Rosh Hashanah*—especially since Bubbie has a surprise! But when

Bubbie's surprise turns out to be her new scooter, Kate is disappointed. She misses “the Bubbie she used to have. That Bubbie danced and took them to climate marches.” However shopping with Bubbie on the scooter turns out to be great fun! The illustrations are intricate and lush. Joy jumps from every page. The book is an opportunity for a conversation about life with disabilities. Wheels won't slow a cool grandma down.

## FEATURE REVIEW:

### THE LOST SHTEL BY MAX GROSS

Written by Rita Roling



Some writers are excellent story tellers and can weave a tale so cleverly that it is hard to put it down. For me that was the case with Max Gross's debut novel and Jewish Fiction Award winner for 2020, *The Lost Shtetl*. In a small town in 19th century Poland, Jews lived a traditional life. This changed quickly when Polish merchants and tradesmen discovered new markets for their

goods and services. The influx of new ideas and cultures did not mix well so the Jewish population decided en masse to move to a new location, as far away as possible. They called their new place Kreskol and returned to their traditional way of life.

For decades, time stood still in Kreskol. Its remote location made it difficult to leave and difficult to enter. The shtetl was bypassed by pogroms, ravages of wars and the annihilation of millions of landsmen. The first crack in Kreskol's tranquility came as

a result of a miserable marriage and a divorced wife. Pesha, now a divorcee, wanted to escape patriarchy and traditional role expectations so, one night she left to find autonomy and prosperity. Her ex-husband pursued her, to avenge the shame and ridicule she had caused him. Eventually the Rabbi and his council decided to send Yankel to look for the couple.

The story now focuses on Yankel and how he navigates a world he does not understand and that does not understand him. His inability to understand any language but Yiddish and his traditional shtetl clothing makes him an anomaly to everyone. Eventually he becomes hospitalized on a psychiatric ward. There he learns Polish and is able to tell his story. This incredulous tale is leaked to the media; tourists and government officials flock to Kreskol. Soon life in Kreskol becomes as chaotic as it was in the town abandoned by their forefathers' decades ago. A circular journey indeed.

Max Gross' work is reminiscent of Isaac Bashevis Singer's Yiddish novels. Gross creates characters who may be ignorant of modern life but who are human. They are intelligent, resilient, and for the most part likable. The book allows the reader to peek into a lost world and to give the reader a better understanding of that time by interspersing Yiddish expressions and idioms. On the surface the novel may appear to be light-hearted, but in this reviewer's opinion, the underlying themes of the work are assimilation, anti-Semitism, faith, adaptability and resilience.



# HUMOUR!

Apparently you have to eat healthy more than once to get in shape.  
This is cruel and unfair.

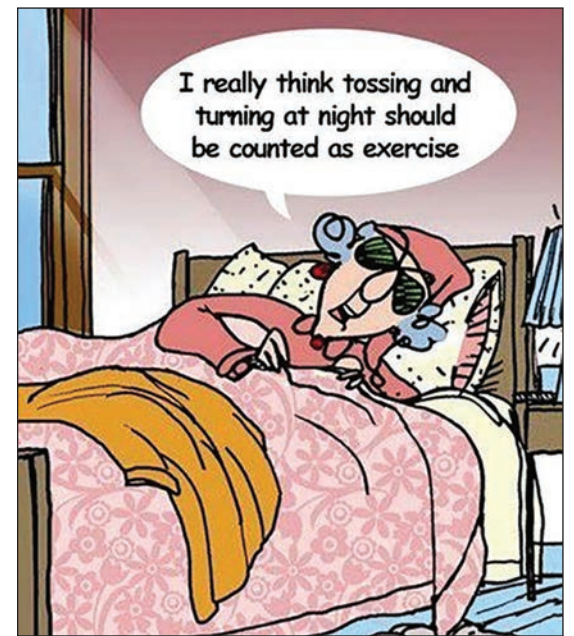
I always knew I'd get old. How fast it happened was  
a bit of a surprise, though.

I'm starting to think I will never be old enough to know better.

Instead of the John I call my bathroom the Jim. That way it sounds  
better when I say I go to the Jim first thing every morning.

I'm not hard of hearing, I've just heard enough!

Maturity means being emotionally and mentally healthy.  
It is that time when you know when to say yes and when to say no,  
and when to say WHOOPPEE!



*We all have our time machines,  
don't we? Those that take us back  
are memories...and those that carry  
us forward, are dreams.*

~ H.G. Wells

I don't know how to use TikTok,  
but I can write in cursive, do long  
division, and tell time on clocks  
with hands...so there's that.

# CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNER:

**SHARON HAROWITZ**

We had a record number of submissions for this contest. Thanks to everyone for your creative efforts!



This pollster interrupted us. Or it would've been  
*Four Times a Month!*  
- David Kirkpatrick

1. So often?
  2. What is is, what was was.
  3. That's an exhausting pace!
- Morris Harowitz

Happy Spouse Happy House.  
- Anita Karp

1. It's all *bobamycin!* You've got a lot to learn!
  2. What's two or three times a month! We don't waste time on our phones.
- Catherine Myerowitz

That's all!?!  
- Dr. Roslyn Kunitz

1. Didn't quite hear you. That was a week, you said, eh?
  2. Study! Shmudy! *Ahbee Gezunt*, as long as we have health!
- Alex Kliner

Very interesting study. Why don't you ask some seniors about it?  
- Shirley Cohn

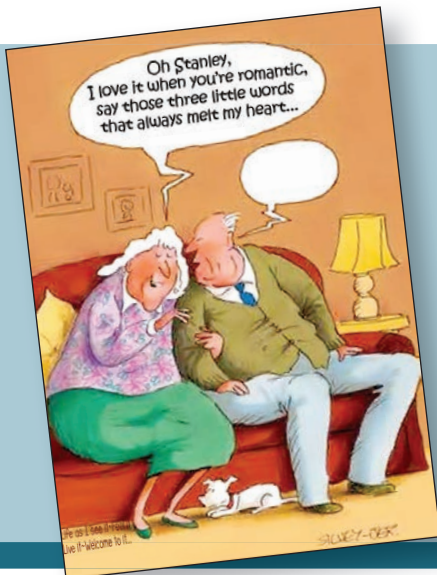
Shhh, we don't want the *kinder* to know.  
- Ron Barak

Yes, between us too, but we each also have many friends...  
- Gary Schajer

Big deal! I satisfy my wife every night! We go to bed and I ask, "Honey are you satisfied?" And she says, "yes, sweetheart, I'm satisfied."  
- Edward Korbin

That's what the study says, but what did the seniors say?  
- Arnold Selwyn

It's true. We overcame Erectile Dysfunction by going to the clinic advertised in *Senior Line*. Now we're happy to say we can get it up two or three times a month!  
- Dr. Hinda Avery



## ENTER THE CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST!

Write a caption for the cartoon and send it to us by mail or email by June 2022

**Jewish Seniors Alliance**  
949 West 49th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 2T1  
Email: [office@jsalliance.org](mailto:office@jsalliance.org)

Be sure to include your name and address. The author of the winning caption will receive a JSA T-shirt and two Tribute Cards worth \$18.00 each. We will publish the cartoon with your caption in the next *Senior Line*.



# MEET DORIS, GRASS ROOTS ACTIVIST: SPEAK OUT, COMPLAIN!

Written by Tony DuMoulin

Let me introduce you to my friend Doris. (I can use Doris's real name because she is fictional). Doris is a healthy, active and socially connected 83 year old. She lives contentedly on her own at home in Vancouver, where she has lived for two dozen years in a small but very comfortable older bungalow with a small garden. In the spring and summer, Doris grows her own salad fixings, as well as a colourful mix of annuals she plants in her three patio containers every May.

Doris's husband died six years ago, but Doris has not let herself suffer much from loneliness. She keeps in regular contact with her two daughters and four teen-aged grandchildren. One family lives in Nanaimo, the other in Calgary, so family contact is mostly online. With the help of one of her grandchildren and a new laptop and smartphone, Doris has learned how to keep in touch with her close friends as well, via Facetime, Zoom, social media, texts and email.

Doris is in good health for her age, and gets regular exercise doing her grocery and other basic shopping by walking with her wheeled shopping cart three and a half blocks to the nearest corner mall and back two or three times a week. In the summer, she gets exercise and emotional nourishment from her work in her garden. Doris knows she is fortunate to have a teenage boy living four doors down the street who she pays

to mow her lawn in the summer and shovel her walk in the winter when it snows. He also changes lightbulbs and does other small chores two or three times a year.

Doris is able to meet her financial needs with a modest but adequate income from her teacher's pension plus her CPP and OAS. She has given a lot of thought to the organization of her life and its daily routines so as to be able to continue to "age in place", and eventually end her days in her beloved home.

Doris is fiercely independent, and proud of her self-sufficiency. ”

Doris is fiercely independent, and proud of her self-sufficiency.

Sadly, in the last two and a half years, Doris has become aware of a slow and gradual deterioration in her ability to keep on top of her daily needs. The osteoarthritis in her hands acts up more frequently now, and her eyesight is growing worse with each passing month. These two conditions, while annoying, were not having a significant impact on Doris's daily life until very recently.

When I talked with her on the phone about a month ago, she sounded uncharacteristically dispirited, frustrated, and frankly, a bit angry. She explained that she had recently begun buying prepared meals, including salads, to reduce the demands on her arthritic hands caused by meal preparation. These meals come in sealed plastic containers, and need a lot of hand strength and dexterity to open.

Two weeks before our phone call, and after having wrestled unsuccessfully for twenty minutes or so with the package containing her dinner, Doris had finally resorted to using a small kitchen knife to break open the seal of the hard plastic lid. With the pressure she applied, the knife had slipped and cut her finger. While a simple band-aid stopped the bleeding, she found that the incident frightened her, and she had lost confidence in her ability to safely open many types of packaging. Most challenging, Doris finds, are the many containers, both big and small, that are tightly sealed by a band of plastic joining the container with its sealed top.

Doris was also frustrated that she was now often making mistakes by picking up the wrong items from the store shelves, simply because she could no longer read the information on the labels. Varieties of soups, sauces, salad dressings and many other products would have almost identical labels within each brand, but distinguishing information like "unsalted", or "hickory flavoured" or "organic", or "contains peanuts" would be displayed in tiny letters Doris failed to notice. Also, often impossible to notice were very faint dotted lines with an icon of little tiny open scissors, meant to guide consumers like Doris on where to cut the package open.

After telling me of these recent mishaps, Doris ended our phone call by wondering if they were a sign that it was time for her to abandon her independence and move into a care facility where she could leave it to someone younger to read labels and open packages. These thoughts filled her with dread.

I hung up the phone wondering how Doris would handle this crisis of confidence. It felt like something was very wrong. Society seemed to be failing her and thousands of others just like her.

As it happened, I bumped into Doris on the street one morning a week ago, and she was once again the upbeat and independent senior I was used to. She filled me in on her life since the sad phone conversation. “After feeling sorry for myself for a few days,” Doris told me, “I decided one morning to stop acting like a victim and do something about my predicament. I needed some groceries, so I headed off to my regular market. When I had filled my shopping cart with all my essential purchases, I joined the line at the only check-out in this small grocery store and waited patiently.

“When my purchases had been scanned, the young check-out clerk, Ruth, kindly asked me if I would be needing any help with my packages today. I told her I most certainly would. I then proceeded to open my purse, and along with my credit card I pulled out a knife and pointed it at the terrified Ruth. ‘What are you doing with that knife?’, she stammered, her eyes bulging with panic. I turned the knife around, handed it to her handle first, and explained that I needed her help opening some of my packages. She looked relieved that I was not about to stab her, but she raised her hands in a

gesture of helplessness, nodding to the line of waiting customers.

“I have been a customer here for many years,’ I pointed out firmly, ‘and about half of these purchases are useless to me because of the way your store has shelved them in hard-to-open containers and hard-to-read labels. If you are not going to help me by at least unsealing them, with the aid of my favourite kitchen knife, I will have to ask you to cancel my order, and I will go home with my empty shopping cart and starve to death.’

“One by one, Ruth started to open or unseal each of the items I pointed to, commenting that she herself was finding some of them difficult to open. ‘My boyfriend usually does this at home,’ she said. ‘I don’t know how you manage on your own.’

“The customers waiting in line were getting impatient with the delay. One young fellow carrying three bags of potato chips and a dozen cans of Coke expressed in a loud voice that I should be doing this myself at home. ‘I am unable to,’ I replied politely. A number of older customers in the line supported my strategy, and as the floor manager approached the check-out to see what was causing the hold-up, one of them said: ‘I am going to ask Ruth to open my packages too. This is the fault of the store, not

this lady’s’. This brought a small round of applause, while the floor manager scurried away.”

As Doris finished her tale, I asked her how she had been received at the store on subsequent visits. “For one thing,” Doris told me proudly, “other regulars seem to know me, and they greet me like some kind of hero. For another, the store has now hired Ruth’s boyfriend to be a bagger, but to also open packages whenever a customer asks for it. But most important of all, I am beginning to notice a few items in better designed packaging I can manage to open on my own.”

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




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**HAPPY  
PASSOVER**

The Board of Directors and Staff of  
Jewish Seniors Alliance wish you and  
your family joy and health this Passover.

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# PEER SUPPORT SERVICES: VOLUNTEER PROFILES

## SUNNY ROTHSCHILD

Interview by Charles Leibovitch

Sunny Rothschild was born near the end of World War II in Baltimore, Maryland. Both of her parents, originally from Eastern Europe, were brought to the United States in the 1920s as young children. During the war Sunny's father worked at the Navy shipyards. After the war, her parents moved to Washington, D.C. where her parents opened a Jewish restaurant and delicatessen with her mother's sister and brother-in-law. They served Hebrew National deli meats like corned beef, pastrami, tongue, bologna and hot dogs. They also served blintzes, latkes, varenikas and kishka. Her parents eventually became sole owners of the restaurant, working from early morning to late at night, six days a week. As a result, Sunny spent a great deal of her childhood alone.

After high school, Sunny went to the University of Maryland. Sunny majored in elementary education. The year she graduated she got married. Her husband had just finished his second year of medical school. They moved to a small apartment and Sunny worked as a grade four teacher. Teaching grade school wasn't really a good fit for Sunny so she took the US Government Service Entrance Exam. She did well and went to work for the US Census Bureau where she was trained as a computer programmer. It was in the mid-1960s and the computers she learned to program were the size of a large room,

lined with vacuum tubes, with the operator sitting in the middle of the room with a keyboard. She worked for the Census Bureau for several years, until she immigrated with her husband in 1969 to Vancouver, Canada, where he did his medical residency.

Sunny was pregnant with their first child, a daughter. She had her second child, also a girl, nearly three years later. While she was at home with her children, she was a member of the National Council of Jewish Women. When her youngest daughter went to preschool, Sunny went to law school at the University of British Columbia. She graduated in 1978 and was called to the Bar in 1979. She eventually became a partner at a well-known Vancouver law firm where she had a solicitor's practice.

In 1993, the partners dissolved their partnership. At the time the law firm dissolved, Sunny was newly divorced, her children were away at university or working and living on their own. She decided to open her own law practice. After a few years, she went to the Justice Institute where she was trained as a Family Justice Counsellor, learning about ways to help people with marital and child custody disputes, and methods of alternative dispute resolution such as mediation and negotiation. However, instead of working as a Family Justice Counsellor, she spent a few years practicing family law, most of it legal aid work.

While Sunny was carrying on her family law practice, some of her former law partners and colleagues from her



original law firm asked for her help from time to time and eventually asked her to come work for them full time. Since she would be receiving a steady income, complete with benefits, and would be doing work that she was actually better suited to, she gave up her family law practice and went to work with them. She worked with them full time from 2001 until she retired from full time practice on her 70th birthday in 2015. Since then, she has continued to work for them on a part time basis.

When she is not working as a lawyer, Sunny fills her time with volunteer activities and study. As a member of Temple Sholom since the mid-1980s, she was on the Board of Trustees and served as President in the early 1990s. Sunny became part of a program called Wise Aging based on the book *Wise Aging, Living with Joy, Resilience & Spirit* (reviewed in this magazine) and co-facilitated two Wise Aging groups. She joined the *Tikun Olam Gogos*, one of hundreds of groups of grandmothers (Sunny is not a grandmother) across Canada who are part of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign of the Stephen Lewis Foundation. They raise money to support the grandmothers

in sub-Saharan Africa who are raising their grandchildren, orphaned as a result of the AIDS pandemic. *Gogo* being the Zulu word for Grandmother. She is a member of two study groups who discuss Mussar, a Jewish study of character.

In 2021, JSA mailed copies of *Senior Line* magazine to senior members of Temple Sholom, with a cover letter from JSA staff member, Rochelle Garfinkel. The letter mentioned JSA's Friendly Visitor and Peer Support Volunteer programs. Sunny was intrigued and took the Friendly Visitor Training with JSA's dynamic trainer, Grace Hann. She now appreciates being a Friendly Visitor, providing emotional support for her JSA client.

**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.



## DR. JOAN ROBILLARD

Interview by Grace Hann

**B**orn in the bustling city of Montreal to a French Canadian father and a mother of Irish descent, Joan, along with her twin sister and two older brothers, had a happy childhood filled with lots of activities, including singing and performing. Two strong women in her life likely ignited her interest in the medical field, her mother, a nurse, and her aunt, a medical secretary. Joan took time to travel across Canada (hitchhiked) and settled for nine years in Winnipeg.

This was the start of her career. First, two years of pre-med studies at University of Winnipeg and then on to the University of Manitoba where she completed her medical degree. From there, it was back to Montreal to do her internship at the Jewish General hospital.

After the internship, Joan was off to La Sarre, an underserved town in Northern Quebec. There she spent seven years providing the full scope of a general practice for the community. The 22 bed hospital had a small labor and delivery unit where Joan got a great start to her obstetrical career.

Joan was truly sad to leave but Vancouver called and this is where Joan knew she wanted to settle down. Once in Vancouver, Joan started a general practice in East Van. After 10 years she left general practice to help start and establish a unique program called "The South Community Birth Program" the first of its kind in Canada. The program brought together midwives, physicians and nurses side by side to provide group prenatal and intrapartum care with doula support at B.C. Women's hospital, followed by post-partum care for both mothers and babies.

Joan involved herself in the Left and Women's Movement soon after she moved to Winnipeg. In Vancouver, she continued in that vein as much as she could given the limits of her busy medical practice. She helped organize annual International Women's Day (IWD) rallies, joined pro-choice coalitions, and attended labor rallies.

At 60 Joan was diagnosed with Meniere's disease and thus retired. Joan caught the travelling bug and loved visiting places like Argentina,



Israel, Morocco, Bali and Italy. Covid-19 is now limiting her travelling but she and her wife Lenore can be seen driving down the highway with their travel trailer in tow, enjoying our beautiful BC Provincial Parks. She loves playing pickle ball and learning duplicate bridge.

So much for the fun, Joan wanted to be of service so she first took an End of Life Doula course and then followed this with the Friendly Visitor and the Senior Peer Emotional Support training. She very much admires and respects the work of the JSA, in particular its commitment to social justice. Serving her community in a volunteer role and helping senior clients with their challenges is very rewarding and she hopes her clients appreciate her as much as she does them.

**Grace Hann** is the trainer of volunteers of Senior Peer

Support Services. She has been training volunteers and supporting seniors for over 20 years.





# PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

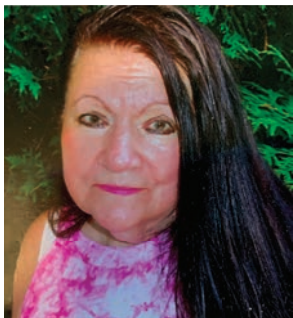
## DID YOU KNOW?

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**



"My passion is to help others. I saw an ad for Senior Peer Support Volunteers and took the training with Grace Hann which further enhanced my helping and listening skills. Today I am busy with JSA, Pacific Association of First Nations Women and my grandchildren.



**CATHERINE, VOLUNTEER**



I have truly enjoyed each senior to whom I have been assigned. These seniors have different stories and very unique lives. Being a part of their lives has been very enriching as I also continue to learn."

**PETER, 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.



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## 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/](http://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

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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 <b>Monthly Recurring Support</b> 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.		



# SLEEP: PRELUDE TO A LULLABY

Written by Rita Roling

When I first heard the term Sleep Hygiene I found it confusing. Did it mean that my bedding and night clothes needed to be clean and that I had to have a shower before I went to bed? Since then I have become more attuned to “recently coined” terminologies and know that sleep hygiene entails having a bedroom environment and habits that promote consistent uninterrupted sleep. The US Sleep Foundation recommends that: keeping a stable sleep schedule, a de-stressing winding down routine, a comfortable distraction-free bedroom, and healthy daily habits are all factors which contribute to a good night’s sleep.

## SHIFTING SLEEP PATTERNS

If you are on the north side of 60 years what once constituted a good night’s sleep may no longer apply as aging tends to shift sleeping patterns. Dr. Samir Sinha, Director of Geriatrics at Mount Sinai Hospital, Toronto, states that every day he hears stories from older patients that what was once a taken-for-granted, restful sleep, has been replaced with a night of tossing, turning and a brain that refuses to shut off. His advice is to reframe the meaning of “a good night’s sleep” as

you defined it at a much younger age. If nothing else, a new definition may be less frustrating and self-defeating. Most data suggests that once we reach adulthood the needs for sleep remain steady but we become less efficient sleepers with each decade as all the mechanism that control sleep and the circadian rhythm become less robust.

Although the sleep cycle remains around 90 minutes, as we age the restorative REM (rapid eye movement) decreases; thus the deep sleep we used to enjoy may now be more easily interrupted. The recommended sleep for adults is between seven and nine hours but if its quality is poor, the quantity is secondary. Circadian rhythm is mainly associated with sleep but research shows that it impacts numerous aspects of physical and general well-being. Discourse supports connections between sleep disturbances and metabolic changes, mood disorders, cardiovascular and/or immunological disease. Innate biological processes and traits may not be changeable but we human beings have been provided with extraordinary adaptability skills that allow us to maintain long term functioning. Sometimes that means that we have altered deeply ingrained habits and our

immediate surroundings. Sleep hygiene involves both environments and habits. Symptoms such as: difficulties falling asleep, frequent sleep interruptions, daytime sleepiness and general feelings of tiredness—all point to poor sleep hygiene. The first step toward achieving a deeper, uninterrupted and restorative sleep can be to reassess the bedtime routine and the sleeping environment. Once the needed changes have been determined the time has come to readjust. Needless to say a crisis in your life, an unfortunate accident, anything out of the ordinary, is going to cause anxiety, fear, rumination—all of which will disturb your sleep.

## LIFESTYLE CHANGES

As people age their life styles tend to change. Once we reach a certain age, raising a family and being actively employed tend to be ‘history’ rather present reality. Strict scheduling including regular bedtime hours may have gone by the wayside. Once such life stages are no longer priorities, it may be tempting to go to bed later and to sleep in. But if these behaviours continue over a longer period of time, a seven-hour good refreshing sleep will likely be hard to get. In older adults the circadian rhythm changes to an “early early” phase advance. Such a shift will cause drowsiness earlier in the evening and early morning awakening. It is important to listen to your circadian rhythm and to establish bed time consistency. If it is a consolation, science has proven that older people have better physical and mental functioning during the morning.

Make sleep a priority and make the necessary changes as proper sleep is vital for your physical and mental wellbeing. One gradual change to consider is to

If you are on the north side of 60 years what once constituted a good night’s sleep may no longer apply.





stay away from longer afternoon naps. They may feel energizing but can also cause negative effects on your night sleep. Set the stage for a restful sleep and design a pre-bedtime relaxing routine where electronic stimuli such as the telephone and television are turned off. Low soft music may be part of your relaxation plan and you can enjoy the background as you do easy stretching exercises or meditation. If you enjoy a beverage before going to sleep, you want to make sure that those drinks are alcohol and caffeine free. Alcohol decreases metabolism which is linked to sleep disruptions, and empiric research shows that caffeinated drinks reduce sleep duration and increases sleep interruptions. Some sleep specialists suggest a glass of warm milk may induce drowsiness. Last but not least, the time has come to actually go to bed in your dark, uncluttered, well-ventilated bedroom where the thermostat is set at the desired 66 degrees F or 18 degrees C.

Sleep hygiene however is not a panacea. If you have long lasting or severe sleeping problems, it is best to seek advice from your family physician.

As a side note, above counter sleeping aids are available in most drugstores; but, before you decide to buy any of these, discuss it with your doctor as some pharmaceuticals may have adverse interactions with other medications.

### RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME

There are medical conditions which may interfere with your sleep. Restless Legs Syndrome is one. RLS however is not a sleep disorder but a neurological disorder of the senses. RLS is a condition that causes an uncontrollable urge to move your legs, usually because of an uncomfortable sensation. It typically happens in the evening or nighttime hours when you're sitting or lying down. Moving eases the unpleasant feeling temporarily. Restless legs syndrome, also known as Willis-Ekbom disease, can begin at any age and generally worsens as you age. It can disrupt sleep, which interferes with daily activities. Simple self-care steps and lifestyle changes may help relieve symptoms. Medications also help many people with RLS. If one of the reasons that you have difficulties falling and staying asleep is because you cannot find a comfortable

place for your legs, or you have pain or uncomfortable sensations in your feet, let your physician know.

### SLEEP APNEA

Another problem is Sleep Apnea. Sleep Apnea is a common sleep disorder characterized by repeated interruptions in breathing throughout the sleep cycle. These interruptions, called apneas, are caused by the collapse of soft tissue in the airway (or throat), which prevents oxygen from reaching the lungs. Weak muscles in the airway, a large tongue, obesity, and other factors may cause airway tissue to collapse and obstruct breathing, basically causing people to stop breathing. Sleep Apnea disrupts the sleep cycle and can dramatically impact energy, mental performance, and long term health. In some cases, if left untreated, sleep apnea can be fatal. There are clinics which diagnose and treat Sleep Apnea successfully. Many of my friends use the CPAP Therapy Machine with great success.

This writer has eliminated many of factors that made it difficult to get a good night's sleep. My earplugs are no longer tuned into CBS at night and I have established a bedtime routine that seems to be working for me. So Good Night, *Laila Tov*, and *Sov Bra*.



#### 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 FRANCES BELZBERG



# SWIMMING MY WAY NORTH

Written by Sylvie Hutchinson

Swimming my way north. No, not literally along the B.C. coastline but in a style suitable for my 70 year-old self, or should I say young self. I'm living the dream in my 1995 vintage Pleasure-Way camper with all the comforts: furnace, fridge, stove, toilet (most important) and a memory foam bed to ease the aches that even swimming can't totally erase. My beginning point is Matheson Lake, Victoria, tucked in the Sooke Foothills, a treasure just six minutes from my home. There are no houses on 'my' lake, it's simply adorned by tall firs, pines and arbutus with their smooth, bendy, rich colored limbs.

In January, February and March it is cold enough to demand a full wetsuit.

Front crawl is impossible; I would freeze my face, so I do backstroke and swim to the island, around and along the opposite shore. I'm alone. Even the otters that I've seen from my kayak are elusive. Most people think it's the dark days of winter and even boaters stay home. By the time they might consider it, I've had many exhilarating swims under cloudy wintery skies or warm island rains.

During April and May, I swim in Seymour Lake, nestled at the base of Hudson Bay Mountain. My adult son joins me for a leisurely and companionable swim across the lake, and we admire the Babine Mountain view, commenting as we go on the newest homes built on the lake. It's special to share this passion of mine.



June 2021 takes me west of Smithers to Highway 37 and north 152 km to Meziadin Lake Provincial Campground. My campsite is only steps from the calm waters of the bay. The heat wave is full on as I grapple with my wetsuit, twisting and wriggling. My body temp soars further. Finally, snug as a seal in its skin with booties, hoodie and gloves, I waste no time entering the water, plunging onto my back. The icy water flows into my suit. I backstroke furiously with a strong flutter kick until the water against my skin warms to a refreshing sensation. Rolling over, my arms stretch towards the far side of Meziadin Lake where snow covered mountains yield to forest which meets the wilderness water. I dip my face in but it is way too cold, so quickly I'm on my back again, looking into a bluebird sky and breathing in the pure, virus free air.

My next swim is Kinaskan Lake Provincial Campground 360 km north on Highway 37. The heat wave is here too. Thirty-seven degrees inside my, at the moment, not so Pleasure-Way van. My body craves the freshness of the biggest wildest northern lake so

I feel invincible, as if I could do anything! ”



Simmons Lake, Northern British Columbia

far. Getting into my wetsuit deserves a few expletives as the neoprene and clammy skin war with each other. This is not a smooth transaction. Finally, covered from head to toe I dive in and fearing the face freeze flip directly to my back. But even though I'm further north, the heat wave has warmed the top layer. I welcome the rhythm of front crawl and the invigorating freshness on my face. Soon, tired and warm, I float on my back to revel in my breathtaking surroundings. The lake is a sheet of glass, saturated with mountain reflections interrupted only by rings left by feeding trout as they leap through the air in acrobatic style. The lake stretches forever north to faraway mountains. The high hillside, scarred by rock faces is topped with alpine greened with short lived plants.

It's July when I reach Simmons Lake,

at km 590 on Highway 37. As I plunge in, I am met with the coldest water yet. Many creeks feed into the lake, streaming from mountains that were covered in snow mere weeks back. As my body temp drops I'm spurred on. I've been told that this lake is around eight degrees and the water inside my wetsuit stays cold long into my half hour swim. I keep my face out of the water.

Boya Lake, 638 km north on Highway 37, is sprawled like an octopus at the base of the mountains. Its water is a brilliant turquoise. Marl, a mixture of silt and shell fragments reflects off the shallow lake bottom to produce this stunning aquamarine water. Here, I am a solo swimmer amongst paddleboarders and canoeists. I swim free of booties, gloves and hoodie. Energy expended with front crawl, I twist onto my back to soak up natures' gifts. Dark

thunderheads on the horizon, stacked like high rises invade the azure sky.

It's not until I've already swum in the wild lakes of the Yukon I read they've given it the hip epithet 'wild swimming'. An apt term. I know the concept comes from swimming in wilderness lakes... but...the feelings that surface while actively swimming or reveling in the cleanest, purest water, are what is truly 'wild'. Primal. Belonging to the earth. I feel invincible, as if I could do anything!

I doubt that I'll ever swim in a pool again...but...never say never.

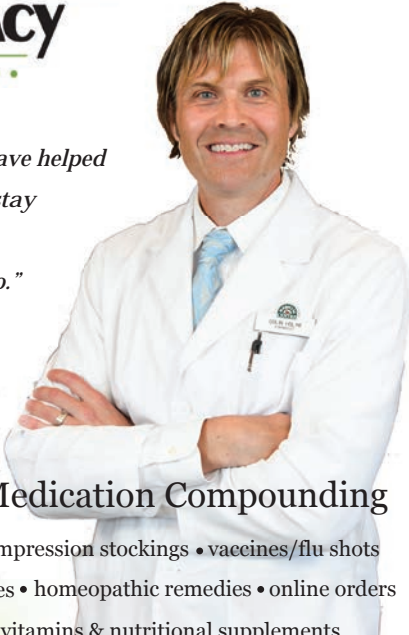


**Sylvie Hutchinson**  
retired from a lifetime of various working engagements, the latest as Life Coach.

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# MEMORIES IN THE CORNER OF MY MIND

Written by Dan Propp

At the age of clickety-click-sixty six, it was still okay, but now in my upper seventies, one feels almost like a relic. As the new production of 2022 opens, some seniors may wonder as the curtain parts, how the lyrics, scenery, and concept will transform us. Those of us who grew up in British Columbia may fondly remember attending Theatre Under the Stars, immersed in the magical summer evening atmosphere of Stanley Park's Malkin Bowl back in the 1950s. Memories of *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Oklahoma*, *South Pacific*, *HMS Pinafore*. "Et cetera, et cetera," as Yul Brynner accentuated so well in the motion picture production of *The King and I*, and many years later when he performed at Vancouver's Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Those wonderful musical memories never seem to vanish. Who knows, perhaps someday a composer will create a musical based upon the city of Vancouver during those very special times.

Walking past the Orpheum theatre, nostalgia hits big time. Recalling that Jack Benny made a special trip to Vancouver in order to perform at the 1973 benefit to save the Orpheum. Way back in time he met his wife Sadie during one of his many visits to the city, during the Orpheum Vaudeville circuit. For me, there are memories of the Vancouver Symphony with Irwin Hoffman conducting and musicians like bassoonist George Zuckerman and violinist Arthur Polson. As I stroll

past the Vancouver Hotel, thoughts about Dal Richards and his orchestra performing there regularly come to mind. On local CBC TV you might recall the popular weeknight program *Almanac* with host Bill Bellman and Bob Fortune who predicted the weather.

There were no satellites folks, in those days, to forecast the weather, just weather balloons. Two popular vocalists, Betty Phillips and Ernie Prentice, broadcast a program called *Lolly Two Dum*. The following bit of rhyme might also take you back:

## AND THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS

"Knock, knock, who's there." On the Dominion radio network of the CBC. It sometimes can seem like just a few years ago, eh? It's the Happy Gang, "well come on in". That's how it used to be in the nineteen fifties.

Do you still remember Ted Reynolds on Vancouver's Channel Two? How about their first Vancouver studios at the corner of Bute and Georgia Streets. It takes me back to Vancouver's 1954 British Empire Games to renew. As well as CBC's radio studios at the Vancouver Hotel, such nostalgic euphoria where we could hear the Rhythm Pals - Mike, Marc and Jack. Just a couple years ago, it seems, eh, maybe around nineteen fifty-two. Those local Vancouver programs sure can take some of us back. Amazing, isn't it, what those old broadcast days still now in 2022, can sometimes still do.



Downtown Granville Street, 1960s  
(Photo: Dan Propp)

Then on black and white TV the popular *Front Page Challenge*. The moderator was Fred Davis and there were panelists like Pierre Burton, Gordon Sinclair, and occasionally, Jack Webster. Those were the days of *The Juliette Show* and *Don Messer's Jubilee*.

There were TV channels 4, 5, 8 and 12 and antennas on top of rooftops everywhere. We watched news shows with Walter Cronkite and Douglas Edwards. Entertainment shows such as Ed Sullivan, Gary Moore, Dinah Shore and *I Love Lucy*.

Long before online computer streaming, how did we ever manage? No zooming, skyping, cellular phones or online banking. Now you can watch or stream TV shows on personal computers, cellphones, and iPads. Wow, we've come a long way since...I guess.

**Dan Propp** is a retired school teacher and photographer. A self-taught musician, he sings the old time songs – with accordion – at seniors' homes throughout the lower mainland. Visit [www.Nostalgicroads.Weebly.com](http://www.Nostalgicroads.Weebly.com)



# LOST IN TRANSLATION

Written by Dolores Luber

## WEATHER WORDS AND THE NEW ANXIETY DISORDER: ECO-ANXIETY

Eco-anxiety is anxiety caused by a dread of environmental perils, especially climate change, and a feeling of helplessness over the potential consequences for those living now and even more so for later generations.

We are worried! In 2021 B.C. was hit by extreme weather, including a record-breaking heat wave, wildfires, unprecedented rains, strong winds and extreme cold. Here is the vocabulary you need to understand the weather reports and to commiserate with your relatives and friends. If we have to suffer from the weather, we should be allowed to complain about it vociferously. It is the least that we can do!

## ARTIC OUTFLOW WARNING:

The warnings stem from a continuing Arctic ridge of high pressure, along with cold northeasterly outflow winds. The warnings stretch from the far north and extend to the Lower Mainland in the southwest and the Kootenays in the east. We experienced wind chill values below minus 20 in December, 2021. There was a risk of frostbite and hypothermia in coastal communities.

## HEAT DOME:

A strong ridge of high pressure trapping warm air underneath it. Like a dome, it does not allow any cool air in. Instead, with each passing summer day, the sun heats the region and causes a scorching heat wave. The heat dome in June, 2021 was unprecedented, causing almost 600 deaths.

## ATMOSPHERIC RIVER/ PINEAPPLE EXPRESS:

Coming from the tropical Pacific to the coast of B.C., a narrow corridor of moisture taps into a low-pressure centre storm pinwheeling off the coast and draws up water vapour in the form of heavy rains. It has been known to cause huge floods and, if temperatures are cold enough, it can lead to massive amounts of snow. B.C. experienced an atmospheric river in November, 2021.

## WATER SPOUT:

Tornadic waterspouts are tornadoes that form over water or move from land to water. They are associated with severe thunderstorms and are often accompanied by high winds and seas, large hail and frequent lightning. A water spout hit land as a tornado that heaped damage and debris on the UBC campus in November, 2021.

## STRATOSPHERIC POLAR VORTEX:

An event where a mass of cold air makes its way down from the Arctic and forms a dome that doesn't allow for an exchange of air from its surroundings. The result is a cold snap as was experienced in B.C. in February 2021 and December/January 2021/2022.

## WEATHER BOMB/ WEATHER CYCLONE:

A rare weather bomb hundreds of kilometres off the B.C. coast in late October 2021 was caused by a rapidly deepening low-pressure system, bringing wind and rain to dry land.

Learn these terms and impress your friends!







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## Goodman:

Best wishes for a Pesach Sameach!



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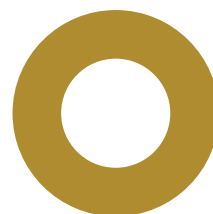


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The Spring Forum is funded in part by the Province of BC, the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver, and various other Foundations and private donors

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