

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND EVENTS

Friday, April 24	8:15 pm	Shabbat Eve Service And Oneg Shabbat	Saturday, May 16	10:00 am	Bar Mitzvah of Benjamin, son of Melissa Muskat and Miles Kettner
Saturday, April 25	10:00 am	Bat Mitzvah of Dana Tough, Daughter of Karen Galler and John Tough	Saturday, May 23	10:00 am	Bar Mitzvah of Zachary, son of Joanie and Steven Smith
Saturday, May 2	10:00 am	Bat Mitzvah of Liza Hersh, Daughter of Faye Cohen & Stacy Hersh	Thursday, May 28	6:30 pm	Dinner and Habonim Hebrew School Graduation
Saturday, May 9	10:30 am	Bar Mitzvah of Morgan Simon, Son of Margot Glatt & Marty Simon	Thursday, May 28	9:00 pm	Shavuot Storytelling Program
Saturday, May 9	p.m.	Bar Mitzvah of Scott Trotman, Son of Lynn Greenwald	Saturday, May 30	10:00 am	Bat Mitzvah of Kayla, daughter of Cary and Joel Greenberg And Shavuot Yiskor Service
Thursday, April 16	10:00 am	Pesach Yiskor Service	<b><u>CHANGING JEWISH COMMUNITIES</u></b>		
Monday, May 11		Changing Jewish Communities Michael Schudrich Chief Rabbi of Poland	<b>Monday, May 11, 2009 – Beth Habonim</b>		

Rabbi Michael Schudrich, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, has agreed to speak at Habonim on Monday, May 11th, 2009. The event is sponsored by the The Polish Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada (PJHFC). March of the Living will be participating as well. This is a nice honor for Habonim, and I imagine

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there should be a good size turn-out. Please see below for excerpts from a recent long interview that was conducted with Rabbi Schudrich by Manfred Gerstenfeld.

The Polish Jewish community is growing and the average age of its members is declining. The process of Jews discovering their Jewish origins and wanting to "do something Jewish" is likely to continue for years to come. A number of new rabbis have arrived from abroad in recent years. Developing local leadership, however, remains slow. Many issues from the Jewish past in Poland have to be dealt with. It is difficult to strike a balance between focusing on the future and dealing with problems of the past. About 1,300 of the 1,400 remaining Jewish cemeteries are still unattended. Also, information is increasingly forthcoming about unmarked mass graves. General Polish interest in Jews and Israel is intensifying. More and more small non-Jewish groups want to "do something Jewish." A number of them are involved in cleaning up unattended Jewish cemeteries. Relations with the Catholic Church remain ambivalent. Some bishops take a very positive attitude toward Jews. The teachings of the late Pope John Paul II play a major role in their attitude. Others are traditionalists and hold problematic positions toward Jews.

"The median age of the Warsaw Jewish community in the last three years has declined from over 65 to about 45. New members joining are all under the age of 40. Parents and grandparents had given up being Jewish. Some of their children, however, are deciding that they want to be members of the Jewish community. This phenomenon is no longer an exception, but a rather normal occurrence. Our membership is now about 550.

#### Conclusion:

Schudrich says: "In recent years the number of Poles who are advocating the preservation of Jewish memory has grown significantly. We have to realize that three million Poles were murdered by the Germans during the Second World War. When dialoguing with Poles and wanting them to feel our pain, we must feel their pain as well.

"As far as Jews are concerned, I have always believed that our work in Poland is to revive the

Jewish identity of individuals. I want to give people the chance to decide to be Jewish.

"To sum up, the Polish Jewish community is reemerging and developing. At the same time it is facing new problems and has to try to solve them."

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### AN URGENT PLEA....

Congregation Habonim has been in existence since the 1950's when a group of European Immigrants decided to create a place in Toronto where they could worship and celebrate Judaism in their own way.

My family has been part of it since the early 1960's.

The original members were new to this country, they had jobs, families, responsibilities and had to work hard to make a living in their newly adopted land. Nevertheless they thought it was worthwhile to build a Congregation that would represent their needs, educate their children, and be a meeting place for like minded people.

In today's tough economic times, we all need to work harder to make ends meet, but the need for having a place to congregate, express your beliefs and ground your children is a necessity now more than ever.

Congregation Habonim has always been run on the dedication of its volunteers, dedicated to keeping it the vibrant place as initially envisioned by its founders.

I try to teach my son that, although we do not have a lot of "extra" money, Tzedaka is not only cash, but it is also giving of our time to volunteer to do things we believe in, and that this is as important, if not more so, than money.

Congregation Habonim NEEDS your time!!! We need you to please just block off perhaps 2 hours per month!! We need volunteers desperately to join various committees, make phone calls, any small task you are willing to do.

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Please help us keep Congregation Habonim alive and well. To offer your services as a volunteer, please feel free to email Rhonda Page [rhonda@dossiercreative.com](mailto:rhonda@dossiercreative.com) or any other of the volunteers listed in this Bulletin to advise us of your interest.

Thank You,  
Dianne Erdos-Rush

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### DO WE LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES?

*By Avrum Rosensweig*

We live in interesting times. Regardless of the generation this 'positive' sentiment is written or said frequently in newspapers, books, magazines, ancient texts or from soap boxes in central squares.

Strangely, this same statement, or one with a similar thought but more instructive, is considered by the Chinese to be a curse.

If a Chinese politician or villager says to you: May you live in interesting times - they are wishing upon you a life of discontent and discomfort. They correlate this curse with: May you become familiar to the authorities- not a very good thing in any country, certainly not in China.

The popularity of this curse is clarified in a letter written by Frederic R. Coudert (Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science, 1939) to his friend Sir Austen Chamberlain, the brother of the war time prime minister of the United Kingdom. In the conclusion to his letter he wrote "we are living in an interesting age."

His friend responded: "Many years ago, I learned from one of our diplomats in China that one of the principal Chinese curses heaped upon an enemy is, 'May you live in an interesting age.'"

(Austen added, "Surely no age has been more fraught with insecurity than our own present time.")

His addendum was appropriate as the threat of World War II was in the air. Interestingly, it seems that every generation perceives their time as being the most difficult and/or challenging).

On the other hand...

Dictionary.com translates 'interesting' to mean: engaging or exciting and holding the attention or curiosity; arousing a feeling of interest - as in an interesting face. [www.interestingfacts.org](http://www.interestingfacts.org) lists interesting things such as: Elephants cry and laugh.... Elephant take great care over dead bones of their family members; Barack Obama uses Apple Mac for his computer needs (something Eli would be happy about)...Barack smokes cigarettes and he never drinks coffee...he is left-handed and loves to play poker.

It seems that the Chinese define 'interesting' differently than the authors of Dictionary.com and other such websites. They see such times as raucous and full of socio-political dishevelment and would likely suggest that one find a quiet place in history with little fanfare.

So are these interesting times for the Jewish people and Israel, the way the Chinese see it or as defined in Dictionary.com?

Would we, the Jewish people, qualify the existence of the State of Israel, the amazing success of our people, and our freedom and ability to actualize our Jewishness and humanity in any way we see fit, as disturbing, perhaps too high-profile, or is it an engaging and winning time?

Would the Chinese say the interesting fact that every Jewish community (other than the Jewish community of Iran) has been freed and/or rescued - allowing for Syrian, Yemenite and Azjerbajanian Jews to live freer lives - is really a discomfoting thing? Or does this reality arouse a feeling of awareness and thrill?

How would the Chinese qualify the interesting celebration of Yom Ha'azmut - Israel's birthday? Would they see the site of 61 candles flickering in celebration as a curse, a negative time tinted in darkness; or as mesmerizing as the nature of an elephant that can cry and laugh?

As we approach Israel's 61st birthday, I would say that these are indeed interesting times, both according to the Chinese and dictionary.com. I will be Talmudic in nature.

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To many Jews around the world, being alive today and watching the incredible growth of Israel on a daily basis is interesting in spades. Watching dozens of cranes standing tall over Tel Aviv and Jerusalem as symbols of urban growth, as well as the sophisticated agricultural tools making the Negev desert blossom and weep with happy moisture, is most engaging and certainly holds my attention. In this, I read 'interesting' according to dictionary.com.

The Chinese have a point though. How often do you hear from a fellow Jew, 'I wish there was less news about Israel, and God would select some others as the chosen people for a while?' It seems that the latitude and speed at which we grow (in some areas of life) leaves others behind, and envious. This can be a curse. You know when you grow ahead of someone you love, or a person you know, somewhere in there negative feelings crop up...a sense of 'why you and not me.'

We, the Jewish people are an interesting tribe as is our Homeland, Israel. One cannot help but be fascinated by the magic we have created in the Diaspora and in the State of Israel. Perhaps an appropriate blessing however for the coming year, 5769/2009 is: May other nations be as interesting as we are!

Happy Birthday Israel. Happy Birthday to the Jewish people. Keep up your good work, just stop being so damn interesting.

See Avrum's Blog - <http://avrum.net> for more about Israel and the Jewish people

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### PERSONALIA

We welcome back the following Habonim Members from the March of the Living trip to Poland and Israel: Emily Friedman, Jennie Greben, Eve Hurwitz, Joel Kadish.

Our heartfelt condolences go out the family of Loretta Grammer, who passed away recently.

Our sympathy goes out to the family of Edgar Wittekind, who passed away recently.

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### DONATIONS

#### **In Memoriam:**

In loving memory of my dear parents, Sophie and Bernard Sion - Rhoda Sion

Remembering my dearest mother, Hetty Goldberg, with love - never to be forgotten - Phyllis Mint

My dearest brother, Marcus Goldberg, is remembered with love and sadness - never, ever to be forgotten - Phyllis Mint

To the Firestone family - We send our sincere condolences on your tragic loss - Joan and Clifford Lax

The Morton and Small families are remembering with love and sadness our dear son and brother Richard Morton.

#### **Greetings:**

Congratulating Gerda Gottlieb on her special birthday - Phyllis Mint

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### HABONIM VOLUNTEERS

**Past President:** Samantha Goldman

**Vice Presidents:** Rhonda Page & Andrew Szende

**Authorized Signing Officers:** Dianne Erdos-Rush, Samantha Goldman, Ted Rechtshaffen

### ASSIGNED ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

**Board Secretary:** Dianne Erdos-Rush,  
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Here are the links to the Passover stories Eli has recorded.  
You can find them at:  
[http://web.me.com/uiaeli/Eli\\_Passover\\_Stories/General\\_Passover\\_Stories.html](http://web.me.com/uiaeli/Eli_Passover_Stories/General_Passover_Stories.html)

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## JAHREZEITEN

### *To be Read at the May 2009 Services*

Gangolf Herman	Iyar 7	May 1
Andrew Leufer	Iyar 9	May 3
Dennis Grant	Iyar 9	May 3
Richard Spitz	Iyar 11	May 5
Steve Jussem	Iyar 12	May 6
Erica Reider	Iyar 12	May 6
Selma Kohn	Iyar 13	May 7
Max Gottlieb	Iyar 14	May 8
Arthur Steuermann	Iyar 16	May 10
Judy Morton	Iyar 16	May 10
Rae Brager	Iyar 17	May 11
Jacob Goldman	Iyar 17	May 11
Irma Lobel	Iyar 17	May 11
Henry Ritter	Iyar 18	May 12
Nathan Saslove	Iyar 18	May 12
Samuel Ostrow	Iyar 18	May 12
Stanley H. Goldberg	Iyar 20	May 14
Willy Ekstein	Iyar 22	May 16
Karl Placek	Iyar 23	May 17
Lewis Finestone	Iyar 28	May 22
Ethel Spector	Iyar 28	May 22
Isadore Haber	Iyar 28	May 22
Hyman Charkow	Iyar 28	May 22
Giselle Pollak	Iyar 28	May 22
Edith Tarshis	Iyar 29	May 23
Allan Lax	Iyar 29	May 23
Lois H. Sufrin-Spigel	Iyar 29	May 23
Guenther H. Orbach	Sivan 5	May 28
Bela Erdos	Sivan 5	May 28

### **In mourning:**

Ken Kagan, Mary Slomen, Abraham Nachamovitz, Sam Cukier, Rae Steuermann, Jack Litvack, Joyce Kuttner, Peter Barsony, Ben Mandell, Sylvia Van Der Hout, Bella Tiefenbach, Celia Fischer, Eve Baxter, Arnold Jussem, Kaethe Ritter, Aron Kravchik, Kate Freeman, Dr. Ladislaus Vogel, Hillary Firestone, Lorretta Grammer, Edgar Wittekind

Information and contributions to THE BULLETIN?  
call Erika Erdos at 416-787-0527  
e-mail [eerdos@sympatico.ca](mailto:eerdos@sympatico.ca)

Deadline for contributions to the next Bulletin:  
*Friday, May 8, 2009*

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