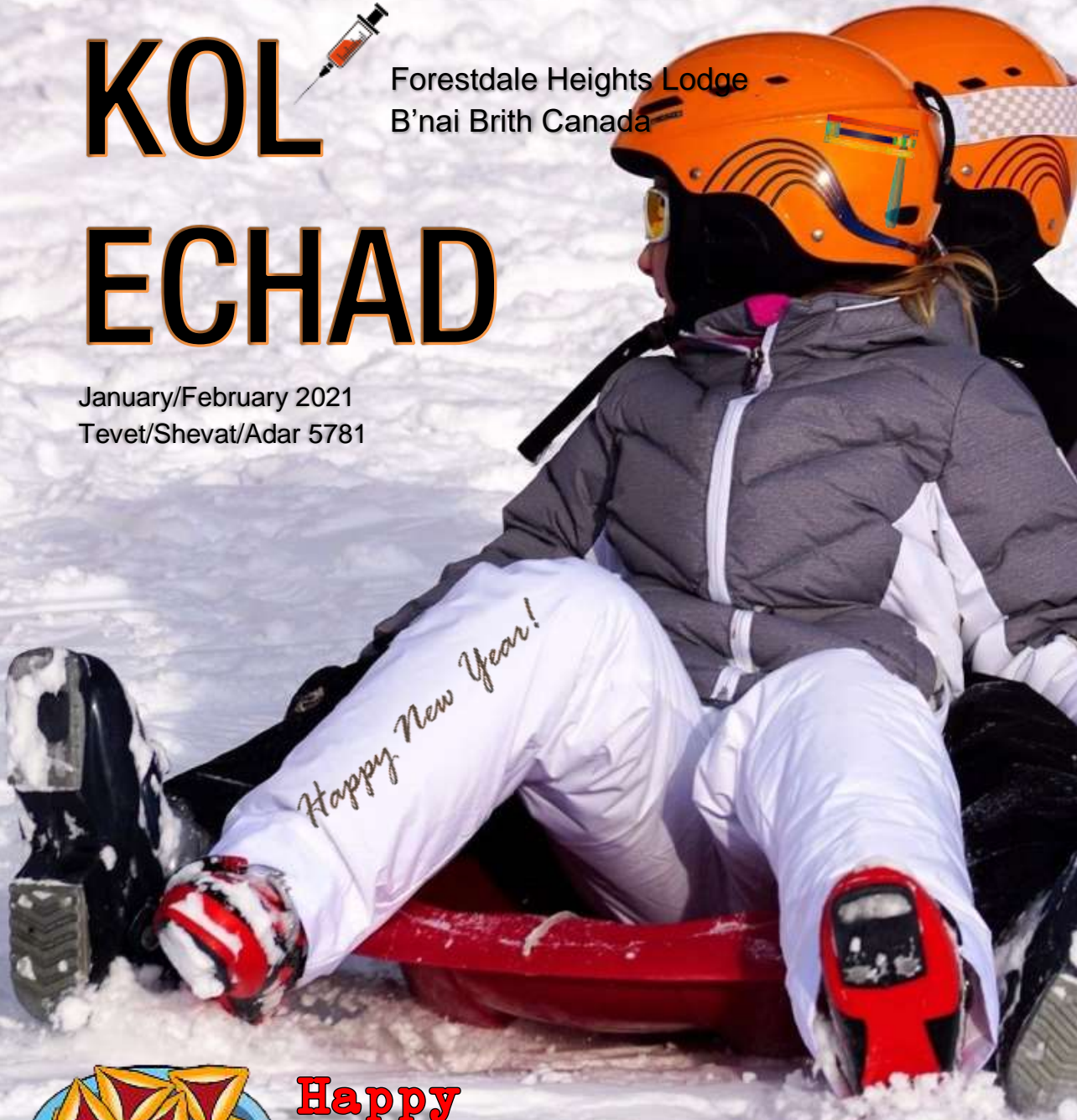


KOL ECHAD

Forestdale Heights Lodge
B'nai Brith Canada

January/February 2021
Tevet/Shevat/Adar 5781



**Happy
Purim**

Volume 19, No 3

COVER ART

A new year dawns? Will it be better than the one we just left behind? At this point, no one has the answer. Right now, we might as well play in the snow.

Happy New Year



Don't forget, Purim comes early this year.
The holiday starts on Thursday, February 25.

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KOL ECHAD

Kol Echad is the official publication of Forestdale Heights Lodge, B'nai Brith Canada.

It is published five times a year.

We welcome all articles and letters from members of the Lodge and their spouses.

All material submitted is subject to editing.

The editor may consult with members of the bulletin committee re-garding suitability and editorial decisions.

All opinions expressed in Kol Echad are those of the individual writers and do not reflect the views of either Forestdale Heights Lodge or B'nai Brith Canada.

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AT A GLANCE

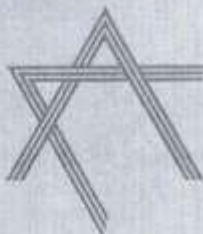
Zoom meetings to be held on the following dates during 2021. All Dates Subject to Change

February 1, March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7

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PRESIDENT'S PEN

Ruth Pupko

As I am writing this column, the sun is shining bright and clear; it is a gorgeous day. There is no way to tell that it's winter unless you look outside and don't see all the people that used to walk outside. Sometimes it even looked like there was a small walking marathon in my neighbourhood! These walks energize me and I look forward to my coffee or tea when I come inside.

I can't believe that Starbucks and the Second Cup are both gone. Where will I meet my friends when this is over? What a Bagel was also a godsend for the bubbies and zaidys to go for lunch and schmooze. I hope that they will still be able to do so as they are not youngsters. Look who should talk; my generation has taken over the condo mania. We are now called "YOUNG SENIORS," well-seasoned and ready to take up any challenges that come our way.

This year will soon end and we will reflect upon 2020, as this is where all the nations connected and went through the same times as us. Hashem works in mysterious ways! 2021 will be a wonderful year full of promise and good hopes for all as the vaccine has been approved for use in Canada.

Our fourth virtual meeting was held on December 7. We have fully adapted to this way of staying connected and informed. Letters of appreciation and cards were sent out to EMS/fire and police stations. A very big thank you to Rosalie for all your hard work in completing this project. We have sent donations to three food banks and have allocated and will be sending funds to seven charities and a special donation to Ve'ahavta for the purchase of gloves, mittens etc.

Thank you to all the members who have guided me and helped me so far. In closing, I would like to wish you a very Happy New Year. I hope everyone had a wonderful Chanukah.

I look forward to our next meeting in 2021.

**HAPPY
NEW YEAR**





EDITOR'S DESK

Jeff Rosen

Here we are in the first week of the second last month of what is turning out to be the worst year of the 21st century. As of this writing, Americans have gone to the polls just two days earlier. Right now, there are no declared winners to determine who will govern the United States for the next four years. By the time you read this, though, everything should be settled. However, the 59th quadrennial presidential election revealed flaws within the

American political system.

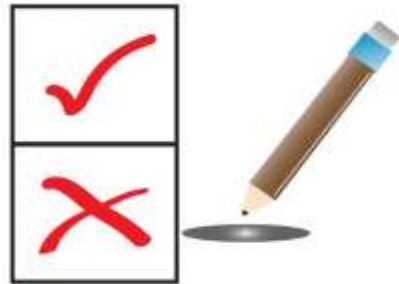
Election night came and went, and, of course, there was no declared winner for that country's top electoral post. As well, many of the races for Congressional seats were not settled that evening. It should not have come as much as a surprise given that some states counted their mail-in ballots after the polls closed.

While Trump's post-vote actions were not that much of a surprise, it was sad to see Americans take to the streets, demanding that tabulators stop counting the vote. It was even more painful watching the President's juvenile behaviour. It was equally disturbing to see elected politicians from across the U.S. call for their Supreme Court to get involved in overturning the people's democratic choice. Is this where the United States is heading in the century's second decade?

I hope not as it could pose serious problems for that country's future. It could also have long-term ramifications for our own political system.

I talked with a few people, contrasting our electoral system with that of our southern neighbour. Here, an election is called, and Elections Canada steps in and runs the show, from "coast to coast to coast." The same rules apply from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador. We also have an independent electoral boundaries commission in each province that reviews existing ridings and proposes adjustments.

Continued on next page



Contrast that with the U.S., where each state sets its own rules and regulations. The result is a colossal mess, made worse due to the increased number of mail-in ballots in 2020.

I realize that our system is far from perfect (what system is?). Contrasted with the rules set out for choosing the United States president, I still think our system is better.

* * *

In the end, sanity seems to have prevailed. The United States of America now has a president who knows how to smile and enjoy life. It also has the first Jewish occupant at U.S. Naval Observatory, the Vice President's home, as Kamala Harris' husband is Jewish. No doubt, this coming Pesach will be a lively affair in D.C.

Still, I fear the United States remains a nation divided.

* * *

Closer to home, cases of COVID-19 continue to rise across Ontario. Premier Doug Ford continues to implore the public to shun large social gatherings, while lauding the non-COVID measures inserted into his government's omnibus budget bill. Sure, there may be more long-term care facilities in the coming years, but at what cost to the environment? I guess he hoped that news about the pandemic vaccine's rollout would overshadow some of his more controversial legislation.



As of this writing, Premier Ford has been unsuccessful in preventing the virus from rolling through many long-term care homes as the province experienced a second wave. While the Conservative government inherited many of these problems, after two years in power, they must assume responsibility for finding a solution. We are far past the point where it's acceptable for them to say they are looking into the issue.

At the same time, we have witnessed outbreaks in some public schools across the province. Again, the government offers no solution.

What has been our government's go-to response in every situation?

Shame, shame, the Premier has repeated during more than one press briefing. These same leaders are going to be responsible for the rollout of the vaccines.

The heart weeps. I guess the only thing we can do now is to stay safe and hang on until the ride comes to a safe stop.

It promises to be a long and dreary winter.

I urge everyone, to be safe, and be well.



PERSPECTIVES

The Children's Bible in a Nutshell

In the beginning, which occurred near the start, there was nothing but God, darkness, and some gas. The Bible says, 'The Lord thy God is one, but I think He must be a lot older than that.

Anyway, God said, 'Give me a light!' and someone did.

Then God made the world.

He split Adam and made Eve. Adam and Eve were naked, but they weren't embarrassed because mirrors hadn't been invented yet.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating one bad apple, so they were driven from the Garden of Eden.....Not sure what they were driven in, though, because they didn't have cars.

Adam and Eve had a son, Cain, who hated his brother as long as he was Abel.

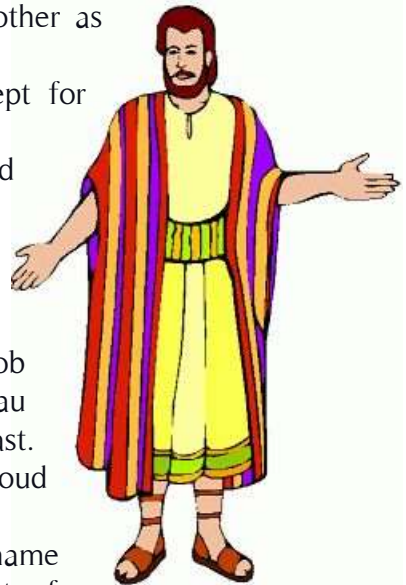
Pretty soon, all of the early people died off, except for Methuselah, who lived to be like a million or something.

One of the next important people was Noah, a good guy, but one of his kids was a Ham. Noah built a large boat and put his family and some animals on it. He asked some other people to join him, but they said they would have to take a rain check.

After Noah came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob was more famous than his brother, Esau, because Esau sold Jacob his birthmark in exchange for some pot roast. Jacob had a son named Joseph, who wore a really loud sports coat.

Another important Bible guy is Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after G-d sent 10 plagues on Pharaoh's people. These plagues included frogs, mice, lice, bowels, and no cable.

Continued on next page



G-d fed the Israel Lights every day with manicotti. Then he gave them His Top 10 Commandments. These include: don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance, or covet your neighbour's stuff.


Oh, yeah, I just thought of one more: Humour thy father and thy mother.

One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua, who was the first Bible guy to use spies. Joshua fought the battle of Geritol, and the fence fell over on the town.

After Joshua came David. He got to be king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon, who had about 300 wives and 500 porcupines. My teacher says he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me.

After Solomon, there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a giant whale and then barfed up on the shore.

There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them.




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B'NAI BRITH CANADA INITIATIVES

While most of us are safely hunkered down at home, what happens to our poor, the infirm and our elderly, who cannot even afford groceries during this time of crisis, let alone travel outside their home?

We at B'nai Brith closed down our daily meal program for seniors, veterans, until we can safely recommence with due regard for our participants' safety.

We have created an emergency response plan to ensure that the needy and at-risk within our GTA community do not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from, including those families previously serviced by the Pride of Israel Kosher Food Bank.

\$75 is the cost per week to feed one family. To sponsor bag(s) or further support this B'nai Brith Emergency Initiative, please let us know.


Can you volunteer to prepare and deliver food bags?

As little as one hour a week of volunteering can save a life. All volunteers must be healthy adults, and proper social distancing and compliance with public health measures will be enforced. To volunteer, please e-mail foodv@bnaibrith.ca.

B'nai Brith Canada is proud to offer an easy solution for those looking to donate items. Continuing with the Jewish custom of *tzedakah*, we respectfully suggest donating them to B'nai Brith. These can be items of a deceased loved one, a downsizing move, or an estate purge.

B'nai Brith Canada operates a clothing bin donation program which we highly value and is an essential lifeline in our community. We redistribute items to seniors, new immigrants, war veterans, individuals with disabilities and those who are living at or below the poverty line.

B'nai Brith makes it simple. Just give us a call at **416-633-6224 ext. 120** between 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Fridays, and one of our trained, specialists will arrange to come to your home, **free of charge** anywhere in the GTA and surrounding areas.





TALKING POINTS

Debbi Silver

What's your day going to be like? Ours is the same day in and day out. Sure, we go to our drugstore, and visit doctors when they aren't virtual or to Tim's for Ice Capp. It really is mind-boggling that we are now in our 10th month of either lockdown or red zone. It has become depressing, and no matter whom you talk to, everyone is in the same boat. Who is tired of watching movies on T.V.? For the few of you who are still working, good for you. What I would give for a part-time job or just plain volunteering, which I did before COVID-19.

Chanukah is next week, and yet again, we will visit our family on the driveway or in the garage. Zoom has been a blessing for most people. At least you can see people. Ok, enough of depressing writing.

The best thing is that we are alive and well.

Now back to reality. Forestdale Heights Lodge is doing the best we can. Usually, boxes of cookies and/or chocolates are delivered to EMS, fire and police stations at the end of December. This year due to COVID-19, it is not being done. Rosalie (Moscoe) offered to send letters to each of the stations, explaining why we won't be visiting. She has done a fantastic job, getting all the addresses, stuffing the envelopes and getting them in the mail — Yasher Koach to you, Rosalie.

Letters will be going out In January to the organizations that are on our allocations list. This is a crucial year to give out the funds.

That's it for this month.....I wish there was more exciting news....The vaccines will be out shortly, and, oh yes, President-Elect Biden will be sworn in on January 20 (if Trump lets him, lol).

Take care and stay safe....wear a mask.

Fondly.



CVS@CHANUKAH



At the last Lodge meeting, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown rules, we decided not to deliver boxes of cookies or other goodies to police, fire and EMS stations. In past years, our members delivered packages in person, with a holiday card and letter of thanks. We wanted to continue this tradition this year, to acknowledge the vital work of these courageous front-line workers and to thank them for putting their lives on the line for all of us. Therefore, we decided to send holiday cards along with a letter of heartfelt thanks from the Lodge.

I took on the task of getting addresses for about 20 stations (since most members were in the habit of just driving to their fire/police stations without noticing the number of the station or even the address. Ray and I included!) It was a bit of a task finding all the correct information. However, the list was eventually completed, and the cards and letters were sent out in the mail. Thanks to everyone for your assistance! I believe this gesture is a great way to spread goodwill from our community.

Rosalie Moscoe

A trip back through 2020

Explaining the Pandemic to my Past Self

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ms7capx4Cb8>

Explaining the Pandemic to my Past Self, Part 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdyDpP2s-og>

Explaining the Pandemic to my Past Self, Part 3

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pbdk_IBCxJk

PURIM 5781/2021



For years, members of FHL have gathered at the B'nai Brith Seniors' Residence to celebrate the Purim holiday, listen to members of the Kelman family recite the Megillah and enjoy hamantaschen and clementines. This year, we are unable to get together. All being well, we will regroup for Purim 2022. In the meantime, we present a collection of "golden oldies" from years past. For the complete slideshow, go to kolechad.ca/purim21.htm.



PASSOVER GREETINGS


To all members of Forestdale Heights Lodge:




This year we will be running Pesach Greetings in the March/April issue of Kol Echad.

The deadline to put a greeting in is February 5.

Please send wording for your greeting to jelijo@sympatico.ca.



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FOOD SENSATIONS

OVEN ROASTED POTATOES

Ingredients

1 lb red or yellow-skinned potatoes
1 tbsp. olive oil
0.5 tsp. garlic powder
1.5 tbsp. fresh herbs chopped (rosemary, parsley, thyme, basil)
0.25 tsp. paprika
Coarse salt and pepper to taste



Instructions

Pre-heat oven to 425.

Scrub potatoes (do not peel them). Dice into 1" cubes.

If time allows, soak potatoes in cold water for up to one hour. This removed starch and makes for a fluffier potato. Drain and dry potatoes, if required.

Toss potatoes, olive oil, herbs and seasonings.

Place on a baking sheet and bake for 30-35 minutes until browned and tender.

Notes

Use any combination of herbs you like. Dry spices/herbs can be substituted. Any kind of potatoes will work in this recipe and peeling potatoes is optional.

What Temperature to Roast Potatoes

I most often roast potatoes at 425°F as I love how it crisps the outside. Depending on what else you have going in the oven, you can cook potatoes at a lower temp if needed (but you may need a longer baking time).

The following cook times are for 1" potato cubes:

- Bake at 350°F for 45-50 minutes.
- Bake at 375°F for 35-40 minutes.
- Bake at 400°F for 30 minutes.
- Bake at 450°F for 20-25 minutes.

NOVEMBER MEETING

It must be true what they say, “third time’s a charm,” as this month’s Lodge meeting was held without a lot of the cross talk that marred our previous two sessions.

On Monday, November 2, the Lodge held its third Zoom meeting of the season with a slightly reduced turnout. Our moderator, Stewart Indig, started the session off by muting everyone’s microphone. As the evening went on, microphones were turned on when someone raised their hands, indicating they had a question or had something to contribute. While all microphones were eventually left on, members continued to listen patiently to what others had to say without interruption.

Those taking part included the president, Ruth Pupko, the meeting’s moderator, Stewart Indig, Albert Ohana, Rosalie Moscoe, Harvey & Debbi Silver, Elizabeth Bloom, and Jeff & Lisa Rosen. Unfortunately, Ray Moscoe was called away for a meeting of his condominium board. We also learned that Eddie



Arkin had been admitted to the hospital. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Before the meeting commenced, members were welcomed into the Zoom meeting room, and we caught up on what was going on in each other’s lives. This part of the evening is very similar to the time we spent enjoying our pre-meeting dinner.

Continued on next page



During the meeting, Harvey Silver reported how much money had been collected from our pushka cans. I noted that the Lodge had collected all ad revenue from our Chanukah Greetings in the last issue of Kol Echad. It was decided that there would be a Pesach Greetings open to all members.

Debbi also opened the discussion on donating men's underwear to Ve'ahavta. It was decided that the Lodge would be making the purchase for this worthwhile programme.

Finally, Ruth reminded everyone to bring their chanukiahs to the December meeting. She said that we could all light them at the same time while holding our next Zoom meeting. We were also encouraged to bring our best latkes and doughnuts!

Jeff Rosen

Kol Echad schedule for the 2020-21 season

January 2021/February 2021 – Winter/Purim Issue

March 2021/April 2021 – Pesach Issue

May 2021/June 2021 – Wrap Up Issue

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DECEMBER MEETING

“Chanukah, Oh Chanukah, come light the menorah...”

Of course, this year, we couldn't gather to light the chanukiah. No doubt, Albert would have arranged for latkes to be served as part of our pre-meeting dinner. I guess we'll have to make our own this year.

The final meeting of 2020, held on Monday, December 7, did have a Chanukah theme, though, as members tuned in on Zoom with their own menorahs, and it was festive – to a point.

FHL president Ruth Pupko even asked everyone to share their own Chanukah memories and stories before we got down to business. She led off with several holiday-themed jokes, a few of which were even funny.

As well as Ruth, this month's on-line get together included the meeting's moderator, Stewart Indig, Albert Ohana, Eddie Arkin, Rosalie & Ray Moscoe, Harvey & Debbi Silver and Jeff & Lisa Rosen.

A discussion was held on how the Lodge could fundraise during the pandemic. A few ideas were tossed around, including an on-line games night.

Debbi Silver also presented which charities and organizations will receive an allocation from the Lodge this season.

After the “formal” part of the meeting concluded, there was plenty of good-hearted banter before everyone wished each other a Happy Chanukah and a wish for a better 2021.

There will be no Lodge meeting in January. Forestdale Heights will meet again on Zoom on Monday, February 1, 2021.

Jeff Rosen



ENTERTAINMENT

Female Cantors from around the world united in song & prayer:
Yerushalayim Shel Zahav

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FORESTDALE FUNNIES

L'Chaim!

To understand his Jewish constituents, the town's mayor reached out to a popular local rabbi.

So the rabbi invited the mayor to spend Shabbat at his home.

The rabbi made kiddish Friday night on a full cup of wine.

Then, after the fish, he made a l'chaim on some fine scotch.

The main course came with Israeli wine.

They said Grace after Meals with another cup of wine.

The next day in shul, after services, they made kiddish on wine followed by herring, crackers and a few l'chaims on schnapps.

They went home, and the rabbi made kiddish for his family on another cup of wine, some l'chaim after the fish, and a nice Single Malt Scotch with the cholent, and some more wine with the grace after meals.

And when it got dark, the rabbi made Havdalah on yet another cup of wine. Then, over supper, they enjoyed more wine and Scotch whisky.

The mayor said to the rabbi, "Thank you for sharing your Shabbat with me. I had a wonderful time. While I still don't understand why you can't turn the lights on and off, I definitely understand why you cannot drive on Shabbat!"

The alphabet in 2021: ABDFGHJKLMNOQSVWXYZ.

There will be no more E.R., ICU, or T.P.

Why are locksmiths allowed to remain open during a lockdown?

They are key workers.



FORESTDALE FUNNIES

One day, the special golden phone on the desk of the Orthodox Israeli Chief Rabbi rings for the first time. Amazed, the Chief Rabbi picks up the phone and asks in a halting voice, “Who is there?”

“This is God speaking. I have two crucial messages to give you. Would you like the good news or the bad news first?”

The Rabbi, after a quick blessing, responds, “O Holy One, if it pleases you, please give me the good news first.”

God continues, “The good news is that all Jews will finally agree on one form of Judaism, and they will unite in peace, harmony, and mutual goodwill forever and ever.”

The Rabbi answers, “Baruch Hashem (Blessed is God), this is the most wonderful news in Jewish History! What could possibly be the bad news?”

God says, “I’m calling from Kol Hadash Humanistic Congregation.”

In February 2021, a man goes to the White House to see Donald Trump. He is told by the Marine on duty that Trump is no longer president and that he no longer resides there. Three days in a row the man returns to see Trump and each time the same Marine tells him Trump is no longer president.

On the fourth day, the Marine finally asks the man why he keeps coming back asking for Trump when he already knows the answer. The man replies, “I just love hearing you tell me Trump is no longer the president.” The Marine snaps to attention, salutes and says, “See you tomorrow, sir!”

It’s 2021, and President Joe Biden is told he needs to assemble a cabinet

Coming back from IKEA, he realizes he’s greatly misunderstood the task.





AS I SEE IT

Marc Kates

The first Chanukah candle was lit tonight (December 10) and spread its light into the world. This small beacon of light is not dissimilar from the news that the first COVID-19 vaccine was administered this past week in the U.K. Finally, there seems to be the proverbial light at the end of the long dark tunnel. The ramifications of the pandemic will be long lasting. Life as we knew it will have changed for good. When we finally come through this, we will never be the same.

From an economic standpoint, many small businesses will have had no other choice but to fold, and the impact on mental health will be immeasurable. I think back to my former students - the grade 7 student who cried on the computer to me because he was stuck at home, or the grade 8 student who was hospitalized with a mental health crisis. For these two students, their struggles were obvious and manifested themselves openly. It's the others I worry about, those whose mental health issues have not surfaced. It seems we've all lost the way in which we interact, and we struggle to make connections with others even though we're more "connected" than ever.

Over the next few months, more and more Canadians will receive the COVID-19 vaccine, starting with the most vulnerable populations, front line health care workers, and then the general population. Inoculating the Canadian population is a gargantuan task, but there is no doubt that we'll get it done. What is unclear is what will happen to those who refuse to be vaccinated. The most pressing issue now is what to do with those who still refuse to wear a mask and those who dismiss the concerns of public health officials. These gatherings are reckless and put the rest of us at risk. Yes, it does suck that holiday parties and family gatherings are diminished, but isn't that the definition of "short term pain for long term gain?"

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The truth is, as it has always been, individuals are responsible for their own actions. It's those people who choose their selfish behaviour over the health of their neighbour, which boggles the mind. Looking at the projections, I have little doubt that we will certainly see an increase in cases resulting from those who chose not to restrict gatherings at Christmas. We are all our brothers' keepers.

As we add an additional candle to the chanukiah, and as the light grows, we must all do what we can to ensure that the light we send out into the world increases. The future tomorrow will be brighter than today, but it's up to us to make it that way.





HARMONY

Rosalie Moscoe

Goodbye, 2020! It was such a promising start to a new decade! However, 2020 brought fear, sickness, deaths, and uncertainty. Now, heave out the old; bring in the new! We all carry on bravely, and in the summer/fall, Ray and I ate meals at picnic benches with friends. We have no visitors to our homes and lead “down in the doldrums” repetitive lives. Basically, it’s grocery shopping, making meals, picking up the odd take-out dinner, and watching too much TV. Ray says he’s getting square eyeballs from looking at a Zoom screen or TV. However, promise is awaiting us as we reach to grasp onto the brass ring.

COVID-19 vaccines are slated for all, and three cheers for the enigmatic president’s farewell residing south of the border! I could hardly keep up with the onslaught of e-mail jokes about the fiasco election turmoil and the 50 lawsuits brought by their administration to overturn their election results. Besides, we have enough of our own political issues to raise our blood pressures!

Life will feel normal once again with family get-togethers, hugs to our kids, grandkids, other relatives, and friends. What about going to a real movie theatre or play or concert, or the Art Gallery or the ROM? How about just sitting in a coffee shop with friends for a chat? Aaah, that will be a treat, as will dining inside a restaurant! I know it sounds like we’re spoiled brats, yet all these outings will help to keep us sane in these unprecedented times. A short trip to Florida would also do the trick!

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We still have this “wait and see” attitude clamping down on us. It’s a balancing act to live in a limbo state on the edge of fear. Those living alone are too often isolated. Even if we have a partner with whom to share our lives, it’s still difficult to have no real plans, no weddings or bar/bat mitzvahs or holiday gatherings to attend. It just plain sucks, making it too easy to get depressed and lonely. So, what can we do in the meantime to enhance our mental health? (Besides shop online, or watch Netflix), which, when we think of it, isn’t all that bad!

I found a free online exercise class at the MNJCC, and at the Prosserman Centre, you can enroll in fitness classes at <http://www.virtualJCC.com>. Feeling stress or anxious? Short meditation classes are offered through the UJA’s – <http://www.JACSToronto.org>. I find the soothing online meditation classes keep me on an even keel. I really need to be up, and out of my pyjamas, hair brushed with a little lipstick on! It gives me a great boost to start the day and something to look forward to as we banter around jokes and stories. There are other classes at JACSToronto about coping with many life issues, which help keep smiles on our faces.

Other happenings I have tackled include attending a worldwide Chanukah candle lighting. In the fall, Ray and I ventured to Hockley Valley to view the leaves’ wondrous changing. On less nippy days, to energize us, we often get out for walks. I enrolled in Ryerson’s Life Institute’s creative writing class and heard speakers through other groups I belong. To keep my brain noodling along, I’m fervently in the process of researching nutrition’s key role in recovery from substance abuse problems. I hope you can find some interesting or fun activities to help you stay positive and in touch with others and the world. A better day is coming! ☺

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MENTAL HEALTH CARE



Canadian Mental
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Mental health for all

YOUR SOCIAL DISTANCING SURVIVAL GUIDE

We are used to having built-in ways to connect. We connect at school and at work, at events and social activities, even with our neighbours in the grocery store. We have visited and we have socialized. And maybe, until now, we've seen all of that connection as simply a part of our everyday life. We can't wait any longer. For the time being, it's not a built-in feature of our lives. We have to go looking for a connection and we have to be creative. We need to make an effort to reach out to each other.

Here's your guide to connecting with others in these difficult times:

Make it part of your routine. Set a time, or several times, over the course of the day, and call it "social connection time." This will be a dedicated time when you forego all distractions and check-in or share with others — like on your morning walk.

Make a date. Book a time for a conversation. Send an e-mail or a message, or just call someone spontaneously, inviting them to a phone date, or a video chat.

Schedule it in. Just like you would a meeting (or a dentist appointment) write the time in your agenda or put an alert on your phone. "At such and such an hour, I'm going to reach out to a friend, colleague or family member." They want to hear from you right now.

Let yourself be vulnerable. If you're craving connection, let others know. Let them know you feel isolated. Deepening your conversations will deepen your relationships.

Be honest. If you're not doing well, don't cover over the feelings. Share them openly.

Be generous and kind. Kindness can actually work to counter stress which is particularly important in these times. Send out a few words of gratitude on social media or send a kind message via e-mail.

Practice listening. Really listen to each other and give the other person space to let you know how they are really feeling, too. Learning to listen actively and carefully is key to having meaningful social interaction.

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Think outside your circle! Your family members and good friends aren't the only sources of social support. Who has offered you support in the past? This might be a good time to reconnect.

Join a virtual community. Go ahead and join a group, virtually. There are Facebook groups on just about everything and now is a good time to find community.

Remember the telephone and low-tech ways to connect. The phone is one of the most enduring and essential tools for the social connection that we have. If you want to reach someone long distance, you can use Skype audio, or WhatsApp, which both offer free services. Letter writing may be a lost art too. Corresponding by mail is a great way to reach out and connect. Canada Post is still there for you. So is your e-mail account.

Make the most of high-tech. Use video technologies, like Skype, Facebook or Messenger. Sign up for free. All you need is a computer with a camera, or a smartphone. Don't be shy: video is the face-to-face time when you can't be side-by-side. If you still feel shy: turn off the video view of yourself. This might help lighten feelings of self-consciousness.

Plan a virtual event. Participating in group activities can bring you closer to your friends, family, and members of your community. Zoom (zoom.us) is a free video platform created to host virtual meetings, but has become a central meeting space for people looking for opportunities to socialize. Here is a partial list of social activities you could host on Zoom: dinner party, play date, a sing-a-long, game night, trivia contest, book club meeting, coffee breaks or slide shows!

Remember you are not alone. Maybe most importantly, know that even if you feel alone, there are others out there, ready and waiting to help. If you're struggling:

Find a support group. With a simple Google search you can find on-line support groups and peer support services to engage on issues that matter most to you. Or get some peers together and host your own support group on Zoom.

Use e-mental health services. There are hundreds of on-line portals and hubs to connect you to virtual and on-line support services such as on-line courses, coaching and therapy. Check out the Government of Canada's new Wellness Together (ca.portal.gs/portal), or check in with your local CMHA (cmha.ca/find-your-cmha) to see what they have to offer on-line and over the phone.

In crisis? Please call 1-833-456-4566 toll-free, 24/7 or visit crisisservicescanada.ca

Material supplied by Canadian Mental Health Association.



COMMENT

COVID ETHICS

Putting aside what plausible legal arguments, if any, can be raised by those who are “anti-maskers” or refuse to follow government regulations and the opinions of medical experts pertaining to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19, of greater interest to me are the ethical issues that can arise. Here is an example. Should those who refuse to wear masks and take part in unsafe social gatherings receive the same medical care as those who follow the recommendations of health care experts and the regulations established by government authorities? In a worst-case situation where there are more patients in need of hospital ICU beds and ventilators than supplies permit, should a patient’s belief and actions with regards to COVID-19 determine who receives the available resources?

No one can seriously question the burden that this pandemic has exacted on the health care sector. Front line workers have unselfishly subjected themselves to the increased risk of contracting COVID-19 and many have died or become seriously ill. They must also live with the fear of infecting their loved ones. They are overworked and exhausted. The virus has also taken a disproportionate toll on the elderly and those with health problems. Anything that can lower this contagion rate in our community reduces risk to our health care heroes and our most vulnerable. Yet those who refuse to adhere to the safeguards or advocate against following them can contribute to an increase in the prevalence of the virus and potentially put us at greater risk.

Those who refuse to follow sound medical advice or government regulations may have reasons for adhering to their beliefs. Some face financial ruin because they have lost their jobs, or the mandated safeguards no longer make their businesses economically viable. There are conspiracy theorists who maintain that COVID-19 is a hoax perpetrated upon us by governments. And others believe as citizens of a free and democratic country they should be able to make decisions and act on them individually and without regard to how their choices and actions may impact others.

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Although the anti-maskers would oppose the regulations and the sanctions for non-compliance, they would rather acknowledge society's remedy for breaching government regulations as a fine or imprisonment than ever supporting the loss of any health care.

In my opinion they actually have a point. As taxpayers they are just as entitled to medical care as any other member of our society. A person in a free and democratic nation should not have their rights to health services determined by that person's beliefs. Do we deny cigarette smokers medical care because their second-hand smoke may be dangerous to others and their health care costs are disproportionately more expensive? We may next also want to deny criminals or terrorists health services. But what does that say about us and our society. There is a slippery slope here. Menachem Begin was Prime Minister of Israel but was also recognized at one time as a terrorist by the British before the establishment of the modern state of Israel. Who else could be deemed unacceptable? Jews in Nazi Germany were also refused government services because of their religion. Denying medical care to citizens may be expected in a totalitarian state, not a western democracy.

Yet, if two patients, one an anti-masker and the other a responsible compliant citizen, both suffering identical life-threatening health conditions and in immediate need of the only remaining ventilator, I have to admit that I see a better way to decide who gets the ventilator than by flipping a coin.

Carl Zeliger



COMMENT

Kingston Olive Oil Company Endorsement

For our last installation, we gave out a sample gift pack from one of our advertisers, namely Kingston Olive Oil. We really enjoyed the balsamic vinegar that we received.

So this year, I suggested to Cathy to get her two assistants a 6pk sampler for Chanukah. I also ordered a large balsamic vinegar for her and a 4pk gift pack for some variety.

We got our shipment and were charged for two 6pks but were only shipped one. Less than 30 minutes later, I get a phone call from Amy at the Kingston Olive Oil, very apologetic as she packed my order and knew for sure she did not send two. She would send out the other one tomorrow.

Not only does Kingston Olive Oil have great tasting products (we no longer use salad dressing), they also have amazing customer service. They truly do care about their customer.





Both Cathy and I cannot endorse them enough. Great company, great products.

Stewart Indig



CORRESPONDENCE


Toronto Police Service
40 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5G 2J3
(416) 808-2222 FAX (416) 808-8202
Website: www.TorontoPolice.on.ca



Office of the Chief of Police File Number:

December 8, 2020

Ms. Ruth Pupko
Forestdale Heights Lodge

Dear Ms. Pupko,


We are in receipt of your correspondence dated December 2020, appreciating the service police officers. Your message has been relayed to the officers at 53 Division.


It is important to hear your feedback on the service provided by the officers. Your kind words of praise and thanks are greatly appreciated.

We value our partnership with the community and if there is anything we can do in the future to assist you, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you very much for taking time to write, and we wish you all the best of the holiday season.

Sincerely,


Shaun Marine
Unit Commander
Central District
13 & 53 Division


Stacey Davis
Inspector
53 Division

/mgt

To Serve and Protect - Working with the Community



GOOD & WELFARE

Birthday

Ruth Pupko

February 14



If you have any memorable moments in your life (or the lives of your children and grandchildren) that you wish to share with the Lodge, please send announcements to jelijo@sympatico.ca.

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LOOKING BACK



Our dad (Albert) started working at Caruso at the age of 19 and has been a fixture in Yorkville ever since. His clients were always so thrilled when they met one of us. They have watched us grow up through the photos tucked into his mirror in front of his chair, asking, “Which one are you?” commenting that they have likely known our father longer than we have! It was impossible to walk in Yorkville with him without stopping to say hello to a handful of people, and we were able to put whatever we wanted at several of the local shops on “Albert’s tab.” Some may call him an artist, a

therapist and an entertainer all rolled into one – we just call him Dad and Papa. We are so very proud of all that he has accomplished and has been able to provide to us.

While the noise and heat from the dryers are dimmed after over 50 years at Salon Piaff, he will remain a fixture in the Yorkville hair scene (just somewhere else). As the days at Salon Piaff have come to a close, we suspect dad will be singing, “Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien (No Regrets),” by his favourite singer Edith Piaf, as he looks ahead with his scissors still in hand.



Xoxo
Danielle, Rebecca and Sherri
Children of Albert & Honey Ohana

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FINAL THOUGHTS

THE IMPORTANCE OF VITAMIN F

Why do I have a variety of friends who are all different in character?
Some of them have obvious flaws, but then, so do I.
How do I get on with them all?
I think that each one helps to bring out a "different" part of me...
With one of them, I am polite and as refined as I can manage.
I joke a lot with another.
I talk about serious matters with one.
With another, I laugh a lot.
I share a glass of wine with one,
And dance on occasion with another.
I listen to one friend's problems and give them advice.
Then I listen to another advising me.

They are all like pieces of a jigsaw,
When completed they form a treasure box.
A treasure of friends!
They are my friends, who understand me better than I myself do,
who support me through good days and bad days.
They are the anti-depressants that I need to make it through life.

Doctors tell us that friends are good for our health.
Dr. Oz calls them Vitamins F (for Friends) and recounts the many
benefits of friends to our well-being.

Research shows that people in strong social circles have less risk of
depression and terminal strokes. If you take Vitamin F constantly you
can be a lot younger than your physical age. The warmth of
friendship reduces stress and can decrease your risk of cardiac arrest or stroke.

We should all value our friends and keep in touch with them.
I'm fortunate to have a plentiful stock of Vitamin F!
Thank you for being one of my vitamins!





Purim Sameach!



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