

THE JUDAEAN

ALUMNI EDITION

WINTER 2022

ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING CANADIAN JEWISH YOUTH



BACK TO OUR ROOTS



CANADIAN YOUNG JUDAEA | 788 MARLEE AVENUE | TORONTO, ONTARIO | M6B 3K1 | CANADA

LETTER FROM THE BOARD

Transformed, inspired, and connected.

Those are the three words that appeared most often in our post-camp reviews this past summer, and for good reason – our camps had one of the most unique summers in recent history. Many of our campers and staff had never waited this long to return to our bunks and connect with their camp families. The reunion was nothing short of transformative and inspirational. I've spent more than 10 summers at CYJ camps and I don't think I've ever heard a more thunderous shira or a more animated rikud than what we heard at our camps this past summer.

The transformative experiences that our camps provided to thousands of Young Judaeans this summer is even more meaningful if you consider recent events. Between the anti-Semantic remarks and posts made by highly influential celebrities on social media, and while the masses hemmed and hawed before taking a stand against anti-Semitism, we were presented with another sobering reminder that anti-Semitism is on the rise.

Yet despite all the noise on social media, there were other voices that remained louder in my mind: those of our campers and staff this past summer at post-Shabbat shira.

CYJ's mission of ensuring that each and every child has the opportunity to experience the magic of Jewish overnight camp, has never been more important.

Our summers together strengthen our shared experience and bond as a Jewish people and inspire future generations to wear their Jewish identities with pride.

Anti-Semitism isn't a new phenomenon, and neither is CYJ. We've existed for over 100 years for a reason: to understand our history of perseverance in the face of adversity, but moreover, to recognize what it took to bring a dream back to life after 2,000 years. Nowadays, this also includes defending our proverbial 'walls' to ensure they won't be breached by ideas, politics or tweets by the powerfully uninformed. Instead, CYJ equips our young leaders with the confidence to continue to be warriors against injustice in the world but at the same time stand up to the crowds who purport that Israel is an affront to that cause.

As a Youth Movement, CYJ's history is one that underscores that our future is in the hands of our young, full of impassioned intellectual and emotional discourse that is powered by the community of peers and young leaders and mentors (which at CYJ we refer to as a "chevra", or a "group") in our vibrant camp settings full of Jewish ritual and experiences. It's that young power that built a state, and it's that young power that will guard it and our existence indefinitely – as long as we continue to transform, inspire, and connect.

Chazak Ve'Ematz,



Daniel Sourani,
Board Chair, Board of Directors
Canadian Young Judaea ■



PS - Canadian Young Judaea's Camper Scholarship Fund is 100% funded by your generous donations, and receives no support from UJA or any government body. Thank you for your ongoing support to ensure that no young leader is turned away because of financial constraints.



LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It takes a village...

Dear Judaeans,

I have always believed that it takes a village to raise a child, to make your community a better place, and to ensure the happiness of a camper. Over the last three decades, I have been privileged to see how Judaeans support each other in good times and bad. People have often commented to me, who are these kids and where did they come from? I proudly say they are YJ'ers who have grown up attending camp and building lasting relationships.

Over the past 8 months, my family and I have witnessed firsthand the impact Judaeans have when they come together to support an alumnus. As many of you know, my husband, Amir, passed away in early April after 36 years of marriage. We met at Biluim Canada in 1986; he was a Shaliach and I was Program Director, and the rest was history. We chose a very private path during his illness and passing. However, that did not stop the outpouring of condolences, donations, meals, notes and so much more from the people who know through this Movement.

The support of the CYJ community was truly overwhelming for my family, and it gave us great comfort during a very painful time. As the past Director of Camp Solelim, I could not believe how many of my staff whom I have not spoken to in years sent me their memories of Amir- either playing music with him or helping in construction to



improve the site and camp experience. Parents of campers who reached out to me reminded me of a kindness I had shown them in the past and extended their condolences and support. It took 30 years as Executive Director to realize that the CYJ community was truly my community, one I could rely on, not only when I am strong and resilient but also when I grieve and experience loss.

Thanks to so many donors, the Epstein-Gamliel Fund raised over twenty thousand dollars in scholarships to set aside for Biluim Israel participants. As the summer of 2023 approaches, I can think of no better use of the funds than to help another generation of young people fall in love with Israel.

On behalf of myself, Annie and Lorne, Fay and Ellie I would like to thank all of you who have been standing with us through this difficult time. I am incredibly proud to be a part of the incredible CYJ family and I know that it is our members that make this Movement special and will ensure the continuity of our community.

Chazak Ve'Ematz.

Risa Epstein
National Executive Director ■



CYJ THROUGH THE YEARS

BACK TO OUR ROOTS

Highlighting Canadian Young Judaea National from 1950-1969



Camp Kadimah 1950



1963 Kadimah



Madrichim 1963



Maritime YJ Conf. Saint John 1950



Jeff Goldberg, Barry Slawsky, Wendy Narod 1963



Biluim Canada 1964 Visitors Day



Kingston, 1965



Biluim 1952 - Herb Goldman bottom left



Biluim 1961



Camp Solelim 1966



Camp Solelim 1966

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

EASTERN REGION

JAKE BEIR,
EASTERN COORDINATOR

CYJ's Eastern Region has just begun running its programs and things are going magically. Our first JOLT meeting took place in mid-November, where our campers reflected on what it means to be a leader in their community and learned about Canadian Young Judaea's five central values, the Darkeinu. They are looking forward to the upcoming outreaches this year. The Alumim campers enjoyed a performance from The Amazing Todsky, a talented and wacky magician in their inaugural activity. The campers were so excited to see their friends again, make some new ones, and of course, enjoy the magic!

Montreal's Youth Council have had their first two meetings and is very excited to plan some brand new initiatives for the 2022-2023 year! This is Montreal's fifth Youth Council since its first meeting in 2018. We just got the ball rolling with our Chalutzim participants who had their annual bowling night. In December, Youth Council ran their annual Chanukah party for the younger campers and got into the holiday spirit! In the new year, JOLT participants can look forward to many outreach opportunities and some fun activities planned by their Youth Council. Alumim and Chalutzim campers also have some fun programs on the horizon, including a Tu Bishvat program and ice skating! ■

OUR YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMS HAVE TAKEN OFF ACROSS THE COUNTRY. CHECK OUT SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS SO FAR...

CENTRAL REGION

SHAYLI LIEDERMAN,
CENTRAL COORDINATOR

With 2023 rolling in quickly, CYJ Central Region's year is only just beginning. These past couple of months CYJ Central Region has started off strong. CYJer's of all ages have had their fair share of fun whether it be during our fall retreat, Mifgash, or during our year-round programming such as JOLT, Youth Council, or Alumim! JOLT has been off to an exciting beginning, exploring philanthropic opportunities within the community and beyond. Our teens at JOLT have had the chance to take part in conversations about community needs and have given back.

Through a toiletry drive, JOLT has had the privilege of collecting items for a women's and children's shelter. In the coming months, JOLT will explore topics such as mental health, food insecurity, and climate change. Central Region Youth Council has been meeting twice a month and is developing some fantastic and fun ideas for the CYJ community for the coming year!

The Alumim campers are also getting excited about the first program of the year: Mad Science! Alumim will be having many incredible opportunities for the youngest campers to meet one another, get to know CYJ and have fun. Upcoming, Alumim Central Region will be hosting a Channukah party, a Tu Bishvat celebration and so much more. Stay tuned for even more upcoming opportunities in the Central Region! ■



SHINSHINIM UPDATE

URI & NIRI,
CYJ SHINSHINIM

Shalom everyone!

We are Niri and Uri and we are the new UJA ShinShinim at Canadian Young Judaea. We volunteer at Beth David shul and Montessori Jewish Day school as well. In CYJ, we take part in Youth Council and the Alumim program.

We live in the same city in Israel, Hod Hasharon, where we were both members of the Scouts. The youth movement has been a big part of our lives, therefore we are thrilled to be a part of CYJ, and to learn about the difference and similarities. We came to Canada 3 months ago, and we've had such a great time so far. We've learned more about Toronto, been meeting so many wonderful community members,

and explored the city. We are, however, still trying to adjust to the weather.

In October, we were so grateful to join Mifgash where we met campers from all over Canada and ran our own program! We had so much fun participating in the activities, dances, songs, blessings and learning some of the camp's traditions. As our first Jewish camp experience, we have nothing but amazing things today and this experience has made us even more excited to spend the summer at CYJ camps.

Additionally, we meet with Toronto's Youth Council every other week. With this amazing group we get to influence CYJ Toronto, and of course,

have a lot of fun! Together we are currently planning an amazing Alumim Chanukah party. Not long ago we had our first Alumim program with Mad Science, where we learned about Yam Hamelach and why we float there. We had so much fun and can't wait to meet more of you at future events!

We are so excited for the rest of the year and look forward to getting to know you all better. ■



CAMP DIRECTOR UPDATES

CAMP SHALOM REBECCA DIAMOND

Hello CYJ Families! To say that the summer of 2022 at Camp Shalom was great is an understatement! We were constantly appreciative of the amount of joy and laughter we saw throughout the summer, and when I reflect on what I think was our biggest accomplishment, it was the emphasis we put on these core Jewish values - kindness, warmth, care, compassion and community.

Having fun and developing skills are all part of the camp experience, but at the heart of these experiences is a need for a true sense of feeling connected and cared about – belonging, appreciated, accepted, confident, capable, and understood. We are not a fancy camp with a lot of bells and whistles, but we are a camp filled with people who care about each other, who value friendships and who feel connected with a true sense of belonging.

Some of my favourite memories from last summer were watching the SFL (Shalom Football League), Shira and Rikud on Shabbat, nut wars (no actual nuts are used!), Yom Israel day, visiting our camping trips, seeing the invigorated sail program, watching Wrestlefest, going on pontoon parties and of course the incredible ruach and excitement of Maccabiah!

We are in the midst of planning for summer 2023. We are so excited to welcome back a record number of return campers and some amazing new

IN 2022 ALL OF OUR AFFILIATE SUMMER CAMPS WERE UP AND RUNNING. WE HAVE LOTS TO CELEBRATE FROM THIS PAST SUMMER, AND SO MUCH MORE TO LOOK FORWARD TO...

families to the Camp Shalom chevra. We have some great surprises in the works and we know that Summer 2023 is going to be incredible! Chazak Ve'amatz ■



CAMP KINNERET & CAMP BILUIM GUY KORNGOLD

Dear Fellow Judaeans,

If you ask any Camp Director, I know that they will, unfortunately, concur with me when I say that many of our youth are still dealing with the effects of two years of isolation from the Covid pandemic. With the significant increase in the incidence rates of anxiety and depression, the summer camp experience is regarded as a panacea. This will be my twenty-fourth consecutive season as the Director of Camp Kinneret-Biluim and I am confident when I say that our work has never been more important.

In May of 2022, less than two months before the start of our season, a tornado ravaged our campsite felling nearly 500 trees. This number of trees represents but a small fraction of the trees on our site, but the loss is still significant. One

week before the storm, our arborist came to camp for his annual inspection, and this thankfully spared our camp buildings and structures. Beyond the devastation of losing so many trees, the only damage caused by the storm was to part of the fence that surrounds our basketball courts. We spent all of May, June, August and September clearing the felled trees and we are going to plant many saplings this coming summer. Our forest at camp looks better than ever and we look forward to all of the new growth.

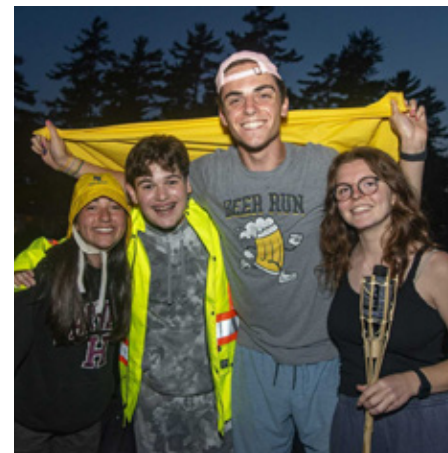
We are excited as we go from strength to strength and are very much looking forward to the summer season of 2023. In early October we opened camper registration and both Kinneret and Biluim were filled within two days. Our leadership team is expanding with the addition of a second Assistant Director, and I am thrilled to announce that Carmel Avitzur and Sierra Leibner will be serving as our Kinneret and Biluim Assistant Directors. As I write this letter, our entire head staff team is preparing to meet at our camp in Mont Tremblant to begin planning what will surely be our Best Summer Ever (BSE)! I am also excited to announce that the summer of 2023 will witness the introduction of a speed boat for waterskiing and rafting and that we have already started construction on three new gazebos to house our Biluim Hadracha groups and three additional Biluim staff tents to accommodate a larger Biluim staff team. We also have a couple of other surprises in store for all of our Kinneret and Biluim campers and look forward to announcing them in the spring!

Chazak Ve'amatz ■

CAMP KADIMAH THE KADIMAH TEAM

To our wonderful Alumni Community, After two long summers of having our gates closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is a thrill to be able to write to you about the incredible summer we had at Camp Kadimah this year! This summer we were delighted to welcome over 250 campers and over 100 staff to our community in beautiful Barss Corner, Nova Scotia. Our campers were so excited to take part in all of the activities our camp has to offer, and they were particularly ecstatic to continue our camp's time honoured CYJ traditions such as Mifkad and the Havdalah ceremony. Many of our returning staff were grateful for the ability to work at other CYJ camps in 2021 while Kadimah was closed, and they were so excited to bring back songs, dances, and program ideas they learned during their time at the other camps.

Ultimately, we were able to return after our hiatus even stronger, with healthy ties to our nationwide movement, and better able to serve both our own community and our broader Young Judaea community. We are currently hard at work planning for the summer of 2023, which will be our 80th anniversary and we cannot wait to welcome everyone back to their home away from home! ■



CAMP HATIKVAH LIZA ROZEN-DELMAN

Summer 2022 was an extraordinary one! We were thrilled to get back to a "normal" summer and to be able to focus on friends, fun, and gaining independence. We felt so lucky to spend our days under the hot Oyama sun and blue skies and in beautiful blue/green Lake Kalamalka. There is truly nothing like whipping across the warm lake behind the boat, surrounded by the beautiful BC mountains. There truly isn't a place like Camp Hatikvah.

After having our worlds turned upside down for the past 3 years, being able to have our campers at camp for our regular session lengths was remarkable. Our kids jumped right back into the routine of camp and wasted no time enjoying every minute. Our staff who had also missed important milestones were fantastic and did their best to give our campers the exciting and memorable summer that their staff gave them when they attended camp.

One of the best parts of the summer was the Disney Production of the Lion King Kids that our Hatikvah campers choreographed and put on. Along with some amazing staff, they produced a Broadway-worthy show for the camp and it was heart-warming to watch.

We are so grateful to our wonderful staff who worked so hard to make each child comfortable and feel cared for this summer. We are so excited for summer 2023! ■

CAMP SOLELIM SHAUNA WALTMAN

In our final week of camp, we ran a musag in which campers had a chance to think deeply about how they had grown, who had inspired them, and what they were taking home with them. As we all made our way to the chadar for lunch, staff and campers came up to me with tears in their eyes, blowing my mind with stories of overcoming anxiety, realizing their leadership potential, owning their Jewish identity, and of kindness given and received in such beautiful ways.

For six weeks each summer, we have the privilege of creating an alternate universe where campers and staff can figure out who they truly are, conquer fears, have life-changing conversations, and create deep bonds of friendship. Every day, we challenge one another to be better versions of ourselves and to push ourselves beyond what we and others think we are capable of. As a result, we grow so much together. We are never the same people leaving camp as are when we come in. And while I miss the incomparable Solelim Chevra and ruach, I think that it's this feeling of growth I miss the most when I am home.

Now, the process of creating this alternate universe begins anew. Solelim 2023 sold out in a record six days, and we are busy planning an unforgettable summer. We have many familiar faces returning on staff and are working hard to recruit the next generation of talented Solelim madrichim. Soon, we'll be starting to come up with all the incredible ideas that form the memorable programming Solelim campers love.

Camp will also be seeing some impressive upgrades this summer. We're not ready for the big reveal just yet, but stay tuned for exciting announcements in the spring! ■

WINTER WON'T STOP CYJ

THE GREAT CYJ RUGELACH BAKE

Joined by 160 Judaeans, alumni, and friends, in support of the CYJ Scholarship Fund



CYJ MONTREAL CHANUKAH PARTY

Hosted by Youth Council Montreal, Kinneret campers were reunited over Chanukah crafts, and latkes!



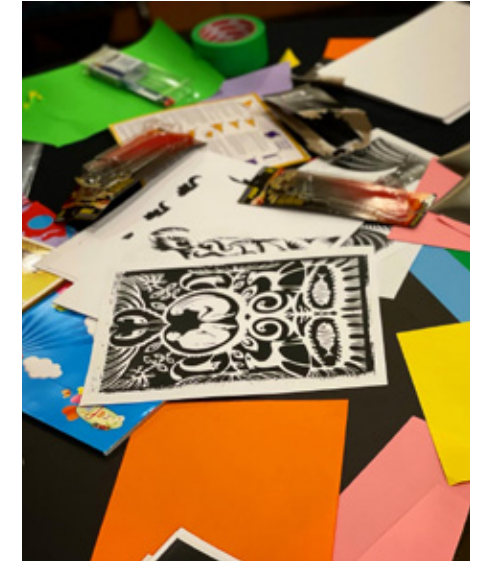
TORONTO YOUTH COUNCIL & ALUMIM CHANUKAH PARTY

Youth Council Toronto welcomed over 50 Camp Shalom campers and other youth from across the GTA!



FIRST ANNUAL MACHANE LEV MIFGASH

Canadian Young Judaea's first annual LGBTQ+ Mifgash (fall convention) in the GTA, with Machane Lev campers, staff, and friends!



MACHANE LEV UPDATE



Hello readers!

Coming off the heels of a successful 2022 session and with snow freshly on the sidewalks, we are more than ready to start daydreaming about summer 2023!

We had an absolute blast being our best selves at Camp Solelim last summer and we are happy to announce that we will be returning to 6490 Tilton Lake Rd for summer 2023. Site stability provides us with the foundation necessary to take our programming to the next level. So buckle up our Queer buttercups, we've got a lot of magic coming your way. Thank you Solelim for being the ally of Lev's dreams and helping us bring our vision to life.

In terms of community outreach, we have been diligently developing relationships with Queer and Jewish folks outside of the GTA with the goal of increasing our geographic diversity as it relates to both campers and staff. Word-of-mouth distribution of information is essential to grassroots organizations. **Sooooo attention readers!** If you know anyone who would like to learn more about Machane Lev be it a parent, teacher, community member, camper or staff, please let us know! We can be reached best via Instagram **@machanelev** or by emailing one of the following email addresses:

sheri@machanelev.ca
galia@machanelev.ca

Lev is beyond important, especially given the political climate our campers are currently existing in. We thank you

with hearts filled with gratitude for any support you can provide whether that is sponsoring a camper, sharing Lev information within your network or simply smashing the follow button on Instagram to help bolster our platform. It means the world.

Beyond planning for the summer, we recently held our first Lev in the City program; a Zine making workshop. Almost 50% of our returning campers were in attendance and let us tell YOU, the creativity was filllooooooowing.

We also recently facilitated Machane Lev's first Mifgash (camp reunion) EVER. Once again, we hosted almost 50% of our returning campers! The weekend was filled with Shabbat programming, crafting (duuuuh), intentional programming centred around the intersection between Jewish and Queer identities, screening of an independent docuseries highlighting the careers of Queer Toronto-based creatives, movement-based activities, karaoke night and glow-in-the-dark mini-golf!

Looking forward and in celebration of Hannukah, on Sunday December 18th starting at 1pm at the Prosserman JCC, Lev will be hosting a Family Hannukah Party to share some of our unique magic with our loved ones.

The party will feature Lev alumni and Drag Queen Extraordinaire Gila Munster, who will be leading a drag storytime! The party will include cookie decorating, crafting (duuuuuuh) and of course some yummy Hannukah snacks!

WAIT! THERE IS MORE!

That same evening (Dec. 18th), starting at 7pm at the Centre for Social Innovation, Machane Lev will be co-hosting a fundraiser Drag variety show 8 Gays of Hannukah, which will feature talent from across our 2SLGBTQ+ Jewish community.

Tickets can be purchased at **bit.ly/8gaysofchannukah**.

Fundraising proceeds will go towards Machane Lev to help erase any and all financial barriers that would otherwise prevent campers from accessing Lev's safe landing space. We hope to see you there!

**With all of the Lev (love),
Coffee (Sheri Krell) and
Beans (Galia Amoils) ■**



BILUIM ISRAEL UPDATE



If you are asking yourself, what does travel abroad look like after the COVID-19 pandemic, I can tell you it's not without its challenges. Israel, a thimble of a country, was truly unprepared for the tens of thousands of visitors they received this year. Between, Birthright, Maccabi Israel, and all the other teen tours, the country was overwhelmed by groups. The hospitality industry in Israel has struggled to fill their staffing positions in hotels, restaurants, museums, etc. Despite these challenges, Biluim Israel was able to create a community, 123 participants strong, that travelled from the most northern tip, to the southern heat, and everything in between.

When you think about a tour of Israel, your instincts are to fill the itinerary with Masada, The Kotel, or the Beach of Tel Aviv. Biluim Israel is uniquely positioned as a four week tour, which gives the participants an opportunity to have experiences that are slightly "off the beaten path". These experiences allow the group to expand their concept of Israel, the way of life, and introduce them to organizations doing challenging but necessary work for Israeli society.

On July 21st, just before the group separated for their Family Weekend plans, we had the opportunity to visit with an NGO that works to reduce food insecurity within Israel, Leket. I will never forget when the busses arrived to what seemed like a deserted area, and we ushered the participants into a mobile classroom, where we were welcomed by the farm staff and introduced to our activity for the day. The sun was beating

down, but Biluim Israel participants rolled up their sleeves, put on their hats, and got to work. Our group had the pleasure of offering up our help to harvest the vegetables that Leket grows on this farm- we pulled beets and radishes, and potatoes that will be delivered to families across the country. Being able to see 123 Jewish teens from Canada jump in and get their hands in the dirty to help feed those less fortunate was a truly remarkable day. They truly embodied the legacy of the 'Bilu', where we get our name Biluim, who dedicated their lives to working the land, creating community, and providing life and a future for the Jewish people in Israel.

When our time in the fields was up, I got to see their faces and see the pride and satisfaction as they marveled at how much work the group was able to accomplish in their short time with Leket. The impact they are making as individuals was apparent, and I believe that for many, this day will stay with them for many years to come.

Last summer was a season of lessons. Our participants were immersed in education from the moment we met at the airport, whether it was Israel education, Jewish education, or lessons on being a mature young adult and becoming a camp staff. As director, I believe that while my job is to impart my knowledge and to guide the participants, I learned the most and grew the most over those 5 weeks. I learned about the new challenges today's young people are facing, and that we are only now understanding how to support

them through this transitional time in their lives. I learned how to adapt the itinerary and program to better suit the participants and their needs. And, I learned that the impact of Israel travel has a reach that is inconceivable to those who are not able to see it firsthand. If you have not had the privilege of watching a group of young people see the sunrise off of Masada for the first time, I urge you to staff an Israel trip or to engage with an Israel tour as a participant and share your love of Israel and the Jewish people at large with those around you.

Chazak Ve'Ematz,

Ellie Gamliel

Biluim Israel Director ■



FEATURED BILUIM ISRAEL

AFTER 2 LONG YEARS, CYJ'S FLAGSHIP SUMMER IN ISRAEL WAS FINALLY ABLE TO RETURN TO OUR HOMELAND. HERE'S WHAT TWO OF OUR BILUIM ISRAEL GRADS HAD TO SAY ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE...

AIDEN ELHARRAR

Growing up in Montreal, I am surrounded by a vibrant Jewish community. From a synagogue down the road from my home in Montreal to strong Jewish family traditions to having a large group of Jewish students in my graduating class- my Jewish identity is a huge part of who I am.

I have been learning what it means to be a Jewish man since birth. But I realized that despite my vibrant Jewish surroundings, my interest in learning about Judaism and my strong values (which I am beyond grateful for) there is a piece of my identity that was still missing. I was missing knowledge of the history of my people and what they had to endure.

Since I did not attend Jewish elementary or high school, I felt that my day-to-day academics did not really educate me or my peers about my Jewish heritage. Although I loved my school, teachers and community- teachings about my heritage were lacking in the curriculum.



But where school might have fallen short, CYJ was there to help educate, strengthen and solidify my Jewish identity and understanding of my heritage.

After 9 summers spent at Camp Kinneret and Biluim, applying to Biluim Israel was very important to me. Having the opportunity and honour to participate in both the Biluim Israel and Poland in the summer of 2022 was a truly enriching and fulfilling experience.

At first, the thought of going to Poland was nerve-racking, overwhelming and a bit out of my comfort zone. Seeing pictures of large groups of teenagers crying at a concentration camp worried me. Was I, too, going to cry in front of hundreds of people? Would I be able to handle the experience? How would I be perceived if I didn't cry?

But all my worries were quickly wiped away as once I landed in Poland surrounded by my friends, I knew in my gut that I would be ok. What was most comforting was how the staff spoke to us about what we were to expect which made me feel immediately at ease. They assured us that they would be there to support us, every step of the way.

On the first day in Poland, we went to a cemetery, which was a very impactful start to our trip. Walking through the cemetery was surreal and inexplicable.

Each day in Poland, our tour guide formulated a daily theme about which we would continuously learn. During our tour, we learned about many aspects of Jewish society in Poland. Some of

my favourite themes included: our Jewish identity, responsibility as a Jewish person, remembering those in the past, impossible decisions, building over tragedy, and finally, dehumanization.

Visiting the camps was life-changing and I will carry the experience, emotions, sights and smells in me for the rest of my life. My visit to Poland truly impacted me in ways that are inexplicable. Although both my parents and my sister have experienced the journey to Poland there is absolutely no mental or emotional preparation that can be done to make the experience more bearable. Going to the concentration camps was a crucial component of our trip. Unlike learning about the Holocaust in a classroom, book or movie, attending Biluim Israel allowed me to truly mourn the atrocities of the Holocaust.



However one of the most meaningful visits for me was to the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Unlike many Holocaust museums in North America, this museum focused more on the history of the Jewish people and their rich culture, not only the tragedies that the Jewish people had to undergo but the vibrancy of Judaism and its people.

After spending 6 days in Poland, landing in Israel as a group of 80 strong was extremely powerful and unforgettable. I felt like I was finally home and at that moment I felt truly joyful. This is a complete contrast to the feeling I had just a few hours earlier in Poland.

I loved everything about my visit to Israel. The feeling of being in my homeland was amazing. The food, the weather, the people, the history and the energy are truly unbelievable.

My favourite memory in Israel was definitely our visit to Tzfat and touring Tzfat. It was an unforgettable day. As a history buff, I learned so much that day about a different aspect of Judaism, Kabbalah. I thoroughly enjoy learning about things I had never studied such as Jewish mysticism. Also exploring the city and meeting locals was really an amazing experience.

I am so grateful to have been given the experience of visiting both Poland and Israel back to back. This life-changing journey really gave me that missing peace and has allowed me to really understand my Jewish identity on an entirely new level.

Thank you CYJ. ■



SADIE SEATON

This summer I had the best time travelling to Poland and Israel with my friends on Biluim Israel. Our week in Poland was very meaningful and educational. While touring through the Warsaw and Krakow ghettos, I was expecting to walk through an old, desolate town, when in reality it felt as though I was walking through a normal city. We also visited several death camps and concentration camps; it was a moving experience, and I felt privileged to be able to leave the camps freely, unlike those who perished there many years ago. Poland is a beautiful country that has a lot to offer. My friends and I enjoyed eating perogies and fun desserts and were able to experience its bountiful European culture.



Our time in Israel started off with a camping trip in the north. We hiked along the trails of the sea-to-sea hike which goes from the Mediterranean Sea to the Sea of Galilee. This challenged us physically but brought us closer together. During our time in the Galilee, each bus stayed on a different Kibbutz. My bus actively kept camp traditions alive, making sure that each CYJ camp was represented. With all of our ruach, we created memories that I will never forget. In Jerusalem, we had a lot of fun exploring the old city and visiting the Western wall and Western Wall tunnels. We had the opportunity to explore the Machne Yehuda Market where we ate amazing food and experienced life in Jerusalem.

In Tel Aviv, we visited the Palmach museum which was one of the highlights of my trip. This experience made us feel like we were with the Palmach on a secret mission, while still teaching us about the importance they hold in Israel's history. We spent a lot of time at the beach, where we were stung by jellyfish and had fun playing games, listening to Israeli music and eating ice cream. During times when we were at our hotel, we ran programs for each other which was a great experience that I will take with me this summer when becoming a staff. Eilat, brought us heat like never before, almost breaking the bus's air conditioning. We had an awesome time volunteering at a school where we made art for the community. On our bus rides, we played games and sang karaoke which brought our bus close together and made it that much more difficult for me to say goodbye to my friends at the end of our trip.

Biluim Israel was a trip of a lifetime. I was able to learn and create memories with my friends that I will carry with me forever. ■

CHW UPDATE



We held our second annual S.O.S Starting Over Safely Campaign to empower victims of domestic violence. We raised an unprecedented \$450,000+ from generous donors, coast to coast, during our limited 27-hour crowdfunding period.

It is always amazing how quickly time passes. A year ago, we started planning for our inaugural Journey 4 Impact and just last month we returned to Canada having had the most incredible

experience. This maiden voyage launched CHW's first round of social impact investing. CHW is proud to be the first Canadian Jewish organization to launch a gender-lens investment strategy that ensures better outcomes in areas such as gender disparities, social mobility, and economic opportunities for women and girls. Our \$300,000 investment will continue to have an impact year after year, empowering women, growing employment opportunities, and creating a sustainable future for the next generation of entrepreneurs and social enterprises in Israel. Join us in Israel October 23-30 for *Journey 4 Impact 2023!*

Before the end of the year, we hope to raise \$125,000, much-needed funds to empower the students at the youth villages and schools supported by CHW through our Empower Bright Minds education campaign. Without CHW's

investments in education, students in Israel would not have access to vital opportunities for advanced learning. Together, we can ensure that EMPOWER BRIGHT MINDS helps build bright futures for youth who count on CHW every year.

Each year, CHW provides funding to Canadian Young Judaea summer camps in Canada. CHW is honoured to have grown alongside such a wonderful organization and enjoys serving children and youth in Canada and Israel together.

CHW continues to move forward to meet the needs of a new generation of donors and volunteers while safeguarding our roots. Our organization is ever-changing and evolving to increase engagement and impact and to ensure our future.

Elayna Latsky, National President and **Lisa Colt-Kotler**, CEO ■



INFO SESSION

**AREVIM MASA YEAR OF SERVICE
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2023 | 10:00 AM ET**

10-MONTH VOLUNTEER PROGRAM IN TEL AVIV
[TINYURL.COM/5D7YUYFM](https://tinyurl.com/5D7YUYFM)



UJA FEDERATION
of Greater Toronto



CANADIAN YOUNG JUDAEA
SCHOLARSHIP FUND

— 2ND CYJ SCHOLARSHIP FUND —

GOLF TOURNAMENT

**SPRING
LAKES**
GOLF CLUB



JUNE 8TH, 2023

\$300/GOLFER | \$1200 FOURSOME
\$1100 FOR EARLY BIRD FOURSOME - SIGN UP BEFORE JAN 30TH

FOOD DRINK RAFFLE CONTESTS AND MUCH MORE

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO CANADIAN YOUNG JUDAEA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

FEATURED ALUMNI

CHERYL WISE



The CYJ National Office is thrilled to welcome educator, mother, and CYJ alumnae Cheryl Wise, as our new Office Administrator. This past September, Cheryl joined our staff team and has already contributed so much to several CYJ initiatives, offering much-needed administrative support as our programming is ramping up post-pandemic. In addition to her invaluable contributions to CYJ these past weeks, Cheryl is also the Director of Education for Shaarei Beth El, in Oakville, where she provides a foundation of Jewish knowledge for children of all ages. She is also a wedding officiant, registered doula, and dedicated mother of 3.

Can you tell us about your camper/ history with CYJ? How has CYJ impacted your life? How does it feel to return to your CYJ roots?

I began my journey with CYJ as a camper at Camp Shalom in 1984 and spent every summer after that as a loyal Judaeen attending camp Solelim, then Biluim ('92) and Biluim Israel. I then returned to Shalom as staff for 4 summers where I met my husband Stephen Wise ('90) who wooed me while dredging the lake during pre-camp by throwing all the dirt and grime from the bottom of the lake on me and then sending me Shabbatagrams with some interesting poetry written on them.

CYJ has had a huge impact on my life. I wouldn't be married to my incredible husband if it weren't for CYJ and my kids' summers would probably have looked a little different. CYJ taught me that friendships can last a lifetime and that being part of a Chevra (a community) is the most valuable gift. CYJ gave me leadership and programming skills that I use on a daily basis in my role as Director of Education.

Working in the CYJ has felt like a return to my youth. I get the opportunity to share my passion for providing immersive Jewish experiences on a weekly basis in a warm environment where we all share common goals and values. ■

You have been working with Jewish kids and youth as a Jewish educator for over 25 years. What are some of your takeaways about the needs and strengths of Jewish education right now? What are your hopes for the future?

The need in the field of Jewish Education right now is to be able to provide families (parents and kids alike) with a sense of community - a place where individuals feel welcomed, supported and heard. It doesn't matter what the environment is - at camp, at school, or just in our everyday interactions with people - we need to focus on relationships. Program content can always be conveyed but the environment within which we strive to convey whatever content we are teaching is what matters most.

Our ultimate goal needs to be to create confident, comfortable, caring, compassionate and connected young leaders who can share themselves with others in whatever paths of life their journeys take them. ■

You've worked in a bunch of different areas within the Jewish community. What are some lessons you've taken away?

From the earliest days of my career in Jewish Education, I have focused on creating meaningful and experiential programs and lessons. I am continually focused on building a relationship with every one of my students and their families. I believe that engaging and connecting with those in my community is of greater value than the content that I convey. The learning will come but a strong relationship leads to a durable foundation. I am grateful each and every day to one of my tenth-grade teachers for lighting the way for me and teaching me that we are each unique and created B'tzelem Elohim - in the image of God.

I believe every person can succeed and learn. My teacher recognized my uniqueness thirty-five years ago and I continue to do so with my own students. This is what keeps the flame in me burning so that I can ignite it for others. No matter the setting, a synagogue, a Hillel, a Jewish day school or a summer camp, my focus is and will continue to be on a multi-tiered learning environment that provides teachers, students, and parents with love and care. Giving kids the opportunity to participate in Jewish Educational experiences is a gift that should never be taken for granted. ■

Why is it important for you that your children get to experience life as Judaeans?

CYJ is a movement that provides a nurturing environment for its participants to develop their Jewish identity. It holds fast to inspiring in its youth the values of Tikkun Olam, leadership, respect, and community. I know that the relationships that my kids and I have built during our years with CYJ will last a lifetime. We are YJ'ers for life! ■



MAZEL TOVS

ENGAGEMENTS, WEDDINGS & BIRTHS



Gil Garshowitz, Kinneret & Solelim, 2002-2005, Solelim, Biluim Canada & Biluim Israel Staff, 2012-2016
Bosmat Mesika



Ron Garshowitz, Kinneret, 2003-2008
Shir Nadam



David Kornhauser, Biluim 2009
Kate Tenenhouse, Biluim 2010



Lindsay Cohen, Biluim 2009
Jamie Cole



Fern Kachuck, Biluim 2009
Josh Rosenberg

ANNIVERSARY

Vivian Mielnicki and Jeffrey Claman first dated at Camp Hatikvah in 1967; they celebrated their 44th wedding anniversary August 22, 2022.



Have something to celebrate?
Get in touch and let us know to be featured in the next edition.

MAZEL TOVS

ENGAGEMENTS, WEDDINGS & BIRTHS



Riley Meirovich
Ally Krystal, Biluim 2006
Harley Meirovich



Shaya Bailey
Hilete Fisher (nee Stein), Biluim 1999
Matt Fisher, Biluim 1999



Yael Rose Altbaum
Shelby (Spigelman) Altbaum, Biluim 1999
Shane Altbaum



Dean Jesse Rembach
Lorne Rembach, Biluim 2005
Jaclyn Rembach



Ollie Wyn Meadows
Talia Meadows (nee Dick), Biluim 2002
Duncan Meadows



Rose Chaia Quitt
Annie Gamliel, Biluim 2005
Lorne Quitt

CANADIAN YOUNG JUDAEA
PRESENTS

Shabbat

Shabbat in the City
Dinner Bar and program
More information to come...

31
-
03
-
20
23

7:
00
-
P
M

THE WAREHOUSE



CAMP SHALOM #SHALLEVERBE OUR HOME

ESTABLISHED IN 1948, CAMP SHALOM HAS HELPED ENCOURAGE PRIDE AND JEWISH IDENTITY IN CANADIAN JEWISH YOUNGSTERS FOR 75 YEARS. IN CELEBRATION OF THAT MILESTONE, WE WILL BE HAVING A GRAND BASH AND YOU ARE INVITED!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

On May 7, 2023, join us at the Leah Posluns Theatre in Toronto for 2 special events:

Daytime: Family festivities including some of your favourite camp chugim, shira, rikkud, swag, tuck - you name it! From 1 - 5 p.m.
Evening: Camp Shalom Coffee House with live performances from our past campers and staff. From 7 - 10 p.m.

Save the date and spread the word. It's going to be awesome. Tickets sales to begin in March.

For more information, follow the Camp Shalom's 75th Anniversary Celebration Facebook Page.

Sponsorship opportunities available



REGISTRATION OPENS IN JANUARY FOR MACHANE LEV 2023!

SUMMER CAMP AUGUST 2023

Join our community of amazing LGBTQ+ Jewish Youth,
and experience a week like no other!

Visit www.machanelev.ca today or email sheri@machanelev.ca for more information



**“CYJ
WOULD
NOT BE
THE SAME
WITHOUT
YOU”**

**YOUR SUPPORT MEANS WE CAN CONTINUE
TO WORK TOWARDS A FUTURE OF ENGAGED,
AND INSPIRED JEWISH YOUTH.
TODA RABA AND CHAZAK VE'EMATZ!**



**CANADIAN YOUNG JUDAEA | 788 Marlee Ave. Toronto, ON M6B 3K1
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