NEWSLETTER

JANUARY, 2009

Happy New Year!

New Year's greetings often include wishes for a healthy new year, a prosperous new year, a peaceful new year. In the time-honoured tradition of Jewish debate and disagreements, these greetings are open to discussion. A healthy new year, sure, but not so healthy that your new look makes me feel lumpy. By 'prosperous new year', do you mean spiritual prosperity or can we kvetch about our flat-as-a-latke portfolios? As for peace, we can surely all agree that peace can't come soon enough to the Middle East.

For all that is new in a new year, there's comfort in the familiar: monthly services (Rabbi Lynn returns by month's end), a Coffee House, a communal Passover Seder, a Purim party. There is much to look forward to. And so at a time when many of us are shadowed by uncertainty -- What will tomorrow bring? -- We hope you will both find and offer sustenance through the DJC.

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Message from the Board

With the recent fighting in Gaza and Israel once again a focus on the world stage we all struggle with the violence and loss of lives of so many Palestinians in such a short period of time. But as Jews some of us may also be struggling with the criticism of Israel that is coming from many different directions causing us to wonder if we are not being held to some sort of double standard. The issue is complex, layered and historically laden with despair and hope.

As a community, the Danforth Jewish Circle has a vision of inclusiveness that includes support for a wide range of opinion about Israel and the Palestinians. Our new rabbi – Lynn Gottlieb – is a world recognized leader in the movement for peace in the middle east and she has been involved in this conflict and working for a non-violent solution for over forty years (see her message in this newsletter). We want to support our community in all of our opinions on this subject and also

provide an opportunity for discussion, education and meaningful action. Three such events are planned when Rabbi Lynn is next here at the end of January. Read on…

Let's keep the dialogue open and above all be respectful of one another's feelings, politics and concerns. Regardless of our personal position(s) we hope that the DJC as a community can pray with one unified voice for a peaceful resolution to the ongoing conflict in Israel and the Middle East. Amen!

Come to a Multifaith Peace Vigil – Saturday, January 31st at 4:00 p.m. at Eastminster United Church (310 Danforth Avenue).

This will be a multifaith gathering welcome to all those who want to give witness to our shared belief that peace is possible between Palestinians and Israelis and that the road to peace requires turning away from militarism towards restorative justice and constructive peace building actions. ***Please bring a donation for emergency medical aid in behalf of the people of Gaza.***

Join us for a Multifaith Prayer Study Session directly following the peace vigil at Eastminster. This study of sacred texts (*Torah, Koran, New Testament)* will begin with healing prayers and focus on the notion of peace action in all our traditions.

Share your thoughts about Israel and the current Gaza situation with DJC friends -- following the peace vigil and study session which are both open to multifaith communities we offer an opportunity for sharing and discussion within our own DJC community. Has what's been going on in Gaza been troubling you and top of mind? Would you like to share your thoughts and feelings (even your political stance!) with DJC friends in a smaller, more intimate discussion? Then join us on **Sunday, February 1st at 2:00 p.m. Location: TBD**

Message from Rabbi Lynn

Dear friends,

I know we are all deeply troubled by the loss of life that has accompanied the past two weeks of conflict in the Middle East. As I write this by the light of the Havdalah Candle on Shabbat, about 800 have died since the last night of Hanukkah, half of them women and children. In addition over 2000 people have been wounded and literally hundreds of thousands of people are deeply traumatized by the massive military attack which has been unleashed on Gaza with no end in sight.

Whatever our understanding of this conflict, we are all in mourning and pray for an immediate and unconditional

ceasefire so that no more people have to die. There will be a ceasefire. I for one am praying that it happens before another 800 have to be buried. For each person killed, entire family networks grieve along with their nation, on both sides. This is not the road to peace.

I honor all the feelings and life experiences this congregation represents. I pray that as a community dedicated to inclusiveness and a circle of caring, we can be a light to the rest of the interfaith and Jewish community in Canada, as well as to ourselves, as a place where, regardless of our opinions about the conflict, we find the courage and spiritual motivation not to contribute to the voices demanding we take sides, see the other as our enemy, find justification for war.

Rather, I pray that we are a shelter for peace-making and understanding, even when we struggle and feel conflicted, and that we make every effort to prevent and end the violence by supporting non-militaristic ways to proceed towards peace.

I look forward to seeing you all at month's end when we can be together at the peace vigil and study session and also have a chance for some meaningful discussion the following day.

Yours in peace,

Rabbi Lynn

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Overview of Rabbi Lynn's visit dates for 2009

January 29- February 1 (Family Shabbat Service)
March 5- 8 (Purim)
April 10-14 (Passover Seder)
May 28-31

June: TBA*

JANUARY CALENDAR...*At a glance*

DATE	TIME	EVENT/Details	LOCATION
Tuesday, January 27	**7:30 pm**	**1st gathering to meet/greet DJC members**	Home of Sheri Cohen: 4 Austin Crescent (Bathurst/Dupont)
Friday, January 30	**6:00- 7:00 pm**	**Family Shabbat Service**	Eastminster: 310 Danforth Avenue **Sanctuary**
	7:00 - 8:00 pm	**Potluck Oneg**	Eastminster **Auditorium**
Saturday, January 31	**9:45- 10:15 am**	**Meditation**	Eastminster- **C 17**
	10:30 am - 12:00 pm	**Torah Studies**	Eastminster- **C 17**
	4:00- 5:00 pm	**Peace Vigil**	Eastminster **Sanctuary**
	5:00 - 6:30 pm	**Multifaith Prayer/study**	Eastminster **Auditorium**
Sunday, February 1	**2:00 pm**	**DJC Gaza Discussion**	Location: **TBD**

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FAMILY SHABBAT SERVICE
Friday, January 30

FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

This Sabbath service will be led by Rabbi Lynn with a focus on kids and families in our community.

Join us for a celebration of songs, stories and prayers in honour of the Sabbath. "It takes a village to raise a child" and the whole Danforth Jewish Circle to celebrate the Sabbath with our children. Put on your dancing shoes, your story hat and a Sabbath smile and join us for a joyful celebration. Services will be followed by a potluck Oneg (good food!).

Where: **Eastminster: 310 Danforth Avenue- Sanctuary**
*****Please use the Danforth entrance as "Out of the Cold" is using the Jackman street entrance.***

When: **Friday, January 30**
Time: **6:00 PM**

Potluck Oneg: **Eastminster Auditorium** (following service)

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Please bring a main or dessert contribution to the auditorium by 6:00 pm

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Interested in meeting other people at the DJC?

Want to connect to activities within the DJC?

You are invited to join us and meet informally with members of the DJC on these following dates:

Tuesday, January 27
7.30 p.m.
Home of Sheri Cohen
4 Austin Crescent (Bathurst and Dupont)

Monday, March 16th
7.30 p.m.
Home of Dinah Power
94 Dearbourne Crescent (Broadview/Danforth)

Tuesday, April 21
Home of Karen Bernstein
7.30 p.m.
61 Hopedale Avenue (Pape and O'Connor)

For more information please contact Tanya Lewis t7lewis@ryerson.ca or (416) 691 4209.

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Greetings from the Danforth Jewish Circle Youth Group!!

This month the group will be reuniting after a long break for the holidays. We will be kicking off the New Year with a night of volunteering with Out of The Cold (January 17), followed by a get together hosted by one of our group. We are also very excited to

be starting our new partnership program with LEAD, an organization dedicated to spreading knowledge and awareness about the horrors of genocide. We will participate in training workshops about genocide, and then run them for the greater community. We will also be hosting a YouTube party: each member will bring a couple of their favourite videos for us to relax and have fun before February weather brings us down.

If you're interested in joining us for any of these activities, you are more than welcome – our doors are open to anybody from Grades 9-12. For more information, please contact djcyouthgroup@gmail.com.

The DJCYG Team

Danforth Jewish Circle Coffee House and Fundraiser

Let's tap the vast performing talents of the DJC community once again!

When: **Saturday, March 7, 2009**

Where: **the Trane studio: 964 Bathurst St**

http://www.tranestudio.com/: the trane studio offers a fabulous Cajun/Caribbean menu and a fine selection of beverages, available for purchase.

Time: **9 pm to 12 midnight (Doors open at 8 p.m.)**

Cost: $20 cover charge

... PLUS – great raffle prizes*!

*We're seeking items to be donated for the raffle – anything helps! Your donations will help the DJC meet the growing requests from our community and congregation. Please e-mail: Dinah Power to drop off raffle donations: dnhpwr@sympatico.ca. **100% of the proceeds go directly to the DJC!**

Format:

5- 15 minute performance pieces
Venue offers space for 120 (with seating for 80) and provides sound and light systems.

How to participate/details:

Do you sing, dance, write/read poetry, short stories or plays, play an

instrument, do magic tricks or do anything else that would suit a coffeehouse format?

The planning committee will receive requests and, based on numbers, develop a program incorporating as many performance submissions as possible. Please submit your proposal by ***February 15, 2009***. In the event we are inundated, we will have to, regretfully, limit the number of performers. We will get back to you no later than the end of February with our program and selected performers. Please understand that the choice will be based upon how many responses we get and what makes up a reasonable and well balanced 3 hour program.

Let's make the 2nd DJC Coffee House even better than the first!!!

- **Interested performers, please write to Rosie Beitel: rosiebeitel@sympatico.ca with your name, whether or not you're a DJC member (all are welcome) and a brief description of your performance piece (5 - 15 minutes).**

- **OR: Submit your proposal in writing to our mailing address (by February 15):**
  Danforth Jewish Circle, Suite 125
  Toronto, ON
  M4K 1N2

Thanks in advance for your interest!

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TO THE DJC COMMUNITY

LEARN TO READ HEBREW IN 6 HOURS!!!

Once again, the DJC is offering a 6-hour "Hebrew marathon" taught by Nirit Gruber. This is a great opportunity for you to learn to read Hebrew and to launch any further Hebrew study you may be doing. The program is being offered through the DJC Jewish Studies program and is open to School children in grades 5, 6 and 7 and their parents, as well as anyone else in the DJC community who might be interested.

The program works especially well when kids and parents attend together - and so we encourage kids (grade 5 and older) to attend

with their parents.

When:	**Saturday, February 28** **Saturday, March 7**
Where:	**Riverdale Presbyterian - 662 Pape Avenue** - *enter via the side door, go down the steps, turn right and go to the large room in the basement.*
Time:	**10:00 am - 1:00 pm** (both days)
Cost:	Free to all DJC members

Registration: To register and confirm space in the workshop, please contact Chantal Bassous at bchantal@sympatico.ca or phone: 416-693-9829.

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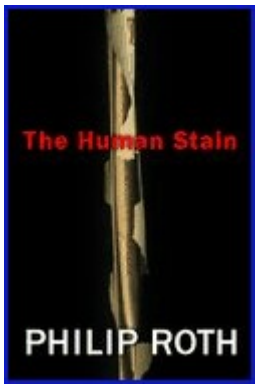
PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS…

FOR THE NEXT DJC BOOK CLUB SELECTION ON **MARCH 12** (you may write to info@djctoronto.com for more information or to RSVP):



Thursday, March 12, 2009
THE HUMAN STAIN, BY PHILIP ROTH
FACILITATOR: ANDREA MOST

Set in 1998, at the height of the culture wars, Philip Roth's, *The Human Stain* is a remarkable book about what constitutes identity and how much freedom we have to choose who we are. One of Roth's best novels, the book brings back his familiar alter-ego Nathan Zuckerman, now as observer rather than actor, of an extraordinary and often funny drama of New England academic life which pushes us to question our assumptions about what it means to "be" Jewish, or anything else, for that matter. "Philip Roth's *The Human Stain* is the best novel he has written…Here, everything the writer has learnt and experienced within that indefinable form we call the novel….has come to full realization." Nadine Gordimer, The Times Literary Supplement (International Book of the Year Selection). Winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award, and Britain's W.H. Smith award for the Best Book of the Year.

Andrea Most, associate professor of English at the University of Toronto, is the 2004 recipient of the Polyani Prize for Literature. Among her many published writings, her recent book *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical* won the Kurt Weil Prize for distinguished scholarship on music theatre. Last year she facilitated a terrific discussion of *Maus* for the DJC Book Group.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

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Crossroads Theatre Project presents Hear the Crows' Wings

A true story of three generations blends comic playfulness, poetic lyricism and haunting narrative.

Performed by Deborah Sheppard
Written by Deborah Sheppard and Vincenzo Sestito

Friday, January 16 and Saturday, January 17, 2009
8:00 pm
Adults $20
Students/Seniors $18
For tickets call: (647) 346-1332
Directed by Vincenzo Sestito
Designed by Annabel Weinstein

Winchester Street Theatre
80 Winchester Street
(Located 2 blocks south of Wellesley, 1 block east of Parliament)

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Happy New Year!

IT'S BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!:
"If I Only Had a Brain - Ilana Waldston sings Harold Arlen".
This time I will be playing at the **Trane Studio**, a beautiful venue in which I held my very first standing room only show. The Arlen tribute will be on **January 24th** at 8:00pm, followed by **a couple of jazz sets** so if you've seen the show already, do drop by for those.

If by some lucky chance you're vacationing somewhere warm that weekend, please pass this information on to some poor soul who is stuck here in the snow (!) and could use a fun night out. They can warm up with the music, the cosy ambiance, the great Caribbean-inspired cuisine and perhaps a soothing drink.

Here are the details:

"If I Only Had a Brain - Ilana Waldston sings Harold Arlen"
Saturday, January 24th, 2009
8:00 PM followed by jazz sets until 11:30 PM
The Trane Studio
964 Bathurst St. (south of Dupont)
416-913-8197 for reservations

I hope that you can attend and I thank you again for your support in 2008. Here's wishing you a safe, joyous and stress-free 2009 filled with (what else?) music!

Ilana Waldston

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TOP BUNK

TopBunk is an incentive program for families of first-time campers to encourage parents to choose Jewish summer camp over other summer options. The program is specifically geared for families whose children do not have the same daily, intensive exposure to Judaism as those who attend Jewish day school.

Grants of $1,250 each will be awarded to first-time campers who attend one of the eight qualifying overnight camps in the program.
We understand the concern of day school parents whose children are not eligible for TopBunk and the financial burden they face. However, UJA Federation already invests more than $8 million a year in tuition subsidies and over $750,000 in camping subsidies for new immigrants and low income community members.
Our community can take great pride in Top Bunk as an exciting, creative Jewish identity development initiative.

For more details on TopBunk, UJA Federation's Jewish Camp Incentive Program, check out www.topbunk.ca

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DOR L'DOR OPPORTUNITY

A SPECIAL RIKUDIYAH

TO PARENTS OF GRADE 2 CHILDREN ...
For the past three years grade 2 students have been presented in a special

performance at RIKUDIYAH - ISRAELI DANCE FESTIVAL for CHILDREN entitled

DOR L'DOR - GENERATION TO GENERATION

The centre is inviting Grade 2 students to participate in RIKUDIYAH 2009. Rehearsals will be held at the BATHURST JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE, 4588 BATHURST ST starting on:

SUNDAY JANUARY 11, 2009 in room 110 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Each child must be accompanied by one parent. Both student and parent are expected to participate in the dance presentation which will be performed at RIKUDIYAH 2009 at TANENBAUM CHAT WALLENBERG CAMPUS on:

Sunday March 29 at 11:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Please consider participating in this unique opportunity to share an enjoyable experience with your child. Those interested should contact TEME KERNERMAN no later then JANUARY 7 at 416-636-1880 ext 364 or email teme@rogers.com

Rikudiyah is co- sponsored by The UJA Federation Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education and The Koffler Centre of the Arts.

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