

# THE BASH

Bnei Akiva Schools Headlines

## STUDENT LIFE

### Administrators, Teachers, or Both?

#### *Understanding BAS's Hierarchical Structure*

By: Layla Frischman

One of the defining characteristics of the Bnei Akiva Schools is its staggering number of administrators. As the running joke goes, there are more administrators than teachers and students combined. In order to better understand this administrative system, I approached Rabbi Grauer (the mastermind behind this structure) to gain a more informed perspective.

Before delving into this questionably effective system, it should be made clear what exactly the system is: every administrator at Bnei Akiva Schools teaches classes in addition to their administrative duties. This means that the job of one or two administrators is spread amongst multiple people in order to make each administrator available to teach as well. This contrasts with schools' traditional hierarchical structure which includes a select number of administrators who deal solely with administrative matters. The BAS is throwing tradition to the wind as it has adopted what Rabbi Grauer calls, a

"very creative educational methodology."

Additionally, the word 'administrator' should be understood in the context of Bnei Akiva Schools. Rabbi Grauer defines an administrator as "someone involved in stuff other than teaching," who has a "significant portion of their time dedicated to administration". For example, a teacher who is involved in a club or two would not make the coveted cut as an administrator.

Through my interview with Rabbi Grauer, I wanted to explore the reasoning behind this system. Rabbi Grauer believes that blurring the line between administrators and teachers has many benefits. First, having administrators who teach means that when they implement rules which will be imposed on teachers, they are not doing it from their ivory tower. Rather, any decision the administration makes will affect them directly, which results in more careful decision making. Mrs. Fixler, the Director of Admissions and Academics, confirms this point; she states that this setup allows the administrators "to be able to see things from a teacher's point of view and relate better to the teaching staff".

Another reason why this system is successful is because it allows the administrators to remain in touch with the original purpose of their work. Rabbi Grauer points out that

if administrators exclusively deal with administrative matters, they lose "what education is all about, which is really represented in the classroom". On a similar note, Mr. Rapp believes that setting up the system this way allows the administrators to "continue to develop their craft as teachers and remain in touch with the experience of [the] students in the classroom".

Ultimately, there is an inherent value to the administrators building relationships with their students. Mrs Munk explains: "I pride myself on teaching all the grade 9 students so I can get to know each girl from the very beginning." Mrs. Munk makes it clear that having personal connections with the students throughout their whole high school experience is quite significant.

Mrs. Weinberg also agrees that "to be a good administrator you have to get to know your students as individuals" and the best way to do so is in a classroom setting.

In our conversation, Mr. Rapp also expressed the downside of this structure. He feels "torn" by the structure, as he loves teaching, yet he explains, "I see an inevitability of lessening my teaching to better manage my administrative responsibilities". As this inevitability comes to fruition, he hopes that he will not become too disconnected from his students and their academic experience.

Another drawback of this system is that the administrators simply do not have enough hours in the day to do both jobs - being an administrator and teacher - to their fullest capacities. Mrs. Munk admits that "many times administrators don't do everything they're supposed to as teachers", and that she herself is always late to class due to her administrative duties. Similarly, Rabbi Grauer shares that not only do the administrators struggle on the teaching end, but on the administrative end as well.

Although this reality perhaps means that both ends are lacking, all of the administrators feel that the system is worthwhile despite its setbacks. Rabbi Grauer believes that the true goal is "to find the right balance between how many classes an administrator should teach", which would ideally solve the issue of timing for the teaching component of their jobs.

My main takeaway from these series of interviews is positive - with hard work and communication, a brighter educational future exists. Let us hope that the administrator/teacher complex will be solved, and in doing so the line between administrator and teacher will continue to blur to the benefit of both teacher-administrators and students.

**STUDENT LIFE: PAGE 1**

**SPORTS: PAGE 5**

**ISRAEL: PAGE 6**

**POLITICS AND RELIGION: PAGE 6**

**Benefits of Colour War Not Black and White**

*Colour War Leaving Some Teachers Feeling Blue*

By: Temima Tova Gerstl

When Colour War broke out on Tuesday, January 30th, between

Team Galil and Team Negev, excitement filled the halls of Ulpanat Orot. Colour War at Ulpana has long been a perennial favourite. Students clamour for the two-day activity extravaganza all year long, speculating as to when the breakout will be, and occasionally even going so far as to stage protests when their calculations are incorrect and they are left disappointed. The idea behind the program is to give each girl an outlet for her talents--whether they be academic, artistic, or athletic--and to create unity among the grades. However, as much as Colour War is beloved by students, the teachers have been largely silent on their views of this staple of Ulpana culture, leaving some to wonder as to their true feelings toward this intrusion into their class time.



When probed for their views of Colour War and its place in the school schedule, some teachers expressed hesitation about speaking out against this venerable Ulpana tradition. When reached for comment, Hillel Rapp, Director of Education at Bnei Akiva Schools, began by praising the “many positive elements of informal education that are captured by an experience like [Colour War],” going on to explain that “educational moments in leadership, collaboration, improvisation, creativity, self-expression, and Jewish identity are just a few of the opportunities [that Colour War] can provide.”

However, Mr. Rapp admitted that he believes that overall, the fundamental structure of Colour War may be educationally flawed. In his opinion, the two components that are critically important in pedagogy are the need for teachers to “build ideas, lessons and units within a linear, consistent and predictable time frame,” and the necessity of focusing on one thing at a time and not giving in to the “natural and well-intentioned impulse to be everything at once.” Education, according to Mr. Rapp, is “a marathon and not a series of sprints,” and in his view, Colour War not only

disrupts the flow of classroom consistency that is vital to learning, but also crams too many activities into a short period of time, wasting a lot of “mental and emotional energy” that could be directed instead toward mastering the curriculum.



Sharon Fixler, Director of Admissions and Academics at Ulpanat Orot, also weighed in, saying that she had “mixed feelings” toward Colour War. “I love the the ruach and achdut it creates within students and the opportunity it gives for so many students to shine. On the other hand, over the years I have seen a decrease in overall student participation.”

Naomi Glogauer, a Grade 12 student, seemed to confirm Mrs. Fixler’s impression about the decline in student participation in Colour War when she admitted that to her, the program is “a complete waste of time that I don’t participate in,” adding that she views the two-day period as “time off [from] school.” Along the same lines, Mrs. Fixler noted that “by day two [of Colour War], numbers have dwindled and students are exhausted by it,” an assessment that is supported by the many empty chairs at Tefillah and the roster of students marked “Absent” on the second day of activities each year.

In addition, Mrs. Fixler, like Mr. Rapp, expressed the “educational concern of losing class time to yet another program.” This concern stems from the fact that teachers at Ulpana are regularly forced to give up class time for various other school programs such as speakers and trips, and the two days of Colour War leave teachers with even less time to finish the provincial curriculum.

Moving forward, Mrs. Fixler proposed a solution to these concerns: shortening Colour War down to “one full, action-packed day” that is mandatory for all students to attend. In this way, she hopes to limit the class time teachers will lose while still keeping the students engaged and invested in the Colour War programming.

Mr. Rapp, on the other hand, expressed wariness as to whether

Ulpana can effectively provide both formal education and informal education, such as Colour War, without sacrificing one for the sake of the other: “I imagine it’s not a very appealing sales pitch to say we just teach,” he admitted. “But the more time I spend thinking about this, the more I’m convinced that educating the whole child is best accomplished in well-defined and discrete parts.”

Well there you have it, it looks like Colour War is nothing if not a grey area in the Bnei Akiva Schools Education.

### Sunny Days Ahead YOC Students Visit Sunnybrook Hospital

By: Yochanan Goldstein

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, Grade 10 and 11 students at YOC participated in Sunnybrook Hospital’s “PARTY” program. The program is tailored for high school students and focuses primarily on risk assessment and prevention, with several graphic presentations designed to highlight the importance of taking preventative measures to ensure safety in adolescents.

Grade 11 student Yair Moll noted, “The trip was extremely essential for all teenagers. We got to hear firsthand from a police officer who conveyed her experiences dealing with traumas caused by impaired driving. I think that that is especially important for vulnerable teenagers who may come in contact with a case like this.”

Students toured the building and heard from medical professionals about the hospital’s many features. Some were even brave enough to witness the CICU (Critical Intensive Care Unit) firsthand. In the afternoon, students were captivated by personal stories of survivors of accidents, who inspired messages of hope despite their horrific experiences.

While the trip was praised by many Or Chaim students, some noted that it wasn’t as valuable as it could have been. One grade 10 student claimed that the trip, “Could have been structured better.” He noted that the students likely would have gained a lot more from the trip had it been slightly more engaging for all types of students in Or Chaim.

The Administration at Bnei Akiva Schools have claimed that the program was a vital component of the growing community effort to

reduce death and injury in alcohol, drug and risk-related crashes and incidents. Many teachers are confident that the students have gained a lot from the trip to Sunnybrook hospital and a decrease in risky student activities is anticipated.

### Rabbanit at Ulpana Purim Play and Fundraiser Event

By: Chana Silverman

At Ulpana, the grade eleven students recently held the annual Rabbanit evening, featuring a Purim-infused production of *Aladdin* as well as a fundraiser.



As one of the writers and directors of the play, I had the privilege of working with my class to make the evening possible, and together we put on a spectacular performance (totally unbiased here). The play was complete with great acting and choreography, beautiful costumes, sets, and props that our committees worked hard to make.

Our grade’s charity of choice was the *Machlis Shabbat Project*, a Jerusalem based charity that provides Shabbat meals and lodging to visitors and people who cannot afford to buy meals. In order to raise money, the fundraising committee ran an auction at school in which grades bid on prizes generously donated by teachers and students such as class slurpee walks, BBQs, pizza parties and more. Additionally, on our Rabbanit evening, we had a raffle with cool prizes including a personalized jersey, gift cards, and Raptors tickets.

Lastly, in true Ulpana fashion, we sold delicious snacks with all the proceeds going towards the *Machlis Shabbat Project*.

Congratulations to Dalya Mirlas for being voted as Rabbanit, and the rules that she made that the school had to follow for the week were so much fun! (Including the teachers having to be Chazzanit at davening, which was hilarious.)

Overall, I can truly attest that a lot of hard work was put in by my grade to making Rabbanit so amazing this

year. A huge thanks to everyone who helped, including all the donors of the raffle and auction prizes, our teachers who gave up class time to let us practice, and Prof for all the hard work she put in.



## YOC/VO Meme Accounts *The Dark Side of Meme Accounts*

By: Sarah Birnbaum

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the enigma of the meme account, let me explain it to you: A meme is an idea, behaviour, or style that spreads from person to person within a culture, often with the aim of conveying a particular phenomenon, theme, or meaning represented by the meme. The anonymous creators of meme accounts on Instagram are dedicated to posting memes, often asking their followers to submit some, which can then be posted on these popular accounts.

People enjoy seeing what will be posted next and talking about it with their friends, whether it be because the most recent post was funny, shocking, or downright outrageous. When done respectfully and without harming others, they can connect the Bnei Akiva Schools through shared humour and relatability. The original Ulpana meme page, *Uowhatitis*, was created last year by an anonymous Ulpana student and it has been a source of appropriate and hilarious memes.

Soon enough, these Instagram accounts became a popular trend at the beginning of this school year, with new ones seemingly popping up every few days. Now that they have died down and seem to have lost their popularity, it is time to reflect on them, and understand why they were so controversial.

The first piece of evidence that these accounts were becoming a problem was how fast they were being created. It started off with just one or two of them, until it seemed like another one was up every few days. It spiraled out of control and many people became fed up with the

constant requests to follow these accounts, which led many people to block or report them.

Another problem that came up was the use of people's photos without their permission. I personally was a victim of this, when one of the many "shidduch accounts" took a picture of my face to pair me with someone from Or Chaim. I wasn't offended, but I did feel vulnerable because no one asked me first before uploading this. Yes, I took a risk by letting a photo of me be put on social media in the first place, but the person behind that shidduch account should have known better than to do it without my consent. I am not the only one who this has happened to, and that is *not* okay.

Some meme accounts even went so far as to involve people from other schools in the GTA. It isn't fair to those individuals that they had to be sucked into this mess when they were never related to any of it in the first place. The more that this happened, the more it turned into full-blown cyber bullying, with some accounts going so far as to use crude adjectives to describe people and using language calling for violence. For example, on one of the Bnei Akiva Schools meme pages, Ulpana girls were referred to as "thots", meaning "that hoe over there". Aside from being primitive, this language is also degrading and offensive. Individual students have also been penalized on this page.

The biggest issue with the meme accounts, however, is that they were all anonymous. People become bolder when they are unidentified; since there is no accountability, these people could do or say whatever they want with impunity. To put it simply, they know who you are, but you don't know who they are. This leads to another problem, because if a victim wanted to ask an account to take down a post, they'd be doing it with the risk of becoming even more of a target than they already are. Complaining gives the account owner more fuel to add to the flames.

Meme accounts are supposed to be harmless fun and a way for people to find common ground over funny images and captions. Unfortunately, many of them simply became a means to anonymously bully people with no repercussions. We may never know the names of the people who operated the accounts, but hopefully by enlightening people as to the damage caused by them, we can make sure that this does not happen again.

## Weizmann Physics Safe Competition

### *Ulpana Team is Victorious*

By: Noa Muscat

To many, physics is known as dull and boring. The reality, though is that it can be one of the most hands on and interesting of the sciences. This is especially true when looking at the *Shalheveth Freier Physics Tournament*, which challenges teams from all over the world to create a safe that can be cracked using physics principles.

My team, consisting of Atara Gasner, Dalya Mirlas, Margalit Mirlas, and myself, used the principle of air pressure as the main component of our safe. The other Ulpana team was composed of Atara Lipson, Marya Nurgitz, Sheina Franco, Meira Torczyner, and Chana Silverman. The primary principle used in their safe was circuits and sound waves. Both teams worked for months in order to prepare for the national competition, which took place in Montreal earlier this year.

The competition itself consists of two components; cracking the competing teams' safes and presenting our safe to each of the three judges individually. This was an extremely enjoyable and challenging experience.

Out of the thirteen competing teams, two were victorious and will proceed to the international competition which is held in Israel at the Weizmann Institute. One team from Montreal won, as well as my team, and we will be going to Israel from March 19th to the 22nd! Mrs. Chocron, who helped guide both UO teams to create their safes, will be accompanying my team on as we enter the second phase of the competition.

Participating in the safe competition has been an educational and exciting experience to be a part of. Thank you to all involved!



## Getting Down to Business *The YOC Finance Club*

By: Hershel Ganz

Yeshivat Or Chaim has many great clubs but this article will focus on one particular club, The Finance Club.

The "CEO" of the finance club is Jonah Mayer, a senior at Or Chaim. The goal of the club is to encourage and educate young entrepreneurs and those interested in careers in business and finance.

The club has had different business professionals come to educate, share their experiences, and provide insider information in their field. One of the speakers was Mr. Edward Kholodenko, the President and Ceo of Questrade. He came to Or Chaim to speak and share his experiences and he talked about not only his successes, but also about his failures.

The club also has interactive activities for its members such as the stock market game. The stock market game is a mock online stock market where players are given a certain amount of startup money to buy stocks and hopefully make some equity.

Between the high quality speakers and the hands on activities, this is a very useful club for a young, striving entrepreneur.



## Yeshiva University Model UN Conference

### *Tales from YUNMUN*

By: Ahava Helfenbaum

I was so busy frantically memorizing Afghanistan's foreign policy before my session started, I barely heard the thud of the 3 ring

binder against the desk. When I looked up, I must have been so terrified by the enormity of the binder because the delegate holding it smiled and said, “don't worry, half of the papers in here are last year's Tanach notes.”

For me, Yeshiva University Model UN conference was a highly enjoyable experience, but an unexpectedly rigorous one as well. I, along with eight other Bnei Akiva School students, travelled to New York along with hundreds of students from all across North America and beyond to participate in the conference. All nine of us were in one of the fifteen committees, which ranged from the Security Council to the World Food Program. All of the committees mirrored committees existing in the UN itself and had the exact same procedures.

The objective of each delegate was to enter his or her committee as a representative of one of the two countries their school had been assigned (BAS's were Afghanistan and Myanmar), and debate with up to 25 other delegates on thoroughly researched topics. Eventually, delegates broke into groups with other students and met throughout the conference (in my case until 2 am) to construct two resolution papers in the hopes of them passing their committee's vote.

This rigorous research was admittedly due in part to the ultra-competitive environment the conference perpetuated and, as delegates rushed from snack break to sessions, you could feel the excitement in the air.

Being in a conference hall with 500 other aspiring lawyers and politicians was intimidating, especially since most of them were veteran debate champions. But, the rush of participation immediately eliminated any lingering stage fright. I can confidently say that none of those perpetually-open research tabs on my computers went to waste because, as I learned, there is no such thing as too much research. I also learned that Unmoderated Caucus is a lot more fun than it sounds.

I speak on behalf of the whole BAS delegation when I say we are wholly grateful to Sarah Wapner, Mr. Rapp, and Mrs. Kagan for making all our hard work come to fruition.

Who knows, maybe next year we'll all be lugging last year's Torah notes to make an impression, but I have a feeling we won't be needing them.



## Ulpana Shabbaton 2018

### *A Shabbaton to be Remembered*

By: Leora Kronenberg

Everyone knows that the Ulpana Shabbaton is highlight of every year. From getting the sweaters, to dancing with everyone in the dining room, Ulpana Shabbatons tend to be fun-filled and exciting. Chances are, if you are lucky enough to go on one, you're probably going to have an amazing time.

The Shabbaton of 2017 was the one where everyone made new friends or stepped out of their respective comfort zones. This Shabbaton made everyone laugh, but it also made everyone cry. This one was the greatest, most joyous, and most exhilarating Shabbaton yet.



So, what made this Shabbaton so special?

Lots of people agreed that it was because of the bonds it created within the school. “It brought me closer to my friends,” said Elyanna Remer, a sophomore. She continued to say that, “It really united the school. It was so much fun and there was so much ruach. It made the school feel more like a family.” Shmuli Cohen, a junior, also commented that the, “Ulpana Shabbaton was awesome because it created a stronger sense of unity and friendship within the Ulpana mishpacha.” Clearly, after this Shabbaton, everyone felt an even stronger sense of kinship towards their friends and teachers.

The activities and the way the Shabbaton was planned out were real factors which contributed to the atmosphere of the Shabbaton. Orly Aziza, a senior, put it best: “It was well planned but not too planned out.” Orly continued, “As a senior

going into my last Shabbaton, this was everything I could have wanted.”

Her classmate, Kinneret Witty comments that “the dancing, the smiles, bonding time, were all parts of it being so great.” Whether you were taking advantage of the structured activities, or just enjoying the company of your classmates, there is no doubt you were having a great time.



All in all, this Shabbaton was one that will be remembered. Thank you to everyone involved in the planning, the upbeat atmosphere, and the memories!

## Mother Daughter Night

### *Successful Sharsheret Fundraiser*

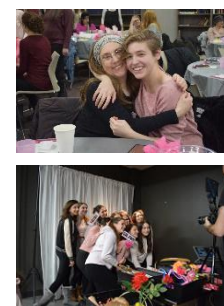
By: Hannah Lipson

The chessed committee organized the annual mother daughter night event this past February 7th. This year, the event coincided with Sharsheret awareness day. Due to this, we felt that it was only appropriate to donate our funds to Sharsheret; a charity in the US which helps and supports Jewish women who are facing breast and/ or ovarian cancer.

Mothers and daughters came dressed in pink in support of Sharsheret. The evening's events included a dvar Torah from Mrs. Munk, a pink themed dessert reception and a cake wars competition judged by none other than Hardcor Snackie herself.

Each mother and daughter received one cupcake to decorate and came together with the rest of their table to create a unified image depicting the importance of Sharsheret.

Thank you to Elyse, Mrs. Klein and Prof for helping us plan and organize the incredible event. As a school, we raised almost \$1500 for Sharsheret (over double what the chessed committee has raised in previous years)!



The chessed committee, Eliana Grunbaum, Tehila Greenberg, Shira Mammon, Zahava Fortinsky, and I thank all of you for coming to Mother Daughter Night 2018 to show your support for Sharsheret. We could not have raised this money without each and every one of you!



## Let's Talk

### *Mental Health: What Is It?*

By: Yosef Zeldman

On Tuesday, January 30th, 2018, I gave a presentation to the students and faculty of Yeshivat Or Chaim about mental health awareness for Bell Let's Talk Day. I spoke about the variety of the diverse mental illnesses that affect our society in the masses, the way the brain works under the influence of certain mental illnesses, the indications that someone is a victim of mental illness, and, most importantly, what you can do about mental illness even if it doesn't directly affect you. I plan to use this article to properly instruct you on how to not only spread awareness of mental illness, but actively take a stance in helping others through various mental health crises.

One of the most important things in counteracting any issue is being aware of the issue itself. There are, unfortunately, a plethora of mental illnesses that are out there. Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, Bipolar disorder, Gender Dysphoria, Schizophrenia, Anorexia and Dementia are only a few of the hundreds of different mental illnesses. Knowing what they are and how they affect us is crucial in actively counteracting everything that is out there.

For the sake of being more concise, however, I'm going to use this article to talk about depression and its link to suicidality, the most prevalent mental illness among young teenagers. 11% of Canadians aged 15-24 have met the criteria for depression. Suicide is the second leading cause of death amongst 15-24 year olds (second only to car accidents). Unfortunately, I am very aware of the effects of depression and suicidality first hand, as my father (Aaron Zeldman א"ר) committed suicide back in 2010. I've also struggled through my own bouts with depression and suicide attempts, something I have since been able to overcome entirely through therapy and medication. Since suicide has had a very significant effect on me and my family, I have an immense interest in studying the topic and educating others on the subject.

To further illustrate the awareness of the effect of depression, I'm going to explain what depression does to the brain directly. When under the influence of depression, the brain's chemicals are all out of whack, and certain areas of the brain are far less active than they should be, whilst other areas are hyperactive and out of control. The amygdala, the part of the brain responsible for processing emotion, is loud and out of control when in a depressive state, rendering the prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain responsible for logical thinking, inherently ineffective. For example: Let's say I'm talking to someone I'm trying to make a good impression on. I accidentally slur my words, and instead of saying "How are you?" I end up saying "How you are?". This is a small, unimportant error, right? Well, to any logical person, it would be. But when the brain is under the influence of depression, logic is rendered innate and emotion takes over all processes of thinking, which causes the brain to spiral downwards into negative overthinking.

Depression puts a gray veil over the world. Everything is sad, nothing has a point, and there's no reason to stick around for it. For most of us, we can find positivity in many things because our brains are working just fine. With people under the influence of depression, however, emotion dominates their thought process, not logic.



Now that I've thoroughly explained depression and its effect on the brain, I'm going to tell you what you can do about it. If you personally feel that you're seeing early signs of depression, such as overwhelming sadness, excessive self-deprecation or loss of interest in hobbies or activities, I beg of you to reach out to someone for help. We live in a world where there isn't shame in coming clean about mental illness, and there are so many outlets in and outside of YOC/UO that can help you find the right method to getting out of a depressive state. For the rest of us, however, knowing that a statistically overwhelming majority of people do *not* suffer from depression, there are many things you can do to take a stance against mental illness.

As I said before, being aware of what's out there is a crucial first step. If you think a friend, family member, colleague or acquaintance is suffering from depression or anxiety, do not hesitate to reach out to them before it's too late. Although the number of suicides is going up every year, the number of people coming clean about their mental illness and seeking rehabilitation are astronomically high as well. If you see someone on the side, someone who sits in the corner, someone generally upset or content, it's your responsibility as a caring, empathic human being to go up to them and offer your help. If you don't feel that you're adequate in dealing with mental health issues, however, please point the person to someone who is qualified to help them.

The more we start to do this, the more we lift the negative stigma around mental illness, the more people we will help, the more lives we will save, means we will make the world a better place overall. There are also many hospitals that specialize in child rehabilitation, such as Holland Bloorview hospital, that welcome and encourage high school volunteers. I plan to volunteer at this centre in the future, and I encourage everyone do to the same, or find a place that does something similar. Every issue desperately needs

change, and, together, we can be that change.



## Night-time for the Knights *The UO Knights volleyball team close their season*

By: Hannah Aaron

Spanning over approximately two months, the UO Knights volleyball team played their hearts out over the course of a gut-wrenching season, which ultimately came to an end on March 1st.

The team, consisting of 50% new players, welcomed their new coach Mr. Jonathan Parker who introduced a different style of play, called a 6-2; a system that brought the team great success.

The members of the team include Penina Basser ('18), Adina Weitzner ('18), Layla Frischman ('18), Dorothy Paling ('18), Hadar Werberger ('19), Hannah Aaron ('20), Hanna-Eden Ibgghi ('20), Sarah Abbou ('20), Ariella Spiro ('20), Aliza Balsam ('21), Adina Judelman ('21), and Nina Samson ('21). They played a total of 11 games, including an exhibition game against CHAT and three playoff games.



The Knights started their season strong, earning themselves a record of 4-0, which by the end of the season helped push them into the third seed in their division and a spot in the playoffs for their second year in a row. The team demonstrated a tremendous amount of integrity during the playoffs (which happened to fall on Purim). Many members of the team brought *Mishloach Manot* for the entire team, including Coach Parker. When the dust had settled, the team tied finished tied for 5th place overall.



Penina Basser, a senior, reflected on the season, "Our volleyball season has finally come to an end. Our resilience and strong team stood out this season and we all had so much fun playing as the Knights."

The team will be losing four current seniors next year, all of whom were valuable players who lead the team this past year.

Fortunately, the Knights have a promising future ahead and we wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors - which will hopefully earn them a new trophy to proudly display in our school. Go Knights!

## Ice in the Desert *The Israeli Olympic Team*

Shmuel Laitman STAFF WRITER

We all have that one friend who is seemingly good at everything. That friend that is a great student, very athletic and not socially awkward. That friend, on a more global level, is Israel.

Until recently, the world had Israel beat in one thing: winter sports. But during the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, Israel proved that it could compete with the world's best, even in the cold. Israel sent ten athletes – including eight skaters – to the games. Unfortunately, the Israeli competitors were unable to bring a medal back home but, in the eyes of many, merely qualifying was an achievement in and of itself.



The question remains: how can a country with just four skating rinks – a country that rarely experiences temperatures below zero – produce eight Olympic level skaters?

The answer is not as miraculous as you would think. In fact, it is anything but miraculous. Most of us know about the 1988 Jamaican Bobsled Team and have watched Disney's film *Cool Runnings*, which follows the "miraculous" journey of the team's members. Despite what Disney

would like you to think, the true story of the Jamaican Bobsled Team is nothing like its portrayal in the film. Miracles don't happen in the Olympics (except that one in 1980, which also took place on ice). So, if the Israeli Winter Olympic Team isn't a miracle, then what is it?

The truth is, only three of Israel's ten athletes are Israeli by birth. The teams star – Alexei Bychenko – along with three other members of the team were born in Ukraine while the remaining three Israeli athletes are from the United States.

Although Israel isn't the winter-sport powerhouse we all wish it were, athletes wanting to play for Israel's team shows that Israel as a country can still attract top-tier foreigners with blue and white in their veins.

### The Players Tribune: The Sunshine State YOC Knights Take Their Talents to South Beach

By: Jacob Fine

The disheartening loss in the TDCAA semi-finals served as motivation for my teammates and I to achieve success in the Florida Tournament.

With cohesive cooperation, we won our first three games. Avi Karakowsky, who developed his game tremendously since Grade 9, carried the team on his back, scoring over 80 points throughout the entire tournament. Additionally, William Ayayi set the tone for us at the defensive end of the floor. This was matched by clutch shooting from Jonah Mayer, as well as Aaron Ekstein's crisp three-pointers. All of these individual efforts set the tone for us as a team and further enabled the rest of our guys to perform at a high level on the court.



Despite our combined efforts, we lost in the tournament finals by three points; it was absolutely devastating. This would be the last time many of us would don the blue and gold. When we left the game, some of us were sad, grieving over the loss.

Although we were not victorious in the regular season or in the tournament, our team's unparalleled chemistry made us all winners. Without a question, the unmatched team bonding component of this squad trumps any potential championship trophy.



### מדוע חשוב לשלוט בשפה העברית כיהודי? מדוע חשוב לשלוט ביותר משפה אחת?

By: אלי יסר

וודאי שמעתם על התועלת האקדמית שידיעת שפה שניה יכולה להביא לכם. – יותר הזדמנויות עבודה, שיפור הזיכרון, הגברת היצירתיות ועוד. וזה נהדר. אבל, האם חשבתם אי פעם על היתרון של ידיעת השפה העברית כיהודי? כל כך הרבה מהתרבות שלנו מסתמכת על השפה שלנו: העברית. העברית עוזרת לנו ליצור קשר עמוק יותר עם המקורות שלנו, מעצימה את הרוחניות שלנו, ואת ההבנה שבתפילה ובקריאת ספרי התנ"ך. ולזה, אין תחליף. ההעצמה הרוחנית מאפשרת לנו להאזח במדינת ישראל, זה עוזר לנו להבין בשלמות את ציוני ההיסטוריה שלנו. הבנת התפילה בעברית (השפה המקורית) מאפשרת לנו להרגיש יותר מחוברים לתפילתנו שכידוע, היא דבר קשה לכל יהודי באשר הוא. ולסיום, ידיעת השפה העברית מקלה על ההבנה העמוקה בקריאת התנ"ך והמקורות. לדוגמה: "רבי שמואל בר נחמן אמר...פועה, שהופיעה פנים כנגד פרעה, וזקפה חוטמה בו. ואמרה לו: אוי לו לאותו האיש, כשיבוא האלוהים להיפרע ממנו! נתמלא עליה חימה להרגה. שפרה, שהייתה משפרת על דברי בתה, ומפייסת עליה, אמרה לו: על זה אתה משגיח? תינוקת היא ואינה יודעת כלום" (שמות רבה פרשה א). לדוגמאות כאלה אין סוף. תודות רבות לאליעזר בן יהודה מחייה השפה העברית. באפריל 1879 פירסם אליעזר בן יהודה מאמר פוליטי, "שאלה נכבדה" ששם כתב שעם ישראל יגיע לחיות בארץ ישראל עם השפה העברית. לדעתו, לא היתה דרך אחרת משום שאין לאום ללא שפה משותפת. זהו המאמר הראשון שבו הוא החליף את שמו מפרלמן, לבן יהודה.

### Canada and the Terrible, Horrible, No good, Very Bad National Anthem Canadian Anthem Revision

By: Naomi Glogauer

When radical feminists get bored, they identify politically incorrect minutiae as an attack on women. This most recent episode of "super important issues that threaten women" featured the passing of Bill C-210. This Bill tackles the allegedly offensive lyrics in the Canadian national anthem which read "in all thy sons command". You might be perplexed as to the significance of this single line, so allow me to explain: The use of the word "sons" is an attack on women now. This is absurd. I don't feel assaulted... Do you?

There is no attack on women within this statement. Within most languages, when referring to a group of both men and women, the male pronoun is used. And even if this were an issue, the original version of the anthem states "Thou dost in us command" which was *still* gender-neutral. Why not revert to the original version, if this is their concern?

We are now expected to sing "in all of us command" because, apparently, feminism now trumps grammar. Since patriot love is commanded and not the sons' or the sons, we should be singing "in all of us commands". Apparently, feminists couldn't even create a new lyric properly.

This is not a new complaint, as women have whined about exclusion from the national anthem since the 1950's. In the 50's, women were fighting to be seen as equal to men. Instead of focusing solely on the important things, however, they seemed to think that these lyrical issues deserved the same amount of attention.

In 1997, Frances Wright first noticed this egregious violation of human rights. A friend asked her, after singing the anthem "Why are you singing that sexist anthem, Frances?". Wright realized that her friend was correct, the lyrics only referred to sons and not daughters. "Where are the women?" she asked herself. Soon afterwards, she spearheaded the movement, being passed from Senator to Senator in an attempt to have her voice heard. Nearly 20 years later, her oddly specific dream came true when Bill C-210 was passed.

With any luck, there will be a silver lining to this insanity. Not only will our anthem finally be conscious of gender, but perhaps the world will finally see Canada for what it truly is: a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad social justice warrior of a country.

### The New Canada Politically Correct Prime Minister Makes Faux Pas

By: Raphi Singer

At a recent town hall event in Edmonton, Alberta, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was asked a question by a young woman regarding the status of religious charitable organizations in recent legislation. She was ending her question with, "the future of mankind," when all of a sudden Trudeau interrupted her declaring, "We like to say people kind, not necessarily mankind. It's more inclusive." The crowd erupted in cheers with the woman thanking Trudeau for his useful words. The exchange soon went viral with many around the world lambasting and making fun of the Prime Minister's gaffe.



Trudeau's response to the woman's question should not surprise anyone around the world, especially not in Canada. As soon as he got elected to office, his Liberal Cabinet was filled with half women and half men, signifying the importance of gender equality in 2015. Trudeau promptly declared himself a so called "Feminist," and even went as far to pen an article in which he wrote about "boys escaping the pressure of masculinity" in order to become feminists. Further, just a few short weeks ago, the lyrics of the Canadian national anthem were amended from "in all thy sons command," to "in all of us command." If you couldn't figure out already, the reason was to have a gender-neutral anthem where no one's feelings would be hurt by a couple of words. This is yet another example of Trudeau's bizarre focus with respect to governing this country.

The Prime Minister does not understand that not all Canadians agree with his political correctness agenda, nor do they want him changing our way of speaking. Sixty percent of Canadians believe that people are too offended by the language use of others. And it's not just Trudeau who uses these crazy "PC" words. Universities around the

world have started to ban words like “sportsmanship”, “right hand man”, and “manpower”.

Are we as a society going to start policing what kinds of words we use when talking to different people? Are we going to take out words from the dictionary and replace them with gender neutral ones? Are we going to start getting in trouble if people get offended by the words that we use (if we haven't already)?

If Canada continues on this dangerous trend towards correcting speech, then there will be mayhem. We wouldn't be able to have a province Manitoba anymore, instead it would become “People-itoba.” You wouldn't be able to go use the men's room or ladies' room in public places, instead you would use the “People's Room.” And that manhole in the street that you just avoided, those do not exist anymore. Instead they are called “People-holes.” See how absurd Canada and the world would become if we talked like this?

Trudeau's agenda is not necessarily the agenda that all Canadians want to see, and frankly, if people get offended by others using normal, everyday words then that is their prerogative. If a person cannot go into the world without being offended by harmless words, then they are setting themselves up for failure. Trudeau went too far by interrupting the ladies question and adding his two-cents. One could further argue that he certainly went too far by changing our national anthem.

Perhaps the saddest part about all of this is that the Prime Minister has failed to realize that you cannot spell “woman,” without “man.” You heard that right. Women have just become “wo-people”.

Oh... Canada...

## Reach for the Stars

### *Elon Musk Continues to Innovate*

By: Ben Nemirov

“Reach for the stars” is a quote to inspire those who feel discouraged or to motivate people strive for a seemingly impossible goal. It is a quote to inspire people to work towards what they believe in. And, if you're Elon Musk, this quote is not only something you have succeeded in doing, but actually exceeded.



Being a genius, billionaire, engineer, inventor, philanthropist Mr. Musk has a rather busy schedule. Whether he is occupied creating the world's fastest roadster available for purchase commercially, or selling flame throwers to the public to raise awareness and funds for his “Boring Company”, the CEO of Tesla, SpaceX and Neuralink seems to have his hands full.

Although his schedule seems to be consistently jam packed, *Time Magazine's* 20th most influential person of 2017 has spent the better part of the past year overlooking the Falcon Heavy project at SpaceX. The Falcon Heavy is a super heavy-lift launch vehicle able to be partially reused. A super heavy-lift launch vehicle (SHLLV) is a launch vehicle capable of lifting more than 50,000 kg (110,000 lbs) of payload into low Earth orbit (LEO). While, at first glance, the Falcon Heavy may seem like any other rocket, it is actually able to support more than twice the payload of the next closest operational SHLLV, the Delta IV Heavy, and costs only one third of its competitor's price.

The rocket is assembled with 3 Falcon 9 boosters, with a total of 27 engines allowing it to generate 5 million pounds of thrust, making it capable of lifting 64 metric tons, or 18, 747 aircrafts, or 13,157,894 iPhones. Due to all of this, the Falcon Heavy has the second highest payload of any SHLLV ever made. The specifications of the Falcon Heavy clearly prove it to be one of the most advanced SHLLVs and deserving of the copious levels of intrigue they have caused. But what has caused most of the excitement around the vehicle is its ability to be launched, landed and reused. The ability of a rocket to be reused is a major stepping stone for space exploration, especially when coupled with the most powerful rocket worldwide. The Falcon Heavy truly a feat of special advancements as its capabilities could, in the future, contribute to a stable travel system to other planets and back.

In addition to his groundbreaking achievements with the Falcon Heavy,

Elon Musk made sure to make it an entertaining vehicle for those without particular interest towards the rocket itself. Mr. Musk took it upon himself to place a Tesla roadster with a seated astronaut mannequin nicknamed “Starman” within the Falcon Heavy as a dummy payload. This action gained him points with a younger audience with its absurdity, lending itself to the creation of many memes and being seen as such a peculiar choice that it made the news and countless headlines.

Elon Musk has clearly shown himself to be a pinnacle figure in almost every field of technological advancements especially that of space exploration. With Musk's plans for SpaceX containing human transports to Mars by 2019, it seems as though Elon Musk no longer wishes to continue reaching the stars on his own, but wants to let everyone enjoy in this amazing experience.

## The Legalization of Marijuana

### *Pros and Cons of Controversial Legalization*

By: Orly Davidov

In just a few short months, Canadian Citizens will be able to purchase marijuana from retail stores. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has decided to legalize marijuana, which has been a long time wait for Canadians. Prime Minister Trudeau's liberal party ruled that marijuana would be legalized in the summer of 2018, and the Health Department claimed that, "As previously indicated, the government of Canada intends to bring the proposed Cannabis Act into force no later than July 2018."

Several provinces will sell marijuana from shops that are run by the provincial government, including Ontario, while the western provinces of Manitoba and Alberta claimed that they will sell marijuana through private businesses who require designated licenses.

In Ontario, the legal age to purchase marijuana will be 19 years old. In other provinces, the legal age is 18 years old, but the provinces have the option to raise the age if they so choose.

The Ontario Government expects there to be online distribution of marijuana available by July 2018, and 150 stores open by the year 2020.



There has been a lot of commotion amongst Canadians ever since Prime Minister Trudeau's government declared the legalization of marijuana. Many individuals believe that this declaration is beneficial, and that the outcome will have a significant impact, while others highly disagree.

I have gathered numerous opinions from the staff and students of Bnei Akiva Schools, who all share unique, informative opinions.

“My opinion is that legalization is the wrong choice. My main concern is that substance use is often a stress reliever on the spectrum of mental health issues. As a substance that is labeled ‘criminal’, users are charged with an offence when what they really need is help with the underlying reasons for their use. Decriminalization of substance use in general is a good choice because those who use substances should not be treated as criminals. Legalization takes the issue a step to far because it legitimizes substance use, makes the substance more readily available, and allows businesses and government agencies to profit from mental health issues.

Although, legalization can't be labeled as wholly negative. Legalization will allow the sale and therefore taxation of marijuana. The additional tax revenue could be useful in creating social programs. However, this immediate benefit will be outweighed by increased health care costs if marijuana usage increases.

From a strictly economic view, I believe that the reduction in health care costs through disease prevention would far outweigh tax revenue gained from selling substances that harm health. This applies to tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana. Unfortunately, healthcare savings would not be realized for decades after political changes. Increases in tax revenues that will be seen now are a much more attractive prospect for a party that may not even be in power ten years from now.

My experience of social media is that there is a large movement of people who believe that marijuana

use is harmless and only has positive effects. Medical benefits are often cited as one of the major arguments of this movement. Unfortunately, these are the deluded opinions of people who are only interested in getting high without social repudiation. Positive uses for cannabis are cherry picked to make their point while dismissing negative points as conspiracy.

Marijuana, along with most psychoactive substances, has been shown to permanently interrupt normal brain development. This can lead to greater instances of mental health problems such as schizophrenia, and decreased capacity for concentration and learning.

From a more holistic point of view, the physical and mental health, and the standard of living of citizens should be of greater importance than the economic implications. Social programs, higher minimum wage, community building, healthy lifestyle promotion, etc. will be of greater benefit to the population and actually reduce the desire to make use of substances as an escape. It would also create a healthier more productive population which would, in turn, benefit the economy.”

**- Dr. Clapham, Bnei Akiva Schools Staff**

“I believe that the legalization of marijuana is beneficial in several ways for the Canadian population. Marijuana has been proven to treat a lot of medical conditions which ordinary medication could not. Some of these conditions include epilepsy, Crohn's disease, PTSD, and as well as different types of cancer. Additionally, through the Canadian government's selling of marijuana, the Canadian economy is predicted to increase by 22.6 billion dollars. Another important point is that with the legalization of marijuana, it can now be purchased safely from a trusted resource. This will therefore prevent Canadians from purchasing street drugs.

Recently there have been many reports of fentanyl-laced marijuana in marijuana sold in the streets. Fentanyl is a highly addictive narcotic that many drug dealers lace marijuana with. This is an easy way to ensure future business, as smoking marijuana that is laced with fentanyl will likely lead one to overdose, and potentially kill themselves. Hopefully soon these dealers will lose all power with the presence government distributors.

Lastly, it seems trivial to argue against marijuana usage just because it may cause negative side effects. Cigarettes give you lung cancer. Why have something that causes cancer, over something that could be used beneficially?

Overall, in the future, I would rather my child smoking marijuana over cigarettes anyway.”

**-Ariela Shick, Grade 10 Student in Ulpamat Orot**

“I do agree with legalization and the government treating marijuana like any other controlled substance, such as alcohol or cigarettes. All these substances are potentially very harmful, and so are guns and automobiles. The role of government should be to protect the liberty of the individual to decide how he conducts his own life, with the power only to try and ensure that a person with poor judgement does not harm others.

This is beneficial for Canadians because if we don't take seriously the idea of rights, we may as well not be a democracy. If our rights are indeed inalienable, then they are not transferable to any government. If adults have a right to make a choice for themselves that does not harm another, that right must include the right to make the wrong choice.”

**- Mr. Rapp, Director of Education**

“In my opinion, there are many pros and cons with the legalization of marijuana. I believe that there will be dramatic changes in Canada socially and economically. The Canadian government will be able to collect taxes from Canadian citizens who choose to smoke marijuana. Although, I believe that a portion of the tax revenue should be used for education, and programs for substance abusers. Also, with the legalization, there is a much lower chance of contaminants being contained in marijuana, since there will be government oriented stores where you could safely purchase marijuana. When individuals purchase marijuana from drug dealers, it creates more of a hazard. For example, drug dealers might offer their buyer other illegal substances they could purchase that are more dangerous and addictive, such as heroin, since many of them do not specialize in selling just one kind of drug.

However, as much as this legalization could potentially impact Canada positively, I am aware of the negative changes that come with this legalization. The usage of marijuana

majorly increases depression, anxiety, psychosis, and other mood disorders. Many people use marijuana for its joy-filled and relaxing effects. Although, some people also experience feelings of fear and stress or paranoia when intoxicated. So, marijuana could be used to relieve anxiety or stress for some, while causing others to feel nervous/eager.

Due to this legalization, marijuana will no longer be grouped with dangerous drugs, such as cocaine and heroin. This legalization will create hundreds of new jobs for unemployed citizens, ultimately raising Canada's economy. Through the research that I have done, I am certain that the positive attributions of this legalization have outnumbered the negative ones.

**- Raquel Soberano, Grade 10 Student in Ulpamat Orot**

Overall, it seems as though there is a never-ending stream of opinions regarding the legalization of marijuana in Canada. All of the opinions above are educational and enlightening, and contrastive in their own way. Until the legalization of marijuana occurs, nobody knows the impact it will leave on Canada and Canadian citizens.



### **The BASH Team**

#### **Ulpamat Orot**

Layla Frischman  
Adina Weitzner  
Rivka Werner  
Marya Nurgitz  
Dorothy Paling  
Sarah Birnbaum  
Sara Green  
Temima Tova Gerstl  
Malka Daniels  
Hadar Wercberger  
Zahava Fortinsky

#### **Or Chaim**

Eitan Markus  
Ben Nemirov  
Yochanan Goldstein  
Avery Hoffer  
Shmuel Laitman  
Avi Weinberger

#### **Faculty Advisor**

Mr. Saltsman



