

Beaconsfield teacher Jeff Pinsky wins scholarship to study at Yad Vashem



Mike Cohen

Presently in his ninth year of teaching and sixth at Beaconsfield High School, **Jeffrey Pinsky** says his mind is already racing in regard to what he has planned for the next academic year. In a few weeks the 32 year old Drama Department chief will be off to Israel to join dozens of his peers from around the world as part of the Teaching of the Holocaust for Educators Program.

Pinsky and two others from Montreal were awarded Riva and Thomas O. Hecht Scholarships (www.t-h-e-program.org) for this

once and a lifetime experience. I had the pleasure of meeting him last week at a reception held at the home of the Hechts. Beaconsfield resident and Lester B. Pearson School Board Director General Robert Mills was also on hand.

Each of the teachers will take part in a professional development program under the direction of the Faculty of the Yad Vashem Seminars for Educators from Abroad, International School for Holocaust Studies. The goal of the program is to provide professional development activities for the teaching about the Holocaust and anti-Semitism to students in the youth sector. Each recipient will be asked to create at least one teaching unit or module developed within the context learned. This is the ninth year for the program, with 29 teachers having gone through it with full scholarships.

"My late grandfather was a Holocaust survivor," Pinsky revealed. "When he was a teenager, he was separated from his parents and sister in Poland. After obtaining false papers to get him to central Europe, he managed to get to Italy, and from there to Argentina where he met his wife, herself a Holocaust refugee. While he already knew that his parents were killed in the concentration camps, he had no idea that his sister had survived and was living in Russia. Through the Yad Vashem network, he re-established contact with her about 15 years ago.

Pinsky says he did a sit-down interview with his grandfather as part of a sound project for one of his Concordia University classes more than a decade ago. "I had never asked him about his experience, and he

fought back the tears in telling me about his childhood and his escape, but could not go into more details," he says.

Please read my extended column in the next Suburban Magazine, online this Friday afternoon, for more comments from Pinsky about his goals and objectives in this interesting endeavour.

NAKED FASHION: The Sexual Health Network of Quebec (SHNQ) has come up with a very novel way to raise some funds to promote sex education in high schools and get everyone's attention. On Thursday evening, June 26 at Galerie 203 in Old Montreal they will present Stripped, a Naked Fashion Show aimed at showing the true beauty of real men and women who have bravely volunteered to appear nude as for the cause. "We need to start a real conversation about the importance of sex ed, which should incorporate critical topics like consent, readiness, body image, self-esteem and other pressing issues beyond the basic fear-based tactics of STI's and unwanted pregnancy," says SHNQ President, host of CJAD's Passion and Dollard des Ormeaux resident **Dr. Laurie Betito**. The evening will include hors-d'oeuvres, an open bar, and gifts from the sponsors, an art exhibit and show clearly unlike something anyone has ever seen. For details log on to <http://shnq.ca> and see my blog for an interview with one of the models.

Have you got something to share?
Email mcohen@thesuburban.com or call 514-484-9203, ext. 307. Follow me on Twitter @mikecohen-sl and on my blog at <http://blog.thesuburban.com>



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'The Suburban rocks'

The Suburban Magazine columnist Suzanne Reisler Litwin dropped by our offices last week to deliver what she called a homemade "Chocolate Chip Cookie-A-Gram" which was enjoyed by the staff. Reisler Litwin, a Hampstead resident and mother of three, is an instructor at Concordia University's School of Extended Learning and the author of the children's book *The Black Velvet Jacket*. You can read her Living in the Now columns every two weeks in the Suburban Magazine at www.thesuburban.com



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