



Annual Report 5784



Burquest Jewish Community

Your Jewish Home in the Tri-Cities



September 2023-August 2024

VISION



A lively & welcoming Jewish community.
Your Jewish Home in the Tri-Cities.

MISSION



Burquest is dedicated to fostering a vibrant and inclusive community hub that transcends generations within the eastern Vancouver suburbs Jewish community. We are committed to providing a welcoming space and unwavering support for diverse educational pursuits, meaningful religious practices, enriching cultural activities, and fostering strong community connections. Through our dedication to inclusivity, respect, and shared values, we strive to create a nurturing environment that empowers individuals of all ages to learn, grow, and flourish together.

Table of Contents

S
T
R
U
C
T
U
R
E

04.

Message from Board of
Directors

05.

Chairman's Message

07.

Highlights of 2023/2024

08.

Events

12.

Program Reports

18.

Financial Update

22.

List of Board of Directors

25.

Recognizing our Donors,
Funders & Community
Partners

MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

5784 - 2023/2024 was a difficult year for Jews worldwide. Coming together as a community helped us during these challenging times. Burquest worked hard to facilitate community connections and support.

The Burquest Jewish Community Centre, based in Coquitlam, BC, provides a place for our diverse Jewish community to connect. The working Board of Directors plans and supports a range of activities together with staff programmers and our administrator. Our programming and events help Jewish families, adults and seniors thrive and connect. We look forward to the year ahead where we can provide even more programs and events to connect our community.



The year 5784 is and will long be seared in the minds of the Jewish community by the vicious October 7th attack on Israel by Hamas from Gaza and subsequent war. The events reverberated around the world, triggering anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic demonstrations and other actions in our own community. It has not been an easy year to be a Jew, even in Canada. Thankfully, our organization and facility has not directly experienced the violence that has occurred in Vancouver, elsewhere in Canada, and around the world. However some members of our community, including school children, have experienced personal confrontations. Some Jews in our area are reluctant to participate in public Jewish events, and/or have curtailed displaying personal jewelry or symbols identifying themselves as Jews. Burquest has provided links towards potential tools for addressing anti-Semitism put together by the greater Vancouver Jewish Federation – see our website or theirs, for links.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The Burquest Jewish Community Association has provided support to our community at several levels. In the immediate aftermath, mental health counselors provided sessions at the BJCC. We co-organized and hosted a set of political meetings to respond to anti-Israel petitions presented to local city councils. We wrote to councils in the organization's name arguing against adopting such petitions. Members of our community met with local mayors asking for stronger enforcement of bylaws against illegal demonstrations. We have also received support from allies outside the Jewish community. The political results have varied. Throughout these interactions, we have tried to present a positive face for our community.

We have altered our own operations with an eye toward increasing security at our events. We completed installation of security cameras, and record activity. Smile, you are now on camera! We improved the exterior lighting at the BJCC and in our parking lot. We have hired security for some events, in part with support from the Jewish Federation.

We have strengthened our pre-registration systems and been less public about advertising event locations, albeit this is a fig leaf for events at the BJCC. Most recently, we installed a video doorbell system at the main entrance to allow us to keep the door shut, but allow latecomers entrance, during events.

Beyond responding to distant events close to our hearts, 5784 continued a resurgence of activity by the BJCA that has been building for several years. We expanded our staff and general offerings focused on the Israeli community, both for current residents and newly arriving immigrants from Israel and elsewhere. The building is in use throughout the week with our own activities, plus those of other community groups, whose use helps support our own staff and programming. This 5874 annual report reviews a handful of these programs. We look forward toward being of service to the community in 5785.

Dov Lank, Chair, Burquest Jewish Community Association



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023/2024

Our team at Burquest came together to celebrate events in the community as well as find new opportunities to connect. The Board has brainstormed new ideas to attract new membership across the Tri-Cities and continue to do so. Our aim is to support Jewish life for all the members of our community.

01

Holiday Events

Burquest made a point of hosting a variety of unique and diversified events throughout the year. The most well-attended events were during Purim, Chanukah and Shavuot. All of these events had record attendance and we received positive feedback following the event.

02

Unique Events for the Community

Recognizing the 90th birthday of our longest participating member, Bill Gruenthal, Burquest hosted a classical music concert in his honour and his wife Naomi. Bill served as president of Burquest in the mid 1980s, and has been a loyal member ever since (photo below!)

03

Programming for Newcomers

This year we were pleased to offer newcomers a number of programs to help them accommodate to English and to a new work environment. To this end, we offered online and in-person sessions geared to help non-first language English speakers.

04

Partnerships in the Community

While Burquest hosted a number of unique events, we also partnered with other organizations in the Tri-Cities and beyond, including Chabad of the Tri-Cities. This helped us to build stronger bonds and connect with new people across the Jewish community.

EVENTS

Burquest is so proud of the events it hosted in 2023/2024. Even through challenging times, Burquest found the means to pull together the Jewish community in a variety of ways. Events ranged from shabbat services, seminars to celebratory events. Here's some of the top events & programs attended in 2023/2024.

01

High Holiday Services

Rabbi Laura Duham-Kaplan led Burquest's High Holiday services in September 2024. Together with her husband Charles Kaplan, Cantor Frani Goodman, Burquest member Dave Medzon, and Burquest alumnus member Effron Essieva, the group combined warmth of the Rabbi's Jewish Renewal orientation with the traditional holiday prayers and meditations to produce exceptionally meaningful experiences. With the last Tekiah G'dolah, many started 5875 with a renewed sense of hope.

02

Programming for Newcomers

This year we were pleased to offer newcomers to the Tri-Cities a number of programs to try to help them accommodate to English and to a new work environment. To this end, we offered a number of online and in-person sessions geared to help non-first language English speakers.

English language topics included common phrases used when shopping, when banking, and when attending parent-teacher meetings. We looked at common adjectival verbs, e.g. we catch a train, we catch a flight, which is odd if you think about it, as there is no possibility of physically catching a train nor a plane!

We were also pleased to offer several online sessions in constructing a cover letter, a resume and the job seeking process. All of these zoom sessions were generously sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver.

Our in-person sessions took place at Burquest, where we introduced services offered by the JCC, by Burquest and discussed Canadian culture. About 20 people registered for the Vancouver Public Library session where we were shown the many Canadian job-finding resources for skilled workers.

We wish all of our newcomers all the best in settling into Vancouver!

03

Bringing the Community Together During Hard Times

We developed programs to unite community during these challenging times. This included a Hebrew-speaking Women's Circle, Oneg Shabbat every 3 weeks, and Hebrew Cooking sessions. These events helped to bring the community together, engage in discussion and learn too.

04

Burquest Book Club in Full Swing

This past year, we've had a great turnout at our Burquest Book Club, bringing together a good group of people who enjoy sharing their thoughts on the stories we read.

The books and authors we've had the privilege of featuring at the Book Club have made for excellent conversation. In October 2023 we also had the privilege of having Holocaust Survivor Marie Doduck speak at Burquest, after the Book Club read her memoir, *A Childhood Unspoken*. It was an incredible afternoon.

05

Purim Fun

Burquest hosted a Purim Potluck on March 17th, 2024 that attracted almost 50 people to celebrate this special holiday. This event was an Israel-inspired potluck for families to celebrate Purim and have some fun. Alongside this event, Burquest held a Hamantaschen Bake where families joined together to bake Hamantaschen.

Then, on March 23rd, 2024, Burquest also hosted a Purim Carnival, offering a more traditional Purim party, reading of the "Megillat Esther" for all ages. This included Purim Arts and Crafts, Megillah Madness - Purim puppet show, face painting and Megillah for adults.





PROGRAM REPORTS

Burquest strives to offer a range of programs for the members of its local community. We understand that we have a diverse community and have been working hard to provide a range of programs for adults, families, children and seniors.

Ritual

In addition to High Holy Day services, Burquest holds bi-weekly Shabbat services. Services are held on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings.

Cantor Levin always enjoys leading our Shabbat services at Burquest. We hold services generally twice per month, one Friday evening and one Shabbat morning. Since coming out of the pandemic we have continued to offer our services online and in person. Our Shabbat services offer a warm welcoming community atmosphere of spirituality, praying and singing together, with inspiring music blending both traditional and contemporary.

We have seen many new faces at our services, and attendance varies from smaller intimate groups to much larger especially for special occasions such as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah or a community holiday celebration such as our Friday night Pesach Seder, Sukkot, pre-Rosh Hashanah and Hanukkah and others during the year.

We welcome everyone to our services and look forward to seeing many more from our community.

May we grow from strength to strength, and continue to provide a source of spirituality, community, and celebrating our Jewishness together with hope and inspiration for the future.

Book Club

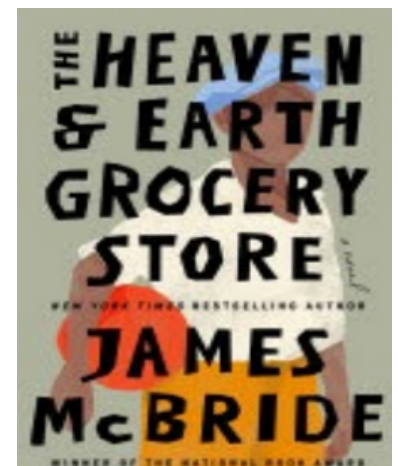
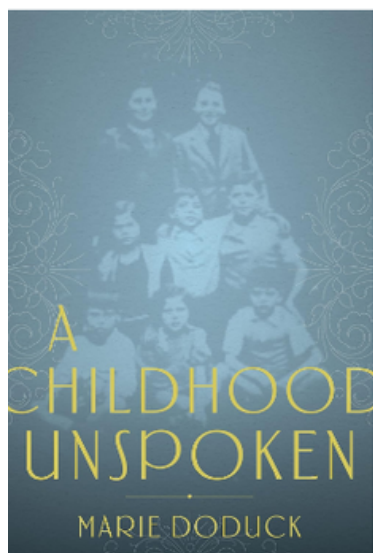
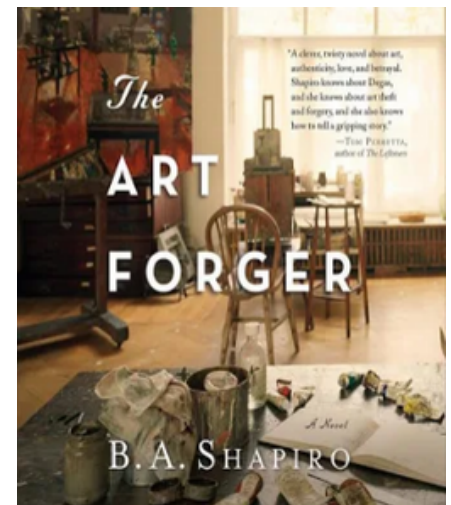
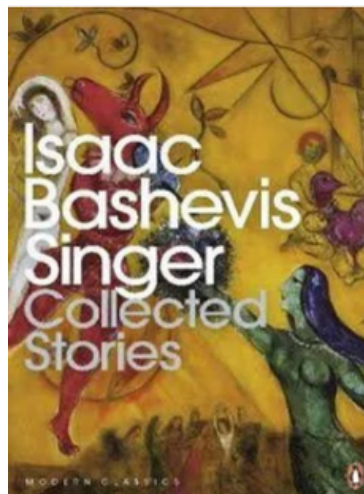
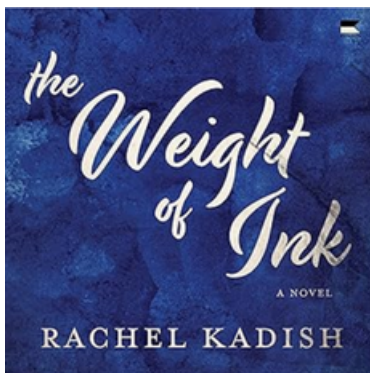
Over the past year, we've had the wonderful opportunity to dive into some fantastic books, sparking lively discussions and meaningful connections—whether in person or via Zoom. Here's a quick peek at what we've explored:

- *The Art Forger* by Barbara Shapiro
- *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride
- A number of Isaac Bashevis Singer's short stories
- *The Weight of Ink* by Rachel Kadish
- *A Childhood Unspoken* by Marie Doduck

Our book group is open to everyone and completely free! It's a welcoming space where we share thoughts, exchange ideas, and enjoy deep conversations in a relaxed, respectful, and supportive setting. We gather on Sunday afternoons, either online or in person, to chat about our latest read.

The only rule? Our books are either by Jewish authors or explore Jewish themes, which keeps our discussions rich and meaningful.

Looking ahead, we're excited to possibly host some authors in the upcoming year—maybe even a children's author too! So, stay tuned for more great reads and special events!



Seniors Program

Our regular programs like the singing group (twice a month) and monthly Hebrew-English conversations took on a new approach. We had a lot of fun learning and practicing songs in Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, and English, and even tried singing along with the audience at our concerts. For our Hebrew-English conversations, we covered a variety of topics, such as world news, Jewish poetry and literature, and an introduction to the Siddur, where we explored the history and meaning of Jewish holidays, customs, and traditions. One of the highlights was the "Family Album" segment, where participants could share photos and videos of their loved ones, along with stories and memories about their families.

Seniors' lunches at Burquest and "on the road," featuring performances from our singing group and special guests attracted new participants. Some of the events included a Seniors' Brunch for Rosh Hashanah in September, a Lunch on the Road at the Safe-on-Food kitchen in October, and a community latkes party for Chanukah. All of these lunches were funded through our own expenses and the hard work of our volunteers.

The October performance by the musical trio Du Souvenir was attended by 49 people and raised \$475 in ticket sales. In November, our seniors enjoyed a musical matinee with the Duo Bergman at Evergreen, and in December, we celebrated the Festival of Lights with hot chocolate and an art exhibition at the Evergreen Art Gallery.

After the tragedy in Israel on October 7, 2023, funds raised from lunch ticket sales were donated to the Israel Emergency Fund.

By January we continued with our singing sessions and Hebrew-English conversations, and hosted special events, including a Tu B'Shvat Seder, a musical matinee at Evergreen with Cameron Crozman, and more!

February was kicked off with a festive seniors' "Valentine" lunch, filled with laughter, great food, and a delightful musical performance. Everyone enjoyed the lively reception that followed, and the energy was truly infectious!

March brought the much-anticipated Seniors' Purim celebration, where participants enjoyed a fun-filled presentation, a delicious lunch, and a fantastic concert. The room was buzzing with excitement as everyone joined in the Purim spirit, complete with songs and stories.

In April, our seniors had a wonderful time at the musical matinee at Evergreen, where the music was the perfect backdrop to a relaxing and enjoyable afternoon. The Passover lunch, prepared by the community kitchen club, was a big hit, and the presentation on "10 Things Every Jew Should Know About Passover" sparked great conversations, adding even more depth to the celebrations.

All in all, these months were filled with joy, camaraderie, and a wonderful sense of community as everyone came together to share in the festivities!

In May 2024, we kicked off the month with a lively Yom HaAtzma'ut celebration! The singing group brought down the house with their performance, and the Kitchen Club served up a delicious lunch that everyone loved. Later on, we had a fantastic musical trio performance in honor of Arnold Kobiliansky, followed by a fun reception. Such a great time with 54 people joining in the celebration!

June was full of sunshine and good vibes, starting with the Inspiration Garden tour followed by a lovely Shavuot picnic. 24 attendees shared a tasty potluck, talked about the 10 Commandments and the Book of Ruth, and were accompanied by guitar music and fun songs. It was a day full of joy and inspiration!

July and August—our summer break! The seniors' coordinator, Zanna Linskaya, took a well-deserved rest.



Other Programs

Women's Circle

A Hebrew-speaking Women's Circle aged 18 and over. The purpose of the program is to build a strong community around Hebrew speaking women. During each session the group will discuss different topics where we share, listen, and learn.

Job Hunting for Newcomers Online Sessions

In May 2024, Burquest hosted two sessions on best practices for job interviews, tips on how to create impactful and relevant cover letters and resumes. This was pulled together to assist newcomers so they can have some assistance for finding work in Canada.

Cooking Hebrew (Kids)

Weekly sessions that incorporates experiential learning by combining cooking and Hebrew. The aim of this program is to practice Hebrew with fun activities, cook healthy food that will encourage kids to eat and make new friends.

In Memoriam: Max Jacobson

With heavy hearts, the Burquest Jewish Community Centre bids farewell to a cherished and long-standing member, Max Jacobson. Max was one of the early founders of Burquest and his contributions over the years have enriched the experiences of all who had the privilege of knowing him. Max was also featured in our historical movie, [Burquest - Past, Present & Future](#). We will miss Max.



FINANCE UPDATE

Burquest Annual Report for Fiscal Year 5784: Advancing Our Mission with Financial Transparency

The financial results for the year 5784 ending August 31, 2024, reflect a stable performance, with a modest excess of revenues over expenses of \$352 for the year, a decrease from last year's surplus of \$18,220.

Revenues

Total revenues for the year were \$131,770, down from \$200,079 in the previous year. This decrease primarily reflects the substantial drop in Programming revenue, which decreased from \$74,602 to \$3,902. Community revenue also showed a decrease, from \$34,133 to \$26,421, although it remains a significant revenue source. Notably, Rent revenue increased from \$56,925 to \$70,370, reflecting more constant use of our facility. Restricted Fund contributions held steady, with a slight decline from \$31,019 to \$29,392.

Expenses

Total expenses for the year amounted to \$131,418, down from \$181,859 in the prior year. The overall decrease in expenses is mainly due to lower costs in Programming (down from \$69,082 to \$41,959) and Community expenses (down from \$43,331 to \$27,473).

Other key expenses, such as Ritual and Building-operating costs, remained relatively stable, with minor fluctuations compared to last year. Interest on long-term debt decreased slightly from \$2,514 to \$2,362.

Excess of Revenues Over Expenses

The year ended with an excess of revenues over expenses of \$352, compared to the previous year's excess of \$18,220. While the decline in surplus is noted, it is important to highlight that the organization remains financially stable with no significant outstanding debts or liabilities.

Conclusion

While the financial results show a decrease in surplus compared to the previous year, the overall financial position remains healthy. We will continue to monitor our revenues and expenses closely, particularly in the areas of programming and community outreach, to ensure that we remain on track to meet both our financial and organizational goals in the coming year.

A big 'Thank you' to our donors and grantors for their ongoing support of our mission. We look forward to another year of continued growth and success.

BURQUEST JEWISH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Statement of Financial Position August 31, 2024

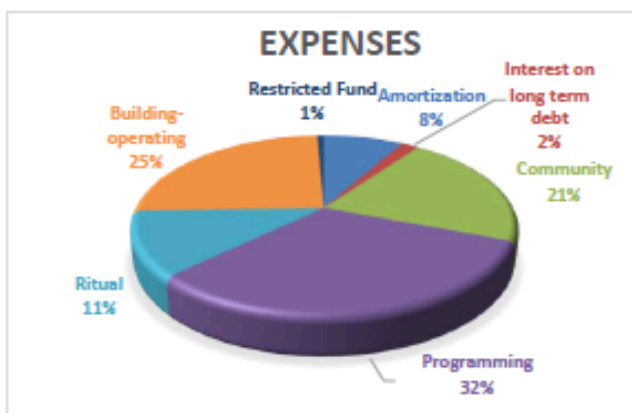
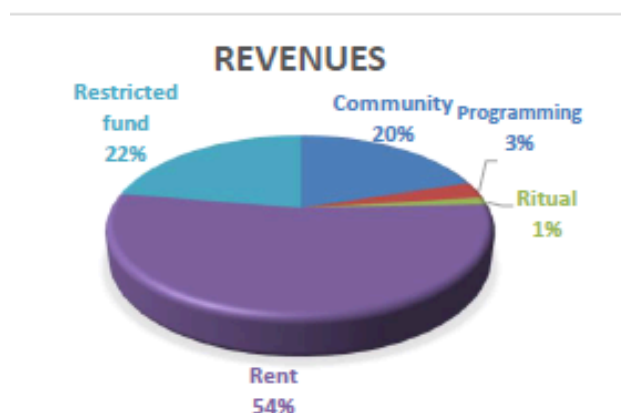
	2024	2023
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 122,221	\$ 117,451
Trade accounts receivable from related parties	167	251
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 3)	403,063	413,726
LONG TERM INVESTMENTS	10,774	10,774
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 536,225	\$ 542,202
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 3,295	\$ 3,720
Employee deductions payable	-	763
Deferred income	2,510	3,313
OTHER LONG TERM LIABILITY	60,288	64,626
TOTAL LIABILITIES	66,093	72,422
NET ASSETS	470,132	469,780
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 536,225	\$ 542,202

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

G. Glade
Treasurer

BURQUEST JEWISH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Statement of Operations and Fund Balances Year Ended
August 31, 2024

	2024	2023
REVENUES		
Community	\$ 26,421	\$ 34,133
Programming	3,902	74,602
Ritual	1,685	3,400
Rent	70,370	56,925
Restricted fund	29,392	31,019
	<u>131,770</u>	<u>200,079</u>
EXPENSES		
Amortization	10,663	10,663
Employee benefits	122	-
Interest on long term debt	2,362	2,514
Community	27,473	43,331
Programming	41,959	69,082
Ritual	15,272	18,940
Building-operating	32,621	34,601
Restricted Fund	946	2,728
	<u>131,418</u>	<u>181,859</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ 352	\$ 18,220



BURQUEST JEWISH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Statement of Changes in Net Assets Year Ended
August 31, 2024

	2024	2023
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 469,780	\$ 451,560
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<u>352</u>	<u>18,220</u>
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 470,132	\$ 469,780

2023/2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dov Lank, Acting Chair



Maggie Karpilovski, Past President



Gabriela Slade, Treasurer



Sandra Hochstein, Secretary



Heather Liberman, Director



Miriam Hoolahan, Director



Laura Zitron, Director

2023/2024 BURQUEST STAFF

Marina Karpilovsky, Administrator

Corrine Sha'ked, Administrator

Cantor Steve Levin, ritual

Liora Bukofzer Gal, Programming

Yossi Degan, Programming

Zanna Linskaia, Seniors programming

Ayelete Heilweil, Membership



TODAH RABAH
TO DONORS,
FUNDERS &
COMMUNITY
PARTNERS



JEWISH FEDERATION
GREATER VANCOUVER



**JEWISH COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
OF GREATER VANCOUVER

ANONYMOUS DONORS

TODAH RABAH TO ALL OUR
MEMBERS & OUR COMMUNITY!



Thank you to everyone who came out to our programs, became a member or donated to help us continue the good work we are doing in the Jewish community in the Tri-Cities.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute to our community.

CONTACT

Burquest Jewish
Community
Association

2860 Dewdney Trunk
Road
Coquitlam, BC
V3C 2H9

www.burquest.org
admin@burquest.org
(604) 552-72221