



Annual Report

September 1, 2023-August 31, 2024



Message from the Soloway JCC Board Chair and President


It has been an exciting year of growth and transition at the SJCC. We bid farewell to longtime President, Barry Sohn who retired after 15 years of service to our JCC. We thank Barry for his dedicated leadership. After an extensive search process, we welcomed our new President, Sarah Beutel in August 2024.

A major milestone was the completion of our ground-floor renovations, including upgraded locker rooms and new fitness equipment, enhancing our facilities for members. We are grateful to the generous donors to the Renewing our Promise Capital Campaign, as without their support none of the renovations would have been possible.

Our membership has continued to grow, and we celebrated another successful Ganon Preschool and summer camp season, in which our energetic and dedicated staff team served over 600 children. We are especially proud of our SJCC staff, whose commitment to the JCC's mission makes a meaningful impact every day. We extend our deepest thanks to our incredible team, as well as to our Board of Directors who are an inspiring group of individuals who generously share their time, expertise, and passion to help the JCC thrive.

Even as we navigate an increasingly complex economic and political environment, we remain steadfast in our mission. The JCC continues to be a safe haven—a welcoming space where people can come together, find connection, and build community. With resilience and optimism, we look ahead to a bright future, embracing new opportunities to grow, adapt, and strengthen the JCC as the central gathering place for our community.

Thank you to our members and supporters,


Jack Shinder
Chair of the Board


Sarah Beutel
President

Soloway JCC Highlights

Community Engagement



The SJCC serves as a vibrant hub for **over 3,000 members**, fostering a strong and inclusive community.

Jewish Celebrations



Chanukah, Purim, Yom Ha'atzmaut, and more – **hundreds of people of all ages join** our fun and inclusive events.

Enriching Summer Programs



600 campers experienced an unforgettable summer at SJCC Summer Camps, building friendships and lifelong memories.

Support & Resilience



The SJCC serves as the community's central gathering place in times of celebration and crisis. **1,000+ community members** gathered for the vigil after the October 7 attacks in Israel.

Lifelong Learning



From **Ganon Preschool to The Greenberg Families Library** and the **Melton Adult Education Program**, the SJCC supports lifelong learning and knowledge-sharing.



Building Community: Early Years to Teens

The **Ganon Preschool** continues to provide an enriching and engaging early learning experience for young children. Seventy-nine children were enrolled for the 2023-2024 school year. In the spring, the preschool warmly welcomed five families recently arrived in Canada from Israel, ensuring a smooth transition and a nurturing environment for their children.

Throughout the year, children engaged in a **trilingual learning experience** in English, French, and Hebrew, embracing cultural traditions by making latkes during Chanukah, dressing up for Purim, and enjoying snacks in their sukkahs during the fall season. One of the highlights of the year was an **art auction**, where every student contributed a unique piece of artwork. Through a silent auction, the preschool successfully **raised more than \$900 in support of Magen David Adom**, Israel's national emergency medical service.

SJCC Summer Camps provided another unforgettable summer, with most camp groups **filling up within hours of registration opening**. The summer was a resounding success, with **1,968 registrations** from over **600 different campers** across *Day Camp, Sports Camp, Specialty Camps, the CIT Program, and After Care*. The

campers generated a **net revenue of more than \$400,000**. Specialty Camps continued to thrive, with 16 unique options available. The new *Musical Theatre Camp* and the ever-popular *Horseback Riding Camp* both reached capacity on the first day of registration.

The SJCC provided financial assistance to 30 children from 16 families, **ensuring that all children had the opportunity** to experience a summer of fun, learning, and friendship.

The SJCC remained a vibrant hub of activity for children beyond the school day. The **Just 4 Kids After School Care** program welcomed 39 children on a regular basis, with an additional 17 children using the service on a drop-in basis.

A variety of **enriching extracurricular activities** were offered throughout the year, including *Karate, ukulele, yoga*, and a **selection of sports programs**, providing children with diverse opportunities for physical activity and creative expression.

Following a successful pilot program, the SJCC officially introduced **Hakibbutz** providing Hebrew-speaking children a program to **develop values-based leadership skills, form meaningful social connections, and have fun, all in Hebrew**. The program now welcomes **42 children** to the SJCC on a weekly basis and continues to expand its offerings to the Hebrew-speaking community.



Celebrating and Commemorating as a Community

The SJCC is the central gathering place for Jewish Ottawa and proudly offers a variety of celebrations to meet the needs of all ages and stages of life. The SJCC is proud to partner with many community organizations throughout the year.

The SJCC hosted a family-oriented Chanukah celebration in partnership with *PJ Library*, featuring a puppet show that delighted 125 children, their parents and many grandparents. Purim festivities were hosted in collaboration with *Camp Bnai Brith of Ottawa*, with a magic show and a total attendance of 175 people.

JOY Ottawa, a collaborative teen programming initiative uniting *SJCC*, *NCSY*, *Torah High*, *JSU*, *USY*, and *FROSTY*, brought teens together for an exciting Purim celebration at VR Zone. With 70 teens in attendance, the event combined holiday festivities with cutting-edge virtual reality experiences, creating a dynamic and engaging way to celebrate Purim.

In April, the SJCC partnered with the *Israeli Embassy* for a solemn Yom Hazikaron commemoration, with over 330 people honoring Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror. Just two days later, the spirit of resilience and unity continued as more than 600 families celebrated Israel's independence at the community-wide Yom Ha'atzmaut party, marking another year of strong community engagement and pride.



Enriching Lives: Fostering lifelong learning, cultural appreciation, and meaningful community connections.

The SJCC offers a diverse array of **Adult Education and Cultural Programs**, providing opportunities for lifelong learning and community engagement. Programs included language courses, art and dance classes, as well as lectures, film screenings, and Melton classes, ensuring a rich and varied experience for participants.

In the spring of 2024, the SJCC launched an Adult Singles Group, bringing together more than 20 active adults to plan and enjoy social gatherings throughout the Ottawa area. This initiative fostered meaningful connections and expanded social opportunities for participants.

The **Greenberg Families Library** saw significant growth in the past year, with a total of 2,730 circulations and 332 new books acquired.

A major milestone came in November 2023, when the library introduced the Libby e-book and audiobook platform, expanding its collection beyond physical books. Since its launch, 80 library members have accessed the platform, resulting in 515 checkouts—a testament to the growing demand for digital resources.

In May and June 2024, the library introduced 'Carlie's Creations', a new hands-on program to foster creativity and connection among adults. This initiative was made possible through a *JFO MicroGrant*.

The **Vered Israel Cultural & Educational Program** hosted a meaningful gathering at Mountain Orchards, where nearly 90 community members came together to pick apples in preparation for Rosh Hashanah. This beloved annual tradition fostered a sense of togetherness and set the tone for a year of engaging cultural and educational experiences.

In November, the SJCC proudly hosted the book launch of Sarah Vered's *Among the Defenders of Israel*. The event drew a crowd of 150 people, offering an inspiring evening of storytelling and reflection.

The 21st Annual Israeli Film Festival in June featured three award-winning Israeli films. The festival opened with *Supernova*, a powerful documentary about the Nova Music Festival, which attracted close to 90 attendees. The evening was



Together with *AJA50+* the library welcomed author Diane Rachel Bloomfield for a lecture and discussion on her book *Playing with Fire: Hebrew Doorways to the Jewish Soul*.

From January to June, the library facilitated monthly sessions of *PJ Library's PJ Our Way*, with 10 tweens (ages 9-12) participating in each session. Led by the librarian, these gatherings encouraged children to explore Jewish communities around the world through activities, discussions, and crafts inspired by each region's unique traditions.

enriched by speeches from the ambassador and cultural attaché, as well as a moving performance by a young singer. Throughout the course of the festival, nearly 250 tickets were sold, demonstrating the community's strong engagement with Israeli cinema and culture.

The Hebrew-speaking community enjoyed two highly anticipated musical performances. In March, Dov Navon entertained audiences, followed by Ilya Axlerod in May. Both events attracted around 90 attendees, highlighting the SJCC's commitment to offering diverse cultural programming for Hebrew-speaking members.

The *Chanukah Gift Fair* was a resounding success, welcoming 35 vendors and 600+ people gathered to shop, celebrate, and connect.

Prioritizing Well-Being: Keeping our Community Healthy and Active

SJCC members enjoyed exciting upgrades to the fitness facilities, with 17 new machines, weights, and benches arriving in September to enhance their workout experience.

The *20 Classes in 29 Days Fitness Challenge* motivated nearly 130 members to step out of their comfort zones, try new group fitness classes, and compete for prizes. The challenge was a great success, filling classes with enthusiastic participants eager to explore new workout routines.

New additions to the **Group Fitness Class** roster included *Uplift* and *Shine* both of which brought fresh energy to the schedule. *Yoga Tune Up*, introduced in January, launched to a **packed class of 30** members. Additionally, *Aqua Mobility*, was made available as part of the SJCC membership.

The **SJCC Aquatics Department** remained a hub of activity, with **over 1,200** community members participating in swimming lessons across three sessions. During summer camp, more than **200 children** received daily instructional swim lessons, plus a daily free swim.

The aquatics program is supported by a **dedicated team of 70 lifeguards**, many of whom grew up swimming at the SJCC and completed their certifications within our facility.

Despite temporary change room renovations, the community adapted, utilizing tents on the pool deck and new change stalls at the outdoor pool to maintain a smooth experience for swimmers. **We thank all our members for their patience and adaptability throughout the renovations.**

The SJCC pool is a welcoming space hosting groups from *Tamir*, *Ganon*, newcomers to Ottawa, and others. Additionally, the *Hakibutz* program and *Ganon* students benefited from first aid training led by our skilled aquatics staff.

The **SJCC Gymnasium** became a **hotspot for Pickleball**, with all courts in use four times per week. Regular players formed strong friendships and readily welcomed newcomers into the game.

The *Jewish Men's Basketball League* (JMBL) **continued to thrive**, maintaining seven teams, while the *Jewish Men's Hockey League* (JMHL) featured four teams, including the newly formed Team Blue.

When not in use by SJCC members, the gym remained a **sought-after rental space**, hosting groups such as the *OSSC*, *Coach Brown Basketball*, and, for the first time, *Wheelchair Basketball Canada* in Spring 2024. This special partnership provided members with the opportunity to learn about and experience the game firsthand.

Membership Growth & Enhancements

Membership at the SJCC continued to grow steadily, **surpassing 3,100 members**. The most popular membership categories remained seniors and youth, reflecting strong engagement across generations.

Following the events of October 7, the SJCC experienced a small but meaningful increase in membership, as many in the Jewish community sought a deeper connection and a place of support during difficult times.

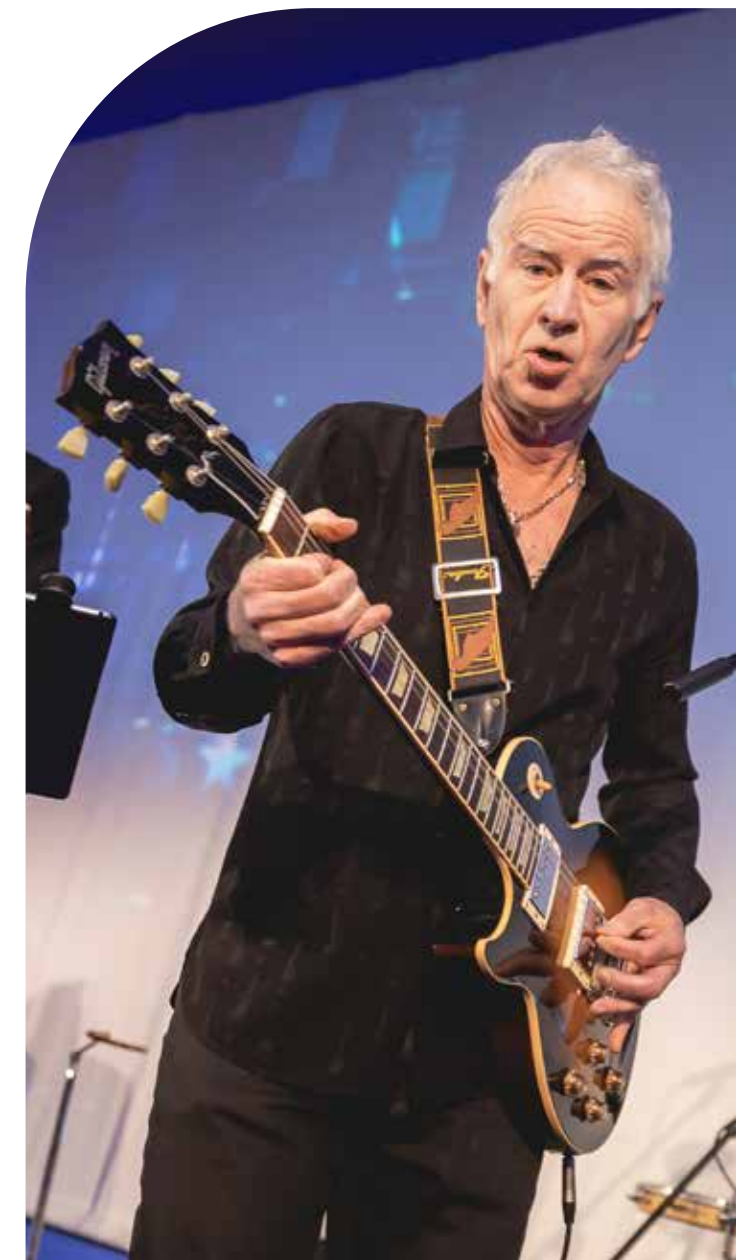
In a significant operational shift, the SJCC transitioned to a **new membership and program registration system** called *Amilia*, which is growing in use among North American community centres. While the transition came with challenges, staff worked diligently to resolve issues, and both members and staff have now successfully adapted to the new system, ensuring a smoother experience for all.



Fundraising Successes

The **Ottawa Celebrity Sports Dinner** in October 2023 was a **resounding success**, featuring special guest, tennis legend John McEnroe. With **700 attendees**, the event raised nearly **\$400,000 in support of the SJCC**, making it a truly memorable evening for all involved.

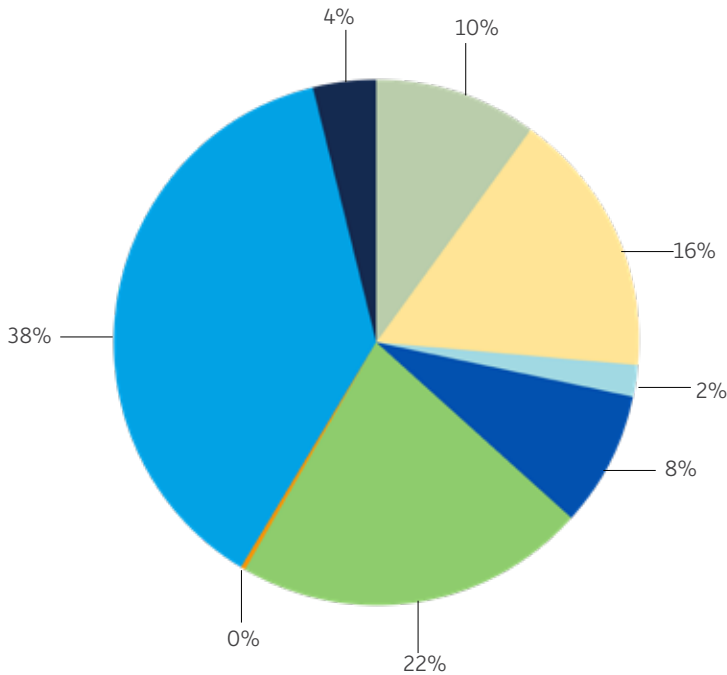
Additionally, the SJCC's *Renewing Our Promise Capital Campaign* successfully raised the funds needed to undertake renovations to the change rooms marking an exciting milestone in the **ongoing improvement of our facilities**.



Financial SUMMARY FY24

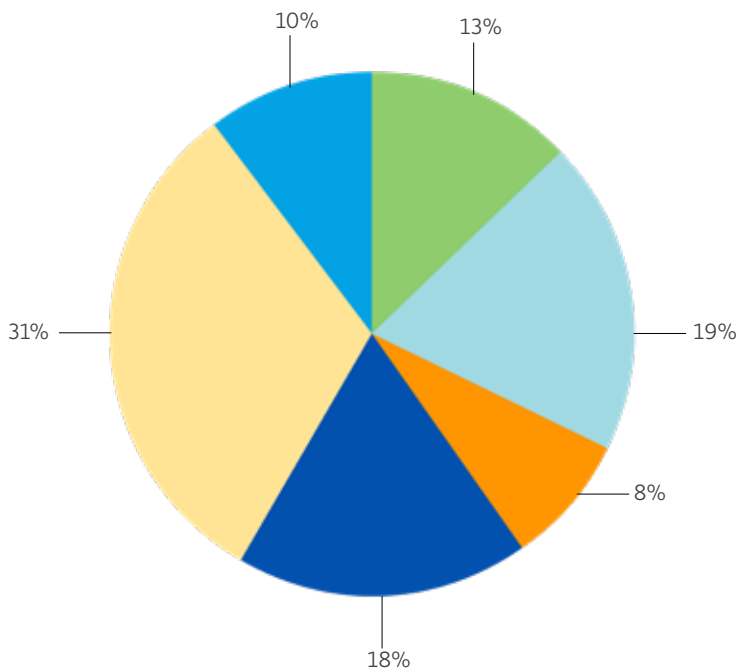
Total Revenue	\$ 5,373,037
Total Expenses	\$4,628,554
Less Amortization	\$309,759
Net Surplus	\$166,367

Revenue FY24



- Communal Funding**
\$539,867
- Fundraising and Revenue Development**
\$878,501
- Amortization of Deferred Capital**
\$117,118
- Health and Wellness**
\$447,216
- Memberships**
\$1,162,659
- Other**
\$11,427
- Programs**
\$2,008,838
- Room Rentals and Recoveries**
\$207,411

Expenses FY24



- Administration**
\$638,406
- Health and Wellness**
\$940,358
- Memberships and Marketing**
\$397,797
- Occupancy Expenses**
\$888,032
- Program Expenses**
\$1,536,146
- Revenue Development**
\$495,633

Not displayed:
Other Expenses: \$539 (1%)