

the jewishconnection



December 2013 and January 2014

Issue No. 43

A" High School of Jewish Studies"- by Rabbi Edward Boraz

This past year, our Board of Directors asked me to write a reflection on my goals for the next period of service at the Upper Valley Jewish Community; one of those goals is to establish a High School of Jewish Studies. From my vantage point, and from my discussions with other dedicated Jewish leaders, this is as critical a need as preparing a young man or young woman for a bar/bat mitzvah. I believe the UVJC has both the capability and the resources to do so.

The high school I envision attracts students because they wish to learn in depth what Judaism has contributed to the world in the fields of religion, law, psychology, theology, philosophy, science, the humanities, art, and music. In, short the school will be dedicated to exploring the core idea expressed by the great 20th century Jewish thinker, Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan, in his classic work, *Judaism as a Civilization*.

This past fall, we began with one course, entitled *Being Jewish in America*. We read Tolstoy's essay on "What is a Jew?" in which he stressed the idea of justice and respect for human life as unique contributions of our faith to the world. This led us to examine the sanctity of human life and its relationship to law and murder. What does it mean to vigorously pursue justice? Why does the Bible place such heavy emphasis on law? What are the parallels and differences between Jewish and American jurisprudence and under what circumstances, if any, should the death penalty be invoked? Should there even be a death penalty? What does Judaism have to say?

These questions led us to the experiential part of our program, where we accomplish an activity in the community that relates to our classroom work, to bring those ideas to life. In this case, we attended a Northern Stage performance of *12 Angry Men*. After the performance, the actors discussed with us the play, its meaning, their characters, and the difficulties of production. The following week, Dr. Melissa Herron, a social psychologist, led an in-class discussion on "group think." Students were exposed to profound ideas demonstrating the relationship between Jewish thought, law and reason, and the United States's most fundamental social institutions: courts of justice and due process of law.

As I write, we have posted on the On-Line-Learning Center an essay entitled, "Modern Orthodox Arguments against Television." It is designed for students to think of how our society's values are portrayed through the media, and their intersection with what is commonly referred to as "traditional values." Our desire is to develop each student's critical thinking skills while considering the balance between religious traditions and society's.

It is a modest beginning: just one course with 15 students enrolled. Next term, we are going to add a course in Modern Hebrew, along with one in either the psychology of prayer or Jewish thought.

Our Jewish learning centers must keep pace with the extraordinary development of young persons' intellects and opportunities for secular learning. It is crucial that they appreciate how Jewish learning can enrich their lives at every stage. It is good for them and good for our world.

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A message from Deb Kaplan, UVJC President

The busyness of the High Holidays is long behind us, and while I am just at the beginning of my tenure as President, I am struck by how we are quickly moving through 5774.

In November we honored Anne Segal, a long time UVJC member, with the UVIP (Upper Valley Interfaith Project) **Micah Award**. These awards recognize our **Local Heroes** that make a difference in others' lives through their steadfast work in the Upper Valley Community. I first met Anne when we served together on the Dresden and SAU 70 School Boards. I always found Anne, even in the most contentious of meetings, to be a strong voice of reason. Her knowledge and experience were tremendous assets to these Boards. Of course, this award represents only one her many contributions to both the UVJC and greater community. Read more about Anne Segal and the award in this edition of the **Connection**. Mazeltov, Anne!

I would like to bring some attention to and update readers about an area of UVJC life that we have worked actively to address: our desire to engage and keep active our young adults (middle and high school students who have completed their bar or bat mitzvah). Our *Madrichim* Program (*madrichim* are assigned as teacher's aides/helpers in UVJC school classrooms) has been around for many years, and has been a successful way of engaging some students after bar/bat mitzvah.

Three years ago, Melinda Agron and Adam Kraus, 2 Dartmouth students, approached the board to present a program designed to engage post bar/bat mitzvah students in Jewish social activities. Pam Hausler provided oversight and assistance (Thank you, Pam!) and the program was off and running. We are grateful to Melinda, and Adam for providing the structure and for organizing activities. This year, we will work to transition to new leaders, as they will be graduating at the end of the school year.

This year also, we have begun a pilot program that we hope will lead to the formation of a true High School for Jewish Studies. Its mission is to address the question of what we want our students to know about their Judaism at the time of their graduation from High School and begin college. We seek to create a partnership between Dartmouth College Hillel and members of the Dartmouth faculty to create an institute that will excite our young men and women to continue to engage in serious Jewish learning (intellectual, spiritual, and experiential) through their high school years.

The first course for our students is called "Being Jewish in America." It began with reading an essay by Leo Tolstoy on "What is a Jew?" in which he asserts that Judaism expresses a profound concern for "justice as an act of righteousness." Students are reading and discussing Jewish texts, including a blog, on these issues. The group recently attended the play *12 Angry Men* at Northern Stage. Afterward they enjoyed a Q&A with the cast. The level of interest and engagement on the part of the students is impressive.

Thank you Rabbi and Maggie for all of your efforts.

Introducing New Board Members

Felixa Eskey

I've been part of the UVJC for 13 years, enjoying Torah study and other adult education programs. More recently, I've also become involved with the Hebrew School alongside my son, now in third grade. In 2012, I served on the Curriculum Committee. For the past two years, I've been teaching prayerbook Hebrew to adults; and occasionally, I tutor our young students. I joined the Board as a general member in July 2013.

Gloria Finkelstein (Gloriafinkelstein@gmail.com)

Our family has been active UVJC members since we joined the Upper Valley Jewish Community in December 1993. Our daughter Erica enrolled in the Sunday Preschool, became bat mitzvah in May 2004, and worked as a madrichah. My husband Syd has served on the Hillel Board, written articles for The Jewish Connection, and was a speaker for the "Lunch N' Learn" program. From October 1995 to May 1998, I served as the UVJC's community coordinator when our headquarters were on Summer Street in Hanover; I helped with the move to the Roth Center. Through the years, I've been an active volunteer on several committees including writing a "Membership News" column for the Jewish Connection. The most memorable committee was the Roth Center for Jewish Life Building Committee. I serve today on the UVJC History Committee and will sit on the Board of Trustees beginning in November 2013. I currently offer an Interactive French language program called "With Madame G" for children, teens and adults.

~ ~ ~ *Yahrzeit* Board ~ ~ ~ Remembrance

The act of remembrance in Jewish tradition is a profound experience. Remembrance brings to present consciousness the influence, love, and nurturing that the departed brought to us, our children, and our children's children.

The Upper Valley Jewish Community is fortunate to have received a generous donation to purchase the *yahrzeit* board now installed in the Alperin Sanctuary at the Roth Center for Jewish Life at Dartmouth College. The board provides each member of our congregational family an opportunity to engage in the profound mitzvah of remembrance by acquiring a *yahrzeit* plaque invoking the memory of loved ones. On the anniversary of the *yahrzeit* (the date of death), a light is illuminated adjacent to the deceased's name.

If you are interested in acquiring a *yahrzeit* plaque, please contact Carole Clarke at 603-646-0460 or at uvjc@valley.net.

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Yahrzeit Memorial Plaque

Ellis and Ginny Rolett in loving memory of their parents,
Daniel and Mary Rolett and Irwin and Geraldine Vladimir

Esther Gert in loving memory of her husband,
Bernard Gert

**~ Please Welcome ~
New Members**

Daniel Weinstein and Amelia Ihlo and their children,
Grace and Sophie

Ken Rumelt and Wendy Kares and their son, Ben

Lauren Gulbas and Alan Covey and daughter, Charlotte

Paul and Sue Etkind

Welcome back returning members...

Judith Hertog and Gil Raz and their children, Dina and Miki



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Lichvod et haShabbat: To Honor the Shabbat Maggie Duford, Director of Education

On October 26, 2013, a Saturday at ten in the morning, children, parents and grandparents filed into the Roth Center to celebrate the Shabbat together in our first "Family Education Day," at Hebrew School. By eleven that morning, tots and their parents arrived for Tot Shabbat, wonderfully organized and facilitated by Rachel Kleinbaum. And by half past eleven that same morning, in the room behind the sanctuary, there were well over 100 people enjoying Kiddush together.

And the above is only a small snapshot of our Upper Valley Jewish Families on that wonderful day.

The first through fourth graders and their parents spent the first half of Shabbat services in their downstairs classrooms, engaged in a discussion of Shabbat. I had the honor of joining the first and second graders as they explored the idea that Shabbat may not only be a day, but a place to which we go, prepared and ready to take a rest from the week.

Sharing Jewish customs from around the world while attempting to describe how Shabbat is experienced in the different movements of our own faith, opened up classrooms and minds to share how other individuals experience the gift of Shabbat.

Simultaneously, upstairs in the sanctuary space our madrichim (post bar and bat mitzvah students) were leading the congregation through various liturgical landmarks of our service as Rabbi took time to explain the significance of prayer in our tradition.

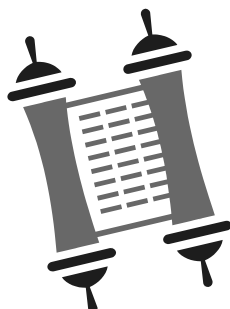
When it came time for the Torah service, everyone hurried from the classrooms to the sanctuary space to greet the Torah together and to hear Chai Sarah chanted.

From a Jewish educator's viewpoint, I really can't identify anything that should be "taught" in our Family Education Day which is not already being experienced in the home. This is not to say that there isn't great value in coming together to learn together as a community and as families. We are part of a new paradigm occurring around the country, instituting practices that avoid "drop-off" programs and bring families together.

What I saw on this Shabbat reaffirmed that the covenant of Abraham that our school works to instill in our children, is kept alive by our parents as they take their turn passing down the importance of our Jewish heritage. Regardless of our varied Jewish traditions, our interpretations, our dress or our region, honoring the Shabbat and the sacredness of our teachings, is the common ground of our Jewish peoplehood.

On the heels of the recent Pew Study, I take robust comfort in knowing that our people will live on because of what you as parents impart to your children every day, and especially as confirmed on this shared family Shabbat. The day was permeated with lichvod et haShabbat.

See you in Hebrew School!



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UVJC Mitzvah Fair

Sunday, March 9, 2014,

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at the Roth Center

**Interesting Booths
Good Food
Inspiring demos**

All are invited.

If you would like to have your own booth to display your mitzvah activity, or that of your favorite organization, please contact Carolyn Gordon: csgordon@dartmouth.edu

Kiddush Schedule

December 2013 – January 2014

December 7	Diane Roston
December 14	Sharon and Bob Racusin
December 21	Yoni and Stephen Neirman
December 28	Bonnie Kimmelman
January 4	Dianne and Gary Levine
January 11	Susan and Mark Israel
January 18	Deb Kaplan
January 25	Family Shabbat

MAH-JONGG AT THE ROTH CENTER

Come join the weekly mah-jongg games at the Roth Center on Wednesdays at noontime!
For information, please contact Janice Fischel at 603-643-5724, or janice.fischel@valley.net.

Alice Werbel in Jerusalem visits *Keren Orin*,
recipient of UVJC High Holiday *tzedakah* collection by Alice Werbel

When she announced that *Keren Or* in Jerusalem would be a recipient of our High Holiday *tzedakah* collection, I suggested that since I was travelling to Jerusalem in early October, I could represent our community and hand-deliver our gift; and so I did. I met with the executive director, principal and staff, and visited the impressive, well-equipped facility high in *Ramat*. *Keren Or* is a center that provides education and rehabilitation programs for children who are blind with multiple disabilities. *Keren Or's* facilities, dedicated staff, and individualized therapy programs allow each student to reach his or her maximum potential. *Keren Or* aims to limit families' economic burden, relying on funds from the state, local municipalities and donors to carry out its programs and to maintain an optimal child-to-staff ratio.

Executive director Tamara Silberberg said that the UVJC donation of \$600.00 came at just the right time -- *Keren Or* is equipping a much-needed new kindergarten space!

Want to know more about *Keren Or*? I'm happy to share photos and additional information about my visit there.



Volunteer to Sponsor a Shabbat morning Kiddush

Responsibility to prepare our weekly Shabbat *kiddush* is rotated among UVJC volunteers who attend services. Preparing *kiddush* for the congregation is a great way to celebrate a birthday, graduation, wedding anniversary, or to commemorate a loved one's *yahrzeit*. It's also an opportunity to get together with old friends and make new ones.

For those unfamiliar with the tradition of Shabbat morning *kiddush*, it is the time following the service when we gather over wine, grape juice, challah and other goodies. But most of all, we come together to enjoy Shabbat with good fellowship.

Wine, grape juice, paper goods and cups are supplied by the UVJC. The weekly *kiddush* volunteer supplies the challah. One may add to the fare if one wishes. For example, herring, gefilte fish, cheese, cookies, coffee cake, sweet rolls, pretzels, or fruit make nice additions to the *kiddush* table.

If you have questions, or would like to sponsor a *kiddush*, please contact Yoni Neirman who may be reached evenings at 802-649-3234, or by email at Yoni.Stevens.Neirman@hitchcock.org.

Donations

Yahrzeit Contribution

Bob and Sharon Racusin in memory of Bob's mother, Shirley Racusin
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Jerome and Sharon Smith in memory of Sharon's father, Isadore Greenberg
Aila Conarck in memory of her husband, Sy Conarck and her mother, Ann Yanover
Ruth Slow in memory of her grandmother, Rebecca Slow
Rosina Carpentier in memory of her sister, Irene Kirvit
Walter and Eleanor Angoff in memory of Walter's sister, Marion Angoff
Rick and Harriet Fingeroth in memory of Rick's mother, Grace Fingeroth
Daniel Levin in memory of his grandfather, Israel Fond and his grandmother, Ida Levin

UVJC General Fund

Jeff Licht and Jodi Wood in honor of their son, Jake becoming a Bar Mitzvah
Susan and Mark Israel in memory of Sheryl Lerner's mother, Sarah Rubin
Syd and Gloria Finkelstein in memory of Bayle Drubel's father, Leon Weiner
Rabbi and Shari Boraz in memory of Bayle Drubel's father, Leon Weiner
Les and Roberta Chosed in memory of Bayle Drubel's father, Leon Weiner
Rabbi and Shari Boraz in memory of Sheryl Lerner's mother, Sarah Rubin and Sam Zucker's sister, Susanne Zucker
Yoni and Steven Neirman in memory of Sam Zucker's sister, Susanne Zucker, Sheryl Lerner's mother, Sarah Rubin
Yoni and Stephen Neirman in memory of Yoni's uncles Milton Schlomkowitz and David Freedman, her aunt, Betty Klugman, and her grandparents, Sam and Esther Schlomkowitz and Rose and Sal Hatkin
Deb and Aaron Kaplan in memory of Sam Zucker's sister, Susanne and Sheryl Lerner's mother, Sarah Rubin
Gloria and Syd Finkelstein in memory of Syd's mother Anna Finkelstein and in memory of Devora Gronauer's mother, Shirley Tabenkin
Tom and Judy Oxman
Rusty Sachs
Mimi and Jim Weinstein in memory of Bayle Drubel's father, Leon Weiner
Deb and Aaron Kaplan in memory of Bayle Drubel's father, Leon Weiner and Devora Gronauer's mother Shirley Tabenkin
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Jeremy Katz

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Gloria and Syd Finkelstein in honor of Griffin Stotland's Bar Mitzvah

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Annie and Jeff Silverstein in honor of Lisa Greene for her wonderful cantorial singing and Rachel Kleinbaum for her excellent High Holiday Tot Services and leadership

Dori and John Dalton in memory of Leon Weiner, father of Bayle Drubel and father-in-law of Richard Drubel

Torah Restoration

Gary Apfel

Donation Funds

There are many opportunities for you to designate a gift to the UVJC. Please give generously throughout the year. Please make your check payable to either "UVJC" or "Upper Valley Jewish Community," noting the name of the fund on the memo line.

Donations may be directed to the **UVJC General Fund** or specifically to one of the following funds:

- **Adult Education Fund:** To support guest speakers and other special adult programs
- **Beautification Fund:** To be used toward furnishings, decorations, and ornamentation to enhance the Roth Center for Jewish Life.
- **Cemetery Fund:** To help with landscaping and maintenance of the UVJC cemetery.
- **Endowment:** Contributions of cash or securities, payable to the UVJC Endowment Fund. Interest will be used to support the activities of the community.
- **Library Fund:** For purchase of books and/or other library materials.
- **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund:** For charitable purposes as determined by the Rabbi.
- **Religious School Scholarship Fund:** To provide scholarships for deserving religious school students.
- **School Programming Fund:** To support special programs over and above the curriculum.
- **Teen Programming:** To provide support for young adults in our community to participate in Jewish programs.

Upper Valley Jewish History Project Update (November 2013)

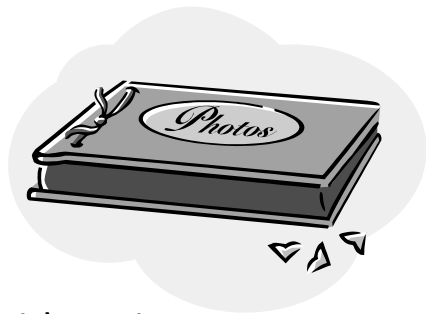
For nearly a year, a group of UVJC members have been working to document the history of Jewish life in the Upper Valley from the time of the building of the Roth Center back through the 1940s or even earlier. Through personal interviews, videotaped when possible or audiotaped, we are collecting personal histories and stories along with community documents, photos and memorabilia, from people who lived in the area during that time period. To date, we have completed between twelve and twenty lengthy (and fascinating) interviews, and are beginning to transcribe their contents.

Did you know that a member of the UVJC was the first Jewish Mayor of Lebanon? Was the President of Dartmouth College? Lived on a commune in Canaan in the late 1960s and went on to become one of the founding leaders of the UVJC? Became the chairman of the SEC (Southeast Football Conference) and has been labeled by *Sports Illustrated* "one of the most powerful men in college sports?"

We are fascinated by the information we have collected thus far. We have many more interviews in process and want to make certain we preserve in the best way possible what we are learning. We need additional help with interviewing (will train volunteers!) and interview transcription. We are in great need of someone to help us organize all the information we are gathering, to look at the full picture and to help design the final product(s) that emerge from all this, so that none of this precious history is lost.

Can we interest you in sharing your time and talents, on a large or small scale, and joining us to create a permanent history of Jewish life in the Upper Valley? Or would you just come join us once or twice to share your thoughts about what form the final product should take? We need YOU!

Email: uvjhistory@gmail.com or jill.schiffman@dartmouth.edu



News from the United Valley Interfaith Project

Our congregation is a member of the United Valley Interfaith Project (UVIP), a coalition of faith communities working for social justice in our region. Questions? Interested in joining UVIP in its work? Contact Lead Organizer Leah Torrey (603-443-3682, unitedvalleyinterfaith@gmail.com) or President Rod Wendt (603-469-3190, RodWendt@tds.net).

The UVJC was proud to honor Anne Segal as the UVJC's recipient of the United Valley Interfaith Project 2013 Micah Award. The Micah Awards recognize "local heroes" who make a difference in others' lives through their steadfast work in the Upper Valley Community. For more than 50 years, Anne Segal has worked as an advocate for social change, including establishing the local NAACP chapter, promoting decent and affordable housing, as an educator, and most recently, by representing the interests of children in the court system. Anne also has served on the UVJC Library, Joint Building and Planning, and Cemetery Committees.

UVIP's several-year battle against the re-introduction of high-interest car title predatory lending in New Hampshire has entered a new phase now that Title Cash stores have opened in Claremont and West Lebanon. "Title loans" are short-term loans secured by a car title, with interest rates up to 300% per year (25% per month); the New Hampshire legislature legalized such loans in 2012 over the strong objections of the governor, the Upper Valley's state Representatives and Senator, and UVIP and many allies. UVIP is actively seeking low-interest alternatives to predatory loans.



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December 2013 and January 2014 / Issue No. 43

LITERATURE LOVERS

We are an enthusiastic reading group who love to discuss books proposed by group members. We welcome new participants.

Come join us!

~ ~ ~ Here are the books selected for discussion ~ ~ ~

December 8

INTUITION by Allegra Goodman

The novel is about researchers in a cancer research laboratory. It explores their relationships, professional struggles and questions of alleged misconduct related to research protocol.

January 26

MY NAME IS ASHER LEV by Chaim Potok

The book's protagonist is Asher Lev, a Hasidic boy in New York City. Asher is a loner with artistic inclinations. His art, however, causes conflicts with his family and other members of his community. The book follows Asher's maturity as both an artist and a Jew.

Literature Lovers usually meets at 7:00 PM the last Sunday of the month, unless otherwise noted. For location or more information, please contact Susan Cohen at (603) 643-3611, or

sncohen037@gmail.com

UVJC FACEBOOK PAGE

Keep up with what is happening at the UVJC today, next week and into the future on Facebook. Please request to join the UVJC page today at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/359003357910/>