



the jewish connection

JUNE-JULY 2018
Issue Number 70

Kol Ha'Emek – Upper Valley Jewish Community • 5 Occom Ridge • Hanover, NH 03755

“These are my Festivals,” “This is my Israel,” and “These are my people”

Rabbi Edward S. Boraz

This year for *Shabbat* May 5, we read the Torah portion *Emor*, which carries a wonderful message relating to Jewish identity. In Leviticus Chapter 23, God speaks to Moses stating, “Speak to the children of Israel. Say unto them, ‘The festivals of God – you shall proclaim them; a holy proclamation, these are my festivals.’”

The syntax of these phrases is awkward, and there is ambiguity in the word “my.” Does “my” refer to God, or does it refer to the children of Israel? The text goes on to enumerate all the festivals: *Shabbat* (which is not really a festival), *Rosh Chodesh* (the beginning of each Hebrew month), Passover, *Shavuot*, *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, and *Shemini Atzeret* (the day following the end of *Sukkot*).

Rashi, the 11th century biblical commentator *par excellence*, ascribes the proclamation originally to the *Sanhedrin* (a rabbinic court) which would declare the start of each month based on testimony of witnesses who observed the small sliver of moon. He continues that prior to the destruction of the 2nd Temple, there were many Jews who lived outside of Israel (in the *Galut*, or *Diaspora*) who could no longer rely directly on the *Sanhedrin*. Instead, they developed a Jewish calendar, a work of science, mathematics, and art, a calendar which sometimes requires adding an additional month to the year.

According to Rashi, the Jewish calendar allowed those living in the *Diaspora* to arrive timely in Jerusalem, thus allowing the greatest number of Jews possible to be in Jerusalem for each of the major festivals. If the date were proclaimed solely according to witnesses (as was prior practice), Jews living in the *Diaspora* would be left waiting for news of the new month to arrive at their distant location, preventing them from heading to Jerusalem because they would always arrive



too late for the festival. Through a set calendar, *Diaspora* Jews would be able to fulfill this *mitzvah* of making *aliyah* to Jerusalem. There was unity in religion, but a disunity of place; Rashi’s *halakhah* strove for unity and inclusivity.¹

By studying such intricate details, we may reach a deeper understanding of what I be-

lieve is a central tenet of Judaism: We are a unity through our diverse approach to Torah, to worship, and acts of loving-kindness. Rashi’s analysis draws from two historical realities: one is life in Israel, with the glory of its Temple and unique sense of place for us as Jews; the other, of equal importance, is life of Jews living in the *Diaspora*. Each is bound to the other, yet each is unique.

When, regardless of place, Jews proclaim, “These are my festivals,” we express a virtue that enhances our love of Torah, of worship, and our acts of loving-kindness. We affirm a universal Jewish heart.

The juxtaposition of the ancient practice of relying on eye-witnesses to testify before the *Sanhedrin* so it could proclaim the certain arrival of the New Moon, to the modern practice of following a fixed calendar, affirms a commitment to diversity and modernity that is a great lesson for us today. The worst outcome would be for us as Jews to embrace uniformity of thought and practice; the best outcome for all is to affirm the rich diversity of our experiences as the basis of a universal Judaism reflecting our sacred literature.

A simple yet important example may be stated in our time. Let those of us who live in the *Diaspora* proclaim, “This is our Israel.” And let our brethren and sisters who live in Israel proclaim to those of us who live in the *Diaspora*, “These are my people.”

¹Rashi does not mention that the origins of our calendar may have come from the Babylonians during the first exile after 586 BCE.

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President's Message

by *Rusty Sachs*



SWAN SONG

Kol Ha'Emek President Rusty Sachs

Our high school philosophy class met at the end of each school day. It was the winter of 1960, and Mister Goodwin occasionally digressed admirably. He once asked the class somewhat off-handedly, "Are you familiar with the term swan song?" Class clown Dick Colton was the first to reply. "No, sir. Will you sing it for us?"

The past two years have marked more than a little change in the life of our temple. Most notably, we have assumed a Hebrew name to show proudly our heritage and tradition. We have grappled with the resignation of our twenty-year spiritual leader, Rabbi Ed Boraz, who is about to move westward as he faces new beginnings of his own.

We have drawn on our own resources to define our needs as a community and seek a successor; and a group of clear-thinking, hard-working leaders has emerged. Kol Ha'Emek is indeed a micro-society rich in both spirit and energy.

Our annual meeting will present a strong set of candidates for the board of trustees and officers of the temple. Members will be asked also to approve two simple amendments to the bylaws, both addressing an annoying problem that has confused folks for years.

We conform our spiritual lives to the same lunar calendar as did the ancient sages. Our leaders serve terms that begin in November. We operate on a fiscal year running from September first through the following August. We bill tuition and dues during the summer, then collect a significant portion in the following fiscal year. For far too long, we have run the temple with a view only as far as the next annual meeting. Is this any way to run a railroad? How it got started is a matter of debate – most think it had something to do with not wanting to saddle a new president with the burdens of High Holidays immediately after taking office. But most everyone agrees that we should operate consistently on the same year for everything – that's the goal of the two simple bylaws amendments you'll receive shortly in the mail.

Finally, I want to express unlimited appreciation to a few people who have lightened the load of this presidency and transformed it to a fulfilling period.

Laura Rosenthal, now in her former home in British Columbia, gently filled the gaps of my absent-mindedness and suggested improvements to our procedures. She drew on her decades of service to previous shuls, and made Kol Ha'Emek a better place.

Jeff Lubell stepped up to the plate and has taken on leadership of the rabbi-succession challenge in yeoman fashion. I will always admire his ability to disagree on issues without diminishing the friendship and admiration among those who disagree.

And Debbe Callaghan, my guardian angel. Debbe's comprehensive view of the world and her ability to look far into the future, combine with an innate kindness that inspires us all. The temple will be far the better under her aegis.

Letter From Our Education Director, Melissa Herman



Dear Kol Ha'Emek,

Greetings from the Hebrew School! We are winding down our school year and looking forward to the retreat planned for Shavuot. By the time you read this, it will have happened, and I hope that many of you will have attended. If you didn't make it, please count on joining us for our next retreat in December, 2018, at the Hulbert Outdoor Center.

Since my last update, we have celebrated Passover at Tuesday school complete with bags of toy plagues and great leadership by Talia Lorch and Jonah Kelly, Dartmouth student teachers in the school.

Jonah, and congregant/teacher Leah Kaliski, are graduating so we are looking for new 7th grade and 5th grade teachers. Are you interested? To do this job, you need intellectual curiosity, willingness to read and discuss the weekly parsha, and interest in working with adolescents. Hebrew is desirable but not required, as we can hire separate teachers for Hebrew.

Along with 3rd grade teacher Mikayla Kravetz, I attended a Holocaust educators' workshop run by the Facing History organization. We learned some interesting techniques and gleaned some content for use during Hebrew School.

I will be helping to run the madrichim program at this summer's New CAJE conference ("New Conference on Jewish Education"). I am hoping to bring several Kol Ha'Emek madrechim with me.

Please check the following website for details if your 14-19 year old is interested: <http://www.newcaje.org/home/newcaje9/gem/>

Your faithful Education Director, Melissa



SHALOM WALKS

It's summer!

Join the fun! Socialize & meet members on a SHALOM WALK.

All ages welcome.

Add your name to the email list, indicating your best available days & times. We walk from the Roth Center.

Send me an email expressing your interest:
gloriafinkelstein@gmail.com.

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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.

Please visit <http://bit.ly/2f1OoxV> to sign up to sponsor a *Kiddush* or if you have questions please contact Yoni Neirman who may be reached evenings at 802-649-3234, or by email at yoniltsneirman@gmail.com.

LUNCH PROGRAM for CHILDREN IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Kol Ha'Emek Social Action Committee

We anticipate that Kol Ha'Emek, the UVJC, will once again take part in a summer lunch program for children who live in affordable housing in White River Junction.

During the school year, these children receive federally-funded lunches. Throughout the summer, Kol Ha'Emek-UVJC and various area churches provide lunches, with each participating congregation assuming responsibility for a week's worth of lunches. In past years, many of you contributed generously toward the cost, while others volunteered to help prepare the lunches. We typically spend a delightful Monday morning preparing lunches for the full week.

If you would like to donate toward the cost of the lunches, please send a check made out to the UVJC to the UVJC office with "lunch program" in the memo line. If we receive more contributions than needed, any leftover funds will be donated to a food pantry or shelter.

If you are interested in helping with the shopping or preparation of the lunches, please e-mail UVJCSocAction@gmail.com, or call Carolyn Gordon at 603-643-5895. Once we know which summer week will be our responsibility, we will contact you to see if you are available.



Women of Haverot Laderach

On April 23, the women's social group of Kol Ha'Emek, the Upper Valley Jewish Community, met at Tip Top Pottery in White River Junction, VT, to nosh, drink wine, and paint a "tree of life" canvas with acrylics. Twenty women who are Jewish, or who are raising Jewish children, attended.

The women's social group meets quarterly in a variety of venues. The social group aims to bring Jewish women and women raising Jewish children together in a low-key environment to find areas of shared interest and build community in the Upper Valley.

We will meet again in August for dinner and then to view stars and planets at Dartmouth College's Shattuck Observatory with the assistance of astronomer Jenica Nelan.

Any woman who is Jewish or part of a Jewish family is welcome!

To be added to the mailing list and be notified of future events, please contact Hilary Ryder at hfryder@gmail.com or 603-252-6719.



UVJC History Project Update

By Liza Draper – May 2018

*“This was kind of rural Judaism.
This is Judaism that you really had to do for yourself.
It wasn’t going to work if people just paid dues
and expected things to happen.”*

– Larry Edwards

*“We are the Dan & Whit’s
of Judaism.
If we don’t have it,
you don’t need it.”*

– Bob Racusin

The History Project Committee’s work is rich with recollections like these. We have woven threads from interviews with more than 70 individuals into a document that now stands at 250+ pages.

In addition to these voices there are maps, a timeline, many historic photos and an inventory of Jewish-owned businesses.

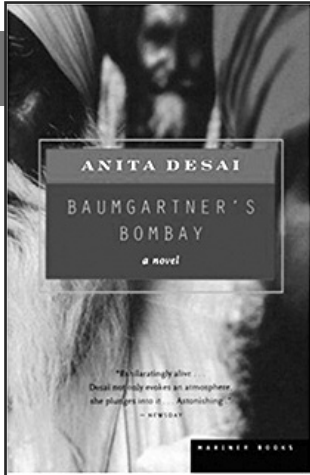
We are excited to share all of this with the UVJC, but there is still work to be done!

Beyond editing and proofing the draft text, the next stage of the History Project is to tackle the hundreds of hours of video associated with some of the interviews that have been conducted and we need help! If you are willing to watch any of the footage to select the most important excerpts, please be in touch. We promise the viewing will be interesting!

Liza Draper (ldraper@dartmouth.edu) 603 477-4753

Literature Lovers

We are members of an enthusiastic reading group who love to discuss books proposed by group members. We welcome new participants. Come join us! Literature Lovers usually meets at 7:00 PM the last Sunday of the month, unless otherwise noted. For location or information, please contact Susan Cohen at 603/643-3611, or email sncohen037@gmail.com



SUNDAY, JUNE 24

BAUMGARTNER'S BOMBAY

by Anita Desai

Anita Desai's classic novel of the Holocaust era is a story of profound emotional wounds of war and its exiles. The novel follows Hugo Baumgartner as he flees Nazi Germany – and his Jewish heritage – for India, only to be imprisoned as a hostile alien and released to Bombay at war's end.

PLEASE NOTE: The book group will not meet in July.

There are many opportunities for donors to designate a gift to Kol Ha'Emek – the Upper Valley Jewish Community – 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.

Library Fund:

For purchase of books or other library materials.

Endowment Fund:

Contributions of cash or securities, payable to the UVJC Endowment Fund. Interest will be used to support the activities of the community.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund:

For charitable purposes as determined by the Rabbi.

School Programming Fund:

To support special programs over and above the curriculum.

Teen Programming Fund:

To provide support for young adults in our community to participate in Jewish programs.

Yahrzeit Contributions

Rosina Carpentier in memory of
Lazard and Lillian Katz her parents.
Thomas Cochran in memory of Richard Regosin, his teacher.
Thomas Cochran in memory of
Isaac Rothstein his great grandfather.
Gary and Dianne Levine in memory of
Bertha Sholinsky, Dianne's mother.
Gary and Dianne Levine in memory of
Ruth Levine, Gary's mother.
Susan and Mark Israel in memory of
Lillian Lustgarten, Susan's mother.
Susan and Mark Israel in memory of Michael Humphrey.
Robert Greene in memory of Sonya Presberg, his mother-in-law.
Robert and Sharon Racusin in memory of
Aaron Racusin, Roberts's father.
Daniel Levin in memory of Benjamin Levin, his father.
Daniel Levin in memory of Isadore Levin, his grandfather.
Barry and Arline Rotman in memory of
Marion Schwartz, Arline's mother.
Gary and Lynn Schwartz in memory of
Ellen and Benjamin Farkas, Lynn's parents.
Virginia and Ellis Rolett in memory of
Daniel Rolett, Ellis's father.
Barry and Arline Rotman in memory of
Murray Rotman, Barry's father.
Harriet and Rick Fingerroth in memory of
Norma and Samuel Rifkin, Harriet's parents.
Gary and Dianne Levine in memory of
Julius Sholinsky, Dianne's father.
Carolyn Gordon in memory of
David Gordon and Esther Gordon Toovy, her parents.
Robert Greene in memory of David Greene, his father.
James and Miriam Weinstein in memory of
Brianna Weinstein and Sheldon Weinstein.
Gene Kadish and Karen Fryer in memory of
Milton Kadish, Gene's father.

UVJC General Fund

Deborah and Aaron Kaplan in honor of Carey Callaghan
Barbara Brown in honor of Hillel 20th Anniversary
and Thomas Buergethal

UVJC Endowment Fund

Jeremy Katz

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Susan and Mark Israel in honor of Rabbi Boraz

Summer Lunch Program Fund

Fay Bronstein
Paul and Sue Etkind
Eric Levy and Laura Parker

Social Action Contributions

Rosemary Brown in honor of Roberta Berner
for her many years of generous and wide-reaching service
to the Grafton County Senior Citizens Council

Upper Valley Jewish Community Cemetery

The Upper Valley Jewish Community owns and maintains its own cemetery for your comfort and service in times of need. We encourage UVJC members to think today about future needs. Plot locations may be selected and information you want family members to have may be recorded informally at a time when there is not a present need. Inquiries about the cemetery or plot acquisition should be directed to the UVJC Office Administrator at 603-646-0460.

Bimah Baskets & Centerpieces for B'nai Mitzvah & Other Special Occasions

A Beautiful Alternative to Flowers

Colorful and elegantly-arranged baskets of food provide the festive beauty of flowers and infuse your occasion with the spirit of *tikkun olam*. Afterwards, the contents are donated to food pantries. Perfect for B'nai mitzvah, Kiddushes and other occasions. The Social Action Committee is delighted to prepare the baskets. You pay only for the contents.

For further info, contact UVJCSocAction@gmail.com



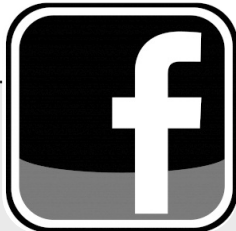


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today, next week and into the future
on Facebook.

Please request to join the UVJC page today
at
facebook.com/groups/359003357910/

DO YOU KNOW

. . . where everything Jewish is going on in the Upper Valley? . . . where you can find the entire TANACH read to you in Hebrew? . . . where there are links to popular local destinations and local weather? . . . where there is a database of everything Jewish for your region, including learning links and candle-lighting times?

Visit the UVJC website *OFTEN*, for *ALL* the news:

www.uvjc.org



5778 B'nai Mitzvah

JUNE 23, 2018

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