



JCOGS
Jewish Community of Greater Stowe

Jewish Community Of Greater Stowe

*“To create and sustain an environment which
perpetuates and celebrates
Jewish traditions, observances and sense of community.”*

Annual Report 2017

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Members

June 25, 2017
10:00 a.m.

1189 Cape Cod Rd. Stowe, VT

Mailing address: PO Box 253, Stowe, VT 05672 www.jcogs.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: 2016- 2017

Rabbi David Fainsilber	Ex Officio
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Rita Schneps	
Peter Steinerman *	
Shari Vermeulen	
Jeremy Segal	Youth Trustee

**Current Executive Committee Member*

*** Partial year*

COMMITTEES & CHAIRS: 2016-2017

Building Operations – Aaron Goldfield
Cemetery – Steve Berson
Chesed - Ellen Gibs, Priscilla Minkin
Children’s Education Committee – Emily Rosenbaum
Festivals & Holidays – Patti Rubin
Finance – Ron Feinstein
Governance – Rita Schneps
Programming:
Arts & Education – Carole Lichtenstein
Shalom Committee – Miriam Rosenbloom
Tikkun Olam – Lynne Gedanken
Tzedakah – David Gameroff, Simon Gameroff

STAFF

David Fainsilber – Rabbi
Lisa Carrick – Finance manager
Olivia Easdale – Administrator
Stacey London-Oshkello – Director of Family and Youth Education

From the Rabbi

“There is so much going on at JCOGS.” This is the line I hear the most when I am out mingling with others in the greater community. “I get your weekly e-mail and I can’t believe how much great programming is happening at the community centre.”

Yet it is not just the sheer quantity that is tremendous. It is the quality of events at our humble Jewish Community of Greater Stowe that is compelling. From the Stowe Jewish Film Festival, to the intellectual offerings of the Arts and Education Committee, to the social gatherings of our Shalom Committee (come to the BBQ on July 2 at 5pm!), to the Tikkun Olam opportunities to repair our communities, locally and globally...I am constantly amazed at the creativity, ingenuity and hard work of our volunteers to make a difference every week of the year.

I have been particularly moved by the first JCOGS Holocaust Exhibit, co-curated by 2nd generation children of survivors, Marcie Scudder and Debbie Steinerman. They are bringing survival stories from JCOGS families to the forefront of the greater community. Just last month, we had two separate groups visit the exhibit and hear child survivor and JCOGS member Erica Hecht’s story: the first was a group of 50 JCOGS B’nei Mitzvah families and community members and the second was a group of over 70 children and educators from a local middle school. Marcie and Debbie have just begun this impactful program that I know will ultimately reach thousands in Vermont and beyond.

Some other highlights from this past year, include:

- We unrolled the entire Torah, spirals of Hebrew words dancing off the page during our Simchat Torah celebration
- The Jerusalem-based band Nava Tehila came and performed at ZenBarn in Waterbury to a standing room only crowd, as a benefit concert to HIAS, as we raised \$2000 to resettle refugees in the U.S.
- Our Musical Shabbat series every month grows, as we experience on any given Shabbat cello, piano, guitar, drums, recorder, saxophone, clarinet and the many voices of harmony. In November, we honoured the legacy and music of Leonard Cohen z”l by chanting his prayerful music of longing. If you haven’t been to a Friday night service recently, you should come and enjoy our enhanced oneg, with delicious food to delight all!

The experience we are having with JCOGS children and families is a blessing. We celebrate multiple, personalized Bar and Bat Mitzvah every year; we have gathered for a swim party and at a local farm for social events; and the holiday programs are filled with joy. On Wednesdays during the year, the building is bustling in ways we have never seen before. The Building Committee tried to meet during our Olam Chesed Education Center hours and they were relegated to meet in the storage room!! Our Kinderlach program on Saturday mornings for young families regularly has 30+ children and adults gathering for arts and crafts, singing and learning through play. Next year, we are bringing a new program for children ages Kindergarten and up during those same Kinderlach mornings, as the children experience the majesty of our sanctuary, looking inside the Torah and more.

Underneath all of this work, we are building community, connections made around the table on Friday nights and at events like our Dine-Around. As, G-d forbid, people fall ill, the Chesed Committee continues to reach out with letters and e-mails, food and comfort. We are such a caring community. Isn’t that what is so needed?

This summer we launch a new adult education series, *Judaism's Best Ideas*, where beginners and advanced students alike can learn about the basic Jewish values of *Simcha/Joy*, *Tzelem Elohim/Created in G-d's Image*, *Tikkun Olam/Repairing the World*, *Shabbat*, *L'Chayim/To Life* and more.

All of these good works are fueled by the volunteerism of our congregation. There are so many people to thank, each one represented in the pages of this annual report. There would be no Holocaust exhibit, film festival, social programs, Friday night oneg, and educational opportunities without the hard work of people like you. Rabbi Tarfon famously said: "*Lo eilecha hamlacha ligmor; v'lo atah ben chorin l'hibatel mimena*. You are not expected to complete the task, but neither are you free to avoid it." (Pirkei Avot 2:21) There may be so much going on at JCOGS, and you do not have to make it all happen on your own - nor are you free to avoid helping. If you have not yet offered your own volunteering fuel to the fire that makes JCOGS what it is, please look over this annual report and see if there is a committee or task that calls to you. Or if you have a one-time compelling program to bring to JCOGS, don't hesitate to reach out and help make it happen!

Rav brachot, many blessings of continued growth, increased volunteerism, gratitude and good works,

Rabbi David Fainsilber

From the President

My dear friends:

I am pleased to report another successful year in our journey to build community, continuity, and vibrancy. Our caring and inclusive culture is creating a future for our children and our children's children.

Our long-range plan has not changed. We continue to work hard in the planning and implementation of our ambitious and achievable strategic initiatives:

- Our Rabbi David is making a difference in people's lives every day, in so many different ways: inspiring and multi-generational Shabbat services, incorporating music in the spiritual and religious activities, the leadership he is providing in our Jewish holidays, his acts of loving kindness for people in need, life cycle events, community involvement, and even more.
- Our programming has been ambitious, diversified, educational, religious, and social. The list is too long to articulate, but I will mention Holocaust education, Jewish film festivals, musical performances, authors, Israel's Consul General, and so much more. It is wonderful to see the level of volunteerism making these programs so appealing to so many different demographics.
- Our leadership development continues with the growth of our Board's involvement, expansion of our executive committee and new committees being activated. I want to thank Gary Feibus, Israel Ellner and Robin Trowbridge for their important contributions as they depart from our Board of Trustees. We welcome to our Board: Shari Vermeulen and Marvin Rosenbloom. Marvin is president of the Canadian Friends of JCOGS, and his presence elevates the valued representation of our Montreal Jewish community. We have completed the reorganization of our administration with Lisa Carrick as our finance manager and Olivia Easdale as our administrator. This new structure offers us expanded administrative capacity as well as specialized focus on our accounting and

finances and we are fortunate to have these two talented members of our staff.

- We have been growing and hover at 200 families and individual memberships and about 50 children in our religious school and pre-school. This growth is an important part of our future as we further develop the greater Stowe area.
- And finally, as I have said before, the final initiative to insure the long-term sustainability of our community is an endowment to support the school and its required resources. We will be announcing the campaign next year with a goal of reaching our targets by our 25th anniversary in 2021.

Our strategy is on track and we thank you for your support. We cherish your involvement. We are so appreciative of all of you who are making a difference in your generosity of time, talent, and, of course, treasury. It is a privilege and an honor to serve you.

Sincerely,

Ron Feinstein
President

By-Laws

The amended and restated By-Laws were approved by the Board of Trustees on May 18, 2017. The changes from the previous By-Laws clean up inconsistencies in terminology, usage and typos and include the following more material amendments:

1. clarifying that members who pay agreed reduced dues based on financial need are in good standing;
2. adding the head of Canadian Friends of JCOGS as a voting Ex Officio member of the Board of Trustees;
3. allowing the Board of Trustees to fill unfilled, in addition to vacated, seats on the Board in between even numbered year annual meetings;
4. removing the need for approval by the Board of Trustees of standing committee members and limiting the chair's ability to remove standing committee members without Board approval;
5. revising the standing committees by adding Building, Cemetery, Chesed and Tikkun Olam as standing committees and clarifying the role of committees; and
6. revising the Children's Education committee to require that a Trustee be the committee chair.

The complete revised By-Laws can be found on the JCOGS webpage at jcogs.org or you can request a copy at the JCOGS office.

Children's Education Committee

This year we renamed our Children's Education programs at JCOGS, the Olam Chesed Education Center. We continued to offer 3 regular programs in addition to holiday programming. The three programs engaged close to 50 children and include: our Wednesday afternoon education program for children in grades K-7, Kinderlach for families with children 0-5 years old, and The Mitzvah Project for children in grades 6-7.

Our Wednesday afternoon Olam Chesed program had 26 students enrolled, with 4 classrooms, and three new teachers. The teachers included Rabbi David, Amy Holloway, Jonah Ibson, Stacey Oshkello, and Emily Rosenbaum. Shona Reiter volunteered each week. We had two teenagers help out in the classroom each week, Ayla Oshkello and Celia Liberman. Substitutes included Claudia Woodward, Barbara Bauman, and Susan Rogers. Many parents helped out when asked. Jennifer Rudin worked with us as a consultant, assisting in helping teachers with the new curricula.

The Wednesday program continued to be divided into three parts. The first hour was dedicated to Hebrew learning, with 5 groups working at different levels. All of the children have learned Hebrew at an appropriate level. At each session children spend time with Rabbi David in the sanctuary singing and praying together. This year the older children and younger children had separate times with Rabbi David so that they partook in developmentally appropriate activities. The last half of our school day was designated for Jewish Life curriculum which utilized a curriculum called Chai, and brought many modalities of learning.

We had four multi-generational, student-led, Kabbalat Shabbat services on Friday nights where the children helped lead prayers and songs they worked on at school. These services were well attended, and were followed by community potlucks which helped toward building community. In addition, we had special programs for Chanukah, Tu Bishvat, Purim, and Passover that was well attended by families.

Kinderlach, a program for families and children ages 0-5, met monthly on Shabbat mornings from October to May engaging in music and activities with Rabbi David and Courtney Rose. Adding Courtney to our team of teachers has enhanced our program in a variety of ways, including bringing engaging crafts, and educational materials for families to go home with. There were 12 children who attended regularly, with additional families joining at times. We spent the first half of the program singing, engaged in games, and learning a Hebrew letter and word. The second half of the program participants shared in arts and crafts activities related to the theme of the month.

Our last program in May launched a pilot program to engage children 5 years old and up. This program will meet once a month starting in the Fall, and become the next step for the Kinderlach children before entering our Wednesday program. We look forward to launching this program and curriculum in the Fall.

The Mitzvah Project is for children in 6-7 grade, and met 5 times this year. We had 9 students engaged in this program. Students met for a variety of activities to enhance their preparations for their B'nei Mitzvah including a mitzvah project, ethics study, Shabbat morning service, and a Holocaust program. Two of the students in this program had their Bar Mitzvah at JCOGS this spring, and two more are scheduled for the Fall. This program will continue to evolve next year as we improve upon it.

The Children's Education Committee was formed this past fall. We met every other month and helped to discuss the needs of the Olam Education Center and best practices moving forward. The chair of the committee is Emily Rosenbaum. Committee members include: Rabbi David Fainsilber, Stacey Oshkello, Claudia Woodward, Rita Schneps, Lynne Gedanken, and Matt Yoskowitz.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Oshkello
Director of Family and Youth Education

Finance Committee

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I would like to highlight a few of the noteworthy items in our financial results and proposed budget for 2017-18.

- We continue to invest in our future, with donations closing the gap on investments in our religious school and programming. While membership is growing as well as enrollment in our religious school, so too is the need for financial assistance for the many families who cannot afford our fees. Our inclusiveness is one of our core values.
- We are modestly raising family membership dues by \$25 and individual by \$50 to cover some of our cost increases.
- We value our Canadian members and we recognize that the devalued Canadian dollar is a challenge for both our members and JCOGS. We will weather this weak exchange rate and hope to see the Canadian dollar strengthen in the future.
- Donations remain strong. Both small and large donors are vital to balancing our ambitious budgets.
- We have reorganized our administration which will actually provide more service at lower costs this coming year.
- It's a constant challenge to balance operating budgets with maintenance of the facility - and we watch that very carefully - at the same time as we increase the use of the facility with increased programming.
- While we have not included the cemetery's financials in this report, that investment is doing very well as we maintain an excellent offering, sell plots, and reduce our small debt. The cemetery committee does an outstanding job of their leadership on this important aspect of our community.
- Our JCOGS balance sheet remains debt free and we are proposing another balanced budget.
- We recognize the risks associated with being so dependent upon fundraising and major donations, and look forward to continued membership and enrollment growth in our school, active support of our annual fund, followed by a successful endowment campaign to be launched next year and completed in time for our 25th anniversary in 2021.

Respectfully,

Ron Feinstein and your Finance committee: Al Besser, Avi Kalichstein, our newest member, Lynne Gedanken, and our finance manager, Lisa Carrick

JCOGS Operating Budget

	2016-17 actual (projected to year end -6/30/17)	2017 - 18 Budget
Membership dues	118,200	125,575*
Children's Education	7300	8440
Festivals & Holidays; Programs	19,900	20,120
Facility Use Fees	1800	2000
Benefactor Campaign	41,500	42,000
General donations/Annual fund	20,500	18,000
Fundraising events	12,000	12,000
Fund for the Future – Phase 2	159,500	176,000
Balance Sheet reserve**	31,000	
Total income	\$411,700	\$404,135

* Increase in membership dues to: Family \$925; Individual \$500

** Contingency and maintenance reserves

EXPENSE

Administration	115,095	104,400
Clergy	119,485	123,670
Children's Education	57,445	65,500
Payroll taxes	7000	8400
Festivals & Holidays; Programs	46,576	38,450
Facility Operation & Maintenance	49,000	46,400
Fundraiser – raffle expenses	3500	3500
Miscellaneous- boutique, childcare, ritual/spiritual materials, social event etc	6054	5815
Chesed Committee, Tikkun Olam	1700	3000
Transfer to Maintenance reserve	5000	5000
Total expense	\$410,855	\$404,135
Net income	845	

Benefactor Appeal

Ambassador (\$5000 – up)

Deborah & Ron Feinstein
Kimberly Yellin & Marc Stern

Benefactor (\$2500 - \$4999)

Judy Allen
Gretchen Rous Besser & Albert G. Besser
Lynne Gedanken
Shelli & Alan Solomon
Sara & Irwin Tauben

Patron (\$1000 - \$2499)

Glenn Danziger
Nancy Gold
Marion Hecht
Harvey Herman
Carole & Stephen Lichtenstein
Priscilla & Andrew Minkin
Leslie Shedlin & David Raim
Barbara & David Siegel

Sustainer (\$500 - \$999)

Charlene & Sig Baltuch
Barbara & Robert Bauman
Mitzi & Hillel Becker
Betsy & David Blechman
Miriam Weinstein & Peter Feinstein
Susan Newberger
Eugene Posnick
Jean Remmer & Marvin Rosenbloom
Marilyn & Skip Rosskam
Patti C. Rubin
Kenneth Rubinstein
Rita & Stephen Schneps
Mel Siegel

Supporter (up to \$499)

Anonymous
Carole & Harold Ewen
Sheila & Nahum Gelber
Susan & Michael Heitner
Amanda & Avshalom Kalichstein
Kelly & Richard Levenstein
Wendy & Colin McCreight
Caren & Howard Merson
Sandra Montgomery
Sharron Moskowitz
Susan Rogers
Anne & Bruce Rosenberg
Miriam & Stephen Rosenbloom
Susan & Marc Segal
Barbara Stern
Carol Teplick
Robin Trowbridge
Judith & Norris Wolff

Annual Fund

The one who gives to those in need lends to G-d. Proverbs 19:17

Your charitable giving supports our operating budgets and those families who cannot afford membership nor tuition in our religious school. Thank you.

Over \$5000

Deborah & Ron Feinstein*
Kim Yellin & Marc Stern*

\$2500 - \$4999

Judy Allen*
Gretchen & Al Besser*
Lynne Gedanken*
Jean Remmer & Marvin Rosenbloom*
Miriam & Stephen Rosenbloom*
Shelli & Alan Solomon*
Sara & Irwin Tauben*

\$1000 - \$2499

Susan & Aron Ain
Barbara & Robert Bauman*
Glenn Danziger*
Nancy Gold*
Marion Hecht*
Harvey Herman
Carole & Stephen Lichtenstein*
Priscilla & Andrew Minkin*
Leslie Shedlin & David Raim*
Patti C. Rubin*
Barbara & David Siegel*

\$500 - \$999

Anonymous
Charlene & Sig Baltuch*
Mitzi & Hillel Becker*
Betsy & David Blechman*
Susan & Steve Cummings
Miriam Weinstein & Peter Feinstein*
Robin & Eric Gershman
Susan Newberger*
Sandy Nisenholtz
Stacey & Craig Oshkello
Eugene Posnick*
Emily & Jeffrey Rosenbaum
Anne & Bruce Rosenberg*
Marilyn & Skip Rosskam*
Kenneth Rubinstein*
Rita & Stephen Schneps*
Mel Siegel*
Barbara Stern*
Marilyn Takefman
Claudia Woodward

\$250 - \$499

Beverly Albert
Anonymous
Nickie Benoze
Michael Blustein ~ Blustein, Shapiro, Rich
& Barone, LLP
Barbara Segal & Howard Brown
Ann & Doug Brown
Tina & Fred Dubrovsky
Carole & Harold Ewen*
Sheila & Nahum Gelber*
Kim Kaufman & James Goldsmith
Carol Good
Susan & Mike Heitner*
Edee Simon Israel & Mark Israel
Alissa & Barry Katsof
Mark Lazarovich
Ellen Lazarus
Wendy & Colin McCreight*
Ann Scott
Susan & Marc Segal*
Wexner Foundation
Katrine & David Wolfgang
Joanna Wolper

\$100 - \$249

Anonymous
Judyth Pendell & Warren Azano
Toni & Russell Barr
Susan Bauchner
Phyllis & Perry Black
Gail & Steve Blumsack
Catskill Hudson Bank - Kevin McLaren
Carole & Tom Cookson
Emily DiGiulio
Elaine & Richard Dubrovsky
Suzan & Gary Feibus
Susan & Steve Fishman
Julia & Charles Goldstein
Phyllis & Lou Gordon
Paul Halpern
Deborah Black & Mich Kabay
Amanda & Avi Kalichstein*
Janice & Gerald Kandestin
Aviva & Sid Kastner
Kelly & Richard Levenstein*
Helen & Andre Levy

Annual Fund (continued)

Pearl & Saul Lighter
Caren & Howard Merson*
Sandra Montgomery*
Sharron Moskowitz*
Forrest Parkinson
Karen Pettinelli
Rhoda & Joel Pinsky
Shona Reiter
Susan Rogers*
Marcie & Bill Scudder
Janice & Lloyd Sheiner
Karen & Jon Shreter
Robin Singer & Tim Skedzuhn
Hilary & Alan Soiefer
Debora & Peter Steinerman
Stonybrook Homeowners Assoc.
Sugar House Hill Property Owner's Assoc.
Carol Teplick*
Robin Trowbridge*
Teri Wolofsky & Larry Witte
Judith & Norris Wolff*
Linda Zamvil & John Angier

Up to \$99

Rose & Gerson Adelman
Adler Foundation
Bev Allen
Marcy & James Andrus
Tanya & Stanley Applebaum
Gloria April
Irving Ash
Rita & Malcolm Barry
Lynn Baumrind
Louise Teitelbaum & Paul Bedard
Anita & Ezra Beinhaker
Magdalena & Peter Benedek
Nickie Benoze
David Black
Fern Ellen Blood
Faigie & Harold Borden
Marlene Bourke
Barbara & Mervin Brown
Victoria Bullock
Pearl & Lewis Cooper
Harriet Apple & Armand Cymbalista
Gloria & Ken Davis
Patricia Doherty
Judith & Larry Dunn
Candace Elmquist
Louis Flamenbaum
Yvonne & Arthur Felgar
Judy & Ben Frank
Jacqueline Freedman

Jordan Friede
Ruth Gais
Lucille & Peter Gates
Sandra & Dan Geensburg
Ellen & Larry Gibs
Shirley Goldfarb
Lori & Adam Gottlieb
Sherrill & Jean Gregorie
Joan & Ed Grossman
Charlotte & Gerald Guttman
Lenore and Paul Harris
Lynda & Stan Heisler
Leah Hodari
Marc Hurwitz
Alison & Al Karosas
Joan & Bob Katz
Lorin & Dr. Tom Klein
Doris & Sheldon Klein
Elaine & Julian Kotler
Nancy & Reid Krakower
Gail & Sid Kreppel
Roslyn & Jack Kunin
Martin Lepler Foundation
Leslie Dunn Levine
Linda & Robert Levy
Elizabeth Mariani
Max Mashaal & family
Lillian & Billy Mauer
Sheila Mingel
Judith & Stephen Minsky
Sharon & Gerry Naimer
Michelle & Brad Rauch
Amalia Reisman
Eleanor Roth
Elyse Rudner
Nancy & Allan Salzman
Renee & Joel Schacter
Isabel & Joe Schuster
Ava Schwam & family
Brenda Blatt & Nate Sheiner
Cherri Sherman
Tracy G. Shoor & family
Anita & Mendel Shore
Melissa & David Solomon
Bernice Katz & Max Teitelbaum
Elayne Teitelbaum
Judith & Arthur Tischler
Nora Gold & David Weiss
Denise & Skip Wentz
Ellen & Martin Yoskowitz
Edith Black Zfass

(*includes Benefactor Appeal contributions)

Tzedakah Committee

“Tzedakah and acts of kindness are the equivalent of all the Mitzvot of the Torah”

- - Jerusalem Talmud

It is with gratitude and respect that your Tzedakah Committee is able to report that the JCOGS membership contributed \$5458 in 5777 to be used for Tzedakah needs in the community. Through your generous donations, the JCOGS Tzedakah Fund was able to support the following worthy recipients:

USA Charities

- **Vermont Food Bank:** Supports food shelves throughout Vermont feeding more than 80,000 Vermonters
- **Lamoille Community Food Share:** Food shelf in Morrisville supplying food to needy Lamoille County families
- **Clarina Howard Nichols Center:** Provides shelter, support and social services to victims of domestic violence
- **Capstone Community Action, fuel assistance:** Provides funding for needy area families facing winter heating emergencies
- **Copley Hospital Foundation:** Assists with payment of medical and hospital fees for needy Vermonters
- **Stowe Weekend of Hope:** Stowe event providing support and education for cancer survivors and families
- **Stowe Community Church:** Charitable Purpose Fund
- **Lamoille Area Cancer Network:** Founded in 2000, Lamoille Area Cancer Network is a non-profit organization that recognized the need to assist people in our local Vermont communities that have been diagnosed with cancer.
- **VT Refugee Resettlement Program:** Protects the rights and addresses the needs of persons in forced or voluntary migration worldwide and supports their transition to a dignified life.
- **Children’s Literacy Foundation:** Waterbury, Vermont based program offering underprivileged children free books and reading opportunities
- **North Central Vermont Recovery Center:** Morrisville based program providing various forms of assistance to individuals and families impacted by alcohol and substance abuse
- **United Way of Lamoille County:** Umbrella organization helping fund and support various Vermont based charitable organizations and programs

Canadian Charities

- **Agence Ometz :** Umbrella Jewish human services agency providing employment, immigration and social services support
- **Mazon Canada:** Umbrella Jewish aid organization providing funding on a non-denominational basis to Canadian charities providing basic food needs
- **Jewish People School Scholarship Fund:** To help fund tuition for a needy

child tending JPPS

- **Akiva School:** To help fund tuition for a needy child attending Akiva Elementary School
- **Auberge Shalom:** Jewish Community based centre offering shelter and counseling for women and children affected by conjugal violence
- **Camp B’Nai Brith:** To assist in paying for the cost of a summer camp experience for a needy child at this Montreal based Jewish summer camp
- **MADA Community Center:** Montreal based food bank supporting individuals and families with food and groceries and weekly Shabbat meal deliveries.

Committee Members: S. David Gameroff and Simon S. Gameroff, Co-Chairs, Hillel Becker, Cindy Allen-Berson, Carole Lichtenstein, Patti Rubin, Gail Yanowitch

Tikkun Olam Committee

During the past year, the Tikkun Olam Committee focused on a theme of supporting refugees while continuing to address issues of hunger in our community. Our main programming for the 2016-2017 year began on Sunday, September 11 with JCOGS’s first Mitzvah Day. JCOGS members of all ages participated by assembling refugee welcome baskets, cleaning Torah ornaments, gleaning potatoes for the Vermont Foodbank, making welcome cards for refugee families and thank-you cards for local first responders and law enforcement and helping the Stowe Land Trust clear brush at Dumont Meadow. Other activities in support of refugees included JCOGS becoming a signatory to HIAS’s Welcome Campaign, a refugee Shabbat service and dinner where we learned more about the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program (VRRP) and were joined by a refugee family from the Congo. From Thanksgiving through Chanukah, we sponsored a winter outdoor drive and delivered four SUV loads of winter gear to VRRP. In May, JCOGS co-sponsored, with Beth Jacob Congregation, a benefit concert at Zenbarn to support HIAS’s work with refugees at which over \$2000 was raised. We continue to support the Neighborhood Food Project (be sure and pick up your green bags in the lobby) and participate in the Lamoille Valley Hunger Council. The committee also provided support for a food security Shabbaton led by students from the University of Vermont.

During the coming 2017-2018 year, we will continue our focus on refugees and hunger. We are in the planning stage for JCOGS’s second Mitzvah Day, which will be held in September, when everyone (young, old and in between) can participate in one of several projects to help make our communities a little bit better. Lastly, we will be looking for ideas and members to expand our programming.

Portia Arthur, Lynne Gedanken (chair), Alice Goins, Amy Holloway, Patti Rubin, Claudia Woodward

Chesed Committee

The mission of the Chesed Committee is to reach out to one another at difficult times through acts of caring and loving kindness. May JCOGS be an extended family where all of us feel at home. May we perform good deeds for others in the expectation of only one reward - the warm feelings engendered by helping a fellow human being in need.

The Chesed Committee's dedicated volunteers enable JCOGS to be a community of healing and support. This past year Chesed reached out to over thirty individuals and families through letters, emails, phone calls, home or hospital visits, and simple meals as well as rides to and from services or special programs at JCOGS. In addition to the quiet acts of kindness Chesed partnered with The

Arts & Education Committee in presenting a series called "Life's Challenging Decisions."

It is our hope that we can continue to reach out to members through acts of kindness in their time of need and through these kind acts remind each other of the power of a caring community. To continue to grow and expand outreach we need volunteers to join our Chesed committee and meal making team.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Priscilla at p.minkin@myfairpoint.net or 802-371-9753. Ellen Gibs at esgibs@yahoo.com or 978-621-3807.

Co-Chairs: Priscilla Minkin, Ellen Gibs

Festivals and Holidays

HIGH HOLY DAYS 2016-5777 marked the 20th year that JCOGS has offered HHD services and programming for our members, guests of members and a growing number of perennial visitors, many of whom became new members. Thanks to the exemplary spiritual leadership of Rabbi David Fainsilber, our mission statement was visually realized by record-breaking attendance.

This year we took our long-standing haimish welcoming to the next level by embracing "audacious hospitality." Rooted in Genesis, it encompasses the highest standards of inclusivity. We are most grateful to our HHD Leadership team which included Head ushers Peter Steinerman and Emily Rosenbaum; Welcome Table managers: Rita Schneps and Cindy Allen-Berson.

Special thanks to Nancy Krakower for once again coordinating our personalized Yizkor Book. And to Steve Schneps, our shofar blower. In total, 30 volunteers helped make HHD 2016-5777 a success on many levels.

Our expanded childminding services met the needs of our growing number of

families with young children. Music, always a significant component of our services, has been greatly enhanced. Apples, honey sticks, almonds and raisins have become our complimentary mainstays to ensure the sweetness that is Rosh Hashanah. Our Tashlich service and picnic never disappoint.

Heartfelt thanks to all who brought bags of non-perishables to help assist the Lamoille Community Food Share in their mission to provide food security for our struggling Lamoille County neighbors.

New this year: Erev Rosh Hashanah Dessert Reception, Yoga sessions by Hayley Goldstein, our HHD Rabbinic Intern, a larger spontaneous choir, a dedicated meditation space and an online HHD survey.

We ushered in **SUKKOT** with a Refugee Shabbat and Sukkot Service in coordination with Vermont Refugee Resettlement staffers. With our sukkah in view, a talk shared by a Vermont-settled refugee family enlightened and prompted questions, while we enjoyed a vegetarian potluck amid the autumnal decorations that visually define our harvest festival.

Determined **CHANUKAH** party-goers made their way through the storm to JCOGS for music, food, fun and games. The social hall was filled with hands-on-activities for all. With menorah candles burning bright, the singing commenced followed by latkes. Our Second Annual Cook-Off showcased applesauce as the secret ingredient.

For the second year, JCOGS marked **TU BISHVAT** with two seders and a vegetarian potluck supper. Both seders were filled with music and song. Fruits, nuts and symbolism, engaging activities and a multigenerational vegetarian potluck to bridge the seders made for a most meaningful “New Year of the Trees.”

The JCOGS Social Hall rocked on March 23 as **PURIM** activities filled the center. By 5 p.m., costumed-partiers of all ages were engaged in the various activities that were underway: storytelling, drumming and singing along with Rabbi David. The sounds of Purim joy and laughter filled the building.

After the multigenerational potluck that resembled a Queen Esther banquet, the reading of Megillah commenced with whirling graggers. Hamantaschen and potluck desserts were plentiful. Olam Chesed students created mishloach manot bags for the Stowe firefighters.

On April 11, JCOGS welcomed a record 114 **PASSOVER** guests. In keeping with our commitment to “from generation to generation,” a Passover fun activity for young

families was held at 3:30 p.m. Our multi-generational seder followed at 5:30 p.m. Our traditional Passover foods were provided by Vermont Kosher. New this year: Fair Trade Kosher for Passover chocolate bars!

YOM HASHOAH: On April 23, JCOGS, in conjunction with the Greater Stowe Inter-faith Coalition (GSIC), hosted a powerful tribute to the legacy of Elie Wiesel. Keynote speaker, Dr. Ingrid Anderson of the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies at Boston University captivated the audience with her personal stories of Elie Wiesel, her mentor and teacher. The program was enhanced by the showing of the film, “Sighet, Sighet.” Readings and reflections on Wiesel’s writings were read by GSIC clergy. Our traditional candle-lighting concluded the commemoration. The inaugural opening of the JCOGS Holocaust Memorial Exhibit, co-curated by Debora Steinerman and Marcie Scudder followed the program.

KABBALAT SHABBAT is Judaism’s most important and most frequent holiday. At JCOGS, our weekly Friday Night service is filled with communal warmth and joyous expression. Rabbi David leads uplifting, music-filled and themed services on a rotating basis to heighten the connectivity of our diverse congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Patti C. Rubin

Programming

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

The Arts and Entertainment Committee presented events to keep JCOGS very busy every month throughout the past year.

We presented three authors who came to discuss their books. We showed two Metropolitan Opera films and at each event told about the lives of famous Jewish opera stars.

We had a classical guitarist, Steven Hancock present his program about the Mendelssohn family and Bach. Paul Orgel performed a beautiful concert for us.

We have continued to hold our monthly book club meetings. Participants bring a bag lunch and we discuss the book we have read which always has a Jewish theme and of course the discussions range far and wide!

We had a catered dinner at which the Consul General of Israel to New England spoke. Through the year, three of our JCOGS members presented programs - Erika Hecht spoke of her experience as a child survivor of the Holocaust and we showed the documentary she took part in, "Hidden Children". Professor Michel Kabay enthralled us with his program of "The Music of Poetry, Piano and Song" and his beloved, Dr. Deborah Black performed a gorgeous classical concert with her string quartet.

We showed the film, "Hester Street" and one of the authors spoke about her experience growing up on Hester Street in the 30's. We enjoyed interesting speakers on a variety of subjects from the Vermont Humanities Council on three occasions. We also hosted an art lecture by Diana Huston.

The esteemed yoga instructor, Kate Graves, led us in 12 sessions of "Chair Yoga for Seniors".

We are looking forward to another outstanding year of events to be presented by our marvelous committee who are all deeply appreciated for the work they do. Great thanks to Barbara Stern, Debora Steinerman, Ellen Gibs and Susan Rogers. We are also looking forward to the participation of our new member, Marcie Scudder. My very deepest thank you has to go to my Chief Chauffeur, Tech Advisor and Sherpa, Steve Lichtenstein, without whose help none of the above could have been accomplished!

Respectfully Submitted,
Carole Lichtenstein
Chair

SHALOM COMMITTEE

Tzofim Friendship Caravan presented a lively interactive show for nearly 100 guests on July 10. These ten Israeli scouts brought songs and stories about Israel to JCOGS for a fun filled evening. The teens were hosted in the homes of five JCOGS families.

We held a Shabbat "Celebrate Summer" Vermont Kosher catered dinner on June 9. It was a wonderful way to catch up after a

long winter, welcome returning friends, sit together and eat together.

Miriam Rosenbloom, Rita Schneps, Debbie Steinerman, Betsy Blechman, Ellen Gibs & Leslie Shedlin

STOWE JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

The Stowe Jewish Film Festival (SJFF) at JCOGS launched last summer and had a very successful inaugural season, thanks to the support of the JCOGS board, administrative staff and of course the community! Many generous JCOGS members stepped up to contribute as sponsors, which positively impacted the festival's budget. The festival opened with 'In Search of Israeli Cuisine,' the hit documentary, with Roger Sherman, the filmmaker, traveling to Stowe from New York to join us. Our other films were 'Nobody Asked, Nobody Cared,' a post-Holocaust documentary from Montreal and 'Raise The Roof,' a fascinating story of the construction of a model of a wooden Polish synagogue that is now the centerpiece of the Museum of Polish Jewry in Warsaw. Again, the filmmakers came to Stowe to attend and speak! Attendance was high at all screenings.

This summer the SJFF continues with an active committee planning an exciting summer of film and fun! The festival opens on July 6th with The Wandering Muse, a story of Jewish music. Not only will the filmmaker attend, but also one of the musicians in the film will travel to Stowe to perform during the festive pre-film dinner! Three more great films will follow. Once again, JCOGS members will have the opportunity to support the SJFF as sponsors, and in gratitude will receive reserved seats for every film plus the opening dinner. We also have some corporate sponsors from the greater Stowe community this year; their generous donations will help support the fees we pay to bring these films to Stowe and related costs of producing the festival, keeping the ticket costs reasonable for all.

Sara Tauben and Edee Simon-Israel
Co-Chairs

Building Operations Committee

The committee has been functioning well after the change in leadership of the chair from Gary Feibus to Aaron Goldfield.

The committee did a walkaround of the exterior of the building to put together a list of maintenance and needs for the outside of the building. It is agreed that the building is holding up very well over the years and the only major exterior project for the building would be to paint all the trim (not siding).

List of work/maintenance that has been accomplished recently:

- Secure storage area was constructed
- Double doors to patio now closing and locking securely
- Dumpster enclosure trim replaced
- Front door closure repaired and header trim replaced
- Stereo system installed in sanctuary
- Carpet in sanctuary replaced on May 22

Committee members: Aaron Goldfield (chair), Steve Berson, Mike Goldfield, Steve Lichtenstein, Jacob Racusin.

Cemetery Committee

Please join us after the Annual Meeting for a prayer book and sacred artifact burial ceremony at our Darchei Shalom Cemetery

Our cemetery continues to move forward on all fronts. The sale of Burial Rights Lots continue at a good pace as more and more JCOGS members consider Darchei Shalom Cemetery in their end of life plans. As a result of the plot sales and other donations we have been able to continue our work maintaining, improving and developing the site.

In 2016/17 we installed Roselle's Bench, memorializing Roselle Abramowitz, our dear friend, dedicated JCOGS member and Cemetery Committee member. Her bench is one of four benches installed along the 'Path of Peace' that separates the two sections of the cemetery. William Allen is memorialized on Bench #2 and soon Burt Rubin will be memorialized on Bench #3. There is only one bench left in this grouping to honor or memorialize a loved one. Please contact me if you are interested...

We also installed pavers along the Path of Peace, resurfaced the Chesed section with topsoil, which was then rolled and over seeded to make it smoother, replaced some plantings that were not doing well, graded the perimeter road, mulched and weeded the landscaping. This summer we have plans to add more landscaping and install a storage shed.

It is important to mention that although the Cemetery is owned and operated by JCOGS, it is entirely self-sustaining with its own accounts and does not rely on the general JCOGS budget for its funding. For more information about Darchei Shalom, visit our website at www.jcogs.org or contact me or one of the Cemetery Committee members; Steve Lichtenstein, Marcie Scudder, Stephen Rosenbloom, Carol Good, Shelly Klein and Eric Lande.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Berson, Committee Chair Sbberson@gmail.com 802.343.8765

Member List 2016-2017

Beverly Albert
Beverly Allen
Judy Allen
Marcy & James Andrus
Linda Zamvil & John Angier
Gloria April
Portia Arthur
Sandra Montgomery & Irving Ash
Jeri Wohlberg & Nat Bacon
Charlene & Sig Baltuch
Holli & Ed Bassin
Susan Bauchner
Barbara & Robert Bauman
Mitzi & Hillel Becker
Anita & Ezra Beinhaker
Rita "Nickie" Benoze
Debra & Joel Benson
Cynthia Allen-Berson & Steve Berson
Gretchen Rous Besser & Albert Besser
Joan & Henry Binder
Betsy & David Blechman
Anna Westervelt & Jared Blum
Gail & Steven Blumsack
Lindsay Rothstein & Cliff Borden
Barbara & Mervin Brown
Barbara Segal & Howard Brown
Rachel & Benjamin Clarkin
Shekhinah & Elliot Cluba
Murray Cohen
Joanne & Richard Cummings
Susan & Steven Cummings
Harriet Apple & Armand Cymbalista
Margie & Howard Dananberg
Glenn Danziger
Rona & Robert Davis
Tina & Fred Dubrovsky
Elaine & Richard Dubrovsky
Judith & Larry Dunn
Caroline & Marcel Elefant
Sarah & Israel Ellner
Candace Elmquist
Carole & Harold Ewen
Alison Link & Rabbi David Fainsilber
Suzan & Gary Feibus
Miriam Weinstein & Peter Feinstein
Deborah & Ron Feinstein
Yvonne & Arthur Felgar
Linda Sallop & Michael Fenlon
Nelly & Robert Fischer
Marlena Tucker-Fishman & Noah Fishman
Susan Bayer-Fishman & Stephen Fishman
Lovissa Fon Eisen
Judy & Ben* Frank
Sandy & Ed Frank
Jacqueline Freedman
Elyssa & Jonathan Freedman
Ann & Stephen Fried
Jordan Friede
Shoshana Frieden
Brenda & David Gamaroff
Jordana & Simon Gamaroff
Lynne Gedanken
Sheila & Nahum Gelber
Andrea & David Gellis
Robin & Eric Gershman
Ellen & Larry Gibs
Janet & Alan Ginsberg
Kerry & Andrew Glanz
Nancy Gold
Mike Goldfield
Kim Kaufman & Jim Goldsmith
Julia & Charles Goldstein
Alice Goins
Carol Good
Morris Goodman
Sue Minter & David Goodman
Ana Maria & Mark Gordon
Lori & Adam Gottlieb
Caroline Sand & Angus Grant
Jane & Steven Greenfogel
Saryl & Stephen Gross
Casie Grossman
Erika Hecht
Marion Hecht
Susan & Michael Heitner
Harvey Herman
James E. Hirsch
Amy Holloway
Edee Simon-Israel & Mark Israel
Barbara & Richard Jacobs
Wendy & Gary Jacobson
Stephanie Justine
Deborah Black & Michel Kabay
David Kahn
Amanda & Avshalom Kalichstein
Lisa Walker & Robert Kaplan
Alison & Al Karosas
Heather Katz
Joan & Bob Katz
Mimi & Merv Kerman
Rona Klein
Doris & Sheldon Klein
Nancy & Reid Krakower
Jane Krasnow
Mark Laxer
Mark Lazarovich

Member List 2016-2017

Bunny & Mortimer Lechter
Dara & Jarett Levan
Jacquie Mauer & Brian Levan
Kelly & Richard Levenstein
Linda & Robert Levy
Shelley & Leonard Lewkowicz
Beth & Moni Liberman
Carole & Stephen Lichtenstein
Pearl & Saul Lighter
Mila Lonetto
Jewel and Paul Lowenstein
Sebastian Lupu
Terri & Barry Lyman
Wendy & Colin McCreight
Caroline & Calvin Melmed
Caren & Howard Merson
Priscilla & Andrew Minkin
Minda Moskowitz
Sharron Moskowitz
Amy Wolk Murphy & Patrick Murphy
Judith Needleman
Susan Newberger
Sandy Nisenholtz
Wendy & Nick Nunez
Stacey London-Oshkello & Craig Oshkello
Abby Parker
Rhoda & Joel Pinsky
Betty Polow
Eugene H. Posnick
Deborah Levy & Michele Pressman
Greta Quintin
Mary Niles & Jacob Deva Racusin
Lynn Herzeg & Stephen Raicek
Leslie Shedlin & David Raim
Michelle & Bradley Rauch
Judy Litvack & Carl Ravinsky
Carrie Redlich
Evelyn Redlich
Amalia Reisman
Shona Reiter
Diane & Martin Richler
Susan Rogers
Bobbi Rood
Emily & Jeffrey Rosenbaum
Miriam & Stephen Rosenbloom
Jean Remmer & Marvin Rosenbloom
Lisa Bernat Rosenfeld & Abram Rosenfeld
Josie & Arthur Roskies
Marilyn & Skip Roskam
Patti C. Rubin
Ken Rubinstein
Elyse Rudner
Simone Rueschemeyer
Nancy & Allan Salzman
Jennifer & Richard Salzman
Susan & Otto* Sand
Shelly & Brian Schaffer
Sara & Bob Schlosser
Rita & Stephen Schneps
Marcie & Bill Scudder
Susan & Marc Segal
David Selby
Peggy & Gerry Shapiro
Janice & Lloyd Sheiner
Barbara & David Siegel
Mel Siegel
Kathy Myron & Jonathan Sigler
Elizabeth & Joel Silverstein
Marni & Roger Singer
Robin Singer & Tim Skedzhun
Jennifer & Joshua Slen
Jill & Alan Slootsky
Shelli & Alan Solomon
Melissa & David Solomon
Debora & Peter Steinerman
Barbara Stern
Kim Yellin & Marc Stern
Gloria & Barry Sternthal
Ruth Stoddard
Michal Woll & Jonathan Sweeney
Sara & Irwin Tauben
Estelle & Steve Tauben
Carol Teplick
Judith & Arthur Tischler
Robin Trowbridge
Becky & James Tunick
Shari & Riaan Vermeulen
Terrye Goren & Michael Voelger
Stacey & Ronald Wagner
Lynn & Ron Waxman
Bernard Weichsel
Liz & Kevin Weishaar
Alice Zelman & Stanley Wener
Michele Cohen & Mark Wexler
Judith & Norris Wolff
Katrine & David Wolfgang
Claudia Woodward
Diane Grossman & Maks Wulkan
Linda Hazen & Stephen Yanow
Gail Yanowitch
Katie & Matt Yoskowitz
Marlene Maron & Michael Zacharias
Edith Black Zfass
Ronna & Arnold Ziegel

*deceased