



# Bulletin

Jewish Community of Greater Stowe

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My dear friends,

On May 17, 2018, the Board of Trustees voted to elect Emily Rosenbaum as our next president, as my tenure ends this June. I am



writing you today to thank you for your support over my four-year tenure as president of the Jewish Community of Greater Stowe. Serving you has been a privilege and an honor.

Experiencing our growth and vibrancy has been truly inspiring. I am grateful for the commitment and support of our members, active volunteers, committees, and board of trustees. Most of all, I want to thank our Rabbi David, who has worked tirelessly to fulfill the complex role of our clergy. We are truly blessed and lucky to have found him and his family. He has touched so many peoples' lives in his first four years: during *simchas*, through personal loss, and in our everyday lives. Having our first full-time ordained rabbi was a big step, and the results are exceeding all expectations.

### Continuous growth

During these first years under Rabbi David's leadership, we have experienced a dramatic increase in educational, religious, social, and musical programming. With the growth in programming has come growth in membership, as well as greater attendance in our programs and at our beautiful Shabbat and holiday services.

While so many congregations struggle with membership decline, in just the past four years we have added 86 new family and individual memberships. With our growing membership comes so many life-cycle events, the *simchas* — *b'nai mitzvah*, weddings, baby namings — and, of course, the moments when families are suffering.

Our lay leadership has increased. We are experiencing a wonderful blend of long-time leaders with their valuable historical knowledge and new younger members eager to help build community.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of my tenure has been seeing the Olam Chesed religious school and the Kinderlach pre-school come alive. This includes a wonderful faculty and staff, an exciting rise in enrollment, and early indications that we have plenty of growth potential as we continue to invest in the school's development.

A religious school in a resort community is tricky; it's not easy to find schedules that complement our families' needs. But early signs show that we're filling a significant void, and the future looks optimistic. We are hiring our first-ever full-time director of family and youth education to reinforce this strategically important priority. I am delighted that the talented Beth Liberman will step into this role as we move toward further growth.

And we are making significant progress in the Greater Stowe Interfaith Coalition with our rabbi playing a leadership role. Overall, our place and perception in the community and our commitment to supporting the greater community is very positive and strengthening as time passes.

As many of you are aware, we have a Jewish cemetery on the Morrisville-Stowe line that is now financially self-sufficient and an important aspect of our community.

### Looking ahead

JCOGS is still a very young community; we will celebrate our 25th anniversary in 2021. Like any Jewish community in its foundational years, we are investing in our future. As my tenure as president ends this June, I pass the leadership role to our new president, Emily Rosenbaum,

and I will now transition to creating a 25th anniversary annual fund and endowment campaign to raise the dollars needed to sustain what you have built. With a full-time rabbi, a full-time education director, and a full-time administrator, we are prepared for growth, and the campaign will ensure our sustainability.

Fundraising must be an important component of any Jewish community. Over the next few years, I am optimistic that our community will step up to its capabilities and we will create the infrastructure to ensure development has a permanent role in our future.

Having been a second homeowner in Stowe for 44 years, I know how easy it is to focus one's generosity back home, whether that is in Boston, Montreal, or further afield. But I have learned the importance of a vibrant Jewish community wherever I have roots, and I urge all of you to do the same to your ability: locals, snowbirds, visitors, and second homeowners from the north and south. We have an opportunity to sustain our Jewish heritage and make a difference in people's lives, and that is a pretty impressive opportunity.

Emily, my successor, is passionate about our community, is dedicated and hardworking, and has demonstrated results in a number of important areas with her direct involvement, serving on JCOGS's Executive Committee, chairing the Children's Education Committee, chairing the search for our new director of family and youth education, and always making the vibrancy of our community a priority. We are fortunate to have her skill and intelligence, and I am confident she will take us to the next level, because, truly, we are just getting started.

Let me close by once again thanking you for the privilege of serving our community.

Respectfully,  
**Ron Feinstein**

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Dear fellow JCOGS community members,

Last year at Kol Nidre services, I spoke of the value of building community. Throughout this year, I have continued to think about the ways we knit ourselves into a community, one that may not be visible in every moment of our



lives. Some days we spend hours at JCOGS, perhaps attending Kinderlach with our children or watching a movie in the film festival. Other days, we work, attend school, visit the dentist, walk our dogs, and cook dinner, all without stopping to dwell upon our involvement with JCOGS.

And then, just when we need our Jewish community, it is there. It is there because we have found ways to build it together — through countless volunteer hours, through creative programming, and through the commitment of our lay leadership. Ron Feinstein, in his years as president, has worked tirelessly to ensure a strong future for this community. Due to Ron's vision, our outstanding Rabbi David guides us through our life-cycle events, our education center is flourishing, and the front office supports us in all aspects of JCOGS's operation.

I have been so fortunate in these past few years. Not only has our family been warmly welcomed by all of you, but Ron and the board have given me the opportunity to be part of JCOGS's growth. As chair of the Children's Education Committee, I have worked with some wonderful people to build a strong foundation for our young people. Ushering for the High Holy Days, I shook your hands and looked so many of you in the eyes as we came to worship together. On the board, I have learned from the collective experience and talents of some of our most committed lay leaders.

**And now we look forward.**

We look forward to growing our leadership in old and new directions, engaging new volunteers while continuing to learn from those who have stewarded JCOGS for more than two decades. We look forward to developing programs and approaches that can support our continued growth. We look forward to the summer social events, the High Holy Days spent together, and the next year of nurturing our children's Jewish identities.



*Incoming and outgoing presidents, Emily Rosenbaum and Ron Feinstein, stand together outside the doors of JCOGS.*

Thank you for being there as our children are called to Torah, as our babies are born, as we mourn our losses. Thank you for the warmth with which we greet each other, both in our beautiful building and when we see each other at the grocery store. Thank you for working so hard to build Jewish community here in a place where we cannot take it for granted.

And thank you, most of all, for allowing me to give more deeply to JCOGS. I am grateful

for the opportunity to serve our community. It is an honor and a responsibility I will never take lightly.

My email address is [emily.rosenbaum@jcogs.org](mailto:emily.rosenbaum@jcogs.org). Please reach out to let me know how you would like to be involved as we move forward with the momentum that Ron and the JCOGS leadership have begun.

Warmly,  
*Emily Rosenbaum*