



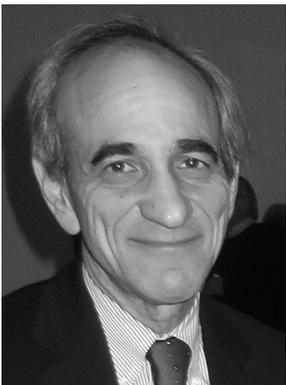
the jewish connection

June & July 2015
Issue No. 52

Bulletin of the Upper Valley Jewish Community • 5 Occom Ridge • Hanover, NH 03755

LEARNING

Rabbi Edward S. Boraz



According to a legend I heard, Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, one of the foremost *talmudists* of our generation and author of

the *Steinsaltz Talmud*, was once touring the United States. He was invited to a Jewish day school. Many of the students, whose ages ranged from 6 to 14, had heard of Rabbi Steinsaltz and were looking forward eagerly to his talk in the school's auditorium. He ended his remarks with the following statement: "Remember, it is your duty to give your teachers a hard time."

The students were murmuring about what this great sage meant. The principal, clearly nervous, took the microphone and said, "What Rabbi Steinsaltz meant was that you should study very hard and ask good questions. He was really saying, 'Be a good student.'" When Steinsaltz overheard this remark as he was walking off the stage, he turned and went back to the microphone. "That is not what I meant. I meant exactly what I said: your task is to give your teachers a difficult time. By this I mean asking very hard questions and not just accept-

ing their answers because they come from your teacher."

Part of my responsibilities as your Rabbi is to conduct an assembly for the 4th through 7th grades on Tuesday afternoons from 5:00 to 5:30. Often, we'll study the liturgy, Torah, or learn Israeli songs. I decided yesterday to tell this story to students and invite them to ask any questions they wished, doing my best to answer them. Here is a sample of what they asked:

1. *Hold old are you?*
2. *Can you prove that God exists?*
3. *How did God come into being?*
4. *Could God ever take a bodily form?*
5. *Was the Torah always a scroll, and if not, how and when did the Torah take the form of a scroll?*
6. *Who wrote the Torah?*
7. *If Moses wrote the Torah, then who wrote the last three verses that describe Moses's death?*
8. *Why is there evil in the world?*
9. *If God does exist, how does God act, if at all, in the world?*

Of course, only the first of these questions can be answered definitively. These are complex questions, and reflect many of the issues I have had the great privilege to explore in my work at the Roth Center. No less a scholar than Maimonides, whom I study each week along with five members of our community, struggled mightily within a philosophic framework to address these very questions, some

of which I shared with our students in trying to respond to their profound inquiries.

(I also mangled the story of the Hubble telescope "observing" light emanating from an exploding star; the light having traveled 9,000,000,000 years to a point where it could be recoded for science. Thank goodness, a Dartmouth student, a member of our faculty, rescued me on that part of my answer!)

In this assembly, perhaps as a tribute to the great Steinsaltz, we engaged in Talmud, which means learning (as opposed to teaching). When people, regardless of age or relationship, engage in the study of Talmud in its essence, each individual comes away enriched and better for it.

While I can't speak for everyone present yesterday, I know that I certainly felt blessed to engage so deeply with the wonderful *talmidim* (students) with whom I work on Tuesdays.

We had begun at 5:00 and brought things to a close at 5:40, stopping only because parents were waiting in the hallway and also because I was becoming somewhat mentally drained! At the close of the assembly, seven hands remained raised either to comment or to ask a follow-up question. I was the one who ended the session, not the students.

All I can say is, "Thank you", to Rabbi Steinsaltz, to the parents who encourage their children to learn, and most of all to our students.

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President's Message

Deborah Kaplan



Last year, for the first time in many years, the number of UVJC membership units fell from 200 to 196. This year we are at 198, but passing the critical threshold of 200 prompted the UVJC board to look seriously at the issue of membership.

I am sure many of you are aware (through popular media) that synagogue membership in both the Reform and Conservative movements is down, requiring many congregations to merge, close, or refocus their efforts. Closer to home, many churches in the Upper Valley struggle as well with membership decline. While the UVJC appears to be stable compared to other communities, we are not immune to this phenomenon and need to be proactive.

This past April, the UVJC board spent its annual retreat discussing membership. We discussed and analyzed important historical data, finding these important trends:

- While our overall membership number has stayed around 200 member units, the numbers in different membership categories have shifted: we are seeing an increase in the number of single and senior couples and a decrease in families.
- The decrease in families reflects the 61% decrease in number of students enrolled in the religious school since 2005/2006.

It is clear that we have 2 variables of membership to address:

- Retaining current members
- Attracting new members

A recent survey gave us a better understanding of the reasons for affiliation of our current membership, and also helped us to determine the interests and needs of our current members.

We are very fortunate to have had Jacob Crandall, a Tuck student, who, under the guidance of Rob Shumsky, a UVJC board member and Tuck professor, worked with the UVJC Board to design and analyze the survey. The Board is working now on next steps, utilizing the data to move forward in an effort to keep our members happy and participating.

While this presents a challenge, it also presents an opportunity. This is your Community; we are open to your needs. Active participation will lead to a better, stronger UVJC.

Attracting new members is our other challenge. We all know Jews in the community who choose not to affiliate with us for a variety of reasons; we are interested in learning about the barriers to affiliation. This is particularly important for our religious school.

We will continue to address membership in both formal and informal ways; your help as we continue is crucial. If you have thoughts about barriers to affiliation or ways to make the UVJC a more welcoming place, please be in touch with me at deb.kaplan@comcast.net or (802) 649-8808.

Thank you for your continued support of the Upper Valley Jewish Community. I look forward to hearing from you.

Take Away

Maggie Duford,
UVJC Director of Education



As I write and reflect, we conclude both our 2014/2015 school year and my fourth year as your Director of Education at our Hebrew school.

I heard recently an interesting comment on the news, which, though not related directly to us as a people, still had great resonance for me. The comment was this: "We learn from the grave." It is hard for me to think of a more somber yet more true statement.

What have those before taught us? What is the Jewish legacy that we carry forward?

In our normal school assemblies in which our students gather at the beginning of Sunday's Hebrew school session, I normally teach a short lesson. The lesson may be relative to an upcoming holiday, the week's Torah portion, or to some important value relevant to our young community. In a more recent assembly, rather than teaching, I considered what our students might teach everyone in that room. So I posed the following topic: "Teach us about prayer."

I was overwhelmed by the number of hands that shot into the air. I had expected to have to draw ideas from them, but that was not the case. Over and over, young children shared their experience of prayer as a real and natural thing, a personal and powerful thing.

There was little left for me to ferret out or to teach, but there was plenty to learn. The students who participated, many as young as 8 and 9, shared, in public, what it was like to be alone with G-d. There is a reason that our tradition teaches that the Torah was entrusted to the children.

Could this be a lesson from those in the grave who lived and died before us?

I have witnessed our children making a steady ascent in understanding their own personal Jewish identity. I am aware of those who consistently attended, as well as led, our All-School Shabbat services, our festivals and our celebrations. I saw our children at the school minyan comfort our Rabbi when he lost his mother this last year. I observe children who have "Hebrew in their mouths," because their teachers have put it there.

I know that our children have learned the liturgy of a Shabbat service in both Hebrew and song. I witness *madrechim* who attend every single Sunday they can possibly make it, who work in classrooms and attend classes designed by our Rabbi (who does not want to see our young adults enter the world with only a 7th grade education. All of these things were born before my eyes, as all of our educators worked very hard to provide a venue for learning, community and expression.

This is legacy; this is heritage. Is this a lesson one learns from the grave?

We as teachers, and you as a community, by becoming members and encouraging others in the Jewish community to come forward and join our synagogue and school, are all passing the Torah to the next generation.

That is my take away, and it is most promising.

Eshalom, Maggie

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KIDDUSH SCHEDULE

June-July 2015/5775

- June 6 • Dianne and Gary Levine
- June 13 • Sharon and Bob Racusin
- June 20 • Diane Roston
- June 27 • Deb Kaplan
- July 4 • Jamielynn Garland
- July 11 • Ivan Hacker- Bar Mitzvah
- July 18 • Jeff Parsonnet
- July 25 • Sheryl Lerner

July Bar Mitzvah

July 11 • Ivan Hacker
Son of Charles Hacker

Please Welcome UVJC's Newest Members

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Joan Rachlin and Seymour Small

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Social Action News ~ by Carolyn Gordon

At the time of this writing, the UVJC Fill-a-Bag campaign has brought in over thirty bags of groceries along with winter clothing for the Claremont Soup Kitchen. Meanwhile, the tzedakah box in the Roth Center lobby is filling up! So far, we have sent \$200 in cash donations to the Soup Kitchen.

The Soup Kitchen provides monthly food boxes for 300-500 families, with more in the winter months when many families must choose between buying food or fuel. Our donations of food, clothing and funds are greatly needed and appreciated.

Our thanks to all of you for your contributions, with special thanks to Lynn Schwartz, Pam Hausler and Tamara Carluccio for organizing the Fill-a-Bag campaign. Please continue to drop your change (or more!) in the tzedakah box, and leave non-perishable food and personal care items in the wicker basket whenever you are in the Roth Center. We hope you'll fill a bag!

The enthusiastic and ever-enlarging Social Action Committee is planning more ways to address needs in the Upper Valley. If you would like to join the fun and help make a difference in our community, please contact Carolyn Gordon csgordon@dartmouth.edu



Upper Valley Oral Surgery

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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.

~ Yahrzeit Board ~
Remembrance

The act of remembrance in Jewish tradition is a profound experience. Remembrance brings to present consciousness the influence, love, and nurturing the departed brought to us, our children, and our children's children. A yahrzeit board provides a spiritual means of paying respect and offering tribute to the memories of our departed loved ones.

The yahrzeit board in the Alperin Sanctuary at the Roth Center for Jewish Life at Dartmouth College provides each member of our congregational family the opportunity to engage in the profound mitzvah of remembrance by acquiring a yahrzeit plaque. 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.

UVJC History Project Update

Liza Draper

ldraper@dartmouth.edu • 603-477-4753

Documenting the history of a community as lively and diverse as this one is an exciting challenge. I am thrilled to be working with the UVJC History Committee on such an important project.

Since joining the team last month, I have begun reviewing transcripts from dozens of interviews Committee members have conducted over the last two years. Each reveals a unique perspective on the past. Members' reflections on the Upper Valley and what it has meant to be Jewish here make for powerful, poignant reading. I cannot wait to go through all of them.

It is wonderful that so many of you have shared your memories of celebrations, worship services, school, work life, and even instances of anti-Semitism. These recollections provide a rich palette that should enable us to paint a clear and compelling picture of how the community has evolved over time.

As we continue to go through the material gathered to date, I urge you to look once more for maps, photos, programs, local news articles, song lyrics, and memorabilia (other than b'nai mitzvah invitations) you may have from prior to the opening of the Roth Center. Every additional artifact has the potential to bring another aspect of the community's history to life. Items submitted will be photographed, recorded, or scanned and returned to you.

I am honored to have the opportunity to share in this effort, and look forward to working with the rest of the History Project team to produce a worthy final product that will have lasting value.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch should you have any questions or suggestions for me.

Celebrate Special Occasions with Bimah Baskets and Centerpieces

A Beautiful Alternative to Flowers

In lieu of flowers, many congregations throughout the country have developed a tradition of decorating the bimah with elegantly arranged baskets of food and/or other items for occasions such as b'nai mitzvah and other celebrations. Smaller baskets also make lovely centerpieces for dinner or Kiddush tables. After the ceremony or celebration, the contents of the baskets are donated to local food pantries or other appropriate charities.

The colorful arrangements not only provide the festive beauty traditionally provided by flowers, but also help to infuse the occasion with the spirit of tikkun olam.

Baskets may be personalized; in place of food, they may be filled with stuffed animals, books, toys, or other items.



The Social Action Committee is delighted to make baskets available to you for your special occasions. Various sizes are available. You may choose either to prepare the baskets yourself or to have the Social Action Committee purchase the contents and arrange and decorate the baskets.

You will be charged only for the contents of the baskets and the decorations (cellophane and bows).

If you would like us to prepare a basket or baskets for you, please notify us at least one month prior to the occasion.

You may reach us at UVJCSocAction@gmail.com or by calling Carolyn Gordon at 603-643-5895.

We hope very much that you will consider bimah baskets and help this lovely custom become a UVJC tradition.

There are many opportunities for donors 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.

June 2015 14 Sivan 5775 - 13 Tammuz 5775

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 14 SIVAN	2 15 SIVAN 12:00 p.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Boraz 1:30 p.m. Torah Study	3 16 SIVAN	4 17 SIVAN 12:00 p.m. Guide for the Perplexed	5 18 SIVAN 7:57 6:00 p.m. Hillel Shabbat Service - Dinner to follow - All are welcome	6 19 SIVAN Beha'alotecha 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Dianne and Gary Levine
7 20 SIVAN	8 21 SIVAN	9 22 SIVAN 12:00 p.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Boraz 1:30 p.m. Torah Study	10 23 SIVAN	11 24 SIVAN 12:00 p.m. Guide for the Perplexed	12 25 SIVAN 8:01 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service e	13 26 SIVAN Shelach 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Sharon and Bob Racusin
14 27 SIVAN	15 28 SIVAN	16 29 SIVAN	17 30 SIVAN Rosh Chodesh Tammuz - Day 1	18 1 TAMMUZ Rosh Chodesh Tammuz - Day 2	19 2 TAMMUZ 8:04 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service	20 3 TAMMUZ Korach 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Diane Roston
21 4 TAMMUZ	22 5 TAMMUZ	23 6 TAMMUZ	24 7 TAMMUZ	25 8 TAMMUZ	26 9 TAMMUZ 8:05 6:00 p.m. Hillel Shabbat Service - Dinner to follow - All are welcome	27 10 TAMMUZ Chukat 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Deb Kaplan
28 11 TAMMUZ	29 12 TAMMUZ	30 13 TAMMUZ 12:00 p.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Boraz 1:30 p.m. Torah Study				

July 2015

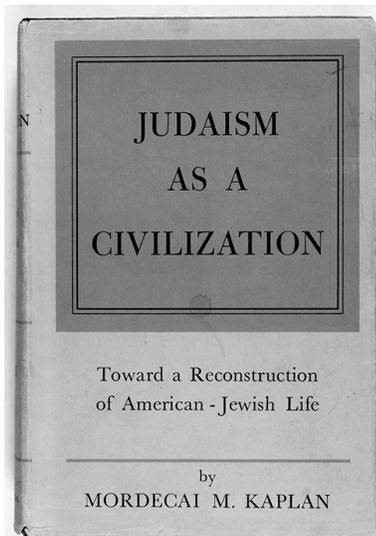
14 Tammuz 5775 - 15 Av 5775

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 14 TAMMUZ	2 15 TAMMUZ 12:00 p.m. Guide for the Perplexed	3 16 TAMMUZ 8:04 6:00 p.m. Hillel Shabbat Service - Dinner to follow - All are welcome	4 17 TAMMUZ Balak 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Jamielynn Garland
5 18 TAMMUZ Fast of the Seventeenth of Tammuz	6 19 TAMMUZ	7 20 TAMMUZ 12:00 p.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Boraz 1:30 p.m. Torah Study	8 21 TAMMUZ	9 22 TAMMUZ 12:00 p.m. Guide for the Perplexed	10 23 TAMMUZ 8:02 6:00 p.m. Hillel Shabbat Service - Dinner to follow - All are welcome	11 24 TAMMUZ Pinchas 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Charles Hacker in celebration of his son, Ivan becoming a Bar Mitzvah
12 25 TAMMUZ	13 26 TAMMUZ	14 27 TAMMUZ 12:00 p.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Boraz 1:30 p.m. Torah Study	15 28 TAMMUZ	16 29 TAMMUZ 12:00 p.m. Guide for the Perplexed	17 1 AV Rosh Chodesh Av 7:58 6:00 p.m. Hillel Shabbat Service - Dinner to follow - All are welcome	18 2 AV Matot - Masei 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Jeff Parsonnet
19 3 AV	20 4 AV	21 5 AV 12:00 p.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Boraz 1:30 p.m. Torah Study	22 6 AV	23 7 AV 12:00 p.m. Guide for the Perplexed	24 8 AV 7:52 6:00 p.m. Hillel Shabbat Service - Dinner to follow - All are welcome	25 9 AV Devarim 10:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Kiddush: Sheryl Lerner
26 10 AV Tisha B'Av 8:00 p.m. Tisha B'Av Service	27 11 AV	28 12 AV 12:00 p.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Boraz 1:30 p.m. Torah Study	29 13 AV	30 14 AV 12:00 p.m. Guide for the Perplexed	31 15 AV Tu B'Av 7:45 6:00 p.m. Hillel Shabbat Service - Dinner to follow - All are welcome	

Literature Lovers

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

SUNDAY, JUNE 28



Judaism As A Civilization

by Mordechai Kaplan

Mordechai Kaplan is the intellectual founder of Reconstructionist Judaism. *Judaism As A Civilization* was Kaplan's first major book, and it sets out his basic philosophy. While written eighty years ago, his language and argument are generally understood with ease. More importantly, his presentation of the problems modern Jews face is entirely contemporary. The challenges he discusses for Jewish communities are exactly the same challenges we discuss today. Members of the group may or may not agree with his critique of Orthodoxy and Reform Judaism, and they may reject his solutions, but the points Kaplan raises should make for a spirited discussion about who we are as Jews today and where our future lies.

~ UPPER VALLEY JEWISH COMMUNITY ~ 5775 ANNUAL DINNER

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Joshua Lev Silver Horowitz
Larry and Carla Silver and Family with gratitude to Dr. Eric Bronstein
for being the mohel at the bris of their grandson, Joshua Lev Silver Horowitz
Debra and Michael Gelband in loving memory of Michael Levine
– our father and grandfather
Maggie Duford in memory of her son, Chris Davidson
Debbe and Carey Callaghan in memory of Rabbi Boraz's mother, Helen Mae Boraz

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Helen Mae Boraz
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Debra and Michael Gelband in loving memory of Michael Levine
– our father and grandfather
Sharon and Jerome Smith – Sale of chametz
David Sobel Family in loving memory of Katherine Levenson,
beloved grandmother of Jennifer Sargent
and great-grandmother of Ben and Hannah Sobel
Arline Rotman in memory of her mother, Marion Schwartz

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in recognition of Gary Schwartz
receiving the Mishpacha Award

Yoni and Stephen Neirman
in recognition of
Jill and John Schiffman
receiving the Shem Tov Award



CALL TO ACTION: PROTECT ELDER SERVICES

UVJC Social Action Committee

The United Valley Interfaith Project has issued a call to action to its member congregations, including the UVJC, regarding the devastating cuts to non-Medicaid elder services in the NH House of Representatives' Budget. UVJC members—older adults within our own community—have directly benefited from each of the services that stand to be cut.

- **The House approved the elimination of ServiceLink.** ServiceLink is an aging and disability resource center that provides expert counseling to assist individuals to access the benefits of Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care, caregiver support, veterans' assistance, and the health exchange. In our region, ServiceLink assisted approximately 3,000 individuals on more than 7,000 occasions in 2014.

- **The House budget cuts in half the funding for such senior services as Meals on Wheels, congregate meals, home care, senior transportation, and more.** In our region, close to 130,000 Meals on Wheels were delivered last year to 750 frail adults, 78,000 senior center meals were served to more than 4,000 older adults, and more than 43,000 rides were provided to 1,000 older adults and adults with disabilities—those who no longer drive, don't own a vehicle, or need a lift-equipped vehicle for transportation because they use a wheelchair.

Over the years, UVJC members have benefited from ServiceLink counseling, have received "Meals on Wheels," have participated in programs and joined in meals at the senior center, and have utilized the senior bus to access medical appointments, the grocery store, volunteer assignments, exercise classes and activities at the Roth Center.

The state Senate will craft its own version of the budget (this stage may already be completed by the time this issue of the Connection reaches you). Then, a committee of conference will hammer out the differences, and the Governor will approve or veto the budget for the biennium July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2017.

We urge you to contact your Senator (town lists below), your representatives in the House, and Governor Hassan. Note that calls to their offices will be answered by an assistant who may or may not capture the full meaning of your call. Leaving voice mails on their personal phone is better, and the combination of an e-mail AND a phone message is the best of all.

Senator David Pierce (D) – represents Canaan, Charlestown, Claremont, Cornish, Enfield, Hanover, Lebanon, Lyme, and Plainfield.

office: david.pierce@leg.state.nh.us;

personal: NH.Sen.Pierce@gmail.com

office: (603) 271-3067; personal: 603-359-2878

Senator Jeanie Forrester (R), Chair, Finance Committee (the committee considering the budget!) – represents Alexandria, Ashland, Bridgewater, Bristol, Campton, Center Harbor, Danbury, Dorchester, Ellsworth, Grafton, Groton, Haverhill, Hebron, Hill, Holderness, Meredith, New Hampton, Orange, Orford, Piermont, Plymouth, Rumney, Sanbornton, Tilton, Warren, Wentworth, and Wilmot.

office: jeanieforrester@leg.state.nh.us;

personal: jeanieforrester.com

office: (603) 271-4980; personal: (603) 279-1459

Senator Gerald Little (R), Vice-Chair, Finance Committee (the committee considering the budget!) – represents Acworth, Antrim, Bennington, Bradford, Croydon, Deering, Frankestown, Goshen, Grantham, Hillsborough, Langdon, Lempster, Marlow, New London, Newbury, Newport, Springfield, Stoddard, Sunapee, Sutton, Unity, Washington, Weare, and Windsor.

office: Jerry.Little@leg.state.nh.us

office: (603) 271-4151; personal: (603) 660-2248

Governor Maggie Hassan (D), Office of the Governor, State House, 107 North Main Street, Concord, NH 03301; (603)271-2121; (603)271-7640 (fax)

To send e-mail, go to

<http://governor.nh.gov/contact/index.htm>

Representatives in the House

See

www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx

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<p>www.blueskyrestaurants.com</p>	



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