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## Galilee Diary: Hearing Torah

May 23, 2012 1 Comment by Rabbi Marc Rosenstein

On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone forth from the land of Egypt, on that very day, they entered the wilderness of Sinai. -Exodus 19:1

The holiday of Shavuot, as it is described in the Torah (Numbers 28:26) is a harvest festival, when "first fruits" are brought as an offering in the Temple. It has no historical referent, its timing was set according to the counting off of seven weeks from the second day of Pesach. However, the rabbis of the Talmud somehow (creatively, it seems) calculated that the date coincided with the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai, and so it took on the additional meaning of the holiday of the giving of the Torah and that is how it is described in the traditional liturgy.

In secular Israeli culture it is associated with the color white, with dairy foods, and with greenery: kindergarten children come to school the day before Shavuot dressed in white with crowns of leaves. A permutation of Mayday, I suspect. In any case, for those who don't go to synagogue, it is a day off, and the weather is usually conducive to excursions in nature or to the beach. The unexplained tradition of eating dairy foods has become a kind of obsession fueled by advertising. A generation ago, the kibbutz custom of holding a parade celebrating the first fruits of the fields (and of the plastics factories – and of the baby nursery) was well-known, and an attraction for city visitors. These still exist, but today are seen more as quaint than as a moving symbol of our return to the land.

The medieval custom, the "Tikkun Leyl Shavuot" – staying up all night to study Torah – has long been observed, mostly in Orthodox communities around the world, as a way of connecting with the Sinai component of the holiday. We spent a couple of years in Jerusalem in the 70s, and looked forward every year to the experience of wandering the city all night, tikkun-hopping until we got to the Western Wall in time for a sunrise service and then walked home to collapse. The density of religious communities and scholars in Jerusalem made that experience uniquely possible. There were enthusiastic conversations before and after, as people gave tips on where was cool and what had been boring (the recent Israeli

Continued on page 7.

## RABBI

**Louis Sutker**

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For rates and copy deadlines,  
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## WEBSITE

<http://www.kolotmayimreformtemple.com>

## From Rabbi Louis .....



It has been quite a ride this year!

The entire world was created and maintained. We humans were created and almost immediately did something to get us kicked out of a really posh situation but realized we had free will in the process.

Most living things were wiped out in a universal flood but enough survived to repopulate the world.

A couple named Abraham and Sarah realized there was only one Creator and not a whole bunch had changed how people viewed the world. They also became the ancestors of a group of people who became known as Hebrews/Children of Israel/Judeans (Jews).

These Jews eventually moved to Egypt to escape a famine but were made slaves when they became too populous and were perceived as a threat by the Egyptians. The Creator miraculously brought them out of Egypt under the leadership of a man named Moshe.

After 49 days of wandering the Creator revealed a set of binding rules in the middle of thunder and lightning on Mt. Sinai. These rules have governed our lives as a basic constitution ever since. Sometimes we forget them or choose to ignore them and have to deal with the consequences.

We lived in fragile huts. Now we wander for a while until we finally enter a land flowing with milk and honey. Two temples have yet to be destroyed. And these are just the highlights! And then it will start all over again.

The story is true for us as individuals, couples, families, nations, worlds. It is true as a lifetime or as history. It gives us perspective on where we are heading and how we are getting there. It provides clues to help us help each other on the journey.

What a ride! What a Story.

*rav Louis*



## President's Message

Hello Kolot Mayim Family,

Where has the year gone? We are into June now with the bi-monthly schedule for services to begin in another month. Although I was out of town when Rabbi Louis last led services, I have heard there was a full house that included some new faces. It's encouraging to see that our services continue to be well attended this year.

We look forward to seeing the musical duet, **Couscous** join **Rabbi Louis** for our next service on June 8th. Come and enjoy this joyful service which will be the last until Rabbi Louis returns in September for next year's High Holidays.

The sale of **potted mums for Mother's Day** went very well. We made a profit of almost \$350. Thanks to everyone who bought Mums and supported this fundraiser. Our gratitude goes out to Sharon and Jack Shalinsky who took on the responsibility for organizing it.

The Mother's Day Concert, **"Klezmer to Klassics"** was enjoyed by all who attended. I was away visiting family in Toronto so I couldn't attend but I've heard praise for the quality of the musicians who performed that night. Unfortunately, there was only a small number of people in attendance. Our community needs support from our membership to remain financially viable. Thanks to Reva Hutkin for organizing the Concert and to Julie Elizabeth and Pony Rainshadow for working so hard as Reva's able assistants. I appeal to our members to come out and support our fundraisers.

**Rabbi Louis and Charlotte Sutker's Open House for Shavuot** was well attended. We engaged in study of Torah as the holiday calls for. We focused on studying the Ten Commandments. Afterwards we indulged in sweets made with dairy. We were joined by a large group from Temple Emmanu-El where we had Part Two of the Torah study that went till 1:00 am. From there the group walked together to several other homes in the area where further Torah studies occurred, and which culminated back at the Sutker's home at 4:00 am in time for the sunrise.

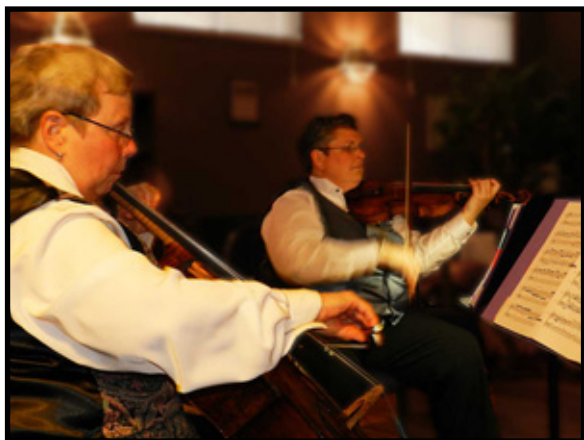
We have a tentative date set for our **Annual General Meeting** on Tuesday July 18th at 7:00 pm at the Jewish Community Centre. Everyone is welcome to attend and to speak about how they would like to see Kolot Mayim proceed into the next year.

L'shalom,

Neal







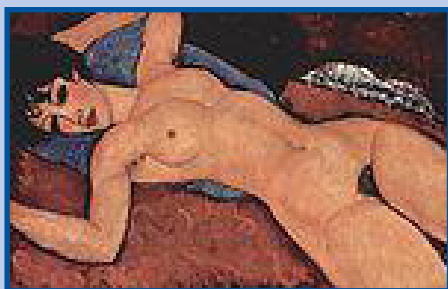
## Kolot Mayim Concert —an Artistic Success

On Saturday night, May 12<sup>th</sup>, a small but appreciative audience heard rousing performances from **Mary and David Lowther** of *Without a Net* (with the help of **Amber Woods** of *Kouskous*, on percussion), and **Heather Gatland** and **Ellen Himmer** of *Duo West*. We listened to Klezmer, Classics and hits from Broadway musicals. We ate, we drank we danced. We had a good time.

While we fell short of our fund-raising goals, we provided an entertaining evening to those who attended.

Kudos to **Reva Hutkin** who organized the event and to those who helped her put on a truly classy evening.

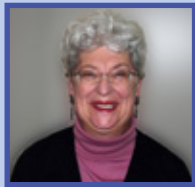
Thanks also to **Sharon Gillean Shalinsky** for the *Mums for Mums* tie-in to the concert. Many Victoria homes were enlivened by beautiful pots of flowers on Mother's Day.



## Jewish People Around the World

**FAMOUS JEWISH PAINTERS:** Amedeo Modigliani, born in 1884 into a Jewish family in Livorno, Italy, worked in France, in a figurative, unclassifiable style, characterized by mask-like faces and elongation of form; died penniless and destitute at the age of 35. In 2010 his painting of nudes series sold for \$68.9m at an auction in New York. Red Nude, 1917.

Thank you  
to  
Sandy Fagan  
for representing  
the Social Action Committee  
of Kolot Mayim  
on the  
Mitzvah Day Committee.



Our Community rose to the occasion  
by donating toys for six-year-olds and  
younger to Kiwanis House, a home for  
young, single women and their children.



## **Tzedakah: A way of life.**

### **Kolot Mayim Supports Food Bank**

Please bring food donations for the  
James Bay Community Project Food  
Bank to the JCC on Friday nights.

We have a beautiful box for your  
contributions, which are deeply  
appreciated. Packaged goods as well as  
produce are welcomed.

**Donations of cans of beans and  
soup are  
especially needed.**

For more information, please contact  
Reva Hutkin, 388-4161,  
or Ann Gougeon-Ryant, 384-9351.





## Chai חַי

### Donations received since the last newsletter:

In memory of **Marion Marks**  
- Arlette Baker

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

- Reva Hutkin

## Introducing the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

A recent crises in our congregation has acted as the catalyst to establish a **"Rabbi's Discretionary Fund"**. While some volunteers offered their time and manpower, others saw the need to put in place a financial resource that could be available not only to assist immediately, but also in the future.

Donations to this Fund are not counted as general income of the congregation; rather

these are monies which are directed to the Rabbi to perform acts of charity. Any disbursements are entirely his decision and are handled confidentially.

This Fund is reliant on the generosity of individual donors. It is not intended to be funded from the operating budget of the congregation. Donations may be made for many reasons — whether to honour joyous occasions or acknowledge solemn events. Donations will be recognized in **The Voice**, and are eligible for tax receipts.

As a matter of process, congregants should not lay out funds and expect reimbursement. Please feel free to privately discuss a need with the Rabbi, and he will determine whether he is able to offer assistance and in what manner.

Donations may be left in the Kolot Mayim (green) folder at the JCCV, or mailed to the attention of either Joe Gougeon-Ryant or Morris Bleviss at Kolot Mayim Reform Temple c/o the JCCV, 3636 Shelbourne Avenue, Victoria, BC V8P 4H2.

**Morris Bleviss**

Treasurer

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## The Victoria and Vancouver Island Jewish Burial Society

The Jewish Burial Society of Victoria and Vancouver Island is a service organization founded to assist all Jews with end of life requirements. We administer four totally separate and distinct sections in the Hatley Memorial Gardens and provide space for all persuasions of Jewish life from orthodox to secular, complete with cremation if specified.

The Society works with the Victoria Chevrah Kadisha in preparation of the body for burial, and works with the family in all ways to ensure that the concern and embrace of the entire community for the bereaved.

While we are a non profit Society, regretfully, end of life does not respect one's pocketbook, and costs are dear. There is a small membership charge that must be paid to become a member of our Society, and arrangements for this, and for burial requirements may be made at any time. We recommend dealing with one's self and saving the pain and expense of the survivors at a very stressful time.

The first stage of the beautification program is now complete. This consists of a network of paved pathways and a sign identifying the Jewish Community Section of the cemetery. In the very near future we hope to see a number of trees planted and a bench or benches placed. In the spring we hope to have a formal Service of Consecration at the cemetery, to which the whole of the Jewish community will be invited.

For additional information on a highly confidential basis, call Joel Fagan (250 477-2006), Jack Shalinsky (250 477-1012), or Michael Goldberg (250 598-9094).

June 2012  
Sivan-Tammuz 5772

THE VOICE

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Gallililee Diary, continued from page 1. movie "Footnote" has a scene making fun of this aspect of Jerusalem culture).

Since then, the tikkun has become a mass phenomenon all over the country, and the week before Shavuot is packed with pre-holiday tikkunim at community centers and schools, libraries and other institutions, enriched by musical performances and focusing on a broad variety of themes from the heavy to the light (the food, on the other hand, tends to be only heavy). Of course, one can criticize this fad for a certain amount of kitschiness and trivialization. However, it seems to me that it is a wonderful example of the way culture develops, sometimes in surprising directions. The belief that God indeed appeared on Mt. Sinai and revealed ten – or 613 – commandments is not exactly universally accepted by the participants in all these tikkunim. But that doesn't stop increasing numbers of us from gathering on the anniversary of that alleged revelation to explore together the rich tradition – Torah in the broadest sense – that somehow got started on that day. For the early 20th century pioneers, the return to agriculture was a kind of redemption, and so the restoration of the harvest festival was a powerful symbol. But just as in the rabbinic period the day took on a meaning connected to revelation, so too in modern Israel, the land itself has turned out to be not enough – many Israelis are seeking the spiritual and moral dimensions in their Jewish identity, and are taking advantage of the resources of the tradition in new-old ways to find them.

Originally published in Ten Minutes of Torah  
<[www.urj.org](http://www.urj.org)>



Mount Sinai

## JFVVI Hires New Executive Director

The Jewish Federation of Victoria and Vancouver Island (JFVVI) is pleased to announce the appointment of Mark Sholem Egan as Federation's new Executive Director. Mark replaces Tim Humphreys who retired from that position after 7 years of dedicated service to the Jewish Community on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.

In his role as Executive Director, Mark will be involved in all aspects of Federation activities, including organizing campaign events, being involved in general fundraising activities and assisting the campaign director with fundraising. He will also continue to provide Community outreach services, assistance and support to members of the Jewish Community and Jewish organizations on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. He will also be involved in event planning and will provide assistance and support to the Board of Directors of JFVVI.

Mark graduated from Boston University where he attained a Masters of Education degree in Community Organization. Mark also attended York, McGill, and Concordia Universities where he received various degrees and diplomas.

Mark brings considerable experience to his new role. He has served as Regional Manager of St. John Ambulance in Victoria, Regional Manager of the Alzheimer Society of BC, Communications Consultant in the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security and with Statistics Canada in varying roles. An experienced fundraiser and event planner, he has worked with many elements of society, building bridges within the general community utilizing his skills through teamwork, initiative and leadership. He has been successful in recruiting volunteers of note to become involved with the many organizations with which he has served.

Mark is also an experienced artist (having presented shows at the Fairmont Empress Hotel, Marina Restaurant, etc), art instructor and freelance writer. Mark was, amongst his other credentials, a member of the Board of Directors, Canadian Association of Gift Planners, Vancouver Island for several years.

Mark is functionally bilingual in French and Hebrew and is continuously working on his Yiddish.

Mark commenced his duties on May 1, 2012. He is very much looking forward to meeting with as many people as possible within our Jewish Community and offering to the members of the Community assistance and support within the mandate of Federation. Please join Federation in welcoming Mark to his new role.

**Hal Yacowar**

Chair, CDO Search Committee, JFVVI

### JCCV Newcomers' Group

If you are new to our fair city, and want to meet other Jewish people socially, give Joanne Helm a call at 778-426-2996, or email her at <helmj@shaw.ca>.





## Historic Decision in Israel: Rabbi Miri Gold Recognized by State

New York, May 29, 2012--- Israeli Reform Rabbi Miri Gold will be the first non-orthodox Rabbi to be paid by the State of Israel, under a ruling today by the Israel Attorney General. Rabbi Gold, who first heard the news on the radio said, "This is a big step for religious pluralism and democracy in Israel. Israeli Jews want religious alternatives and with this decision the State is starting to recognize this reality. There is more than one way to be Jewish, even in Israel."

"Miri's success is success for all of us. With patience and perseverance, we will build an inclusive democratic Israeli society," said Rabbi Daniel Allen, Executive Director of ARZA, the Reform Israel Fund. ARZA is the major American Reform Movement funder of the Israel Religious Action Center, an arm of the Israel Reform Movement, that brought the case to court six years ago. "Israel's Declaration of Independence guaranteed religious freedom, it has to be that this freedom is for all Israeli's, Jewish as well as Christian and Muslim. This decision brings us closer to the day where this will be the reality in Israel rather than the ideal."

"This is a watershed moment for the Reform Movement and for religious pluralism in Israel," stated President of the Union for Reform Judaism Rabbi Rick Jacobs. "Mazel tov to Rabbi Gold and the many activists who work so diligently to ensure the eventual and thorough embrace of liberal Judaism in Israel."

The ruling in this case follows other successes by the Israel Religious Action Center including the placement of a Reform Rabbi in Mevasseret on the Religious Council there, the finding that forced gender segregation on public transportation is discrimination and prohibited, and the allocation of pre-fab units to non-Orthodox congregations for synagogue buildings.

Rabbi Gold is also available for interviews. Contact Barbara Kavadias or Rabbi David Allen at ARZA for more information. 212.650.4280

ARZA, The Reform Israel Fund, is the Israel voice of the Reform Movement in the United States, and seeks to make Israel fundamental to the sacred lives and Jewish identities of Reform Jews. ARZA champions and supports activities that help build an inclusive and democratic Israeli society. Find out more at [www.arza.org](http://www.arza.org).



### Torah Study

**Saturday June 9th**  
at 4:00 pm

at the home of  
Rabbi Louis  
1135 McClure Street

**Everyone is welcome.**





June 2012  
Sivan-Tammuz 5772

THE VOICE

## Those we remember ...

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OBSERVED DATE	CIVIL DATE YEAR OF DEATH	HEBREW DATE YEAR OF DEATH	NAME	RELATIONSHIP	MOURNER
June 4, 2012	June 4, 1978	28 Iyar 5738	Helene Levy	Grandmother	Arlette Baker
June 5, 2012	June 5, 1971	12 Sivan 5731	Samuel Harbison	Father	Glenn Harbison
June 8, 2012	June 15, 1987	18 Sivan 5742	Ernie Ashford	Father	Murray Ashford
June 10, 2012	June 10, 2010	28 Sivan 5770	Leon Gueller	Father	Paulina Gueller
June 11, 2012	June 11, 1997	6 Iyar, 5757	Rachel Ruth Krasnick	Mother	Jeffrey Krasnick
June 13, 2012	June 13, 1992	12 Sivan 5752	Jack Pollick	Father	Frances Aknai
June 15, 2012	June 21, 2006	25 Sivan 5766	Sally Mintz	Mother	Ken Mintz
June 16, 2012	June 16, 1988	1 Tamuz 5748	Anne Magidman Simpson	Grandmother	Bill Katz
June 19, 2012	June 19, 2011	17 Sivan 5771	Gertie Cohen	Aunt	Reva Hutkin
June 21, 2012	June 21, 2007	5 Tamuz 5767	Marion Edith Kirk	Mother	Donna Kirk
June 23, 2012	June 23, 1977	25 Sivan 5736	Bertha Booth	Mother in Law	Len Jaffe
June 24, 2012	June 24, 1983	13 Tamuz 5743	James Munroe Donnenfield	Brother	Betty Cohen
June 26, 2012	June 26, 1989	23 Sivan 5749	Michael Kendal	Father	Alan Kendal
June 27, 2012	June 27, 1979	2 Tamuz 5739	Moses Katz	Father	Bill Katz
June 30, 2012	June 30, 1960	5 Tamuz 5720	Alice Spigelman	Mother-in-law	Phyllis Chuly
June 30, 2012	June 30, 2008	27 Sivan 5768	Louise Hawksford	Friend	Urania Levinson
June 30, 2012	June 30, 2011	28 Sivan 57671	Bunny Harrison	Friend	Caroline & Martin Hergt

June 2012

Sivan-Tammuz 5772

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	White squares indicate days Rabbi Sutker is with us.				7:30 Kabbalat Shabbat 1 11	Naso 2 12
3 12	4 14	5 15	6 16	7 17	7:30 Kabbalat Shabbat 8 18	Behaalotecha 9 19
10 20	11 21	12 22	13 23	14 24	7:30 Kabbalat Shabbat 15 25	Shlach 16 26
17 27	18 28	19 29	20 30	Rosh Chodesh 21 1 Tammuz	7:30 Kabbalat Shabbat 22 2	Korach 23 3
24 4	25 5	26 6	27 7	28 8	29 9	Chukat 30 10



## THE VICTORIA AND VANCOUVER ISLAND JEWISH BURIAL SOCIETY

### COMMUNITY DEDICATION

SUNDAY JUNE 3RD

We are delighted to announce that the Jewish Community Section of Hatley Memorial Gardens is set to formally dedicate the Jewish Community Section of Hatley Memorial Gardens on Sunday June 3rd, 2012 at 2:00 PM. This will occur at the cemetery. We hope you will join us to celebrate this significant milestone.

We are very proud of the work that has been done in beautifying our cemetery, and look forward to sharing this, and our future plans, with you. Please mark this event on your calendar. This occasion will allow past and present members of our Society, and others, to be publicly acknowledged for their fine efforts on behalf of the Jewish Community. Hatley Memorial Gardens is located at 2050 Sooke Rd, immediately across from Royal Roads University.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the dedication ceremony has been postponed until September 9th, 2012.

**Hillel Victoria** is now looking to fill their house with tenants for the summer.

There are several spots available. Usually they look for students only but if we know someone, personally, who is looking for a place for the summer, they will make exceptions based on our recommendations.

Please apply to:

**Rael Katz,**  
**Director, UVic Hillel**  
Vancouver Hillel Foundation  
4012 Dawnview Crescent  
Victoria, British Columbia  
V8N 5M8  
p: 250-298-7200  
e: [uvicdirector@vancouverhillel.ca](mailto:uvicdirector@vancouverhillel.ca)  
[www.vancouverhillel.ca](http://www.vancouverhillel.ca)

