



Congregation Ahavath Sholom

The Creative Spirit Dwells Here

THE CAS NEWSLETTER

April 2025

Upcoming services and events

Wednesday, April 2 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin via Zoom

Sunday, April 6 at 1:00 PM: Portrait Workshop with Ilene Spiewak

Wednesday, April 9 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin via Zoom

Friday, April 11 at 5:00 PM: Kabbalat Shabbat with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin

Sunday, April 13 at Noon-1:00 PM: Passover Second Night Seder Prep

Monday, April 14 at 5:00 PM: CAS Board Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, April 16 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin via Zoom

Monday, April 17 at 12:00 PM: Memoir Workshop with Barbara Janoff via Zoom

7:00 PM: Photography Workshop with Arthur Hillman via Zoom

Wednesday, April 23 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin via Zoom

Friday, April 25 at 5:00 PM: Kabbalat Shabbat with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin

Saturday, April 26 at 10:00 AM: Shabbat Study with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin

Sunday, April 27 at 2:00 PM: Karen Chase Book Talk

Wednesday, April 30 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin via Zoom

Note: Unless indicated, all services & events take place at the synagogue at 15 North Street, Great Barrington

This month's newsletter features:

Passover Cooking with Alison / Hamantaschen Baking with Rabbi Rudin

Poetry in Times of Crisis

Book Talk: Two Tales: Jamali Kamali and ZundelState

Portrait Painting Workshop with Ilene Spiewak

Widow's Log, the third in a series of writings by Barbara Janoff

Notes from the March Board Meeting

Save the date: The CAS May Gala: *The Catskills Comes to the Berkshires*

April Creative Arts Workshops

April Yahrzeits and Donations

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Passover Cooking with Alison Adams-Weinberg



Hamantaschen Baking with Rabbi Rudin



Poetry in Times of Crisis



Saturday, April 5 // 3 pm
Stockbridge Library, 46 Main Street

William Carlos Williams wrote, “It is difficult/to get the news from poems/though men die miserably every day/for lack/of what is found there.” What exactly do poets bring to the newsroom? In this symposium, four poets will explore current and past events that have preoccupied us including: war in the middle east, antisemitism and other forms of racism, the Covid epidemic, homophobia, global warming, and gun control. The participants are all widely published poets: Richard Michelson and Lesléa Newman (both from Northampton), Jayne Benjulian (West Stockbridge), and Owen Lewis (Stockbridge).



Jayne
Benjulian



Owen
Lewis



Lesléa
Newman



Richard
Michelson

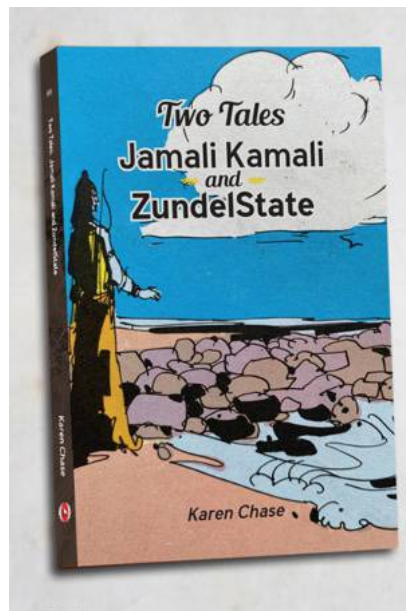
Book talk: *Two Tales: Jamali Kamali and ZundelState*

On Sunday, April 27 at 2:00 PM, in the synagogue, Karen Chase author of “Two Tales: Jamali Kamali and ZundelState” will be in conversation with Jayne Benjulian, author of *Five Sextillion Atoms*.

Two Tales: Jamali Kamali and ZundelState explores love and beauty in the context of fear and threats. *Jamali Kamali* is a book-length poem about two men who lived in sixteenth-century India and are buried together in a small tomb in Delhi. It is a fictional account of their love, separation, and death. *ZundelState*, a novella in verse, takes place a thousand years in the future in a repressive land where history is banned and dreaming has vanished. Joe, a lover of history, and Marianna, a State worker, fall in love against all odds. These two tales of outsiders, one from the distant past and the other from the far-off future, echo and reflect upon each other in surprising ways.

Jamali Kamali came out in India in 2011 but has never been published in North America. It continues to have a following in India and has been mistaken for the historical record. Here's an essay that came out last year about this.

<https://www.thecommononline.org/tag/jamali/>.



Karen Chase is the author of two collections of poems, *Kazimierz Square* and *BEAR*, as well as *Jamali-Kamali: A Tale of Passion in Mughal India*, a book-length homoerotic poem. Her award-winning book, *Land of Stone*, tells the story of her work with a silent young man in a psychiatric hospital where she was the hospital poet. In her memoir *Polio Boulevard*, Chase brings the reader back to the polio outbreak of the 1950s that crippled our country. In her lively sickbed she experiences puppy love, applies to the Barbizon School of Modeling, and dreams of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. *The Larocco Log: FDR on the Houseboat*, a project that grew directly out of her memoir, follows Franklin Delano Roosevelt during a Florida winter when he lived on a houseboat, attempting to regain use of his paralyzed legs. *History Is Embarrassing*, her collection of essays, was published in 2024. Karen Chase's poems, stories and essays have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New Republic*, *The Gettysburg Review* and *Southwest Review*, among others. Her poems have been anthologized in *The Norton Introduction to Poetry*, Andrei Codrescu's *An Exquisite Corpse Reader*, and Billy Collins' *Poetry 180*. Chase and her husband, the painter Paul Graubard, live in Lenox.

Jayne Benjulian has always been a writer. She grew up in suburban backyards near New York City and spent summers swimming in the Atlantic Ocean. Drawn to coastlines, she also lived on the West Coast—on an island, in a cabin in the hills and a house under the redwoods. She began writing as a young girl, leaving letters under the mattress to read years later and see who she had been. Her poems and essays appear in numerous journals, including *Agni*, *Barrow Street*, *Poet Lore*, *Nimrod International*, the online performance journal *HowlRound*, *Women's Review of Books* and *Poetry Daily*.

Jayne's careers have been as varied and many as places she has lived: she served as chief speechwriter at Apple; investigator for the public defender in King County, Washington; and director of new play development at Magic Theater. She was an Ossabaw Island Project Fellow; a teaching fellow at Emory University, where she earned an MA; a lecturer in the Graduate Program in Theater at San Francisco State University; and a Fulbright Teaching Fellow in Lyon, France. She holds an MFA from the Warren Wilson Program for Writers.

Admission to this event is free, but a donation to the congregation is always appreciated. Refreshments will be served.

Portrait Painting with Ilene Spiewak



The Portrait Painting Workshop offered by painter, educator, art therapist, and CAS board member Ilene Spiewak, originally scheduled for March 23rd, will take place on Sunday, April 6th at 1:00 PM. This studio painting workshop will take place in the upstairs reception space at the synagogue. Ilene volunteers her time for these unforgettable events!



Widow's Log, a series of writings by Barbara Janoff

[Barbara Janoff leads the very successful online CAS Memoir Workshop]

Moving On

For me, moving on does not mean abandoning what I've lived through. Bereavement is now a part of me and adds to my perspective, but I don't cling to grief or push it on everyone I meet. Over time, my identity as a widow has blended with other aspects of my life and personality. I've consciously sought wholeness and fought against indiscriminately stuffing the spaces left empty when Al died. Friends, counselling, and self-inquiry have helped, as has the passage of time.

Unrelieved, unprocessed grief--grief that is harbored--is not healthy. We who were left behind are supposed to live. Anyway, that's how I see it.

I can understand, though, people who hold on to their mourning. I think, at least in part, it's a reaction to our culture's suppression of grief displays. Our culture is riddled with unexpressed grief. It gnaws off its own limbs in futile attempts to disown this most basic part of our destiny.

Well, it can't be denied for long. It merely dislocates and crops up as rage, paranoia, and ruthlessness. Or numbness. Just look at us, so afraid of sadness. Let me tell you something--sadness doesn't kill when you acknowledge and respect it. Then you can move on.

November 15, 2011

Barbara Janoff

Notes from the March Board Meeting

- Upcoming services at the synagogue have been scheduled through June.
- The Board will plan a formal installation ceremony of Rabbi Jennifer Rudin, probably taking place during the summer.
- Rabbi Emerita Barbara Cohen is continuing to provide pastoral counseling services to members through the end of June.
- Membership dues collections are currently running ahead of last year's. The financial condition of the congregation is generally sound though major expenses, like a roof replacement, lie ahead.
- A sign acknowledging the support of the Katsh Family Foundation for upgrades to the synagogue has been placed in the kitchen.
- Jayne Benjulian and Dan Burkhard did a walk-through of the building with security consultant Andrew Hoffman. This will become the basis of a report that can be used later to apply for various grants.
- New date for the painting class is April 6th; enrollment is still open.
- Triplex Gala: Barrington Bagel will charge CAS \$20.00 for food; tickets will be available beginning March 16th and will cost \$118, with possible reductions for congregants who find this too expensive. The Committee also discussed publicity and specifics of the program for the evening.
- We need to consider security for upcoming events, including the Gala at the Triplex in May.
- The Board expressed its appreciation to Marie Rudden for writing the grant that supported the upgrade to the Memorial Board.

CAS Raise the Roof Gala: The Catskills Come to the Berkshires

On Monday, May 12, 2025, at 4 PM, our iconic 100-year-old synagogue, Congregation Ahavath Sholom, invites you to Great Barrington's Triplex Cinema to share in this historic restoration fundraiser and to bask in an afternoon of unforgettable sights, sounds, and tastes of the Catskills in the 1950s.

The event will feature an evocative screening of the documentary "The Catskills," by filmmaker Lex Gillespie. The Catskill Mountains in upstate New York or the "Borscht Belt", boomed with resort hotels and bungalow colonies, providing opportunities for all types of vacationers to escape the heat and crowding of urban areas. It was a haven for guests and performers excluded from many resorts at that time, including the most popular and up-and-coming Jewish and African American comedians and entertainers of the day.

The documentary will be followed by live entertainment by Michael Pizzi, founder of MPZ Productions, and accompanist Bob Shepherd, with a cameo singing appearance by Rabbi Emerita Barbara Cohen. A buffet of small bites, "a bissel the essen," Yiddish for 'something to eat,' catered by GB Bagel, will conclude the event. Ahavath Sholom's new permanent spiritual leader, Rabbi Jennifer Rudin, will emcee.



"The Catskills Come to the Berkshires"

Congregation Ahavath Sholom invites you to a Gala:

FILM: "The Catskills" a documentary film by Lex Gillespie

FUN: Live entertainment by Michael Pizzi & accompanist Bob Shepherd

FOOD: Small bites buffet by GB Bagel

MONDAY, MAY 12 AT 4:00 PM
The Triplex Cinema, Great Barrington

Raising funds for the preservation of 100 year-old historic synagogue
Tickets: Eventbrite
Information and donations: www.ahavathsholom.com



Congregation Ahavath Sholom (Love of Peace), still in its original home at 15 North Street, Great Barrington, MA, was purchased to house the members of the newly formed community in 1923 and is the longest synagogue building in continuous use in the Berkshires. The building's aesthetic, reminiscent of the disappearing late 19th-early 20th century Eastern European synagogue style, has been respectfully maintained over the years by careful repair and restoration.

Now in need of a new roof for its historic home, we hope to encourage the whole Berkshire community to attend this gala event by purchasing tickets at Eventbrite <https://thecatsskillscometotheberkshires.eventbrite.com>. For information and donations to contribute to 'raising the roof' and securing this treasured landmark for its next 100 years, please go to www.ahavathsholom.com or call 413 528 4197.

April Creative Arts Workshops

The next Memoir Writing Workshop is scheduled for Monday, April 21st at noon via Zoom. Shared readings and short writing exercises. Each of these sessions is stand-alone. Please RSVP to Barbara Janoff at bjanoff1@gmail.com. Suggested donation to CAS is \$10 to support our Creative Arts Programs.

Barbara Janoff Ph.D. is retired from the Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York in Manhattan, where she taught writing and literature. Her poetry and essays have appeared in a number of journals, including Communication Arts, Women's Work: The Journal of the Columbia College Women's Center and the Berkshire Review.



Photograph by 2-H Media on Unsplash

The next Photography Workshop will also take place on Monday, April 21st, but at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Participants in the workshop can submit any images they would like discussed, regardless of subject matter or content, using phone or camera. They can also share their screen with the group. These workshops are stand-alone sessions, open to all. Please RSVP to arthurhillman54@gmail.com. Suggested donation to CAS is \$10 to support our Creative Arts Programs.

Photographer and printmaker Arthur Hillman has been exhibiting his prints for more than 60 years. He has delivered a variety of lectures and presentations on photography and printmaking, juried many exhibits, and was a founding member of the Berkshire Photography Group. He is Professor Emeritus, Photography, Printmaking and Design, Bard College at Simon's Rock.



Photograph by Bill Barth from the CAS Photography Workshop

April Yahrzeits

“Much of our experience of divine goodness, grace and love has come to us through those whose lives have touched our own.”

	Hebrew Date	Gregorian Date	This Years Date
Raye Steiner Pozefsky	Nisan 4 5734	3/27/74	4/1
John Gellert	Nisan 06 5726	3/27/1966	4/4
John P. Hammond	Nisan 06 5763	4/8/2003	4/4
Muriel Budnick	Nisan 07 5773	3/18/2013	4/5
Irving Nathaniel Barth	Nisan 8 5743	3/22/1983	4/6
Edward Alec Weiner	Nisan 12 5766	4/10/2006	4/10
Edith Rosenberger	Nisan 12 5756	4/2/1996	4/10
Lotte Kunstler	Nisan 13 5772	4/5/2012	4/11
Harry Mullen	Nisan 14 5753	4/5/1993	4/12
Jean Kessman	Nisan 15 5759	4/1/1999	4/13
Mal Guralnick	Nisan 21 5779	4/26/2019	4/19
Irma Waller	Nisan 23 5761	4/16/2001	4/21
Irving Gross		4/24	4/24
Jack Osterweil	Nisan 30 5750	4/25/1990	4/28
Rose Clarin	Nisan 30 5741	5/4/1981	4/28
Julius Greenstein	Iyyar 2 5762	4/14/2002	4/30

April Donations

For the People's Pantry with thanks to Hevreh for the use of their kitchen
The CAS cooking class

In memory of Michael Sloane
Stephanie Sloane

In loving memory of my father, Edward A. Weiner
Keren Weiner

In memory of Martin Sagan, Stanley Clarin, and Irving Toporek
Carole Clarin

In honor and gratitude to our CAS committees and the people who never stop working to keep our synagogue running
Debbie Slater

In support of the Creative Arts Workshops
Ross Bettinger (Memoir Workshop)
Bruce Frishkoff (Memoir Workshop)
Linda Geffin (Memoir Workshop)
Arthur Hillman (Memoir Workshop)
Carol Killian (Memoir Workshop)
Stephanie Sloane (Memoir Writing)
Michele Waldman (Photography Workshop)

In support of the upcoming Gala and the "Raise the Roof" campaign

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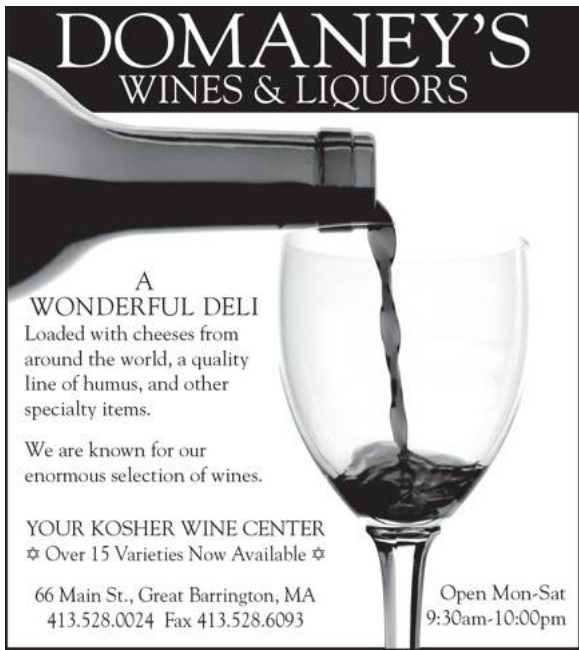
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