



# Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism  
15 North Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-4091  
New Web Address: [thoi.org](http://thoi.org)

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March 2005, Adar I/Adar II 5765

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## From the Rabbi's Desk

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,  
SHALOM!

There is a promise of spring in the air. I have even seen a few flowers peeping up, and we have had some lovely days (now, if we can just get through the last bits of ice and snow....)!

### **THE CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS**

We are heading towards the end of the month of Adar I. Rosh Chodesh (the new Month beginning) for Adar II will fall on March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

In March we also have two of the seven specially named Shabbatot (Sabbaths); Shabbat Shekalim (Sabbath of the Shekels - weights or coins) on which we read about the collection of the shekels for upkeep of the Temple; and Shabbat Zachor (Sabbath of Remembrance), on which we read about Amalek being recalled in order to wipe out its memory – preparation for Purim!).

The biggest item on the calendar in this month is PURIM, which is from sunset on the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> to sundown on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, which is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Adar II (Adar 14 in non-leap years). We will mark Purim in our Shabbat service at THOI on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and are scheduled to do so again on the 27<sup>th</sup> in the Religious School.

Purim is our version of carnival! Everything is done topsy-turvy: we poke fun at anything and anyone, we dress up in costumes, we do things in exaggerated and odd ways, and we have fun! Some people have the custom of drinking until they cannot tell the difference between Mordechai (Yeah!) and Haman (Booo!), but this is not universally accepted [it tends to be more of a college fraternity/Hillel practice ;-)]. Some people gamble or play games of chance as a way of recalling the use of lots or dice by Haman (Booo!) to select the date on which to kill the Jews. We also eat Hamantaschen, the three cornered filled cookies, as reminders of Haman's (Booo!) fancy hat. In Israel these are called Oznei Haman, Haman's ears! Take that, elephant ears!

The major mitzvah (commandment) for Purim is to hear the Megillah (as is said, der ganze megillah – the WHOLE megillah!). It has become the custom to drown out the name of Haman (Booo!) during the reading, which is why shouting, groggers (ratcheted noisemakers), stamping, horns, and the like are heard throughout during the story. It also helps the younger listeners pay attention all the way through!

The second mitzvah of Purim is to give Shalach Manot (the sending of portions). Usually, this is a basket of goodies sent to friends and family containing at least three kinds of foods (cookies – Hamantaschen most often, fruit, candy, and nuts are very common) and a greeting. The real mitzvah, to my mind, however, is the Shalach Manot we send to those who are in need as a form of Tzedakah (righteous action) and Gemilut Chasidim (deeds of loving kindness). This is a far more

## From the Rabbi's Desk

substantial collection, such as a large basket or a grocery bag, usually filled with staples and non-perishable foods that can be used for several meals, and sometimes even containing money. There are organizations that will collect money to prepare and distribute these baskets, but you can make them yourself and deliver them, or just give food or money to First Step or the Food Bank. The Shalach Manot are sent both to friends and to those in need so no one needs to feel embarrassed by receiving something as Tzedakah – we hope that everyone gets something!

*I strongly urge you to take this mitzvah seriously and make a particular effort to give at this time of year. All the major donations that were received at winter holiday time are long gone, and the need is still very much there. Purim is a way for us to use the holiday spirit to help bridge the gap for those who have too little.*

Directly related to Purim on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March is Ta'anit Ester (the Fast of Esther). On this day it is traditional to fast in remembrance of the three day fast that Esther took on in preparation for approaching King Achashveros. The fast is sunup to sundown. And just remember: you can break your fast with Hamantaschen! ;-)  
Yummmm!

The day after Purim is also a holiday (Bet you didn't know that!) called Shushan Purim. Because Shushan was a walled city, the messengers from the king were not admitted until the next morning because they arrived late in the evening after the gates were closed (for security). For that reason, the news did not get to Shushan for another whole day. We celebrate the delayed arrival by allowing that any walled city can have a second day celebration, thereby extending Purim an extra day!

Plan ahead: decide what you will dress up as this year. Queen Esther? Mordechai? Haman (Booo!)? The King? Vashti? Darth Vader? Groucho and Harpo? The cast of characters is as wide open as your imagination! I look forward to seeing you in your costume.

B'virkat shalom (with Blessings of Peace),  
Rabbi Joe Blair  
February 2005

## Office Hours

The Rabbi is generally in Staunton on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He's also generally in Harrisonburg on Mondays and Fridays. You may email or call for an appointment.

Email: [RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com](mailto:RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com)

Beth El Congregation 540-434-2744

Temple House of Israel 540-886-4091

Home [For emergencies only, please] 434-971-4741

## Contact Information

If you should hear or know of anyone who is ill or hospitalized or who might otherwise wish a visit or call, please leave a message on the telephone answering machine at the temple. Messages are checked frequently.

## Noteworthy Congregational News

- Mazel Tov to the whole congregation!!  
Rabbi Joe Blair has signed a three-year contract, extending his services to both Temple House of Israel and Beth El for another 3 years. Purely as an editorial comment, *that's wonderful news! Our Jewish community*

**Noteworthy  
Congregational  
News**

*is thriving with Rabbi Joe's leadership.*

- Mark your calendars: Our community **Passover Seder** will be held Saturday, **April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 pm**. Doug Degen has volunteered to chair this event – but he needs a co-chair. If you are interested in helping Doug, please call him direct at 886-8651. More details and a reservation form will follow in the April bulletin.
- Elana Brody will perform a 45-minute program of her original music– both piano and voice –on Saturday evening March 12<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 7:30 PM in the Temple Sanctuary. Elana has been composing musical poetry to sing with her piano since she was 13 years old. Her sound might be considered pop-folk, with sounds of the 60's and 70's Joni Mitchell, Carole King and Laura Nyro. A surprise guest will be the opening act. Come and enjoy! The admission of \$7 for adults and \$3 for students will go directly to benefit the temple.
- A corrected, updated and revised Temple Members and Friends list is included with this newsletter. Please let us know of any corrections at [templenews@ntelos.net](mailto:templenews@ntelos.net). Subsequent changes will be noted in the bulletin.
- The next **Temple board meeting** is on **March 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00** in the temple social hall. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Special Event**

Get ready for an evening of quiet music, tasty hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction and wine tasting at Congregational Beth Israel's O'Mansky Hall, 301 East Jefferson Street, Charlottesville. The event will be held on Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. A number of fine wines, all kosher for Passover, will be presented by the Market Street Wineshop. Order forms will be available to order wine for Passover. Some fabulous items have been donated for the silent auction, including two nights at a luxury inn in Lexington, two tickets to the Paramount Theater, a facial and massage at City Spa, and many more. Be sure not to miss it! Tickets are \$18 per person and will be available at the door. All proceeds benefit CBI Preschool. Additional donations are welcome. For more information, call (434) 295-6382.

**News of our  
Community**

- Our condolences to Lesley and David Novack on the death of both of Lesley's parents at the end of January.
- Rabbi Jonathan Biatch, with his wife Bonnie Margulis and children Samantha and Joshua, has accepted a pulpit in Madison, Wisconsin. We wish them the very best!

**Film Series**

Come view "**Rosenstrasse**" on **March 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00** in the social hall. The story tells of how a handful of unorganized Aryan women in 1943 held a spontaneous weeklong vigil outside the Jewish Community Center in the heart of Berlin where their Jewish husbands were being detained by the Nazis. The demonstration eventually coerced the Nazis to release the men. "A very good film" reviewed by Shirley and Rafael Brand.

**News from the  
Women's Group**

- We wish the following members and friends a HAPPY BIRTHDAY in March:  
 Laura Jean Brand on March 19<sup>th</sup>  
 Laurie Berman on March 28<sup>th</sup>  
 And HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to:

<p><b>News from the Women's Group</b></p>	<p>Asher and Laura Jean Brand on March 12<sup>th</sup> Mike and Bonnie Brown on March 23<sup>rd</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>next Women's Group meeting</b> will be <b>Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:00</b>. <i>We're open to new people and new ideas. No "membership" is necessary – just an interest in keeping our community connected. Please come join us!</i> We'll be talking about the bake sale and Passover duties as well as the last bits of the social hall renovations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adult Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next <u>monthly Torah study</u> at Beth El will take place on <u>March 18<sup>th</sup></u> at 6 pm. Once again, bring your own dinner, eat and join in as we discuss the Torah portion. This event is also planned for April 15<sup>th</sup>, and May 9<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>• A <u>weekly Torah study</u> meets on Thursdays (except the first Thursday of the month) at noon at THOI. All congregants are welcome to drop in and take part.</li> <li>• The <u>Jewish Lecture Series</u> continues on Sunday evenings from 7 to 8:30 pm, usually on the third Sunday of the month. Come to any or all, and if you have suggestions for topics, please feel free to tell the Rabbi.        March 20<sup>th</sup> @ Beth El - Jewish Lifecycle: Liturgy and Practice        April 17<sup>th</sup> @ THOI - Passover: Ritual and Rules</li> <li>• The Adult B'nai Mitzvah class has shifted into a more individual mode for those who are participating. If you are interested in pursuing this goal, please speak to the Rabbi. The lead-time to accomplish this milestone is anywhere from a minimum of a year upwards, depending on your free time, flexibility and knowledge base. It is a very significant undertaking, and certainly worthy of celebrating and acknowledging when it is reached!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Youth Group SHORTY</b></p>	<p>Shorty, our Youth Group, is a separate program from the Confirmation Class, but most of those involved are in both programs. More information on the Youth Group will come from Sherri Alt, their advisor, but I want to let you know that we have three members who attended the NATIONAL NFTY Convention in Los Angeles, thanks to all of you who donated towards this major milestone. Even better, we have at least four of our members attending THEVENT, a NFTY Kallah in Falls Church in early March! Kol hakavod (all honor) to Sherri and the members of our Youth group for their ruach (Spirit)! <b>Please note the change of meeting times:</b> Our next meeting is <u>February 27<sup>th</sup> at BE</u> and the one following that is <u>March 13<sup>th</sup> at BE</u></p>
<p><b>Confirmation Class</b></p>	<p>The culmination that I envision of this several year-long program of continuing Jewish education is Confirmation – a celebration of the full Adult status and ongoing Jewish learning of the participants at the end of their High School careers, as they prepare to go off as adults. This year we anticipate celebrating this milestone for Gabie Kalman and Eli Giovanetti at the Shavuot Shabbat service on June 10<sup>rd</sup> at Beth El.</p> <p>We will also be welcoming the incoming class of Confirmation students (those having their B'nai Mitzvah this year) at our YOUTH Service, led by them and all the current Confirmation class members on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at THOI, perhaps to be followed by a Cosmic bowling and Shul-in (stay tuned for more details)! I encourage you to hold those dates and attend both of these wonderful events. I know that you will join me in kvelling (filling with pride and joy).</p>

<b>Judaica Shop</b>	Thanks for supporting the Judaica shop! If you have any suggestions for inventory please call Dianne Mason at 885-6254.																																							
<b>Staunton Book Group</b>	Our March selection is a book that has fired Leah's imagination. We'll read <u>The Slave</u> by Isaac Bashevis Singer. The sharing of books that affect us, many by Jewish writers, is a wonderful experience. Two or more gathered together, entertaining different opinions, opening horizons – aren't books amazing? Please join us with your insights on <b>Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30</b> . We'll meet at Dianne Mason's home, 1805 Orange Street in Staunton. Call Dianne at 885-6254 for directions.																																							
<b>Notes from the Editor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please note our new website: <a href="http://thoi.org">thoi.org</a>. We no longer need to go through the reform movement's site address. Quick and easy –so check it out! Thank you to Marcia Conner for doing all that was necessary to accomplish this.</li> <li>• The deadline for each issue is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. (April's bulletin will go to press on March 20<sup>th</sup>.) Your suggestions are welcome!</li> </ul>																																							
<b>Donations</b>	<p>We gratefully acknowledge and thank these generous members and friends who have given to the Temple during the past month:</p> <p>To the social hall building fund.....Doug and Martha Degen  General Donation ..... Ken Schwartz</p>																																							
<b>Yahrzeits for March</b>	Louis Cohen Louis Cohen, Jr. Rose Weckler Freiburger Emanuel Gutnick Irving L. Janus Irving Kamerman Joseph Kamerman Leah Kamerman	Annie Kaplan Klotz Abraham Kreitzer Abraham Levin Adrian Neuman Harry Raskin Moses Rosenthal Rebecca Rosenthal	Regina Ruttenberg Ralph Aaron Seltzer Albert Laub Shultz Sophie K. Strauss Irving Waxman C. Herman Weinberg Samuel I. Zeldin																																					
<b>Temple Contacts</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Rabbi</td> <td>Joe Blair</td> <td>886-4091 or rabbioeb@hotmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>President</td> <td>Rafael Brand</td> <td>949-0529 or rafa@ntelos.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>V. P. - Membership</td> <td>Paul Klein</td> <td>396-6169 or mediamat@ntelos.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>V. P. – Bldgs. Grds.</td> <td>Michael Brown</td> <td>885-3809 or mcbrown@uaix.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secretary</td> <td>Ruth Chodrow</td> <td>886-2252 or rchodrow@ntelos.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Treasurer</td> <td>Laura Jean Brand</td> <td>942-3656 or ljvp@adelphia.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Director at large</td> <td>Lisa Solod</td> <td>463-7637 or lisa@rockbridge.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Past President</td> <td>Doug Degen</td> <td>886-8651 or wkdegen@aol.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Trustees</td> <td>Ralph Degen</td> <td>886-5434</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alan Goldenberg</td> <td>adg1221@aol.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Richard Young</td> <td>885-1481</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bulletin Editor</td> <td>Beth Young</td> <td>885-1481 or templenews@ntelos.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bulletin Circulation</td> <td>A.J. Hartung</td> <td>337-6836</td> </tr> </table>			Rabbi	Joe Blair	886-4091 or rabbioeb@hotmail.com	President	Rafael Brand	949-0529 or rafa@ntelos.com	V. P. - Membership	Paul Klein	396-6169 or mediamat@ntelos.net	V. P. – Bldgs. Grds.	Michael Brown	885-3809 or mcbrown@uaix.net	Secretary	Ruth Chodrow	886-2252 or rchodrow@ntelos.net	Treasurer	Laura Jean Brand	942-3656 or ljvp@adelphia.net	Director at large	Lisa Solod	463-7637 or lisa@rockbridge.net	Past President	Doug Degen	886-8651 or wkdegen@aol.com	Trustees	Ralph Degen	886-5434	Alan Goldenberg	adg1221@aol.com	Richard Young	885-1481	Bulletin Editor	Beth Young	885-1481 or templenews@ntelos.net	Bulletin Circulation	A.J. Hartung	337-6836
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<b>March</b>		1 Rabbi's office day	2	3 Rabbi's office day ; Hebrew 7-8:30 pm	4 RS Shabbat @ BE	5 Bat Mitzvah of Samantha Miller 10:00 am @ THOI
6 Film Series: "Rosenstrasse" 7:00 pm	7	8 Rabbi's office day	9	10 Rabbi's office day; Torah study noon; Hebrew 7-8:30 pm	11 Shabbat Services at 7:30	12 Elana Brody performance at 7:30 pm
13 Youth Group & Confirmation 1:00 pm @ BE	14	15 Rabbi's office day	16	17 Rabbi's office day; Torah study noon; Hebrew 7-8:30 pm	18	19
20 Women's Group @ 2:00 Lecture / Liturgy & Practice 7-8:30 @ BE	21	22 Rabbi's office day	23 Book Club at 7:00 at Dianne Mason's home	24 Rabbi's office day: Torah study noon Board Meet @ 7:00	25 Shabbat Services & Purim at 7:30	26
27 Purim Carnival @ BE	28					

Mar 1	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Mar 3	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Hebrew 7-8:30 pm
Mar 5	Bat Mitzvah of Samantha Miller at 10:00 AM at THOI
Mar 6	Film Series: "Rosenstrasse" at 7:00 pm
Mar 8	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Mar 10	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome! Hebrew 7-8:30 pm
Mar 11	Shabbat Services at 7:30 - Martha & Doug Degen 886-8651 hosts
Mar 13	Youth Group and Confirmation at Beth El at 1:00 pm
Mar 15	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Mar 17	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome! Hebrew 7-8:30 pm
Mar 20	Women's Group at 2:00 pm; Lecture Series: Liturgy & Practice 7:00-8:30 pm @ BE
Mar 22	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Mar 23	Book Club at 7:00 at Dianne Mason's home: "The Slave" by Isaac Bashevis Singer
Mar 24	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome! Temple Board Meeting at 7:00 pm
Mar 25	Shabbat Services and PURIM at 7:30 – Sue Johnsen and Lynn Hewitt 377-6704 hosts