

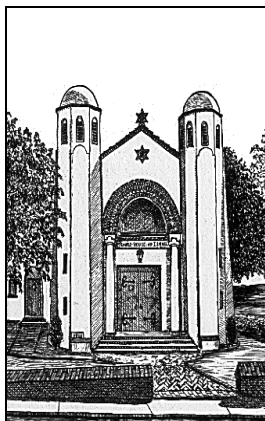
Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism
15 North Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-4091
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1412, Staunton VA 24402

www.thoi.org

Our mission is to perpetuate Jewish life and identity through a welcoming community of spirituality, learning, service, joy and worship.

April 2009, Nisan/Iyar 5769



Staunton Jewish Film Festival

Staunton Jewish Film Festival is on April 3rd, 4th, and 5th. The opening reception will be at THOI on Friday. All screenings of the films will be at the *Visulite Cinemas* in downtown Staunton, VA. There are two films to be shown on Friday, and four each on Saturday and Sunday. There will be two opportunities to see each film during the weekend. There will be a speaker or presenter at one of the two showings of each of the films. Tickets are available at the *Visulite Cinemas*. The cost is \$10 for a single film, \$45 for a Festival Pass. There is also a group rate discount for purchases of more than ten Festival Passes.

This will be the second annual festival. This is an opportunity for our tiny Jewish community to connect with others in the region, to raise our profile and present ourselves in a positive light. This is truly, as this year's theme states, the process of 'Bridging Gaps.' We need to make a strong showing in attendance (please buy a Festival pass), there is also a need for help with the opening reception; food, welcoming people into the synagogue, and making new friends in the community, letting others know that we are here and a contributing part of the larger community. Contact Laurie Berman and Beth Young to volunteer. See the enclosed flyer or online www.thoi.org/stauntonjewishfilmfest/index.html.

From The Rabbi

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,

Shalom!

I write this as it is rainy, damp and cold, but we have already had several lovely days that promise spring is almost here. The frolics of Purim have passed, and Passover is just ahead. Our world is moving towards renewal, spring, rebirth, and redemption.

I have been feeling a bit like the white rabbit, recently. I feel that I am constantly in a rush to get places and do things, and always behind. We are having so many events, activities, and programs, that I have been finding it hard to keep track of it all.

In addition to all the regularly scheduled services, holiday events, religious school activities, Shorty programs, Men's Club and Sisterhood events, Tzedakah and Gemilut Chasidim efforts, meetings, tutoring sessions and classes, we have been immersed in the *Shenandoah Valley Holocaust Education Project*. Let me tell you, we have made a big splash with this!

In addition, there has been a lot of time and effort invested in the *Staunton Jewish Film Festival*. Both of these events are aimed at the larger community, with the intent of building bridges, encouraging relationships, and offering education, all to foster greater understanding, acceptance, and cooperation among the varied groups, and their members, in our region.

Self-assessment Project

To keep you up to date: progress has been slightly slowed by the activities of the past

two months, but we are moving ahead. When you are asked, please agree to take part in one of the discussions, and give us feedback. It is for the good of our community and congregation; we truly need your help to do the best we can.

Upcoming Events

As part of the *Shenandoah Valley Holocaust Education Project* we have arranged a teacher training workshop on teaching the Holocaust in connection with cultural diversity, addressing intolerance, prejudice, and genocide in historical and contemporary contexts. We hope to present this ADL designed and led three hour workshop on two occasions, and to be able to offer continuing education credits through Mary Baldwin to those attending. The session will take place on April 4th at 10 am to 2:15 pm, and offer continuing education credits for teachers. The program is free. For more information please contact Katharine Gorsuch at 817-781-9229. To learn more about the offering, please contact D. Goldberg at her office at the ADL at 202-296-8310, or Steve Grande at the Spencer Center for Civic Engagement at Mary Baldwin College.

On April 8th at 6 pm at Temple House of Israel, we will have the community seder for Passover (first night). Reservations are due to Sarah Grove Humphries sarahgh@verizon.net, 540-885-4223 by March 30th.

Rabbi-led Shabbat services at THOI will be April 10th and 24th at 7:30 pm. For the service on the 24th at THOI, the following announcement/invitation has been issued: Belle Carson Neckowitz, daughter of Aaron and Rachael, and granddaughter of Alan and Kate, will be named during the Friday service on April 24, at 7:30 p.m., at Temple House of Israel in Staunton. All are welcome to share in our celebration. An Oneg Shabbat will follow the service.

May 2nd there will be a small congregations Kallah for the day in Richmond at Congregation Or Ami. Speak to Beth or Rabbi Joe about details.

Sometime in May, if we can find a time, we hope to schedule a trip to the Richmond Holocaust Museum as another event in the SVHEP. We can tour the museum with a docent, and arrange a meeting with one of the founders of that museum who is a Holocaust Survivor, and who will share his story with us. This would be a day trip, probably caravanning. Let Rabbi Joe know if you would be interested ASAP.

Conversation with the Rabbi

If you feel a conversation with the rabbi on any topic would be of benefit to you, please be in touch to make an appointment. You can call or email Rabbi Joe.

Service Participation

Please know that we always seek congregant and guest participation in services throughout the year. If you are interested in taking a role in a service, please be in touch with Rabbi Joe, Beth Young, Don Chodrow, Leah Farmer, or Lisa Warren. Roles include: reading Torah (Hebrew or English), reading Haftarah (Hebrew or English), delivering a Devar Torah, serving as Gabbai (the “MC” for the Torah service), or being offered an honor in the service. The Honors we usually confer in our services include being called up for an Aliyah (saying the blessings for the Torah or the Haftarah reading in Hebrew or English), serving as Hagbah (lift, hold, and/or carry the Torah), Gelilah (undressing and dressing the Torah), or Petichah Usegurah (opening and closing the Ark).

Of course, if you are interested in studying for and celebrating a B’nai Mitzvah, or in learning to leyn (read/chant) Torah and/or Haftarah, or to lead services, or to be a Gabbai, please be in touch with the rabbi. Both youngsters and adults can celebrate a B’nai Mitzvah.

	<p>In Closing</p> <p>May the improving weather, the budding trees, and the blooms of spring be harbingers of joy for all of us. May we each be gladdened by the renewal that we see around us. May we find the courage and the wisdom to live as our highest selves. May the joy of our celebration of holidays and lifecycle events be multiplied, and our sorrows be made less by those around us who share them. May we be blessed, and granted the privilege to live in health and in joy, with love. May our prayers be answered. Amen</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Rabbi Joe Blair</i></p>
<p>President's Notes</p>	<p>Dear Members and Friends,</p> <p>Come support the temple! Buy your tickets now for our <i>Staunton Jewish Film Festival – Bridging Gaps</i> and bring your friends to the movies</p> <p>Many thanks to the previewers who watched umpteen DVDs: Lou Boden, Shirley Brand, Janet Brody, and AJ Hartung; to Laurie Berman for the film contacts and pr releases, to Marsha Pillet for all of our graphics, to Marcia Connor for updating our website, to Rachel Peretz Comes for marketing, to Judy Liss, Jan Kaufman and Grace Kolman for distributing posters, to Lisa Warren for arranging the opening night reception and to Ruth Chodrow and Paul Klein for leading tours of the temple. A big thank you to Rabbi Joe, our fearless leader.</p> <p>Please join us for our Community Passover Seder on Wednesday, April 8th at 6 pm. We'll read the haggadah, sing songs, eat matza, drink at least 4 glasses of wine and enjoy a wonderful meal together. Reservation forms were included in the March bulletin and need to be made with Sarah Grove Humphries at sarahgh@verizon.net by March 30th. We'll welcome everyone.</p> <p>Our little congregation is a busy community and I do hope you'll be a part of all of our activities. And then take time to get outside and enjoy spring!</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Shalom, <i>Beth</i></p>

<p>Shenandoah Valley Holocaust Education Project</p>	<p>The SVHEP is another project that has as its’ goal an impact in the larger community. The focus is not to teach about the Holocaust for its’ own sake; rather, it is to teach about the Holocaust in order to learn the lessons that we should have drawn from it, and which we should be acting on today.</p> <p>Collectively, we believe that we can help those we reach with these programs to learn from the horrors and mistakes of the past, in order to avoid them in the present or future. Through education, we believe that all may grow in understanding of each other, and accept our similarities, differences, and diversity without fear, hate, or prejudice. In this way, we can each fight intolerance, bigotry, and indifference in our community and in the world.</p> <p>The SVHEP is the result of a consortium of congregations, private and public schools (elementary, middle, & secondary), colleges and universities, organizations, associations, foundations, agencies, and individuals, together bringing into existence the Shenandoah Valley Holocaust Education Project, under the umbrella of the Foundation for Holocaust Education Projects. You may contact the foundation at HolocaustEducationProjects@gmail.com; officers: Founding Director & Creative Executive Director Katharine Gorsuch, 817-781-9229; Avi Mizrachi, Executive Director, Holocaust Memorial, Greater Miami Jewish Federation, 1933-1945 Meridian Ave., Miami Beach, FL 33139 305-538-1663; Rabbi Joe Blair, Temple House of Israel, 15 N. Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 540-886-4091.</p> <p>As part of the SVHEP, we have had speakers, plays, museum visits, films, lectures, teacher trainings, and other events. Although the starting point for many of the stories and events that are presented is terrible and tragic, we are striving to show the triumph of the human spirit, the power of good, and the human ability to seek and find hope and possibility in even the most horrific of conditions.</p> <p>The SVHEP has not only brought programs to the general public. In addition, we are working with schools and teachers to offer students an opportunity to make the curriculum they study relating to the Holocaust real. Using technology now available, we have facilitated direct interactions between students and survivors, allowing the students to ask questions and develop a much more personal connection to the lessons that they are studying as part of the curriculum. Hearing a story told firsthand by someone who lived it is far more impactful than reading an account in a textbook. We have been able to bring some of the survivors to the area. The teachers in the schools have been wonderfully creative and used these opportunities to enhance what they are doing in the classroom, bringing it home to the students by showing ties to bullying and other experiences they can easily relate. It has been inspiring to see these students ‘get it’ and to become passionate about what they are studying, understanding their relevance to the world right now, with direct applicability to the situations in the Sudan, Chad, Rwanda, Tibet, Chechnya, and Kurdistan.</p> <p>We started the SVHEP two years ago with one program in March, and one in November. Last year we had nine events (most open to the public) over the course of a week, and three sponsoring organizations. This year, we have more than twenty events open to the public, and almost as many in various schools and colleges that are by invitation only, spanning the period from late-February to the end of May, including seventeen sponsors at last count. In the first year, we had a total attendance of approximately 230 persons. This year, we anticipate over 1200.</p>								
<p>Celebrating Birthdays</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Eva Blair on April 4th</td> <td>Rabbi Joe Blair on April 13th</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kelli Lynn Goldenberg on the 6th</td> <td>Rafael Brand celebrating on the 14th</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Martha Degen on the 7th</td> <td>Sara Blair on the 19th</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amy Goldenberg Fox also on the 7th</td> <td>Vicki Goldenberg on the 21st</td> </tr> </table>	Eva Blair on April 4 th	Rabbi Joe Blair on April 13 th	Kelli Lynn Goldenberg on the 6 th	Rafael Brand celebrating on the 14 th	Martha Degen on the 7 th	Sara Blair on the 19 th	Amy Goldenberg Fox also on the 7 th	Vicki Goldenberg on the 21 st
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Refuah Shelemah	REFUAH SHELEMAH BIMHEYRAH (Speedy & Complete Health and Wholeness) We extend continuing wishes for healing and shalem (wholeness) to: Natasha Benenson; Rafael Brand; Shirley Brand; Pauline Drucker; Steve Guberman; Barry Kolman; Grace Kolman; Lynne Landsberg; Claire Lerner; Betty Menaker; Dan Schorsch; Margie Schwartz; Crys Sragovitz; Fredi Solod; Jay Solod; Rosalie Waterman's aunt; Nancy Witt; and everyone else who should be included.
Torah Parashiot	<p>Torah parashiot (Torah portions) read for the period covered by this newsletter include the following: April 2009 Tzav; Chol Hamo'ed Pesach; Shemini; and Tazria-Metzora, drawn from Vayikra (Leviticus) 6:1-15:33, plus Shemot (Exodus) 33:12-34:26 and Bamidbar (Numbers) 28:19-25 as a special reading for the intermediate Shabbat on the first day of Passover. This year, in order to fit all fifty-four of the weekly parashiot (sections of the Torah) into the calendar, we combine the two readings of Tazria and Metzora into a single week.</p> <p>There are special Shabbatot (Sabbaths) throughout the month. April 4th is known as Shabbat Hagadol, the Great Sabbath, the one that precedes Pesach. April 11th is the special Shabbat in the midst of the holiday of Passover. April 18th is Bircat Hachodesh, the Sabbath when we announce the arrival of the new month in the coming week (Iyar will begin on the 25th, with Rosh Chodesh on the 24th and 25th). April 25th is Rosh Chodesh, the head of the month, or the beginning of the new month.</p> <p>Haftarot (selections from the Prophets) read on Shabbatot (Sabbaths) in this month include selections from Malachi 3; Joshua 3, 5-6; 2 Samuel 6-7; and Isaiah 66.</p>
Appreciation	TODAH RABAH to all who have worked so hard on the events of the SVHEP, the SJFF, our Religious Services, music, social events, adult education, and so many other things in our community. Your efforts are noted and very much appreciated, and truly make a difference in our small community!
Judaica Shop	Passover items are on sale at the temple. Please contact Natasha Benenson at 540-886-1157 or judaica@thoi.org to schedule an appointment or a special request.
Women's Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to Gail Bruscoe and Rosalie Waterman for managing the Saturday Oneg Shabbat Luncheon. • Interested in a temple mitzvah spring clean day up for the garden and grounds? Contact Marsha 540-249 4946. • Look for our next meeting date to be posted by e-mail and/or phone. • Interested in helping with the Women's Group Spring Shabbat Dinner, May 8th? Contact Bonnie Brown, 885-3809.
Oneg Reminder	<p>According to the master schedule, the following people have oneg responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 10 Linda Blazer 540-885-5670 and Nancy Witt 540-943-9488 • April 24 Ellen & Dan Schorsch 540-942-3149 and Paul Klein 540-396-6169

Yahrzeits	Herman Barber Ella Barth David Bishop Sim Brand Alfred Brettner Evelyn Brettner Isadore Cohen Walter Cohen Samuel Duken Ralph Degen	David Gelber Morris Guberman Nathan Greenspan Hyman Blazer Louis Harris Jacob Klotz Sylvia Kramer Joseph Masinkoff Joann Neuman Arthur Printz	Esna Roth Maurice Siegel Holly Singer Irving Singer Henry Switzer Sophie Switzer Philip Schwartz Harold Shapiro Jack Witt
The Calendar & Holidays	<p>NISAN > IYAR (April)</p> <p>Adar began February 25th and ran until March 25th. The 26th of March was Rosh Chodesh for Nisan, which runs from March 26th until the 24th of April, with the 26th of March being Rosh Chodesh (head of the month) for Nisan, and April 24th and 25th being Rosh Chodesh for Iyar.</p> <p>In the month of Nisan, the major holiday is Pesach (Passover) which falls on the 8th to the 16th of April, from 15 Nisan to 22 Nisan.</p> <p>In addition, there are several days that surround Pesach that have customs that are observed.</p> <p>The day of the 8th of April is Nisan 14, Erev Pesach (the eve of Passover), and a very busy day. Not only are we deeply immersed in preparations for the seder: that is the day on which falls the Fast of the Firstborn. This is in commemoration of the 10th plague, the death of the firstborn males. It is a sunup to sundown fast. This is somewhat convenient, as one is not supposed to eat leavened materials after about 10 am, and one is also not supposed to eat Matzah until they taste it as part of the Seder meal. There is another custom that supercedes this; if someone completes a major study of Torah, they are obligated to engage in a Seudah – a festive meal. This is a commandment, which makes it a higher obligation than the custom of fasting in commemoration of the death of the firstborn. Thus, it has become the custom that anyone who is involved at the completion of the study is included in this meal. Consequently, many firstborn men will gather and participate in a study session in the morning as one of them completes the major study; that obliges all of those present to eat as part of the Seudat Mitzvah (festive meal in honor of a Mitzvah or commandment). Once one has eaten, it cannot be a fast day, so the obligation to fast is eliminated for those present at the study session.</p> <p>That same day is also the day when one is to complete the cleaning of their home and possessions, removing and disposing of any chametz (leavened material). There is a lovely custom of searching the night before, and again on that morning, for any chametz, using a candle to look in ‘dark corners,’ a feather to sweep up ‘crumbs,’ and a wooden spoon to carry the crumbs or pieces found. After the whole house has been searched and all chametz removed, the crumbs and bits found are to be burned as a symbol for all chametz, as the prayer renouncing ownership of chametz is recited. It has become common to leave some chametz to be found, so the search is not fruitless. This custom is spiritually quite beautiful, because one can see the chametz not only as the leavened food stuff in their pantry or on their shelves, but as symbolizing and representing those parts of our behaviors and habits that we wish to eliminate, to rid from ourselves. In this way, we tie Pesach with Rosh Hashanah, the New Year, when we have the ceremony of Tashlich (casting), in which we toss bread crumbs into the water, symbolizing the removal and disposal of actions and behaviors (sins and transgressions) that we do not wish to repeat. So at the beginning and in the middle of the year, we return to the theme of examining and cleansing ourselves and correcting our behaviors. This sense of the cycle of the year, and the themes that repeat throughout, adds a deeper</p>		

	<p>meaning and a more powerful connection to the various events and rituals that we are commemorating and performing.</p> <p>I am sure it will come as no surprise that one is to neither eat, own, nor benefit from any chametz during Passover. That means matzah, the bread of our affliction, is the staple. Chametz can be made of any of the five grains: wheat, barley, rye, oats, or spelt. Jews of Ashkenazic descent traditionally will not eat any of the families of legumes, soy, rice, beans, corn, or any derivatives of them (corn syrup, corn starch, soy protein, etc.). This restriction may not be observed by Jews of Sephardic descent, or those living in Israel.</p> <p>A major mitzvah is to tell the story of the Exodus. This is done in a stylized ritual, called a Seder (order). During the Seder, the story is told using several symbolic foods as part of the telling. Among these symbols we have matzah, bitter herbs, greens herbs, a roasted egg, a roasted bone, salt water, and charoset (the mixture that is to remind us of mortar used to build the store cities). The seder is constructed from a combination of the elements of a religious Temple service, a ritualized festive meal modeled on a Roman banquet, and a Shabbat home observance, overlaid with the symbols and storytelling aspects, and the devices for keeping the attention of children that we have come to know.</p> <p>April 21st is Iyar 27, known as Yom HaSho'ah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. A modern insertion in the calendar, there is no particular liturgy or standardized pattern of observance. Nonetheless, it is fairly universally acknowledged.</p> <p>April 28th and 29th are also modern, and less well known days of commemoration. April 28th this year is Iyar 4, which is Yom Hazikaron, the Day of Remembrance. This is close to Memorial Day as it was conceived in America, a time to recall and honor the memory of those who fell in defending the nation. It is extremely solemn. When the siren sounds in Israel on that day, everything and everyone come to a stop for the period of silence. It is incredibly moving to be there then.</p> <p>April 29th will be Iyar 5, Yom Ha'atzma'ut, or Independence Day. This is the day on which the state of Israel was declared in 1948. This is a day of great pride and joy, though it is somewhat mingled and saddened by the underlying memory of those who perished without a haven, for whom it came too late. In a sense, the existence of the state of Israel is an embodiment of the commitment to support the statement, 'Never Again.'</p>								
<p>Reaching the Rabbi</p>	<p>The rabbi is available to meet by appointment. If you wish to meet or speak with the rabbi, please email or call to set an appointment.</p> <p>The office is not staffed and the building is generally closed when the rabbi is not in. Messages are regularly checked by the Rabbi at both congregations, and email is frequently read during the week. Please understand that the rabbi will not be available or reply on Shabbat or on Jewish holidays unless it is an emergency.</p> <p>In the event of an urgent need the rabbi may be contacted by telephone. In that case, please call the cell phone number listed, leaving a detailed message, and be sure to express the need for an urgent response. To minimize driving, he is grouping most appointments in Staunton on Mondays and Fridays and in Harrisonburg on Sundays and Thursdays.</p> <table data-bbox="337 1598 1339 1745"> <tr> <td>Rabbi Joe's Email:</td> <td>RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Beth El Congregation</td> <td>540-434-2744</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Temple House of Israel</td> <td>540-886-4091</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cell phone (Please use this # for emergencies)</td> <td>434-981-3959</td> </tr> </table>	Rabbi Joe's Email:	RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com	Beth El Congregation	540-434-2744	Temple House of Israel	540-886-4091	Cell phone (Please use this # for emergencies)	434-981-3959
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<p>Congregational Calendar</p>	<p>If you visit our web site www.thoi.org click on the Calendar 5769 link, you will see an up-to-date schedule. If you click on the Rabbi link, you will see a blurb about Rabbi Joe and then his schedule outside those on the congregational schedule.</p>								

Temple Contacts	Rabbi President Past President V. P. of Membership V. P. of Building/Grounds Secretary Treasurer Director at large	Joe Blair Beth Young Lisa Solod Warren Laurie Berman Steve Rosenberg Ruth Chodrow Ellen Boden Janet Brody	886-4091 or rabbi@thoi.org 885-1481 or president@thoi.org 886-1603 or pastpresident@thoi.org 885-2925 or membership@thoi.org 943-0507 or building@thoi.org 886-2252 or secretary@thoi.org treasurer@thoi.org 851-0877 or director-at-large@thoi.org
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	Cantorial Soloist		
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	Film Series Beth El Congregation	Rosalie Waterman Shirley Brand	

THOI Calendar April 2009			1	2	3 SVHEP @ MBC Film Festival Opening	4 Film Festival
5 Film Festival	6	7	8 Passover Seder 6:00 PM	9	10 Shabbat 7:30 PM	11
12	13 Board Meeting 7:00 PM	14	15	16	17	18
19 No Religious School	20	21	22	23	24 Shabbat 7:30 PM	25
26	27	28	29	30		

