



# Temple House of Israel Bulletin

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

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**July-August 2006, Tammuz/Av/Elul 5766**

## From the Rabbi's Desk

Please be sure to read the monthly newsletter regularly to keep up with all that is going on and any changes that may be announced. Check the congregational calendar (which will come out with the September bulletin) for the list of upcoming events each month and come join in! Take advantage of all that your congregation and Jewish community offer. There are Holiday celebrations, adult education classes, youth activities, religious school, and social events on the calendar throughout the year. Social action, Tikkun Olam (repair of the world), Gemilut Chasidim (Acts of loving kindness), and Tzedakah (righteous action) project ideas and suggestions are offered continuously. Be a part of it all!

My Dear Valley Jews,  
SHALOM!

### Looking Back

This last month of our year was oh, so busy! June 2<sup>nd</sup> at Beth El was a spaghetti dinner (fundraiser for the youth group) followed by services led by Shorty (our Youth Group) which combined Shavuot and Confirmation. It was lovely! Afterward, Shorty went cosmic bowling and had a shul-in overnight, with a meeting that included elections of officers for the coming year. Congratulate Jennie Greenfield, Hannah Kulakow, Riff Blair, and Simone Giovanetti when you see them, and ask about their plans for the coming year. June 4<sup>th</sup> was the THOI-Grace Covenant potluck, which saw about 40 people attend for a lovely time. June 11<sup>th</sup> was a Mitzvah day at THOI, and many thanks to those who came and worked hard. The ceiling is moving along and now it is fairly sure that it can be completed before the fall and High Holydays! June 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> was the Bat Mitzvah of Grace Lambeth. She did a wonderful job and all those who came had a blast! Mazal Tov to the whole family!

It is hard to believe we have come to the end of this year, but what a year! It was incredibly full and rich with all kinds of Jewish life! Birth, Conversion, Brit Milah (Circumcision), Simchat Bat (Welcoming Daughters), Namings, Marriages, Funerals, B'nai Mitzvah (Bar & Bat Mitzvah celebrations), all sorts of Holidays; Confirmation, Consecration, Memorials, Birthdays, Anniversaries, Commemorations; Torah, Talmud, Kabbalah; Classes, Lectures, Discussions, Meetings; Social Action, Social Events, Onegs & Kiddushes; Tutoring, Counseling, Shmoozing (Chitchat), and Noshing (Eating)! It was *Wonderful!*

### Looking Forward

Now we will have the summer season, a quieter time - not without events, though! Starting June 30<sup>th</sup> there are lay-led Shabbat services every other week for the summer at THOI! Come and join with those who have stepped forward to lead services and chant Torah. In various combinations, we have Dev Singer, Laura Jean Brand, Ruth Chodrow, and Sarah Grove-Humphries taking on the roles of Shaliach Tzibbur (representative of the congregation/prayer leader) and Ba'alat Korei Torah (Reader (f) of the Torah). Of

From the

course, there are lay-led services scheduled at Beth El as well.

#### JEWS ONLINE

The final website I offer you in this topic is a Jewish Q&A service. Visit <http://archives.jewish.com/askrabbi/> to submit a question and have a rabbi respond, or to read the posted questions and answers. In the interests of full disclosure and informed consent: I am the moderator of this web site and coordinator of this service, as I have been for some years.

#### ISRAEL TRIP UPDATE

The June 2007 Israel Trip is on (pending the situation). I am working on plans and details. If you are interested in going to Israel on a group trip, and you have not told me so specifically, please contact me and let me know of your interest. So far I have heard from about 15+ people in our community who would like to go. I think this trip will be a blast! As soon as I have a little more information, I will be in touch with prices and specific dates, and will begin to schedule some meetings and classes in preparation.

#### THE CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS

We are in the month of Sivan now as I write this. The next month coming in the Jewish calendar is Tammuz. Rosh Chodesh for Tammuz is June 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, and the month continues until July 26<sup>th</sup>, which is Rosh Chodesh for Av. Av runs until August 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, which are Rosh Chodesh for Elul, the last month prior to the High Holy Days, which begin this year on the evening of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Rosh Chodesh for the month of Tishrei.

During Tammuz, we commemorate the Fast day of the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz, which recalls the first breach in the walls of Jerusalem, and begins “the three weeks” of mourning that conclude with Tisha Be’Av (the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av), the saddest day in the Jewish year, commemorating the destruction of the Temple in both 586 B.C.E. and in 70 C.E. Legend also has it that this is the day on which many other calamities befell the Jewish people throughout history. During these three weeks, it is traditional to maintain a semi-mourning state, with no public celebrations.

Tisha Be’Av is marked by a very sad tenor. On Erev Tisha Be’Av (this year the evening of August 2<sup>nd</sup>) it is customary to gather after dark (midnight is the custom) to read the book of Lamentations from the Tanakh (Bible), using a very mournful, almost dirgelike nusach (tune).

To mark the conclusion of this period of sadness, beginning with the Shabbat after Tisha Be’Av, we read several Haftarot (sections from the Prophets) that are understood as comforting. The first one, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Av this year (5 August) is known by the opening phrase of the Haftarah (Prophetic reading from Isaiah 40:1-26), Nachamu, Nachamu, Ami (Comfort, Comfort my people), and that Shabbat is called Shabbat Nachamu, one of the seven specially identified Shabbatot (plural of Shabbat, Sabbath).

The month of Elul is traditionally a time of self-reflection and introspection, when we each conduct a Cheshbon HaNefesh (Accounting of the Soul) to ourself, and take the measure of who we have become, where we are, what we have done, and how it all measures up against who we want to be, in preparation for the Yamim Nora'im (Days of Awe) from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur. The more leisurely time of summer is a good period for this: we have a little time to slow down and look both backwards and inwards. With this ‘accounting’ in hand, we are ready to perform Teshuvah (repentance and returning) and to strive to be a better person in the year ahead.

#### TZEDAKAH

As we move towards the summer and times of vacation, need does not rest. Please give as generously as you can. There are needs at every level, from locally to internationally. Jewish tradition teaches that we must first take care of our own community, and then

## Desk

reach out to others. The congregation needs funds for its maintenance and upkeep. There are hungry and homeless and those who need medical care among our neighbors. There are needs at the regional, state, national and international levels. I leave the choice of what is worth supporting and how to support it to your sense of Tzedakah (righteousness), and trust that you will do what you can towards Tikkun Olam (Repair of the World) and Gemilut Chasidim (Deeds of Lovingkindness), the three pillars upon which the Jewish conception of the world stands.

### Random Thoughts

One of the trends I have been happy to see and help nurture in the congregation is a move towards more involvement in ritual activities by congregants. Leading services, reading Torah and Haftarah, learning Hebrew, and mastering new songs in the liturgy are all examples of greater participation and a sense of ownership on the part of our community members. This helps to make our community stronger, more vibrant, and more stable in the long run.

Another aspect of the community I am very happy to see is the warmth and welcoming nature of our group to visitors and potential members. This trait is directly responsible, in my opinion, for the increase in the number of members we have seen in the last year, and will help to continue our healthy pattern of slow but steady growth.

And finally, I am delighted with the sense of vibrancy, vitality, and positive excitement that I sense in the congregation. It is wonderful to feel this almost electric charge that is energizing the group! We are truly building a living Jewish community, full of the values, ethics, and traditions that make the group vibrant and wonderful.

### The Coming Year

I have been trying to decide what I would like to include in my monthly columns in the coming year. As you may recall, last year was a focus on calendar, and this year was a focus on Life Cycle events.

I would appreciate your suggestions for the coming year. Please let me know what you would like me to talk about in the newsletter in the coming year so I can try to address the interests of congregation members. Is there something that would be of interest or value to you in the newsletters? Any specific topics that you wish to have me address?

B'virvat shalom (with Blessings of Peace),  
Rabbi Joe

## Office Hours and Contact Information

### RABBI'S AVAILABILITY & OFFICE DAYS

During the summer Rabbi Joe is on vacation and will not be in the office. He can be contacted for important matters: please leave a message for him on the message service at the congregation, or email him. In the event of a true emergency, if you can't reach him through the synagogues, please contact the rabbi at home by phone.

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

**Beth El Congregation**

**540-434-2744**

**Temple House of Israel**

**540-886-4091**

**Home [Emergencies only, please]**

**434-981-3959**

The Rabbi's Office days will change in the Fall. Watch for an announcement with the days he will be in the office in the next bulletin.

## Noteworthy Congregational News

- Welcome to Adam and Kim Gutterman and their 1-year-old daughter Rose who are new members of our congregation!
- Grace Lambeth celebrated her Bat Mitzvah on June 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Mazal tov to her, and to her family! We will look forward to seeing Grace actively involved with Shorty and perhaps even helping to lead services now and again!
- Our annual potluck dinner with Staunton Grace Covenant Church saw 40 people (between our two congregations) enjoying food and socializing. Afterwards we had a Hebrew song sing-along! Thanks to Ruth Chodrow who compiled the songsheets and to Laurie Berman and her talented daughters Rachel and Sarah who helped lead the singing. It's always good to see our old friends again.
- Thanks to those who came and worked at our June Mitzvah Day. Natasha Benenson, Ruth Chodrow and Philip, Marsha Pillet and Jordan, and Beth Young all made some headway on replacing the ceiling tiles.
- The Mid-Atlantic Council biennial will be held in Gaithersburg, MD on Oct. 20-22<sup>nd</sup>. The theme is "Staying Connected: How We Make Community Matter". There is a fund to help subsidize costs for members of small congregations like ours. To find out more, go to <http://urj.org/mac/macbiennial2006/>.
- The next **Board Meeting** will be held **August 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm** in the social hall. If you would like to add to the agenda, please contact Lisa Solod prior to the meeting.
- Please come to our **Potluck Picnic at 226 Taylor Street** (the home of Beth and Rich Young) **on Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm.** Paper goods and ice will be supplied. The alphabet is divided to ensure that we have enough to eat – has that ever been a problem with this group??

Last name beginning with:

A-B

C-G

H-P

R-Z

Please bring:

side dish

drinks

main dish

desserts

- We're looking for additional volunteers to be the chair or a part of our newly formed **Caring Committee**. Please contact the Rabbi directly.
- **Lay-led services are happening over the summer!** Huge thanks to those who have volunteered to make this a reality: Laura Jean Brand, Ruth Chodrow, Sarah Grove-Humphries and Dev Singer. Special thanks to Ruth for her coordinating efforts and to Sarah for her singing. We enjoyed services led by Sarah, with Ruth chanting Torah on June 30 and led by Dev Singer with Laura Jean chanting Torah on July 14. Join us in the sanctuary on the following dates:

**July 28**

**August 11**

- Our first Rabbi led service will be held on Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm.

## Message from the President

Dear Congregants:

I hope that your summer has been good – productive and relaxing. I know that many of you have faced challenges these past few months, and my prayers are with you.

As the New Year approaches, let us all count our blessings, chief among them our fellow congregants and the warmth and inclusion our Temple offers. In this deteriorating world, it is our duty to stick together and support ourselves and our synagogue. Toward that end, I hope you will give of yourselves when we ask, and that you will help us keep our precious congregation alive amidst all the world's turmoil.

Hope to see you all at the picnic at the Young's.

----- Lisa Solod

## Board Meeting Summary

The Rabbi has had a request for a Community Awareness Shabbat in the spring as well as the fall. This will be scheduled at the calendar meeting. • The new Caring Committee needs a chair. • New members Adam and Kim Gutterman and their daughter Rose were approved by the Board. • Mike Brown discussed the needs of the building and cemetery. The Board moved to make the curb cut and railing a priority and it will be done as soon as the money becomes available. Other work on the list includes the social hall ceiling tiles replacement, refinishing the floors, and repair and protection of the Connick windows in the sanctuary. • Laura Jean pointed out that currently dues contribute only about 25-30% toward total operating expenses. ----- Ruth Chodrow

## News of our Community

- The Valley Music Academy is offering Musikgarten early childhood music classes in Staunton and Waynesboro for children from 4 months to age 9. Musikgarten's programs awaken and develop a young child's natural joy and talent for making music. Music's melodic and rhythmic patterns stimulate neural pathways in the brain and develop listening skills, the foremost necessity for learning. Musikgarten classes also provide the essential foundation for further musical study. Classes begin the week of August 28, 2006 and class size is limited. To register or for more information, please contact the Valley Music Academy at 942-8648 or [www.ValleyMusicAcademy.org](http://www.ValleyMusicAcademy.org) or Sarah Grove-Humphries at [Humphries@rica.net](mailto:Humphries@rica.net) or 885-4223. For more information about Musikgarten, call 800-216-6864 or [www.musikgarten.org](http://www.musikgarten.org).
- Our condolences go to Joe Kristoff and Marsha Pillet and Jordan on the death of Joe's father, July 5<sup>th</sup> in Pennsylvania.
- We wish a continued recovery to Rachel Peretz's husband, Paul Comes, after heart surgery during the spring.
- We're happy to say that Shirley Brand is recovering from a broken arm and the resulting surgery after a fall in June.
- Welcome back to Dianne Mason who was caring for her mother in Wales for several months. Dianne is home now but is planning to return to the UK in October after she makes the necessary arrangements here.
- Rachel, Tony and Ian Jordan have sold their home in Crozet and have moved to Richmond. This is good news for them since Tony's commute will be shortened by 3 hours (round trip), but sad news for the congregation. We wish them all the best and trust they will stay in touch with us. They have been a wonderful addition to our community for the past several years!
- Marie Landes reports that her husband Bill's surgery on July 19<sup>th</sup> went extremely well. We hope for a recovery that goes extremely well.

## News from the Women's Group

- The Women's Group will have a "volunteer opportunities" sign-up poster at the Aug. 20<sup>th</sup> picnic. Please take a minute now to think of ways in which you would like to help the temple community. Then on the 20<sup>th</sup>, sign-up to chair that event or activity.
- *Happy Birthdays to be celebrated in July:*
  - Marcia Conner celebrating on July 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Kate Goldenberg is on July 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Twins Sydney and Benjamin Fox on July 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Sarah Young will be 21 years old and legal on July 10<sup>th</sup>
  - Byron Grove-Humphries on July 14<sup>th</sup>
  - Lynne Landsberg on the 21<sup>st</sup>

News from  
the  
Women's  
Group

Elana Brody will be 18 on July 24<sup>th</sup>

*Happy Birthdays to be celebrated in August:*

Lillian Blair celebrating on August 9<sup>th</sup>

Jonathan Freedman on August 19<sup>th</sup>

Stephanie Brand will be 6 years old on August 11<sup>th</sup>

AJ Hartung celebrating on the 13<sup>th</sup>

Joe Kristoff also on August 13<sup>th</sup>

*Happy Anniversary to :*

Martha and Doug Degen celebrating together on July 30<sup>th</sup>

Religious School

The new trio of 'principals' of the religious school has been announced, and they are Ruth Berger, Dara Hall, and Linda Kohn, all congregants at Beth El with children in the school. I am sure they will be in touch with returning religious school families, but if your child will be entering the religious school in the fall for the first time, they may not know, so please be in touch with them as soon as possible. You can reach Linda at [LIN5KO@aol.com](mailto:LIN5KO@aol.com), Dara at [mddmhall@verizon.net](mailto:mddmhall@verizon.net) or 540-433-5596, or Ruth at [rbberger@adelphia.net](mailto:rbberger@adelphia.net) or (540) 574-0440.

Adult  
Education

If you would be interested in having a B'nai Mitzvah, or in learning to read Torah, chant Haftarah, lead services, or to serve as Gabbai, please be in touch with the rabbi.

PARASHAT

This will be taking place on the same day in the coming year, However, the Rabbi's days in the office will be changing – watch the next bulletin for information.

JEWISH LECTURE AND DISCUSSION SERIES (from the Rabbi)

I am thinking ahead to what to offer next year, and would be happy to hear your suggestions.

As a single or short series of sessions I am definitely planning to teach/study/learn about the Chevrah Kadishah, the Holy Society, that group of people who help to prepare the deceased for burial; including what they do, why, and how. Some interest in forming such a group was expressed this year, and I think it is worthwhile to learn about it and then consider what we might want to do as a community in the Valley.

As a single session or short series program, I think there was some interest in examining Jewish spirituality and practices related to it.

I am also thinking in terms of a series of film viewings and discussions, based on Jewish themes in the films.

I have also had the thought of a more ambitious program, perhaps ten sessions, using the Bill Moyers Genesis program as the catalyst for a discussion, or possibly a multi-session program on How to Get More out of Being Jewish, or the Many Faces of God in the Bible, but I am open to hearing other ideas.

Book Group

Come join us at **7:30 pm on Wednesday, July 26<sup>th</sup>** at Beth Young's house to discuss **The Kite Runner** by Khaled Hosseini. The story begins in 1975, in the last peaceful days of the monarchy in Afghanistan, just before the invasion by Russian forces, and continues through 2001. It's an unforgettable novel and we'll probably have unforgettable conversation, as we had at Janet Brody's last month when we discussed The Color of Water after most of us had read it. AJ only wishes others had read it to agree with her! AJ is currently reading a book that she thinks we'll enjoy for August. "It should certainly provoke a noisy meeting. Wot is new?" **The Happy Heretic** by Judith Hayes is in the library system. **Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 at AJ's home.**

## Young Adults

Natasha Benenson has organized a Young Adult group – yeah Tash! - with a planning meeting in June and a picnic on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. If you are a young adult and interested in joining this group, please contact Natasha at [nhbenenson@hotmail.com](mailto:nhbenenson@hotmail.com) or 886-1157. An August activity is in the works but details are yet to be decided.

## Judaica Shop

Dianne Mason will continue with the Judaica Shop while she remains in the area. We hope she's here for a long time! If you have any wants or needs, please contact Dianne at 885-6254

## Youth Group and Confirmation Class

The Youth Group, Shorty, had an active month. June 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> they led the Shavuot and Confirmation service and served a spaghetti dinner, enjoyed cosmic bowling and a shul-in, talked about Kallot and Convention, held elections, and ate! The new Executive Board members will be making plans for the coming year.

Be on the lookout: we plan to have a Fall Shorty Hershey Park (or Busch Gardens or another amusement park) trip the weekend of September 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> to welcome back our members and start the year off with a bang.

There will be a wide variety of Shorty activities in the coming year, including Social Action, Shul-ins, cosmic bowling, services, the Confirmation program, the Purim carnival, an amusement park trip, programming, fundraisers, FUN and FOOD! We have a REALLY FULL year planned for Shorty, including travel to the NFTY Convention in Philadelphia in February - watch for information on it! The full calendar of NFTY events is available on the web site at <http://www.nfty.org/mar/> - just click the link to the 2006-2007 calendar which will come up as an HTML page. The year kicks off with Summer Kallah at Camp Harlam on August 22-25. Exciting news is that the Fall Kallah is in Charlottesville in early November, and Majyk is in Roanoke in mid-November, so we should really be able to attend in force this year. It will be a fantastic year for Shorty!

## Donations

**Thank you** to these generous people who have made contributions to the Temple during the previous month. We appreciate your donations!

In honor Laura Jean Brand becoming a Bat Mitzvah.....Beth and Rich Young

In appreciation for all that Rabbi Joe does.....Betty Menaker

## Notes from the Editor

- I'd love to hear from you! Please have your information, comments and suggestions to me by **August 20<sup>th</sup>** for the September newsletter.

## Yahrzeits for July

Leah Bressman Barber	Vera Duken	Richard Roth
Edith W. Belfor	Bernice Cohen Fox	Simon Jacob Sachs
Ruby Schorsch Bornstein	Delores Levy	Frances Schwartz
Abe Bressman	Joseph Loener	Sara Helen Seltzer
Maurice Coheen	Ben Raybin	Abraham L. Suskins
Jerome Degen	Betty Rosenthal	Samuel Weinberg

## For August

Charles Brand	Julius Kane	Esther Rosenthal
Louise C. Cohen	Dr. Samuel Shultz Loewner	Rachel Schwartz Rothenberg
Albert R. Gomberg	Donald Mindell	Sandra Schoenberg
Cynthia Ann Grossman	Lucy Hyde Nicely	Vivian Kleinrock Schorsch
Anna Harris	Doris Harris Patterson	Madeline Barth Shultz
Louis Philip Kamerman	Eva Neretin Robins	Charles E. Switzer

**Temple  
Contacts**

Rabbi	Joe Blair	886-4091 or rabbioeb@hotmail.com
President	Lisa Solod	463-7637 or lisa@rockbridge.net
V. P. - Membership	Laurie Berman	885-2925 or raela@ntelos.net
V. P. – Bldgs. Grds.	Michael Brown	885-3809 or mc-brown@earthlink.net
Secretary	Ruth Chodrow	886-2252 or rchodrow@verizon.net
Treasurer	Laura Jean Brand	942-3656 or asherb@mac.com
Director at large	Rachel Jordan	434-823-7828 or casajordan@earthlink.net
Trustees	Doug Degen	886-8651 or dbd@ntelos.net
	Alan Goldenberg	adg1221@earthlink.net
	Richard Young	885-1481 or younghdwe@ntelos.net
Bulletin Editor	Beth Young	885-1481 or bydesign@ntelos.net
Bulletin Circulation	A.J. Hartung	337-6836

**JULY - AUGUST**

July 26	Book Group at BethYoung's at 7:30 pm: The Kite Runner
August 17	Temple Board Meeting at 7:00 in the social hall
August 20	Welcome Back Picnic at the Young's at 5:00 pm
August 25	Shabbat Services at 7:30 pm - oneg hosts: Beth & Rich Young and AJ Hartung
August 31	Book Group at AJ's at 7:30: The Happy Heretic

*High Holidays start September  
22<sup>nd</sup>!*

*Enjoy the rest of your summer!*