



Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism
15 North Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-4091

<http://uahc.org/congs/va/va008/>

September 2004, Elul/Tishrei 5764/5765

From the Rabbi's Disk

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,
SHALOM!

I hope that you have had as refreshing and restful a summer break as I, and that you too are now ready to plunge back into the activities and events of the year.

I hope you remembered the THOI Congregational picnic at Happy Hollow, hosted by Lynn Hewitt and Martha and Doug Degen on August 22nd. It was WONDERFUL.

Although I was not able to defend my imaginary title at either kayaking or ping-pong, it was a wonderful time. I am demanding a rematch next year!

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO THOI

I want to begin my column for this year with a very sincere note of appreciation to the entire congregation for the generous gift and the lovely note that was sent to me at the start of the summer break. I was both surprised and deeply touched by this kind and thoughtful acknowledgment of my efforts this past year, and greatly appreciated the enclosed gift. I cannot express adequately my thanks and gratitude for this lovely and large-hearted present. Please know that the sentiments expressed by it are fully reciprocated on my part. Thanks to all on behalf of Karen, Riff, and myself.

THE CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS

It is mid-August as I write this, and we are moving very rapidly towards the High Holy Days. August 17th and 18th this year are Rosh Chodesh (the New Month) for the month of Elul. Elul is the final month of the year leading up to Rosh Hashanah, which this year begins on the evening of September 15th, the start of the month of Tishrei.

There are several customs associated with Elul. One is that both morning and evening we read Psalm 27 as part of the concluding service from the second day of Elul until Hoshanah Rabbah (the seventh day of Sukkot), because it is said that in this Psalm the text 'my light' refers to the teachings of Rosh Hashanah and 'my salvation' to the teachings of Yom Kippur, and it is said that the book of life is sealed on Hoshanah Rabbah. Thus, we remind ourselves to absorb the teachings of these holidays into our lives and to be worthy to be sealed in the book of life for a good year in the year to come.

A second custom is that prior to reading this Psalm each day from the First day of Elul until the day preceding Rosh Hashanah we blow the Shofar (Ram's horn) to 'awaken' our community to the approaching days of awe. When Yom Kippur falls on a Shabbat, we blow the Shofar on the day before in the morning, but otherwise we do not sound the Shofar on the last day preceding Rosh Hashanah: this is to 'throw off' the evil eye, so that any ill that is seeking to befall us will not know which day it is, and will be held at bay by the arrival of the holidays (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) and the Yamim Nora'im (the ten days of awe between these holidays), until after we have been entered into the book of life.

A third custom is more personal. We are encouraged to use the month of Elul as a

time of introspection and self-examination, performing a Cheshbon Nefesh (an accounting of the Soul). During this time we are encouraged to cast our minds back over the past year and identify all those sins of omission and sins of commission we have committed, as well as those transgressions and actions that are not sins, but simply not the actions of the person we wish to be, and to find ways to make amends and repair the injuries we have caused to others. This is a time when traditional-minded Jews will seek out those they may have injured in any way, and seek forgiveness and to make them whole, as much as they possibly can. When we take this seriously, it can be one of the most cleansing practices, affording a sense of peace and well-being, and preparing us to enter into the High Holy days in a state of enhanced emotional, spiritual, and ritual purity.

As part of this time of introspection, it is also customary to read and meditate upon a variety of edifying materials, most commonly drawn from sayings, stories, and Psalms, with the reader choosing those specific items that seem most appropriate on any given day. One excellent collection of such materials is that of S.Y. Agnon, titled Days of Awe (Yamim Nora'im in Hebrew). There is also a selection to be found in the Gates of Awe prayer book for the High Holidays at the beginning of the book.

Also during this time, some have the custom of privately reciting penitential prayers, known as 'Selichot prayers'. It is customary to recite these prayers as a community on the evening following the Shabbat that precedes Rosh Hashanah. We will be holding a Selichot service and discussion on September 11th, at 8 pm at THOI this year. All are welcome to come and participate, and I believe there will be light refreshments served.

One other custom I hope you will remember beginning Erev Rosh Hashanah (the eve of Rosh Hashanah, this year the evening of September 15th) is the symbolic hope for each of us to have a sweet new year expressed by the eating of such delicacies as apples and honey, honey cake, and round challot (Challah bread loaves that are shaped to remind us of a crown in remembrance of the sovereignty of God) made with honey or with raisins included in the dough. For us, as Jews, there is a great deal of truth in the old adage that 'you are what you eat'. ;-)

Allow me to wish you and your loved ones 'Shanah Tovah Umetukah Tikateivu Utichateimu' (may you be written and sealed [in the book of life] for a good and sweet year).

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Our year will officially kick off with Friday night services at 7:30 pm on September 3rd at THOI. I am looking forward to seeing you there! In particular, I am looking forward to having the pleasure of hearing what Sarah Grove- Humphries learned and is bringing back to us from the cantorial training she attended in Cincinnati.

There will be a Selichot service on Saturday evening, September 11th at THOI at 8 pm. This service is the communal recitation of penitential prayers and requests for forgiveness, and usually occurs on the Shabbat prior to Rosh Hashanah. The service is quite short, and will be followed by a discussion, with light refreshments.

High Holiday services will be held at 8 pm and 10 am as in past. This year we are again fortunate in having Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell return to lead services. She and I will be alternating, so that Erev Rosh Hashanah, she is at Beth El while I am at THOI. We will switch for each High Holiday service. Again, the dates are Rosh Hashanah on September 15th evening and 16th morning, and Yom Kippur on September 24th evening and 25th morning.

**From the
Rabbi's Disk**

Tashlich, the symbolic ceremony of casting away of sins by throwing bread crumbs into running living water, will be held on Thursday, September 16th at 1 pm, following Rosh Hashanah services. Please stay tuned for details as to the place.

Don't forget the Yizkor/Memorial service that will take place on Sunday, September 19th at the Beth El cemetery at 1 pm (at Beth El in case of rain), and at the THOI cemetery at 3 pm (at THOI in case of rain).

LOOKING AHEAD

No time to pause after High Holy Days: we are jumping in and running full tilt this year. Mark your calendars!

October 1st is Sukkot at Beth El, October 8th is Simchat Torah at THOI.

October 9th is the Bat Mitzvah of Sarah Grove-Humphries, and October 16th is the Bat Mitzvah of Sara Brody.

FEEDBACK

I wrote in past newsletters that I was looking for feedback from each of you. I was fortunate to receive some very valuable and helpful responses, and I have taken these into consideration in my planning for the coming year.

As a result, this year I will generally hold single-session or short-term classes for Adult Education, rather than the longer courses that I offered last year. In many ways, I think this will be an improvement, as it will permit offering a wider variety of materials and subjects (without need to increase the number of hours in a day!), and will require less of a long-term commitment from those signing up to participate.

My request, however, is that you continue to provide your comments and opinions to me, letting me know what you think will help to make our Jewish community stronger and more vibrant, be even more fun, provide a richer Jewish experience, and allow me to serve the community more effectively. Please feel free to communicate your thoughts to me by email, in writing, by telephone, or in person.

ADULT EDUCATION

Times and days/dates for adult education will be announced for each program. Courses that I plan to offer include: Hebrew Literacy I, Hebrew Literacy II, Advanced Hebrew Literacy; and Adult B'nai Mitzvah. I plan to offer class sessions on the topics of: Ethical Wills; Midrash; The Zohar; Jewish History; Liturgy; Judaism & Christianity; Jewish literature; and Women in Judaism. If you have ideas for additional offerings, please let me know.

OTHER SCHEDULING INFORMATION

Parashat Hashavuah/Weekly Torah Study

I intend to resume our weekly sessions on Thursdays at noon starting September 9th. Bring a lunch and join in!

Adult Education Class Question

I want to ask if you would please let me know your preference for the days/times for adult education offerings. In general, are evenings during the week better, or would a Sunday afternoon/evening be more convenient? Are you free to attend a class once in a while during the workday in mid-week, perhaps at lunch? Is there another time that works better for you? Please let me know.

B'virvat shalom (with Blessings of Peace),

Rabbi Joe Blair

July 14, 2004

**Office Hours
And**

The setting of specific hours as 'drop-in times' was not very effective, according to

**Contact
Information**

feedback. Consequently, the Rabbi will be more than happy to set appointments for any office day, but will not hold open blocks of time as drop-in hours. Appointments can be last-minute affairs: simply call and make sure that the Rabbi is available and then come over.

Office days in Staunton will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with appointments generally available from **10 to 5 on Tuesdays**, and from **11 to 7 on Thursdays**.

Office days in Harrisonburg will be on Mondays and Fridays, with appointments generally available between eleven and seven Mondays and between 10 and 5 Fridays. Religious school hours will regularly be on Sundays from 9:30 until 12:30 while classes are in session.

B'nai Mitzvah tutoring will be scheduled individually with each student and family.

Confirmation class will meet at a fixed time on Sundays, with the time and frequency to be announced shortly.

Other times to meet or speak with the Rabbi are also available by appointment. leave a message on the phone at shul, email, and in case of an emergency, by phone at home.

Email: RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com

Beth El Congregation 540-434-2744

Temple House of Israel 540-886-4091

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

PLEASE CONTACT THE RABBI

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.

**President's
Message**

The year is beginning for us September 15th with the Holydays, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Succot. It is a bit early, but I take this opportunity to wish you all a L'Shanah Tovah, a year with less strife in the world, G-d willing, a year of well being and health.

Over the summer, THOI received a gift of two sofas from Paul Klein's brother-in-law Harry Samet. In addition, Sara Brody's bat mitzvah project of building and cataloging our library was discussed. What were simmering, back burner plans for renovating the seating area of the social hall became a front burner issue. I named an ad-hoc committee to recommend renovations to the space and Beth Young has drawn plans suggesting alterations to the space. If the Board approves, we may be able to start enjoying the renovated space by Holyday time. I urge the THOI community to participate and help fund the renovations.

Rafael Brand

Congregation President

**Noteworthy
Congregational
News**

- You are invited to join the celebration as Sarah Grove-Humphries becomes Bat Mitzvah Saturday, October 9, 2004 at 10:00 am Temple House of Israel

Potluck lunch will follow the service

Music provided by the Vulgar Bulgars klezmer band

Please bring a vegetable or side dish to share and your dancing shoes

Call Beth Young 885-1481 to respond to the invitation.

- A note from Sarah Grove-Humphries:

I would like to thank you for sending me to Mifgash Musicale at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati from August 1-5. The conference was an incredible experience for me, both musically and spiritually. I had the opportunity to meet and work with temple musicians from all over the US and Canada (and one guy even came all the way from Australia!). The 26 participants were led by 4 invested cantors in prayer services, repertoire sessions, and workshops that started at 9 in the morning and ended at 10 each night. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Sarason, a teacher at HUC and a liturgy specialist, gave a wonderful overview of the High Holidays liturgy. Two leading composers of Jewish music, Bonia Shur (age 81) and Ben Steinberg (age 74), each led a session introducing us to some of their works, and the opportunity to meet and learn from these two amazing musicians was a blessing for all. We took a field trip to Isaac M. Wise's Plum Street Temple, the birthplace of Reform Judaism in America and an amazing building in Byzantine-Moorish style. I enjoyed steeping in Jewish music for 5 days and I learned so much. I am profoundly grateful to you for the opportunity to attend Mifgash. Thank you very much.

- **A huge thank you** to Doug and Martha Degen and Lynn Hewitt for hosting our "welcome back picnic". We do know how to have a good time! David Young won 1st place in the kayak race – congratulations David! Marsha Pillet and her husband Joe Kristoff were 1st in the doubles and Doug Degen came in 1st in the "senior division". Notice all the 1st places.... Categories help!
- Applications and information for anyone wishing to attend the **Mid Atlantic Council Biennial** meeting in Norfolk in October are available at the temple. Ruth Chodrow will be officially inducted as a Board member of the Mid Atlantic Council there! Non-refundable fee and applications must be postmarked by September 28th.
- **High Holiday Services** will begin with **Selichot Services on Saturday, September 11 at 8:00 pm**. We hope you're planning to join in our community penitential prayers. If you are, please bring a refreshment of your choice to share.

Erev Rosh Hashonah Services will be held on **Wednesday, September 15 at 8:00 pm**. Sarah Grove-Humphries and Marsha Pillet are co-chairing the oneg for this evening and will welcome all your dessert contributions. Please bring your goodies to the kitchen prior to services.

Kol Nidre Services will be **Friday, September 24 at 8:00 pm** and **Yom Kippur Services** continue **Saturday morning at 10:00**. Our community **Break the fast** will be held in the social hall **immediately following the close of services Saturday evening**. Martha Degen and Rachel Jordan will coordinate the evening's meal.

- The Rudlin Torah Academy, now the Yeshiva, will be organizing a kosher meat order and the option to order any other grocery items, and bringing orders to their building in Richmond. You may contact them at (804) 784-9050 or meatorder@rudlin.com or fax (804) 784-9005. The order deadline is Aug. 31 with delivery on Sept. 8 between 3-5 pm at the Yeshiva of Virginia, 6801 Patterson Avenue in Richmond. For more information call (804) 784-9050.
- The next **Temple board meeting** will be Thursday, **September 23rd at 7:00** in the temple social hall. Everyone is welcome to attend.

<p>Community</p>	<p>Eliana was born December 22, 2003 in Korea and arrived here August 3rd. According to Mike it's been a "pretty intense" few weeks, but everyone is adjusting well. Sam is proud to have a baby sister, Bonnie is caring for the new baby and Mike is doing his best to gain weight and strength as he continues his recovery from the liver transplant successfully performed in July. Mike's sister is also continuing her recovery without any problems and has returned to work part time. When Mike can lift Eliana and change her diaper, life will become normal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "A.J. appreciates deeply the mitzvahs gladly given by Leah." • Rabbi Ariel Friedlander's father passed away in London this summer. At the same time, Rabbi Ariel was offered a position and is now working in Westchester County, New York. She can be reached at (914) 666-3133 X121 or in care of Temple Shaaray Tefila, 89 Baldwin Road, Bedford Corners, NY 10504 or rabbi.ariel.friedlander@shaaraytefila.org
<p>News from the Women's Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our first Women's Group meeting will be on Sunday, September 12 at 2:00 in the social hall. We'll fill in the blanks where volunteers are needed and plan our year together. • We're planning a yard sale in October – so stash those treasures out of the way for just a little bit longer and we'll sell them in the fall.... • Remember to keep selling our cookbook! They make great gifts and are joyfully received by everyone. <p>We'd like to say HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the known September birthdays Ralph Degen celebrating on September 9th Scott Goldenberg on the 17th Caterina Janicker on the 28th</p> <p>And HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to: Beth and Rich Young on September 20th Iris and Ray Rubin on the 28th</p>
<p>Religious School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On August 29th, the Religious School principals are planning a "paint, decorate and socialize" day. Students and parents are invited to take part in making the classrooms more fun and interesting looking. • There is to be a meeting of Religious School teachers to discuss the curriculum and how the new schedule will be implemented. Keep an eye open for more information from Margee Greenfield and Ellen Defriece, co-principals, via email. • The first day of Religious School will be September 12th, with a full set of classes and a parent meeting. School will also be held September 19 and 26.
<p>Notes from the Editor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to the New Year! I'm most willing to hear your suggestions for changes or additions that you'd like to see in the bulletin. I look forward to hearing your comments at templenews@ntelos.net. • If you would prefer to receive this bulletin via e-mail, please let me know and I'll be happy to send it in that format. • The deadline for each issue is the 20th of the preceding month. October's bulletin will "go to press" on September 20th.

<p>Staunton Book Group</p>	<p>A small group, due to sickness and vacations, had a lively discussion about the <u>Dead Sea Scrolls Dissected</u>. Feedback from those not there was that they found it quite interesting. The book selected for September is <u>Man's Search for Meaning</u> by Austrian psychologist Viktor E. Frankl, who with his wife was in a concentration camp during the war. Come join us on Wednesday, September 29th at 7:30 at the Hartung's house. To reach the Hartungs, follow 250 (Churchville Road) almost to Churchville. Cross the Middle River bridge at the bottom of the hill and turn right onto Hanger's Mill Road. Go 4/10 of a mile and turn right into the driveway marked "Five Thorns". AJ promises that the dogs will be confined to their own quarters. For information, please contact A.J at 337-6836</p>																																									
<p>Judaica Shop</p>	<p>Check out our many gift items in stock and peruse the many Judaica catalogs available. There's a lot to choose from! Please let Dianne Mason know of any items that you would like stocked. Dianne can be reached at 885-6254.</p>																																									
<p>Contributions</p>	<p>Thank you to these generous people who have recently supported our Temple: We do appreciate your contributions!</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">For Sarah Grove-Humphries cantorial workshopLeah Farmer Alan and Vicki Goldenberg Tony and Rachel Jordan Sim Brand Memorial Fund</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In honor of Jordan Kristoff's Bat Mitzvah Herbert Lerner In honor of Sarah Grove-Humphries singing Bill Ney In memory of Ben Raybin from his children In memory of Rosaline Printz KamermanMarlene Ross In honor of Rabbi Joe's work with youth 2003-04 Anonymous</p>																																									
<p>Yahrzeits for September</p>	<p>Flossie Wise Cohen Rueben Harris Harry Harrison Henrietta Summerfield Harrison Herman Levy Miriam Shultz Loewner</p>	<p>Julius Margolis Minnie Fred Patterson Hermina Printz Samuel Printz Joseph Ruttenberg Nathan Schilling</p>	<p>Anna Seff Seltzer Michael Seltzer Stephen P. Shapiro Samuel Shultz Sadie Kravis Witt</p>																																							
<p>Temple Contacts</p>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Rabbi</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Joe Blair</td> <td style="width: 33%;">886-4091 or rabbijoeb@hotmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>President</td> <td>Rafael Brand</td> <td>949-0529 or rafa@cfw.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 ljpg@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>Trustees</td> <td>Ralph Degen</td> <td>886-5434</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Alan Goldenberg</td> <td>adg1221@aol.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <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 rabbijoeb@hotmail.com	President	Rafael Brand	949-0529 or rafa@cfw.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 ljpg@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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Temple House of Israel

SEPT.			1	2	3 Shabbat Services at 7:30	4
5	6	7	8	9 Torah study noon	10	11 Selichot Service at 8:00 pm
12 Religious School	13	14	15 Erev Rosh Hashonah 8:00 w/ Rabbi Joe	16 Rosh Hashonah Services 10:00 w/ Rabbi Sue Elwell Tashlich at 1:00	17 Shabbat Services at 7:30	18
19 Religious School Yizkor Services at 3:00 at cemetary	20	21	22	23 Torah study noon Board meeting at 7 pm	24 Kol Nidre at 8:00 pm	25 Yom Kippur Services at 10:00 am
26 Religious School	27	28	29	30 Torah Study noon		

Sept 3	Shabbat Services at 7:30 pm
Sept 7	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Sept 9	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome!
Sept 11	Selichot Services at 8:00 pm
Sept 12	First day of religious school
Sept 14	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Sept 15	Erev Rosh Hashonah Services at 8:00 pm with Rabbi Joe
Sept 16	Rosh Hashonah Services at 10:00 am with Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell; Tashlich at 1:00 pm
Sept 17	Shabbat Services at 7:30 pm
Sept 19	Religious School; Yizkor services at THOI cemetery at 3:00 pm (in case of rain, in the sanctuary)
Sept 21	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Sept 23	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome! 7:00 pm Temple Board Meeting
Sept 24	Kol Nidre Services at 8:00 pm
Sept 25	Yom Kippur Services at 10:00 am; Community Break the Fast at the conclusion of services
Sept 26	Religious School
Sept 28	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Sept 30	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome!

NOTE: If you are not currently a member and would like to continue receiving this bulletin, the subscription rate is \$15 per year (September-July/August) made payable to Temple House of Israel. Please contact Laura Jean Brand, our treasurer, at 942-3656 or mail your check to THOI, P.O. Box 1412, Staunton, VA 24402