In the last three years we have changed many aspects in regards to how Congregation Beth Ahabah serves our families. The Board of Managers, the Rabbis, and Educator have worked together developing and unifying our youth programs to more holistically support and guide our youth and their families from the time a family enters into our community until their youngest child graduates high school. We have learned that families want to be involved with Jewish life, but that life needs to be flexible and meaningful.

The Family Connection was formed to help understand how we can better function. Now under “one roof” we have connected the Religious School, B’nei Mitzvah preparation, tot and family services, Midrasha, youth groups, and family programs with the mission of building Jewish identity and community. Last year we even developed new programs like Family Connection Chavurot; where multiple families formed a social group sharing Shabbat dinner together in a casual way. We are forming groups now, so please contact me if you would like to participate. It is our hope that Beth Ahabah families celebrate Shabbat both inside and outside the Temple. We also offered four Shabbat-in-the-Park services which had nice turn outs, except for the one during Super-Storm Sandy.

Additionally this year we are going to be hosting brunches for parents in the Religious School to meet one another. One of the biggest critiques the congregation receives is that many of our parents do not know the other families in their children’s religious school classes. Therefore, each grade will have a Sunday Brunch in the Joel House. We ask for each family to bring a dish to share and we will provide mimosas and orange juice!

Beth Ahabah has organized a Bar and Bat Mitzvah preparation program. All students will have the opportunity to work with Sarah Beck-Berman, our Cantorial soloist, as they practice and perfect their prayers. Students will also work with Ina Ginsberg to learn their Torah and Haftarah portions. Meetings take place either at the Temple or at Ms. Ginsberg’s office in the West End. This year, each new Bar or Bat Mitzvah student and their families will meet with me in the sanctuary for a ceremony initiating their process of becoming a Jewish adult.

In regard to our teenage program, we have seen tangible success. On Monday nights during Midrasha, we host 50 teens enjoying dinner together, grade level classes, as well as electives. Our students also have a yearly teen retreat, with approximately 30 students participating. This year we are hoping to offer a Mitzvah Corp Social Justice Trip to New Orleans in February, where teens can get their hands dirty helping to improve life in the Big Easy. Our Confirmation trip will be to Washington DC at the Religious Action Center, where students will learn about important political issues from a Jewish perspective and lobby on Capitol Hill. Also, JeRAFTY has a new advisor, Lisa Goldberg, a Psychology PhD student at VCU; and Matt Gaskin will be Jr. JeRAFTY advisor for our middle-schoolers.

The Family Connection is also going to evaluate and explore how to best serve our teens by asking which changes have helped improve our program, and what could be done to attract more high school students in the future. We will be reaching out to both students and parents to get helpful and important feedback.

All of this growth is due to the wonderful partnership between our staff and families. Thank you to all who have served on the Family Connection, volunteered your time, and supported our programs. We look forward to a strong 5774. Please know that if you have questions or would like to share comments, my door is always open. Please feel free to email or call me at any time.

Rabbi Jesse Gallop
Associate Rabbi

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH FAMILY CONNECTION
PRESIDENT'S SPEECH
ROSH HASHANAH ‘13

L’shana tova.

I asked Rabbi Beifield his advice in giving this speech and he reminded me of one paramount over-arching rule of presidential speeches; have a good beginning, a good ending – and have the two as close together as possible. Rabbi Gallop suggested that I tell you something personal about myself, be funny, and explain my hopes for the future. I was horrified when I heard all of this advice because as a lawyer I can’t say anything fast and I have no sense of humor. So I did what I’m sure all of you do when you need to center yourselves and think deep thoughts …I watched a rerun of Amish Mafia on the Discovery Channel …and it came to me. Here goes….

I remember the first time I set foot in Beth Ahabah. My friend and law partner Dave Belkowitz invited me to Rosh Hashanah dinner and services here 26 years ago, almost to the day. I walked in and saw the vaulted dome, ark and proscenium arch, and thought “this isn’t your daddy’s temple.” While the aesthetics took my breath away, the people here stole my heart. Looking back, it wasn’t one eventful encounter or milestone; it was a series of events, discussions, and activities that wove this rich, colorful, diverse, sometimes jarring, but mostly joyful tapestry of experiences... and I wanted to be a part of it.

I am constantly overwhelmed by… YOU. All of the creative voices and working hands that move us forward. Over the last 26 years I’ve witnessed the organized chaos of Sunday morning Religious School, drank cups and cups of coffee chatting with other parents in the school break rooms, observed our dedicated teachers hard at work for little pay but huge dividends, attended countless bar and bat mitzvahs. I’ve stuffed myself on more than my fair share of hot dogs and hamburgers at the Brotherhood’s congreational picnics where Ron Kasoff’s degree in chemical engineering allowed him to explain to me that you always put the water in the drink coolers before mixing in the lemonade powder.

I can picture Meg Marshak and the Beth Ahabah Chefs slaving over hot stoves for days for congregational dinners. Our Mitzvah Day corps delivering stuffed animals to hospital-bound kids and food to the hungry. I had the pleasure of chaperoning my daughter Jessica and a dozen other kids on their confirmation class trip.

Eight years, and counting, of board meetings and strategic planning where we wrestle with the best way to guide the Congregation into the future. I want to thank all of you for being members and volunteers and making that tapestry come to life for me.

Our dedicated clergy and professional staff, board members, officers, committee chairs and members and countless volunteers work tirelessly to make Beth Ahabah engaging and relevant to our members. We’re two years into an evolving program called Family Connections where, in this phase, we’re reaching out to Religious School age families, helping them to foster life-long relationships with other families and the congregation. We plan to expand that program in the future to include all generations.

Meanwhile, we’re continuing programs in adult education, including weekly Torah study and Introduction to Judaism class. We have plans for musical events, including a cabaret night organized by our very own Music Director Natan (the “Bear”) Berenshteyn), and we always welcome new voices to our choir.

We’re engaged in a number of social action projects, including the Sisterhood program revolving around the book Half the Sky which focuses on the women around the world and efforts to address inequalities in health care, education and economic opportunities. We provide services to the homeless through CARITAS. And, of course, we hope you will help us feed the hungry by participating in our food drive this holiday season.

My hope for the future is that Beth Ahabah will remain a vibrant, relevant Jewish community where our members and families at every age continue to find spiritual fulfillment, rich educational experiences, laughter and supportive friends. I want to keep our eyes on the need for social justice right here and abroad and recognize the positive role that we play in the larger community.

I hope our children and grandchildren look back gratefully in 20 or 30 years as amazed by our dedication, vision, engagement and sacrifice, as I am of the leaders and visionaries who came before us.

I look forward to your help in moving the Beth Ahabah community forward. Volunteer. Also, there’s no monopoly on good ideas. If you have suggestions for improving the congregation, for new, engaging programs or events, please let me know.

Thank you, again, for your membership, participation and support.

Have a sweet new year.

Charles Rothenberg, President
Due to the outstanding success of the Jewish Community of Richmond’s (JCFR) Interfaith Journey last year, a second such trip is now being planned. Marvin Daniel and Cathy Plotkin are returning as co-chairs.

This time Rabbi Martin P. Beifield, Jr. will be the Jewish spiritual leader. Al Butzer, Minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Virginia Beach is returning as the Christian faith leader. They have already met and are working together on providing an educational and inspirational experience for all participants.

The trip will begin on January 20th and conclude on January 29th. However, participants are welcome to spend more time either before or after the trip. Members of all faith groups are welcome to participate. The journey is designed to enhance participants’ understanding of each other’s faiths and the relationship of each group to Israel.

For more information and to sign up for the JCFR’s 2nd Interfaith Journey to Israel, please contact Matt Langsam, Assistant Executive Director of JCFR at mlangsam@jewishrichmond.org

To see a review of last year’s trip, please visit http://www.jewishrichmond.org/page.aspx?id=264357

SCENES FROM THE BROTHERHOOD PICNIC AT DEEP RUN PARK
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CARITAS:

Beth Ahabah will again serve as an intake site for the CARITAS Program for the homeless. CARITAS stands for Congregations Around Richmond Involved To Assure Shelter. From Saturday, December 21, 2013 through Friday, February 21, 2014, persons seeking shelter for the night will come to our school building at approximately 5:45 pm.

We need volunteers to help CARITAS personnel sign in the homeless, offer them refreshments and make our guests feel at home until the CARITAS bus takes them to their shelter for the night. The bus arrives at approximately 7:00 pm. Volunteers need to be at Temple by 5:30 pm and should be finished by approximately 7:15 pm.

Two volunteers are needed per night. There will be CARITAS personnel as well as a Beth Ahabah staff member present each evening. No advanced training is needed to perform this mitzvah. Please consider volunteering as an individual or a family. Most Beth Ahabah volunteers agree to work the same night each week for the duration of the program. Several members who have participated in the program with their teenage child have found this a rewarding family experience.

Items such as appropriate magazines, playing cards, books and toiletry items are always welcome as donations. To sign up or for more information, please contact Chuck Greenberg at 794-6800 or cgre41@yahoo.com.

Before you know it, Thanksgiving will be here and Thanksgiving is a good time to count our blessings. Sitting with your family and/or your friends helps make you appreciate life, and that’s the main point of the day. Gratitude, too, is easiest felt by context. When we take the time and make the effort to look at the “big picture”, we should be able to find at least one reason to be happy. As it was written many years ago, “Who is happy? One who is content with his or her portion.” So, how do we become content with our own portion; by realizing how blessed we are to have what we have.

As you read this reflection by an anonymous author, try to find the context that will help enable you to appreciate the blessings in your life.

If you find yourself stuck in traffic; don’t despair. There are people in this world for whom driving is an unheard of privilege.

Should you have a bad day at work; think of the man who has been out of work for years.

Should you despair over a relationship gone bad; think of the person who has never known what it’s like to love and to be loved in return.

Should you grieve the passing of another weekend; think of the woman in dire straits, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week to feed her children.

Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance; think of the paraplegic who would love the opportunity to take that walk.

Should you notice a new gray hair in the mirror; think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes that she had hair to examine.

Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering what life is all about, asking “what is my purpose”? Be thankful. There are those who didn’t live long enough to get the opportunity.

Should you find yourself the victim of other people’s bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities; remember, things could be worse.

Happy Thanksgiving!!

Russell M. Finer, FSA, Executive Director
WHAT? LATKES WITH MY TURKEY!
Hanukkah and Thanksgiving: A once in an eternity overlap

This year features an anomaly for American Jews – The first day of Hanukkah coincides with Thanksgiving, on November 28, 2013. It turns out that it has never happened before...and it will never happen again.

Thanksgiving is set as the fourth Thursday in November, meaning the latest it can be is November 28. November 28 is also the earliest Hanukkah can be. The Jewish calendar repeats on a 19 year cycle, and Thanksgiving repeats on a 7 year cycle. You would therefore expect them to coincide roughly every 19x7 = 133 years. Looking back, this is approximately correct – the last time it would have happened is 1861. However, Thanksgiving was only formally established by President Lincoln in 1863. So, it has never happened before. Why won’t it ever happen again?

The reason is because the Jewish calendar is very slowly getting out of sync with the solar calendar, at a rate of 4 days per 1000 years (not bad for a many centuries old calendar!) This means that while presently Hanukkah can be as early as November 28, over the years the calendar will drift forward, such that the earliest Hanukkah can be is November 29. The last time Hanukkah falls on November 28 is 2146 (which happens to be a Monday). Therefore, 2013 is the only time Hanukkah will ever overlap with Thanksgiving.

Of course, if the Jewish calendar is never modified in any way, then it will slowly move forward through the Gregorian calendar, until it loops all the way back to where it is now. So, Hanukkah will again fall on Thursday, November 28...in the year 79,811.

MID-WEEK HEBREW: THE BEST KEPT SECRET
There is Still Room for Enrollment!

“My son Michael was disappointed that Midweek Hebrew had ended and he had to wait until next fall to start again. He had so much fun while he was learning Hebrew with Mr. G and was very clear that was the one thing he did not want to miss each week. Michael is very much looking forward to it starting up again in the fall!” - Beth Stein

Five Great Reasons to Register for Midweek Hebrew
1. Your child will improve his or her Hebrew proficiency and knowledge in a shorter time period.
2. Your child will progress faster through the Sunday Hebrew program.
3. Your child will have an opportunity to study in a smaller informal tutorial-style classroom setting.
4. At less than $5 per session, it’s a bargain!
5. It’s Fun!!

Class will be preceded by an optional pizza dinner.
Pizza Dinner: 5:30 –6:00 pm in the Prachim room
Class: 6:00 –7:15 pm in the school building

Cost: $150.00, Pizza Dinner $80 for the year or $5 drop in fee

GRADE 7 FIELD TRIP TO MONTICELLO:
Sunday, November 3rd

As part of our American Jewish History curriculum the 7th grade will be taking a trip to Monticello on Sunday, March 3rd. The focus of the trip is Thomas Jefferson’s contribution to religious freedom and its impact on the Jewish community. Additionally the students will learn about the contribution of the Levy family to saving and restoring Monticello after Jefferson’s death. We are fortunate to have this interesting opportunity to learn more about our American Jewish heritage!!

Parents are invited to chaperone: contact Ramona at r.brand@bethahabah.org for more information

SHABBAT-IN-THE-PARK
Friday, October 4th
6:00 PM Service
6:45 PM Oneg
Deep Run Park Recreational Center
9910 Ridgefield Parkway
Back Field Shelter

For more information contact Rabbi Gallop at rabbi.gallop@bethahabah.org or Ramona Brand at r.brand@bethahabah.org.
GRADES 1 AND 2 SYNAGOGUE TOUR: THE “OR TOUR”
Sunday, November 10

Our 1st and 2nd graders participate in a city-wide Bus Tour of 3 area synagogue. Their interactive experience includes a scavenger hunt, snack, and a great active learning opportunity. This year the tour goes to Or Ami, Or Atid and Chabad.

Drop off and Pick Up is at the Weinstein JCC
9:00 am: Students arrive at the JCC
9:15 am: Busses leave for synagogues
12:00 pm: Students arrive back at the JCC for pick-up.

Parents are invited to chaperone: contact Ramona at r.brand@bethahabah.org for more information.

This program is generously sponsored by the Richmond Council for Jewish Education.

GESHERS
Kindergarten: Sunday October 13th
Theme: Shabbat

First Grade: Sunday, October 20th
Theme: Making a Jewish Home

Third Grade: Sunday, October 27th
Theme: The Bible

Second Grade: Sunday, November 3rd
Theme: Jewish Literature

Parents are invited to join their children at Religious School to participate in our Family Education Program called GESHER (which means “bridge” in Hebrew).

9:15-10:30 am: Students in class
9:30-10:30 am: Rabbi Beifield will engage in an Adult Education Session with parents on the topic Shabbat.
10:30-11:45 am: Parents & children will join together in the kindergarten classroom with their teachers for an age-appropriate project and brunch.

A MESSAGE FROM LISA GOLDBERG, JERAFTY ADVISOR:

I am very excited to be the new JeRAFTY advisor! I grew up in a suburb of Boston and was involved in NFTY-North East and had a blast. Following high school, I went to college at Brandeis University and majored in Psychology. I am currently a graduate student at Virginia Commonwealth University getting my PhD in Counseling Psychology. In my free time, I enjoy being outdoors and active. I love running, hiking, biking, swimming, yoga, and pilates. I also enjoy a good book. I look forward working with JeRAFTY this year and helping to bring some great events to you!
John “Jack” Edward Troutman  
October 12, 2013

Jack Troutman will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on October 12, 2013. Jack is the son of John and Jessica Troutman and older brother to Nicholas.

Jack is a 7th grade student in the International Baccalaureate program at Lucille Brown Middle School, where his favorite subjects are history and physical education. Jack plays football as a wide receiver for the Western Wildcats, is an avid ESPN viewer, and enjoys spending time playing pick-up baseball games and riding his skateboard around the neighborhood with friends.

For his Mitzvah Project, Jack volunteered at The Virginia Home near Byrd Park. The Virginia Home provides loving, lifelong residential care to approximately 150 adults with permanent physical disabilities. Jack has spent time getting to know many of the residents and helping them with activities such as writing letters, painting pictures, tossing a ball, visiting, and other activities enjoyed by the residents. He has enjoyed his experience and plans to continue volunteering at The Virginia Home in order to earn his community service hours for Lucille Brown Middle as well as to continue the relationships with the Virginia Home residents who he has enjoyed getting to know.

Jack is looking forward to sharing this special occasion with family, friends, and the Beth Ahabah community.

Corrine Brager  
October 19, 2013

Corinne Brager, daughter of Sharon and Rob Brager, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on October 19th. She has two sisters, Erica and Nicole. Her grandparents are Madalene and Stan Brager and Phyllis and Bill Scott.

Corinne is a seventh grader at Orchard House School. She enjoys performing in theater productions; participates in her school chorus; plays on the basketball team; and has taken violin lessons for the past seven years. Corinne loves to travel and explore new places, and she is an avid reader. For her Mitzvah Project, Corinne volunteered on a weekly basis as an assistant in an early childhood classroom at the William Byrd Community Center, where she read; played games; and had fun with the kids.

Corinne is looking forward to celebrating with her family and friends on this wonderful occasion.

Henry Alexander Greenberg  
October 26, 2013

Alec Greenberg will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on October 26th, 2013. He is the son of Hank and Natalie Greenberg, brother of Hayes and Avery Greenberg and grandson of Hank and Nancy Greenberg and Morry and Betsy Johnston.

Alec is a 7th grade student at Collegiate School and he enjoys music, reading, building projects, soccer, friends and family gatherings. Architecture and entrepreneurial thinking are his interests. For his Mitzvah Project, Alec chose to work with children with special needs as a soccer buddy for Top Soccer. This project was a great fit for a young man born with compassion and the ability to work with young children.

Call for Council for Social Justice (CSJ) Members

The congregation regularly receives information about local and national social justice initiatives and issues. The Social Justice Committee would like to convene a panel to review these and decide which initiatives and advocacy issues the congregation should pursue, as well as coordinate the efforts that we support within the Richmond community.

If you are interested in being part of this committee please contact Heather Dinkin at heather.dinkin@gmail.com or 306-8873.
Conner Clark, son of Bently and Alissa Clark will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on November 9, 2013.

Conner is a 7th grade student at Pocahontas Middle School in Henrico County. For his Mitzvah Project he volunteered at the JCC preschool Camp Ganim. He enjoys working with computers, reading and writing short stories.

His family is very proud of him and we look forward to celebrating his special day with family, friends and fellow members of our congregation.

Eric will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on November 23rd. He is the son of Alex and Gladys Brenner, brother of Karina and grandson of Sina Brenner and the late Pini Brenner, the Late Alberto Lischinsky and Sara Kohan de Lischinsky.

Eric is an 8th grade student in the International Baccalaureate program at Moody Middle School. He is a part time actor having played with the Barksdale Theater, Cadence Theater, and HatTheatre and plays percussion at the school band. He enjoys soccer, tennis and studying Chinese. For his Mitzvah Project Eric volunteered at TOPSoccer Buddies helping special needs athletes to learn and improve in soccer. He also volunteers in TOSS events (Tikkun Olam Super Stars) with different organizations such as Beth Sholom Home and Arms Wide Open Childhood Cancer Foundation.

We are very proud of Eric’s accomplishments and of being able to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah with his classmates, friends and family and hope that his becoming an accountable member of the Jewish community turns out to be a meaningful landmark in his life.

“Tikkun Olam, helping make the world a better place,” is what motivates congregation member Jim Weinberg to be a leader and devoted to community organizations. “When people come together to build something bigger and better than what they had,” it is very rewarding.

One of the organizations, Jim has led as president is the Central Virginia Food Bank, which provides food to 500 different agencies and Virginia’s most vulnerable populations. His participation started with a project, through Leadership Metro Richmond, to assess the Food Banks’ needs. Jim has also been president of The Jewish Community Federation and now is President-Elect of the Richmond Jewish Foundation. Jim also serves on our board at Beth Ahabah and has served on the Valentine Richmond History Center, all the while President of the Hirschler Fleischer Law Group.

What makes a successful leader? “Being a good listener. Bringing together all the different perspectives everyone contributes, and helping to find a role for everyone who has a voice at the table.”

Jim is the second generation of his family at Beth Ahabah. His dad, Jay Weinberg, served as president of the board of managers. Jim and his wife, Rosannn Bocciarelli, have two daughters Julia and Caroline.
Unlike many Jewish holidays, Hanukkah (also known as the Festival of Lights) is not mentioned in the Bible. The historical events upon which the celebration is based are recorded in Maccabees I and II, two books contained within a later collection of writings known as the Apocrypha. Although Hanukkah is considered a “minor” Jewish festival, today it ranks—along with Passover and Purim—as one of the most beloved Jewish family holidays.

In the year 168 B.C.E., the Syrian tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes sent his soldiers to Jerusalem. The Syrians desecrated the Temple, the holiest place for Jews at that time. Antiochus also abolished Judaism, outlawing the observance of Shabbat and the Festivals, as well as circumcision. Altars and idols were set up for the worship of Greek gods and he offered Jews two options: conversion or death. On the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev in 168 B.C.E., the Temple was renamed for the Greek god Zeus. A resistance movement—led by a priestly family known as the Hasmoneans, or Maccabees—developed against the cruelty of Antiochus. The head of the family was Mattathias, an elderly man. His son, Judah, became the chief strategist and military leader of the resistance. Though outnumbered, Judah Maccabee and his fighters miraculously won two major battles, routing the Syrians decisively.

Although historians debate the causes and outcomes of the war in which Judah Maccabee and his followers defeated the Syrian armies of Antiochus, there is no doubt that Hanukkah evokes stirring images of Jewish valor against overwhelming odds. Other themes rooted in the observance of the holiday include the refusal to submit to the religious demands of an empire practicing idolatry, the struggle against total assimilation into Hellenistic culture and loss of Jewish identity, and the fight for Jewish political autonomy and self-determination.

Hanukkah, which means “dedication,” is the festival that commemorates the purification and rededication of the Temple following the defilement caused by the Greeks during their occupation of that holy place. Today, the holiday reminds Jews to rededicate themselves to stand against forces that would destroy Judaism and to keep alive the flame of Jewish religion, culture, and peoplehood so that it may be passed on to the next generation.

Originally, the eight-day holiday was intended to parallel the eight-day festival of Sukkot. The Books of the Maccabees made no mention of the legend concerning a small jar of oil that unexpectedly lasted for eight days. Only centuries after the Maccabees’ defeat of the Syrians did the story of the jar of oil—which has come to be a part of Hanukkah—appear in the Talmud.

According to the legend, when the Maccabees entered the Temple and began to reclaim it from the Greeks, they immediately relit the Ner Tamid (eternal light), which burned constantly in the Temple and has a parallel in our synagogues to this day. In the Temple, they found a single jar of oil, which was sufficient for only one day. The messenger who was sent to secure additional oil took eight days to complete his mission, and miraculously, the single jar of oil continued to burn until his return. The rabbis of the Talmud attributed the eight days of Hanukkah to the miracle of this single jar of oil.

Although the practice of lighting the menorah was common throughout much of the 19th century, North American Jews tended to neglect most of the other traditions and practices associated with the holiday. By the 1920s, however, Jews increasingly added gift-giving to their Hanukkah celebrations, prompting Christians to refer to Hanukkah as the “Jewish Christmas.”
Like many aspects of Jewish religious practice, the transformation of Hanukkah was linked to the growth of North American Jewry within its unique environment. The elevation of Hanukkah to a major holiday was the result of Jews acculturating themselves to a North America that was overwhelmingly Christian in population and symbols.

Although Hanukkah had become an important holiday among North American Jews by the 1920s, it would be incorrect to regard it as an imitation of Christmas with an emphasis on the exchange of presents. Rather, North American Jews use this holiday as a celebration of family, reinforcing Jewish identity in a place whose population may be overwhelmingly Christian but in which Jews feel at home. Hanukkah, therefore, is a means for North American Jews to feel a kinship with their neighbors, while simultaneously asserting their Jewish distinctiveness.

http://www.reformjudaism.org/hanukkah-history

HANUKKAH: CUSTOMS AND RITUALS

MUSIC
Ma’Oz Tzur (“Rock of Ages”), a Hanukkah song, traditionally is sung after the lighting of the candles each night, and at other times throughout the holiday. It was composed in Europe in the 12th or 13th century.

“I Have a Little Dreidel” is a modern-day children’s song frequently sung during the Festival of Lights. Other holiday favorites include “Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah,” “Sivivon, sov, sov, sov,” a Hebrew folksong, “Light One Candle,” written by Peter Yarrow, and “The Latke Song,” by Debbie Friedman, z”l., the renowned Jewish singer and songwriter.

RITUAL OBJECTS
Ritual objects associated with Hanukkah include the menorah and the dreidel.

Menorah is a Hebrew word meaning “candelabrum” and refers to the nine-branched ceremonial lamp in which the Hanukkah candles are placed and blessed each night of the holiday. The nine branches include eight branches, one for each day of the holiday, and one branch for the shamash (servant) candle that is used to light the other candles. In ancient times, oil was used in the menorah. Over time, candles were substituted for oil. The Hanukkah menorah can also be called a hanukiyah. (Seven-branched candelabra, one of the major symbols of the State of Israel today, are used for kindling the lights of Shabbat.)

The word dreidel derives from a German word meaning “spinning top,” and is the toy used in a Hanukkah game adapted from an old German gambling game. Hanukkah was one of the few times of the year when rabbis permitted games of chance. The four sides of the top bear four Hebrew letters: nun, gimmel, hey, and shin. Players begin by putting into a central pot or “kitty” a certain number of coins, chocolate money known as gelt, nuts, buttons or other small objects. Each player in turn spins the dreidel and proceeds as follows:

- nun – take nothing;
- gimmel – take everything;
- hey – take half;
- shin – put one in.

Over time, the letters on the dreidel were reinterpreted to stand for the first letter of each word in the Hebrew statement “Neis gadol hayah sham,” which means “A great miracle happened there” and refers to the defeat of the Syrian army and the re-dedication of the Temple. In Israel, one letter on the dreidel differs from those used in the rest of the world. The shin has been replaced with a pey, transforming the Hebrew statement into “Neis gadol hayah po,” which means“A great miracle happened here.”

FOOD
Latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly donuts)—foods cooked in oil—are traditionally eaten during Hanukkah and serve as a symbol of the legend of the jar of oil that lasted for eight days. In Israel, pastry shops specialize in creating delicious and creative sufganiyot.
WORSHIP
Worship services held during Hanukkah include the al hanissim (“for the miracles”) passage in the Amidah (the central prayer in worship, recited while standing) and in Birkat HaMazon (the blessing after meals).

The Torah reading for each day of Hanukkah is taken from Numbers 6:22-8:4, which recounts the dedication of the mishkan (temporary, moveable place of worship) by the Israelites in the desert. On Shabbat during Hanukkah, we read the regular weekly portion. During the Festival of Lights, the Haftarah readings, additional selections from the Prophetic books, are Zechariah 4:1-7 and I Kings 7:40-50.

BLESSINGS
Candles are added to the Hanukiyah from right to left but are kindled from left to right. The newest candle is lit first. (On the Shabbat of Hanukkah, light the Hanukkah candles first and then the Shabbat candles.)

Light the Shamash—the helper candle—first, using it to kindle the rest of the Hanukkah lights.

(Say or sing)

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the Hanukkah lights

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, she-asah nisim laavoteinu v'imoteinu bayamim hahaeim baz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who performed wonderous deeds for our ancestors in days of old at this season.

For first night only:

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higianu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.
DONATIONS:

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Ruth Bellet & Sidney Burnstein
Eric & Vicki White
Robert & Gloria Scheinman
& Family
Florence Stillerman
Fern Stillerman Cohen
Patricia Raab Marks & Howard
F. Marks, our parents
(Heath) Howard F. Marks, III, our nephew
Karen & Barry Hofheimer
Morton D. Schumann
Elinor Schumann
Paula Shapiro
Steve & Dorothy Bernstein
Irving I. Held, Jr.
Lucy Held
Steven Finer
Allen Finer
Russell Finer
Julius Griffin
Linda & Irvin Seeman
Samuel & Rebecca (Billye)
Michael
Sherlee Michael Ginsberg
Celia Yaffe
Russell Finer
Joseph Weiner
Russell Finer
Hilde Blumenthal
Lynn Stevenson
Ron Tunick
Bonnie & Ron Kasoff
THE RABBI’S
PHILANTHROPIC FUND
IN HONOR OF:
Sarah Seltzer’s Bat Mitzvah
Sheldon & Carmen Seltzer
Katie Roeper’s special birthday
Jim & Rachel Schmidt
Robert Boswell’s Aliyah on
Simchat Torah
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Greenberg
Victor Kasoff & Stevie Bodamer’s marriage
Laurie, Adam, Melissa & Lyndsay Nelson
Betty Vitsky’s speedy recovery
Sally Vitsky
Harry L. Cohn’s 88th Birthday
Wendy & David Miller
IN MEMORY OF:
Jonah M. Slipow, beloved husband, father & grandfather
Bernice Slipow
Paula Shapiro
Laurie, Adam, Melissa & Lyndsay Nelson
Harriett Goodman
Eileen & Ed Kitces
Stanley H. Becker
Millie Becker & Alan Schulman
Yetta B. Lowenstein
Marilyn Lowenstein & Family
Selma R. Mann
John B. Mann

MABEL STRADLING
ORGAN FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Marjorie Koblenzer Axel, my mother
Marc Axel

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL TUITION
ASSISTANCE FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Harriett Goodman
Bernice Slipow
Allison & Ken Samuels

MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
IN MEMORY OF:
Selma Mann
Mr. & Mrs. Louis O. Bowman, Jr.
Paula Shapiro
Carol & Michael Sesnowitz
Edith Brenner
Bonnie & Mike Eisenman
Katie & Ken Roeper
Pat Asch
Roberta & Peter Opper
Jeanne L. Landers
Dr. Audrey Landers
Harriett Goodman
Audrey Holtzman
Phillip Holtzman
Beth & Steve Cohen & Sons

HERBERT HELTZLER FUND:
IN HONOR OF:
Herbert Heltzler’s special birthday
Claire & Bob Rosenbaum

CANTOR GOLDMAN
MUSIC FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
M. David Shapiro, my beloved father
Katherine Shapiro Wootton, Bill, Amy & Lisa

An armed security guard is on duty at Hebrew Cemetery on the first and third Sundays of the month from Noon to 3 pm.

Pet Blessing
Saturday, October 5th • 10:30am
In honor of the week’s Torah portion, Noah, we will have a short worship experience that will take place on the surface parking lot. We ask that all animals be on leashes or in carriers.
The elections will be held at WRJ’s 49th Assembly in San Diego, CA, December 11-15, 2013.

Many thanks to Meg for her devotion to the Beth Ahabah sisterhood and Women of Reform Judaism. Her nomination is a great honor for all of us.

DID YOU KNOW that Congregation Beth Ahabah-Women of Reform Judaism sponsors and is responsible for many activities that happen at Temple? One of the big activities occurs during the High Holy Days. In addition to preparing meals for their own families, the women were busy preparing the Rosh Hashanah Luncheon and the Yom Kippur Break Fast. We hope you all enjoyed the lovely goodies that were made by the women and served on the respective days. If you like to cook and would like to help us before any of the Congregational Dinners during the year, just come to the kitchen by 5:00PM the Thursday night before a Shabbat Dinner on Friday. You can also contact Meg Marshak (see below) for more information.

After a very successful summer of viewing the 6 part series of videos that accompany Half the Sky, we are ready to launch the action part of our Social Action project. On October 6, Congregation Beth Ahabah’s Women of Reform Judaism (CBA-WRJ) will kick off the year of Half the Sky, Social Action project, with a Brunch in the Goldburg Auditorium. We (the entire group present) will decide what the goals will be and what activities will move us to those goals chosen for this Social Action project. We would love to have anyone interested show up for this brunch starting at 9:30 am in the Goldburg Auditorium. If you have questions about this project please contact Laura Davidson at lauraelaine87@aol.com. We would like to have all of you involved in this project. There will be things for all women to do while we put together the activities for this project. BRING YOUR VOICE AND IDEAS TO THE BRUNCH ON OCTOBER 6.

Oh, now wait, we aren’t done with October yet. On Saturday the 19th, at 7:00 PM Beth Ahabah- Women of Reform Judaism will host our spectacular Art Auction, beginning at 7:00 with noshes and drinks. While you browse and decide which items you will bid on you get to chat with others and decide your strategies for taking home the art you have fallen in love with. Bring your checkbooks and/or credit cards and leave the budget at home. As the saying goes. WE WANT YOU. Yes, we want you to enjoy the evening and help to support the many activities that CBA-WRJ does for the Temple. Marlin Art House is bringing us some great artwork and it is always a fun evening. By the time you get this Bulletin, tickets may already be on sale. Check with Beryl Holzbach at beryl44@comcast.net, she will gladly see that you get your tickets. We would love to see you at this event. It is a fun evening and Marlin does a great job of bringing diverse art, so everyone finds something they like.

A note of information. If you are having a Bar or Bat Mitzvah this year and would like to use the Sisterhood’s linens, we have added some new colors. We need you to contact Meg Marshak at meg.marshak@comcast.net for the information about the linens. It is important that you let us know and that we get you to send us a check made out to CBA-Sisterhood. Thank you in advance. CBA-WRJ has a great year planned.

Please look for the next Bulletin and check the e-news for updates on the activities that are being planned.

by Meg Marshak, President

MEG MARSHAK NOMINATED FOR WRJ NATIONAL OFFICE!

Congratulations to Meg Marshak, who has been nominated to the slate for election to the Board of Directors for Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ).

The elections will be held at WRJ’s 49th Assembly in San Diego, CA, December 11-15, 2013.

Many thanks to Meg for her devotion to the Beth Ahabah sisterhood and Women of Reform Judaism. Her nomination is a great honor for all of us.

MEG MARSHAK NOMINATED FOR WRJ NATIONAL OFFICE!

Congratulations to Meg Marshak, President

MEG MARSHAK NOMINATED FOR WRJ NATIONAL OFFICE!

by John Marshak, President

Recently, I was asked, in essence, “What value is there in joining Brotherhood?” Although I have participated actively for about five years here at Beth Ahabah, I realized I had not given this any thought. There were things to be done and I stepped up to do them. So, to answer this question, I went to a couple of MRJ publications. I found part of the answer in an article by Rabbi Kenneth Mithander entitled “Getting in Touch with My Masculine Side.” Allow me to share part of his perspective, one that appealed to me:

It seems that in recent decades, men have relinquished some of their responsibility vis-à-vis the synagogue. As women have achieved equality as rabbis, cantors, Jewish educators and synagogue leaders – a very welcome and positive addition to the Jewish world that was long overdue – many men have moved to the sidelines. Instead of working together with women in partnership in continuing God’s unfolding creation, I believe many have simply given up on the synagogue as a place for them. But just as men play a critical role in the family structure and in the upbringing of their children, men also play a vital role in the life of the synagogue.

Our young and not-so-young sons and daughters need to see men as active participants in synagogue life. We need to show our spouses/partners and children that we can relate to other men on a variety of levels and that we are strengthened and strengthened each other when we are able to interact with other men.

by John J. Marshak, Ph. D., President
Currently on Exhibit in the Galleries

• Edith Lindeman Calisch - Opening November 3
• That You'll Remember Me: Jewish Voices of the Civil War
• Commonwealth & Community

Museum Hours:
10 am to 3 pm Sunday - Thursday

The Museum & Archives is located next door to the temple office at 1109 W. Franklin Street. For more information about the archives, to make an appointment to research in the archives or set up a group tour, please contact 804.353.2668.

Edith Lindeman Calisch married A.Woolner Calisch on May 3, 1920 at Congregation Beth Ahabah. As described in the Richmond newspapers, the bride wore “an exquisite wedding gown of white duchess satin, made in short length, and trimmed with pearls. Her long tulle veil fell gracefully from a wreath of orange blossoms and her flowers were a bouquet of white snap dragons, lilies of the valley and orange blossoms.

A new exhibition on Edith’s life and career as a newspaper woman and published songwriter opens November 3 in the Fairman Gallery.

DID YOU KNOW? Jewish Trivia

JUDAH P. BENJAMIN'S RICHMOND ADDRESS

There is a marker in the sidewalk at 9 West Main Street between First and Foushee Streets in Richmond, noting the location of Judah P. Benjamin’s home while he served as Secretary of State in the Confederate cabinet during the Civil War. Judah P. Benjamin also served as Secretary of War and Attorney General.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W02</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F04</td>
<td>Shabbat at Deep Run Park&lt;br&gt;Shabbat Service at Temple</td>
<td>6:00 PM&lt;br&gt;7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S05</td>
<td>Pet Blessing Shabbat</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S06</td>
<td>Religious School</td>
<td>9:15 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>M07</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>W09</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F11</td>
<td>Tot Shabbat&lt;br&gt;Congregational Shabbat Dinner&lt;br&gt;Shabbat Service with Guest Rabbi Eric Wisnia&lt;br&gt;and the Adult Choir</td>
<td>5:30 PM&lt;br&gt;6:00 PM&lt;br&gt;7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S12</td>
<td>Bar Mitzvah of Jack Troutman</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S13</td>
<td>Religious School&lt;br&gt;Kindergarten Gesher</td>
<td>9:15 AM&lt;br&gt;9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>W16</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F18</td>
<td>Shabbat Service</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S19</td>
<td>Bat Mitzvah of Corinne Brager</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S20</td>
<td>Religious School&lt;br&gt;First Grade Gesher</td>
<td>9:15 AM&lt;br&gt;9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>M21</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>W23</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F25</td>
<td>Kindergarten and 1st Grade&lt;br&gt;Shabbat Dinner&lt;br&gt;Consecration Family Shabbat Service&lt;br&gt;w/ Etz Chayim Choir</td>
<td>6:00 PM&lt;br&gt;7:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S26</td>
<td>Bar Mitzvah of Alec Greenberg</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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<td>S27</td>
<td>Religious School&lt;br&gt;Third Grade Gesher</td>
<td>9:15 AM&lt;br&gt;9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>M28</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>W30</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F01</td>
<td>Shabbat Service</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S03</td>
<td>Religious School&lt;br&gt;2nd Grade Gesher</td>
<td>9:15 AM&lt;br&gt;9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>M04</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>W06</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F08</td>
<td>Tot Shabbat&lt;br&gt;Shabbat Service</td>
<td>5:30 PM&lt;br&gt;7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S09</td>
<td>Bar Mitzvah of Conner Clark</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S10</td>
<td>Religious School</td>
<td>9:15 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>W13</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F15</td>
<td>4th and 5th Grade Shabbat Dinner&lt;br&gt;Family Shabbat Service&lt;br&gt;w/ Etz Chayim Choir</td>
<td>6:00 PM&lt;br&gt;7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S17</td>
<td>Religious School&lt;br&gt;New Member Brunch</td>
<td>9:15 AM&lt;br&gt;9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>M18</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F22</td>
<td>Introduction to Judaism Class Dinner&lt;br&gt;Shabbat Service with Choir</td>
<td>6:00 PM&lt;br&gt;7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S23</td>
<td>Bar Mitzvah of Eric Brenner</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>S24</td>
<td>Religious School&lt;br&gt;W/ Hanukkah Celebration</td>
<td>9:15 AM&lt;br&gt;6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>M25</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>F29</td>
<td>“Bring your Hanukkiah” Shabbat Service</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Calendar information is subject to change, please check the calendar online at bethahabah.org
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Jesse Gallop Associate Rabbi*
Russell M. Finer, FSA Executive Director*
Ramona Brand Education Director*
Dr. Jack D. Spiro Rabbi Emeritus
Frances T. Goldman Cantor Emerita
Natan Berenshteyn Music Director & Accompanist
Sarah Beck-Berman Cantorial Soloist

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