Shavuot

by Rabbi Jesse Gallop

WITHIN the Biblical tradition there are three festival holidays: Sukkot, Pesach (Passover), and Shavuot. Sukkot and Pesach are widely known. However, Shavuot is commonly overlooked or unknown to many Jewish Americans. Shavuot celebrates receiving the Torah on Mount Sinai after the Israelites were freed from Egyptian slavery.

Traditionally Shavuot is celebrated with an evening of studying, lasting until morning. In addition, at the Festival service, we are to read the Ten Commandments for Torah. The Book of Ruth is also associated with this holiday. Jews across the world read the story of Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz.

The Book of Ruth is incredibly powerful. It begins with Naomi losing her husband and adult sons. In her mourning she tells her daughter-in-laws Ruth and Orpah to go back to their ancestral homelands, as she is going back to hers in Israel. It is at this moment when Ruth makes an oath to Naomi:

“Wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people shall be my people. And your God shall be my God.”

This is seen by many in our tradition as the first formal conversion in Judaism.

The power of the story goes far beyond this one moment. Overall, the story is an allegory of the Israelite people, and their destiny. Just like our ancestors in bondage, it begins with bereavement and hardship. Then they journey from the land they live back to their homeland in Israel. While traveling they experience God’s blessing in many ways, especially in being able to feed themselves by Ruth gleaning the crops that have fallen during harvest. These pieces of produce can be seen as being manna-like, food that was given onto them. And finally Ruth is transformed from a helpless widow, who is vulnerable and destitute, into a person whose experience is based in joy. She is remarried, can provide for Naomi, and fulfills her responsibility to produce a child continuing the lineage of her deceased husband. Just like Shavuot is the climax of the Israelite encounter, where God bestows them with the eternal gift of Torah, the Book of Ruth symbolizes the creation, revelation, and redemption of the Jewish people.

At Congregation Beth Ahabah, we too celebrate the important holiday of Shavuot where we honor this holiday of Revelation by studying, eating cheesecake and other wonderful desserts, and by sharing a service together. Please join us on Tuesday, June 3rd at 7pm.

Meet the Super Heroes and Villains of the Purim Shpiel on page 4.

Pictured Left to Right: The Riddler played by Katie Atwood; Wonderwoman played by Laura Freiden; and The Joker played by Cheryl Anne Williams

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CONGREGATION BETH Ahabah
MITZVAH DAY 2014
Sunday, April 27, 2014

WHAT IS MITZVAH DAY?
A single day service project that lets us reach out and make the world a little better. Working together, we make a difference in the lives of others and our environment. We will make new friends, have fun and finish the day feeling GREAT!

MITZVAH DAY SCHEDULE
9:15am Religious School Children Should Report to Classrooms at the Regular Time.
11:00am Mitzvah Day Assembly with Introduction by Rabbi Beifield.
11:30am Boxed Lunches Distributed. Projects Begin.
2:00pm Projects Completed.

IT’S EASY TO HELP
For more information on the projects and to register, complete the Mitzvah Day form online at www.bethahabah.org or http://www.formstack.com/forms/21711178-fhN6wAgAb2. Bring in collected items on Mitzvah Day.

ON SITE
• Package Meals for Stop Hunger Now
• Feed the Homeless at Monroe Park
• Baking Desserts for Hospital Hospitality House
• Cooking Meals at St. James’ for Hospital Hospitality House
• Paint Inspirational Stones for Hebrew Cemetery
• Cards and Letters for U.S. Troops
• Beautify the Grounds at Beth Ahabah
• Clean-Up of Beth Ahabah Sanctuary
• Table Build for Caritas
• Mitzvah Day T-Shirt Sales to Benefit ARC and Beth Ahabah
• Information Tables for Mt. Moriah, Half the Sky, and Fall Prevention
• McGruff, the Crime Dog Fingerprinting for Kids
• Blood Drive for Virginia Blood Bank

COLLECTIONS
• New and Gently Used Toys for the Homeless
• Pet Supplies for Foster Homes
• Toiletries for Camp Comfort
• Books for Homeless Children
• Art Supplies for the Visual Arts Center
• Cell Phones for Vets and Battered Women’s Shelters
• New Undergarments and Socks for Homeless Shelters
• Eyeglasses for the Lions Club

OFF-SITE MISSIONS
• Clean Up at Hebrew Cemetery
• Plant a Vegetable Garden for William Byrd House
• Create Art at Visual Arts Center for Beth Sholom
• Sisterhood’s Pink Ribbon Project for Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation
• Sisterhood’s Lovies for MCV
**INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIFE**

by Russ Finer, FSA

In going through my files recently I came across the following INSTRUCTIONS for LIFE which I would like to share with you:

- Take into account that great love and great achievements both involve great risk.
- When you lose, don’t lose the lesson.
- Follow the three Rs: Respect for self; Respect for others; and Respect for all your actions.
- Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck.
- Learn the rules so you know how to break them.
- Don’t let a little dispute injure a great friendship.
- When you realize you’ve made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.
- Spend some time alone every day.
- Open your arms to change, but don’t let go of your values.
- Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you will be able to enjoy it a second time.
- A loving atmosphere in your home is the foundation for your life. Do all you can to create a tranquil, harmonious home.
- In disagreements with loved ones, deal only with the current situation. Do not bring up the past.
- Share your knowledge. It is a way to immortality.
- Be gentle with the earth.
- Once a year, go to someplace you’ve never been before.
- Remember that the best relationship is one in which your love for each other exceeds your need for each other.
- Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.
- Approach love and cooking with reckless abandon!

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**Shavuot**

Shavuot, known as the Festival of the Giving of the Torah, is reflected in the Bible, which recounts how, after the Exodus from Egypt, the Children of Israel proceeded to Mount Sinai in the desert. Moses ascended the mountain to meet God, who gave him the Ten Commandments, which were written on two tablets to be delivered to the Children of Israel.

According to the Torah, it took precisely 49 days, or seven weeks, for the ancient Israelites to travel from Egypt to the foot of Mount Sinai. The Torah commands: “And you shall proclaim that day (the 50th day) to be a holy convocation!” (Leviticus 23:21). The name Shavuot, “Weeks,” symbolizes the completion of this seven-week journey. The rabbis tightened this connection by associating Shavuot with Moses’ receiving the Torah from God atop Mount Sinai.

Shavuot also is a harvest holiday. In the time of the Temple, the ancient Israelites brought their first fruits to the Temple to offer to God at Shavuot. Along with Sukkot and Passover, it is one of the Shalosh Regalim (Three Pilgrimage Festivals), during which people gathered in Jerusalem with their agricultural offerings.

Shavuot is known by several names: Chag Hashavuot (the Festival of Weeks), Chag Habikkurim (the Feast of the First Fruits), and Chag Hakatzir (the Festival of Reaping). Ashkenazi Jews may pronounce and write the name of the holiday as Shavuos.

This year at Beth Ahabah, we will celebrate Shavuot on Tuesday evening, June 3rd at 7:00 p.m.

From URJ.org
HOLY #$%&*, BATMAN!

Clockwise from the top left: Kim Miller and Ricky Williams; Nello Williams and Cheryl Anne Williams; Laura Freiden and Brian Meyer; Dana Isaacoff and Hart Isaacoff; Ken Roeper; Megan Miller, Dina Berenshtein, Nicolette LeBlanc Zbell

The Super Villains were outmatched by the Super Heroines & Super Heroes of Beth Ahabah!
Twenty five 7th - 9th graders, parent chaperones and teachers experienced a fantastic way to learn history up close and personal with a trip to Philadelphia. This trip was the culmination of the 7th grade study of American Jewish History and took place over the weekend of March 28th – 30th. We travelers journeyed by bus to Temple Beth Am on Old York Road in Abington, PA where we were warmly welcomed by host families, shared dinner and a Kabbalat Shabbat service led by their song leader. Saturday was a whirlwind day beginning with a visit to the National Museum of American Jewish History. The interactive exhibits followed Jewish American history from the landing of the first Jews in America in 1654 through present day. Special exhibits on Jews in Baseball, Jewish Camps, an interactive video making session and passing through the immigration tests at Ellis Island were favorites! We also learned about several very important contributions of our congregation to American Jewish History! After braving the cold pouring rain for Philly cheesesteaks and a quick visit to the Visitor’s Center, the National Constitution Center was the next stop. This highly engaging museum had students and parents making connections between the history of the Jewish people in America and the impact of American history on the development of American Judaism. The day ended with bowling and camaraderie with our new friends from Beth Am.

On Sunday we rose very early to go to morning Minyan services at Congregation Mikveh Israel, a Sephardic Orthodox synagogue in the heart of old Philadelphia, just a few blocks away from Independence Hall. We participated in a service that Rabbi Gabbai said was not much changed from 1740! After a wonderful presentation by the Rabbi about the history of Mikveh Israel (and some connections again to our congregation) we departed Philadelphia for home. This exciting trip furthered our students’ understanding of the growth and development of the Jewish American people and the American Jewish impact on the social, cultural and governmental development of the United States. Next year’s trip is already in the works and our new friends from Beth Am are planning a visit to Richmond as well!!
Jewish camping builds a foundation for Jewish living. Children who participate in Jewish camps create a positive Jewish self-identity, feel more engaged in community and retain connection to the Jewish community into adulthood. There are many choices for Jewish camping from day camps to overnight camps geared toward a great variety of interests. Check out our camp board in the lobby of the Religious School to see where your children’s friends will be this summer!

Registration for Camp NOAR and Camp Sababa is now open! Space is limited so don’t delay!

CAMP NOAR: A TEEN TRAVEL CAMP FOR RISING 7TH – 9TH GRADERS

This exciting new teen camp includes 3 days in Charlottesville and 3 days in Richmond. Beth Ahabah is partnering with Congregation Beth Israel in Charlottesville to give rising 7th – 9th graders the exciting opportunity to participate in a one-week traveling adventure camp.

When: Monday, June 23rd – Sunday, June 29th

Where: Charlottesville and Richmond (home hospitality housing)

Cost: $350.00 all inclusive!!


Students will participate in home hospitality. This is a great way for the teens from each congregation to bond together while spending the evenings in each other’s homes. The parents of students participating will serve as hosts.

CAMP Sababa!

Looking for a fun way for your kids to explore their Jewish roots this summer? Come to Camp Sababa! Sports, singing, dancing, nature, crafts, drama, and special events like the Israel Cafe, Mayim (water) activities and Jewish world travel are all part of the fun. Make sure your child is in on the action! Sababa is Hebrew slang for “cool,” and Camp Sababa is the coolest way for your children to make new friends over the summer while learning Hebrew!

This year’s theme “Jewish Time Travel”

For whom? For ALL rising Kindergarten – 6th grade Jewish students with a Counselor in Training Program for rising 7th & 8th grade Jewish students

When? Monday-Friday, August 18-22, 2014 from 9am-2pm

Where? 601 N. Parham Rd. (Beth-El Religious School)

Goals?
• To have fun through outdoor activities, music, crafts, games, etc.
• To meet Jewish students from around Richmond
• To review & refresh Hebrew language skills

Staff? Education Directors and teachers from the participating schools and teen madrichim

Cost? $75 for all 5 days final
Registration Deadline July 18, 2014
For more information or to obtain an application, contact Ramona at r.brand@bethahabah.org or Sara Rosenbaum at the Federation office 545-8629 or srosenbaum@jewishrichmond.org.

YOM HA’AZMAUT FAMILY CELEBRATION OF ISRAEL

Three Lakes Park and Nature Center
Sunday, May 4th
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

All are encouraged to wear blue and white!

Celebrate Israel Independence Day with a great morning at Three Lakes Park and Nature Center.

Field games, crafts, music, hiking, visits to the Aquarium and Nature Museum. Play on the fully handicapped accessible play structure.

Come join in the fun as we celebrate Israel’s 66th Birthday! The Brotherhood will provide a hot-dog picnic lunch! YUM!

Three Lake Park and Nature Center is located at 400 Sausiluta Dr. Henrico, VA 23227
Ben Ratner will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, May 3rd. Ben is the son of Sarah and Todd Ratner and older brother of Jonah.

Ben attends the Faison School for Autism. He enjoys swimming, listening to music, and visiting the beach.

Ben has worked extremely hard preparing for this important milestone. His family is very proud of him and is excited to celebrate his accomplishment.

Shane Bishop will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, May 3rd. Shane is the son of Jodi and Greg Bishop and the older brother of Brett and Blair. He is the grandson of Phyllis and Robert Berman of McLean, and Hattie and Roger Bishop of Roanoke.

Shane is a 7th grade IB student at Tuckahoe Middle School. He enjoys soccer, skiing, tennis, reading, computer technology and hanging out with friends.

Shane is looking forward to sharing this special day with his family and friends.

Sara Skolnick will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on May 10th. Sara is the daughter of Curtis and Marie Skolnick and the younger sister of Jason. She is the grand daughter to Phyllis Skolnick and the late Richard Skolnick of Virginia Beach, Sonja and Bill Vogel of Columbia, Maryland, and Bill Patrick of Columbus, Georgia.

Sara is a 7th grade honors student at Robious Middle School. She has a wonderful sense of humor and enjoys music, reading, making videos, cooking, crafts, playing with the family cat (Gwen), and spending time with her friends and family. Sara plays field hockey and softball, swims on her local swim team, and skis. She has been part of the Beth Ahabah family since 2004 and has attended Camp Louise in Cascade, Maryland for the past 4 years.

For her Mitzvah Project Sara is working to raise awareness of and money for research for the Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation in memory of her grandfather, Richard Skolnick, who passed away in January from MDS (myelodysplastic syndrome).

Sara is looking forward to sharing this special day with the Beth Ahabah community, and her local family and friends from Central Virginia and Hampton Roads as well as from Maryland, Georgia, and Ohio.
HOPPER STRAUChLER  
May 24, 2014

Hopper Martin Strauchler will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, May 24th. He is the son of Kasi and Adam Strauchler and the brother of Molly and Lucy.

All four of his grandparents, Linda Strauchler, Pennsylvania and Gayle and Buddy Dacus of Williamsburg, Virginia, will be in attendance.

BRYCE AARON GOLDSTEIN 
May 31, 2014

Bryce Aaron Goldstein will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, May 31st. He is the son of Kim and Alan Goldstein and the brother of Mason, and the grandson of Adrien and Rob Watson, Larry Goldstein and Karen Schneider, Donna and Ray Dennison and David and Jill Sheer.

Bryce is a 7th grader at Short Pump Middle School. He plays soccer for Richmond Strikers. He also enjoys reading, traveling, computers and hanging out with friends.

Bryce’s Mitzvah Project is helping The Sandals Foundation in the Caribbean, by collecting school supplies to take to a school in need over the summer.

His family is so proud of his hard work and dedication in preparing for this special day.

JESSLYN KATZ  
June 14, 2014

Jesslyn Katz will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday June 14th. She is the daughter of Lee and Jenni Katz and older sister to Lila. She is the granddaughter of Albert and Doris Katz and Judy Marini and the late Frank Marini.

Jesslyn is a 7th grade student at Holman Middle School where she is a SCA representative and performs in the school’s plays. Her passion for dance keeps her very busy as she takes seven dance classes and performs in the junior company for Central Virginia Dance Academy.

Jesslyn also takes classes at HATT Theatre. When Jesslyn is not dancing or acting she likes reading, playing the piano and spending time with her friends and family. Jesslyn’s ultimate love is taking care of and being with her dog, Brinkley.

For her Mitzvah Project, Jesslyn planned, organized and participated in a dance showcase and a dessert reception for residents at the Beth Shalom Home. Jesslyn’s love of dance brought smiles to the residents’ faces which truly warmed her heart. This project was very meaningful for her since her Papa, Albert Katz, previously worked at the Home.

Jesslyn is looking forward to sharing this special day with her family and friends.
DONATIONS

TEMPLE FUND
Philip W. & Nathalie L. Klaus Fund
Debra S. Gardner Legacy Fund
IN HONOR OF:
Babs & Larry Jackson’s special anniversary
Ann Bendheim
Michael Decker’s special birthday
Ann Bendheim
Rachel Schmidt’s speedy recovery
Ken & Katie Roeper
Rabbi Beifeld’s special birthday
Scott & Nancy Bellemann
The birth of Ennis Marshall Freed
Scott & Nancy Bellemann
The birth of Bailey Grace Silverstein
Scott & Nancy Bellemann
Bonnie Eisenman’s special birthday
Katy & Jimmy Yoffy
Susan & Ronnie Adolf’s 40th anniversary
Debbie & Bob Fitzgerald & Family
Alan, Ken, Sarah & Natan for a fabulous Purim Shpiel experience
Dana Isaacoff
Ellen Glass’ special birthday
Katy & Jimmy Yoffy
IN MEMORY OF:
Carol Davidson
Kim & Martin Miller
Carol Ann & Cal Callahan
Scott & Nancy Bellemann
Julius Koziol
Isaac & Judith Koziol
Abraham Gurman
Barbara Blumberg
Fannie Rosenthal
Barbara & John Crowder
Eleanor Aarts
Ken & Katie Roeper
Frances Rothenberg
Scott & Nancy Bellemann
Hans Falck & Renate Forssmann-Falck
Cathy Plotkin
Louis Kallen
Linda Pinsky
Theresa Corbett
Ira & Maureen Goldstein
Phyllis Buchsbaum
Ken & Katie Roeper

THE RABBIS’ PHILANTHROPIC FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Frances Rothenberg
Mr. & Mrs. Charles G. Thalhimer
Lorraine S. Friedenberg
J.D. & Linda Kirschten
Steve Reinhard
Shirley & Bob Reinhard

CANTOR GOLDMAN’S MUSIC FUND
IN APPRECIATION OF:
Alan Corbett, Ken Roeper & Sarah Jane Blankenship’s hard work on the Purim Shpiel
Kim & Martin Miller
Natan Berensteyn’s musical leadership in this year’s Purim Shpiel
Ken & Katie Roeper
Purim Shpiel Director’s
Ken Roeper & Alan Corbett
Laura & Dave Savage
MEMORY OF:
Nathan Zell, my father
Myrna & Morton Norman

SADIE KIRSH FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Frances Rothenberg
Muriel Scoler
Jo Ellen & Michael Rush
Frona S. Colker
Frances Pollard
Mel & Deb Jacobson
Alan & Kathy Candioto
Rita & Tom O’Neill

HEBREW CEMETERY FUND
Philip W. & Nathalie L. Klaus Fund
IN MEMORY OF:
Fannie Rosenthal
Sandra & Stewart Kasen
Sophia Gumenick
Nancy Grandis White
Betty Sue & Todd LePage
Linda Blatt, my sister
Nancy Grandis White
Lorraine Friedenberg
Nancy Grandis White

SISTERHOOD CENTENNIAL FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Kathy Cohn, my sister
Dina S. Boettcher
Jack Boettcher, my husband
Dina S. Boettcher

MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
IN APPRECIATION:
For Research Assistance
Mary McGue Millhiser
IN MEMORY OF:
Carol Davidson
Edith Brenner
Frances Rothenberg
Betty Vitsky
Bonnie & Mike Eisenman
Joyce Rosenbaum
Leo S. Newpol
Helen Newpol
Phillip Brenner
Edith Brenner
Joseph L. Landers
Audrey Landers
Lorraine Friedenberg
Edith Brenner
Questors Literary Club

THE HERBERT HELTZER FUND:
In Honor of Jo Murphy’s Special Birthday
Millie & Herb Heltzer

An armed security guard is on duty at Hebrew Cemetery on the first and third Sundays of the month from Noon to 3:00 p.m.
NFTY MAR’s TheVENT is the largest regional program in the country, 350 teens. Teens from the Mid-Atlantic Region participate in social justice activities and then have color wars. The Richmond part of the southern sub-region is Red.


Photography Credit: Monica Rosenthal

Gifts That Make A Difference...Simchah or Remembrance

Charitable Giving in honor of or in memory of a loved one is an important tradition for the Beth Ahabah congregation. Making a gift to the temple offers a positive way to affirm your values and priorities and protect our future Jewish way of life. Honoring a friend or loved one through charitable gifts is often an especially meaningful act of paying tribute to someone special, while assuring that worthwhile giving continues to influence our children, grandchildren and the world around us.

Beth Ahabah has a wide range of donation opportunities available. The list can be viewed on the temple website or you can call the temple office at 804.358.6757.

Thank you for your consideration.
As you read this, Sisterhood will have just completed a weekend of hosting the Mid-Atlantic District Interim meeting. The weekend consisted of several workshops covering Sisterhood Finances and Budgets, Being a Better Listener and Spirituality. Women from Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Washington, DC joined us for a weekend of learning and sisterhood. We had the honor of having Sara Charney, WRJ Vice President for Programs and Education with us for the weekend. Those of you who were at services on Friday evening got a chance to hear her remarks. This weekend was a chance for us to show off Beth Ahabah and Richmond as we visited The Holocaust Museum, Beth Ahabah Museum and got very familiar with the West End, as the Markel Corporation allowed us to use their wonderful facilities for our meetings.

The ideas and plans for the 225th Picnic are in full swing. We have the site, which is a spot at Maymont (near the farm animals) for the first Sunday of Religious School. There is a great drop off place for people who need assistance as well as parking fairly close by. We will have lots to eat, a variety of games, a juggler, some well known singing groups, games for all ages, and a few surprises. The area is accessible for everyone and we will have seating for people.

Sisterhood continues to support many programs around the Temple. It is not just for a few women. We want you to join us. As you move into summer relaxation and begin to think about what new thing should I do in the fall—THINK SISTERHOOD! We are here for you and we want to hear from you.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

Editorial submissions & advertising in B’Yachad

July/August Issue due Friday, May 23

September Issue due Friday, July 25

For more information about advertising in the bulletin, contact Russ Finer in the Temple office, 804.358.6757. Please submit editorial and camera ready ads to Susan Morgan at smorganpr@comcast.net

COMMUNITY

IN SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILIES OF....

David Blassberg
father of Wendy (Bob) Reardon

Ruth Wolff
mother-in-law of Cheri Wolff
grandmother of Emily (Robert) Mercer

Lorraine Friedenberg
aunt of Peggy Friedenberg

Phyllis Buchsbaum
mother of David (Leslie McManus)
Buchsbaum

Elaine Pincus
mother of David Pincus

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Insist on Stevie!
Shavuot Customs & Rituals

In modern times, Jews can no longer bring the first fruits of their harvest to the Temple in Jerusalem, and thus there are no particular mitzvot, or commandments, associated with Shavuot. There are, however, several rituals that are traditional components of celebrating the holiday.

Many people stay up all night studying Torah. This custom evolved from the story that says that when the Israelites were at Sinai, they overslept and had to be awakened by Moses. As a result, many modern Jews stay up all night to study and celebrate receiving the Torah. These events, known as Tikkun Leil Shavuot, which literally means “Rectification for Shavuot Night,” are understood as the custom of studying with a community in order to re-experience standing at Mount Sinai, where the Jewish people received the Torah. The Tikkun Leil Shavuot was developed by 16th century mystics in Safed, who believed that by studying on Shavuot, they were symbolically preparing Israel to enter into a sacred relationship with God. Modern interpretations and versions of this practice include study on a wide range of topics.

For early Zionists, who deemphasized the religious elements of Judaism to focus on its cultural aspects, the obvious direction for Shavuot in Israel was the restoration of its biblical format. For years, First Fruits Festivals were held on kibbutzim, featuring elaborate pageants and parades, displays of fruits, tractors and babies, and joyous singing and dancing. Urban dwellers also marked the holiday with first-fruit pageants and celebrations of second-graders receiving their first Bible text. Tikkun Leil Shavuot, however, was largely observed solely by Orthodox Jews.

Over time, the divide has blurred, and in recent years, Tikkunim have become extremely popular for all Israeli Jews. In Jerusalem, one can spend the whole night wandering from tikkun to tikkun, which are held in homes, synagogues, community centers, and educational institutions of every religious and ideological flavor. Most of these gatherings use the name, but ignore the traditional format. They simply are evenings of study for the sake of study and fellowship, and the various themes and topics they address are endless.

It also is customary to eat dairy foods on Shavuot because Jewish tradition compares the words of Torah to the sweetness of milk and honey. Blintzes and cheesecake are among the popular foods to make and enjoy for the holiday.

Source: The Jewish Home (Revised Edition) by Daniel B. Syme  Galilee Diary
Volunteer at BAM&A

BAM&A depends on volunteers like you who love history and are interested in learning more about the history of the Richmond Jewish community. Help catalog and file new acquisitions, assist with gallery tours.

For more information about the volunteer opportunities at BAM&A, call David Farris at 804.353.2668.

Richmond Jewish Trivia
Did you know?

In 1781, the Richmond firm of Cohen and Isaacs (Jacob Cohen and Isaiah Isaacs) hired Daniel Boone to survey their land holdings along the Licking River in Kentucky.

TREASURES FROM THE MUSEUM & ARCHIVES COLLECTION

This month’s Treasure from the Collection is not inside our museum, but it is still a valuable part of Beth Ahabah history. The fence that surrounds the Confederate Soldiers’ section at Hebrew Cemetery marks the division of this plot from the rest of the cemetery. The plot contains the graves of 30 Jewish Confederate soldiers who died near or in Richmond. The railing was designed by Richmond artist Major William Barksdale Myers prior to 1873. The wrought iron posts are composed of furled flags with stacked muskets topped by a flat Confederate cap. The railings are crossed sabers, hung with wreaths of laurel. These elements also represent the three branches of the Confederate service; infantry, cavalry and artillery. Every May, the Hebrew Ladies’ Memorial Association held a special service at the graves of the fallen soldiers. This section of the cemetery is now maintained by the Hebrew Cemetery Company. If you’d like to learn more about the history of the Hebrew Cemetery, or schedule a tour of the cemetery with a docent, please call the Museum and Archives at (804)353-2668.

Rabbis Meet with Congressman Cantor on Immigration Reform

From Right to Left: Rabbi Andrew Goodman, Rabbi Jesse Gallop, US Congressman Eric Cantor, (R, VA), Rabbi Gary Creditor
A Box of Beth Ahabah Treasures Not to Be Opened Until?

by David Farris

We have many boxes of interesting and valuable historic items in our Archives, waiting for future researchers to discover their contents. There is one box at Beth Ahabah that we cannot access, but the contents of which we know. It is set into a niche carved into the cornerstone of our Synagogue, and was put in place on Friday, March 4, 1904 at the beginning of the actual construction process of the building.

Thanks to an article in the Richmond Times-Dispatch published on the following day, we know what treasures the box contains. These are:

- A copy of "Tefillath Beth Ahaba," the prayer-book of Beth Ahaba
- Souvenir history of the congregation, issued on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the congregation
- The Annual Report of the Hebrew Home for the Aged and Infirm
- An attested list of the officers and board of managers of Congregation Beth Ahaba
- A list of the Contributors and of the amounts contributed to the new temple fund
- A list of the Officers and members of the Ladies’ Auxiliary of Congregation Beth Ahaba
- The Annual Report of the Hebrew Home for the Aged and Infirm
- An attested list of the officers and board of managers of Congregation Beth Ahaba
- A list of the Contributors and of the amounts contributed to the new temple fund
- A list of the Officers and members of the Ladies’ Auxiliary of Congregation Beth Ahaba
- The American Israelite; The Times-Dispatch; The News Leader
- Programme of to-day’s exercises, Richmond, Va., March 4, 1904; Adar the 17th, 5664

Cornerstones were originally the first stones laid for a new building, and all other stones were placed in reference to them. Over time, they became more ceremonial in nature and began carrying inscriptions marking the significance of the building and frequently having recesses carved into them in which were placed relics or other memorabilia about the building or the organization constructing it. That is the kind of cornerstone we have at Beth Ahabah.

There does not seem to be any protocol for doing anything with cornerstones or their contents following completion of the buildings in which they rest. Presumably they will rest undisturbed until their host structures cease to exist, at which time future generations will get a glimpse of what past generations considered to be significant and valuable.

It has been 110 years since our cornerstone and its box of treasures was put into place, and let’s hope that it will be at least another 110 years before the contents are once again seen by human eyes, as that event might mean that something undesirable happened to the building.

Beth Ahabah Museum & Archives

Currently on Exhibit in the Galleries:

- Justice Wheels
- The Entertaining Mrs. Calisch
- 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.
## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### MAY:

**FRI 2**  
Religious School 7th - 9th Grade *Shabbat* Dinner  
6:00 p.m.  
Confirmation Class Reunion *Shabbat* Service  
7:30 p.m.  
Parallel Youth Service w/ Ruach Chadash  
7:30 p.m.  

**SAT 3**  
Bar Mitzvah of Shane Bishop  
Bar Mitzvah of Ben Ratner  
10:30 a.m.  
2:00 p.m.  

**SUN 4**  
Religious School outing to 3 Lakes Park  
10:00 a.m.  

**MON 5**  
*Midrasha* - Confirmation Class Only  
6:00 p.m.  

**WED 7**  
Midweek Hebrew  
6:00 p.m.  

**FRI 9**  
Annual Meeting *Shabbat* Dinner  
Installation *Shabbat* Service w/Adult Choir  
7:30 p.m.  

**SAT 10**  
Bat Mitzvah of Sara Skolnick  
Cabaret Night  
10:30 a.m.  
7:00 p.m.  

**MON 12**  
*Midrasha* - Confirmation Class Only  
6:00 p.m.  

**WED 14**  
Midweek Hebrew  
6:00 p.m.  

**FRI 16**  
Confirmation *Shabbat* Service  
7:30 p.m.  

**SAT 17**  
Ruach Chadash Cafe  
6:00 p.m.  

**SUN 18**  
Religious School  
9:15 a.m.  

**FRI 23**  
*Shabbat* Service  
7:30 p.m.  

**SAT 24**  
Bar Mitzvah of Hopper Strauchler  
10:30 a.m.  

**FRI 30**  
Rosh Hashanah in the Spring *Shabbat* Service  
w/ Adult Choir  
5:30 p.m.  

**SAT 31**  
B’nai Mitzvah of Bryce Goldstein and Jacob Andersen  
10:30 a.m.  

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### JUNE:

**TUE 3**  
*Shavuot* snacks, study and Service  
7:00 p.m.  

**FRI 6**  
*Shabbat* Service  
7:30 p.m.  

**FRI 13**  
*Shabbat* Service  
7:30 p.m.  

**SAT 14**  
Bat Mitzvah of Jesslyn Katz  
10:30 a.m.  

**FRI 20**  
Oneg *Shabbat*  
*Shabbat* Service  
6:00 p.m.  
6:30 p.m.  

**FRI 27**  
Oneg *Shabbat*  
*Shabbat* Service  
6:00 p.m.  
6:30 p.m.  

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On *Shavuot* it is customary to decorate ones homes with greens and fresh flowers as a reminder of the spring harvest and the ancient ritual of bringing the first fruits to the Temple. Many Jews prepare and eat dairy foods—often cheesecake or blintzes—on *Shavuot* as a reminder of the sweetness of the Torah. Often families gather together on the holiday to enjoy a meal that features such dishes.

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**CALENDAR INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE,**  
please check the calendar online at bethahabah.org
ANNUAL MEETING SHABBAT
DINNER & INSTALLATION SERVICE
Friday, May 9th
Dinner 6:00 pm • Service 7:30 pm

Call 804 358 6757 to make your reservations today!