



TEMPLE BETH-EL



84rd Annual Meeting *May 3, 2015/5775*

Agenda

D'var Torah.....	Rabbi Knopf
Adoption of Minutes of 83rd Annual Congregational Meeting.....	Louis Gary
Nominating Committee Report & Election.....	Jeff Sampson
Installation of Officers, Board of Governors, and Endowment Committee Members	Rabbi Knopf
President's Remarks	Ben Lewis
Report of Budget & Finance Committee.....	Richard Genter
Men's Club Report & "Man of the Year" Award	Josh Cane
Sisterhood Report & "Woman of Distinction" Award.....	Cathy Soffin
Certificates of Appreciation, Special Awards & Recognition	Ben Lewis, Louis Gary
Adjournment - Reception in the Social Hall thanks to the efforts of Josephine Harris & Chris Muffo	

Certificates of Appreciation/Special Awards/Recognition

Exemplary Board Service Awards
Ed Mollen, Nancy Walter

Certificates of Appreciation

Mensches of Richmond Band: Stephen Frost, Gary Goldberg, Chris Parker, David Sachs

Religious School Madrichim: Jennifer Mollen, Mara Sharnoff

Professional Staff: Krista Fidlow, Norma Fiedler, Josephine Harris, Debbie Lacks-Hanner, Chris Muffo, Jayne Sklon

Event planning including Purim, Lag B'Omer, Young Family programs: Liath Bricks, Leah Frommer,

Deborah Karp, Shana Katz, April Williams

Visioning Committee: Judy Gary, Stephanie Goldberg

Recognition of the Rabbi Transition Committee

**Chick Becker, Judy Becker, Michael Edelstein, Benita Felmus, Larry Goldman, Shelley Gouldin, Steve Green,
Harry Hirsch, Laura Lewis, Marci Linas, Beth Rubenstein, Rita Ruby, Cathy Soffin**

Recognition of Scholar-in-Residence Committee

Stacey Baum, Robin Jackson, Jessica Lynn, Susan Sisisky, Lisa Zasler

Recognition of 2015 Graduating High School Seniors

Eli Gary, Janice Guinn, Lev Looney, Jennifer Mollen, Elana Silverstein, Sadye Soffin, Benjamin Winkelmann

Recognition of the 2014-15 B'nai Mitzvah Class

**Rebecca Falik, Sophia Goldin, Alex Halpern, Jacob Kalman, Samuel Krieg, Davis Lapkin,
Reese Plotkin, Jakob Schwartz, Benjamin Sherman, Jenna Stern**

Unsung Heroes Award

Recipients to be Announced

Minutes – Submitted by Louis Gary

Temple Beth-El's 83rd Annual Congregational Meeting, May 4, 2014 (5774)

1. Rita Ruby, President, called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. A quorum of the congregation was noted to be present.
2. Rabbi Creditor delivered the D'var Torah.
3. Louis Gary, Secretary, submitted the minutes of the 82nd annual congregational meeting which were approved by all.
4. Rita Ruby, Outgoing President, shared how the 5 pillars of coaching as followed by the University of Virginia head basketball coach, Tony Bennett, speaks to the best of what Temple Beth-El has been and will be.
5. Sara Rosenbaum, Nominating Committee Chair, presented the slate of nominees for officers for the term of '14-15, members of the Board of Directors for terms ending in '15, '16 and '17, and Endowment Committee members for term expiring in '16. The slate was approved by all those in attendance.
6. Rabbi Creditor installed the officers, members of the Board of Governors, and Endowment Committee members.
7. Ben Lewis, President of Temple Beth-El, delivered his address to the congregation in which he thanked Rita Ruby for her service, thanked Rabbi Creditor for his long service and patience, and gave the congregation a summary of his personal and family background.
8. Richard Genter, Vice President of Finance, reported on the budget and finances of the synagogue, indicating that the current 2013-2014 fiscal year had not concluded but was expected to be similar to recent years. Dues increases of 2% had been approved for the next fiscal year.
9. Steve Green, President of the Men's Club, shared the work of the Men's Club over the past year. Josh Cane, Vice President of Men's Club, awarded their Man of the Year to Steve Green.
10. Cathy Soffin, President of Sisterhood, described the work of Sisterhood during the past year and presented the Woman of Distinction award to Chris Greenberg.
11. Bea and Jack Fine were honored with a Lifetime Service Award.
12. Exemplary Board Service Awards were presented to Bari Cohen, Harry Hirsch, Marci Linas and Bonnie Wilensky.
13. Lifelong Learning Awards were presented to Pearl Karp Markham and Karla Worrell
14. Chesed Award was presented in absentia to Ephraim Seidman for his many and significant contributions leading the Social Action/Tikun Olam Committee.
15. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Maureen Genderson, Gary Goldberg, Alison Linas, and Steve Linas for their leadership of Shabbat Unplugged services. Religious school Madrichim Nicole Felmus, Jennifer Mollen, Mara Sharnoff, Brook Silverstein, and Asia Woods were recognized with certificates. Office staff members Krista Fidlow, Norma Fiedler, Debbie Lacks-Hanner, Josephine Harris, Chris Muffo, and Jayne Sklon were acknowledged for their extraordinary efforts over the previous year. "Next Generation Transition Fund" Campaign Leaders Ric and Rhona Arenstein, Chic and Judy Becker, Irving and Rhona Banks, Art and Susan Davis, Howard and Maureen Genderson, Harry and Lois Hirsch, Lee Krumbein and Susan Kornstein, Jeff and Bobbi Levin, Stanley and Janet Meyers, and Mark and Susan Sisisky were recognized for their valuable service.
16. Ben Lewis, President of Temple Beth El, recognized the 2013-2014 B'nai Mitzvah class members and the 2014 Graduating High School Seniors.
17. Rita Ruby recognized as Unsung Heroes Debbie Falik, David Perry, Norma Fiedler, and Craig Rader for their significant contributions on many committees, helping other congregants, and leading the Green Team in evaluating facility issues.
18. Noting that the stated business of the Annual Meeting had been concluded, Ben Lewis adjourned the meeting at 2:40 PM.

Nominating Committee

Jeff Sampson, Chair

Committee Members

*Jennifer Bandas, Elliott Bender, Melody Imburg, Marci Linas, Bob Siegel, Martin Slutzah,
Bonnie Wilensky, Franklin Wolf*

Officers (2015 – 2016 Term)

President – Ben Lewis

Senior Vice President – Debbie Minden

VP of Finance – Richard Genter

VP of Membership & Publicity – Bonnie Wilensky

VP of School & Family Programming – Nancy Walter

VP of Adult Education & Social Action – Wendy Solomon

Secretary – Marci Linas

Treasurer – Benita Felmus

Immediate Past President – Rita Ruby

Board of Governors (Class of 2018)

Marsha Feldstein

Robyn Galpern

Aaron Goldberg

Larry Goldman

Richard Murad

Aaron Rosenberg

Sam Straus

Gary Weiner

Board of Governors (Class of 2017)

Ari Hirsch

Barry Krieg

Roy Zeidman

Board of Governors (Class of 2016)

Herbert Clayman

Louis Gary

Ed Mollen

President's Remarks - Ben Lewis

Fellow Congregants, Officers and Board Members, Staff, Rabbi and Hazzan,

I would like to start by thanking Jeff Sampson and the Nominating Committee for all their efforts identifying and recruiting an exceptional team of officers and new board members with a wide range of talents and experiences. I look forward to teaming with these fellow congregants this year as we have a lot of exciting work ahead of us.

I'd also like to thank the outgoing officers who served out their term limits – Debbie Minden (VP of Membership & Publicity) and Louis Gary (Secretary) – as well as two other members of the Executive Committee who maxed out their respective roles – Ed Mollen (Ritual Committee Chair) and Cathy Soffin (Sisterhood President). The entire congregation appreciates all you have done for Beth-El over the years, and I'm delighted to note that you have all agreed to continue on the board in various capacities.

Next I'd like to thank you, the congregation, for allowing me to continue to serve as temple president for another year, and for providing me with your input, guidance and support. I have certainly made mistakes over the last 12 months, but together we are moving forward.

Finally, I'd like to thank Rabbi Knopf, whose vision and vitality are absolutely contagious. In fact, it was that "vision" that the Beth-El rabbi search committee noticed during the recruiting process. Even before he moved to Richmond last summer, he and I agreed that there is a palpable hunger for spiritual growth here. As I wrote in my April bulletin article, Rabbi and I have engaged in innumerable discussions on the future of our congregation since his arrival. Judy Gary and Dr. Stephanie Goldberg agreed to join us as we embarked upon a structured visioning exercise.

Before we could begin on the visioning process, we had to agree on exactly what is meant by terms such as "mission" and "vision," and why such definitions are essential to achieving success. After much reading, research and discussion, it was decided that six critical questions must be answered to define our congregational community's purpose and core values. All decisions the organization will make thereafter should then be in harmony with those foundational beliefs. As such, we believe it is crucial for every congregant to learn, understand, and feel a sense of pride in and ownership of, our purpose and values; otherwise, it will be impossible to use those principles to determine our direction moving forward.

To help us answer these questions, Rabbi and I met with groups of congregants in members' homes and during Open Forums here at temple. (More of these sessions are scheduled going forward.) Of course, Rabbi Knopf has engaged in many one-on-one discussions with current, for-

mer and prospective Beth-El members as well. The Board of Governors was surveyed last summer and we reviewed those results as well as the results of the temple survey performed by a consultant six years ago. Finally, the four of us did a great deal of research in the relevant literature and held many spirited conversations, which enabled us to address the six questions.

As I present these questions and our answers, please know that they should not be thought of as "linear" - number one leading to number two leading to number three... Rather, these statements should be considered as a collective, not individually.

1. What is Temple Beth-El's most idealistic purpose? What is our fundamental reason for being?

Our purpose is to lead people into growing relationships with Jewish community, wisdom, and practice that help them thrive intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually and that inspire them to build a more compassionate, just, and peaceful world.

Note that the question refers to "Temple Beth-El's...purpose." It does not say the "rabbi's purpose," "the hazzan's purpose" or "the board's purpose." So when the purpose statement refers to leading people, it includes the notion of members of the Beth-El community leading each other. It also allows each individual to follow his or her own direction in an attempt to achieve personal fulfillment, however that is defined.

As Rabbi Knopf explains, this purpose statement *"reflect[s] a congregation that believes it exists to relentlessly illuminate and inspire through Judaism, and that strives to do this better than anybody else. Such a congregation features worship and learning that are emotionally dynamic, spiritually resonant, and personally relevant. And such a congregation never stops experimenting and innovating in order to better fulfill our purpose."*

A congregation with such a purpose requires a commitment to ensure people of all ages, relationship statuses, genders, sexual orientations, and even religious affiliations feel fully at home in the congregation. Such a congregation would measure its success by the quality and quantity of relationships we help to form - between people and people, between people and Torah, and between people and God - and by the extent to which we improve lives and repair the world...

...A congregation with such a purpose will always be moved to reach out to people wherever they are physically and spiritually, removing barriers to access and providing many points of entry...It seeks new ways to bring meaningful and relevant Judaism to people, wherever they may be."

(President's Remarks continued)

2. What are Temple Beth-El's core values?

WE ARE DYNAMIC: Our community embraces a compelling and current Judaism that fuses devotion to our heritage with insights from today and imagination toward our future.

WE ARE PASSIONATE: Our community is animated by an unflinching love of Judaism, the Jewish people, and all of humanity; and we are driven by the desire to change lives through Jewish wisdom and practice, build meaningful community, fight for human dignity, champion equality, and pursue justice.

WE ARE HEYMISH [1]: Our community cultivates Jewish life and community in a spirit of joy, warmth, and love because we believe that Jewish wisdom, practice and community should be easily accessible for all; as a result, we strive to break down barriers, meet people where they are, and offer as many points of entry as possible.

WE ARE MENSCHES [2]: Our community is welcoming and supportive, treating every individual (regardless of their age, stage, religious/ethnic background, gender, dis/abilities, and sexual orientation), with kindness, compassion, and dignity; and we take seriously our humanitarian obligations as Jews.

If I were in a conference room with a white board right now, I would draw a Venn diagram showing how these core values intersect. They are not mutually exclusive, nor is any one more important than another. In fact it's the combination of all four core values that truly creates Beth-El's identity.

As Rabbi Knopf and I met with groups and individuals this past year and asked them to talk about Beth-El, their comments reflected these four values. Our definition of "Dynamic" suggests the best that Conservative Judaism

has to offer – "devotion to our heritage" made relevant in today's world while also looking to the future.

"Passionate" extends beyond love of Jews and Judaism, to include "all of humanity." We believe it is our collective role to do whatever we can to help others. "Heymish" refers to our culture of being welcoming and showing compassion, while "Mensch," besides being the name of the band that plays during Friday night services, are those who, as Spike Lee might say, "Do the Right Thing."

3. What does Temple Beth-El do?

We provide Jewish learning, religious services, life cycle observances, social and cultural programming, community service and social action opportunities, pastoral care, and spiritual guidance for people in the Richmond, Virginia area.

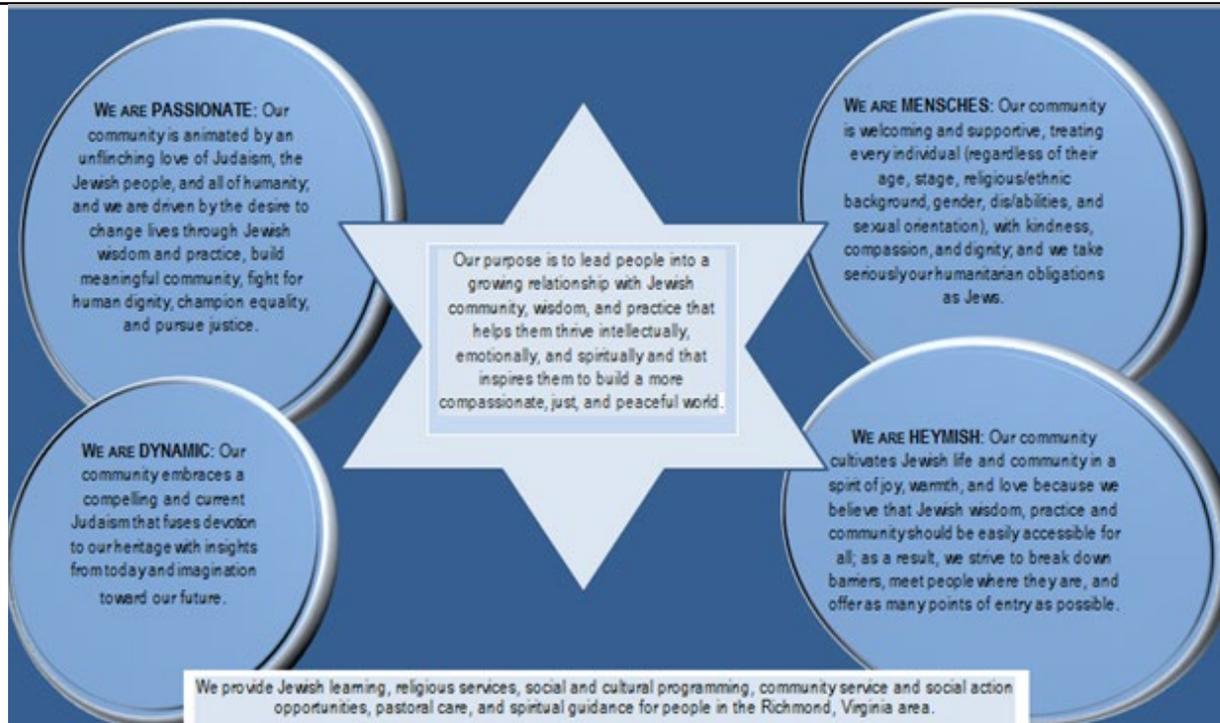
These are the activities that operationalize our purpose and our values. The extent to which people engage will vary. All of us are entitled to focus on those areas that enable us to flourish and grow as the Jews we want to

be. And over the course of our lives, the services we want or need from Beth-El will change. What is important is for Beth-El to offer them all so the wider community is served.

continued on next page

[1] 'Heymish,' the Yiddish word for 'like home,' evokes friendliness, informality, and a lack of pretense.

[2] 'Mensch,' the Yiddish word for 'person,' evokes decency, integrity, and responsibility.

(President's Remarks continued)

As I mentioned earlier, these first three questions relating to purpose, values and services should be considered holistically, not linearly or individually. Accordingly, please see the graphic above for a pictorial representation of these three Statements.

4. How will Temple Beth-El succeed?

Our 3 Current Strategic Anchors are:

- **New Member Engagement**
- **Organizational Health**
- **Financial Strength**

While supporting the needs of our current congregants is vital for the long-term vibrancy of our shul, developing an actionable plan to engage new members is equally critical. And because young families are prime candidates for recruitment, we must develop a new vision and structure for our religious school to make it more attractive for potential new members. It is imperative that we build the best religious school in the region, and it must be consistent with the purpose and values we're defining today. Rabbi Knopf and Hazzan Turk have recently announced a new approach for B'nai Mitzvah at Beth-El that aligns beautifully with our values by making the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process "personal, meaningful and empowering." All aspects of our religious school must be equally aligned.

The temple's organizational model, from the structure of the clergy and professional staff to the lay leadership as defined in the temple's constitution, has remained largely

unchanged over the years. We have extraordinarily talented people supporting Beth-El but the roles, responsibilities and reporting structures as they currently exist may not be optimal for the desired 21st Century outcomes. We must look at what we do as an organization with new eyes and define an organizational model that best supports it.

One might think that the need for "financial strength" is obvious, and on one hand it is, but financial strength is more than the ability to pay the bills each month. Historically, for instance, dues revenue supported 60% of the annual expenses. Today it is closer to 50%. (Before you start thinking that it's because expense have increased, please know that the office staff has done a remarkable job keeping expenses stable over the last several years.) Just as the organizational model needs to be revisited, so does our financial model. Beth-El can't simply rely on increased dues revenue, whether through growing membership or increased annual dues rates, as our only source of new funds. We must look at long-term financial goals based on our core values and develop a financial model that supports them.

5. What is Temple Beth-El's most pressing short term priority?

Grow membership by 3% in the next 12 months.

As opposed to earlier questions, the three anchors just discussed are indeed presented in the order in which they are to be addressed. Accordingly, growing our membership is

(President's Remarks continued)

priority #1 and our goal is to increase the number of family units by 3% in the next 12 months. To do that Beth-El will need to develop a new branding and marketing strategy focused on new member recruitment. We must focus on recruiting efforts, membership drives, and outreach programs to unaffiliated Jews. We must also establish a new vision and structure for our religious school to make it more attractive to potential new members.

6. What are Temple Beth-El's corresponding short term actions?

- | |
|---|
| <p>Establish 4 Task Forces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Recruitment • Brand / Marketing • School Visioning • Membership / Dues Model |
|---|

I am announcing today that we are establishing four task forces to address member recruitment, brand/marketing, school visioning, and membership/dues model. [Once these task forces are underway, we will consider adding

others.] These four task forces will have clearly defined responsibilities and timelines, with expectation of actionable results. The congregation will have opportunities to provide input and will be kept informed of the task forces' progress.

These task forces will be accountable to the Visioning Task Force led by co-chairs Judy Gary and Dr. Stephanie Goldberg who will appoint committee chairs and provide guidance and support. The Visioning Task Force is accountable to the temple's Executive Committee and Board of Governors.

Clearly defining Temple Beth-El's purpose and core values provides us all with the premises or assumptions on which all future decisions are based. Going forward you can expect to see the statements that were announced today, likely edited to some degree, appearing in temple communications. My hope is that over time, the more everyone sees them and internalizes them, you will be able to articulate them in your own words to others. Please share your thoughts and questions with me. Our ability to articulate clearly our common purpose and values will guide who we are, how we behave, and how we represent ourselves to others.

Endowment Committee - Ron Felmus, Chair

Members: Frances Goldman, Marc Greenberg, John B. Levy, Robert Siegel

In 2014, The Endowment Committee continued to monitor investment performance and distribute funds from the Endowment to support the Temple's operations and programming.

Investment performance for 2014 was 5.2%. Our benchmark return was 6.9%, resulting in an underperformance of 170 basis points for the year. Annual returns in excess of our spending rate plus inflation (about 6%) are required to keep the fund growing. Underperformance was driven by the results of the Richmond Jewish Foundation asset manager's underperformance. Last year, the committee moved 50% of the Temple Assets into ETFs that performed as expected. The decision to allocate a portion to index ETFs resulted in roughly \$40,000 more in assets vs. keeping the assets with the Richmond Jewish Foundation's asset manager.

This past year, the Legacy Fund provided \$43,085 to support the Temple's operating budget. The New School fund dispersed monies for capital repairs; and Specialty Funds subsidized dues and Hebrew School tuition.

The Committee wants to highlight the many Endowed Funds and their purpose. Beyond supporting the operating budget, dues and facilities, the endowment has funds which support travel to Israel, training and materials for the teachers of Brown Religious School, Jewish camp experiences

for our members' children, adult education and music programs. Information on each fund and its purpose is available on the Temple's website, by calling the office, or reaching out to Ron Felmus, the Endowment Committee chair. Individuals can make contributions to any of these funds, create a new fund for a purpose for which they are passionate, or make a contribution as part of their Estate Plan.

The Endowment is a tremendous asset left by our past and current congregants. It helps to sustain Temple Beth-El. If you are interested in providing a legacy for future generations, please contact the office or any member of the Endowment Committee to see how you can help ensure the future of our congregation.

The Committee wishes to thank Bob Siegel for his many years of service as he leaves the Committee. Bob has been a significant contributor to making the Committee stronger and providing valuable insight into the operations of the Temple. I would also like to thank the other members of the Endowment Committee: Frances Goldman, John B. Levy, and Marc Greenberg for their time and energy they bring to each meeting of the Committee.

Budget & Finance Committee - *Richard Genter, Chair*

*Members: Benita Felmus, David Galpern, Chris Greenberg, Marc Greenberg,
Brian Imburg, Ben Lewis, GD Rothenberg, Sara Waskin;
plus the support of Jayne Sklon and Debbie Lacks-Hanner*

I want to thank the committee members for their invaluable assistance which required them to give up leisure time to attend meetings so the current budget could be completed. Executive Director Jayne Sklon was never too busy to lend assistance and tirelessly updated one version of the budget after the other.

I have provided the chart below to show trends over the last five years showing actual results versus budget projections.

Fiscal Year	Actual	Budget
2009/2010	36,280	(166,772)
2010/2011	(22,204)	(118,332)
2011/2012	14,530	(148,862)
2012/2013	22,182	(162,305)
2013/2014	4,887	(205,700)
2014/2015	TBD	(90,592)
2015/2016	TBD	(146,200)

The budget projects a deficit of \$146,200 for the upcoming fiscal year. The budget reflects no fundraising. Approximately \$30,000 of the deficit is due to the religious school.

While major fundraisers are not included in the budget, the budget does reflect approximately \$3,000 earned from Kroger Cares gift cards. Everyone is encouraged to use your Kroger card. You now need to go online to Kroger.com to register your card for Temple Beth-El to receive credit.

The Board of Governors is working on ideas for fundraisers. The golf tournament chaired by Louis Gary yielded several thousand dollars for the last few years but it appears doubtful it will be held this year due to a lack of someone willing to head it up. Louis has already done more than his fair share over the last few years. If you are interested in volunteering for this job please let the congregation president, Ben Lewis, or a board member know. The Gala Event for Rabbi Creditor was a great success and we are considering similar events for the upcoming year.

For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the B&F Committee has recommended another two percent dues increase which will result in a monthly increase of two or three dollars depending on your dues category.

Men's Club Annual Report - *Steve Green, President*

2014-2015 Officers: Josh Cane, President; Paul Fiedler, Vice President; Neal Menkes, Recording Secretary; Martin Slutzah, Financial Secretary; Michael Hessberg, Treasurer; Steve Green, Immediate Past President

2014-2015 Board Members: David Abady, Reid Cardon, Michael Edelstein, Ron Felmus, David Galpern, Louis Gary, Rick Genter, Eugene Glock, Gary Goldberg, Morris Goldberg, Michael Greenberg, Brian Imburg, Marty Janner, Barry Lazarus, Ben Lewis, Don Light, Steve Linas, Arnold Lowenstein, Robert Siegel, Glen Wilensky, Barry Wilson, Booker Woods

Our mission at Men's Club is to support the Religious School, the students, and their education. In September, we began the school year with our traditional Men's Club Back-to-School picnic. We had a great turnout of students, their parents, congregation members, and everyone else who caught the inviting scent of our World Famous hot dogs – which went quickly.

For Sukkot, as we do each year, we put our barn-raising skills toward assembling and dismantling the sukkah at Grove Avenue. I understand that the whole assembly of beams, bolts and latticework was fashioned and donated by Dr. Mike Decker about 20 years ago.

In October, Rabbi Knopf was officially installed as our new rabbi. That installation weekend, Men's Club sponsored the Sunday speakers brunch. Rabbi Knopf was joined by rabbis Gary Creditor, Neal Rose, and Abe Friedman in a thoughtful discussion on the role of rabbis in the 21st Century.

For one week each year, the Temple takes its turn hosting CARITAS, a Richmond organization that provides needed services to the homeless. During the sponsored week last December, Men's Club members joined with other Temple congregants in setting up the living space, serving meals, cleaning, and providing a listening ear.

That same month, we hosted our annual Chanukah latke party at the Religious School. Sizzling latkes with dollops of applesauce were enjoyed by all comers. Many also boarded the Virginia Blood Services bloodmobile to donate to our annual blood drive, organized this year by member Barry Lazarus. Thank you to all those who gave.

In the beginning of March, Men's Club ran the JCC's kitchen for its annual Purim Carnival. The cold, sleeting weather could not keep away people's demand for our World Famous hot dogs, served along with hamburgers, potato knishes, and smiles.

Our new softball season is underway. Our players are capably captained by Michael Edelstein. You can find the schedule in the monthly bulletin, so please come out to the games to cheer them on to victory!

Last year, Men's Club was approached to help fund a new and needed position at the Religious School. The

Education Coordinator would help share with Hazzan Marian Turk the responsibilities of running the school. We decided that we would put every penny of dues raised that year toward this worthy endeavor, which has since been filled by Bari Cohen.

Also last year, we did enough painting that we should have gotten corporate sponsorship. We put a fresh coat on the walls of the halls of the Religious School and we also answered Jay Ipson's call to re-stripe the Grove parking lot.

Another initiative is outreach to clubs of other congregations, like Beth Ahabah's Brotherhood. We already had a successful Football, Food, and Fun event in the Fall, which the Brotherhood hosted. We hope to have more collaborative events soon.

Looking ahead, we will close the school year on May 17 with a picnic, featuring those World Famous hot dogs, water ice, and cake. Be sure to come by to congratulate the students, and thank Hazzan Marian, the staff, the school committee, and the parents for another great year.

Sign up for the annual Men's Club ballgame outing. The Yankees will be playing the Orioles at Camden Yards, and I understand we have great terrace club seats reserved. This year's game will be held on June 14th – Flag Day. So show your love of country and love of Temple Beth-El by purchasing tickets for yourself, family members, and anyone else who would want to go. We will have Don Light's famous Bloody Mary drinks aboard the bus, as well as snacks.

I wish to recognize Bob Siegel who reliably steps up at Bar Mitzvahs to present the Kiddush cups. We appreciate you taking the time to help foster Men's Club's relationship with the next generation of mensches and members.

Thank you to Paul Fiedler for stepping up to be vice president of Men's Club.

Thank you to past presidents of Men's Club who have supported and encouraged me this past year.

And thank you to all the Men's Club members for the tireless hours you have put in and continue to put in to help make Temple Beth-El a great place.

Sisterhood Annual Report - *Cathy Soffin, President*

2014-2105 Officers: Cathy Soffin, President; Fran Broeder, Vice President, Programming; Lisa Hessberg, Financial Secretary; Chris Greenberg, Treasurer; Fern Frost, Secretary; Susan Beller, Corresponding Secretary; April Williams, Publicity; Judy Crocker, Parliamentarian; Becky Halpern, Immediate Past President; Bonnie Wilensky, Member at Large.

2014-2015 Board Chairs: Arlene Slutzah (Gift Shop Chair), Marian Winer (Torah Fund Chair), Rebecca Kalman-Winston (Floral Fund Chair), Frances Goldman (Endowment Chair), Gail Schwartz (Commemorative Cards Chair), Stacey Baum (Invitations Chair)

Honorary Board Members: Hazzan Marian Turk, Adira Knopf, Jayne Sklon

I want to thank all of those who have made this year successful by donating your time, participating in our programs and contributing generously.

The primary mission of Temple Beth-El Sisterhood is to promote the welfare of the Congregation of Temple Beth-El, the Jacob and Selma Brown Religious School and the families of our congregation.

To carry out this mission, I offer the following summary of revenue and expenses projected through 4/2015. Total revenue generated through fundraising and dues was \$25,298. Total expenses so far this year was \$49,769 which includes donations to Temple Beth El and the Jacob and Selma Brown Religious school of \$42,000.

School Support including:

Annual \$15,000 gift to offset tuition and contributed funds to pay for various school programs including donation to support salary of School Coordinator, Ruach and school events, and teacher reimbursement for school room supplies.

Temple Support including:

Sponsorship of monthly pre-negs, Kiddush luncheons and Shabbat Coffee, donation of leaf in honor of Rabbi Knopf's family, staff holiday gifts and gift to Rabbi's discretionary fund, funds for rental house repairs and yearly payment for membership software.

Congregational Programming including:

Sponsorship of Kiddush Luncheons and monthly Friday night pre-negs, monthly speaker luncheons including presentations by Barton Hinkle, RTD; Rabbi Zaches, Congregation Or Ami and Rabbi Knopf, etc; Sisterhood Game Day; annual Bubbles 'N Brunch (free event for all Sisterhood members) and support of other social events including Rabbi's Welcome Picnic

Major Fundraising efforts:

Member Dues, Hanukkah Party, Annual Spring Donor, Gift Shop, Floral Fund, Commemorative Cards, Invitations

We honored Barbara Shocket as Kallah Bereshit at Simchat Torah for her many years of dedication to Sisterhood and the congregation.

Personnel Committee Report - Sara Waskin, Chair

Members: Marsha Feldstein, Benita Felmus, Louis Gary, Ben Lewis, G.D. Rothenberg, Rita Ruby, Nancy Walter, Laura Lewis

The Personnel Committee perseveres tackling the delicate but important task of managing our Human Resources concerns. This was my first year as Chairperson, and my orientation to the Committee was facilitated by the long-standing members who provided me with the insight and tools to help us accomplish our goals. The members listed above have the professional knowledge and the institutional wisdom to be invaluable for this important aspect of Temple life.

The Personnel Committee had laid much of the contractual groundwork last year for the Rabbi's welcome to our community, and that allowed the Committee time to focus on other issues.

The Personnel Committee remains involved in working with our clergy and Executive Director on an on-going basis. We help ensure that our professional staff has the support and guidance it needs from lay leadership as we strive to reach mutually agreed-upon goals.

We continue to review and manage appropriate job responsibilities and Personal Growth Plans to ensure they are reasonable and achievable. We addressed time-sensitive contract issues and worked diligently to address these obligations.

Once again, the Personnel Committee had to work to find a reasonable solution for increasing healthcare costs. We evaluated many alternatives in response to the increasing costs and the feedback from employees – not an easy task for a small group employer.

While much of the attention of the Personnel Committee is focused on the leadership staff, we cannot forget that we have a wonderfully dedicated office staff who take tremendous pride in the work that they do for the congregation. This became very apparent to me as I worked with them to learn about how the Temple works from a human resources perspective.

Membership & Publicity - Debbie Minden, Vice President

This year Temple Beth-El is happy to announce that we have greeted 16 new members and their families and look forward to including them in our congregation. We have a net loss, however, and are now 425 members. As an older congregation, we continue to lose most of our membership through the death of beloved older members. There has also been a large number of members moving from the Richmond area. There have been more of those events than resignations, but any decline in our number by any means is a loss to our community.

We continue to work on retention of old members and are planning new ways to attract new members to our community. We have seen an upsurge in excitement and commitment this year. Next year we plan to continue and add to these events. In August we are planning an open house to showcase our congregation to interested new parties. If you

have any friends, family, or neighbors who are unaffiliated please invite them to this event. More information will be forthcoming.

This year Publicity has been handled beautifully by the office staff. They have updated the look of the website, the Bulletin, and the Good Shabbos announcements. These publications are much more user friendly and attractive. We thank Jayne Sklon, Norma Fiedler, and Krista Fidlow for all their efforts.

I will be handing over Membership and Publicity to Bonnie Wilensky. In her hands I am sure that our efforts will be redoubled. Larry Goldman will continue to chair Membership. Feel free to contact either of them. For more information about Membership and Publicity, or to join our team, contact Bonnie Wilensky, ExBronxer@aol.com or Larry Goldman, largold@verizon.net.

Ritual Committee Annual Report - *Ed Mollen, Chair*

Members: David Ruby, Milton Rubin, Bea Fine, Rita Stein, Roxie Grossman, Jim Plotkin, Judy Okun Belinkie, Ellen Shapiro Terner (OBM), Matt Langsam, Neal Menkes, G.D. Rothenberg, Harry Hirsch, Gary Goldberg, Craig Rader, Rita Ruby, Leah Frommer.

Ex officio members: Rabbi Michael Knopf, Hazzan Marian Turk, Ben Lewis

During the course of 2014-2015, the Ritual Committee was involved with the following main issues:

High Holy Days: The prime role of the committee is to ensure smooth functioning High Holy Day Tefilot (Services), working with clergy, office staff and many synagogue volunteers, including Franklin Wolf's Ushering Committee. We are already planning for Yamim Noraim (Days of Awe) 5776, including two separate age-appropriate family services.

Prayerbooks: Please consider dedicating one or more copies of the Machzor Lev Shalem or the Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary Chumash (we are gradually replacing the Hertz Chumash, as funds permit).

Simchat Torah Honorees: The 5775 Ritual Committee honorees were Karla Worrell and Gary Goldberg. The Sisterhood honoree was Barbara Shocket.

Shabbat and Yom Tov Tefilot: The Committee and Gabbaim coordinate with Rabbi Knopf and Hazzan Marian to ensure orderly services. We've been involved in a number of changes to our services, including alternative formats to engage larger segments of our Congregation. These now include musical services, a learner's service, a healing service and others. Simchat Torah services were held in the Social Hall and were well-received. A combined Erev Purim service with Beth Ahabah became a template for engagement of a broader community. There are newly formulated services for Tots (Tot Shabbat) and for older pre-B'nai mitzvah

children (Minyan Mitsuyan – the Amazing Minyan)

Torah Scrolls: The Holy Torah Rollers, led by Michael Hessberg, regularly unroll and re-roll each Torah Scroll to ensure that they are kept in the best condition possible, in accordance with the guidelines established by our Sofer, Rabbi Gedalia Druin.

Minyans: Our minyans provide a venue for daily tefilot, including those with Yahrzeits or those who are in mourning. For those who wish to say Kaddish it may be advisable to "bring your own minyan," by which we mean to encourage family and friends to attend. Sunday morning minyan continues at Brown Religious School. The weekday morning Okun Chapel minyan is held on Monday and Thursday and is poorly attended. Give serious thought to attending this minyan, for your personal prayers and for support of others. The Monday through Thursday evening minyans fairly often need additional support. A loving community supports the short, sweet Shabbat Mincha service following Kiddush lunch. Our Shiva Minyan Subcommittee, under G.D. Rothenburg and Neal Menkes, help Rabbi and Hazzan arrange for leadership of shiva minyanim.

Brown Religious School Report

Nancy Walter, VP of School & Family Programming

2014-2015 School Committee members: Susan Beller, Paul Buckberg, Bari Cohen, Debbie Falik, Judy Gary, Stephanie Goldberg, Shelley Gouldin, Lisa Hessberg (chair), Rabbi Michael Knopf, Marci Linas, Jake Pasternak, Jonathan Sharnoff, Hazzan Marian Turk, Nancy Walter, Jennifer Wright, Lisa Zasler

This year Hazzan Marian and her excellent staff guided the school through an exciting year of learning. The staff of the school includes Linda Griff (Kitah Aleph, K-1st Grade), Galee Saar (Hebrew Teacher for Kitah Bet and Gimmel, 2nd and 3rd Grade), Melanie Marks (Judaics teacher for Kitah Bet and Gimmel, 2nd and 3rd grade), Ronit Saar (Kitah Dallet, 4th Grade), Linda Kerman (Kita Hay, 5th grade), Eric Saar (Kitah Vav, Sixth Grade), Maia Conrad (Kita Zayin, 7th Grade), Geri Adler (8th-10th grade), Laurie Kaplan (Pre-K program), and Alison Linas (music teacher). Linda Kerman is a new teacher this year and has done a wonderful job of engaging her students in learning about the Jewish prophets and other subjects. Maia Conrad was also a new teacher this year and has brought her expertise in history teaching to guiding our 7th graders in learning about their Jewish heritage.

Our teachers have continued to use the Chai curriculum for Judaics instruction. This year the school started a new teaching methodology for Hebrew called "Hebrew Through Movement". This methodology uses everyday movements to help students acquire Hebrew vocabulary and is modeled on the way babies and children naturally acquire language. Four teachers were trained in Hebrew Through Movement and the implementation has been very successful. Students can be seen walking down the hallway of the school following the directions their teachers are giving them in Hebrew. Students and teachers alike report that the children are having fun while learning Hebrew.

This year the school also re-introduced technology into the program. The Susan Cohen Marks Memorial Fund of the synagogue's endowment enabled us to acquire Google Chromebook computers and projectors. This equipment has allowed our teachers to plan more creative lessons using technology to engage the students.

Students also participated in and benefitted from innovative and fun holiday workshops this year, including a Trip Through Tishrei for the High Holidays, a Tu B'Shvat carnival, and a re-enactment of the Passover story.

Our high school program this year operated on a new model, combining classroom learning with field trips and service projects in the community. Students helped a congregation build their family sukkah and then gathered to learn and to share a meal in the sukkah; visited Shalom Farms

where learned about alleviating hunger through sustainable farming. In another session they explored the topic of being Jewish in the South. The students also benefitted from the new technology when they were able to learn with different speakers from the U.S. and Israel via Skype. Several of the synagogues in Richmond are working together to form a community high school program for next year, to be funded by the Jewish Federation's Impact Grant program. We are planning for our high schoolers to take part in the community program when it begins.

This year the school has benefitted from having Bari Cohen in a part-time role as Education Coordinator. Bari has been instrumental in ensuring that school-wide holiday workshops run smoothly and coordinated the school's CARITAS effort this year.

Rabbi Knopf's arrival at Temple Beth-El has paid wonderful dividends for the school. Both students and teachers have enjoyed Rabbi Knopf's visits to the classrooms. Rabbi Knopf and Hazzan Marian are working on expanding Rabbi Knopf's role in the school for next year. They will also schedule family learning sessions for the pre- b'nei mitzvah grades.

Thanks to a very generous donation, the school was able to grant free tuition to the first 6 enrollees in our Pre-K program. As a result, this year we had 8 students in the program, the biggest pre-K class in some time. Having a robust Pre-K program is a crucial step toward boosting enrollment in the school. The donor has kindly offered to make the same donation for this coming school year.

We are looking forward to the coming year with more exciting educational opportunities for all the students.

Facilities Committee - *Brian Imburg, Chair*

Members: Michael Hessberg, Craig Rader, Mitch Ragone, Jayne Sklon, Glen Wilensky, Barry Wilson

Fellow congregants,

It continues to be a challenge keeping our real estate assets functioning at Temple Beth-El. Notable issues are listed below.

Parham Campus

Our Parham Road campus is 16 years old now. While it is fully functional and rented, regular use by our tenants and us put a strain on its physical plant. The building is in good shape, but some stress and settling cracks are visible in some walls and classrooms.

1. One of the HVAC units was replaced because it could not be repaired, and all of the others had some form of maintenance performed. These repairs consisted of replacement of motors, condensers, or sensors, and these repairs were costly. But now everything is in serviceable shape.
2. The roof continues to be a problem. A great deal of it was repaired, but new leaks have developed. We are in the midst of getting the problems diagnosed and the costs to repair estimated.

Grove Avenue Campus

Grove Ave. properties consist of the main sanctuary, the administration building, the old school building, the two rental units, and the parking area in the middle of the block.

1. I would like to thank Colonel Jay Ipson for providing and operating the line painter (and paint) when we undertook the parking lot restriping project before the High Holy days.
2. The two rental units are upgraded, updated and fully rented, and we have ended our rental management engagement with Bandazian and Holden property management. All of these efforts were driven by Barbara Shocket, and we thank her for her effort and expertise.
3. In early winter the old school building had a boiler failure which was repaired in a timely fashion. A needed upgrade for that building would be to replace all of the single pane louvered windows.

4. The administration building suffered a boiler loss at the end of the winter, causing our staff to work in less-than-ideal conditions using inadequate space heaters. They are to be commended for keeping at task under these grueling conditions. We are researching the best way to replace the boiler and mitigate another such failure.

5. The main sanctuary building has several areas that need attention and improvement. Most notably you will remember that the ceiling above the second floor balcony had sagged and was in danger of collapse. This necessitated that the balcony be off-limits to congregants. The balcony repair was made possible by the Clayman family, who made a donation specifically for that purpose. The balcony is back open, and we thank the Claymans for their generosity.

6. The ceiling in the social hall still needs attention. The hold-up on that project is that we can't seem to get any contractors that really want to work on it. It is a specialized construction, and we may have to bite the bullet and take it all down and start from scratch with a new design.

7. The men's room off the social hall needs an upgrade, but that will probably entail taking up the floor to expose the drainage system for replacement. That project is in the estimation phase.

8. There is visible water infiltration on the northwest corner of the sanctuary, and there is always the apparent leakage in the southwest part of the roof in the sanctuary.

Any and all of these projects are dependent on funds, which are in short supply. We have been in talks with Verizon about placing a cell phone antenna on the roof of the sanctuary. This will generate some cash flow to start some of these needed repairs to our beloved sanctuary complex.

As always, anyone who would like to donate money, expertise, or labor is welcome to get in touch with the office, schedule a time to meet, and get you more active in the care and maintenance aspect of Temple Beth-El.

