

Sim Shalom

February 2016

THE NEWSLETTER OF TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL, HARLINGEN TEXAS

**BLOOD
DRIVE
FEB. 21**
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1702 E. Jackson
P.O. Box 3398
Harlingen, TX 78551
(956) 423-2928
www.harlingentemple.
com

Rabbi Frank Joseph
1832 Cooper Dr.
Irving TX 75061
214-293-6515
frank@
rabbifrankjoseph.org

TRUSTEES

Abby Warshowsky,
President
956-412-3520
956-536-0705 cell
gonsky@sbcglobal.net

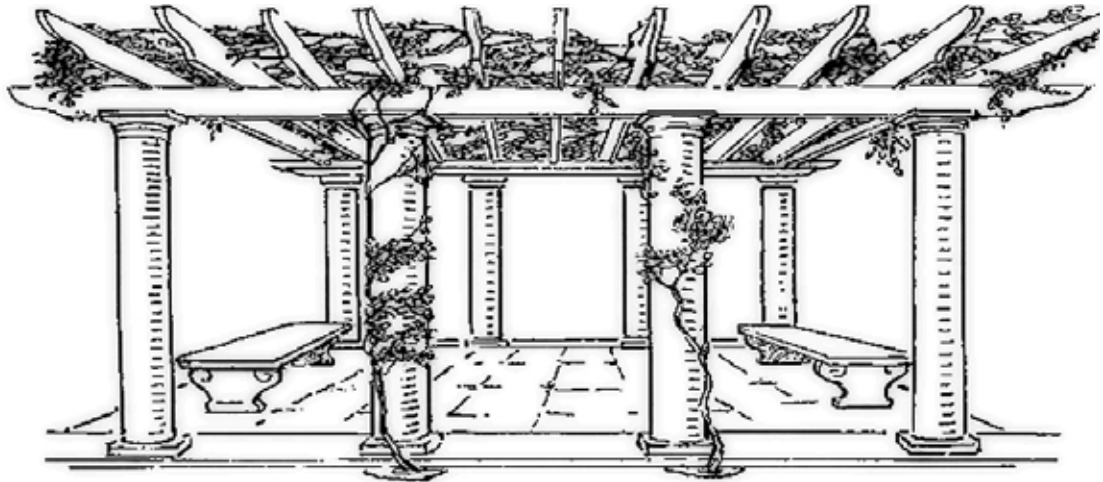
Richard Newman,
Vice President
718-419-6202
rocknewman@gmail.com

Alma Russek
Treasurer
956-970-7722
AlmaFRussek3@aol.com

Jesus (Chuy) Silguero
Secretary
silguero33@yahoo.com

David Goldstein
956-454-6569
david-goldstein@att.net

Rollins Koppel,
Trustee Emeritus
956-428-1789
rkoppel@rkoppel.com



LET'S BUILD IT!

This Sunday, February 7

Help build a new Pergola/Sukkah for the temple terrace!

Morning service, 8 a.m.; Building begins at 9 a.m.

Pizza lunch will be provided for the volunteers.

My name is Tona Gonzalez. I am a student at the Science Academy of South Texas, a member of Troop 2101 of the Boy Scouts in Harlingen, and a member of the confirmation class at Temple Beth Israel. My eagle project is planned for February 7th. I, with the help of both the youth and adults of the temple as well as the Boy Scouts, will build a permanent pergola to be used for the Sukkah. The temple has been building a temporary Sukkah every year, which in turn costs extra money and labor that isn't necessary. Not only can this pergola act as a roof for the Sukkah, but also as shade throughout the year in the patio between the Temple's building and the Sunday school. For this project to be completed and helpful to the temple, we need funds. The project is estimated to cost about \$3,500-\$4,000. A great many people have been very generous and I thank them for that, but we still lack sufficient funds for our minimum goal. Any donations would be extremely appreciated. Also, if you can please come the day of the project, please do. Volunteers welcome. Thank you.

If you need more information about what is needed, or you want to donate or volunteer please call me at; (956) 792-1134.

Or you can mail a donation to: P.O.Box 3398, Harlingen, TX 78551 with the note that it's for Tona Gonzalez's eagle project.

Thank You, Shalom

Tona Gonzalez

FROM THE TREASURER

Dear Members:

Five months have passed from the beginning of our fiscal dues year that started in September, and it is very important for the temple finances that all members pay their dues. Please let me know when you expect to pay your dues so we can plan ahead and budget for our expenses, including the Rabbi's salary.

Did you know that you can pay your dues with a credit

card? Go to <http://www.templebethisraelharlingentx.org/>

At the bottom of the page you will find a button that reads Donate. Click and it will take you to the Temple's Paypal account where you can make your payment.

If you have any questions, please call me or e-mail me.

Thank you,

Alma F. Russek

Calendar

FEBRUARY

5 Shabbat service 7 p.m. Please bring a sweet or savory treat for an informal oneg Shabbat after services.

19-21 *Rabbi in town*

19 Shabbat service at 7:30 pm

20 Shabbat service 9 a.m.

20 Havdallah 6:30 p.m.

21 Blood Drive

MARCH

4 Shabbat service 7:30 p.m.

24 *Purim*

25-27 *Rabbi in town*

25 Shabbat service 7:30 p.m.

26 Shabbat service 9 a.m.

26 Havdallah 6:30 p.m./Purim Party, Megillah reading

APRIL

1 Shabbat service 7:30 p.m.

3 Annual Congregational Meeting and pot-luck lunch

10 Temple Clean Up/Work Day

17 Model Seder

22-24 *Rabbi in town*

22 Shabbat service

22 Temple Community Seder,

Thank You

DONATIONS

FOR THE GENERAL FUND

Stan & Nivia Fisch *in honor Ari Holzman's Bar Mitzvah*

Victor & Judy DeLeon *in memory of Meldaldo and Ezra DeLeon*

Rabbi Frank & Laurie Joseph *in memory of Don and Jeanne Burns*

Rollins Koppel

William Berg & Laurel Steinberg *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

David & Lori Suissa *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

James H & Anne Denison *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

Gerald & Shirley Sondock *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

David & Lori Suissa *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

Medical Technology Associates *in memory of Albert Wolf. "Our deepest sympathies on the loss of Bert father."*

Valeri & Tim Marks *in honor of Albert Wolf. "Our deepest sympathies to Bert and his Family on the loss of his father."*

Sheila Greenfeld *in memory of Gertrude Greenfeld*

FOR THE BUILDING FUND/ SUKKAH PROJECT

Abby Warshowsky

Bert & Jamie Wolf *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

Mary H. Warshowsky

William Berg & Laurel Steinberg

Victor & Judy DeLeon

Abby Warshowsky *in memory of Albert Wolf*

Abby Warshowsky *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

Alma & Fernando Russek Jr. *in memory of Albert Wolf*

Alma & Fernando Russek Jr. *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

Alma & Fernando Russek Jr. *refuah shlema for Nivia Fisch*

Alma & Fernando Russek Jr. *refuah shlema for Bert Wolf*

Deborah Russek *in memory of Albert Wolf*

Deborah Russek *in memory of Kathy Koppel*

Celebrations

BIRTHDAYS

2/4 Fernando A. Russek

2/7 William C. Stewart

2/10 Laurie Joseph

2/20 Bill Berg

2/18 Brett Wolf

3/14 Gerald Sondock

3/17 Bert Wolf

3/22 Dan Simha

3/31 Gilbert Weisberg

4/5 Alma Russek

4/5 Jamie Wolf

4/6 Dagan Wise-Herring

4/11 Andre Suissa

4/15 Jonathan Berg

4/16 Brittni Elise Greenfeld

ANNIVERSARIES

2/6 Christine & Richard Newman

2/7 Jose & Liliana Cohen

3/7 Dr. Stan & Nivia Fisch

3/20 Paul & Sofia Shirazi

Please send changes and updates to laurie.b.joseph@gmail.com.

GIFT CARDS AVAILABLE!

DO YOU BUY GROCERIES?
DRINK COFFEE?
SEE MOVIES?

Help Temple Beth Israel at no additional cost while you do the things you always do. Buy gift cards for HEB, Wal-Mart, Cinemark, Starbucks, Target etc. before you go, and the Temple will receive a percentage.

Please support our scrip card program!

See Alma Russek or call her at 970-7722.

■ RATES FOR MEMORIAL

PLAQUES: Our rate for a memorial plaque on our memorial wall is \$350. Or you can buy two for \$600. Please contact any board member to purchase a memorial plaque.

■ HONOR A LOVED ONE OR A SPECIAL OCCASION with an engraved plaque on a Pew. The cost is \$1250. See any board member to make arrangements.

Oneg Shabbat

Each member household is asked to host one Shabbat oneg during the year. Remember hosting now involves setting up, cleaning up, and providing challah, Kosher wine, grape juice, paper/plastic goods, coffee and drinks. You can bring other treats you like, but the congregation will share the responsibility of bringing snacks and desserts. If you cannot be a host on the date assigned, please call Laurel Steinberg at 550-9530.

ONEG HOSTS

Feb 19: Richard Fourzan, Sofia and Paul Shirazi

Mar. 25: Victor and Judy de Leon, Tammy Spink

NEWS AND NOTES



MAZEL TOV to Samuel and Ada Barrios for the birth and naming of their daughter, Sarah.



MAZEL TOV to the Russek family for their daughter Deborah becoming a First Lieutenant in the Israel Defense Forces.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

First and foremost, I would like to extend condolences to both the Koppel and Wolf families. These two families have been profoundly important to our community. Both families were essential to the founding of Temple Beth Israel as well as the continued support of our ongoing community. Please know you are in our thoughts and prayers at this time.

On Sunday, February 7, 2016, we will be building a Pergola connecting the Temple Sanctuary and the Sunday School building. This structure will hopefully provide shade for our outdoor celebrations as well as serve as a permanent foundation for our Sukkah every year. This project is funded by donations (which we will gladly still accept). It will also serve as the Eagle Project of Tona Gonzalez. In order to complete this project, we could use all the volunteers we can get. Please come by even if you

cannot stay too long. Every hour of work helps. This would also count as community service hours for any kids you may know that wish to donate some volunteer hours. We will have services at 8 a.m., and then start to work at 9a.m. Please bring any drills, ladders or tools you may have. Donuts in the morning and pizza for lunch for all volunteers.

On February 21, we will have our Second Annual Blood Drive and cookout. Save a life, save the world! Please come and donate blood. There is an attached flyer. Even if you are unable to donate blood, please come by for a hamburger. Enjoy a nice day out under our new Pergola! Also, Christine Newman will be setting up a book fair. Proceeds go to the Temple, and she will have lots of nice children's books on display.

See you soon!

— Abby Warshowsky

FROM THE RABBI

Shalom,

One of my favorite lines in all of literature is from the Alfred Lord Tennyson poem, *Ulysses*: “I am a part of all that I have met.”

We are all a part of those whom we have met. All we encounter enrich and impact our lives in unforgettable ways. During the past month, our community has lost two individuals who in their own ways enriched our personal, communal and congregational lives.

On Jan. 31, the community came together to remember Albert Wolf, father of Bert Wolf, who passed away Jan. 23 at his home in Del Ray Beach, Fla., where he resided for the last 20 years. Albert Wolf, affectionately known as “Coot,” was born in Corpus Christi in 1927 and was a beloved resident in Harlingen for 67 years.



Although many of us may not have had the opportunity to know him, we have been privileged to know his son Bert and the Wolf family and to be enriched by the wonderful legacy that Albert left us all. As a founding member of our congregation Temple Beth Israel, Albert Wolf had a significant and lasting impact on our community. As a result of his dedication and desire to help create a Jewish congregation in Harlingen, countless individuals have had the opportunity to pray, study, celebrate life cycle events and attend religion school, Shabbat and festival services. The spiritual and intellectual life of the community has been strengthened because Albert Wolf was here.

“*Ldor v'dor*,” we recite in our prayers — from generation to generation. I'm extremely grateful that Albert helped plant the seeds whose fruit we have all been privileged to enjoy. May we continue to grow from strength to strength and may future generations be spiritually enriched through the continual presence of dedicated and generous congregants like Albert Wolf.



On Sunday Jan 17, we assembled to say farewell to Kathy Koppel, daughter of Rollie and the late Amie Koppel, and our beloved friend. Kathy was a deeply spiritual individual who possessed a gentle, loving, kind, adventurous soul and a gifted eye for beauty and design. On behalf of my wife Laurie and me, I wish to take a few minutes to remember the wonderful relationship we shared with Kathy and her family.

I first knew Kathy and Rollie as students in the first adult education class I taught when we first moved to the Rio Grande Valley 16 years ago. It was a result of that class that we became close friends with the Koppel family. From 2000-2016 we enjoyed Kathy's company, and she was always a pleasure and a delight to be around. Our tradition teaches

us to greet everyone with a cheerful countenance, and Kathy always greeted everyone warmly with a smile.

Two particular experiences with Kathy stand out. The first, the one we refer to as The Reggie Caper, took place with Kathy in Houston. The second was traveling to Israel with Kathy and the rest of the Koppel family.

A few years ago, Rollie found a bulldog puppy — now known as Reggie — that he wanted to buy for Amie and himself from a man in Austin. Rollie arranged to meet the man in a cavernous parking garage at MD Anderson Hospital, where Amie was receiving treatment. Unable to leave his hotel room at the hospital complex while waiting for an update on Amy, he dispatched Kathy, Laurie and myself to smuggle the dog through the crowded hotel lobby and into his room. Though the stakes were pretty small, high drama ensued. Kathy put the dog in a big purse, and we stalled for time until the coast was clear and a free elevator was available. Dodging groups of people, we tried to nonchalantly make our way through the crowded hotel lobby, hoping Reggie would keep quite. Every time he yelped, we walked a little faster. Laurie said the “Mission Impossible” theme song was playing in her head. For us, this perfectly captured the sense of excitement that Kathy naturally infused into everyday life. Any activity had the potential to become a dramatic game, and she made us feel lucky to be among the players.



The second occasion was our magical trip to Israel with the Koppel family several years ago. For us it was the fulfillment of a dream, and Kathy had an incredible time. We never saw her more filled with vitality than when we literally got lost with her in the Old City, looking for the Western Wall and some quality shopping. We know she had an incredible trip because every time we saw her afterward she said she wanted to go back.

Kathy helped us remember the things we tend to forget but that are the most vital elements of life. In Judaism, joy is such an important component, and she truly believed life should be lived with joy. Kathy was courageous in her time of suffering and displayed tremendous dignity in her last days. She reminds us that even in times of suffering, a person with a sincere belief in life after life can find peace.

Rest in peace, Kathy. Your joyous spirit remains with us.



In addition, we extend our condolences to Alma Russek on the recent passing of her cousin, Javier Figueroa.

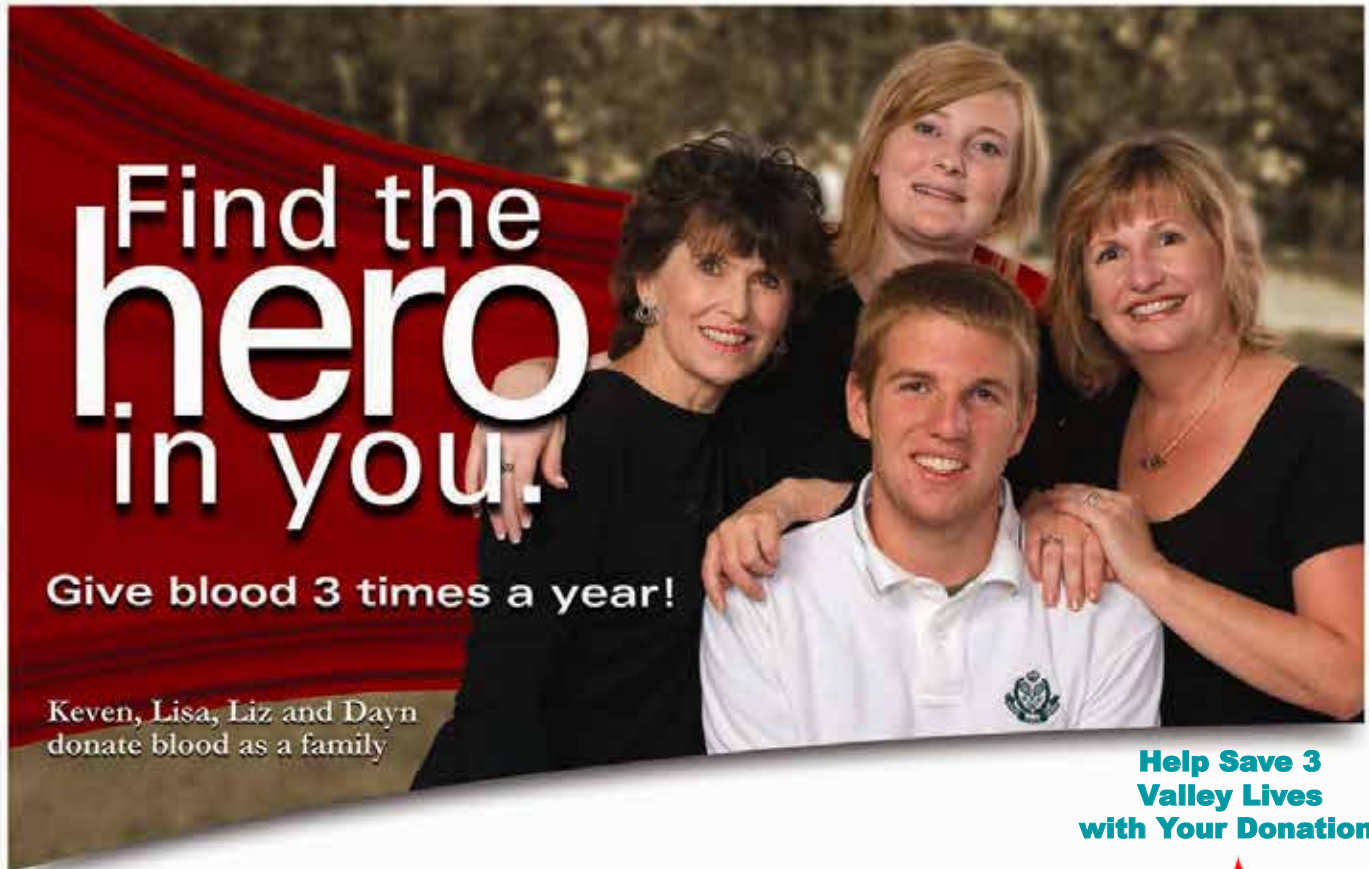
Shalom u'v'rahcha,
Rabbi Frank Joseph

TuB'Shvat

The Religion School celebrated TuB'Shvat on Jan. 24 at Arroyo Park, where we shared a meal hosted by the Goldstein family, ate some of the seven fruits from the Promise Land, and tried some new, unusual fruit, which allowed us to make the Shehecheyanu Blessing. Afterwards, the kids had plenty of fun on the playground.

— *Fernando A. Russek*





Temple Beth Israel

BLOOD DRIVE_s



Sunday, February 21, 2016

11:00 am to 2:30 pm

Bloodmobile in parking lot

Please eat a full meal, drink plenty of water and
bring your photo ID



To help speed up the process, log onto www.UnitedBloodServices.org
and complete the Health History Questionnaire on Left side of screen.
(Day of blood drive)



United Blood Services

www.UnitedBloodServices.org

BS210C (1/09)

Please bring photo ID and donor card. Free Cholesterol Testing every donation!