

# Sim Shalom

Kislev 5774  
November 2013

THE NEWSLETTER OF TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL, HARLINGEN TEXAS

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## REBEKAH SHULAMIT RUSSEK

### *Bat Mitzvah*

*November 15-16*

**H**i, my name is Rebekah Shulamit Russek. I wanted to invite everyone to my Bat-Mitzvah that I will be celebrating on November 16. But first let me tell you a little about myself. I'm the daughter of Fernando A. Russek and Alma (Figueroa) Russek. I go to Coakley Middle School, and some of the activities that I do there are UIL, Band, and Athletics. I have 3 sisters: Rachel, Yafah Tziporah, and Deborah Shoshana. I have been going to Sunday school for nearly 8 years studying Judaism and Hebrew. 8 years is a long time for me, and now it is finally paying off, because without my parents taking me to Sunday school there is no way I could be having my Bat-Mitzvah; I also couldn't do this without the Rabbi. He is the one that helps me study everyday the Torah portion that I will be

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## FROM THE RUSSEKS

**A**s a member of our Jewish community of Temple Beth Israel, I have great joy in writing this message. I usually don't write for the Sim Shalom, our newsletter. I consider our community to be my friends and part of my extended family. I want to take this moment to thank you all for your support that makes it possible for us to celebrate the Bat-Mitzvah of our daughter, Rebekah Shulamit. In special, I want to thank our Rabbi Frank Joseph and my closest friends.

I also want to share with you that I'm very happy that we will be celebrating the third Bat-Mitzvah of one of my daughters with you all.

It seems like yesterday when we celebrated her naming ceremony at the Synagogue and then shortly after Rebekah had her consecration and started her days going to Sunday School. And now she is a young lady about to be a Bat-Mitzvah. I'm very proud of her and of all my daughters — Deborah in Israel who is about to start her service in the Army, of Rachel who is at the top of her class and will be graduating high school in a few months, of Yafah who is making straight A's at school — and of my husband. Finally, I want also to thank my family that will be visiting from far away.

*Alma F. Russek*

# Calendar

## NOVEMBER

15-17 *Rabbi in town*

- 15 Shabbat services, 7 p.m.  
led by Rabbi Joseph with  
Rebekah Russek
- 16 Shabbat service 10:30 a.m.  
Rebekah Russek Bat Mitzvah,  
followed by kiddush luncheon
- 16 Havdalah service, Russek  
home, 6:30 p.m.
- 27 Erev Chanukah, first candle
- 28-12/5 Chanukah
- 29 Shabbat Chanukah Service  
and Chanukah party, 7 p.m.

# Celebrations

## BIRTHDAYS

- 11/06 Moniel Feuerman Powell
- 11/6 Susie Weisberg
- 11/8 Laurie Anne Jacobson
- 11/11 Luis Gonzalez
- 11/12 Jacquelyn Stewart
- 11/13 Benjamin M. Yudesis
- 11/14 Monica Stewart Weisberg
- 11/18 Elizabeth Holzman
- 11/20 Charlene Moskal Stegman
- 11/20 Deborah Shoshana Russek
- 11/27 Renata Sobelman
- 11/29 Ari Holzman
- 12/4 Ivan Shirazi
- 12/7 Liliana Cohen
- 12/10 Jan Cassidy
- 12/10 Lori Suissa
- 12/17 David Goldstein
- 12/20 Jose Cohen
- 12/21 Jacquelyn Goldstein
- 12/21 David Martin Jacobson

## ANNIVERSARIES

- 11/7 Gerald & Shirley Sondock
- 11/17 Jan Cassidy & Joel Smith
- 11/20 David & Elizabeth Goldstein
- 12/16 Fernando & Alma Russek

*Did we miss you?*

*Please send birthdays & anniversaries  
to [laurie.b.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:laurie.b.joseph@gmail.com).*

# MAZEL TOV

TO

## *David and Elizabeth Goldstein*

ON THEIR

# 20th Wedding Anniversary!

## NEWS

■ **MAZEL TOV:** To the Russek family on Rebekah's Bat Mitzvah!  
■ **MAZEL TOV:** To Chuy and Angela Silguero on the birth of their new daughter.

■ **CONDOLENCES** to Shlomo, Yakir, and Rolando Harosh on the passing of Mary Harosh on Nov. 4.

■ **SCRIP FUNDRAISER:** Liz Holzman has volunteered to coordinate our new "scrip" fundraiser. You can buy gift cards for any of hundreds of businesses, restaurants, etc, with a percentage (varies 2-8% or more) benefiting Temple Beth Israel directly. Please contact Liz at: [holzmanfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:holzmanfamily@yahoo.com) or at: 956-459-5433. At the scrip website, [www.glscrip.com](http://www.glscrip.com), you can see the list of business that are available. We all need to buy things -- your purchases can benefit our temple!

■ **INTRO TO HEBREW FOR ADULTS:**  
Laurel S will teach intro to Hebrew for adults, Sundays, 11-12 am, continuing with the Aleph Bet and intro reading, where the class left off last year. Please call her to join the class if you know a little bit of Hebrew reading.

■ **NEW WEB SITE AND ON LINE DONATIONS:**  
The Web address for the Temple is [www.harlingentemple.com](http://www.harlingentemple.com). You can donate to the temple at the bottom of every page. Thanks to Max Rojas for setting up our website, and thanks to Anne Weiss for setting up our PayPal account.

■ **Please send the temple your family's dates** for birthdays, anniversaries, and yahrzeits. Upcoming birthdays and anniversaries will be listed in the Sim Shalom. The temple (Dyan Banks) will send reminder letters for approaching yahrzeit dates so that you can say kaddish at services and have an opportunity to give tsedakah in memory of your departed loved one. Please send any of these life cycle dates to Laurie Joseph, at [laurie.b.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:laurie.b.joseph@gmail.com), or just Yahrzeit dates send to Dyan Banks at [dyanbanks@yahoo.com](mailto:dyanbanks@yahoo.com).

■ **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 Bert Wolf, or 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 Bert Wolf or any board member to make arrangements.

# THANKSGIVUKKAH?

*Good thing latkes go great with turkey!*

FROM Chabad

<http://www.chabad.org>

Question:

Is it true that . . .

Thanksgiving falls on Chanukah this year, it's never happened before, and it will never happen again?

Answer:

Yes, no, and maybe.

Yes, this Chanukah, if you're celebrating Thanksgiving, you'll want to light the second candle of the menorah at your turkey dinner.

No, it's not true that this has never happened before. Let's work this through step by step:

Chanukah was declared a Jewish national holiday 2178 years ago. Thanksgiving was declared a national American holiday on the last Thursday of every November by Abraham Lincoln in 1863. Before then, Thanksgiving was celebrated on different dates in different states, so we won't count those. But, using the Chabad.org Date Converter, you will see that Thanksgiving coincided with the first day of Chanukah on November 29, 1888. It also coincided with the fifth day of Chanukah on November 30, 1899.

On November 28, 1918, Thanksgiving was on Chanukah eve. But since it's still Thanksgiving until midnight, and Jewish days begin at night, that would still mean that Jewish Americans would have eaten their turkeys that Thanksgiving to the light of their first Chanukah candle.

It gets more complicated. Originally, Thanksgiving was always on the last Thursday of November. In 1939, FDR decided it would be good for the economy to push Thanksgiving back a little, so he declared the fourth Thursday of that November



to be Thanksgiving—even though there were five Thursdays to November that year. In 1942, that became federal law. But not all states went along with it. As late as 1956, Texas was still celebrating Thanksgiving a week later than the rest of the country.

Which means that if you were a Texan Jewish family, you would be eating that turkey to the light of your first Chanukah light in 1945 and 1956.

Will it ever happen again? Inter-

esting question. If we project forward, assuming that:

Thanksgiving will be celebrated on the same schedule,

The people celebrating Thanksgiving will continue following the Gregorian calendar without modification,

The Jewish calendar will continue on its current 19-year cycle,

. . . then the next time the two will coincide would be when Thanksgiving falls on Chanukah eve in the year 2070.



# CHANUKAH AT THE TEMPLE

## FRIDAY, NOV. 29, 7 P.M.

This year the Confirmation class is taking over most of the Chanukah celebration. Here is what they have planned; some of it is the same and a lot is different:

- There will be 4 separate categories for the Chanukiah building contest: K - 2nd grade will build theirs from toys; 3rd and 4th grade, use anything animal, (not live ones); 5th and 6th grade, Food; 7th grade through adults, only natural products, (ie. tree branches, shells, pine cones, etc.)
- There will be a Sufganyot/Star of David jigsaw puzzle relay contest.
- A Chocolate eating contest that may be a little different from past years.
- Dreidel coloring (not a contest)
- Latke contest
- Dreidel spinning contest

Also we hope to have a combination of traditional Chanukah music as well as an infusion of more modern takes on Chanukah tunes.

*Charlene Moskal*

## HOLIDAY VILLAGE

Holiday Village will be open from November 25 - January 1 in Dean Porter Park in Brownsville. Once again, the Hannukah House is part of the village. It is sponsored by the Jewish community.

*Robin Pierce*

Gobble tov!



## Thank You

### DONATIONS

#### YIZKOR FUND

**Robert I & Anne B. Weiss**

#### GENERAL FUND

**Harry and Elizabeth Holzman** for flowers and plants

**Fernando and Alma Russek** labor and plants in Honor Rebekah's Bat Mitzvah

**Jesus and Angela Silguero**

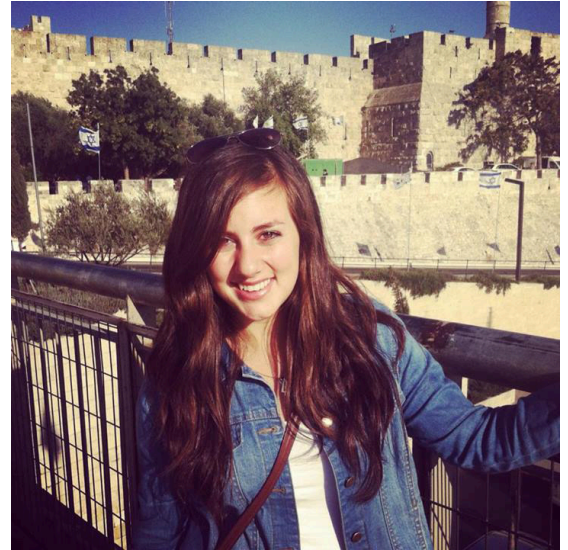
**Rene y Eliza Gonzalez** for a new bookcase

**Patty Gaytan** for a new bookcase

**Samuel and Ada Barrios** for a new bookcase in Honor Rebekah's Batmitzvah

## FROM THE RUSSEKS

As I anxiously await my draft day, I think of home and how much I miss my family. You see, I made Aliyah in March 2013 specifically with the sole purpose of coming to serve in the Israeli Defense Force. I did Israeli high school here my sophomore through senior year, but never really wanted to stay afterwards. I just wanted to go back to the states and start college like I'd always planned on doing. When I graduated in July of 2012, I went back home and realized that I couldn't keep to my original plan. As I watched most of my friends from high school who had stayed doing their part for the Jewish state, I knew more and more that I had to go back and do the same. Once I arrived in the country, I faced many problems and struggles. The bureaucracy in the IDF makes it very difficult for everyone, especially those not accustomed to the Israeli mentality, so as a small town Texan girl I was pushed around and kind of tossed to the side. But I kept on, constantly calling everyone and anyone I could, sending faxes, making phone calls, just to try and go in soon and with a decent position. It was not an easy process, but now I'm set to draft November 12. I'm excited and nervous all at the same time, not knowing what to expect. I hope to meet all sorts of people during the next two years and have an unforgettable experience. I will go into the army alone, being a lone soldier (a soldier whose family lives outside of Israel), watching every other girl excitedly wait with her family by her side, but I don't feel so bad about it because I know I'm doing my part for the state of Israel. I was not obligated to because I was not Israeli, but I chose to come join the force that protects our country. The IDF (with the help of G-d) is the only thing keeping all of the Jewish people's enemies from destroying us, like many have tried before, and protecting the tiny strip of land that is the only place in the whole wide world where any Jew can come and live safely as a Jew. I have my family's support all the way from the other side of the world and an amazing host family here in Israel, which is very comforting. As I start this new stage in my life, I would like to also congratulate my younger sister Rebekah who is also starting a new stage in life. She celebrates her Bat Mitzvah this weekend and will take on the responsibilities of being an adult in the Jewish community. If you're reading this, I know you'll do amazing, and I'm so proud!



*Deborah Shoshana Russek*

FROM REBEKAH RUSSEK,  
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reading. Speaking of my Bat-Mitzvah, I will be happy to tell you that the parshah I'm going to read from the Torah that day is Vayishlach. Well, that's about all I have to say. So hope you can make it!

*Rebekah Shulamit Russek*

We would like to invite everybody in our community to join with us to celebrate our daughter, Rebeka Shulamit, becoming a Bat-Mitzvah. She will be helping lead services Friday at 7 p.m. and will be having her Bat-Mitzvah Saturday morning at 10:30. Following the services, we will have Kiddush and lunch. Havdalah will be at 6:30 in our home, with a potluck after-Bat Mitzvah party celebration. If you need directions, please call me at (956) 970-4005

*Mazal Tov Rebekah  
Fernando A. Russek*

## Oneg Shabbat Hosts

Each member household is asked to host one Shabbat oneg during the year. **If you do not have a date to host, please let me know.** You can view the calendar at [http://www.rab-bifrankjoseph.org/Temple\\_Beth\\_Israel.html](http://www.rab-bifrankjoseph.org/Temple_Beth_Israel.html) to see when Rabbi Joseph will be in Harlingen. 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. Call Laurel Steinberg at 550-9530 for information.

### ONEG HOSTS

**NOVEMBER:** Russek, Holzman, Wolf  
**DECEMBER:** Warshowsky, Warshowsky, Barrios  
**JANUARY:** Pot luck supper, Berg coordinator  
**FEBRUARY:** Silguero, Rodriguez

# Temple Beth Israel 2013-2014 Calendar

## AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## NOVEMBER

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## FEBRUARY

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## MAY

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## SEPTEMBER

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29	30					

## DECEMBER

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29	30	31				

## MARCH

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## JUNE

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29	30					

## OCTOBER

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31				

## JANUARY 2014

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## APRIL

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## JULY

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26	27	28	29	30
31				

## AUGUST

Aug. 24 National/school holidays  
Aug. 24-25 Jewish holiday/festival

## SEPTEMBER

Sept. 4 Religion School in session  
Sept. 5 & 6 Rabbi Joseph in attendance  
Sept. 8 Additional 7:30 p.m. service  
Sept. 13 Shabbat services 10-10:45 services  
Sept. 14 7:30 p.m. Fri./9 a.m. Sat.  
Sept. 15 School day schedule 10:45-12:15 classtime  
Sept. 19-25 12:15-1:00 lunch  
Sept. 26 1:00-1:45 Hebrew class

## NOVEMBER

Nov. 16 Rebekah Russek Bat Mitzvah  
Nov. 27 Erev Chanukah, first candle  
Nov. 28-Dec. 5 Chanukah  
Nov. 29 Shabbat Chanukah Service

## DECEMBER

Dec. 28 Tona Gonzalez-Washowsky Bar Mitzvah  
Jan. 16 Tu B'Shvat  
Jan. 17 Early services/Potluck Dinner  
Jan. 19 Tu B'Shevat outing

## FEBRUARY

Feb 15 Havdalah and Movie Night  
March 16 Purim Party, Megillah reading  
March 23 Annual Congregational Meeting  
March 30 Temple Clean Up and Work Day

## APRIL

April 6 Religion School Model seder  
April 14 Temple Community Seder, Erev Passover  
April 15-22 Passover  
April 27 Yom HaShoah

## MAY

May 5 Yom HaZikaron  
May 6 Yom HaAtzma'ut, Israel Independence Day  
May 18 Lag B'Omer  
May 23 Confirmation Service  
May 24 Braulio Gaytan Bar Mitzvah  
May 25 Last day religion school

## JUNE

June 3 Erev Shavuot, Services  
June 4-5 Shavuot

## JULY

July 19 Havdalah and movie night