



Save the Date

Friday, May 25 and Saturday, May 26
 Help Celebrate Rabbi Murray Ezring's 18th
 Anniversary with Temple Israel

There will be a special Shabbat Dinner, Guest Speakers, Shabbat Kiddush and a Tribute Journal. We look forward to celebrating 18 years and many more with Rabbi Murray Ezring, his family and our Jewish Community. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

Chabad Ballantyne

Shabbat Dinner – Southern Style

Join us with your family for a delicious Shabbat dinner – Southern style (non-fried options, too). As our community continues to grow this is a fabulous opportunity to see old friends and make new ones. During services and at certain times during the meal, we will have a special simultaneous children's program to keep your little ones entertained while you enjoy discussions with Rabbi Yisrael Levin.

Friday, February 10 at The Springhill Suites in Ballantyne, 12325 Johnston Rd.

Shabbat evening services complete with songs and explanations will begin at 6 PM.

Dinner will begin at 6:30 PM. You are welcome to come at either time.

\$15 a person or \$45 a family. For more info or to RSVP, email info@JewishBallantyne.com or call 704-246-8881 or visit our website www.JewishBallantyne.com.

Pre-Purim Fun and Hamentaschen for Kids

Give your kids some Purim fun a week early. Make your own hamentaschen, hear awesome Purim stories, play Purim activities, and make a Purim craft all in one hour. A great way to learn more about the holiday of Purim and hang out with other Jewish kids.

Monday, February 27
 5:30–6:30 PM at Chabad of



Ballantyne, 11408 Snapfinger Dr. Preschool age – 5th grade (groups will be split by age); \$10 a child – parents are welcome to stay. Free for our Hebrew School students.

For more info or to RSVP, email info@JewishBallantyne.com or call 704-246-8881 or visit our website www.JewishBallantyne.com.

Save the date: Purim in Africa (party and dinner), Thursday, March 8 at the South Charlotte Banquet Center. ☆



Temple Or Olam Member Profile: Leta

By Angela Hodges

We often hear about what a congregation is doing or how they are celebrating, but it is, after all, the people who make the congregation what it is. To this end, we spend our column inches this month profiling Leta VanArsdale, one of the many small rays of sunshine who call our temple home.

I interviewed Leta over the phone on a Friday night just before Shabbat. She'll be bat mitzvah in a couple of years, and right now she's finding her place in our small congregation—exploring all the things that are possible and figuring out what appeals to her.

I admit, Leta is a joy for me. Last year, when I taught her beginning Hebrew class, I caught a glimpse of a younger version of myself. She is a learner, that one. She wants to know what there is to know: "I like when the rabbi asks a question and I know the answer even when the adults don't," she admits shyly, her voice soft and smiling on the other end of the phone. I tell her I understand, and I do — it's a good feeling to have the right answer, even if you aren't always the person with your hand in the air. Leta's hand, in my experience, is not raised any more than average, and I think that says a lot about who she is as a person. There is a kindness there, an awareness of other people that usually only comes with age and experience; although she might know more than her share of right

answers, she never takes up more than her share of space.

"I really like our temple because we always play music," Leta says, "Everyone gets to play something if they want to, and some people go up and perform." In fact, our congregation is small enough that the adults Leta knows best (outside her parents, of course) are the same ones that she sees up front on Friday nights. A couple of times, she's been up there, too. "I get nervous when I'm gonna have to perform," she says, "but then I have fun when I'm up there doing it." The truth is, she handles herself like a pro and she shines when she sings—we'd like to see much more of her.

Toward the end of our interview, I asked Leta if she thought she would continue to use the Hebrew she had learned (and would learn) leading up to her bat mitzvah. "You know when we stretch out the Torah during Simchat Torah?" she asked. "It would be cool if I could read it then, or any other time. I'd like to know what it says for myself with no one telling me." And suddenly, knowing this child as I do, I was inspired to ask something else — "Hey Leta," I said, "you've heard people 'sing' Torah, right? It has its own kind of notes written in around the words, and it's not very hard to learn."

The excitement in her reply was palpable. "Are you kidding?!" she asked.

I grinned, though she couldn't



Leta

see me through the phone; it seems we inadvertently stumbled on the next thing Leta would like to learn. And it's a good thing, since her bat mitzvah is coming up.

Temple Or Olam is a Jewish Renewal community that serves Cabarrus county and parts of Mecklenburg county (including University City, Davidson, and Huntersville). We encourage heartfelt, easy access to all things Jewish. For more information, please visit our website at www.or-olam.org and subscribe to our mailing list. You can also email us at info@or-olam.org, or call 704-720-7577. ☆



J.B. TALLENT
FUNERAL SERVICE & CREMATORY

"Respecting Your Traditions And Values"

*John Tallent, Sr., Frank Pierpont,
 John Tallent, III*

Locally Owned & Operated
Full Service Funeral Provider

*Privileged to Serve the Jewish Community
 for Over 20 Years*

**1937 Sharon Amity Road
 704-567-1500**

(located across from Sharon Memorial Park)

**Yours Truly Needlepoint
 and Knitting**
Handpainted Needlepoint Canvases

All New Canvases — Free lessons
 — Unique Gift Ideas —
 New and Old Customers Very Welcome
 Best Selection in Charlotte

All Proceeds Go to Local Charities

**3802 Columbine Circle
 704-366-6765**

**Open Thursdays
 9 a.m.-5 p.m.**

**BUSINESS CARD
 DIRECTORY**

To advertise in the Business Card Directory,
 contact one of our sales representatives:

**Jodi Valenstein, 704-609-0950 or
 Scott Moskowitz, 704-906-2474**

**25 Years of
 Serving the
 Carolinas with
 High Quality
 Storage and
 Marina
 Properties**
www.mstarproperties.com