

President's Message Summer 2007

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Shalom everyone. After four years of being your president, I will be stepping down when my term ends in June. I think that I am leaving the temple in better shape than when I took over in certain respects and not as good in others. During the past four years, we have been able to "dream the impossible dream" and make our building (except for the Bimah) handicapped accessible. We have been able to hire a student cantor for the past three years, we have had a second night Passover Seder, our co-op Sunday school is still in great shape and for the last four years we have been able for our Jewish community to finance the teaching of our young adults, and our finances are not in bad shape. We also held a wonderful celebration for Rabbi Lewis' 25th year of being an ordained Rabbi.

The only place that I see us in some trouble is that our membership has dwindled to a number that is too low. We need to find new members. We need all of you to try and recruit members to the temple.

As far as saying goodbye, I will not do it. I am not going anywhere and I will continue to serve on the board of directors and be actively involved in the temple. But I do have a number of people to whom I owe a special gratitude for all of their hard work during my presidency. These thank-yous are in no particular order, and I love all of these people very much.

Let's start with Helen Mattson, who has been such a major influence on this temple for as long as I have been here. Her attention to detail is unparalleled. Helen is leaving the board in June and her leadership will be impossible to replace.

My next thank you is to Gwen Nagorsky. Gwen has taught me how to be President and has guided me from before I took over the presidency and has been one of the people I look to for advice. She ran the Rabbi's Shabbaton and is instrumental in improving our building with her talent as a decorator and her heart as someone who really cares about our shul.

Paul May has been the treasurer for my term and is another of my resources whom I go to when I need advice. Paul has been instrumental in coming up with ways to finance the types of improvements that the board would like to do to the building. He is not afraid to speak up and disagree with me when he thinks I am wrong. I may not always appreciate the fact that we disagree, but Paul has the synagogue's best interest firstmost in his heart.

Sharon Herson has been what I would consider a co-president. Sharon makes sure that when I forget to do something that it is taken care of. It is sort of like having someone who knows what has to be done looking over your shoulder and not only offering advice, but diving in and getting the work done.

Lisa Bauch has been the newsletter editor for my entire term and is the most patient person in the world. When I couldn't think of another thing to write, Lisa has the patience to wait

for my muse to strike, but also the tenacity of an editor to gently remind me that it is time to write again. Without her gentle ways, I would have been a basket case.

Mike Weiner has been my trusted vice-president and again someone on whose advice I relied heavily. Mike has also been teaching in the Sunday school for a very long time and his sense of humor and love of Judaism is something that is being passed onto our children.

For the last of my major thank-yous I need to say thank you to Rabbi Lewis, whose warmth, caring and love have helped sustain me on the days when the job seems overwhelming, like having to postpone a Bar Mitzvah because of inclement weather.

In addition, I want to say thank you to all of the people who have served on the board with me, my fellow members of the Men's club, all of the teachers in the Sunday school, all of the PTO parents and everyone else in the congregation who has taken me into your heart and let me be the kind of president that I have been. I hope that you are proud of the work we have done and I want each and every one of you to know that you are special to me. And as a final gesture of my presidency, I leave you all with a great big hug.

Shalom

Howie the Hugger