

## President's Message September 2012

Life certainly has been a roller coaster for our Jewish Center this year. The year started on a very sad note with the passing of two of our elder and more stalwart congregants, Charlotte Fels and then Eric Edelstein. Then in the spring, we were able to celebrate a few very joyous B'Not Mitzvahs, followed by a jubilant celebration of our Rabbi's 18th anniversary as our Rabbi and the presentation to the congregation of a light-weight Torah, which should be of great use to the congregation in the years to come. We gave out the first Jewish Center scholarship to Hannah Finkelstein and prepared for a joyous summer. We have had too many people fighting diseases this spring, including the Seidorf, Needleman, and Parson families, to name a few.

The summer's peace was filled with some happy/sad news that Rabbi Lewis will be retiring from the pulpit at the end of June. While we are very happy for the Rabbi and will do everything we can to wish her well, it does mean that things will change in the congregation. A search committee has been formed, chaired by Mo Bauer, and we will begin looking for a successor to Rabbi Lewis.

Then in the last few weeks, we have found out that our beloved teacher and friend, Mike Weiner, is battling a brain tumor. All of our prayers are with Mike as he fights this terrible disease. If positive thinking and a great attitude can help beat a disease, then the disease has no chance against Mike.

In the fall, we will have an event where each of us will have the ability to assist in the "completion" of writing the Torah under the supervision of Rabbi Isaac Winer. Look for more information on this.

What these events go to show is that life goes on for our people as well as for the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey.

We laugh and celebrate together when times are good, and we cry and console each other when times are tougher.

The best thing about being part of a community like ours is that we are so small, that there is no one who doesn't matter. We need each and every one of us to shoulder a bit of the burden of not only sustaining the Jewish center for our mutual benefit, but it also is incumbent upon us to be able to leave the families that are yet to join us with a loving place to raise their families with a Jewish heritage.

May you all be inscribed in the book of life for the coming year, and may we enjoy the coming year in good health and peace.

Shalom, Howie

