

## **May 2018 Message from President Howie Hirsch**

Spring is finally here. The trees are budding. The flowers are blooming. The plant world is coming alive again in Northwest New Jersey. This is one of my favorite times of the year, even though it means lots of work. I finally got into my garden and started planting vegetables. I will start my flowers hopefully after the B'Not Mitzvah of Molly and Emma Kahan, two students who I have been tutoring for the past year.

It is so exciting to see these two young girls get ready for their big day. I really enjoy teaching Hebrew to students of this age. While they study hard, they also need to have fun and not make this process life or death. Both Molly and Emma have done a wonderful job of learning the service as well as enjoying our time together. I am grateful to Debbie and Sandy for trusting me to be their tutor. I have known these girls since they were around two years old, and we have had a special relationship for a long time. They both like to see how far they can push my physical limitations with jumping on me and having me carry them around the temple and other places. I love this, and hope that my back will hold up well enough to do to this for a while longer.

This leads me to another point. The title of the Rolling Stones song "The Last Time" is appropriate for this part of my article. One of the things that happens as you grow older is that things change imperceptibly sometimes and other times they change with great rapidity. As I lift Molly and Emma in the air, I start to wonder, "Will this be the last time?" Will my body hold up? Will they get too big physically to do this anymore? Will they get to the point where they are embarrassed or just too old to play that way anymore?

What this means to me is to cherish every interaction with those who you love. You never know when something will be the "Last Time". When will be the last time I get to tell my father how much I love him and how much I admire who he is and how he has affected my life? I don't know, but what I do know is to cherish every time I get to visit him and spend time with him. I try to do that with everyone in the congregation as I cherish every one of you as my family.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a leader here. I want you all to know how precious you are to me.

Shalom,

Howie