

My first year as your president has truly been an eventful one.

Some of the highlights:

As many of you are aware, the organ in the sanctuary, which served us well for over four decades, is no longer functioning. We recently ordered a new organ, which will be installed in late spring or summer - certainly well before the High Holy Days. We are deeply grateful to Sisterhood, the Men's Club, Ethel and Bob Singer, Randi and Scott Wolfson, and Amy and Jason Esralew for their very generous donations toward the cost of the new organ. The new organ comes with its own up to date sound system and will truly enhance our worship experience.

As you heard during the presentation of the operating budget, we have increased security this year. The safety of all who use this facility is paramount. There is now a security presence whenever children are in the building. We constantly evaluate our security practices. We have a new collaboration with Robert Wilson, the MetroWest Federation's director of security. As recently as yesterday, we met with him to go over our security practices. We asked him for honest feedback. He gives us very high grades. We have received a security grant from the Federation and we are applying for a Homeland Security grant.

The renovation of the Early School's Room 13, the large room at the end of the hallway downstairs, is just about complete. It's a wonderful space for our children and their teachers. If you haven't seen it, take a look. We are very grateful to Nancy and Robert Eskow for their donation to fund the renovation, to create the Nancy and Robert Eskow Family Room.

Early School enrollment is now on the upswing, particularly in the two's. The Early School has now engaged a social media expert consultant. A big thank you to Debbie Ziering, her teachers, and her staff for continuing to do such a wonderful job with our kids.

The Jewish Learning Program, the JLP, rolled out its new curriculum in September. The new program is a resounding success. The children are happy and they are learning. Enrollment is up, with more students enrolled now than in decades. Thank you to Melissa Weiner, JLP director and the JLP teachers and staff. Melissa, you had a vision for a new approach to teaching our kids and you have now put your vision into practice.

Thanks to all who have donated to Partners in Leadership, our annual giving campaign. There is still time to donate this fiscal year if you have not yet done so - the fiscal year doesn't close until February 28.

I must mention the ongoing great work of my predecessor Julie Silbermann, our Development Chair. \$500,000 was raised so far for the Ross Endowment and the Capital Improvement Fund. Many thanks to the donors.

The Memorial Park is now managed by a management company, Raiken-Epstein. This was the first full year with the new management. The transition been smooth and successful. The park is well run and looks great.

As you all know, Rabbi Kulwin announced that he will retire in the summer of 2019 at the end of his current contract. This is a major event in the history of our synagogue. At the time of his retirement, Rabbi Kulwin will have been our spiritual leader for twenty years. Rabbi, in the coming year and a half, many of us will pay well-deserved tribute to you. I have a feeling that you already know how I feel personally. Your tenure is a blessing to this congregation.

To all of you, please stay for the Congregational Forum that follows this annual meeting to give your views about what we need and want in our next rabbi.

We are deeply grateful to our clergy, Rabbi Kulwin, Rabbi Dantowitz, and Cantor Epstein. You inspire us. You teach us. You comfort us and you help us celebrate.

Thank you to Tracey and the maintenance staff. You do a terrific job every single day.

To Gail and the administrative staff - all I can say is many thanks. Your professionalism, expertise, wisdom, and skill are incredible and second to none. Gail, you are truly a trusted and valued colleague to me personally.

To the incoming members of the Board of Trustees, welcome aboard. I look forward to working with you. As you get acclimated, please feel free to ask me any questions you might have.

To our retiring board members, thank you for your years of service. I deeply appreciate the time and energy you gave to your synagogue. I hope that each of you remains involved.

To the temple officers and our counsel, thank you for your hard work, for your commitment to TBA, for your assistance, and your advice. I truly look forward to our next year of working together.

I want to say a special word of thanks to Sandra Kantor and Suzanne Weinick who completed their terms as presidents of Sisterhood during this past year. All of us at TBA are grateful to you for the job you did and for the devotion to TBA that you continue to show.

The end of this fiscal year means that Brian Altman's and Darren Schumer's many years of service as co-chairs of the Buildings and Grounds Committee will come to an end. What an amazing run. You have done your jobs very well. You have accomplished much ... more than I can begin to list. You will be missed, but I also know that you are not going far. Thank you to both of you.

To all of the many committees and organizations that make up our lay leadership, keep up the good work, thank you for everything. I hesitate to mention any specific group for fear of inadvertently omitting someone. To all of you, please know that I speak for the entire congregation when I say that I appreciate each of you and the many good things that you do.

I could not do this job without the support of my family. Susan and Mark, thanks.

I look forward to next year with great anticipation. It will be a busy time, a time of transition. I believe it will be a time of new growth and opportunity. Let's continue to work together to make our synagogue's future a great one.