

Presidential Matters

by Bob Stern



Over the past few months, you've heard various individuals speak about the different reasons people opt to join a synagogue. These have ranged from purely religious to purely social and virtually every aspect in between.

Over the past thirty plus years of my temple membership, one overriding aspect always seems to come through. As Steve Aronowitz said during his Yom Kippur speech and I paraphrase, "we are more than a synagogue, we are a family." Yes, it's the sense of being a family.

Over the past two weeks, that has been vividly demonstrated several times. We had our New Member Kabbalat Shabbat Service on October 9. While the weather limited the turnout of both old and new members, the new members present cited the "Hamish" feeling as being one of the top reasons they decided to join L'Dor V'Dor.

On October 17, George Klein celebrated the 50th anniversary of being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah by reciting his haftorah. Leslie and George sponsored a magnificent Kiddush after the services as a way of sharing their simcha with their family, friends and "temple family."

The aufruf of Hilary Wolecki and Jon Schiffelman took place in the afternoon of October 17. A significant stepping off point as they prepare for a life together.

Jeffrey Wirtheim celebrated the 25th anniversary of his becoming a Bar Mitzvah on October 23 by reciting his haftorah. Lois and Stan sponsored a special Kiddush following services, again as a way to share their simcha with their family, both real and temple.

To be sure, the extended synagogue family also shares life cycle events of a sadder nature than the joyous ones cited above. Unfortunately, there are too many of those to enumerate them all here. But that's the way it goes for a real family, so why not for our temple family. But whether it's a happy or sad occasion, our L'Dor V'Dor family is always there to share in the joy or aid with the comfort. That's what families do!

And like just about every family, we can be dysfunctional at times. Sometimes more so than others. But despite that, or perhaps even because of it, the synagogue family always seems to come through in the clutch. Rabbis come and go. Cantors come and go. And congregations change. But the very essence of a synagogue remains unchanged. No matter what your reason for joining.