

Presidential Matters

by Bob Stern



It's hard to believe the High Holidays will soon be here. It's even harder to believe that our two congregations have been together for almost a year! What a wonderful year it's been!

I've made no secret about what OJC was looking for in a consolidation partner. I've also made no secret of the fact that LNJ met almost all of those criteria. As such, I and my committee were very comfortable we had led our congregation to an excellent opportunity to continue the OJC spirit and tradition. Fortunately, after much discussion and debate, the congregation agreed and voted in favor of consolidation.

Now, almost a year since we joined together for services and programs, it's a joy to see the way the congregations have come together. Apart from OJC gravitating to the last pew, it's virtually impossible to tell who belonged to which temple. I had high expectations but the reality has far exceeded them. This is a testament to the members of both congregations and their willingness to place the good of the synagogue first and foremost.

To be sure there are many things still to be done. Some are very simple - obtaining new signage and logo. Some are fairly easy - moving furniture and equipment from OJC to OLNJC, moving the memorial plaques (heavy but not difficult), moving the Tree of Life, and burying prayer books. Some are much harder - dismantling the ark, finding good homes for the Sefer Torahs we will not be using, and adequately staffing the office.

And all of these things are being, or will be, done by the end of August. Or we will have very clear directions for those few areas not finalized.

Your Transition Committee has worked diligently with several committees and Rabbi Yaffe to ensure everything gets done in an effective, efficient manner. As the deadline to be out of OJC nears, we will be meeting as frequently as necessary to get the job done. And done right.

I'd like to personally thank those who have played a part - Dawn Singer, Jeff Bass, Irwin Wolf, Howard Litvack, Marjorie Goldstein, Marty Ackerman, Marty Jahre, Jerry Schwartz, and Chuck Wayne of the committee. Others include Rabbi Yaffe, Stan Wirtheim, Joel Friedman, Deanne Raffel, George Klein, Esther Forman, and Harriet Joseph. For those whose names I may have omitted, I apologize. Any oversight was purely inadvertent.

Of course, I must thank my co-president and friend, Steve Aronowit for his extraordinary work on this seemingly endless process. We are probably spending more time with each other than we are with our wives. So, special thanks to Julie and Lesley.

Steve and I hope you are enjoying your summer and we look forward to seeing you all as we celebrate the High Holidays. We hope the judge will have officially made us Congregation L'Dor V'Dor by then. But we are already one congregation thanks to all of you. And that's what truly matters.