

Presidential Matters

By Bob Stern



You should be receiving this edition of Temple Talk in the middle of Hanukkah given the vagaries of the calendar. In an unprecedented occurrence, we have celebrated Thanksgiving and Hanukkah on the same day. I understand this will not occur again for 70,000 years but I can't vouch for the accuracy of that statement – nor should it really matter to any of us.

Last month Steve addressed some issues regarding the consolidation. He set forth a series of questions and answers. Not wishing to belabor the matter, but recognizing the importance of it, let me take a few words to add my take. Yes, we still await Court approval for the consolidation. But again, should it really matter to any of us? For almost 18 months the congregants of Oakland and Little Neck Jewish Centers, very ably assisted by our incredible clergy and staff, have put into place, in my humble opinion, a very successful venture. Has the lack of Court approval hindered our functioning as a synagogue? The answer is no. We followed, precisely, the prescribed procedure as set forth in the Religious Corporations Law regarding the voting and the filing of documents with the NY Supreme Court (several times).

So what's the big deal? And why is it taking so long? It's not really a big deal. The Order to be signed is but a piece of paper. It legitimizes what we have collectively already put in place. As for the delay, the simple truth is, as Steve described, that the Queens Supreme Court has suffered staff cutbacks and these have created a severe backlog in the support mechanism of the court. Each time materials are submitted, they must make their way through this office before they are delivered to the judge. There is the problem – three to four month delays each time.

To be sure, we all want the consolidation to become official. Nobody more than Steve and I. From a practical matter, the delay has had no real impact on Oakland or Little Neck Jewish Centers. The one obvious impact of the delay is not seeing Congregation L'Dor V'Dor on the front of the building.

Will any of us see dramatic changes once the Court approval is granted? Or even minor changes? My guess is the answer is no. This is simply because we have already undertaken the necessary steps to become one synagogue. Yes, some housekeeping matters will have to be addressed regarding bank accounts, tax exempt numbers and the like but nothing that should affect the day to day activities of our synagogue or congregation. Steve and I ask for and appreciate your continued patience.

By the time you read this I will be in Florida for the winter. Lesley and I have decided to be snowbirds to see if we like it. So, what happens while I'm away in the far reaches of the South? Does the mechanism of OLNJC come to a grinding halt? Are necessary decisions delayed? Will anyone even realize I'm away? Everything remains business as usual owing to the beauty of having co-presidents. Just as during my recent cruise, Steve and I keep in touch via email, text messages, and phone calls. In today's technological world, we are all connected 24/7, much to the dismay of Lesley and Julie. Both have called into question Steve's and my level of sanity when, during various vacations, we took calls from the other or exchanged emails and texts. Seriously, rest assured nothing will slip through the cracks.

On behalf of the Officers and Boards of Trustees of Oakland and Little Neck Jewish Centers, Steve, Julie, Jordan, Lesley and I wish you and yours a magical Hanukkah and a Happy, Healthy New Year.

Bob Stern