

# Presidential Matters

by Bob Stern

First and foremost, let me wish our members and their families a Happy, Healthy 2013. May this new year bring only joy to your homes.

Hopefully as you read this the New York Supreme Court has seen fit to approve the consolidation petition of Oakland and Little Neck Jewish Centers into Congregation L'Dor V'Dor. This is the final piece of the year long effort to blend our two shuls into the preeminent synagogue in Northeast Queens/Nassau. For what it's worth, my personal observation is that the joining of our two temples has been a true joy. Last month's Hanukkah party was a perfect example of that. At the conclusion of the Jewish Family Feud one of the members of Oakland Jewish Center came over to me with a big smile on her face to tell me how much she enjoys the activities at Oakland Little Neck Jewish Center. She particularly likes the music and the number of younger people present. I look forward to seeing her at any event because, in trust, she has been an avid supporter of the consolidation and has always had something positive to say about it.

If only everyone would have such a positive attitude and take advantage of all that our wonderful synagogue has to offer. I realize that not everyone will be interested in every activity. Well, maybe the Rabbi. But there is so much offered that you are bound to find something. Please take a look at Temple Talk and find one activity that *might* be of interest to you and try it. I have no doubt that you will enjoy it and be glad you did. Such a vast array of programming does not magically appear. It is the result of countless members who give unselfishly of their time and effort to ensure we have such a wealth of varied programs. To all these nameless volunteers, thank you on behalf of the membership. Please know your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Let me shift briefly to what could be entitled Personal Matters. The past few weeks have included events and experiences that caused me to put things into perspective by reflecting on my life. I recently underwent a week long course of Cyber Knife radiation treatment for early stage prostate cancer. It was an intense time for me, my wife and family. It was more arduous than I hoped it would be and more problematic than I was told it could be. With my wife Lesley's help I got through it. I didn't realize when I first heard the prostate cancer diagnosis that it would be a defining moment in my life but it has opened my eyes to what is around me. My point is to be thankful for what really matters - your health, family and friends, for they are the most important things in life. Material possessions are nice, but they cannot comfort you when you need to be comforted. They cannot listen to you when you need an ear to listen, nor hug you when you need a hug. Family and friends are the true riches in our lives and we should treasure them.

I'm very excited and delighted to say that I love where I am and what I see. You are a big part of that and I am truly grateful and thankful. Thank you all for the phone calls, cards, prayers and good wishes which were a valuable source of strength and inspiration that helped tremendously.