

## **Presidential Matters**

**By Steve Aronowitz**

### **CONGREGATION HOSTS COMMUNITY INTERFAITH SERVICE**



If you didn't wake up early on Memorial Day, you missed a great start to the holiday as we hosted the 32nd annual Little Neck – Douglaston Interfaith Memorial Day Service. Pausing from the day's festivities to remember those who gave their lives for our country is, of course, meaningful. Standing together with community members from local houses of worship is particularly significant as it is the first time that our temple has participated in this service.

The idea to be the host religious center came about in an informal conversation with organizers two years ago. Attending the holiday service at St. Anastasia Roman Catholic Church, Rabbi Yaffe and I spoke with officials and expressed interest in having Oakland Little Neck Jewish Center become part of the annual program. On a brilliantly clear Monday morning, an outpouring of community members celebrated an important bond with those brave men, and women, who have given their lives in our nation's service.

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO OFFICE MANAGER, HARRIET JOSEPH**

There have been many changes at the synagogue over the past several years; the reason each transition has been virtually seamless falls in great measure to the credit of Harriet Joseph, our office manager, who has announced her retirement, effective at the end of June. As president at Little Neck for the past six years, I really understand Harriet's contributions. Her calm, unexcitable approach made her role unnoticed – and that is the highest compliment of all! Think about it – Shabbat dinners, Sisterhood and Men's club functions, B'nai mitzvah, weekly kiddushes, and, oh yes, a consolidation – everything set, nothing to worry about.

When Harriet told me she was retiring, my response was, "You can't. It's not in your contract!" After 13 1/2 years of service for our congregants, she has decided it's time to do other things. Long time temple member Esther Forman, who continues to be invaluable assisting in so many different ways with membership and finance, was quick to point out Harriet's value across so many lines. "Harriet was dedicated to the welfare of our Temple for so many years. It was a pleasure to work with her on Temple finances and especially on Temple history. We worked together for many years on Temple Talk, Book of Remembrance, the Journal Dinner Dance, and so many other functions. The Temple will sorely miss her."

What's next for Harriet? "I love to travel (she just returned from a trip to Argentina, Brazil, and Chile), I can spend more time with my children and grandchildren. I have a blended family of nine children (seven living) and ten grandchildren. And I want to learn to play golf." Those who work at the temple will certainly join those of us who frequent the synagogue regularly in saluting this loyal employee. "The best part of being at the temple is making so many friends," Harriet reflected. And, for the past 13 years, it has been with Harriet as the greeter. For me – and for so many others – that has been the best part of having Harriet behind the front desk.

We will be honoring Harriet at our Shabbat service on Friday evening, June 20, at 7:30 p.m. Please put the date on your calendar, as I am certain you will want to join us and say, thank you, congratulations, and best wishes for health and happiness to a very special woman who has meant so much to us over the years.

*Steve Aronowitz*