

Pesach, the Exodus and AIPAC

By Stephanie Green and Karen Ehrenberg, Co-Presidents
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Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech haolam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'tzorchai tzibur.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who sanctifies us through *mitzvot* and has commanded us to engage in the needs of the community.

For this is what we truly do – we the THS Board of Trustees has the awesome responsibility to engage in the needs of the community and Karen and I, as this community's Co-Presidents, have the honor, partnering with Rabbi Musnitsky, of leading that effort. It is work – hard work. It takes time, energy, skill, teamwork, collaboration, management, negotiation, patience and is full of frustration, heartache, listening, learning, laughter, joy, and pride. It is work but for us, it truly is a labor of love. We don't do it alone and must thank all of our partners who, working alongside us moves us forward. Rabbi, Cantor, Joel, Manny, Karen, Melissa, Angelica, Elizabeth, Amanda, Shira, Stephanie, our teachers, Mountain Top and Religious School, our fellow trustees and the many volunteers who have given their time and talent during this past year.

This year, that began last June in terms of board service and in July in terms of the Temple's fiscal year, was truly a new one in that we welcomed a new Mountain Top Director, Amanda Jacobs and a new Congregation Manager, Dr. Joel Goldman. It is always hard to welcome new staff during what is arguably our busiest time of year – year-start – but they have been a tremendous addition to our team and as their experience grows and we get to know each other, our working partnership has and, it is our belief will, continue to blossom.

We also welcomed, as part of ATID, a new *bimah* with accessibility for all and it has been our pleasure, and hopefully yours, to see it used often bringing joy to those who can now fully participate in our services, ceremonies, and special events. Suffice it to say we are grateful to those who contributed and those who led and continue to lead ATID in pursuit of achieving all of our goals and objectives.

As we look to the next year – and our last as President, we must truly thank those who served our congregation on our Board of Trustees but are stepping down. First, we thank Rob Segal for his two years of service.

In addition we must recognize two women who have served – in truth we don't know how many terms – with distinction, dedication, loyalty, giving so much of their time and effort.

Karen Feuer who has been in charge of our *Mitzvah* Action Committee and has done an amazing job. From blood drives, to working with MLK, El Centro, the Soup Kitchen and

so much me we are grateful to have served with you and proud of all you helped our community accomplish. Your presence on the board will be missed but we know we can count on your help in the future.

Sonia Kahn, Chair and then co-Chair of the Budget and Finance committee, which is a huge effort year after year. Sonia is always volunteering to help others too, other committees, baking when needed, working Touch-a-Truck and so much more. Again, you have our gratitude and we look forward to working with you as a congregant instead of a board member.

Lastly a volunteering giant will be leaving our board – after many years of service with two terms as President, two as treasurer – not less than 16 years of board service – and that man is Lou Friedman. Through multiple rabbis, Congregation Managers, Mountain Top and Religious School directors, the flush years and the leaner ones, Lou's professional expertise, his personal expertise, his knowledge, his experience and his integrity has informed every major decision this community has made. His passion and his love of and for this community has shown in all that he has done. We are grateful to have served with you officially and look forward to working with you as just a regular volunteer in the coming year. Lou, on behalf of this grateful community, *Todah Robah*.

As Karen and I begin our last year as Co-Presidents we have had but one goal – to leave THS in a better place than when we began our 1st term as Co-Presidents. If we can remember why we are here. If we can be grateful for all that we have. If we can work together to serve our mission and meet our goals and objectives.

Hine mah tov u Mah-Nayim shevet achim gam yachad.

Behold how good and how pleasing it is for people to sit together in unity.

When we, as brothers and sisters unite as a community, may there be nothing we cannot do or achieve. *Ken yi he ratzon.*