

President's Column December 2009



If you were members of Beth Torah more than a year ago you had the opportunity to participate in the first phase of our ongoing Strategic Planning effort—the Congregational Survey. The results of the survey were then used, in the context of the Beth Torah Mission Statement* to form eight work groups to address the needs and desires expressed in the survey.

These eight workgroups are Ritual, Attract and Retain Members, Programming, Preschool, Learning Center, Facility, Administration and Finances. The high level goals for each of these workgroups are as follows:

Ritual: To assure that ritual observance fulfills lifecycle and spiritual needs of all members. Chair, Marty Barenblat.

Programming, Attract and Retain Members: To engage, inspire, and foster friendships through innovative social, cultural, ritual and adult educational programs. Attract and Retain Chair, Debbie Will; Programming Chair, Howard Taper.

Preschool and Learning Center: To inspire Jewish learning and spiritual growth for youth and achieve highest levels of parent satisfaction through quality education at the Learning Center and Preschool. Learning Center Chair, Gayle Hill; Preschool Chair: Lisa Weiser.

Facility: To make certain that facilities are welcoming, well maintained, and fully accommodating to current and future needs. Chair, Chuck Smith.

Administration: To cultivate and maintain a supportive work environment for paid and volunteer staff that uses assessment, innovation, and technology to assure effective administration and communication. Chair, Lou Kaiser.

Finances: To generate the financial resources necessary to sustain current programs and provide for future growth. Chair, Dan Fabricant.

During the course of the summer volunteers were recruited to lead and participate in these workgroups. Since the summer kick-off each of the various groups have held meetings and started working on actions towards achieving each of their goals. Finding volunteers to take on these responsibilities was not easy. People have committed themselves to working weekends and evenings to achieve these goals so I hope please join me in thanking those who have volunteered to participate in, or chair, these workgroups.

Each workgroup either has or will define the timeline to achieve their goal or to identify the programming required for the more long term goals. Unfortunately these timelines can and will be affected by factors outside the control of our volunteers. Some have already had to reconsider and step back from their initial commitment because of changes at home or where they work.

In general, progress is being made toward the goals outlined above. It is not a fast process and not all of the changes will be visible to everybody. Some of the visible changes may seem cold or business like—such as formal job descriptions, expense approvals and cash receipts—or not a part of your personal Jewish Journey. I do hope and expect that the overall results will have a positive effect upon you and your relationship to Beth Torah

Tony

*Our Mission Statement: Congregation Beth Torah is a welcoming, Conservative synagogue community. We inspire the lifelong Jewish journeys of individuals and families by promoting active participation in Jewish life and learning.