

## Announcements – 10 February

When I was in high school, I was part of MZ Yoshanah, a girls' chapter of the B'nai Brith Youth Organization. Among the countless memories I have of that experience was of our chapter meetings, and in particular, the end of them. We finished each meeting with a standard refrain, then added our unique perspective. The refrain was this: "For the Good and Welfare of MZ Yoshanah Chapter 2053..." Each person then mentioned something they enjoyed about the meeting or a recent success or how a member did something above and beyond for the benefit of the organization. To this day, I remember how uplifted I felt after each meeting – regardless of the topics discussed, regardless of which girls attended (remember, not all teenage girls are friends), and regardless of whether we we actually accomplished anything at all.

Sadly, good and welfare is no where to be found in my professional life. Never in all my years at Accenture, HEB, USAA, or any of my corporate clients have I ever participated in a meeting that ended with something intentionally uplifting. We work our way thru the agenda -- or don't -- and call it day. Some days I rinse and repeat this process 6 or 7 times, but never have I seen Good and Welfare.

Temple board meetings, however, reintroduced me to this lovely notion. As the President, I look forward to Good and Welfare. Why? For several reasons. First: have you ever led a roomful of 30 smart, outspoken, passionate Jews? I understand Moses' hesitation when he was asked to lead Israel! Good and welfare serves as a well-deserved finish line to an often challenging experience.

Second: the board tackles difficult issues – ones that affect our congregation today and tomorrow. Not one person takes this responsibility lightly. These issues engage both our heads and our hearts, so our conversations are both intellectual and emotional. That can create some dynamic discussions. Said differently, it can periodically get heated and tense – all for good reasons, but nonetheless, our meeting space can be uncomfortable. Good and Welfare serves as the great neutralizer: of temperature, of attitudes, of moods. It reminds us that we're all on the same team, working toward the same goals.

Third: our Trustees are friends – of mine and of each other. While our meetings provide the forum for us to accomplish Temple business, Good and Welfare allows us to cultivate those friendships, share good news, support each other in difficult times, and deepen our connections as congregants, as Trustees, and as humans.

I always look forward to our Board's Good and Welfare because I know how uplifted I will feel after each meeting, regardless of the topics discussed, which Trustees attended, and regardless of how much we actually accomplish. I leave you with one final thought: For the Good and Welfare of Temple Beth-El, may we always find the finish line, may we keep working together on big dreams,