

February 3, 2023

Before I graduated from college, I said I would never live in Houston. It was just too big for me. But a real live job offer quickly changed my mind. While working at said job, I said I would never carry a pager – you know, those ancient things that beep and show just a number at any time of day or night. Well, working in systems development and babysitting the brain of an organization's operations changed that plan as well. Being the child of a divorced family, I said I would never get married. 25 years later, you've seen how incredibly successful I've been with my "I will nevers." Candidly I've tried the "I will never win the lottery," but thus far, the universe has not taken the bait on that one.

If it had, I may be talking about something else right now. Last May, our Master of Coin, aka our Treasurer, Bregger Garrison shared the congregational budget at our annual meeting. As usual he painted a deficit budget; yep, we spend more than bring in. Amazingly enough, in the middle of those red numbers, he also painted a big, beautiful FUNDRAISER that would, like that one pot of oil during Hanukkah, miraculously appear and keep the proverbial lights on. In May, that fundraiser was a vision; today it's a reality.

On Thursday, March 2nd Temple will host our *Doing Good for SA* benefit. Our hope – *our need* – is to raise \$100,000 to close the deficit. Our members have received these invitations as have countless friends, partners, and other community stakeholders. But nothing is more powerful than a personal invitation. So tonight, I am inviting you, and you, and you, and you to join us at this wonderful event. The agenda includes an outstanding silent auction, the recognition of two unsung heroes, an amazing performance by San Antonio's own poet laureate, and the celebration of Temple's communal service to this great city of ours. But a party isn't a party without people. So please, buy a table on your own or with friends, buy a ticket and make new friends. This event is Temple's only fundraiser of the year, and it will take our collective effort to make it a success.

My freshman and sophomore years in college, I took a job as a telemarketer and sold credit card protection. While I was good enough to buy a car with my earnings, the experience left a traumatic scar. I said I would never solicit people again. Instead, I've bought boxes of fundraiser chocolates, "accidentally" buried raffle tickets in the accumulated mail pile, and shortened girl scout careers because of those darned cookies. While I will continue to challenge the universe about the lottery just in case, out of love and respect for this amazing institution of ours, I will ask you explicitly to give generously before and during this important event. \$100,000 is a lot of money. And it's for a good cause. You're sitting in and among it. I am happy to share my invitation this evening for the QR code for those of you who do not keep shomer Shabbos. I look forward to seeing you on March 2nd!