

Legacy for our Future  
Report to the Beth Israel Board  
June 7, 2009  
David Mangs, Co-Chair

On behalf of the Legacy For Our Future Committee of Congregation Beth Israel, I am pleased to report to the Board that we have had a busy and successful year.

We have had a full agenda, and we appreciate the support of the Beth Israel staff, in particular Jane Zande and Abby Mayou, as well as our our Rabbis. We also want to thank our hard working committee members who have given time, great ideas, and inspiration to our efforts. Our leader has been Bennett Pearl, who has had the vision and inspiration that has been the core of our committee's work. We also want to thank the Beth Israel Board and its officers who have made Legacy a long term commitment of Beth Israel and its Congregation.

Our mission has been to educate our Congregation members, first, on the fact that there is an endowment that supports us not only today, but an endowment that will ensure that our Jewish religious and cultural heritage lives on for future generations. Second, Legacy for our Future also hopes to encourage and facilitate those among us who have a charitable intent toward Beth Israel by making gifts today or as part of an estate plan at some point in the future.

As part of this mission, last fall Jeff Winnick and I hosted a three seminar series on retirement and estate planning including a guest speaker from State's Connecticut Partnership for Long term Care. People want to take care of themselves and their families first, as they should, but they also need to understand that including a charitable component in their plans does not mean they will be unable to provide for themselves in retirement and for their families when they pass. This message is especially important today with the shrinkage of so many portfolios and retirement accounts.

Second, we have attempted to have an article each month in the Temple Bulletin highlighting those who have made legacy gifts and why they have done so.

We need constant reminders of our responsibility and the joy of giving. These articles are one step in that direction.

I want to thank **Sharon Reisner** and **Deb Rothstein** and others on the committee for their help in designing our Legacy brochure. After much discussion, we have chosen the Jewish star you see on our brochure as our logo. Also included in our brochure is the beautiful Torah Crown of silver filigree which can be found in our Abraham J. Feldman Museum. We will use this logo on our Legacy stationary and we are hoping that when people see this beautiful crown and logo they will automatically think of Beth Israel and its Legacy.

Please note that when you call Beth Israel, you can leave a message for our committee on the Legacy extension 260.

We still need to do work on the Beth Israel's website which can be a no cost method of telling our story, and explore other internet strategies to educate and encourage giving.

Finally, this spring we have started a program of "Parlor Meetings". So far we have met at the homes of **Sandy and Aaron Gersten** and at the home of **Gail and Stephen Sack**. I must say that this approach has been warmly received by those who have been in attendance. Please be patient, we can only invite so many at each meeting. If you have an interest in attending future parlor meetings please leave a message at extension 260 or speak to any Legacy Committee member. At these meetings we have realized how important it is to ask the simple question: ***What Is Important About Beth Israel And Its Community To You?***

Before a legacy gift happens, there first must be a reason for that gift. I believe it is fair to say that everyone who attended our Parlor Meetings were moved by what we heard in these heartfelt testimonials. As we listened to those who gave testimonials on why they have given or why they made plans to give, or simply how our synagogue and Congregation had positively impacted their lives and the lives of their family, we found the reasons for making a Legacy.

In conclusion, there is much that has been done by our committee and the Ezra Society that came before us, but there is much that still needs to happen.

When people give, it is our responsibility to say thanks. Our committee hopes to see a place somewhere in Beth Israel where the names of our Legacy donors are honored and recognized with a tasteful and long lasting display.

Thanks to all of you on the Board for the opportunity to be of service, please encourage others in our community to consider a Legacy, and we look forward to another productive and rewarding years.