

By the time this Kol Emet is published, our Passover dishes will have been put away, the boxes of matzah will be gone, and another season of sharing the Seder table will have come to a conclusion. I do hope that you all took the opportunity to infuse the many teachings from our Rabbi's into your holiday. I had the distinct pleasure of sharing Pesach with my mom, who joined me for the week, and with many friends, some old and some brand new. It was quite special. For most of us, Pesach starts right after Purim. We clean our houses, search far and wide throughout Plano and Dallas for all the necessary food items, plan menus, and cook for hours. This holiday is filled with ample preparation and rituals and often we get caught up in the actions and miss out on the spirituality of these rituals. But, this year, many Anshai women were better prepared to embrace that spirituality as Talia Kushnick led a most meaningful Manishevitz and Munchies program, just prior to Pesach. She dedicated the evening to our very dear and beloved Wende, which was a moment for many of us, and then imparted much wisdom about the thoughtfulness that should and could accompany our actions. It was a very special evening. Thank you, Talia, for once again, sharing your wise insights with us. Not to be outdone, the men also, had another successful Scotch and Steak Seder organized by Andy Rabhan, with Rabbi Kushnick leading and teaching. Thank you both for preparing our guys.

Lots more thanks...Our Shalach Manot program was once again, a success led by Jacob Ratner, Karen Hazan Cohen, and Dan Cohen. Much thanks to all of our benefactors who insure that each member of Anshai Torah receives a package. Thank you to Sisterhood and Sheryl Billman for coordinating a lovely Sisterhood Shabbat program, and congratulations to our most deserving honorees, Dafna Rubinstein and Bonnie Rubinstein who have given so much to Anshai Torah over the years. The Men's Club followed suit with a meaningful Shabbat as well, orchestrated by Eric Berman, who did a great job. These lay led programs give our members an opportunity to showcase their talents in leading and participating in services. We have many gifted congregants. Kol Haka-vod to all.

Thank you to Lisa Gerstenfeld, who took over the reigns of Mitzvah Day, creatively and enthusiastically engaging our students in all sorts of projects that served the community. Along those lines, Anshai Torah had the opportunity to participate in Jewish Federation's International Good Deeds Day with a project at Anne Frank School, coordinated by Nicole Roy and Rabbi Kushnick. Special thanks to them, and to all who volunteered. And, while I am doling out thanks, one of our unsung heroes at Anshai Torah is Debbie Butvin, who mans the front desk, fields our calls, takes our reservations, coordinates our sponsorships, all with a smile every day. Debbie, we appreciate all that you do.

Finally, regarding security, our Federation has created the Community Security Initiative to ensure that our entire community is proactively prepared to address any and all security issues. They have hired a Director of Security who is charged with convening all Jewish organizations throughout the Metroplex to develop and convene training plans, using best practices, and providing a centralized security communications platform for all of us. There is no cost to our participation – this is being funded partly through Federation's unrestricted campaign. This should give everyone great comfort knowing we are adhering to strict protocols to ensure the safety and security of all. As we receive additional information, we will share it with you.

While this note is mostly about events past, and acknowledging our volunteers, clearly, there is a lot happening at Anshai Torah. I encourage you all to read our many emails and find something that speaks to you. You will find yourself enriched, inspired, and engaged.

Warmly,  
Marcy