

President's Perspective . . .

Dear Friends,

Imagine sitting in a hall with 18,000 people, all sharing one collective idea. I am hard-pressed to find that at a meeting of 12, let alone with 18,000. Nearly 30 of us represented Anshai Torah at AIPAC Policy Conference in Washington, DC. For me, as a first-timer, it was an extraordinary experience, being part of a group of advocates who share a profound love of Israel and support for the American Israel alliance. AIPAC policy conference provided an inspiring few days of the positive impact that Israel has made on the world through innovation and crisis intervention, the innate beauty of our homeland, and of course, desired Mideast peace. Speakers ranged from a man whose life was saved with a bone marrow donation through Ezer Mizion, the only Jewish Registry in the world, to congressional representatives from both sides of the aisle, all professing love of and commitment to Israel and to peace. We also had the privilege of a stirring presentation from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Anshai Torah has always been and remains a friend to AIPAC. Manuel Rajunov, one of Anshai Torah's champions, has recently been elected Chair of AIPAC Dallas. Congratulations, Manuel. We know you will be an outstanding leader in this role.

Thank you to Lisa Gerstenfeld, who once again took on Mitzvah Day, creatively and enthusiastically engaging our students in all sorts of projects that served the community, and to Jacob Ratner, Karen Hazen-Cohen, Michael Pershes, and Debbie & Dan Cohn who orchestrated another successful Shalach Manot program. Working with a cadre of volunteers in seeming organized chaos, they created more than 800 baskets which were delivered near and far, and for the first time, our college kids also received Purim goodies thanks to collaboration with the CATs in College committee.

Most recently, Celebrity Top Chef and Kosher Cuisine connoisseur Chef Katsuji Tanabe joined us for to share his kosher cooking secrets with nearly 200 guests who

dined on samplings from his *Mexi-kosher* menu. We learned that eating kosher does not mean compromising on taste or options.

Chef Tanabe, though not Jewish, shared his enthusiasm for and gratitude to the Jewish dietary laws in that he does feel more spiritually connected with his conscious attention to food prep and eating.

If you were inspired, Rabbi Weinberg and Rabbi Kushnick would be delighted to assist your transition to creating a kosher home. Thank you to Paige Rothstein and Sisterhood, along with everyone else involved, in bringing this program to Anshai Torah.

On Sunday, April 15, Project 613 will come to fruition as we pen the final letters in Anshai Torah's Torah. We will march and sing and dance and eat and then place the Torah in our Aron Kodesh where it will remain a living legacy to our beloved Wende Weinberg z"l for generations to come. If you have not yet participated, there is still time to do so. Write yourselves into the tapestry of Anshai Torah, choose a word, a sentence, a sedra, and fulfill the 613th commandment. Do it for yourself, your family, your children, your shul.

Finally, Sunday, April 22, is Anshai Torah's Spring Fair of West Plano. Bring your families to enjoy arts and crafts, games, rides, food, and of course, don't forget to order your flowers, which you can now do on-line! Thanks to Heather Vanacour and Stephanie Kufert, and Lisa and Ben Kenter and the entire committee, who are working tirelessly to make this year another outstanding Spring Fair.

As I proudly share each month, there is no shortage of ways to get involved at Anshai. You can be a volunteer or a participant or a sponsor. No matter what, you will find your lives so much more enriched by your connection to all things Anshai. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events, and of course, each week on Shabbat.

Warmly, Marcy