

# A MESSAGE FROM FLORENCE AND LEON PENN

*We would like to thank the Shaare Zedek Congregation for the beautiful tribute held in our honour Shabbat morning, June 11, 2011. The donations made to the Shaare Zedek Youth Programming Fund hold special meaning for us. Our three children, Roslyn, Martin and Harold, played active roles in the formation of the Youth Program here at Shaare Zedek Congregation. We both strongly believe in the importance of sponsoring youth programs for the future of our beloved synagogue.*

*Herb Finkelberg, Rabbi Bright, Cantor Fogel, Freda Leffell, Richard Davine, Sheila Busgang and our children spoke eloquently and from their hearts. We, as well as all those attending services that special morning, were truly touched by the warm speeches and glowing testimonies. It was a morning that will forever be etched in our hearts and minds.*

*There are no words to describe the exquisite painting by Annette Joseph that was presented as part of the morning's tribute. The beautiful Torah, so close to our hearts and the guide of our lives, will be a constant reminder of this momentous occasion.*

*We were so grateful to share the morning together with our precious family members and our Shaare Zedek family members. We extend a warm, heartfelt thank you to all of you.  
Florence and Leon*



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## An Appreciation of Leon Penn

On Shabbat, June 11, 2011, Shaare Zedek Congregation, in laudable fashion, thanked Florence and Leon Penn for their many years of extraordinary commitment to our synagogue. Now it is my turn.

I do not know Mrs. Penn, save as an elegant, somewhat shy lady, who generously shares her husband with the extended SZ family. Thank you, Mrs. Penn. But I feel I do know Mr. Penn, the gentleman with the sparkling blue eyes who, whenever he sees me, bestows one of his unique smiles on me, a smile which I know he extends to others, but which I always feel has been custom made just for me. Therein lies Mr. Penn's magic: he is kind to all, but makes each of us feel as though we have been singled out for attention.

"Mr. Shaare Zedek," he is affectionately called, but to me, Leon Penn is more of Papa Shaare Zedek. He nourishes the shul with his attendance and attention, protects it, supports it, tries to guide it, sets an example for its members, and beams with pride and satisfaction whenever a SZ congregant does something well. On Shabbat, he seeks out those new to SZ, greeting them warmly, and thanking them for their presence. At Jack Benny's advanced age of 39, Mr. Penn is a regular at the

morning minyan, no matter the weather. Ever ready to teach or mentor us, he does so with a light touch and an inexhaustible supply of jokes. Those of us less learned than he follow his every move, standing up or sitting down exactly when he does. He is our compass. Each day, Mr. Penn looks over the Yahrzeit list for the next day and if he sees that one of "his people" (meaning one of his 1000 friends) has a Yahrzeit to observe, he may well return to shul in the evening to ensure a minyan for those reciting Kaddish. If such care and devotion is not father-like, what is?

Mr. Penn claims that he was once a dinosaur. Now, he says, after observing the ladies who faithfully attend morning services, he is ready to rethink the role of women in the synagogue; he has shown his support of change by coming to the recent Sisterhood Kabbalat Shabbat services. What a breathtaking example of progressive thinking! Perhaps he really is 39.

Mr. Penn, you inspire me. I thank you for your unceasing kindness, tolerance, encouragement and indomitable spirit. And that inimitable smile of yours.

An affectionate Fan