

Message from Outgoing Region President Sherryl Kaufman

Greetings to all. I hope everyone had a very Happy Chanukah, filled with the bright light of the burning candles celebrated with family and friends.

For my “farewell” speech at the November 22, 2015 Region Board Meeting and Installation, I created a PowerPoint presentation featuring the highlights of National and the SNJ Region from mid-2012 through the end of 2015. I would like to share excerpts with you, as I now realize how much we accomplished together in the past 3 ½ years.

When I began my term on **May 6, 2012**, three hallmarks of Hadassah were already in place: **Marcie Natan** had been our National President for a year; the **Sarah Wetsman Davidson Tower** construction was almost completed; and Hadassah was gearing up to celebrate a fabulous milestone, its **Centennial Anniversary** in July in Jerusalem. Marcie used her personal slogan, *Hineni! I am Here!* many times during her 4 ½ year term.

The Tower, commissioned when Hadassah received a \$75 million grant from William and Karen Davidson to build a tower addition to Hadassah Hospital in honor of his mother, opened its doors to patients in March 2012 and was officially dedicated at the Centennial Convention that July. The slogan –*We’re Not Waiting for the Future, We’re Building It* – became the basis for many fundraising efforts to complete the Tower.

Other noteworthy events occurred in 2012. Thousands had become Life Members in 2011 with a \$100 membership special in honor of the Centennial. The result - Hadassah entered 2012 with 97 % Life Members nationally! The price of Life Membership increased to \$212 in 2012 where it remains today. **Young Judaea**, a part of Hadassah since 1936, now became an independent organization, while still maintaining ties to Hadassah through fundraising for scholarships, such as our SNJ annual YJ raffle and bracelet sales. Lastly, **Revenue Share and Annual Planning** became firmly entrenched in our vocabulary as Hadassah’s way of funding our chapters and our Region.

National introduced a number of fundraising initiatives in 2012: **Bricks and “Heart Health” Bricks** on the Centennial Path, opportunities to fund **tower equipment**, and **Tower Challenge Grants and Matches**, to encourage year-end giving.

We entered **2013** on the **One Calendar Year Plan**, with all aspects of Hadassah now following the calendar year, causing the Region and its units to adjust the timing of their events. National introduced its new theme “**Choose Where to make Your Impact**” and the entry-level annual giving program, **Chai Society**. The Tower, now built, shifted its fundraising theme to “*We Built It, Now Let’s Equip and Furnish It.*”

“**Every Beat Counts,**” the Women’s Heart Health Program designed to educate and empower women to take control of their heart health, was introduced. Units nationwide and in our Region held events to educate women on the signs and dangers of Heart Disease, the #1 cause of death for women in the US and worldwide.

The **PRAZE** Program, an acronym for **Programming, Advocacy, Zionism and Education**, came into full swing, bringing to us wonderful online programming such as *Defining Zionism in the 21st Century*,

The **HMO Crisis** loomed over us and into 2014. Marcie Natan and her team made dozens of trips to Israel in order to reach a resolution. Finally, in early 2014, the Government of Israel approved an agreement for a recovery and reorganization plan.

In our Region, we brought back the **Annual Associates Golf Outing**, introducing the Ned Weiss Cup, named in honor of Associate Ned Weiss, a founder of the Golf Event. The event has net over \$90,000 combined in 2013, 2014 and 2015, making it the single largest fundraiser for the Region. Mah Jongg, cards, and a gift raffle auction complemented the event.

In early fall of 2013 we honored a special group of donors, our Annual Givers at a **Keepers of the Gate** Program hosting Barbara Goldstein as our speaker. The **Myrtle Wreath Event** continued our tradition of honoring special women in our units, our “Hadassah Lights.” Our Myrtle Wreath honoree was Letty Cottin Pogrebin, author, women’s advocate, and inspiration speaker. Our attendance broke 400! Lastly, in an office personnel change, we hired **Debby Carasia** as our Office Administrator.

The year **2014** was also a busy one. The **National Convention** in Las Vegas - Imagine * Inspire * Ignite - was attended by almost twenty SNJ women. National recognized our region for its 2013 Keepers of the Gate event.

We embraced **Operation Protective Edge** by raising funds due to attacks on Israel. National introduced **e-Memberships** to attract busy and active younger women, and **Double your Impact** by making yourself and someone else a life member. Our Region was one of the first to complete the newly mandated **Consolidated Banking** system, linking our Region bank accounts with all of our units under one banking institution for efficiency of administration. The **Project Uplift** initiative featured dozens of units across the county holding bra-decorating events to raise funds for breast cancer research. The year 2014 also brought us the **Rebranding** of Hadassah by the introduction of a new logo and slogan, **Hadassah The Power of Women Who DO**.

The Region held our Annual **Education Symposium**, themed *Israel @ 65: Focus on a Nation: Impact, Innovation, Invention & Introspection*, followed by Chapter Awards. Our Myrtle Wreath Luncheon honored Rabba Sara Hurwitz, who broke the glass ceiling to become the first ordained Orthodox rabbi, and our unit “Heart of the Chapter” honorees.

Here we are in **2015**. Hadassah moved its national headquarters to **40 Wall Street** from its prior mid-town location. The **Every Step Counts Program**, an offshoot of Every Beat Counts, featured a virtual walk from Hadassah HQ in NYC to Jerusalem. About 1000 participants nationally walked a total of 710 Million Steps. SNJ walked an equivalent of 17,276,781 total steps. I am proud to say that I was one of those walkers, logging 1,241,000 steps! National introduced the “**I’ve Gifted, Have You?**” campaign, where any Life Member could gift a new Annual Member for free through the end of 2015. We are on target to reach National’s goal of 5,000 new annual members nationally! Fundraising for the **Tower** shifted to enabling the opening of the underground ORs and ICUs. Hadassah responded to the recent random brutal terrorist attacks with the **We Can’t Stop the Bloodshed but We Can Stop the Bleeding** campaign which focused on raising funds to enable the hospital to be prepared to treat a potentially unknown number of victims. **Advocacy** in the areas of Gender Equality in Medicine and the fight against Human Trafficking came to the forefront, as well as the introduction of the lobbying program **Day in the District**.

Our region celebrated the Chai Anniversary of the Keepers of the Gate Annual Giving Program with a **Celebrate 18!** program at the Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County. We continued our perennial favorites – **Associates Golf**, the 2015 **Education Symposium**, themed *The Medium is the Message: Israel Though the World’s Lens*, and **Myrtle Wreath**, honoring Ruth Messinger, President of American Jewish World Service, and advocate for underserved women worldwide, and the Hadassah **Women Who DO** from our chapters and groups.

Throughout these three years we continued holding our other popular annual events and fundraisers such as **Helping Hands** portfolio training (along with AVP and Presidents Training) to educate our unit leaders, **Chapter Awards**, and **Region Raffles**.

During my term we sadly lost three Hadassah leaders: **Bess Rothbaum**, our 3rd SNJ Region President and National board member; and two past National presidents - **Bernice Tannenbaum** (16th) and **Ruth Popkin** (18th). We honor their memory.

We are poised at the threshold of **2016**. **Ellen Hershkin** is our newly elected National President. Her motto is ***Kulanu – B'yahad, All of us ---Together***. We look ahead to the **Hadassah National Convention, the “Power of our Dreams”** in July 2016 in Atlanta.

Hadassah Southern New Jersey just installed a new President, **Michelle Krasner**, and her Executive Committee, who already have exciting plans for the upcoming year. I wish Michelle and her team all the best, as they stand on the shoulders of those who came before them and shoulder to shoulder with each other, together.

As for me, I am taking on the position of National Associates Chair for 2016. I will miss the Region, which has been part of my Hadassah career for almost twelve years, and the friendships that I have made. I look forward to seeing you all at future SNJ events.

Sherryl Kaufman

Sherryl Kaufman, Outgoing Region President