



From the desk of the CEO,

Back in grade 7 I caught a bug; it was the urge to get involved and give back. When I heard about the social action committee I knew where I needed to be. For years I volunteered at Maimonides Geriatric Hospital, and I learned what a difference volunteers make to individuals and to organizations. Volunteers are the lifeblood of non profit organizations.

This coming week is National Volunteer Week, and the theme for 2021, **The Value of One, The Power of Many**, is a time to “reflect on the awe-inspiring acts of kindness by millions of individuals AND the magic that happens when we work together towards a common purpose.”

Magic. This word perfectly describes what we have been experiencing around the Jewish Federation as we in the ‘offices’ continue to work together with many volunteers towards common purposes.

Magic is when volunteers engage the community in a deeply impactful virtual Yom Hashoah ceremony. With close to 400 views and counting, your survey comments told us how meaningful this was for you and how connected to the community you felt despite us sitting apart from one another.

Magic is when volunteers pull an entire community together to spread kindness to Edmonton on Good Deeds Day, achieving our goal of filling the truck. With true chesed we managed to collect 3600 lbs of food as well as \$500 directly to the food bank and you can watch the thank you video [here](#).

Magic is when a dedicated P2G committee ensures that despite a pandemic keeping Israeli and Canadian teens from visiting one another, virtual meetings occur on a regular basis. The kids stepped up to provide programs for one another despite never having met in person.

Magic is when volunteers work months to plan the 25th annual Film Festival, ensuring a sponsored and engaging lineup of high calibre films and speakers fully accessible to all free of charge. Financial support this year will also assist in the continuation of the covid relief program.

Magic is when volunteers plan for Yom Hazikaron and Yom Haatzmaut in the hopes that restrictions will be lifted and we can go ahead with events, knowing that it might not happen, but wanting to ensure we are ready to execute should it be possible.

When professionals and volunteers work together in support of the mission **magic** truly does happen. Our Executive and Board are dedicated individuals who truly show up when it is just as easy not to. So as I reflect on my first 100 days, and all that we have started to accomplish and continue to provide, I can tell you that I am truly excited to see what sparks we can continue to create, together.

Shabbat Shalom,

D. Lewitt