

First I wish Mazal tov to Joan on receiving the Life Member award. I am humbled. Standing next to an amazing librarian like Joan is a great honor.

Thank you to the award committee and to all my dear friends for your greetings and donations in my honor. When Fred emailed me that the award committee selected me for the Fanny Goldstein award I was surprised. It sounds like a cliché when one says: “I don't deserve it”, but I mean it. I gained from AJL much, much more than I gave.

This is not an acceptance speech. This is a piece of advice.

When I accepted my first position in a synagogue library the Rabbi told me “I will give you a little gift and one day you will thank me”. He gave me the phone number of the librarian where he used to work. He was right. I can't thank him enough for it. Those of you that were here 20 years ago may remember the woman whose phone number he gave me. It was former AJL president Hazel Carp. Hazel told me to do two things and in return I will get a gift from her. She told me to join AJL and to attend the convention. When I joined AJL Hazel gave me the booklet: **HOW TO ORGANIZE A JEWISH LIBRARY** by Margot Berman which is now being revised under the leadership of Joyce Levine. This was my “Bible”. I followed it to the last detail and it was very helpful. It was harder to follow her advice about attending a convention because I had no funding. I will not go into details, but tell you that Hazel gave me the first lesson in what she called schnoring tricks. I attended the first convention with little funding from my community and a generous subsidy from AJL. They also helped me find a roommate who continued to room with me for several conventions. I returned from the convention reenergized and with a suitcase full of bibliographies and publishers catalogs. Unfortunately, upon arriving at the airport my suitcase broke at the airport. I saw a person who emptied the trash cans. I asked for two bags and got on the airplane looking like a homeless person.

By the second convention, again with partial funding from AJL, I wanted to give back to AJL, so I founded the Bibliography Bank modeled after the CAJE Curriculum Bank. It will take too long to give you all the details, but, again, I gained more than I gave because I used the bibliographies for acquisitions for my community library that serves several religious schools. Please keep in mind that this was over 20 years ago. Most synagogue libraries did not have a computer and most libraries were not automated, but email was used by many. I, certainly, did not have one. I would go to my husband's office every Sunday night to advertise new lists on Hasafran. I made copies and mailed lists upon demand. Now it is in a searchable format on AJL's website thanks to Elana Gensler and Lisa Silverman's hard work.

As my library grew I was ready to apply for accreditation. Later my library merged into two other libraries so I applied again and soon after receiving the accreditation for the second time, I was asked to serve on the Accreditation Committee, here again, I gained more than I gave by I adopting ideas from applications and using them in programming, fund-raising and creating a better policy in my library .

My participation in the Weine cataloging committee helped me in cataloging our collection. For a while I was on the mentoring committee. When my husband and I visited my mentee's city she

hosted me and was proud to tell me about the award that her synagogue gave her for her dedication to the library. I felt like a proud parent.

Last but not least many convention attendees became my closest friends over the years. In order to avoid forgetting one I will not give name. When my husband attends his annual convention in Washington DC, I join him and stay with a dear friend and other friends too many to mention here.

I have retired 4 years ago. I find that while you can take Amalia out of the library - you cannot take the library out of Amalia so for the past 4 years in an effort to give more than I have received I had the privilege of serving on AJL Council and Board. So, as you can see, I gained form AJL experience, knowledge, ideas for my library and life-time friends. To all of you get involved and you will not regret it.