

# Message From the Executive Director

Welcome to Greater Philadelphia ZOA's 2018 Gala. As I write, Dickens' gem comes to mind: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ... ."

The American Embassy is now in Jerusalem. The PLO "embassy" is on its way out of Washington. Yet Palestinian-Arabs murder our Israeli brothers and sisters in cold blood while others launch incendiary balloons and kites to destroy Jewish farms and preserves — and Gazan Arabs launch rockets with no warning.

Here, Jew-hatred — let's call it what it is — is in the open from politicians, to campuses, to media which practices it relentlessly against the Jewish State.

ZOA is stronger than it has been in decades, but sadly the need is stronger. That brings me to you. Whether you are holding this in your hand or reading it on a screen, **ZOA needs YOU!** We need you in so many ways.

Leadership is in short supply in so many walks of life. So is responsibility. Meanwhile, tangible, meaningful advocacy for our cause seems to be going the way of the rotary phone where and when it is most needed for America and Israel.

But tonight, in this room, leadership, responsibility and advocacy are in abundance. Look around. Feel it. Take a deep breath and inhale it. Let it fill your lungs and circulate through your arteries. Let it inspire you to emulate our esteemed honorees and others here this evening. You will need it — we need it — tomorrow, and the next day, and for many weeks, months and years thereafter. For Jew-hatred merely takes a respite. We must triumph where others failed!

Recently I asked a committed Zionist to get involved in a project. He said he would do only what a colleague did: The bare minimum. I was taken aback. Imagine, for example, a running back striving only to gain a yard because that was what his teammate did. We each must strive to do more!

It is an era when rabbis, in High Holiday sermons, question and condemn Israel and Zionism; when politicians are openly anti-Israel — and it gets them elected not shunned. Open Jew-hatred is acceptable, as leading activists and rank-and-file members of the community are mostly silent and invisible.

Join the ZOA. If you are already a member: Thank you! Whether you are a member or not, I need you to do more. Give more of your time; your energy; your talent; your connections; and yes, your money. We as an organization must do more, and that means that the grassroots: our members, friends and supporters — must commit to do more — and then do it! Become a leader within our chapter. Take on a project — don't talk about doing — let your actions do the talking.

I am willing to talk with and meet with all who have a genuine desire to get involved or more involved. 610-660-9466.

Many people make this Gala and our organization what it is. From Mort Klein, to each member. I especially also want to thank: Beth-Ellen Kroope, Evan Davis, Howard Katzoff, Heather Berman, Lee Bender, and our many wonderful volunteers. A special thank you to the ageless Beverly Sher. Enjoy the Gala — and call me.

*Steve*