

issues, I believe strongly in equal rights and that women have the right to choose. On gay and lesbian issues, I think we're all God's children and each of us should be able to live our life with the same rights as anyone else. It's the same for anyone with special needs. All human beings deserve to be treated with dignity.

I also got involved at the Religious Action Center on the administrative level, helping to renovate the RAC. And it was then that I realized that everything had come full circle. RAC Director Rabbi David Saperstein's father, Harold, served as rabbi for thirty-five years at Temple Emanu-El in Lynbrook, New York. Now here I was, a serious Reform Jew like the grandfather I'd never met. While Reform Judaism essentially had skipped a generation, it's now back in my family, going from strength to strength.

Still, I'll be the first to admit that I'm not the best educated or the most knowledgeable Jew. I'd like to be more Jewishly literate, but retaining what I learn is a challenge for me. What does come easily, instinctively, to me is understanding people. I tend to wrap my arms around people. I could be working with you for a day or two and I'll know your soft points, your interests, your personal history. And throughout my life I've used that to help others.

What are your interests and hobbies?
Number one—and the thing I'm really good at—is flying. I pilot a six-seated twin-engine Beechcraft Baron plane. It's nothing fancy, a rather simple airplane, but I love it. I've flown all over the country, sometimes to Biennial conventions.

I also like skiing, hiking, and biking, which makes me sound more athletic than I am. As a kid I was the last guy chosen to play basketball or baseball because whenever a ball was coming toward me, I invariably turned away.

You're very comfortable talking about your deficiencies.

I'm comfortable with myself. I'm not embarrassed by what I can't do. I just recognize what I can't do and make sure I understand what I am good at. That's what helped me become chairman of the board. Remember, I didn't join this organization as an insider. And it shows

you that anyone can move up. Anyone can find his/her Reform Jewish commitment, be a responsive citizen, act on social values, and succeed.

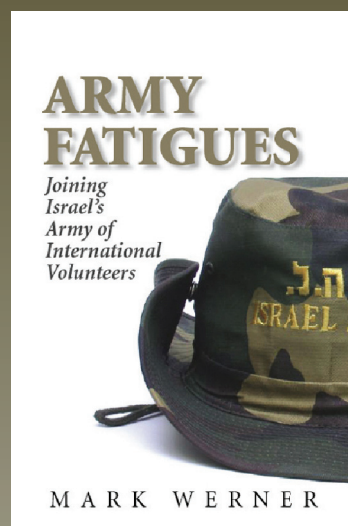
One of your strengths is business. And you've channeled your success in real estate to affordable housing.

Yes. We have a social obligation in this country of ours to help those who are less fortunate, whether they're Jewish or not. I'm now chairman of the Community Development Trust, a private entity owned by financial institutions dedicated to the

ownership and financing of affordable housing throughout the United States.

You've sold the WNY business.

Yes, six years ago, when I was 55. I wanted to do other things—a lifestyle change. Life's too short. I wanted both to play a little bit and to give back—to my community and temple, and of course to the Union. Now as chair, I have the pleasure of working with extraordinary lay and professional leaders. It's important to be happy, make your dreams come true—and not forget your social obligations. □



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