

Monthly Profile: This month we feature Sheri Hewson. Thanks Sheri for sharing your story with us! Read other profiles at: <https://templemanuelakeland.com/member-profiles/>

I grew up on the border between Stoughton, and Sharon MA but my Synagogue, and friends and family were mostly in Sharon, so that's where I spent most of my time. The Corman family were well known there. My uncles owned a Kosher Hotel and Restaurant and a dry-cleaning business. My mom, Phyllis Weiner was in communications and on the radio in Boston. My dad, David Allen Hewson, was a Jazz musician and music teacher. I grew up with my brother Scott, who was my 3d Birthday present, and both of my mother's parents. My grandmother, Anna Rose, was Orthodox so we were raised very traditionally with 6 sets of dishes, but as our shul became Conservative, so did we.

I don't think my father's family ever really accepted his conversion and later us. My dad's dad died when he was an infant and my grandmother was from an old Yankee family (we are grandchildren of Ethan Allen) so things were a bit awkward at times. They were not religious but we did spend Christmas there. No prayers were ever said except when Chanukah was at the same time and we would light our Menorah for our family members to see.

My grandmother, Anna Rose Corman Weiner had the biggest influence on my life not only because of her Jewish faith, but for her strength and fortitude when facing a life threatening illness. I emulated her and was lucky, I'm still here and I'm not planning on going anywhere! She suffered from Parkinson's Disease. I had to grow up quickly to help her out, and my mom around the house, as well as taking care of my brother. It was my grandmother's devotion to Hashem and her beliefs that I hold in my heart and it is she who had the most influence on me, who I became, and how I handle my own illness. I have Combined Variable Immunodeficiency which means I do not produce antibodies, in my case, including to vaccines. It is a T & B cell genetic defect that I was born with. As a result I also have severe lung damage from a lifetime of pneumonia. I moved to Florida so I do not have to isolate 8-9 months a year in Massachusetts anymore. (Yes, it's a bit ironic now with Covid-19, but I am still better off here though!) I give myself weekly infusions of Human Gamma Globulin subcutaneously (below skin) so I can live a mostly normal life. It takes 36 - 48 hours each week to recuperate from the infusions. That is why my emails have the signature asking to donate plasma. If you are well, please consider doing so. Thank you!

I also grew up very close to my cousin Brian, my mom's sister's (Auntie Jan's) son. We were like the Hardy boys and Nancy Drew until Star Wars came out... then we were Luke, Leia, and Han!! I was very studious and went to services all the time. When I was 12, I began studying at Prozdor, a division of the Hebrew Teachers College in Brookline, MA. By 13 I was conducting Junior Congregation Services at my shul and by 17 teaching Hebrew school (and attending college). I was active in USY, volleyball, coached my brother's baseball team with my Grandpa (moms Dad, David) and worked as a babysitter and then I got a job selling clothes as soon as I was 15 years old.

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Professionally, I had my first poem published in a regional paper when I was 15 and my first sports column in regional papers when I was 16. By the time I was 19 I was working for George Stephanopoulos on the Dukakis Campaign and still going to college. I had my own Political and Legal column, with my friend who would give the opposing view, a “she said she said” in the Emerson College newspaper.

I attended Emerson College in Boston where I majored in Political Communication and Law. Basically, I was trained to be a Press Secretary and a “Spin Doctor”. I then went to law school and began my career in public service. I worked mainly as a Public Affairs Officer/Communications Specialist for the government and the military. Over the last decade I had my own PR firm and one of my clients was a musician and chef and we had a very successful gourmet healthy food company in the Greater Tampa Bay Area. I am now searching for my next adventure. My most interesting and challenging job was definitely selling soups in the Florida summers ... then again, did you ever try my mango-gazpacho?

I have 2 grown children, my oldest, Jacob is 26 and working in the family business, Engraving Signs and Awards, with his Dad. My Daughter, Rachel, 24, is a scientist who specializes in water, soil, and plants and helping farmers grow better, natural crops all over the world (she has been a vegetarian since birth). When they were young, I went home to Sharon, with my then husband, to raise them, to be in a mostly Jewish community and to grow up with the next generation of cousins as I did.


I have been with Temple Emanuel a little over 3 years now and teaching going into my 3d year!

My interests are in music, nature, and hiking. I just started reading “Jew(ish)” on my Kindle. Because I’m still mourning my dog Lily, my favorite book right now is, “The Rescue at Dead Dog Beach... One Man’s Quest to Find a Home for the World’s Forgotten Animals” by Stephen McGarva . My all time favorite though is “Eats Shoots and Leaves...the Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation” by Lynne Truss, because, as you know, it's all about the comma (& I LOVE Pandas!)

One thing that might surprise people is that I am also part Irish and the singer Bono (Paul David Hewson) is my first cousin (once removed).

My proudest achievement has been watching a bill regarding child support that I suggested and lobbied for, become law locally and then federally. Then I worked for MA Child Support and helped develop the system to make the law technically enforceable. It was one of my earliest jobs and still my proudest!

The best advice I would give my younger self is to slow down. I was always in a rush, not sure why. I would slow down and take time to try different things and travel. I have no regrets, but maybe it wouldn’t have been so terrible if I did take time off between College and Law School or between school and marriage.



Deadline for the next Menorah is February 28, 2021. Do you want to be our next profile? Please send inquiries, info, articles, images, comments, etc. to irmacole26@gmail.com