



A Tribute to Herb Smilowitz

Rabbi Hyman Arbesfeld

Vice Chairman, RIETS Board of Trustees • RIETS '56

Herb Smilowitz served on the Board of Trustees of RIETS for more than 20 years. The members were so impressed with this man, who was so outstanding yet humble, that he became the vice chairman soon after joining the Board, something that he tried to turn down.

When the position of chairman became available, and which by tradition belonged to him, he declined, saying that a *musmakh* (someone ordained by RIETS) should be the chairman. He rarely missed a RIETS meeting, whether it be the full Board or even various RIETS committees. Herb always arrived early and when asked why he always came so early, he answered: "When you come from New Jersey, the only way to be sure to come on time is to come early."

At a Chag HaSemikhah ceremony 10 years ago, he was honored with the most prestigious award RIETS can grant, the Etz Chaim Award. This honor was forced on him. The beautiful reception that followed was remembered by all.

In 2008, Herb and his son, Rabbi Mark Smilowitz, a *musmakh* of RIETS, were the guests of honor at the RIETS annual dinner, held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel and attended by more than 700 people. As you can imagine, Herb did not want this recognition. Rabbi Mark's impressive address was the highlight of that dinner.

We now honor his memory. How fitting this is for such a memorable person. Yes, Herb will forever be in our memory. He was truly a one-of-a kind person.