

A Park Avenue Synagogue member since 1991, Arthur Gurevitch is quick with a joke and a laugh. Perhaps that's part of what makes him such a driving force behind the scripts for PAS's annual Purim spiel.

Gurevitch joined his first spiel in 2014 as a way to become more involved at the shul while also juggling work and family obligations. He was looking for something outside of his comfort zone – a weekly change of pace – and this fit the bill nicely. It wasn't long before he found his niche: creating and writing the spiel. You might recognize his prose from such hits as "Spiel! The Musical," "Megillah U: Esther Goes to College," and "The Princess Spiel: A Purim Fairytale," to name a few.

Even before he became the Purim staple he is today, Gurevitch always felt at home at PAS, where he has made many friends, gone on life-changing international trips, and enjoyed services and educational opportunities. The synagogue community continues to be a buoy for him today. When his father-in-law, Dr. Arnold Moses, passed away in August, it made a huge difference to have the support of clergy and PAS community who know the family so well. Dr. Moses regularly tuned into PAS Livestream services from his home in Syracuse, and one of his last conversations with his daughter and son-in-law was a call to express his excitement when in-person services restarted and he saw them on Livestream.

Just as PAS has played a significant role in Gurevitch's life, his presence in day-to-day synagogue activities has been an uplifting influence for many, especially during the pandemic. Accustomed to catching up with friends after Shabbat services every week, he and his wife, Linda Moses, decided that there must be a way to continue that connection once the lockdown started. So they started hosting a weekly Kabbalat Shabbat Zoom, where there would be as many as 25 windows on the screen each week to light candles, make kiddush, say *hamotzi*, and catch up with friends. "It seemed like a no-brainer," Gurevitch says. "Who'd have thought that an unlimited Zoom account and a weekly email reminder would make such a difference for so many people?"

While he has never held an official Board or Committee position at PAS, Gurevitch has no doubt made – and continues to make – a profound impact the community. "I am humbled by this honor," he says. "My initial reaction was that they had me confused with someone else. It's quite a remarkable thing, and I'm very much moved."