

Enjoying Retirement

by Estelle Hoffman

Retirement does not arrive suddenly, like a birthday gift. It is the harvest of one's previous life.

Over fifty years ago in a class of Commercial Law, my sage and philosophic teacher impressed me so deeply that there remained within me not only the fundamentals of law she taught well, but the benefits of her life's experience. Important was her teaching about acquisition of truly valuable resources. One day she posed the question, "What do you do when you are confined to your home alone? How long can you remain alone?" That led to advice on cultivating resources within ourselves, prompting me to make investments that increased with time.

To lose the enjoyment of the beautiful world in which we live is a sin. This I have read and do firmly believe. What constitutes that enjoyment is a decision each of us makes for himself, either consciously or unwittingly, and lucky is the one who has a companion to share his choice and fate. I would like to be able to state that I believe in a system of reward and punishment, for it appeals to my sense of justice; however, all I can say honestly is that I do believe that what matters is the way we take what comes, how we react to prosperity or the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

Having lived sixty years in Chicago, Leo and I approached retirement. This meant retirement from work; however, we needed to decide what would follow. Our interests and appetites were great. We had to arrange our priorities in order of importance. We wanted more freedom than Chicago offered to be outdoors, to come and go, to engage in new kinds of activity. We wanted a new start, inasmuch as possible at this time in life. Many friends had left Chicago, but those who remained and our families asked repeatedly, "How can you leave everyone here?" Our answer was that we could not stay and thrive. Chicago's winters are long and depressing. We don't have time to live only half of each year. To maintain a winter home and a summer home in two separate locations and climates did not appeal to us and would be too expensive. We knew that as long as we had each other we could make a new life for ourselves elsewhere.

We had travelled throughout most of the United States. We revisited several cities and turned to Charlotte. We had been visiting North Carolina for

several years and loved its mountains and forests, its mild climate, its population — fewer people lived in the entire state than in Chicago, where much of our time was spent in our car, driving in heavy traffic at the expense of our patience, in order to be with family and friends. Most neighborhoods in which we had lived are decayed and the sight of them was sad. It became a tiring effort to take advantage of those good things Chicago offers. In the precious, golden years remaining, we became increasingly reluctant to waste time.

On our first visit to Charlotte we were impressed by its beautiful trees and attractive housing. As we returned at different seasons of the year, we concluded that within this finest country in all the world, the finest state is North Carolina, and within North Carolina the finest city is Charlotte.

It was not our intention to grow older slowing down our customary activities, passively continuing as we had been doing, watching contemporaries age and fade. There were riches we had never known awaiting us. Charlotte provides a great home base for the exploration of the world of nature, the ocean and mountains, the forests and farms, gardens and sky.

In Charlotte people ask, "Why Charlotte?" My reply is, "Why not?" Here we have found cordial people, lush vegetation, and a variety of interesting occupations. We subscribe to most of our theatres and enjoy most of their performances. At Temple Israel, the synagogue we joined, we have friends and pleasant acquaintances. We have been fortunate to meet people in various circles in the city and we associate with people of various ages.

One of our most enjoyable new activities is square dancing. We dance with various clubs, of which there are dozens in Charlotte whose members are so friendly that they made us feel at home. Square dancing is relaxing, its cheerful music is fun, and it requires alertness and concentration that permit no thought of the cares of the day. In dancing two or three times a week we have met people whose paths would not otherwise have crossed ours, and we have been greatly enriched thereby.

We had entered square dancing because we seldom had occasion to dance ballroom style, and we missed that recreation.

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Hebrew Academy Receives Aquarium

by Rose Massachi

This fall a fully-equipped aquarium was received by the Hebrew Academy as a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Joe Gaynor. The kindergarten and first graders helped prepare the aquarium a week before they visited the Gaynors' store, Altee's Tropical Aquarium. Mr. and Mrs. Gaynor led a tour of their large aquariums, after which the children returned to the school with their very own fish.

Ruth Goldberg, a teacher at the Academy, explained how this has been a multi-faceted learning experience for the students. "The children are fascinated watching the fish, take turns feeding them, and check the water temperature frequently. As a token of their appreciation, the students dictated a thank-you chart to the Gaynors and each child signed it. They also drew pictures and dictated stories for their pictures."

Some films were coordinated with the trip to Altee's to provide a visual reinforcement for the students, and several reference books on fish are being used on a daily basis to identify the fish they have.

Recently some of the fish contracted a fungus and the children helped give them medicine, but it was to no avail. The students had to deal with the events of sickness and death of a pet; they showed tremendous maturity in their acceptance of it.

The aquarium is a most welcomed addition to the school and has facilitated a new means of growth and learning for all of the students. A sincere thank you is extended to the Gaynors for their gracious gift.



Nitsan Tucker identifying the various types of fish.



Ruth Goldberg and students.

Books In Review

Dictionary of the Jewish Religion

Dr. Ben Isaacson, Edited by David Gross
Bantam Books, N.Y. \$2.50. 224 pp.

Originally published in Hebrew in Israel and now used on the Israeli Educational System, *Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* by Dr. Ben Isaacson is an illustrated and alphabetically arranged compendium of information on Jewish life, history, customs, laws and tradition.

Published as a Bantam Original, the reference book includes over 500 entries from "Aaron" to "Zohar" as well as basic Hebrew language information and statistics regarding politics and society as well as an exploration of moral and ethical teachings. While the interpretations have an Orthodox bent, both Reform and Conservative points of view are represented, which would make it forbidden reading material in many of the strictly Orthodox Yeshivot.

The dictionary includes a bilingual Hebrew-English appendix listing such material as days of the week, months of the year and numerals. There are numerous photographs and wood cuts as well as line drawings representing a useful addition to the American Jewish home, especially those in which the veneration of Jewish knowledge is very thin, the usual situation in the American Jewish community.

Some years ago, during a conversation with a non-Jewish friend, he mentioned that it was easy for him to recognize a Jewish home when he entered one. "How can you do that?" I asked, expecting him to mention the Mezuzah, of course. His reply surprised me. "By the presence of books," he said. "Every Jewish home I ever entered was well supplied with books of all kinds. That must be the reason they call you Jews the 'People of the Book.'" Since then I always examined and tested his statement, whenever entering the homes of Jewish friends of mine, and found it to be true in every case. Even when walking through the residential streets in the towns of Israel that I visited, I could always observe a bookshelf plainly displayed through every window. We must really be the "People of the Book," more accurately, the People of many Books.

NEW STAFF MEMBER

We warmly welcome our feature writer, Estelle (Mrs. Leo) Hoffman. Her first article for *The Jewish News* appears on page 4. We look forward to a long and enjoyable association.

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A SPEEDY RECOVERY TO

Marta Garelik, our International News Editor, who is recuperating from her recent illness. We hope she will be back with us soon and that we will resume her column in next month's issue.

— The Editors

Victims Of Member's Experiments

by Rochelle Saidel Wolk
NEW YORK (JTA) — Two survivors of Dr. Josef Mengele's experiments at Auschwitz, Marc Berkowitz and Alex Dekel, were among the delegates at the First International Conference on Children of Holocaust Survivors, which was sponsored here by Zachor, the Holocaust Resource Center.

Mengele, the "Angel of Death" who is still believed to be residing in Paraguay, selected some 400 children, especially twins, for experiments. Six pair of these twins were liberated from Auschwitz-Birkenau, and Berkowitz, who has a twin sister, believes that only two pair are now living. Now 47 years old but looking much older, he lives here with his wife and two children. His sister, also living in the area, has three children.

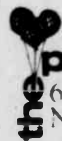
Baring his arm to reveal a tattooed number A7739, he had a copy of a certificate with his name and this number and signed by Mengele, stating that he was used for experiments. Berkowitz wears a neck brace which is necessary because of these experiments, involving injections into his spine. His sister also has related medical problems.

Arriving in Auschwitz in the beginning of 1944 at the age of 11, Berkowitz and his sister were liberated by Soviet forces in December of that year, during a death march to Buchenwald. "If Mengele is still free, that makes the world a prison for humanity," he said.

Dekel, 48, is a caseworker for HIAS and a free lance journalist. Although one of the 400 children selected for experiments, Auschwitz was liberated before Mengele got to him.

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