

THE CHARLOTTE JEWISH NEWS

Published monthly by:
Charlotte Jewish Federation and
Jewish Community Center
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Copy deadline the 5th of each month
P.O. Box #220188, Charlotte, N.C. 28222

Editorials

Community Hospital

In recent weeks there has been a great deal of attention directed toward the pros and cons of closing the doors of Charlotte Community Hospital. The issue at hand is the cost of providing medical care for the indigent elderly in a rapidly graying society. From all reports this hospital has served an important need in our city and at the same time it is providing quality service.

- It represents an authorization for 143 hospital beds.
- The hospital is in an area where population is expected to increase substantially, in Third Ward and nearby Fourth Ward, and the path of a future expressway.
- It has been providing a home for Charlotte Chapter B'nai B'rith Women's Sick Loan Chest.

Community's financial woes stem in part from a state law which cites that Medicaid patients no longer in need of hospital care must be reassigned to a nursing home. The law says if the patients are not moved within three days, the hospital loses its Medicaid reimbursement.

The question is — what do you do with long-term indigent patients who need acute hospital care? In our computerized society do we turn our backs and ignore these needs, hoping that by ignoring the problem, it will disappear?

Perhaps the answer is, as has been suggested by some Community board members, that the hospital be converted to a geriatric and training center. This move might overcome the problem of doctor acceptance and would represent a logical evolution from the service Community now provides.

We concur with the idea proposed by many who believe it would be advantageous to make the necessary capital improvements by being bond financed. This would qualify at least one wing of Community for reimbursement for elderly long-term patients. The cost of providing that kind of care for a growing number of patients would cost us much more at a new facility. Keeping Community open would, therefore, prove to be a savings for the taxpayer.

We believe in time that Community would be the ideal place for a geriatric care and training hospital.

Judaism and Right Wing Christian Politicians

A few months ago the Israeli government presented an award to the Rev. Jerry Falwell, recognizing his strong support of the State of Israel. Falwell, it should be noted, is head of the Moral Majority, the right wing Christian group that received prominence during the recent presidential election. Apart from promoting the security of Israel, the Moral Majority and groups like it support causes such as prayer in the schools, favor capital punishment, oppose abortion, and even now, seek to monitor those TV programs that display too much cleavage or are exceedingly violent. Because Jews in America have been at odds with many of the positions advocated by such Christian groups, one needs to consider how a Jew should respond to what is the Christian fundamentalist support of the state of Israel.

It is no secret that many American Jews objected to the Israeli government's decision to give Falwell an award. This objection was a result of what is seen as Falwell's lack of concern for American Judaism and a purely theological support for Israel. I felt and still believe that the Begin government erred in giving Falwell an award. The avowed goal of many of the Christian fundamentalist groups to make America a Christian America smacks of a subtle anti-Semitism that cannot be ignored. In this connection, one must take cognizance of the many letters in the local press that have defended the views of Bailey Smith ("God does not hear the prayers of the Jews") and have criticized those people who had the courage to renounce the remarks of Rev. Smith.

It is also no secret that Jews usually support liberal causes, taking positions that differ from those held by their Christian neighbors. Most American Jews have long resisted the cause of prayer in the public schools and I believe should continue to do so. Jewish tradition, more often

than not, has resisted the notion of censorship and opposes the view that one group of people possess the right to determine what one may see, hear and read. It will be a sad day for America and for American Judaism when one religious group will have the power to determine what is seen or heard on the airways.

One cannot deny Israel's precarious position in the arena of the world's nations. She certainly needs our unstinting support in her hour of distress and her need of friends and allies is great. But I question the wisdom of granting an award to an organization that, to the best of my knowledge, has yet to show more than passing concern for the future of Judaism in America.

— Raphael Panitz



Across The Editors' Desks

Award Well Deserved

We were quite upset with the letter published in the last issue (February 1981) of the *Charlotte Jewish News*, referring to the fact that the B'nai B'rith Human Relations Award is just an additional award for volunteerism and not in recognition of being a great humanitarian. In all the definitions of humanitarian that we know of, humanitarian stands for the right doing towards others and an interest in the public welfare. We feel that Sol Jaffa has far exceeded himself in doing towards others and has had an interest not only in public welfare but in the Jewish welfare of this community. His work in various organizations has been outstanding, to say the least, and the one organization in which we work so closely with him, BBYO, his energies and efforts have helped to mold and shape many teenagers of this community. If for no other reason, and there are plenty of them, than his work in BBYO, he deserves this award and it has been our pleasure and honor to work with him.

Tobey Silber,
Advisor, Chai BBG
Allan Silber,
Advisor, Barak AZA

To: The anonymous party suggesting re-evaluation of the B'nai B'rith Human Relations award.

I suspect you are a member of the Charlotte area Jewish community. If so, rather than hide from your peers behind "Name withheld upon request," come forward, become involved, state your beliefs openly in front of an open forum, and then, cast your vote. BBW is not a closed door club.

Although I am not a member of any B'nai B'rith organization, due to my wife's and many friends' involvement, I understand the meaning of this award.

Frankly, Mz. Name withheld upon request, I detect "sour grapes" in your letter.

Alan Greenwald

It was with great dismay that I read the anonymous letter to the editor entitled "Reassess Award" in the February issue. To say the least, it was an inappropriate decision made by the editors to print such an article, and a cowardly act not to include the names of those submitting it. *The Charlotte Jewish News* should not be a forum on passing judgment on the recipient of such a distinguished honor such as the B'nai B'rith Women Human Relations Award. Anyone in disagreement with the selection should air their news directly with BBW. Their selection committee researches the candidate thoroughly and only after stiff criteria are met do they name the recipient. This year the deserving honor went to Sol Jaffa.

Joseph Steiner, D.D.S.

The letter, which appeared in the last issue of *The Charlotte Jewish News*, concerning the presentation of the ADL Human Relations Award by the Charlotte Chapter of B'nai B'rith Women, greatly disturbed me. Having known Sol Jaffa and having seen the work which he performs in service to the Charlotte community and the Jewish community of the state, and the region, I can personally attest to his worthiness in being the recipient of this award. He well fulfills the criteria set up by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith for this award. The fact that he has done a great deal of work within the Jewish community should in no way detract from the quality of work or his worthiness as an honoree.

For the record, while it is standard procedure for publications to protect the anonymity of their correspondents where their reputation or person might be in danger, it is rare to grant such a request where a correspondent has simply written a letter full of venom and unsupported vituperation. It is an act of abject cowardice to ask to withhold name and address when such a

letter is written.

Michael Shapiro, President
Charlotte Lodge B'nai B'rith

Charlotte B'nai B'rith Women's Human Relations Award is "an award given to someone in the state of North Carolina who does excellent work to promote human relations and help mankind above and beyond his or her chosen profession."

The Webster Dictionary states — humanitarian — a person devoted to promoting the welfare of humanity, especially through the elimination of pain and suffering; philanthropist.

In giving these two definitions I hope there has been a clarification for "Names Withheld" on what our "Human Relations Award" is about.

It is our feeling that if this individual or individuals had delved further into the definition of the award he or she would have realized the past recipients have been given this for volunteering in different areas of working with people.

Sol Jaffa has worked privately through many volunteer organizations in our community in the past 25 years. Therefore, B'nai B'rith Women is honored to bestow this award for untiring work in all areas of volunteerism, especially youth. After all, one of the philosophies of B'nai B'rith Women is the preservation of Judaism with our greatest emphasis on youth, the future of our people.

It is almost unbefitting the dignity of our organization to respond to individuals who choose to hide behind the title of "Anonymous." However, this coveted award and its recipients deserve the respect and honor of our community.

In publishing an unsigned letter in a community newspaper, that is of award-winning quality, the editors have allowed individuals to use the paper for personal vindictiveness. This can only lead to destructiveness. The editors and sponsors must reassess their policies.

Charlotte B'nai B'rith Women
Terri Cathcart, President

We have reassessed the policy of this newspaper and concur that all letters to the editors in the future must be signed, regardless of what policies other newspapers have. Shalom, the editors.

The Editors welcome comments and letters expressing all points of view and reserve the right to edit.



A Happy Purim To Our Readers