

THE CHARLOTTE JEWISH NEWS

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Editorial

How Wonderful It is to be Alive

As most of you know, I suffered a heart attack on February 11. I never expected that I would ever experience something like that. We all know that we will die some day — some of us from cancer or other illnesses, some by an accident, and others, ideally, from old age.

When you feel that death is imminent, you can either accept it or you can fight back and refuse to let it engulf you. I would not accept the fact that I might die — I still have too many things I want to do and too many things I have yet to experience. I want to be around to see my three children marry and hopefully to become a grandmother some day. That in itself is reason enough to want to live.

I was fortunate to have received excellent care by a wonderful medical team at Presbyterian Hospital. The staff in CCU did everything they could for me. Of course the many prayers of my family, friends and rabbis helped. All of your concerns, cards, flowers, donations and visits helped me during my convalescence. They were like rays of sunshine during the bleak hours.

I am getting stronger daily and hopefully I will be able to do most of what I was able to do before I became ill. I realize now that one can not "burn the candle at both ends" and will have to slow down a bit. Stress and tension are two words which **must** be eliminated from my lifestyle if I want to be around to see the 21st century.

I will continue to work as editor of this paper, but I certainly could use some volunteers to help and eventually learn how to put it together if and when I will be unable to do it. I thank Ann Langman for her help in doing the layout last month. Thanks also go to my husband Irving who did most of the "legwork" when I was "out of commission." Much appreciation goes to our advertisers who were very understanding and cooperative, since I have been unable to personally call upon them. Besides being editor, I also secure a great deal of the advertising for the paper. Our advertisers are vital to the CJN because they defray most of the paper's expenses.

Until the doctor gives me his o.k. to drive again, I will be at the office for only brief periods of time. Consequently, if you need to call me, please contact me at my home number, 366-6632.

Spring is here and how great it is to enjoy the nicest season of the year. How wonderful it is to just enjoy life!

A happy and healthy Passover to you all. L'Chaim!

— Rita Mond

**Jewish Calendar
Candlelighting**



- Apr. 7 - 7:31 p.m.
- Apr. 14 - 7:37 p.m.
- Apr. 19 - 7:41 p.m. (First Seder Night)
- Apr. 20 - 8:41 p.m. (Second Seder Night)
- Apr. 21 - 7:43 p.m. (Shabbat Chol Hamoed Pesach)
- Apr. 25 - 7:46 p.m. (Seventh Eve of Pesach)
- Apr. 26 - 8:46 p.m. (Eighth Eve of Pesach)
- Apr. 28 - 7:48 p.m.
- May 5 - 7:54 p.m.
- May 12 - 8:00 p.m.

Parents: Talk Tachlis with Your Kids about College!

By Rabbi Marc H. Wilson

"... the most formative years of your child's life..." Depending on the point that the speaker is trying to make, each one of us has heard the cliché applied to every step of a child's development, from early toddler to nearly adult. And, of course, the words are eternally true: Every stage through which a child passes is in its own way "the most formative."

What are the most formative years of a child's Jewish development? Experience teaches us that the years spent in college often have a make-it-or-break-it effect on the lasting direction of a young person's life. Those years are, after all, the first taste of real freedom, the first real challenge to values away from the watchful parental eyes, the first real instance in which the question of "How Jewish?" must be answered independent of the influences of home,

Temple, Hebrew School and JCC. Jews for Jesus and similar cults are an ever-present reality on most campuses. Campus life can and often does contribute significantly to Jewish obliviousness, assimilation and the staggering rate of interfaith marriage.

Some folks would argue that unless we plant seeds of Jewish commitment and pride well before our kids take their SATs, any pitch we make to them about living Jewishly in their college years will be an exercise in futility. Yes and no. Yes, it is too late to spring the idea on our kids that the very same Jewishness that had been irrelevant yesterday should today become the central concern of their lives. But no, it is not too late, not by any means, to speak candidly with our children about the lasting impact that the choice of a college can have on the quality of their Jewish future.

Some considerations:

(1) On the most elementary level, will the school accommodate the basic needs of a Jewish student? Will there be any hassle about absence on Jewish holidays with regard to make-up exams, due dates for projects, registration? What about school-sponsored church related activities? Even if the activities are not mandatory, will the Jewish student be seen as an "outsider" if he/she does not participate? Is there any history of anti-Semitism on campus, even of the "socially acceptable" variety?

(2) Are there lots of Jewish students on campus, or will your child be Jewishly isolated? One need not be a yeshiva graduate to figure out that the prospects of assimilation and interfaith marriage multiply exponentially if there are not many Jewish students with whom your child can establish a satisfying network of social relationships.

(3) Is there more-than-ample opportunity for positive interaction among the Jewish students on campus? Are there fraternities and sororities where Jewish kids can get together to have a good time? (Sometimes **too much** of a good time!) Is there an active Hillel to provide for basic Jewish religious, cultural, educational and social needs? Are Jewish kids comfortable or self-conscious about associating with other Jewish kids?

(4) What is the quality of Jewish life on campus? Is the student who aligns with Hillel perceived as a nerd or misfit, or is Hillel considered part of mainstream campus activities? Do young people on campus feel "OK" about asserting their Jewishness? (I was flabbergasted to see how many yarmulke-clad students were walking around the Columbia and NYU campuses, as I was flabbergasted a few years earlier when I heard the valedictory address at Harvard delivered by a young man with a yarmulke on his head!) Is kosher food readily available on campus? Is the Jewish student "penalized" socially or economically for choosing to eat kosher? What are the opportunities for pursuing higher Judaic studies, formally or informally? Will the school accept credits from a "Year in Israel" program?

I can not tell you that Jewish issues should become an all-consuming obsession as your child plans her/his college years. As the parent of a senior, I confess that the quality of Chanie's education is of premier importance. I also know that Chanie would not be satisfied with any school at which she could not freely observe Shabbat and kashrut and where she could not have extensive social and academic relationships with other Jewish students. Nonetheless, I find myself frequently encouraging (lobbying!) her to thoughtfully



Auschwitz—The Symbol of Anti-Semitism

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

The announcement recently by European Catholic authorities that the Carmelite convent is being moved away from the grounds of Auschwitz to a nearby new center is a constructive move in the right direction.

In 1984, 10 Carmelite nuns took over a former Nazi warehouse in Auschwitz in which Zyklon-B gas was stored for use in gas chambers.

They converted the warehouse into a convent to pray for "martyrs and the unconverted."

Nowhere in their fund-raising literature did they refer to the Nazi's massacre of more than a million Jews in that death camp.

Jews clearly are not opposed to the Carmelite's prayers. And most Jews understand the appropriateness of their honoring Polish Catholic victims of Nazism.

But Auschwitz was built by the Nazis for the primary purpose of exterminating European Jews. Rather than an act of reconciliation, the convent became a gesture of appropriation.

Significantly, five leading European cardinals, the Vatican, and Pope John Paul II himself have understood the central symbolic meaning of Auschwitz to the Jewish people.

Contrary to earlier misinformed reports, they have finally persuaded the Carmelite nuns to move their convent to a new center of prayer and study, but off the blood-soaked grounds of Auschwitz.

As the Pope declared to surviving Polish Jews last year, Auschwitz is a monument to barbarism and anti-Semitism and it must remain intact as a sign and witness to all mankind.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international consultant for the American Jewish Committee.

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