

The Charlotte JEWISH news

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Federation Connection

"Sometime this year the Task Force will recommend a new organizational structure for our community, one which will free Federation to focus on its primary missions and place the responsibility for managing Shalom Park with the organizations responsible for its primary uses: the two temples and the JCC."



Rich Osborne
Federation President

In this, my first monthly communication as President of Federation, I want to do two things. First, I want to thank those who have served our community through Federation; secondly, I want to apprise you of the status of some key community initiatives.

My predecessors, Harry Lerner and Shelton Gorelick, sought to satisfy the needs of our community through the organizations and resources available during the last three years. They oversaw substantial increases in support for Jewish Family Services, JCC and Jewish educational programming at a time when campaign increased only modestly. Dan Lepow and his staff worked diligently to support these efforts. Much remains to be done, but even as we continue, we need to thank those who so capably and selflessly have led us this far.

Restructuring

We must restructure the organization of Shalom Park. Four years ago the partners in Shalom Park- Temple Beth El, Temple Israel, the JCC, the Foundation and the Federation- decided there was no longer a need for a separate organization to own and manage

Shalom Park. The Foundation, which was created to perform these functions, was merged into Federation. This reorganization has proved unsuccessful.

Federation must serve as a community fund-raiser, planner, facilitator and mediator. It cannot effectively focus on those key missions if it simultaneously is landlord and enforcer of the Joint Venture Agreement that created Shalom Park.

Mark Bernstein is chairing a Restructuring Task Force. Serving with Mark on that Task Force are Bob Abel, Mickey Aberman, Sam Bernstein, Gene Daumit, Harry Lerner, Norman Levin, Hal Levinson, David Miller, Mitch Rifkin, Butch Rosen, Eric Sklut and me. Sometime this year the Task Force will recommend a new organizational structure for our community, one which will free Federation to focus on its primary missions and place the responsibility for managing Shalom Park with the organizations responsible for its primary uses: the two temples and the JCC.

Financial Needs

The growth in the Jewish community in Charlotte mirrors the dramatic growth in Charlotte

as a whole. This is a blessing, as so many of the great, traditional Jewish communities in our nation are declining; but it also represents a challenge, for this growth strains the resources of all of our organizations. We must increase the funds available to organizations providing vital services.

Our first resource in funding these needs is our annual campaign. We tentatively have set a goal of raising \$2 million dollars a year within five years. This requires annual increases of about 10%. We have great leadership in undertaking the first steps toward that goal; Bill Gorelick will chair and Jill Newman will co-chair our annual campaign in 1996.

Community Planning

The most pressing need in our community today is the need for a plan. We don't need a rigid document that tries to dictate who does what, when. We do need a forum in which all parts of the Jewish community can examine current and future needs and develop a common sense of goals and priorities. Lynne Sheffer is chairing this critical mission. Lynne is seeking to build a team with representatives from every part of the Jewish community. This team will develop and implement a process that will provide everyone opportunities to participate, learn and contribute as together we determine how best to move to the end of this decade and into the next.

I speak for the entire Board of Federation in expressing our honor and pride that the community has entrusted us with important responsibilities during the forthcoming year. We commit our best efforts and count on your continued support and participation so that Federation can play its role in guiding the further growth and prosperity of the Jewish community in Charlotte.

Rich Osborne,
President
Jewish Federation of
Greater Charlotte

Should Jews Fear The Conservative Victory?

YES

NO

By Arthur Hertzberg

Jewish neo-conservatives have been busy for years urging the Jews to move to the Republican Party, and predicting that they would. This did not happen in the "national referendum" which Newt Gingrich called on the steps of the capitol. The Jewish voters heard his call to vote against liberalism and they spurned it.

What explains this persistent anomaly? Why do Jews continue to vote with the poor? Two conventional explanations have been offered. The first is that Jews remember when they were poor and continue to have sympathy for Americans who still are. But this does not explain the fact that while few of their children and grandchildren have any personal memory of grinding poverty, the large majority of these younger generations also vote consistently for liberal candidates and the liberal agenda.

The second explanation is that Jewish voters are motivated by a biblical compassion for the weak and defenseless. This argument is not entirely convincing. Christian Americans read and study the same Bible, but that has not inhibited the majority of them from rallying behind those who are trying make liberalism into a dirty word.

Neo-conservatives have been telling Jews for years that their self-interest dictates that they vote their pocketbooks, just as other Americans of their economic class do. The vast majority of Jews has rejected this argument, understanding that the basic interest of Jews is bound up with peace in society.

By Marshall S. Breger

Jewish organizations defend their commitment to liberal ideology on two bases: first, they argue that political liberalism is demanded by Jewish values; second, they suggest that they must support liberal positions to create the coalitions that often support Jewish concerns. It is time for the Jewish community to reevaluate both those propositions. Unless Jewish communal organizations rethink what constitutes Jewish public policy, they are in danger of becoming marginalized in the coming public policy debates.

What the conservative election victory means is a new-found focus on personal accountability rather than state largesse in addressing social problems.

There is considerable irony in the Jewish communal agencies' apparent commitment to statist solutions. Few organized communities are as philanthropic as American Jewry and few have our rich skein of mediating institutions. We raise hundreds of millions of dollars annually to fund important social services to feed the hungry, heal the sick, shelter the elderly and rescue captive Jewish communities. A worldview that is spurred by private philanthropy is one congenial to Jewish folkways and in keeping with Jewish law. It is, therefore, perplexing that the Jewish community has so vigorously championed government-driven welfare programs. The obsessive defense of affirmative action and quotas by liberal Jewish organizations does a great disservice to the Jewish community.

Arthur Hertzberg, professor emeritus of Religion at Dartmouth, is now visiting professor of the Humanities at New York University.

Marshall Breger is senior fellow at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C., and a visiting professor at the Columbus School of Law, Catholic University of America.

June & July Issues
will be combined.
Deadline for
submitting material is
May 10th.

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During a recent visit to Israel, Vice President Al Gore (l) met Moshe Rivlin(r), JNF world chairman, who presented him with a JNF tree certificate and sapling. In Gore's honor, 1,000 trees were planted in Independence Park, outside Jerusalem