

# PERSPECTIVES

by Harvey Cohen

## A Good Idea That Bears Repeating

While going through some Jewish newspapers from around the country, I ran across the story that follows and felt it was worth sharing. I've been told that what this boy did in Delaware for his Bar Mitzvah, has also been done here, but not for some time. So, for whatever it's worth, I hope this story inspires one of Charlotte's youth who is going to have their Bar or Bat Mitzvah to do the same.

## Bringing Meaning to the Bar Mitzvah

By David M. Glazier  
Wilmington

It is almost a year since final preparations were made for my Bar Mitzvah... During these final stages of planning, I asked my mother how much it costs to put a flower arrangement on the Bimah. She hesitantly answered, because she thought it was a strange question coming from a soon to be 13 year old.

I explained we hear so much about the homeless and hungry people around the holidays but some concern for these people seems to drop off in March. I then mentioned I would rather have a basket of food on the Bimah instead of flowers because the food could be given to the hungry instead of throwing out the dead flowers a few days after my Bar Mitzvah.

We took this idea to our Rabbis, who both thought it was a great idea.

After approval from the Rabbis, my mom went to visit the designer at the flower shop. The designer also liked my idea. She and my mom picked out a large container which they agreed would look nice sitting on the Bimah.

My mom started food shopping for canned and boxed foods of all shapes, sizes and food categories that would look good in the basket. About a week before my Bar Mitzvah, my mom took these food items to the designer at the flower shop.

The designer then placed the food in the basket, covered it with a clear wrap and finished it off with a large bow with streamers.

The final product was beautiful and useful instead of the usual basket of flowers which would have been only beautiful.

A classmate from my congregation heard about my food basket and did the same at her Bat Mitzvah. My good friend is going to be Bar Mitzvah in January and is also doing the food basket on the Bimah.

I am hoping that this story will reach other Bar and Bat Mitzvah students and that they will also have this beautiful and useful basket of food on the Bimah on their Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

I also hope they will feel as good about doing this as I did.

Everyone in attendance at my Bar Mitzvah thought it was a special idea on my special day!



## Federation Connection

Rich Osborne-President  
Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

The Federation board has approved the report of the Allocations Committee and set allocations for 1996 of funds raised in the 1995 annual campaign.

The Board previously had directed that \$475,000 be allocated to UJA and \$133,285 for the upkeep of Shalom Park. In November, the Board made all remaining allocations. These are detailed on the following page. You'll find a list of the Allocations Committee and its working panels elsewhere in the paper. I want to comment on a few key issues.

The JCC received more than \$300,000 - \$93,300 to help pay the costs of the JCC facility on Shalom Park, and \$210,000 for programming. While many of us are quite familiar with the health and recreational services offered by the J, these represent only a part of the contribution of our Center to the community. The JCC offers many educational and social services which are vital but cannot sustain themselves financially.

Allocations to Jewish educational institutions rose almost 130% to \$63,485. This consists of a 27% increase in dollars spent on educational programming and a much smaller increase in the subsidies allocated to the Charlotte Jewish Pre-School and the two synagogues for the cost of using classroom space on Shalom Park.

The Education Panel of the Allocations Committee also deter-

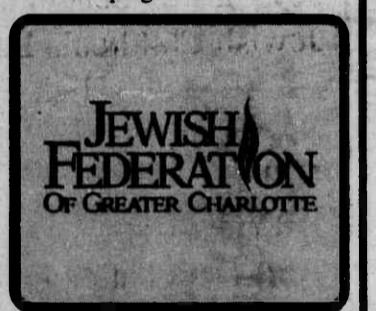
mined for the first time to fund the education of Jewish children on a per capita basis. Thus, recognized Jewish preschool programs will receive \$50 for each Jewish child enrolled in those programs, and the Charlotte Jewish Day School (operated by Lubavitch of NC) will receive \$75 for each Jewish student enrolled there. This distinction reflects the significantly greater expenses associated with grammar and middle school education but still falls far short of the allocations made by Jewish day schools in cities like Greensboro, Richmond or Norfolk.

While I cannot cover each allocation made for next year, I do want to mention the board could fund only \$7,500 into the Community Tzedakah Fund. This Fund is administered by Jewish Family Services but represents a responsibility of all of us. The Social Services Panel recommended that a greater awareness be sought for the Community Tzedakah Fund and that Federation offer opportunities for individuals to make and be recognized for memorial or honorary gifts to that fund. You will be hearing more of this soon.

Again, let me thank all those who served on the Allocations Committee and its working panels, especially Sara Schreiber, who chaired this effort. A special thanks also goes to Vicki Hopkins who provided proficient staff support.

There was a great deal of discussion at the November board meeting about the long-standing objective of this community to institute an active program to send teenagers to Israel. Thus far, Federation has provided subsidies on an ad hoc basis. I am asked Shel Goldstein to chair a community task force to examine this question and recommend how we implement such a program. I will be seeking representatives from all segments of our community and am confident that this priority will become a reality.

Allocating limited resources presents us with hard decisions. Please keep these decisions in mind when you consider your gift to the 1996 annual campaign. Nobody should confuse the goal of \$1.45 million with the true needs of our community. The Executive Committee of Federation estimates the community will require an annual campaign of about \$2 million within four years. With your help we can make great strides towards that level with our 1996 campaign.



Deadline for the February issue is January 10!

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### Israel To Issue Rabin Stamp

A month after the death of Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Postal Authority announced it would issue a stamp commemorating the late Prime Minister.

Stamps in memory of prime ministers are usually issued on the first-year anniversary of their death.

Shulamit Aloni, Communications Minister said that in view of the circumstances surrounding Rabin's death, it was decided to issue the stamp sooner.

