

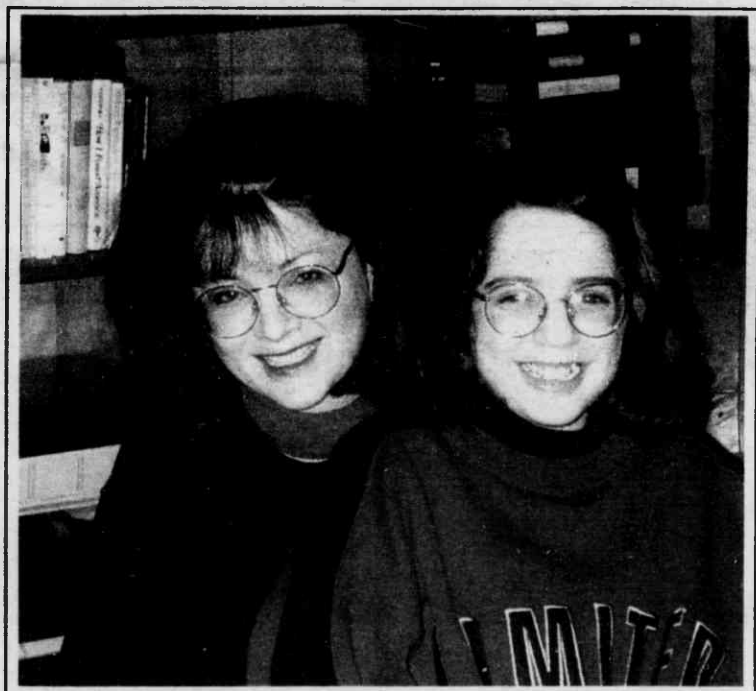
## Making Jewish Memories

by Elaine Markmann Chernotsky

As any parent knows, one day you look up and the little girl who was once beside you is becoming a teenager and on the road to womanhood. Before we knew it, there was talk of a Bat Mitzvah - and plans and studies were begun. But in the rush of activity, it was important to stop and recognize this special time in her life. Interpreting events and making them meaningful has always been a priority in our family. We marked our daughter Rena's entrance into the world with a Simchat Habat - a celebration of a daughter. Along with concerns for the loss of self-esteem for pre-adolescent girls, we wondered what could be done to acknowledge this year before her Bat Mitzvah; how could we add to her Jewish memories?

*create an Etz Chayim - a Tree of Life.*

We had an enthusiastic response. Rena was both excited and curious - as were many of the participants. On a Sunday evening in January, more than twenty women came to our home and gathered in the living room. As with all our meetings, we began with lighting candles. Drawing from *Miriam's Well*, I spoke of Shvat and how its themes of growth related to women. Several friends did readings on the wonders of nature, and then I spoke of the importance of ritual in our lives. I then asked the participants to do two things: to write their wise thought on an index card and then cut out a felt leaf. Inspired by my mother, Ruth, who was so creative and able to make every day a yontif,



Elaine (l) and Rena before the ceremony

Havurah Tikvah's Rosh Chodesh group proved to be the perfect vehicle. Begun eight months ago, the women of Havurah Tikvah meet monthly to celebrate the new moon. This draws on biblical tradition that saw Rosh Chodesh as a semi-holiday for women - a time to pause from various responsibilities and enjoy each other's company while studying and sharing customs based on each new month. When a volunteer was sought to program our meeting for Shvat, it seemed an ideal time to celebrate both this new month and Rena's 12th birthday.

Invitations, printed in green, were sent with the following inscription:

*"Havurah Tikvah Rosh Chodesh invites you to welcome the month of Shvat: a time for renewal and creation. We will commemorate Rena Markmann Chernotsky's year before her Bat Mitzvah. Bring a wise thought to launch her entrance into womanhood. Together, we will*

I designed a white felt banner with leftover felt from a Chanukah banner she once made. With help from Ellen Chelms, a beautiful brown felt tree was designed awaiting its leaves from those who were to gather.

Everyone jumped into the materials and the tasks were accomplished.

Rena sat regally on the rocking chair as each woman approached. First there were the words of wisdom, followed by the addition of a leaf to the tree banner. Most presentations were completed with hugs. It was an extraordinary time for everyone: Rena was surrounded by a roomful of women giving her positive messages along with wishes and affection. Our group had the opportunity to nurture her - and I got to observe her joy, while basking in my own. The

Continued on page 10

## Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte Women's \$365 Division Welcomes 17 New Contributors

On February 13th the \$365 Division of the Jewish Federation's Women's Campaign welcomed 17 new contributors to the Division at a dessert reception held at the home of Deborah Rivkin.

"Each year we try to reach out to women in the community to include them in the campaign" said Allison Lerner, \$365 Division Chair. "We are pleased to welcome so many new members to this category."

Donna Lerner, \$365 Co-Chair continued "We were fortunate to have a strong group of solicitors working in the division this year. These women were effective in conveying the importance of Federated giving to both new and old members of the community."

The following are the new members of the \$365 Division: Lois Benjamin, Ruth Cohen, Joan Choper, Ellen Framm, Sandy Hoagland, Vicki Hopkins, Anita Kalver, Muriel Kane, Becky Kaplan, Allie Lerner, Meredith Levy, Elise Menaker, Florence Perlin, Nancy Resnick, Beth Rosenberg, Sandie Rouso, Susan Ades Young.

The dessert reception featured guest speaker Holly Callen. Ms. Callen spoke about "Preserv-

ing the Jewish Family in the 90's." Tammy Menaker, \$365 Event Co-Chair found Ms. Callen's remarks to be informative and from the heart. "I thought that the 10 Ways to Enhance your Jewish Identity was particularly interesting. Since many of us in the division have young families it is always helpful to hear concrete ways to reinforce positive Jewish identity." said Ms.

Menaker

Deborah Rivkin, also \$365 Co-Chair, continued about the importance of women's giving and her decision as a newcomer to Charlotte to become involved in the Women's Division campaign - "Women's Division offers women the opportunity to unite to play a role in making a difference in the community."

### Women's \$365



(l-r) Deborah Rivkin, \$365 Event Co-Chair; Alison Lerner, \$365 Division Chair; Anita Jacobs, Guest Speaker; Tammy Menaker, \$365 Event Co-Chair; Donna Lerner, \$365 Division Chair

## Nations Bank Exec To Head Financial Division

Richard Osborne, President of The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, announced that Richard Gross, NationsBank executive, has accepted the chairmanship of the newly formed Financial Division of The Jewish Federation. Gross said, "I am very much interested in the establishment of a professional society within the parameters of the financial division which is comprised of the banking, stock brokerage, accounting, real estate

and insurance industries. In addition to adding to the support and strengthening of Jewish life through active involvement with the Jewish Federation, the society will offer a unique opportunity for fellowship and networking among Jewish financial professionals." Rich Osborne added, "The coordinated financial division and its honor society will fulfill an unmet need for the community. Financial professionals will be involved not only in their profession, but with colleagues who promote the interests of the Jewish people."

Richard Gross is President of NationsBank Capital Markets, Inc. Mr. Gross joined NationsBank in 1976 as Vice President and Representative for South Africa and was named Senior Vice President in 1980. After his unit was merged with the Corporate Finance Group and was charged with investment banking activities, he was named Executive Vice President in 1990. Gross was educated at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa and did his graduate work at Stanford University.

## The American Jewish Community Responds to the Recent Acts of Terrorism in Israel

Following are responses from the Conferences of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and a letter to Prime Minister Peres from the partnership of the United Israel Appeal, the United Jewish Appeal, the Joint Distribution Committee, the Council of Jewish Federations and the Federation System.

Continued on page 2

Make Your 1996 Campaign Pledge Now!

Call 366-5007