

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Charlotte, NC  
Permit No. 1208

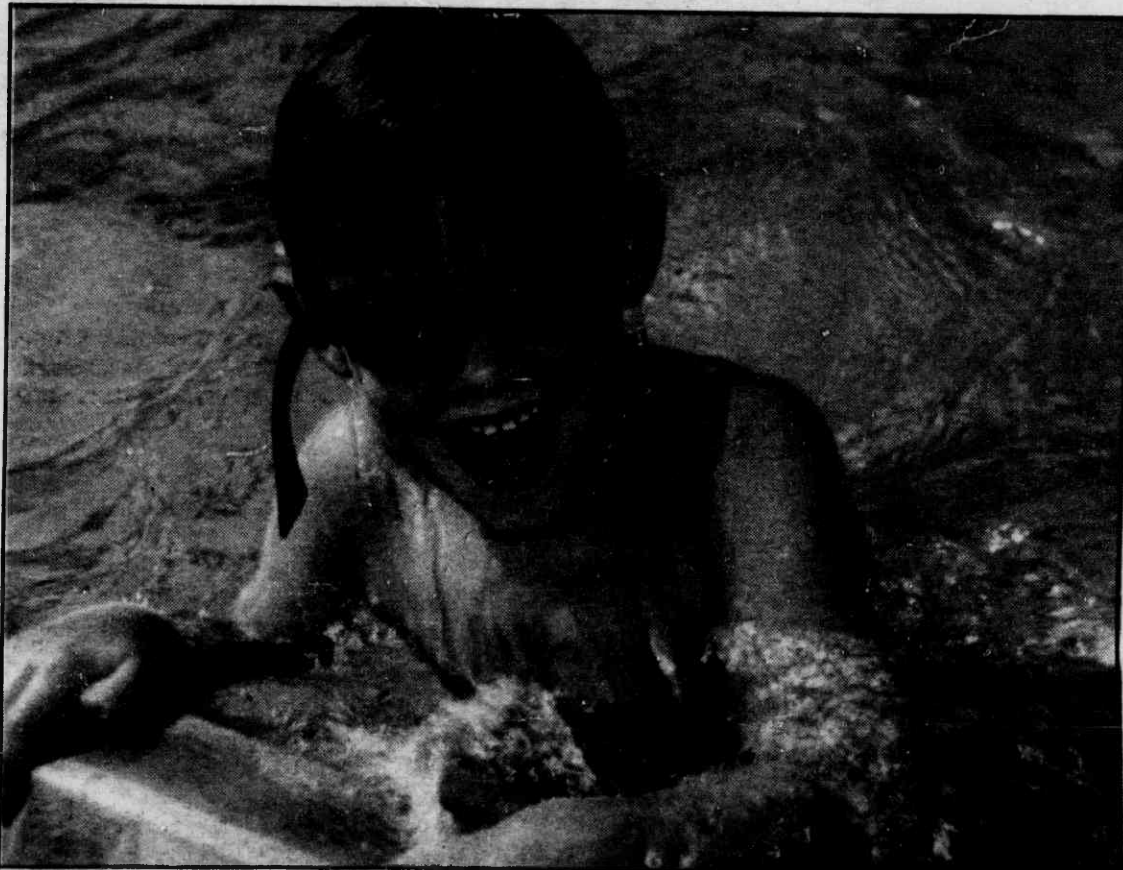
# The Charlotte JEWISH news

Vol. 19 No. 7

Tammuz-Av 5757

August, 1997

## Hot?? Who said it was hot?



Adam Levinson has found the perfect way to stay cool during these hot dog days of summer. Most afternoons, he and his Mom, Holly can be found at the JCC pool at Shalom Park where he says, "Come on in, the water's fine!"

## New Director Takes Helm at Jewish Family Services

By Susan Kramer



Penny Wagner-Schuster

As of 4:45 PM on July 14, it appeared that Penny Wagner-Schuster had survived her first full day as Director of the Jewish Family Services. You might even say she had thrived — she seemed fresh and bubbly and certainly still very excited to be in Charlotte.

And the Charlotte Jewish community is just as excited to have her. After a year-long

search, while the JFS directorship was so ably handled by Interim Director Laurie Gordon Harris, Penny was hired in May. She comes to Charlotte from Miami where she was Director of Older Adults Services for the Jewish Family Service of Miami, and brings with her an air of enthusiasm and excitement that is downright contagious.

"I'm really looking forward to the opportunity to build this agency, to create programs that will be helpful and meaningful to the community," Penny stated in her (mostly unpacked) office on Monday afternoon.

When asked what prompted a move to Charlotte, this almost-native Floridian (she moved there when she was ten months old and had lived there ever since) said simply, "It's really almost a miracle — a real dream come true." You see, two years ago, Penny's mother and sister moved to Raleigh, and Penny found the separation difficult.

"Then almost a year ago, I saw

the listing for the position as Director of Jewish Family Services. I got out my map and tried to estimate how far it was from Charlotte to Raleigh. I'm not very good at that sort of thing — I thought it would be a 10-hour trip." Remember, this is a lady who grew up in a state with over 700 miles between its borders.

Then in January, someone pointed out that it was more like a 3-hour car trip, and Penny, who holds an MSW from Barry University of Miami, wasted no time in sending off her resume to the search committee. "Everything just fell into place after that," says Penny — even down to finding a place to live where the architecture reminds her and her husband of Florida.

And how about Mom — is she glad that Penny is close by? Well, let's just say Rosh Hashanah will be a very happy holiday in the Wagner-Schuster household this year! ✪

## Temple Beth El welcomes new associate Rabbi

By Jo Minchew

Over his desk hang favorite quotes: "You cannot depend upon your eyes if your imagination is out of focus;" "One does not discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time;" and "Know Before Whom You Stand."

Adam Michael Morris, 29, the new associate rabbi of Temple Beth El, has always been one to wonder at life. "Even as a child, I liked to question and ponder over the Big Questions," he said. "Being a rabbi is getting paid to consider these full time and the older I get, the more I have to learn."

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Rabbi Morris is one of four brothers. Although he grew up in an observant, Conservative family the rabbi found that Reform thinking better suited him.

"I am not afraid to either embrace what tradition gives us or to think outside of the box... What appealed and appeals to me about Reform Judaism is that it is the Judaism most open to going outside the box."

A 1989 graduate of Emory University (B.A. in History and Judaic Studies), Rabbi Morris later received rabbinical training at Hebrew Union College in both Jerusalem and Cincinnati. Following his ordination in 1994, he moved to Nashville, Tennessee where he remained

until the offer arrived from Charlotte.

Both the rabbi and his wife, Renee, who works in advertising, are "terribly excited" about the move to North Carolina.



Rabbi Morris noted that he looks forward to sharing and growing with our community and to reaching the next level of his experience as a person and as a rabbi.

"What impressed me, first, about Temple Beth El is an attitude," he remembered. "It's the one I felt from speaking with Jim [Rabbi Bennett] and continued as I spoke to more staff and members of the community."

"People smiled when they spoke about Temple Beth El," he concluded, "and, not only did I see the smiles on their faces — I felt them upon their hearts." ✪

## World-wide celebrations to mark Israel's 50th Anniversary

Locally, L'Chaim Charlotte set for May 17

As Jews in Israel and around the world gather on December 23 to observe the first night of the holiday of Chanukah, the State of Israel will commence the yearlong celebration of its 50th Anniversary. "The celebrations will begin as we light the very first Chanukah candle," says Arie Sommer, Israel's Commissioner for Tourism, N.A., referring to the Jews' traditional lighting of candles, one per night, for eight days, in memory of the miracle associated with the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem by the Maccabees two thousand years ago. "It is a very dramatic and

meaningful symbol," Sommer continued, "that we link the joy and excitement of our country's 50th birthday, with a memory of another joyous moment in our history, the Jews' redemption from oppression two millennia ago."

Israel's tourism officials are preparing for a major tourism year in 1998, as unprecedented numbers of travelers are expected to visit Israel during the anniversary year. Indeed, group bookings and airline seatblocking for 1998 are breaking all records, say tour operators and airlines.

The celebration of Israel's 50th anniversary will be a 12-month series of gala happenings, parades, concerts and events in Israel and throughout the world. These events will be spread throughout the twelve months from December, 1997 to December, 1998.

The opening event will be held on December 23, 1997, with the Lighting of the First Chanukah candle by the President of Israel,

(Continued on page 3)

### Inside this Issue . . .

Keeping perspective.....	page 3
<i>Dr. Kenneth Stein looks at Israel's successes over the last 100 years</i>	
Back to school.....	page 4
<i>Some educational food for thought</i>	
Greetings for the New Year.....	page 24
<i>Let the CJN send your Rosh Hashanah greetings for you this year</i>	

### Also inside . . .

Speizman Library .....	page 8
Jewish Family Services .....	page 19
Temple Beth El .....	page 14
Temple Israel .....	page 15
Lubavitch of North Carolina ...	page 16
Mazel Tov .....	page 10
CAJE .....	page 17
The Jewish Traveler .....	page 18
Dining Out .....	page 22