



CAJE



CAJE 26 Conference is a "Rocky Mountain Chai"

The 26th Annual Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education (CAJE), held at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins, CO, during August was a celebration of Jewish teaching and learning, held for the first time, in the pristine environment of the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. More than 1800 Jewish teachers, educators, administrators, rabbis, cantors, librarians, informal educators, youth workers, authors, scholars, publishers, musicians, college students, and learners of every imaginable branch of Judaism were in attendance, to share their creativity and to take home an inspired spark of what it means to be a Jewish educator in the 21st century.

A large delegation of teachers from Charlotte was in attendance: Denise Abadi, Wendy Rosen, Barbara Ezring, Rabbi Robert and Sharon Kasman, Mary Jean and Howard Kushner, Jason Cathcart, Robin Landsman, Jennifer Foley and Lenora Stein.

The Conference was filled with

more than 500 sessions. In addition to the usual Expo marketplace, the film festival, the teacher resource center, the hands on "make it and take it" learning center, the edu-tainment, the *beit midrash* (one on one learning), the art center, the media center, the *mifgash* (encounters with Israeli counterparts), family programming, *tzedakah* activities, keynotes, and the informal interactions among those in attendance, there was a special Jewish environmental *havaya* (field trip out into the land) experience. Barbara Ezring and Lenora Stein participated in this Jewish Environmental Nature Education Poudre Canyon Extravaganza. Along with a Jewish forest ranger, a Bureau of Land Management naturalist, and specially trained Jewish environmental educators, groups went into the Rocky Mountain National Park to learn to make nature a co-teacher as well as how to turn the outdoors into a natural Jewish learning environment through a

series of rotating interactive workshops.

Jennifer Foley and Robin Landsman participated in several hands-on arts and crafts learning experiences that involved developing lesson plans they hope to implement during this school year in their respective classes. Jason Cathcart attended a mega session for Jewish informal educators and youth workers from all across the country: an opportunity to learn and network with colleagues who do similar work. Mary Jean Kushner participated in the annual CAJE Chorale, a group that studies new Jewish music during the conference week, and culminates in a performance at the closing ceremonies. Denise Abadi, Wendy Rosen and Sharon Kasman attended a variety of sessions on new pedagogic techniques and classroom ideas. Rabbi Kasman attend-

ed several Jewish family education programs, along with his children Jason and Emily, who are now CAJE Conference veterans, *vatikim*, themselves, and who get to attend a wonderfully creative Jewish day camp that the CAJE Conference hosts for the kids of conference attendees.

One of the most significant conference keynotes was an address by Rabbi Harold Schulweis, of Valley Beth Shalom Congregation in Encino, CA, a noted scholar, author and spokesperson for the cause of Jewish education. His talk was entitled "Teaching the Big Ideas." Presented to a standing room only crowd, audio cassette tapes were distributed afterwards, so that every person in attendance could



Charlotte teachers who attended the CAJE 26 Conference in Ft. Collins, CO, join with their colleagues from North and South Carolina for the traditional group photo.

take his inspiring words back to their home community. A copy of Rabbi Schulweis' talk on tape is available on loan from the CAJE Resource Center at Shalom Park.

Thanks go to the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte for funding, through its annual allocation process, the Jewish teacher professional development program that makes it possible for teachers from Charlotte to attend the CAJE Conference every year. ✪

Oops! CAJE Still Around in 2001-02

Apparently, last month's Charlotte Jewish News had the community joining CAJE for last

year rather than this upcoming year.

Rest assured CAJE will still be

around for 5762. So, please use the form right here to join CAJE for the 2001-02/5762 school year.

2001-2002 Annual CAJE Membership Application

PLEASE CIRCLE MEMBERSHIP LEVEL & ENCLOSE CHECK PAYABLE TO CAJE

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