



Jewish Family Services



JFS Announces Kickoff of 2002 Friends Campaign

By Marty Kelso, JFS Public Relations Committee Chair

"Last year, we were grateful to see the community respond like never before," said George Cronson, Chairman of the annual Friends Campaign of Jewish Family Services. "2001 was our most successful year ever in terms of the dollars raised, and now we're ready to take it to the next level with this year's campaign."

With total contributions surpassing JFS' original 2001 goal, Cronson said Charlotte's Jewish community is clearly aware of the agency's importance, along with the importance of a fundraiser that provides a major portion of the money needed to operate JFS.

"It really comes down to individual contributions to keep our programs and services alive and

well," Cronson explained. "We've established a higher goal this year because of the increased need for these programs and services, and expenses keep going up. Record numbers of visitors continue to access our food pantry. Our counselors have never experienced such full caseloads. They're seeing more and more clients from all walks of life. In fact, the number of families served by JFS has nearly doubled in the last year."

The 2002 Friends Campaign begins with a letter mailed to past donors and all members of the Jewish community. This initial appeal will be followed by a phone campaign conducted by JFS board members and volunteers. Cronson is joined in his efforts this year by Friends Campaign co-chairs Amy Mullen

and Andrew Bodenheimer.

"While it's never easy to ask for money, we've been pleased to see how quickly people respond to our letters and how receptive they are when we call," Cronson said. "They're willing to do their part to support the JFS mission of providing quality counseling and assistance for all Jewish families. It's more crucial than ever that we do it ourselves, because funding sources for non-profit agencies are

harder and harder to come by these days. When an organization like JFS remains strong and vital, we're able to touch the lives of literally hundreds of families in our community."

Cronson added that a recent speech delivered to temple congregations by JFS Executive Director Penny Wagner-Schuster eloquently summarized the organization's caring tradition. "I can think of no better way to kick off

the Friends Campaign than by sharing portions of Penny's speech," he said. "She speaks from the heart and illustrates why JFS benefits us all. Hopefully, her words will inspire the community to continue to support the great work JFS does every day of the year."

The article directly below is the full contents of Penny's speech. ☆

On the Occasion of the Jewish Family Services Shabbat

By Penny Wagner-Schuster, JFS Executive Director

Editor's Note: On March 15 and 16, Penny Wagner-Schuster gave this speech from the pulpit at both Temple Beth El and Temple Israel in honor of Jewish Family Services Shabbat.

The 2002 Jewish Family Services Shabbat is dedicated to those in our community who have turned to JFS for help.

During 2001, Jewish Family Services assisted more than 2,000 Jewish families and individuals through its many services and programs. It is expected that even more families and individuals will turn to JFS this year.

Already this year, we have seen many families and individuals who have never asked for assistance. People who were always givers of tzedakah are finding themselves in need of help. Business owners, executives, and airline pilots who have found themselves out of work are seeking help from JFS for emotional and concrete needs. Their electricity is being threatened and many face eviction or foreclosure.

In my 20 years as a Social

Worker, I have never seen a greater need among us.

The JFS Food Pantry has been used by 70 to 80 families and individuals each month. We are seeing more and more families with children. Requests for counseling have also increased. People just like you and me are seeking help, comfort, and support from JFS.

All of our lives are filled with much beauty and miracles. Life is also filled with challenges. It seems as though these are difficult times for many of us. None of us are immune from stress, depression, divorce, loss, or unemployment. The mitzvot that we offer to others we may one day need ourselves.

Responding to human need is a supremely Jewish act. The Torah is filled with references to acts of kindness. We are commanded to lift up the fallen and heal the sick. By addressing the financial, emotional, and spiritual needs of those among us, we live our Torah and our tradition. As daunting as this may seem, these acts do not call for anyone to revolutionize the world. The world can be perfected one step at a time, and that is

exactly the premise on which JFS works. It assists one child, one adult, or one family at a time. JFS is engaged full time in performing these tasks on behalf of the Jewish community.

The strength of JFS lies in the support from community members like each of you. It is through your generosity that Jewish Family Services is able to assist those in need, with an understanding that each life is sacred and every family should be self-sufficient. We must always remember that none of our lives can be complete if we forget those among us who are in need. Together we will continue to meet the tradition of repairing the world one life at a time.

There is a marvelous story of a man who once stood before God, his heart breaking from the pain and injustice in the world. "Dear God," he cried out, "look at all of the suffering, the anguish, and the distress in your world. Why don't you send help?"

God responded: "I did send help. I sent you." ☆

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Donations to Jewish Family Services in March

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS

To David Abrams from Alan and Ruth Goldberg; to Vera Cohen from Anita Pepper; to Bob Solow's from Abe and Selina Banner, Rose and Herbert Weisman, Jan and Ron Katz, and Micki Schiffman, Eleanor and Morty Turk; to Phyllis Weinstein from Selma Melasky.

MAZEL TOVS

To Amy Pomeranz and Eric Essely on their wedding from Alan and Kate Kaplan; to Beth Winterfield on her bat mitzvah from Bea Gibbs; to Elly Ostrow on her bat mitzvah from Bea Gibbs; to Sally and Manny Rosenfeld on their son's engagement from Eleanor and Morty Turk; to Irving and Evelyn Hochstat on their 50th wedding anniversary from Abe and Selina Banner; to Jinny and Lew Holtzman on their 50th wedding anniversary from Micky Schiffman, Gerry Litwak, and Eleanor and Morty Turk; to Sonny and Ralph Besnoy on the birth of their grandson from Sally and Manny Rosenfeld.

HONORS

In honor of the birth of Brent Dylan Cohen, grandson of Barbie and Steve Weiner, from Sally and Manny Rosenfeld; in honor of the 50th wedding anniversary of Jinny

and Lew Holtzman from Cecile Rose; in honor of the bat mitzvah of Mollie Cohen from Ellen and David Framm; in honor of Ilse Bergen's new home from Anita Pepper; in honor of the bat mitzvah of Elly Ostrow from Gale Osborne; in honor of the bat mitzvah of Sherri Leonard from Gale Osborne; in honor of the bat mitzvah of Tracy Brown from Gale Osborne.

SPEEDY AND COMPLETE RECOVERY

To Alene Strause from Marilyn Shapiro, Florence Jaffa, and Susan and Donald Jacobs; to Linda Roohchang from Dicky Shapiro, Susan and Donald Jacobs, and Evelyn and Leonard Berger; to Susan Jacobs from Ruth and Alan Goldberg; to Robert Bolande, father of Debby Block, from Susan and Donald Jacobs; to Bob Abrams from Shirley and Eddie Goodman; to Kathryn Kossove from Audrey Madans; to Mat Luftglass from Evelyn and Leonard Berger; to Brenda Meltser from Eleanor and Morty Turk.

IN MEMORY

Of Joe Frank from Morty and Eleanor Turk; of Irving Greenman, father of Maxwell

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