

Sandra and Leon Levine JCC Maccabi Games Award Winners

The Sandra & Leon Levine JCC's Sports and Fitness Department is very happy to announce the winners of the 2006 JCC Maccabi Games awards, presented this year during the annual Team Charlotte's reunion party this past October.

Baseball coach Larry Brown, Basketball coach Dan Vizzini and chaperone Aree Skolnik-Pearlman are this year's winners of the Harold Josephson Memorial Award. This award, established in 1998 at the JCC Maccabi Games hosted in Charlotte and named in memory of an outstanding leader and gentleman from our Charlotte Jewish community, is presented annually to a member or members of the Charlotte JCC Maccabi Games delegation who demonstrates tremendous fortitude despite adversity and who displays the perseverance to achieve goals that appear unattainable. This is the first time in the eight-year history of the award that credentialed adults have received this presti-

gious award. Previous winners have included: Matt Manes, Mitchell Gartner, Brett Strumwasser, Courtney Rosenberg, Michael Murray, Rebecca Raphael, Alan Platocek and the boys in-line hockey team from 2005 (Harry Bergmann, Jonathan, Cohen, Matthew Laxer, Matt Lepow, Zach Maniloff and Kyle Schumer).

For the fourth year in a row, a fairly newer award for the JCC Maccabi Games program in Charlotte was also presented. Named in memory of Amy Beth Rosenberg, former Associate Director of the JCC Maccabi Games who very sadly and very suddenly passed away in the spring of 2003 at the age of 36 and who was one of the key continental staff insuring the success of the JCC Maccabi Games for many previous years, the award is presented annually to a member or members of the Charlotte JCC Maccabi Games delegation who displays "extraordinary" behavior while participating at the annual

JCC Maccabi Games. The winners of this award for 2006 are Alex Goldstein, Dayna Katz, Sarah Platocek, Alex Widis and Amanda Widis (the Charlotte mixed girls soccer team), joining previous Rosenberg award winners Elyssa Iagnocco, Jeffrey Goldsmith, Matt Gershen and Aaron Zucker.

Alex Goldstein is a tenth grader at Providence Day School and has been involved with Maccabi for the past two years. She has played soccer for her school for five years and made the varsity team as a freshman. Alex is the daughter of Alan Goldstein and Vicki Pennington-Bowles. Dayna Katz is a 9th grader and in the IB program at Myers Park HS and has been involved with Maccabi for the past two years. She plays soccer for the Charlotte United Futbol Club and is a member of BBG. Dayna is the daughter of Robert and Jeanie Widis and Peter

and Laura Katz. Sarah Platocek is a sophomore at Myers Park HS and she too has been involved with Maccabi for the past two years. She is very active in BBG and is treasurer of her chapter and a member of the Hebrew High Student Council. Sarah is the daughter of Eric Platocek and Lisa Strause. Alex Widis is in the tenth grade at Providence Day School and has been involved with Maccabi for the past two years. She plays field hockey in the fall and soccer in the spring for her school. Alex is the daughter of Robert and Jeanie Widis and David Hansen and Emily Chatham. And last, but certainly

not least, Amanda Widis is a sophomore at Providence HS and has also been involved with Maccabi for two years. She plays soccer for a Matthews Classic Club, the MARA Hurricanes, and is a member of BBG. Amanda is the daughter of Howard Widis and Kathy Consorte.

Congratulations to all of the 2006 athlete and adult Maccabi award winners for these well-deserved honors. Your enthusiasm for the JCC Maccabi Games program and Team Charlotte, plus your willingness to do "whatever it takes" to be successful both on and off the field of play are an inspiration to many others in our Charlotte community. ☆



The Freakonomics of Tu B'Shevat

By Judy H. August

This year, on February 3, we celebrate the holiday of Tu B'Shevat. The holiday celebrates the new year of trees.

In Leviticus it states: "When you come to the land and you plant any tree, you shall treat its fruit as forbidden; for three years it will be forbidden and not eaten. In the fourth year, all of its fruit shall be sanctified to praise the Lord. In the fifth year, you may eat its fruit." - Leviticus 19:23-25

So, Tu B'Shevat was created as a way to track the age of trees, and to answer the age-old Jewish question, "When can we eat?" Any tree planted before the 15th of the month of Shevat is considered a year old on Tu B'Shevat, and then aged a year every Tu B'Shevat thereafter, until the fifth year when the fruit is allowed to be eaten. At its core, Tu B'Shevat shows us the important value Judaism places on caring for God's nature over time. Interestingly, time is one element that in today's society works against trees and the environment. Time tends to distort the economics of decisions affecting the environment. Let me give you some examples.

We make economic decisions today about how much land to devote to garbage dumps based on today's land use and values. However, the garbage that we are dumping will be there for generations to come, when the land use and values will most assuredly be much higher. Evaluated in future terms, we might not be so willing to dump such a huge amount of garbage on the valuable land. That doesn't mean that we need to eliminate landfills. It's a matter of degree. If we care about future generations, we need to reduce the amount of garbage we dump, and with it, the rate at which we expand our landfills. We need to "reduce, reuse, recycle."

The economics of air pollution are similarly out of kilter. We incur little to no personal cost for the pollution we generate as we sit in

What Can I Do To Help?

* Donate to the "Foundation of Shalom Park - Environmental Fund" to financially support the ongoing recycling pick-up costs for all of the organizations at Shalom Park. Checks may be dropped off at the JCC front desk, Temple Beth El, Temple Israel, or any of the school offices.

* Practice the "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" adage at home. Once you start the habit, it becomes easy and second nature. See the Mecklenburg County website for more information: <http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/Solid+Waste/>.

* Reduce your contribution to air pollution by eliminating unnecessary idling in carpool lines and drive-throughs. It is more efficient to turn off and restart most warmed-up vehicles rather than idle for more than 30 seconds. Also, become more efficient in your use of electricity by turning off appliances and lights when not needed and purchasing more efficient appliances and bulbs.

our carpool and drive-through lines idling our car engines, or make inefficient use of electricity. However, there is a cost to society, particularly in the areas of health care and global warming. Mecklenburg County is currently designated by the EPA as not meeting safe standards for ozone. Ozone has been found to contribute to asthma, lung infections, cell inflammation, and shortness of breath, especially in children, who breathe 50% more air per body weight than adults. My car idling may bring on a child's asthma attack, but I pay nothing for doing so.

We at Shalom Park take seriously our Jewish obligation to care for the environment. Last year, in honor of Tu B'Shevat, we created the Foundation of Shalom Park - Environmental Fund. We were able to initiate recycling Park-wide by purchasing the recycling bins and paying for the pick-up of recyclables. Because the pick-up costs are ongoing, our Environmental Fund needs replenishing every year. You can act in the spirit of Tu B'Shevat and help all of our organizations by making a generous donation to the Foundation of Shalom Park's

Environmental Fund (see box).

This year's Tu B'Shevat initiative will focus on air pollution. Our Jewish schools and after school programs are now participating in a "No Idling" campaign, to help reduce unnecessary emissions from carpool lines, and help raise awareness of the harm and waste caused by automobile idling. It is so easy to help year-round by reducing the use of drive-throughs, turning the car engine off when waiting for any length of time, and turning the key to battery only when listening to the end of that fabulous song or talk show interview. ☆

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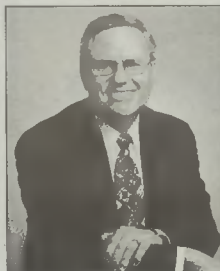
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