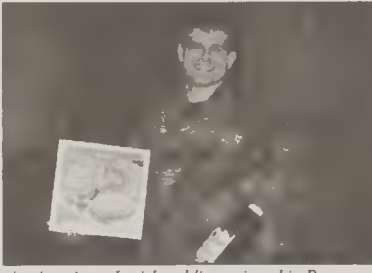


# Temple Israel Supports American Jewish Service Personnel throughout the World

During the early part of March, Temple Israel was able to purchase hundreds of Passover boxes to be sent to American troops serving in battle zones throughout the world. Each box contained a copy of Alfred Kolatch's Haggadah, matzah, kosher for Passover fish, soup, grape juice, macaroons, and a desert-camouflage kippah. These gift boxes are accompanied with a card wishing the troops a "Happy Pesach"



An American Jewish soldier enjoys his Passover gift.

from their friends at Temple Israel, Charlotte, North Carolina.

The response to the call for support for these boxes was tremendous and immediate. Over 200 boxes were purchased in the first two days of the campaign. Program co-chair, Alan Raznick, Lt. Colonel, US Army, retired, stated that, "When I served, I never received such packages from home. What a morale booster. People back home,

caring about you and wanting to help you observe our holidays. Jews worrying about other Jews whose lives are put in harm's way in service to our country. It creates a connection that shows the appreciation of American Jews back home for those serving in combat zones."

The committee, which was formed to reach out to American service personnel, will also be reaching out to Chayalim Bodedim, the lonely soldiers - Americans serving in the Israeli

military. This new committee has been formed to show Temple Israel's support for American Jews serving the cause of liberty, common democracy, and freedom throughout the world. ☆



## Schools

### CJDS Alumnus Takes Top Honors in Mitzvot Contest

Mendel Cohen, son of Rabbi Shlomo and Yiska Cohen, recently received the highest grade in his class for learning over 100 mitzvot from Maimonides' Book of Mitzvot.

Mendel, who graduated from Charlotte Jewish Day School in 2006, now attends the Seymour J. Abrams Cheder Lubavitch Hebrew Day School in Skokie, IL. The mitzvot contest required the students to learn the mitzvot and then take three written exams to explain each mitzvah and its source in the Torah, as well as the reason for the mitzvah. Mendel's average on the three tests was an amazing 98.7.

He will be traveling to New York with five other students from the school to participate in the final examination in mid-March. Schools from all over the world will be present at this competition, including students from

Argentina, South Africa, Australia, and France. The participants will be treated to a sight-seeing trip around New York City and will be eligible for prizes based on their grades on the final exam.

Congratulations, Mendel. All of us at CJDS are proud of your accomplishments. ☆



Mendel Cohen

### CJDS Board Ponders Jewish Demographics

The Board of Directors of Charlotte Jewish Day School recently enjoyed a presentation by Audrey Goldfarb, of the Project for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE.) Mrs. Goldfarb has been consulting to CJDS, under a PEJE grant, to facilitate the development of long term educational and operational goals and strategies.

Many facts and trends that Audrey reviewed are of importance to all Jews, regardless of affiliation. Following are some key points:

☆ American Jews have achieved zero population growth in a single generation. There were 5.5 million Jews in the US in 1980, and there were 5.5 million Jews in the US in 2000.

☆ In 1950 the 5 million American Jews constituted 3.31% of the general US population of

151,330,000. In 2000 the 5.5 million American Jews constituted just 1.96% of the general US population of 281,000,000. While the US population grew 46% in fifty years, the Jewish population grew just 10%.

☆ After adjusting for rates of non-marriage and intermarriage (as well as for the impact of intermarriage on the religion of the child) there is actually a net population decrease of approximately 547,000 per generation.

What can we do to reverse this decline and to increase Jewish commitment and Jewish identity? According to Audrey and other researchers, the four important factors are: Jewish sleep away camp; Jewish teen youth groups; teen trips to Israel, and Jewish day schools.

Statistics show that Jewish day schools work. Day school grads

show the highest levels of Jewish engagement; they have the greatest attachment to Israel and to the Jewish people; they thrive in their future choice of learning environments; and they have higher chances of joining a synagogue as adults.

Audrey cited the above statistics as being the reasons that more Reform and Conservative families choose Jewish day schools for their children's education. She also noted that more children from "unaffiliated" and/or interfaith families are enrolled in Jewish day schools than ever before.

Audrey told the board that she began working for a Jewish day school late in her professional career. Her final remark was that "Although none of my own children attended Jewish day schools, all of my grandchildren do." ☆

"I am drowning in the muddy slime, and there is no foothold; I have waded into the watery deep, and the flood sweeps over me. I am wearied with calling; my throat is parched."

- Psalm 69:3, 4

**Yours Truly Needlepoint and Knitting**  
Handpainted Needlepoint Canvases



All New Canvases — Free lessons  
— Unique Gift Ideas —  
New and Old Customers Very Welcome  
Best Selection in Charlotte

All Proceeds Go to Local Charities

3802 Columbine Circle  
704-366-6765

Open Thursdays  
9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Checking out the Purim scene at **The Charlotte Jewish Preschool** were several Queen Esthers, Cousin Mordechais, Hamans, and an assorted Cat in the Hat or two. We enjoyed parading through the JCC and sharing hamentaschen and other treats with our friends. Now we can look forward to Pesach and where that Afikoman may be hiding.

