

## The Book of Life Stan Greenspon

By Phil Warshauer

Donors are often asked, "Why did you make a gift?" At a recent seminar a nationally recognized speaker provided a group of planned giving professionals with the most common answer to this question: "I want to make a difference" - a rather simple answer

to a rather simple question.

Most of us want to make a difference, but how many of us actually do? You can identify "difference-makers" by the hours they spend volunteering and by the charitable gifts they make. They are selective, giving time and money to organizations that share

their commitment to making a difference. It can be said that "difference-makers" attract "difference-makers." Fortunately, our Charlotte Jewish community is blessed with a variety of organizations and individuals that made a difference in years past, are making a difference today and will continue to make a difference in the future.

Stan Greenspon has been an involved member of our commu-

nity, serving in leadership roles in many organizations. I have enjoyed our conversations, which have often been filled with passionate discussions about his commitment to improving the lives of others and the satisfaction this has provided him. He is a quintessential "difference-maker." As a member of The Book of Life Society, he has committed to making Charlotte and its Jewish community a bet-

ter place for future generations. We all want to make a difference. It requires commitment but it's easier than you might imagine.

For more information on how you can make a difference and become a member of The Book of Life Story please contact Phil Warshauer at 704-973-4544 or [pwarshauer@charlottejewish-foundation.org](mailto:pwarshauer@charlottejewish-foundation.org). ☆

## Making a Difference Stan Greenspon

My family and I have lived in the Charlotte area for over 40 years. During that time I have been fortunate to witness and experience the fantastic growth and all of the positive things that have come with it.

My first volunteer role in the community was to serve as an Assistant Chairperson for the Israel Bonds Campaign. This led to my chairing the campaign in the mid-70s. During this time I vividly recall honoring Leon Levine for this event and successfully selling over \$200,000 of bonds. The tremendous satisfaction I gained from this campaign and working with a strong committee and dedicated individuals fueled my passion to do more for the Jewish community. In the early 80s, I joined the Jewish Federation and I served as Allocations and Major Gifts Chairperson. Through this work I achieved great personal growth and appreciation for high level

organizational work.

Twenty-five years ago Charlotte and the Jewish community were much smaller, but the dynamics of leadership and volunteerism were exceptional. It was then that my good friend Aaron Gleiberman insisted that I take on the role of president of the Federation. He convinced me it was my duty and responsibility. It was truly an experience and honor to be in a position during such exciting times, with Russian immigration and the placement of many Israelis into the Charlotte community. We also started the *Jewish Times* newspaper and created the Social Services Agency. There were many challenges, including the planning of Shalom Park, but a strong commitment from a community working together helped us to reach our objectives.

All of this work has strengthened my belief and determination to assist charitable causes

throughout our community. This applies not only for the Charlotte Jewish community but for the greater Charlotte community. I am proud to have served on the original Board of Directors for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. My former wife, Roslyn, started the Charlotte Chapter and was recognized for its early success. The chapter is now raising over two million dollars per year.

It is obvious to me that many of us in the Jewish community feel the same way about making Charlotte a better place. Many of us gained valuable leadership experience within our Jewish community and have worked hard to ensure that future generations will reap some of the benefits of our hard work. ☆



## HIAS

(Continued from previous page)

good teachers. Therefore they sought educated Bhutanese to teach their children. With the older boys working outside the camp, the remaining family had more to eat. The boys were also able to buy clothes and other necessities for the family. They returned to the camp every three to six months.

While acknowledging the primitive conditions in the camps, Ngana says, "We were the luckiest refugees in the world."

Myin Aung would not say that. An uneducated Karen (a large ethnic group) farmer from Burma (Myanmar) running from his

country's oppressive regime, he and his family fled to the Umpium refugee camp in Thailand in 1984. Myin was given wood and bamboo to build his house. Unlike Ngana's camp, no one was allowed to leave to work outside. With their rations of cooking oil, rice, salt and beans, Myin's wife Minge fed their family of six. They were allowed to raise livestock—pigs and chickens—which they could sell or trade or use for the family itself.

They had candles for evening light. Myin said they suffered in the cold—two shared a blanket. The rainy season brought floods and mud. They lived this way for 21 years. For so many years they lived without hope. The UNHCR called for refugees to register for a

photo ID, the first step toward applying to leave the camp. That was in 1999. Myin was untrusting and did not believe they would be safe so he did not pursue the option until 2008, when the family was approved to come to the U.S.

We are lucky to be able to remember our ancestors who dwelled in huts this holiday season. Truly, we can be grateful for the "clouds of glory" that surround us as Jews in the U.S.

HIAS NC has resettled these two men and their families in Charlotte. You can help these and other refugees with a donation to HIAS NC, 5007 Monroe Rd., Charlotte, NC 28205. To donate furniture and house wares or to volunteer for HIAS, call 704-535-8803. ☆

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**Where: Camp Mindy Rec. Hall**

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**Questions? [dkapustin@carolina.rr.com](mailto:dkapustin@carolina.rr.com)**

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