

# Anonymous

By Phil Warshauer, executive director, Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community

I've been thinking a lot about the word "anonymous." Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines an anonymous act as one made by an individual that is not named or identified. An anonymous face in the crowd is one lacking individuality, distinction or recognizability.

In my profession I meet many generous people who wish to remain anonymous. They feel an obligation to give back, making charitable gifts with little care for recognition. Maimonides writes that an anonymous gift is "a commandment fulfilled for its own sake," rather than done in order to obtain honor.

Several years ago my daughter and I stopped for breakfast at a fast food restaurant. After giving our order over the intercom we proceeded to the drive through window to receive our food and pay for it. The nice woman at the window handed me our order and I handed her payment for the food. She informed me that my order had been paid for by a man who had just driven off in the car in front of me. She explained that he was a regular customer, and each

week he paid for the car behind him. My daughter and I were shocked! I asked, "Who was this man?" The women told us that while he was unidentifiable to her by name, the entire staff at the restaurant knew him as a regular customer. Each week he puts the same smile on their faces as could be seen on the faces of my daughter and me in the car that morning.

I have thought of that generous man quite often. He has motivated me personally and professionally. On several occasions, but not nearly enough, I have followed his lead and returned the favor to unexpected passengers at other fast food restaurants. He taught me that my smile is even broader in the role as the anonymous donor than the unexpected and appreciative recipient. I have learned to put money and trust in the hands of others to follow my request that my gift be used to improve the lives of others. I realized that if he could do that so could I. and that even a small gift affects the lives of others. As inspiring as this anonymous man has been to me, I regret that I will never have the opportunity to thank him for his gift and to let him know how he inspired me and the message I was able to pass along to my daughter.

In the philanthropic world, professionals are taught the power of

the words, "thank you." There are many ways to thank donors and volunteers for gifts of their time and financial resources. One of these ways is to list their names for others to see. We want to say thank you to these donors, make others aware of their generosity and inspire them to follow their lead. Donors lead by example and like to know that they have inspired others to follow in their footsteps.

As a development professional, one must balance the wishes of an anonymous donor and the potential that donor's gift has to influence others. When we see our friends and people in similar economic positions as us making generous gifts, it is human nature for us to think that maybe we can do the same.

The Charlotte Jewish community needs gifts from our current donors to help support the future needs of our community. These gifts can be established and personalized to match your resources, interests and the needs of the community. There are no minimum amounts and we can help you to leave either a general (unrestricted) gift or a more specific (designated) gift. Many of these gifts require no current transfer of assets.

If one of our Jewish institutions is already in your will or estate

plan and you have decided to remain anonymous, I thank you for your generosity. If not, I hope you will consider a gift of this nature. I ask you to consider contacting either the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community or the institution you would like to support to let them know about your planned gift. We want to say thank you and let others in our community be inspired by your generosity. ☆

For more information please contact Phil Warshauer at the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community at 704-973-4544 or [pwarshauer@charlotte-jewishfoundation.org](mailto:pwarshauer@charlotte-jewishfoundation.org).



# Mark Your Calendars for the 6th Annual Charlotte Jewish Film Festival

The 2010 Charlotte Jewish Film Festival will be coming to a neighborhood theater near you, March 4-14, 2010. The Festival committee is hard at work preparing for another presentation of the best in Jewish film from around the world. As always, we have listened to your feedback on the surveys. One update new this year is a dedicated phone number to call for last-minute updates and ticket availability - 704-554-2059. More will be announced in months to come.

The Festival has been lucky enough to have the excellent graphic design firm White Rhino out of Boston, MA develop our poster design the last two years. The poster from the 2008 Festival actually won a prestigious industry award known as the BoNE (Best of New England). The poster featured an orthodox Jewish man with his peyes replaced by a film strip, and was one of only 49 designs selected from 500 entries. Mazel Tov to White Rhino on this wonderful achievement. We look forward to collaborating on what will hopefully be many more award-winning posters in the future.

The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival has grown every year, and last year we reached an all-time



high of almost 1,500 attendees. As you can imagine, a lot of time and energy goes into an endeavor like this. The Festival is volunteer-driven, and we certainly appreciate all efforts made by our legion of volunteers in the months leading up to the Festival as well as the week of the big event.

If you are interested in helping out with the 2010 Film Festival, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Ellyn Gross, at [EllynGross@aol.com](mailto:EllynGross@aol.com). Every little bit helps.

Start spreading the word - the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival is coming to town. See you at the movies.

The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival is brought to you by the Levine JCC and the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah, and is made

possible, in part, with funding by the Arts and Science Council and the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. ☆

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Warmest Regards,

*Ryan Poterack*

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