

After 80 Years, We're Still Wild About Harry

Harry Swimmer's Special Birthday Celebration Supports Mitey Riders

Turning 80 is certainly a special time in anyone's life, and one would expect a big celebration. But shining the spotlight away from himself and onto more important things is typical of Harry Swimmer.

Harry Swimmer has been a prominent and respected member of our Jewish community for over fifty years. His philanthropic and civic minded commitment is evident not only throughout the Levine JCC and Shalom Park but extends well beyond into the Charlotte community at large.

Harry moved to Charlotte in 1951 after graduating from Penn State University where he founded the Swimmer Insurance Agency, Inc. Relinquishing the day to day responsibilities of his company has allowed Harry to pursue his devotion to the Swimmer Family Foundation which supports the Mitey Riders Program and Arena. The Mitey Riders Program, founded in 1993 by Harry and his wife Marilyn, was established to provide therapeutic horse riding for children who face physical and mental challenges. The program is held at the Misty Meadows Equestrian Center located on Providence Road in Waxhaw. This center, which services hundreds of

children and adults, is funded solely by donations made to the Swimmer Family Foundation. The students are not asked to pay any tuition, and many of the staff are volunteers who generously share their time and expertise following Harry's inspirational example of serving those in need in our community.

"Mitey Riders was instrumental for Stacy when she was younger," said Carolyn Hennes about her granddaughter, Stacy Marx, who was born with cerebral palsy. "The program gave her confidence she couldn't have gotten any place else. We are all so grateful to Harry for this gift to disabled children."

For his 80th birthday, Harry characteristically wants to "shine the light" not on himself, but rather on his students at Mitey Riders.

Lynn Edelstein, of Yours Truly Needlepoint and Knitting, will be sponsoring a day to honor Harry. On Sunday, December 5, Lynn will hold a sale at her home and



Harry & Marilyn Swimmer
photo courtesy of Scott Swimmer

donate 100% of all her proceeds to Mitey Riders, with a special preview sale on December 3, 9 AM-5 PM. Lynn's extensive selection of yarns and needlepoint kits, paintings by local artists, gift certificates from local vendors and restaurants and much, much more will be available for sale or part of a silent auction.

Come on over to 3802 Columbine Circle and splurge for yourself or as a holiday gift on a beautiful scarf, blanket, lots of jewelry or gift certificates – all for Harry and the Mitey Riders. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated by Harry and his beloved program. The hours of this special celebration are from 10 AM-5 PM. We hope to see you there. ☆

The Thrill of Films

For the first time, the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival has selected to show a thriller to our Charlotte audiences. The 6th Annual Charlotte Jewish Film Festival — running Mar 4 - 14, 2010 — will show the Israeli feature film, *The Debt*. A huge box-office hit in Israel and nominated for four Israeli film awards, *The Debt* is a unique psychological cat-and-mouse espionage thriller. It was filmed on location in the Ukraine and Israel and features an international cast. Film curator Debby Block says "This is an unforgettable film of intrigue and suspense that will keep you sitting on the edge of your seats."

The Debt, directed by Assaf Bernstein, is the story of three young Mossad agents who are sent to capture and bring to trial a notorious Nazi war criminal known as "the Surgeon of Treblinka." Something goes terribly wrong with the mission and 35 years later this mistake comes back to haunt them. One of the original agents, Rachel (played by Israel's best known actress Gila Almagor) is assigned the task of returning to Eastern Europe. Is it possible that the Nazi is still alive? What will sixty-year-old Rachel do if she finds him? You can find out when you join us at the Film Festival for this and other fantastic Jewish movies from around the world.

The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival is a volunteer-driven event, and we certainly welcome all the help we can get. From marketing to baking, ticketing to ush-



ering, there is definitely a place for your talents. If interested in helping out, please contact Ellyn Gross at EllynGross@aol.com.

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 & 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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