



## JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES



### Jewish Family Services Mourns the Loss of Bea Gibbs

Jewish Family Services, as well as the entire community has suffered a great loss by the passing of Bea Gibbs, Senior Outreach Specialist. Bea died February 21 at Presbyterian hospital.

Bea was raised in Cambridge, MA and moved to Charlotte in 1993. At the age of 70 she began attending CPCC to study Gerontology. At that time she began volunteering at Jewish Family Services. She became so invaluable that her volunteer work grew into a professional staff position. Bea became a passionate advocate for older adults throughout the community. She brought Jewish programming and services to over 100 frail, older adults who were homebound or living in senior communities. Although her job was only "part-time" she managed to continually visit more than 20 senior facilities in the Charlotte area.

Each Sabbath, Bea led Shabbat services at several assisted living facilities where she helped seniors welcome the Sabbath together. Every year Bea led a Chanukah party at Shalom Park where she brought together all of the seniors she visited in the community for a celebration with traditional holiday food and entertainment.

Through her efforts, Bea was able to maintain a connection for many isolated Jewish seniors to the community and to their peers. Bea brought a warm friendship to those she visited weekly. She also delivered home cooked meals and holiday foods to frail homebound seniors. Bea had a wealth of knowledge and helped many Caregivers find facilities and make difficult decisions regarding care for their loved ones. At all hours of the day or night, she would receive phone calls from families seeking her guidance and

support. Bea discussed current events with the seniors and she encouraged them to practice brain exercises to maintain their cognitive functions. She'd often ask them, "What did you do this week to keep your brain sharp?" Many of the participants sought her advice and she gave it in a firm and loving manner.

One of Bea's proudest moments was this past August when she brought together a group of women aged 79-100 to study for their Bat Mitzvah. She arranged for their Torah lessons with the local Rabbis and volunteers. The entire community was invited to this event and it was covered by local, National and International news stations. Bea was instrumental in helping her peers reach this monumental achievement.

Bea was an inspiration to people of all ages. She encouraged many younger students at CPCC

to get involved with older adults and she taught them about the joys of working with seniors. Several teenagers in our community were able to complete their community service projects by working with Bea on achieving their goals. Bea developed intergenerational programs for the Charlotte Jewish Day School where she arranged for the students to visit senior facilities, deliver Purim Bags, and plant trees on Tu B'shevat. She also arranged for the Charlotte Jewish Preschool students to sing for the older adults at the annual Senior Adult Chanukah Party.

At the age of 81, she still had endless energy and dressed meticulously. After a full day of work, Bea would go home in the evenings and bake cakes to bring to the seniors for a special Shabbat treat. Bea showed us how to live our lives fully and made us believe that anything is possible. She was an exceptional role model and whoever she touched felt her passion, kindness and concern.

Bea's true love was her precious family. She was a proud mother and grandmother who spoke about her family all the time.

Over 300 people in the community gathered on Sunday, February 21 for a Memorial Service to honor Bea. At that service, three Rabbis as well as family and friends spoke about the love and dedication that Bea provided to the Jewish seniors in the community. Bea never slowed down, even



Bea Gibbs, z"l

when she became very ill. She kept working until the last days of her life. One person alone will never be able to fill her shoes. If you would like to volunteer to be a friendly visitor to our Jewish seniors to keep Bea's mitzvah going, please call JFS offices at 704-364-6594.

It was essential to Bea Gibbs that seniors in the Charlotte Jewish community not be forgotten. Jewish Family Services of Greater Charlotte is proud to announce an Endowment in memory of Bea Gibbs, so that her name will be inscribed into the Book of Life. The Bea Gibbs Endowment Fund for Seniors will allow for Jewish Family Services to provide programming and services for Jewish seniors in perpetuity. Please contact Linda Bass, Development and Communications Director, 704-944-6849, to discuss your participation in this Endowment. ☆

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Mark and Harriet Perlin from Anita and Marvin Shapiro, Jill and Ed Newman, Linda and Mark Rothman, Judi and Leonard Strause, Ollie and Sam Polk, Anita and Marvin Shapiro

Libby and Al Behar from Lewis and Toby Spitzer

Julius and Mae Goldman from Ruth and Alan Goldberg

**GENERAL DONATION BY**

Mark Perlin  
 Tov M'od Havurah

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO**

Sandra Besnoy and Eleanor Turk from the Wednesday Lunch Bunch

Brenda Patten from Rona Mackelfresh, Robert and Carol Speizman, Gloria Goldberg

Mort Turk from Phoebe and Marvin Witte, Roz and Marty Husney

Mary Gordan from Judy and Steve Kaufmann

Murray Rose from Judy and Steve Kaufmann

Leonard Slesinger from Henry Hirschmann

Stuart Hennes from Gloria Goldberg

David Abrams from Ruth and Alan Goldberg

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On February 18, Phyllis Korman opened her lovely home to over one dozen volunteers who put together meals for 75 people for distribution through Jewish Family Services. Those who helped this month are: Susan Aizenman, Simona Ben-Dov, Cathy Bogus, Ellen Bottner, Laurie Gersh, Gail Green, Hadas Kasher, Judy Kaufmann, Phyllis Korman, Penny Krieger, Phyllis Romaine, Hagit Stav, Joyce Stoll and Ivy Saul.

**Mitzvah Maker Cooks**

Emily Chatham, Congregation Ohr Hatorah, Sandra Fischer, Shirley Goodman, Leigh Jacobson, Diggie Pesakoff, Cheryl Slane, Nancy Tarbis