

Community News

Film Festival Wows Audiences, Sets Attendance Record

Ten days of the best in Jewish film from around the world flew by, but Charlotte attendees won't soon forget these incredible films that graced the silver screen. Time and again, audiences were wowed by marvelous movies and scintillating speakers who added so much to the viewing experience. Almost 1,900 Charlotteans came out to be entertained and educated, a new attendance record for the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival.

The Festival kicked off at the Levine Jewish Community Center with a full house on March 3. They were moved by the documentary "An Article of Hope" about Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon and the tiny torah that went from the depths of despair to the heights of scientific achievement aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia. Racelle Weiman, a personal friend of Ramon and contributor to the film, gave added insight into this inspirational story, and Tiffany Russell from NASA answered questions about the future of NASA and her interesting career.

Opening weekend was a smashing success with the Israeli film "The Matchmaker" followed by the Hadassah Centennial Celebration at a packed Ballantyne Village Theater. The following evening, baseball fans of all ages filled the sanctuary at Temple Israel to see "Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story" and hear Hall of Famer Ron Blomberg, first designated hitter and New York Yankee. The audience enjoyed Ron's stories of his days in the "Bronx Zoo" and what it meant to be a Jewish major leaguer.

The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival continued its tradition of interfaith outreach with the film "Circus Kids." The mixed-faith audience was amazed by the story of the St. Louis Arches, a youth circus troupe that traveled to Israel to perform along with an Arab/Jewish circus group. We were dazzled by the artistry of the Arches and impressed by their efforts to contribute to the peace process through circus.

The Festival came to a close on March 13 with another amazing film. "Where I Stand: The Hank Greenspun Story" riveted the sold out crowd with the previously untold history of an unbelievable man and his numerous exploits. Writer/producer/director Scott Goldstein came from Los Angeles for a Q&A session after the film that everyone found incredibly enlightening. Goldstein was so impressed with the turnout that he agreed to a second screening which took place on May 22 and delighted another full house.

Young and old, newcomers and familiar faces - The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival was thoroughly enjoyed by a wide array of film lovers. We hope you'll tell a friend about the Festival and help us to set a new attendance record next year. Keep updated on the Festival on our Facebook page (Charlotte Jewish Film Festival) or sign up for e-mail updates at www.charlottejewishfilm.com. Anyone interested in becoming involved with the Festival should contact Jeff Turk at omegae-mail@aol.com.

In the wake of this resounding success, the CJFF is pleased to announce that Jeff Turk has agreed to accept the role of festi-

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Taking the Next Steps in Community Philanthropy

By Jeff Bierer

The summer months have always been an excellent time for me to exercise both my mind and body in preparation for that hectic dash toward the end of the calendar year. During this time I find myself looking toward the future and reflecting on the past.

In May, I began my term as Board Chair for the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community (FCJC). I am enthusiastic, optimistic and a bit nervous about my new role. For the past three years FCJC has been led brilliantly by my friend, Alan Kronovet. Alan led us through a strategic planning process that clarifies FCJC's role as a collaborative leader in the effort to raise long-term charitable resources for the Charlotte Jewish community. Among the next steps in our strategic plan is to determine how to most effectively fulfill this role in collaboration with our community partners, both donors and all our Jewish nonprofit agencies.

Success ultimately requires that

we develop lifelong relationships with our community's donors, and understand their personal and unique philanthropic interests. This donor-driven approach will help foster a culture in which each individual in our community realizes his or her ability to make a difference. We can all be philanthropists. My wife, Lee, and I recently made that connection ourselves and have created a legacy gift to support our community, while also establishing a donor advised fund at the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish community.

A key piece of FCJC's mission is to be the long-term charitable giving resource for the Jewish agencies and organizations that serve the Greater Charlotte region. We understand the financial challenges facing our agency partners, such as funding operational expenses and meeting the growth needs of their members. Our focus is to help them to incorporate long-term philanthropic strategy to compliment their existing annual and capital giving plans. We are



here to help them help themselves.

As we balance our role with our community partners, donors and agencies alike, the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community will be well-positioned to match the philanthropic interests of our donors with both the long-term and short-term needs of our community. This paradigm shift to embracing long-term philanthropy will not take place overnight; it is, however, essential to meeting our community's future needs. ☆

Jeff Bierer is the current Board Chair for the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community. To learn more about FCJC and how you can create your own Jewish Legacy please contact Jeff at jeffrey.h.bierer@bankofamerica.com or Phil Warshauer, Executive Director, Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community at pwarshauer@charlottejewish-foundation.org or 704-973-4544.

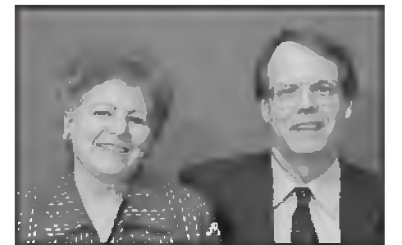
Welcoming Synagogue Triggers Lifetime of Giving

By Anita Strauss-LaRowe

Having been raised in a Conservative Jewish home, I never intended to intermarry. And considering that I did not date non-Jews, I thought I had that well under control. When Bruce, who grew up in a religious non-Jewish home, joined the staff at the same arts council where I worked, I considered him an interesting

and fun colleague, but nothing more. We worked together, and attended arts events together (strictly business, of course) and well, fate had a different path for us. I like to say that we never actually dated, we just got married.

When Bruce's career took us to Charlotte in 1983, I had to shake off my New York prejudices against the South. We had



Anita Strauss-LaRowe and Bruce LaRowe

agreed to keep a kosher home, and to raise our children in the Jewish faith. But I worried whether there would be a temple where Bruce would feel welcome, and where

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Hebrew Cemetery Association

By Lorrie Klemons, publicity Annual Memorial Service, October 2 at 10:30 AM

By the time you read this article the summer will be almost over. How did that happen? The older you get, the quicker life seems to fly by. We often hear the cliché "take the time to smell the roses." What does this really mean? It means to stop and take a moment to enjoy the beauty around you. The sights, the tastes, the sounds, the touches, and yes, the smells. And don't forget the people within that sensual experience, those in your life who add to the joy, and yes, sometimes even to the sorrow.

During the upcoming High Holiday season, it is our responsibility to do "teshuvah" - to return to a life of significance. As we prepare for and start reflecting on this very special time in our Jewish calendar, I challenge you to heed the shofar as it calls out to each one of us to do something significant in order to make the world a better place. Take the time out of your hectic busy schedule to appreciate the pleasures. Take the time to read a book to your

child, no matter how busy you might be. Take the time to visit a homebound friend or neighbor. Make a meal for an impoverished family. Be a big brother or sister or tutor to an underprivileged child. Send a get well card to a neighbor who is ailing. Make a phone call to a long lost friend. Write a check to a relief fund. Volunteer at a community agency that turns you on. Join the Hebrew Cemetery Association. It doesn't really matter what you do long as you do something in your quest for a meaningful life.

And that life for us Jews in Charlotte is so much better and more fulfilling because of the Jewish community that we have collectively built. One can't help but be so proud when driving into Shalom Park and seeing what we have accomplished. I beseech you to support the work of this very significant and meaningful community. The Hebrew Cemetery is a great place to start as it works to guarantee a holy and sanctified resting place for the children and adults who were the movers and shakers of our community. Come visit the cemetery. Bring your

children to introduce them to the Jewish traditions surrounding this journey of the soul. You will be pleasantly inspired by the holiness and yes, beauty and serenity, that you will encounter.

Call Cemetery Director Sandra Goldman at 704-576-1859 or 704-944-6854 or email her at director@hebrewcemetery.org to arrange for a private tour of the cemetery or for more information about donations, membership benefits, graves, prepaid funeral costs, endowments, and/or including the cemetery in your estate planning. In the meantime, visit the cemetery website at <http://www.hebrewcemetery.org>.

If you have already decided to leave money for the cemetery in your will, we would like to thank you in advance for your generous legacy and invite you to call Phil Warshauer, Executive Director of the Charlotte Jewish Foundation at 704-973-4544 or email him at pwarshauer@charlottejewish-foundation.org to find out how you can maximize that donation. If you have not yet considered such a gift, let Phil explain the process to you. ☆



Mazel Tov & Congratulations

Congratulations to **Russell Jampol** as he graduated with Honors from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore majoring in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering in May. Two weeks earlier Russell received the Johns Hopkins University Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Undergraduate Research Award.

