

## Reach Out, Reach In

By Sandra Goldman

When Jews settle in a community, what is the first thing they build? Not a synagogue and not a school. Not even a mikveh. A devout group of men, members of the Hebrew Benevolent Society, answered this question 145 years ago by purchasing eleven acres on Statesville Avenue. Today the Hebrew Cemetery is a vital and historical important part of the Greater Charlotte area. Every time someone visits these holy grounds, he or she leaves with a sense of belonging.

Going back in time, in Eastern Europe, the cemetery in Jewish culture was a site for numerous functions. People came to the cemetery not only to attend funerals but also to pray, or to seek the intervention (if a relative was ill, for example) or the blessing (the bride and groom before their wedding, for example) of the dead. On such occasions the visitors sometimes recited prayers expressing a close, personal connection to the departed. Cemeteries also sometimes functioned as indicators of identity, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries among secular Jews.

Nowadays, the community remembers once a year the loved ones who have passed away with the Annual Memorial Service between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Once a man approached me after the service to tell me how grateful he was that we were giving him the opportunity and a place to be on this special day. This brief encounter displays the unique ability our cemetery has to help community members to heal and embrace change.

This expression of gratitude explains how community outreach has long become an integral part of the cemetery's focus. It involves creating opportunities to celebrate cultures within our community. It allows us to reach out to the community at large while providing an opportunity for community to "reach in."

Encounters like the above mentioned are also reason why the Hebrew Cemetery has joined forces with the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community for Create Your Jewish Legacy (CJL). In order to celebrate lasting community relationships, we all can help establish a vision and create a path leading to a prosperous, sustainable future. Bequests or other planned gifts are an ideal means of creating significant endowment funds for the Hebrew Cemetery. They will keep our Jewish heritage strong for generations. Foundation executive director,



Phil Warshauer, explains: "As a community we have done an excellent job of building and renovating facilities that serve Jewish Charlotte. It is now time to focus our attention on building endowments to help sustain all that we have created. The CJL Initiative will teach us that deferred gifts such as bequests, life insurance, and retirement plans (IRA's and 401(k)s) can be incorporated into our current lifestyles. Through deferred giving, we can continue to give annually while establishing a lasting legacy to help sustain and perpetuate organizations like the Hebrew Cemetery."

Community outreach is educational and philanthropic. It has the ability to make a significant positive impact on everybody. The Hebrew Cemetery is ready to enter the next stage of its transformation and enhance services to respond – rather than react to – an ever-changing world. The vision and the forward thinking of the board have led to the groundbreaking of the new Memorial Building. The building will house the former ark of Temple Beth El, a family room to gather before or after services or unveilings, bathrooms, an office, and a maintenance room.

Soon commencement of parlor meetings will introduce the public to this magnificent and useful structure being constructed on the grounds of the cemetery. Building co-chairs Marc Silverman and Bill Gorelick will answer any questions which arise and show ways how each of us can become pillars for this significant Memorial Building. Marc Silverman stresses: "There is a time for every generation to improve their community, and to create a legacy. Now we are calling upon the community to fulfill everyone's responsibility. This will be a one time commitment in order to build the necessary amenities at the Hebrew Cemetery."

As Mr. Gorelick states: "We want a wonderful cemetery that will be the choice for all Jews."

To learn more about the new memorial building, pre-planning, or to arrange a personal tour of the cemetery, please contact Sandra Goldman by phone at 704-576-1859 or by email at [director@hebrewcemetery.org](mailto:director@hebrewcemetery.org). ☆



## CJL Inaugural Dinner: A Huge Success

By Nancy Kipnis, Create Your Jewish Legacy Coordinator

The Create Your Jewish Legacy initiative (CJL) of Charlotte has officially begun. The inaugural event on Wednesday night, August 29, included more than 60 people from the Charlotte Jewish community and Foundation For The Carolinas. The keynote speakers were Diane Azorsky, Associate Executive Director of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Kansas City and Don



Diane Azorsky of Kansas City shared her experience and success with Create Your Jewish Legacy.

Goldman, Executive Director and CEO of Jewish Family Services of Greater Kansas City. They shared their experiences and the successes of their program which since its inception in 2007 has secured more than \$33 million in deferred gifts to help support the Jewish causes in their area. More astounding was the fact that 69% of all legacy gifts came from people who gave less than \$500 per year to an organization.

CJL is an initiative of the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community (FCJC), in partnership with 10 participating community partner organizations to build a strong, vibrant community with bequests for permanent endowments. Our CJL program is modeled after successful programs already established in more than 30 cities including Kansas City, Hartford, St. Louis, San Diego, and Richmond.

Our Wednesday event was followed by a comprehensive day as our CJL partner organizations met individually for 45 minutes with our guests from Kansas City. This allowed each organization to engage in conversations more specific to the interests, needs, and concerns of their CJL team. Some of the recurring themes from these conversations were:

\* All of us, regardless of age, wealth, or affiliation, have the ability to make a difference for future Jewish generations.

\* Legacy gifts come from our accumulated assets and not disposable income.

\* Effective legacy giving programs have a positive effect on total giving.

\* One third of bequest donors include more than one charity in their estate plans.

\* They do not compete with but actually complement our annual campaigns.

Jewish tradition teaches that one of our key duties is to make the world a better place for future generations. The simple truth is without bequests and legacy giving we will not be prepared for the future needs of our community. It is essential that we plan ahead to keep our Jewish community



strong for the future. Chances are you already donate generously to the Jewish charitable organizations of your choice. But have you considered including those organizations in your will, or as a beneficiary of your IRA so you can continue to make a difference for generations to come? The Create Your Jewish Legacy initiative will give us the tools to start these important conversations in our community. I know we will be as successful as other communities who have ventured down this path already.

For more information on how you can Create Your Jewish Legacy please contact one of our Charlotte Jewish organizations or Nancy Kipnis at

the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community at 704-973-4554 or [Nkipnis@charlottejewishfoundation.org](mailto:Nkipnis@charlottejewishfoundation.org). ☆

### CJL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Charlotte Jewish Day School
- Charlotte Jewish Preschool
- Congregation Ohr HaTorah
- Foundation of Shalom Park
- Hebrew Cemetery Association
- Jewish Family Services
- Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte
- Levine Jewish Community Center
- Temple Beth El
- Temple Israel



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- Adam Bernstein and Tamar Seigel
- David and Janice Cantor
- David and Aleen Epstein
- Foundation For The Carolinas
- Meg Goldstein and Matthew Luftglass
- Bill and Patty Gorelick Family Foundation
- Shelton and Carol Gorelick
- Stan Greenspon
- Florence Jaffa
- Barry and Lorrie Klemons
- Alan Kronovet and Cary Bernstein
- Alison and Mark Lerner
- Harry and Gloria Lerner
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- The Leon Levine Foundation
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- Risa and David Miller
- Gale Osborne
- Richard J. Osborne
- Allan and Marcelle Oxman
- Mark and Harriett Perlin
- Lee and Diggie Pesakoff
- Marc and Mattye Silverman
- Louis Sinkoe and Kevin Levine
- The Blumenthal Foundation
- Mark and Amy Vitner

## The Race is On!



Sign up now to participate or volunteer for the 5k/1 Mile Friends Run on November 11.

[www.Friends-Run.com](http://www.Friends-Run.com)