

# The Sandra and Leon Levine Playground Dedication

By Elka Bernstein, director, CJP  
 April 28, CJP families celebrated Lag BaOmer by dedicating the Sandra and Leon Levine Playground. Even though it rained, 300 people joined together in The Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts for this joyous event.

The Sandra and Leon Levine Playground Dedication celebrated and thanked all who contributed to making this capital expansion happen. Parents, teachers, donors, CJP-PTO and CJP Board members all had an impact on the creation of this playground. While the children ate ice cream and enjoyed face painting, Brian Bernhardt and I thanked everyone for their contributions.

Lisa Blau, Amy Vitner, and Julie Rizzo served as the presidents of the CJP Board of Directors. Their vision and understanding of the needs for the school and young families provided support and guidance to starting and completing this project.

Steve Starr is a CJP parent alum, an architect, and a passionate advocate for the preschool and the Jewish Community. Steve not only gave his time and money, but donated the tremendous resources of his firm Tobin Starr to provide

professional guidance to this project.

As President and Executive Director of Temple Beth El, Rick Glaser and Sara Schreiber provided us with an incredible service by allowing our construction vehicles to trample their backyard for three months last summer, saving us tremendous time, energy, and money.

Bill Gorelick and Brian Bernhardt spent countless hours in his office, on the telephone, at lunch,

and in meetings talking about how to improve the playground. Bill has been involved in Shalom Park since before the Park actually existed. Bill's vision is embedded in every building, every footprint, of Shalom Park, and CJP was honored that he and his family chose to involve himself in this project. Rael Gorelick, Marcelle Oxman, and Todd Gorelick provided the lead gift for The Karro Playground which is used by our one and two year olds, in honor of

their grandparents, Elsie and Jack Karro.

Don and Bobbie Bernstein made the first major gift in support of the playground. Their willingness to invest in CJP encouraged all of us and helped us realize that we could make the dream playground a reality.

The CJP PTO represents all our parents who worked tirelessly for two years raising money to help fund the playground. We would not be the preschool we are without our parents and teachers.

The Levine JCC and specifically Phil Berman, Karen Maniloff, and David van Glish supported our vision from day one. Their leadership gift truly epitomizes the support that agencies on the Park have for each other.

Amy and Mark Vitner knew from the start how important this playground was for the future of CJP. When they saw that we planned to build an amphitheater for the entire Park to use, they immediately stepped up and asked to fund it. This amphitheater, the Amy and Mark Vitner Community Amphitheater, is a testament to their involvement in the Jewish community and their belief in communal nature of the play-



The four-year-olds sang during the dedication.

expect that The Sandra and Leon Levine Playground will inspire many generations of children to spend more time here at Shalom Park.

When the community around us said that CJP would never be able to raise the money for this playground, Brian Bernhardt, current CJP Board President, took this as a challenge. He made the impossible possible.

In addition to the lead donors and volunteers, we had over two hundred families contribute to the capital expansion project. With the support of these families, we were able to achieve success. The CJP and Shalom Park community truly made the Sandra and Leon Levine Playground a community gift that can give back for many years to come. ☆

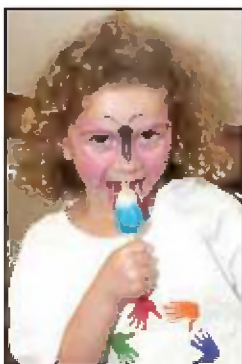
ground.

Larry Schwartz worked for months, providing advice, equipment, and a wonderful gift. We are proud to have had the opportunity to name the 3s, 4s, and 5s playground The Schwartz Playground in his honor.

None of this would have been possible without the help and support of the Leon Levine Foundation. The Foundation's challenge grant not only pushed us to do more, but also provided the critical funding we needed to take the playground from an idea to a reality. Larry Polsky at the Foundation provided help, advice, and support. We are thankful for his involvement and dedication. Sandra and Leon Levine have supported so many organizations in Charlotte, and we are so pleased that they chose to help CJP as well. We are happy to have the opportunity to name this playground in their honor, and we hope and



The back of the commemorative T-shirt from the dedication.



Nora Yesowitch enjoys a treat.



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