

## THE CHARLOTTE JEWISH NEWS

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### Editorials

by; Marvin Bienstock

## Hat Off — Hat On

It is a wonderfully strange experience to change titles while staying in the same building. For six years I have born the slings and arrows of outrageous plumbing and electrical systems, of mixed up room scheduling and parental concerns. Suddenly, on July 1 it all ended. My temptation to shout hooray was tempered by the loss of the close working contact I have had with so many marvelous people who "understood" the problems and worked to find solutions with me.

"I wouldn't have your job for anything!" I have heard that comment often in my 22 years of working in JCC's and sometimes I more than agreed. But, if I hadn't had my job I never would have shared the joyousness of a day camp filled with eager faces; I never would have come to understand patience and wisdom in the way only a CHAI group can teach these qualities; I never would have puffed with pride at a JCC swim team, tennis team, soccer team, basketball team. Most of all, I never would have known the intense pleasure of sharing and working for a cause with people I respect and like — the Board, committees, volunteers and members of the JCC!

When I look back over my six years "bed of roses" I can spot a thorn or two of my own creation. There are those I offended by acts of omission or of commission, who look right through me when we are in the same room. If I knew what to do to make amends I would do it.

And then there are the blossoms in the form of smiles and nods when I walk by, of shared memories of personal moments and ac-

## Of Time & Tithe

It was a plain little envelope with the familiar name of a prominent Charlottee Jewish family on it. It was addressed to me in care of the Federation and it said in part, "Enclosed is 10% of the money my son Joel received for his recent Bar Mitzvah. Joel wants to donate this money to help underprivileged or starving children."

It was no small sum of money. It would have bought an expensive bike or a drawer full of alligator-type clothes. Yet, here was the check, a startling symbol of Joel's passage into the world of adult responsibilities. Even more, it was fulfillment of a mitzvah — to tithe, to give the 10th part to the poor and the needy.

What prompted Joel to take such action? I can only guess that it was the result of knowing his Jewish obligations and having the commitment to fulfill them. A commitment which comes from strong and lovingly Jewish parents whose record of concern for others has inspired their children.

The money has been put to the use Joel wanted. There is less hunger in a child tonight and a special warmth in my heart tonight because of Joel Asrael.

## Across The Editors' Desks...

The Charlotte Jewish News has meant a great deal to me personally and religiously. Thank you very much.

Carolyn Henderson

When I picked up your May, issue and read *Have Yiddish-Will Travel*, I was spurred on to do something I've been putting off for a long time...that is, to let you all know how much my husband and I enjoy reading your paper. The articles are very good, and the news keeps us abreast of what is going on in the Charlotte Jewish community. I especially enjoy reading Muriel Levitt's *Random Thoughts*. She brings back fond memories of my own childhood in Baltimore. We are very fortunate to have this newspaper in our area.

The Yiddish troupe that visited Florence, S.C. delighted everyone who saw them. I have heard

nothing but good things about the entire afternoon's program and its performers. The young people there thoroughly enjoyed their Yiddish experience and got so much out of the program. Perhaps this exposure to Yiddish from time to time, as we are trying to do through our Adult Education series, may help keep the language alive in their lifetimes. I certainly hope so.

My husband joins me in wishing the very best to the Charlotte Yiddish Group for a successful future. I know they enjoy doing what they are doing because it comes through in their performance; but more than that, they are performing a mitzvah. Their idea of taking their programs to other areas is great...particularly into the small communities, where our cultural heritage could so easily be forgotten.

And to you...keep up the good work with *The Charlotte Jewish News!*

Sincerely,  
 Mrs. Sam Rogol  
 (formerly Bea Sodden)  
 Darlington, S.C.

I would like to share this letter I recently received with all of your readers.

Irving Mond

Dear Irving,

I am so grateful you took the time to come to Advent Lutheran Church with your daughter to share about the "Holocaust". With the rise of Nazism once again, it is terribly important to work on people's attitudes and to remind them of past failures.

The dialogue was neat and I hope

you might be able to interest your Rabbi in sharing worship with us. We need to know each other better in order for the world to know we are one under the rulership of Almighty God.

I share your concern about the use of the term "chosen", so often it leads to arrogance and bigotry.

In Judaism we find our roots. The person we call Messiah was a Jew. The better I might understand your religion and traditions, the better I will understand my identity as a Christian.

Thanks again for allowing yourself to become vulnerable by coming and sharing with us. May the worship we attended at Temple Beth El and Sunday evening's sharing be only a beginning.

Sincerely yours,  
 Bernard W. Hess, Pastor

## Thoughts From the Lubavitcher Rebbe

### Torah: The Beauty of the Elderly

by Rabbi Yossi Groner

In recent decades, there has developed a tendency to view age as a serious handicap. Anyone past sixty is liable to be considered "a bit past it" and family and "friends" explain that he isn't as young as he used to be and should start taking things easier.

Soon the older man starts getting subtle hints that he'd better consider retiring himself honorably now, before it will have to be done for him. This is especially evident if there's an ambitious younger person who is considered more capable and cheaper, too, starting out at a

lower salary. If the older man must be kept they'll do him the favor of giving him some minor niche in the company hierarchy, perhaps even asking his advice occasionally, but of course doing just the opposite.

When retirement age finally arrives, he has come to accept second class status as a fact of life. The popular view of old people as incompetent and useless has influenced him to the extent that he feels superfluous and a burden to those around him. This has a negative effect psychologically: he gets depressed and resentful, with resultant harmful effect on his physical health.

This attitude is justified in the

name of progress. As technology advances, and automation reduces the need for workers in many fields, some become superfluous and need to be laid off. What better than to retire those closest to retirement age, giving them the rare benefit of taking things easy even earlier than usual.

Most unfortunate is the fact that society thereby turns its back on the tremendous stock of hard-learned experience older people possess. They have been through various trials and tribulations, have learned ways of coping with many of life's toughest problems, and can be an invaluable source of sage counsel to younger people lacking this experience. This is true in the family and community; it is also true in business and industry. The older man has learned things the hard way: be built up the business, developed new methods, learned from his mistakes the correct course to get things done.

Such a priceless store of knowledge is acquired only over the course of many years. Here is a man well-qualified to train and advise younger colleagues, who has often experienced similar problems to those they are now encountering and learned how to utilize the situation to best advantage. By heeding his sound advice they can avoid costly mistakes.

But instead of utilizing this valuable asset to the full, instead of showing gratitude for his years of faithful service to the company and for training the younger workers and showing them the ropes, society now takes the misguided attitude that it is better to replace him with someone younger, who is often unfamiliar with the most elementary fundamentals of the job. Quality is sacrificed for the doubtful advantage of youth.

Younger men who share this attitude would be well-advised to consider the likely consequences. In the present century, trends, especially undesirable ones, tend to gain momentum more and more rapidly, just as jobs that used to take days and years can now be done in a fraction of the time. There is a strong possibility that those who are now young will be called old by the next generation — at least ten years earlier than the age at which they now consider their own predecessors old!

In fact this is alluded to in the Fifth Commandment: "Honor your father and mother so that your days may be lengthened upon the earth that the Lord your God gives you." If you want your own days lengthened, in respected and useful contribution to society, then honor and respect your own elders now.

One who is forced to retire, instead of wallowing in resentment, should reflect on the true reason for this having happened. The company's reasons are not important. There can be no doubt that the Creator, who guides and controls the world, has placed him in a situation where his extra leisure time may be utilized to the fullest. So, instead of burdening his mind with supervising his subordinates of flattering the directors, instead of racking his brains for ways to make more money or keep the business afloat on non-existent foundations, he can truly be his own boss and devote several hours a day of Torah study. Fortunately his health is still good, and he will probably find that his mind has mellowed over the years and that he understands subject matter better than would a younger person.

The main point of all this is to increase the Torah study among all Jews, particularly the elderly, and to foster a new approach towards old people who have unnecessarily been made to suffer, through no fault of their own, by the false modern attitude towards the aged.

