

THE CHARLOTTE JEWISH NEWS

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Editorial

Transportation for our older adults has been a serious problem for almost every organization and institution in the Jewish community. Most of us can easily drive to the supermarket to do the weekly shopping. If we need to see the doctor it's only a short trip by automobile. And when we wish to go to a movie or to a meeting who thinks twice about getting there. For many older adults who no longer drive a car these normal daily activities have become problems of major proportions.

Over the last year several possible solutions have been investigated. First, how about volunteer drivers? Attempts to arrange for volunteer drivers have mostly been a failure. People just don't have the time available and the expense of such driving continues to rise. Second, what about buying a van for the Jewish community and providing it as a service? Even at a low price of purchase the expense of buying and operating would come to over \$20,000 for the first year. That's a considerable amount of money in anyone's book. Third, what about somebody donating a van or other vehicle? It's not a bad idea if someone were interested in such a contribution. So far there are no takers. Fourth, doesn't the federal government have grants to buy vans for this purpose? Yes, but no agency in Mecklenburg County is able to apply for such a grant at this time because the County has not completed the federally required "county transportation plan." This plan will eventually be carried out once the County and State can agree on who will cover the cost of doing the study. It will then take approximately six months to a year to complete and then we can apply for the federal grant. The intricacy of the rules is a model of bureaucracy in action. Fifth, would it be possible to share van time with another local agency or group that has one at little or no cost besides operating expenses? This is probably our best option in terms of dollar cost and practicality.

The Charlotte Jewish Federation has expressed its concern about this problem and its willingness to be a part of the solution. The Blumenthal Jewish Home commissioned a study which indicated, among other things, that transportation was the number one problem of concern for the elderly in our community. With larger numbers of elderly and almost totally inadequate transportation resources in Charlotte our problem can only worsen. If you're feeling frustrated then you're experiencing a small part of what it's like to be without transportation for some of life's necessities. Transportation is a very concrete link which keeps people connected with the flow of community life and allows them to live in independence and with dignity.

Take a moment now to think about this issue, and then let me hear your reactions to it, c/o the Charlotte Jewish Federation Department of Social Services.

L. Louis Albert, ACSW

Across The Editors' Desks...

Congratulations

Dear Rita and Ann,

Mazel Tov on the third Public Relations Award of CJF. The two of you are doing a fine job, and we of the community are genuinely thankful to you.

Helen sends her warm greetings.

Shalom,
Harold I. Krantzler
 Rabbi, Temple Beth El

Good News!

I am pleased to report that the Argentinian government is showing signs of improvement and that several individuals who had been held for years without being charged, including Deborah Benshoam, have recently been released. (See December's "For the Record")

Norman Olshansky
 Regional Director ADL

For The Record

By **Norman Olshansky**
 Regional Director
 Anti-Defamation League

North Carolina/Virginia
 Regional Director Anti-Defamation League Of B'nai B'rith

As I entered the Christian Bookstore in Fayetteville, N.C., I immediately felt an atmosphere of calm and respect. Soft religious music was playing. About six customers were browsing among the racks. The place was clean and quiet, not unlike a library. You might ask what would take the Regional Director of ADL to a fundamentalist Christian bookstore? I had heard a rumor at a Fayetteville Ministerial Association meeting, where I was the guest speaker, that the store was carrying the Crusader Comics by Jack T. Chick, a notorious publisher of anti-Catholic and sometimes anti-Jewish "religious" materials.

It didn't take long before I found the rack of Chick Publications. There were at least 30 different items with titles such as King of Kings, The Passover Plot, Support

Your Local Jew, and Angel of Light. The most infamous, Alberto, was not on display. Alberto is a blatantly anti-Catholic publication which purports to be the true story of a Jesuit priest whose job it was to destroy Protestant churches. The material is so vile that the Canadian government has prohibited the book from Canada under a law which makes the distribution of hate materials illegal.

A new Chick Publication, which I had not previously seen, titled "My Name?...In the Vatican?", was on the rack. It is another follow-up to Alberto, claiming conspiratorial designs by the Vatican against every Protestant church in the world.

By innuendo, the story line leads one to believe that Hitler was acting under direct orders of the "holy office." The theme then identifies Dr. Alberto Rivera as "...an ex-Jesuit priest whose job it was to infiltrate and destroy Protestant churches." The authors claim that because they dare to publish his story that Satan would stop at nothing to kill its message. It goes on to

talk about how Christian bookstores have been threatened and that some have "held their ground and were willing to face the pressures...because they see it as one of the best soul winning books to win Catholics." The sequel to Alberto is a comic book titled Double Cross.

I asked the manager if she were familiar with Chick Publications. She admitted that she was aware of the controversy regarding Alberto and as a result did not have it on the rack. She said some wanted it and others didn't and that she is caught in the middle. When I pointed out that other anti-Catholic items were on the rack, she protested that she couldn't read everything that came into her store. I told her about the Canadian decision and not to my surprise, she knew all about it.

She went on to tell me of her interest in family values and concern about pornography. I asked how she could, at the same time, claim to be a good Christian and fight pornography on TV and in adult bookstores, if she were allowing lies and bigotry to be sold from her store. I told her she had so much other material in the store for customers to pick from, including good comics, that I wondered why she needed Chick Publications? She said she would talk to her husband indicating that she was not making any further commitments. When I left the store the atmosphere was no longer calm and I felt little respect.

Prejudice and bigotry are like a sickness. If you do not intervene it can grow like a cancer. To be silent or to ignore a problem is tantamount to acceptance. Whether its targets be blacks, Hispanics, Jews, Catholics or others, prejudice is something America can do without. If we truly "care" we must not only be concerned, but also respond.

For more information contact your regional ADL office at 3311 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230.



Facts About Jewish Law

1. What makes a male baby a Jew is not the bris, but his birth of a Jewish mother.

2. A boy becomes Bar Mitzvah not by being called up to the Torah for an aliya, but by living to be thirteen.*

3. Going through a wedding ceremony is not the only way to get married under

Jewish law. Living together will do it.

4. Having a Jewish funeral is not a necessary condition for achieving the world to come.

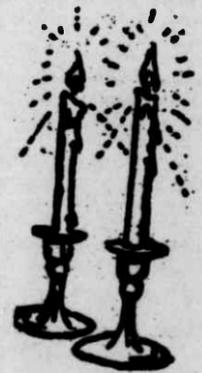
5. One does not have to have a rabbi at the bris, Bar Mitzvah ceremony, wedding, funeral, or at any Jewish service or ceremony. The rabbi's only religious function is to answer questions of Jewish law.

Saul Brenner

The Editors welcome comments and letters expressing all points of view and reserve the right to edit.

(Ed. note — if the boy is an orphan he becomes Bar Mitzvah at age 12)

The Jewish Calendar



Candlelighting

Jan. 1 — 5:22 p.m.
 Jan. 8 — 5:28 p.m.
 Jan. 15 — 5:35 p.m.
 Jan. 22 — 5:42 p.m.
 Jan. 29 — 5:42 p.m.