

Arthur's Place

By Rose Massachi

There's a bright-eyed man in Charlotte's Jewish community who for the past three years has been sharing his knowledge and love with the Hebrew Academy children each Thursday morning, rain or shine. He arrives at the school before 8 a.m., ready to greet the children and begin the weekly Torah reading.

Arthur Pressman, a Charlotte resident for over 30 years, loves people, especially children.

"I try to let all the kids take part in the service," he said recently, when asked to describe an average Thursday morning visit to the Academy. "For instance, one child opens the drapes to the holy ark, two children make the blessings, three have an aliyah each week, two hold the Torah, one ties the Torah, and one puts the crowns on. That way they all enjoy it more."

Arthur grew up in Providence, R.I., along with four brothers and two sisters. His wife, Frances, and he had a son and daughter, and in 1950 decided to move to Charlotte. Arthur went into business (National Wine & Beer Distributing Co.) with his brother Jake, until 1966. In 1967 he opened his own wine shop located across the street from Ivey's in downtown Charlotte.

In 1972 Arthur was notified that the building his shop occupied was to be demolished. One day two young men came into the store and offered to purchase the entire inventory from Arthur with plans to open a similar shop nearby. Arthur not only sold the inventory; he sold the shop's name with it... "Arthur's." These same men later opened the well-known restaurant and wine shop in Ivey's downtown named "Arthur's," which now has branches in Ivey's SouthPark, Eastland, Greensboro, NC and Greenville, SC. Arthur and his wife left Charlotte for awhile to enjoy their retirement.

Interfaith Service To Be Held

The annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews in cooperation with the Charlotte Area Clergy Association and various religious groups, will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 21, 7:30 p.m., at First Presbyterian Church, Church Street. The denominations participating are: Bahai, Friends, Lutheran, AME Zion, Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Jewish, Baptist, Unitarian, Methodist and Sufi. A reception will follow the service.

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Arthur Pressman
photo/B. Massachi

They returned when Frances became ill; she passed away in 1979. Frances had been very active in Temple Israel's Sisterhood and served a term as its president.

Arthur has also been a committed member of Temple Israel, where he is a regular participant in the daily minyan. He loves to sing and shares that love for music with members of the Temple choir. He is in charge of setting up the Sunday morning breakfast for the minyan.

When asked how he remains so young at heart he replied, "It's my attitude. I accept life the way it is. I think of others, not myself. I believe in Tzedaka and doing mitzvot. That's what keeps you alive. You can't live only for yourself. I have strong faith and a good sense of humor."

Arthur is truly loved by all of the children at the Academy. When they see his car parked at the school on Thursday mornings, smiles come to their faces.

One story he related, which he recalls as one of the funniest experiences he's had since joining the children at the Academy, occurred during the '83-'84 school year. "We were down at Temple Israel leading the Friday night service, sponsored by the Hebrew Academy. All of the kids were sitting down in the front of the sanctuary and Rabbi Rocklin was talking to the congregation. A kindergartner, Philip Berman, began talking and I went over to him and said, 'Shh...the Rabbi's talking.' Philip looked up and answered, 'He's not the Rabbi. You're the Rabbi!'"

The Hebrew Academy staff, parents, and especially the children are deeply grateful to this fine human being who gives so generously of himself. "When the kids are happy," Arthur says, "I'm happy."



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Nature Study

Hebrew Academy children have been involved in nature study. The beauty of nature in the Charlotte area is particularly accessible and understandable through tours given by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Recreation Department in the county parks.

The children went on two of these tours at McDowell Park. One was "Bugs, Bugs and More Bugs," the other, "Edible and Non-Edible Plants." The younger children learned to recognize and identify various types of insects and the older children learned to recognize a variety of plants which have been used in this area for medicinal and edible purposes.

First and second graders have been studying about animal environments in a veritable hands-on activity: After searching for an outdoors creature (such as worms, bugs, toads) near their homes, they built habitats for their new pets, did research about animal needs and habits, and wrote about their particular finds.

Third and fourth graders, as they study geographical relationships and symbols, are becoming more sensitive to local geography and learning to observe the environment more closely. Their experiences have included projects such as making a map of the route from their home to the school in order to notice such land differences as land contours, and making their own compasses, rain gauges or thermometers. The project culminated in an outdoor treasure hunt using map skills to find a treasure.

Volunteers

The Hebrew Academy invites volunteers to participate in its programs. In September, Coralia Lewy, mother of se-



Teacher Zeva London singing Rosh Hashanah songs with students.



Teacher Gail Burke shows children how to measure ingredients for Rosh Hashanah honey cake.

photos/Ben Massachi

cond grader, Dror, taught the children how to work with clay, fashioning objects for Rosh Hashanah.

If you have a talent or an interest which you would like to share with the children, please call Eleanor Weinglass at 366-3690.

A Rosh Hashanah Observation

Children in the fourth grade were studying about the Akedah (the binding of Isaac) for the holiday of Rosh Hashanah, and were asked to write the feelings of Abraham. An example:

If I were in Abraham's place I would be scared about killing my son. But God knows what He's doing, and I'm sure God

wouldn't want me to really kill my son. If he does, I'm sure it's for a good reason, because God told us never to kill or hurt somebody else even though they hurt you.

I'm still scared...my only son...my precious son...I wonder what my son is thinking...I wonder if he is scared or not...I wonder if he's asking questions, like me, to himself. Even though he's young, I wonder if he's asking himself where's the lamb...you see everything but the lamb...and wondering why he's tied up.

What should I do? Obey God or not? I know we should honor and have faith in God, but this is unusual. Maybe I should do what God says...it's for the best.

by Sloane Muller (4th grade)

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