

The Charlotte JEWISH NEWS

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Update: Soviet Jewry Resettlement

Plans have begun for resettling Soviet Jews in Charlotte. Bill Gorelick, Meg Goldstein and Dr. Jared Schwartz have agreed to chair the campaign portion for local resettlement as well as the campaign for Operation Exodus which funds resettlement in Israel. Penny Eisenberg has already begun coordinating volunteer recruitment, and Sally Schrader has been hired by the Federation, under the supervision of Jewish Family Services, to work with resettlement. A Community Coalition for Soviet Jewry, chaired by Bobbi Bernstein, has been formed to help mobilize and encourage a total communal effort to help meet the needs of the Soviet Jews fleeing to Israel and to the United States. The campaign for Operation Exodus (resettlement in Israel) and long-range funding for local resettlement will begin this fall. The

Charlotte community must raise close to \$1 million over the next three years to fund resettlement here and in Israel.

The Charlotte Jewish community in phase one must raise approximately \$100,000 for the resettlement of seven Soviet Jewish families in Charlotte. Two families will not receive any help from the U.S. government, while the remainder may be able to receive minimal assistance. Charlotte has accepted its responsibility and is responding with incredible enthusiasm and responsiveness. At this point in time, there is an effort to raise dollars for the local resettlement through parlor meetings and quiet solicitation leading up to a full program of reaching out to the entire Jewish community. The key to this effort is to understand the plight of the Soviet Jew and how we can really be a part of making Jewish

history.

Once Charlotte has completed its local resettlement and feels comfortable in its coffers being secure to participate locally for the next three to five years, we will then turn our attention during the fall of this year, to help Israel in its resettlement. As Federations are doing throughout the United States, there will be an effort to raise an additional \$220,000 above and beyond our regular campaign to help Jews resettle in the State of Israel. Funds must be made available to build housing, help with job retraining, teach language, and for the manifold complexity of acculturating into another society.

Everyone's cooperation is needed. We are concerned with saving lives. Anti-Semitism is growing in the Soviet Union with the rise in nationalism and the decline of the economy.

Conditions are very similar to those of the 1930s which preceded the Holocaust. If we really mean "Never Again!" we must put our words into positive action and give generously of our time and our financial resources. We need volunteers to provide transportation for appointments, shopping, school, religious and community activities; to help find employment; to help with tutoring English and to translate (must be fluent in

Russian). Thanks to Gil Portnoy and Fleetco, we now have storage space for the furniture and household goods we are collecting. We are just beginning; there is so much left to do.

Make a difference in this world. Don't wait to be called. To volunteer or for more information call Sally Schrader or Jewish Family Services, 364-6596/364-6594, or Penny Eisenberg, 847-4037, or The Charlotte Jewish Federation, 366-5007.

Yom Hashoa Program To be at Shalom Park



Painting by Ephraim

A special program for Yom Hashoa will be held at Shalom Park in Gorelick Hall on Sunday, April 22 at 7 p.m. It is being sponsored by The Jewish Community Center and The Charlotte Jewish Federation. "An Evening with Madame F." is a drama-with-music written and performed by pianist-singer-actress Claudia Stevens. This unique one-woman presentation is based on "Playing for Time," Fania Fenelon's account of her life as a musician at Auschwitz, where she performed and arranged music in order to survive. Performer Claudia Stevens, whose amazing versatility mirrors that of Fenelon, recreates the unimaginable horror of Auschwitz and the courage of its inmates. She plays and sings pieces actually performed by the musicians of Auschwitz, including songs of faith and resistance, from a score developed for her by composer Fred Cohen.

In her distinguished performance career, Claudia Stevens has been presented in recitals at Carnegie Recital Hall and by the Community Concert Association, performing throughout the

United States as well as in Europe and Israel. She has recorded for Perspectives of New Music and National Public Radio.

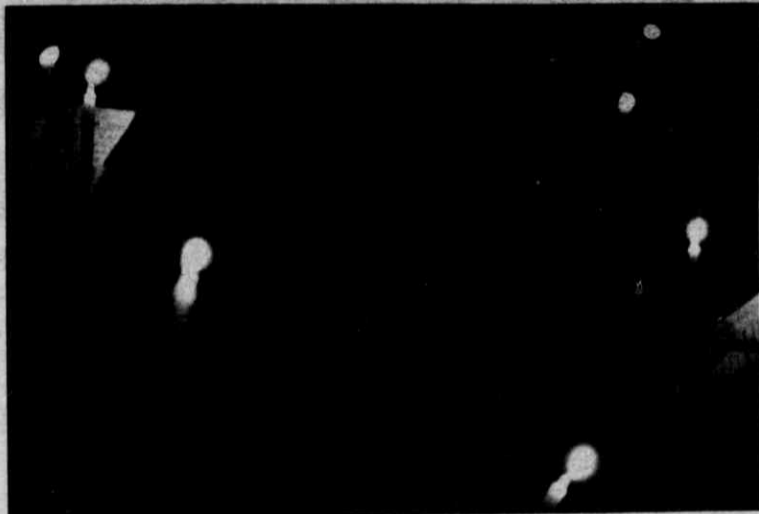
There is no charge for this presentation and it will be followed by dessert.

Prior to the actual performance there will be a memorial candlelighting ceremony for the 11 million who perished during the Holocaust...6 million Jews and 5 million others. Six candles will be lit by second and third generations of Holocaust survivors and the remaining five by the liberators and righteous gentiles.

Special arrangements, through the Charlotte members of the NC State Holocaust Commission: Dr. Susan Cernyak-Spatz, Celia Scher, Irving Mond and Henry Hirschmann, have been made for a display of memorabilia and posters of the Holocaust. These will be in the Speizman Galleries April 1-30. Included in the display will be photos taken by James Todd, an Army liberator who resides in Cherryville, and actual Battalion Books donated by James Shrum, another liberator, who lives in Lincolnton. School children, church groups and the general public are invited to view these and also special slide presentations. If your group or class would like to come, please call Irving Mond, 366-6632 or Scott Snyder, 366-5007.

A Look Back: "Ripples in Time"

On Monday, April 16 at 10 p.m., WTVI-42 will rebroadcast a locally-produced hour-long documentary, *Ripples In Time*, which profiles a number of people in the Charlotte area with various connections to the Holocaust of World War II. The project was supported with major funding from the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust, Royal Insurance Company and The Charlotte Observer. Producer/director Stuart Graseberg wrote this account of his experience during the production of the program.



In memory of Kristallnacht.

The elderly man spoke with a heavy Polish accent, but his passion and emotion came through. "With my brother, we used to talk about it — sometimes we'd say, 'Maybe this was a dream, maybe it's not true. How could we live like this?' But we did."

For Isaac Lepek, the memories of his months and years in Hitler's concentration camps may have seemed like a dream. But as he spoke, the look in his eyes revealed a frightening reality. Isaac survived. Eleven and one-half million people, nearly one-quarter of World War II casualties, died of starvation, disease, physical abuse and poison gas. Of those more than

11 million, six million were Jews. The rest were Christians, intellectuals, Gypsies, the mentally ill, and any other minority the Nazis deemed to be undesirable. We have all heard the statistics of the number of deaths in the Holocaust, but what do we hear of those who survived?

We began work on *Ripples In Time* the summer of 1988, when associate producer Sandra Barley and I sent out questionnaires to a number of people on a list provided by the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust. Through responses and other word-of-mouth connections, we culled the list down to nine. Before production began, we

talked with each person several times in an effort to get to know the individual. In the process, and in varying degrees, each one began to relax. By the time we rolled video tape, they opened up and shared their stories.

For some it was difficult, having not spoken about their experiences for over 40 years. As the world was licking its wounds from the devastation of World War II, survivors and liberators were told to "forget," to go on with their lives. Indeed, it is apparent that people often do not want to hear of the horrors of the camps — and a growing number even deny that the

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