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The Charlotte JEWISH NEWS

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August 1993

Temple Beth El Has New Rabbi

By Cindy Crane

On August 10, Rabbi James M. (Jim) Bennett becomes the new spiritual leader of Temple Beth El. Chosen from over 40 candidates recommended by the UAHC, he comes to Beth El with the unanimous support of the Rabbi Search Committee, the Board of Directors and the congregation.

Michael Gold, president of Temple Beth El, says of him, "He is exactly what we were looking for in a rabbi. He's bright, he's warm, he's committed to our congregation, and he can sing. The search committee did their work meticulously and they found the right person for us."

Rabbi Bennett graduated "with distinction," Phi Beta Kappa, from Indiana University in 1979 with a major in economics. In 1984 he received his ordination from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, where he was also awarded the Gittelsohn Prize in Education and Human Relations. Among other honors, in 1991 he won the Council of Jewish Federations Rabbinical Award. He comes to Temple Beth El from Congregation Shaare Emeth in St. Louis, Missouri where he has been serving since 1984, first as Assistant and then as Associate Rabbi. His work at Shaare Emeth, a congregation of nearly 1900 families, offered him the opportunity to experience all aspects of the rabbinate, including a six-month tenure as Acting Senior Rabbi.

He is active in civic and Jewish organizations, both at the local and national level. However, education and counseling are his special gifts. At Congregation Shaare Emeth his youth group became the largest in the nine state region, and attendance at the regional UAHC camp skyrocketed. Although he enjoys a special rapport with children and teens, he is committed to Jewish



(L to R) Abigail, Rabbi Bennett, Ethan and Amy.

education as a lifelong endeavor, and to Jewish outreach as a key to reaching unaffiliated Jews and improving relations with the community at large.

In his personal life, Rabbi Bennett is the busy father of two young children, Abigail, 3, and Ethan, 1. His wife, Amy, busy at home with the children, also freelances as a graphic artist. Born in St. Louis, she graduated from the University of Kansas with a B.F.A. in graphic design. They have been married for four and a half years.

Earlier this year, my husband, David Crane, and Mattye Silverman, both of the search committee, went to St. Louis to meet

with his current congregants. People of all ages spoke of Rabbi Bennett's exceptional intelligence and warmth. He has been a beloved rabbi there for many years, and they will miss him.

While it will be difficult for him to leave St. Louis where he and Amy have so many friendships and connections, he says he is looking forward to being the sole rabbi at Temple Beth El, where it is still possible to know all the congregants and where the entire rabbinical responsibility will be in his own hands.

Please join Temple Beth El in welcoming Rabbi and Amy Bennett to Charlotte.

Federation Welcomes New Staff Associate

By Rita Mond

It is with mixed emotions that the Federation is saying goodbye to Pam Appelbaum who has been a staff associate for over three years. She was a tremendous asset to the JFGC and we will miss her. Pam will be living in Charleston, SC where she is getting married on Labor Day weekend to Dr. Lee Krapin. Lee is a neurologist at the Naval Hospital in Charleston. We wish her much happiness and success.

The new staff associate who began working in that capacity last month is Audrey Krakovitz. Audrey comes to Charlotte from Gainesville, Florida where she was the program director at the University of Florida Hillel, a position which she held since 1990.

Audrey has been married to Michel Avshalom for the past six and a half years and they have one son Ra'anana, 10-months-old. She is a midwesterner, having been born in Indianapolis, Indiana. From 1986 to 1988 she worked in an Indianapolis Jewish Nursing Home. Audrey received a BA in Psychology/Jewish Studies from Indiana University and an MA in Jewish Communal Ser-



Audrey Krakovitz

vice from Brandeis University.

When asked about some of her "favorite things" she confessed to being a "chocolate freak" and that she loves traveling and being in Israel. She also enjoys nature walks (her walks to the office will be short, as the family is living in the house on Jefferson which was formerly occupied by the offices of Temple Beth El while they were building their new temple). She enjoys reading and said that the last book she read was *The Joy Luck Club*. Her all-time favorite movie is *The Sound of Music*.

If you are passing by the Federation office, why not stop by and say hello to Audrey...you'll enjoy meeting her.

Teen Editor Joins *The CJN*

By Cynthia Chapman

New with this issue of *The Charlotte Jewish News* is the addition of Alan Shulimson as the Teen Editor. The Executive Board of *The CJN* wanted to bring a young adult on board as a link to the younger members of our Charlotte Jewish community. Alan will be contributing articles about youth news and organizations, as well as material of interest for youth. Alan comes to the position with high recommendations regarding his involvement with other Jewish teens and his interest in writing.

Alan is a rising senior at East Mecklenburg High School. His father is Michael Shulimson. Alan plays soccer and tennis. He enjoys being involved with BBYO and he hopes to get into USY next year.

I asked Alan several questions about himself as a way of intro-

See TEEN page 23



Shulimson

Interfaith Outreach Committee Develops Survey

The Interfaith Outreach Committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (JFGC) is distributing a survey to the entire Jewish community this month to determine attitudes about interfaith relationships, as well as interests and needs of interfaith couples and their families.

When the results are tabulated, arrangements will be made for the most popular classes and workshops to be offered either by the temples, the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family Services, the Carolina Agency for Jewish Education, or other appropriate organizations.

Ruth Goldberg and Resa Goldberg were asked to cochair the Interfaith Outreach Committee by the Community Services Board of the JFGC.

The mission of the newly-developed committee is to help interfaith couples and their families feel comfortable in the Jewish community.

Other members of the committee are: Betty and Joel Cohen, Cindy and David Crane, Mandy and Larry Horowitz, Melissa and Scott Cooper, Jonathan Goldberg and Adrienne Rosenberg.

— Resa Goldberg



Resa Goldberg

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Jews by Choice Column Debuts in *CJN*

A new feature column comes to the readers of our newspaper this month. Each month we will be sharing with you a column by Mary Hofmann. Mrs. Hofmann and her husband are both Jews by Choice who are raising their children as Jews. Her column appears regularly in *The Jewish Post and Opinion*. Through the efforts of *CJN*

Executive Board cochairperson Rosalind Taranto, Mrs. Hofmann has given us permission to run some of her previous columns. We hope these will bring a new perspective to our readers. Your comments are welcome. Mrs. Hofmann's address is included at her request; she likes to hear from her readers. The column appears on page 7.