



# The Charlotte JEWISH NEWS

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## — Hear The Lions Roar —

By Bobbi Bernstein

On Monday, Oct. 4, 1,100 Jewish women from across the country, Mexico and Canada gathered in Washington, DC to attend the 1st National Women's Division Lion of Judah Conference. I was privileged to be among them, and it was an experience so special that I would like to share it with you.

The conference invitation (which arrived in July) promised "an extraordinary, energizing experience in our nation's capital celebrating the empowerment of The American Jewish Woman," and the response was overwhelming. They expected 400 women, limited it to 800, and overflowed to 1,100 women in a matter of weeks! The excitement generated was palpable and the conference did indeed live up to its promise.

It provided a rare opportunity to participate in the most exciting programs ranging from an opening session with Marion Wright Edelman, head of the Children's Defense Fund, to a major plenary on the peace process with an expert panel including one of the highest ranking Palestinian leaders involved in the Israel/PLO peace agreement, along with Middle East professors and state department officials.

We had a surprise visit by Crown Prince Hussein of Jordan as well as a keynote address by His Excellency, Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States.

The conference hosted a reception honoring the new members of the House of Representatives but by far, the most exciting event was the tribute to the women of the United States Senate. All seven United States women Senators were presented and took part in an historic first time panel discussion. They had never before been together on one dais, at one time, and were frankly amazed that the conference coordinators were able to pull it off. Ann Rubinstein (formerly of NBC nightly news) moderated this exciting panel, and we came away feeling so proud of these bright, articulate women who have dared to make a difference in the U.S. Senate.

None of us forgot, for one moment, why we came to Washington as we toured the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and became witnesses, once again, to the horrors of our past. We had been given extended hours at the Museum and had the freedom to take as much time as needed to see, and learn, and listen. It was wonderful to share this experience with other Jewish women who understood our tears as we listened to the heartfelt stories of the survivors. Following the tour, we were addressed by Michael Beren-



Carole Solomon, chair of UJA's National Women's Division, presenting gift to Marian Wright Edelman, president, Children's Defense Fund, (R) at Lion of Judah Conference in Washington, D.C. photo/Robert A. Cumins

baum, the project director of the Museum and Gerda Klein, Holocaust survivor and author. It is hard to describe the emotional impact of listening to Gerda Klein describe her feelings as she walks through this memory of

her past and the message of hope she brings to all of us about the future. Gerda Klein's two adult children, along with several other children of survivors, led

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## JCC Presents Annual Gala: "A Night in Venice"

December 11 is the date for the Jewish Community Center's elegant "Night in Venice." This annual Gala will be bigger and better than last year's which still has people talking about the great time they had.

Chairing this spectacular event is Jill Newman who is being assisted by Sue Ades and Linda Goldsmith, ticket co-chairs; Paul Edelstein and Mike Van Glish, auction chairs; Paula Musler and Elaine Schefflin, catering chairs. Many volunteers will be helping to ensure that every detail will be taken care of to enhance the evening and guarantee a good time for all.

The Gala will begin with both silent and live auctions. Gifts for the auction have already started pouring in. You'll be able to bid on a wide array of exciting items ranging from theater and sports tickets to luxurious jewels and trips to far away places. Plan to arrive at 7:30 p.m. so you don't miss the chance to bid on the gift of your dreams.

When the auction ends, danc-



Jill Newman

ing and feasting begin. The sumptuous Italian dinner will have something for everyone's taste. You'll be able to dance the night away to the music of "Easy Street." Don't be surprised if you recognize one or two of the band members; both Dr. Peter Katz and Dr. James Bedrick are part of this talented combo.

Don't miss out on this terrific evening. Tickets are only \$125 per couple. To make a reservation, donate auction items, or for more information contact the JCC at 366-5007.

## Jack Wexler Honored

By Debbie Maslov

Jack Wexler, owner and director of the Family Computer Center, Inc., was awarded the Business Friends and Child Advocate Award for North Carolina from the Council for Children, at the Adam's Mark on Oct. 14. The Family Computer Center, Inc. (FCC) was one of several nominations from the state of North Carolina and along with Duke Power was one of two businesses to receive this award.



Jack Wexler

The FCC was established in 1988 with the mission to "provide an environment where children could increase their computer knowledge and realize that the computer is a tool that can improve and assist their overall learning capabilities."

The Center started at the Charlotte Jewish Community Center with only 21 students and in 1993 ended with 180 kids attending the camp. There are now 4 additional locations: Nashville, Kansas City, Pittsburgh and Memphis.

The FCC has supported and participated in numerous com-

munity projects dedicated to helping children through creative and educational programs. It has shown its support extensively through volunteering for Springfest, offering free classes for special needs groups who use the computer center and providing scholarships to children for computer camp.

Jack opened the doors that opened the minds of hundreds of school aged children who eagerly embraced social studies, geography and world history. He conceived the idea of hosting a county wide contest proving that every child can learn and be a winner, thereby creating The Carmen Sandiego Day Contest for Mecklenburg County. "Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?" a computer software program, became a contest that any fourth through sixth grader in Mecklenburg County, regardless of race, creed or religion, could participate in at no charge. It took five months and thousands of hours of dedication to coordinate this event

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—UJA Press Photo Service

Kristallnacht. The Night of Shattered Glass. November 10, 1939 is a date that is symbolic to the Jewish people. While Nazi Germany had already set in place many restrictions for Jews, Kristallnacht was a violent omen of things to come. It was a time shocking to many Jews because of the unconcealed hatred and violence it displayed. Jewish homes, stores and synagogues were vandalized in Nazi Germany and Austria on that night.

Kristallnacht is a time to remember, so it can never be repeated. Join us at the Jewish Community Center for a Kristallnacht Memorial Service on Nov. 10 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call the JCC, 366-5007.

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