

Volunteer of the Month

By Linda Levy

Ida Berman

Ida Berman describes herself as a "compulsive volunteer." "When I retired two years ago, I was concerned that I would have nothing to do, so I began offering to help out at Jewish Family Services. There's so much that needs to be done, that having nothing to do has never been a problem," she laughed.

This behind-the-scenes quiet volunteer was almost reluctant to talk about her activities. "Isn't that

what friends are for, to help where needed?" she asked.

And help she does — in various capacities. However, if one were to prioritize Ida's volunteer activities, the one that comes to the forefront is her participation in the Regional AIDS Interfaith Network (RAIN) through Temple Israel. RAIN volunteers from a number of Charlotte's religious institutions have a RAIN "partner" — an AIDS patient, whom they take out to dine in restaurants and to movies and entertain in the best way possible — through companionship.

Ida explained that through the

ten or so members of Temple Israel's RAIN team, their special partner is contacted almost daily. "The problem," Ida sadly noted, "is that you get very attached to your special AIDS person . . ." She asks that anyone interested in volunteering for this most worthy project call Rabbi Ezring at 362-3806.

Another of Ida's volunteer projects is serving as a JFS driver for those without transportation, taking them to doctors, dentists, shopping and wherever they need to go. "Transportation is a big problem in this community," Ida

said. "I'm on call — if I'm needed and available, I'll go!"

Volunteerism extends through the generations in Ida's family. Her daughter Jenny Rosenthal helps out at Hope Haven — a halfway house for recovering drug addicts. Son-in-law Rich Rosenthal helped build a home in the Habitat for Humanity project. "He does things for people all the time but never gets in the news," Ida exclaimed. Even twelve-year-old granddaughter Abby is in the volunteer mode, helping her mom in various capacities, including serving supper to the homeless.



Ida Berman

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Featured will be guest lecturer Ruth Barlas and performing artists Zalmen Mlotek and Robert Abelson, all returning by popular request.

If you would like to be placed on the mailing list, please send your name and address to:

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