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The End of an Era? Board of Directors Study Feasibility of Selling Blumenthal Jewish Home

By Susan Kramer

35 years ago, Carolina Jewish elders in need of care had little choice. They could stay at home with relatives or go to a facility that, very often, had no means of providing a Jewish component to their daily lives. No kosher food, no Shabbat services, no Jewish communal activities. All that changed when the Carolina Association for Jewish Women came to see I. D. Blumenthal and pointed out the problem.

With his usual can-do spirit, the noted Jewish philanthropist started

looking for a location and funds to rectify the lack of a facility for Jewish elders. He found both and the North Carolina Jewish Home for the Aged was born on the grounds of the Lassiter estate in Clemmons, North Carolina. At that time, the location of the beautiful estate on the banks of the Yadkin River was considered central to the Jewish population of both North and South Carolina. For the next 30 years, the home went about its mission of meeting the needs of the Jewish elderly of

both states. (In July of 1978, the home was renamed the Blumenthal Jewish Home in honor of I.D. Blumenthal.) Now, although the needs of the Jewish elderly are just as great, the shift in population centers and economic and financial concerns associated with the continually changing health care environment has created a dilemma for the Board of Directors of the Blumenthal Jewish Home.

According to Audrey Madans, President of the Board, the very location has become a problem. Although the 134-bed nursing facility is at 92% occupancy, the Jewish population of the home is dwindling and the Blumenthal Jewish Home could very well, in the foreseeable future, have no Jewish residents at all. "With the explosion in the number of nursing homes and other alternative care options now available in Charlotte, Raleigh,

Greensboro and other cities around the two states, families are choosing to place their loved ones in facilities closer to home. It's no longer feasible to have your father or mother 2 hours away when homes with Jewish accommodations are available right around the corner."

Moreover, the advent of managed care and the changes in the laws governing Medicaid finds the future of the nursing home industry in flux. "No one is quite sure how these changes will impact the industry in general and the Blumenthal Jewish Home in particular," states Madans. For several years, the Board has recognized that change was imminent and necessary. In February of this year, a committee was formed to look into possible solutions that had been proposed and explored in recent years. In April, at an Executive Board meeting, the committee presented its recommendation: the Board should look into the feasibility of selling the home and investing the proceeds of the sale into a foundation that would be formed to continue the mission of the



Audrey Madans, President of the Blumenthal Jewish Home Board of Directors

Blumenthal Jewish Home. In May, at a full Board Retreat, the recommendation was endorsed by a unanimous vote.

"But," states Madans emphatically, "There is no reason to panic. The feasibility of selling the Clemmons facility will take time to investigate, study and evaluate. It's likely that there will be no change in the quality of care or Jewish ambiance of the Blumenthal Home. We will be very careful in choosing who we will be dealing with — they will be scrutinized closely to make sure they meet the requirements and standards that we have always maintained at the Home." In fact,

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The Blumenthal Jewish Home in Clemmons, North Carolina

Like a Maccabee Charlotte Area Athletes Gear Up for the 1997 Maccabi Games

Excitement is mounting as Charlotte prepares to send a cadre of talented young athletes to the 1997 JCC Maccabi Youth Games in Sarasota, Florida in August. According to Steve Coen, co-chair of the Charlotte JCC Maccabi Youth Games Committee, 35 youngsters have been chosen to represent the JCC in events ranging from basketball to swimming. "It is an overwhelming experience," comments Coen, who attended the St. Louis Regional games last year with the Charlotte athletes. "It's not just about the competition, it's about the camaraderie and Jewish connections that the athletes experience."

Indeed, the goal of the JCC Maccabi Youth Games is to contribute to the enrichment of Jewish identity and the development of democratic values and leadership, providing a point of entry into the organized

Jewish community. The JCC Maccabi Youth Games are the most recent offspring of a proud tradition of Jewish amateur sports. The Maccabi Movement was founded in 1895 when the first all-Jewish sports club was organized and in 1932 the first Maccabiah Games were held. Maccabiah Games have been held every four years in Israel as a two week international competition, and have consistently attracted the cream of Jewish athletes, many of whom have achieved fame in the Olympics, most notably Mark Spitz and Mitch Gaylord.

The Maccabi Youth Games has existed for many years in Israel, Europe and South America. In 1982, the concept of the Games was brought to North America when the JCC of Memphis, Tennessee hosted the first Games.

The JCC Maccabi Youth Games have grown in both size and sophistication since its



inception. Every year, 6 to 8 cities around the US host regional games with venues in basketball, swimming, tennis, track and field, bowling and even ping pong. The Maccabi Youth Games in Sarasota will draw young athletes from across the region with over 400 youth expected to participate.

This is the third year that Charlotte has sent athletes to the Junior Maccabi Games. Charlotte first participated in the Orlando Regional games in 1995, and last year sent over 30 athletes to the Continental Games in St. Louis.

The Charlotte JCC Maccabi Youth Games Committee lobbied successfully to host the 1998 Games, and plans are in the works now to make the August, 1998 event a successful community

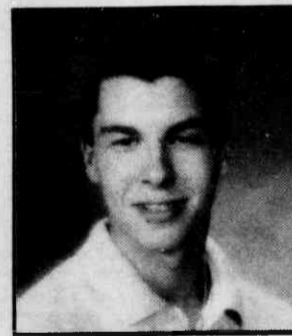
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Two Local Athletes to Compete in 15th World Maccabiah Games in Israel

Two local youths have won spots in the World Maccabiah Games to be held in Israel in July. Brett Golembe of Charlotte is one of 12 athletes selected to play on the 1997 Junior Maccabi USA Basketball team. Ilana Kalvadlo has been selected to be a member of the United States open swim team, her second Maccabiah Games in 4 years. The Games are held every 4 years in Israel and are recognized by the International Olympic Committee.

The Maccabiah is not only about athletics. It is also a cultural and educational experience, with athletes having the opportunity to tour historic sites in Israel, participate in seminars, and experience the culture of the people. More than 5,600 Jewish athletes from over 50 countries are expected to participate in the 15th Maccabiah in July.

Brett, son of Trish and Barry Golembe, traveled with his father



Brett Golembe



Ilana Kalvadlo

to New Jersey in March for tryouts, which were also held in Los Angeles and Chicago. Of approximately 150 athletes trying out, 12 were selected for the team.

Brett began his basketball career at the JCC 10 years ago when he was 6 years old. Since then he has also played on teams for SouthPark League, Providence Day School, Summer League, and AAU. Last summer

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