

# My Voice . . .

By Susan Kramer

There's a weekly newspaper in Charlotte that has one of the catchiest mottos around. This is a paper whose editorial staff is, to say the least, not afraid to take a stand. In addition, the paper is distributed free-of-charge to the public.

Their motto, "The newspaper that can't be bought," is a nice little play on words. It's also an amazing feat. I know — because I now see first hand just how expensive it is to produce a newspaper.

The *Charlotte Jewish News* doesn't just appear in your mailbox, you know. There's a large group of people who come together each month to produce what has been, for almost twenty years, the voice of the Charlotte Jewish Community.

A lot of these people are volunteers and the generous gift of their time and efforts are certainly invaluable. But there are "hard costs" to producing a newspaper of the size and quality of the *CJN* — costs with which I am becoming intimately familiar.

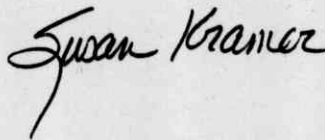
There are staff salaries, administrative costs, design and prepress expenses, printing costs, mailing expenses — as you can see, the "free" *CJN* is really quite an expensive proposition. We try to pay our own way by selling advertising space, but sometimes there are shortfalls, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte supports us when our "income" doesn't match our "outgo."

And that of course, brings me to the point of my article. At the bottom of this page, you will find a "voluntary subscription" form. In the past, the Board of the *Charlotte Jewish News* has asked that you show your support of our efforts by taking a voluntary subscription to the paper. Many of you responded generously. Now it's time to renew those subscriptions, and if you've never "subscribed" to the *CJN*, today's the day.

Will you continue to receive the *CJN* if you don't respond? Of course you will. Will the Federation continue to support us

if we spill some red ink? Of course they will. But we hope that, just as you have over the years relied on the *CJN* for your news about the Federation, the JCC's programming, happenings at the Temples, community events, simchas and celebrations, the *CJN* can now rely on you to demonstrate your support. A generous donation from you will enable us to continue to improve the quality and quantity of Jewish news available to you in Charlotte. The *CJN* will continue to be — just like our sister publication — a paper that can't be bought. With your support, however, we will also be able to continue our tradition of becoming better and better — and that's something that really can't be bought!

Shalom,



## The End of an Era? (Continued from page 1)

as Madans points out, the whole process of the sale could take a year or more and until that time, the Board will remain firmly in control, continuing to provide quality care to the BJH residents.

"We are hoping to find a buyer that will enable the staff and all of the residents to remain in place. Until that time, we will continue to

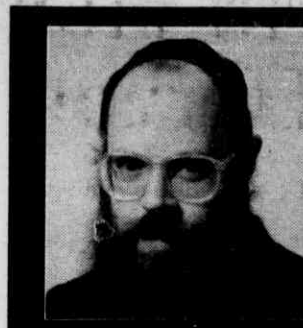
operate as we always have. Financially, the Home is very sound. Money is not the problem at the present time. The Blumenthal Home must, however, remain a viable institution that will continue to provide quality care for future generations."

When asked if selling the Home marks the end of an era, Madans

quickly replies, "Oh no — it's just the beginning. With the creation of a foundation, a whole new set of services will be available to the Jewish elderly population of the Carolinas. We will be able to reach so many more Jewish families." When pressed for details of how the yet to be set up foundation might accomplish that, Madans replies with a chuckle. "Oh, all that is still to be ironed out — that will be a whole new set of committees!" The physical location of the foundation offices, funding, even the name of the foundation are yet to be determined. But Madans wants to get the word out: the mission of the Blumenthal Jewish Home will never change. "The Jewish elders of North and South Carolina are still our number one priority. The foundation's initial responsibility will be to see that current Blumenthal residents continue to receive care comparable to what they are now receiving." ☆

**The Charlotte Jewish News**  
 5007 Providence Road - Charlotte, NC 28226  
**Office Hours**  
 Tuesdays 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM  
 Thursdays 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM  
**Phone**  
*(voice mail after office hours)*  
 Office 366-5007 ext 268  
 FAX 704 365-4507  
 E-Mail: skramer@vnet.net  
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### Point of View

Each issue of the *CJN* features an article written by one of three rabbis active in the Charlotte Community.

*This Month:*  
 Rabbi Yossi Groner  
 of Lubavitch of NC

## Judaism is a Religion of Commitment

During this month of June (the 11th - 12th) we celebrate the festival of Shavuoth, which marks the anniversary of the giving of the Torah by G-d to the Jewish people at Mt. Sinai, 3309 years ago.

Shavuoth is the Hebrew word for weeks. This refers to the seven weeks of counting the Omer which begins on the second night of Passover. Our sages explain that the counting represents the original counting of the days by the Israelites, from the first day of freedom to the day on which they received the Torah, which was seven weeks later.

One of the customs practiced on Shavuoth is to feast on dairy foods. Cheesecake and cheese blintzes have long been associated with the festival of Shavuoth. Though traditionally meat is eaten on the festivals, Shavuoth is different as it emphasizes dairy foods.

One of the reasons for the dairy foods on Shavuoth is that this was the first step the Jews took. By keeping kosher, they made a commitment to G-d to adhere to the Torah and its commandments.

The Torah states that when Moses approached the Israelites to tell them about the Torah, the people responded with the following reply, "All that G-d will say, we will do."

There were no review committees or study commissions. There was a unanimous response in the affirmative. The midrash expounds this point; if even one Israelite would have replied in the negative, the Torah would not have been given.

This commitment from all Jewish people was real and everlasting. This commitment has been proven each and every day of each generation. Today the commitment continues to thrive as Jewish parents transmit the Torah heritage as they educate their children in the teachings of the Torah.

This is why Judaism lasted, endured and survived throughout the most trying challenges in history.

On Shavuoth when we enjoy our freshly baked cheesecake and blintzes, we also remember the commitment our ancestors made to G-d, to the Torah and its commandments.

For it was on Shavuoth that the Jews demonstrated their commitment to G-d by accepting the newly taught laws of kosher. The Jews refrained from eating meat until they were trained in the laws of kosher.

On Shavuoth, we reflect on the meaning of our commitment. Commitment means that we analyze our obligations as Jews and resolve to meet them in the best possible way.

Commitment means that we make Judaism our priority. Commitment means we study the Torah and practice its precepts and make it the focal point of our life.

Commitment means that we will learn to cherish our heritage. We will study our religion and develop an appreciation for its values.

Commitment means that we cling to our Jewish practices, even if we face hardships doing so or inconveniences.

Commitment means that we constantly strive to grow in our Judaism. Commitment means we celebrate our bond with G-d and view each mitzvah as a precious jewel which strengthens our connection with Him and gives meaning to our existence.

On Shavuoth we read the Torah portion which contains the Ten Commandments. The obvious purpose is to reaffirm our commitment to G-d once again.

Since the continuity of the Torah depends on how we transmit it to the children, the Rebbe had requested on Shavuoth, that during the Torah reading of the Ten Commandments, we should include even young children. The Rebbe emphasized the importance by having even infants present at this particular Torah reading.

So enjoy your delicious cheesecake and have a happy Shavuoth. ☆

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