

A conversation with Marvin Goldberg

By Susan Kramer

One year ago, Marvin and Renee Goldberg made a major life change. Not only did they move from Worcester, MA to Charlotte NC, giving up snow and ice for Bradford pears and warmer temperatures, but Marvin also made a career jump from Executive Director of the Jewish Healthcare Center, a 141-bed facility with a staff of 200, to heading up the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, with 4 offices and a staff of 6. It is worth noting that Marvin is the first person in Federation history to make such a move from the Jewish home field into the ranks of Federation professionals.

"I've spent my career in Jewish communal service," Marvin explained when asked why he made such a major change. "I think that its important to give back to the Jewish community and to make sure that there is a Jewish community for our children." Marvin had always been active in the Worcester Jewish Federation, heading up a major component of the community planning process

sponsored by the Federation. After 19 years as director of the Jewish Healthcare Center, he felt it was time to make the leap into a larger arena of Jewish communal service and joining the Federation as a professional seemed to be the most logical move. Now here he is, 12 months later, reflecting on the year just ended and the challenges that lie ahead.

And what a year it has been!

At the annual meeting held on May 8, the accomplishments of the past year were enumerated by Rich Osborne, Federation president. A major demographic study — the first ever for the Charlotte Jewish Community — was completed. L'Chaim Charlotte, a festival celebrating Jewish life in Charlotte, brought 3,000 spectators to Shalom Park to sample Jewish culture and community. The Bernstein Leadership Development Program completed a successful year, training over 40 young adults in the intricacies of Jewish community leadership. 13 teens were given funds to travel to Israel for the summer. The

community spent "An Evening with Elie Weisel." Perhaps most remarkable, in an era of stiff competition for shrinking charitable dollars, the Annual Federation Campaign grew by 10.1% to an all time high of \$1.572 million.

When asked how so much was accomplished in a single year, Marvin was typically self-effacing in his reply. "It was a joint effort," he says. "We got the message out that every individual is important — every contribution counts. And of course, we had marvelous lay leadership in Bill Gorelick and Jill Newman.

So after such a stellar start, what can we look for in the next twelve months?

A lot, apparently. The results of the demographic study will be published before the High Holidays, and the information gleaned from the several hundred pages of statistics will give direction to the Federation as it heads into the 21st century. The demographic study covered a broad range of topics, delving into the community's opinion on everything from funding a Jewish day school to the need for senior housing. "There will be a Federation Long-Range Planning Committee formed that will digest the information and come up with a plan to implement the changes that the community has indicated it wants," Goldberg states.

In addition, the Federation is planning a year-long salute to Israel's 50th Anniversary, featuring an even bigger and better L'Chaim Charlotte in the spring of 1998.

"Mainly, we will be building on and refining the programs that we



Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte President Rich Osborne with Marvin Goldberg, Executive Director, JFGC

started this year. We are building a solid foundation, but that takes more than just one year. All of the successes of the past year were made possible by our donor's contributions. They should all be proud of the work they've done."

And what has Marvin learned about Charlotte in the last twelve months, aside from the difference between Bradford and Bartlett pears?

"Charlotte is a growing Jewish community," he responds quickly. "There is a lot of opportunity and promise here. I was surprised at the . . . intensity of the Jewish community here in Charlotte — Shalom Park is a very close family."

And, as with all close families, some conflict is bound to occur. "We need to learn to be more together than apart," Goldberg states. To that end, he and the

other Park professionals meet on a monthly basis to try to identify and iron out differences before they become crises. His self-described management style could also be a description of the purposes of that group: treat each other as professionals, allow others to do their job, and above all, if you value what people say, you have to listen to them first.

"We've done a lot of good," he says at the end of the interview. "But there's a lot more that needs doing. We need to be mindful and respectful that some things are beyond our control, but with less knee-jerk reactions and more thoughtful planning, there is no limit to what this community can do. The bottom line is, I like Charlotte and I enjoy being here."

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Salute To Summer Beach Party

The Membership Department of the JCC is organizing a "SUMMER NIGHTS CELEBRATION" — a Salute to Summer party on Saturday, June 21st from 7:30 -10:30pm.

"The Beach Party event, at only \$5 per person, is part of our ongoing Membership Appreciation campaign," states Roni Fishkin, JCC Membership and Marketing Director. "This is the JCC's way of saying "Thank you" to our members."

"It is for members only," echoes committee member Lee Beirer, "and costs only \$5 per person which includes beer and wine, munchies, ice cream, games, prizes and musical entertainment by 'Magic Barry and the JukeBox Hero.'" Dancing music from the '60's '70's '80's and '90's will be featured.

"Magic Barry," also known to Charlotte Hornet fans as "Dancing Barry," has been providing distinctive entertainment for corporate functions, reunions, proms and weddings in Charlotte since 1994. Prior to moving to Charlotte, he reached celebrity status in L.A., where he danced at Laker games. He has made numerous television appearances including the David Letterman Show, The Gary Shandling Show and Soul Train.

The Summer Nights Celebration decorations committee headed by Terri Dubin, Vicki Berman, Beth Gordon and Cathy Shait will transform the JCC into a veritable private beach club with a dance floor! Casual dress is suggested.

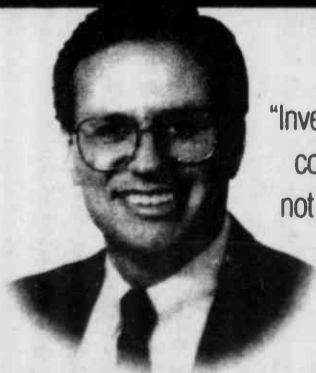
Other "Summer Nights" committee members include Sharon Katz, Cheryl Comen, Jodi



Cohen, Judy August, Robin Stier, Beverly Grey, and Jodi Valenstein. Tickets (\$5 per person) can be purchased from all committee members as well as the JCC Front Desk. Please purchase tickets early. After June 15th, tickets will be \$7.50 per person.

Please call Roni Fishkin or Lee Beirer at the JCC at 366-5007. ☆

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A Healthy Baby Girl

June 19, 1997 • 7:30 pm
Gorelick Hall
Free & Open to the Community

The JCC's Adult and Jewish Family Living Departments and Temple Beth El will be hosting a screening of the documentary film "A Healthy Baby Girl." The film is a video-diary of Judith Helfand's experiences with cancer that were a direct result of her mother taking the widely prescribed drug diethylstilbestrol (DES) during her pregnancy. This film raises a number of issues

including how reproductive technology and infertility are specific to the Jewish community and how as Jews we reconcile our ethics, values and our commitment to Tikun Olam with our status and responsibilities with the corporate world. A discussion and reception will follow the screening of the film.

Other sponsors of this event include The Mint Museum, Charlotte Women for the Environment and Grassroots Leadership. ☆

*For a review of the film, please see page 14.