



# Jewish Family Services



## Reflections

By Penny Wager-Schuster, MSW, ACSW, CCSW - Executive Director

December marks the beginning of the fifth month since my move to Charlotte. I have seen and experienced many new and different things during this time. I feel almost child like as I explore new areas of the city and see things that I may have taken for granted in the past. The people I have met have been so friendly and helpful. The stress and anxiety that can come with moving and starting a new job never became a problem because I felt so welcomed and reassured from the day I arrived here.

As I reflect on all of the new things that I have seen or done during the last few months, one particular discovery stands out. I have discovered a Jewish Community, (although I came from Miami), which is very strong in its commitment to kindness and charity to others. The Jewish Community here in Charlotte seems to be one that pulls together in times of happiness as well as times of need. Seldom have I heard anyone say "no" to a request for help. Often the opposite is true. I have found people here who call and ask how

they can help even before the request is made. I am truly amazed at the frequency of those calls and the generosity I have seen from the community. The number and size of a community really does not matter. What does count is the level of dedication among those numbers. The desire to be there to help others in need seems to be a strong one in the Charlotte Jewish community.

Jewish Family Services has a special group of individuals who routinely give of their time and special talents to others. If someone needs a ride to the doctor, or is in need of a friendly telephone voice or visit, there are several Mitzvah Maker Volunteers willing and ready to fill these needs, no questions asked. There are a number of individuals that are "matched" with specific volunteers who visit or call on a regular basis. A true partnership and friendship often develops from these matches. The benefits and rewards are found on both ends of the partnership.

I have also noticed a commitment from the community at large. T

support from the Temples, the Jewish Community Center and the Jewish Federation, working with JFS to ensure that whenever possible, no one goes without. When I first arrived, I would worry when I saw that the JFS food pantry began to look empty. The next thing I knew, wonderful people from the community walk in the door, arms full of groceries to re-stock the shelves. I have also found that when there are special requests for shoes or furniture, calls come into the agency from individuals who will help.

During the holiday season, the request for help seems greater. Perhaps more now than at other times of the year, people reach out for assistance. People who are lost, sad or lonely. People who need just a little assistance to get by. I am sure that the need occurs the other months of the year. It is during the holiday season, however, that the needs seem even greater. The requests for help seem more desperate and the urgency appears more intense.

Jewish Family Services relies on the commitment of the Jewish Community to continue their generosity. As a social service agency, JFS reaches out to those in need. There are often times, however, when the requests for help are best met by those able and willing to provide the tangible assistance that professional counseling cannot make a reality. JFS is always in need of additional volunteers. We need individuals who can assist with transportation to doctors. JFS also needs people who can assist with errands or make a friendly call or visit to someone who is alone and isolated. We also need ongoing donations of canned goods to make sure that our food pantry stays stocked with grocery items so no one in our community goes hungry.

The staff of Jewish Family Services appreciates the "gifts of self" offered by the Mitzvah Maker Volunteers and the Jewish Community. If you would like additional information about ways that you can provide assistance, please call us at 364-6594. ☆

## Donations received and tribute cards sent in October 1997

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Dr. Sherrie Kantor from Judy & Milt Tager  
Mary Ann Levinson from Gerry Litwak, David & Doris Citron, Bernie & Buddy Roberts, Marilyn & Mike Tuckman, Florence & Ben Jaffa  
Herman Poliakoff from Alan & Ruth Goldberg, Gerry Litwak, Gerson & Wilma Asrael, Fay & Gerald Sinkoe, Ollie & Sam Polk  
Essye Rosenkrantz from Alan & Ruth Goldberg, Al & Doris Rousso, Marilyn & Mike Tuckman, Cynthia & Peter Levinson, Ethel & Allen Gordon, Betty & John Levin, Florence & Ben Jaffa, Marilyn Shapiro

### Congratulations on birth of child:

Barbie & Steve Weiner from Marilyn & Mike Tuckman, Leigh Ann & Brett Goodman from Marilyn and Mike Tuckman Marci & Phillip Goldberg from Ollie & Sam Polk  
Wishing you a Speedy Recovery to:  
Marsha Smith from Dorothy & Ira H. Schulman  
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Susan Kramer from Clarice & Harold Breitman  
Shirley Silverstein from Dicky & Walter Shapiro  
Ginnie Hayes from Marilyn & Mike Tuckman, Dicky & Walter Shapiro

### Happy Birthday to:

Elsie Karro & Ira H. Schulman  
Alan Blumenthal from Linda & Trevor Goldberg  
Elly Ostrow from Tammy & Andy Cohen  
Walter Klein from Linda & Barry Marshall, Ena Stern, Sally Ascenberg, Renee Buxbaum, Eve Stewart, Selma Melasky, Jesse Simon, Margot Moritz, and Trudy Packard

### Happy Anniversary to:

Susan & Hardy Spatz from Clarice & Harold Breitman  
Carol & Joe Voynow from Clarice & Harold Breitman  
Selma & Sonny Melasky from Ena Stern

### With Special Thanks to:

Dr. Gerson Asrael from Leigh Ann & Brett Goodman  
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