

# The Charlotte JEWISH news

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## “Step into the Limelight” at Jewish Federation Gala on February 12

The Jewish Federation's second annual community fundraiser will be held on Saturday, February 12th at the Marriott City Center. “Step into the Limelight” will be a fun filled evening in a nightclub setting with comedy by Rita Rudner, followed by dancing with the band “Liquid Pleasure.” The evening will begin with a cocktail reception, followed by a four-course dinner, open bar, and lavish dessert reception.

Sara Schreiber, who chairs the Gala Steering Committee, sees the evening as an opportunity for the community to gather to celebrate the work of the Federation's constituent agencies and as a way to further spread the word about the community campaign. “I am thrilled to be working with a terrific committee who are all hard at work to make this event a reality.



Meg Goldstein

Our goal is make this evening a community celebration. We want everyone to have a great time and feel good about contributing to the 2000 Annual Campaign.”

Meg Goldstein, 2000 Annual Campaign Chair will present the “case for giving” again this year. “I am looking forward to the opportunity to further educate the members of our community on the impact our campaign dollars have on Jews in need here in Charlotte and around the world,” said Ms. Goldstein. After Ms. Goldstein's remarks, guests will be asked to sign a pledge card indicating their commitment to the 2000 Annual Campaign.

This year the program will focus on the stories of just these individuals. Each of Federation's recipient agencies has been asked to share a story of a person or family in their organization who has been directly affected by the Federation's Annual Campaign.

An example of one such story centers around “Estelle.” Estelle is an older adult who, like so many in her age group, moved from her own home to her own apartment to an assisted living complex to her daughter's home to a secular nursing home selected by her HMO. After six months in the secular home Estelle changed dramatically. She had become withdrawn and was barely eating. It was clear that the nursing home experience was

taking a toll on her both mentally and physically. After assessing the situation and deciding that it was no longer tolerable, her family decided to transfer her to the Federation-supported Jewish nursing home. The Jewish nursing home restored Estelle's spirit and as a result her physical condition improved. She connected with the other Jewish residents and they found a community for her whole family.

Recruitment Chairs, Sue Littauer and Marni Abramowitz are pleased with the recruitment effort for the evening. There are currently forty-five couples and six singles making tables for the event. Ms. Littauer emphasized that although tables are being arranged, the evening is open to anyone in the community who wishes to attend.

This extraordinary event provides a unique opportunity for the community to show support for the Federation's constituent agencies and to learn about how funds from the 2000 campaign help Jews in need.

For reservation information contact Cary Bernstein at 944-6762 or email her at cbernstein@shalom-charlotte.org. ☆



Sara Schreiber

## Still Talking

### Unique Lives and Experiences Brings Joan Rivers to Charlotte Stage

On the evening of February 7, expect the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center to reverberate with that signature question: “Can We Talk?” But, of course we can. Because Joan Rivers is still talking.

Unique Lives and Experiences is a one-of-a-kind lecture series presented by Robert Benia, a Philadelphia native and Orthodox Jew, who has gathered some of the most prominent, interesting, and exciting women of the past century and is bringing them to different cities to present their stories.

Just last month, Mary Tyler Moore was here in Charlotte, and before you know it, Joan Rivers will be here with her unique brand of comedy and chit-chat.

And can she ever talk! Joan Rivers has more than just a delicious gift of the gab; there is substance behind her chatty flamboyance and self-deprecating wit. Having experienced and survived personal tragedies in the unwavering glare of the public eye, she speaks with equal parts honesty and humor about husband Edgar Rosenberg's suicide, her daughter Melissa's depression and alienation, and her Tonight Show trials. Today, Joan Rivers can say that she has worked diligently to turn herself from a financially clueless widow to a commanding and effective business woman with a strong sense of self and a terrific family dynamic. Her enterprising and courageous spirit has helped her triumph over fear, doubt and tragedy. When Joan Rivers turns the spotlight on herself, you'll be surprised and moved by the story behind the comedy.

She began her career entertaining in closet-like clubs and lounges (which often passed the hat in lieu of paying her a salary). In 1960, she graduated to Greenwich Village cabarets and coffee houses, and later honed her comedic skills at Chicago's renowned “Second City.” Today, she headlines the most prestigious concert venues across the country.

Second only to her famous “Can We Talk?” line is the fame she brought to her “very best friend” Heidi Abromowitz. Heidi is a living metaphor for the trampy girl in school we all loved to hate.

### Observations from the Observant Producer

Producer Robert Benia has been bringing his interactive Unique Lives and Experiences to live theater since 1993. “Women have an insatiable appetite to discuss serious matter” - more so than men, says Benia. “Women ask questions; men make statements.”



Joan Rivers will appear at the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center on February 7.

It's no wonder, he contends, that women have helped him build such a strong series. “Look into the Torah and you'll see the role each of our matriarchs” has played.

And Benia makes sure that whatever he tackles, it's not done at the expense of his religious commitment. He says, “I never produce anything on the weekends. It's never been a problem; our office shuts down early for Shabbat.”

Benia is a big believer in not shutting out his heritage on a fiscal level either, making major charitable contributions from his concerts to such recipients as the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Federation (to the local offices in Toronto where he now resides).

### What to Expect at Unique Lives and Experiences

Doors will be open at 6:30 PM for pre-show activities and entertainment in the lobby of the Performing Arts Center.

Once inside the theater, the audience will realize that an integral part of the Unique Lives event is the set design. This is the critical point when Unique Lives goes beyond the traditional lecture experience of a podium and microphone at center stage and

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Rita Rudner

## Vocolot: An A Cappella Ensemble Performing Original Music with Universal Heart, Jewish Soul and Social Conscience

Vocolot: from the English word “vocal” and the Hebrew word “kolot” meaning voices.

*Kolot Ha Na'shim:* The Voices of Women is proud to present Vocolot in concert at The Great Aunt Stella Center. Imagine Simon and Garfunkel, Sweet Honey and the Rock, Manhattan Transfer, and Peter, Paul and Mary, blended together into a women's a cappella ensemble, and you're imagining Vocolot. Better yet, go hear them for yourself at The Great Aunt Stella Center, March

5, 2000 at 7:00 PM. Vocolot digs deeply into the art of song in a fusion of folk, jazz, classical and cantorial vocal traditions. Layering lush harmonies and global rhythms, Vocolot creates

original music and poetry along with fresh interpretations of ancient and contemporary texts. Vocolot has released three critically acclaimed recordings. Vocolot is the 1998 winner of the Best Folk/World Music Award for their album *Behold*.

This event is co-sponsored with The Great Aunt Stella Center.

Tickets will be available February 1, 2000, through The Great Aunt Stella Center box office for \$10.00. ☆



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Sustaining Tradition**  
SHALOM PARK

**Campaign Surpasses  
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