

# Change In Directorship at JPS

By Nancy Zolotorofe

It's the start of a new chapter at The Jewish Preschool on Sardis as Fern Sanderson, the school's first lead teacher and director for 21 years, hands the reigns over to assistant director Jen Lahn. "I'll always see the preschool as my baby, and it brings me a lot of comfort to know that Jen will be the one keeping a daily watch over the school, making sure its growth is continually nurtured. The endless talents Jen offers as both an educator and administrator will greatly benefit the school and the Jewish community of Charlotte as a whole."

No one would argue that Fern, who played a major role in gaining the school's prestigious five-star rating, leaves behind a big pair of shoes to fill. "Fern has built an unbelievable program from the ground up and she'll always be a JPS icon," says Jen. For the last five months, Jen assumed the role of assistant director to help ease the transition and allow for parents and teachers to adjust to the change.

However, Jen is no stranger around JPS. She started as a parent, when her oldest child Sam, now 10, began at the school. "I was new to Charlotte and still searching for that feeling of 'home,'" says Jen. "I found it on Sardis Road." Immediately, Jen became involved. She served as vice president and president of the Parent Teacher Organization, and she was a member of the preschool board. Four years ago, Jen, who holds a master's degree in social work from Columbia University, joined the JPS staff as



The passing of the torch: Jen Lahn (left) accepts the directorship of JPS from Fern Sanderson.

a "threes" teacher.

"As a parent at the school, I joked with friends and family about having Fern's position one day," says Jen. "Now years later, this dream is becoming a reality. Something special goes on at the school each day and I'm honored to know I'll have a hand in that."

After February 15, Fern will assume the role of consultant at the preschool for 18 months — and enjoy some time "relaxing" and spending time with her grandchildren. "Fern's legacy is a gift to the community that will keep on giving," says Mariashi Groner, who founded the preschool with Rabbi Groner. "When we educate our young ones in a warm, nurturing environment that's rich with the message of our precious heritage, we are sure to grow our future Jewish leaders."

At the same time, Jen will start tackling her own goals: "My plan is to take what is already great and make it better. In particular, we need to come up with a way to accommodate Charlotte's growing

population. Currently, we have a waiting list; mothers call from the hospital after delivery to reserve spots for their children. Eventually, I want to have space for every Jewish child who applies. For today, I am truly excited for the future of this preschool—and can't imagine that Ms. Fern's desk is going to be mine."

### The Hottest Ticket in Town

On Thursday, March 13, The Jewish Preschool on Sardis will combine its annual silent auction with Fern Sanderson's retirement party for one not-to-be missed event. Come wish Fern well, while bidding on tons of great items, such as birthday parties, tickets to Walt Disney World, and sports memorabilia. Participate in a "diamond drop" for a chance to win a one-carat diamond from Diamonds Direct. The fun disco-themed party starts at 7:30; hors d'oeuvres will be served. Tickets are \$25 per person or \$36 a couple, and all proceeds benefit the preschool. To purchase tickets or for more information, call JPS at 704-364-8395. Special thanks to the auction sponsors: Dr. Robert Liesman, Podiatrist; Scope Architectural Consulting; Charlotte Pediatric Clinic; Laxer, Long & Savage Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics; Ditesheim Cosmetic Surgery; Rogers and Gala Creative Partners, Inc.; Scott Menaker, DDS & Associates; Varji & Varji; Hendrick Honda; Action Plus; Zobo.tv; Steve Lepow Re/Max Executive Realty; Dr. Leo Spector, OrthoCarolina Spine Center, Matthews office. ☆

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## WOMEN'S NEWS

### Nishei Charlotte Monthly Women's Night Out Back by Popular Demand

Mrs. Rachelli Miller has made tremendous impression on those who experienced her first visit to Charlotte two years ago. Her unique style of teaching makes the learning of the oral Torah and personal growth brilliantly clear. It's like a mother to daughter transmission with a close and personal connection to each of the women who attend. She imparts the tradition with love. Mrs. Miller will be returning to Charlotte on Tuesday night February 19, 7:30 PM to speak on "Kavod - The Universals of Closeness and Attachment in our Relationships" and on Wednesday morning February 20,

9:30 AM on "Anava - Humility, the Basis of Self Esteem." Women interested in attending these presentations should RSVP at miller@charlottetorahcenter.com. Coffee, tea and dessert will be served. Cost \$8.

For more information please call the CTC at 704-367-1225.

Nishei Charlotte ("Nishei" means women in Hebrew) is the women's division of the CTC. Nishei Charlotte is dedicated to providing educational and social opportunities to Jewish women from all backgrounds and at all levels of observance in order to enhance their understanding and



appreciation of women's spiritual experiences in Judaism. As Jewish women, we share questions, interests, and issues that are unique to us. Nishei Charlotte provides an array of opportunities for women who are looking for answers, encouragement, information, and much, much more. Nishei Charlotte offer group classes as well as one-on-one study sessions on almost any topic. ☆

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Past event with Nishei Charlotte