

Your Campaign Dollars at Work

## RAIN-Uganda



As part of the 2013 Campaign and Allocations process, the Savannah Jewish Federation approved a new Mini-Grant program whereby community members could recommend overseas agencies to receive \$500 mini-grants, with up to 20 being approved. Sixteen submissions were made in 2013 and this continues our introduction to you of the grant recipients.

RAIN-Uganda provides education and screening for HIV and other specific public health concerns to the most vulnerable populations in Uganda. The organization was started in 2006 when a young Ugandan doctor, Samson Wamani, and an American volunteer, Hedy Cohen, sat together brainstorming about the serious needs of the local people, especially concerning HIV in the local villages surrounding Mbale where Ugandan Jews live. They agreed there was an immediate need for access to HIV testing and information.

Since its inception, RAIN-Uganda has formed a team of HIV counselors,

lab technicians and mobilizers. They have conducted thousands of HIV tests in more than 30 rural Ugandan communities and are conducting ongoing conversations in the villages with men, women and youth about their choices covering topics such as testing, family planning, infidelity and condom use.

But the organization faces many challenges because of the rural, agricultural nature of the people who are its constituents. The medical care they require is available free, but only in government facilities in Mbale, and travel there is expensive and requires patients to give up a day's work in the fields, which most are reluctant to do. Also, those who have tested positive for HIV often see the label only as a death sentence as there are few role models in their rural communities who are living healthy lives with HIV.

RAIN-Uganda is working to expand the support and counseling it can offer the people it serves.

## Catching Up with BBYO

More than 35 teens from BBYO's Dixie Council convened in Savannah the weekend of Feb. 28-March 2 for the annual Sweetheart/Beau Dance. Dixie Council consists of Savannah, Augusta, Charleston, Columbia and the newly formed chapter of Greenville/Spartanburg/Orangeburg. Outgoing sweetheart Hadley Gordon and beau Max Strauss planned the weekend events.

The dance theme was a Hawaiian luau which gave everyone a much-needed break from the harsh weather this winter. Other programs over the weekend included a session on 'Bullying' and a volunteer project with the Ronald McDonald House of the Coastal Empire. The teens also held a Council business meeting and wrapped up with a friendship circle on Sunday morning.

Sophie Guggenheim and Gabe Adler were selected the new sweetheart and beau. Both are sophomores at Savannah Country Day School.

The next Council-wide event will be held in Columbia, SC, March 14-16. Events that weekend include Columbia's Sweetheart/Beau dance, Council Board elections and senior life membership.

BBYO currently is recruiting 8<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> graders. For more information, please contact Wexler Clark BBG #39 President Hadley Gordon (912-660-8319), or David Finn AZA #206 President Max Strauss (912-346-



Outgoing Savannah BBYO Sweetheart and Beau  
Hadley Gordon and Max Strauss



Incoming Beau and Sweetheart  
Gabe Adler and Sophie Guggenheim

7804).

BBYO Connect is a relatively new branch of BBYO targeting 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> graders. For more information, please contact Michelle Ourhaan (805-501-7056).

In addition, both chapters are looking for local advisors. For additional information, please contact Jill Strauss (912-844-5588).

## LASTING LEGACIES

Savannah is a city steeped in history. Everywhere you go people are proud to tell the stories of their families, their homes, their businesses. Our Jewish community is deep-seated in that history. We are fortunate to have families here who trace their roots back to the original 42 Jewish settlers who arrived in 1733 as well as "newcomers" who have arrived throughout the years and embraced our community. One thing almost all have in common is a desire to be part of the heritage of this community, to leave something behind that those who follow will remember and look up to.

A beautiful way to leave a "lasting legacy" is with a designated fund that serves a need in the Jewish community. This series will look at some of the different funds established over the years that bear the names of the community's beloved members — some old families, some new; many now of blessed memory but others, thank-

fully, here and still shining examples of philanthropy and service.

At the JEA, the *Ethel Cohen Meddin Memorial Fund* was created not long after she died in June 1994. Ethel's three children — Aron Charles ("Chuck") Palefsky, Sherry Palefsky Meddin Macchia and Louis Richard Meddin — established the fund with the hopes that it could be used to revive and support the JEA Variety Shows that Ethel loved and "got complete happiness from" as an active participant in every year. If the variety shows were not to be, the fund could be used to support other entertainment or dance performances.

On the occasion of the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ethel Cohen Meddin Memorial Fund, we spoke with Chuck Palefsky, who still lovingly remembers how important the JEA and his mother's involvement in the variety shows were to her. He and his family continue to make contributions to the fund to honor friends

and loved ones, with the intention that the fund always will be used to provide entertainment at the JEA that will honor their mother. They hope others will do the same.

Leon Deich lived in Savannah almost his entire life. He served his country during World War II, worked with his brother, Mickey, at Mickey's Beverage Center and cared for his widowed mother and older sister. He was known as a sweet, gentle man who mostly kept to himself, fishing on the beach at Tybee and riding his bicycle around the island. Leon also had a concern for the welfare of Savannah's Jewish community, as he demonstrated with one of his final acts, a testamentary gift to the Savannah Jewish Federation that was used to establish the *Leon Deich PACE Fund*.

A PACE fund is a Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment fund. Using the bequest from Leon's will, an endowed fund was created that, every year in perpetuity, will make a gift to the Savannah Jewish Federation's annual campaign in Leon Deich's name. His generosity helps to insure the future of Jewish education,



Ethel Cohen Meddin in a 1962 JEA Variety Show  
(JVM 003 Savannah Jewish Archives, item 1070)

social services, Holocaust education, Israel advocacy and so much more for our community — for all time — and Leon Deich's name lives on.

As seen by these two examples, a designated fund can benefit a specific purpose dear to your family or the community at large and is a lovely way to honor someone's memory or assure the perpetuity of your family name in the community. Funds can be created and activated now or established with a bequest or other financial instrument. To discuss establishing a Lasting Legacy for your family with a fund at the Jewish Community Foundation of Savannah, contact Adam Solender at (912) 355-8111 or [adam@savj.org](mailto:adam@savj.org).