

## Fran and Steve Bombart

When Steve's job transferred us from Long Island to Greensboro in 1980, we felt like pioneers. Our friends and family, on the other hand, thought we were crazy for leaving New York—it was just not done.

When Steve joined Wrangler, he had very few Jewish co-workers. There was no discrimination, but we did not feel like part of the group, especially around the holidays. Everyone asked which church we belonged to. We became strikingly aware that we were Jewish, and it suddenly became much more important.

Our world in Long Island was 40 percent Jewish, and we did not think about it. Here in Greensboro, we became involved in the Jewish community almost immediately. We were only here for two or three weeks when a vice-president of the synagogue called us to join. We said we really could not afford to join. The answer was "You cannot afford not to join," so we became members of Beth David.



We got involved in other Jewish organizations, as well. Fran has served as the financial secretary of Beth David Synagogue, vice-president of Hadassah and president of National Council of Jewish Women. In the 1990s, Fran got very involved in Russian resettlement, and she even co-chaired the effort, coordinating housing, furniture, clothes, jobs, and English lessons. It was meaningful to show others the same welcome that we were shown, and we still keep in touch with those families.

Besides being on the board of Beth David Synagogue and serving as financial secretary and vice-president, Steve has been treasurer of the Federation for five years and served on the Foundation Board.

We set an example for our two daughters. We decided right away that we wanted our kids to be Jewish and got them involved with Hadassah and Young Judaea. They grew up attending Camp Judaea. We led a multi-family trip to Israel for 11 Greensboro families. Our trip was designed to make the kids say, "We had a fantastic time, but the next time I go, I want to do this...I want to go back." And they did. Our oldest daughter even spent her first year of college in Israel.

The same friends who were surprised at our move to Greensboro have been here for our kids' *b'nai mitvahs* and weddings, and they are impressed with the love of the people here. They just cannot comprehend how and why so many people here sponsor Shabbat dinner or a Sunday brunch. They are not used to it. They still ask us if we plan to move to Atlanta to be near our kids or to return to New York or move to Florida. But this is our community.