

Mimi Levin

I have loved living in Greensboro. I like the size, I like the southern accent—I was raised in Nashville, Tennessee--so I felt right at home when we moved here. My family belonged to all three congregations in Nashville. We attended services at the Conservative synagogue, and we belonged to the Orthodox synagogue because my grandparents did. We also belonged to the Temple because it had a better religious school that placed more emphasis on girls' education. I love that the two congregations in Greensboro have a similar feeling—a sense of togetherness among the Jewish community as a whole.

When I was only ten, my father passed away. Around that time, my mother threw herself into Hadassah. I suspect she wanted to keep busy, which she did. She became president of that organization within the year, and she took her position very seriously. It was a very exciting time to be involved. Our home was full of visiting dignitaries eating with us because we kept a kosher home. Israel was created during her presidency, and there was a lot of dissention in the community leading up to that. My mother herself was a gung-ho Zionist. She bought the first issue of Israel bonds for \$50, which she paid off in installments because she had modest means, with three children and my father gone. So I had a good example from her to be active and to give back to the Jewish community.

I love Greensboro because of the people, all of whom helped me out as I learned to serve the community here. I was very excited when I was asked to serve on the board of the Women's Cabinet. One year I helped to co-chair the Women's Drive.

I am especially proud of my role in helping to found B'nai Shalom Day School. It was not easy, but it has been worth it. I think B'nai Shalom has been great for this community, not least because it has influenced who has moved here. I think we attracted the wonderful Rabbis we have because of the school. They probably would not have considered moving here if we had not had these school facilities for their children.

I got my degree in library science because of B'nai Shalom. In its humble beginnings, before we could hire a librarian, I decided to work at the school's library and to organize parent volunteers to help run it. I have always loved books, and the idea just fell into my lap through this involvement.

I am very proud of my children, all of whom are active in their Jewish communities. It is for them that I endowed my Lion of Judah. I feel that it is very important to provide for the future. Contributing to non-Jewish causes is wonderful, and I do it myself. But we need to remember that only Jews will take care of each other, and we owe it to our history to continue to do so. It is like a huge chain and we do not want to break any links.

