

Phyllis Shavitz

My mother taught me that Judaism always comes first. She believed that even if you had hardly any money, you had to give first to the Synagogue. She was also generous with her time and served twice as president of Richmond Hadassah. Growing up in Virginia, we attended services at Beth El. I was married at that synagogue, and I continued to celebrate the High Holy Days there until my mother passed away.

Judaism has always been an important part of my life. I was a member of a Jewish social sorority in my teens. I have been involved in Hadassah and am the Lion of Judah Endowment Chair on the Foundation Board. I believe in giving back to the greater community as well. I serve on the Advisory Board of the Women to Women Fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro. I also served on the board of the Shepherd Center and volunteered at Moses Cone Hospital for 13 years. After Stanley and Steven served on the Children's Museum Board, we started funding an annual bus trip for school children to visit the museum and donated the Shavitz Family Pavilion in the Edible Garden.



My greatest achievement, besides having my son, Steven, is starting “Taste of the Town” in High Point. The first affair, held in 1989, raised \$3,000 for three local nonprofits. The event has grown tremendously, now involving over 60 restaurants and hundreds of volunteers and raising over \$135,000 for Hospice of the Piedmont. This cause is now even more dear to my heart since I used Hospice for Stanley's last weeks.

I often approach even my non-Jewish commitments with a Jewish bent. I have been active on the board of the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, where I have focused on building the Judaic collection. We have accumulated a whole room full of beautiful relics—Torah covers, spice boxes, menorahs—most of them salvaged from Europe after World War II. I especially love showing them to children. Stanley and I sponsored a spice box and established an endowment which purchased Torah finials for the collection.

Giving young people a Jewish education is very important to me, and it was to Stanley, too. When our son was young, I taught at the Sunday school at B'nai Israel Synagogue in High Point. More recently, when Stanley and I saw how much our grandchildren loved camp, we established the Stanley Shavitz Camp Judaea Camper Incentive Grant Fund and the Shavitz Family Climbing Tower. We also created a scholarship to sponsor high school students at the American Hebrew Academy, and we funded the Hebrew language-learning lab there.

I could not be happier with the Jewish life here in Greensboro, and I am proud of all of our Jewish organizations. Being involved in philanthropy gives meaning to my life. It is important for me to know that the organizations I hold dear will live on for my family after I am gone.