

Support Today – Secure Tomorrow

The “Legacy Circle”

We thank the following people for including the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires in their estate planning:

Anonymous (7)	Stuart M. Fischman	Amy Lindner-Lesser	Mark and Elisa Snowise
Barbara Bashevkin	William Foggie	Helen Maislen	Harold Sparr
Robert Bashevkin	Eiran Gazit	Ellen Masters	Lisa Fletcher-Udel
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Sheila K. Donath	Andrew S. Levine	Richard A. Simons and Marcie Greenfield Simons	
Melva Eidelberg	Toby H. Levine		
Diana and Stanley Feld	Erna Lindner-Gilbert		

By joining the “Legacy Circle” your good deeds and Jewish values will live on and Jewish needs will continue to receive the resources you have provided over the years. Questions? Call Arlene D. Schiff at (413) 442-4360, ext. 12.

“The Legacy Circle”

Ed Udel: ‘No Dogs, No Ponies’

By David Verzi

Ed Udel wants it all ...to continue.

With a deep appreciation of the comprehensive nature of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ role in nurturing Jewish life throughout the region, Udel’s decision to leave a bequest via the “The Legacy Circle” program is a heartfelt endorsement of the Federations’ rock-solid credibility and the efficacy of its increasingly wide-ranging programs.

“I’m helping preserve a very critical Jewish institution,” said Udel, “the Federation provides financial, organizational, and emotional support to keep our faith and our people alive.”

Looking toward youth and the future, Udel said, “Without the Federation’s unique, ongoing support for the congregational Hebrew schools and Jewish camps, our future would be in jeopardy, but with its support our prospects are greatly strengthened.”

However, Udel was also quick to mention support for: the Federation’s social worker’s outreach, which serves an increasingly aging population; institutions in Israel that provide food, shelter,

clothing, education, and medicine; organizations that support poorer Jews in Europe; and the local “Older Adult Kosher Hot Meal Program.”

In addition Udel praised the Federation’s aid to the Five College Hillel structure, especially, said Udel, “in light of the pressure and criticism being leveled against Jews and Israel on college campuses – thus, the Federation helps provide an anchor for our kids there.”

“In fact,” said Udel, “I can’t think of a single program that the Federation supports that is superfluous and I see no limit on what we could accomplish to help ‘repair the world, and make people whole.’”

But, acknowledging that his support will aid a “changing Berkshire Jewish Community,” Udel noted, that because of secular pressures the role of faith and the grasping of Jewish identity is in flux and therefore there must be a certain flexibility with regard to preservation efforts, without, however, discounting traditions.

“All generations, noted Udel “should listen and learn from each other; and in that spirit my bequest, and that of others,

both guarantees the future and honors the past.”

“Older Jews must listen, not sit in judgment. As the Federation has done, we must listen to their concerns of the ‘twenty and thirty-somethings,’ and then invite them to accept positions of leadership.

Udel noted that there needs to be an acceptance of the fact that people are not going through the process of “being Jewish” in the same way as in the past and there is a greater pull, especially regarding positioning children toward attaining high quality academic higher education, that both financially and culturally takes away from yesteryears’ more laser-like emphasis on synagogue and faith.”

“That is the trick of parenting today: to make sure ‘the Jewish piece’ is not just a ‘dog and pony show,’ but that you pass it along as a critical value of unimpeachable authenticity,” said Udel, a retired teacher and father of three.

“It’s difficult today to be a Jewish parent, but it’s crucial for parents to guide their children to feel the importance of our religion; and, secondarily, see us, their parents, ‘role modeling’ support – I want my children to see me practicing my commitment, to feel it.”

Udel noted that in the Berkshire Jew-

ish Community that he is in contact with numerous families – most certainly even many young families – that reflect that deep commitment.

That,” said Udel, “gives me hope for the future.” As does knowing that my small, modest bequest is a vehicle which will help the Berkshire Jewish Community, and the Federations’ programs, serve to help keep Judaism alive and prospering in many ways.”

For more information concerning Create a Jewish Legacy of Western Massachusetts or the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ “Legacy Circle,” please contact Arlene D. Schiff, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 12 or arlene.schiff@jewishberkshires.org.



Ed Udel

PHOTO: DAVID VERZI