

Blindness, age can't slow down journalist

By Alice Collins
staff writer

Writing is something that Philip Slomovitz has to do and loves to do. "Some things just need to be said," explained the 55-year-old founder and retired editor of Southfield-based The Jewish News.

The internationally respected journalist, now blind and confined to his Southfield apartment, retired as editor in 1984 after he sold his publication, which serves the metropolitan Detroit Jewish community. But Slomovitz never stopped writing his column which appears weekly in The Jewish News.

land." When he first composed this it was "just at the emergence of the Holocaust and six years before the establishment of the State of Israel."

He also dedicated his newspaper to let the Jewish community know the news of their neighbors "and to ensure that they have knowledge of their past history and traditions as they relate to the present."

Slomovitz has written a weekly column for 70 years, first when he worked for the Detroit News, then during his 18 years with the Detroit Jewish Chronicle before founding The Jewish News. "In the 70 years, I missed just one issue," he said. "That was the first edition after I retired."

He never runs out of subjects, he said. "The moment I run out of ideas something else is emerging."

"For instance, I know I'm going to be writing about Menachem Begin (who died recently). I've known him so long. I introduced him at public functions in Israel." "Also, I'll be writing about recent reports of the rise of a very ugly type of growing anti-Semitism in every state in our nation — the skin-



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— Philip Slomovitz
Founder, The Jewish News

heads and the besmirching of synagogues."

Slomovitz admits it's not as easy to do his columns as it was when his vision was better and he was able to type it himself at his office desk.

Now he has a reader who comes in daily to help him. Together they go

over his mail. Slomovitz dictates his column to his reader who delivers it to The Jewish News for final typing for publication. But Slomovitz still has an opportunity to examine a proof of his column before publications so that he may make corrections if necessary.

Slomovitz was born in Russia and immigrated to the United States in 1910. He lived with his family in New Jersey until it became time for him to go to college. Then he moved to Ann Arbor where he attended the University of Michigan and earned his journalism degree. Later he moved to Detroit and then Southfield.

Slomovitz has many stories and memories to relate about his years as a journalist through most of the 20th Century.

He met his wife, "my beloved Anna," when both were attending a Zionist Movement convention in Cleveland and they have been married for 66 years.

She is bedridden now, and two nursing aids come to their apartment every day to help. "I'm with her all the time now. We still eat together and talk together," he said.

"She was a great help to me through the years. She was born there. She not only knew English well, but Hebrew, Yiddish and German. We traveled together. We made 22 trips to Israel starting in 1949 right after the emergence of Is-

rael." His wife served as his reader up to the time she became incapacitated. Slomovitz decided to start his own newspaper, he said, "because after working for the Chronicle, a family-owned newspaper, for 18 years, much of it as editor, they indicated to me that a couple members of the family were going to take over those duties."

THAT'S WHEN HE borrowed \$18,000 from friends and started his own newspaper. "From the start it was mine. I was editor and publisher. I wrote all the editorials and my column. I wrote wherever I was, even overseas. I always did the work and we'd send it back."

The Jewish News caught hold after a short period of time and he repaid his debt, he said. Eventually it took over the Chronicle.

He has authored two books, "Without Malice," and "Purely Commentary: Philip Slomovitz's 60 Years as a Newspaperman." His editorials and columns sometimes made national news through the years. And he has won numerous honors.

The Jewish News is turning 50

By Alice Collins
staff writer

The Jewish News, which serves the Jewish community of metropolitan Detroit, will mark its 50th anniversary with its March 27 edition. It has also published a 150-page commemorative book featuring the reproduction of 50 of its most important front pages.

In addition, the newspaper will sponsor and co-sponsor a number of events and activities during the year, according to associate publisher Arthur Horowitz. Among

those will be the annual Israeli Independence Day celebration May 3-10 and neighborhood projects in Oak Park and Southfield in the summer.

The Jewish News was founded by Philip Slomovitz in 1942. Its offices are in Southfield and it is printed in Detroit.

Horowitz said the publication retained its independence when it was sold in 1984 to a group led by Charles Burger who also owns the Baltimore Jewish Times and the Atlanta Jewish Times.

"THE READERSHIP" is a reflection of the Detroit Jewish community," said Horowitz, "everyone from a business executive who might live in Bloomfield Hills to a Torah scholar in Oak Park, from a single parent in West Bloomfield to a senior citizen in Southfield. The Jewish News is one thing that unites the Detroit Jewish community every Friday regardless of where they live or whatever their demographic profile."

The newspaper experienced a 40 percent increase in paid circulation over the last five years taking it to 21,000 a week.

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