

SUBURBAN LIFE

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THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 1993

THE SCENE



GRETCHEN HITCH

'Life' is theme of annual ball

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A celebration of life. That was the phrase speakers used several times to describe the eighth Crystal Rose Ball sponsored by the Hospice of Southeastern Michigan on Saturday evening at Neiman Marcus at the Somerset Collection in Troy.

Hospice Council chairwoman Bev Moore greeted 650 arriving guests with her husband Tom. President-elect Kathy Antonini arrived with her husband, Kmart CEO Joseph. Co-chairman and co-chairwoman of the evening Richard and Shelley Golden, both very tanned, were at the entrance. Their co-chairman and co-chairwoman, the Mori Crims, were out of town.

Mary Fisher, Crystal Rose honoree, in a navy suit with a long skirt, chatted with friends in the throng on the Neiman Marcus first floor. I told Mary I remember her 21st birthday when her guests rolled around town in a red British two-decker bus, with champagne flowing.

In the throng were Joe and Jane Mauer, John and Annette Kolon, Jan and Pat Hartmann, John Bloom, Dick and Valerie Strath (just back from Jupiter, Fla.), Rick and Joyce Inamoto, Marybeth Decker, Lloyd and Maureen Reusa, John and Nancy Burrows, Tim and Cindy Leullette, and Leah and Lynn Thomas.

Ima Elder arrived with Claire Chambers. Judith Sherman, who was chairwoman for the profitable and handsome program, thanked her committee of Marybeth Decker, Bev Moore, Linda Morrow, Shirley Littlefield, Diane Brown and Debby Gaclin.

At 8 p.m. the assemblage moved to the second level for the program.

Mary Fisher, after receiving the crystal rose award, presented a moving and eloquent talk. "I don't want to squander this moment," adding, "Hospice makes it possible not to be alone — those of us who are walking into the valley of death." She recited the 23rd psalm and confided she found it strengthening. "Life is a pilgrimage, no word of rage or grief can express the feeling, but people want desperately not to be alone."

"Celebrate life," she admonished. "Every child and adult matters, all are human beings whether they are HIV positive or negative."

Hillary Clinton, who is conducting health care reform hearings in Lansing, was invited but was unable to attend.

The party then moved to the third level of the elegant store where round tables were covered in white lace and centered by luscious peach roses.

More than 3,800 terminally ill people and their families will benefit from the program offered by Hospice of Southeastern Michigan this year.

23 Skiddoo

The Village Players of Birmingham celebrated 70 years of the theater arts with its Theatre Arts Ball on Saturday evening at The Community House in Birmingham. For its fourth annual ball, to raise money for their building fund, Roaring Twenties costumes were optional, but many members complied.

Jewelers Richard and Debby Astrein each received a golden Oscar look-alike as honorees for the Village Players Super Star Award.

Chairwomen were Donna Masters and Shirley Mann. Committee members Betsy Todd and

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Committee members: John and Annette Kolon attend the hospice party.

Temple celebrates 30 years

Birmingham Temple has been active in the local area for the last 30 years and looks forward to continuing success and expansion of its facilities.

BY ETHEL SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER



Thirty years ago, a renegade rabbi and eight area families got together in a Birmingham home to form the Birmingham Temple.

"It became the first temple of Humanistic Judaism in the world," Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine said, in his office at the temple on 12 Mile Road in Farmington Hills. "We now have 40 communities around North America and about 200 communities around the world." Birmingham Temple is the largest.

Wine said the national organization began in 1969, with the Birmingham Temple serving as headquarters for the Society of Humanistic Judaism. The international federation was organized in 1982. Eight national organizations joined, representing France, Belgium, Israel, Uruguay, Argentina, Israel, Canada and Australia, as well as the United States.

In the last few years, there has been the addition of Russia and the Ukraine.

Meeting in Moscow

"The first international meeting was held here in Detroit in 1986, and the last in Jerusalem in 1992," Wine said. The next meeting will take place in Moscow.

Referring to Humanistic Jews who had been in the Soviet Union, Wine said, "At the end of the Cold War, they were able to make contact with me. They didn't know about the movement till we came there."

The Birmingham Temple is celebrating its 30th anniversary, with many events scheduled throughout 1993. Israeli Minister of Education Shulamit Aloni, a leading feminist in Israel and one of the world leaders of Humanistic Judaism, will deliver a Shorr Memorial Lecture on Friday, May 7. A Jubilee party with cabaret singer Sherry Nichols and accompanist Richard Berent will be presented Saturday, May 8. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich also will speak in May, at a date to be announced.

"There are five alternatives in Judaism — Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist and Humanistic," Wine said. "The heart of Humanistic Judaism is the word 'human.' Its primary source of power and strength comes

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SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Eye on the future: Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine looks through a sculpture in courtyard of Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills. The temple is celebrating the 30th anniversary year of the Humanistic Judaism movement, which Wine developed.

Area women train as Humanistic rabbis

BY ETHEL SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER

Two women who grew up in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area are among the three individuals who are training to be rabbis for Humanistic Judaism congregations.

Stacie Schiff of Beverly Hills and Tammy Feldstein of Bloomfield Hills are in the first year of a five-year program, newly inaugurated at the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism at the Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills.

Feldstein went directly into the rabbinic program after completing undergraduate studies in 1992. Schiff had seven years of job experience after her undergraduate days ended in 1986, including working as a prison chaplain and as a Conservative movement rabbi.

Also in training as a Humanistic rabbi is Richard Sherman of Los Angeles, who files in for the rabbinic program under the guidance of the institute. He hopes to be a rabbi in L.A. and to establish secular Jewish day schools.

"I've been a member of Birmingham Temple since I was 6," Feldstein said. "My whole Jewish education is from here." She graduated from Andover High School, and her undergraduate experience was at the Hebrew University in Israel where she studied international relations and English literature. Currently, Feldstein attends the Center for Humanistic Studies in Detroit, where she is getting a master's degree in clinical psychology.

Recalling her earlier temple education, she said, "It was always into the after-school classes." She had her bat mitzvah and confirmation at the temple and also took philosophy classes there through high school.

"I just saw this as a natural continuation," Feldstein said about her studies in the rabbinic program.

Both Feldstein and Schiff sat down for a chat after a seminar class conducted by Rabbi Wine at Birmingham Temple. "This class fulfills part of the requirement," said Feldstein, who noted that a class she is taking at the center in Detroit "fulfills

the counseling part of my rabbinic program."

Schiff described her own local background, saying, "I grew up in Beverly Hills, and went to Detroit Country Day School." She graduated from the University of Michigan, and she studied English literature, psychology and criminology. Currently, she is studying for a doctorate in Judaic Studies and Hebrew at U-M.

After completing undergraduate studies, Schiff did television news producing, consulting, and worked as a prison chaplain at the State Prison of Southern Michigan at Jackson and at the Western Wayne Correctional Facility in Plymouth, traveling throughout Michigan to conduct weekly services.

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SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Learning the ropes: Rabbis-in-training at the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism are Stacie Schiff (left), Richard Sherman and Tammy Feldstein.