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MS-763: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman Collection, 1930-2004.

Series I: Wexner Heritage Foundation, 1947-2004.

Subseries 1: General Files, 1949-2004.

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63

Folder
7

Herzl Jewish Day School [Denver, Colo.]. 1994-1996.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.

7/23/96

Phone conversation with Michael Hepner of Denver,
303-740-8696, past president of Temple Emanuel.
Wonderfully satisfying.

1. He thinks person who spoke to me at Aggen about Denver building a high school was Jeff Auerbach. Jeff and Marsha Gardenschwartz are working on merging The Herzl Day School (K-8) with the Rocky Mountain Hebrew Academy (high school, not orthodox yeshiva) and putting them on same campus. I will call them for details.
2. He then raised question of how to strengthen Temple supplementary school, which is not flexible, and gave an example of his partner's son, who attends Day School, fluent in Hebrew, wants to do more at his Bar Mitzvah than the usual minimum - and Temple says no. We spoke at length - he is itching to find a path to doing more - has all the correct priorities, understands the historic crisis. I spoke to him about a 4-day supp. school - 10 or 12 hours.
3. He started to discuss strategy. He will inform himself of exactly what the Religious School is doing and let me know (including the books used). Then we will plot the next move - to draw up a plan for a 4-day school. Then we will meet with Rabbi Foster, principal Bennett, and new Rabbi Cohen (female) a Wiener fellow, one year there, super lady.

No time

To HAF
Date 12/9 Time _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

M David Finell

of _____

Phone (303) 755-1846
Area Code Number Extension

TELEPHONED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PLEASE CALL	<input type="checkbox"/>
CALLED TO SEE YOU	<input type="checkbox"/>	WILL CALL AGAIN	<input type="checkbox"/>
WANTS TO SEE YOU	<input type="checkbox"/>	URGENT	<input type="checkbox"/>

RETURNED YOUR CALL ☐

Message from Hertel Day
School in Denver. Read
a piece in WTKR "Question
I will" (June 16, 1993)
Was so moved by
your words, wanted to
ask you a few ?'s.

Operator

Eden



AMPAD
EFFICIENCY®

REORDER
#23-000

Rocky Mountain high-tech fever

12/12/94
Washington Post

DENVER

By noon one recent Sunday, the parking lot at the old Gilpin Hotel in Blackhawk, Colo., was nearly filled with the cars of the politically and religiously incorrect—weekend gamblers in sweat pants and jeans.

"We thought things would slow down after the summer, but it hasn't," says Robert King, the Gilpin's assistant marketing director. "People here are feeling pretty good right now."

Pretty good, indeed: Retail sales in the region are up 14 percent in the last year.

Denver is booming again, but not because of the usual mining, oil and land

- Unemployment rate: 3.2%
- Office vacancy rate: 13.2%
- Retail sales: Up 12.5%

speculation. This latest wave of gold diggers is strictly high tech.

The nation's telecommunications capital is taking shape at the Tech Center south of the city, where several giants—including Jones Intercable Inc., Tele-Communications Inc., Time Warner Inc. and US West Inc.—have headquarters or major outposts, all engaged in furiously expanding their horizons.

Colorado Springs is a second home to California-based Apple Computer Inc. and Hewlett-Packard Co., and Washington, D.C.-based MCI Communications Corp.

And in Boulder, the federal government recently has established a major research presence.

Even defense giant Martin Marietta Corp. is growing again as it transfers its California operations here.

Nonetheless, last year's real estate market has been cooled by higher rates, rapidly rising home prices and growth curbs. Low-wage labor already is reported in short supply.

"This doesn't feel like a boom in the sense we have known them in Denver," says Jerry McMorris, who turned three beer delivery trucks into NW Transport Inc., a nationwide transportation empire.

"It feels like a broad-based expansion that will be with us for a while." ■



Herzl Jewish Day School
2450 S. Wabash
Denver, Colorado 80231
(303) 755-1846

December 8, 1994

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10025

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

It was with a great deal of excitement that I recently read your article A Question of Will, which was based on your acceptance speech upon your receiving the Rabbi Max Arzt Memorial Medal. I am writing to say to you that I share your dream and I accept your challenge. A network of Jewish Day Schools must be built and a community fund established to support these schools.

I am a Jewish Day School director. I have devoted my professional life to Jewish education. It is my feeling that a campus of Jewish education should be built in Denver; one that can serve as a national model of how Jewish education can be constructed. I believe that such a campus, and the community fund to support it, should be designed according to the principles which you have put forth. The Denver Jewish community, with substantial national support, has the resources to make this dream a reality.

I am not a 'mover and a shaker', Rabbi. I am a Jewish educator. I ask for you to advise me and to support me in this endeavor. How do we precede in generating the necessary support for such a project? How do we involve others in embracing a broad ranging vision which looks aggressively towards our Jewish future and seeks to secure that future for the generations to come?

I write to you with the hope, and with the belief, that your guidance and support will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

David B. Finell
Director
Theodor Herzl Jewish Day School

January 4, 1995

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

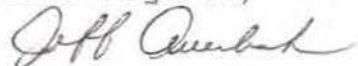
Dear Rabbi Friedman,

Enclosed find a copy of an article in the Intermountain Jewish News featuring the new director of Herzl Jewish Day School. David Finell is very receptive to the idea and has been successful in promoting the campus idea to many in the community.

I thought that you would be interested to see that your ideas are being discussed throughout Denver and that we are continuing to work toward this campus concept.

Thanks for your support and insight. Please feel free to call me with any suggestions or help at work 1-800-875-5926 or at home 303-320-0777. I look forward to the day when our vision becomes reality.

Best Regards,



Jeff Auerbach
Wexner Fellow
401 Monaco Parkway
Denver, Colorado 80220

FOCUS

Perspective of new Herzl director David B. Finell

The Jewish seatbelt

By ANDREA JACOBS
IJN Staff Writer

David Finell, the new principal of Herzl Jewish Day School, pauses on the stairway linking the empty chapel with the gymnasium, where a dozen or so children are learning a new game. For him, the neighboring yet seemingly dissimilar rooms and the contradictory sounds which escape symbolize the very heart of Jewish education.

"There are moments when I can hear the sound of students davening in Hebrew, turn the corner and hear shouts of laughter coming from the gym," Finell says. "I think this typifies one of Herzl's basic philosophical premises, to bring together general studies and Jewish studies in a more holistic way."

Finell believes that Herzl heals the often schizophrenic line splitting the psychic center of children who are both Jewish and American. The Jewish American child "actually has two identities," he says, "the American identity and Jewish identity, and both are rich in knowledge and heritage." At Herzl, the goal is fusing those divisions into a single and ultimately stronger whole.

Pointing to a collage depicting not only significant moments and individuals in Colorado history but also the Jewish contribution, he says the mural encapsulates the Herzl approach to learning.

"The fourth-grade students study Colorado history per state requirements while simultaneously learning about the rather sizable role Jews played in that history. They come away feeling proud about being Coloradans and Jewish."

Since becoming Herzl's principal this fall, the California transplant has established a warm relationship with students and staff which is evidently reciprocated. Everybody, from the first-grader to the office administrator, seems to enjoy being around Finell, and the feeling is mutual. This is a man who clearly loves his job.

As an undergraduate at the University of California at Berkeley, Finell volunteered at the JCC, Big Brothers and other children's organization around Oakland. And Judaism, always a vital factor in his personal life, became increasingly important. Jewish education, he discovered, "was the one way I could combine the two loves of my life, children and Judaism."

"I wanted to do important work, work that makes a difference," he says during a rare moment of self-reflection — he prefers talking about Herzl and Jewish education in general, not David Finell. "I'm not the kind of person who could punch a clock or do something that I felt was at worst harmful and, at best, doing nothing."

"One's life should be used to effect positive change in the world, to make the world a better place — a very important Jewish concept," he adds with a smile.

Finell's unannounced classroom visits invariably elicit smiles from teachers and older students, and unbridled enthusiasm from younger children in the K-6 day school.

Ambushed mid-sentence by a first-grader brandishing a rather primitive work of art, the principal quickly redirects his focus, regarding the pink and red squiggles with



Emily Rotbart and David Finell

Photos: Bob Weinberg

a reserved thoughtfulness generally reserved for Renoir or Picasso. Suddenly a small train of cans and other minority cultures. "Often parents fear that if they send their kids to a Jewish day school where they spend all day with only Jewish children, they will all cultures, and how they as Jews fit into the society at large." With a current enrollment of 315

'Synagogue life and Jewish day school life complement each other. It's a mistake to send a child to day school and feel there's no need to affiliate with a synagogue'

students flag down Finell with their artistic masterpieces, and they all receive a thorough — and very positive — appraisal.

Back in his office, Finell gets an opportunity to discuss his second love, Jewish education. He begins with Herzl, "a wonderful school and one of the reasons I was willing to move my family here from California."

Finell is a firm believer in day school's pluralistic approach to Judaism, which accommodates all Jewish affiliations, from the Orthodox to Reform to Reconstructionist to Conservative. "We teach respect for the diversity of approaches to Judaism," he says. "And our families, regardless of where they fall on the religious spectrum, are supportive of that philosophy."

Not only do students learn to respect forms of Judaism which differ from their own, they study African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Ameri-

become too insulated from 'the real world,' Finell says. "Although I think insularity is a hard thing to come by in today's world — a child's time at school doesn't define his or her entire experience — we make sure our students learn about

ly adding, "This is not my idea; it belongs to Rabbi Herbert Friedman. But I believe it's a feasible one."

"With substantial support from the community, both local and national, we buy a large piece of

land and build an elementary, middle and high school comparable to the finest private schools in the country. As Rabbi Friedman puts it, it would be 'of Andover and Exeter quality,' with great facilities and top-flight programs."

Finell sees a great deal of fragmentation in Denver's Jewish education community which a central Jewish campus could very well heal. "As the ideological spectrum of Jewish observance gets divided finer and finer and finer, and as the Jewish community here grows, which it will, more and more schools will open. And as that happens, community resources will be stretched increasingly thinner." The result, he said, is even more fragmentation.

Finell isn't saying that a central campus would necessarily seek to replace independent, private Jewish institutions. "Certainly there is room for people to go their own way, to form their own schools and be independent," he says. "We're all working toward the same goal, educating Jewish children."

"The question is, are we in this community adequately fulfilling our responsibility to educate those children to the best of our ability? I think the answer is clearly no."

By pulling together to create a Jewish education campus, Denver has the unique opportunity to establish itself as a model in this regard for the rest of the country, says Finell. "We should get Rocky Mountain Hebrew Academy, Hillel Academy, Denver Academy of Torah and Herzl to work together toward this goal."

The crisis of Jewish continuity in America and the strong role played by Jewish education in ensuring that continuity was the focus of last month's General Assembly in Denver. It's a theme which resonates strongly and quite naturally with David Finell.

While a plethora of studies have shown a direct correlation between Jewish education and living a Jewishly identified life as an adult, Finell says education alone is not sufficient.

"Synagogue life and Jewish day school life complement each other, and it's a mistake for a parent to send a child to day school and feel that in doing so there is no need to affiliate with a synagogue. That would be making a mistake in my opinion."

And although the same body of research indicates that out of all Jewish teaching methodologies day schools have the most impact on a child's Jewish life, "it also shows that the more exposed a child and his or her family is to Judaism — synagogue attendance, camp, trips to Israel, observance in the home — the greater likelihood he or she will grow up knowledgeable as a Jew," Finell says.

"There are no guarantees in life," he says. "The analogy is given that if you wear your seatbelt and get in an accident, it doesn't mean you won't be injured. However, the seatbelt greatly reduces the chances for injury."

"Similarly, you can send your child to Jewish day school, synagogue, camp, even Israel, and he or she may still grow up without any interest in living Jewishly. But again, when children are exposed to these experiences, the odds are much greater they will choose a Jewish life."



David Finell

BARRY CURTISS-LUSHER

157 DAHLIA STREET • DENVER, COLORADO 80220
(303) 333-4636 PHONE • (303) 331-8977 FACSIMILE

Dear Rabbi Friedman -

As an "interested party" and given my reference to a comment of yours in my letter, I thought I ought to send copies of my correspondence with Nathan to you. You may remember my wife Gay from several conversations she had with you in Snowbird. She is the grand daughter of Doc Schloss, and you officiated at her parents' wedding here in Denver in 1947.

On a happier note, I participated in a planning session today with representatives of our largest Day School relating to their expansion and development of a middle school. The further addition of a first rate High School — and a campus to house all three schools — is also under discussion. David Finell, the school director, and I both brought up your vision of the campus as part of the framework for our discussion. It has a ways to go, but we have a start. I'll let you know how we do.

Hope to see you in the not too distant future.

Barry

The Wexner Heritage Foundation

551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022
212 355 6115
Fax 212 751 3739

Huntington Center Suite 3710
41 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614 464 2772

January 19, 1995

Mr. Barry Curtiss-Lusher
137 Dahlia Street
Denver, CO 80220

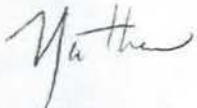
Dear Barry:

Hope you have been enjoying the year of study so far. We have received a couple of phone calls letting us know that Gay has been attending some of the seminars with the lecturer's blessing.

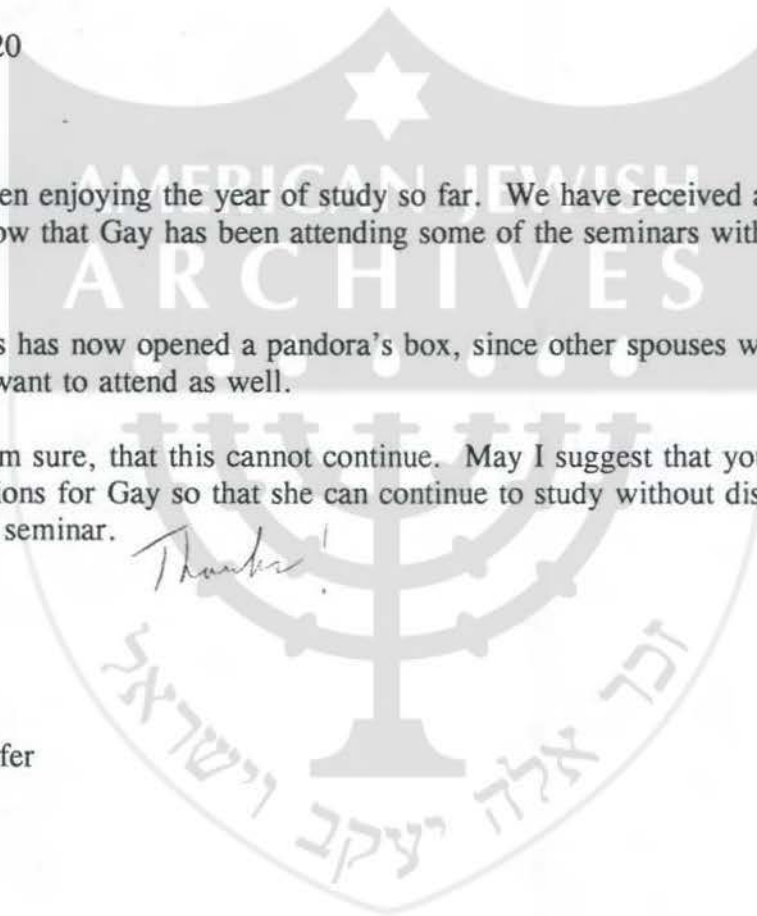
Unfortunately, this has now opened a pandora's box, since other spouses who we interviewed and turned down want to attend as well.

You understand I'm sure, that this cannot continue. May I suggest that you audio or videotape the sessions for Gay so that she can continue to study without disrupting the equilibrium in the seminar.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Nathan Laufer
President



BARRY CURTISS-LUSHER

137 DAHLIA STREET • DENVER, COLORADO 80220 • (303) 333.4636 PHONE • (303) 331.8977 FACSIMILE

January 25, 1995

Rabbi Nathan Laufer
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Nathan:

I thought that a response to your letter of January 19 was appropriate.

First of all, I suggest that if you wish to discuss Gay's attendance at the seminar held on the evening of our 20th anniversary or the subsequent session, which she attended at Rabbi Kimmelman's invitation, you ought to contact Gay herself. As you know, she was not shy about discussing with you directly, in person at Snowbird last June and subsequently by telephone, the possibility of auditing the seminar, at her own expense. The circumstances of her attendance at the two sessions in January can best be addressed to her directly.

Although I know that Gay has been quite disappointed that she has been unable to attend the sessions even in an auditing capacity, I know that she had no intention of "disrupting the equilibrium in the seminar", Rabbi Friedman's admonition about seizing leadership opportunities ("do it and don't tell the Board") notwithstanding. Given the lack of attendance of several of the participants in the group (albeit "ex-officio"), she had hoped - but certainly not counted on - that there might eventually be a spot for her. However, since this apparently is not the case, I am sure that Gay will accept that and continue her study without the benefits of the group or direct contact with the teachers. I have in fact been taping (audio) the sessions, with the teacher's permission of course, and that has proven valuable to Gay, to me, and to several others in the group who have made use of my tapes. However, as I am sure you know, it does not replace the personal contact and special nature of attending the seminars. If it did, there would be little reason for the considerable expense to send the teachers here in the first place.

With respect to the rest of your letter, I have a couple of comments of my own. I have indeed been enjoying the seminars immensely so far, considerably beyond my expectations. I greatly appreciate the opportunity, and I have been soaking it up. I look forward to meeting Dr. Gampel, although I wish that we could have had more with Rabbi Kimmelman. He was sensational as a lecturer, a teacher, a quick

Rabbi Nathan Laufer
January 25, 1995
page two

wit, and a scholar. He whetted our appetite, and I think that we all wish we could have more study time with him. He is an exceptional person and a wonderful teacher.

As you know from my original application and our subsequent interview and telephone conversations, I have never been in agreement with your approach with respect to spouses (mine or those of my Denver classmates). After having had our seminar week at Snowbird and now eight sessions in Denver, I am even more quizzical. It seems to me that much of what we have been studying supports notions of familial involvement, imbuing Jewish values in the home, and studying together as bases for Jewish commitment and Jewish communal leadership, and certainly Jewish continuity. Although including those of our spouses who want to study with us and who are willing to make the commitment expected of us might present some difficulties, excluding them is equally problematic. I think that the fact that some of our spouses want to attend, and are willing to make the commitment required to do so, is admirable, and I would not compare it to a Greek myth about insatiable curiosity leading to the release of demons and plagues into the world. Perhaps opening the door of the cheder to more of those who want to learn is a better metaphor than opening Pandora's box. While I understand that there are no easy answers, if precedent and the sanctity of a selection process for leadership were not open to question, would we have ever gotten as far as the Rabbinic era? As a kohanim, perhaps I should not question it as much. Or, perhaps I will learn more to the contrary with Dr. Gampel and our future teachers.

As my final comment on your letter, I was also perplexed about your reference to "disrupting the equilibrium in the seminar". I thought that the atmosphere, balance, and energy of the group was great in Snowbird, and that group included a number of the spouses. In fact, I thought that the spouses who were involved in Snowbird added a strong, positive, cohesive dimension to the group. I am not aware of a different equilibrium that has been created without them, and I certainly have not detected anything positive resulting from their exclusion.

Rabbi Nathan Laufer
January 25, 1995
page three

After some contemplation, I have decided to send this letter to you without first discussing it with our group in Denver (or their spouses). It is not my intent to further exaggerate an issue that is, or at least I think ought to be, tangential to the real focus of what we are attempting to do. Although I wish the issue would have been resolved differently, and more easily, I do not believe that it needs to become a group issue or a point of leadership or conflict. By the same token, I do not wish for this exchange of correspondence to become an object for lashon horah. Accordingly, it seems best to me to simply copy people in on the exchange of letters. That way they will know that I am speaking only for myself, and to you.

I look forward to seeing you this summer.

Sincerely,



Barry Curtiss-Lusher

cc (with enclosure):

Wexner Denver Classmates
Rabbi Herb Friedman
Rabbi Reuven Kimmelman
Rabbi Dan Gordis



Herzl Jewish Day School
2450 S. Wabash
Denver, Colorado 80231
(303) 755-1846

January 6, 1995

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue, 9th floor
New York, New York 10025

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

I am sending you an article which was recently published in the Intermountain Jewish News in which I quote your idea regarding a campus for Jewish education.

I also send to you best regards from Stanton and Jane E. Rosenbaum. Jane is the president of our Board of Trustees.

When you have some time, I would appreciate having the opportunity to discuss with you the vision of a campus for Jewish education in Denver.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David B. Finell
Director

DBF:dja

February 21, 1995

Mr. David B. Finell
Herzl Jewish Day School
2450 South Wabash
Denver, CO 80231

Dear Mr. Finell,

I am usually a bit late with my correspondence, but never as badly as this. An unusual combination of circumstances, including much travel, plus a 4-week bout of flu, has resulted in a terrible backlog of mail which only now is coming under control. Please accept my apology.

The article in the Intermountain Jewish News expressing your philosophy of education resonated exactly with my own. I thrilled to read it, and feel certain that you will enjoy great success because your basic ideas are so valid. I would like very much to be helpful to you, but I don't know exactly how. What is it that you think I might be able to do?

A model for you might be Boca Raton, Florida, with a present Jewish population somewhere between 50 to 70,000, and constantly growing. They have adopted the campus concept to the maximum, i.e. including a Community Center and a Senior Citizens residence in addition to the Day School. I would recommend 3 persons from whom you can obtain lots of information: (Use my name as door-opener; I shall send them notes to expect your call).

Tom Katz - Federation Board member
8765 Horseshoe Lane
Boca Raton, FL 33496
(407) 451-4046

Marvin Kirsner - Federation Board member
5868 Hamilton Way
Boca Raton, FL 33496
(407) 994-1394

Barbara Schuman - former president of the Donna Klein Jewish
Academy

3790 Kings Way
Boca Raton, FL 33434
(407) 483-8883

I have no current knowledge of the wealthiest Jewish families in Denver,
but Stanton Rosenbaum can be helpful in making a short list, as can Bob Loup.
I might not recognize a single name, but who knows? Perhaps we should set up
a conference call between you, Jane and myself - and start from there.

Sincerely yours,



Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

cc: Jeff Auerbach
401 Monaco Parkway
Denver, CO 80220

Barry Curtiss-Lusher
137 Dahlia Street
Denver, CO 80220

Jane & Stanton Rosenbaum
5365 South Fulton Court
Englewood, CO 80111

