

1 ORAL HISTORY OF: Jane Sherman
2 INTERVIEWED BY: Ruth Broder
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4 LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Jewish Federation of Metropolitan
5 Detroit
6 SUBJECT MATTER: Family, Jewish community
7 leadership, Israel

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9 MS. BRODER: This is Ruth Broder. I'm conducting an
10 oral history interview with Jane Sherman at the Jewish
11 Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, the Max M. Fisher
12 Building, and it is May 25th of the year 2005.

13 Jane, do we have permission to use your words and
14 thoughts in the future for educational and historical research
15 and documentation?

16 MS. SHERMAN: Yes.

17 MS. BRODER: Let's go immediately to talking about
18 personal things. I think we'll do that first. I want to know
19 about your early family history, I want to know about where
20 you were born, where you lived as a child, and your parents.

21 MS. SHERMAN: I was born in Detroit, and I lived
22 here on and off -- my mother was very ill. As a young child,
23 I spent some time in Tucson with her, some time here. I did
24 go to school in Tucson a couple months here and there when I
25 was very young, but basically I started school here, Hampton

1 Elementary. In seventh grade my mother was very ill and
2 living in Tucson all the time. I went away to school, to St.
3 Louis, where I went to public school there, too. In 1952 my
4 mother passed away. I stayed in St. Louis and graduated from
5 a public high school there with only 136 graduates.

6 My father remarried to Margorie in '53.

7 MS. BRODER: From St. Louis did you come back and
8 live in Detroit or did you go on to college?

9 MS. SHERMAN: I was here in the summertimes. I went
10 to college. I went to Sandia College for Women for two years.
11 Then I got married to Larry, and I transferred to Wayne.

12 MS. BRODER: Did you graduate from Wayne?

13 MS. SHERMAN: I had one semester left, and one
14 semester consisted of all courses I didn't want to take. I
15 was a science major.

16 MS. BRODER: So you don't have your degree.

17 MS. SHERMAN: I do not have a degree.

18 MS. BRODER: So why don't you go back and get it?

19 MS. SHERMAN: I have no real desire to get a degree.

20 If it had been today, I would have gone to business
21 school, but women just didn't go to business school

22 MS. BRODER: So you got married when you were 19
23 years old?

24 MS. SHERMAN: Just 20.

25 MS. BRODER: What about your religious upbringing,

1 if you were in Tucson, St. Louis, Detroit?

2 MS. SHERMAN: Well, my religious upbringing was
3 probably like everybody else's of my generation. Grew up in a
4 Reform congregation. Like every other young person, hated
5 going to Sunday school, as we did then, and had minimal,
6 minimal religious upbringing, and very little at home.

7 MS. BRODER: Were you confirmed?

8 MS. SHERMAN: I was confirmed.

9 MS. BRODER: In St. Louis?

10 MS. SHERMAN: Yes, in St. Louis. There was just
11 very little religion at home at all. You just didn't have it.
12 It's unusual when you think of who my father was, but there
13 was no religious upbringing. But he was the same way. To the
14 day he died, I think the only time he ever went to synagogue
15 was Yom Kippur, only to open the ark, and then he'd leave.
16 It's not something I'm proud of. It's just -- because my life
17 is completely different today. Just the way I grew up.

18 MS. BRODER: And we'll talk about that. But that's
19 important to know, how it started.

20 What would be your earliest Jewish memories then?

21 MS. SHERMAN: Probably my earliest Jewish memories
22 is my closest friend, Alice Robbins, I went to their house on
23 Friday nights, and they made Shabbat.

24 MS. BRODER: That was in St. Louis?

25 MS. SHERMAN: That was in Detroit. That is my

1 earliest -- I mean nobody knew from Shabbat in my home. But
2 other than that, other than the experience that our generation
3 as Reform Jews had in synagogue, there was very little.
4 Little education, little history, everything I know today has
5 been basically self-taught.

6 MS. BRODER: When you and Larry got married -- I
7 know Larry comes from a Conservative background -- did you
8 then start a Jewish home?

9 MS. SHERMAN: I did, but it was not from Larry's
10 wishes. It was really more from mine. And it really didn't
11 start until a couple years after we were married.

12 We went to Israel.

13 MS. BRODER: When was that?

14 MS. SHERMAN: In 1962. So we had been married three
15 years, and I was just 22. And that's what changed my life,
16 and I believe Larry's. His education was not much more than
17 mine Jewishly, even though his mother had kept kosher for many
18 years. By the time I knew him, she had stopped keeping
19 kosher. He grew up in a Conservative synagogue, but his
20 Jewish education wasn't any better than mine other than the
21 fact that he had a bar mitzvah and he could read Hebrew, which
22 I couldn't do at that time.

23 MS. BRODER: That first trip to Israel, you already
24 had children by then.

25 MS. SHERMAN: I had one child. When we got married,

1 we were asked to become involved here in what was then the
2 Junior Division, and I was on the road to move up in the
3 Junior Division when we moved to Florida. So we were living
4 in Florida when we went to Israel in 1962.

5 We went to Israel on the first Young Leadership
6 Mission, and I was the young leader, I was the baby, by a far
7 stretch of the imagination. There was nobody even close to us
8 in age. But that changed our lives. We were there for three
9 weeks. It was a different Israel, obviously, than it is
10 today. And I wanted to stay. I wanted to make aliyah. I
11 felt that this was a chance to build the country, and in 1962
12 it needed building.

13 Larry felt that as a retailer he had nothing to
14 offer, and so history is that we came back here, did not go on
15 aliyah, but I threw myself into the Jewish world, and I guess
16 that was my answer. Since I couldn't go on aliyah, I became
17 involved. In Miami at the time I became instrumental in
18 starting a young adult women's division down there. And then
19 we moved back here.

20 MS. BRODER: When did you move back here?

21 MS. SHERMAN: 1964.

22 MS. BRODER: Did you immediately become active in
23 the Federation here?

24 MS. SHERMAN: Yes, I think so. In fact I think
25 Shelby Tauber brought me into the Federation. Even though I

1 was very young -- it's hard for me to remember what the exact
2 dates were, whether it was '64, '65, '66. But by '67 there
3 was no doubt. By then I was pretty well enmeshed in the
4 campaign scene and what was going on in the Women's Division
5 at the time.

6 MS. BRODER: Had you been back to Israel by '67?

7 MS. SHERMAN: No. We did not go back until '72. We
8 had young kids. Larry was trying to build his business when
9 we came back here, so we did not go back to Israel until '72.

10 But '67 was a turning point, I think for all of my
11 generation. You included.

12 MS. BRODER: Yes. Absolutely.

13 MS. SHERMAN: Which is something that our children
14 and grandchildren don't have today. I remember being on the
15 front lawn, working in my yard in June of '67, and David was
16 about six years old, and his coming home from school and my
17 explaining to him what was going on as I listened to the radio
18 outside.

19 And I have to tell you, there was one other Jewish
20 memory that I do have. When the state of Israel was formed,
21 we were living in the Lee Plaza Hotel at the time, and I
22 remember distinctly sitting with my father, listening to the
23 vote in the U.N. Distinctly. I mean I can remember where I
24 was sitting, where he was sitting. I remember exactly what
25 the radio -- those old-fashioned radio. But I don't consider

1 that having the impact at that time that the candle lighting
2 had at the Robins' house on Shabbat.

3 MS. BRODER: Let's talk a little bit about your
4 children, their spouses, your grandchildren, because there's a
5 whole big family now.

6 MS. SHERMAN: We have three children. David, who is
7 married to Ellen, has five children, the oldest almost 21.
8 Jessica is going to be 21, Andrew is going to be 19, Dakota,
9 Josh and Lily. Lily is 2, Josh is 4.

10 Sylvia, who is married to Randy Wolfe, and they have
11 two boys, Stanley, who is 9, and Aviv, who is 4.

12 Scott, who is married to Robbie, and they have three
13 children: Samantha, who is 8, Justin 5, and Emily is 2.

14 MS. BRODER: That's very good that you can remember
15 all those names like that.

16 MS. SHERMAN: And I can remember their birthdays.

17 MS. BRODER: Well, I don't have to know that now.

18 So you have 10 grandchildren, three children, and
19 you and Larry. That's a big family. You have Shabbat.

20 What's the big turnaround now that you have Shabbat dinner?

21 MS. SHERMAN: It's chaos in our house. When our
22 children were born, we made the decision that we would not go
23 out for Shabbat. We would stay home. We would make Shabbat
24 dinner. And the children would have to be home, too. As they
25 got older and they became teenagers, they can invite their

1 friends for dinner, and they could go out after dinner. We
2 don't go out, period. It doesn't make any difference what it
3 is, but we stay home for Shabbat. Today everybody comes,
4 barring some unforeseen circumstances, somebody wants to go to
5 temple. But we are home every Friday night. The children all
6 come. And I think they enjoy it. I mean there's a fight over
7 who's going to pass the bread, who's going to light the
8 candles, who's going to make the motzi, who is going to say
9 the Kiddush, since they've all been through Hillel or are
10 going through Hillel and they can all do it. It's very
11 exciting. It's noisy, but it's exciting.

12 **MS. BRODER:** Have you been on a big family trip to
13 Israel? Probably not because those little children are too
14 young. What's the biggest family trip you've taken to Israel?

15 **MS. SHERMAN:** We went on a family mission when Scott
16 was bar mitzvahed. That's 1978. Then I took Sylvia and David
17 on a prime minister's mission to Poland. And Jessica and
18 Andrew -- Jessica was 10, Andrew was 8 -- I took them on a
19 family mission in the summertime, but we had our apartment
20 there at that time, so we lived there for two weeks before we
21 joined the family mission. We were discussing it last night
22 because Andrew is going on Birthright on Saturday. I'm more
23 excited I think than he is.

24 **MS. BRODER:** We'll talk about Birthright. We'll get
25 to that because I want to talk about that.

1 When you came back from Florida, at some point you
2 became interested in working in the Jewish community here in
3 Detroit.

4 **MS. SHERMAN:** I never thought about it. I just did
5 it.

6 **MS. BRODER:** Do you remember some of your early
7 jobs, what you were doing?

8 **MS. SHERMAN:** I was involved with the Women's
9 Division. I don't remember what the first one was. I do
10 remember Shelby taking me downtown to my first meeting. I
11 don't remember, but I know I did the entire flare of jobs in
12 the Women's Division. I started at the very bottom. By the
13 time I became campaign chairman, I had done every position.

14 It was you and I, Ruth, that started the Worker
15 Training Program, not only in the Women's Division, but
16 throughout the United States, where we trained people how to
17 solicit properly.

18 **MS. BRODER:** I thought of that when Jenny Jones
19 died, the trip to Florida.

20 **MS. SHERMAN:** The trip to Florida with the towels.

21 **MS. BRODER:** Yes. Explain that.

22 **MS. SHERMAN:** Ruth and I went to Florida to do a
23 worker training mission in Sarasota, and Jenny Jones, who was
24 really a mentor to both of us, who has just passed away. She
25 was past president of the Women's Division of the National

1 United Jewish Appeal. She had us come down, and we stayed
2 with her. Jenny was a little compulsive. Ruthie and I
3 couldn't get out of the shower and dry ourselves off, and the
4 towels would disappear. That didn't have a lot to do with
5 Jewish education.

6 MS. BRODER: We went down there for the purpose of
7 training workers as you recall.

8 You had many, many jobs. You have a very, very
9 thick portfolio, and I think we have to talk about some of
10 them, and talk about which ones you liked even more than
11 others, because you really have not only gone through the
12 gamut of everything in Detroit, but nationally, too, and all
13 the way to Israel. It's hard to know exactly where to start
14 because some of the things you did nationally you did even
15 before you were the chairman in Detroit or the president.
16 Like the Young Leadership Cabinet. So let's talk about that.

17 MS. SHERMAN: Well, I think it was in '73 that I was
18 asked to go on the National Women's Board. And in '73 I was a
19 young girl, and the Women's Board was, as we used to say, a
20 bunch of gray-haired old ladies. It was not true, but our
21 perception of it. Very wealthy, didn't do much. I was asked
22 by Elaine Winnick to come on the board.

23 It was just after the Yom Kippur War. I had done
24 some work as state chairman of Michigan. I had gone out in
25 the state and solicited right after the war and done a lot of

1 work, and she asked me to go on the board. I got poo-pooed by
2 a lot of young women throughout the country when I did that
3 because they felt it was the wrong place for a young woman to
4 be, but I had never thought of the issue of not getting
5 involved in the men's world.

6 There was a Young Men's Leadership Cabinet, which we
7 had always been on the periphery of, never a part of. The
8 year before I came on the board we had positioned the Young
9 Men's Leadership Cabinet for them to take women on and we were
10 turned down. We still razz them today. I remember standing
11 outside the meeting with plaques with Donna Kahn in the Hilton
12 Hotel in New York, that they should put women on the Men's
13 Cabinet.

14 Anyway, as I became more involved in the Women's
15 Division, I became more involved nationally throughout the
16 country, and a lot of young women felt that we had been shot
17 down, that we should do something for the young women, that we
18 should begin to educate them and train them, because that
19 really was the purpose of the Young Men's Cabinet, and they
20 did a fabulous job in those days. The education programs, I
21 still have all the books at home. And far beyond, the
22 missions they took to Israel. In fact my second trip to
23 Israel was a Young Leadership Cabinet mission in 1972.

24 So Irving Bernstein, who at that time was head of
25 the United Jewish Appeal, the professional, asked me if I

1 would start the Young Women's Cabinet. So I had a couple
2 meetings in New York with five or ten women throughout the
3 United States, and in '77 we started the Young Women's
4 Leadership Cabinet, which today is history. It's a viable,
5 productive cabinet today. They are now meshed with the Men's
6 Cabinet even though they are separate entities.

7 My purpose at the time was to get women involved.
8 They felt they couldn't get into the men's world. The glass
9 ceiling was very low in those days. They also couldn't get
10 into the blue haired, older ladies, as they talked about the
11 Women's Board, the National Women's Board. So it was
12 important.

13 Our meetings were geared around education. These
14 women went back into their communities, started young groups,
15 be it men or women or both, and I think much of what we see
16 today in the country is because of what was done in both the
17 cabinets, but for women obviously it was the Young Women's
18 Leadership Cabinet.

19 MS. BRODER: Did it have a heavy component of
20 campaigning, too?

21 MS. SHERMAN: Yes. Well, that was a major -- it was
22 a UJA -- well, they don't call it UJA anymore. Regretfully
23 somebody threw that name out with the bath water.

24 First of all there's solicitation training, but
25 there's a minimum gift, and everybody is solicited every year

1 when they go on their retreat, and there are very stringent
2 requirements to stay on the Cabinet, to stay a part of the
3 Cabinet. But the basis is to raise money and to train these
4 people to go out to raise money.

5 You see today presidents and campaign chairpersons
6 throughout the country, they're all graduates of either the
7 Men's or Women's Young Leadership Cabinet.

8 **MS. BRODER:** I think so. When they come back
9 locally, the women have a big place in the community, and I
10 want to talk about that. But before we get to that, I want to
11 talk about your movement up in the Women's Division because
12 you became campaign chair and you became the president.

13 **MS. SHERMAN:** Yes.

14 **MS. BRODER:** So talk a little bit about those years.

15 **MS. SHERMAN:** Well, as I said, I worked every
16 division in the Women's Division. We're showing our age.
17 They now call it the Women's Department.

18 **MS. BRODER:** I know. I still call it the Division.

19 **MS. SHERMAN:** I had worked, whether it's chaired for
20 a gift, started the worker training program, as we had nothing
21 in those days, worked in every division, including -- which
22 was the Pace Setter's Gift. In our day it was \$500; that was
23 the top level in the Women's Division. In 1979 I was asked to
24 become campaign chairman for the Women's Division. And I
25 loved it. I'm a campaigner; I was. As you know, you were a

1 campaigner. We spent a lot of time together working for
2 campaign and doing these things together.

3 MS. BRODER: What was the level of giving when you
4 were the chair of the Women's Division?

5 MS. SHERMAN: As I say, the top level was \$500.

6 MS. BRODER: It hadn't gone to \$2,000?

7 MS. SHERMAN: No. When I was campaign chairman, the
8 top level was still \$500.

9 MS. BRODER: And now?

10 MS. SHERMAN: Well, now the top meeting level is
11 \$10,000. But we have women giving \$100,000, which is true
12 throughout the country. If you remember, you and I in 1973
13 stood at what was then the United Hebrew Schools and gave away
14 our lives and both of us got up and announced gifts of \$5,000.

15 MS. BRODER: Yeah.

16 MS. SHERMAN: Very clearly I remember standing in
17 the back of that room, and we thought we were giving away the
18 world. I mean \$5,000 in 1973 to both of us was more than a
19 lot of money.

20 MS. BRODER: That was the reaction to the Yom Kippur
21 War as I recall.

22 MS. SHERMAN: Yes.

23 MS. BRODER: Being president of the Women's
24 Division, how did you feel about that?

25 MS. SHERMAN: Well, I did not want to be president.

1 My heart was in campaigning, not in education. I did it
2 because we had a new professional, and I promised I would
3 train her. But I had gone back to work professionally in the
4 advertising business, and I really wanted to do that. And I
5 also had major, major jobs out in the national and
6 international world, and I really felt that that's where I
7 wanted to put my expertise.

8 I did take the presidency for a year. I'm not going
9 to go down in history as the best president the Women's
10 Division ever had. I probably was a very good campaign
11 chairman, but it wasn't where my head was; it really wasn't.
12 And I did do it for one year. That was the agreement I had
13 with Dulcie, and trained Michelle Passon, and went on to other
14 things.

15 MS. BRODER: Before we go nationally, because once
16 we do that, there's a lot to get into, you did take on another
17 big job in this community, and that was as a campaign chair,
18 the general campaign chair.

19 MS. SHERMAN: I've never coveted any jobs. I
20 believe that the job comes to the person. If they've earned
21 it, they'll get it. There was only one job that I really
22 coveted, and that was I wanted to be the first woman general
23 chairman of the Detroit campaign. Now we're already into the
24 '80s. And I had that position. And I would say that of all
25 the positions that I had in this community, that was the most

1 exciting, the most gratifying that I've ever done. I loved
2 it. Now, obviously I had some extra added incentives, but I
3 think with or without -- David Hermelin was my co-chair the
4 first year. Paul Borman was my co-chair the second year. I
5 had two of the greatest men to work with. David and I thought
6 and worked together exactly alike.

7 But even besides that, it wouldn't have made any
8 difference. I just felt that this community gave so much to
9 me in that job, that it really was the most gratifying
10 experience I had.

11 MS. BRODER: Because you were the first woman, and
12 this was unique and it isn't unique anymore, how do you think
13 you were received by the men? Especially the older men who
14 were so set in their ways.

15 MS. SHERMAN: I don't think it was too much of a
16 problem except if I had to go to solicit the older men. That
17 I think was more difficult for them. Those of my generation,
18 even the younger ones, I don't think it was a problem. Some
19 resented it. Today it's a foregone conclusion. But I was a
20 campaigner and I was going to do it anyway.

21 I don't think that there was a resentment. I think
22 that it took awhile for them to understand that we were as
23 good, probably better.

24 MS. BRODER: Better trained certainly.

25 MS. SHERMAN: And better solicitors. And of course

1 I believe that you raise money based on education, you don't
2 raise it based on peer pressure. And that was a whole turning
3 point for a generation when we came into the job. But I never
4 felt any animosity, anything at all. And I loved every minute
5 of the job.

6 MS. BRODER: It was tricky at the beginning. I did
7 the first worker training program, and they were never
8 solicited. You will recall what it was like with the men.

9 MS. SHERMAN: Yes.

10 MS. BRODER: I think we should get back now to your
11 national jobs because there is a whole list, and if we can get
12 through a lot of it, I think we should. I'm going to put that
13 aside, because I want to talk about missions first, because
14 missions are a very important part of your life. So let's go
15 there first, before we talk about the national jobs. Your
16 part in missions in this community and nationally.

17 MS. SHERMAN: Well, that's where my Jewish life
18 really started, was on a mission in 1962, and then we went
19 back in '72. Then you and I started going, '74, '75, our
20 first trip to Poland, Romania. '76, '77. I realized it was
21 probably the best way to involve people in Jewish life. To
22 show them the state of Israel, to show them what had happened
23 in Europe in the Holocaust. It was all there.

24 When I became campaign chairman, the first thing I
25 did, I went to Sol Drachler and I said, I want to take my

1 campaign executive committee to Israel. It was unheard of,
2 first of all, for this community to pay for a mission, to
3 underwrite a mission, and for women it was even more so. But
4 we went, and I think there were 24 of us. I think that was
5 the beginning of my leading missions because after that I
6 began to lead missions both locally, along with Larry. We did
7 one every year.

8 I had done a couple prime minister missions, and
9 then when David and I became campaign chairmen, I pushed very
10 much to take a group to the former Soviet Union. It wasn't
11 the former Soviet Union in those times; it was Refusnik time.
12 We divided up into three groups. I was the staff with my
13 group, and almost didn't get out of Russia at the time. It
14 was a very scary time, but a very exciting time.

15 MS. BRODER: What did you do that you couldn't get
16 out?

17 MS. SHERMAN: Well, you don't yell at the Russians
18 and I'm a yeller. But it wasn't us. We had young people on
19 my trip whose tickets were not confirmed. The Blumensteins
20 and the Podolskys. They could have been stuck there forever.
21 So we had to a few issues to deal with.

22 We went to Riga, we met with Refusniks, we put the
23 little kopeks in the phones or the dimes in the phones and
24 we'd call up with our secret codes. We'd arrange to meet them
25 and we'd take the underground, the subway. We all learned how

1 to read Russian, we all had our phone numbers memorized, and
2 we met with the Refusniks. We took the Jewish material we had
3 smuggled in or jeans, which were selling for a fortune. They
4 could live for a month on the sale of jeans and cameras and
5 medical equipment. And it was an eye-opener to all of us.

6 Today it's a completely different world, but we met
7 some of the very famous people that came out. The Slaypaks, I
8 became very, very close friends with them. They now live in
9 Israel. These were all Refusniks that were giving their
10 lives, had lost their jobs and could not get out of the former
11 Soviet Union.

12 We also went to Riga, where we met more Refusniks,
13 and it's also where my husband's parents were born. We saw
14 the house my father-in-law was born in, so it was very
15 exciting from his family historical point of view.

16 When we left and got to Frankfurt, we just felt so
17 good to get out of this environment of being closed in. You
18 and I had been there before. But this was quite a different
19 experience, meeting with the Refusniks.

20 **MS. BRODER:** Talk a little bit about the Poland
21 Romania trip, too.

22 **MS. SHERMAN:** Well, '75. Ruthie and I went with a
23 group of women led by Sylvia Hassenfeld. I believe it was the
24 second time an organized group from the Jewish world had gone
25 to Poland. I know we used to get up on the ceiling and check

1 the little lights above. We knew we were being bugged. We
2 knew we could not say anything in our rooms.

3 We had a young girl --I think it was in Romania --
4 came to our room, wanted to leave the country. I think we
5 turned on the TV or whatever that made a lot of noise, and we
6 talked to her.

7 One of the most interesting experiences, we went to
8 the Yiddish theater in Warsaw. Yiddish theater was not played
9 by Jews. They were all non-Jews. At intermission we went
10 outside and a young girl came over and talked to I think just
11 you and me, and we found out she Jewish, and we had this
12 conversation with her about how she'd like to leave. All of a
13 sudden the KGB was escorting us, supposedly clandestinely, but
14 they all had black leather jackets on, came in and told us we
15 had to leave.

16 The group of 24 women was supposed to get on the
17 bus. If you remember, Ruthie, you and I did not get on a bus.
18 We wandered around Warsaw that evening. But it was first
19 experience, I think for all of us, of what it was like to live
20 under this kind of environment, where you couldn't be a Jew
21 freely. That, coupled with the trip to Krakow, to Auschwitz,
22 to Buchenwald was mind boggling for all of us. I had to been
23 to a concentration camp in Austria in 1962, and somebody had
24 closed the door on the ovens for me. This was just as earth-
25 shaking or devastating to me as that first experience had

1 been. So that was quite a trip.

2 On other trips later on I remember meeting Romanians
3 -- I think it was '72 we met the Romanians coming out on the
4 train in Vienna. I traveled from the former Soviet Union on
5 planes with the Refusniks and the Russians that were getting
6 out, which itself was an exciting experience. When you touch
7 down on the tarmac at Ben Gurion Airport, and they get out and
8 literally kiss the ground, it's quite a feeling. You want to
9 kiss the ground, too, but for them it's even -- we live in a
10 free world, but they did not.

11 MS. BRODER: Miracle missions.

12 MS. SHERMAN: Okay. Well, I led numerous missions,
13 and in 1991 this community decided we were going to run a
14 large mission, non-solicitation, so we could show the
15 community that Federation was not --

16 MS. BRODER: It had a reputation -- I don't know
17 what word you're looking for.

18 MS. SHERMAN: Well, we wanted to reach out to the
19 entire community, whether they could give \$10 or they could
20 give \$10,000. So this mission was open to all. David
21 Hermelin was the chairman, I was one of the co-chairmen, and
22 it became much bigger than we ever anticipated. I went into
23 the office and started working because the young woman we had
24 really wasn't experienced with Federation. She was a travel
25 agent. And I wound up serving as the professional staff

1 running that mission.

2 We took 1300 people. It was three planes that flew
3 into Detroit for the first time ever and went non-stop to
4 Israel. It was quite a chore, but it was very, very exciting.
5 And to this day -- in fact somebody came up to me the other
6 day and said, We were on Miracle Mission One with you on bus
7 number whatever. And I didn't know all the 1288 people. I
8 knew every name but I did not know every person. But it
9 achieved its purpose. It opened up Federation to the
10 community, and we got many, many new people involved.

11 It was so successful we decided to do it two years
12 later. Bob Aronson asked if I would come in and serve as the
13 professional for Federation to run the next Miracle Mission.
14 I told him I would do it, but I would do it as an unpaid
15 volunteer because I would not get paid for something that I
16 felt that I wanted to do for the community. So I had a full-
17 time job here, and I hired Ruth Broder to be my assistant, and
18 I think we had a pretty good time.

19 We limited this trip to two planes because it was
20 very, very difficult to add the third plane on, and we took
21 870 or whatever the number was to Israel. I ran it from the
22 beginning to the end with Ruthie's help. We did it together
23 as a team.

24 I wrote a book after we finished the first mission
25 on how to run a Miracle Mission. I did get some advice from

1 Miami, which they had done the first one. And I think today
2 what the community is still doing is based on what happened on
3 those first two missions.

4 MS. BRODER: Are people still calling you because
5 they know you authored that book?

6 MS. SHERMAN: I get calls once in a while from a
7 community, but I think most of them are coming into the office
8 now.

9 MS. BRODER: Did you travel around the country and
10 talk to other communities?

11 MS. SHERMAN: Yes, I went to about five or six
12 different communities when they wanted to do big missions and
13 how to do it. In fact I got called by the executive in
14 Atlanta last fall, and asked a lot of questions on what to do
15 and how to do it.

16 MS. BRODER: Let's move on to Israel because that
17 plays such an important part in your life.

18 MS. SHERMAN: Oh, we're moving to Israel?

19 MS. BRODER: Yeah. You've been wanting to do that
20 for a long time. Do you still have that feeling? Would you
21 still do that?

22 MS. SHERMAN: No, because my grandchildren are here.
23 I'm not leaving here. It's not that I don't have the feeling.
24 I still regret we never made aliyah. We bought a house in
25 1980 and I spent the summers there for many, many years, and

1 the children would come over and spend the summers with me,
2 and Larry would travel back and forth. We sold it about six
3 years ago. I regret that, as an Israeli, which I am. I
4 should own a piece of land, and we don't.

5 MS. BRODER: Can you be a citizen and not own land?

6 MS. SHERMAN: Oh, yes. A lot of people don't own
7 land. But I feel that I should.

8 MS. BRODER: Talk about becoming an Israeli citizen
9 and how that happened and how it made you feel.

10 MS. SHERMAN: Well, I felt that I wanted to make
11 aliyah for so many years, and I did drive Larry crazy on the
12 issue. But for many years you couldn't take out status in
13 Israel unless your husband did when you were married. There
14 was some law and I don't know what it was. The minute they
15 changed the law, I became an Israeli citizen. I mean it's not
16 a big deal. You file papers and you get a medical exam, and
17 you go through a process, and then you get an Israeli ID card,
18 and after a year you get a passport. To this day I'm very
19 excited to have this.

20 MS. BRODER: Do you travel when you go there on your
21 Israeli passport?

22 MS. SHERMAN: You have to. The law is you must go
23 in and out of the country on your Israeli passport.

24 MS. BRODER: What a nice feeling.

25 MS. SHERMAN: I don't have to go through patdown

1 control because they have these hand things that they use now,
2 and you stick your hand in there and they put you through.
3 But Larry has to go through.

4 MS. BRODER: He does not want to do the same thing?

5 MS. SHERMAN: No. No. He has no desire to do it.
6 I can vote.

7 MS. BRODER: You can vote?

8 MS. SHERMAN: I can vote. You have to go there to
9 vote. There is no absentee ballots. You must be in Israel to
10 vote.

11 MS. BRODER: How many times a year do you go to
12 Israel do you think?

13 MS. SHERMAN: Well, now I'm going a minimum of
14 three. There were times that I was going much, much more. Or
15 I was there for longer periods of time.

16 MS. BRODER: Do you want to talk about what your
17 next trip there is for now?

18 MS. SHERMAN: My next trip in two weeks?

19 MS. BRODER: Yes.

20 MS. SHERMAN: Well, I'm going for the Jewish Agency
21 board meeting and assembly. It happens to be at the time
22 because my father has just passed away, and he was the
23 founding chairman of the Jewish Agency. They're also doing a
24 special tribute to him at the opening of the Jewish Agency
25 Assembly. So the first time in history my entire family, all

1 my siblings plus my step-mother, will be in Israel, plus our
2 three children.

3 MS. BRODER: And their spouses?

4 MS. SHERMAN: No.

5 MS. BRODER: And no grandchildren?

6 MS. SHERMAN: No, my grandchildren are all out and
7 about. They're at camp, Jessica is working, and the other
8 ones are too little at this stage.

9 MS. BRODER: Let's go to the national scene. You
10 moved to the national scene early. Even before you had the
11 big jobs in Detroit, you were already working nationally in
12 different areas. Can you talk about some of that, other than
13 the Young Leadership Camp.

14 MS. SHERMAN: Well, I did the Women's Division, as I
15 said. I started there as a state chairman and then I went on
16 the National Women's Division Board. By being chairman of the
17 Young Leadership Cabinet opened up a lot of avenues for me,
18 obviously, and I was an officer with the United Jewish Appeal.
19 That's what they were at that time. United Jewish Appeal had
20 maybe 20 officers. So I was involved in everything that was
21 going on, all decisions that were being made.

22 Probably one of the most important decisions I
23 remember is when we sat around a table and made the decision
24 at the UJA to take on Project Renewal, that Menachem Begin had
25 come to the world Jewish community and told them about the

1 social gap that was beginning to be created in Israel and how
2 we could take on that program. I remember distinctly the
3 table and the vote, because it was not unanimous at the time,
4 how we would do it. So that was in 1979 I think.

5 So after that I became very involved in Project
6 Renewal, both for the Detroit community when we took on Ramla.
7 I became the first chairman of the Project Renewal for
8 Detroit, and we began to work in the neighborhood there with
9 the residents, tried to teach them how to teach themselves.
10 Project Renewal was a Model Cities program that began to work
11 because it wasn't the elders telling the generation how to do
12 it; it was involving them in making the decisions. It wasn't
13 the establishment. I can't say that it worked altogether, but
14 it was a beginning, it was a big start.

15 At the time I was spending the summers in Israel, so
16 I could get involved in more and more communities. So I went
17 on and became national chairman of Project Renewal, and went
18 from one community -- that's probably the period that I did
19 more traveling than any. First of all, I went to all
20 communities in Israel. There were 90 neighborhoods. I think
21 I knew every single one of them intimately. And then I would
22 travel around the country here involving people in getting
23 other Federations involved in those communities or enhancing
24 their campaigning because Project Renewal was an over and
25 above campaign.

1 I took up Hebrew at the time. I went to An Ulpan.
2 I learned to speak Hebrew, because you could not go into these
3 neighborhoods at the time unless you knew Hebrew. These
4 people did not speak English at all. So that afforded me the
5 chance to get involved at an international level because
6 Project Renewal was run through the Jewish Agency. Then I
7 went on the board of the Jewish Agency in 1983 and became
8 chairman of Project Renewal through them. So that was one
9 step higher in the hierarchy if you want to say that.

10 But that was a very, very exciting time in the world
11 of Jewish philanthropy. People got involved in their
12 neighborhoods, and it was a different experience than
13 Partnership 2000 is today. People really got excited. We'd
14 take missions, they'd be welcomed into the community. In fact
15 our first Miracle Mission we went to Yavneh, which was the
16 second community that Detroit had taken on, and we had home
17 hospitality for all 1288 of those residents. I think it was
18 during Yom Ha-Atzma 'ut, and we all came back and had a big
19 Yom Ha-Atzma 'ut party afterwards.

20 MS. BRODER: Do we still have a relationship with
21 those communities?

22 MS. SHERMAN: No, which is too bad. But it's been
23 taken over by other communities with regard to -- not Yavneh
24 but Ramla with Partnership 2000.

25 MS. BRODER: In 1984 you were then honored in our

1 partnership city, Ramla.

2 MS. SHERMAN: Oh, I became an honorary resident of
3 Ramla.

4 MS. BRODER: Does that hold up even though we don't
5 have a partnership anymore?

6 MS. SHERMAN: I don't know but they haven't told me
7 I'm not. I don't vote there, but I never did.

8 MS. BRODER: Where do you vote?

9 MS. SHERMAN: I vote in Jerusalem. Although now I
10 vote in Harmadask, because I'm using Jeff Kay's address as my
11 formal address, and he just moved to Harmadask. But I haven't
12 had to vote since he moved.

13 MS. BRODER: You've been on many other committees I
14 know. You were active in Youth Aliyah.

15 MS. SHERMAN: After I got done with the chairmanship
16 of Project Renewal, and I can't remember what year it was, I
17 was on the board of governors of the Jewish Agency, and I was
18 then asked to head the Youth Aliyah Committee, which at the
19 time I was heading it, we had close to 100 Youth Aliyah
20 villages in Israel. Youth Aliyah was residential education
21 for those kids that needed it, for children at risk, those
22 that couldn't stay at home, and needed extra education.

23 I was there in the '90s when the Ethiopians came in
24 and we put them in Youth Aliyah villages because they needed
25 to have a better educational program than their parents.

1 Their parents had not been educated. Today I think in most
2 cases we probably made a mistake. We shouldn't have pulled
3 them out of homes. There should have been some other aspect
4 for them.

5 It was very exciting to watch the growth of these
6 young men and women and how we got them so they can
7 matriculate and go into the army. Many of them would have
8 been dropouts of high school, never would have been able to
9 get into the army, and Youth Aliyah afforded many of these
10 children the opportunity to do so.

11 It was particularly interesting to watch how the
12 Ethiopians in a six- or eight-month period, when they came
13 from a country that was 300 years behind us, had no education,
14 couldn't understand the language, didn't know that the world
15 was round, didn't know how to play with toys. You'd walk into
16 a classroom and they were so well behaved. I remember the
17 first time I walked into a classroom with Ethiopian children,
18 they stood up when I walked up. A year later they were just
19 like the regular Israelis; they didn't stand up when I walked
20 in. But it was really a very exciting experience to watch the
21 children that went there and how they were able to be main-
22 streamed into the society in a very, very short period of
23 time.

24 And this not to obviate the problems we've got with
25 the Ethiopian population today, because we have very, very

1 serious issues that have to be dealt with. But these
2 children, many of them, went on and became very productive
3 citizens and very productive in the state of Israel today.

4 In the '90s and I don't remember what day it was,
5 there was an agreement the Jewish Agency made with the
6 government of Israel, we would turn all the Youth Aliyah
7 villages -- I was no longer chairman at this time -- over to
8 the government except for five of them.

9 MS. BRODER: So we're not that involved?

10 MS. SHERMAN: No. We have five villages today, and
11 the rest is being handled by the government, I don't think as
12 well as we did. I think it was a major mistake. I think it
13 was a mistake from the standpoint of not only the youth but a
14 standpoint from fund-raising tool. It was one of the best
15 fund-raising tools we had, and we gave it away. But that was
16 one of the jobs I had at the Jewish Agency, as chairman of
17 that department. And that was at the time that I was spending
18 the summers in Israel, so I could get out into the field and
19 see what was going on and meet with many of these directors
20 and the children.

21 MS. BRODER: Was Otmah also UJA?

22 MS. SHERMAN: No. In 1983 the Young Leadership
23 Cabinet had decided to sit down -- Brian Lowry, at the time I
24 think he was still in San Francisco as the exec, and Urey
25 Gordon, who was with the Young Leadership group at the WCO in

1 Israel, decided to start what we called the Mariah Process,
2 and they wanted to involve young people from Israel and young
3 leaders from the United States together, because they felt
4 that they didn't want our generation growing up only knowing
5 you if you became a big shot in the Jewish community, the only
6 people you knew were the prime ministers and the foreign
7 ministers, and we should get to know the real people, the
8 people that were in the communities. So the concept was that
9 we would have a joint meeting.

10 The first one was held at the Dead Sea at the Mariah
11 Hotel. That's where I got the name of the Mariah Process. I
12 was probably the senior citizen in the group. There were a
13 few other Detroiters there: Larry Jackier, Stanley Frankel,
14 Peter Alter, and Wayne Feinstein. We went to this meeting and
15 it was an eye-opener for all of us, from the Israelis to begin
16 to understand the American Jewish community.

17 I remember -- I think it was Avi Ravitsky -- one of
18 the religious members of the group began to understand what it
19 meant to be a secular Jew, you know, it wasn't all Orthodox.
20 So that was a beginning of a different stage of my life,
21 meeting a different group of young men and women. And we went
22 on to form the Israeli Forum, which was like a counterpart to
23 the Young Leadership Cabinet, but it included men and women.
24 David Kulitz was the first chairman. I was like the
25 grandmother. I went on to deal with it. And we sat and we

1 had meetings. And out of the Israeli Forum and an idea that
2 Brian Lowry had, we were able to form OTZMA.

3 Brian Lowry wanted to bring 20,000 young men and
4 women to Israel as volunteers, like a Jewish Peace Corps, and
5 Ya Ya -- Norm Yayer -- and I were the first chairmen of OTZMA,
6 the first year 85 college students to Israel for a year where
7 they spent three months on an Ulpan, three months working in
8 maybe a Youth Aliyah village, and then working on a Project
9 Renewal neighborhood, and OTZMA is still going today. It gave
10 these young men and women -- and they were all adopted by
11 Israeli Forum families. These young men and women today now
12 have relationships with people throughout the country.
13 They're like their Israeli parents. That's far more important
14 than my knowing Simon Perez. They have a better understanding
15 of what's going on today. So that was the relation of the
16 OTZMA project.

17 More important was the relation of the Forum and the
18 Mariah process. The new chairman of the Jewish Agency, he was
19 going to be voted into office I hope next month, Bielsky, he
20 was at that first Mariah process with us. And we used to
21 laugh at the Jewish Agency and seeing these young men and
22 women taking this role today is very exciting.

23 MS. BRODER: Is your major involvement now the UYA?

24 MS. SHERMAN: No, the major involvement was the
25 Jewish Agency. The UYA, to get to the Jewish Agency you

1 became part of the UYA, but my major involvement really was at
2 the Jewish Agency level.

3 After the Youth Aliyah I became chairman of what was
4 then the Rural and Urban Development Department, and out of
5 that department came Partnership 2000. We started Partnership
6 2000 in 1993 or 1994 with Ronita Levy, and we started it at
7 that time, it was the second answer to Project Renewal, but I
8 think a much better answer, where we really got citizens
9 involved. Today Partnership 2000 is really citizen
10 involvement in Israel and here, and it's a very people-to-
11 people orientation type of program.

12 One short stint in the Aliyah Department for a year,
13 and then I went into the finance end of the Jewish Agency. I
14 chaired all the back room stuff.

15 **MS. BRODER:** Are you on the Executive Committee?

16 **MS. SHERMAN:** Yes. Today I'm now chairman of the
17 Israel Department.

18 **MS. BRODER:** Tell me what that is.

19 **MS. SHERMAN:** The Israel Department was the Rural
20 and Urban Development Department. We changed the name and
21 we're probably going to change it again. And the Jewish
22 Agency has just gone through a strategic plan, and we have
23 revamped the entire Jewish Agency. It's much more related to
24 what's going on in the world today. The Israel Department is
25 now in charge of -- well, Partnership 2000 is there. We are

1 no longer in the settlement business in the Jewish Agency.
2 Haven't been for a number of years.

3 Everything we do is what's involved in Israel, and
4 we are involved in a new program called Youth Futures which is
5 going to deal with youth at risk in Israel, particularly from
6 the ages of 6 to 13, which is an area that has not dealt with
7 on a coordinated basis, and everything that is being done in
8 the Jewish Agency today is going to be a three-way
9 partnership. It will be the Jewish Agency putting in money,
10 Federations or a philanthropist, and then somebody from
11 Israel, be it a Israeli philanthropist, and we have many that
12 are very, very wealthy that are willing to put their money
13 where their mouth is. Or at NGO in the state of Israel, like
14 ~~Samuel Rabin~~ ^{SACHS RICHIE}, the Karem Foundation, and it will be a three-
15 way partnership.

16 But more exciting about this program is that there
17 is a group of young Zionists in Israel today. There's about
18 1500 of them that have finished the army, many of them have
19 graduated the university, that have set up villages and live
20 with the idea that they want to create social change in the
21 state of Israel, so they are volunteering their time, even
22 though they get a small stipend, in different development
23 towns and different communities, whether it's teaching or
24 mentoring or doing all sorts of programs. They're living
25 very, very frugally, and I mean very frugally.

1 We are going to use that group of new Zionists to
2 run this new Youth Futures Program, because they can be the
3 motivation and set the self-esteem for these young kids that
4 are dropouts from even before sixth grade, or they're
5 illiterate. And it's basically in the periphery, in the Negev
6 and Galil that we're going to be. So this is a whole new area
7 that we're going to begin to go in. We're just putting out
8 this program now as we speak.

9 **MS. BRODER:** It sounds like a combination of getting
10 back to working on the social gap and Youth Aliyahs.

11 **MS. SHERMAN:** Yes.

12 **MS. BRODER:** I want to get back a little bit to the
13 national chair of the United Israel Appeal because even though
14 what you're doing at the Jewish Agency is more important,
15 that's a very big job. Are you still the national chair of
16 the UIA?

17 **MS. SHERMAN:** Yes. I don't know if it's a very big
18 job today. UIA's main role is to be accountable to the
19 American Jewish community for the funds that are raised, and
20 prior to the merger of UJA and CJF it was an independent
21 organization. We are responsible for the government grants,
22 as I said, for the American Jewish community, and our role was
23 really to be the watchword and the advocate for overseas need.

24 After the merger took place, there was a deal made,
25 not happily to many of us, where the UIA would be eventually

1 subsidiary of the United Jewish Communities, and the board
2 today, five years into the merger, is now literally appointed
3 by UJC. Now, we appointed the board. I mean I went to the
4 executive of the UJC and said here's our list, and there was
5 no argument, but that's independent. I mean if I decided to
6 leave tomorrow, take the board and leave, I think we would
7 have a bit of a problem.

8 But we've become, I think, more importantly, is
9 advocates for the Jewish Agency, because with all due respect,
10 JDC is out advocating on their own, and they're doing a
11 fabulous job, and the Jewish Agency needs to be doing that.

12 So not only are we accountable for all the funds
13 that are raised in the American Jewish community and where
14 they go, particularly the ones to the Jewish Agency, we have
15 to know that they meet the IRS ruling. We have an agreement
16 with the Internal Revenue Service that goes back to the '40s
17 and '50s, and we have to make sure that that money is spent.
18 We are responsible for seeing that we get the government
19 grant.

20 The United States government is now giving us \$50
21 million at the present time -- it's going to be \$40 in October
22 -- for refugee settlement. That money has to be accounted
23 exactly to the rules of the State Department. So that's the
24 other area.

25 The third area that we are the advocates in the

1 American Jewish community for the Jewish Agency. We're the
2 ones that should be out talking about it. We're the ones that
3 appoint the board. We're the ones that are responsible for
4 what goes one that end. We were very instrumental in the
5 appointment, advice and consent with the new chairman of the
6 Jewish Agency.

7 The UJC's role has gone beyond that. Beyond is a
8 little bit different direction, and their main focus is not
9 the Jewish Agency. As far as I am concerned, the UIA's main
10 focus is just the Jewish Agency. We have a loan, which I
11 signed off on, because we had a loan to pay some of the
12 monies. The Jewish Agency is in debt close to \$200 million,
13 and part of that loan is ours. So those are the roles of the
14 United Israel Appeal. It's fiscally responsible.

15 **MS. BRODER:** That's where you are in the Jewish
16 Agency, too, then, is with the fiscal responsibility.

17 **MS. SHERMAN:** Yes. But the issue is that today,
18 because of my role on the Jewish Agency -- I sit on the
19 executive committee -- I have a major role to play at the
20 Jewish Agency.

21 **MS. BRODER:** How do you think our relationship with
22 the United States government is right now? The Jewish
23 community with Israel.

24 **MS. SHERMAN:** I think it's very good. I think the
25 role with the United States government right now is a strong

1 Israel.

2 MS. BRODER: Is the Congress still in line?

3 MS. SHERMAN: Yes. And I think they're very much
4 behind what the president is doing at the present stage, you
5 know, barring political politics. I think this goes far
6 beyond that.

7 MS. BRODER: Let's talk a little bit, you've gotten
8 some major awards, and you did get the major award in our
9 community, which is the Butzel Award. So I want you to talk
10 about that a little bit, your feelings, who presented it to
11 you, and your speech that night, because we didn't cover that.

12 MS. SHERMAN: You didn't forewarn me about my speech
13 that night. First of all, there's not enough to tell you to
14 be honored in your own home with the highest award this
15 community can offer is not only mind boggling, I don't know if
16 I can even put into words. It's very humbling to be put with
17 the list of some of the people that came before me. The Dora
18 Ehrlichs and the Max Fishers and the Sam Frankels and the
19 Jenny Joneses, Freida⁴-Max Stollman, it's really mind boggling
20 to be a part of that group. Freida being one of my role
21 models. It really was. And when I received that call, I just
22 couldn't believe it.

23 As a Butzel Award winner you're allowed to ask
24 somebody to give you the Butzel Award and it's usually
25 somebody who has had it before, and I asked my dad to do it.

1 By the way, he gave me the Young Leadership Award when I won,
2 the Sylvia Simon Greenberg Award in this community, and he was
3 also president of CJF when I received it, so he gave it to me
4 in Pittsburgh. That's where I got to go for my -- I don't know
5 where you got to go, but I got to go to Pittsburgh. So he
6 presented me with the award. Didn't say much, but I could
7 tell from his feelings.

8 And I gave this community a challenge in my speech.
9 I gave them a challenge to increase the Jewish education in
10 this community, to increase the amount of people that went to
11 Israel, because I believe that if you get them to Israel, you
12 have them turned on, no matter what the generation. I think
13 that's the biggest area we've got to work on. The generation
14 of our children and our grandchildren don't have the emotional
15 ties to the state of Israel we grew up with. Whether it's the
16 Holocaust, '67, '73, or even '81, they don't have it. And I
17 don't want to see money raised or involvement just on the
18 basis of war. It should be much more than that.

19 So I gave them a challenge that not only should they
20 -- I believe that the way we're going to keep -- have a Jewish
21 future for our generation is through Jewish education and
22 through involvement in the state of Israel, and I think those
23 are the two most important things this community can do today
24 to guarantee the future of the Jewish community, and it's not
25 just Detroit, it's any community in the country if you want to

1 keep that going. And it's been proven, all the statistics.
2 You send the child to Jewish day school, and then you send
3 them to Israel, they're much more likely to marry Jewish, to
4 become involved in their community. They go for a year trip,
5 it's even longer. So it multiplies on that.

6 MS. BRODER: Have you been on any national
7 committees for Jewish education? Have you been involved in
8 that?

9 MS. SHERMAN: I was involved here at Hillel Day
10 School. I've had minimal involvement with the Jewish Academy.
11 I have not been involved nationally, other than being a fund-
12 raiser of some standpoint, other than Birthright. I was
13 involved in Birthright from the very beginning.

14 Birthright is a program that was originally started
15 -- and I say this not pejorative -- by Michael Steinhart and
16 Charles ^{BRONFMAN} to give every Jewish child between the ages
17 of 18 and 26 what they considered their birthright, a trip to
18 Israel, for ten days. It is now a three-way triumvirate.
19 There were 14 philanthropists that put in \$5 million apiece.
20 The Federations were charged with putting in a third and the
21 government of Israel putting in a third. Federations haven't
22 quite lived up to their whole end of the bargain, but we're
23 now in the sixth year of the program.

24 And this is for all over the world, not just the
25 United States and Canada. We have sent over 60,000 young men

1 and women in the past six years. Even during the Intifada the
2 groups were going. As I say, we're only in the sixth year of
3 the program so I can't tell you what the long-term
4 repercussions of this program are, but I guarantee you they're
5 going to be very, very good.

6 I have to tell you that the spring/summer trips we
7 had 12,000 kids that were turned down because we didn't have
8 enough spots. This is done on a first come, first serve
9 basis. If you have gone on another peer trip, you're not
10 eligible. My grandson Andrew is going. The teen mission was
11 cancelled the year he went, so he has not been on another peer
12 trip.

13 I think this, with a new Program that's been put
14 forth by the government and the Jewish Agency called the SAH,
15 which is funding year-long programs, we have a real chance to
16 maintain many, many of our young people in the Jewish world
17 today. But I still think that Jewish education has got to
18 continue even at the level of grammar school and high school.
19 I don't think we can just rely on this. I think you have to
20 start it, and you have to start it at that level and do it as
21 a family. There has to be family involvement, so that it's
22 not just going to school from eight to four and nothing
23 happens at home and there's no reinforcement. You need that
24 family reinforcement.

25 I believe if we keep this up, these young men and

1 women are going to be families soon, and they're going to
2 reinforce it in their children when they send them off to
3 Jewish day school or afternoon school or whatever it is. It's
4 the only hope for the future as far as I'm concerned.

5 MS. BRODER: The ten-day trips, how many times a
6 year?

7 MS. SHERMAN: Well, it depends. We have a spring,
8 summer and winter, but all the different organizations go at
9 different times. There's a trip that's leaving tomorrow from
10 Michigan State Hillel. Andrew happens to be going with
11 Canada. Michigan went a couple weeks ago. I think they had a
12 trip in the wintertime.

13 They're done by different trip organizations.
14 Shorasheem, Orneem, Hillel, JNF, I think there are a couple of
15 religious trips, and some of them are geared to graduates.
16 There's 25 or 30 different trips organizers. But they geared
17 within the same basic time frame, you know, like December 15th
18 to January 15th, and then there's a couple in February, and
19 now we've got them from the middle of May through the end of
20 June. And I think a lot of the Russians come over in August.
21 They come from all over the world, all over the world.

22 MS. BRODER: That's terrific. A terrific program.

23 Let's talk about trends a little bit. We're kind of
24 into it with your feelings about education and missions. What
25 differences do you see between the Federation when you first

1 became active back in the '60s and what's going on now? What
2 we're doing, what we're involved in, what the priorities are,
3 the acceptance of women having major roles.

4 **MS. SHERMAN:** Well, that's a foregone conclusion.
5 You can see that we've had many campaign chairmen. We've had
6 our first woman president. Detroit was very late on this by
7 the way. When I became campaign chairman, many of the other
8 major communities already had women campaign chairmen and
9 women presidents and Detroit had not, so we were very, very
10 late on this issue.

11 Trends, oh, there's been a great deal of trends.
12 First of all, in the '70s and early '80s -- we talked about
13 Jewish education. I'm not even sure we funded Jewish
14 education in those days. Today it is the priority in the
15 Jewish community here today.

16 And I remember the votes and the discussions and how
17 we went out on the trends, how with all due respect we ran
18 homes for the aged in those days. We do not run homes for the
19 aged today. We run programs for the aged but we do not run
20 homes for the aged as we did. So that is a much different
21 trend.

22 I think that the feeling of the community is that we
23 need to get into what's going to keep the continuity going,
24 and it's not to forget some of these other areas. But I think
25 that this is where the action should be.

1 I think that one of the serious issues we're going
2 to have to deal with is how we involve more people in what
3 we're doing. That is a very serious issue, and it shows in
4 the levels of the amount of contributors we have today. To
5 get people involved in an ongoing basis in the programming
6 we've got at the level of Federation, be it young women -- I'm
7 going to speak to a group of young women this afternoon about
8 why they should get involved as women and why it's important
9 that they give and get involved.

10 But we've lost thousands and thousands of
11 contributors and people that are involved in this community.
12 And it's not that they're not there and it's not that the
13 money's not there. We as an organized Jewish community here
14 in Detroit, or nationally -- we have the same problem
15 nationally, not just here.

16 MS. BRODER: What do you think the main reasons are
17 for that?

18 MS. SHERMAN: Well, part of it is, and it's hard for
19 me to understand, but I've seen the statistics, people want to
20 be more hands on in what they're doing and what they're
21 giving. And by the way, the Jewish wealth in this nation
22 today is not going to Jewish causes. I think part of that is
23 lack of Jewish education in that generation. You see people
24 giving millions and millions of dollars to universities, to
25 symphonies, to art museums, and a lot of it is Jewish money.

1 Billions. And we're not getting it. I think that part of it
2 is that they don't understand the importance of taking care of
3 your home first before you go outside, which is something we
4 grew up with.

5 **MS. BRODER:** We used to solicit way back when just
6 on the basis of Israel, and it was very emotional, and that
7 has changed, I think.

8 **MS. SHERMAN:** I still believe that we raise more
9 money on the backbone of Israel today and give less than we
10 should. I think a lot of the money is raised on overseas
11 needs and that the allocations in every Federation of the
12 United States are not going where the money is being raised
13 from. And that's not to underestimate what is being done in
14 the local community, but the national allocation to overseas
15 needs continually drops every single year.

16 Part of the problem is to understand what's going on
17 in Israel when there's not a war going on, you have to be
18 there, you have to see it. You see what's going on at the
19 Federation Apartments or the Jewish day school or JVS on a
20 daily basis. You live, eat and breathe it. You're here, you
21 can go visit those agencies.

22 If I could get 5,000 people in this community to
23 Israel for more than four days and really involve them in what
24 is going on, I think if they have the impact at the Federation
25 level to make that allocation change, we would be able to do

1 it. But today you don't have -- and Detroit's better than
2 most. I don't think it's good. I think we've gone way down
3 below -- it depends on who counts the figures, whether 47
4 percent or 40 percent, how you count them, but that's
5 terrible. I remember when the days we were giving 60 percent
6 to the overseas needs.

7 **MS. BRODER:** But does that mean we're doing a better
8 job of educating our people about our local community?

9 **MS. SHERMAN:** No, I think they see it on a daily
10 basis. And I think with all due respect, in war money flows.
11 Then you have to give it. But I think we have to do a real
12 education job.

13 **MS. BRODER:** Do you think that's the best way to
14 change it? How do you think we're going to get these changes
15 made? When you look at the leadership of the Federation
16 today, here -- don't talk about any other communities -- when
17 you look at our Federation, what do you think they're looking
18 at as the critical issues and how do you think they're
19 changing things?

20 **MS. SHERMAN:** I can't give you the answer to that
21 from the standpoint of lay leadership. Today most
22 Federations, including ours, the major input comes from the
23 top professional staff. Luckily we have a top professional
24 that's very interested in Israel and the overseas needs. You
25 know, that's important.

1 I know what Larry's feelings are. I think Peter is
2 involved in Israel. I don't know what his feelings are vis-a-
3 vis local versus national because I've never had this
4 discussion with him, so I can't tell you. I think it's a
5 tough uphill battle. I think it's unlike when you and I were
6 in those positions. It's a whole different era today. They
7 don't see it the way we see it.

8 **MS. BRODER:** Jane, we've got a long way to go. I
9 feel we're interviewing you at a young age, and I think you've
10 got at least probably 20 more years of leadership. What else
11 do you want to do in the Jewish community?

12 **MS. SHERMAN:** I think I've done just about
13 everything I want to do. As I said to you a few minutes ago
14 when we were off camera, I'm in a different stage of my life.
15 I've got ten grandchildren. I love having them around me. I
16 love traveling with them, being there. Larry and I haven't
17 spent a lot of time traveling. We have the opportunity to do
18 it. And I'm a little more selfish today.

19 I love the role I'm playing at the Jewish Agency.
20 Whether I want to go any further there I doubt it. I don't
21 think at this stage of my life I want to make a commitment
22 like that. There's things that I want to be involved in. I
23 think it's important.

24 As I say, I love the Birthright. I'd love to be
25 going to Israel with Andrew next week. I mean that to me

1 would be the most exciting thing, to be a fly on the wall on
2 that bus, to see it through his eyes.

3 But I haven't thought that far ahead. Larry's
4 retired and we're spending a lot of time in Colorado. I'm a
5 little bit involved there. I'm involved in the Aspen Music
6 Festival. I sit on the board there. And I just went on the
7 board of the DSO here.

8 Jewishly, my life revolves around my Jewish
9 volunteer activities. That's been my life. And that's why I
10 had to quit working professionally because it interfered with
11 my Jewish volunteer activities. But I've never thought ahead
12 of what I want to do. I don't know if I want to do any more.
13 You know, 47 years is a long time to be involved in the Jewish
14 community.

15 **MS. BRODER:** What message do you want to give to
16 your children and your grandchildren?

17 **MS. SHERMAN:** I hope that they will all -- and my
18 children obviously are involved in the organized Jewish
19 community today. I hope my grandchildren will be, too. I
20 would hope every one of my grandchildren will marry Jews.
21 That's probably the most important aspect. And raise their
22 children Jewishly. I think we have a great heritage and I
23 think it would be a crime if they didn't understand it, and I
24 think they all do, at least the older ones. I can't speak for
25 the little ones.

1 I don't want to put any pressure on them. They've
2 got to do what's right. If they're giving back to the
3 community, that's what's the most important thing. How they
4 do it is going to have to be up to them, each and every one of
5 them.

6 MS. BRODER: You said you just went on the DSO
7 board. Have you had other involvement in the general
8 community?

9 MS. SHERMAN: I was involved in the United Fund. I
10 was in the Community Foundation for many years. Other than
11 that I haven't had any real involvement outside of the Jewish
12 community. That was it.

13 MS. BRODER: Are you too young to talk about what
14 you want your legacy to be? What do you want your legacy to
15 be?

16 MS. SHERMAN: I haven't the slightest idea.
17 Actually, I think if my children and my grandchildren
18 understand what it is to be Jewish and they give back to the
19 community -- not money; physically -- in their minds and their
20 efforts and they pass that on, then I think that's the best
21 legacy I can give to them.

22 I think it's the same legacy my dad gave to me. And
23 my father never said to us, get involved. If my father had
24 told me to get involved in the organized Jewish community, I
25 probably would have told him to go jump in a lake. He was

1 smart enough to send me to Israel when I was 21 years of age.
2 That's where my involvement began.

3 In the later years I was going to all these meetings
4 and he couldn't get to them, I was like his spy. We had a
5 relationship -- I spoke to him every day about what was going
6 on in the Jewish world. When I took a position like the UIA
7 position or something, I always called and consulted him and
8 got his take on where I should be and what I should do.
9 Sometimes he would say do what you think is right, and other
10 times he would tell me what he felt was important.

11 **MS. BRODER:** What did he say to you when you won the
12 Butzel award? He said something publicly that night that was
13 kind of funny.

14 **MS. SHERMAN:** I think he said you don't need to know
15 anything about my daughter. You know it already. But I don't
16 remember what else he said. I'd have to go back and look at
17 the tape. I don't remember what he said.

18 **MS. BRODER:** It was a very nice moment.

19 **MS. SHERMAN:** But I have to tell, every day -- it's
20 now two and a half months since he died -- I pick up the phone
21 to call him, and when Sallai Meridor two weeks ago resigned
22 from the Jewish Agency, it was probably the toughest day I had
23 because here he was -- and Sallai had said, you know, we
24 always had Max to come to for an answer. I had no Max to pick
25 up the phone and call, and as I told Sallai when he called me

1 on the phone, this would have never happened had my father
2 been alive.

3 So his impact on the world Jewish community
4 obviously had major influence on me. I'm not the consensus
5 builder he was. I wish I could be. I have a different
6 personality. I hope I build consensus, but not quite like he
7 did. But if my children gain anything, they should gain it
8 from their grandfather and great grandfather, because he's the
9 legacy that should go on. I'm just a fly on the wall.

10 **MS. BRODER:** Well, a big one. Buzzing around.

11 **MS. SHERMAN:** Yes.

12 **MS. BRODER:** Impossible to swat.