

Jewish Journal

PALM BEACH NORTH

July 27, 2004

Shopping for charity

Call goes out to shopaholics to participate in JFCS fund-raiser

By SHANI MCMANUS
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Services is teaming up with Bloomingdale's for its annual charity benefit shopping day at all South Florida Bloomingdale's locations on Oct. 26, from opening to closing time.

"Indulge in a favorite pastime while supporting those in the community who need help," entreats the flier advertising the "3-Generations of Shoppers" fund-raiser.

The theme of "3-Generations of Shoppers" is geared toward encouraging grandmothers, mothers and daughters, and everyone else, to spend a day shopping together while benefiting a good cause. Those who purchase a \$10-ticket from AJFCS will get a 15-percent discount on most items in the store.

And in addition to bargains, there will be music, snacks and demonstrations throughout the stores, with ticket-sale proceeds going to help the agency, says AJFCS board member Jennifer Lesser, who is co-chair of the fund-raising event, along with her husband, Palm Beach attorney Gary Lesser.

"We're hoping to achieve awareness for the many services and programs of JFCS by spon-



STAFF PHOTO BY LEE HERSHFELD

From left, Josie, 5, Jennifer, Lillian, 7, and Gary Lesser will be participating in the "3-Generations of Shoppers" fund-raiser.

soring this event," Jennifer Lesser says. "And by doing younger programs like the Bloomingdale's shopping fund-raiser, we're hoping to get younger people involved in JFCS."

Though the Palm Beach Gardens resident has had a long history with JFCS and its plethora of services for the community, she says her heart is with JFCS's domestic abuse awareness program, KOLOT, and she, therefore, serves on its steering committee.

"JFCS provides help for the community that no

other service provides – serving [people from] young children to the elderly," she says. "It's a good cause."

The goal of the Bloomingdale's fund-raiser is to raise money for JFCS so it can continue doing its important work, Gary Lesser says.

"Another goal is to increase JFCS awareness," he says. "Many people don't realize the scope and depth of how many people are helped by its work and services. JFCS is vital – it is an agency in the trenches; they some-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

▼ SHOPPING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
times save lives."

Lesser, who along with Jennifer, their two daughters, Lillian, 7, and Josie, 3, and his mother, Staci Brenner, a former board member of JFCS, represent three generations of activists and philanthropists for JFCS and the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County.

"My mother was a big role model for me," Lesser says. "I witnessed what she was doing."

Lesser's older child, Lillian, is following in her family's footsteps by recently donating her allowance money to help "needy Jewish people," Lesser says.

"I've always been very involved in Jewish Federation, and through my wife's involvement with JFCS, I've seen their pro-

grams and learned how many people they have helped," he says.

JFCS Executive Director Neil Newstein says the Lessers are a wonderful family who have made a difference in the community.

"Jennifer is an absolute pleasure," he says. "They are a wonderful couple – so community involved."

Newstein also thanks Bloomingdale's "for giving charities a chance to make money," and he urges the community to participate in the shopping fund-raiser.

"We have to raise lots and lots of money, and raise community awareness about the work of JFCS," Newstein says.

For more information, or to purchase tickets for the event, call Eileen Trager, JFCS development coordinator, at 561-238-0259.