

Miami Jewish Health Systems honors couple

By Sergio Carmona, Staff Writer

Miami Jewish Health Systems honored Coral Gables resident Harold Beck and his late wife Vivian with its first-ever Judge Irving Cypen Award for their leadership and dedication to the South Florida community at its 27th annual Founder's Gala.

The Becks were married for 67 years until Vivian's passing in January 2009. Their association with MJHS, which is formerly Miami Jewish Home and Hospital, began in 1969 when Vivian's parents became residents and Harold, 89, became impressed with its quality of care that he decided to take an active part in it. He has served as the home's president since 1980 and has also served on its numerous boards and continues to manage the day-to-day operations of its thrift shops. Harold has also been honored as the home's 2003 Men's Club "Man of the Year" and is a Star Club member. The Becks also became Million Dollar Club Founders there and endowed the Harold and Vivian Beck Dining Room in its Schaefer Building.



Jewish Journal: Comment on how honored you were to receive the Irving Cypen award that night considering that you accepted it not only for yourself but on your late wife's behalf.

Harold Beck: I can tell you my wife to me was a blessing. She was a wonderful lady and every time they mentioned her name, I just flipped over and over and every time I looked at a picture, we were both there. I just lost her about almost a year ago in January and she was a wonderful lady.

JJ: Did you feel like her spirit was somehow present in the room that night?

HB: I felt that, and everybody who was there, my son and daughter, we all were shook up whenever anything was mentioned and when you went back to a given time, you flipped.

JJ: You and your wife's philanthropy also extended well beyond the home, especially in your synagogue, Beth David Congregation, where the Harold and Vivian Beck Museum of Judaica is located in its main lobby. How happy are you that you two did some many things together in the community?

HB: We were joking along the whole time we were together that she would rather give me her arm than to do it. We were one. Anything that we did we were one. There was a lot of kidding in our teamwork. It was a lot of fun and we were able to joke around.

JJ: how does the award compare to other memorable moments in the home?

HB: Nothing compares to that [award]. This is Irving and Hazel Cypen and the family, and whenever we needed something to do, we gave our opinions together and even Hazel, sometimes I had a different opinion than Irving and I was right, Hazel would tell him. It was like family. They were as close to us as anybody could.

Harold and Vivian Beck were honored by MJHS with the first-ever Judge Irving Cypen Award.