

*April 2012*

**Dear Chavera,**



I am pleased and proud to present you with the first issue of the “Lapid” newsletter under my auspices as the newly elected Chairperson of the Division of Organization and Tourism. The first item you will find in this issue is an ad promoting the upcoming WIZO Aviv International Seminar, to take place in November. There is nothing like a Seminar in Israel to show our Aviv members what WIZO does, provide them with tools for leadership, and increase their commitment to WIZO. We look forward to hosting large contingents of Aviv participants from all Federations.

The 2012 World WIZO EGM is behind us, in which over 700 delegates from 32 countries took part. It was a special experience for the participants to enjoy meeting so many fellow WIZO members from all over the world, to attend first class panels and workshops, and to tour WIZO projects and sites of interest on our special Tour Day, “Zionism on Wheels”.

This April is packed with significant days on the Jewish calendar: Passover, Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day; Memorial Day for Israel's Soldiers; and Israel's 64<sup>th</sup> Independence Day. We have included three articles related to these events.

Dr. Einat Wilf, a dynamic and charismatic Knesset Member, is featured as our “Successful Jewish Woman”. She took part in the session on “Challenges to the Image of the State of Israel” at the EGM. I hope that you will enjoy these and all the other articles that are presented here, and that they will be of benefit to you in your future WIZO activities.

I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to Briana Simon, who has been employed in the Department of Organization and Education since 1994, first as a writing assistant and subsequently as the Editor of this and other department publications, notably the Bible Day Booklets. We wish her success in all her future endeavors.

This issue of the Lapid will reach you for our holidays which are being celebrated in Israel in the lovely days of spring -- Aviv in Hebrew. I take this opportunity to wish you, on behalf of all the members of my Division, a happy and festive Passover and Israel Independence Day.

With warm WIZO wishes,



Janine Gelley  
Chairperson  
Division of Organization and Tourism, World WIZO



*Creating A New Tomorrow*

## **“BECOMING A LEADER”**

**LET’S GET TOGETHER!**

**WIZO AVIV INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR**  
**NOVEMBER 2012 / TEL AVIV, ISRAEL**

**COME JOIN WIZO MEMBERS FROM ALL OVER THE GLOBE!**

**PARTICIPATE IN WORKSHOPS ON:**  
**MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT,**  
**ORGANIZATION, AND**  
**FUNDRAISING**

**HEAR TOP-LEVEL SPEAKERS ON:**  
**ISRAEL TODAY**  
**WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP**

**VISIT WIZO PROJECTS**  
**TOUR JERUSALEM**

**LEARN TO BE A LEADER**

**YOU ARE WIZO’S FUTURE...**

**FOR WIZO MEMBERS UP TO AGE 45**



Women's International Zionist Organization  
for an Improved Israeli Society

## A great big enthusiastic post EGM HELLO to you all!

Those of you attended the 25<sup>th</sup> World WIZO EGM I'm sure will agree that it was an outstanding, awesome, & moving event.

I'm Laurienne Baitz  
Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive



I live in Durban, South Africa.  
I co-chair WIZO Durban with Michelle Nathan & Colleen Mervis.  
We're called the 'WIZO TRIO'.  
We find that by co-chairing WIZO the task is manageable, we each have our strengths, & we have a lot of fun doing it together!



Meet my family

## Unite & Ignite

For the coming 2 years my aim is to help the Aviv's to 'Unite & Ignite' worldwide.

When asked what I thought the biggest challenge to our wonderful WIZO organization is, I thought that it must be the need to improve communication between the Federations world wide through better use of social media.



Zak, me, Isobella, Kevin, Dylan

By using the social media vehicles such as the web, Facebook, Skype etc available to us all Federations can share fundraising & recruitment ideas with each other at the click of a button. Why 'reinvent the wheel' when clever members have already perfected great new ideas in other federations and are dying to share them?

World WIZO is committed to contemporizing our WIZO brand; to updating our website & making it more interactive; and to redesign our image match the creative, dynamic force that we proudly are.

I've started a new Facebook group that is a closed forum especially for YOU Aviv leaders to share ideas, questions & issues. If you're an Aviv leader, please email me right away [Laurienne@automation.co.za](mailto:Laurienne@automation.co.za) so I can join you up and you can begin to add your input & see what everyone is up to.

I hope that you'll support me by getting involved! Let's share, motivate, design & improve all those ideas that I know you've had for ages!

Start making plans to meet @ the WIZO Aviv International Seminar in November 2012.

See you there! xxx

## HOLIDAYS

### Reconnecting to Passover's Roots

Spring greening.



One of the dirty little secrets about the Jewish calendar is that many of the holidays have agricultural subtexts, which over time have been muted or lost completely under the historical and religious themes that were layered on top of them. Two of these holidays, [Sukkot](#) and [Shavuot](#), have maintained a relatively transparent relationship to their earthy roots. But finding the natural themes of Passover takes a bit more digging.

The first step is to forget about Moses--for now anyway--and recall that Passover, also known as *Hag Ha-Aviv* (holiday of spring), is one of the Torah's three mandated [pilgrimage festivals](#). It is inextricably linked to the beginning of the barley harvest in Israel. Leviticus 23:10-11 describes the *omer* (sheaf) offering of barley (the first grain to ripen in the spring) that took place in the Temple on the second day of Passover:

*When you enter the land that I am giving to you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest. He shall elevate the sheaf before the L-rd for acceptance on your behalf.*

This priestly grain dance symbolized prosperity and was the official green light that the season's harvest could be consumed. Today, Jews [count the Omer](#) for 49 days, starting on the second night of Passover--to coincide with the date of the *omer* offering--and continuing through Shavuot (the beginning of the wheat harvest). In most cases, however, *Omer* practices have been almost completely disembodied--stripped of their connections to grain and ground.

#### The Seder Plate is Already Green

Contemporary Jews are, of course, forbidden to bring sheaves of just-picked barley, which is [hametz](#), to our seder tables. Still, if one is willing to look, signs of spring and nature's rejuvenation abound throughout Passover. This is especially true of the [seder plate](#), which weaves together the historical and agricultural in one eating ritual.

The roasted lamb bone ([z'roa](#)), which commemorates lamb sacrifices made at the Temple, is taken from one of spring's most iconic babies. The green vegetable (*karpas*) sitting next to it that gets dipped in saltwater is a symbol of the first sprouts that peak bravely out of the just-thawed ground in early spring. The roasted egg (*beitzah*) recalls both the sacrifices made at the Temple and also spring's fertility and rebirth.

## Hametz as a Metaphor

Even before Passover begins, the act of removing hametz from our homes offers other opportunities to connect to the natural world. This period of “Jewish spring cleaning” requires us to shake out our sheets and round up any bread or crumbs hiding in our kitchen cupboards. But removing hametz from our homes can also remind us to get rid of the excess “stuff” clogging up our lives--to liberate ourselves from any emotional or spiritual baggage from the year, and send bad habits packing.

It is a perfect time to recycle the stack of junk mail piling up on the desk (and [stop more from coming](#)), plant seedlings in the garden, start [composting](#), switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs, or volunteer for a cleanup day at a nearby river, beach, forest, or park. It also offers a great opportunity to plan ahead, in order to avoid the all-too-common overuse of disposable dishware during Passover. As you clean out your kitchen cabinets, stock them with light-weight, recycled dishes and cutlery.

While these actions might seem like a distraction on an otherwise busy pre-Passover to-do list, integrating them into our holiday preparations can imbue our celebration with deeper significance that lasts beyond the holiday.

During Passover, all Jews are challenged to remember the Israelites’ journey from slavery to freedom, and feel as if they went through it themselves. But for those willing to dig even further, the story of Passover is not simply historical. It is rooted to the land, the giddy joys of spring, and to the reminder that after every period of dormancy and every experience of suffering, new life awaits just under the soil.

By Leah Koenig

[www.myjewishlearning.com](http://www.myjewishlearning.com)

Leah Koenig is a freelance writer whose work has been published in The New York Times Magazine, Gastronomica, Jewish Living, Lilith, Cullinate, Beliefnet and other publications.



# HOLOCAUST MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE DAY

## Triumph of the Human Spirit

With death stalking around every corner, and fear reigning in the sky, the Jewish prisoners in the Theresienstadt ghetto struggled to maintain their sanity by creating cultural blossoming in the midst of destruction and annihilation.

This outpouring of culture stood in sharp contrast to the prisoners' daily attempts to survive in a world of gloom and darkness, providing them with an escape from the prevailing horrors and monstrous drama taking place around them. Within the framework of the "Division of Recreation" of the Jewish self-administration in the ghetto, they established alternative frameworks in order to maintain their cultural values: in literature, art, music and theatre; in lectures and seminars, educational frameworks, sport, etc., all with one aim: to live the day, to preserve the self from disappearance.

The will to create was an expression of the will to live, and survive, as human beings.

Three courageous women survived internment in the ghetto to tell their part of the tale, and recount their participation in improvisational theatrical productions in the ghetto.

Vera Meizels (aged 72) was 8 years old when she appeared onstage as a ladybird in the children's play "Fireflies". Tova Gurevitz (over 80) was 18 when she sang in the Vilna ghetto choir and appeared as a beggar in "The Eternal Jew", a one-act play by David Pinski. Halina Birenbaum (aged 78), whom many are familiar with as the mother of musician Yaakov Gilad, was a member at age of 11 of the Jewish Council responsible for cultural activity in the Warsaw Ghetto. She wrote poetry and arranged theatrical performances and reading nights for the other children in the ghetto.

"We never had a chance"

Halina Birenbaum: "The more a person suffers, the more his soul requires spiritual healing. The more they take from you, the more you cling to the familiar songs and the melodies, creating poetry to express your pain. You hope that if you won't survive your poetry will be a testament. The odds of survival were very low but I couldn't envisage that my life would be terminated at such a young age; I didn't let myself go down that path.

"The many rehearsals kept us busy and full of the joy of creativity. There's no doubt that the period I spent in the Terezin ghetto provided the basis of my future development. One might say it shaped me. I learned to be independent and responsible.

Tova: "We were young, and the theatre helped us to forget our troubles if only for a few hours. It saved lives and boosted morale. We were convinced we would immigrate to Palestine and perform on stage at the Habimah theatre.

But from our group only a few remained. We even made a program with pictures and names of the actors. Theatrical performances in the ghetto theatre were cathartic and an essential component of our healing."

### Anxieties of an 8 year old

*What do you remember about the plays you appeared in?*

Vera: "I remember vividly my part as Ladybird in the children's play "Fireflies", based on a Czech story about a firefly who receives an education on how to illuminate the world. On my head I wore a tight black hat with antennae and I had a red canvas back with black dots and I had transparent wings. "Fireflies" was dramatized and produced by Nava Shan, who became a leading performer with the Haifa Municipal Theatre.



A theater performance in the Warsaw ghetto by the Warsaw Theater.  
[eilatgordinlevitan.com](http://eilatgordinlevitan.com)

"The front rows were filled with German soldiers and officers in black uniforms. This didn't distract my attention from my performance, but I had butterflies in my stomach that they had come to take us away to the gas chambers. Only when the audience was on the way out of the hall I realized that everything was as it was before, and I calmed down.

"The horror was that even then, at such a young age, I learned that the play was also staged before my time in the ghetto, and that I replaced a girl who was sent to Auschwitz and perished there. It was a terrible feeling. I kept thinking during each performance that it would be my last, my swan song. These were the thoughts occupying the mind of an 8 year old."

### Humor in the face of horror and adversity

Halina recalled that "as we were not able to be outdoors, we arranged cultural evenings. I memorized many of the stories and poems as a way of escaping the atrocities in the ghetto. Even before the war I was drawn to the world of the stage, and I wanted to be an actress and a performer. I wasn't very good at singing, but I loved to dance and began to write poetry at an early age. We would write satirical pieces and find humor in our situation."

*Did you manage to laugh about your terrible situation?*

Halina: "Humor lessened the horror of it all. When it became unbearable and the emaciated corpses were lining the streets we found solace in poetry. People who had never written before began to articulate themselves through their poetry.

"I remember one time my brother brought us tickets to the Operetta, The 'Czardash Princess'. I was very excited because I believed that we had a possibility to see such a production in the midst of our miserable existence in the ghetto, it would bring hope that life still abounds.

"My father objected to us going because people were dying in the streets. I was very outspoken and said to him that the bodies would continue to line the streets whether we went or not. In the end I went with my mother, and it was wonderful. To this day I remember the music, the costumes and the actors."

### Creativity preserved

The creativity that existed within them then, at such a young age, in the ghetto, has been maintained to this day. Halina, for example, donated her words to the wonderful album by singer Yehuda Poliker (the son of Greek Holocaust survivors), "Ashes and Dust", produced in partnership with her son, Ya'akov Gilad.

"I wrote 'Like Flowers in the Wind' for Poliker's album," she recounts. "From what I wrote in the ghetto nothing is left; everything was burned. I don't even have photographs to show to my family, but since then and to this day, I feel the need to talk about what I went through at family gatherings.

"My older brother, Mark, is the one who gave me the love of poetry, and he is the one who explained the main thought behind the texts to me. That excited me, and I passed this [excitement] on to my children," she says. "When they were small and I still didn't know Hebrew, I read to them in Polish, and Ya'akov internalized it. He had a bond with the words."

Vera also combines art with her life to this day: "After what I experienced, I had the need to express myself in writing; afterwards I also learned sculpture. I was always creative, but I went in the direction of art and less toward acting. I sculpt and write. I have already published four books of poetry."

For many years they did not speak about what they experienced during the war. "Until 1982 there was a silent agreement that one did not speak about the Holocaust," Vera relates. "Our entire purpose was to become integrated in Israel, to build and be built here, to belong, to be like the native Israelis; and they cooperated with us. Not that we did not have a need to talk about it, but we were forced to keep it inside. The silence was forced upon us; people did not want to listen. It sounds so unreal, the story of Auschwitz and the ghettos. We were called 'sheep to the slaughter', 'Second League'. All those years I kept a journal, and I also became a poetess because when I am under emotional pressure I express myself on paper."

Excerpts from "Triumph of the Spirit" by Maya Cohen, *Israel Today* newspaper, May 1, 2008.  
Holocaust Theater Online Collection [www.jewish-theatre.org/page2.html](http://www.jewish-theatre.org/page2.html) (Pilot Site)



# INDEPENDENCE DAY

## Ten (Out of 54) Ways You Can Help Israel

When Israel was in the throes of the second Intifada, the Aish HaTorah website published a list of “54 Ways You Can Help Israel”, in honor of Israel’s 54<sup>th</sup> Independence Day.



Now, ten years later, suicide bombers have been replaced by rockets and missiles fired from the Gaza Strip; but the basic premise of the original article still holds. We have chosen to share 10 of their ideas with you, as well as the introduction:

For many around the world, one of the most frustrating aspects of the violence in Israel is the seeming inability to help -- even in some small way. And while we may not be able to stop [it], we can still take action to lift Israel's spirits and help it contend with an increasingly uncertain situation.

Even if our actions do not appear to influence the overall outcome of events, at the very least we succeed in changing ourselves. And that, in and of itself, is an important victory.

Buy Israeli products and services.

With the Israeli economy suffering, go out of your way to support Israel's export trade. [www.shopinisrael.com](http://www.shopinisrael.com) and [www.israeliproducts.com](http://www.israeliproducts.com) allow you to buy Israeli products directly. When in the grocery store, look for brands like Elite, Telma, Osem, and Ahava beauty products -- even if you have to pay a few more dollars for Israeli products. Ask the supermarket manager to order these items specifically. Buy Israeli wine to bring as a gift when you visit friends. Home Depot and other stores have many made in Israel products -- especially plastics. [www.buyisraelgoods.org](http://www.buyisraelgoods.org) lists the names of products sold in the USA.

Speak out!

The next time you hear something that puts down Israel, don't wonder to yourself, "What is anyone going to do about it." No Jewish organization or Israeli consulate can fight the propaganda war on every front, so don't assume they will. You be the "anyone" and pick up your pen or keyboard and start writing. Write a piece you for local newspaper, set up information tables at your high school or college, or simply talk to people. Be a roving ambassador for Israel by explaining the true facts to everyone you meet. Even the cashier in the supermarket needs good information. You never know how your contribution may affect someone else's views. The

possibilities are endless. The worst thing that one can do is to remain quiet in times like this. So do something!

#### Get the facts.

The Internet is a great resource for getting an accurate picture of what is really happening in the conflict. For daily news, visit the Jerusalem Post (<http://www.jpost.com>) and IMRA (<http://www.imra.org.il>). For crucial background information, read "Israel: A History" (by Martin Gilbert) and "From Time Immemorial" (by Joan Peters).

#### Phone Israel.

Pick up the phone and make a solidarity call to your Israeli friends and relatives. If you don't know someone personally, ask someone who does. Call that person in Israel and assure them that you share their pain and understand what they're going through. Commend that person for having the courage to live in Israel now. Let them know they are not alone!

#### Protest bias in the media.

The media has a powerful influence on public opinion and government policy. When you discover a piece of bias, immediately contact the news agency and complain. Keep your remarks respectful and stick to the facts. Build a list of e-mail addresses of friends and colleagues, so when you discover bias, you can alert others to also file a complaint. There is power in the number of responses, even if your specific letter is not printed. You can join a media watch email list at [www.HonestReporting.com](http://www.HonestReporting.com) which gives guidelines for how to be effective in contacting the media, and has over 25,000 subscribers protesting biased news against Israel.

#### Give Tzedakah.

Give some charity every day for Israel. Encourage others to give charity for Israel, too. One person wrote; "Because [we have] been forced to cancel [our] annual trip to Israel, we are sending our money anyway to the tour guides and bus driver."

#### Visit Israel.

Go to Israel on vacation, to study, or to visit family. Encourage your local organizations to sponsor trips -- study tours, religious tours, Bar / Bat Mitzvah tours. It can be for 3 days or 10 days. Spend as much money as you can afford in order to help the economy. Hotels, stores, restaurants are lacking tourists -- precisely what [Israel's enemies] seek! Talk to others about the beautiful landscape of Israel, about the unique feeling of thousands of years of Jewish existence in Israel. Visiting Israel will show Israelis that you really care, and will make a tremendous difference to your own sense of connection.

#### Fly the Israeli flag.

Put an Israeli flag in front of your home, [house of worship], etc. Let everyone know that you are proud of Israel. Put an "I Support Israel" bumper sticker on your car. Wear an Israeli flag pin on your lapel. If you can't find an Israeli flag, make one yourself, or ask your kids to draw one, and display it in your car window or office.

### Know your enemy.

The Arab world tends to say one thing in English, but a very different message in Arabic. Blood libels and fabrications of Israeli-sponsored massacres are common. MEMRI ([www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org)) provides important translations of the Arabic media.

### Conserve energy.

Dependence on Arab oil drives much of the pro-Arab sentiment throughout the world. American foreign policy is also heavily influenced by the need for imported oil. To conserve energy, take simple measures like making sure your tires are properly inflated, using compact fluorescent light bulbs in your home, and buying energy-efficient cars and appliances. What about hanging up those car keys and walking or riding your bicycle for a change? If millions would cut down on fuel consumption, the Arab clout would change. On a public policy level, urge your political representatives to allow drilling for oil (while taking appropriate measures to protect the environment), and to pass energy conservation measures.

By Aish.com staff ([www.aish.com](http://www.aish.com)), with thanks to the hundreds of people who submitted ideas.

# ORGANIZATION

## Volunteering: Revisiting Fundamental Values

Identifying the values about volunteering held in your organization is a worthwhile exercise. It uncovers what volunteers and employees think about why volunteers are involved. It points the way for creating meaningful volunteer assignments and provides a framework for working together. It also reminds us that volunteering is bigger than our one setting or even this one point in time. Start the conversation!

Here are some statements of my own philosophy. Do you believe in these, too? What else do you feel is fundamental to understanding volunteer involvement?



### **1. Participation by citizens is vital to making democratic communities work.**

Participatory democracy is based on the value that it is a good thing for citizens to participate in running their communities and in making sure that things happen the way they want. This is the heart of volunteerism and is why, in a free society, volunteering is a right, not a privilege.

Volunteering generates a sense of ownership. People who get involved feel connected to others and affected by the outcome of their "sweat equity." It's the complete opposite of the attitude "that doesn't concern me."

### **2. Volunteers are more than free labor and fill a role that's different from employees.**

First, volunteers are not "free." There are costs to the organization for their support and tools, as well as out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the individuals donating their time.

Most important, when placed in the right positions, volunteers bring a value-added component that actually changes or is lost when a paid employee does the same work. Sometimes their status as volunteers can provide a useful difference. Therefore, volunteers are vital to an organization.

### **3. Equal respect is due to work that is volunteered and work that is paid.**

The value of any work should be determined by its intrinsic quality and impact. Work done by employees does not automatically have a higher value than that done by volunteers (and is also not of lesser value). The contributions of paid and volunteer workers are compatible, collaborative, and integrated.

Even more important, the skills and dedication of the person doing the work are not determined by the presence or absence of a paycheck. There are extraordinary volunteers and extraordinary employees. The potential for excellence always exists.

**4. Volunteer involvement is a balance of three sets of rights: those of the recipient; those of the volunteer; and those of the organization.**

Despite differences in employee and volunteer points of view, each situation defines which perspective takes precedence. In most cases, the bottom line should be what is best for the recipient of service. But there are also organizational and other long-term considerations. The key is not to presuppose that one perspective always outweighs the others.

**5. Volunteering is a neutral act - a strategy for getting things done.**

Volunteering is not inherently on the side of the angels, nor is it an end unto itself. It is a means to accomplishing a goal and is done by people on both sides of an issue. Volunteering is a method that allows people to stand up for their beliefs.

**6. Volunteering empowers the people who do it.**

Volunteering empowers volunteers, both personally and communally. On the personal level, volunteering contributes to individual growth, self-esteem, sense of control, and ability to make a contribution to society. At the community level, the collective action of volunteers who share a commitment to a cause is extremely powerful - real clout for real change.

**7. Volunteering is an equalizer.**

When people volunteer, it is often more important who they are as human beings than what they are on their resumes. In a volunteer role, people can rise to the level of their abilities regardless of their formal qualifications: teenagers can do adult-level work; those with life experience can contribute without a master's degree. Similarly, when running in a fundraising marathon, the highest and lowest members of any hierarchy are indistinguishable, as are all members of a nonprofit board of directors, whether they are employed as professionals capacities or serving as volunteers.

**8. Volunteering is inherently optimistic and future-oriented.**

No one gives time to a cause they feel will fail. In fact, the whole rationale for volunteering is to assure the success of a cause. So, while people may take a paying job that is relatively meaningless if the salary is enticing, the reward for volunteered service is accomplishment. This also means that people volunteer with a vision of the future, often in hopes of a better future in which a problem or disease will be conquered, communities will be safe and inclusive, and the world will be in harmony. This may sound terribly mushy (which may be why such a value is not expressed every day), but it is ultimately true.

By Susan Ellis

Energize, Inc. <http://www.energizeinc.com/>.



## SUCCESSFUL JEWISH WOMAN

### Defending Israel: MK Dr. Einat Wilf



Just over 40 and a relative newcomer to Israeli politics, Einat Wilf is quickly becoming one of the most visible members of the Knesset. Chair of the 'Independence' faction, she serves on the Foreign Affairs and Defense, Education, and Finance committees.

Wilf, who speaks flawless, accent-less English — enhanced no doubt while pursuing university degrees in the United States and England — is frequently quoted in *The New York Times*; and the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, in a series of articles predicting how the world might look in 2031, even envisioned Wilf as Israel's prime minister. (Actually her ambition, held since adolescence, is to be Israel's ambassador to the United Nations.)

Born and raised in Israel, Dr. Wilf served as an Intelligence Officer in the Israel Defense Forces and holds a BA in Government and Fine Arts from Harvard University, an MBA from INSEAD in France, and a PhD in Political Science from the University of Cambridge.

Previously, Dr. Wilf served as a Senior Fellow with the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, a Foreign Policy Advisor to Vice Prime Minister Shimon Peres and a strategic consultant with McKinsey & Company.

Dr. Wilf is the author of two books that explore key issues in Israeli society. Her first book, "My Israel, Our Generation", is about Israel's past and future from the perspective of the younger generation. Her second book, "Back to Basics: How to Save Israeli Education (at no additional cost)" offers a detailed and feasible policy proposal for saving Israel's ailing education system.

On top of her high-powered career, she also has a young son and an international commuter marriage that entails flying to Europe once a month.

Perhaps more intriguing: she is intermarried. Husband Richard Gutjahr, who describes himself as "Journalist. Blogger. Mensch," is not just gentile: he is a German. The two met on a reconciliation program for the grandchildren of Germans and Jews who had been through World War II; they married in 2007, at a Valentine's Day wedding chapel set up on the 75th floor of Manhattan's Empire State Building.

*How do you manage living in different countries?*

We've become very good at it. He comes to Israel once a month, and I go to Munich once a month, so we see each other every two weeks. And when we travel, we find ways to coordinate our travel schedules ... As with everything, if the attitude is, let's make it work, then it works. It also works

really well for the modern life. When we're apart each one of us focuses on our work, and can work from morning to night, and then when we're together we're 24 hours a day together...

*And what about [your son]? Does he have Israeli and German citizenship?*

[My son] lives in Israel. Whenever I go to Munich I travel with him. He has many passport stamps by now! ... He's not a dual citizen and neither am I.

Her bright blue eyes (a striking contrast to her jet-black hair) sparkle animatedly when she discusses the various big-issue challenges facing Israel, from the ongoing conflict with the Palestinians and Arab world, to the need for improved education and a more diversified economy.

Another prime concern for her is the challenge of defending Israel's image.

Last December Dr. Wilf, newly appointed chairwoman of the Knesset subcommittee on Diaspora Affairs, took the historic first steps of proposing a much-needed initiative to transform the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee into a cogent, diplomatic powerhouse – on a par with the IDF – to help Israel finally gain traction in the long-neglected intellectual war waged against its existence.

During a Knesset House Committee meeting, Wilf rightly argued that the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee largely ignores diplomatic issues (i.e. media relations), instead focusing almost exclusively on classic security matters.

She noted that the vast majority of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is dedicated to military concerns – with only one of its 13 subcommittees committed to diplomacy.

However, Wilf recognizes – and made clear – that the battlefield has shifted to the international-media arena, where, as Marshall McLuhan sagely pointed out in his classic 1964 tome *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, “the medium is the message.”

(Editor's Note: Sivan Raviv of Jewish News One has interviewed MK Einat Wilf on the power of social media. See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpOIZ2BJMxc>)

During her tenure in the Knesset, Wilf has repeatedly emphasized and advocated for heightened diplomatic and media relations.

In a BBC World Service interview, Wilf clearly framed the contrasting struggles Israel faces.

“In Israel we are engaged today in two arenas: There is the security arena... then there is a new arena, which is no less important and strategic for Israel, and that is the ongoing campaign to delegitimize [the country],” she said. “The question is, can we defend Israel by other means – by means that are not military? This is the kind of battle of ideas and narrative that we should fight and win...”

“We have a great story to tell, and we must defend our cause when Israel is being attacked on its narrative, on its story – on its image.”

Wilf understands that this can only be accomplished by exponentially improving Israel’s profoundly, and unjustly, maligned perception within the media.

To do this Wilf suggested that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee be split, pointing out that most Western countries have separate panels for foreign affairs and defense matters, and that a separate committee for Foreign Affairs would allow for proper supervision of the Foreign Ministry.

“Now, when the State of Israel is dealing with challenges on the international stage, there is a need to put foreign affairs questions on equal standing with classic security questions,” Wilf said.

Though deeply involved in her parliamentary work, she has the future in mind. When asked if she has ambitions beyond the Knesset, Dr. Wilf replied: “I want to stay in politics for as long as they’ll let me ... And if not in the Knesset and not in government, anything that will allow me to stand at the crossroads of Israel, the Jewish people and the world at large would always be interesting for me. This is what I want my life to be. I made that decision a while ago. I love everything I do. The issues I care about in Israel are of course foreign affairs, but also education and the economy. Any way I can serve, I’d really be privileged and honored...We often forget to take a step back and realize what a remarkable creation Israel is and what a remarkable opportunity it still is to be part of it.”

“Einat Wilf Q & A”, Julie Wiener, Associate Editor, The New York Jewish Week, September 7, 2011.  
[www.thejewishweek.com](http://www.thejewishweek.com)

Daniel K. Eisenbud, “The Medium is the Message”, The Jerusalem Post, December 30, 2011 [www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com)  
Einat Wilf’s English Webpage, [www.wilf.org](http://www.wilf.org)

## INTERNET INFO

### THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

[www.timesofisrael.com](http://www.timesofisrael.com)

The Times of Israel is a Jerusalem-based online newspaper founded in 2012 to document developments in Israel, the Middle East and around the Jewish world. It was established by veteran UK-born, Israeli journalist David Horovitz and his US-based capital partner Seth Klarman. Horovitz is the founding editor, responsible for the site's editorial content.

The Times of Israel has no partisan political affiliation. It seeks to present the news fair-mindedly and offers a wide range of analysis and opinion pieces. It also highlights developments from Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora, thus serving as a global focal point for the Jewish world.

The core staff and contributors of The Times of Israel include many of Israel's leading English-language journalists. They are also happy to consider freelance contributions, to receive news and video content, and to host blogs.



[www.shamash.org](http://www.shamash.org)

**Shamash: The Jewish Network** strives to be the highest quality central point of Jewish information and discussion on the Internet. Their mission is to provide state-of-the-art Internet tools to Jewish organizations and individuals who maintain discussion forums for the benefit of the Jewish community.

Shamash is the oldest and best known Jewishly oriented service accessible through the Internet. Shamash serves the full spectrum of Jewish religious, educational, cultural, communal, and social service organizations interested in utilizing new electronic technologies to share information and deliver services to the Jewish community worldwide. Shamash's directory of Jewish Links is especially helpful.

#### **Youtube link for Passover**

Gil Troy discusses Pesach 5761 (April 2011)

Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-rqwaMZoZ0>

Gil Troy was a panelist in the session on "Today's Zionism -- Facing Tomorrow" at the 25<sup>th</sup> World WIZO EGM in January 2012.

# ISRAEL TOUCH

## Laplanders turn to Israel to learn Sámi

**Looking to revive their traditional Sámi tongue, Norwegians were advised by Welsh and Scottish experts that Israel excels at training language teachers.**

Heads turned as a colorfully dressed delegation of three men from Norway made their way around the Mount Scopus campus of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in February. Just as their attire attested to their dedication to the traditions of Lapland, the men were on a mission to revitalize the Lapp language called Sámi. That's what brought them to Israel on the United Nations' International Mother Language Day.



Photo: [Briankaneonline.com](http://Briankaneonline.com)

"We saw that less and less people were using Sámi and that the methods for teaching it in the schools were not very successful," explained Kevin Johansen, an advisor for Sámi issues at the University of Nordland and for Nordland County, which is part of the Lapland region stretching across Norway, Finland, Sweden and Russia. Of about 10 Sámi dialects, only four are still known among the estimated 100,000 Sámi-speakers of Lapland.

Searching for better teaching methods, Johansen consulted with experts in Scotland and Wales, where long-suppressed minority languages are making a comeback.

"They told us that the methods they use they learned in Israel, and they suggested we make contact with Hebrew teachers here," he said at a press conference after meeting with Hebrew University president Menahem Ben-Sasson.

The Israeli Embassy in Oslo arranged for Johansen's tour of the university's Rothberg International School along with Lars Joar Halonen and Nils Ánte Eira, who head the Sámi language center of the Lavangen municipality.

The men attended a beginner-level ulpan (intensive Hebrew class), met with faculty and learned how the ancient biblical language -- transformed into a modern spoken language 123 years ago -- is taught to immigrants, students and scholars.

Ben-Sasson told them that the university's name reflects a conscious decision to use Hebrew as the medium for instruction and discourse at a time when its future was in question.



"Will you be sending teachers here to learn the methods we've developed for language instruction?" Ben-Sasson asked.

"Absolutely," responded Johansen. "That's the next step in our program. We were at an educational conference...in Oslo, and we heard that more and more people are looking to Israel to learn successful methods for teaching in general, and for teaching language."

## **Ulpan in Norway**

The Norway-Israel connection actually began months before the trip. With financial backing from the Norwegian government's Action Plan to Revitalize the Sámi Language, Johansen hired American-Israeli ulpan director [Shlomo Eitan](#) as a consultant.

"They were looking for new concepts in language teaching, and I have been to Norway seven or eight times to advise them," Eitan said. "We're hopeful that we can give adult learners an exciting, positive experience with learning language so that they will want to continue."

Johansen, married to an Israeli woman he met while learning Spanish in Spain, said that the Hungarian-related Sámi is a much older and entirely different language than the Germanic-based Norwegian. "The first Bible published in Sámi was in 1754, while the first Norwegian Bible was published in 1908," said Johansen. His young daughter is learning a northern Sámi dialect that has about 500 speakers, and he says many young artists are performing in Sámi these days as a statement of ethnic pride.

The revitalization initiative in Lavangen started in 2008, said Halonen. The municipality established a center in which a Sámi-language kindergarten opened in August 2011.

"In order to take the language back, we need children to speak it, and in order for children to speak it they need a community that speaks the language too," said Halonen, whose household is one of only three in Lavangen using Sámi as its primary mode of communication, though some 300 ethnic Laplanders are among the town's 1,000 citizens.

The center will eventually offer adults a six-month ulpan-style course for parents, preschool teachers, municipal employees and healthcare workers. "We have nurses in old-age homes who need the language to communicate with older patients who speak Sámi," Halonen explained.

"My parents don't speak Sámi because the generation before them refused to speak it," Johansen added. "It was considered shameful and was forbidden at school. Now, in retirement homes, they've found that Sámi is a hidden language. People who would never have admitted it was their first language, when they get dementia they forget Norwegian and only speak Sámi."

Adapted from the article by Abigail Klein Leichman February 23, 2012  
Israel 21c [www.Israel21c.org](http://www.Israel21c.org)

# Dolphin Therapy Helps Mute Israeli Teen Speak

In September 2007, Morad Azva, a 16-year-old charismatic and popular boy, was brutally attacked by peers from high school in his village of Kalansua, Israel. The attack left him wounded not only physically, but mentally as well. Morad became mute, closed off to the outside world, and showed strong signs of post-traumatic stress disorder.



Morad with dolphin at the Reef

Morad's parents sent him to be treated by Dr. Ilan Kutz, one of Israel's leading psychiatrists in the field of post-trauma and the former director of the Psychiatric Services at Meir General Hospital in Kfar Saba. But the treatment, which consisted of both medication and psychiatric therapy, showed no signs of success.

"I hadn't seen that degree of severe [mutism]," said Dr. Kutz. "It usually lasts a few hours at

most; never anything this long." With zero progress, Kutz saw no purpose in continuing

with therapy. In a medical report he suggested sending Morad to be hospitalized in a mental institution. Morad's father, unwilling to give up on his son's liberty, asked for another solution.

That's when Dr. Kutz suggested an alternative medical treatment: dolphin therapy.

The aim of the therapy, according to The Henry Spink Foundation that assists children with severe disabilities, is to "increase sensory activity" through the interaction with dolphins. Children are asked to swim, touch, feed, or pat the dolphins, known to be fond of human interaction. They are also known to be intelligent animals with a special sense for distress, the foundation says.

During the past few decades, dolphin therapy has become a popular alternative treatment, especially for children. Some of the patients treated with dolphin therapy include people with cancer, autism or cerebral palsy, and trauma victims such as Morad. Dolphin therapy was introduced as a medical treatment after the American anthropologist Dr. Betsy Smith saw the therapeutic effects of dolphins on her disabled brother.

Although the therapy does not ensure a full medical recovery, research found that after swimming with dolphins, blood samples included more endorphins. According to Dr. Kutz, these changes are also reflected in the immune system. "The positive experience of their therapy is able to counter the state of stress prior to the treatment," he explains.

Morad's father packed his belongings, sold his horse farm and drove with Morad to Israel's most southern city. The Dolphin Reef in Eilat seemed to be their final hope.

The Dolphin Reef is known to most Israelis as a tourist attraction. It offers hydrotherapy treatments, swimming, snorkeling and diving with dolphins. But every morning before the site opens to the public, therapy sessions take place. The Reef in Eilat gives away their time and expertise as a contribution to the community. They ask patients to pay according to their ability, and create programs suited to each individual's needs. Patients are treated for a year on average, but some may take as long as ten years to reach their goal. In Morad's case, while progress was immediate, his treatment went on for four years before he was ready to return to his village.

Therapy sessions at the reef aim to retrieve one's communication skills and trust. They include swimming sessions with the dolphins, ongoing interaction with the trainer, and verbalized communication over time. The second stage of the therapy aims to enhance the patient's sense of responsibility. The patient is given an active role around the reef with daily duties such as preparing the dolphin's meals and cleaning food buckets.

According to Sophie Donio, who developed Eilat's dolphin therapy program over twenty years ago, Morad reacted to the dolphins instantly. "His entire body language changed the moment he saw the water and the dolphins," she said. Donio, now writing her Master's thesis on the experiences of eleven patients at the reef, believes that dolphin therapy proves itself time and again.

During his time at the Dolphin Reef, Morad regained his ability to communicate, first with dolphins and later on with people. A few months into therapy, he spoke his first words. "I felt like I was reborn," he recalls, "The dolphins were my new family." Morad flourished in his new surroundings. He became an active member of the reef and continued his experience with dolphins as a staff member.

Dr. Kutz, who comes from conventional medical practice, stresses that despite the great progress, "it is important to keep in mind that not all of Morad's problems have been dealt with." According to him, "it took unbelievable patience, dedication, intimacy and love from all parties to restore a sense of security for Morad." Furthermore, Kutz emphasizes the importance of time as an essential element of the healing process. "I do not want Morad's story to be perceived as neither miracle nor breakthrough," he says.

Morad, who returned to his village, recently started studying hydrotherapy on a full scholarship. His story reached the ears of film directors Dani Menkin and Yonatan Nir, who decided to turn it into a documentary film. The film, "Dolphin Boy", is currently being screened in the United States. It has also been featured in cinemas across Israel and Europe, and is being used for academic purposes as a case study for psychology students.

By Michal Divon

[NoCamels](#) Israeli Innovation News , March 10, 2012