Dear Chaverot,

Some of you will be reading this at the Conference; for those of you who are unable to come, hopefully you will be able to join us next time. There is nothing like getting together at a conference – seeing the enormity and warmth of our movement, sharing and caring – and perhaps most important – seeing where your money goes, how much it is appreciated here, and what a wonderful contribution we make to Israel’s society.

This issue of your magazine is 56 pages…we only wish we could do more. As we finish one magazine, we have a blank page for the next one – for about five minutes! Something is always happening which is worthy of an article and ideas come tumbling in from various sources. We have hardly ‘put pen to paper’ – or should I say fingers clicking on the keyboards, when the puzzle begins – have we room for everything? Alas, not always, but we do our best.

We have some farewells in this magazine: farewell, but not adieu, to our president Helena Glaser. Helena completes her term as president of World WIZO and 40 years of devoted volunteering. But, as you will see in the interview starting on page 10, she feels her work is far from over.

Farewell too, to Lili Peyser, Nurit Polak and Ruth Rubinstein, stalwarts of the World WIZO Executive who are retiring… and last but not least, farewell to Vicky Fidanque, Aviv representative to the World WIZO Executive, but I am sure Vicky’s WIZO career has hardly begun!

Our feature articles this time cover a varied spectrum:

We spotlight the World WIZO Fundraising Department (p.16), under the able direction of Esther Mor. We continue our series (p.20) of featuring a federation – this time we have had the privilege of interviewing two dynamic and dedicated young women – Gail Perl and Jana Falic, co-presidents of WIZO USA.

In today’s world, it is more and more difficult to recruit young women to take an active role in the work of our federations; on pages 24-25, young WIZO women from around the world tell us how they juggle family, careers and WIZO.

We know you always love information about our projects – in this issue we have focused on the wonderful WIZO branch in Rosh Ha’ayin (p.26); the volunteers manage an amazing array of activities in very difficult physical conditions. How heartwarming it is to hear from pupils in WIZO’s Gan ve’Nof School (p.28), who, thanks to WIZO, pass their matriculation exams and can look forward to a bright future.

Starting on page 32, you can read the fascinating story of how the 45th edition of the World WIZO Bible Day book came into being… a celebration of WIZO’s 90th anniversary, a celebration of 90 WIZO women. Enjoy.

Our last two sections – WIZO in Israel and WIZO around the World, give you a glimpse of our movement’s activities.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy and peaceful 2012.

Ingrid Rockberger
Contents

02 Editorial
04 President’s Desk
05 Chairperson’s Column
06 Up Front
09 WIZO Retirees
10 Ties, Bonds, Alliances and Joint Ventures
   Outgoing World WIZO President Helena Glaser reflects on 40 WIZO years
15 Aliyah anniversary
   New immigrant, Rolene Marks, looks back on her first year in Israel
16 From Source to Supply
   Spotlight on World WIZO Fundraising Department
18 Donor Appreciation
20 Dedicated Duo
   Interview with WIZO USA Co-Presidents
24 WIZO, Women & Work
   Managing family, career and voluntary work
26 From the Kitchen to the Shelter
   The Rosh Ha’ayin WIZO Centre
28 Sowing the Seeds of Excellency
   Pupils aim high at Gan ve’Noaf
31 Celebrating Aviv
32 What have you been doing for the past two years?
   Unearting stories of 90 WIZO women
34 WIZO: Making Involvement Appealing
   How to attract women to WIZO
36 WIZO in Israel
40 WIZO around the World

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: to make sure you don’t miss a copy of WIZO Review, please let us know any address changes by email to wrdistlist@gmail.com. Don’t forget to add your full name, mailing address, zip code and country.
Dear Chaverot,

I cannot write this – my last column in my position as president of Word WIZO - without mentioning the recently debated issue of the attempted segregation of women, especially in Jerusalem, where religious zealots are trying to exclude women from the public domain, by, for example, prohibiting them from appearing on poster advertisements in Jerusalem and other towns such as Beit Shemesh, and the phenomenon of gender separation in some buses in the city (enforced by sectors of the ultra-orthodox community). Sadly, female exclusion has also been experienced at various locations where mixed populations meet. This has led to arguments and vocal resistance. As one who has, for nearly 40 years, championed and promoted the advancement of the status of women, I am very disturbed by this trend that sets us back in our struggle for gender equality and women’s rights. For the sake of transparency, it must be said that the majority of the religious population and rabbis in Israel are opposed to what they conceive as the actions of a fringe minority. The president and prime minister have also spoken out against it. In addition, brave women in the ultra-orthodox sector, at great personal risk to themselves and their families, have spoken out and have actively opposed the seating segregation on buses. The Ministerial Committee on the Status of Women called a special meeting to which WIZO’s representative was invited, and it was decided to establish a legislative task force to fight female exclusion in Israeli society and to enforce gender equality in the job market. WIZO will continue to initiate, lobby and promote legislation and projects to advance and implement gender equality in all sectors and on all levels of life in Israel.

As I mentioned, this is the last column I will be writing as the president of World WIZO and I would like to summarize my two terms as president and nearly 40 years as a volunteer. I have many blessings to count. For the most, it was the best of times: challenging, interesting, inspiring and motivating. Sometimes, the road was long and winding but there was always the ultimate reward at its end – the well-being of our WIZO service recipients.

I want to thank WIZO for giving me the opportunity to grow and develop as an individual and as a professional under its wings; for allowing me to create programmes and initiate projects for babies, children, youth, women and the elderly; for providing me with the conditions to concentrate on the promotion of social and Jewish issues dear to my heart; for letting me fulfill my dream and vision that WIZO become a leading Zionist movement and an influential agent of social change.

I want to thank WIZO for trusting me to represent our movement in the national and international arenas and enhance its image.

And last but not least, thanks to WIZO, I have been lucky enough to participate in some unique and historical events and meet some exceptional people. These people include WIZO chaverot from all over the world who share my love, commitment, dedication and devotion to WIZO, the People of Israel, the Land of Israel and the State of Israel, some of whom have become close friends; all have overwhelmed me with warmth and appreciation beyond words.

It has been a true pleasure working with WIZO donors, benefactors and supporters, WIZO professional staff, and the wonderful WIZO employees – all totally committed to our movement and its causes.

And of course a huge thank you to our wonderful volunteers, here in WIZO House, across the country and throughout the world.

Over the years, I did everything in my power to carry out every task, duty and position as best as I could and more. I hope that history will judge me favourably.

Yours sincerely,

Helena Glaser, President, World WIZO.
Chairperson’s Column

Dear Chaverot,

It is hard to imagine that four years have passed since the last World WIZO Conference, and eight years have passed since I took over the position of Chairperson of this movement. I have marched forward with this organization for over half its life. We have grown and blossomed together. I was brought up on the value of giving, helping one another, humility, being satisfied with little and a love for Zionism and our country. Education was given top priority, as was giving, and giving again.

I strongly believe that every girl and boy, from wherever they may come, has the right to equal opportunity in order to succeed and to excel, to have quality education so that they can pass on values of Israeli identity, Zionism and Judaism to the next generation.

In 2005 I launched an education campaign in WIZO federations around the world, and you all responded. During the time of the Lebanon II War, I launched an emergency campaign in the federations abroad. WIZO youth villages opened their doors and accepted evacuees from the north of the country, thousands of families were given shelter. Throughout my term of office I have concentrated upon finding new sources of funding for building and development in order to bolster the movement. I have implemented efficiency and recovery programs, negotiated new wage agreements with the Histadrut, nurtured connections with government offices and local authorities, and cooperated with women’s organizations, in order to strengthen the movement as it confronts the coming years.

During this period, in 2008, WIZO was awarded the Israel Prize for “their efforts to promote gender equality and their struggle to promote humanitarian, social, cultural and educational issues, while focusing on the central position of women in society and the need for equality between the sexes within Israeli society.” And in 2010, on Independence Day, I was awarded the ‘Honoree of Tel Aviv-Jaffa,’ by Mayor of Tel Aviv, Ron Huldai, for ‘my concern, loyalty and devotion towards the welfare and honor of the city of Tel Aviv.’

During my period of office we implemented the Israel Youth Award project, which is under the sponsorship of Prince Andrew from Britain. Our pupils are proving themselves to be highly successful, in this programme, which is giving them motivation and more confidence to succeed in their studies.

I see my volunteer work in WIZO as a ‘calling’ which is made possible through the help of a full army of volunteers and professionals, both in Israel and abroad in our devoted federations, who all have the same aims, and are all contributing to the building of an exemplary State of Israel.

The last eight years have been fascinating. Despite the financial situation we have an annual turnover of NIS: 650 million. Together we have made a difference in so many lives, and this Enlarged General Meeting gives us the opportunity to savour our successes and to look forward with enthusiasm and optimism. But we dare not pause for long, the future awaits us, hundreds of thousands of Israelis are relying upon us. I undertake to lead this organization forward according to the WIZO vision.

Let the work begin!

Affectionately yours,

Tova Ben-Dov,
Chairperson
World WIZO Executive

BY VIRTUE OF THEIR OFFICE AS PRESIDENTS OR CHAIRPERSONS OF FEDERATION

Argentina: Amalia Polack
Australia: Gilla Liberman
Austria: Dr. Hava Bugajer
Belgium & Luxembourg: Vicky Hollander
Bolivia: Liliana Swerszszaf
Brazil: Helena Kelner
Bulgaria: Marina Nanjova
Canada: Marla Dan
Chile: Agnes Mannheim
Colombia: Sara Meckler
Costa Rica: Anita Ligator
Curaçao: Yael Ackerman
Czech Republic: Eva Kosakova
Denmark: Dorrit Raiter
Dominican Republic: Helen Kopel
Estonia: Reveka Blumberg
Finland: Pirko-Liisa Schulman
France: Joelle Lezmi
Germany: Diana Schnabel
Gibraltar: Julie Massias
Greece: Heather Nahmias
Guatemala: Ruth Sibony Azuay
Holland: Joyce Y. Numann - Durlacher
Hong Kong: Yael Zylberman
Hungary: Daphna Peyser
India: Yael Jhirad
Israel: Gila Oshrat
Italy: Ester (Silvana) Israel
Japan: Jennifer (McAdam) Lim
Jamaica: Sarah Hyams
Latvia: Hana Finkelstein
Lithuania: Rachel Kostanian
Mexico: Dr. Diana Kuba
New Zealand: Lorna Orbell
Norway: Janne Jaffe Hesstvedt
Panama: Estela Faskha
Paraguay: Rebeca Rosenfeld
Peru: Michelle Lumbroso
Singapore: S. J. Khafif
South Africa: Yvonne Jawitz
Sweden: Ilana Querub Bergio
Switzerland: Susanne Szunyoghy-Rytz
United Kingdom: Loraine Warren
United States: Jana Falic
Uruguay: Raquel Lapchik de Szwedzki
Venezuela: Ena Rotkopf

WINTER 2011/2012 | WIZO REVIEW | 5
Na’aleh at Nahalal

There are moments in contemporary history, such as the assassination of President Kennedy, when we ask each other, “Where were you when you heard that news?” On the day that Israel’s abducted soldier, Gilad Schalit was released after more than five long years in captivity, around 100 people will say, “We were at WIZO’s Nahalal School and Youth Village for the dedication of the new dormitory in the name of the late Lord Leonard Steinberg.”

In memory of her husband, Lady Beryl Steinberg very generously funded the renovation of the dormitory, which houses 54 students of the Na’aleh programme, where especially talented students from the Former Soviet Union come to Israel without their families to study. Guests were delighted by musical entertainment performed by some of the students.

In thanking the family, Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive Tova Ben Dov said: “It was only two years ago that we all celebrated – with Leonard – the opening of the refurbished dining room thanks to the Steinberg family’s generous donation. We are here today with one eye happy that we are dedicating the new dormitory and one eye crying that Leonard is not here with us.”

Education, Education, Education!

We can’t stress those words enough and education was the theme of the morning honouring Frank Kettner for his continuing generosity to WIZO projects, and specifically his recent donation to the WIZ Kids programme at the Sandy Martin Alberta Day Care Centre in memory of his late wife Sophie.

Joining in the celebrations were World WIZO Executive Chairperson Tova Ben Dov, long-time family friend Sylvia Milrod and other guests. Tova emphasized the importance of investing in the future of Israeli youth – it is never too early to start!

WIZO’s WIZ Kids programme currently runs in eight day care centres, one youth village and two community centres. Statistics show that this programme enhances basic computer skills, letter recognition, vocabulary and basic maths. Mr Kettner was delighted to see the fruits of his donation ‘in action’ and how the children were benefitting from his generosity. He expressed his hope that he would create new educational projects to help enhance the future of Israel’s children.
A garden for Len

“Dad was a keen gardener, and he was generous in a very modest way,” said son Johnny, “and I know he would be slightly embarrassed by this dedication, but would also take great pleasure in it.”

The refurbished garden at the WIZO branch of Zichron Yaacov (sponsored by WIZOuk) was donated by long-time WIZOuk activist and supporter, Shirley Levinson, in memory of her beloved husband Len.

The event was enhanced by the presence of Len’s extended family in Israel, World WIZO Executive members and many of Shirley’s WIZO friends now living in Israel.

A surprise guest was WIZOuk chairman Loraine Warren, who flew in especially for the occasion. “How could I not be here for Shirley?” she remarked. “During my WIZO career, I have been privileged to meet and work with some truly exceptional women, and right at the top of that list is Shirley Levinson. Shirley epitomizes everything that a strong WIZO woman should be.”

Both World WIZO President Helena Glaser and chairperson of the Executive Tova Ben Dov commented on their long association with Shirley – “a true Zionist and supporter of WIZO and Israel!”

Entertainment was provided by the choir from the local elementary school and singers from the Zichron Music Centre.

...and more – Education

And once again, education – as early as possible – was stressed at the opening of the multi-purpose day care centre, part of the Raya Jaglom Day Care Centre on King George Street, Tel Aviv, sponsored by WIZO Australia.

This additional complex was possible thanks to the generosity of Pearl and Bernhard Lazarus, most generous donors to WIZO and other causes in Israel. This multi-purpose day care centre is the first of its kind in Tel Aviv, where WIZO already operates 22 regular day care centres.

WIZO’s multi-purpose day care centres cater for at-risk children aged from six months to seven years old. The centres are open from 7am to 7pm and provide the children with all their educational and nutritional needs for the day. Activities are also held with the parents.

After the fixing of the mezuzah and unveiling the plaque, Bernhard Lazarus gave a stirring speech stressing the importance of Jewish education and Jewish identity.
University DCC

There was much excitement and cause for celebration as WIZO opened its first day care centre on a university campus. Sixty children, aged from six months to three years, attend the centre, where there are three classes, serving the faculty of the university, researchers, lecturers, and scientists who have returned to Israel from abroad.

Many dignitaries from the university and members of the World WIZO Executive were present. The ceremony was moderated by Amos Shapira, president of the friends of Tel Aviv University, whose four-month-old granddaughter Maya, daughter of his son who teaches mathematics at the university, will soon attend the day care centre.

President of the University Professor Joseph Klafter sincerely thanked WIZO for its contribution and said that when he became president, he did not expect to be wandering amongst little children – but now he is looking forward to the expansion of the day care centre.

Professor Rachel Erhard, Head, Graduate Program of School Counseling, School of Education, Tel Aviv University, welcomed the opening of the day care centre and said, “Faculty members kept coming to my office, not believing the day care centre would actually happen, but it has, and now I have a huge waiting list. Parents of 65% of the children are part of the university faculty at a critical stage of their careers; having their children on the premises is a great help for them. Another 15% are faculty who have returned from periods abroad, and have chosen to return to the university. I myself know how difficult it is to combine an academic career with a family – and this is another asset to the university.”

Representing the parents, Dr Noam Shomron said what a delight it was to hear the sound of happy children amongst the biological cloning, legal doctrines and the analysis of financial reports!

Austrian Visit

A new garden and playground were inaugurated at the Jessi Rubins Day Care Centre in Rehovot (sponsored by WIZO Austria) in the presence of Mrs Freidrich and Mrs Hudet from the Municipality of Vienna and Rita Dauber, past president of WIZO Austria. The visitors from Austria came laden with clothing for the children, which caused great excitement. The Austrian delegation was visibly moved by their encounter with the children and the warm atmosphere at the centre. Seventy-four children attend the centre, mostly from Ethiopia and the former Soviet Union. The children prepared a kabbalat Shabbat for the guests, and the smell of challot, baked on the premises filled the air.

Enjoying the children at the new day care centre at Tel Aviv University:
(sitting l to r) Helena Glaser, Tova Ben Dov, University President Professor Joseph Klafter, (standing l to r) Tel Aviv Deputy Mayor Meital Zahavi, Director of World WIZO Early Age Division Dr Nomi Moreno, Esti Sharon, director of the new day care centre.
Farewell WIZO!

Having completed their term of office, three much-loved and devoted WIZO ladies ‘retire’ from the World WIZO Executive

The world has gone through many changes since the early days of WIZO, as have the lives of women. Nowadays, most women go out to work and the remainder of their time is spent maintaining their homes and caring for their children. For these three women, WIZO is part of their lives forever and they all emphasise that the more they gave to WIZO the more they received in return.

Sima Borkovski

Lili Peyser, the retiring head of the Tourism Department, is a third generation of WIZO volunteers. With both her aunt and mother being WIZO ladies it was only natural for Lili to follow in their footsteps. In the 1980s, as a young mother she joined WIZO Tel Aviv’s legal advice bureau. “This was a unique time for me,” she recalls. “Being part of this department gave me the opportunity to lend an ear to women who suffered bad divorce experiences and other difficulties in their lives.” Peyser eventually became head of the Ramat Aviv branch and her success paved her way to World WIZO where she joined the Tourism Department as Sylvie Pelossof’s deputy, and for the past eight years as head of the department. During her 15 years in the department, she became familiar with all of WIZO endeavours and institutions. “When you accompany delegations to visit WIZO’s projects and meet the wonderful people who do such tremendous work it touches your heart. It opened a window to a world I didn’t know before, and during those years I experienced precious moments that will stay with me for the rest of my life,” she concludes.

Though Peyser, like her parents, has donated generously to WIZO, she refuses any formal recognition or a plaque with her name that acknowledges her contribution. “I would like to be remembered by the work I did for WIZO and not for the money I donated,” she declares.

Ruth Rubinstein

Ruth Rubinstein leaves the Education Department after heading it for eight years with the statement that “WIZO remains part of you even after you leave.” Rubinstein joined WIZO after a long career in the field of adult education as a director of a Hebrew Ulpan (Hebrew language school). Her WIZO career started in the Cultural Department of WIZO Tel Aviv and later on continued in the Education Department of World WIZO where she felt she could contribute the most.

“One of my most important projects was the “WIZO’s Heritage” project. We advanced this issue amongst the students of WIZO schools through the theme of female leadership, based on the personality of three of the founders of WIZO and their unique activity,” she explains.

“I would love to see that programme become part of the educational curriculum at the schools because through this theme we can connect our teachers and students with WIZO. During my years in the Education Department, It was so rewarding for me to witness how our educational system improves the life of underprivileged youth and changes their future prospects,” she concludes.

Nurit Polack

Approaching the age of 75, it is only now that Nurit Polack feels that she needs to slow down. Polack is departing WIZO after a long career that started 45 years ago as the chairperson of the Ramat Hasharon branch and ends as the chairperson of Beit Heuss, a special centre for the advancement of women in Herzliya. “I enjoyed every one of my duties at WIZO and it always felt like the duties I was offered suited my qualities. I’m the kind of person who loves to be active all the time and therefore when I headed the Building Department I would travel a lot and visit the branches. During my years of activity in WIZO I made friends throughout the country,” she states.

“Being part of WIZO gave me so much. When I began volunteering it was a time when women used to sit in cafés if they didn’t have to work. I feel proud that I made the most of my time. WIZO will always be part of my life because you just can’t take 45 years and toss them away,” she smiles.
Outgoing World WIZO President Helena Glaser reflects on her long career in WIZO and outlines how much more there is to be done

Ingrid Rockberger

It wasn’t easy to schedule interview time with Helena; like any top executive, she has an extremely full timetable. However, between missions abroad for WIZO and the Jewish Agency, and while she was busy with preparations for the EGM, we managed! Busy as she was, when we sat together, she was fully focused. She has accomplished a tremendous amount during her many years with WIZO, and like all of us ‘with WIZO in our blood’ she is totally devoted to the cause.

You are leaving an active post in WIZO after 40 years as a volunteer. How and why did you start volunteering for WIZO?

I started volunteering for WIZO in 1971 soon after I came back to Israel from the USA, where I had lived with my family for ten years. At that time my husband, Ami, and myself were part of a group of friends that met together on Friday nights; we found ourselves criticizing many social issues in the country, and I decided to do something about it. I also volunteered because of family tradition. My mother always said “Even if you don’t have [a lot], you always have enough to give something for others.” So the idea was always there that you can help – and not necessarily with money. One person alone can only make a limited difference. When you are part of a movement or organization, then you can make changes. And this is why I preach so much for women to join WIZO; through WIZO and networking, you have the strength and tools to change the lives of many people on a much wider level. This ability was always very important to me.

Through a WIZO Tel Aviv member, our social group became a WIZO group. After a few meetings I was elected as chairperson of the group – and that was the beginning.
Trace your path through WIZO for us.
I was chairperson of fundraising in WIZO Tel Aviv, chairperson of fundraising WIZO Israel, and vice chairperson of WIZO Israel, chairperson of WIZO Israel, vice chairperson of the World WIZO Executive, chairperson and vice president, and finally president.

The time commitment for many of these roles was equivalent to a part or even full-time career. How did your family react to this?
I have to say I have a very supportive partner, who believes that in a marriage each partner should have their own space, interests and challenges. He saw how I grew as a person with all the responsibilities I had with the different positions, and he was very proud of me. WIZO gave me the opportunity. Of course I had days (like all WIZO volunteers!) when I overdid it.

The children – I know they wish I would have been at home more, but they also knew that when they really needed me I was there. I would drop everything for them. And now the grandchildren know the same. Of course, now they tell me how proud they are of me.

What made you continue, instead of pursuing a career for remuneration?
There were some junctions in our life when we did have discussions as to whether I should continue [with WIZO] or do something else. I was once approached to get involved in a business venture – and we discussed it. I would say to myself: “when you look back on your life you will have to ask yourself what you did that was actually meaningful.” The answer was clear to me. I consider myself lucky that my life presented me with these challenges and opportunities in WIZO.

Which of these positions was the most rewarding?
Each position was interesting for me, but when I was chair of fundraising in WIZO Israel, and chair of WIZO Israel I really felt I was in touch with our service recipients and could see firsthand where to direct our funds. When I was chair of fundraising, I always made sure I knew why we needed the money – and this knowledge is very important for every WIZO volunteer here in Israel and around the world. I went round the projects, and asked a lot of questions: the knowledge I gained gave me the motivation to raise the funds. Knowing how badly the money was needed gave me the strength to inspire and motivate others. I was always very goal oriented, and to achieve these goals I initiated a lot of new projects and activities.

For example, I organized the first major fundraising function – a brunch/fashion show at the Hilton Tel Aviv. Everyone thought I was unrealistic – most of them had never heard of the word ‘brunch’! The tickets were expensive for those days and people thought we would never sell even one ticket. I realized that holding prestigious events would enable WIZO to raise large amounts of money for our projects. I knew there would be enough people to buy the tickets – and there were; we had a sell-out.

When I became chairperson of the fundraising department of WIZO Israel, the annual income was $600,000; when I left it was $1.5 million. It was all trial and error in those days, but even then I realized we had to be more professional and so I initiated fundraising seminars, unheard of at that time, and today, years later, fundraising is taught at university!
and I thought – we can never ever build shelters for one thousand women, let alone 200,000! When this project [Centres for Prevention of Violence in the Family] was proposed I supported it wholeheartedly because I thought that those women whose lives were in danger had to be in a shelter, but all the rest could remain at home and get help and services within the community. Although there was much opposition at the time from the various ministries, I now know I was right to push it.

...and highlights while you were chairperson and president of World WIZO?

During my eight years as chairperson of the World WIZO Executive, we opened 40 new day care centres, and built the new comprehensive and community high school at WIZO Nahalal. I formed many good relationships with the heads of municipalities – for their cooperation and assistance is crucial for us. One of the highlights during my presidency was the opening of the Indian federation, which has just celebrated its fourth birthday. They are doing so well, and it has been a real outreach to that small Jewish community.

Although flying is not a pleasure, I love visiting the federations. An international movement cannot be run by remote control. Not all members can visit us in Israel. When someone visits from the World WIZO Executive it causes great excitement amongst the chaverot, and intensifies the bond and brings new life to the WIZO message. When I visit a federation, I meet WIZO leadership and chaverot, government and local dignitaries, donors and community leaders and Israel’s ambassadors. It enhances the prestige of WIZO in the community.

On these missions, you learn what your movement is all about, and what the unique needs of each federation are. You get a chance to speak to people; (emails and phone calls are just not the same)…and how else do you fundraise – by personally meeting donors and potential donors. It is always important to meet with Aviv members and discuss their challenges; after all they are the future of our movement.

From my observation, leaders of some small distant federations do not come to Israel for EGMs or MORs. It is also difficult for us to visit them often. Therefore I suggested creating a liaison position to be held by past presidents of the relevant regions. For example, Jo Gostin, past president of WIZO Australia, has been appointed coordinator of WIZO federations in Southern Asia and Oceania, Sandra Israel, past president of WIZO Panama, co-coordinator of World WIZO for Central America and the northern area of South America and Laura Rozenbaum, past president of Uruguay, co-coordinator of World WIZO for the central and southern area of South America.

Of course, receiving the prestigious Israel Prize on behalf of WIZO was one of those unforgettable WIZO events. The prize was awarded in 2008 to the three women’s organizations: WIZO, Emunah and Naamat for their efforts in the various spheres of improving Israeli society.

Other highlights for me, which I will always keep in my heart, were the wonderful and immediate responses we received from the federations whenever we had a crisis. I initiated several campaigns: Their Safety is in Your Hands (Security Fund), which was a reaction to the Intifada, Poverty is not only Food, Sderot and the Carmel Fire. Chaverot from around the world reacted immediately and from their hearts, for which I am forever grateful.

We are a women’s social movement – that is how I always describe WIZO.
As president for the past eight years, you have been involved in many activities and events in the Jewish/Zionist world. How important do you think this is for WIZO?

Part of my work in the international Jewish forums is always to put WIZO on the map. I think I have been instrumental in showing the men on the various Zionist forums that today they have to take women’s issues seriously. I was elected as the first woman chairperson of the Zionist General Council – and we held one of its meetings at the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family in Jerusalem because I wanted the members to see what WIZO is doing. For me it is very important to expose WIZO’s work at all these forums – this is part of our international standing. I believe it is also of great importance to present the federations’ work for WIZO and for Israel to the World Zionist Organization (WZO), as the local presidents [of WIZO] are often invited to significant community events where discussions affect WIZO as well – e.g. anti-Semitism, delegitimization of Israel and local Jewish issues.

I encourage our federations to take the lead in their communities; for example on Nov 24th, which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women or International Woman’s Day, which is held in March, I ask our federations to be the first in their communities to mark, and invite all the other local organizations.

How do you see WIZO today, going into the second decade of the 21st century?

I think WIZO is at a very difficult crossroads – because we cannot be detached from what is going on in the Jewish world – i.e. that many of the younger generation are not as connected to Israel as their parents were. We are a Zionist movement, our goal is to work for Israel, and so everything that is happening in the Jewish world is affecting us. I think we have to invest more in professional training – for our members as well as our leaders. Years ago ‘everyone’ worked for Israel; today that is not the case so we have to invest in those that do.

We should implement professional training courses for new presidents; we should invite them to Israel, introduce them to all the executive members, take them on visits to our flagship projects and give them training in finance, fundraising, membership – and all the other important subjects to help them with their work.

The other thing is the economic situation in the world, and this is affecting us, like everyone else. We have to recognize the fact that some donors are giving less – and there is great competition amongst all worthy causes in every country. The answer is to seek out new donors. We have an excellent product – it just has to be marketed correctly.
What are the immediate needs of the movement to keep up with today’s world?

I think we should concentrate on three or four issues that should be the emphasis for WIZO, and that WIZO should be identified with these subjects only. I think we have to focus more – we don’t have enough money for everything.

Do you think WIZO has overstretched itself?

Yes, I think so, because WIZO finds it hard to refuse requests from different sectors that really need help. However, we have to prioritize more, focus more…we know what we do: we work with women, children, youth and the elderly. Underneath this comes another list, but we can’t do everything on that list. Of a list of ten, we can do maybe one and two, but not ten.

I think our main concentration should be on the day care centres, children at risk, and women. WIZO is recognised as a leader in early age education and the fact that we have long waiting lists for our day care centres reflects the need to expand our services in this area, be it by donors or joint ventures with municipal or government departments. We must also focus on children at risk: we have always taken great pride in the fact that we have always given children a second chance through our schools and youth villages – what we are doing with them is amazing.

We are already investing a great deal of time and energy in advancing the status of women, and empowering gender equality, and we must continue to do so. We are recognized in Israel as one of the leaders in this field. Whenever a major women’s issue is discussed in a Knesset committee, we are invited to participate.

And last, but not least, we must strengthen our Jewish and Zionist identity. During my years of voluntary work I have always been open to new ideas and have introduced change in many areas; when I look back at many of my speeches I seem to have used the word change often. Although I proposed ideas for immediate change I became aware that change in an organization is a process that takes time, something opposed to my nature. However, reality shows that delaying change can sometimes be more costly.

What are you going to do now?

First and foremost I want to spend more time with my family, husband and grandchildren. They have been so supportive all these years and I really want to spend time with them. There are so many things I didn’t have time for; I hope now I will. I will, of course, continue with my work as chairperson of the Zionist General Council. Different organizations have approached me to sit on their boards. At this point I have not given them answers. I want to continue helping WIZO; there is so much more to do. Hopefully, as Honorary Life President I will continue to be part of this wonderful movement.

At the end of the day I have been very very fortunate that my life has been so interesting, so fulfilling, thanks to WIZO.

Helena has been married to Ami, a retired psychiatrist, for 40 years; they have two children Yitzchak and Dana and three grandchildren: Idan, Inbal and Lior.
A Survivor's Guide to Aliyah

Reflections on my first year as a new immigrant and a few words of advice for potential immigrants

Rolene Marks

It is no great secret that I made aliyah for Zionist reasons but sometimes you need to separate ideology from the reality of daily living. In order to navigate your day-to-day challenges you need to realise that no amount of Zionist fervour is going to help you – a cool head and sense of humour might - especially when attempting to park (or shuffle) your car into a tiny space or trying to understand why all the supermarket trolleys roll sideways. Moreover, you can forget having a coherent conversation in Hebrew. Just remember to keep in mind that Israel is different to your country of origin. This country has absorbed immigrants from over 80 different countries. We are not going to see eye to eye on everything and you may encounter several different cultures a day. I still amuse the baker at my supermarket and my colleagues every time I say 'banana' in my thick South African accent. Accept that Israel and Israelis are different and embrace those differences. That is what makes this country unique – not to mention funny. This is Israel. People will sing at the top of their voices for no reason, have fervent opinions about all kinds of issues. Of course, you must forget about queuing or waiting in line. We can find cures for obscure diseases and develop all kinds of groundbreaking technology but we will not be herded into orderly lines.

Proud to call myself an Israeli

In the past year I have stood in silence to remember the six million and visited the cemetery to remember those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice so that I can live in freedom as a Jew in our country. Every time I see members of our armed forces and especially those close to me who serve, I pray for their safety – and I thank G-d for their existence. I have rejoiced in our independence as a state and my flag still proudly graces the balcony. I observed with great interest the ‘cottage [cheese] revolution’ of the summer. I took pride in the peaceful and democratic way my fellow citizens demanded change. I am particularly grateful that as a citizen, I have the right to criticise my government if I wish. Even though controversial legislation is discussed about the future of our democracy, I am confident sense will prevail. Hey, this is Israel! What good is having issues if you cannot debate them, preferably over coffee and a game of sheshbesh (backgammon). Arguing is our national sport!

Without doubt, the highlight of the year was joining my fellow citizens in welcoming Gilad Shalit home after almost six years of captivity. This is what I love about Israel. Like most families, we argue between ourselves but ultimately it is our show of strength and solidarity that makes this country special. Food plays a great part of Israeli culture; if you learn to do one thing fluently in Hebrew, learn to order your coffee and pastry. On the eve of Chanukah someone noted that maybe our greatest threat to national security is not Hizbullah, Hamas or even Iran, perhaps it is all the bakeries that are constantly on standby ready to launch their weapons of mass consumption to a nation that is ruled by its appetite!

Separation

Joking aside, separation from family and friends is very difficult. Nothing prepares you for the paralysing sorrow you feel when a loved one experiences a loss or when family gathers for a simcha and you cannot be there. Whoever invented Skype – I am eternally grateful to you. Social networking such as facebook brings the entire world to you. But do leave your country of origin behind. Yes, be proud of your roots and background but understand that Israel is different and the processes that you are used to may not work the same here. Embrace the change and don’t compare. It will just frustrate you.

As someone who has embarrassed herself on a magnificent level in Hebrew and still perseveres, it really is worth mastering the language. You can get by with English but you will never truly fit in unless you learn to speak Hebrew. Own your Aliyah experience: your personal achievements and challenges are different to anybody else’s. There is no right or wrong way to feel. Know that what you are experiencing is unique. Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise.

Attitude is everything. Shut out the negative naysayers and concentrate on the road ahead. Have a sense of humour. You are going to need it. This is without a doubt, a most special country to live in. Tough but rewarding – and well worth the commitment.
The significance of a donation - be it foundation-based, bequest, corporate, planned or personal gift is not lost on World WIZO Fundraising Department Chairperson Esther Mor who says, "We are only as good as the funds we raise, and how we handle these funds is of paramount importance." By this, Esther affirms WIZO's policy of complete transparency. "Our donors are WIZO's greatest asset. We appreciate them so much. We give them the value for money that they deserve, and involve them in every step of the process, so they are completely confident in us as being worthy of their trust. They know that we are working on their behalf.”

Notwithstanding the funding that WIZO receives from the government, the movement depends greatly on the generosity of its federations and donors around the world – “and that is what really gives WIZO its edge, because what we receive in government funding is simply not enough” says Esther. “Our federations commit to an agreed sum of money annually and they try their utmost to honour their pledges, despite the gross downturn in global financial security. We are deeply indebted to them – and we are dedicated to doing our best for them.”

All too aware of the difficulties faced in fundraising these days, Esther’s team works on the principle of ‘never say no – everything is possible’. "We are here to provide support to the federations to make their fundraising mission as effective as possible.”

Esther and her team work closely with the World WIZO president, chairperson, worldwide federations and other World WIZO departments to find the cash needed to fix a problem. For example, when a project is in need of renovation or repairs, the building department or the early age department sends reports in Hebrew to the fundraising department. Senior Associate Annette Crandell, among her many other responsibilities, researches and generates proposals in English and sends them out to sponsoring federations so that earmarked funds can be raised. Alternatively, appeal letters are forwarded to all federations when needs arise. As Esther explained, “you can imagine that with WIZO operating approximately 800 projects and facilities there is always a stack of requests for funds; always something needs fixing or refurbishing: a broken toilet, a leaky roof or sandy playground. It is a never-ending story. We are inundated daily with requests.”

From Source to Supply – Addressing the Need

Donations provide solutions. They, in all their various forms, are fundamental to WIZO’s mission in providing excellent care and facilities. They are not merely the ‘icing on the cake’ – they are the key ingredients to the well-preserved recipe, without which there would be no cake at all.

Tricia Schwitzer

God bless our federations. They are our partners. Israel and WIZO is in their hearts and they prove their loyalty by coming up with the funds. It is not so easy these days to raise funds but they do – and they never disappoint.

The eyes and ears
World WIZO Fundraising Department Director Mickey Dahav says, "This department is the eyes and ears of WIZO federations throughout the world. We are in constant contact with them to find out what we can do to assist their fundraising endeavours. We give them fundraising tools and materials to enhance their campaigns and we provide ‘the view from the field’ with real-time information on current trends on Israel. After all, we are all partners with one goal: to provide the funds where they are most needed. Transparency is key – and our federations are kept informed of every single shekel that is spent. It has to be that way. "We provide solutions using our assets: the federations and their generous donors. We will gather all the information on a particular area of need and relay it to the federation, writing a proposal detailing what we are asking for, why it is needed, and how much it will cost to build or renovate or, in the case of funding for an educational programme, its duration. Every step of the way, the federations are kept completely up to date, with photos and reports.”

Esther – the matchmaker
Esther is a shidduch maker, matchmaking the donor to recipient and vice versa. If a donor has a passion for music and wants to give only to a musical programme, Esther’s team will search their database of youth villages that run music programmes. Likewise, a donor with a passion for sport would be more likely to fund a new sports hall. Donations can be initiated on either side. Esther says, “Because
WIZO operates so many projects, we can meet the needs of any donor. Their wish list is our wish list. We can always find the right angle to give to a private donor, the federation or a foundation. The need is always there."

Just one day after a recent rocket attack on the south of Israel, Esther’s team quickly produced a worldwide campaign to raise funds for missile-proof protection in the playground of a new (as yet) unsponsored day care centre in Sderot. WIZO USA, Mexico and Australia’s donors responded favourably to fund this crucial project, which could potentially save the lives of children who may not otherwise have time to reach the safety of their classrooms indoors in the event of rocket attacks.

"We are thankful for every donation. Each one is so important, no matter how small. Every single dollar adds up to become tens of thousands. The department has made great inroads in online donating and you should see the thank you letters and cards that we send out just for a $36 online donation. Donors are appreciated regardless of the size of their donation. The fact that they care to give is enough and a thank you is just common courtesy."

From private life to WIZO
Esther, who is married to Emanuel, has three children and eight grandchildren. She grew up in India where her mother was active in WIZO. She wasted no time in joining her local WIZO branch in Savyon when she made aliyah from Italy. Ten years ago, after having completed her three-year term as treasurer of the International Women’s Club, she was approached by former department chair Celia Michonik to join World WIZO. At this time, Esther was elected president of the International Women’s Club.

"Initially I agreed to help in the WIZO office once a week, but after a few weeks I was coming every day from ten in the morning till five in the evening. One of my duties was looking after the donor files. Some months later, I was asked to look after the WIZO pins. My background is in jewellery and nowadays many women are wearing the unique pins that I designed. They are very sought after and a beautiful token of donor appreciation."

Friends of WIZO
Esther is especially proud of Friends of WIZO, which she co-chairs with Betty Crystal, whom she affectionately describes as the fairy godmother of fundraising. This prestigious group, the brainchild of former World WIZO President Michal Modai, comprises of English speaking expats as well as native Israeli women living mainly in the Sharon area. Nine years since its birth, Friends of WIZO is established on the social circuit for its upmarket fundraising and social events. Esther explained, "Friends of WIZO is all about friendship. The members are friends – not just of WIZO but also of each other. They believe in WIZO, in the work we do and they are generous with their time and resources. Friends of WIZO has many friends abroad who, whenever they visit Israel, attend the fabulous fundraising events. In the last nine years, Friends of WIZO has donated almost one million dollars to selected projects. We are looking to have our own sponsored day care centre – that will be our own baby - and it is in the pipeline."

Teamwork
Esther says, "I am so lucky with my team. Department director Mickey does everything. The same goes for Annette. French translator Monique brings a wealth of experience and a particular penchant for organizing memorable dedication ceremonies and plaques, and administrative assistant Mali ably handles the paperwork. Annette oversees the volunteer fundraising internship programme, which allows young women to gain valuable experience by volunteering in a busy department for three to six months, in which time they become an integral and valued member of the team. They give of themselves and in return, they learn the intricacies of the non-profits world. There is no hierarchy and my door is always open."

Indeed, Esther’s door is always open, and she is always ready with a cup of coffee and a home baked cookie, no matter how busy she is. "In the fundraising world things don't happen by chance," says Esther. "We give the donors more dash for their cash. For them and for WIZO, it is always a win-win situation."
WIZO 2011 Honour Roll of Major Donors

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Donor Appreciation
WIZO is indebted to its major donors from Israel and around the world. Their generosity knows no bounds.

Donor Profile:
Fanny Cohen Kohn

Fanny Cohen Kohn, a native of Caracas, Venezuela, has always had a special place in her heart for WIZO and Israel. Prominent in the Jewish community in Venezuela, Fanny with her vibrant South American personality and strong Jewish identity is loved by all who know her. She is a true leader, having held several executive positions in organizations advocating tolerance and Holocaust remembrance such as the Anna Frank Educational Exhibition. She has served as executive director of the Israel Union and president of Friends of Hebrew University and as president of WIZO Aviv.

Through Fanny’s philanthropy, WIZO was able to convert the Margaret Thatcher day care centre in Sderot into the WIZO Open House for the benefit of Children, Parents and Educational Staff. In 2011, Fanny once again expressed her love to WIZO and to Israel by pledging generously towards the new WIZO day care centre being built on the Ben Gurion University campus in Beer Sheva.

Fanny Cohen Kohn’s love for WIZO has brought life changing services to the children and women of Israel. She has always made Israel her priority and continues to be an active member today.

Joan Kahn

When WIZO New York was established in 1983 its leadership comprised of Latin American, Israeli and South African women. Joan Kahn was the first American born executive member of WIZO NY. Joan was appointed WIZO Representative to the United Nations and served as WIZO Representative to the World Jewish Congress. She was the first New York participant in a WIZO Aviv Seminar in Israel and subsequently, while visiting the Hatzerim Air Force Base, Joan and Mike Kahn established the Kahn Family Centre in Hatzerim which serves the families of the pilots living on the base.

Five years ago, Joan and Mike Kahn established the David R. Kahn Sports Complex in Nir Ha’emek in memory of their beloved son David. Three years later, their generosity enabled the refurbishment of the sports complex, making it disabled-friendly for the European Wheelchair Basketball Championship that took place in September 2011 with the participation of athletes from over 20 European countries. Currently, Joan and David Kahn are building the new Olympic swimming pool and club house, as well as the new stables and landscaping at the Nir Ha’emek Youth Village.
A woman of valor who can find? (Proverbs 31:10)

A woman of valor who can find? (Proverbs 31:10) is the text written on the silver link of the beautiful bracelets and pearl necklaces designed especially for WIZO Holland by well known artist Noomi van Gelder. These exquisite pieces have been crafted by Ethiopian girls from the We Can Do It Too project in the WIZO Holland-sponsored Afula Community Centre and are sold in WIZO Gift Shops in Holland. As a special incentive, Dutch WIZO members can get a discount if they bring in a new member.

These beautiful items of jewellery will be on sale during the conference. For mail order please contact the World WIZO Fundraising Department.

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Please tell us about your WIZO ‘career’, and how you started in WIZO

Gail: I was first introduced to WIZO when I was a young married woman, pregnant with my first child, at a parlour meeting in a friend’s house. She was from Belgium and many of the women in the room were from Europe and South America. As an American growing up in New York, I was very familiar with the work of UJA, Hadassah and others, but had never heard of WIZO. Their mission, the warmth and devotion of the women immediately drew me in. I started by volunteering for the Children for Children Fashion Show. I progressed to chairing the New York Chapter of Aviv, Chair of the New York chapter, and now I have the honour to be WIZO USA’s National Co-President.

Jana: WIZO was very popular in the Latin American countries, and as a young girl, I remembered my mother attending WIZO events in Peru and Panama. In the United States, over 29 years ago, in 1982 my husband’s aunt, Fanny Cohen, introduced me to Lea Freund, one of the founding members of WIZO USA and president of the first WIZO chapter (in Miami) in the US. They convinced me to start the first Aviv group in the USA. I started by holding chapter meetings at my home every two weeks. As new chapters were formed, my love and devotion for Israel and WIZO grew. I went from helping plan small events and gatherings to our now annual gala; speakers have included world leaders, political figures, authors, musicians and interesting celebrities.

Tell us about your personal background, career and family.

Gail: I was born in 1961 in New York City, as were both my parents. I am a graduate of Boston University, and when I first left college, I helped run my family’s retail business. My husband is from Munich, Germany, and his mother has been an active WIZO volunteer for over 50 years. We met at an Israel Bond Young Leadership event and married in 1990. Our children are Spencer (born 1993) Sandra (born 1995)

What makes you devote so much time to WIZO?

Gail: As a daughter, wife, mother and Zionist, WIZO spoke to me. I have the unique honour of contributing to the current and future strength of Israel vis-à-vis the women and children who need our help, and the social service network that WIZO provides. They inspired me to make this commitment. The journey has been a privilege. Today, I devote a good deal of my time raising awareness in the American Jewish community to the vast network of social welfare institutions WIZO has in Israel, the work WIZO does as an NGO at the United Nations and the importance of being part of an international sisterhood of committed Zionist women.

Jana: WIZO has been an extension of myself, my heart and my family. My children cannot remember WIZO not being part of their lives and now my grandchildren will do the same.
and Michael (born 2000). My children not only embrace my role in WIZO, they themselves have been active in many fashion shows and fundraising events.

**Jana:** I was born in Chile to a family of Russian immigrants. My mother, a Polish survivor, joined her family in Chile after escaping the Holocaust and then Russian communism. Her father was the orthodox rabbi in Chile. We moved to Peru and then Panama where I was devoted to Maccabi and the Zionist agenda. I graduated from the Albert Einstein Institute, went to the University of Miami, followed by a year at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where I did a double major in Economics and Judaic Studies. I met my beloved husband Simon while at the University of Miami. We have four children: Tila born in 1981, Lisa in 1984, Shena in 1987 and Samuel in 1995. We also have six beautiful grandchildren.

**One of the most important factors in a WIZO federation is its continuity, its future. How is your federation addressing this issue, how are you attracting the young women of today, given their busy lives combining careers and family?**

Gail aptly describes WIZO USA as a melting pot of volunteers. Many members are second and third generation women whose mothers came from Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, but the federation is increasingly attracting women who are first in their family to be active in WIZO. The federation has chapters of women of varying ages and has some innovative ideas for ‘catching them young.’ As part of their bat mitzvah programme, the young girls are taught about charity, volunteering and giving back to the local community as well as Israel. Jana and Gail regard recruiting young women and mothers as a definite challenge and are always thinking up new strategies.

**How is your federation dealing with 21st century technology changes vis à vis membership and fundraising?**

Gail and Jana are only too aware of the importance of keeping up to date with the latest technology. They are constantly looking for ways to reach a younger audience through the latest social networking techniques. WIZO USA has its own website (of course!), as do some of the individual chapters, a facebook page and twitter account. Jana adds that the website is constantly updated with WIZO and Jewish world news. Donating to WIZO USA is easy – ‘with a click’ via their website. Gail also feels it is essential to have a staff person who is both technologically proficient and in touch with trends and ideas that appeal to the next generation.

**Do you feel it is important for members to visit Israel and visit the projects they are supporting? How do you encourage such visits?**

Both Gail and Jana cannot stress enough how important it is for WIZO chaverot to personally visit the projects they support. “It is crucial,” says Jana. Both agree that all the videos, websites, facebook pages and personal stories are nothing compared with actual personal interaction with the people who benefit from WIZO’s services. Jana: “It is a totally different thing when you have a young woman or man come up to you and thank you for what you do. It is incredibly touching and emotional when you can see, feel and hear what an impact you have made on the life of a child, and you hold that child in your arms.” Gail: “It’s only when someone holds a new-born baby at a WIZO home for babies, when they touch a toddler at a WIZO multipurpose day care centre, when they talk with a student boarding at a youth village, then they feel and know what WIZO does for the people of Israel. They know it in their mind and they feel it in their heart.”

WIZO USA held a family mission to Israel in 2010, which had a big impact on all members of the families who participated, especially the children, who played basketball with a group of wheelchair-bound students at WIZO’s Nir Ha’emek Youth Village (sponsored by WIZO USA and WIZO Argentina). Many of the USA volunteers travel to Israel on personal visits and Gail and Jana encourage them to visit WIZO projects as part of their visit.

**What are the challenges facing your community today?**

Today there are approximately 5-6 million Jews in the USA. “Assimilation,” says Jana, “is the greatest obstacle facing Jewish survival in the USA today. About 50% of American Jews marry outside the faith. Finance – or lack of – is another factor affecting Jewish affiliation. Research shows that American Jewish families today require $25,000 - $35,000 a year of discretionary income for intensive Jewish experiences such as synagogue membership, Jewish Center membership, Jewish day school and camp, federation donations and kosher food.” “Competition for the available dollar is fierce,” adds Gail, “and there is no shortage of worthwhile organizations doing good work here and in Israel that need financial support. The challenge is to bring WIZO to the top of the list. We need to impart that a strong and vibrant Israel is essential to every Jew in America.”
Currently there are seven WIZO chapters in the US – do you have plans for expansion?

Both Jana and Gail would love to see more USA WIZO chapters. “Growth is essential,” says Jana, “The bigger WIZO USA is, the louder our voices are heard. Besides developing new chapters in more cities in the US (Chicago for example) we have to develop new ways of fundraising for the organization. In addition to event driven fundraising we are developing a three-year plan focusing on foundation grants, endowment campaigns and emerging current donors to their next gifts level. We think that all these strategies will bring WIZO USA to the next level. I am sure that we will continue to develop new chapters throughout the US and bring WIZO to new heights so that one day WIZO will be a household word in all Jewish homes in this country”.

Is there any message you would like to convey to our readers?

Jana: I believe it is very important for the Executive Board to continue to change and to evolve. It is essential to bring its growth. To continue our pace of growth we must keep making it interesting and attractive by standing out and making our organization THE BEST with its events and its message. We need to keep it exciting.

Gail: The importance WIZO has placed on helping “the family” since Israel’s founding is something to be proud of. This distinguishes WIZO from many other organizations and WIZO will continue to support the needs of the family. As Israel grows and changes, so will WIZO. WIZO adapts its approach to solving the everyday problems of families. This should appeal to any young leader who cares about the future, health and Israeli society.

It is gratifying to see WIZO USA in the capable hands of these two amazing young women.
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For more information, contact your local WIZO office.

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Working WIZO women live by American queen of comedy Lucille Ball’s words of wisdom: If you want something done, ask a busy person. The more you do, the more you can do

Tricia Schwitzer

In today’s competitive world, the role of women has evolved. As well as being wife and mother, carer and homemaker, many women today have a career outside the home. They allocate time according to demand. Invariably, there is little time for themselves and less so for volunteer work. There are simply not enough hours in the day. It need not be that way, say the WIZO chaverot who have added voluntary work into the mix. What is their secret? Could it be that their days really do have 25 hours instead of our 24? No. It is simply that they live by American queen of comedy Lucille Ball’s words of wisdom, if you want something done, ask a busy person. The more you do, the more you can do.

Here is how some of them manage to do it all!

Bela Himelfarb - Colombia
Thirty-seven-year-old mother of twins, Bela Himelfarb is vice president of WIZO Bogota. Married to architect Henry, Bela sees the positive side of being active and says it is all a question of structuring your time. Bela has a challenging career as chief of imports for a gourmet restaurant chain. She believes that a supportive husband and parents are a big asset because they provide ‘guilt-free’ childcare. Bela involves her family in her voluntary work as much as possible. She explained that in Colombia there is ‘WIZO Junior’ for the daughters of chaverot to enable them to take an active part in their mothers’ voluntary efforts and it is heart-warming to see three or four generations working side by side.

Beulah Sonnenberg-Spark - South Africa
Co-chair of WIZO Ilanit in Johannesburg, South Africa, Beulah Sonnenberg-Spark is married to Gregory and they have a 12-year-old son Joshua Max. Beulah, a speech-language pathologist who works from home, says, “If you are committed to a genuine cause, then you must structure your schedule to make time for others.” Her mother, Lorna, a WIZO member since 1965 is naturally supportive, but Beulah admits that it is not so easy to enlist other women to the WIZO cause. She explains, “In South Africa, many Jewish women prefer to donate their free time to local causes. In my group, we focus on organizing functions like self-enhancement, fashion, beauty and cooking. Show ing videos of WIZO projects and distributing the WIZO Review and other hasbara materials keeps members motivated.”

Carolina Reytan-Magrizos - Greece
Athens-born Carolina Reytan-Magrizos, who works in the family’s optical business, lives in Larissa with her husband and three children, aged 10 to 16. “There are only about 20 WIZO chaverot in Larissa; I am the treasurer of our group and help out wherever I am needed. All the women of my age go to work but every two weeks we hold very productive group meetings. Everyone shares the workload and my family is very supportive. These days, when everyone is so busy, I sometimes feel that I have to ‘steal’ the time for WIZO but I feel empowered by what I do. I love the feeling of belonging to the large WIZO family where we all share the same interests, goals and aspirations. I am setting a good example for my children when they see the important work we do. It makes them aware of the ethos of our religion and our obligation to help others.”

Fortune Homsani - Brazil
Fortune is married with one son at university. She is a pharmacist, studying for her Masters in pharmaceutical studies. She believes that life is too precious to do things without enthusiasm and that women have the natural ability to harmonize crucial tasks such as taking care of the family, educating the children, taking an active part in the business world and volunteering for WIZO. She firmly believes that to do her best she must like and believe in what she does.
Hayley Binn - USA

WIZO New York board member Haley Binn, (35) works part time from home. She and husband Jason have three young children, Penny (6), CeCe (4) and new born baby Oscar. Haley devotes between five and ten hours per week to WIZO. “The more you have going on personally and professionally, the more organized you must be. My parents offer different perspectives and creative ideas for the children while friends and family are inspired by my enthusiasm and passion for WIZO. Even my young daughters are learning the importance of WIZO, by being around me and seeing what I do. The State of Israel, its children and its future are dear to my heart and being a part of the WIZO movement, working alongside amazing volunteers, is a gift.”

Hayley Onona - UK

As well as teaching part-time, London-based mother of three, Hayley Onona seen here with her children, James (11), Toby (9) and Katie (6), is active in WIZOuk’s Jewish Women’s Week annual fundraising campaign and treasurer of the Aviv group Inspiration. As her parents live in Manchester, she does not have the luxury of having them ‘on tap’ for babysitting duties – although husband Eric will help when he can. Hayley is a copious list maker, explaining, “I am always very organized and when something is on my list it gets done.’’ When first approached, she was reluctant to join WIZO as she had just had a baby, but her mother (Linda Jacobs) told her that when she was heavily pregnant and already had a two-year-old, she managed to chair a committee. Hayley involves her children by giving them small tasks, like posting the letters for Jewish Women’s Week. “It is gratifying to know we are contributing to the greater importance of WIZO, by being around me and seeing what I do. WIZO view the movement as one big family and that family is helping many other families. That is very empowering.”

Ilana Ifrah-Schloss - The Netherlands

Mother of two teenagers, 44-year-old WIZO Rotterdam Chairperson Ilana Ifrah-Schloss seen here on the right of photo with daughter, Awital, works four days a week for the Central Works Council at Unilever Rotterdam and yet she still finds time for at least a day of WIZO work every two weeks. “I am a busy person, I am never bored,” she said, “the busier you are, the more organized you must be, but do ask people who have more time on their hands to help.” Ilana’s family is very supportive. Her husband and children help with the household chores and with the preparations for WIZO events. “When Awital (16) and Yaniv (13) were little, I brought them with me to our events. For them it was always fun, like going to the playground. It is important to involve them, they help me with the organization and on the day of an event. WIZO brings the Jewish community together and that is important. Having seen the projects in Israel that benefit from our endeavours I feel good about what I do. Women who join WIZO show their daughters the State of Israel, its children and its future are dear to my heart and being a part of the WIZO movement, working alongside amazing volunteers, is a gift.”

Leah Seetner Goldband - Canada

CHW Toronto-based 32-year-old Leah Seetner Goldband and her sister Heidi are co-presidents and founding members of the Yaffa chapter. Leah works full time in the family plush-toy business and she and husband Jeff have a 22-month old daughter. Leah explained, “In the months leading up to a big event I can spend up to 15 hours a week. My mother and grandmothers are members and when we were just young girls, my sister and I became life members. My family is very supportive of my work for CHW and we are always eager to help practically and with sponsorship. All the chaverot in our group are working women, some married, some with children. We all juggle our lives to incorporate voluntary work. I believe I am setting a good and positive example for my daughter.”

Orly Licht - Germany

Orly lives in Köln and works full time in an office. Married with two children aged 20 and 17, Orly serves on the executive board of WIZO Cologne and WIZO Germany and dedicates 10-15 hours of her busy week to WIZO. She agrees that women who work outside the home and take care of a family are much more organized. She says, “they are used to sticking to a schedule to maximise their time and they make time for voluntary work. Sometimes the work is exhausting but the successes and the results make me happy. Through my involvement, I have the opportunity to work alongside very strong women and we all work for one goal. That is empowering.”

We salute our industrious working chaverot and are pleased to share their tips to help you become more productive in your WIZO mission:

Tips from the girls:
• Organize your time, make lists
• Get your friends to join you – have fun
• Be resourceful – use work connections to help your group
• Know that your contribution, however small, is appreciated
• Love what you do – love WIZO
• Be proud of the example you show your children
• Feel involved. Visit Israel – visit the projects
From the Kitchen to the Shelter

The Rosh Ha'ayin WIZO centre operates from two public shelters but this doesn't affect the variety of activities organized for the welfare of the community

Sima Borkovski

"I came to Rosh Ha'ayin with my husband 16 years ago when this neighbourhood was built for army veterans," says Esther Oren, chairperson of the Rosh Ha'ayin WIZO Centre. "I am a retired English teacher; I have three children and three grandchildren. A medical situation forced me to take early retirement, so I decided to become a volunteer and contribute to our community. Thereafter my way to WIZO was short. At first we started our activities as part of the Petach Tikvah branch and held all our meetings in my kitchen," she smiles.

Growing community

"The community of Rosh Ha'ayin is growing every year and many young families are coming to live here. The town consists of a very diverse population and even though this neighbourhood is considered 'strong' there are also weaker areas. The weak population here is comprised of the original residents of Rosh Ha'ayin and Ethiopian immigrants. Our aim is to empower these people and minimize the gaps between the strong and weaker residents of the city. Since we developed such a wide range of activities, we became an independent WIZO branch in 2007 and were given these two venues by the municipality. Working in a shelter is not easy but this is all we have at the moment. My dream is that a WIZO centre with a day care centre right next to it will be built here. As a city with so many young couples it is a shame that WIZO doesn't have a strong presence here," she says with sadness in her voice.

Recognition

The activities of the branch under the leadership of Oren were recognized by WIZO when she received one of the "excellent volunteer" prizes at this year's WIZO Israel Conference. Alongside Oren there is an army of dedicated volunteers who work hard to make this WIZO branch a success. I specifically chose the word 'army' as many of these volunteers were previously career army officers. Sigal Tal Levi, a widow and mother of three, is an attorney who, after 23 years' service, retired from the army as a lieutenant colonel.

As a WIZO volunteer, for the past three years she has been in charge of activities for the elderly, together with Bracha Perach who coordinates everything. "Our group already consists of 30-40 members and I am very proud of the fact that it also includes some men," she declares. "We meet every other week and in addition to the 'regulars' we have new members who join us every once in a while. It always warms my heart to see how persistent they are and the efforts some of the women make to attend the meetings, even on rainy days. We do our best to have interesting lectures, some of which I give if they are on legal issues. However, since out of 22 lectures, only four are funded, it is a hard task. I can only invite those lecturers who are willing to volunteer."

Course for mid-life

Another interesting course initiated and operated by Tal-
Levi was the course for menopausal women. "We focused on all the issues affecting women during their menopause. The course was a great success and we have a waiting list for the next one," she says with pride.

"These courses give us the opportunity to expose people to WIZO," explains Dvora Gurfunkel, 54, a mother of two daughters, who finds time to volunteer for WIZO even though she works full time as manager of a large book store in Tel Aviv. "The groups and the subjects of our courses mirror the society we live in – we try to answer their needs and not vice versa. This is what I like most about WIZO, that it is open to the community. When I was asked to develop a course for parents of children with special needs it seemed a great opportunity since I studied to be a teacher and parents' guide. The course was a great success and we even had fathers from Petach Tikva that attended it. It was extremely moving," she recalls.

Immediate chemistry

Talma Ashkenazi, another retired lieutenant colonel, has been volunteering for five years after retiring from two careers. After serving in the army for 20 years she became a teacher who taught her students 'good citizenship,' as she defines it. "While walking my dog one Saturday, I met Esther Aharoni who immediately invited me to join her as a WIZO volunteer at the Mo'adonit, (after-school club) where she and six other volunteers help the children: all welfare cases who receive their meals at the facility.

Aharoni, a sprightly 78-year-old with the spirit and energy of a young woman, adopted this centre and comes once a week to help the children with their homework, and provides them with whatever they need from the Bigudit (the second hand clothes store). If a child needs a school bag, Esther will make sure it is there the next day.

After Ashkenazi started with the Moa'donit the rest is history. "Later on I was invited by Esther Oren to her famous kitchen and thanks to the immediate chemistry between us we began our wonderful cooperation. Currently, I help wherever I'm needed at the branch but mainly I coordinate our workshops for divorced women and children (two separate workshops). These courses empower the women as well as provide support and encouragement to the children. Some of the women like them so much, they keep coming even after their children no longer do so."

One thing leads to another

Tami Madar, 50, a single mother of three children started with WIZO as a participant in the workshop for divorced parents. "My son attended the course and he liked it so much that I decided to attend the parents' course. Later on I felt the need to contribute something to the community and started with a 'story hour' at the 'Moa'donit.'"

This small activity opened up new opportunities for Madar and her next project was the initiation of a new course for mothers and their teenage daughters, a course that aims to empower both mothers and daughters.

According to Esther Oren, "Tami Madar is the perfect example of a woman empowered by WIZO who later on felt she wanted to give back to the community. From being a participant in a WIZO course she became the initiator and head of a new course." There is not enough room to write about all the wonderful activities held by this dedicated team of volunteers: the activities with the children at the Moa'donit, the elderly group, the empowering courses for women, girls and children. It seems every age group is catered for. These devoted volunteers, who started in a kitchen and 'graduated' to a shelter, carry on with their work, but they dream of a more suitable and respectable venue.
WIZO Landscaping Gardening and Technology Youth Village (Gan Ve’Nof), sponsored by WIZO Switzerland and WIZO Panama, is an island of greenery in the midst of the urban landscape of Petach Tikva. The school is approaching its 90th anniversary with a history that goes back to the 1920s when it was established by Mrs Rivka Broisman. In those early years its students were young pioneer women who fled the horrible pogroms in Eastern Europe and aspired to learn agriculture and work the land of their forefathers.

Nowadays, being part of WIZO’s chain of schools, Gan Ve’Nof is a modern and beautifully maintained school and youth village that continues its agricultural heritage with a special emphasis on science and landscaping studies. The students are part of the on-going maintenance as every one of them is obliged to give four hours’ work per week in the school grounds, plant nursery or gardens, or tending the animals. A walk through the school provides a number of opportunities to admire its gardens, nurtured by the students and their teachers.

Supportive federations
"The village is going through an on-going process of growth and development and draws increasing numbers of students every year," proudly states Uri Sa’ar, the vibrant director of the school and youth village. Sa’ar can be described as an amiable principal, one who doesn’t keep his distance from his students and tends to joke around in their presence. He acknowledges the support of the sponsoring federations, both Switzerland via Anne Argi and Panama via Estela Faskha. "They provide us with generous donations that make it possible to develop the school. We feel that they don’t just give the funds but truly care what is done with them and follow up on their projects. They are loyal partners."

Therapeutic subjects that empower the students
The students at Gan Ve’Nof have a variety of subjects to choose from and it seems that everyone can find something they like, whether it is music, theatre, science or agriculture. "For students who are incapable of completing their matriculation exams we offer the chance to study business management and accounting. Hence they graduate with a profession and a diploma as accounting managers (levels 1 and 2).”

"It was important for us to initiate subjects such as theatre, music and dog training as these subjects have therapeutic qualities and can truly help empower our students," explains Sa’ar. "These subjects also include much practical work and activity; therefore, they are much more suitable for students with learning disabilities or students who come from difficult backgrounds.

Sowing the Seeds of Excellency
Gan Ve’Nof: This special school provides a second chance for students who couldn't find their place in any other educational system

Sima Borkovski

Keren Moav, Daniel Gavriel, Meron Mangitut, Alex Davidovich
Veterinary studies

“We are renovating and expanding our animal farm to provide an answer for such students. Working with animals is the best part of their day. In this way they experience success and get motivated to succeed in their studies. As part of this trend of expanding the opportunities for our students, this year we initiated pre-veterinarian studies for students in seventh grade (age 12-13). This is a very special programme that teaches them both the practical and academic side of this profession. They also enjoy lectures by professional veterinarians and tours,” he adds.

Dog training

But the current icing on the cake is the dog training department that was opened only a year ago. This department is the first of its kind in Petach Tikvah. The students learn about the dog’s psychology, anatomy and physiology, and get plenty of practical training under the guidance of Shuki Kadosh, a professional dog trainer. The goal is that the graduates of this course will be accepted into the elite unit of dog trainers in the army.

The principal didn’t give up on me

Many of the students find Gan Ve’Nof is their last resort. They discover that, despite their poor academic achievements, there is still hope for them.

"I was pushed to come here by my parents after I didn’t do any studying, and my previous school threatened to kick me out," says Keren Moav, a graduate student who arrived at the school from Ramla two years ago with a very poor academic record. "We heard about the school from friends and I decided to come and give it a try. I wasn’t used to life in a boarding school and at first it was difficult to adjust, especially as I didn’t know anybody," she recalls. "But Galia Meron, the school’s principal didn’t give up on me and pushed me to study hard. It is thanks to her that I will graduate with a matriculation certificate," she says with pride.

"What I mostly love about this school is that they actually listen to us. If, for example, we ask for a new course that interests us they will actually make an effort to open the course if enough students sign up for it. In terms of studying, I received a lot of help in order to overcome the gaps I had, even if it meant studying till seven in the evening or staying during my vacations to study."

His future assured

Alex Davidovich, an immigrant from the Former Soviet Union, is a graduate student who arrived at the school six years ago without any reading or writing abilities in Hebrew and very poor self-esteem. "Back in my old school the teachers couldn’t understand me nor answer my needs," he declares. "Here I started learning Hebrew and within a year I could read and write. I felt that I have the support of the entire professional staff and the school’s social workers helped me open up and speak about my feelings and situation. The school also supported my basketball aspirations and now I am certain about my future as a professional basketball player, as I play with the Maccabi Petach Tikvah team."

Daniel Gavriel never believed he would be able to take his matriculation exams after he dropped out of school in 7th grade. It seems that no one, including himself, had any faith in him or his ability to succeed.

"After I came here I started changing and took my future into my hands. I made an effort to become a better student. Being here has helped me mature and become responsible for myself," he acknowledges.

Representing Israel

As students of Gan Ve’Nof, both Daniel and Alex are proud of the opportunity to represent their school abroad, meet their contemporaries from other countries and also serve as ambassadors of Israel. As a representative of the Israel Youth Award Scheme, in which Gan Ve’Nof participates, Alex has returned this year from Finland where he had a “shocking experience,” in his words. “One thing was the intense cold – a real shock to my system," he says. "The other was meeting young people from all over the world and hearing about the image they have of Israel. After long and intensive talks with them, we [the Israeli students on the delegation] managed to convince them that Israel is not what the international media shows, and we ended up quite friendly.”

Daniel, along with four other students, was part of a delegation to Poland, where he visited the concentration camps. "This visit had a huge impact on me," he says, "and although I had learned about the Holocaust at school and seen films of the concentration camps, actually being there put everything into a different perspective."
**Shabbat at the school**

Currently in 10th grade, 16-year-old Meron Mangistau is an Ethiopian student who arrived at Gan Ve’Nof from Beit Shemesh three years ago. “Before I came here I used to drink and smoke and I gave my parents a lot of trouble. I know for sure that had I stayed in Beit Shemesh I wouldn’t have done my matriculation exams,” she admits. “Here it feels like home. We can talk to our teachers about everything. When we have a ‘closed Shabbat’ (meaning that all the students and teachers remain at the village and don’t go home for the weekend) it’s a real pleasure. We all dress in white and in the dining room we welcome Shabbat together. Afterwards there is always a special activity or a show [by the students]. It’s never boring here,” she states.

The greenery and pastoral atmosphere must create a positive effect since according to the students I have spoken with, there is practically no violence in the school. “When a new student joined us this year she was amazed by the kind way she was accepted,” says Mangistau.

**Teach them to believe in themselves again**

Galia Meron, the school’s principal is the woman who stands behind the students’ successes, never gives up and keeps pushing them forward till they achieve their goals. “I truly believe that every student needs to graduate with a matriculation certificate. Sometime the blockage is only in their mind – they simply don’t believe they can do it. Once we get over that obstacle, then I don’t have to stimulate them anymore, they are eager to make the effort. Once I know that a student has the will, he or she will get all the help necessary, whether it is private teachers, studying marathons or any other pedagogic tool.”

**Gan Ve’Nof dreams**

One of the new projects Galia Meron has initiated is called: *Dreams Come True in Gan Ve’Nof.* “I met an extraordinary person who was interested in donating to our school and together we came up with this project. A student can come to me with his ‘dream’ – it can be a cookery course, financing a trip to Poland or any other dream that the student has, and needs our help to finance it. Our deal is that they need to give something to the community or the school in return. They can volunteer here in our youth village because there are always things that need to be done, or volunteer in the community. The emphasis is on the idea that students should be giving something to others and they go through a certain process while doing it.”

One of WIZO’s mottos is – “the more you give – the more you get.” It seems that at Gan Ve’Nof School and Youth Village this motto is implemented in both directions – from the school to the students and from the students back to the school and the community. Some people may have bad memories of their school years, but the students of Gan Ve’Nof get what most students can only dream of and in return they have a strong desire to give back, both to their school and their community.
Dear Friends,

Time flies… It seems like yesterday when WIZO gave me the amazing opportunity to be the Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive. At first, I was a little unsure of what this task entailed, and if I would be able to live up to the challenge. Looking back, I can now smile and proudly say that all those doubts have disappeared, as I feel completely engaged and actively involved with this great organization.

Since I was very young, WIZO was often the topic of conversation in my family. WIZO Panama has always had a unique tradition where, as soon as a young woman gets married, she becomes a WIZO member and is initiated in a very nice ceremony together with all the newlyweds of that year. That is how, 18 years ago, I became involved.

First trip to Israel

It was on my first WIZO trip to Israel that I saw first-hand how much impact we make on the lives of so many women and children, and it was at this time that my passion for WIZO work and support for Israel increased. My knowledge expanded, as I grasped how the federations operate in their individual countries and how much effort World WIZO must invest to guide all the federations. Most important was that although we were from different nationalities, backgrounds and traditions, as peers, we shared the same bonds with Israel, the same deep and unconditional love for WIZO, and the common goal to help provide a better life for our people.

There were many special moments during the past three years that will always remain in my memory: representing Panama twice in the Aviv International Seminar, sharing long and interesting conversations with different Aviv members and chairpersons, the creation of new Aviv groups in other federations, and the celebration of WIZO’s 90th anniversary.

Future challenges

Today, in order to grow as an organization and ensure the mission of WIZO, we must understand some of the challenges we face in the near future. Recruiting new members is essential and the life blood for any organization. Just as important is finding ways to involve the younger generation with a well-planned “succession strategy” to create new leaders, by encouraging and/or sponsoring attendance to the WIZO Aviv Seminars and EGMs to see first-hand the impact WIZO has on Israeli society. Such an experience will make them feel more committed and provide a charge of positive energy that will surely have a multiplying effect on their peers when they talk about their experience on their return home.

Dear chairpersons of Aviv, we must attract and approach possible new members and provide a place in WIZO which suits them. Once they live the WIZO experience and deeply understand our WIZO mission, their Zionism will grow.

Use the new technology!

We have at our disposal great popular social media tools to help us deal with the challenges ahead of us. We must be more active in utilizing them as a way to simultaneously share what is going on in the WIZO world. These tools can eliminate the barriers of long distances and allow us to know in real time what is happening in any part of the world. By working, communicating and sharing, we can become the best WIZO working team ever!

In addition to promoting WIZO in our Jewish schools, our children should try to partner other Zionist organizations when they go on to university. These organizations are a meeting point for Jewish students in college, and their mission is to establish an enduring commitment with Jewish life. Within this framework we can introduce WIZO to our fellow students, and even host them when they visit Israel to get acquainted with our projects. I am convinced that those who live this type of experience will be forever identified with these organizations and with WIZO.

Thanks

I would like to express my gratitude to Hashem, for giving me the opportunity for this noble work. I honour and applaud all the work that our previous WIZO leaders have achieved, the effort of the wonderful ladies that are committed volunteers and that secure the stability of WIZO. Helena, Tova, Sylvie, Ahuva, Ingrid, Tricia and Janine, thank you for all your invaluable help and support during my term of office, and my best wishes to my successor in strengthening the WIZO Aviv movement. Count on my support!

WIZO is young! WIZO is forever!

Shalom,

Vicky Fidanque  
Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive
What have you been doing for the last two years?

An idea for a standard book representing the lives of 90 WIZO women turns into something quite different…

Raquel Dar

Every story has a beginning, middle and end. The end of this story is the 45th edition of the World WIZO Bible Day booklet – or perhaps it is a book. After two years of work, we feel that the beginning and the middle – the process itself – is no less important than the end, and worthy of being put into writing.

How the idea was born

It began long before World WIZO’s 90th anniversary. The idea was raised in the department of dedicating the 45th edition of the World WIZO Bible Day booklet to this important event in the life of the movement, and, to this end, to collect material on 90 women who were part of WIZO, and for whom WIZO was a part of them. We prepared a list of women who, in our opinion, were the most appropriate to include. We changed, we added, we deleted; and in the end we had our list.

The first thing to do was to find material on each woman. We found our first lead on the Internet. Researcher Dr Esther Carmel-Hakim put an appendix of mini-biographies of women online from her book _Hanna Maisel’s Lifelong Mission: Agricultural Training for Women_. Until then, we were unaware of the existence of the book, but to find the appendix was like finding the golden candelabra from the Holy Temple – you know, the one the Romans took.

From there things started to pick up speed. We found the names of additional women, many in World WIZO Honorary President Raya Jaglom’s autobiography, in the book _Hebrew Zionist Women_ by Esther Smoira, and in other sources. As we found each name we went back and changed the list, and simultaneously increased our knowledge about each woman. We began to delve into the material, but could not decide what approach to take. We did not want to write another booklet of short biographies. Not only that: to be honest, we saw that it was very difficult to find written material on women, since women are busy doing things, not writing about themselves.

The concept crystallizes

A new concept for the booklet took shape when we found a story about Joseph Trumpeldor, who symbolized the struggle of the beginning of Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel. He gave the bullet that hit him in the Battle of Gallipoli as a present to his girlfriend Esther Rozov (the story appears on page 36 of the book). Years later, Esther was a roving instructor for the WIZO Israel Home Economics Department. (Unaware of our discovery, Lili Peyser, Chairperson of the World WIZO Tourist Department, came to show us a picture of her mother as a little girl in the arms of Esther Rozov, who was her aunt. What a surprise! It was the same photo that we had used to illustrate the story).

It was then we decided that the publication would be a collection of anecdotes, the stories behind the story of WIZO, which, combined, would portray the essence of the movement over the past 90 years. The original list was put aside, and the tempo of our work increased. The search spread out in all directions: libraries, archives, websites, newspapers and WIZO publications.

The research in local libraries, and especially in the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem, was fascinating. I had always wanted to visit the Archives, and now I had the chance to do so with Briana Simon, who was acquainted with the place and knew how to locate information there. This gave added value to our visit and made our research that much easier.

We found many interesting stories where it was not clear who the woman behind them was, and therefore, in order to stay within the parameters we had established for ourselves, we did not include them in the booklet. The only instances in which we allowed ourselves to make an exception were with regard to a few of WIZO’s youth villages. The village itself became the main character, and we added a number of women in supporting roles (for example the stories about WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim on page 64 and WIZO Hadassim on page 88).

As we continued our work, we appealed to all WIZO branches in Israel and all WIZO Federations throughout the world. As a result of the minimal response, and since the material, we did receive...
did not fit the parameters we had set, we were forced to continue our research on our own. We did receive a great deal of assistance from women in the academic world who are doing research about the function of women and women’s movements in the history of the State. In addition to pointing us in the direction of other resources, they gave us a great deal of material, including books, articles and pictures. In some cases, relatives of the WIZO women in the booklet also contributed material.

**Chance lends a hand**

There were women whose stories we found by chance. I found the story about Anita Jamitovsky-Rooz (page 54) in my father’s library in Montevideo, Uruguay, in a book of testimonies of the Jews of the local community. We found the lead to the bittersweet story about Betsy and Peggy (page 92) in Raya Jaglom’s autobiography, where she recalls in brief the event which led to Betsy’s rescue from the Nazis. In the wake of the book we collected material on Transport 222, and then Ahuva Koren, the director of our department, remembered that she had heard a similar story about Peggy Ben Horin, who had worked in the World WIZO Tourist Department. This is how we discovered that the fate of these two women joined at the intersection of WIZO. There were even women whom we found out about by chance, women who had been forgotten over the years.

We found the story of Gila Uriel (page 154) while digging deep into the Internet – where the word ‘WIZO’ in Hebrew produced 380,000 results and 1,810,000 results in English (in the course of our search we discovered that there is a German punk-rock group with the same name). On the Canadian Hadassah-WIZO website there was a lecture given by Betsy Rigal about her grandmother, Lillian Freiman (page 16); and on the website of WIZO Argentina we found the amazing story of Irene Spanier (page 80). In short, stories were culled from different sources around the world.

**Beyond the text**

Collecting pictures was a chapter in itself, and we had to overcome many obstacles. For one thing, it was very hard to locate pictures from the distant past; and for another, when we finally found a picture it wasn’t always the proper size or of sufficient quality to use. Along with the difficulties there were joyous moments, especially due to the assistance of Anat Goldman from the World WIZO Department of Publicity and Communications, who, thanks to her fantastic memory, knew where to locate numerous pictures within the collection of photos in WIZO’s possession.

For some, telling a story and searching for pictures at home involved opening wounds from the past. These were times when a great deal of sensitivity and understanding were required. In other cases, like that of Irma Pollak (page 114), we had a poor-quality copy of a picture from a newspaper and we asked ourselves, how is it that no one has a photo of her? Detective work brought us to Kibbutz Neot Mordechai, where she spent her last years. We approached the director of the kibbutz website in order to locate her family. He said that they had left the kibbutz, and directed us to the kibbutz archives.

After extended correspondence and a number of technical problems, they succeeded in sending us a good picture.

The story of Rachel Harel (page 150) appeared in an internal publication of Discount Bank, along with a picture. We tried to reach the person responsible for the publication, but in vain. In a moment of sudden inspiration, we called the bank’s museum and, after a series of telephone calls, her son, Elchanan Harel, contacted us. He willingly sent us high-quality photos of both his mother and the certificate she received from President Truman.

**Two years later**

We had planned to complete the booklet within six months. However, once we got going, this fascinating journey took much longer. Scraps of information were woven together and became stories. We thought about where else we could look and came to the conclusion there were a number of women who we wanted to speak with directly. These personal interviews provided us with especially moving experiences. Every time we returned to the office, we were full of admiration for these women, women for whom work on behalf of others was their chief concern, ageless women who radiated charisma, persistence and a sense of mission.

Time passed unnoticed as we continued our research and writing. Finally we understood that we would have to determine an end to it since every scrap of information that reached us rekindled our curiosity, and pushed us to continue searching.

We chose the 25th World WIZO EGM as our point of conclusion, since it is a significant venue and an opportunity to present the booklet as a parting gift to the outgoing World WIZO Executive, the President, the Chairperson, and especially to the Chairperson of our Department, Sylvie Pelossof, who knew how to give us the freedom to create, to spread our wings and reach new heights.

Now, with its publication, the booklet has a life of its own. We hope that it will be a source of information and inspiration to all those who want to know the stories behind WIZO.

To order a copy, please contact your local WIZO office or the World WIZO Department of Organization and Education. wizo@wizo.org
WIZO: MAKING INVOLVEMENT APPEALING
or How to Attract Women to WIZO

Briana Simon

A ll those who have the bests interests of WIZO at heart recognize that involving as many Jewish women as possible enriches WIZO activities and, more important, enables the movement to fulfill its mission and goals. A concerted effort must be made to involve every Jewish woman in your community in WIZO. Our basic assumption is that every Jewish woman should be a WIZO member.

Every woman has her own unique talents and skills. Each one has something to contribute. The task is to learn how to use these assets constructively - and creatively - in order to transform latent feelings into active intent and purposeful involvement.

Stages of involvement

Bringing about awareness is the first stage. Making a potential member aware of the fact that WIZO exists, and what it stands for, is a prerequisite for involvement.

Once a person is aware, a deeper and more detailed understanding of WIZO’s objectives and projects, and how she can play her part in advancing them, can be put forth. As her understanding develops and she identifies with one or more of WIZO’s goals, she begins to care, which leads her to deepen her involvement, and to reach the final stage of commitment: involvement on a steady, permanent basis.

How do we bring about such commitment in a potential member? What will make commitment worthwhile for her? We have to take into account what her motivations are. People are generally motivated to become involved when their personal needs are met. For example, if a person feels that her self-image is enhanced by her affiliation with WIZO, she will be motivated to become involved. If she finds like-minded people within the group with whom she can socialize, this fills another vital need. The feeling of community, of working together for a common cause that WIZO engenders, is also very important.

A sense of pride – at belonging to a leading organization and helping to ensure Israel’s future – is vital to many potential members. And so, of course, is being appreciated for their work. Finally, there are those who become involved because of their admiration for those who are already active. “If someone like her is in it,” such a person says to herself, “it means that the organization is a good one.” What else would a prospective volunteer hope to get out of her involvement?

Many volunteers would be hard-pressed to articulate why they’re involved, but they would generally agree that they share the following motivations:

A. Contributing to a particular sphere that is important or worthwhile to them. “Giving back something” is a phrase that often accompanies an expressed wish to use one’s time and professional skills in new, important ways.

B. Developing social and professional contacts with like-minded individuals.

C. Developing new skills, such as events-planning or fundraising.

D. Having fun.

Involvement guidelines

When approaching a potential member, it is wise to bear the following points in mind:

1. Promoting involvement is best achieved through direct contact. No papers, pamphlets, or media aids are necessary at this initial stage. Your uniqueness is what must shine through; what you have experienced personally has an enormous impact. In such a personal conversation, there are three major elements that influence your message. They are body language (55%); your tone of voice (38%); and finally, what you say (7%).

2. Effective promotion of involvement is the result of how well you present your story. This applies even if you are talking to someone you feel you know well. By telling about your personal connection to WIZO, you acquire the trust and respect of the other person. For example, talk about how you have grown inside WIZO and what else you get out of it. Tell about how WIZO has made a change in you, how it has been a growing experience, and by extension how it
may change the person to whom you are speaking.

3 People identify with people. For a potential member, you are WIZO. Part of your task is to let her know how WIZO is unique.

4. When speaking to a potential member about WIZO, it is wise to accentuate the positive and avoid the negative. There is no place for criticism, complaints, comparisons, competition or contention in the process of encouraging involvement.

5. Be specific about what you want from a potential member. Present her with a particular task that you feel is suitable for her. In order to do this, you will have to learn about her beforehand.

6. Promoting involvement is best accomplished by giving a feeling of participation and building. It is important to communicate WIZO’s vision in a coherent, clear and understandable way. The importance of shared vision is that it bonds people together, giving them a sense of unity. It creates a feeling of common purpose, and it provides great strength in times of challenge.

7. Remember that people may decide to do what they want independently of your efforts. Do not take this personally. Most of the time, what you want, doesn’t happen. However, the “click” with any potential member is more likely to happen when you emphasize the positive.

Prof. Barry Kosmin, Bring me your huddled masses, Haaretz newspaper, Nov. 2001


Every year, WIZO gives special awards for its ‘excellent workers’ – employees from all sectors of WIZO’s activities, who are so devoted to their work, they feel they are part of the WIZO family, making their contribution to improving Israel’s society.

This year’s winners are:

Orit Henrietta Cohen, 56, a cook at Zelkind WIZO day care centre, Rehovot, who cooks for the children as if for her own family. If she sees a child needs something, she has no hesitation in bringing something from her own home. “When I stop working, I will come here and volunteer,” says Orit.

Ashraf Salchi, 34, is the building supervisor for WIZO projects in Jerusalem and the centre of the country. He treats every project he visits as he does his own home, and says he feels at home everywhere he goes: “I do all I can and even more, and at the end of the day I feel good to know that I have made a difference in people’s lives.”

Orli Cafri, 40, a house mother in the dormitories in WIZO Hadassim, has four children of her own and is in contact with the Hadassim children under her care on a daily basis. “For me, the most satisfying and fulfilling work is caring for children; I feel I am giving them another chance in life.”

Zehava Hammami 61 has worked for WIZO for 30 years and is described as the ‘care giver every parent wants for his/her child.’ Zehava and the staff at the day care centre in Rishon Le Zion where she works, are like one big family and have made the day care centre into a second home for the children and their parents. “The thought that the parents entrust me with their most valuable possession gives me a sense of responsibility and fills me with pride every single day.”

Etti Bachar, 59, is the chief accounts manager at the Tel Aviv branch of WIZO. She regards her work to be of utmost importance as she has to keep track of all the finances of the Tel Aviv projects. Thus she has learned of the wonderful work of WIZO, and says, “My work hours become irrelevant when I think of the contribution WIZO is making to the community.”

Edna Rofe Lynder, 49, is the director of WIZO’s Beit Porge day care centre in Tel Aviv. Many of the children at this centre come from dysfunctional homes and Edna and her staff do all they can to improve the children’s lives. “We check on the children all the time and carefully monitor their development; we invest so much in them and want to do the best we can – and more.”

Danny Arman, 51, is head of maintenance at WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim School in Haifa, and has been working for WIZO for 27 years. “To work in this wonderful place gives me great pride and joy every day – the children come from very problematic backgrounds, and I feel as if I am their family.”

Muriel Huberman, 44, the director of the Family Welfare Department in WIZO Israel, sees her work as the opportunity to give another chance in life to those who come from difficult backgrounds due to all sorts of reasons. “I come to work each day with a big smile on my face because I know every day I can make a change in someone’s life.”

And last but not least, the ‘team prize’ goes to the group of ladies in World WIZO’s Early Age Department under the management of Dorit Barchet, who are responsible for managing the department’s income from WIZO’s 175 day care centres. Lena Kameron, Hanna Levi, Zemira Hoffman and Henrietta Hoffman are a devoted team who, like everyone else here, regard WIZO as their family.
**Broadway Comes to Tel Aviv**

All the who’s who of Israeli society, including former President Yitchak Navon, and numerous WIZO members and supporters, attended the premiere of the stage production of the well-known musical *Cabaret* at Tel Aviv’s Cameri theatre, which was a gala fundraising event for WIZO Israel. Everyone was enthralled by the professionalism of the production, which deals with the seedy night club life in 1930s Berlin, under the shadow of anti-Semitism and the rise of Nazism.

In his message to donors and attendees, Attorney Gidon Fisher and chairman of WIZO Israel’s fundraising campaign said, “Together with you we are paving new paths, along which will walk a hungry child, a battered youth, an abused woman. Together we can give them a chance to get out of the circle of poverty, their suffering and their pain.”

The evening was a great financial success, with proceeds dedicated to WIZO Israel’s activities for women and children at risk.

**(l to r)** WIZO Israel Chairperson Gila Oshrat, WIZO Israel Campaign Chairperson Attorney Gidon Fisher, Danny & Janice Gillerman, World WIZO President Helena Glaser, WIZO Israel Fundraising Chairperson Arela Meiri

**Israel and Diaspora Bond**

Approximately 100 students from the Haim Weizmann Jewish School in Santiago, Chile, visited WIZO’s Nachlat Yehuda School while on an Israel tour. The students were delighted with their visit and were most impressed with the school.

They were divided into small groups, and together with students of the village and staff they gathered eggs, milked cows and participated in joint activities aimed to facilitate the acquaintance between the Israeli students and those from abroad.

At the end of the visit they all gathered in the dining room, where, after dinner they enjoyed a performance of the Nachlat Song and Dance Troupe.

It was a most successful event, which WIZO would like to turn into a tradition in order to enhance the bond between youth in Israel and the Diaspora.

Rivka Lazovsky (seated centre) surrounded by the students from Chile
Violence Against Women

For the third consecutive year, marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, WIZO members from around the country, joined by women Knesset members, carried out a symbolic funeral march in the streets of Tel Aviv. Carrying 'coffins', the aim was to draw public attention to the growing phenomenon of violence against women. The march ended with a ceremony in a memorial tent erected in the forecourt of the Tel Aviv Museum during which candles were lit and speeches were made, warning against the deterioration in the status of women in Israeli society and efforts made by the Ultra Orthodox to drive women out of the public arena. An emotional speech was given by Druze Sheikh Amin Canaan, whose daughter was murdered by her husband two years ago, since when he has been active in trying to combat family violence.

Chairperson of WIZO Israel, Gila Oshrat sympathized with Sheikh Canaan and said that violence in the family is a blunt assault upon human rights. “Our message should be that violence against women is not merely a women’s issue but a problem of the entire society. The exclusion of women from the public arena de-legitimizes women and spreads a message that they are inferior.” Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive, Mrs Tova Ben-Ari was shocked by the murder of a young Druze woman by her husband and was also active in fighting domestic violence.

Wheelchair Championships

WIZO Nir Ha’emek (sponsored by WIZO USA and Argentina) was honoured in September when the European Wheelchair Basketball Championship was held at the school. Teams from 20 countries participated plus a team from Israel. When it was announced that the tournament was going to be held at Nir Ha’emek, many alterations were made to facilities at the school in order to accommodate the players and their entourage. The alterations were funded by the Israel Sports Association for the Disabled and WIZO USA.

Many of the students at the school assisted throughout the tournament, which, according to school principal Esti Cohen, the experience was a wonderful educational experience for all concerned. Praise was heaped on everyone at the school from the Israel Sports Association for the Disabled and all the tournament officials and players. Ro’i Rosenberg, a member of the Israeli team, and a teacher at Nir Ha’emek, was especially proud that the tournament was held on his ‘home ground.’

Despite their disabilities, the players are to be admired for their determination and dedication to the game.
WINTER 2011/2012

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WIZO REVIEW

Chairperson of Beit Heuss Nurit Polack, World WIZO President
Helena Glaser, World WIZO Director General Mirla Gal, Beit Heuss
Director Cheli Yechiely

Israel’s southern citizens are enduring from the endless rocket attacks from Gaza. It was extremely sobering to see the collection of spent rocket shells. The trip then continued on to Ashdod which has recently seen a vast increase in rocket attacks on her citizens.

Members of the branch were also on hand to inaugurate the new WIZO women’s centre in Modi’in and many participate in weekly pilates classes or empowerment programmes and even squeeze in a game of bridge or two. We took great pleasure in toasting Rosh Hashanah with a sing-a-long in the new centre.

We look forward to making our contribution towards an improved Israeli society.

On the Road with Friends of WIZO

Every year, Friends of WIZO conduct a festive opening of their year at a member’s home. This year was different – FOW went on the road to show members WIZO projects first hand, projects to which they have contributed. First of all they joined the dedication of the Lord Steinberg dormitory at WIZO Nahalal. Friends of WIZO have contributed to the Ometz project at the school, a remedial educational programme for youth in the dormitories.

The hardy travellers continued to the women’s centre at Zichron Yaacov to admire the branch renovations and new garden, a joint project of WIZOuk, Friends of WIZO and the Wohl Foundation. While there, they were greeted by the chairperson and members of the branch, who provided a sumptuous afternoon tea with musical entertainment by local musicians.

Modi’in branch takes off

Rolene Marks

The ladies of the English speaking group at WIZO Modi’in are immigrants from around the world, coming from England, the United States, South Africa and Australia. Many of them were very involved in WIZO in their countries of origin and continue their commitment by meeting and planning activities that will benefit WIZO projects in Israel.

Earlier this year, members organized a day trip to Sderot to view the Bruce and Ruth Rappaport Day Care Centre, the only completely rocket proof day care centre in the world. From there we moved on to a visit with the Sderot Media Centre, where a spokesman described the conditions that

Seminar for prison workers

It is already a year since the devastating Carmel fire, where over 40 people lost their lives, most of them members of the prison service, who were trapped and died when their bus was engulfed by flames, while on their way to try to rescue prisoners in a prison situated on the slopes of the Carmel.

At the time, WIZO ran a special fundraising campaign with the aim of assisting the families of victims and others affected by the fire. Members of the prison service were deeply traumatized by the loss of so many of their colleagues; a workshop was held for them in the warm atmosphere of WIZO’s Beit Heuss sponsored by WIZO Germany.

World WIZO President Helena Glaser, who initiated the campaign, greeting the participants saying: “It was natural for us to approach you, the Israel Prison Service, and offer WIZO’s support and assistance in post-disaster rehabilitation.”

Over a period of two days, participants attended workshops and listened to lectures organized by professionals on the subjects of dealing with trauma and bereavement. Special training sessions were given to help the staff deal with any future crises and traumatic situations.

Prison Service employees participating in the seminar at Beit Heuss

Chairperson of Beit Heuss Nurit Polack, World WIZO President Helena Glaser, World WIZO Director General Mirla Gal, Beit Heuss Director Cheli Yechiely

Friends of WIZO Executive in the garden at Zichron Yaacov Women’s Centre. (l to r) Liz Harris, Valerie Maxwell, Esther Mor, Betty Crystal, Rachel Pentol, Birgitte Kormind, Sylvia Milrod

WINTER 2011/2012 | WIZO REVIEW | 39
ARGENTINA

Lunch at the Residence

In October, the wife of Israel’s ambassador to Argentina, Michelle Gazit, hosted chaverot from OSFA WIZO for an elegant luncheon at the ambassador’s residence. OSFA WIZO President Amalia Polack and chaverot enjoyed lunch and listened intently to a fascinating address given by guest speaker, Professor Alfredo Neuburger from the Gino Germani Institute of the University of Buenos Aires, which focused on anti-Semitism in the world. Michelle Gazit who graciously welcomed chaverot into her home, had recently returned from Israel and described the reaction of the people of Israel to Gilad Shalit’s release after more than five years in captivity.
Chalalalalalah Day

WIZO supporters of all age groups joined forces to make their annual Chalalalalah Day a huge success. Over 3,000 challot were sold in schools and street locations within the Melbourne Jewish community in this successful WIZO Victoria venture.

Melbourne Cup

The Melbourne Cup, known as ‘the race that stops a nation’ is the richest two mile horse racing handicap in the world and provides the perfect excuse for WIZO ladies to put on their best hats and party. This year, 500 women around the Eastern Suburbs celebrated the Melbourne Cup day with six different functions held simultaneously in homes and restaurants around Sydney, the proceeds of which will benefit the Australia-sponsored Shikun Mizrach WIZO day care centre in Rishon Lezion.

Happy 70th

At WIZO Adelaide’s 70th birthday celebration, the Brighton Secondary School Music Department entertained guests. Lynnette Ninio presented a short history of WIZO South Australia. At the event, Jan Gould, Huguette Hasda, Marie Lipert, Eva Phillips, and Helen Tversky Steiner were honoured for their long-standing service to WIZO. A certificate signifying the laying of a paving stone at Australia-sponsored Ahuzat Yeladim was presented to Eva Tuckfield. Eva, who also has a paving stone bearing her name in Adelaide’s Migration Museum, responded wittily by saying, “Now friends can walk all over me in Adelaide and Israel!”

The Son Speaks

Some 700 supporters of WIZO NSW gathered to listen to former Israeli security service (Shin Bet) informer and author of the bestseller, Son of Hamas. Mosab Hassan Yousef, who now lives in the USA, captivated the audience with stories from his childhood in the West Bank and his work as a spy for Israel. He also shared his personal perspective on the conflict in the Middle East and his ideas for advancing peace.

Farewell to Lynne

Perth’s loss will be Israel’s gain as WIZO Aviva bid a fond farewell to hard working and highly valued chavera Lynne Goodman and her husband on their aliyah to Israel. At a delightful farewell brunch, held at the home of Vicky and Lionel King, Lynne and Marcel were presented with a Sponsor a Child certificate.
AUSTRIA

Trauma Treatment

WIZO Austria led by Dr Hava Bugajer, in partnership with the S. Freud Society, presented an interesting lecture at the S. Freud Museum in Vienna featuring world-renowned Israeli psychologist and psycho trauma specialist Prof. Mooli Lahad, known for his creative methods of intervention and treatment of stress. In his excellent address, entitled 'When Their World Falls Apart' Prof. Lahad explained his work, which has led him to various parts of the world in the implementation of crisis intervention techniques. During and post the Second Lebanon War, Prof. Lahad established an extensive project with WIZO day care centres and youth villages helping children and adults recover from war-trauma.

Painting for WIZO

Former WIZO Austria President Edith Landesmann’s hobby of painting brings in revenue for WIZO as she donates the proceeds of the sale of her pictures

Youthful Talent

WIZO Austria presented a piano concert by the Hauptmann siblings much to the delight of residents of the Maimonides Zentrum last October. Under the direction of Prof. Natalia Zymbal, the two young Hauptmann sisters and their brother thrilled the audience as young and old danced and sang along to their performance.

BELGIUM & LUXEMBOURG

Race for the Cure

Last September, as every year, WIZO Antwerp showed solidarity in the fight against breast cancer by taking part in the Susan G. Komen’s For the Cure Walk. Chaverot joined health workers, sympathisers and sufferers in the three-kilometre walk.

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Pie Wows Crowd

A dinner and one-man show featuring Pie Tshibanda, entitled, ‘a mad black in the country of whites’ was held in
a restaurant located on the River Schelde in Antwerp. The audience enjoyed a convivial evening and dazzling performance by the Congolese artiste. This successful event was organised by the dynamic Art Aviv committee led by WIZO Antwerp President Nathalie Miodownik.

Successful Recipe

WIZO Nana Team is a brand new committee in Brussels, which organizes cooking lessons, a book club and art visits. Their latest event was a piano recital in a private home and all the ingredients were present: friendship, solidarity and great teamwork.

Moving Celebration

A spectacular performance by popular Israeli singer Yehoram Gaon featured in WIZO São Paulo’s celebration of 90 years of World WIZO and 85 years of WIZO Brazil. With this performance, WIZO São Paulo also paid homage to all their volunteers, friends and supporters, exemplified by a beautiful banner honouring the late former WIZO São Paulo President Antonieta Feffer.

Communication Tool

WIZO Brazil’s new website, launched in honour of 85 years of WIZO in Brazil by WIZO Brazil President Helena Kelner, provides Brazil’s growing ranks of volunteers with effective knowledge sharing tools. Visit: www.wizobrasil.br

Visiting São Paulo

WIZO São Paulo President Iza Mansur, executive members and WIZO Brazil President Helena Kelner welcomed Helena Glaser in her capacity as chairperson of the Zionist General Council who paid a visit, together with members of her delegation, to WIZO São Paulo en route to the Jewish Agency Board of Governors meeting in Buenos Aires. Iza Mansur presented an overview of several WIZO activities in São Paulo and in Brazil. The visitors were impressed with the scope of work in educational partnerships. Helena Kelner awarded the celebratory 85 years of WIZO in Brazil medal to World Zionist Organization President Mr Avraham Duvdevani. WIZO São Paulo Vice President Mirta Landesman was honoured with a celebratory medal.
Solidarity Hymn Show

WIZO Paraná presented Brazilian internationally acclaimed soprano Luciana Melamed, who charmed the audience as she sang in many different languages, and was accompanied by a chords ensemble in what was a truly memorable performance.

Partying in Rio

Attended by Israel’s Ambassador to Brazil HE Mr Rafael Eldad and his wife Batia, WIZO Rio celebrated 85 years in Rio. A huge turnout from the Aviv and Vakitot groups and several former WIZO Rio de Janeiro presidents led by current president Lúcia Balassiano, added to the atmosphere of this fabulous fun-filled evening, where guests danced to the vibrant Eletra Band.

WIZO Rio President Lúcia Balassiano awarded entrepreneur Rogério Chor the celebratory 85 years WIZO Brazil medal, for his enduring support of the movement. The evening ended with a rousing ‘happy birthday’ as guests toasted WIZO’s future.

Fraternity Fair

The 2011 WIZO Rio Grande do Sul Fraternity Fair celebrating 65 years of WIZO RS and 85 years of WIZO Brazil, opened to great acclaim. The children’s fashion show and play were magnificent. Former WIZO RS President Matilde Gus was honoured at the fair, and was very touched by the affection shown by family and friends. The creation of the Yeladot Group for six year-old girls was particularly moving guaranteeing, as it does, the future of the movement.

Concrete Art Auction 2011

The Montreal Canadian Hadassah WIZO art auction was held last October at Espace Reunion with a crowd of 200. The evening raised a very impressive $90,000, and was co-chaired by Sarah Hutman and Alana Shiveck, newly elected CHW Montreal president. Canadian Hadassah-WIZO’s art auction has been a presence on the Montreal art scene since 1956, with the dual goals of promoting Canadian artists while raising funds for CHW’s projects in Israel.

Art Auction 2011

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Mind Power

An evening with Mentalist Sidney Friedman was presented by CHW Toronto in November and was a complete sell-out. With an audience of over 550, Sidney Friedman, known as ‘mentalist to the stars’ for his many celebrity clients, wowed the audience with his psychic abilities. VIP guests were treated to a cocktail reception where they were able to meet Sidney and, following the show, all guests mingled and enjoyed a delicious dessert reception. CHW Toronto is thrilled to report that the event raised over $30,000, which will support CHW projects in Israel.

CHILE

Ambassador’s visit

Chaverot from the Derech Hashalom and Kalaniot groups enjoyed an amiable evening of conversation with Britain’s Ambassador to Chile HE Mr Jon Benjamin, when he visited the WIZO headquarters, where he enlightened chaverot with an informal address on current affairs.

Chocolates and Handicrafts

WIZO Chile’s chocolate course has become a very sweet tradition for the children who participate during the winter vacation. Wearing colourful aprons, the children mastered the art of confectionary and produced mouth-watering chocolate fancies and cupcakes. Another ‘hands on’ activity was a handicrafts course where youngsters enjoyed lessons in making rag dolls, clay sculpture, fabric painting, decoupage and more.

Music, Karaoke and Fajitas

Husbands and friends who participated in the Maayan Group’s traditional annual event added to the fun at the music, karaoke and fajitas evening where the more daring guests were eager to show off their karaoke singing talents. Tasty fajitas and delicious desserts were enthusiastically devoured, as was the video of WIZO projects in Israel, which carry the name of Chile.
COLOMBIA

Bazaar Success

The Carmel Country Club was the venue for WIZO Bogota’s annual Rosh Hashana bazaar, which once again provided fun and entertainment for young and old. The 2011 bazaar attracted some 1,000 guests who bought goods at the many stalls. Cafe Kapulsky was, as usual, the star of the show with its mouth-watering array of home-baked goods. One hundred and ninety children frolicked on the bouncy castles and competed for the many prizes at the outdoor activities. Residents at the retirement home enjoyed a delicious luncheon and were entertained with a medley of 80s music. Israel’s Ambassador to Colombia HE Yoed Magen attended this happy and profitable event with his family. A raffle for a prized iPad 2 drew considerable interest from guests.

DENMARK

Brilliant Bazaar

In November, WIZO Denmark held its 66th bazaar. WIZO chaverot begin months in advance to organize this eagerly awaited event. Though small in numbers, the Danish federation is blessed with highly motivated chaverot who take on the huge task of the bazaar, ensuring its success, which is enjoyed by the entire Jewish community. Visitors, old and young sang along to the unofficial Danish queen of Klezmer music Channe Nussbaum and her trio of musicians. Mrs Furmansky revealed her magnificent embroidered ‘Name Carpet’ - a work of some 11 years duration where Mrs Furmansky received donations for WIZO and single-handedly embroidered the names of donors on the carpet. There were attractions for all, and hungers were sated on Jewish delicacies from the dairy, meat and ‘Taste of Israel’ restaurants and guests enjoyed all the fun of the many booths, winning prizes from Israeli wines to new footballs.

Birthday Tea

WIZO members who enjoyed a celebratory birthday tea in the cafeteria of the Israeli Centre last July were Anita Ligator, Abela Chérracov, Merav Rosenstock, Lisa Davidovich, Tobel Cosiol and Sarita Boruchowicz.

COSTA RICA

Extreme makeover

Funds raised from ticket sales to the Extreme Makeover event, attended by 120 women at the Intercontinental Hotel last September benefitted Costa Rica’s National Children’s Hospital. At a formal presentation, hospital head Dr Rodolfo Hernández, laboratory head Dr Mario Vargas and blood bank director Dr Giselle Valverde were presented with a centrfuge for the blood bank by WIZO Costa Rica President Anita Ligator, chaverot Tobel Cosiol, Vicky Amón and Abela Chérracov as well as Guita Grynspan representing the Israeli Centre. During the ceremony, Dr Hernández, who has participated in courses in Israel including safety and disaster training, thanked the Jewish community for its support and praised Israel for sharing expertise with Costa Rica.

Pictured with hospital staff, (front) Abela Chérracov, Tobel Cosiol, Vicki Amón, (middle) Anita Ligator, (back) Guita Grynspan

Pictured at Cafe Kapulsky: Bluma Ramler, Vera Rosembusz, Susy Camhi, Marianne Kovacs, Vicky Wasserman, Anita Awinami
**Shalom Ambassador**

WIZO Finland President Pirkko-Liisa Schulman presented Israel’s Ambassador to Finland HE Avi Granot with a WIZO certificate at a concert arranged by Israel friendship associations in his honour on his departure from Finland. Every year the ambassador has invited WIZO supporters to his residence for a Sunday afternoon gathering and he will be sorely missed.

**Coffee Concert**

WIZO Finland President Pirkko-Liisa Schulman welcomed guests to the newly renovated Jewish community centre, for which she was the architect, where they enjoyed a coffee concert. Pirkko-Liisa introduced Zahava Ashbel, the wife of the new Israeli Ambassador to Finland. The Hazamir Choir led by Eva Jacob, and three young flutists from the Helsinki Conservatory provided entertainment. Rising star singer Sharon Rubanovich’s touching renditions, accompanied by her father Kenneth, received thunderous applause, as did Laura Kaspi’s jazz versions of traditional Jewish songs.

**Helsinki Bazaar**

The much-awaited WIZO Bazaar, an annual tradition since 1956, took place last November in Helsinki. Over 100 members of the community, from children to husbands and friends, helped set up the stands and sell the donated merchandise at the various stalls. Some 800 visitors came to this popular event where they were able to buy a wide range of items from Jewish delicacies to antiques.

**Golf at Fourqueux**

Some 150 players teed off at the 2011 WIZO France Golf Cup held at the Fourqueux Golf Club organized by Eliane Sprung and Paul Zajfen. WIZO France President Joëlle Lezmi addressed participants who watched an emotive film showing WIZO’s work in Israel.

**Dinner Debate**

At a solidarity dinner hosted by Israel’s Ambassador to France, HE Yossi Gal at his residence, WIZO France chaverot listened to an address on the global economic situation by director of research at the National Centre for Science (CNRS) and professor of economics Mr Elie Cohen. The proceeds of the dinner are earmarked for renovations of the WIZO France-sponsored Simone Berr Porge Day Care Centre in Tel Aviv.

**Book Fair**

The WIZO France Book Fair, under the direction of writer and member of the reading committee, Jeana Altbuch, brought together professor of law and political science and lifelong friend of WIZO Draï Raphael, and auxiliary bishop of Paris, Bishop Moulins-Beaufort, Auxiliary Bishop of Paris and journalist Guy Rozanowicz who discussed Benedict XVI’s book, Jesus of Nazareth. Leading authors were on hand to sign copies of their books for the large gathering, which including many luminaries of the literary world.
Berlin Gala

Held at the Ellington Hotel last autumn, WIZO Berlin’s Sponsor a Child gala attracted 260 guests who enjoyed gourmet food, fine wine and good conversation whilst pledging their support. Entertainment was provided by Audrey Kolento and Duo Protubero, Anna Luckikhina and Ivan Luzan. After dinner, guests tried their luck at the roulette table and the raffle. Quality raffle prizes such as an iPad donated by Deutsche Lloyd Insurance and diamond earrings donated by Milgro Jewellery, ensured brisk sales. DJ Koby provided a party atmosphere as guests danced until the small hours. It was a winning night for all, not least for WIZO Berlin and the children of Israel.

One Night in Frankfurt

WIZO Frankfurt’s 2011 One Night for the Children was held at the Frankfurt Hilton Hotel attended by 300 guests. In her speech, WIZO Germany President Diana Schnabel appealed for sponsorship of 500 Euros to ensure one child a place for one year in a WIZO day care centre. The president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany Dieter Graumann gave an overview of the volatile security situation in Israel, underscoring the need to support Israel. Andrea Kiewel and Daniel Fischer superbly compered the evening. Long-standing WIZO Frankfurt board member, Roza Orlean, was honoured as Woman of the Year. Andrea Kiewel also received an award for her extraordinary commitment to WIZO. The talented A Capella group, ‘The Wanderer’ from Cologne and New York’s singing superstar, Jennifer Rush, provided top-notch entertainment, and Johnny Jack and Midnight Tiger provided a magical grand finale.

HOLLAND

Literature Prize

Under the heading ‘Books, bind and bond’, WIZO Holland launched its first ever Literature Prize 2012 at an interesting and well-attended event last October where two of the shortlisted authors, Jessica Durlacher and Chaja Polak, were interviewed by well-known journalist Tamara Gyrath. Celebrated writer and publicist Daphne Meijers reviewed all books in what is hoped will become an annual event. Jurors consist of a variety of people, who will read at least three of the six shortlisted books by famous Jewish Dutch authors: Jessica Durlacher, Assaf Gavron, Sarah Glidden, Chaja Polak, Jonathan Tropper and Leon de Winter. A scholarship in the name of the winning writer will be awarded to a gifted literature student in a WIZO school in Israel.

INDIA

Happy Fourth Birthday

The WIZO India Federation held an event at the Kenesseth Eliyahoo Synagogue to celebrate its fourth birthday last October when chaverot gathered to hear guest speaker
Manju Nichani, principal of KC College, speak on parent-child and teacher-student relationships. The children and grandchildren of members (Generation Next) received WIZO India 2011 certificates. World WIZO President Helena Glaser inaugurated WIZO India on 25th October 2007 in Mumbai and the federation, led by Yael Jhirad has grown in popularity, and now has over 80 members who appreciate the many and varied Jewish cultural activities offered at the monthly meetings.

ITALY

Tea in the Garden

Guests enjoyed the colours, fragrances and ambience of a high tea party held at a wonderful garden in the centre of Milan. The event, a pleasant way to meet friends with a cup of tea and sweet gateaux was organized by ADEI-WIZO chavera Raffaella Grun.

Adeissima Milan

More than 600 guests attended Adeissima 2011 in Milan, the traditional opening of ADEI-WIZO’s year. The Solisti Veneti classical orchestra conducted by Claudio Scimone presented a memorable concert with works by Mendelssohn, Chopin, Rossini, Grieg, Vivaldi and Paganini. They also played two popular Hebrew songs, Hava Nagila and Yerushalaim Shel Zahav, which took the audience completely by surprise, filling them with great joy. This spectacular event was organized under the leadership of ADEI-WIZO Milan President Susanna Sciaky and her excellent team. Special guest of honour at the event was World WIZO Fundraising Department Chair Esther Mor.

Roman Gala

The elegant halls of the exclusive Villa Miani in Rome were a fitting backdrop for Adei WIZO Rome’s Gran Gala Adeissima Roma 2011, which took place last November attended by over 700 guests. Presidents of Adei WIZO Rome, Viviana Levi and Silvana Limentani, welcomed guests and explained the charitable aims of the Gala. A delicious dinner was followed by a fashion show where youngsters from the Jewish community took to the catwalk and modeled fashions by De Carlis and Gattinoni followed by music and dancing. The proceeds of the Gran Gala support Beit WIZO Italia in Jaffa, which provides an opportunity for a better life for underprivileged youth in Israel.

Literary Prize

The 11th Adelina Della Pergola Literary Prize award ceremony was held in Livorno at the imposing naval academy. Among those attending were many
dignitaries from the local municipalities and prominent members of the Jewish community. Some of the most notable speeches were those of Adei WIZO Livorno Branch President Silvia Bedarida and the warm words from outgoing Adei WIZO National President Roberta Nahum. Patrizia Ottoienghi spoke of the success of the award. The winner of the first prize was Israeli writer Eshkol Nevo. The Della Pergola award is highly regarded in literary circles in Italy.

Eshkol Nevo, winner of the first prize

Tova's Visit

Chaverot were delighted to welcome World WIZO Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov on her four-day mission to Mexico. Tova met with the members of all the various committees, including those in charge of the federation’s main annual activities - the membership campaign, Sponsor a Child and Project Education. She also spoke to younger members, empowering them with the knowledge that the future of WIZO is in their hands.

Chaverot were motivated by Tova's address, wherein she reinforced their enthusiasm with warmth and passion for their important WIZO work and stressed the need to open more day care centres and the urgency of protecting day care centres from missiles.

At a cocktail party hosted by WIZO Mexico President Diana Kuba with Executive members and their husbands, Tova presented the stark realities that face Israel and the pressing need for shelters.

Tova Ben-Dov (front 2nd left) Israel's Ambassador to Mexico Rodica Radian Gordon (front 3rd left) enjoying lunch with WIZO Mexico board members

Echoes of Life

Tova also attended the unveiling of 23 plaques in the Echoes of Life project, presided by Sima Kipnis, at WIZO Headquarters where the Month WIZO Committee led by Mely Metta also presented the new Children for Children wall, which Tova was given the honour of unveiling. The wall comprises of delightful decorated mosaics of Israel and Mexico painted by children.

Tova surrounded by young Mexican chaverot

Project Education

WIZO Mexico’s major activity, Project Education spearheaded by Tania Hop, took place last November. Focusing on ecology under the banner of ‘WIZO is Ahead and Turning Green’ the pilot project comprised of special workshops to recycle, reduce and re-use at the Kalpili School, a low-income school furnished by WIZO Mexico. After months of hard work, teaching the children to respect the resources of our planet, WIZO Mexico held an ecological fair, attended by around 1,000 visitors, who enjoyed the ecological workshops, games, activities and animals. Families also contributed to the occasion by planting trees.

Javerut Group chaverot plant a tree at the Project Education ecological fair

Ensuring Continuity

WIZO Mexico President Diana Kuba, Sylvie Mizrahi and Shula Shrem visited WIZO Tijuana-San Diego to meet with young women in the community as well as existing WIZO members. At the “Will I Still Exist?” seminar, the young

Chaverot of the new Delmar Group with (seated right) WIZO Mexico President Diana Kuba
women learned of the valuable work done by WIZO and were eager to play their own part, which culminated in the formation of two new groups, which will ensure continuity for the movement.

Johannesburg gardens. At a delicious tea in the park-like surroundings of the third garden in Bryanston, Ludwig the ‘Rose King’ entertained a rapt audience, sharing his love for roses and giving useful tips for successful growing.

Marion Brivik (l) & Jo Livingstone at the garden day

PANAMA

Sponsor a Child

At the delightful home of chavera, Betty Cohen, a lunch to celebrate the closure of a very successful Sponsor a Child campaign was enjoyed by many WIZO friends and supporters. Daniel Cesarkas from Uruguay enlightened the gathering with an interesting lecture on WIZO’s work. Every year, Panama increases the number of sponsors and WIZO Panama President Estela Faskha was pleased to report that the current number of sponsors now stands at 248.

(l to r) Elisa Behar, Gloria Zebede, Betty Cohen, Yvonne Attie and Estela Faskha

Teeing off

The annual WIZO Etgar Golf Day was held at the Kyalami Country Club last November. This year, the popular event sponsored by Stenham Investments Ltd attracted many new players. Guests enjoyed a delicious halfway lunch and the day culminated in a canapé supper and awards where everyone received a prize, made possible by generous sponsors.

The Etgar Golf Day committee with Johnny Osrin from Stenham Investments

An Evening of Song

Proceeds from an enchanting evening of song, which was held at the Theatre on the Square in Sandton, Johannesburg, will benefit South African project Neve WIZO. The evening featured Adam Davis with Keven Greenberg playing keyboard who entertained the audience with a medley of Broadway hits. The function hosted by Mark Samowitz, was held in memory of Steven Aaron who was brutally gunned down ten years ago.

Rebecca Sieff Awards

At a bible day event and ceremony held in the sukkah of the Oxford Synagogue during Sukkot last October, WIZO Johannesburg honoured five special chaverot for long service. WIZO Johannesburg Chair Zee Bergman welcomed guests and Oxford Synagogue’s Rabbi Chaikin spoke on
the importance and necessity of reaching out to others and inviting them in, using stories of Sukkot. Guest speaker Rebbetzin Aidel Kazilsky discussed the positive and crucial role women play in every sphere of life.

WIZO South Africa President Yvonne Jawitz presented service awards to Crystal Kaplan (Cyrdenez Branch), Shirley Abraham (Meir Szold Branch) and Gertie Feinstein (Executive/Council) for 40 years service. Ethel Amoils (Johannesburg North) for 50 years and Rose Matus (Cyrdenez) was recognized for 60 years of service to WIZO.

Collectables Market

One Sunday last November, WIZO Johannesburg held its collectables market at the Norwood Mall where dealers and bargain hunters crowded around the tables laden with goods from the minute the doors opened at 9 am. Yvonne Jawitz, president of WIZO South Africa, convened the collectable market assisted by a band of very hard working volunteers. The market is held every two years, and this year’s market was a runaway success.

Rebecca Sieff award recipients (l to r) Shirley Abrams, Rose Matus, Ethel Amoils and Gertie Feinstein

Sponsor a Child

Former WIZO Spain President Astrid Misrahi and her husband Henri graciously hosted an elegant Sponsor a Child luncheon in the presence of Israel’s Ambassador to Spain, HE Mr Aron Bar and his wife Esther at the Intercontinental Hotel in Madrid. Also present were WIZO Spain President Ilana Querub Bergio, Mrs Susan Solomont, wife of the USA ambassador to Spain and HE Alavaro Albacete, the director of Casa Sefarad-Israel. Special guest speaker, Friends of WIZO co-chair Mrs Betty Crystal, who together with her husband Jack had flown from Israel specifically to attend, impressed the gathering of some 80 ladies at the luncheon with her excellent fundraising presentation.

Sponsor a Child luncheon in Madrid

SWEDEN

Floral Tradition

In what has become a tradition for the Swedish federation, some 10,000 roses are delivered every year to nearest and dearest of chaverot in the days prior to the high days and holidays. WIZO Sweden branches in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö engage volunteers in order-taking and sending skillfully arranged bouquets of ten beautiful red roses. This excellent fundraising venture has grown in popularity over the years.

SWITZERLAND

Lunch with Michel Friedman

In Zurich, at the Sponsor a Child lunch catered by Topas and hosted by Eva Wyler for the fourth time, 52 guests were captivated by the stories of TV personality Michel Friedman who recalled his childhood growing up with a dedicated WIZO mother. He told his fellow diners of his fondness for WIZO and they responded generously to his heartfelt appeal, making the event a resounding success.

Dinner and Quiz

About 100 guests attended the traditional dinner and quiz evening organized by WIZO La Chaux-de-Fonds. Branch president Danièle Golan explained the fundamentals of WIZO and thanked donors and WIZO friends for their unconditional support for this event, which is surely set to become a firm favourite on the social calendar.
Grand Cabaret

‘Le Grand Cabaret de la WIZO’ - this was the title of a superb event, which took place in the Beau-Rivage Palace in Ouchy last November, organized by WIZO Lausanne. Nathalie Fischer managed the dazzling show and Georges Braunschweig presented the evening. Astounding feats by the students of the Ecole du Cirque and the Group of Miss Clairette with the participation of Alizée and Axel, winners of the TV show ‘The Incredible Talents,’ drew gasps of wonder from the audience. Guests also enjoyed a delicious dinner and tombola with excellent prizes.

Ecole du Cirque in action

The WIZO Lausanne committee with WIZO Switzerland President Anne Argi (seated 2nd left)

Standing Room Only

When WIZO Geneva presented the Jewish theatre company Hamacom production ‘Excusez-moi d’être venu’ by Ephraim Kishon at the Theater Cité Bleu, all of the 320 seats in the hall were sold out and many guests had nowhere to sit. That did not stop them giving the performers a standing ovation for a very entertaining show and buying tickets to win the excellent prizes in the tombola.

WIZO Geneva committee

Car Rally

Twelve cars took part in Shemesh Aviv’s car rally. In the two-hour rally around Bushey, near London, 40 participants used a series of cryptic clues to find their final destination – the home of Gila and Geoff Harnell where a welcome afternoon tea awaited them. The winners, Gloria and Ian Besser and Susan and Alan Solomon were presented with prizes and WIZO certificates by organizers Simeon and Suzanne Osen.

(l to r) Car rally winners with Simeon and Suzanne Osen

Robert Runs

Robert Epstein, the son of WIZOuk trustee and Jewish Women’s Week campaign chair Andy Epstein, ran in the Royal Parks Foundation half day marathon. Robert’s company matched funds that enabled him to raise an outstanding £10,000 for WIZO projects in Israel.

Robert (r) and mum Andy Epstein at the marathon

Ethics and the Media

JCWIZOnet’s held a fascinating debate on ethics and the media last autumn at the London Jewish Cultural Centre. The evening was chaired by Geoff Martin. Panelists included Andrew Bloch, Jonathan Shalit, Jonathan Weinberg and Joby Davies.

Generous Alex

The Anne Frank Leeds WIZO concert was held at the Etz Chaim Synagogue. Guests enjoyed the Cadenza choir, Phil Cammerman and his Freylach Spielers and 13-year old Alex Stanley. Singing sensation Alex donated part of his bar mitzvah money and the proceeds of his latest CD to WIZO.

Alex Stanley with his parents, Philippa & Jonathan Stanley
Two Coffee Mornings

Aviva WIZO attracted a large crowd when Sheila and John Collins hosted a coffee morning at their Alwoodley, Leeds home opened by Adele Woolfson where Philippa Addelman showed off a fine display of designer hats. Guest of honour was Ruth Silver.

Six hostesses welcomed coffee drinkers to the home of Sandi Firth at Anne Frank WIZO’s successful Sunday morning social. Miriam Brosh opened the event and the guest of honour was Vanessa Glass. Ilana and Mikayla, the grand daughters of Phillipa Bloom were child presenters.

(1 to r) The six hostesses, Janet Stowe, Phillipa Bloom (and granddaughters at front) Rosalind Shenderay, Maureen Levin, Judith Gordon and Sandi Firth

Firewalk

Leeds WIZO was one of the eight Leeds charities that took part in a Firewalk. The five women representing WIZO who braved the hot coals were Shelley Peel, Nicola Smaje, Shelley Harris, Elissa Winston and Hannah Schiffieldrin. Over £1,300 was raised from this challenging event.

Downton Abbey Success

Julian Fellowes, actor and screenwriter of the British hit TV period drama ‘Downton Abbey’ was in conversation with British author Joanna Trollope at WIZOUk’s fourth annual literary lunch recently at London’s St Johns Wood Synagogue. A capacity crowd was entertained by Mr Fellowes who revealed that the success of Downton Abbey exceeded his wildest expectations, with viewing figures of over 14 million. The attendees raised around £40k to help fund WIZO projects in Israel.

Knocking on Doors

The 2011 Jewish Women’s Week (JWW) Campaign has exceeded expectations and raised over £230,000 despite the dismal economic situation in the UK. “We are delighted with this year’s success and are grateful to over 1,000 volunteers countrywide,” said JWW chairman, Andy Epstein.

New Executive

Outgoing WIZO Uruguay President Laura Rozenbaum handed over the baton to Raquel Lapchik de Szwedzki, who heads the new executive, assisted by vice president Jaquie Saul, secretaries Silvia Tieger and Gabriela Bonomo and executive members Sara Trajteng, Barbara Saul, Laura Mentor Rozenbaum, Ines Jawetz, Lylian Bonomo, Pearl Lapchik, Mery Berger, Nelly Altman and Susan Zimmermann.

Busy Groups

The Kinneret group’s concert at the Sheraton Montevideo Hotel, showcasing the talents of opera singer Gabriela Pochinki, attracted a high profile audience. The Atid group presented a stupendous show, Soul Music for the Soul, featuring the Klezmeron Orchestra. The Shoshanim group reported brisk sales of Rosh Hashana gifts and guests enjoyed the Tikva group’s beautiful Succot celebration.

The New Executive (1 to r) Jacquie Saul, Silvia Tieger,
Fashion Show and Luncheon

Nearly 350 guests enjoyed the 14th annual Children for our Children Fashion Show and Luncheon chaired by Drazie Ashkenazy at New York’s Pierre Hotel. The ‘WIZO Loves Fashion’ event featured children of WIZO members ‘strutting their stuff’ in support of children in Israel. Harrison Geller, Lily Haber, Teddy Kahn, Eliana Salmon, Gabriela Siegal and David and Kayla Waterman, the WIZO New York Bar/Bat Mitzvah teens who donated their gifts to WIZO, received certificates of honour at the event.

Running for WIZO

Last November, WIZO New York board member Lisa Ostad completed the ING New York City Marathon in record time. Lisa convinced her friends and family to support her efforts on behalf of WIZO by contributing to the ‘Lisa Runs for WIZO’ campaign, which raised over $22,000.

Chanukah Boutique

WIZO New York held its annual Chanukah Boutique last November in a beautiful apartment on Park Avenue, which drew a crowd hungry for fashion and philanthropy. Lisa Ostad, Jessica Kalimian, Vicki Sakhai, and Mireille Manocherian chaired the event, hosted by Jamie Mitchell. The 20 vendors showing designer fashions and jewellery donated a portion of their sales to WIZO.

Art & Music

WIZO New York’s annual Sponsor a Child Evening of Art & Music, co-chaired by WIZO USA Vice-Presidents Caren Constantiner and Mira Sofer, was held at the home and private gallery of Dr Phyllis Hattis and attracted 100 guests who enjoyed a private viewing of exquisite art including works by Picasso, Matisse, and Warhol.

A VIP reception was held at the home of Dr Arturo and Caren Constantiner, where Mr Shehbaz Safra, a world renowned, independent art scholar-curator, led a brief tour and discussion about their private collection. The evening concluded with a performance by award-winning Australian native, Kim David Smith.

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WIZO around the World was edited by Tricia Schwitzer.
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