Saving Sderot
Protection from the missiles
Mark Regev
Fighting negative media
Daniel Cohen
WIZO changed my life
24th EGM
Come to the conference!
Save
The Date!

JANUARY 13 – 17, 2008

THE 24TH WORLD WIZO CONFERENCE (EGM)
JANUARY 13 – 17, 2008
ISRAEL, HILTON TEL AVIV

COME AND BE A LINK IN THE IRON-CLAD WIZO CHAIN
COME AND MEET HUNDREDS OF WIZO MEMBERS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD
COME AND TAKE PART IN THE IMPORTANT DECISION-MAKING PROCESS
COME AND WITNESS SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN ISRAEL’S HISTORY
COME AND EXPERIENCE WHAT WIZO DOES
COME AND INVEST IN ISRAEL’S FUTURE

LECTURES, PANELS, DISCUSSIONS, MEETINGS WITH ISRAEL’S LEADERS, TOURS AND MOVING SPECIAL EVENTS. EXCLUSIVE EVENTS FOR AVIV PARTICIPANTS

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Cover: Celebrating Rosh Hashana at the WIZO protected day care center in Sderot (Photo by Kfir Sivan/Israel Sun)
"Permit me to remain an optimist. Permit me to be a dreamer of his people. Permit me to present the sunny side of our state. And also, if sometimes the atmosphere is autumnal, and also if today, the day seems suddenly gray, the president whom you have chosen, will never tire of encouraging, awakening and reminding – because spring is waiting for us at the threshold. The spring will definitely come!"

These lovely words are from the inaugural address delivered by President Shimon Peres on July 15, 2007. The inauguration of our senior statesman Shimon Peres as president towards the last phase of the Jewish year 5767 marks the beginning of a new era - one of optimism and hope. Shimon Peres, a man of vision, action and peace, has been an integral part of the State of Israel from the very beginning. His achievements are many and worthy. Shimon Peres has earned international respect and esteem for his steadfast pursuit of peace for Israel, the region and the world.

In his speech he also spoke of the Negev, the Galilee and Jerusalem. Our founding mothers recognized the significance of these areas and for 87 years WIZO has given priority to establishing projects in them. Indeed there are more WIZO projects in Jerusalem than in any other city in Israel. I cannot ignore the fact that 5767 was a very difficult year. Gilad Shalit, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev are still being held captive by the Hamas and Hizbollah. The Kassam missile attacks on Sderot and the surrounding area continue almost on a daily basis and there seems to be no foreseeable end to the situation, as the Hamas in Gaza have separated themselves from the Palestinian Authority and sadly, President Mahmoud Abbas has no control over what they do. I am also acutely aware that because of the link between us for better or worse - whatever happens in Israel has an effect on your communities, and 5767 witnessed anti-Semitic events in most Jewish communities in the world.

Looking ahead though, like President Peres, I am optimistic in 5768 – (נְוֵיָה) - is just around the corner. The New Year is symbolized by the letter Chet (ח) – the first letter of the Hebrew words: life (חיים), compassion (חֵדֶשׁ), hug (חֵסֶר), new (חדש), innovation (חדש), warmth (חום), positive (חיובי) – words that fill me with hope.

With the help of its Federations, WIZO continues to serve the society in Israel. WIZO fulfills its duties and commitments through its long-term projects and programs. WIZO’s experience, openness, attentiveness and flexibility allow our organization to address the immediate and short-term needs of the hour. Also at all times WIZO continues to develop new and innovative projects, programs and tools to benefit its service recipients. You are full partners in every WIZO activity and achievement and your support is paramount to what we do here.

I wish every WIZO chavera and her family, Shana Tova (Happy New Year), Gmar Hatima Tova (May you be inscribed in the Book of Life) and Succot Sameach (Happy Succot) and may 5768 be the beginning of a happier and better era for Am Yisrael (the People of Israel) and Eretz Israel.
I would like to share with you some of the successes in WIZO’s schools and youth villages during the last year:

- The administration and staff of the WIZO Bet Hakarem Secondary School in Jerusalem, (sponsored by WIZO, uk) was awarded the "Prize for Education, 2006" from the Jerusalem Municipality;
- 28 certificates of excellence were awarded to pupils in the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda School and Youth Village (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland);
- A ninth grade pupil in the WIZO Youth Village in the Name of Hanna Maisel Shohat, Nahalal (sponsored by Hadassah-WIZO Canada) won first place in a nationwide quiz on the Geography of Israel;
- Eight pupils from the WIZO Nir Haemek School and Youth Village, (sponsored by WIZO Argentina and WIZO USA) won second place in the "Robotics 2007" competition;
- The pupils of eight high schools, all in the twelfth grades, throughout the city of Hafia rated the WIZO Municipal High School in the name of Henrietta Irwell (sponsored by WIZO Belgium and Luxembourg, and WIZO Uruguay) as the leading school in Haifa during 2007 in a newspaper survey;
- Three pupils from the WIZO Gardening and Landscape Technology Youth Village in Petach Tikva, (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland) were invited to take part in a Competition of Young Scientists which was held in the Science Museum in Jerusalem;
- The staff in the WIZO Municipal Technological High School in the name of Maya Rosenberg, Rehovot (sponsored by WIZO Brazil) were awarded the title of 'Excellent Workers in Education' in the city;
- The Girls Basketball Team in WIZO Hadassim (sponsored by Hadassah-WIZO Canada) continues to lead in the girls’ basketball league. The team has received high media attention with public support, due to their excellent results;
- A poem, accompanied to music and played on the guitar by the composer, won second prize in a competition on the subject of “Saying No to Drugs and Alcohol” for a 16 year old pupil, of Ethiopian background from the WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim Boarding School and Residential Home (sponsored by WIZO Australia).

Although I have highlighted the achievements in our schools and youth villages, this is just a sample of WIZO’s performances in every aspect of its work, and in every department, in order to build a better society in Israel.

I look forward to seeing you at the Enlarged General Meeting this year, the 60th anniversary of Israel’s independence and the 88th anniversary of the founding of WIZO. I know that it will be an unforgettable experience.

I wish you all a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

Chairperson’s Column

Once again we are celebrating Rosh Hashana and our thoughts are turned to the New Year. We look forward to a year which will be full of WIZO activities, WIZO input and WIZO successes. It has been a difficult year, but WIZO’s performance during the last year was like that of the Northern star, leading the way in a year that was otherwise full of obstacles.
Come to the EGM!

At the beginning of 2008, over a thousand WIZO members from all over the world will converge in Israel for the World WIZO Enlarged General Meeting – the EGM – to be held from January 13th – 17th at the Hilton Tel Aviv.

This conference, which takes place once every four years, provides a golden opportunity for an international gathering of WIZO chaverot from Federations around the globe.

"Investing in People for Israel’s Future" is the theme of the EGM, the 24th such gathering, which marks three momentous events: WIZO’s 88th anniversary, Israel’s 60th year of independence and 40 years since the unification of Jerusalem.

During the course of the EGM, the participants will hear a number of lectures and participate in workshops regarding issues on the agenda of the Jewish People and the State of Israel, such as Zionism, global anti-Semitism, Israel’s security situation, the economy, education and the status of women. These presentations will be conducted by the best lecturers available, with the participation of government ministers, Knesset members and experts in society and economics. Within the framework of the EGM, formerly known as the World WIZO Conference, WIZO members will be able to view WIZO’s work at the various projects, such as the youth villages and schools, day care centers, shelters for battered women, youth clubs and more.

The EGM will open with a festive and moving event in the presence of the President of the State of Israel, WIZO delegates, and public personalities, involving the participation of students from WIZO schools and youth villages.

This year, the World WIZO Executive has decided to salute the graduates of WIZO Aviv International Seminars, which have been conducted for more than three decades. Many seminar graduates presently hold executive positions in their Federations, and are a significant segment of WIZO leaders throughout the world. Among the special events planned for Aviv participants there will be an evening dedicated to WIZO Aviv International Seminar graduates, which will also be attended by heads of WIZO Aviv through the years and former chairpersons of the Department of Organization and Education, who organized the seminars. For many of the graduates it will be a grand reunion.

The EGM will conclude with an exciting evening, in the presence of the prime minister of Israel, that will cap the five eventful days.

We look forward to the participation of many hundreds of WIZO chaverot from around the world, for whom this EGM should be an unforgettable experience.
While life in the rest of the country goes on, the people of Sderot and the kibbutzim near the Gaza Strip continue to suffer from Kassam missile attacks. WIZO’s new state-of-the-art protected day care center provides an answer to the urgent needs of parents and children of Sderot.

The first thing that strikes you when arriving at Sderot is the emptiness of its streets. On a mid summer’s day the streets of this Kassam-stricken town are deserted and traffic is sparse. It seems no one leaves his home unless he has to. No wonder. For the past seven years Sderot has been a target of constant shelling of rockets coming from Gaza with no end in sight. Life has become a living hell for its citizens who cannot find shelter even in the safety of their homes, not to mention public areas such as schools, kindergartens or factories. The town’s playgrounds are deserted and look neglected as children cannot play in the open anymore. Indeed, children pay the highest
Ruth Rappaport: Youth are the Key to our Future

"What moved us to support the protected WIZO day care center in Sderot? It all began when my husband Bruce entered a meeting of all the WIZO presidents in Tel Aviv," says Ruth Rappaport, in a telephone conversation from Geneva. "World WIZO Executive Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov had just described how the children of Sderot were suffering from attacks by Kassam missiles, and had proposed that the children at the day care center be made secure against the attacks. They were arguing about who should pay for it. My husband asked, 'How much does it cost?' and they said $650,000. 'I'll pay for it, provided that my wife agrees,' he responded. And of course I agreed."

"Why have we been so supportive of WIZO's day care centers? Children are our future, and the WIZO day care centers enable parents, particularly mothers, to go to work secure in the knowledge that their children are well taken care of from 7 a.m. till 4 p.m. The children receive the best early age care and education possible, which becomes a key to their futures.

"WIZO is the only movement I know whose leadership is composed entirely of volunteers. Thus any donor can be assured that no percentage of their donation goes to pay leadership salaries, and that everything goes directly to the worthy projects that are being supported."

"I joined WIZO when I arrived in Switzerland, and was very well-received from the beginning. After a number of years I was elected president of the Geneva chapter, and served in that position for 15 years, a fact which gave me immense satisfaction and pride."

"I am extremely proud of all the work that WIZO does for battered women, with the day care centers, schools and youth villages, and am particularly proud of the WIZO Gardening and Landscape Technology Youth Village, Petach Tikva, and the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda School and Youth Village, sponsored by WIZO Switzerland."

"I am very much looking forward to participating in a WIZO Switzerland delegation which will be coming in October for the official inauguration of the protected WIZO day care center in Sderot."

Price in this ongoing war. Their ears are already familiar with the sound of the 'Red Alert' alarm which gives the citizens only eight seconds warning before the rocket falls. Even the youngest ones at the local WIZO day care center know they have to cling to the nearest wall and stay away from windows.

Until now, the Israeli government has taken its time to come up with any solutions or at least provide the citizens with safety measures. However, like so often in the past, WIZO rose to the challenge and recently provided the city with a ‘one of its kind’, state-of-the-art protected day care center built from reinforced concrete.

By no means does the building resemble a shelter. On the contrary, it is a tall and impressive white structure with a dome decorating its entrance and every one of its rooms cheerfully designed with bright colors and plenty of toys. Moreover, since it is completely safe, the children can continue with their daily routine even when a Kassam alert is activated. Even though they have to remain inside, it is spacious enough for them not to feel too frustrated about it.

"We made the move in four days"

“Our former location was in a cement structure from which we were intended to move into this protected space in September, but unfortunately circumstances forced us to move much sooner,” says Ziva Korsiya, 46, director of the new WIZO day care center. "On May 17, due to ongoing attacks on Sderot during which both people and property were hit, the army declared a state of emergency in the city."

"They were arguing about who should pay for it. My husband asked, 'How much does it cost?' and they said $650,000. 'I'll pay for it, provided that my wife agrees,' he responded. And of course I agreed."

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stories and apparently most of them or their relatives have had a near death experience. Fanny's sister was saved by her husband who threw himself at her when a Kassam rocket hit their living room, and as a result was badly wounded. Her young cousin cut his arm on a glass door and needed surgery as he rushed to get into the house when he heard the alert, and her own son is in shock after a Kassam rocket missed him by inches. Ziva Korsiya tells me how she was saved with her own husband and daughter when a rocket hit the family car minutes before they went into the safety of her friends' house, and so it goes on and on. But not all stories have a happy ending.

“We wish there was some kind of authorized person who would come and instruct us what to do or give us some hope but it seems we were forgotten. People in Tel Aviv or other peaceful areas cannot understand what we are going through,” says Aliza Malka, 56, who has always worked as a childcare assistant for WIZO.

“Many young families decide to leave Sderot simply because they have no choice. For those who choose to stay we provide a solution,” says Korsiya. “At least they can be sure their child is safe in here for eight hours. On the other hand, our space is limited to 81 children. Every day more parents come to the center wanting to register their child and we have no choice but to refuse them. We have a long waiting list for next year and painful as it is we simply have to let some of the parents down.”

Note: There was extensive media coverage for the opening of the day care center in Sderot, both by all the national daily newspapers and TV news channels – Ed.
Interview with Mark Regev

"I believe in engagement. I have enough confidence in the case of my country, and I don't have to play games." That's the opinion of Mark Regev, the personable and articulate spokesperson for the Israeli Foreign Ministry. And he adds - "if you are going to engage with the media, you have to be well-informed"

Hillel Schenker

How to Deal with

Negative Media and Boycotts

Mark Regev, the spokesperson of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, met us in the spacious Jerusalem offices of the ministry, not far from the Knesset. The backdrop of the bookshelves in his room is a familiar sight on CNN and the BBC, and he has hosted all of the major foreign correspondents based in Israel.

There is a tremendous concern among members of WIZO and Jewish communities around the world about how to confront simplistic, negative and stereotyped images of Israel which appear in the international media. How do you deal with this problem?

Mark Regev

I think it's illogical to believe that the job of the international media is to be pro-Israel. That's my job, or WIZO's job. The job of the media is to cover the story. If they're critical, that's their right, and many journalists will say it's their obligation. As we all know, Israel's own media culture - the newspapers, radio and TV, is extremely critical of the government. We live in a very self-critical society, thank God.

Israel is an open, transparent and pluralistic society. If you're a journalist stationed in Israel, all you have to do is open the paper in the morning, Ha'aretz or the Jerusalem Post, and you get criticism, debate and a list of everything that went
Who is Mark Regev?

I was born in Australia in 1960, was a member of a Zionist youth movement and came on aliya in 1981. I joined the Foreign Ministry in 1990, and can't complain about my diplomatic career. I have been to very interesting places: Hong Kong for two years, Beijing for three, and then spent five years in Washington as the spokesman of the Embassy of Israel. After Washington I returned in 2004 to take up this position which I very much enjoy. My father says he is very envious, that I'm the only person he knows who gets paid to read a newspaper. The Israeli taxpayer pays for me to get all the Israeli dailies on my doorstep at 5.30 every morning and I read them at home. I get into work and I go straight into reading all the British, American and Canadian papers, and I get one or two papers from South Africa and Australia.

My BA degree is from Melbourne, Australia, Masters in Political Science from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and a Masters in Science and Management from Boston University.

I married an Israeli girl who was born on a kibbutz in the north. We have three children: two sons aged 12 and five and a half and a daughter aged four. We live just half an hour outside Jerusalem.

What would you recommend as a method to counteract and rectify this situation?

I think it’s very important to engage with local media - to try to educate. Many journalists come to Israel after having been in Vietnam, Bosnia, etc. They come with a certain amount of knowledge, read a few books, and some mistakes are made simply due to a lack of information. It’s not necessarily due to a negative agenda towards Israel. So it’s important to cultivate relations with the media. On a quiet, regular day, we have 450 foreign journalists stationed here in Jerusalem. I’m their source, and take them out for lunch and want them to ask me about government policy. If they’re doing a critical story, I want them to give me a chance to respond. I organize briefings for them.

I don’t believe in boycotts. I believe in engagement. I have enough confidence in the case of my country, and don’t have to play games.

Are there particular resources that you would recommend that people make use of when trying to deal with these questions?

It is very easy for someone to sit in the Diaspora and love a perfect Israel. For people like you and me who live here, we know that Israel is far from perfect and we make mistakes. If you are going to engage with the media you have to be well-informed. I would urge people who do care to make an extra effort to be well-informed - to read the newspapers. The Jerusalem Post and Ha’aretz are both on line - you can read them in English - and there are very good websites putting up information every day about what is going on here. Read books, go and study, come and visit Israel and then, if you know more than the journalists, that gives you an advantage and you can engage, you can have a constructive dialogue with the journalists. Just complaining sometimes has a place, but if you want to build relationships with the media then you have to be an expert - you have got to know your stuff.

That leads me to the question of the boycott campaign, which is particularly prominent in the UK but there are
also signs of it in other places. How should it be dealt with?
The boycott movement has to be exposed for what it is, fundamentally illegitimate, something for which there can be no tolerance. As for the idea of a boycott of Israeli academic institutions - you can ask one very obvious question; how is it that this group is proposing a boycott against the only country in the Middle East which has free academic institutions? Anyone who has been to an Israeli university knows how vibrant the political debate is on campus, in faculty and among Israeli students. What sort of academic freedom do they have in places like Syria, Sudan and Saudi Arabia? Yet this group of British academics is not proposing to deal with Saudi Arabia, Libya, Syria - countries with atrocious records on academic freedom. They are singling out the Jewish State and its universities for special treatment. There is a word for that.
The pro-boycott people say that it worked in South Africa. In South Africa there was apartheid, in Israel there is an occupation. What is your answer to that comparison and the claim that there is no other way to move forward?
It is all based on non-fact. I am willing as an Israeli to take my part of the historical responsibility for not having peace here in the Middle East, but 'it's all Israel's fault'? Not Hamas and Ahmadinijad, only Israel?
Some people say if Israel would return to the 1967 borders then everything would just fall into place. Well, Israel did return to the 1967 borders. In 2005 we pulled out all the settlements in Gaza, and in 2000 Prime Minister Barak decided to pull out of Lebanon. Have the borders with Gaza and Lebanon been completely quiet since then? When Hamas, Hezbollah and President Ahmadinijad in Iran talk about occupation they are not talking about the West Bank and Gaza. They are talking about Tel Aviv, and Hadera and Netanya and Beer Sheba because they do not accept Israel's legitimacy in any borders. If the people of Palestine, Iraq, Zimbabwe and Vietnam have a right to national self determination, and you single out the Jewish People as the only people in the twenty first century who don't have the right to national self-determination, then you are singling out the Jewish people for special treatment. There are people who say if the UK union wants to boycott us then we should boycott the United Kingdom, or if we don’t like what is written in the Los Angeles Times we should boycott and cancel subscriptions.
I believe we should engage. Look at the UK example, where you have seen wall-to-wall condemnation of the boycott. All the major quality newspapers in Britain wrote editorials criticizing the boycott - The Guardian, Independent, Times, Financial Times - everyone. These people have really been exposed as a bunch of individuals with a very extremist and hateful agenda. I am very thankful to see this very broad coalition of left and right, government and non-government academics coming out against the boycott.
One has to ask about the boycotters' motivation. Are they really friends of the Palestinians? Is not a two-state solution and peace best for both Israelis and Palestinians, rather than an extremist hateful agenda that does no good for Palestinians, for Israel or for anyone?
The Internet has revolutionized media. What do you think of the role it is playing?
This is very, very important. I remember when the Jerusalem Post international edition was printed on rice paper, and you would wait a week before you would get it. Now you see the Jerusalem Post on line. When I was at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, I read the Israeli papers before the Israelis were waking up to read them. All the information is now out there to read at any time.
As we are speaking here there is a conference in Herzlia on the blogosphere. That is another revolution. How do you view the blog as a tool?
We are hosting a delegation that was organized by our consul general in New York of leading bloggers from the US.
What does that mean - 'leading bloggers'?
People who have blogs, who have websites that are visited regularly that are opinion-forming and this is a new, important medium, especially reaching young people and we have to engage with them. If in the past we took the columnist from the big American newspaper and he met the Foreign Minister and we took him around the country, today in the 21st century we have to take those bloggers seriously as well. It would be irresponsible not to take them seriously. Young people today are getting their news less from newspapers, less from television and more and more from the net.
Is there anything you would like to add?
Women in my family have been involved in WIZO. While there are a lot of organizations in the Jewish world, WIZO really makes a difference. I have nothing but respect for those women who are giving their time and energy for WIZO activities. I think that they are doing a mitzvah. WIZO is doing a wonderful job, with day care centers, the empowerment of women and raising money for humanitarian projects - and we should not take it for granted.
Imagine being in charge of 5000 employees: hiring and firing, seeing to their wellbeing and much more. This is what confronted Ora Baharaff now almost eight years ago when she took on the human resources department of WIZO.

I Ingrid Rockberger

The feeling of giving is the best thing

In the last decade or more, with the advent of ‘hi-tech’ and new approaches to business, what used to be called the Personnel Department is now called the Human Resources Department – with the accent on the ‘human’. Ora’s brief was to change the ‘personnel’ to ‘human’, and introduce modern concepts in line with commercial companies; she feels she has done just that.

Caring for the Employees

"Since I took over this job, one of my main aims has been to have close relationships with the employees – to know about their personal lives and their lives within the WIZO family. Together with my departmental manager Shuki Orbach and my dedicated staff, within the realms of our ability we try to get the best pension conditions possible and provide training, enrichment and refresher courses for all the WIZO workers, as well as social events. We now organize day trips to WIZO projects. Previously each one worked at their own job and had no idea about all the facets of WIZO’s work. In addition, we give them work incentives, culminating each year with awards to the best workers. We have joined a scheme for this with Israel’s two leading daily..."
Hebrew newspapers, where we enter our best workers to a national competition. In fact, one of our employees, Mira Bar Mocha, deputy head of the Maya Rosenberg Municipal Technology High School in Rehovot, won this competition in 2005.

“I hope I have contributed to WIZO with what I have done here – but I get back so much more from WIZO; the feeling of ‘giving’ is the best thing about this type of work. I have learnt something entirely new that I was never involved in before. I came to it from another world entirely – the business world. All my working life I received a salary slip and never gave a second thought to what lay behind its preparation. Suddenly, I was the person behind it – it just opened my eyes. Even at the beginning when I was learning – and had to say ‘no’ to an employee – I gave that employee the impression that I was doing the maximum I could for him or her.

A Latecomer to WIZO

Ora was not active in WIZO while she was a working wife and mother, although many of her friends were, and she heard about the organization from them. However, she was involved in some WIZO projects ‘from the other side’ as she puts it, as for many years she worked for the Wolfson, Clore, Mayer Corporation. Charles Clore, a British Jewish financier, retail and property magnate and philanthropist established the Clore Israel Foundation, through which many WIZO projects, including the Margaret Thatcher Day Care Centre in Sderot (sponsored by WIZO.uk) were established. Ora was involved in the administration of this project and many others on behalf of the Clore Foundation.

Despite this connection with WIZO, when she finally started her voluntary job at WIZO she discovered what a massive enterprise it is: “I was amazed; I couldn’t absorb the size, the depth and the strength of this ‘company’ that is called WIZO.”

There is no doubt that during her eight years as chairperson, Ora Baharaff has given the Human Resources Department of WIZO a new aura.

About Ora Baharaff

Ora was born in Israel; her parents immigrated to the country in 1932, leaving behind their entire families in Poland – every one of whom perished in the Holocaust. As her parents are no longer alive, Ora feels very strongly that she and her sister are re-establishing their family. Ora has two children and four grandchildren, and her sister has three children and (so far!) one grandchild. Ora’s great love in life is music and for many years she volunteered on various committees of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and the Israeli Opera. Her day starts at 6am when she reads the newspaper; from 7-8 she joins a keep-fit class, and by 9am she is in the office.
As we welcome the Jewish year 5768 I want to wish you all a happy and peaceful New Year. It is perhaps fitting that we will begin the year 2008 with the eagerly anticipated 24th World WIZO Enlarged General Meeting (EGM), which will take place in Tel Aviv from January 13 - 17, 2008. The activities planned for us as Aviv representatives at the conference are both exciting and interesting and will be integral to the goal of attracting membership among younger women and developing new leadership for the future. To successfully meet those challenges, I encourage each and every Aviv chairperson to attend the conference and hope that they will motivate their Aviv members to attend in great numbers. At this year’s conference we will celebrate 60 years of Israeli independence. What a marvelous opportunity for us to learn more about Jewish traditions and cultures around the world, to become more knowledgeable about the current problems and successes of the State of Israel, and in so doing, be better equipped to motivate and inspire activity in our chapters!

I look forward to meeting each of you personally at the conference. I know that this will be a unique experience in our lives. Please mark your calendars and send in your registration forms as soon as possible.

Marci Waterman
Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive

Exciting Times in the UK
Michelle Wolff, Chairman AVIV WIZO.uk

These are exciting times for AVIV in the UK. Since becoming its newly elected leader and with the help of many wonderful AVIV members around the country, our movement is re-energising, with new blood, ideas and events.
We now have three talented and committed vice chairmen to help drive AVIV onwards and upwards in the UK: Josephine Dayan in London and Natalie Pearce and Elissa Winston in the Regions, who hail from our Leeds WIZO 3000 group.
New groups and start-ups are expanding AVIV in London and in the north of England. Regular AVIV Forums in London and a new Northern AVIV Forum give our committees an opportunity to meet, to exchange ideas and to find out what’s going on in our groups in different parts of the country. We also have a new AVIV logo: "Today’s women for tomorrow’s Israel.”
Our key fundraising events continue to attract terrific support. A London production company that staged the musical Fiddler on the Roof chose AVIV as its main charity, helping us to raise significant funds in support of the WIZO.uk-sponsored Tiberias Music Centre.
We launched the “Comedy Factor”, to find London’s funniest new Jewish comedian for 2007. Our finalists go head to head in December at a prestigious London venue where a panel of celebrity judges will offer their frank opinions on each act and the audience will decide the winner. We will also have a dinner, an auction and an appeal to renovate the Nahariya multi-purpose WIZO day care centre which was badly hit during Lebanon War 2.
AVIV has great plans for several big events in the coming months - an AVIV Trek to Israel in May 2008 as part of WIZO.uk’s 90th anniversary celebrations and a spectacular musical and dance event for children. At the AVIV International Seminar held in Tel Aviv last November, it was uplifting to meet AVIV women from around the world with the same passion and commitment to Israel. What we learned from the Seminar I will carry with me throughout my chairmanship: that AVIV is here and we need to work hard now to create the future.
As we all know, Australia is a huge continent, spread over 7.7 million square kilometers, and any visit to WIZO Australia involves many long plane journeys. I experienced this first-hand when I was invited by WIZO Australia President Jo Gostin to take part in the movement’s 21st Triennial Conference, held in Melbourne from May 19-21, 2007.

The Conference was highly successful. It was wonderful to see WIZO members from all over Australia, as well as a big delegation of Aviv members. The Conference launched a campaign entitled, “The House of Dreams,” a new building that will house a multi-purpose center in the WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim School & Youth Village, sponsored by WIZO Australia. It will include a ceramics and arts and crafts room, drama center, therapy room and counselor rooms, and the World WIZO Publicity and Information Department helped to develop a marketing approach to promote “The House of Dreams” campaign. Take a look at the WIZO Australia Internet site to get an idea of what is happening there.

I spoke about WIZO’s activities during the 2nd Lebanon War, and the delegates were very proud of WIZO’s ability to open our youth villages to absorb children, women and whole families who fled the north of the country, as well as the programs initiated after the war which are still continuing, aiming to empower women and help them to deal with the after-effects of trauma. I also spoke about the work that is going on in the projects sponsored by WIZO Australia, as well as in WIZO in general, our vision and aims.

Honorary Life Memberships were bestowed at the conference on Maxine Klarnet (NSW), Rena Rabin (Victoria) and Miriam Millingen (SA), and Jo Gostin was re-elected as WIZO Australia President.

Preparing for the Mission
I used the opportunity of my visit to carry out a general mission to WIZO Australia. Before heading “down under,” I met with the Australian-born Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mark Regev and received a “mini-seminar” on how to deal with issues like nuclear power and Iran. Australia has a strong and growing Jewish population of over 100,000. They love Israel, and are concerned about how to cope with Israel’s difficulties in the media. There are 21 Arab-run radio stations in Australia, and we have to learn how to counteract the propaganda that some of them broadcast.

Visits to Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth
During my visit to Melbourne and throughout my whole mission, I met with many donors and potential donors. I also met with the Israeli ambassador to Australia, local dignitaries and the heads of all the Australian state chapters. From Melbourne I traveled to Brisbane where I found the community to be very warm and welcoming. I was impressed by the commitment of both Jews and non Jews to Zionism and to building “Bridges for Peace”. I spoke to the WIZO members at the home of Myrna Freed, president of WIZO Brisbane. Members of the Kesher group are not Jewish, but they came from afar to participate. The meeting was very
pleasant and everyone enjoyed it greatly. They also decided to begin an Aviv group called Ness Tziona.

From Brisbane I continued to Sydney, where I arrived on the second day of the Shavuot holiday. I spoke about how things might have turned out so very differently if WIZO had been active at the time of Ruth and Naomi, instead of being forced to fend for themselves in the famous “Story of Ruth” which is read in synagogues on Shavuot. It gave me the opportunity to speak about WIZO’s work with women, and how the two biblical figures would have been welcomed in any WIZO club or center, how they could have taken courses in women’s empowerment.

From Sydney I continued to Adelaide in South Australia, and although there are not many Jews there, there is a very active WIZO group that enjoys the “togetherness” which WIZO provides them.

From Adelaide I flew to Perth, where I stayed for two days and spoke in six different places on the subjects of: education, children at risk, the economic situation in Israel and internal politics.

**Education: The Most Important Investment for the Future**

Everywhere, I emphasized my personal credo: Education is the most important investment for the future of the Jewish State, and investing money in a project or an educational facility is neither a charity nor a donation: It is an investment which bears fruit in every sense of the word. When one invests in shares of education, the shares can only “go up”.

In the Perth Carmel School, I spoke to children in the seventh and eight grades who were fascinated by our work in Israel for children at risk and the bar and bat mitzvah projects. At Perth University I spoke about children at high risk and the ways in which WIZO brings them from despair to hope, giving them the chance to succeed in life. Among those who came to hear me was the vice president of the United Nations Association of Western Australia, who wrote me a wonderful letter saying that the goals of WIZO parallels the ethos of UNICEF, and congratulating WIZO on our dedication and great work that we are doing.

“Tired but Happy”

At the end of this wearying mission I was, as they say, “tired but happy”. I loved the feeling of togetherness, and was excited by all the work that is being done in the name of WIZO and Israel across the globe, as well as all that we are undertaking in Israel.

I would like to thank everyone in Australia who made this mission such a memorable one for me, and a special thanks to Jo Gostin and her executive for the wonderful warm welcome they extended to me and for the efficient impressive conference they organized.
Mission to Italy

At the ADEI-WIZO Italy 53rd National Meeting

World WIZO President Helena Glaser was the keynote speaker at WIZO Italy’s 53rd National Meeting from May 13-15, 2007 in picturesque Venice

Helena Glaser

Upon my arrival in Rome I participated in a lovely Shabbat dinner hosted by ADEI-WIZO President Ziva Fischer at her residence. Among the guests were members of the Executive and their husbands, Israel’s ambassador to Italy Mr. Gideon Meir and his wife Amira and Mr. Gattegna, head of the Jewish community in Italy and his wife. On Saturday the chaverot from ADEI WIZO Rome, their husbands and guests gathered for dinner, and I spoke about WIZO and its activities.

The National Meeting at the Jewish community center in the old Jewish ghetto in Venice opened with greetings delivered by Jona Fiammetta and Serena Levis – co-presidents of ADEI-WIZO Venice, Chief Rabbi of Venice Elia Richetti, Dr. Vittorio Levis - president of the Venice Jewish community, Dr. Renzo Gattegna – president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, Ziva Fischer, Ambassador Gideon Meir, Mrs. Amira Meir and my presentation about WIZO’s role in Israeli society. Much of the first day was dedicated to marking ADEI-WIZO Italy’s 80th anniversary.

The gala evening at the Ca’Rezzonica Palace, with representatives from the Venice municipality, featured a presentation by Ambassador Meir. I paid tribute to the brave chaverot of ADEI-WIZO who did relief work to help Jewish refugees from Germany and post-war illegal immigration to Palestine. The second day was dedicated to WIZO activities: elections were held and chairpersons gave reports on their chapter’s activities. A very good discussion was conducted on the ECWF (the European Council of WIZO Federations), and Anna Vera Calimani gave an interesting lecture on “Israeli Literature”.

A warm, impressive Jewish community

Observing WIZO chaverot in their own countries is very different from seeing them in Israel. Ziva Fischer is very active and visits the 20 branches in 20 cities and towns: Milan, Rome (718-947 members), Turin, Trieste, Florence, Venice (100-158 members), Genoa, Leghorn, Padua (51-86 members), Bologna, Perrara, Naples, Modena, Pisa, Ancona, Mantua and Brescia, Merano, Siena and Parma (7-46 members). All ADEI-WIZO branches engage in Jewish education and culture. Ziva carries out her job in conditions that are far from ideal – she lives in Rome and the national office is in Milan.

About 10 percent of the 30,000 Italian Jews are WIZO members. This is quite impressive, and much higher than the membership of other Jewish organizations in Italy. We shouldn’t be surprised at this level of Zionism, since Italy has one of the oldest Jewish communities in Europe.

Decisions taken at the 53rd National Meeting

ADEI-WIZO Italy approved our request to increase their annual commitment by 20 percent. They also have taken upon themselves to find funding for the “WIZO goes Green” requirements of the two day care centers they sponsor. ADEI-WIZO chaverot are planning to attend the EGM and bring their husbands with them. One modest request is that World WIZO PR materials, especially DVDs, be dubbed or carry Italian subtitles.

I would like to congratulate ADEI-WIZO on a very successful conference, particularly Fiammetta Jona and Serena Levis co-presidents of ADEI-WIZO Venice, Claudia Ottolenghi and Bruna Tedeschi co-presidents of ADEI-WIZO Rome, and their husbands, Roberta Nahum, officially vice president and head of fundraising and unofficially my simultaneous translator from Italian to English, and Mrs. Lia Hassan of ADEI-WIZO Milan for obtaining a significant legacy for WIZO Italy with the help of World WIZO’s Fundraising Department. And thank you to Ziva Fischer for her leadership, wisdom and warm Jewish hospitality.
Education Makes a Difference

Daniel Cohen was leading a double life - supposedly in school, but actually on the streets - until he discovered the WIZO Rehovot School, which totally changed his life. "Now nothing will make me miss a single day of school," he says, "and the teachers are more like my friends."
Education Makes a Difference

Through time, the age of 16 has inspired the imagination of writers, who recall their own memories from that stormy and emotional period. Alongside the excitement which generated the term "sweet sixteen", it is known to be a time of confusion, riddled with disappointments, broken hearts, and perhaps most significantly, a period in which the young person searches for his identity while trying to define his own individuality. In short, it is a complicated age, by any standards, and schools are not always aware of what the pupils are feeling day after day, year after year. But there are also some schools that try everything within their power to provide their pupils with a different reality.

On entering the WIZO Municipal Technological High School, in the name of Maya Rosenberg, Rehovot, (sponsored by WIZO Brazil and France), which overlooks wide expanses of green fields, I took a deep breath and felt that my soul was opening up. It would seem that I was not the only one to have this feeling. In every corner of the youth village are groups of girls and boys, speaking a multitude of languages, and bursting out into healthy fits of laughter. They so obviously feel "at home". Nothing indicates that most of the pupils in the school have been rejected by other school frameworks for being "unsuitable" or for various other reasons. The adolescents came to WIZO with large gaps in their education, disciplinary problems, a severe lack of motivation and without any belief in themselves.

Such was Daniel Cohen, one of the pupils in the school. Daniel, aged sixteen and a half, is a pupil in the graphic design track and he was happy to tell me his personal story, aware of the fact that others can learn from his experience. "From the second that I arrived here I was taught that manners are of the utmost importance" he recalls with a smile. "Other achievements take second place, and I realize that is how it should be". It is hard to believe that this young boy, who took me on a tour through the different buildings in the school, proudly introducing me to his teachers, and showing me the state of art laboratories, had been expelled from numerous schools in the past. Today, as well as studying, Daniel is active as a youth counselor and is involved in activities for improving the quality of life in Israel. Just that week, he and his friends cleaned up the beach at Caesarea, and he was proud of the fact that not only had he contributed to society, but had brought his friends to help too. During the few spare hours that he has available to work, he earns money as a waiter.

I always have someone to talk to

"The main aim in educating the pupils in the school is to nurture them emotionally, and to build up their social and learning skills. The focal point is always the individual boy or the girl," explains school director Yehudit Witzenblat. The school offers a wide choice of tracks, so that each and every pupil can develop his or her unique potential in such subjects as: electronic media, computerized graphics, administration, jewelry design, fashion design, chemistry, life sciences, education and psychology. Within these tracks the pupils progress according their individual pace, and each of them enjoys the taste of success. The school also places an emphasis on social activities such as outings, theater performances, ceremonies and folk dancing troupes. Thanks to WIZO’s support of the school there are extended learning programs every day, extra tutoring is available prior to the matriculation examinations and learning marathons are also organized. “The educational staff is experienced and views their work as sacred. We do not disappoint our pupils and they have remarkable success in their matriculations. The school won the ‘Outstanding School in Rehovot’ award for its activities and successes. We are very grateful to WIZO for its financial, administrative and educational support, which enables us to give those pupils, whose parents are on a low socioeconomic level, every opportunity to succeed”, says Mrs. Witzenblat.

"The class teachers are always available for their pupils, they make sure that they arrive at school on time and on a regular basis," says the director of the school, "The teachers have undergone many hours of training and have learned unique methods for teaching each subject. The teacher is tuned to the progress of each pupil according to his or her personal pace and special programs are created to raise motivation and self image. The teachers also maintain regular contact with the parents."

There is no place like home

So what did Daniel Cohen go through before he finally settled down at WIZO Rehovot? "After I finished junior school, I wanted to be with my friends from the seventh grade and I registered for Southern Yeshiva High School, which is a very religious framework." As a boy who grew up in a ‘liberal religious’ atmosphere, as he describes it, he found it hard to deal with the strict religious atmosphere in the Yeshiva. "At home nobody forced me to pray, to wear..."
Daniel and his class teacher Nechama Axelrod

I know that there is someone who wants me to be consistent and to succeed. I often remain after classes for extra help in subjects that I find difficult. I eat a good lunch, and I am a volunteer on the student council. Nobody threatens me nor warns me. I do everything because I want to. Only here they have managed to instill in me that I have to learn,” he says with sparkling eyes. “Every person wants to succeed,” he continues. “The second you see that the teachers are helping you and want you to succeed, you also want to succeed. It is like a person who puts everything into his children, and they want to repay him by doing what they have to do.”

Daniel, when did you finally realize that you had settled down?

“When I realized that all the teachers wanted to help me, and every other pupil here, on a personal level. It gave me the ‘push’ to learn. I enjoy an excellent relationship with my teachers. The best example I can give is that I sit with my teacher in a café and we plan outings together.”

What do you want to say to adolescents who are in the same position as you used to be in?

“This is a school that lifts you up when you fall,” says Daniel. “Here you will not fall further. You will grow and blossom because you have everything: respect for one another, caring and a professional staff.”

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Outstanding School in Rehovot Award

“On behalf of the city of Rehovot and its residents, I am proud to present the award for outstanding education to a group of the finest educators who are devoted and unique. These educators have never met a ‘bad’ child. They continually look for what is bad for a child. They are people who have a sacred duty burning within them, and no end of patience to find a compliment, to encourage and nurture success and to aim for excellence. They know how to get the best out of our children, and do not rest for a minute.” That is how Rehovot Mayor Shuki Forer opened the ‘Ceremony for the Outstanding School’ in Rehovot. The ceremony was held in the Weizmann Institute last December in the presence of the mayor, deputy mayor, the president of the Rotary Club and the director of the Rehovot Education Department. The recipients of the prize were: school director Yehudit Witzenblat, deputy director Mira Bar Mocha and the coordinator of the intensive matriculation class, Nechama Axelrod.

The prize, consisting of a trophy, certificate and a financial grant, was awarded to the WIZO Municipal Technological High School for its outstanding achievements in entering 150 pupils for the matriculation examinations, and their success in attaining a full matriculation certificate.
WIZO In The News

WIZO events and human interest stories are covered in the national and local press every month. Here are some recent examples...

Compiled by Ingrid Rockberger

WIZO Haifa Academy honors Ze’ev Bielski and Yehezkiel Teller

At the end-of-year ceremony and fashion show, the Neri Bloomfield Academy of Design and Education in Haifa sponsored by Canadian Hadassah-WIZO, honored Mr. Ze’ev Bielski, chairman of the Jewish Agency, and Professor Yehezkiel Teller, previous deputy chairman of the Council for Higher Education. The Honorary Associate award was given to Bielski for his services to the public as mayor of Raanana, and his continued assistance to new immigrants and youth at risk. Particular mention was made of his contribution and help to the northern population in the Lebanon War last year, including the students of the Neri Bloomfield College.

Professor Teller was honored for his services to higher education; he and his board were instrumental in awarding the Neri Bloomfield College degree status. In addition he was honored for his contribution to the field of mental health in Israel. Thanks to him, services for mentally ill patients have drastically improved.

WIZO Nir Ha’emek pupil gets his 'wings'

For the second successive year, staff and pupils of the WIZO Nir Ha’emek Youth Village Afula, sponsored by WIZO USA and Argentina, attended the annual Israel Air Force pilots’ graduation ceremony to congratulate one of their former fellow-students who graduated the course. School director Yossi Goshen said, “There is nothing more emotional than seeing a graduate of our school reaching the ‘elite’ of the Israel Defense Forces. We came to congratulate our new pilot who deserves all the applause and accolades awarded to him today.” Pilot “A” and his family emigrated from Minsk, Belarus16 years ago, and at first the family found it very hard to make ends meet. A’s mother, who worked as an economist in Minsk, worked for a time as a cleaner in the WIZO Afula Women’s Center. Eventually her Hebrew was good enough for her to attend a tour guide course, a profession at which she works today. “Who would have thought a cleaner’s son would become a pilot – never in my wildest dreams,” said the proud Mom!

End of year concert at Tiberias Music Conservatory

The Margaret Gold WIZO Music Conservatory in Tiberias (sponsored by WIZO.uk) held its annual end-of-year concert with performances by several choirs and different types of orchestras – showing the wide diversity of subjects taught at the school. There is great demand for the school orchestras and choirs to perform at municipal and tourist events, and they are all held in very high esteem throughout the area. This year, the children’s choir represented Tiberias in an international children’s choir festival which took place in Germany and France. In view of the school’s success, WIZO donors have donated more money this year for scholarships for talented pupils, and the Tiberias municipality has also increased its financial contribution to the Conservatory.

Helena Glaser Chairperson, the Neri Bloomfield Academy of Design and Education, Ze’ev Bielski and Dr. David Alexander, Director of the Academy

Pupils performing at the end-of-year concert
WIZO summer camp

As in the previous 30 years, WIZO organized a summer camp for children aged seven to eleven from bereaved families, those whose family members have suffered injuries from terrorist attacks, single-parent families and orphans. Based at the WIZO Hadassah Canada Children and Youth Village, Hadassim, 190 children enjoyed a week of various activities and outings.

One of the beautiful things about this camp is that some of the children, who come year after year, form bonds and friendships with each other, and keep in touch via email. One participant, who is now too old to attend, so wanted to 'give back' to WIZO that she came back this year as a voluntary assistant. Another 'camper', who is now a soldier, also comes back to volunteer.

Hadassim achieves road safety award

In a national competition, WIZO Hadassah Canada Children and Youth Village, Hadassim, won first prize for its road safety education program. The award was presented by Education Minister Yuli Tamir and Transport Minister Meir Shitreet. Ziva Maximov, head of the school road safety project nominated the school because of the special activities and community involvement of both pupils and teachers.

The award committee, which visited Hadassim was impressed by the wide range of creative projects, including songs and video clips, in addition to the very high standard of research projects conducted among the local community, aiming to reduce injuries and increase road safety awareness. The committee also noted the many aspects of road safety which have been invested in the village infrastructure, such as good lighting, well-defined parking areas and transport pick-up points.

From the Archives...

Twenty years ago, the Fall issue of WIZO REVIEW reported:

...on the WIZO Margaret Gold Music Center, describing its activities and courses, particularly how its orchestra won 2nd place in a competition for 101 youth orchestras in Belgium. For five years the center, located in a very poor part of Tiberias, had acted as a magnet for local youngsters. Plans were afoot to offer courses to children from the entire town.

...the first international Fundraising Think Tank and European Seminar at Grindelwald, Switzerland, where representatives from 13 European Federations deliberated for four days to define what WIZO fundraising would look like over the next decade.

...on the 'welcome home' to refusenick Ida Nudel after 16 years of incarceration in the Soviet Union. The campaign to free Ida was headed in Israel by World WIZO President Raya Jaglom, and WIZO Federations around the world worked tirelessly for Ida's release.

10 years ago
...on the 'new' town of Modi'in, and the visit to the new WIZO day care center in the town by delegates to the 1997 WIZO Aviv International Seminar. The writer, Larry Derfner, describes the town and remarks that a poll of about 1000 homeowners revealed that 59% had at least a bachelor's degree!

...on head of WIZO Tel Aviv's Absorption Department Zehava Shilon. A film entitled The Story of a Volunteer depicts Zehava and her colleagues in action. Zehava describes how she became interested in WIZO: after the birth of her third child, she was in her gynecologist's waiting room and started chatting to his wife, who was helping out in the clinic – and was none other than Thelma Neri (then chairperson of WIZO Tel Aviv Cultural Department, later chairperson of WIZO Israel). Thelma started chatting to Zehava about WIZO, and before long, Zehava headed up a new WIZO chapter!

15 years ago
...on the opening of the new Margaret Thatcher Day Care Center in Sderot. Sponsored by British WIZO, and donated by the Clore Foundation, at the opening ceremony Mrs. Thatcher greatly praised WIZO's contribution to children's education. "You in WIZO are the best proof that it is not only politicians who influence a country," she stated.

10 years ago
...on the establishment of two new WIZO chapters in Los Angeles, the Scandinavian Nordic Conference and Brazil's 8th annual Yiddishe Mama dinner!
In Memory of Susi Bradfield

But She Became a Star

Not many were familiar with Susi Bradfield the artist, the writer, and the historian. Susi wrote a moving memoir on her life in Germany before World War II and her subsequent achievements. Her book, entitled "But Some Became Stars", recounts many anecdotes of a bitter-sweet history, allowing us to identify with and understand the stories of more than one million children who perished in the Holocaust.

Susi wrote about her survival: "I felt very keenly that I had been spared for a purpose. If you are singled out to live, then you have an obligation to the living. The thought was very clear in my head. I believed that I was fulfilling my responsibilities through my work with WIZO. The obligation was to the 1.5 million children who were cold-bloodedly killed. They became stars in heaven".

Prominent Leader and Dear Friend
Her prominence in the British community was remarkable, given her arrival in London as a nine-year-old refugee aboard one of the Kindertransport trains from Berlin. She became an accomplished and highly successful businesswoman in the competitive domain of property and real estate, at the
Susi Bradfield came to England as one of the Kindertransport children. She was the true embodiment of Chesed. She had a deep love for Israel and its people and was well respected by the Jewish Community in Great Britain. Susi worked tirelessly for WIZO for almost 40 years. She successfully co-chaired the fundraising department for over 20 years and organized many glittering events during that time.

She became Honorary Vice President of WIZO.uk in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the Federation and later became Patron of WIZO.uk.

Susi and Freddie Bradfield were generous benefactors to many projects throughout Israel especially the WIZO Pisgat Ze'ev Centre which bears their name and the assembly hall at the Helena Kagan Centre in Jerusalem.

Susi was gracious and kind. She was interested in everyone she met and took the time and trouble to get to know all her colleagues in the most caring manner. She will be sadly missed by us all at WIZO.uk and remembered with love.

Loraine Warren
Chairman, WIZO.UK

same time running a home and fulfilling the role of wife to Freddie and mother to Michael and Cheryl.

For many people worldwide, Susi Bradfield will be remembered from the early 1960s as a member of WIZO.uk, loved and respected as a leading benefactor and patron who served for many years as the fundraising chairperson of the British WIZO Federation and a council member of World WIZO.

Much of Susi’s working life was dedicated to Israel, not only as a generous donor but also as a prominent leader of WIZO.uk. Among the many WIZO projects which she supported over the years are the Freddie and Susi Bradfield Community Centre and the Helena Kagan Community Centre, both in Jerusalem.

To me, Susi Bradfield was a dear and close friend for many years. She cherished the value of friendship and regarded WIZO as a real source of camaraderie where she derived her motivation and inspiration. She used to say, “WIZO has given me the gift of friendship.”

Always the WIZO Family

In February 2004, during the International Annual Women’s Day event held by WIZO Jerusalem, Susi Bradfield was awarded the Citation of Merit, and I had the privilege of receiving it on her behalf. As I was standing on the stage, I felt honored to have this remarkable woman as my personal friend.

Susi once told me: “My late husband Freddie and I traveled all over the world. It didn't matter where we went, there was always a WIZO family who would be in contact with us. I find it amazing that a WIZO group can be found in the most unpredictable places. I have gained so much from WIZO.”

It is unbearably hard for me to think of Susi in the past tense. For years she has enriched our lives, inspiring our endeavors, teaching us about generosity and friendship.

A Guiding Star

Passing away on May 27, 2007, Susi Bradfield has too become a star: a guiding star that points us in the right direction and lights our path. Each one of us will cherish Susi in our own way.

It is said that the memory of people who live a full and rich life will last forever. Susi is one of those people. Although she is no longer with us, we will continue embracing her legacy and basking in her benevolent light.

May her dear soul rest in peace.
"Women for the Benefit of Everyone" was the theme of the 23rd WIZO Israel Conference, held in Kfar Maccabiah, Ramat Gan, on May 7-9, 2007. WIZO Israel Chairperson Yochy Feller welcomed the delegates who came from every corner of the country, and emphasized that WIZO volunteers are fulfilling the slogan in all of their activities. World WIZO President Helena Glaser greeted the conference on behalf of all the WIZO Federations around the world, and World WIZO Executive Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov noted the many senior volunteers who were present. Brigadier General Yehudit Groisero, advisor to the chief of staff on women's issues, said that the IDF is the only army in the world that enlists women for compulsory service. Women are 30 percent of the human resources in the army, and they play an essential role wherever they serve. Beersheba University President Professor Rivka Karni spoke about "Women at the Top – A Glass or a Metal Ceiling?" She encouraged WIZO to increase its efforts to promote legislation for women’s rights. The festive opening evening was moderated by veteran actress Rivka Michaeli with humor and warmth.

"WIZO should teach children to dream"

The new president of Israel, Shimon Peres, said that women have a very important role to play in teaching children to dream, to aim towards and become part of the global village. Mayor Zvi Bar of the host city Ramat Gan complimented the WIZO branch in his city, and congratulated WIZO for its great accomplishments throughout the country. Greetings were also presented by Mrs. Glaser, Mrs. Ben-Dov and WIZO Rishon Lezion Chairperson Shalva Cohen on behalf of the WIZO branches throughout the country. Elinor Sela gave a hilarious standup comedy performance, and the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda School and Youth Village (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland) Song Troupe also entertained the delegates. Members of the WIZO executive sang "Halleluya," and twelve members appeared in designer clothes from WIZO second hand shops. Popular singer Gali Atari closed the evening with a selection of her songs.
WIZO for the Benefit of the Community

The second day featured a panel on "WIZO for the Benefit of the Community", with youth at high risk who have received WIZO services and had their lives changed. A "Salute to the Veteran Members", presented by radio personality Moshe Timor, highlighted the history of the women who set up WIZO Israel, speeches of past WIZO Israel chairpersons were screened, and members of the younger generation from the north, south and the central area spoke of the importance of WIZO past and present.

On the third day, members of the WIZO Israel executive, together with their professional staff, presented the projects of their departments through a panel session with women and young girls who were being helped by WIZO. "Honorary Member of WIZO Israel" awards were presented at a festive ceremony to Bamat Haisha (WIZO Israel's magazine) Deputy Director Hannah Oren, Fundraising Department Chairperson Tini Yehudai, and Legislation Committee Chairperson Hanna Ish-Hurvitz.

A trophy for the best branch in the name of Hannah Levin, was awarded to WIZO Rehovot Chairperson Ora Fish and the WIZO Ramat Gan executive received an Award of Merit in recognition of their large number of individual groups, ongoing initiatives, devotion and meeting of their fundraising goals. The volunteers of the Girls Club in Ness Tziona and of the second hand clothes shop in Ramat Gan received Awards of Merit. A Certificate of Recognition was presented to the volunteers of WIZO Israel's head office who staff the 'Hotline for the Rights of Pregnant Women and their Partners'.

At the concluding ceremony, Conference Chairperson Esther Lazar summarized the three packed days, and WIZO Haifa Chairperson Haya Kovatch thanked everyone on behalf of the WIZO branches. The conference closed with the delegates dancing the night away to the music of the "Muskat" band.
The "No Gifts" Bar Mitzvah

"No gifts please, but instead, if you wish, please make a donation to my WIZO bar mitzvah fund."

You won't hear that from many bar mitzvah boys, but that is exactly what Steffan Crystal of London, grandson of Betty Crystal of World WIZO Fundraising department, whose bar mitzvah was held in Jerusalem last year, said to his guests. The Crystal family established a special WIZO bar mitzvah fund in Steffan's name to celebrate his coming of age. Guests were extremely generous with their donations, and a substantial sum of money was raised for the fund.

The WIZO bar and bat mitzvah program

Each year, WIZO branches around the country sponsor many bar and bat mitzvah programs for some 600 children whose parents are unable to finance a personal celebration. The children, chosen in conjunction with Israel's National Insurance Institute, are usually from single-parent families, or immigrants from Ethiopia and the Former Soviet Union. The programs vary from branch to branch, but all include special educational programs and gifts for the children.

Steffan's fund helps Afula

A few months ago, members of the WIZO Community Center in Afula (sponsored by WIZO.uk) decided they would like to make a bar mitzvah celebration for some Ethiopian children who attend their center. They approached World WIZO Fundraising Department for funding and it was decided that the money would be provided from the Crystal Fund. The program was conducted from December to May and included Jewish studies, a pilgrimage to the Western Wall in Jerusalem, and culminated in a wonderful party for the participants and their families. The Crystal family was so pleased with the result that

Friends of WIZO "Sponsor a Child" Event

Once again the 'Friends of WIZO' group under the able co-chairs of Esther Mor (Deputy Chairperson of World WIZO Fundraising Department) and Betty Crystal, organized a magnificent fundraiser, where a substantial amount of money was raised for WIZO's 'Sponsor a Child' program. The event took place thanks to the generosity of Friends of WIZO member Tova Kronfeld and one of Israel's top fashion designers Yaron Minkovsky, who donated a fashion show featuring his beautiful designs. Addressing the audience, amongst whom were members of the World WIZO Executive and several ambassadors' wives, Betty Crystal stressed that despite the vast advances in technology in the 21st century and huge rises in the standard of living, 1.6 million people live below the poverty line in Israel and 330,000 children are classified as 'high...
Following the success of the Kadishman Hagaddah as a fundraising and promotion tool, WIZO Israel has prepared and is selling a special book of Israeli songs, illustrated by leading Israeli artists together with youth at risk who are cared for in WIZO institutions. Among the songwriters are Shlomo Artzi, Tirza Atar, Yossi Banai, Leah Goldberg, Shalom Chanoch, Ehud Manor and Naomi Shemer. Among the artists are Gad Ulman, Tzibi Geva, Yair Garbuz, Ofer Lalush, Menashe Kadishman, Etty Ya’akovi and Talia Yisraeli. Information about the project can be gained from Orly Meskin, director of the WIZO Israel Fundraising Department, at orlim@wizo.org.

A new WIZO hotline for parents of young children, aged 6 months to 4 years, was initiated by the World WIZO Early Age Care & Education Division. According to division director Dr. Naomi Moreno, the volunteers who staff the hotline utilize WIZO’s 80 years of accumulated experience with babies and toddlers in WIZO’s day care center network, to provide help and guidance to parents throughout the country. The hotline can be reached on Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays by calling *6968 on any Israeli landline or cellular phone.

Rosh Hashana Gift

In the past, WIZO Israel has sold the special book of Israeli songs as a fundraising tool. This year, WIZO Israel decided to produce a special book of Israeli songs, illustrated by leading Israeli artists together with youth at risk who are cared for in WIZO institutions. The project was initiated by Orly Meskin, director of the WIZO Israel Fundraising Department, and was supported by the WIZO Israel Board of Directors. The project was carried out by a team of volunteers from the WIZO Israel Development Department. The book, titled ‘Rosh Hashana Gift’, contains 100 pages of Israeli songs, illustrated by leading Israeli artists. The book is available for purchase at WIZO Israel offices and WIZO Israel branches throughout the country.

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Cover of WIZO Israel’s Rosh Hashana song book

Calling card for WIZO Parents Hotline distributed throughout the country

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Cover of WIZO Israel’s Rosh Hashana song book

Calling card for WIZO Parents Hotline distributed throughout the country
UNITED KINGDOM

Young WIZO.uk's Beach Party helps disadvantaged children

Young WIZO.uk's Beach Party held at the Mahiki cocktail bar in London's Mayfair attracted over 200 young business and professional men and women and raised over £4,500 to benefit WIZO day care centers including Sderot Hatamarim where children from disadvantaged backgrounds receive desperately needed care. The center's wide range of educational activities stimulates natural curiosity allowing the children to express themselves in a secure and pleasant environment.

UK 'Sponsor a Child' lunches pass the half million pound mark

Pamela and David Crystal hosted WIZO.uk's 13th London 'Sponsor a Child' lunch at their central London home in honor of the birth of their daughter Maya. Proceeds of over £67,000 will go towards Israel's vulnerable children. 'Sponsor a Child' chair, Sarah Glyn, told guests that profits from the London lunches have now exceeded half a million pounds. Betty Crystal, liaison World WIZO Fundraising Department, spoke of the problems of Israel's most disadvantaged children and the ways in which WIZO addresses their needs both therapeutically and educationally. Guest speaker, Iren Kochman Frenkel, World WIZO's administrative supervisor responsible for 30 day care centers in northern Israel, outlined her work with hundreds of children at risk from domestic violence and neglect who attend the WIZO centers for treatment and care. During her four-day stay in the UK, Iren Kochman Frenkel addressed other 'Sponsor a Child' events notably Manchester's first and highly successful 'Sponsor a Child' lunch held at the splendid South Manchester home of Ruth & Raymond Taube, and sponsored by Mark Adleston of Beaverbrooke's Jewelers. Forty-five guests were welcomed by lunch chair, Manchester WIZO Life Vice President, Lady Steinberg. WIZO.uk Chair Loraine Warren gave an enlightening talk about WIZO's work and her recent trip to Israel on the UK Federation's 2007 Lifeliner Legacy tour. An impressive £40,000 was raised.
Lifeliners pledge legacies to WIZO

First launched in 2001, the Lifeliner Legacy Campaign aims to encourage people to leave a bequest to WIZO. Those doing so have their names inscribed on a prominent plaque at the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family, which evidences their lifetime pledge to WIZO. To date the campaign has been a great success with over 300 names inscribed on the first plaque. In May, 26 WIZO.uk supporters embarked on their biennial Lifeliner tour to Israel, visiting many WIZO projects and many other places of interest not usually found on a tourist itinerary. Mark Regev, spokesperson for Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, briefed them on the current situation in Israel. At the offices of the mayor of Jerusalem, they met and heard the head of the Jerusalem Municipality Opposition, Nir Barkat. The group, including a number of husbands, enjoyed afternoon tea at the magnificent Ramat Gan residence of the British ambassador, Tom Philips. At the day care centers, the group was able to witness first hand the tireless efforts and devotion of the staff. This was certainly the highlight of their visit, and they returned to the UK buoyed by their experience and determined to continue their support for the innovative work carried out by WIZO.

CANADA

Metamorphosis - Change for the better

In May, the Holt Renfrew store provided the setting for Canadian Hadassah WIZO’s Calgary Center’s Metamorphosis - a theme representing the change in seasons, of wardrobes, and the positive changes made in the lives of children in Israel through WIZO. Over 200 women indulged in two hours of private shopping and a mouthwatering brunch catered by the Hyatt. Nineteen artists and designers contributed to a silent auction featuring cowboy hats, a legendary symbolic icon of Calgary and the western prairies in Canada. The fabulous door prizes included a chef’s dinner and a day at the spa. The raffle prize, a highly sought after Louis Vuitton Papillon handbag, caused quite a frenzy of ticket buying. Proceeds raised from Metamorphosis went to the CHW Nahalal and Hadassim Children and Youth Villages for the care of children at risk. Canadian Hadassah WIZO is already focusing on an action-packed fall season of celebration fundraisers to coincide with their 90th anniversary.

1. Lily Lister, Marilyn Libin (past president of Calgary Center), Lauren Bell, Suzi Dil, Marsha Dil, Tracey Rumig (president of Calgary Center)
2. Suzi Dil models a cowboy hat for the Silent Auction
3. Mary Libin, Kathleen Bell, Fay Oppenheim
Ron Lauder elected president of the World Jewish Congress

World WIZO President Helena Glaser, in her capacity as vice president of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), recently attended the board meeting of this influential organization in New York. At the meeting, noted entrepreneur and philanthropist Ronald (Ron) Lauder was elected president of the WJC, succeeding longtime president Edgar Bronfman. Also elected as chair of the WJC governing board was Matthew Bronfman, the son of Edgar Bronfman.

'Sponsor a Child' in New York

WIZO New York's annual 'Sponsor a Child' event this year was held at the home of Corice Canton Arman, widow of the artist Arman. The evening was organized by 'Sponsor a Child' chairs Caren and Arturo Constantiner, Mira Levenson, Mira and Laurence Rappaport and Mira and Benny Sofer. Noted international pianist Audrius Zlabys played a stirring recital for the gathering. WIZO USA President Evelyn Sommer spoke of the increase in anti-Semitism in Europe and around the world and expounded on WIZO's needs in Israel. Corice Arman referred to the strong stand against racism and anti-Semitism undertaken by her husband in Nice, France. She was presented with the 'WIZO Wall of Life' award.

Children for our Children

WIZO New York, under the leadership of regional chair Gail Perl, held its tenth annual 'Children for Our Children' spring fashion show & luncheon at the Mandarin Oriental hotel in May. Chaired by New York executive member Jamie Mitchell, and featuring over 80 young models, supporters' children and friends, the event included a special 'walk' by young mothers and their babies. This year's luncheon honored the chairpersons of spring luncheons in the past ten years: Azita Aghravi, Caren Constantiner, Mireille Manocherian, Joyce Misrahi, Nazee Moinian, Iline Sands, Adam Lindemann, Amalia Dayan, Haley and Jason Binn

Contemporary Art with the Young Collectors

The New Leadership chapter, chaired by Haley Binn and Michelle Lobel, held a special 'Young Collectors' event hosted by the noted collector of contemporary art, Adam Lindemann and his wife, the gallerist Amalia Dayan, granddaughter of Moshe and Ruth Dayan. Mr. Lindemann gave a presentation on how to start a contemporary art collection. Amy Sabo and her committee, Orna Kirsch, Ariana Rabbani and Aimee Zarabi, chaired the event.

Women of Valor at the 10th annual 'Children for our Children' Spring Fashion Show & Luncheon
Toby Gotesman Schneier, Jackie Siegal, Chantal Taic, Roxana Tetenbaum, Marci Waterman and Lois Zaro - each of whom received a special Woman of Valor Award. Funds were allocated for WIZO’s programs for the post-war recovery of the population in the north of Israel.

New York celebrates Israel's 59th Independence Day

WIZO USA Vice President Mira Sofer, chaired WIZO’s Yom Ha’atzmaut (Independence Day) celebration attended by Israel’s permanent representative to the UN, Ambassador Dan Gillerman, his wife Mrs. Janice Gillerman, Ambassador Arye Mekel, Consul General of Israel in New York Mrs. Ruth Makel and some 200 participants. The event benefited WIZO Nir Haemek’s special programs helping young soldiers adjust to civilian life.

FLORIDA

WIZO Florida honors volunteers

It was an evening filled with love, happiness and pride as WIZO Florida held its annual ‘Volunteer Recognition Dinner’ where awards were presented for long service. More than 50 volunteers gathered to enjoy good music, good food and good friends. It was the perfect opportunity to dance the night away and generally enjoy each other's company. Brenda Behar received the award for ‘Office Volunteer of the Year’.

'Sponsor a Child' pays tribute to mothers

At its annual Mother’s Day ‘Sponsor a Child’ Bazaar and Luncheon WIZO Florida paid tribute to the women that have had the most impact on their lives - their mothers. Over 250 chaverot attended a special fashion show by renowned Panama designer, Claudia Szerer. In a day filled with touching tributes, Vivian Fulop, world-renowned soprano thrilled the audience with her rendition of the Star Spangled Banner and Hatikva. The keynote speaker, Rebetzen Chain Lascar from the Bal Harbour synagogue, spoke on the inner beauty and outer radiance of women. Tohar Talmor, a direct recipient of funds from WIZO’s Nir Haemek School and Youth Village, thanked WIZO for its continued support. She emphasized that many others still need help. Event chairs were Michellen Amselem and Sara Kanarek and co-chairs Brenda Behar, Rosita Greenberg, Margarita Minski and Margie Szerer. Monies raised will be used to sponsor children in a WIZO day care center in Israel.
EUROPE

AUSTRIA

Sun always shines at WIZO's cake stall

Despite the rain, Austria's Jewish Street Festival provided a ray of sunshine to the hordes who braved the inclement weather. The sweet delights of the WIZO cake stall attracted the biggest crowd who threw all notions of weight watching to the wind as they queued up to buy the mouth-watering strudels, gateaux, tarts and pies home-baked by WIZO chaverot. Austria WIZO's legendary cheesecakes have a following all of their own and were quickly snapped up by appreciative hordes who stood at the booth enjoying tasty morsels. The friendly WIZO chaverot proudly shared their recipes. Counting the takings at the end of the day confirmed that the long hours spent baking in the kitchen and standing in the pouring rain had all been worthwhile to the benefit of WIZO Austria's projects for the children of Israel.

FRANCE

Andrée’s vision will take Grenoble from strength to strength

Andrée Gnansia, an active member of WIZO France since its inception, has been elected as president of WIZO Grenoble. WIZO France President Nathalie Cohen Beizermann and WIZO France Director Yvette Sebag, traveled from Paris to see Andrée take up her new position. Andrée, a passionate Zionist, brings with her a proven record of accomplishment in event organizing, fundraising and exceptional skills in the social field. As vice president of the Jewish Cultural Center, she was instrumental in bringing together members of the community, Jewish and non-Jewish organizations. She is practiced at enlisting the services of many high profile lecturers and artists and as a committed Zionist she works actively for the Jewish United Appeal of France.

GERMANY

WIZO women – ‘the world champions of charity’

To the hardworking chaverot of WIZO Germany, the preparation for the next WIZO bazaar begins the moment the previous bazaar closes its doors. It is a never-ending cycle of collection and preparation of stock from year to year. Everything from second-hand clothes, toys, books, CDs, cosmetics and handicrafts are put on sale before an enthusiastic crowd who pick up first class bargains and enjoy the culinary delights at the WIZO deli, such as falafel and freshly pressed fruit juices, not to mention the wine and vodka available at the WIZO bar. The biggest smiles are on the faces of the tombola prizewinners. WIZO Germany's tombolas are known for their generous prizes. Every third ticket is a winner with over 2,000 prizes including flights to New York, Tel Aviv, Budapest and dinners at 5-star restaurants to name but a few. In her humorous welcome speech at the last WIZO bazaar, Rachel Singer, president of WIZO Germany, compared the mechanism of the WIZO bazaar with the stock exchange, as both are partners in an enterprise that stands for value, welfare and humanity. The
songs on the keyboard, Roman Kupperschmidt played the clarinet and Majer Szanckower read Yiddish stories and tales from Hesse. Leftovers of the generously catered buffet were collected by the food distribution charity, 'Franfurter Tafel' and distributed to the homeless people of Frankfurt and proceeds of the evening will help needy families in Israel.

Fun for all at Luna Park

The success of the Purim Luna Park was due to the diligent efforts of the new team, Janina Hillemann, Sabina Liebensohn, Nava Nadler, Alla Spanz and Minka Wildberger and generous contributions from the Jewish congregation: Sohar Restaurant, Youth Center Amichai, the trainers of Maccabi Frankfurt and, of course, the tireless endeavors of all the chaverot. The venue, the Ignatz Bubis Community Center, was decked in cheery decorations to complement the delightful Purim costumes worn by the children. Families turned out in force, determined to take part in the many exciting and fun activities on offer. The appetizing pastries and cakes sated the hunger of the revelers and the pasta stand was a huge hit. There was something for everyone including a handicrafts stand, cross bow shooting, and rolling chute. Everybody tried his or her luck in the raffle and there were prizes for all. However, the biggest prize of all was the smile on the happy faces of the children. It truly was a fabulous day.

GREECE

All smiles from WIZO Aviv in Athens

Once a year, the mayor of Athens allows the Town Hall Square to be used as a bazaar to raise money and awareness for an organization called the Ergastir - dedicated to children with special needs. WIZO Aviv helps support this worthy cause by staffing a stall at the bazaar. Greek WIZO chaverot are now hard at work in preparation for their 23rd Panelleni Meeting-Seminar to be held in Athens in November. Mrs. Sylvie Pelosi, chairperson of World WIZO's Organization Department will be the main guest speaker.
ADEI WIZO turns 80

Founded in 1927, ADEI WIZO has spent the past 80 years supporting Israel and the Jewish people through its 20 plus branches, dedicated to maintaining Jewish education and culture in Italy. In celebration of its 80th anniversary, ADEI WIZO held a special meeting at the Jewish Community Center located in the ‘old Ghetto’ in the presence of World WIZO president, Helena Glaser. Amongst the other guest speakers were Venice Rabbi, Dr Elia Richetti, the president of the Jewish Community in Venice Dr. Vittorio Levis, and National ADEI WIZO president, Ziva Fischer, as well as co-presidents of ADEI WIZO Venice branch, Fiammetta Jona and Serena Levis, who opened the meeting. The history of ADEI WIZO from its inception until the present day was showcased through a series of enlightening lectures and visual presentations.

During the course of the meeting, various speakers dealt with the issue of anti-Semitism, and its ‘perceived’ association with anti-Zionism - a topic that is of particular interest to the Italian chaverot as this trend is prevalent in Italy. During her speech, Helena Glaser explained the role of WIZO Federations all over Europe in fighting anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. The evening’s gala was held at ‘Ca’ Rezzonico’ Palace - one of Venice’s most magnificent 18th century palaces.

Ending the social calendar at Pombia with aplomb

On a sunny afternoon in June, chaverot from Milan gathered to celebrate the end of the social year with a very special lunch in a magnificent country house at Pombia, hosted by Stefania Zevi, national treasurer of ADEI WIZO. After an elegant lunch, Manuela Sorani, the daughter of one of the chaverot, sang a medley of English, Yiddish, Sephardic and Italian songs, which added to the harmonious atmosphere of the afternoon.

HOLLAND

Women of Valor pin a surprise on Renée

Mrs. Renée Krant hosted a party in her charming Amsterdam home to honor Mrs. Floor Kokernoot (aged 86), for her generous donation to WIZO-Holland for the renovations of Dormitory ‘A’ at WIZO’s Nahalat Yehuda Youth Village. WIZO Holland president Joyce Numann-Durlacher presented Mrs. Kokernoot with a beautiful ‘Woman of Valor’ pin in the presence of good friends, executive members of WIZO Holland and past president Annelies Cohn-Erwteman. Renée Krant was completely taken by surprise when she was also awarded with a ‘Woman of Valor’ pin. She and her husband have been generous donors to WIZO for many years and Mrs. Krant has been a member of the executive of WIZO Holland.

Farewell to Margaret

After 11 years as vice president of WIZO Holland Margaret Mogendorff-Oveneg stepped down on May 14th during the AGM in Amsterdam. From 1996 until 2002, Margaret was also vice president of ECWF, the European Council of WIZO Federations. Joyce Numann-Durlacher, president of WIZO Holland, presented Margaret with the Rebecca Sieff Award, in recognition of her work for WIZO. To honor Margaret, the Dutch chaverot raised money for a ‘fun day’ for 200 children who live in the Eshkol Region near the Gaza border. The children were able to enjoy a pleasant time in central Israel where they could let off steam out of range of the Kassam rockets fired from the Gaza strip.
SWITZERLAND

Switzerland goes dot.com

Swiss WIZO recently launched their new website. The site, updated regularly, is a powerhouse of information for the Swiss chaverot and WIZO supporters in their fundraising and hasbara efforts and provides links to World WIZO’s website. It is well worth a visit: [www.wizo.ch](http://www.wizo.ch)

LATIN AMERICA

ARGENTINA

OSFA-WIZO’s season of embassy performances

The WIZO season began with a distinguished dinner, hosted by Israel’s ambassador Rafael Eldad and his wife Batia. The meal, sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada was organized as a tribute to OSFA-WIZO’s most prolific supporters. OSFA-WIZO’s ‘Embassies’ Performances’ are an excellent platform for building bridges between WIZO supporters, music lovers, and the diplomatic arena. For the benefit of WIZO, the Dutch Embassy opened the doors of its magnificent residence as guests enjoyed cocktails with the charming ambassador and listened to two outstanding musicians who entertained with typical Argentinean music - the Tango.

Under the auspices of The Croatian Republic Embassy, The Croatia Cords Quintet performed in OSFA, arranged by Ambassador Mrs. Mira Martinec and ‘Quinteto Ventarron’ played classic tango at the Rumanian Embassy.

In May, Mr. Carlos Abolsky and his wife, Elsa, invited the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra’s four most important soloists to perform in Buenos Aires. Mr and Mrs. Abolsky hosted a delightful concert and reception, which took place at the exclusive country club ‘El Lazo’ in Miraflores. The Quartet Cords together with a talented local pianist played Shostakovich, Mozart and Brahms to an appreciative audience.

(l to r) At the Israeli Embassy: Amalia Polack, Judith Barujel, Teresa Kovalivker, Angela Polack, Haydee Brodsky.

(l to r) Violin and accordion duet at the Dutch Embassy.

Top: Concert at the magnificent Croatian Republic Embassy

Bottom: Carlos Abolsky receives ‘The Blessings Book’ from Clara Ginsberg and Amalia Polack

(l to r) Batia Eldad, Israel’s Ambassador to Argentina Rafael Eldad, OSFA-WIZO past president Amalia Polack
BRAZIL

Celebrating 60 years in Belem & Manaus

WIZO Aviv Director, Liana Kupfer, travelled to the northern city of Belem, capital city of Para, to take part in a remarkable celebration of the chapter's 60th anniversary. To mark the occasion, 29 ex-presidents, or surviving members of their family received special WIZO awards from WIZO Brazil for their devotion to the Federation. Over 200 guests attended.

in the region. Mrs. Sarita Schaffel, president of WIZO Brazil, represented WIZO at the gathering, as did Mrs. Silene Balassiano, president of WIZO Rio, and Mrs. Lea Lozinsky, former member WIZO-Rio executive who is currently active in WIZO Rio, through her group Yardenia. Lea is an active affiliate and vice president of FIERJ - Israel Federation of Rio de Janeiro, elected through direct vote for this term.

WIZO Rio de Janeiro - Women who make the difference

March 8th - a date designated as International Women's Day, was the perfect date for WIZO Rio to honor their renowned members who really 'make a difference'. This year, a special WIZO plaque, which was presented at a spectacular afternoon affair, was designed for 17 remarkable Jewish women of different ages and backgrounds, all living in Rio de Janeiro. Ms Dorit Grossman from Israel, in Rio to visit her granddaughter WIZO Rio member Dora Grossman, entertained the gathering with a selection of songs in Hebrew, Italian and Portuguese.

A brunch in Israel - Rio style

WIZO Rio celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut, Lag Ba'omer, and the 40th anniversary of Jerusalem's reunification at Beth Lubavitch Synagogue with 'a Brunch in Israel' festival. Israeli singer Dorit Grossman together with the HG Band provided the music for the show while choreographer Luiz Felipe Barbosa put Leakah Hatzmair through her steps in a memorable event enjoyed by over 250 guests.
Sao Paulo's 3rd Kids & Teens Fashion Show

WIZO Sao Paulo groups Silvia Hodara and Tzeirot jointly held their third ‘Kids & Teens Fashion Show’ to celebrate Mother’s Day. With real spontaneity, 100 children and teenagers modeled styles from 12 internationally renowned fashion designers. Two teenage actors presented the fashion show: the main characters of the celebrated Brazilian movie play entitled: O ANO EM QUE MEUS PAIS SAÍRAM DE FÉRIAS (The year my parents went on vacation). With sponsorship from the Safra Bank, business executives and WIZO friends, the fashion show, held at the ‘A Hebraica’ club was a great social and financial success due in no small part to tireless fundraising efforts performed by WIZO Sao Paulo’s vice-presidents: Nava Polity and Bella Hakim.

WIZO Sao Paulo book launches

Two book launches: the first, a cocktail party heralding chaverot Lucia Igel and Regina Fichiman’s cookbook - Cozinhando com an Idish Mame - (Cooking with a Yiddisher Mama), was held in June. In the first few hours, over 200 copies were sold. WIZO Brazil honorary life member Mrs. Fany Rozentraub launched her autobiography Fazendo a Diferença (Making the Difference) at a cocktail party attended by hundreds of chaverot and friends who were eager to receive a signed copy. Messages and tributes were received from World WIZO President Helena Glaser, WIZO Brazil Vice President Eva Solecwicz on behalf of Sarita Schaffel, Mr. Arthur Rotenberg, president of the counsel board of A Hebraica club, Mrs. Jairo Fridling of Sefer Publishing and the renowned writer, Mrs. Norma Rotenberg. They all joined WIZO Sao Paulo public relations director, Mrs. Rebeca Rosenberg, in a tribute of a lifetime of commitment to the Jewish people through Mrs. Rozentraub’s WIZO mission.

CHILE

President Bachelet inaugurates new school ‘Republica de Israel - Los Angeles’

The ‘Republica de Israel - Los Angeles’ school, one of 11 schools sponsored by the women of CEFI (WIZO’s local chapter), has been completely renovated. Located in the Galvarino, the school has 350 students. The recent inauguration ceremony was attended by the president of the Chilean Republic Dr. Michelle Bachelet, the minister of property Mr. Andrés Velasco, the governor of the region Mrs. Maria Soledad Tohá, the mayor of Los Angeles Mr. Joel Rosales, Senator Dr. Mariano Ruiz Ezquide and deputies and authorities of the region. The Jewish community of Los Angeles was represented by President Dra. Lucy Kojchen; school director Mrs. Jeannette Fuentes, professors, students and WIZO Chile President Mrs. Susy Baron. Mrs. Baron presented the school with an Israeli flag on behalf the Israeli Embassy.

Visit to WIZO Concepcion

In May, a delegation from WIZO Santiago including Susy Baron, president, and treasurers Caty Farkas and Raquel Hasson traveled 600 km to visit the Concepcion chapter with the aim of strengthening their ties with WIZO branches all over Chile. At a reception in the community center, Concepcion president, Susana Deunas de Suwalsky, the Concepcion community rabbi, Prof. Angel Kreiman, together with WIZO chaverot and friends welcomed the Santiago delegation. Susy Baron presented a WIZO diploma to the past president of Concepcion WIZO, Mrs. Inge Tichauer. Committee members received WIZO brooches. The delegation also visited the ‘Republica de Israel’ school where they enjoyed a rousing rendition of ‘Hatikva’ sung in word-perfect Hebrew.

WIZO Chile embarks on its first Bat Mitzvah preparatory course

Rabbi Daniel Zang will prepare five girls from the Sephardic community for their Bat Mitzvah ceremony, which will take
place next year in the Sephardic Community Synagogue. In the style of many WIZO Federations worldwide, the preparation course embraces the history of the Jewish people, the high holidays and festivals, Jewish cookery, culture, charity, hasbara (advocacy), and Jewish life in Israel and the Diaspora. The girls came along to their first lesson with their mothers and grandmothers who share WIZO's aspirations of educating the next generation of Jewish women - an important part of the WIZO philosophy.

**Grand charity show surprises celebrity Vivian**

An impressive fashion collection from top designer boutiques wowed the audience at a grand charity show held at the Hyatt Hotel presented by top TV personality, Vivian Kreutzberger. Vivian was awarded the WIZO prize for ‘Outstanding Woman of the Year’. She and the audience were taken completely by surprise when a home video provided by her mother was shown. To the assembled gathering it was the sensation of the evening to gain such a personal insight into the celebrated personality’s life, which included scenes of her childhood days and her family.

**Bingo with a bite**

The Maayan WIZO chapter’s ‘Bingo Tallarinata’ night with great pasta and excellent prizes drew in a crowd of over 200 WIZO friends.

**COLOMBIA**

**Bogotá boosts Aviv membership**

The executive of WIZO Aviv in Bogotá recently held a luncheon for 50 newly married women in a campaign to boost membership. The Aviv chaverot welcomed the newly weds into the WIZO family and explained the many ways in which they could become involved. Impressed by the philosophy of WIZO and the difference it makes to the people of Israel, ten women eagerly signed up to take up office on the WIZO Aviv executive and a further 15 women volunteered to help in various ways.
AUSTRALIA

WIZO Australia’s 21st Triennial Conference sees launch of ‘House of Dreams’

Delegates from all over Australia descended on Melbourne in May for WIZO Australia’s Triennial Conference. Special guest, World WIZO Executive Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov traveled from Israel to attend the conference, which saw the launch of the exciting new ‘WIZO House of Dreams’ campaign to raise funds to overhaul WIZO Australia’s flagship project, WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim. The new facilities planned will include a drama center, music room, communication center, media center, library and learning center. The highly effective campaign is the brainchild of WIZO Australia President, Jo Gostin, and Organisation and Fundraising Chairperson Rachel Caplan, together with the World WIZO Publicity Department. Accompanied by poignant photographs, the by-line “Have you ever touched someone 10,000 miles away?” motivates generous donors into doing just that. During the course of the conference, honorary life memberships were bestowed on Maxine Klarnet (NSW), Rena Rabin (Vic) and Miriam Millingen (SA). Jo Gostin was re-elected as WIZO Australia president for a further three-year term.

PANAMA

A night with the stars

WIZO Panama’s Aviv Jai group staged a ‘sound alike concert’ to the delight of a 560-strong audience. Using the song and dance talents within the Jewish community, together with the local Music Farándula (modern amateur singers), they recreated hits from the 1980s, 1990s and year 2000. Songs from international hit-makers such as Billy Joel, Celine Dion and the popular Israeli singer Kobi Peretz were performed by look-alikes who imitated every note to perfection. Performing in front of a beautifully designed backdrop, accompanied by a live band, professional dancers and amazing special effects, the show was nothing less than spectacular. To add to the Hollywood-style atmosphere, the ‘stars’ were interviewed on the red carpet as they arrived for the show and their images displayed on giant screens inside the auditorium where they were greeted with rapturous applause.

Playing to a packed house in Panama

Girl power at Jai’s sound alike concert

World WIZO Executive Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov & WIZO Australia President, Jo Gostin at the conference
Young hearts learn the art of giving

WIZO Victoria’s Aviv groups are constantly coming up with creative fundraising ideas. One initiative that has become popular with children (and their mothers) involves children of all ages donating money instead of buying a small gift for their friends to take home after a party. Ezra Liberman, who just celebrated his 2nd birthday very kindly donated money for his birthday and received a beautiful Toda Raba (thank you) certificate from WIZO Victoria. Of course, the children do not leave the parties empty handed. They receive a lovely note, explaining that a donation has been made in their honor, which is attached to a chocolate.

On the good ship WIZO - who will sink and who will swim?

At the Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce and WIZO South Australia ‘Celebrity Life Jacket Debate’, well-known speakers Martin Hamilton-Smith MP, Geoff Merrill, Lindy Powell QC, Rosa Matto and psychiatrist/comedian Dr. Nathan Serry (playing Rabbi Gornisht), pleaded their case for salvation. Picture the scene: They are cruising the ocean on the imaginary ocean liner ‘WIZO’ when suddenly the captain (master of ceremonies Ros Neale) informs them that the ship is sinking. (think Titanic). Worse still, there is only one lifebelt amongst the entire panic-stricken mob. A decision has to be taken as to which of four likely candidates most deserve to be saved: a politician, a comedian, a wine maker, a cook or a lawyer? Leader of the Opposition Martin Hamilton-Smith MP pleading his case for the lifejacket saying that “politicians can stumble, bumble, fumble and even pretend to be humble but they can’t walk on water.” Winemaker Geoff Merrill said he should have it because he has a child. Chef Rosa Matto drew on Shakespearean quote “to be or not to be” stressing that her cooking skills were needed to feed the hungry masses. However, it was Lindy Powell QC, who really rocked the boat (excuse pun), claiming that all lawyers are thought to be sharks, so she’d be in safe company in the water, but if she had the life jacket she would sue the WIZO cruise line once she got back on dry land. In the end it was given to the rabbi. With convincing logic he had theorised that whoever got the jacket would be dooming the others to certain death, and he was the only one who could effectively plead their case at the ‘Pearly Gates’, therefore it simply had to be him. No contest. In the midst of such hilarity, the good ship WIZO proved unsinkable and over $20,000 was raised to keep WIZO projects in Israel afloat.
SOUTH AFRICA

Forty years of undivided Jerusalem warms hearts in Johannesburg

Three hundred chaverot celebrated Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day) along with two singing chazanim, a violin performance by a very gifted twelve-year-old and a most revealing mind reader who enthralled everyone with his antics. The guest speaker explained the significance of celebrating 40 years of an undivided Jerusalem and its link to Jewish people around the globe. With the aid of a short film, participants were transported in spirit to the historical city, as if they were walking its streets. There was an array of Israeli-made products on sale, after which guests enjoyed a scrumptious tea.

Mum’s the word in Cape Town

Bnoth Zion Association WIZO in Cape Town held a Mother’s Day function, which was the perfect excuse for mothers and daughters to enjoy ‘quality time’ and a delicious brunch organized by the Orit Branch. Both appetite and curiosity were sated as the guest speaker, ‘Dr. Eve’, answered candid questions on the subject of women’s sexual issues in a delightfully entertaining way.

Jerusalem Prize for Queenie

Bnoth Zion Association WIZO awarded Queenie Sacks with the World Zionist Organisation Jerusalem Prize. The silver encrusted shofar mounted on a stand engraved with her name was given in reward for her time-honored and invaluable contribution to WIZO. Queenie has presented numerous popular talks to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations in Cape Town and nearby country communities.

Family Fun Day attracts the crowds

WIZO Tzabar attracted hundreds of people to their highly lucrative and exciting Family Fun Day. Amongst the attractions, there were stalls selling innovative Israeli and local wares, children’s face painting, tap dancing, African ethnic dancing, judo and karate exhibitions, African drumming and refreshments. South African chaverot never shy away from hard work, particularly when enticing the crowds to spend their money to support WIZO projects in Israel. The Family Fun Day was so profitable and enjoyable that it is destined to become an annual fixture on WIZO Tzabar’s schedule of events.
You, too, can play a role in providing a brighter future to Israeli children who have come to WIZO from a past of neglect, abuse, hardship and despair.

Donation Opportunities

US$ 3,000  Sponsorship of a child for a half year at a WIZO youth village
US$ 1,800  Funding for a bar- and bat-mitzvah celebration for 10 children at a WIZO youth village
US$ 1,000  Scholarship for a child living at a WIZO youth village to help fund participation in the Young Ambassadors youth exchange program in the United States
US$ 540    One month of funding for a student in the Ometz program
US$ 100    Four hours of tutoring for an immigrant child at a WIZO school

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