Poverty
WIZO Faces the Challenge

Education
Aiming for Excellence

Violence
14 Females Murdered

Changes
Making History in South Africa
Their Future is in Your Hands

Israel's Future is in Their Hands

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President’s Desk

This time I want to share a few very moving experiences with you.

I had the honor of participating in this year’s Panhellenic Conference, organized by WIZO Greece in Salonika. Two things particularly impressed me:

1) I was given a unique opportunity to get to know the history of the Greek Jewish community. My visit to the Jewish Museum provided me with a rare view of the history, cultural richness and organizational structure of the Saloniki Jewish community. Jews began arriving in Salinka after the Spanish Inquisition. There used to be tens of schools and charity organizations, a thriving community, with tremendous warmth, that looked out for its members. There were also Zionist organizations, including WIZO. It was wonderful to see the strength of the community. Unfortunately, 96 percent of the community members died in Auschwitz. Today, the memory of this glorious community is preserved in books that the survivors are writing.

2) We frequently speak about the WIZO movement. I saw what this means at the Panhellenic Conference. There were delegates from many of the Jewish communities in Greece, some of them numbering just 35, 40 and 70 people. In all of these communities, WIZO keeps the spark, the flame of Judaism alive. It serves as the link with the Jewish experience, with Zionism, with Israel. This is true for many Federations around the world. There is much assimilation, but the chaverot are doing a fantastic job, and they deserve praise for it.

On my way back to Israel, I met 15 young, professional, really impressive women. They are all well educated, with families, and are active in their local schools. We talked for three hours, and I asked that they become connected to Israel via WIZO. Upon my return, I heard that they already participated in the latest WIZO bazaar, with their extended families, husbands and children. It was a real happening.

Yes, our message works, it resonates. Under our umbrella, young women can join the family of WIZO. The other thing I would like to share with you is the ECWF (European Council of WIZO Federations) Conference I attended in Paris - “Voluntarism versus Career Women: Is there a future for women’s organizations?” The conference was honored by the participation of two former female ministers in the Mitterrand Government. “There must be a connection between women’s movements and members of the establishment,” said former Minister of Women’s Affairs Yvette Roudy, “because they are the ones who make the laws that guide our lives.”

Here I want to tell a story. When she was appointed a minister, a number of WIZO members asked for a meeting to present WIZO to her. They told her about the Alimony Law in Israel that WIZO lobbied for. The minister said that it was an important idea, and then proceeded to submit a similar law in France, which has been adopted.

This demonstrates how important such meetings are. Idea and knowledge sharing, are an important part of the empowerment of women.

At the ECWF conference, I learned that there is a law in France that enables workers to contribute nine days of voluntary work to any organization, and in return the government reimburses the employer. The law is currently implemented by the trade unions, but it is also applicable to associations, and has to be promoted. I said that in Israel we don’t have a similar law, but we have social security insurance for volunteers which doesn’t exist in other countries. I requested a copy of the French law, with the thought that maybe it could be adopted in Israel as well. That’s how an exchange of ideas works, and demonstrates just how important it is to learn from each other.

I am filled with tremendous admiration for those WIZO chaverot who represent us in so many important European forums. This requires certain skills, the ability to appear before an audience and a lot of patience, because people who advocate for Israel are not always well received. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done in this large and important arena. We have to reach out to young, capable women, who can relate to this issue. Both they and we will benefit from this. The women involved in this activity are doing an outstanding job, and deserve our appreciation.

Helna Gilsar
President, World WIZO
Chairperson’s Column

The year 2005 has just begun and we all share hope for better times. The death of Arafat has opened a new channel to implement the disengagement and reach the longed-for peace for Israel and our region. This peace will enable us in WIZO to dedicate our efforts and resources to our top priority goals - education and closing of social gaps.

Although the economic situation seems to have improved somewhat, the situation has not improved for all those who need WIZO’s services. The arbitrary cuts in the government’s budget strike at the heart of WIZO’s activity, and have left their mark. Our institutions and services have encountered difficulties, and WIZO is not always able to fulfill its goals. WIZO doesn’t stand still nor does it take things for granted. It has always had its hand on the pulse of developments, and is quick to respond to any problems or needs that arise within Israeli society. WIZO tries to fill the gap between what the government provides and the actual needs, and believe me, this gap is growing wider and wider.

There is almost no region or sphere in the country where WIZO’s presence isn’t deeply felt. Early age, youth, women, senior citizens, new immigrants and minorities all receive support and guidance from WIZO. In each of these spheres, WIZO cares for all those with special needs like children at risk, battered women and victims of violence. You, our WIZO chaverot, are those who convert our movement’s goals into reality. Your dedicated, tireless work frequently comes at the expense of your homes and families, but I know that you are driven by your firm belief in WIZO’s way, and in the importance of our work.

You, our chaverot in the Federations around the world, have demonstrated your responsibility and your faith in WIZO.

Without the funds that you send us, we wouldn’t be able to help so many people. This year you really excelled yourselves and your remittances were the highest ever.

On December 26, 2004, the whole world was shocked by the Tsunami disaster in south-east Asia, when over 160,000 were killed, leaving many missing and thousands wounded. Families were broken, children were orphaned and parents became childless, homes were destroyed and whole villages were wiped off the face of the earth. People from all over the world collected, and are still collecting, food, clothing, blankets and money to send to the area.

Many countries, including Israel sent equipment, food and clothing as well as rescue teams to aid the victims. This terrible natural disaster is a reminder to us, we fragile human beings, how helpless we are vis-à-vis nature and how we must try to make the most of our lives while we can and help the less fortunate strata of society.

Dear chaverot, we are on the eve of the annual World WIZO Meeting of Representatives, when our leadership from Israel and the Diaspora convenes together in Tel Aviv to discuss the future of our movement and the form of its activities. Prominent figures will deliver lectures and participate in panels on various interesting subjects. On the tour-day we shall visit WIZO Projects and other interesting sights, focusing on Sderot, the southern town that is under attack by Kassam rockets.

I am sure that after the fruitful discussions and deliberations, we shall emerge from the annual World WIZO Meeting of Representatives strengthened and more united, with increased motivation and new tools to continue our activities, putting emphasis on education for the sake of an improved Israeli society and proud Jewish communities around the world.

We are one family, one heart, with one goal - the aspiration for peace will enable us in WIZO to reach the longed-for peace for Israel and our region. This peace will enable us in WIZO to dedicate our efforts and resources to our top priority goals - education and closing of social gaps.
With almost a quarter of the population living below the poverty line, including 652,000 children, WIZO’s Anti-Poverty Fund serves as a lifesaver for thousands of Israel families.
The number of Israelis living below the poverty line last year stood at 1,427,000, some 22.4 percent of the population. "That's how Haaretz, Israel's leading daily, began its commentary after the National Security Institute's (NII) annual poverty report was released to the public. "Israel is becoming poorer and poorer," said Dr. Yigal Ben-Shalom, the NII director general, during the presentation of the report. The report indicated that 105,000 additional people slid below the poverty line in 2003, while unemployment has risen to 10.7 percent of the population. One of the most disturbing statistics is that there are now 139,000 families in which the head of the household is employed, who are living below the poverty line. These are known as the working poor.

Of particular concern to WIZO is the fact that 652,000 children in Israel, 30.8 percent of the children, are poor. Poverty hit more than 360,000 families, or 19 percent of the households in Israel. The poverty rate reaches 48 percent in Arab households, 27.6 percent in single-parent families and 22.3 percent of all elderly families. Large families with many children have been hard hit by the situation, and the Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) sector also has a very high percentage living in poverty. Jerusalem is the major city most hard hit, since 33 percent of the population lives in poverty. Almost 83,000 of the poor in Jerusalem are elderly, primarily East Jerusalem Arabs and Haredim.

WIZO to the Rescue

WIZO has always adapted to the needs of the times. Two years ago, realizing that the situation was becoming more and more severe, World WIZO President Helena Glaser launched the Poverty is not only Food Campaign at the World WIZO Annual General Assembly held in January 2003. WIZO has always dealt with both the short and the long-term needs of Israeli society. The rationale of the campaign was, as the name indicates, that poverty is not only a matter of being hungry. "WIZO is not a soup kitchen," said Mrs. Glaser. "We are different from other organizations that only deal with short-term though important needs. We want to enable people to break out of the cycle of poverty. The reality is that, in the short-term, some people do need food, and we help to provide it. But in the long-term, they need to be empowered, to be able to get themselves and their families back on their feet. And we strongly believe in the empowerment of women and children. We want to ensure that students aren't forced to drop out of school, and that they and their parents become constructive members of a supportive community."

The campaign was approved by the WIZO Federations around the world, and they mobilized with all their love and dedication to confront the problem. WIZO has successfully raised tens of millions of shekels to make this campaign a success.

"It's difficult to listen to some of the stories," says Helena Glaser, "but we are filled with empathy for the impoverished people. We believe that this action expresses the very essence of WIZO's commitment to the well-being of Israeli citizens in their time of need."
Theater for Life

**Coping with Depression and Economic Hardship**

“In a Beersheva day care center, a family had a big debt. In the beginning of 2004, a second child from the family began attending the center. Towards the end of 2003, the father became depressed and was unable to work. As a result, the family’s economic situation began to seriously deteriorate. This year the sister’s tuition fee is paid for by the Ministry of Social Welfare, but they do not cover the debt. Once again, WIZO’s Poverty Fund Committee decided to take responsibility, and it covered the amount of the debt.”

“Another Beersheva story. There is an Ethiopian family with seven children. One of the children suffers from retardation, and was sent to an institution. The parents said that they have a problem buying food for the children, and the director of the local day care center sent us a letter.”

“To move on to Bat Yam, here’s a story from the multi-purpose day care center. In June 2004, a child in one of the families died because of epilepsy. As a result of this tragedy, the family’s situation began to deteriorate. The mother experienced a major crisis. The family run grocery store got stuck in tremendous financial difficulties. The family neglected their children, both health-wise and emotionally. The child at the day care center began to arrive in the morning without a change of clothes, and with a strong body odor and with temperature. Obviously, this child was suffering from a major case of neglect. On top of all of this, because of its inability to meet the regular mortgage payments, the family was facing an eviction notice from their home. A municipal social worker said that if the child remained at home during the day, it would be exposed to a great level of risk. So WIZO covered the family’s debt and welcomed the child to a summer camp for free.”

**Jerusalem, a Center of People Below the Poverty Line**

“Jerusalem. There’s a single mother of a child in a multi-purpose afternoon center who doesn’t manage to meet the ongoing needs of her family. The cuts in the government’s child welfare subsidies have seriously affected her situation. She hasn’t been able to find work, and the family constantly lacks food in the home. In addition, the child suffers from physical abuse because the mother is very nervous about the situation. Once again, we received a letter, and we helped confront the situation.”

Zamira says that these are just a sample of dozens of situations around the country that she’s familiar with. In all of these cases, the names are not mentioned, to preserve the dignity of the families and children.

**Saving Souls at the Schools & Youth Villages**

“After the Poverty Fund was launched, we started to provide support for needy children in the WIZO schools and youth villages,” says Irit Lindner, who’s responsible for the activity in World WIZO’s Formal and Informal Education Division.

“In September, 2002, we began to provide hot meals for 582 needy external students, who commute to the schools from their homes six days a week (the children who live in the dormitories receive hot meals daily).”

“This is the second year that we are also providing scholarships, or partial scholarships, for youth in need. The guidance counselors at our schools and youth villages tell us which children need help, and how much they require to continue attending school.”

“We also provide special individual aid, when necessary. For example, last year we purchased a computer for a child who was suffering from brain damage, to enable him to function more effectively. We have also financed dental care, eye-glasses, and other essentials for the student’s well-being.”

**Special Holiday Gift Packages**

“On the holidays - Passover, Purim, Shavuot and Rosh Hashana, we provide needy students with holiday gift packages. The 582 needy external students who receive hot meals also received these packages, together with the students at the youth village dormitories, most of whom come from needy family situations. These holiday gift packages provide food for the holiday for the entire family, not only the...”
“We are different from other organizations that only deal with short-term needs. We want to enable people to break out of the cycle of poverty”

Helena Glaser

Poverty Fund Committee
In order to coordinate this activity, World WIZO established a Poverty Fund Committee, chaired by World WIZO President Helena Glaser. The members are World WIZO Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov, Treasurer Miri Perlis, Fundraising Department Chairperson Celia Michonik, Formal and Informal Education Chairperson Ruth Rubinstein, Early Age Care and Education Division Chairperson Dina Bar, WIZO Israel Chairperson Yochy Feller and World WIZO Director General Chaim Zamorsky. The committee is responsible for distributing the funds raised in the campaign. Requests come from the WIZO day care centers, schools and youth villages throughout the country. Directors identify needy children and families that are suffering from the current economic situation, and their candidacy to receive a grant is submitted to the committee.

Bus Tickets for Russian Immigrant Students

“Many of the students who attend the WIZO Municipal High School for Art and Design in the name of Henrietta Irwell in Haifa (sponsored by WIZO Belgium & Luxembourg and WIZO Uruguay), live quite far away from the school. There is a group of students, all of whom are new immigrants from Russia, who can’t afford the ticket. WIZO decided to pay for their transportation, and many of them also receive a hot meal.”

“We are constantly receiving requests for help via the principals of the schools and the directors of the youth villages. And we also initiate the process, asking them to identify and send us a list of needy children on a regular basis. It’s a privilege to be involved in this activity,” concludes Irit. “As the saying goes — helping to save one life is liking saving a world.”
I Have a Face, not Only a Back

A unique, innovative performance by a group of abused women was the highlight of a special ceremony at WIZO House in Tel Aviv, organized to mark the International Day to Prevent Violence Against Women.

Adi Ronel

Photos: Shai Ignitz
What am I? A mother? A daughter? A woman? I am no one!” This was the opening monologue, starkly declaimed by an actress in the Therapeutic Drama Group for Battered Women, whose performance was clearly the emotional highlight of the ceremony organized by WIZO Israel’s Division for the Advancement and Status of Women in Law and Society, headed by division chairperson Gila Oshrat.

The woman on stage was no ordinary actress. She was an abused woman, one of 11 participants in a four year long therapeutic process organized at the WIZO Center for the Treatment and Prevention of Violence in the Family in Ashkelon, in cooperation with the Ashkelon Municipality’s Social Welfare Department.

Eleven women, aged 25-50, 10 divorcees, one still married, all of them with children. And all with an extraordinary courage to stand up and be counted – to bear witness to the therapeutic process they had undergone, and to be a role model for others to help break the conspiracy of silence.

Why is the play called “I have a face, not only a back”? After the initial monologue, audience attention switches to a screen and the video replay of a TV interview with one of the women. She introduces herself as “Rachel”, and we the viewers only see her back, as she tells how she was a victim of family violence.

Suddenly, the spotlight returns to the audience, and woman start popping up all around the room, announcing that “My name is Irit, Leah, Regina, …”, each one declaring that she has suffered from physical abuse. These are all real women, with truly heartbreaking stories. But now they are also actresses, who have undergone an extraordinary therapeutic process, under the supportive guidance of director Sonia Effiger, social worker Cochi Shlesinger and center director Alon Gal.

Each of these courageous women tells her story. We also see a depiction of how one of them hesitatingly comes for the first time to the center, afraid to admit that she is an abused woman. We hear a monologue from a Russian immigrant, from an ultra-Orthodox Haredi woman, one by one they tell their story.

“All of us are Partners in the Struggle Against Violence”

The third week in November, 2004, was not a good week. Two Israeli women were killed by their partners. In 2003, 22 women were murdered. In the past 10 years, a total of 248 women were murdered, a horrific number.

These numbers were read out by WIZO Israel Chairperson Yochy Feller at a profoundly moving ceremony held at WIZO House in Tel Aviv, to mark the International Day To Prevent Violence Against Women held every year on November 25th around the world. “This year, WIZO has decided to focus its efforts on the violent men,” she declared. “WIZO has a comprehensive, systematic approach to the problem, which sees the man as an integral part of treatment for abused women and her children. Thus, using the slogan “Hands Off!” (Lo Merimim Yadaiim! in Hebrew), a clear challenge to the male population – together with the mass circulation daily Yediot Aharonot we set up a hotline for violent men, maintained by a combination of formerly violent men who were treated in WIZO centers for the prevention and treatment of violence and a number of professional social workers.” An overwhelming number of phone-calls were received, demonstrating that WIZO’s initiative had really touched a sensitive nerve in the Israeli population.

“I consider the entire Israeli public, and you here today are representatives of this public, to be partners in the struggle against violence,” said Yochy, who gave a special thanks to all of the women who were involved in organizing the evening –division chairman Gila Oshrat, division director lawyer Bela Cohen and Nurit Kaufman, responsible for violence in the family. “From this platform I call on everyone to become involved in this struggle. We must break the conspiracy of silence. Each and every one of us must activate our “antennas”, must open our eyes to what is going on around us. Violence exists in all sectors of society, it can exist among our neighbors, our friends, even among our relatives. We must ensure that the issue remains on the public agenda until we eliminate violence from our society.”
Theater for Life

“A Name of Her Own

Towards the end, the woman known as “Rachel” in the TV interview gets up and announces “I am not ‘Rachel’, my real name is Tzippy!” One by one they announce what their real names are – a ceremony which enables them to take back their identity. This is clearly not a simple act for them, which is reflected by the fact that we are still not allowed to publish their photos in WIZO Review.

At the end of the show, whose conclusion is greeted with warm, enthusiastic applause of empathy and identification, the director explains how the process works.

“The entire text of the show you have just seen was written by the women themselves,” says Sonia Effinger. “We use a very special technique. Each of the women declaimed the story of another woman. They go beyond their own story, and realize that they are not of the alone.”

Director Sonia Effinger

How Could you Allow it to Happen?

Members of the audience were then given an opportunity to interact with the women. One said that “your courage is equal to the courage needed by soldiers in combat.” Another said that “to try to explain the problems of abused women reminds me of the difficulties in trying to explain to people the nature of the Holocaust.” A young WIZO staff member asked Tzippy – “You
14 Israeli women killed in the past 12 months

There was a hushed silence in the audience when World WIZO Honorary Life President Michal Modai, World WIZO Chairman Tova Ben-Dov and Yochy Feller went to the front of the stage to light 14 candles, in memory of the 14 Israeli women, Jews and Arabs, veterans and new immigrants, who were murdered during the past 12 months. The names of the 14 women appeared in black behind the candles:

12/12/03 – Chava Ben-David, 48, Netanya, shot by her estranged husband
14/12/03 – Ankonia Ymaharan, 40, Ramla, murdered by her husband in the street
24/2/04 – Carol Cohen, murdered by her husband during a trip to Thailand
5/3/04 – Maria Lim, 69 and her son Oleg, 36, Arad, stabbed by her husband
5/3/04 – Yelena Zilberstein, 27, Ashdod, stabbed by her husband
27/3/04 – Risa Weiner, 79, Givatayim, murdered by her husband
6/4/04 – Rola Abu Jabel, 30, Nazareth, murdered by her estranged husband
20/6/04 – Svetlana Rappaport, 42, Acre, murdered by her husband
1/9/04 – Segal Taleh, 37, Kiriya, strangled by her husband
5/9/04 – Yektarina Rashtanikov, Kiriya, strangled by her husband
29/9/04 – Shelly Isakov Michaelov, 33, Migdal Haemek, murdered by her husband
9/10/04 – Yevgina Krimatchensky, 73, Beersheva, murdered by her husband
18/11/04 – Yelena Kozmin, 31, Jerusalem, murdered by her partner
21/11/04 – Sachara Arshid, 38, Dir Hana, murdered by her ex-husband

The message of the women at the workshop is that all of us have to stop behaving like ostriches. We have to take our heads out of the sand and struggle to eliminate this ugly phenomenon.

A Place of Their Own: Centers, Shelters and Hotlines

WIZO runs two shelters for battered women in Israel, three Centers for the Prevention of and Treatment of Violence, a hotline for battered women and 34 legal advice bureaus. In all these locations, professionals and volunteers provide assistance and guidance to women and help them return to normal life.

Each year thousands of women are cared for in these frameworks. They receive constant assistance, professional and legal counseling, lectures, workshops and more, with the goal being to help them to get out of the cycle of violence. One of the relatively new ways of treating women is the theater workshop in Ashkelon. Aside from this, the organization runs a national hotline for battered women and for the prevention of violence in the family (Tel. 1-800-39-39-40).

“We are all partners in the struggle against violence.” Yochy Feller
For the First Time in 2000 Years: Israeli Nobel Prizes in Science

They were not exactly household names, but Prof. Avram Hershko and Prof. Aaron Ciechanover are the first-ever Israeli Nobel Prize winners in science. Israel's primary natural resource is its people, and education is the key to cultivating their abilities.

On October 5th, 2004, two professors from the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, Prof. Avram Hershko, 67, and Prof. Aaron Ciechanover, 57, were informed that they were awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for 2004, together with American Prof. Irwin Rose. They were recognized for their work in identifying a process responsible for the dissolution of cell proteins which has led to breakthroughs in the understanding of an treatment of cancer, degenerative brain diseases, cystic fibrosis and many other disorders. Technion President Prof. Yitzhak Apeloig said that "this is a mark of distinction for Israeli science in general."

Most Nobel prize winners wear a tie, but Prof. Ciechanover still comes to work in a jeans and a blue shirt, and he offers his guests warm bourekas served on laboratory napkins. Ciechanover was born and grew up in Haifa, where his mother was an English teacher and his father a lawyer. He was orphaned at a young age since his mother passed away when he was 10 and his father five years later. His extended family saved him, together with the army and the excellent Israeli education system. His older brother, Joseph Ciechanover, also excelled in his chosen professions, becoming legal adviser to the Defense Ministry and Director General of the Foreign Ministry."

Prof. Hershko, who was born in Hungary, is a Holocaust survivor. He was brought to Israel by his family when he was 12. Hershko is an Israel Prize winner, a member of both the Israel Academy of Sciences and the American the National Academy of Sciences. Hershko served as the tutor of Ciechanover's doctoral thesis. When the phone call came from Sweden, Ciechanover thought it was one of his Swedish friends inviting him to attend a conference. Instead, the voice said - "This is the secretary of the Swedish National Academy of Science. I congratulate you on being selected to receive the 2004 Nobel Prize for Chemistry."

"The Jewish Brain, That's What We Have"

"We are a country that lacks riches," he says. Ciechanover is very blunt with his assessments. "The Jewish brain, that's what we have. Everything that we've had and will have in this country is the direct and clear product of education. If we harm this system, we will drastically decline and cease to exist. We need to save the system, and to increase the allocation of long-term national resources to education. This provides the life breath for..."
“These are the values the Jews of Europe brought with them,” he says. “What did my father do in Poland all day? He sat and studied. I remember in my childhood Jews who came from Persia and Morocco living in the ma’abarat (immigrant transient camps), in tents that leaked rain. My parents adopted a child for the winter named Uriel. We would bring him home so he wouldn’t catch pneumonia and send him to school together with my brother so that he’d receive an education. In the summer, when the rain ended, we’d return him to his parents.”

“An extraordinary education system was established at the time, and I speak as a product that system,” he concluded. “The system is being damaged today because of budget cuts. It must be preserved and developed.”
Excellence in Education

**New WIZO Nahalal Campus Reaches for the Heights**

On Thursday 14 October 2004, the WIZO-Hadassah Canada Youth Village in the name of Hanna Maisel Shohat, celebrated the opening of its beautiful new campus.

"Here, everyone, student and teacher, will do the best he can, and together we will sail on the waves of life," said the youth village’s general manager David Horesh. "This campus was built thanks to the generosity of some very dear people who believed in the school’s educational staff and mission. They were all devoted to the cause and inspired others to do the same. They have created a home for students from the Jezreal Valley and from all the sectors of Israeli society - veterans and new immigrants."

“The school and youth village have created a special partnership between WIZO & the Regional Council,” said Eitan Broshi, Head of Jezreal Valley Regional Council. “The campus will serve as a central anchor of the educational system in the Jezreal Valley.”

**NASA Comes to Nahalal**

“Eight years ago I received a brochure entitled NASA,” said World WIZO President Helena Glaser, “and I wondered how WIZO was connected with space related topics. “Then I learned that NASA stood for Nahalal, Adam (human being), Sivva (environment) and Aichut (quality), and understood that this reflected a grand educational vision, the aspiration to become a qualitative human being within a qualitative environment. This campus combines many of WIZO’s goals and concepts regarding education, integration and community involvement.” Mrs. Glaser said that three factors - the Regional Council, the Ministry of Education and WIZO joined forces to create a winning combination. She thanked Tova Ben-Dov, Michal Modai, World WIZO Director General Haim Zamorsky, Eitan Broshi, the Ministry of Education and the donors, among them Hadassah-WIZO Canada; the Goldshlagger Family and WIZO Panama.

**Highest Educational Standards and Optimal Conditions**

“As someone familiar with the village and school for decades, I am delighted and excited with the new campus, a significant upgrading for the complex,” said, World WIZO Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov. “Nahalal, the first of WIZO’s schools, was established in 1923 by Hanna Meisel-Shohat, as an agricultural school for young women. A year later, in 1924 the Hadassah-WIZO Organization of Canada took over sponsorship of the institution, and in 1926 the school’s inauguration ceremony and formal opening to the public took place. From a meager start with 14 students in humble dwellings and desolate surroundings, the school has developed and expanded over the years - new buildings for classes and dormitories, agricultural facilities, laboratories and, a swimming pool were added. The school has always maintained the highest standards of education and knowledge for the benefit of the students, along with optimal physical conditions for the classes and dormitories."

“I have no doubt that Gabriella and Morris Goldshlagger would have been happy if they were to know exactly how their donation was utilized, since they always cared for the State of Israel,” said Honorary World WIZO Life President Michal Modai.

“It’s hot outside, but my heart is warm too,” said nephew Yona Goldshlagger, who unveiled the plaques on the buildings honoring the Goldshlagger’s donation.

“The youth are of the utmost importance, and thus their education is too. I see the glitter in the eyes of WIZO’s Executive and their desire to do more and more, and I praise them for that. I am sure that Morris and Gabriella Goldshlagger, who had strong ties to the State of Israel since the 1970’s and donated a lot over the years, would be glad with the results of this donation.”

**Future Nobel Prize Winners?**

Among the most famous of the school’s graduates are parachutist/poet Hanna Senesh who was one of the many young Polish and German immigrant girls who were absorbed by the school on the eve of WW II, Moshe Dayan who was born in Nahalal, and current Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, both of whom studied at the school after it became coeducational following the war.

In 2004, 1200 students are studying at WIZO Nahalal, two hundred of them under boarding school conditions. These students are the future citizens and leaders of Israel. The school enables them to gain an excellent education, within a secure and warm environment, while maintaining a loyalty to Jewish-Zionist-National values and to the tolerance, openness and faith in man that have always guided the institution.

Who knows? Maybe a future Israeli Nobel Prize winner is currently studying at WIZO Nahalal. ■
Warm winds of change were blowing at the recent “Women Defending Peace” conference held in December in Geneva

Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, wife of Egyptian President Mubarak and President of the Suzanne Mubarak Women’s International Peace Movement recently initiated a Women Defending Peace Conference in Geneva, co-chaired by Micheline Calmy-Ray of the Swiss Foreign Ministry, with some 500 representatives from around the world. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan sent a warm message, and speakers included former UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize winner Jody Williams and this year’s winner, Kenya’s Minister of Environment Wangari Maathai.

Israel’s Foreign Ministry invited me to be the sole official representative of the State of Israel. I was proud to accept this honor for WIZO.

Mrs. Mubarak quoted Annan’s statement that violence against women and girls had “reached epidemic proportions.” We women have failed to make our voices heard - what was needed was “a strong global coalition that acts as a unified and powerful women’s front capable of mobilizing civil society and conducting coordinated campaigns.”

A Forum with a Difference

This was the first such forum where the Palestinian issue did not take center stage - especially remarkable as the subject addressed was conflict resolution!

From the moment I entered the Conference hall I felt the difference. At no time did Mrs. Mubarak refer to the Palestinian issue. Even the Palestinian representatives gave more tempered presentations. Zahira Kamal, Palestinian Minister for Women’s Affairs said that the loss of their beloved leader had “left us with a lot of challenges to face. The continuity of our collective struggle for peace is one of them and must go on” She had co-taught a course on Middle East women and religion with Israeli Professor Galia Golan, and “this experience allowed us to listen to each other and to discuss our points of view more fully”

In contributing to the deliberations I wanted to be positive. I paid tribute to the conveners who gave us the opportunity of meeting and hearing one another. I described how an Israeli Jewish teacher had organized a United Nations Day, bringing together Jewish and Palestinian 17 year olds to discuss their respective positions. Two young women, a Palestinian and an Israeli, who had returned this year as facilitators, spoke of how they had come to know the other as a person rather than the enemy!

My main message? “Conflict prevention is as important as conflict resolution. We must educate towards peace rather than promote hatred of the other.” I highlighted the bridge building WIZO carries out in our Jaffa Day Care Center for Arab and Jewish children and also the importance of women being trained for leadership roles. Training has to be a pre-requisite for the inclusion of women in peace negotiating teams. Proudly I told about our four WIZO schools for leadership training and how Muslim, Jewish and Christian women benefited from studying together. My presentations were met with warm applause, and many delegates approached me to learn more about our activities.

An Invitation from Mrs. Mubarak

I had the privilege of being introduced to Mrs. Mubarak, an impressive and articulate leader. She enquired about WIZO and our objectives, and asked if I would be prepared to participate in a Round Table Discussion Conference in Cairo within the next two years. We exchanged cards. As I write this article, there is definitely a wind of change in Israel’s relationship with Egypt, which has become much warmer.

When the final Plan of Action was resolved, I was delighted to see it embraced two proposals I had presented: 1) Educating and training children and youth towards peace; and 2) Processes and training for increasing the number of women in influential positions.

Perhaps the winds of change have finally arrived. Certainly this conference was different. I felt accepted, welcomed and able to contribute in a constructive manner – a totally new experience that we can but hope is not unique!
Interview – Lee Joffe

Living Through Historic Times

Being President of WIZO South Africa today means living in the midst of historic and changing times. Lee Joffe says it’s a privilege to be where she is today.

Hillel Schenker
We met with Lee Joffe at the 23rd World WIZO EGM in Tel Aviv. She has a dramatic story to tell, as she and all the other members of WIZO South Africa are living through the transition from the former white apartheid regime to the new South Africa. Their story includes the Durban conference and the changing nature of South African Jewry.

Tell us a little about your background. Where were you born, and did you have a Jewish and Zionist education?

I was born in a very small country town in South Africa, which had a total of 10 Jewish families. It was an agricultural area, but my father had a general dealer’s store. We were always very Jewish, very traditional, maintained all the chagim (holidays) and even kept kosher, though it’s very difficult to do that in a small place. Israel was always very important to us. We had lots of family there - my mother had a brother in Israel, and my father had two sisters there.

Were your parents also born in South Africa?

Yes. Both of my parents were born in Lithuania...

The origin of many members of the Jewish community.

Yes. I’m the first generation born in South Africa, and I have two brothers, one who lives in Israel, and the other in Canada. I’m the only one left in South Africa.

Presumably there was no WIZO branch in that little town.

There definitely was no WIZO branch or Jewish day school in that little town, but the Jewish children and the Jewish children always stuck together. Even though there were only about 15 Jewish children when I was growing up, we had a little shul in the community and my father often served as the rabbi, the hazan, the gabi, everything!

Did he have training for all of this?

No. The knowledge came from a traditionally very Jewish and probably very religious Lithuanian background in the shtetl. We always had a minyan, and if necessary brought friends in, and kept the shul going.

My grandmother lived in our home and spoke Yiddish, so Yiddish was almost a mother tongue for me, together with English and Afrikaans. I know all three languages. And I have continued to keep a very Jewish home till this day.

So how did you make the contact with WIZO?

Only much later. When I was about 14 years old I went to school in a bigger city, which had about 300 Jewish families, and was exposed to Jewish youth movements. I was involved in Habonim till I finished school. When I came to the really big city, Johannesburg, I changed my loyalties and joined Betar - from one extreme to the other - and I was very involved in Betar almost until I got married.

When I was growing up, many more Jewish children belonged to youth movements. But today they are not interested in youth movements - it’s not sexy! However, the youth movements are still fairly strong, particularly the Bnei Akiva religious youth movement. There’s a big return to religion in South Africa.

Did you have a profession?

Yes. I worked in property administration until my children were born. Then we immigrated to the States and went to live in Atlanta for two years. We then seriously considered coming to live in Israel - my husband was looking at a business, which didn’t materialize - and we went back to South Africa.

At that stage, I was out of the social loop. It was the period of the height of immigration from South Africa, and many of our friends immigrated, going all over the world. This was in the late 70s, early 80s.

When I returned to South Africa I wasn’t working and needed something to fill my time. Someone invited me to a WIZO meeting, since they were trying to start a new branch. I went to the meeting, and immediately felt - this is for me. It was Israel-oriented, Zionist-oriented, and that’s where my heart lay.

I got involved at the branch level. I was the secretary, then progressed to become the treasurer and then the chairman. After that I was invited to sit on the executive where I filled various positions, the most senior one being the treasurer of WIZO Johannesburg, a regional position. Then I was invited to sit on our national council. I have been involved in WIZO for about 20 years, and now I’m the president.

Tell us about the reality of WIZO and the Jewish community in South Africa today.

The Jewish community today is about half the size of what it was 25-30 years ago. We’re about 70,000 today, and not long ago numbered 120,000. A lot of our younger people, the Lapid age in WIZO, have immigrated to Australia, Canada, the United States, Great Britain and Israel. You can see at the World WIZO conference that there are many South Africans who are delegates from other countries. As I noted before, there’s a big return to religion, so the Lubavitchers, Chabad, and the Or Sameach people are doing a wonderful job, capturing a lot of the young people. They are not anti-Zionist, but they are also not interested in belonging to WIZO where we demand a lot of their time which involves giving of one’s self, since we live in quite a self-centered society today. People would rather go to a shul and get something for themselves, rather than to give.

Nevertheless, we are still the biggest and strongest women’s organization, and the strongest Zionist organization.

How do you cope with this new reality? How do you try to reach out to attract new members?

It’s difficult. We are doing quite a lot of work with young people, hoping that it will pay dividends in the future. We work with the young women who have just finished school and are involved at a senior level in the youth movements. We have a very good
Things You Didn’t Know About Me

Family: I have a two sons, Jason and Dan aged 26 and 24, both living in South Africa, and I have a husband, Brian, who’s a high-profile businessman.

Books: For pure mindless pleasure, I enjoy reading a quick, boring murder mystery.

Movies: I like comedies - life's too serious. I like a Hugh Grant movie, nothing heavy. It's good sometimes to forget yourself in non-serious things.

Hobbies: I play bridge when I have the time, and I love the bush, love nature in South Africa. We have a game farm that is a pleasure to go to for a weekend, or even for a day, just to bird watch, animal watch – I love it.

Vacations: My husband’s business requires him to travel extensively, to the UK, Australia, France, New Zealand, and often I go with him. I have a brother in Israel and Canada, and my husband has three brothers in America, so at least once a year we go to see our family.

To become a member, and to pay membership dues, is not much of a problem. If we approach someone and ask them to become a WIZO member, they ask - what does that involve? Well - we have a commitment of membership, and for that you will receive our publications and be invited to all our activities. And if you’d like to be more involved, on a branch level - more often then not they’ll say - oh, I’m happy to be a member, but I don’t want to be involved on branch level. So we have a very good membership. Card-carrying members, if you want to call it that. But we have a lack of involved people, and that’s a problem.

You have been living through some very historic times in South Africa, with the transition from the previous white-dominated government to a multi-cultural era. How has that affected WIZO, and how do you feel about it in general?

The changes didn’t really affect us. Ultimately, what has happened is for the good of the country. The tension is over. The big threat of a revolution no longer exists. We went through a wonderfully peaceful transition. To see it and to live through was a privilege. Now things have settled down, the economy is improving, and the only problem we really have is crime. As an Israeli, you all understand what it’s like to live in danger, and you carry on. And we carry on. Somebody gets hijacked - you get into your car and you carry on. And if you don’t have a car, if you’re one of the unlucky ones, you get a new one (laughs). And thank God that you’re safe. And you carry on. I’m sure in Israel it’s the same. If someone’s been in a terrorist attack, and they survive, you say thank God, and you carry on.

It’s hard to talk to someone from South Africa without referring to the Durban conference and the phenomenon of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. Have you experienced that, and how have you dealt with it?

Durban was a wake-up call for everybody, including South African Jews. I wasn’t at the conference, but WIZO Durban was very involved. They really did a good job, under the circumstances. Tamar Lazarus was involved, and the chairman at the time was Caren Peer. When the conference on sustainable development was held the following year, the world was more prepared. Israel sent specially trained emissaries to deal with and counteract the possible problems, and we were very organized - WIZO, the Board of Deputies, the youth movements and SAUJS. We participated, and were briefed every morning, given t-shirts and pamphlets to counteract the possible confrontations, and through the wonderful modern medium of SMS or text messages, we communicated. They would say - be at this hall at 11 o’clock. There’s a possible flare-up. And we all dashed over there, with our t-shirts on, or off. We’d sing peace songs, or shout slogans. Whatever was appropriate. We were very organized. The police were also much more organized, and they immediately stopped any confrontation and pulled the fighting parties apart. I must say that the young people who came from Israel were outstanding. They did an exceptional job. We were proud to be with them on this occasion, us “old ladies.”

You mean ladies in their prime.

That’s right (laughs). Ladies in our prime.
Unfortunately, anti-Semitism is “good for the Jews.” It brings us together, and it makes us realize that we have to rely on each other. The community is stronger for it. When we launched our security appeal a few months later, we felt that the sympathies were with Israel, and had a very good response. The following year we launched the poverty appeal, and were successful as well. When there’s trouble, people stick together. When we arrange talks and forums in the past on Israeli, Jewish and Zionist themes, we used to have marginal attendance, and now we have a full house.

These are with the Jewish community. But you also work with the general community.

We do what is called a Presenting Israel program, at least once a year. We have an Israeli visitor, and sometimes also a local personality, who speaks to the general community. We make a particular effort to try to reach the Black community. We describe the WIZO programs, and the things that are happening in Israel in general, to counteract the negative publicity, and a growing Moslem fundamentalist influence in the country.

What are the primary challenges that you are facing today?

Our first challenge is to continue with our education activities, to counteract the constant negative publicity, and to try to bring in more young people. A few years ago we worked on a “Bride of the Year” program. We gave each Jewish bride a free membership for a year, and most of them have continued to pay membership dues, and receive our publications. We hope to create a new data base of young women. If they will only become paying members, that’s okay. And if we can start branches with them, that’s wonderful.

Are most of the younger women professionals?

I would say 95 percent of the young women are professionals, often working in more high-powered positions than men. In South Africa we have very stringent affirmative action. The first priority is to be a black female, second a colored female, a black male, a colored male, a white female. Young women often have more high-powered jobs than men, and are earning more money than their husbands, so of course they are very career orientated. Even now they are WIZO members, but we hope that one day, when they will retire at 50, they will become actively involved.

We also do a Bead Program every May that coincides with Yom Ha’atzmaut (Israeli Independence Day), when we speak to all the children, who make bracelets that are sent to school children in Israel. We also do a program with the children during Israel Week. Slowly the children get to know what WIZO is.

Are these children going to Jewish schools?

Ninety percent of the Jewish children are in private Jewish schools. The standard of the public schools has dropped, and people feel they want a better education for their children. This is a huge sacrifice, financially, which really puts a drain on our community. But we don’t want to think negatively. We will continue, and we will be strong. If you market yourself correctly, and you think positively, you will achieve your goals.

And finally, I wish there would be peace in Israel, and in the whole world, and health and happiness. What more could one want.

Lee & her Council

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Young Women
The Wonderful, Inspiring Aviv Seminar 2004

(To r) Yael Jspan, Ronit Collis, Allison Maurice and Gloria Bessor showing their WIZO.uk pride at the finale.
They came from 11 different countries, and many of them it was their first visit to Israel. The International WIZO Aviv Seminar was a powerful experience, and a resounding success.

We are all back on our home turf, yet the excitement of what we were privileged to experience is still strong in our heads and our hearts. We are sure all the other delegates feel the same as we do, and are bursting to share their stories, enthusiasm and passion with their own WIZO groups.

The seminar was intensive...emotionally, educationally, physically and mentally. But how lucky we were to be there.

**Day 1** began with registration. Forty-four young women from 11 nations around the world, all there for the same purpose...to help the women and children of Israel have a better quality of life.
As soon as we registered we were whisked off to an Opening Ceremony at the Tel Aviv Hilton. We drank, ate, danced, sang and most importantly got to know each other.

Day 2 was an intensive workshop day at the hotel. We heard brilliant speakers, who were very informative and incredibly motivating. All that we learned is so relevant to our every day tasks of building stronger WIZO groups. To succeed you need knowledge, and we certainly were given that. At night we were treated to a dinner at WIZO Petach Tikva Community Center, where again we were looked after and entertained.

Day 3 was a tour of Jerusalem. We visited Mount Scopus with its magnificent views. At this special place we had a L’chaim and we danced and broke challah together. Those of us who were experiencing Israel for the very first time (Kerri Adams included) were presented with a certificate saying that a tree had been planted in our name in the WIZO Forest in Israel. This was such a special and very moving moment.

Eyes Wide Open at the Finale
We arrived on Israel’s door step with our eyes closed. We had heard from those at home who have been fortunate to attend a World WIZO Seminar before, but nothing could prepare us for what we were about to experience.

We have been looked after……..and fed……..cared for……..and fed……..loved……..and fed……..educated……..and fed……..we’ve cried……..and been fed……..been moved……..and fed some more!!!! (You’ll probably have to go on a diet after you get back — ed).

The knowledge and feelings we take home from our time in Israel is overflowing in our heads and our hearts. We have met special women with the same passion as ourselves whom we have bonded with and will enjoy continued friendships created by WIZO.

We leave Israel with our eyes wide open to the needs of those who depend on us and to whom we are so committed. Our passion now is to go home and share with our fellow WIZO members, families and friends all we have learnt and experienced and hopefully in some way give them a piece of Israel and spread the special feeling we now are lucky enough to hold in our hearts forever.

We thank you our fellow WIZO women for giving us the continued empowerment to keep going forward and spreading our special message.

We hope to see you all in Australia one day.
AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE OI OI OI

Speech by Kerri Adams and Sara Karpin at the Finale of the International Aviv Seminar
We then visited two WIZO projects: The Freddie and Susi Bradfield WIZO Center for Youth and Adults and then the amazing Rebecca Sieff Family Center. This project affected many of us emotionally. It houses so many different groups of needy women and children from so many different backgrounds, ranging from women who are victims of domestic violence to children from very poor socio-economic backgrounds.

Yad Vashem, Israel’s National Holocaust Museum was our next stop and one we will never forget. We had a ceremony in the memorial for all of us to stop, cry, think and reflect on what was such an important part of our Jewish history.

Once our eyes were dry, we were taken on a tour of the Western Wall and tunnels. A real eye opener and a chance to learn so much more about Israel’s history.

That night, with our last bit of energy, we were taken to the WIZO Denise Bernard-Kahn Youth Club and Community Center in Bet Shemesh for some more food, dance and entertainment.

Day 4 was a taste of the Air Force, as we were treated to a guided tour at the Palmahim Air Force base. We heard from one of Israel’s pilots about the extraordinary search and rescue missions that they carry out, saving Israelis, Palestinians and tourists. We also visited the beautiful WIZO day care center at the Air Force base that houses the gorgeous children of all the amazing men and women who help defend Israel.

We then traveled to the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda School and Youth Village. This school not only provides children with an education but also gives them the opportunity to learn a trade, to ensure their futures.

The afternoon was spent at Nachlat Yehuda listening to some more brilliant speakers and being educated on some inspiring fundraising techniques.

Our final night in Israel was spent at the Rishon Winery, where we all got to party, dance on tables (yes on the tables!) and celebrate what had been such a special week for us all.

The last day was spent hearing more inspirational speakers, followed by the final wrap up of skits, songs, poems and other very creative and amusing ways for us to all say how we felt and of course our sad goodbyes.

We all thank you, World WIZO, for this wonderful, inspiring opportunity, and for opening our eyes wide to the needs of those who depend on us and those to whom we are so committed.

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Aviv’s Voice

These last two years as World Aviv Representative have been a privilege and a wonderful experience, especially as an Israeli living in the Diaspora. During this period I have been totally amazed by the work going on around the world for WIZO. I have enjoyed communicating with you all and hearing the news from around the world. I urge you all to carry on with your amazing fundraising efforts.

Although tiring, I am sure those of you who were there will agree that the International Aviv Seminar was fantastic. Girls, remember, we are all ambassadors wherever we go, and don’t forget, be proud to be a member of WIZO. It is a very special organization.

For those of you who experienced the fantastic seminar program - when you meet up with your group again, don’t forget what you felt when you went to see the projects and listened to the staff and the children. Convey those emotions and energy to your group. You saw part of the wide scope of the work that WIZO does, and how much we are needed and appreciated. Spread the word!

As some of you know, I am coming to the end of my term of office. I wish my successor all the very best for the future.

Lots of love to you all.
Ronit Collis
Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive

“The seminar was intensive....emotionally, educationally, physically and mentally. But how lucky we were to be there” Kerri and Sara

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There are more similarities between Australia and Israel than one might expect. Both countries are receiving many new immigrants from societies which experienced stress, difficulty and trauma. Australia has much to learn from the Israeli and WIZO educational experience.
arie Hammer, an Australian specialist in early age childhood education, was the recipient of a prestigious Yachad Scholarship, that enabled her to come to Israel to learn from Israeli and WIZO expertise in early age childcare. “The program is an information exchange,” says Marie, “which enables specialists in Australia to learn about what is happening in their field in Israel. It has the strong support of the Jewish community in Australia, and its purpose is to encourage scholars to look beyond the traditional British and American models of doing things.”

**Immigrants from Kosovo, East Timor and Africa**

It’s not coincidental that people in Australia feel that the Israeli experience is relevant to them. Australia, like Israel, is very dependent on migration, and both countries have large immigrant populations. “Australia is a large country, but we have a relatively small population.” Both countries have to accommodate different cultures, different styles, and, many of the new arrivals come from places where there has been a great deal of stress, difficulty and trauma. People have recently arrived in Australia from such conflict-ridden places as Kosovo and East Timor and from various African states. “They bring with them the issues of the difficulties they had in their countries of origin, as well as all the issues of adjusting to a new country and a new way of life,” says Marie. “Israel is dealing very much, and very successfully, with the same types of problems. An Australian who participated in the program last year saw great similarities between the problems of the Ethiopian community in Israel and the aboriginal community in Australia - and the need for society to be more inclusive. This led to the establishment of a new program in Australia, a direct result of this cultural exchange. Another topic where Israel’s knowledge is relevant for Australia is the question of water conservation - a “burning issue” in Australia. “We have had five years of drought in Australia, and it’s a major problem.”

Australian-Israeli affinity is reflected by the fact that the military cemetery in Be’ersheba is the largest Australian military cemetery outside of Australia. Dr. Everett, the Australian Ambassador to the UN was the one who moved the motion to establish the Israeli state in 1947. There are very strong ties between the two countries, and the Yachad scholarship program is aimed at cultivating these ties.

**Learning from WIZO’s Educational Experience**

In Marie’s case, Ann Zablud, a former President of WIZO Australia, contacted Monash University in Melbourne, looking for
Early Age Childhood Education

an academic specialist in early age childhood, a field where WIZO has great experience in Israel, “and that’s how I eventually was chosen for the program,” says Ann. “As the coordinator of the Early Childhood Education Program at Monash University, I met with Ann and explained what our scholars were doing. When I discussed it with our staff, we decided that my particular research about the impact of trauma on children’s social and emotional development was very relevant to the programs and situation in Israel.

“In my visits to WIZO early age childcare programs,” says Marie, “I’ve seen a strong commitment to building up children’s capacity to participate in society, something I would call ‘social competence.’ I’ve been impressed by the level of many intervention and preventative programs, which we have scaled down in Australia because of budget cuts during the past 10-15 years. One of the things I would hope you would learn is not to allow things to be cut down that far, given the current economic constraints that Israel is facing. When you destroy something, it’s much more difficult build it up again.”

“I expect to take home to Australia many inspiring program ideas and projects that I’ve seen throughout Israel and the WIZO educational network. This is particularly true of the WIZO therapeutic and multipurpose day care centers, where everything comes together in a constructive way. There is acknowledgement of the role of the professional, alongside the regular educational staff - a real sense of teamwork.” Marie was very impressed by the delicate balance maintained at the Jewish-Arab multi-purpose day care center in Jaffa. Her visit to the Rebecca Sieff Center in Jerusalem (sponsored by British WIZO) has already led to an e-mail exchange about curriculum development, and she was also very impressed by the WIZO School for Women’s Political leadership, “a carefully constructed program that empowers women to be influential in the policy-making and decision-making processes.” She notes that 94 percent of the staff in early childhood education is female, and it is important that women gain leadership skills that will enable them “to help shape the educational programs.”

There are great similarities between the problems of the Ethiopian community in Israel and the aboriginal community in Australia - and the need for society to be more inclusive in both countries

“There is a recognition in Israel that children’s behavior is not a question of being naughty or bad, but is symptomatic of other problems in a child’s life. People are very empathetic to where children are coming from”

People in Israel have Great Empathy for Children

“There is a recognition in Israel that children’s behavior is not a question of being naughty or bad, but is symptomatic of other problems in a child’s life. People are very empathetic to where children are coming from. Children are really valued here. They are the center, and that is not the case in Australia. We constantly argue that we’re forgetting about the children. People are even criticized sometimes for being ‘too child focused’. Here you see children dining with their families. It’s part of the ambience of the community. I think that’s one of the really special aspects of Israel. In Australia, day care centers are open 20-24 hours a day. People even leave their children at day care centers at night when they go to the theater! You drop off your children and drop off your laundry, and at night you pick both of them up.”

Marie is aware that everything in Israel is not ideal. In her presentation to the WIZO executive in Melbourne upon her return, she said that among the “many similarities between Israel and Australia are the fact that the pressures of life can lead to domestic violence and child abuse. The day to day trials of poverty can lead to neglect. The one glaring difference is the obvious pressure of living in the shadow of terrorism that can strike at any time and plunge a family into the depths of despair.”

Another difference is that in Israel, children go into the army at 18, which means there’s a defined childhood. In Australia, they tend to wander on, staying at home well into their 20s, with no clear conclusion to childhood. “Of course,” she adds, “the tragedy of army service is the danger involved, and the loss of lives, of boys and girls.”

“People in Israel are very passionate about what they are doing,” concludes Marie, “and really committed to their work with children, and they really believe in trying to make a difference. It’s been quite mind-blowing.”
Friends of WIZO Initiates First Ever Sponsor a Child Event in Israel

On October 26th, Friends of WIZO organized the first Sponsor a Child luncheon ever held in Israel. The event, which was hosted by Linda Sagol at her elegant home, attracted the participation of 55 women and the support of over 100 donors. Chaired by Esther Mor and Betty Crystal, the event generated important funding for WIZO’s services for children in Israel.

In the warm and cordial setting of the Sagols’ home, Betty Crystal spoke about the importance of WIZO’s quality child care for Israel’s youngest citizens. Sponsor a Child pins were presented to the leading supporters of the event by Friends of WIZO Chairperson Esther Mor and by World WIZO Fundraising Chairperson Celia Michonik. Special thanks were conveyed by Yochy Feller, Chairperson of WIZO Israel. Esther Mor also presented hostess Linda Sagol with WIZO’s prestigious Silver Award in recognition for her support for WIZO.

The event concluded with an announcement that a home has already been volunteered for next year’s Sponsor a Child luncheon. Sponsor a Child is a worldwide WIZO campaign in support of WIZO’s services for children in Israel.

McDonald Come to Haifa

Despite his Scottish name, the British Ambassador to Israel Simon McDonald was born in Manchester. You had to be at the first 2004/2005 season luncheon of the Genia Wilsker WIZO English Speaking Group in Haifa to discover that fact - a fact that was particularly appreciated by the third of the group members who themselves come from Manchester. Ambassador McDonald turned out to be a delightful speaker and personality. He explained British policy towards the region, emphasized Israel’s right to self-defense, and said that Britain was working hard to reduce anti-Semitism. It was an excellent luncheon, with everyone maintaining the tradition of paying NIS 50 for a ticket to support WIZO’s activities.

This was followed by a fascinating luncheon with Jerusalem Post journalist Ruthie Blum, who spoke about “Israel - Miracles and Paradox.”

Rose Bloch
Making History: WIZO Israel’s First General Assembly

“This is a first step, and I hope it will become a breakthrough,” said WIZO Israel Chairperson Yochy Feller, speaking at the first-ever WIZO Israel General Assembly, that took place at the Meridian Hotel in Haifa, with the participation of hundreds of delegates from WIZO chapters throughout the country.

Etty Ashtar, Chairperson of WIZO Israel’s Guidance and Development Department, said that “the motivation for organizing the general assembly arose from the field, which expressed a desire to have a joint meeting between the members of WIZO Israel’s executive and the executives of the chapters throughout the country.”

“We wanted to increase the flow of information between the national executive and the local branches,” said Yochy Feller, “which wanted a greater role in the discussions and decision-making.

We set five goals before us:
1) To recruit new members so that we will have new strength to work in the field;
2) To ensure that we have a younger generation of WIZO volunteers;
3) Leadership, the key word in a voluntary organization, which must be based on the cultivation of leadership skills to motivate people to act;
4) Organization and order, to ensure that goals are achieved;
5) Spirit, a new, fresh spirit is the key to achieving all of our common goals, based upon cooperation and solidarity.

“When I see Yochy Feller and all of the women in the audience,” said World WIZO President Helena Glaser, “I know that we have leadership and continuity, and this is our strength as a women’s movement. You, the volunteers, are the heart, the goal for which all of our Federations around the world are working.”

“My wife convinced me that women are better than men,” said Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav. “It is appropriate that the WIZO Israel General Assembly is convening in Haifa,” he continued, “because we gave you Yochy Feller. We are particularly proud of the new campus of the WIZO College in Haifa’s German Colony. People want to join something which is successful, and WIZO is a successful organization.”

“I see before me the smiling facing of women from all over the country,” said Herzliya Mayor Yael German, one of the two female mayors in Israel. Women’s leadership is a key to improving Israeli society. We have to pass laws that will guarantee a certain percentage of women in all political positions. Our society needs women leadership, and my priorities are based on the feminist culture that I acquired in the course of my life.. I have always believed mutual admiration. WIZO is well integrated into the entire fabric of life here in Haifa, and you, dear delegates are the people who convert the goals of our movement into a reality. You are at the forefront of our struggle to confront the social needs of our society.”

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“I see before me the smiling facing of women from all over the country,” said World WIZO Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov, who came together to demonstrate a combination of togetherness, love and
Having fun at WIZO Israel’s First Assembly

In the importance of social change, and a different style of administration.

After Dr. Ariel Karya gave a lecture on “The confrontation of volunteer organizations with changes and globalization in the 21st century,” the delegates participated in sessions on such topics as “Cooperation between Branches,” “Effective Running of Meetings,” “Recruiting and Guiding Volunteers,” “Resource Development,” and “The Management of Community Projects.”

Mimi Berkow – A Haifa Legend

For tens of years, the English-speaking group of WIZO Haifa has been meeting once a month at the WIZO branch, cooking, bringing food and listening to a lecture. They buy a ticket to each event, which helps support the activities of WIZO in Haifa.

This year, the group held a retirement farewell party for their long-time chairperson, Mimi Berkow. At the party, she related the fabulous story of her family.

In 1944, in the midst of WW II, her father, Yehoshua Wilsker, who was an expert in glassmaking and ran a factory in South Africa, was invited to establish the Finitzia glass bottle-making factory in Haifa. Her parents, who were dedicated Zionists in their native Russia, welcomed the opportunity to come on aliyah to Eretz Israel. Mimi and her mother, Dr. Genia Wilsker, arrived in the country after the war was over. Her mother was very active in WIZO, and served as chairperson of WIZO Haifa from 1968-1975.

During the War of Independence, Mimi served in the Hagana, and later in Machal, the overseas volunteers corps. After the war she served as secretary to Arieh Pincas, who later was to become Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive. She then returned to South Africa and married her husband Gerald, spending the next 15 years there with her husband and two children.

She returned to Israel, and in 1967 she replaced Faye Hirsh as Chairperson of the WIZO English-speaking group in Haifa. The group had regular monthly activities, and Mimi recalls that among the first speakers they brought to the group were Abba Eban, Moshe Arens and Lea Rabin. “I always tried to invited speakers with a special message or story, that would captivate the audience and inspire them from a cultural and informational point of view,” she says. The group also was responsible for running a WIZO clothes boutique. “WIZO is a challenge for every woman,” she says, “and it’s vitally important that every WIZO volunteer sees in front of them the purpose of their actions, and the results of their activity in the field.”

Ora Bahat, Chairperson WIZO Haifa
New York

Garden Party & Casino Night
WIZO New York, under the leadership of New York Chair Gail Perl, launched the fundraising season with a garden party hosted by Haley Lieberman Binn and Jason Binn at their summer home in Southampton. Haley and Cecilia Lempert will chair the second annual WIZO Casino Night in January 2005.

WIZO Reaches Long Island
WIZO New York celebrated the inauguration of its newest chapter, WIZO Long Island, at the home of Erein and Henry Justin. Chapter Co-Chairs Donna Omari and Dr. Carole Lerman Libby introduced Mira Sofer, Vice President and Sara Rabbani, Director of Development, and welcomed WIZO USA President Evelyn Sommer who reported on WIZO’s current activities in Israel. Iris Rosin of Iris in Design, daughter of WIZO member Aviva Rosin, made a special presentation on the art of dried and live floral arrangements that was very well-received by everyone.

Rita Katz, Terrorist Hunter
Rita Katz, the author of “Terrorist Hunter: The Extraordinary Story of a Woman Who Went Undercover to Infiltrate the Radical Islamic Groups Operating in America,” was the exciting guest speaker at a reception hosted by Nurit Kahane-Haase and Werner Haase at their home. WIZO members and their guests gathered to hear Ms. Katz tell the amazing story of her life as a Jew born in Iraq and her undercover investigative work to expose terrorists in the U.S.

Happy Chanukah Boutique
Tammy Cohen, member of the WIZO New York Executive, organized a Chanukah Boutique at her home. The event, featuring a dozen vendors of jewelry, clothes and services, was so successful that plans are already underway to hold another next year.

Three Guests from Israel
Members of the Tri-State and New York Executives welcomed three important guests from Israel this fall. Yossi Goshin, principal of the renowned WIZO Nir Haemek School and Youth Village near Afula, reported on the achievements and continuing needs of the school, a major project of WIZO USA. The event was also the occasion of the official inauguration of the new offices of WIZO USA Headquarters in New York. Tova Ben Dov, Chair of the World WIZO Executive, presented a dramatic report on how WIZO is confronting the many challenges it is facing during these critical times. Helena Glaser, President of World WIZO, was warmly welcomed by over 50 members who came to hear Ms. Glaser’s report on WIZO projects and requirements. All these events were held in the presence of Janice Gillerman, wife of Israel’s Ambassador to the United Nations and former member of the World WIZO Executive.
Festival of Lights and Opera

WIZO New York concluded its fall fundraising season in December with “A Festival of Lights and Opera” to benefit the Sponsor A Child program. The event, chaired by Caren and Arturo Constantiner, Mira and Beny Sofer, Nurit Kahane and Werner Haase, was hosted by Mireille and Robert Manocherian at their home. The highlight of the evening was the performance by internationally acclaimed opera star Chen Reiss. Ms. Reiss also sang the blessing while Steven and Daniel Manocherian and Ariela Kahane Haase lit the Chanukah candles. Caren Constantiner greeting the guests who included Celia Michonik, Chairperson of the World WIZO Fundraising Department, Ruth Mekel, wife of the Consul General of Israel in New York, Joan Kahn, WIZO USA Vice President and Sophie Sabo, National Treasurer, and Laurence and Mira Rappaport. WIZO USA President Evelyn Sommer presented the Wall of Life Award to Sydelle and Henry Ostberg and a special award to hosts Mireille and Robert Manocherian made by members of the Adisia Project in Afula.
**Los Angeles**

**The Power of Women**

WIZO Los Angeles, led by Western Region Vice Presidents Malka Fogel and Barbara Limon, held their Annual Membership Luncheon at the home of Izek and Aline Shomof. The event was chaired by Gisele Joffe, Lily Artenstein and Miriam Wizman. WIZO Los Angeles Co-Chairs Louise Collin and Orly Maciborski welcomed 52 new members. Guest Speaker Michele Bohbot, president and founder of the Bisou Bisou Fashion House, spoke about the “Power of Women” in today’s society.

![Malka Fogel, Soraya Nazarian and Ruth Davidov](image)

**Chanukah in L.A.**

WIZO Los Angeles celebrated Chanukah with a party, chaired by Ruth Davidov, Kathy Mannheim, Nava Marmur, Shirley Sherman and Hanna Shlomi, held at the Sephardic Temple in Los Angeles.

**Florida**

**Annual Gala Luncheon**

On November 16, 2004, WIZO Miami held its Annual Gala Luncheon, this time honoring lifelong volunteer and donor Claudine Assous. The luncheon featured performances by renowned opera singer Vivian Fulop and Oscar Caballero and his Tango Ensemble, and everyone enjoyed the carefully selected entertainment. Prior to the beautiful affair, attendees were treated to a large selection of artwork by well-known local artists. Among those present were WIZO Florida President Mercedes Ivcher, WIZO Florida Senior Vice-President Rosita Retelny, WIZO Florida Vice-Presidents Beverly Kopolowitz and Jana Falic, , Sisel Klurman, Regina Brandwayn and Charlotte Rohr. The luncheon was organized under the dynamic leadership of Rosita Retelny.

**Washington**

**Dancing Under the Stars with Golda Meir**

WIZO Washington honored Dorothy Ascherman with the 2004 Rebecca Sieff Humanitarian Award at their Sponsor A Child event “Dancing Under the Stars,” held under the guidance of chapter chairs Margie Blumberg, Annette Forseter and Nancy Reed. The evening was organized by Karen Keats, Fran Odinec, Irma Koretsky, Susan Levin, Ellen Ratner, Celia Cantor, Phyllis Kliman, Cathy Sonneborn and Linda Rosenkranz. The event included “An Evening with Golda Meir,” a one-woman show starring actress Renee Taylor, followed by an elegant dinner.

![Dorothy Ascherman](image)

![Charlotte Rohr, Fima and Nili Falic](image)

![Mercedes Ivcher and Claudine Assous](image)
Ambassador Dan Gillemman at Donor’s Recognition Dinner

On October 12, 2004, WIZO Florida held its Annual Donors’ Recognition Dinner, a celebration of those who selflessly support our organization through our Fundraising Campaign. Under the leadership of Beverly Koplowitz, Head of Fundraising and WIZO Florida Vice President, we were honored to feature Ambassador Dan Gillemman, Permanent Representative of Israel to the UN, whose speech was brilliant and inspiring. All attendees rose to their feet to applaud a magnificent presentation that brought hope and pride to all those present. WIZO Florida Vice President Jana Falic followed with a powerful appeal, that motivated a fantastic fundraising effort. Among those present were WIZO Florida President Mercedes Ivcher, WIZO Florida Senior Vice President Rosita Retelny, Saul Retelny, Myriam Weinstein, Aline Jacobsohn, Ralph and Rita Jacobsohn, Harold and Beatriz Jacobsohn, Sisel Klurman, Regina Brandwayn, Rosita and Frank Greenberg, Stephanie and Salo Esquenazi, Reyna and David Behar, Lillian and Moises Tabacinic and Charlotte and Sami Rohr.

Judith Groisman, Executive Director, WIZO Florida
San Francisco

**Latin Nights & End of the Summer Party**

WIZO Nativ, under the leadership of chapter chair Betty Paz, held a fundraising “end of summer” party at Serra Park for parents and children, and a festive and successful “Latin Night” dance party.

Bulgaria

**Summer Camp for Senior Citizens**

In our last issue we reported about the wonderful five-day summer camp for senior citizens organized by WIZO Bulgaria at Bankja, a resort near Sofia. Now we have some photos, sent to us by Alice Levy, Vice President WIZO Bulgaria.

Discussing Israel, “the situation,” and anti-Semitism

Jewish songs and dances at the summer camp

France

**ECWF Debates Professional Career Versus Voluntary Work**

The European Council of WIZO Federations (ECWF) held their annual conference in Paris at the end of November, attended by 75 delegates from France, Holland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Lithuania, the UK and Israel.

The aim of the ECWF is to strengthen bonds between WIZO’s European Federations, fight anti-Semitism and racism, promote gender equality, human rights and the status of women and lobby on behalf of Israel.

ECWF President Lien Heijmans-Slager, from WIZO Holland, presided over the conference, whose key topic was professional career versus volunteer work - what future for women’s organizations? The message was that with the increased privatization of social and welfare organizations, voluntary organizations such as WIZO are essential for women wishing to maintain a professional career or to prepare them to enter one. Organized voluntarism is still more efficient than individual effort; and voluntary work can turn into a profession.

World WIZO President, Helena Glaser, a lifelong campaigner for the status of women, addressed the conference on career versus voluntarism. Yvette Roudy, former French Minister for Women’s Rights and President of the French Women’s Assembly, spoke about volunteer work and a political career. Corinne Lepage, former French Minister of the Environment and President of Cap 21 (Citizenship, Action and Participation in the 21st century), discussed administrative thoughts: possible aids for civil society. Esther Fouchier, Jewish VP of the Mediterranean Women’s Forum, whose aims are to help women advance better understanding of diverse origins and backgrounds, discussed volunteering and a professional career. Her husband gave up his job to enable her to pursue her profession in the voluntary sector. ECWF representatives also reported on their lobbying successes at various sessions of the Council of Europe, the European Women’s Lobby and the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Margitta Neuwald-Golling of WIZO Germany, an ECWF VP, spoke about fighting anti-Semitism in her country and VP Daisy Masse discussed her partnership with French schools, “School Watch”, a network counteracting racism, anti-Semitism and sexist problems.

The next ECWF conference will be held in Frankfurt in 2005.

Judy Miller, WIZO.uk and Anne Jacobson, ECWF Secretary General
**WIZO Gala**

Thanks to the women of WIZO Frankfurt, a very successful gala evening was organized. Among those present were major donors and important artists and performers, prominent personalities Dr. H.C. Paul Spiegel, Dr. Solomon Korn, Mr. Norbert Kartmann, President of the Hessen Parliament, Mr. Ilan Mor, representative of the Israeli Embassy, Edgar Itt, Juta Ebeling, Helga Trosken, Frau Haidl and Roland Koch and important guests who participate every year. Altogether 340 people came to participate in the 7th WIZO Gala held at the Hilton Hotel.

At the entrance to the gala, a small box of candies was presented to each guest.

Rachel Singer, President of WIZO Germany, greeted all of the guests in the most cordial manner.

Dr. Paul Spiegel quoted German President Johannes Rau — “When you give double the amount you intend to give, you have only given half of what was expected of you.” This sentence had an influence on the evening’s goal of raising 500 Sponsor a Child scholarships for WIZO children.

The evening was run by well-known masters of ceremony Ulla Kock and Thomas Koschwitz. “WIZO Superstars,” the young performing troupe from the WIZO Nir Haemek High School and Youth Village (sponsored by WIZO Argentina & WIZO USA), entertained the audience with Israeli songs and dances, led by actress/singer Agam Rodberg. The guests enjoyed the Hilton menu, with expensive wine contributed by Brizzis Trattoria.

Roberto Blanco sang a medley from his repertoire, and the entire audience danced to his song “Sex Bomb”.

Pepa Lis was chosen “Woman of the Year” for raising 50 scholarships. This was the second year that artist Mike Kuhlmann contributed a painting. Bank Leumi bought his painting, “The Sleeping Child,” for 16,000 Euro, and donated it to the new Jewish school that will be opened two years from now. A second painting that WIZO received from the artist will also hang from its walls.

Chef Johnny Klinke, who appears in a series of TV variety programs, made a presentation that drew great applause from the audience.

We thank the sponsors Credit Suisse (D), the Hilton Hotel, Mike Kuhlmann, Bank Hapoalim, Bank Leumi, Les Ambassadeurs GmbH, The Leading Hotels of the World Ltd., Brizzis Trattoria, Bouquerterie Felicia, Henkell & Sohnlein, Sprungli and many other major donors such as the Dani Family and Lisa J ammer, Maruscha and Dr. Salomon Korn, Frau Pepa Lis, Diana and Jakob Schnabel, Frau Rachel Singer, Barbel and Dr. Michel Friedman, Frau Miriam Gertler, Bareket Katsir and Josef Buchmann, Nicole and Robert Faktor, Ronny Weiner, and the Taubenblatt family.

Thanks to them, WIZO can enable hundreds of children, who otherwise couldn’t afford it, to attend WIZO day care centers throughout Israel.

**Nostalgic Fashion Show**

The WIZO Gruppe Hellen Hannover organized a 60’s Nostalgic Fashion Show as a major fundraising event. Many people came to participate, sitting around tables and drinking coffee. They saw an exhibition of hats, shoes and night-bags, all modeled by members of the group. The evening was moderated by Grit Heinsel, a long-time friend of WIZO. The highlight of the evening was the appearance of Ingrid Wettberg, a veteran WIZO member, and chairperson of the Liberal community. All the models were received with great enthusiasm. The climax was an appearance by Genia, Tanja and Carola in white wedding gowns, the oldest of which was from 1954.

At the end, every participant received a rose from the chairperson, and the audience contributed generously to support WIZO’s activities.

**Ruth Borenstein**
Visiting WIZO Projects in Israel

This year, once again many members of the German Jewish community visited Israel on the occasion of the Fall holidays. Maccabi Frankfurt also organized a training camp at the Wingate sports center for our youth soccer team. We encouraged WIZO in Israel to organize a trip for us to the projects in Israel supported by WIZO Germany, and Maccabi Frankfurt immediately agreed to participate, both the kids and their parents. We decided to focus on two projects: the Luba and Moshe Korn Day Care Center in Ramat Israel and the Theodor Heuss Family Therapy Center in Herzlia.

World WIZO Fundraising Department Chairperson Celia Michonik brought us from Tel Aviv in a bus. About 50 people came with us from Berlin, Frankfurt, Cologne and Munich., including men and children. On our way, Celia told about the difficulties facing WIZO and Israeli society during the past year, with a particular emphasis on the increase in poverty among the Israeli population due to the intifada and the world-wide economic crisis.

At the day care center, we were welcomed by the children, educators and Dina Bar, Chairperson of the World WIZO Early Age Care and Education Division. At this center, children from age three months to two years are taken care of from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., enabling both of their parents to work. We visited the new therapeutic area and the newly refurbished playground.

The funds needed for both facilities were raised five months ago during one evening in Frankfurt that was organized by Dr. Florian and Sandra Janis, together with Jacky and Esther Endzweig. Moshe and Luba Korn, who had made the donation which enabled the day care center to be established in 1989 were also present, and World WIZO President Helena Glaser gave a talk about the extensive range of services that WIZO provides to the Israeli society. Inspired by the occasion, a ten-year-old boy in our group contributed 20 shekels from his pocket on the spot.

We then traveled on to the Theodor Heuss Family Therapy Center, where we were welcomed by Center Director Nelly Jonas, World WIZO Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov and World WIZO Public Affairs and NGO Chairperson Brenda Katten. Nelly told us about the positive feedback she continues to receive from former participants of the therapy week. Only recently, the lounges and some of the rooms at the center were refurbished, and we could see the positive changes. The reception area is embellished by a Mike Kuhlmann painting that was donated at the last Frankfurt Gala and Bank Hapoalim.

Another surprise still awaited us. Nicole and Perla Factor each received a “Woman of Valor” pin, for their generous donation to the WIZO “Poverty is not only Food” campaign last year. Their donation helped external pupils from poor families at WIZO schools. Nicole, who was one of the organizers of our trip, was very moved.

The day trip was a great success, and all the participants said that they had absolutely no regrets that they decided to come, rather than just laying on the beach.

Jenny Sommer

Children at the Ramat Aviv Day Care Center with Muriel Martin and Rachel Gerczikow

Ingrid Grinbart, Helena Glaser, Luba and Moshe Korn at the day care center in their name

The Maccabi Frankfurt football team

Nicole Faktor meets a little friend in Ramat Israel
Delegates Assembly

This year’s WIZO Delegates Assembly was held on June 7th in Berne.

We bid farewell to Carola Hecker, our Secretary in WIZO Friburg. In her honor, Friburg was represented at the assembly by a very large delegation. Carola gave a wonderful D’var Torah, and we all thanked her for her dedication.

Rama Einav described the nature of her work as WIZO’s NGO representative to the UN in Geneva. She gave us vivid report of her important work, and her efforts to demonstrate that Israel is really a democratic state.

Our guest from Israel was Yariv Sultan, director of the World WIZO Federations Division. He described his responsibilities, and what World WIZO does for the Swiss Federation. Yariv emphasized the importance of membership, and the reasons why a woman becomes a WIZO member. He gave us many ideas and suggestions about how to “sell” WIZO, but it’s up to us to realize them.

A very effective video film of the WIZO schools supported by the Swiss Federation, prepared by the World WIZO Publicity Department, was shown at the Assembly. We hope to show it at all of the WIZO branches throughout Switzerland.

Kreuzlingen

It is very hard to organize activities in such a small branch. But our WIZO chaverot do their utmost for Israel. One of their main sources of income is the sale of roses and day care center greeting cards. One can also receive a parcel of honey and jam on request.

La-Chaux-de-Fonds

On October 30th, the annual evening party was held, featuring an excellent jazz orchestra. It was well attended and very successful.

Lausanne

On November 23rd, the branch organized its annual Hanukkah sale at the Lausanne Palace.

Zurich

On November 27-28, the Bazaar was held at the Zurich Fair. Many people came to the event, which brought in much income.

Edith Bino

The Golem Makers Project

When Elisabeth Bronfen was elected President of WIZO Minas Gerais in April, everyone knew that she would do an outstanding job. Today the Minas Gerais Executive is a very productive combination of Aviv and more experienced members.

They demonstrated their abilities when WIZO was identified with an unusual international project entitled “The Republic of Golem Makers.” This consists of a wandering exhibition of 36 works of art based on the Golem myth, designed by non-Jewish Fine Arts Professor Dr. Vald Eugen Poenaru, based on a book, “The Golem Maker.” The book is based on research carried out by Professor Luiz Nazario and Dr. Lyslei Nascimento at the Federal University of Minas Gerais.

Golem in Hebrew means shapeless, amorphous. It became a myth when a rabbi in Prague was supposed to have created a giant made of clay - the Golem - who protected the Jewish community when threatened by anti-Semitism. Prof. Poenaru created 36 works of art to symbolize the 36 righteous individuals who are supposed to watch over mankind. All of the art is based upon elements of family, heritage, work and dreams of the Jewish communities around the world. The entire project is based upon the belief that intolerance towards the Jewish people stems from the lack of an acquaintance with our culture, ideas and customs.

We are proud that the acknowledgement of WIZO’s assistance is registered both in the exhibition and the book, at no financial cost to us. Former WIZO Brazil president Ana Marlene Starec represented WIZO at the exhibition opening in Belo Horizonte.

Sarita Schaffel, President WIZO Brazil
Leah Rosen

WIZO.uk regrets to announce the passing of Honorary Council member Leah Rosen in August 2004 at the age of 96. The loss of Leah Rosen is a great one† for WIZO.uk both in London and in Hull, where she undertook outstanding work for the local community, especially in support of her late husband during his term of office as Mayor and Sheriff of Hull. Leah’s exceptional work for WIZO in Hull has been recognized by her name being the first to be† inscribed on WIZO.uk’s Women of Worth Board at WIZO House in London. Her daughter, Angela Landau, an ongoing and highly active WIZO member, is continuing her tradition. She serves as a vice-president of WIZO.uk and is an independent member of the European Council of WIZO Federations. Leah will be greatly missed and always fondly remembered.

Columbia

Continuing Our Activity

We are continuing with our activity for Israel:
1) Bazaar activity for children and adults.
2) Selling of gifts for Rosh Hashana by WIZO Aviv
3) Special activity for children during the Jewish holidays
4) A Hannukah Tea for women with prizes and raffles.
5) Conferences presented by important personalities in Colombian life to educate the community
6) Cultural and Creative Entertainment projects together with the Jewish community’s institutions.

This multitude of activities helps to cultivate skills that can be passed on.

Once a year, the Carmel Club organizes a bazaar, usually in April. It is geared not only to the Jewish community, but to the general public as well. It is a very successful fundraiser, to support WIZO work. The Carmel Club also organizes a Bridge Tournament every few months, which is open to all.

One of the most important events of 2004 was a Golf Tournament, organized by WIZO’s younger members.

Sara Mekler, President WIZO Colombia

Mexico

WIZO is Light

At the initiative of Promotions Committee member Tammy Lati, Mrs. Fredelle Kalach made a sculpture that transfers an important message of life and love, Judaism and greatness - WIZO is Light. This sculpture now decorates the main wall in WIZO House. The project is based on a torch that represents the power and solidarity of our people. The light from the sculpture becomes a constellation of 18 large and 100 small stars of David that represent our identity as Jews, together with four eternal flames. The first one represents the altruism of the Jewish people. The other three integrate our past, reminding us of our roots, together with the present, symbolizing our daily work. And that’s how a future is created with a horizon towards hope, goodness and peace.

The project was launched on Sept. 22, and over 200 guests honored the occasion.

A video was shown about WIZO’s work, and the urgent needs of the day, that motivate us. Greetings were presented by WIZO Mexico President Syvie Mizrahi, Promotion Director Raquel Lati, and Project Coordinator Tammy Lati. Each of the donors lit their flame with great emotion.

Taking Care of Children

In the past ten years, WIZO Mexico has helped nine of the Jewish schools in Mexico, that are suffering from the decline in economic conditions. This help enables Jewish children to preserve and maintain their roots. Our chavera Rackel Alfille coordinates the schools scholarship project. At every festive occasion, like a birthday or a bar-mitzva, the children receive a Chai.

None of this could be achieved without our groups:
Looking back on the year 2004, the Women’s Zionist Organization of S.A. (WIZO South Africa) experienced a medley of diverse and varied activities.

Victims of Terror in Israel

The communities of Johannesburg and Cape Town were privileged to have fundraising functions for “Victims of Terror” in Israel. Three victims visited South Africa accompanied by the Kfar Shmaryahu Choir. Seeing these young people with life-long injuries brought home the tragedy and intensity of the 4-year long war Israel is fighting. The pleasure experienced by the melodious singing of the choir was tinged with pain and sorrow. The visit was made possible by the “One Family” Organization, which seeks to ameliorate the trauma and financial burdens suffered by victims.

Johannesburg Fashion Show

On a lighter note festive functions were held in the larger centers to honor WIZO workers who have served for 40 years and longer. The Rebecca Sieff Award was presented to recipients in the presence of family members and colleagues.

One Sunday morning saw the Jewish women of Johannesburg flocking to the WIZO Johannesburg Fashion Show. The function included a sumptuous breakfast followed by fashions from a well-known local boutique, chic à la mode Israeli fashions brought to Johannesburg for the occasion. The beautiful venue was packed with women - some older, some younger and all looking very glamorous. Many had to be turned away as all tickets had been sold. It was a most successful WIZO morning, enjoyed by all.

Hashish Pipes and 2000 Year-Old Beads

An enthralling, fundraising morning was spent by a WIZO group in Johannesburg listening to well-known travel agent Rhoda Levy talk of her life-long fascination with beads. While taking 53 groups around the world she spent her free time hunting for beads. At the function she had on display 2000-year-old agate beads from the banks of the River Jordan. They are still found today and it took her 20 years to collect enough to make a necklace. There were also a Tibetan collar from a Monastery made of coral, silver, lapis lazuli and pearls, 110 years old, and; a Hashish pipe made by workmen building the Taj Mahal. It was exciting to touch the 70 exhibits, remnants of a world gone by.

Mountains of Biscuits, Israelis, Music and Mystery Tours

The Yom-Tov Market held by Bnoth Zion WIZO of Cape Town, has become a landmark in their fundraising calendar. Committed, energetic branch members produced mountains of homemade biscuits, cakes, teiglach, kichel and other delicacies packed in beautiful presentations. A fashion show modeled by pre-primary school children drew young parents and beaming grandparents. WIZO Johannesburg’s Barnyard Theatre was a novel experience with ticket holders bringing their picnic baskets
Australia

“What Jewish Women Want”

WIZO New South Wales (Sydney, Australia), recently held a very successful event, a panel evening on the topic “What Jewish Women Want”. The event was promoted in the Australian Jewish News† with a series of advertisements beginning with teasers such as “WIZO knows the answer”, and “WIZO knows the answer to the question that drove Freud crazy”, followed up by large advertisements headed “WIZO knows the answer to ‘What Jewish Women Want’.”

The event was held in a large city auditorium and began with small children singing Rosh Hashanah songs. Gilla Liberman, President of WIZO NSW spoke about WIZO’s work and the great needs of many families in Israel. She appealed to the audience to give funds to ensure a “Sweet New Year” for struggling families. The audience responded generously.

The panel comprising a magazine editor, author, actor, comedian and celebrity hairdresser entertained the audience with their various answers to “What Jewish Women Want”, and the evening concluded with the drawing of a raffle, followed by the anthems.

The event was a great success - over AU$185,000 was raised.

Jo Gostin, President WIZO Australia

The large audience greatly enjoyed the lighthearted approach to the topic “What Jewish Women Want”; (l to r) Nelly Weiss, Past President WIZO Australia, Shirley Lowy and Orna Sagiv, Chargé d’Affaires, Embassy of Israel

The function theme of bright pink for the invitations and advertising was carried through to the night with pink sashes for raffle sellers and other workers; (l to r) Kerri Adams, Belinda Selby and Bev Kaplan, WIZO NSW Aviv Representative

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Hypnotic Father’s Day
WIZO Victoria’s inaugural Father’s Day function was thoroughly enjoyed by over 100 people. An excellent supper was served and the entertainment captured the imagination of those in attendance. “The Hypnotist,” Kevin Grise, enthralled the audience by his ability to create a humorous and magical atmosphere.

Perth Fashion Parade
A fashion parade was held on September 19, 2004, at the home of Anne and Leon Levitt in Perth, Western Australia. All the money raised went to WIZO’s summer camp for children of single parent families.

Daniel Kossov Recital
A capacity audience of 500 people came to a WIZO function at The Government House ballroom in Perth, to hear a special recital given by Israeli violinist Daniel Kossov. Kossov live in Perth for years while he was working as leader of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. This was his farewell concert, and the magnificent recital ended with a standing ovation. Perth will certainly miss this brilliant violinist.
Remember the WIZO Living Legacy Program

The WIZO Living Legacy Program allows you to shape the legacy by which you want to be remembered.

With the WIZO Living Legacy Program, you can design a specific planned giving program that meets your goals. And, at the same time enjoy substantial tax savings*, today and tomorrow.

WIZO is ready to answer your questions about how you can provide for WIZO in your will, and through insurance policies, family foundations, trusts, and annuities.

Please contact your local WIZO Federation to learn how you can design your personal WIZO Living Legacy Program.

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*Tax savings will vary depending on the country and specific planned giving program.