Looking Ahead
Helena Glaser
Tova Ben-Dov

Nightmares & Dreams
Faina and the Dolphinarium

Woman Power
About the 23rd EGM

Flower Children
Springing to Life
Dear Friends,

I would like to express my great appreciation for the activity carried out by you, the WIZO chaverot in Israel and in the Federations throughout the world. I felt a tremendous flow of emotion when I saw you, 600 women delegates from 30 Federations around the world, together with another 200 delegates from Israel, at the 23rd World WIZO EGM in January 2004 in Tel Aviv. I could feel the motivation that moves you, the joy of creativity and the desire to give and to aid Israeli society.

As the new Chairperson of the World WIZO Publicity and Information Department & WIZO Review, together with our entire department: Iris, Idit, Elad, Hillel and Anat, I promise that we will do everything in our power to provide the necessary service to you. We would like to deal with everything relevant to our movement, activity that will fulfill the needs of all of our diverse Federations, and with your help, to demonstrate and reinforce the strength and stability of the Jewish people.

We will confront the wave of anti-Semitism that is sweeping the world, we will support processes that strengthen Israeli society and particularly the status of women, and we will speak out against the violence that is perpetrated against women and children.

Please don’t hesitate to approach us, to submit your ideas, suggestions and initiatives to us. We are currently in the midst of upgrading and improving our Internet site in English and in Hebrew. We greatly value your cooperation. I am proud of you.

Adi Bershadsky
Chairperson
Publicity & Information,
WIZO Review
Contents

02 Adi’s Letter
04 The Power of Women: The 23rd EGM
10 Helena Glaser: Envisioning the Future
14 Tova Ben-Dov: Doing Good Deeds Every Day
18 The New World WIZO Executive
20 Nightmares that Won’t Go Away
24 Friends in Deed
27 Israel Prize 2004
28 Spring is in the Air
32 Aviv Now
34 WIZO Around the World
A Summary of the 23rd World WIZO EGM

Over 600 delegates from 31 WIZO Federations around the world were joined by hundreds of Israeli delegates for an action-filled and inspiring week at World WIZO’s 23rd Enlarged General Meeting (EGM). It was a week to remember.
of Women:

An unforgettable EGM
It is an honor, as Chairman of British WIZO, to be asked once again to summarize the 23rd World WIZO Enlarged General Assembly (EGM).

At the opening session, Michal Modai, our outgoing President, reminded us how hopeful we were that a new era of peace was dawning in the year 2000, only for the Intifada to dash all hopes of that elusive peace and to bring with it the death of over 900 Israelis and 6048 injured – each one of them is a father, son, brother, mother, daughter, sister, and we mourn them all.

The impact of the Intifada on the economy has been catastrophic – 1.32 million people, including 650,000 children, living below the poverty line; unemployment at over 11% and welfare and education budgets slashed by the government, leaving more people without the basic means to get on with their lives. It is depressing that 1 in 4 Israelis is in need of social welfare services.

Confronting the Challenges
The stereotypical Jewish mother is one who is constantly feeding her family. It is her way of nurturing, of caring, so when World WIZO Vice President and Executive Chairperson Helena Glaser requested extra funds for the Poverty Campaign, we all rose to that challenge over and above our commitments, raising a total of 5.4 million dollars. How could we, as Jewish mothers, imagine cupboards without food, or having to tell your child to stay at school or on the army base rather than come home because there they would have food?

We salute WIZO Israel for being third amongst the 50 Federations in fundraising achievements. We are sure that under the chairmanship of Yochy Feller you will go from strength to strength. We learnt much from Yochy about WIZO’s work with single parents, with victims of domestic violence and about the constructive, unique courses for leadership for women.

Education is the Key
Deep concern was expressed about government cuts, especially in the education budget in this longest ever recession. If education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty, then surely these cuts are short sighted and a recipe for disaster. There must be a change in the education system and its curriculum and a greater respect for higher learning, said former Technion...
President Professor Hanoch Gutfreund, because if students are unable to find money for higher education, they may leave the country.

This theme was developed further with a powerful speech by Professor Avishai Braverman, President of Ben Gurion University, who considered whether the crisis in Israel could provide a chance for change. He feared major demographic changes within the next 20 years west of the Jordan River. This will require difficult decisions if Israel is to remain both a Jewish and a democratic state. He stressed the need for further mass immigration and the development of the Negev and the Galilee to ease the overcrowding in Tel Aviv and the Coastal Plain.

The New Anti-Semitism

An eminent panel, including Minister Natan Sharansky, Dr Avi Beker and Mr. Avi Primor, gave their views on the New Anti-Semitism. Racist anti-Semitism in Arab literature has grown, and since most Arab countries no longer have Jews—this anti-Semitism is directed at Israelis, Zionists and Diaspora Jews. The Internet has become a powerful tool to spread anti-Semitic propaganda, and who can deny the double standards used by the U.N. to judge Israel,

11 Answers from 9 Delegates

Attending the 23rd World WIZO EGM was an experience I will never forget. I had the pleasure and honour as Canadian Hadassah-WIZO Aviv Chair to accompany nine other Aviv members to Israel, eight of them being first-timers. It was such a wonderful feeling seeing Israel through their eyes for the first time.

On the last day of the conference we had an Aviv meeting with all the other Aviv participants and a question was put to us: “What did you learn and/or gain from this conference?” I asked the other nine delegates to quickly tell me the first thing that came into their heads, and these were the answers I received:

- Stronger commitment to our organization.
- Realization of what really goes on in Israel.
- The difficulty that Israel has in always having to justify its existence.
- Life and leadership skills
- Closer connection to Israel
- Have a better understanding of how vital and important our fundraising dollars are.
- Assurance of the investment in the children in all of our projects.
- Made friends with people from all over the world.
- Impressed with strong relationship between Canadian Hadassah-WIZO and Israel and the wonderful social services provided.
- How to Survive an Israeli Buffet.

Thank you, WIZO Israel, for your hospitality. I know we will all be back in the near future; until then you will all remain in our hearts and our thoughts. Be safe.

Marla Dan
Canadian Hadassah-WIZO Aviv Chair
compared to the Arab states, especially on the issue of human rights. Let us hope that the recent poll taken by the European Union, which indicated that 60% of the Europeans see Israel as the greatest threat to world peace, will be a wake-up call to Israel to improve its Hasbara. It was heartening to hear Gideon Meir, the Foreign Ministry’s Deputy Director General of Media and Public Affairs, telling us that at last Israel was taking the initiative and explaining how the media distorts facts and images.

I know that each one of us is an ambassador for Israel and for WIZO, who will go home and describe the projects we visited on Tuesday when 16 study tours set out in busses that scanned the length and breadth of the country to visit “A Day in WIZO’s Life.”

Public Hearing - A Stimulating Innovation

Though WIZO gains full marks for its educational and social welfare successes amongst immigrant youth, has the government of Israel done as well in its absorption and integration of young people? This was the topic of a mock Public Hearing – a most innovative and thought-provoking session, led by Prof. Zeev Segal from Tel Aviv University, with the participation of the current and former Ministers of Immigrant Absorption Tzipi Livni and Yair Tzaban, and some very articulate students and principals from WIZO schools and youth villages. Many important and disturbing issues were raised:

1. The dignity of each immigrant is the essence of successful absorption.
2. Without knowledge of the Hebrew language full integration is not possible.
3. The native culture of the immigrant must be respected and encouraged.
4. Despite an affirmative action program (and advantageous mortgage grants) the Ethiopians remain in the lower social economic stratum with a higher school drop out rate.
5. The vulnerability of parents in a new country leads to role reversal within the family. (Often the inability of parents to integrate can lead to frustration and delinquency of the child).
6. Many young immigrants only feel totally Israeli when in the army.

Proud of Our Pupil - Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz

One particularly successful absorption was that of Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, who considers himself fortunate to have been a pupil at our WIZO-Hadassah Canada Youth Village in the Name of Hanna Maisel Shohat, Nahalal. He said that his education at the WIZO school shaped the path that he took in adulthood. He stressed that Israel was still committed to the Road Map for peace, but that the Palestinian leadership has to commit to peace. Let us hope that peace will be a reality by the
time of our next conference.

We had elections, resolutions, ratifications and commissions,
but unfortunately once again not enough time for questions,
discussions and suggestions – leading to frustrations.

**Aviv is Our Future**

As always, many of the most positive ideas emerged during the
more informal sessions - like working with Jewish schools to
educate about WIZO, encouraging links with Israeli AVIV
members for visiting AVIV families and volunteer programs for
students from the Diaspora who take a year off from their
studies.

We are proud of the AVIV Representative to the World WIZO
Executive Ronit Collis, who is continuing in her position. She and
her colleagues are the future of WIZO.

**A Rose to Michal**

The beautiful tribute to Michal as she completed 36 years of
WIZO voluntary work, the stunning Festive Opening, the
‘Surprise’ evening when we danced all evening - seeing the
wonderful children singing and dancing filled us with emotion,
knowing that behind every one is a story, and proud that we have
helped make a difference in their lives.

Winston Churchill once said “You make a living by what you
get, you make a life by what you give”. Every one of us gives to
our great movement and by doing so we enhance not only the
lives of others but immeasurably our own lives as well.

**Gala Closing Evening**

The festive closing evening, which was honored by the
presence of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, was dedicated to
welcoming the new World WIZO President-elect Helena Glaser.
The Prime Minister praised WIZO’s work, saying that it touches
the lives of tens of thousands of children, youth, women and
senior citizens. He was followed by representatives of WIZO
youth who were helped by Helena Glaser in her previous
position as Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive, among
them Ravid Ben-Ze’ev, now a soldier, who was elected
Chairperson of the National Student Council when she was
studying at WIZO Nir Haemek (sponsored by WIZO Argentina &
WIZO USA), and the newly proclaimed Girls National Youth
Basketball Champions from WIZO Hadassim (sponsored by
Hadasah-WIZO Canada).

**Our Power is Acknowledged**

During this action-packed week, we were privileged to be
addressed by some of the most prominent Israeli leaders -
President Moshe Katsav, Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai, Jewish
Agency and World Zionist Organization Chairman Salai Meridor,
Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz
and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

It is so heart-warming for us to know in what high regard WIZO
is held and it has also made us feel good to know that the power
of women working together is acknowledged and respected.

**Congratulations and Commitment**

On all our behalf I congratulate Ahuva Koren, Tini Yehudai and all
their team for their terrific organisation of this EGM. Helena and
Michal, we wish you all the best in your important new roles,
Helena as the new President of World WIZO, and Michal as
Chairperson of the Council of Women’s Organizations in Israel. I
know I speak for us all when I commit us to working with
continued dedication and passion with you, Tova, as our new
Chairperson.

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**Hallmark in My Memory & My Heart**

January 2004 marked my first visit to Israel. As a daughter
of World War II survivors, I felt I had joined a great loving
family, and it didn’t matter if we came from Europe, the
Americas or Australia - we all had a common language. I
want you to know that World WIZO has turned me into a very
enthusiastic Zionist “spokeswoman.” There is no doubt that
the 23rd EGM will always be a hallmark in my memory and in
my heart. Thank you World WIZO! Thank you chaverot from
all over the world!

*Flavia Torikachvili*

WIZO Brazil Aviv Delegate from Rio Grande do Sul
Helena Glaser:
Envisioning
the Future
Finding a spare hour to meet with Helena Glaser is no easy matter. Somehow, she manages to find the time in her busy schedule, and we arrange to meet in her new presidential office. Clearly she feels it’s important to communicate her ideas to the readers of WIZO Review.

Could you share with us your vision for WIZO’s future?

My dream is that we should become the largest and strongest women’s organization that we can be, with the ability to influence the advancement of women, both in Israel and throughout the Jewish world, and to have great influence on social concerns within the State of Israel. One of the first things we have to emphasize is membership. We are not only an organization - we are a movement. And one of the most important aspects of being a movement is to have as many members as possible.

We are living in very competitive times. Every day another organization is born. Our message must be clearer and sharper, to ensure that women will want to take part in our activities.

When we face difficulties, we discover strengths we didn’t know existed that enable us to overcome them. And to think in a more positive manner, we should call these things challenges rather than difficulties.

The fact that there is a new wave of anti-Semitism around the world is very disturbing, but it also creates an opportunity to attract more women to our movement. We are a Zionist women’s movement, whose focal point is activity for the citizens of the State of Israel. When a Jewish woman anywhere in the world accepts our approach that Israel is the center of the Jewish people’s experience, she can then identify and become a part of us and everything that we do. The new anti-Semitism demonstrates that there is a growing need to strengthen Israeli society. We have to ensure that, if any Jew anywhere wants to come to live in Israel, they will come to a society that really is “a light unto the nations.” I don’t think there is a Jewish woman anywhere who can deny the importance of the State of Israel, the type and quality of its society and the need to be partners in its development.

How do you define WIZO’s goals in a way that can make it attractive to Jewish women throughout the world?

Our ability as a movement to create international links of love between Jewish women around the world is unique. At the 23rd EGM in January we saw our veteran ‘chaverot’, who continue to be devoted and active, and many young women who have joined and feel that they are an integral part of our movement. And we saw their wonderful bond with our ‘chaverot’ in Israel. In the age of e-mail, Internet and faxes, people have no problem maintaining contact. We can offer this special international connection to Jewish women around the world.

I would like to see us develop an initiative of networking for female entrepreneurs. An important part of the campaign that I initiated, “Poverty is not only Food,” was devoted to the empowerment of women. Women who participated in training workshops and received financial assistance to develop small businesses, and broke out of the cycle of poverty. The WIZO connection of Jewish women in Israel and around the world can become a lever to help promote their businesses.

Knowledge is a key, and we can provide an exchange of knowledge and information. There are places throughout the world where our accumulated knowledge about early age child care, youth clubs, youth at risk, domestic violence and absorption can be very helpful. And there are things that we in Israel can learn from you too. The international nature of WIZO provides us with unique opportunities for mutual learning.

The Internet can be a key tool for maximizing these possibilities. Addresses and contacts - that’s what women are looking for and need. And we can provide this. When a WIZO woman arrives in a new country, she has a whole WIZO network there waiting for her.

“The new anti-Semitism demonstrates that there is a need to strengthen Israeli society,” says newly elected World WIZO President Helena Glaser. “We should turn this challenge into an opportunity”
What message can attract young women to WIZO activity in Israel and abroad?

In today's world you have to be very focused in your approach to young women. The first approach should be on the basis of identification with our philosophy as a women's movement that is helping Israeli society and the advancement of women. I believe that many women will be ready to pay dues to a women's movement to empower it to do work for Israel and women. Much of our agenda can serve as an inspiration for women. We should extract from the supermarket of WIZO activities those areas that are of particular importance to each individual woman. One will say - "I believe in the importance of coexistence, what do you do in this area?" Or poverty, absorption of Ethiopian or Russian immigrants, early age child-education, youth at risk, etc.

Young women are wonderful, the future of our movement, but I'm also a practical person. Young women feel that society places too great a burden on them. They are expected to work, to study so that they can advance in their profession, to raise children, serve as hosts, to be a superwoman. And then we come and ask - "what are you doing for society?" If we want young women to be active in the movement, we have to explain very clearly exactly what we want of them. We can't just say "Come volunteer for WIZO." We have to say please give an hour a week, or even one day a month, serve as the moderator of an event, organize a specific project, whatever. We have to take advantage of the specific skills of young women for very specific challenges.

People are very busy and want to be effective.

Much of our work will be based upon women who have taken early or regular retirement. Today women in their 50s and 60s look good and are in their prime. Such women have a tremendous desire and ability to give and to do. We can approach them and say - come and join us and devote at least part of your time to a very worthwhile and interesting cause. Most of these women are educated and have a wealth of experience.

In today's competitive world there are many organizations and movements that focus on very specific areas of activity. Perhaps WIZO should focus on fewer activities?

My view is that WIZO should continue with all of its spheres of activity. I can't imagine that we would stop dealing with the status of women, or education - after all, we have built such a wonderful network of educational institutions throughout the country. And we will continue to promote tolerance, equality, equal opportunity for all, absorption and integration, the importance of young leadership, and so on.

However, we can and should periodically examine the specifics of what we are doing. Life changes, needs change. It's healthy for every living organization and movement to keep its hand on the pulse of things.

We have recently begun a study program where chairpersons and senior directors of World WIZO departments, the lay leaders and the professionals, are carrying out a joint learning process about how we work together and how we view the future of our movement. We have to make use of all the professional knowledge and experience that we have. Usually each individual is focused on his or her own field, and we don't gain the benefit of their ideas in other areas. That was why I established the World WIZO Directors’ Forum that convenes on a regular basis.

How has that accumulated experience helped to prepare you for your new responsibilities?

I gained a tremendous amount. I feel very comfortable asking a chavera, a chapter or a Federation to do something, because I can always say that I did it too.

I even have a photo with the current Prime Minister, when I was still serving as chairperson of a neighborhood group. Sharon was a young man, with rolled up shirt sleeves, and I was a young woman with a pony tail. I wanted to do a fundraising activity, and
via a friend we were able to approach and convince him to be the main speaker at the event. I had to introduce him and was so nervous that my hands shook.

What originally motivated you to join WIZO?
I joined WIZO because of my desire to contribute to Israeli society. At that moment in my life, I might have joined any organization that contributed to Israeli society as long as it wasn’t an extremist organization.

I had come from the United States where I helped raise funds to provide food to people suffering from hunger in Africa. Jews were always helping everybody. In 1967 after the Six Day War, I remember coming to hear the Israeli Ambassador to the USA, Yitzhak Rabin, speak to a student gathering. I understood that we had to help, so I went from office to office in the corporation where I worked to raise funds. I even cried, and people were very moved, and gave. Then it turned out that someone else was the UJA representative there. He called me to his office and said “What the hell did you do?” What did I know? Of course, now I know how to fundraise. Everything’s organized, coordinated. But then?

When I arrived in Israel, I had this consciousness to do things for the sake of society. My children were in kindergarten and I had a few spare hours. I could have done anything, but it happened to be WIZO that approached me.

I hear a hidden message in this story for our readers. Essentially you are saying to all the chaverot - talk to people, you don’t know who you might discover will be ready to join and become very active in WIZO.

That’s right. There are so many women out there who are looking for a social framework and don’t know how to find it. It takes a lot of emotional energy to pick up the phone, to talk to someone, to say I’d like to be a part of you. There are a lot of women who want to belong and we are an organization that wants them, but we don’t always create the connection between the two.

WIZO is always looking for younger women. In my case, they said to some of the chaverot, maybe you have daughters, who have friends who will be ready to set up a neighborhood WIZO group. There was a veteran WIZO member, who had a daughter, and we were friends. That’s how we founded our group, and after two meetings, I was elected chairperson of the group.

I began fundraising without really understanding what WIZO was all about. I organized a big event in the popular Hamam nightclub in Jaffa. We went to help children in the Yemenite Quarter in Tel Aviv. I didn’t know anything. But I began to do. And I discovered that WIZO’s door was always open. I was just 23-24, and all the other women were much older than me.

Once a year WIZO Tel Aviv had a big study day in the country club. I went, and my eyes opened wide. I saw a lot of other young women, from other groups, in other areas. I collected all of their telephone numbers and invited all of them to my beautiful penthouse apartment in Ramat Gan.

Soon I became Deputy Chair of the WIZO Tel Aviv Fundraising Department. And I carried out activities, based upon my personal ties with all the other young women. I used to pick up the phone, and things would happen. The first event we did was a very prestigious Gideon Oberson fashion show. All the players from the Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball team came, because a friend’s husband was one of the managers of the club. Everyone got dressed up in costumes, Trinidadian singer Jimmy Lloyd performed, we had everything. What a push it gave to all the younger groups. WIZO is a very open organization. The moment you demonstrate capability, you can advance.

Do you have any concluding message?
I’d like to say one thing about the Federations. The very fact that a Jewish woman, who lives so far from Israel, feels a commitment to and works so hard for Israeli society, is in my eyes a tremendous thing, something I don’t take for granted. Why should she do it unless she has an overwhelming love for the State of Israel? She has her family, the Jewish community, the non-Jewish community, maybe she lives well. Yet she still works for an organization, in a country which is so far away, physically. Because it is so close to her emotionally. Without a love for Israel, it won’t work. And I really believe that our tremendous community of people would really like to see an improved Israeli society, not only because we want to be a light unto the nations, but because we first want to be a light unto ourselves.
Tova Ben-Dov: 
Doing Good Deeds Every Day
“WIZO is the most wonderful, value-filled movement I know,” says the new World WIZO Executive Chairperson Tova Ben-Dov. “We have to ensure that all our institutions and activities are run as efficiently as possible.”

After over 30 years of voluntary activity in WIZO, Tova Ben-Dov is looking forward with great anticipation to the challenges of her new position. She is clearly eager to share her experience and her views, saying that her door is always open to WIZO members in Israel and around the world.

As the new Chairperson of World WIZO, our readers are curious to know how it all began?

Actually, I’m a second generation member since my mother was also active in WIZO. I’m a sabra, born in Tel Aviv, and I come from a home that was imbued with Zionist and Jewish values. My family on my mother’s side has been in the country for seven generations. They came from an old line of rabbinical families that lived in Safed and Tiberias. My father was 11 years old when he arrived in the country in 1908 from Plonsk, the birthplace of David Ben-Gurion. My father graduated from Rabbi Kook’s yeshiva, studied engineering and was the first metal industrialist in the country. All the rusty burned out armored cars on the road to Jerusalem and the famous Davidka gun from the War of Independence were built in his factory.

Every day Father would ask the children sitting around the table in our home in old Tel Aviv – “What good deed did you do today?” My mother used to secretly give to needy children in my class. That’s why I can’t imagine a life not filled with voluntary activity.

So how did you start your voluntary work with WIZO?

I began my activity as a volunteer at the age of 27 in Herzliya Pituach. We had just moved there, and one day there was a knock on the door. “I am Violet Jacobson, the WIZO secretary in Herzliya Pituach,” said the woman. “Do you know about WIZO?” And I answered – “Vaguely.” She asked me, “Do you know how to bake a cake?” And I said, “I was Queen of the Kitchen this year!” She made me secret to give to needy children in my class. That’s why I can’t imagine a life not filled with voluntary activity.

I was asked to be Aviv representative to the World WIZO Conference in 1971, and described what we were doing in WIZO Herzliya Pituach. Later in the year there was a WIZO Israel National Conference, and they chose me to be Deputy Chairperson of the Women’s Training Department. I was responsible for all the courses throughout the country. I placed a special emphasis on developing the Arab and Druze sectors, opening chapters and courses for women throughout the country, in Wadi Joz, Nazareth, Me’iliya, Ussifiya and Pekiin. We organized Jewish-Arab celebrations. These were complicated times, with the Yom Kippur War - there were Arabs who were happy when there was a terrorist attack, but on the other hand, Violette Houri, Mayor of Kfar Yassif, organized all the women of the village to knit gloves for the soldiers. I said “Violette, I’ll pay for the wool.” And she answered, “It’s for our boys. Are you trying to insult me?” We had a tremendous sense of closeness as human beings. During the 1991 Gulf War, her sister called me and said, “Ya Uchti, my sister, come up with all your family to us. You’ll be safe. There won’t be any Scuds here.”

What other responsibilities did you assume in WIZO?

I served for a year as World WIZO Chair of Public Relations in the Tel Aviv area, and then was elected to be Chairperson of World WIZO’s Building, Property & Development Department. I applied all my university and special course studies in business administration, real estate, law and entrepreneurship to the work. During my years as chairperson, 1977-1983 and 1988-2000, we built many WIZO day care centers and other institutions with the help of generous donations obtained from the Federations and private donors, many of them obtained by then World WIZO President Raya Jaglom. I always saw the children and women beyond the walls of the buildings, always thought about the needs of people. When we built the Battered Women’s Shelter I thought of the individual woman’s needs, that the bathtub should be near the room, so that she won’t have to expose her scars to the world.
additional pairs of eyes. WIZO also developed ideas about how to build day care centers. Where to place windows for the convenience of the children. The dividers in the bathrooms for privacy. I never was a chairperson who just sat behind a desk, but was always out there in the field, caring. I love people. I’m like a fish out of water without the connection to people.

When I was elected World WIZO Treasurer, the fact that I was familiar with the schools and youth villages, the day care centers, the women’s centers, the entire spectrum of WIZO’s activities, made things easier.

Now that I am sitting in the World WIZO Chairperson’s office, I realize that having been treasurer helped tremendously to prepare me for this position. To understand our overall needs.

What do you see when you look out of this office?

We are going through very difficult times today, and our challenge is to cope with the difficult economic, social and security situation in the country that affects all of WIZO’s activities.

We have wonderful products, we just have to make them appear more sexy & attractive

The Federations did a wonderful job last year reaching their quotas, and contributing to the struggle against poverty and to security for our institutions, despite the economic difficulties around the world. Today, our goal is to ensure that WIZO will be a financially sound organization, without a deficit.

We are facing tough challenges. We are receiving fewer funds from the government and the municipalities to help maintain our institutions. The government provides less support for the poor and needy, the primary recipients of our services. Families can’t afford to pay tuition fees, and either the children drop out or we have to cover the difference. This means we have a larger target audience with fewer means to pay for our services. We have to be very creative, have to think about using our properties for various income earning activities - summer camps, afternoon play centers, etc. We also have to make our activities more sexy, more attractive. We have wonderful products, and have to find the way to package and market them better. I would like to note that WIZO initiated the idea of connections between Federations and specific projects in Israel back in 1920(!), way before Menachem Begin’s Project Renewal and Partnership 2000.

America is the leading challenge we face. We could raise much more funds there, and recruit many more chaverot than we have today. We have to do long-range planning and be focused in our goals, to take into account the character of each country and community, and decide which projects will attract them.

The WIZO Federations around the world are more than just partners – they are the heart and soul, the moral and financial backbone of our movement. Without their help and support, we can’t begin to realize all our aspirations for Israeli society.

Jewish education is important to us. If there won’t be Jews in the Diaspora, and if they won’t consider Israel to be the center of their life, we won’t be able to gain new members. The younger generation are our potential future donors. We have to attract a younger generation into our movement because they are the key to our future.

How should we cope with the financial pressures we are facing?

According to the Israeli Amutot (non-profit associations) law regulations, the Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that we have proper management procedures in WIZO. I bear administrative responsibility for all of our departments, for ensuring that everything functions, and that we have a balanced budget. This year we will receive 10% less from the Ministry of Education, on top of the 20% cut last year, yet our educational budget has risen 10%, an example that is repeated in all the other government ministries as well.

Our great challenge is to manage our huge enterprise in the proper way,”

Tova speaking at the EGM

The Federations did a wonderful job last year reaching their quotas, and contributing to the struggle against poverty and to security for our institutions, despite the economic difficulties around the world. Today, our goal is to ensure that WIZO will be a financially sound organization, without a deficit.

We are facing tough challenges. We are receiving fewer funds from the government and the municipalities to help maintain our institutions. The government provides less support for the poor and needy, the primary recipients of our services. Families can’t afford to pay tuition fees, and either the children drop out or we have to cover the difference. This means we have a larger target audience with fewer means to pay for our services. We have to be very creative, have to think about using our properties for various income earning activities - summer camps, afternoon play centers, etc. We also have to make our activities more sexy, more attractive. We have wonderful products, and have to find the way to package and market them better. I would like to note that WIZO initiated the idea of connections between Federations and specific projects in Israel back in 1920(!), way before Menachem Begin’s Project Renewal and Partnership 2000.

America is the leading challenge we face. We could raise much more funds there, and recruit many more chaverot than we have today. We have to do long-range planning and be focused in our goals, to take into account the character of each country and community, and decide which projects will attract them.

The WIZO Federations around the world are more than just partners – they are the heart and soul, the moral and financial backbone of our movement. Without their help and support, we can’t begin to realize all our aspirations for Israeli society.

Jewish education is important to us. If there won’t be Jews in the Diaspora, and if they won’t consider Israel to be the center of their life, we won’t be able to gain new members. The younger generation are our potential future donors. We have to attract a younger generation into our movement because they are the key to our future.

How should we cope with the financial pressures we are facing?

According to the Israeli Amutot (non-profit associations) law regulations, the Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that we have proper management procedures in WIZO. I bear administrative responsibility for all of our departments, for ensuring that everything functions, and that we have a balanced budget. This year we will receive 10% less from the Ministry of Education, on top of the 20% cut last year, yet our educational budget has risen 10%, an example that is repeated in all the other government ministries as well.

Our great challenge is to manage our huge enterprise in the proper way. We are managing over NIS 500 million, over $110 million a year. It’s a tremendous responsibility.

We are planning a general recovery program for WIZO, both in
WIZO headquarters and in our broad network of institutions. We will have to decide on priorities in certain areas that may require some tough decision-making, won’t be able to avoid cutbacks, both in activity and staff. Yet we will continue to do our utmost to provide the best services we can.

WIZO’s workers are so dedicated. Their involvement and identification with what we are doing is exemplary. They know that they are working in an organization that they can be proud of. When you leave the main office and go out into the field, see our children in action, you lose any sense of cynicism that you might have. When you see children who were abused at home, whose mother was a prostitute, who manage to complete their studies at a WIZO school and then go on to the army, how can you not be bursting with pride? It’s really sacred work that we are doing.

We have to make our activities more professional, but we can’t forget the soul of our movement that is provided by all our volunteers. If we had to calculate the value of their work in our budget, it would constitute a tremendous added value.

What is your vision for the future?

My vision is that WIZO will be seen not only as an organization that provides services, but as a movement that leads the way in the social arena, inspiring many more women to join and be active. A movement that encompasses hundreds of thousands of chaverot who want social change and a more egalitarian society. A place where women lead and have a profound influence on the fabric of Israeli society. I hope we will obtain more rights for single parent families and equal pay for men and women, that we will succeed in our struggle against violence in the family and society via social and educational programs in our schools and centers, and that we will propose and pass more laws on these issues in the Knesset. We should also strengthen the bond between Jewish women in Israel and around the world.

I am thankful for this privilege and opportunity I have been given, with this new position, to help WIZO, the movement that I so believe in. I believe that WIZO is the most beautiful movement that exists, with the best values possible, both a Jewish and Zionist women’s movement, that believes in the centrality of Israel and mutual solidarity. I hope that all WIZO chaverot feel like me, proud to be Jewish, proud to be a Zionist, and proud to be a member of this magnificent movement of ours, that leads and lights the way.
The New World

Celia Michonik, Chairperson Fundraising Department

Sylvie Pelossof, Chairperson Organization & Education Department

Esther Mor, Deputy Chairperson Fundraising Department

Lili Peyser, Chairperson Tourist Department

Adi Bershadsky, Chairperson Publicity & Information Department (New) Colonel (reserves) headed IAF Human Resources Dept., IDF Attache to Poland, Czech Rep., Slovakia & Hungary, MA in Organizational Behavior

Yochy Feller, Chairperson WIZO Israel

Ruth Rubinstein, Chairperson Formal & Informal Education (New) Former Chairperson of WIZO Israel’s Guidance, Development & Culture Division, taught new immigrants Hebrew for many years in ulpanim.

Janine Gelley, Deputy Chairperson Tourist Department (New) Deputy Chairperson WIZO Kfar Saba, Jewish Agency rep., for absorption of South African immigrants in Kfar Saba, runs family business in Nahariya

Absent: Raya Jaglom, Michal Modai, Ruth Tamir and Brenda Kattan
here’s something deceptive in the perfectly formed body and beautiful face of Faina Yaakovlev, who was injured in the terrorist attack at the Tel Aviv Dolphinarium. At the age of 17, her life seems to be the dream of every teenage girl. She’s an honors student, sings and dances in the successful troupe of WIZO’s Nachlat Yehuda School & Youth Village in Rishon L’Zion (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland), and enjoys quite a bit of media coverage. The signs of the shrapnel that entered her arms and legs disappeared long ago, and only the nightmares have left a deep, but invisible, mark. “No one knows how hard it is for me to fall asleep at night and wake up in the morning. Sometimes I just don’t go to sleep so I won’t experience the nightmares again.”

Media coverage usually focuses on the fatalities in terrorist attacks. The injured remain nameless and are erased from the collective memory, where they never were in the first place, especially when the scars are not prominent and extreme. Only the victims are left with the deep wounds in their bodies and souls, and with the struggle for control over the rest of their lives. Faina has found her own way of dealing with the situation and is considered a success story. The psychological support of the counselors and psychologist at the boarding school helped her return quickly to her daily routine, and the very hectic schedule she has imposed on herself is helping her cope.

“If I Fall, I Don’t Cry. I Push On” Life at the boarding school also demands that she be independent. Her permanent routine includes studies, work in the chicken coops, dairy or animal corner, rehearsals for the new show, homework, and a daily walk (“I can’t do without it.”) In between, she allows for quality time with her boyfriend. “The doctors told me that I wouldn’t be able to dance again. Today I not only dance in the dance troupe, but I do ballroom dancing as well, and I’m planning to participate in, and maybe even win, the coming national competition.”

“I wish everyone had my motivation. I achieve almost everything I desire. If I fall, I don’t cry. I push on. No one knows that I’m still in a state of trauma. I keep myself busy all the time so as to suppress the thoughts and feelings, because I know that that’s the only way. Sometimes you’re up and sometimes you’re down. The main thing is to keep going.”

Faina Yaakovlev came to Israel with her mother and sister in 1996. Her father decided to remain in Russia and since then there has been no contact with him. Her mother works at random jobs and has difficulty supporting her daughters, who preferred to study at WIZO Nachlat Yehuda. Faina doesn’t remember any particular absorption difficulties, except for the year she still...
Faina is an outstanding student.
didn’t know Hebrew. She skipped a grade and today, at age 17, she is in the 12th grade”.

**Forced to Grow Up Early**

The boarding school cushioned her during her most difficult period, and constitutes an alternative home for this girl who was forced to grow up too early. “I skipped over the silly period of the teens and I don’t miss it. When you see blood and the bodies of your friends scattered round you, you take life more seriously, and the wonderful opportunity to perform before audiences becomes something very precious.”

Since the terrorist attack Faina has traveled on three missions to Los Angeles, Chicago and Ukraine on behalf of various non-profit organizations that support the victims of the Dolphinarium attack, and has given talks to teenagers about the attack. These talks were an inseparable part of the joint trips she took with some 30 victims of the attack. “All these trips gave me one good thing: I learned to speak perfect English, and I’m going to take the highest level matriculation exam in English,” she smiles and then immediately becomes serious again. “We were in non-Jewish schools and it was a challenge to show them that we aren’t terrible like they make us seem on CNN. They kill us too. These talks opened their eyes. They didn’t even know the size of Israel. We convinced many youth that we were the just side. Youth can be powerful weapons.”

**That Fateful Evening**

Faina Yaakovlev won’t forget the evening of June 1, 2000, that began with such excitement. She left her house in Lod, met her two friends Danny and Simon, and the three of them took a taxi to the Dolphinarium. “At that time I had started to go to discotheques with friends and enjoyed the dancing a lot. We got there too early, it was only 10:30 p.m., so we went to the Opera Tower Mall, bought some ice cream and walked around a bit. The discotheque was supposed to open at midnight and we stood in line, two yards from the terrorist. Suddenly there was an explosion. It wasn’t a huge or deafening sound, just a blast and then a deep silence. I didn’t understand what was happening.”

Even today, it’s hard for her to understand that all that remains of her friends who were killed is a stain on the sidewalk. “I sat on the

**Suddenly I saw bloody bodies on the right, children on the ground, & on my left there was no one**

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**A Nightmare / Faina Yaakovlev**

The following poem that Faina wrote, in English, provides a powerful expression of the painful feelings that she carries with her

1. Waking up at night with a nightmare
Explosions been on Friday
Scream, blood, flash and muddle
My head is full, of fears and fire
I stand there on the side
Watching dolphins go with the wind
Watching the others, run and scream
I’m standing, whispering a prayer to him

Chorus: They’re always in my head
They’re always in my heart
The twenty-one dolphins of love
Are swimming on the wave of life
They’ll never be back
They’ll never be back to life
But the whole world, remember them
And the way they died
But the whole world, remember them
And the way they died

2. I cannot sleep at night
In my dreams, I always fight
Fight for peace, with all the bad
Every night when I’m in bed
Almost every night I cry
Cause all the time, I see them die
I see their faces with last smile

“I immediately recognized her on TV” - Dr. Hezi Yosef and Faina at WIZO Nachlat Yehuda today
ground alone. I held the bars tight. Suddenly I saw bloody bodies on the right, children on the ground in back of me, and on the left there wasn’t anyone. I wanted to run inside the discotheque, but it was hard for me to drag my leg, which hurt a lot. I lifted my pants and saw two big holes in my leg. Objects went in and out of my body as if it were made of paper. My hand was bleeding too, but at that point I didn’t feel anything anymore.”

At that moment Faina believed that she was in control emotionally and that she wouldn’t become panicky, as happens to everybody in an attack. She limped amid the chaos of blood and bodies in the direction of a nearby club and asked for some water, phoned her mother and told her not to worry, and only then went to sit down in the corner of one of the offices and tried to distract herself. “I started to tell myself jokes, to laugh, and then I remembered my friends. I limped back to the club and we found each other. We hugged and rejoiced that we were alive. We only found out later about a few other friends that were killed.”

Fearing the Worst

Faina was diagnosed as having a medium injury and was taken to the Schneider Children’s Hospital, where she underwent an operation on her legs. Ten days later she returned to her home in particularly low spirits. “The doctors had told me that I would never be myself again and that I would limp my whole life. I was afraid of the future that awaited me as a person who limped. I was very edgy and didn’t want to see anyone.”

Faina’s mother Elena has a hard time talking about the attack. She still hasn’t gotten over the fear of death that seized her when she received her daughter’s telephone call: “Don’t worry Mom, there was an attack but I’m okay.” She traveled quickly to the Dolphinarium, got through the row of security guards, and reached the site of the bloodshed. “I stepped on pieces of flesh, fell down on corpses, searched for my daughter and didn’t find her. Then she phoned again and said that she was at Schneider Hospital and everything was alright.”

“Terrorism Entered Our House”

During the first days in the hospital Faina was the center of a lot of attention, and friends from the school and her neighborhood came to visit. Dr. Hezi Yosef, the director general of the school, recognized Faina on television. “She was sitting on the ground and looked very frightened and dazed. This wasn’t the alert, friendly girl we knew. I called the principal of the boarding school, who already knew and was in contact with her mother. I also called Michal Modai, who was president of World WIZO at the time, and that same day we were all at her bedside. We talked to the children in Faina’s age group, for whom the attack had become very concrete and not just a story in the newspaper. Faina was a very prominent personality in the boarding school. There wasn’t a ceremony or event that she didn’t appear in. The attack affected all the children in the youth village. Every day we sent a different group of friends and staff to visit her. The terrorism had left the collective sphere and entered our own house. I found myself making decisions limiting the children’s outings; we demanded to know where every child was at any given time. The children’s freedom was significantly hampered, and they reacted to these restrictions with mixed feelings.”

Faina decided not to give up. She had physiotherapy every day, she walked and trained until her limp completely disappeared. Within a year she had returned to dance with the company. Today she does Latin dancing at an exclusive club and even goes to discotheques. “It might sound absurd, but I dance at discotheques because it makes me feel that I’ve won. If there were another solution, I would shout it in the street. I hope that our government won’t take down the separation fence. It’s a relatively good solution and has reduced the attacks.”

“You’ve become a celebrity since the attack, haven’t you?” “Yes and no. Some people make fun of me and call me a bombshell; some are jealous and hate me; and there are friends who admire and respect me. That’s natural isn’t it? I’ve gotten used to it. I live in my own bubble and try to fill the space.”
hen we walked around the exquisite Ralli Museum in Caesaria, Barbara Drench said that “unless I’m imagining things, I saw the exact same museum in Uruguay.” It wasn’t her imagination. There are no less than four, similar Ralli Museums, funded by banker Harry Recanati and his wife Dr. Martine Recanati. In addition to the beautiful Caesaria museum, there are three others in Punta del Este (Uruguay), Santiago (Chile) and Marbella (Spain). Together they house the most important collection in the world of contemporary Latin American art. The visit to the museum was arranged by Elaine Recanati (born in Belgium, lived in Cuba, grew up in America, married an Israeli – “It’s a long story”), a member of Friends of WIZO, who wants to help support WIZO’s activities.

This relatively unknown gem of a museum was the natural setting for the opening of a typical activity of the new Friends of WIZO Group. As originally conceived by Betty Crystal, and
founded by Esther Mor, Deputy Chairperson of the World WIZO Fundraising Department, Friends of WIZO thrives on a basic triangle: Friendship, Culture and Support for WIZO.

**Dali and Viagra**

On a very sunny March morning, about 30 members of the group were treated to a guided tour by Ralli Museum director Lily Tzohar, who introduced them to the extraordinary permanent exhibition of surrealistic works of contemporary Latin American artists. The group visited the temporary exhibition hall that featured five contemporary European artists, and the special patio devoted to magnificent sculptures and prints by the great Spanish surrealist Salvador Dali. “If you come to this patio for 15 minutes,” says Lily Tzohar, “it’s the best cure for headaches and any other problem you may have.” One of the highlights of the museum is a sculpture known as “The Discovery of Viagra” by a Venezuelan artist, but to find out why, you’ll have to see it yourself. Another very powerful bronze sculpture describes the impact of war on man, which resonates very strongly in Israel. There are also two powerful works dedicated to the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. “I was particularly interested in this day,” says Valery Maxwell, “because I’m an artist myself.” Valery has lived in Israel for about 20 years, and like all of the other members of Friends of WIZO, she’s an English speaker, in her case from England. “I think that WIZO does an amazing job in Israel,” she says, “and it’s worthy of our support.”

**Wonderful Hospitality from the Shalits’**

After completing the tour of the museum, the group got into their cars and drove to Beit Ariel, the lovely home of Anna and Eli Shalit in Caesarea. Eli, who is in shipping and construction, has had a fascinating life. He went to two of the most famous high schools in Israel, Gymnasia Herzliya and the Realli School in Haifa, went to university in the USA, was arrested for smuggling weapons for the Haganah on the eve of the War for Independence, bought the President Warfield ship that was converted into the famous “Exodus” that brought illegal immigrants to Palestine, co-founded the American-Israel Shipping company, made clandestine shipments of planes in 1948, did offshore drilling for oil in the Sinai, and eventually went into the cruise ships field. Anna is a member of Friends of WIZO, has contributed generously to WIZO, and served as an extremely gracious hostess for the event. Describing a very imposing picture on the wall, Anna says “that’s Eli’s grandfather, one of the 17 families that founded Rishon Lezion at the end of the 19th century. His home has become part of the Rishon Museum, and it’s called “Beit Shalit.” In the reception room on the ground floor of the home stands a dramatic sculpture by Israeli artist Frank Meisler devoted to “the Jewish contribution to the voyages of discovery,” including the possibility that Christopher Columbus himself was Jewish. “I am very friendly with two of the ladies here, Mrs. Mor and Mrs. Celia Michonik (Chairperson of the World WIZO Fundraising Department),” says the Uruguayan-born Anna, who came to Israel 10 years ago after living in America and Spain, “and when they said they were planning a visit to the nearby Ralli Museum, I said that I would be happy to host the group for lunch. I know that WIZO does wonderful work, and my cousins are members of WIZO in Uruguay.”

Before dessert, the group was treated to a delightful musical interlude presented by three 16 year old students from the Tiberias WIZO Youth Orchestra (sponsored by British WIZO), Lilach Lieberman, Avital Friedman and Itamar Avni, led by their director Noam Ya’acoby. They were followed by a brief, inspiring description of WIZO’s activities by Celia Michonik, who included a tribute to Esther Mor’s initiative in her words.
Friends of WIZO

A Good Place to Be

"I have been in Israel 36 years," says the very attractive Gigi Harpaz. "I was born in Belgium, and came to visit Club Med when I was very young, met a nice Israeli guy, and he always says that he got money from the Jewish Agency to bring a new olah (immigrant) to Israel," she laughs. "I've worked here, did my business here, everything, this is a good place to be. Recently I've been working with a group that helps diplomat wives to get oriented and adjusted to Israel. As for Friends of WIZO, I didn't have time to help out when I was younger because I was a working mother, but I believe in the things that WIZO is doing. So when they told me about Friends of WIZO, I said 'why not!' I'll give a donation and whatever else I can do to help." Her mother, Sarah Brenner, "a child of the war," who has been in Israel now for about five months, was also at the event. She served as President of WIZO Belgium when she was younger and has "always loved WIZO."

Friendship, Culture and WIZO

"What we're trying to do with the group," says Gillian Hart, Vice Chairperson of Friends of WIZO, is a) Friendship; b) Trying to raise money for WIZO for the children; and c) We're trying to do interesting things with our cultural activities. Personally, I'm from Ireland, and my husband's from Scotland. I've been here 19 years, and we've got a real cross-section of people in this group. This has been my first involvement in WIZO. Our committee began operating last year, and I feel we're going from strength to strength. If we do interesting things, if people can have culture, and an enjoyable time, and we also manage to raise money for WIZO, I believe it's a good combination. Where do we find the people? From friends. One person tells another, 'Oh, you're going to the Ralli Museum? I'd love to come, and can I bring my mother?' You just have to talk to people. That's the way you do it."

In early May, another event was held, sponsored by U.B.S. bank at the Hilton Hotel in Tel Aviv, featuring opera singers from the Israeli-based international opera workshop I.V.A.I and Simca Heled, the world-famous Israeli cellist and conductor who lives in New York and conducts in Poland. "On May 17th," says Esther Mor, "our only honorary member, Italian Ambassador Gaulio Terzi, hosted an evening of "Altra Moda" of Renato Ballestra at the David Intercontinental Hotel in Tel Aviv, and all the proceeds will go to children at risk. Both of these events were donated by U.B.S. and the Ambassador."

Nancy Grossman, who grew up in Chicago, went to the University of Chicago, and has also been a part of the organization since her days in Israel, says, "The whole world should know about WIZO!"

Barbara Drench, who saw the similarity between the Ralli museums in Caesaria and Uruguay, still lives with her husband in New Jersey (USA), "but we spend our winters in Tel Aviv, preferring it to Florida."

"Shmee Barbara (My name is Barbara)," she says, and "we made aliyah because it was very important for us to be a part of the country that we worked so hard for and cared so much about. I think the whole world knows about WIZO, and if they don't, they should. We were fortunate to be introduced to Michal Modai (the outgoing WIZO President), who is a relative of someone from our community in New Jersey. And she introduced us to Sylvie Pelossof and she took us around the country to show us the WIZO projects, like the extraordinary foster homes project, Beit Heuss and the Single Parents Center in Jaffa – Benny, Sylvie & Me (Benny of course being WIZO’s beloved driver). We’ve also become very close to Tova Ben-Dov and Brenda Katten who are all outstanding representatives of the World WIZO movement. They are so inclusive, and that made us feel very much a part of the organization. And now that there is an English-speaking group, it was more comfortable for me, since I’m still in kitah aleph (first grade). We always felt very connected, but our aliyah was because there was a missing piece in the puzzle. We felt privileged that we could now vote, and actually have a say in all that we had heard and talked so much about. I felt that the day I went in to put my little piece of paper in the ballot box was an extremely powerful moment. Right or wrong, I had a say."

I care most about the social concerns, and the human aspect of things in Israel. WIZO is doing wonderful work, with its 800 projects and services around the country, really making a difference in people’s lives. I’m a volunteer at heart, and I think that the WIZO people can be very proud about what they’ve done over the years. This is a message that should get out to as many people as possible."

“And just to show you how WIZO and Israel get around, let me tell you a story,” continues Barbara. "I was in Kharkov in the Ukraine, visiting a school for girls at risk, and what did I see on the wall? A little picture of the WIZO emblem, with Michal Modai’s picture underneath it. With a certificate acknowledging her visit to this particularly school. That explains my theory that, wherever you are, you’re connected to WIZO and Israel.”
Israel Prize 2004

One of the highlights of the Yom Atzma’ut/Israeli Independence Day festivities is the annual Israel Prize Ceremony. This year, two of the recipients of the State of Israel’s most prestigious award have a special association with WIZO

Gila Almagor - Israel Prize for Cinema

“For her many years of activity that have accompanied the modern Israeli cinema since its inception. For her passion for cinema and her love of acting which expressed themselves in her artistic craft, her great investment in the development of characters, and her penetration into the emotional and intellectual world of the Israeli woman...”

Gila Almagor was a pupil at the WIZO-Hadassah Canada Hadassim School and Youth Village, 1953-1955. “I was happy there,” she says. “The encounter with nature, with friends and with the educators - all in such a short period, shaped my life. During one of my vacations I saw a play. That night my life changed. Fortunately, I had a wonderful educator who understood this. He began to guide me in reading texts and the history of the theater. Hadassim also allowed me to work on Saturdays for a small salary, that enabled me to buy tickets to the theater in Netanya...” Gila wrote a prize-winning novel about that period, “The Domim Tree is Taken,” that was later made into a successful film.

Gil Aldema - Israel Prize for Hebrew Song

“To ‘Mr. Hebrew Song’ for his achievements and innovations. For the cultivation and preservation of Hebrew song through the generations... For his musical and vocal arrangements... For his contribution to the choir culture and the love of Hebrew song...”

After fighting in the Palmach in the War of Independence (losing a leg when he stepped on a mine) and studying at the Academy of Music in Jerusalem, Gil Aldema served as an inspiring counselor and music teacher at the WIZO-Hadassah Hadassim School and Youth Village, 1952-1957. While there he founded and conducted a choir and wrote many of the songs that became a part of the basic Hebrew song repertoire. He is also one of the pioneers of the Israeli folk dance culture, and was always there, playing his accordion. Many of his pupils went on to outstanding careers in song and music.

Michal Modai - Honorary Citizen of Tel Aviv

World WIZO’s Honorary Life President, Michal Modai, was feted at the 23rd World WIZO EGM with an evening entitled “A Rose to Michal,” as she concluded eight successful years as President of World WIZO. On Independence Day, the Tel Aviv Municipality made Michal Modai one of 13 new Honorary Citizens of Tel Aviv for 2004, all cited for their great contributions to the city and the state.
Spring is in the Air
Heyut Aspav from Ethiopia and Israeli-born Yehuda (Udi) E’araz enjoy the spring air

Spring is first of all a good mood. Something opens up and we experience the opposite of autumnal depression. Spring is carpets of white daisies, nature in bloom, the sign of the lamb, the Song of Songs. Love is in the air at the WIZO Gardening & Landscape Technology Youth Village

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When you arrive at the WIZO Gardening and Landscape Technology Youth Village in Petah Tikvah (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland), you feel spring all around you. Already at the entrance to the village in the parking area you are surrounded by tropical plants, various kinds of cacti, olive trees, a flowering golden cassia bush and vines. Fifteen acres of vegetation that open the heart and uplift the spirit. Something is in the air. The melancholy of winter and fall is making way for optimism and the flow of positive energy. The pollution of the city seems to have remained outside and been replaced by an intoxicating smell of things in bloom. A smell that makes people take deep breaths and inhale the glory of nature into their souls.

Next to the classrooms, a beautiful exhibition garden has been built. Grevillea, gazanias, various kinds of roses, Chinese wisteria, Indian alder, jasmine and other flowers and climbers blossoming in splendor and intertwined in and out of an intricately designed metal construction. The director of the garden, Rami Chai, stands in wonder at every flower and plant in the garden he has designed. He removes an unnecessary stone and examines the ground with love: “A plant is like a person, you have to feel it. I don’t just pass by it, I penetrate through it,” he says with the smile of someone whose knowledge is perhaps more sublime than that of others.

Gardening Revolution

The garden is tended every week by 90 students in the framework of their studies, providing them with practical experience as well as theory, also saving the village money. During the last three years the care of the boarding school’s plant life has undergone a revolution. Rami Chai: “I began by moving plants to their natural locations. Plants that need sun were moved into the sun, and those that need less light or shade were moved to their natural habitats. I installed a computerized irrigation system for the whole village, and most importantly, we covered all the ground. The covering causes less water to evaporate, and preserves the structure of the ground and the plants. We saved 40% of our water consumption. We also brought plants from all over the world in order to expose the students to as much knowledge as possible.”

There is also a greenhouse department, which is the hi-tech of vegetation. Genetically cloned plants are grown in the greenhouses and the surplus plants are sold to the public. “All the students study and experiment with agriculture and with all branches of landscape vegetation,” explains Biram Shneur, the coordinator of the hardening (adaptation) greenhouse for the last 18 years. “We have many graduates who go on to work in plant nurseries and agriculture faculties,” he says with pride.

“The Green & the Quiet Captivated Me”

Ma’ayan Ivgi, 18, from Rishon L’Zion, sister of the actor Moshe Ivgi, loves and is active in the schools theater department and dreams of being a lawyer. “Thanks to the school I have discovered that I’m attracted to biology,” Ma’ayan came to the boarding school in the seventh grade and was a mediocre student. Five years later, she admits that the school was a turning point for her. “I wasn’t an outstanding student, and today I earn high grades and will finish my matriculation exams. My self-image was low and now it’s high. I have been exposed to every area of life, because we have all kinds of activities from both the social
and academic points of view. The teachers are supportive, helpful and caring, and this gives us a great feeling. Landscape gardening sounded like the worst thing possible to me, but the view, the greenery, and the quiet have captivated me.”

Aryeh from Petah Tikvah says that he too has been captivated by studying in this green environment. He dreams of becoming a landscape designer. Chen Levi, 17, from Pardes Hana, grew up in a house with a yard and has always loved to care for and nurture plants. “I am curious to see how the embryonic process develops into a plant. We deal with agricultural hi-tech here, and are at the cutting edge of the field. We have a laboratory for tissue cultures, a hardening greenhouse and fascinating projects. I am doing an experimental project on plant food and various soil mixtures.” Levi has taken an acting course at Ramat Efal and a course in make-up. The school covered half the expenses and she worked in the summer to pay for the second half. She already knows that after the army she will work with her sisters in the family hairdressing business.

Shneur isn’t worried about student declarations concerning the heavy study load: “In my view the most important thing is to prepare the kids to be good people with a head on their shoulders. The gardening is not an end in itself. The village is built on three legs: the boarding school, the academic studies and agriculture, and each area has its own place. We try to expose the kids to a wide variety of knowledge. There’s a science class, an organic class, projects, a computer room, research projects via computers. They absorb a bit of physics, a bit of botany, computers. Our graduates study biotechnology, physics, botany at the universities, and I meet others at teachers’ seminars in life sciences, agriculture, and ecology. We’re really making a contribution in this area.”

Signs of Spring are everywhere: outdoors, in the greenhouses & in the students’ hearts

Rachel Meiri, points to the greenhouses in awe. Things are already beginning to blossom, a profusion of flowers in different colors, coleus, gazania, begonia and balsam. She was a student in the village and is now the greenhouse coordinator. She says that there is a difference between the boys and girls: “The girls turn to agronomy, design, and growing plants, while the boys turn to gardening.”

Signs of spring are everywhere: outdoors, in the greenhouses and in the students’ hearts. For Udi E’araz and Heyut Aspav spring means sitting on the grass in the sun, jokes, renewal, flowers, love, “spreading a blanket on the grass or in the exhibition garden, a feeling of fun and relaxation.”
Touring the Day & Dancing the Night Away!

Believe me the World WIZO EGM was no holiday! Following an intensive day of meetings, the AVIV touring day kicked off at 7.30am, gratefully the sun was shining! The tour was arranged so that the 85 Aviv delegates from around the world could get to know each other better.

The first stop was an Aviv Day Care Centre in Givatayim, which looks after 175 pre-school children in a most kind and caring environment. They provided a great range of activities for the children and it was wonderful to see the kind of work they undertake.

We then traveled to Mount Scopus, Jerusalem, overlooking the wonderful view of Jerusalem and the glittering Dome of the Rock, and we all danced, sang and drank a l’chaim. ‘In the wonderful sunshine, with the feeling of sisterhood, all of Israel’s troubles seemed very far away.

Our next visit was to Yad Vashem, Israel’s National Holocaust Museum. We were privileged to meet an amazing woman who told us her story of leaving Sarajevo after the recent war. Since her parents had been granted the title of ‘Righteous Gentiles’, after having saved Jews during the Nazi period, they were able to live in Israel. After arriving here family converted to Orthodox Judaism after having lived a Muslim life! We then visited the

Learning how to belly dance at the EGM

Ronit Collis
Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive
memorial hall where a rabbi recited Kaddish, and we all made a proclamation that we would never forget the 6 million Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust. I was asked to lay the flowers in the hall, an extremely emotional moment for me, one I will never forget.

We then traveled on to The Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family - the jewel in British WIZO’s crown, a truly amazing place. It houses a day care centre, vocational centre and many other activities. It also includes a shelter for 15 women who are victims of domestic violence. We listened to a story from a 22 year old girl who had been threatened death by her husband and how the shelter was helping her deal with her many problems.

Our last visit of the day was to the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda School in Rishon LeTzion (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland). Before our arrival we were told the story of a 12 year old girl who had arrived from Latvia with her mother four years ago. Her mother had been diagnosed with cancer and was unable to take care of a daughter properly. The girl engaged in violent fights, couldn’t form relationships with the other students and her speech was far too sexually explicit for a girl her age. However, under the amazing guidance of Hezi Yosef, the Director of the school, her life was turning around and she was slowly improving. We were then treated to an amazing show by the children including a beautiful song by the Latvian girl. She received rapturous applause and it showed us how, with the right direction, a child’s life can be changed for the better.

After this exhausting day I was ready for bed, but our tour organizers had other ideas. As a surprise we met up with all the other tours at the Dan Panorama in Tel Aviv for a fabulous Israeli buffet with belly dancers and other entertainers. We danced the night away and, although incredibly tired, I’m sure we all felt so invigorated by our day’s travels.

Allison Maurice, British WIZO Aviv
New York

Black Tie Casino Night

WIZO New York launched the new fundraising season with Casino Night, a black tie event at the elite private hall, Capitale. Close to 400 people moved to a hip music mix, enjoyed a delicious buffet and gambled the night away. It was a wonderful evening, full of fun and friendship, and a financial success for WIZO. The event was organized by New York Chair Gail Perl, Vice Chairs Joyce Misrahi and Wilma Aschendorf and the Casino Night Committee: Brenda & Alvi Abuaf, Azita & Zoheir Aghravi, Yvette & Michel Benarrosh, Ester and Meyer Chetrit, Debbie & Mark Cooper, Tammy & Sidney Cohen, Peggy and Morris Dahan, Michelle & Robert Dana, Kris & Michael Fuchs, Irina & Michael Grad, Sima & Morad Ghadamian, Lissa & Steve Goldberg, Ellie & David Levin, Mireille & Robert Manocherian, Yael & Jed Manocherian, Chach & Robert Mishkin, Nazee & Joseph Moinian, Vicki & Daryosh Sakchai, Leslie & Ricardo Salmon, Liana Silverstein & Arthur Backal, Pauline and Steven Sitzer, Arlene and David Stein, Chantal Taic, Marci & Brian S. Waterman, Jennifer & Guy William and Susan & Henry Zilberman.
New Young Professionals Chapter

The newly established WIZO Young Professionals Chapter, under the leadership of Michelle Gut, Morgan Goldberg, Carolyn Hirsch, Yasmine Rahimzadeh, Laura Rosenbaum, and Meredith Weinsaft, participated in Casino Night. It was their first major event, and over 100 young men and women attended.

New York Teens

The WIZO Teens Chapter of New York held their first party of the year at the Dylan Hotel. It was a most successful fundraising event, led by the guidance and efforts of Brenda Abuaf, member of the WIZO New York Executive.

New Jersey

Jersey Luncheon

Ariela Spialter, Co-Chair of WIZO New Jersey, hosted a luncheon in her home to welcome Brenda Katten, Chair of the World WIZO Public Affairs and NGO (non-governmental organizations) Department. In New York for meetings of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, Brenda spoke on the rise of anti-Semitism internationally and presented a dramatic report on the efforts being made by WIZO in Israel to alleviate hunger and poverty.

Evelyn Sommer, President of WIZO USA and Mira Sofer, Vice President of Development, together with Ariela and New Jersey Co-Chair Bat Sheva Halpern, presented the WIZO Volunteer Award to Rita Maurer-Hollaender, President of the WIZO New Jersey Teen Chapter, for her efforts in developing the Teen Chapter.

New Jersey Teens

The WIZO Teen Chapter of New Jersey under the leadership of chapter president Rita Maurer-Hollaender and the guidance of her mother Debbie Maurer-Hollaender, held a successful fundraising variety show and party at Temple Bnai Abraham in Livingston, NJ.

Washington

At the State Department: Meeting Colin Powell

WIZO USA President Evelyn Sommer and members of the World Jewish Congress met with U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell at the State Department in Washington to prepare for the Anti-Semitism Conference held in Berlin in April.

Florida

Oliver North at Annual Gala

WIZO Yonit celebrated its Annual Gala with special guest speaker Oliver North on March 4, 2004 at the Fontainebleau Hilton in Miami Beach. Major donors enjoyed an exclusive cocktail sponsored by Luis and Norma Quintero in their beautiful...
Stephanie Esquenazi served as the Vice Chairpersons of the magnificent event. Among the distinguished participants were Mr. and Mrs. Lazar Gilinski, Nily and Fima Falic, Evelyn Katz, WIZO Florida President Mercedes Ivcher, WIZO Florida Senior Vice President Rosita Retelny and WIZO Florida Vice Presidents Jana Falic and Beverly Koplowitz.

The Dorfman Family together with Mercedes Ivcher (l to r) Cherna Moskowitz, Jana Falic, Dr. Irving Moskowitz and Sisel Klurman

Working Committee with Oliver North

Oliver North and Mary Appel

Lillian Tabacinic and Gary Gomol

Children for Children Fashion Show
On December 14, 2003, WIZO Ilanit Tikva, chaired by Vicky Abadi, held a Children to Children Fashion Show at the Sheraton Bal Harbor in memory of Elizabeth Dorfman, a dear WIZO friend and lifelong volunteer, who passed away at a young age. Eighty-two children modeled the latest fashions to the delight of over 300 parents, friends and relatives. All the children contributed to the Sponsor a Child program, and a special fund was established to meet the specific needs of the WIZO Florida Day Care Center in Rishon Lezion. The event was co-chaired by Kathy Matz, one of Elizabeth's daughters, all of whom attended together with their father, Roberto Dorfman. Gula Benasayag and Stephanie Esquenazi served as the Vice Chairpersons of the magnificent event. Among the distinguished participants were Mr. and Mrs. Lazar Gilinski, Nily and Fima Falic, Evelyn Katz, WIZO Florida President Mercedes Ivcher, WIZO Florida Senior Vice President Rosita Retelny and WIZO Florida Vice Presidents Jana Falic and Beverly Koplowitz.

The Dorfman Family together with Mercedes Ivcher

mansion. Later, over 200 guests were moved to tears by a powerful appeal made by WIZO Florida Vice President Jana Falic. After the energetic entertainment offered by a group of Rikudim dancers, Oliver North described his deeply rooted bond with the Israeli people. Jana Falic and Beverly Koplowitz served as the Event Chairpersons, aided by Yonit Chairperson Lillian Tabacinic and Co-Vice Chairpersons Sara Kanarek and Margie Szerer. Dr. Irving and Cherna Moskowitz, Sally and Joseph Handlerman, Sissel Klurman and Mary Eppel were the honorees of the unforgettable evening that was the culmination of the efforts of an excellent Working Committee.
ENGLAND

85th Anniversary Dinner
The V & A Museum buzzed with excitement as British WIZO’s 85th Anniversary Dinner began. The 360 guests enjoyed drinks and canapés in the delightful domed hall and impromptu arias as the singers mingled amongst them.

Susi Bradfield, much loved patron of British WIZO to whom the evening was dedicated, was given a poignant tribute by Sarah Glyn. Susi was thrilled that so many of her family and friends were able to share this special occasion, many of whom had travelled from far afield.

After dinner guest speaker Dan Gillerman, Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations gave a rousing presentation. He shared his strong WIZO connections, amusing the guests by referring to himself as a WIZO husband! He spoke passionately about the need to fight the rise in anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activities as well as the importance of WIZO in Israeli society.

A very emotive film especially made for the occasion on WIZO’s work in Afula was then shown. The focus of the evening’s fundraising was the substantial renovation and expansion needed for WIZO services in Afula – a town with major economic problems compounded by severe security issues.

The evening, generously hosted by Sue and Michael Zamkow, was a great success. The time for carriages came far too early as guests departed from the Raphael Gallery. Sarah Glyn and her dinner committee had prepared an excellent affair which marked British WIZO’s 85th anniversary in style.

Taking to the Catwalk
WIZO Aviv held its spectacular fashion show extravaganza for the second straight year in the Hampstead Garden Suburb. The event was a huge success, with more than 300 people attending to see this winter’s latest fashions. Once again, Aviv girls and guys took to the catwalk, modeling clothes, handbags, shoes and jewelry supplied by this year’s sponsors – Averyl/774, Daniel Footwear, Doani, Fifty-Seven Degrees and the latest hairstyles by Laurence Stoll Hairdressers and make-up from the Virgin Cosmetic Company.

Over 20,000 Pounds were raised, to help WIZO battered women’s shelters in Israel caring for victims of domestic violence. “It is always so encouraging to see so many people supporting such an important cause,” said the show’s producer, Ronit Collis, Aviv Co-Chairman and Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive. Everyone left smiling with a goody bag sponsored by Ahava.

FINLAND

Ladies’ Dinner
On March 14, 2004, with the city still covered by snow and a frozen Baltic Sea in the background, WIZO Helsinki invited ladies from the Jewish congregation and their friends to a delicious ‘Ladies’ Dinner.’ Began as an experiment three years ago, the dinner has become a popular annual event, giving people a chance to meet each other and enjoy a selection of favorite foods prepared by the Board members. There was even a waiting list, because the space could only hold 100 ladies, while there are 200 WIZO members in the whole country.

All the guests enjoyed the musical recital by violinist Diana →
Anna Pultuskier had been active for more than 25 years in WIZO Munich, 15 of them as chairperson. Her motto in life was: ISRAEL'S CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE, and she worked tirelessly for this purpose. She had a special gift to collect money for WIZO that no one else has equaled, before or since. Nobody could resist her plea, or we could say, her demand - after all, it was for a worthy cause. During her term as chairperson, a “Friendship Circle” was also formed, composed of non-Jewish women, mainly from the spheres of politics, economics and culture.

Anna Pultuskier was born in 1917 in White Russia. She was already married at the early age of 16, and in 1935 her first son was born. Her husband fell in 1941 while serving in the Russian Army, and she became a widow at the age of 24. Together with most of her family, she fled to Uzbekistan, where she met her second husband, with whom she had another son, Jossi. After the war, she fought her way to Germany to the Feldafing DP Camp, near Munich, where her daughter was born. When her husband became sick, she became the head of the family, raised the children and moved to Munich in 1953.

While she succeeded through enormous efforts to build a good life, she never forgot that it was most important to help others. Through WIZO she found the way to express her great love for children. Unfortunately, women like her are rare nowadays. The image of the “Yiddische Mama” that she carried with pride, was holy to her, and her death has created an empty space in the Jewish community of Munich. Her efforts were honored via the “Bundesverdienstkreuz First Class” Award, given to her in 1992 by the President of Bonn. She also received the “Bavarian Award”, presented by the Bavarian President in 1999. May she rest in peace!

Helga Guttmann, Chairperson WIZO Munich

WIZO Frankfurt Gala & Donors

Last year WIZO Frankfurt organized a WIZO Gala Evening at the Frankfurt Hilton Hotel, that was honored by the presence of then World WIZO President Michal Modai. People were so touched and moved by her outstanding speech, that we had our best fundraising results for a single evening in the past six years. We were very proud to host Michal.

WIZO Frankfurt is also proud to have two very generous families associated with us: Henry and Perla Faktor and Robert and Nicole Faktor. When Robert was in Israel on one of his business trips, he discovered World WIZO’s anti-poverty campaign, and he spontaneously decided that the two Faktor families would donate $65,000 to WIZO’s campaign to help alleviate poverty.

Jutta Jakkubowicz
Hague Demo - “No Tribunal Against Israel”

WIZO Holland was proud to be involved in the organization of the big international Jewish demonstration in February outside the International Court of Justice (the World Court), which convened to give an advisory opinion on Israel’s security fence.

WIZO Holland and other Dutch Jewish groups demonstrated together with groups from Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, USA, Italy, and Israel. Especially prominent were Israelis from the Association of Victims of Terror Attacks, people from ZAKA with the remains of the bus from the explosion in January & volunteers from Magen David Adom. A very moving moment occurred when 1000 people, each carrying a photograph of a victim of terror, ended their march through the city at our demonstration site in front of the Palace, and all of the victims’ names were read aloud. Two US Congressmen, Robert Wexler (Dem. Florida) & Steve Chabot (Rep. Ohio), spoke against bringing the issue to the Court and in support of Israel’s right to defend itself against terrorist attacks.

The following day a public hearing took place at the Old City Hall where 18 victims of terrorist attacks testified about their personal experiences and feelings, an extremely emotional and moving event. A resolution condemning terrorism, supporting Israel’s right to self-defense and calling upon the Palestinian Authority to suppress terrorist activities was unanimously accepted by all present, including the European Parliamentarians.

Despite the bad weather, WIZO women came to demonstrate their solidarity with Israel, not only from Holland but also from France (Monique Boaziz from the ECWF, who also took the photos). Dutch WIZO provided lunch boxes for all the participants from abroad arriving by bus at the demonstration, which was appreciated by all.

It was a very dignified demonstration of solidarity with Israel and we hope that the International Court of Justice will decide wisely on this issue.

Annelies Cohn-Erwteman
Acting President
WIZO The Netherlands

New WIZO Ina Kisch-Houthakker Day Care Center

Immediately after the 23rd World WIZO EGM in January, the official opening ceremony of the new WIZO Ina Kisch-Houthakker Day Care Center (sponsored by WIZO Holland) took place in Eilat. Among those present at the ceremony were World WIZO Honorary Life President Michal Modai, World WIZO President Helena Glaser, outgoing World WIZO Early Age Child Care Department Chairperson Tini Yehudai, Eilat Mayor Meir Yitzchak Haleyv, members of the Executive and guests of WIZO Holland. The entire Kisch family, from Israel and the Netherlands, came especially for the occasion to Eilat. A beautiful lunch was prepared by the chaverot from WIZO Eilat, and the children and staff of the day care center warmly received the guests from Israel and Holland. The family was very moved to see the beautiful new day care center in their mother/grandmother’s name. WIZO Holland is proud to have this new project under its care.

WIZO Holland’s Sabine Cohn (sitting) and a female Deputy of the European Union, who addressed the gathering. On the wall are photos of all the Israeli victims of the 2nd intifada.

Helena Glaser, Michal Modai and Eilat Mayor Meir Yitzchak Haleyv at the opening of the new WIZO day care center.
ITALY

Nachlat Yehuda Comes to Rome & Florence

WIZO Italy was very happy to receive the show put on by the performing troupe of youngsters from the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda School & Youth Village (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland), in Rome and in Florence. It was a great success, and created a wonderful opportunity for us to expose the Italian public to the achievements of the WIZO schools and youth villages in Israel. Everyone was impressed with the professionalism, confidence and dynamism of the young boys and girls. Their joyful attitude imbued us with great hope for the future, and all our appreciation goes out to the teachers and heads of the school.

Ziva Fischer
President Adei-WIZO Italy

SWEDEN

Malmo Hosts National Conference

WIZO Sweden holds a National Conference every second year in one of the country’s three larger cities. Malmo, the third largest city in Sweden, hosted this year’s conference in October 2003. The honorary guest was Brenda Katten, World WIZO Public Affairs & NGO Department Chairperson, who described how the media manipulates developments in Israel, and experiences she’s had representing WIZO in international forums.

WIZO has been active in Sweden for more than 60 years and attracts women of different ages and professions. The majority of the participants at the conference came from Malmo but there were also delegates from Gothenburg and Stockholm, among them the members of the WIZO Sweden National Board.

A Shabbat luncheon was given at Malmo’s Community Centre, and on Saturday evening, the vice president of WIZO Malmo opened her home for a very agreeable get-together.

A Poverty Campaign was launched in Sweden during the past year and Brenda’s talk about the situation in Israel revived interest in it. WIZO Sweden aims to continue the campaign during the coming year.

Inspired by what we heard, the delegates formed animated work groups that came up with good ideas on how to continue to raise more money for WIZO and its many projects. The conference ended on a note of encouragement and enthusiasm.

Bella Danowsky,
WIZO Malmo, Sweden

BRAZIL

World WIZO Song in Hebrew & Portuguese

WIZO Rio launched its 2004 activities with an exciting afternoon party, organized by President Silene Balassiano and Sara Lewcowicz, supported by the WIZO Rio Executive Board and staff. The party began with a ‘premiere’ of the movie about the 23rd World WIZO EGM, shot by our immediate Past–President of WIZO Brazil, Ana Marlene Starec, and edited by Silene Balassiano. Sara Lewcowicz is the conductor of WIZO Rio chorus – “The Voices of WIZO.” “Sarinha”, as her friends tenderly call her, is full of enthusiasm, energy and love for WIZO. Sara
sang and played her accordion, accompanying guest singer Varda R. Usiglio, a well-known performer of Israeli songs. Sara and Varda sang the 23rd World WIZO EGM Anthem in both Hebrew and Portuguese. The enthusiastic audience joined the duo, singing along with them. Among the extraordinary women cited for their work for WIZO was a very dear WIZO chaverah who has just won a huge battle against a life-threatening disease. This dear member was effusively applauded. She is a genuine example of WIZO willpower.

**WIZO Sao Paulo Celebrates International Women’s Day**

WIZO Sao Paulo’s Chana Szenes group inaugurated the Chapter’s activities for 2004 with their sixth International Women’s Day ceremony on March 8th. The prominent women honored were Albertina Durate Takiuti, Ester Rosenberg Tarandach, Lourdes Alves de Sousa and Rifka Berezin. They are a gynecologist who works with youngsters, a social welfare expert who runs an organization devoted to the socialization of people with special needs, a psychologist who devotes herself to teenagers and a teacher who brought dignity to Hebrew learning in and outside the Jewish community. Each of them gave a brief presentation about their activities. The audience was also entertained by the Guitar Camera Orchestra conducted by maestro Claudio Weisman from the Tom Jobim Music Studies Center, tenor Mauro Wrona, and WIZO Sao Paulo Sharsheret choir conducted by music teacher Sima Halpernen. WIZO Brazil President Sarita Schaffel and WIZO Brazil Honorary Life President Ana Marlene Starec traveled to Sao Paulo specifically to attend this beautiful enterprise.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Bnoth Zion Association - WIZO**

An air of excitement and expectation greeted members and friends of the Bnoth Zion Association, as they “poured” into the Israel Abrahams Hall of the Albow Centre in Cape Town on February 17, 2004, because of 4 firsts!

1) The voting on a resolution to add the name WIZO to the Association, thereby bringing Bnoth Zion in line with the 50 federations worldwide proudly bearing the name WIZO.

2) Chairman Tamar Lazarus would be presenting her first annual address and report on the Association’s activities.

3) The prestigious guest speaker was none other than Tova Ben-Dov of Israel, newly elected Chairperson, World WIZO - and Tamar’s Mother!

4) South Africa was the first Federation to be visited by Tova since assuming the Chairmanship!

Tova’s “down to earth” and approachable manner, her charm, grace, warmth and passion for Israel, the Jewish people and in particular for WIZO captured everyone’s heart. Her detailed descriptions of WIZO’s many projects highlighted the fact that WIZO is making a difference, and is instrumental in securing a productive, dynamic and creative Israel. “A role model”; “Inspirational”; “Motivating”; “So warm, unpretentious and caring”; “to be emulated”, were just few of the many expressions of admiration heard at the conclusion of Tova’s address!

Tova! We of Bnoth Zion Association - WIZO promise that we “will do you proud.” We promise “to do WIZO proud”, for we too, believe in “Am Israel Chai.” You have shown us how we can face the future with new vision!

Li Boiskin

**Perpetually Mobile in 2003**

The year 2003 was a year of great activity for the Women’s Zionist Organization of South Africa (WIZO South Africa). One of the highlights was “The Bead Project,” whose goal was to enable South African children to become aware of the plight of Israeli children. Bracelets with the colors of the Israeli & South African colors were made and sent to Israel to be distributed to children in WIZO schools.

The Women’s Zionist Council held its Triennial Conference in May – three stimulating days of discussion, planning and learning, enhanced by the presence of World WIZO President Michal Modai. WIZO Johannesburg organized the “Fortnightly Forum,” a program of about 15 lectures throughout the year. The 2004 topic is “Not the Weakest Link,” dealing with Jewish topics ranging from religion, tradition, politics, the arts on down to (or is it up to!) Jewish food and Jewish humor.

New WIZO branches were formed, ranging from new Aviv groups to older women living in retirement homes. Capetown’s Bnoth Zion established two new Aviv groups and organized a WIZO Bible Day and Rebecca Sieff Award function. WIZO Durban held a... Parachute Debate. The passengers boarded the “flight” for an
incredible journey, navigated by WIZO Durban Chairman Lynn Foster. Youthful flight attendants presented each person with a snack box and a copy of WIZO Review, the in-flight magazine (an excellent idea!). Only one parachute was available to save the passenger who could convince the judges that he or she deserved to be saved. This produced hilarious entreaties and an evening of fun and lucrative fundraising.

“Music, Maestro, Please,” was the theme of WIZO Pretoria’s annual music morning featuring hits from well-known Broadway musicals and a selection of Viennese and Italian tangos. WIZO Port Elizabeth opened its doors to long, patient queues of customers waiting to spend money at the Collectable Market.

Our resolution for 2004 is to surpass our achievements of the previous year, and our fervent wish is that we shall be working for our beloved State of Israel in an era of peace and prosperity.

Jane Levitas, Hasbara Chairman

Aviv Group Breaks Fundraising Record

WIZO Tova, one of Sydney’s Aviv Groups, recently set a new record for funds raised by a group during a six-month period by raising just over $100,000 (Australian dollars). The Group was presented with the President’s Award at the WIZO New South Wales’ Annual General Meeting in February.

Ensuring WIZO’s Continuity

Nelly Weiss, a Past President of WIZO Australia, and an Honorary Life Member of World WIZO, chose a wonderful living memorial when she wanted to honour the memory of her late parents, Cecile and Max Merel. She established a fund in their names which enables young WIZO members to attend Seminars and
Conferences in Israel, thereby ensuring that many young women will follow in her footsteps as leaders in the movement to which she has given so much of her life.

**Woman (?! of Valour Pin**

At the Annual General Meeting of WIZO New South Wales (Sydney, Australia) in February, major donors were presented with the Woman of Valour Pin. One lady could not be present, and her husband valiantly agreed to accept the pin on her behalf. Felicia and Stanley Kahn, who run Sydney’s leading kosher catering business, are staunch WIZO supporters, and Stanley was very happy to be a “Woman of Valour” for the evening.

**WIZO Victoria Celebrates its 70TH Anniversary**

WIZO’s 70th Anniversary celebrations were launched with a Gala Luncheon in February, in Melbourne, Australia. The Luncheon was under the distinguished Patronage of Sir Zelman & Lady Cowen (Sir Zelman is a former Governor General of Australia) and amongst the dignitaries present were politicians from both political parties and communal leaders.

A large video screen provided the 270 guests with a visual personal message from Helena Glaser, a synopsis of 7 decades of WIZO Victoria’s activities and our WIZO projects in Israel.

The guest speaker, Commissioner Christine Nixon, (Chief Commissioner of Police for Victoria and the first female Police Commissioner in Australia) empowered those present with her many anecdotes about being a female member of a male dominated work place.

Lee Avshalom and Nelly Weiss (l), Sydney, Australia. Lee attended the World WIZO EGM in Israel as a beneficiary of the Cecile and Max Merel Leadership Scholarship, established by Nelly to honour the memory of her late parents.
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.