The Olive Tree Project
Israeli Artists Exhibit

Meeting of Representatives
WIZO Leaders’ Annual Meeting

Pioneers of Social Change
WIZO’s Entrepreneur Project
WIZO chaverot from federations all over the world joined the international Shabbat project, ‘Spreading the Light,’ which called on Jewish people to light Shabbat candles and donate tzedaka to charity, as well as to say a prayer for Israel and the Jewish people in the Diaspora. The project, initiated by the Chief Rabbi of South Africa Warren Goldstein, called upon Jewish people worldwide to observe Shabbat on October 24, 2014, with the goal of fostering connections and peoplehood among the Jewish people globally. After participating in the initiative in 2013, WIZO South Africa decided to invite all WIZO federations around the world to join in 2014.

Each WIZO federation marked the special event uniquely. Some sold WIZO Shabbat candle and matches sets; others created WIZO tzedaka boxes; and others yet organized challah baking events. Chaverot then photographed themselves at candle-lighting events with a poster reading the name of the federation and the #SPREADINGLIGHT hashtag.

The event was an incredible success, with chaverot from all corners of the earth joining together to sanctify Shabbat and celebrate Israel, Jewish peoplehood and WIZO.
Dear Chaverot,

I always compare putting together each issue of WIZO Review to a giant jigsaw puzzle – fitting all the pieces in this case pages together. We usually start with our regular items, and feature articles, with quite a number of ‘blank’ pages. As the weeks go on, we are always inundated with interesting stories and news about WIZO, and requests from various divisions to include their important topics. So the puzzle begins – what to include, what to leave for the next issue and what to put where. One thing is for sure – the puzzle has to be solved!

So it was with the current issue – so much is happening in WIZO! You will see everything in the Contents page opposite; I will just draw your attention to some highlights.

We have reports on the recent Aviv Seminar (p.25) and the Meeting of Representatives (p.10). Both are occasions for chaverot from around the world to meet and brainstorm – looking towards WIZO’s centenary in 2020. The countdown has begun!

We are delighted to launch an international WIZO summer camp for Israeli children and children from abroad. The campus will be our own WIZO Nir Ha’emek School and Youth Village – so consider signing up your children or grandchildren for what promises to be a fantastic experience. (p.13)

Two feature articles on pages 14 and 22 showcase some of WIZO’s work ‘on the ground’ to help improve Israel’s society.

A group of women from diverse backgrounds, who attend the WIZO Gruss Community Centre in Afula, have joined together in an exciting art project – which has gone international. One of the paintings is on our front cover. See more on page 31.

The Organization and Tourism Division encourages you and your friends to visit our projects on any visit to Israel – nothing is more convincing than seeing our work ‘on the ground’. In addition, we now have special programmes for visiting youth groups – see some of these activities on pages 28 and 29.

In these days of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, take note of Rolene Marks’ article on page 30 – feel proud to be WIZO and Zionist!

Enjoy reading!

Ingrid Rockberger
Editor
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CHANGE OF ADDRESS: To make sure you don’t miss a copy of WIZO Review, please let us know any address changes by email to wreview@wizo.org Don’t forget to add your full name, mailing address, zip code and country.
Two thousand and fourteen was a very special year for me. It marked my 50th year as a WIZO chavera – a WIZO volunteer. I regard this as an honour and a privilege, or as I have said before on many occasions - for me WIZO is a way of life and commitment, a feeling of belonging, a service to the society in Israel and to the Jewish communities in the Diaspora.

On 11th July 1920, WIZO was established because as Rebecca Sieff explained: “The women Zionists... only wanted to use and develop their specific powers and capabilities as women to co-operate and complement the work of men in the reconstruction of Palestine and to take their full share in the duties and responsibilities of the Movement”.

The building of the State of Israel continues as does WIZO’s work. I can testify that WIZO remains a strong, relevant, leading women’s Zionist and social movement because it never rests on its laurels, but day in day out continues to be a pioneer, to initiate, promote and develop new projects and programmes to benefit the society in Israel. With its finger on the national pulse WIZO is constantly adapting itself to the need of the national hour. This is WIZO’s strength and what distinguishes it from other movements – many that sadly fell by the wayside.

WIZO strides for excellence and perfection in all it does and therefore, can boast great achievements including the prestigious Israel Prize (awarded in 2008) for “their efforts to promote gender equality and their struggle to promote humanitarian, social, cultural and educational issues, while focusing on the central position of women in society and the need for equality between the sexes within Israeli society.”

From the beginning, I have always seen education as an essential investment in the future. The WIZO concept implemented in its day care centres, schools, youth villages and youth centres affords every child to develop and strive for excellence, to turn natural and raw talents into skills and tools that can change their lives and that of their families - no matter what their socio-economic background. WIZO instills in them the desire to reach for the sky and beyond.

My dear chaverot in the federations worldwide, you are full partners in all we do. I am humbled by your commitment, innovation, creativity and hard work for the State of Israel. I applaud your efforts to strengthen your Jewish and Zionist identity within your communities. I stand by you at a time when anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israelism are rising and implore upon you to make aliya – come continue your WIZO work in our beloved homeland.

Winston Churchill said: “This is no time for ease and comfort. It is time to dare and endure.” With over 1.7 million Israelis still living below the poverty line, Israel still needs WIZO. Our WIZO work - continuing to make a positive difference to those in need - is far from done.

Affectionately,

Tova Ben-Dov
President World WIZO
Dear Chaverot,

Northwards, southwards, eastwards and westwards

During the last few months, it has been my pleasure and honour as Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive to have travelled far and wide at the invitation of our WIZO federations around the world.

In Chile, I took part in the XIV WIZO Latin American Congress, with over 300 leaders from the Latin American federations. The Latin American federations are wonderful, vibrant and active federations, in which the various generations of leaders cooperate in order to further develop their WIZO work.

I attended a Sponsor A Child event in Madrid, as the guest of WIZO Spain, who used the occasion to re-energize WIZO activities in Spain, and with the enthusiasm that I saw there, the Spanish Federation is bound to move forward.

I was invited to a Sponsor A Child luncheon in WIZO Switzerland. This small country boasts one of the strongest WIZO federations, which continually adds to its projects, as soon as they recognize the need. I salute their leadership.

At the Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) Annual General Meeting in Toronto, tribute was paid to Marla Dan, who completed her presidency. As with all our retiring presidents, I know that Marla will remain a guiding light in the movement. I wish great success to Claudia Goldman, Marla’s successor,

And, most recently I participated in a brilliant Hannukah candle lighting organized by WIZO France in the Municipality of Paris. The WIZO Nachlat Song and Dance troupe gave a wonderful performance which captured the hearts of all the important guests and dignitaries who attended. They really put focus on what we do in WIZO and gave us a lot of ‘nachess’ and pride.

Although separated by thousands of miles geographically, we are so alike wherever we live. WIZO is one big family, and wherever I travel I feel that instant connection when we meet up with one another. Being part of a global family means that each one of us is part of an international network who genuinely care for one another, and are ready to help each other at all times.

When I travel to you in your home countries and tell you about our challenges, I sense and feel your concern, and then, when I tell you about the successes in your projects, I see the pride in your eyes, I see your satisfaction in knowing that you have been successful in moulding the next generation.

Throughout history, the heroes of the Jewish people have been generations of Jewish mothers, who have created loving homes and instilled values in the coming generation. It is we WIZO women who are transmitting the torch of our shared heritage to the next generation.

The Ethics of the Fathers teach us: ‘According to the effort is the reward’. May we all see reward for our WIZO efforts.

With warm regards,

Prof. Rivka Lazovsky
Chairperson
World WIZO Executive

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Beit Heuss
Chairperson: Saya Malkin

The Next Generation
Chairperson: Sylvie Pelossof

Special Projects
Tricia Schwitzer
Second WIZO DCC at the Weizmann Institute

Funded by a generous donation from the Siem family, World WIZO President Tova Ben Dov thanked Mrs. Karen Siem on behalf of her family at a special dedication ceremony, and highlighted the importance of the donation by noting that “early age education is an investment that constantly grows and is a passport to the future.”

The partnership between the World WIZO Early Age Division and the Weizmann Institute began in 2000, when the university enlisted WIZO’s help to build and operate a day care centre for the children of the Institute’s staff and faculty. WIZO sees providing a challenging and nurturing educational environment for the children of the Institute’s young researchers as an important vehicle for supporting and furthering science research in Israel.

Remembering Sylvia

“Every two weeks on a Monday night was WIZO night.” At an emotional ceremony to dedicate a new computer room at the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family, in memory of his mother, Paul, Sylvia’s son took the participants back in time.

Paul recalled how their lounge was filled with “strong, dedicated women, devoted to WIZO. My brother and I got out of the way; they were discussing serious stuff.”

Family and friends from England and Israel gathered together to remember Sylvia Morris, one of the founders of Southgate WIZO and a highly respected educator.

Evelyn Chenkin, Honorary Vice President of WIZO UK and long-time resident of Israel said that Sylvia’s reputation in the area was very high and ‘anyone who had a problem with their children sent them to Sylvia.”

After the dedication ceremony, lunch and a tour of the Rebecca Sieff Centre led by director Kobi Hillel – the participants proceeded to Ramat Gan for tea at the British Ambassador’s residence.
Michal’s Day Care Centre

“I am a capitalist, socialist and an egoist; I saw that no WIZO project had been named for Michal, therefore I decided that this day care centre would bear her name. I have enough buildings named after me!” declared Ruth Rappaport of WIZO Switzerland at the opening of the new WIZO day care centre adjacent to Rambam Hospital in Haifa, named for Michal Modai, who was president of World WIZO from 1996-2004.

The moving event took place on the first day of the Meeting of Representatives, and was attended by Michal’s children – Boaz Modai, Israel’s current Ambassador to Ireland, Galia Modai Meirovitch, other family members and friends, delegates from the MOR, Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav, Prof Rafi Biar, Rambam Healthcare Campus Director, and many others.

“When we unveiled the plaque, my first thought was ‘I must show Mother’ – as I stop myself phoning her every Friday night,” Michal’s son Boaz emotionally explained, “There is no better way to remember her,” he continued. “If she was looking down on us, she would have tears in her eyes and feel warmth. She was as beautiful within as she was outside”.

The Centre, which is a joint initiative of World WIZO President Tova Ben Dov, the Municipality of Haifa, the Bat Galim Neighbourhood Council and Rambam Hospital, was made possible through a generous donation of Ruth Rappaport, through WIZO Switzerland and the Rappaport Foundation.

The centre will provide childcare and educational services to Rambam Hospital employees and Bat Galim neighbourhood residents, and will educate 77 children between the ages of 1.5-3 years. The day care centre has many special characteristics: for example, the opening and closing hours are designed to accommodate the work hours of hospital employees.

Donor Appreciation

Perla Vainberg

Perla Vainberg is a true Eshet Chayil, the embodiment of what it means to be a WIZO woman. Whether in Bogota, Miami or Tel Aviv, her commitment to Israel and to Jewish causes is second to none. During a trip to Israel, Perla visited WIZO's Shelter for Battered Women in Jerusalem. She was so inspired and moved that upon her return to Bogota, she founded Casa Sarita, a home for abused women, the first facility of its kind in the Colombian capital.

Having spent many years volunteering for WIZO Colombia, it was only natural for her to join WIZO Florida in Miami in 1999, when she moved to the US along with her late husband David.

She worked tirelessly and with great enthusiasm, distinguishing herself as WIZO Miami Membership Chairperson, as well as chairing many successful projects of her Chapter, especially those related to art, another of her deeply entrenched passions. In February 2015, WIZO Florida acknowledged her invaluable dedication to the Jewish cause by bestowing upon her the Joseph Handleman Light of Philanthropy Award.

In 2014, Perla Vainberg granted WIZO a generous donation that will fund an innovative educational enhancement programme benefitting 26 different WIZO Therapeutic Afterschool Programmatic (TAP) centres in Israel. These centres provide a solution for elementary-school-age children who cannot go home after school until late in the evening. Perla’s gift commemorates her beloved husband David, for whom education was so important, by helping close the gap for less privileged children.

Perla is the loving mother of Sharona, Samuel and Anita - former WIZO Florida Chairperson and WIZO USA Vice President, and current World WIZO Fundraising Division Deputy Chair.

In 2013, Perla made Aliyah to realize her lifelong dream of living in the land of Israel.
Meeting of Representatives

WIZO Leaders Meet, Greet and Plan for the Future

As is WIZO’s tradition, Jill Shaw, chairman of our mother federation - WIZO UK - gives a summing up on the last night

The Meeting of Representatives is not just the anticipation of meeting friends and colleagues from around the world, it’s seeing and hearing first hand what’s going on in our beloved WIZO.

It goes without saying that we expect the organisation of these events to run smoothly, and the well-oiled wheels of the Organization and Tourism Division haven’t let us down. Their high reputation is intact.

“Pick of the Week”

In the UK we have a radio programme called ‘Pick of the Week’ made up of snippets of programmes broadcast during the previous seven days. This is my personal ‘Pick of the MOR 2015’.

On Sunday, before the MOR started officially, some of us attended the opening ceremony of the new day care centre in Haifa close to Rambam hospital, so generously funded by the Rappaport Foundation and named in memory of the late WIZO President, Michal Modai.

Several European federations are hosting the exhibition over the next 12 months, and it has already been held successfully in Mulhouse and Paris. This is a shining example of breaking down fences and successful co-existence.

Official Opening

That evening, the official opening of the MOR took place at WIZO’s Hadassim School. What a warm and pleasurable occasion, where the school’s outstanding choral, instrumental and dance groups provided delightful entertainment.

Monday was the business day which commenced with children from WIZO Nir Ha’emek waking us up with a lively medley of songs.

Then it was down to serious business from Rivka Lazovsky, Tova Ben-Dov, and Helena Glaser. We were so pleased to receive greetings from the immaculate, inimitable Raya Jaglom, World WIZO Life President. Each speaker emphasised different aspects of WIZO’s year at home, and world politics including rising anti-Semitism in Europe.

Rivka recalled Rebecca Sieff’s words from 1960:

‘If WIZO had never come into existence, the Jewish State would have looked very different from the advanced, democratic and enlightened Israel of today in which the Jewish nation throughout the world takes such pride.’

Tova noted that if we want to improve society we should recall Eleanor Roosevelt’s words:

‘In all our contacts it is probably the sense of being really needed and wanted which gives us the greatest satisfaction and creates the most lasting bond.’

WIZO Israel, Budget and Work Plans

Gila Oshrat in her report on the Israel Federation covered the many admirable services provided by WIZO volunteers nationwide and their vital work endeavouring to bring greater gender equality to Israeli society.

Atara Ilani masterfully explained the balanced Budget and Igal Dekel described how World WIZO is continuing the drive to modernise and rationalise its activities in the most efficient way. We really hope that progress will be maintained, costs

Prof Rivka Lazovsky and Raya Jaglom surrounded by the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda School Song and Dance Troupe, who performed at the MOR closing ceremony
will be contained and the new Government will treat WIZO kindly and pay their contributions to our projects in a timely manner.

Highlights of the Work Plans for 2015 were briefly described by the responsible World WIZO Executive chairpersons, some of whom had to race through their presentations in order to meet the strict three minutes allotted for each one.

**Aviv**
Laurienne Baitz, Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive, had an important message to pass on. Federations, many of which she visited in 2014, must place very high importance to attract new younger supporters.

**Voting Rights**
The final lively session on voting rights ended with an agreement on the maximum number of votes for each Federation. Janine Gelley, Ingrid Rockberger and representatives from the five continents had worked hard on a committee preparing the way for the debate. The thorny question of ‘Who is a WIZO Member?’ has been set aside for further discussion.

The heads of Federations, be they called Chairperson or President, appreciate the opportunity to have their informal evening meeting with the World WIZO Executive members, chaired by the World WIZO President.

Other informal meetings took place, one for the European Federations and another for the Latin American Federations. These are all good opportunities to get closer to our geographical neighbours and discuss matters of mutual interest.

**Touring Day**
Tuesday, bright and early, in the sunshine, we set off for Sderot. Sderot is flourishing with many new developments and an increase in population to the current 25,000. All this is against a background of constant rocket onslaught from Gaza. During last summer’s ‘Operation Protection Edge’ the mayor decided not to shut the city down and the stoic population stayed despite the terrible strain on their lives. Those of us who have not experienced this type of pressure or danger are full of admiration for the determination of Sderot’s citizens who live so close to the front line.

To see reinforced bus shelters with their own safe rooms forming part of their structure, helps us to realise the perils of everyday life. When the red alert sounds, there is a mere 15 seconds until the rocket lands.

All of us can be grateful for WIZO’s rocket proof day care centre which we visited and centres fitted with air cleansing machinery so that small children do not have to wear gas masks in a possible attack.

We also admired the programme of activities at the Margaret Thatcher Open House project. This was originally a DCC opened personally by the late British Prime Minister. The limitations of its structure meant that it was no longer suitable for this use and the municipality cooperated with its change into a family centre. Here many parents with their small children come for therapy and to benefit from treatment through art, games, music and other means... helping to tackle the effects of anxiety and fear.

We were addressed by Noam Bedein, Director of the city’s Media Centre, who gave us facts and figures about the region. World media and prominent visitors from abroad visit regularly and a brand new Visitors’ Centre is under construction. We saw for ourselves the close proximity of Gaza from the edge of the city.

**Visiting Kibbutz Kfar Aza**
Our visit to Kibbutz Kfar Aza was most emotional. Both here and at Hadassim we were moved to hear from recipients of WIZO’s warm and caring respite care at our youth villages during last summer’s Operation Protective Edge. Over 1000 families were hosted over this very stressful period.
The WIZO centre at Ness Ziona welcomed us warmly with yet more refreshments in the late afternoon. Their volunteers carry out many admirable social welfare programmes. This visit meant that we had touched the full range of WIZO’s work at grass roots.

It was a really worthwhile day, reinforcing the reason why we are all so committed to this cause.

**Division Presentations**

On Wednesday excellent presentations came from the Divisions of Organisation & Tourism, Fundraising and Publicity & Communications. We are all taking back excellent material including beautiful emotive short films. The launch of the first WIZO Summer Camp for both Israeli and Diaspora children is an exciting venture which, we hope, will flourish. Questions and comments flowed following the launching of the new World WIZO website and one on social media platforms.

The Membership session showed that there is a great deal to be done in this area of our activities. World WIZO has gained a great deal of information from the SWOT analysis and these MOR discussions will help with the strategic plan which will take us up to our 100th anniversary and beyond.

Journalist Henrique Cymerman gave a fascinating lecture on The Media War in the Middle East, with many pointers for us to combat inaccurate and biased reporting. Rolene Marks and Alon Futerman led a session entitled ‘Ambassadors for Israel in an Era of Growing Animosity’, in which federation presidents participated, and a lively discussion from the floor ensued.

To paraphrase Dudu Moatty’s words when speaking of the Olive Tree project… “We can sow seeds in the desert’s cracked, parched earth but with just a few drops of rain they can germinate and grow into beautiful colourful flowers.” Let us strive to create a beautiful, colourful future for Israel and her citizens.

Rivka and Tova, thank you for inviting me to give this summary. WIZO UK, the mother Federation is really honoured. We are now looking forward to a peaceful and successful 2015 around the world and to the 2016 EGM a year from now.

Sobering sights in Sderot: Remains of some of the 8000+ rockets which landed in the town on display outside the police station, and a reinforced bus stop - a familiar site all round the town.
The international camp is a whole new way to connect to Israel.

Here at One World camp we appreciate the natural world and the fun experiences it offers. Through innovative and engaging programs, we empower our campers and help them develop confidence, leadership skills, social awareness and personal growth. We strive to build strong bonds between values, society, nature, and Jewish youth from both Israel and around the world.

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ONE-WORLD IS A UNIQUE SUMMER CAMP LOCATED AT WIZO NIR HAEMEK YOUTH VILLAGE.

The international camp is a whole new way to connect to Israel. Here at One World camp we appreciate the natural world and the fun experiences it offers. Through innovative and engaging programs, we empower our campers and help them develop confidence, leadership skills, social awareness and personal growth. We strive to build strong bonds between values, society, nature, and Jewish youth from both Israel and around the world.

Early bird registration at:
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www.oneworld.camp

Ages 11-17
Empowering Teenage Girls

Catching Teenage Girls Before They Fall

In its 12th consecutive year – its bat mitzvah year – participants and organizers alike reflect on the unique role the programme plays in empowering girls

Zohar Friedman

The girls of Otzma Tzeira (Young Strength) love to tell me their stories – something that did not always come naturally to them. Gathered at the Ben Shemen woods, just outside of Tel Aviv, some 80 girls have come from as far south as Eilat, by plane, to as far north as Haifa, to celebrate participating in a year of the programme – and all of them want the opportunity to speak.

These, for the most part, are girls from pretty run-of-the-mill backgrounds. They were recruited to participate in WIZO Israel’s Otzma Tzeira programme for girls who have a variety of problems. While these girls do not yet suffer from drug and alcohol abuse or serious depression, without intervention, they are at-risk for finding themselves on this downward path. Aged between 13-15, nearly each girl I meet describes herself pre-Otzma Tzeira as seriously lacking confidence, afraid to speak in class, at home and among friends, lonely, isolated, and lacking meaningful connections within their peer groups.

Through their stories, they describe a world that is terrifying – where every teenage problem is exacerbated through a relentless media, social scrutiny and the internet. A world where harassment and bullying extend into the home, online, where images of unrealistic beauty ideals are showered upon them day and night, where boys lure girls into sex acts, film them, and post them on Facebook. They describe a world where it’s best to keep your head down, keep to yourself, and remain unseen. They aren’t the girls, for the most part, who are disruptive in class or get expelled from school. They are the girls who develop quieter, more subtle problems that strike inwards, not outwards – eating disorders, depression, hopelessness, and general withdrawal from the world around them.
Withdrawal

Twelve years ago – making this its bat mitzvah year - the Otzma Tzeira programme was founded by the WIZO Israel Welfare Division to address the needs of exactly this group of girls. For girls who have already crossed the threshold, a separate Welfare Division programme, ‘Warm Home’, addresses the needs of girls-at-risk who already have open files at the Ministry of Welfare. In contrast, to qualify for Otzma Tzeira, the girls cannot have a file at the Ministry of Welfare; instead, participants are referred to the programme by school guidance counsellors.

After the girl interviews for the programme with Otzma Tzeira’s dedicated coordinator, Giliy-a Cohen, she joins a local group and attends weekly meetings.

While each Otzma Tzeira group is distinct, each meeting includes several key elements: a hot meal, a hug from the volunteer and a practical, empowerment and skill building segment with the professional counsellor assigned to the group.

Today, at their graduation party, Shosha Avital, the volunteer for the Rosh Ha’ayin group, introduces “her girls,” pushing forward a group of five, somewhat gangly teenagers with the pride of a mother. “Meet my girls, come meet my girls,” she tells me.

Although today, after weekly meetings and unwavering patience, she clearly has built an important bond with the girls, it wasn’t always so simple.

Offering an alternative

“When I first met them, it was like culture shock. I found the girls difficult to connect with. They came scattered and disorganized, prone to wandering the streets of Tel Aviv at night by themselves. We gave them an alternative – a safe place with a warm meal and people who genuinely care about them.”

Shosha explains that the programme yielded results, and the group of five smiling girls attest to that. When asked what it was about Otzma Tzeira that helped the girls choose this transformation, Shosha smiles and says, “They couldn’t resist what we offered.”

While Shosha offers the volunteer’s perspective, Liat Sery, the professor guide for the Netanya group, explains that the girls are at a vulnerable age, faced with extraordinary challenges: “Every direction they turn, they feel trapped and pressured. They are searching for their inner truths. They’re at an age where adults are less influential in their lives, and social pressures are mounting. Temptations are everywhere and like all teenagers, they are at an age where they test their boundaries.”
With this in the back of her mind, Liat set to work providing the girls with tools and skills to help them navigate this social environment: building confidence, developing critical thinking and helping them build self-esteem by providing them with exercises and scenarios where they can feel successful.

**Blame the victim or the aggressor?**

Along with building confidence and the communication skills, critical thinking is also a major theme across all Otzma Tzeira groups. Shosha’s girls of Rosh Ha’ayin recall a particular meaningful memory, where they were presented with a true story of a girl – much like themselves – who had found herself in bad situation. A high school girl was invited by a group of boys, encouraged to undress, was photographed, and saw those photographs – to her horror and deep distress – published on Facebook. Initially, the girls reported that they held the girl responsible: she, after all, was foolish enough to undress.

“It was easy to blame the victim,” one of the Rosh Ha’ayin girls says now, recalling how, after discussing the incident, they withdrew from their immediate position of siding with the boys – the aggressors – and blaming the girl, the victim. Now, the girls have a more nuanced view: while both parties must take responsibility, they say, they are more critical of the social and societal pressures that might cause a girl to acquiesce to such a situation – that a choice – even if it seems like such – is sometimes not a choice at all.

**Building the confidence to speak**

“I never knew who I was or why I am a valuable person,” says Laura, age 15, from Netanya. “I never spoke in the classroom, at school, outside of school, or with my family. I just never spoke.”

The first step to building her confidence was helping her find her peer group – which she found immediately. “Already on the first car ride to our first meeting, I suddenly felt like I belonged. I was with other girls in my class who I didn’t connect with – I thought they were snobs. But we put aside the divisions we felt from school and suddenly we became our own group.”

In addition to finding a peer group that accepted her and exercises from Liat that provided her with experiences where she felt confidence and success, Laura underwent a slow but definite transformation: “Now, I speak. I don’t buckle down in front of criticism. In my life, I feel the effects. I was able to integrate better at school. And it’s not just me – the other girls felt this burst of confidence, too.”

**Reflections after 12 years**

For the Welfare Division of WIZO Israel, the bat mitzvah year of Otzma Tzeira marks a significant milestone. Sigal Ratzin, the manager of the Girls and Youth Programming, explains, “No programme for this group of girls exists in Israel. There are cracks in the welfare system, and if WIZO doesn’t catch these girls, they’ll fall.”

Giliy-a Cohen, the programme coordinator, echoes her sentiments: “These girls all have potential, but there’s no framework to catch them. Otzma Tzeira empowers these girls – these girls who would otherwise be invisible – to change their lives.”

Celebrating its bat mitzvah year, with testimony from participants, parents and volunteers on the effectiveness of the programme, Otzma Tzeira looks forward to a successful future.
Noa carries the key to their apartment tied to her wrist. She can't afford to lose it. She never knows where her mother is or when she will be back. No one is waiting for her when she walks through the door after school. There is no meal waiting to be served. The refrigerator is empty so often that she has stopped looking to see if there is anything there. Noa does not believe she has any opportunities.

Dafna’s home life is chaotic on good days. With an unemployed mother and a father battling alcoholism, uncertainty is the only thing certain in her life. Dafna’s older brother assists when he can, but his income is sporadic at best. Dafna has no strong female role model and practically no chance of completing high school. She has no hopes at all.

Make an IMPACT – and give these children, teenagers and women an OPPORTUNITY to shine.

Dana grew up in one of Israel’s most impoverished neighborhoods. As a young child, she was exposed to abuse, neglect and addiction. The message that was drilled into her head, time and time again, was “Give up. You don’t stand a chance.” She dropped out of high school in the tenth grade. The IDF was happy not to draft her. By the age of 23 she was a single mother with two children under the age of 5. Dana was alone, penniless, with no hope of gainful employment. She was barely getting by, living on welfare and unemployment benefits. In Dana’s eyes, the future is bleak and void of opportunity.

The number of children, teen girls and women living in unstable homes in Israel today is on the rise. Many of them suffer from gender-based violence and bullying for most of their lives. Others suffer at school or in their neighborhood from gender inequality. They have no one to ensure they don’t give up.

That is why WIZO must step in. Throughout Israel, Noa, Dafna and Dana, and others like them receive the support they need to succeed in life. With a promise of equal opportunities for all dating back almost a hundred years to our movement’s inception – WIZO provides the empowerment and educational programming for those who need it most. Through Otzma Tze’ira youth leadership programs, Single Mother Hubs and the after-school centers, WIZO ensures that children, teens and women have a better shot at success.

This is our philosophy – a philosophy that has made WIZO into Israel’s largest women’s organization for almost 100 years. INSPIRE them to dream again – and they will have the power to create endless OPPORTUNITIES for a better life.
Developing WIZO

Thanks to our Federations, WIZO has provided our children, youth and women state-of-the-art facilities. This is just a glimpse of a few of the renovations made possible by our generous donors in 2014.
Developing Beit Sara WIZO Centre, Kfar Saba

Renovations by WIZO Mexico

Raya Jaglom Day Care Centre, French Hill, Jerusalem

Sensory Motor Room renovations by WIZO South Africa

Playgrounds renovated by WIZO Switzerland

Charlotte Beecham & Jacqueline Lewis (KH) Day Care Centre, Acre

WIZO Gan Vanof Gardening & Landscape Technology Youth Village, Petach Tikva

Indoor amphitheatre renovations by WIZO Switzerland
Developing WIZO

- WIZO Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family, Jerusalem
- Beauticians’ School “Rainbow” Centre, Haifa
- Special needs classroom by WIZO.uk
- WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village, Rishon Lezion
- Renovations by WIZO.uk
- Edelstein/Citrin (KH) C3 (Comprehensive Care Centre), Yavneh
- Playground renovations by WIZO USA
- WIZO Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family, Jerusalem
- Dormitory Dekel & 3 youth lounges renovated by WIZO Switzerland
- Dormitory
Entratter (KH) Day Care Centre, Kiriat Ono

Ivchet Dormitory renovations by WIZO USA

Beti Paamonim

Establishment of Snoezelin Therapeutic Room by the SIXT Corporation, Germany

Playground renovations by WIZO USA

Playground renovations and outdoor building renewal by the Mary Bendet Foundation, WIZO Switzerland

Ken Hashalom Day Care Centre, Beer Sheva

WIZO Nir Haemek Youth Village, Afula
WIZO targets women to help realize grass roots social change initiatives

Zohar Friedman

Marisa was working as a doula when she realized there was something striking in the way Arab women in her care viewed the pregnancy and birthing process. “I started to ask pregnant women how they prepare for the pregnancy, and I saw that some women – including these Arab women - did very little to prepare for the birth and felt very uninvolved in the hospital preparation and birthing process.”

The deeper she probed into the issue, she realized that there were whole groups of women – Ethiopian, Druze, Arab and Bedouin – who were woefully unprepared – both educationally and emotionally – for a pregnancy and delivery facilitated by modern medicine in a hospital setting. “They had fallen between the cracks: at one point, they would have had a grandmother or village woman who was an expert in the birthing process and could have helped them through home and natural birth, but now there’s no one to guide them in any setting. So they feel very alienated and non-participatory in the more clinical hospital setting and it makes for very stressful, often traumatic, birth experiences.”

In Marisa’s eyes, these women – and their unborn children – were being robbed of one of the most important experiences of their lives. “A good birth is good for both the baby and the mother. What’s important is how the mother feels and how the baby feels. The process should be full of joy and excitement, not stress and alienation.”

Marisa had a vision that she wanted to see come true: a programme to help these women navigate the pregnancy process. But she needed guidance and advice. She found such a system in the WIZO Leadership Course for Women.

US Embassy partners with WIZO

The WIZO Women’s Leadership Course is a partnership programme between the WIZO Israel Advancement for the Status of Women Division and the US Embassy, which was spearheaded by former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to help develop global women’s leadership. The programme encompassed 24 four-hour sessions and included developing personal leadership styles, exposure to other female ‘trailblazers,’ strengthening gender awareness, and providing practical skills for initiating social initiatives and projects. More than that, it gave participants opportunities to network and exchange ideas with a peer group of like-minded women.

While the US Embassy partnership initiative is a general women’s leadership training project that targets women who want advancement in all areas of life – private, social, business, public and financial – WIZO decided to cater to women who want to develop community-building and social change. The WIZO Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship was launched as a natural progression of the general leadership course, but with a narrowed focus on social projects. The course draws candidates from all spheres of life – Jews, Arab, Druze, secular, religious, new immigrants and veteran Israelis – to launch cutting edge projects in their home communities.

Women like Marisa are ideal candidates for both courses: women who are in touch with the unique needs of various Israeli communities, and have specific visions and drive for how to address problems facing them, but need a little assistance, coaching and structure in planning and implementing their programmes.

Something to give

Yifat, like Marisa, is another WIZO Women’s Leadership Course graduate. A mother of three who retired from a
nearly 30-year army service, Yifat left the IDF with the desire to continue contributing to the State of Israel.

Her last position in the IDF was as a draft service officer, where she helped young soldiers find their placements in the army. “That was the position of a lifetime,” she recalls, “a job that connects the army to all sectors of Israeli life: new immigrants, Arabs, Beduin, Druze and Jews.”

Yifat wanted her project to draw on the skills, expertise and strengths that her education and army service afforded her: connecting civilian and military life in Israeli society. “My dream was to launch an initiative that would help integrate new young olim (new immigrants) with tzabarim (Israeli-born citizens).”

Yifat used the WIZO network to find a place to launch her programme. She chose WIZO Nahalal Youth Village – her alma mater – which hosts a group of immigrant students who come to Israel without their parents through a programme called Na’aleh. The programme, in conjunction with Israel’s Technion University, provides gifted Jewish youngsters from abroad with high school and university education in Israel focused on science and technology. In parallel, these new citizens integrate into Israeli society, join the IDF and eventually strengthen the Israeli economy with creative and technological manpower.

Blessings Yifat wrote to the girl participants towards the end of activities, looking forward to next year

Yifat explains, “We wanted to both prepare these young newcomers for their army services and help them connect with Israeli society, while honouring their unique backgrounds and cultures.”

Yifat recognized that on the ground, the aims of the programme had to be adjusted to fit the Na’aleh students: “We started with the idea of integration, but eventually we saw that the students also craved stability, consistency and support. They wanted to build connections with us. We also focused on preparing for a meaningful service. The idea of the army can feel very threatening and scary to them. I told them I’d help them find a position in the army that fits them. They’ve lost a lot of their anxiety about the army, and they understand that the army doesn’t only take from them, it gives them an enormous amount of opportunity, skills and training.”

Empowering pregnant Ethiopian immigrants

For Marisa, entering secluded Arab communities to offer women pregnancy coaching proved a bit more complicated than expected. Through the WIZO network, however, she was able to find another group of women who desperately needed her services: new Ethiopian immigrants who were located in the North of Israel. She was joined by an Ethiopian social worker, Goodeia, also a participant of the WIZO Leadership Course, who spoke Amharic and was able to bring the needed energy and cultural sensitivity to facilitate the process.

These women were largely disoriented by the prospect of a hospital birth, as it was completely alien to what they or their mothers had experienced in their native Ethiopia. Marisa started the course with some nine students in various stages of pregnancy, and began educating the women about various birthing options available to them.

In her course, Marisa does not seek to persuade her students to choose any specific birthing option. “I’m not a guru of natural or home birth,” she explains. “My goal is to empower these women so that they can choose for themselves and be aware of their own needs and feel comfortable among doctors, and perhaps even more importantly, not to take for granted that the doctors know what is best for them – taking into account their own wishes and feelings.”

When asked about measuring the results of the programme, Marisa was pleased with the women’s progress. “In the beginning, the women were unable to speak out. By the end, they asked questions and were much more involved in the process. We took a tour of a hospital, and we taught them all the medical jargon related to pregnancy. What’s an epidural, for example. This way, once they’re ready to give birth, they’ll be able to make informed decisions for themselves.”
Looking forward

Both Yifat and Marisa, along with their peers from the WIZO leadership course, are looking towards the future to modify and improve their projects for the coming year.

Marisa has teamed up with the WIZO branch in the Druze village, Dalijat Ha’Carmel, and launched a course for the local women. Here, she is joined by a local Druze woman, Nadjat, who speaks the language and has the cultural sensitivity to help Marisa tailor the course to these women’s unique needs and background. She also wants to run workshops to train women from the various target communities to become birthing guides and coaches themselves. “That way, the project will become self-perpetuating,” explains Marisa.

Yifat has a brief break from her project during the summer vacation, as most of the Na’aleh students go to visit their parents for the holiday. But that doesn’t mean she’s not in touch with her students: on the morning of her interview, she gushes, “I’ve been text-messaging all morning with a boy from Russia – you can’t believe the connections we made with these students.” In planning the second year of her programme, Yifat is seeking a central theme or subject to structure the year, as well as finding a system to measure the results.

Through WIZO, both Yifat and Marisa were able to launch projects that are and will change the Israeli social landscape for the better. In the meantime, the WIZO Israel Advancement for the Status of Women Division will continue to lead other women with leadership potential to build Israel society through cutting edge social initiatives.

WIZO’s Social Entrepreneur Projects

Marisa and Yifat’s social change projects are only a sampling of the many projects initiated by members of the WIZO Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship. Other projects include an initiative to assist Haredi women through the divorce process (by Fainy Sukenik); a project to help rehabilitate youth-at-risk by teaching them to refurbish old furniture (by Michal Vital); an initiative to encourage businesses and corporations to adopt more parent-friendly policies for mothers and fathers balancing career and parenting demands (Ronit Krispin); a second birth coaching initiative for first-time Ethiopian mothers (by Simha Dror); and a socially-responsible design project to bring together artists and people with disabilities (by Sharon Rosenbloom).

In Memoriam

Adina Matalon

World WIZO mourns the loss of Adina Matalon, a passionate Zionist, mother of three and a dedicated WIZO leader. Born in 1921 in Jerusalem to a family with roots in the holy city since the 15th century, Adina began her WIZO career as a young woman. She married lawyer Emmanuel Matalon of Tel Aviv, and during the siege of Jerusalem, Adina and her two children Malka and Moshe moved to Tel Aviv where Emmanuel worked – where they would live for 60 years in the family home on Rothschild Boulevard and where Adina’s youngest daughter, Aviva, was born. Adina was remembered as a dedicated and strict mother, imparting strong values and a love of education to her children.

As a WIZO member, Adina was remembered as devoted, dedicated and extremely hard-working; when she served as Early Age Division Chairperson, she was passionately committed to the children cared for at WIZO day care centres, working tirelessly to raise funds to renovate the centres and improve the services provided for the children. Adina also served as Fundraising Chairperson and later as Chairperson of WIZO Tel Aviv, where she made it a top priority that all the needs of the projects and members were met – whether that meant securing funds for a washing machine at a centre or meeting WIZO aid recipients and their families personally. She was also known for her humility and lack of pride and ego, meeting any woman from WIZO Tel Aviv at eye level and treating them as equals, empowering them to become local leaders and take initiative.

When she was appointed as Chairperson of the Childcare Division, she continued in the same spirit, making sure she personally met all of the children and their families, making their welfare her priority – not just physically, but also their children and their development.

After retiring from her WIZO service, Adina stayed active by attending the Veterans’ Forum for former WIZO leaders, where she was able to stay in touch with other chaverot she had worked with over years as well as keep her connection to WIZO alive and active. Adina was a shining example of what it meant to be a WIZO woman; her leadership and actions will guide the next generation of WIZO leaders and forever influence WIZO.
I am certain that I have the BEST job in the world!

My position as World Aviv Representative affords me the glorious pleasure of connecting, interacting with and motivating some of the finest young women around the world.

There is no more fantastic occasion to do this than at the annual International Aviv Seminar in Israel.

Every year we do our best to design a WIZO seminar that takes the delegates on an exciting and fulfilling journey through their heritage, passion, education and senses.

2014 Seminar

We started with the vibrant and colourful rebranding of WIZO Aviv to present a visual package for our Aviv energy.

Next came designing the details of the seminar and finding a way to pack in as many experiences as we could until the seminar was ready to burst at the seams! Next came the balancing act: have we included enough volunteering and project visits, Zionism and tourism, skills training and personal growth, communicating time and party time?!

One of the most important aspects of the seminar is making sure the wonderful group has a chance to bond.

This year saw the magical meeting of 52 Avivs from 15 countries around the world. We visited and volunteered in our WIZO projects, learned skills and gained tools from world-class professionals, forged bonds with each other, tasted Israel in the markets of Jerusalem, and had a FUNTASTIC time!

But that’s not all! The inspired and empowered delegates grabbed their new ‘tools’ and set out as the Aviv ‘Extreme Makeover’ construction team. The goal: to innovate communication concepts to appeal to the young generations of Avivs with whom we plan to share our WIZO magic.

It has been proven to me many times over that no matter how far apart we live, how different our countries, languages and customs, we WIZO women are family. Our passion is a core value that binds us together regardless of personal stories, and enriches our lives with a gift of global sisterhood in return. Our Aviv delegates went home with new sisters for life.

We WIZO women link arms together to forge a wonderful warm worldwide family of WIZO sisters. We will never be alone. We support each other as well as supporting those who need our help. We get as much out of being a part of WIZO as we put into it. WIZO permeates all aspects of our personal lives and becomes a part of who we proudly are.

Call for the future

I thank you all for supporting me and implore you to pledge your love, smiles and sisterhood to energise and innovate the future of our WIZO family.

‘One woman can make a difference but together we can ROCK the world’
Avivs Put a ‘Spring’ into WIZO’s Step

Zohar Friedman

50 Aviv women from 15 countries gather in Israel to learn first hand what WIZO is all about

Gathered at the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village on a warm day in November, some 50 WIZO Aviv members have been put to work. And by work, we mean work: cleaning animal pens and preparing student lunches, among a host of other chores that are usually assigned to the students and staff living at the village. Far from the dinner parties, lectures and fundraisers that usually mark WIZO events back in their home countries, the Avivs aren’t complaining – not in the least. They’re enthusiastic. They’re thrilled. They’ve been given a chance to get their hands dirty, and they’ve gone elbow deep.

Who are the Avivs?
The scene at Nachlat Yehuda well characterizes these emerging WIZO leaders. Bright, industrious, motivated and passionate, the group is in Israel for the annual WIZO Aviv International Seminar, held in Tel Aviv every November. Aviv, which means ‘spring’ in Hebrew, is WIZO’s special group for younger women up to the age of 45, designed to bridge the generation gap between veteran WIZO members and emerging ones, grandmothers to mothers to daughters (and of course, total newcomers).

Since its inception, however, in addition to helping younger members find their places within WIZO, Aviv has taken on a very important additional role. In the Diaspora, where Jewish leaders have been nervously noting the dwindling involvement in Jewish life among the next generation, WIZO’s Avivs have become a lifeline for the next generation of Jewish women. Avivs not only find a vehicle to connect to WIZO, but a way to express their Jewish identities and join an international community of like-minded peers.

According to Beto Maya, World WIZO Organization and Tourism Division Director, the opportunity to join “a Worldwide Community of connected WIZO young women” is one of the main themes of the Aviv Seminar. Just think, Maya explains: “50 women from 15 countries have very different realities, but the one thing that connects them – WIZO – is enough to make them come together and invest five days in trying to identify and define their personal motivation to be part of WIZO.”

A story from Finland

The volunteering day at Nachlat Yehuda is the last day of the Seminar. After five days of travelling around Israel and skill building, the warmth between the Avivs is palpable.

Standing up to address the participants, 23-year-old Lianna from Finland, one of the youngest participants at the Seminar, is moved to tears when she relives her whirlwind foray into WIZO and Aviv. “I didn’t see this coming,” she says, dabbing her eyes. “Seven weeks ago, I attended a young women’s evening. I had no idea what WIZO was, but I was attracted by the thought of young women coming together for Israel. What I found was a group of smart, capable, incredible women who came together to get stronger together. I don’t feel connected to the Jewish community in Helsinki, but being in that room brought me back to Israel. That night, I couldn’t sleep, I was so moved by what I’d experienced.”

Today, seven weeks later, Lianna is standing at a WIZO youth village, surrounded by Jewish women from all over the world.

Another Aviv, Deidre Cline, a blogger from Leeds, UK, expresses the sentiment in slightly different words: “Although we come from all corners of the world, we share a common goal. I met people here today who will be in my heart forever.”

Tools and skills

In addition to fostering connections, the Aviv Seminar emphasizes practical tools and skills, covering themes as diverse as fundraising skills to lectures on the media bias.
against Israel. As Maya explains, one of the seminar’s major goals is to “provide young WIZO women with the tools to go back and be active leaders in their federations and local community” as well as serve as “ambassadors for Israel and ambassadors for WIZO.”

For many participants, the opportunity to collaborate with other Avivs over challenges facing WIZO and the Jewish world is a major focus. For Valentina Hazan, from Italy, the seminar has been an opportunity to both exchange ideas and build skills. An alumnus of the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya with a strong passion for Israel, today Valentina is in charge of organizing Aviv events for WIZO Italy. “Getting new people to join us is our biggest challenge,” Valentina explains. “They don’t know about WIZO.” Through trial and error, Valentina has experience planning a variety of attractive events back home, including Zumba and Krav Mega events. The Aviv Seminar gave Valentina the opportunity to share her ideas with her fellow participants, while drawing on seminars and others’ experiences to tackle challenges in Italy.

Seeing WIZO in action
The Aviv seminar also includes a significant amount of touring, allowing the participants to experience Israel’s many tourist sites and attractions, but most importantly, to see WIZO projects in action.

For participants such as Sandy Taskar from Germany, whose mother and grandmother were WIZO women, WIZO is already in the blood. For Sandy, the most important part of the trip was seeing local WIZO projects. “Although I’ve been in WIZO all my life, this is my first time at the Aviv Seminar,” Sandy explains. “I got to see a lot on this trip – some of the centres and institutions all over Israel. Seeing WIZO’s work first-hand helped me really understand why it’s so important and so worthwhile to invest my time and energy. It’s given me so much motivation.”

Sarah Krussel, from Sweden, echoed Sandy’s sentiments. A member of the Swedish fashion industry, Krussel joined Aviv with the hope to find some space in her life to do good and meaningfully impact others. “Meeting the battered women at one of the WIZO shelters for domestic violence victims was a really meaningful moment for me,” she explains. “The conference gave me a more concrete sense of what we’re actually doing, who we’re raising money for.”

Looking forward: What’s next?
After a week of bonding, touring and skill-building, the Avivs leave Israel to return to their home countries and put their motivation and tools to good use. For Beto Maya, this was his first Aviv Seminar since assuming his position as director of the Organization and Tourism Division, giving him unique insight into the tremendous potential Avivs have.

“After being at the Aviv Seminar and seeing the human quality and motivation, I feel that WIZO has a great future ahead,” Maya remarks. “Lots of young women from around the world are actively trying to improve the reality in Israel by investing their time in such an important role as being involved members of WIZO in their countries. We need to continue to provide the emerging generation with tools and the infrastructure to let them blossom and build WIZO’s future so it continues to become more relevant to the next generations.”

Drawing the seminar to a close, Chair of World WIZO’s Dor Hemschech Division Sylvie Pelossof, addresses the Avivs: “This past week, we’ve sat together through seminars and lectures, visits to WIZO projects and beautiful places all across Israel. After getting to know you, I want you to know how much we believe in you, but most importantly, that we also expect great things from you. We expect you to be our ambassadors, and we want you to take everything you’ve seen and experienced here to give to all of your members back home.”
Visits and Volunteering

The World WIZO Organization and Tourism Division organises customized tours to WIZO projects. The WIZO experience offers visitors an opportunity to be part of the WIZO vision, to see and feel it – and turn it into reality. If “seeing is believing” we can show you the way...

Mitzvah Day International 2014 – British youth engage in social action at WIZO projects

Mitzvah Day International, which takes place annually in November, was started in the UK by Laura Marks in 2008. Since then, it has grown into a global movement of change – encouraging people all over the world to take part in hands-on social action together. For the second year running, WIZO UK teamed with FZY (Federation of Zionist Youth) and Netzer Olami, the worldwide youth movement of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. FZY students on a gap year course in Israel volunteered at two WIZO day care centres in Jerusalem. This experience afforded them a great opportunity to connect with Israelis and many a heart was sad when it was time to say goodbye to the adorable toddlers. In each centre the group carried out an activity, whether it was clearing a storage room or building a recycled children’s toy. Down south at Kibbutz Lotan, participants in Shnat Netzer, a unique leadership training programme for young adults, drove down to Eilat where they volunteered at two WIZO day care centres and the second hand shop, carrying out painting and much needed maintenance work. All the groups thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were grateful to have had an opportunity to take part in meaningful social action.

WIZO UK Tour 2014

A small group of WIZO UK members spent a jam-packed week touring Israel from north to south visiting a variety of WIZO projects, heritage sites and tourist attractions. Highlights included a visit to the Bahai Gardens, WIZO’s Rainbow House, and WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim boarding school in Haifa. In the south: visits to the Margaret Thatcher Centre in Sderot, the Mezerer Day Care Centre in Netivot followed by a hands-on farming experience picking vegetables at the Salad Trail, an organic farm and educational museum in the Negev. A trip to Jerusalem isn’t complete without visiting WIZO UK’s flagship project, the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family. Here the visitors unveiled a plaque in memory of Sylvia Morris, the founder of Southgate WIZO (UK). Before heading back to Tel Aviv, they enjoyed afternoon tea at the residence of the British Ambassador Matthew Gould and his wife Celia. Other stops on the itinerary included: an emotional visit to Independence Hall, the WIZO Beilin & Tager Multipurpose Day Care Centre and the WIZO Manchester Centre (both in Ramat Gan) which houses the Helena Glaser WIZO Centre for the treatment of Domestic Violence where the group learned more about the potentially life-saving support WIZO affords to domestic violence victims. The tour was a great success and the participants are looking forward to the next one.

FZY students volunteering at WIZO Phoebe Leon Day Care Centre, Jerusalem on Mitzvah Day

WIZO UK members on tour
Celebration and chesed combined – a family fun day volunteering at WIZO Nachlat Yehuda

In the midst of Operation Protective Edge, to show their solidarity for Israel and their support for WIZO, the Aschendorf family from New York celebrated their son Sammy’s bar mitzvah by bringing family and friends for a half day of volunteer work at WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village, sponsored by WIZO Switzerland. The visitors helped prepare for the opening of the new school year by gardening, painting, cleaning up the chicken coop, cow farm and petting zoo, and putting together Rosh Hashanah packages (a donation from the Aschendorf family) for the dormitory students and their families. After completing their assigned tasks, they returned to the dining room for a delicious lunch and the bar mitzvah family was presented with a certificate in recognition of their meaningful volunteer effort. This was definitely a transformative experience for many of the visitors and they gained valuable insight into the way WIZO impacts on the lives of Israeli youth.

Australian Jewish youth connect with WIZO and strengthen their Jewish consciousness

On a sunny Friday morning in December a large group of Moriah College students from Sydney, Australia on the Israel Study Tour (IST) program took time out of their busy schedule to visit four WIZO day care centres in Jerusalem. This has become a welcome tradition following the success of last year’s visit. With the smell of freshly baked challah wafting through the facility, the youngsters enjoyed a unique Kabbalat Shabbat experience, singing Shabbat songs and dancing with the children. Rabbi Benji Levy, Moriah College’s Dean of Jewish Life and Learning, who accompanied the group that visited the Rebecca Sieff WIZO Centre for the Family, said “coming to the WIZO kindergartens with our students from Australia is always a highlight! It represents the interface between the Diaspora and Israel, the present and the future and is expressed in the interaction from one Jewish heart to another. For our students to dance with the children, singing about Shabbat candles, gives us hope for the light that WIZO continues to create as it kindles the flame of the future of our people”.

A dream come true

Octogenarian Sylvia Sacks is 86 years young. An active WIZO member who runs WIZO’s second hand shop in Port Elizabeth, home to the second-oldest organized Jewish community in South Africa, she accomplished her life’s dream when she visited Israel for the first time (which was also her first trip abroad). Accompanied by her daughter, great niece and World WIZO Organization and Tourism Chairperson, Janine Gelley, she visited the Inez Bernstein Day Care Centre in Tel Aviv and was overwhelmed at the love and care the children receive from the staff and immensely proud of WIZO South Africa’s contribution to this cause. This was the trip of a lifetime and Sylvia was most impressed at what has been achieved in our small country and by the warmth, hospitality and generosity of the Israeli people.
I call myself Zionist

Maligned and misunderstood, emotive and provocative, the word Zionism is guaranteed to elicit very strong reactions

Rolene Marks

In the years since its inception and the forming of the first World Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland in 1897, Zionism has been reinvented and reinterpreted, and robust discussion has taken place over the merits and relevance of Zionism in today’s fast changing world.

The most basic definition of Zionism is the yearning of the Jewish people to return to their ancient ancestral homeland, Israel. In the years that have passed since the birth of the modern State of Israel, it would seem that Zionism is the only national liberation movement of a people that is derided and questioned.

United Nations Resolution

In 1975, the United Nations passed a resolution equating Zionism with racism. Even though this resolution was revoked in 1991, the seed was planted and the foundation was laid to portray Israel as a pariah state, equal to that of Apartheid South Africa. It became legitimate in public discourse to call Israel an Apartheid state, a trend that gained momentum in 2001 with the UN Conference on Racism held in Durban, South Africa.

It was here that the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) really exploded into international consciousness. Israel and the Jewish world were rudely awakened by the sophistication of this campaign, which included some of the worst invective since pre-war Germany and saw the birth of the international hate fest known as Israel Apartheid Week that takes place on university campuses globally every March.

In short: The new anti-Semitism is wrapped up in the cloak of anti-Zionism and its central charge is that Israel is an Apartheid state that must be dismantled at all costs.

The ‘new’ anti-Semitism

In 2014, Israel launched Operation Protective Edge in response to the barrage of rockets launched at her citizens from Gaza. Israel’s detractors used this as an opportunity to release their worst venom, some of which culminated in violent acts against Jewish communities around the world, giving rise to a tsunami of anti-Semitic hatred. From France and Germany to the USA and South Africa, Jewish communities suddenly found themselves targets in synagogues, schools, restaurants and across various social media platforms.

For the first time since 1945, the cry of “Jews to the gas” or “Jews, Hitler should have finished the job” became the rally call of the haters. Their methods are quite transparent. They wrap their “concern” for Palestinian human rights in condemnation of Israel and Diaspora Jewish communities, but it is apparent that if they cared about these rights their anger would be directed at Hamas.

It all sounds bleak and very threatening. But instead of succumbing to paralysis, we must act.

Our voice must be heard

It is my belief that if we do not stand for something, we will fall for anything. In the modern, social media savvy world, we, too, have access to all the platforms that our detractors do. We, too, have a voice.

We need to be heard – at every opportunity and on every platform we can. As WIZO women, who proudly carry the word Zionism in our name, we are duty bound to take up this call and educate those in our Federations and communities.

The best way to answer those who call for our destruction, question our legitimacy as a nation or brand us as racists, is to be proud of who we are and to be strong in our identity. We must identify the true racism: telling the Jewish people that they have no right to organize themselves politically and call it Zionism is racism; telling the Jewish people that they have no right to an identity or to sit at the table with the rest of the family of nations, is racism.

Organisations like WIZO can help prepare and strengthen our communities. We are called to duty and to arms – armed with the truth. This is why it is important to be armed with facts. We cannot abdicate responsibility anymore by saying it is the work of the government or as WIZO women we have the privilege of leading the charge. Wearing our identity proudly and unapologetically in our name, we wonder women continue to live up to our tenet: we care, we share and we dare.

Let us heed the call to arms. Let facts, truth and pride be our weapons of choice.
WIZO Art Exhibition Goes International

Forty women – Jewish, Arab, Druze, Circassian - from Afula and surrounding Arab villages took part in a special Olive Tree art exhibit, hosted by Afula’s WIZO Gruss Community Centre, which includes over 35 oil paintings that reflect the unique personality and perspective of each painter. The exhibit reflects the coming together of women from unique and diverse backgrounds, who spent hours painting together in the Community Centre as well as travelling around the country to study olive trees, including in one another’s neighbourhoods.

The project was a collaboration between art curator Shila Devori Kasdi and Dudu Muatty, the Centre’s director. The women, from a diversity of backgrounds, have formed close relationships and understanding of each other’s culture and religion through their art.

International attention

The exhibit has garnered international attention, especially in France, where the Jewish community took special interest in this multi-cultural project. The Community Centre hosted community leaders from Belfort, who viewed the paintings and met the painters. One artist, Amal, explained the choice of the olive tree as the subject of the exhibit, an important cultural symbol for both Jews and Arabs, which represents both groups’ connection to the land.

The painters and the paintings travelled to Mulhouse, France, where they were hosted by local WIZO members. The artwork was displayed in the city centre and brought together people from different religions and backgrounds, including Jews, Muslims, Christians, and Druze, as well as the mayor of Mulhouse, city council members, local religious figures, and leaders of WIZO federations from Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Britain and Holland. The exhibit also made stops in Belfort and Paris, where the paintings and painters were hosted for a special showing in City Hall.

Due to the great interest and appreciation of this initiative, several European WIZO federations will be hosting the exhibition and the artists in the coming year.

At the recent WIZO Meeting of Representatives, some of the delegates visited the Afula centre and met with the artists. Curator Shila Devori Casdi, the artists and delegates conducted an honest and open dialogue with each other. A ‘surprise workshop’ ensued, where delegates from each federation, assisted by the artists, painted their olive tree interpretations. On the last day of the conference, the artists arrived in Tel Aviv with the exhibition and presented the federations with ‘their’ paintings.

Dudu Muatty announced that the project has aroused much local interest and a new group – of both men and women – is slated to start a new project painting local landscapes. “The idea”, said Dudu, “is for whole families to mix together, go outside – and paint.”
On her retirement from the army, Major General Orna Barbivai, the first woman to obtain the rank of major general in the IDF, decided to continue serving the people of Israel by stepping on as Chairperson of the WIZO Israel Fundraising Campaign. Commenting on her appointment, Barbivai said, “It’s a great privilege to be involved in fundraising for an organisation that is working for the education and equal opportunities for children and youngsters, and assisting underprivileged sectors of our society. I am completely dedicated to this task with a sincere intention to help as many people as possible.”

In her new role Barbivai will recruit leaders from all sectors of Israeli life to assist her in raising funds for WIZO’s projects across Israel.

She will be assisted by a committee specifically established by WIZO, which comprises public figures and past and present senior managers from the Israeli economy, including: Ika Abarbanel, former VP of TEVA Pharmaceuticals and Brigadier General (reserves), Miri Shapir-Navon, wife of former Israeli president Itzhak Navon, Shuki Forer, former mayor of Rehovot, Aia Azrialant, businesswoman and jewellery designer, Adv. Yosi Sadeh, Adv. Riki Caspi, Brigadier General (Police reserves), Ziva Agami, former head of the National Unit for Fraud Investigation, Rami Guzman, former VP Finance of Motorola Israel and member of the board of Bank Leumi, and others.

At a festive event to celebrate her taking on this role, in the presence of the WIZO Israel Executive, Gila Oshrat, Chairperson of WIZO Israel congratulated Barbivai and expressed her confidence in her chairmanship and her ability to “spearhead real change.”

WIZO Fights Domestic Violence

Domestic violence doesn’t discriminate: among its victims, it counts some 200,000 women and 600,000 children from all sectors of Israeli society. In 2014 alone, it claimed the lives of 10 women.

Every year, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, WIZO Israel launches massive public awareness campaigns to mobilize Israelis to fight against this terrible phenomenon.

For 2014, WIZO’s activities started with a visit from President Reuven Rivlin and his wife Nechama to the WIZO Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Domestic Violence in Jerusalem, where the couple learned about WIZO’s ground breaking initiatives in combating domestic violence, including treatment targeted at not just victims, but violent men.

The President and First Lady continued their tour with a visit to a WIZO battered women’s shelter, where they met and spoke freely with resident women and children. The President summed up his visit by saying, “My wife and I pay tribute to you, the women who have been subjected to domestic violence. You are truly heroic, having the courage to fight for your freedom.” The President acknowledged WIZO’s great contribution to reducing domestic violence and thanked WIZO’s volunteers and professional teams for their dedication.
Panel Discussion

Another activity was a panel of prominent personalities on the subject of men's role in combatting violence against women. The seminar was attended by WIZO executives and leaders of Israeli society, including MK Dr. Aliza Lavie, Chairperson of the Committee to Promote Women's Status and Gender Equality; MK David Tzur, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Trafficking in Women and Prostitution; and MK Eitan Cabel, Chairman of the Knesset Lobby for the Promotion of Parenting Equality. Professor Rivka Lazovsky, World WIZO Chairperson, summed up the importance of the seminar, telling seminar attendees: "If neighbours, colleagues and acquaintances on all levels are able to see the pain and distress of both women and men caught in the cycle of domestic violence, we can succeed in saving every family plagued by this terrible phenomenon. Thank you to WIZO Israel for standing at the forefront of the struggle and for the help you offer to thousands of victims throughout the country to those trying to break out of the cycle of violence."

NO to Violence!

Many Israeli public figures and well-known personalities offered support for WIZO's call to prevent domestic violence, and agreed to have their pictures posted on social networks with the campaign slogan printed on their hands. Public figures and celebrities who took part include: government ministers and Members of Knesset, singers and actors, prominent bloggers, celebrity chefs, high profile reporters and press photographers, and reality show participants. The campaign made waves in the Israeli media and attracted widespread support.

(l to r) Guy Meroz, MK Eitan Cabel, Nurit Kaufman, Tamar Shiri, Yair Eftar, Adv. Eldar Yaniv
WIZO around the world

Argentina

Art Exhibition
On the occasion of WIZO Argentina’s annual art exhibition, the federation invited the Retiro Orchestra wind instruments ensemble to perform. Sponsored by OSFA-WIZO, the exhibition was curated by Nora Recepter.

![Image of Ana María Hollander, Director Carlos Polizotto and the wind instruments ensemble]

Ambassador’s Lunch
Israeli Ambassador to Argentina Dorit Shavit opened the door of the Ambassador’s Residence for the annual WIZO Argentina lunch for major donors. While this is a traditional event for the federation, Ambassador Shavit’s attendance was a first.

![Image of (l-r) Clara Broide, Chairperson of OSFA-WIZO Argentina, Poupee Tessio, Argentinian artist, Nicole Kovalivker, President of OSFA-WIZO Argentina, Israeli Ambassador Dorit Shavit]

Amateurs’ Night
For the second time, WIZO Argentina held an ‘Amateurs’ Night’ for emerging new talents. The performance of a student band from the Yeshurun School was a highlight, and the event served as an opportunity for students and families to get to know OSFA-WIZO and its important mission.

![Image of Amateurs’ Night performers]

Australia

Melbourne

Chalalalala Day
WIZO volunteers from Melbourne held their annual ‘challah on a stick’ fundraiser. Held at various locations around the Jewish community, including shops and schools, the event helped raise both awareness and funds for WIZO Australia projects in Israel.

![Image of School children eat challah on a stick]

Perth

A Recital to Remember
A capacity crowd was thrilled and delighted by a WIZO Perth recital at Ellingtons Jazz Club in Perth. Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of WASO Asher Fisch accompanied Stefanie Iranyi, who thrilled the audience with her beautiful mezzo soprano voice. Asher charmed everyone with the story of his childhood connection with WIZO and an explanation of all the melodies. It was a night to remember!

![Image of Asher Fisch (l) and Ita Goldberger-Amram]

Pigments of Your Imagination
Over 600 people attended WIZO’s Pigments of Your Imagination art exhibition, which was the vision of a team of dedicated WIZO women. The exhibition showcased the works of over 90 artists, including paintings, sculpture, glassware and jewellery.
WINE, WHISKY AND WEINBERG

WIZO Rachel members and friends enjoyed a sumptuous BBQ, held at the home of gracious hosts Carole and Russel Pillemer. With entertainment by the talented Joanna Weinberg, the event raised funds for the renovation of two bathrooms and two wet corners at the Shikun Mizrach Day Care Centre in Rishon Le Zion.

MELBOURNE CUP

WIZO’s projects in Israel were the big winners at Melbourne Cup events held throughout Sydney this year. Various local WIZO groups celebrated in their own unique ways, with events ranging from amazing speakers, enticing cooking demos and delicious breakfasts to stylish fashion parades and a gala card day.

INSPIRATIONAL TALK

WIZO Ayelet hosted an inspirational talk by guest speaker Annabel Morley, daughter of the renowned English actor, Robert Morley. The fascinating event satisfied guests, opening their minds and delighting their intellects.

COOKING DEMONSTRATION

WIZO Tsafon held a cooking demonstration with the girls from the Monday Morning Cooking Club, authors Merelyn and Lisa Goldberg. Everyone had a great time learning cooking tips and tricks and sampling the delicious dishes on hand.

AUSTRIA

SPONSOR A CHILD

WIZO Austria’s Sponsor A Child evening was a great social and financial success. Hosted by the WIZO Austria President Dr Hava Bugajer in her spacious and generous home, the homemade buffet was not only a gourmet highlight but created a feeling of warmth and intimacy for the guests. The star of the evening, Jewish German singer Vivian Kanner, flew in especially from Berlin to charm the guests with a selection of Berlin and Vienna songs, going back to the ‘rolling twenties and thirties’ of the 20th century, as well as some Jewish classics. All guests in attendance, including Israeli Ambassador Zvi Heifeth and his wife Sigalia, were of the same mind: the evening was a very special and intimate affair.

AUSTRIA AVIV HANNUKKAH PARTY

A record number of attendees including children, parents and grandparents were guests at the legendary Hanukkah Party of WIZO-Aviv at the ZPC School in Vienna.

The attractively decorated hall turned into a recreation centre for the children, where they decorated Hanukkioth, Hanukkah candles, matches and boxes, under the supervision of WIZO Aviv chaverot. Everyone was eager to purchase a raffle ticket, the prizes being a flight to Israel and a bike.

Highlights were the Hannukah “shadow game” as well as singing and dancing together with Chief Rabbi Haim Eisenberg, and last but not least lighting the Hanukkah candles.

Proceeds of the event will go to WIZO Austria’s Zalkind Day Care Centre in Rehovot.
Belgium

Liege Events

WIZO Belgium’s Liege chapter held a variety of wonderful events. Its annual raffle, whose first prize was a round-trip ticket to Tel Aviv through El Al Airlines, was an enormous success. Aviv Flowers, an Israeli company, continued the spirit of generosity by offering two thousand flowers to be sold over Rosh Hashana, with free delivery by LACHS, a Liege Airport cargo company. Rounding out a string of fabulous events, Maria Edelman, a long-time WIZO member, catered a delicious Shabbat dinner as part of the ‘WIZO is Spreading the Light’ Shabbat candle lighting initiative.

Nana Team Events

The WIZO Belgium Nana Team has been hard at work planning a variety of dynamic events. The chaverot organized several privately-guided museum visits, cooking classes and a popular book club.

Sponsor A Child

WIZO Antwerp hosted its annual Sponsor A Child lunch, attended by over 100 guests. This year’s highlights included a cheesecake competition, judged by two-star Michelin Chef Viki Geunes, in which ten unique and delectable cakes competed for first place.

Talks and Conferences

WIZO Brussels Vice President Lea Guttermann organized numerous seminars and talks on various subjects. The wide variety of discussion topics, which included everything from Moroccan Jewry today and Einstein to the prevention of cardio-vascular diseases, attracted a diverse and engaged audience.

Style Workshop

Yahad committee organized a Style Yourself Confident workshop, with stylist Diana Goss. WIZO ladies were treated to professional but hands-on tips on how to look fabulous, boost self-confidence and feel great.
Brazil

Israeli Ambassador Welcomed

Community leaders in Rio de Janeiro gathered to welcome the incoming Israeli Ambassador to Brazil, Druze poet Reda Mansour, at the Israeli Federation. WIZO Brazil President Helena Kelner, former WIZO President Sarita Schaffel and WIZO Rio de Janeiro President Lúcia Balassiano were proud to represent WIZO in congratulating Mansour on his new post and wishing him every success.

(1-r) Lúcia Balassiano, Sarita Schaffel, Ambassador Reda Mansour, Helena Kelner

Brasília

Cultural Day

Over 150 guests enjoyed Israeli dances, arkadot, Krav Maga and traditional Jewish food at the WIZO Brasilia Cultural Day at the Israeli Culture Association in Brasilia, an initiative of the Anne Frank Group President Rachel Abitbol. The event include many highlights, including traditional Sephardi and Ashkenazi dishes prepared by a WIZO team headed by chavera Rachel, a dance expo by eight dancers from a Rio de Janeiro group and stunning Jewish songs by Debora Cunha. As the event continued, WIZO member Abrahan Melul gave a talk about Judaism and Jewish history from the time of Abraham. Guests were further invited to peruse a variety of Jewish items on sale, including mezuzot, candlesticks, bracelets, hamsas, refrigerator magnets and decorations.

Dancing presentation at Cultural Day

Minas Gerais

Holocaust Exhibition

The opening of the ‘Only Children: Childhood Stolen by the Holocaust’ exhibit in Belo Horizonte was a moving day to remember. The exhibit is sponsored by WIZO Minas Gerais, Minas Gerais Israeli Federation (Fisemg), Belo Horizonte Israeli Union, Brazilian Israeli Association, Habonim Dror, the Israel Consulate and the Belo Horizonte City Hall. Authorities, politicians, agency representatives, members of the Jewish community and of non-Jewish communities attended the opening, which began with the singing of the Brazilian and Israeli anthems, followed by candle lighting in honour of Shoah victims. The effort and dedication of WIZO activists were crucial for the success of the event, which currently offers tours to students from several public schools by Holocaust Museum trained guides.

WIZO Brazil President Helena Kelner with chaverot from WIZO Minas Gerais Executive at the Holocaust exhibition

Pará

Bat Mitzvah Ceremony

WIZO Pará members organized a Bat Mitzvah ceremony for WIZO girls Daniele Aben-Athar Lobatoda Silva, Deborah Ruth Bemerguy de Souza Côrtes, Esther Shakarov Leite, Haimi Bemerguy Bobina, Rivka Unger, Sheina Bemmuyal Cohen, Shelly Bemmuyal Cohen, and Yael Hadas Serruya Wierzba. To prepare for the ceremony, the girls devotedly studied with their teacher, Jayme Benzecry, and spent time learning about the role of women in Judaism with chaverot Raquelita Athias and Esther Unger. Mazel Tov to all involved!

Pará Bat Mitzvah girls
Pernambuco

Celebrating Sukkot

In celebration of Sukkot, Chavera Simone Zimilis organized a gathering for the WIZO Pernambuco Lapid Group at the Beit Chabad Sukkah. Attended by WIZO chaverot and their guests, Rabbi Alex Mizrahi captivated everyone with a few words about the holiday, after which he led everyone in a recitation of the Sukkot blessings.

Rio Grande do Sul

Fraternity Fair

WIZO Rio Grande do Sul was proud to host its 41st Fraternity Fair at the Israeli Brazilian School. Guests were invited to peruse a variety of goods offered for sale, including crafted goods, handbags, clothes, second hand items and Jewish food. Guests were also treated to a children’s fashion show and supervised playtime, as well as the singing of the Brazilian and Israeli anthems by SIBRA hazanim Aninha and Cardon, a performance by the Kochavim choir led by Morah Milene, and Israeli dances by the Kadima dance group.

Only Children Exhibit

The Rio Grande do Sul Public Prosecutor’s Office hosted the ‘Only Children: Childhood Stolen by the Holocaust’ exhibit, organized by WIZO Rio Grande do Sul, Beit Yaacov Culture Association, B’nai B’rith and the Attorney General’s Office. Porto Alegre Mayor José Fortunati attended, along with First President Mário Cardoni, President of the Holocaust Museum in Curitiba Miguel Krigsner, Museum Curator Carlos Reiss, WIZO RS President Sophie Isdra, B’nai B’rith President Pedro Gus, Attorney General Eduardo de Lima Veiga and Public Security Secretary for Rio Grande do Sul Airton Michels. The incredible effort of WIZO chaverot was rewarded through the enormous success of the event.

Rio De Janiero

Aviv Seminar

WIZO Rio de Janeiro’s Shamash group was proud to send two of its chaverot to participate in the WIZO Aviv International Seminar. Danielle B. Ptak and Simone Starec Wajsfeld attended activities, presentations and workshops on becoming WIZO leaders, visited WIZO sites in Israel, met World WIZO leaders and exchanged experiences with like-minded chaverot from all over the world. Both Danielle and Simon have acquired tools, inspiration and knowledge to enrich their WIZO work – and it shows!

Celebrating Rosh Hashana 5775

Carioca chaverot held a lovely Rosh Hashana celebration at the WIZO headquarters. Rabbi Dario Bialer addressed the guests with well wishes and blessings for the New Year, after which Daniel Schaffel, grandson of former WIZO Brazil and Fierj President Sarita Schaffel, infused the celebration with harmony and joy by blowing the shofar. That night, 150 people were captivated by IDF soldier Yamit Cohen’s report on her work in Gaza, after which young Felipe Cusnir, son of WIZO’s Rio de Janeiro Vice President Suzanne Danon Cusnir, blew the shofar and chaverot screened a thank you video from World WIZO for their support during the recent conflict with Gaza. President Lúcia Balassiano wished everyone a Happy New Year, and Sheila Saubermann read a blessing sent by WIZO Brazil.

Daniel Schaffel blows the shofar

Guests examining the items on view at the Holocaust exhibit
Horror and Infamy

WIZO Rio de Janeiro hosted a very informative presentation by Professor Denis Rosenfield, a writer for leading newspapers such as O Globo and Estado de S. Paulo. Held at Beit Lubavitch, over 300 people attended Professor Rosenfield’s ‘Horror and Infamy’ presentation on the Israel-Hamas conflict, the role of the media and the rebirth of worldwide anti-Semitism.

Presentations

In light of the recent conflict between Israel and Hamas, WIZO São Paulo brought together over 150 chaverot to participate in a series of presentations on the conflict and the region. Andre Lajst, Middle East specialist, talked about counter-terrorism and national security, while Professor Shula Djmal gave a talk titled ‘Israel against Hamas,’ and journalist Sergio Malbergier held a discussion on the impact of Middle East discord on Brazil.

São Paulo

Painting and Drawing Contest Award Ceremony

WIZO São Paulo held an award ceremony for the 26th Painting and Drawing Contest at the São Paulo Legislative Assembly. The contest, which aims to sponsor cultural exchange between Brazil and Israel, drew student competitors from 5000 middle and high schools in the capital and the countryside. First place was awarded to Pedro Paulo Carvalho, from the Valentim Gentil State School in Itápolis, who will travel to Brasília with his teacher to be received at the Israeli Embassy as part of his award. Second and third places were also awarded, as well as honourable mentions and an Open Panel Award. All participants received electronic devices, painting sets and books.

Annual General Meeting 2014

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM). The meeting covered a range of topics, including the National President’s Report, during which National President Marla Dan gave updates on projects in Israel; the Audited Financial Statement by CPA Fred Fuchs; the National Executive Director’s Report by Alina Ianson; and a discussion of proposed changes to the bylaws by CHW Director Gina Grant.

Highlights included the new Major Donors awards, as well as the announcement of the CHW Video Challenge winner, CHW Ottawa. Canadian Young Judaeas (CYJ) Biluim participants Ryan Bobkin and Ellie Gamliel shared their experiences of speaking with families who sought refuge at CHW Hadassim Children and Youth Village during Operation Protective Edge. Keynote Speaker Prof. Rivka Lazovsky, Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive gave a presentation on CHW’s affiliation with WIZO projects in Israel.

The AGM also marked a change in administration within the organization. CHW Vancouver President Beverley Corber installed Claudia Goldman as incoming CHW National President for the 2014-2016 administration. In her acceptance speech, Claudia outlined her vision for CHW, stating that: “CHW makes it possible to fulfil the dream of making the world a better place, and we will continue to reach this goal by working hand-in-hand with our partners in Israel, our volunteers and donors.”

Canada
Tribute Gala Honouring Marla Dan

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) hosted a tribute gala honouring outgoing National President Marla Dan. After a cocktail reception, Master of Ceremonies Judy Zelikovitz began the evening programming. Debbie Eisenberg, National Gala Chair and Tali Baum, Toronto Gala Chair, warmly welcomed guests, and were followed by special greetings brought by Israel’s Consul General to Toronto D.J. Schnneeweiss, Professor Rivka Lazovsky, Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive, and Marla’s loving husband Aubrey Dan, who also generously sponsored the evening’s musical performance – a live band featuring classic Rock and Roll hits.

After a delicious dinner, guest speaker Dr. Benjamin Davidson, Director General of Assaf Harofeh Medical Centre, informed guests of the incredible work that will be made possible at the CHW Stroke and Invasive Neuroradiology Institute thanks to the generous donations of CHW supporters. This was followed by a moving tribute to Marla made by National Executive Director Alina Ianson, to which Marla responded with her own poignant speech. It is safe to say there was not a dry eye in the audience!

Chile

Annual Bridge Tournament

WIZO members and supporters gathered at the WIZO Headquarters for the Chilean federation’s ever-popular annual bridge tournament. Under the direction of Soledad Aldunate and Beatriz Guiloff, the event was a great social and financial success, allowing the Chilean chaverot to continue to aid WIZO projects in Israel.

Changes in the 20th Century

WIZO Chile hosted a get-together to discuss research by WIZO groups on the great changes of the 20th century. The fascinating and mind-opening event was organized by the Culture Department, under the direction of Sima Rezepka and Francine Tempel.

France

WIZO Hanukkah Gala

Over 200 people were moved to tears at the WIZO France Annual Gala in Paris, where the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda dance and song troupe came all the way from Israel to put on an unforgettable show, and Paris senior representatives gathered to publicly voice their support for Israel and WIZO. Held at Paris City Hall, chaverot and guests were joined by Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive Prof. Rivka Lazovsky, who arrived from Israel to support the French federation. Under the leadership of WIZO France President Joelle Lezmi, and the Federation’s dedicated members, the gala evening included a variety of attractions, including a special reception where guests were invited to admire paintings from the WIZO Afula “Olive Tree” exhibition by Jewish and Arab women. Afterwards, guests joined together for a special Hanukkah candle lighting, followed by dinner.

Attendees included members of the French parliament, directors of various Paris city districts, UN representatives and Parisian Jewish community leaders. Participants included Baroness Arianne de Rothschild, wife of Baron Benjamin de Rothschild and Vice President of the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation; Mr. Patrick Klugman, Deputy Head of the Department of International Relations in the Paris Municipality; Mr. Julien Navier, Division of External Relations of the UN Refugee Agency; Mr. Pierre Aidenbaum, Mayor of the 3rd Arondissement; Mr. Joel Mergui, President of the Jewish Central Consistory; and Mr. Meir Habib, MP for the Jewish Community Overseas.
**Germany**

### Berlin

**WIZO Berlin Gala 2014**

Berlin’s Hotel de Rome was the glamorous venue for this year’s WIZO Gala, the first gala evening hosted by the new board of Berlin. Inspiring speakers included WIZO Germany President Diana Schnabel, the new envoy of the Embassy of the State of Israel in Berlin Avraham Nir-Feldklein and the Berlin Justice Senator Mr. Heinemann. With over 150 guests in attendance, the event sold out quickly and the chaverot were happy to meet their fundraising goals to support 250 children for a whole year in WIZO institutions. Thanks to loyal friends of WIZO and many new guests, the evening was a wonderful success with the famous DJ Sivan from Frankfurt and New York band Mrs. Lenox.

![WIZO Berlin's executive board (l-r) Angelika Hessing, Dr. Shoshana Feingold-Studnik, Alexandra Cukierman, Nicole Schauder-Shani, Revital Czarny, Sylvia Hagen](image)

**Coffee Afternoon in Berlin**

Dina Lempert and Brenda Zobrys sponsored a get together at the Jewish Federation in Berlin in honour of their birthdays. Over 20 women attended, each contributing something unique – everything from cakes to guitar performances. Guests also enjoyed singing Israeli and Yiddish songs together, as well as enjoying the social ambiance.

![Ladies enjoying the WIZO Berlin coffee afternoon](image)

### Hannover

**Hannover Bazaar**

Held at the Liberal Jewish Community Centre of Hannover, this year’s annual autumn market of WIZO Hellen Hannover included delicious cakes, salads, soups and falafel prepared by WIZO members.

It also included authentic Israeli items procured by the president of WIZO Hannover especially for the event on a visit to Israel, such as wine, gefilte fish, halva, cookies, cakes and jams. Other Israeli products, including jewellery, Judaica, cosmetics, glass and art, were sold at a stand manned by Ruth Borenstein and her granddaughter Laura. President of the Liberal Jewish Community Mrs. Wettberg attended the ‘odds-and-ends’ corner, and shoppers were treated to Yiddish songs from Faina Pelz and Larissa Belgard of Hameln. Proceeds from the market will benefit WIZO projects in Israel.

![Ruth Borenstein and her granddaughter attending a stand at the WIZO Hannover Autumn Market](image)

### Frankfurt

**Sponsor A Child Frankfurt**

WIZO Frankfurt’s annual Sponsor A Child gala somehow managed to exceed last year’s spectacular event. Held for the 15th time at the Hilton Hotel in Frankfurt, the sold-out affair treated guests to a delicious menu and fantastic entertainment in a beautifully decorated hall. What more could one possibly ask for? Scholarships, of course! The event raised funds to care for 560 children in WIZO day care centres for an entire year. WIZO Germany President Diana Schnabel gave an emotional report about the situation of children in Israel, especially the south, who have been traumatized by rocket fire and the conflict with Gaza. Dr. Dieter Graumann, President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany and Uwe Becker, Frankfurt City Treasurer, also addressed the audience with words in support of Israel. The evening’s entertainment program included musical performances by 12-year old Joel Schneider and piano virtuoso Joja Wendt, as well as an acrobatic midnight show of Tigerpalast.

![Ladies enjoying the WIZO Berlin coffee afternoon](image)
WIZO Frankfurt team at the Sponsor A Child Gala

Stuttgart

WIZO Stuttgart Bazaar
Young WIZO held its annual WIZO Stuttgart Bazaar in support of Beit Heuss in Herzliya, Israel. A joyful and colorful kindergarten booth was especially popular with children, some of whom deployed great charm to encourage visitors to buy home-made goods and fresh fruit. The Young WIZO team sold home-made cakes, coffee, toys and children’s clothes. A special thanks to the children and the Young WIZO team for their dedication and contribution towards easing the suffering of children in Israel, and to Mr. Reznitchi and his team for the hard work of setting up and disassembling the bazaar.

Hong Kong

JWA – WIZO Partnership
The Jewish Women’s Association of Hong Kong has for many years now adopted the Boris Green Day Care Centre in Yad Eliyahu, Tel Aviv, a mid-lower socio-economic neighbourhood. Through its donations and sponsorship, the JWA is helping WIZO renovate the playgrounds of the day care centre, which caters to children of single mothers and working parents. WIZO is proud of and thankful for this fruitful partnership!

Italy

Violence Against Women Conference
Together with Blog la 27ora of Il Corriere della Sera and SVS Women help Women Onlus, ADEI WIZO Italy hosted a conference on preventing violence against women, held in the Casa dei Diritti, graciously donated by the City of Milan. Ester Silvana Israel, National President of ADEI WIZO, opened the conference by pointing out that WIZO, one of the largest women’s organisations in the world, has been working on improving the lives of women for nearly 100 years, including fighting domestic violence and other forms of violence against women.

The conference covered a variety of speakers and themes, including: ‘Gender stereotypes during the pre-adolescent development stage,’ by neuropsychiatrist Elisabetta Bacca; ‘Strategies to oppose gender violence,’ by State Police Deputy Superintendent Marco De Nunzio; ‘Intensified treatment for sex offenders,’ by Paolo Giuliani, Municipality of Milan Crime Territorial Guard Head; and ‘WIZO shelters for victims of domestic violence: a multicultural lab,’ by Laura Ballio, managing editor of Il Corriere della Sera/Se7te and Blog La 27. Alessandra Kusterman and Daniela Dawan gave fascinating speeches. ADEI WIZO has already taken on the mission of organizing a 2015 conference to further examine these themes and topics.

Aviv Italy: Building a Future Together
WIZO Italy Aviv held their Building a Future Together workshop in Milan, which coincided with the visit by the Aviv representative to the World WIZO Executive Laurienne Baitz, who was doing a tour of seven European cities. Aviv members from far and wide and WIZO Italy presidents of various branches were welcomed by WIZO Milan President Susanna Sciaky, after which the workshop was opened with the welcome speech from ADEI WIZO Italy President Ester Silvana Israel and a presentation on WIZO’s extensive work from Laurienne.

Of course, the busy day also included time to get to know one another and share both unique and overlapping WIZO experiences. ADEI WIZO Naples President, Valentina Della Corte, Professor at the University of Naples, led a workshop on team building, where she demonstrated how the corporate team building model can be applied to ADEI WIZO. The participants left the day feeling enthusiastic and satisfied, with many of them deciding to attend the next International Aviv Seminar in Israel.

Esther Mor, Chairperson, World WIZO Fundraising Division, visiting with Ana Scherer and Shani Brownstein in Hong Kong
Annual Literary Prize Awarded

ADEI WIZO held the 14th Adelina Della Pergola Literary Prize awards ceremony in the Salone Maria Luigia, inside the Palazzo Della Pilotta in Parma, hosted by Journalist Laura Ballio. The large audience had the pleasant surprise of being able to admire some illuminated Hebrew manuscripts, which were on display, exceptionally, for this occasion. In her welcome speech, Professor Maria Modena, president of the selection committee for the prize, reminded attendees that the Biblioteca Palatina possesses one of the most important and valuable collections of Hebrew manuscripts and prints in the world. The importance of the library was also underlined by the Jewish Community President and by the City Council President who represented the mayor.

Dror A. Mishani was awarded the prestigious literary prize before a large audience by ADEI-WIZO President Ester Silvana Israel. Laura Wofsi and Miriam Rebhun, members of the award selection committee, made special mention of other finalists and also presented an award to the winner of the youngsters’ category, Assaf Gavron, for his piece ‘Indromania’. Over 16 high schools across Italy competed for this award. Italian writer Gabriele Rubini held an in-depth discussion with Dror Mishani, delving into different aspects of narrative in his novel, and actress Silvia gave a dramatic reading of selected passages of the books. ADEI WIZO especially thanks Mara and Sergio Della Pergola for their invaluable support and Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane for their generous contribution.

Building the Future of WIZO

A WIZO approaches 2020, WIZO Mexico has started contemplating how to move WIZO into the future. The chaverot invited Elias Amkie, a Committee of Strategic Consultancy member, to attend an executive meeting and explain to group presidents how they should discuss the subject with chaverot. On the same subject, Sylvie Mizrahi and her committee held a meeting with group presidents to poll their opinions on taking WIZO into the future, the summary of which was sent to Israel.

In addition, the WIZO Mexico Organization Department prepared a special seminar for presidents on ‘The Experience of Pleasure and Transcendence,’ delivered by Tessy Baravid. Headed by Aurora Saba, the seminar succeeded in provided presidents with the motivation and tools to be stronger leaders.

Global Peace Seminar

WIZO Mexico held a special seminar during their first Executive and Cultural Meeting, where Dr. Rina Mussali delivered a fascinating analysis on the subject, ‘The Centennial of the First World War and its Threats to Global Peace.’ Afterwards, Dr. Mussali fielded a variety of hard-hitting questions from the audience, all of whom were provided with in-depth and enlightening answers.

Israel Under Fire

During the summer, WIZO Mexico made great efforts to keep chaverot and community members informed and updated on the conflict between Israel and Hamas, Operation Protective Edge, as well as WIZO’s efforts to provide support and shelter to families from the south. The chaverot also invited Mauricio Luika, Director General of the Central Committee of the Jewish Community in Mexico, to speak on how to react and respond to the conflict.

Sukkot Celebration

The Cultural Committee, under the leadership of Esther Romano, organized a Sukkot celebration at the Sukkah at Temple Beth Yosef. Rabbi Raul Askenazi capitave the gathered guests with a fascinating talk on the significance of the holiday.
Rosh Hashana Activities

Several WIZO Mexico groups held special activities in honour of Rosh Hashana. The Mazal Group sold more than a thousand kippa boxes and the Noar Group sold orchids. The federation also had a special campaign to sell gift certificates from Israel, which was themed ‘Open Your Heart to Education.’ Proceeds from the fundraiser helped provide scholarships to students at local Jewish schools.

Patio of Sculptures

At the entrance to WIZO Mexico offices, there are three beautiful sculptures, each with a special meaning. One of them is part of the project The Echo of Life, where chaverot can celebrate or commemorate a personal event. Recently 26 new plaques were unveiled for this project headed by Mary Bissu. WIZO House held a joyous celebration for all their supporters.

Media Breakfast

The WIZO Mexico Media Committee headed by Rackel Alfilie and Lizette Mussali held a breakfast meeting for all the public relations representatives of the community. All have supported WIZO by reporting on the organisation’s events and news in their various publications. During the meeting Rackel and Lizette talked about WIZO’s work and encouraged participants to give more information and emphasis on Zionism.

Paraguay

Jerusalem Day

WIZO Paraguay invited children to observe Jerusalem Day by creating special allegorical works of art. The children had a great time channelling their creative energy into celebrating Israel and Jerusalem.

Kristallnacht Commemoration

WIZO Paraguay joined B’nai Brith of Paraguay in commemorating Kristallnacht, a pogrom against Jews throughout Nazi Germany and Austria in 1938. WIZO members were invited to light a special remembrance lamp to memorialize the victims of this terrible instance of anti-Semitism in Jewish history.

Send-Off to Israel

WIZO Paraguay gave a big farewell to Renée Haber, a great friend to WIZO, who worked for many years on the WIZO Paraguay committee. The chaverot blessed Renée on her journey to Israel to accompany her husband, Max Haber, on his post as Ambassador of Paraguay to Israel.
Rosh Hashana Campaign

WIZO Peru’s JAI group held its annual Rosh Hashana campaign selling candies, chocolates and fruit gift assortments of varying sizes within the Jewish community. Members of the community were pleased to give such wonderful holiday gifts to their families and loved ones with the knowledge that the proceeds will support WIZO projects in Israel.

BAT X BAT

For the first time ever, WIZO Peru launched their BAT X BAT campaign. With 14 girls celebrating their Bat Mitzvah this year in the small Peruvian Jewish community, WIZO JAI designed special cards to commemorate this important event in their young lives, offered for sale to the entire community to send to the girls and their families. The entire initiative was made all the more special by the fact that proceeds from the project went to help Israeli children have Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebrations.

Happy Hour

WIZO JAI Peru held a happy hour for St Valentine’s Day at a popular beach. The fun, lively event helped the federation recruit new members and spread the word about the importance of WIZO.

South Africa

Cape Town

Rebecca Sieff Awards

WIZO Cape Town held its annual Rebecca Sieff Awards Ceremony with guest speaker Rhoda Kadalie, Executive Director of Impumelelo Social Innovations Centre, author and journalist. BZA WIZO Co Chairman Felicity Isserow bestowed the Rebecca Sieff Award to members who have devoted 40 years of commitment and dedication to WIZO, as well as other prestigious recognition awards to members who have completed 50, 60 and 65 years of service.
Texas Hold ‘Em’ Poker Charity Tournament

BZA Wizo and ORANJIA made a wonderful team in hosting the Texas Hold ‘Em Charity Tournament. The two groups held the joint event to benefit the children at the Neve Wizo Foster Homes in Israel and Oranjia Jewish Children’s home in Cape Town.

Sukkah Tea

The Gilah branch of Bnoth Zion Wizo Cape Town hosted a Sukkah tea, a morning marked by plenty of song and laughter. Guests included MC Irma Chait, visiting World Wizo President Tova Ben-Dov, renowned comedian Nick Rabinowitz and singer Erez Shaked.

Yom Tov Market

Bnoth Zion Wizo Cape Town held its annual Yom Tov market with Cape Town weather at its best. Adults enjoyed the delicious food, beautiful gifts, crafts and collectables for sale, while children had a blast at the petting zoo and art and craft activities. All the guests were united in supporting Wizo and the people of Israel.

Girls Night Out

Wizo Durban hosted a ‘Girls Night Out’ event at the Durban Jewish Centre in honour of Women’s Day. Together, the chaverot celebrated the power of women by coming together to have fun and do something meaningful for other women. Comedienne Tracy Klass proved to be a hysterical ‘Klass Act’ as she unceremoniously poked fun at all issues women hold dear. The high spirited and well-attended event was marked by loads of excitement and laughter.

Johannesburg

The Johannesburg Wizo Avivs held a fun and uplifting Women’s Day Champagne Breakfast in a festively-decorated hall to reflect the theme ‘Heel’ Your ‘Sole.’ On arrival, 200 women enjoyed a delicious breakfast, after which they were entertained by Joel Harris, who gave a talk on ‘To Stress or not to Stress - That is Your Choice,’ and Gia Bass, who spoke about “the joy of missing out,” or JOMO. In between the speakers, guests were treated to a performance by world champion hip hop dancers.
Bat Mitzvah Girls Have a Vision
WIZO hosted a get together for Bat Mitzvah girls and their mothers to create colourful vision boards about the future. The girls were asked to consider making a contribution from their bat mitzvah gifts towards a Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration for children living at Neve WIZO.

City of Gold Forum
WIZO Forum kicked off their second semester with a journey through Johannesburg, past and present. Entitled ‘City of Gold - Degeneration and Regeneration,’ Isaac Reznik took the audience on a fascinating trip down memory lane as he recalled the sights and sounds of the Johannesburg city centre, with its shops, theatres, doctors' rooms and tearooms. Then Adam Levy took to the floor to give a vision of present and future developments. Adam focused on Braamfontein and his involvement in its regeneration, which included residential blocks, restaurants, bars, markets and even a beach on the top of a building! He spoke about how new spaces are being created to accommodate all the people of our diverse nation. The event ended by giving the engaged audience an opportunity for questions and comments.

Like Mother Like Daughter
WIZO held an inspiring ‘Like Mother Like Daughter’ morning in honour of magnificent mothers and their delightful daughters, as well as their achievements and influence on each other and on society. The event included many fascinating speakers, including Beulah and Lauren Jankolowitz, Lydia and Olga Meshoe, Ros Rosenberg and Michelle Krengel.

Na‘ama Nothman Morning
The WIZO Forum hosted a wonderful morning at the home of world-renowned artist Na‘ama Nothman, where she spoke about her life and answered questions about her work, which she creates with a mixture of collage and paint. Na‘ama, who has had exhibitions all over the world and is featured in the Guggenheim Museum, gave guests a tour of her studio and discussed her latest projects. Over tea, everyone had ample opportunity to examine Na‘ama’s work, which was exhibited around her house.
Spain

Breakfast Lecture

Ninety-six ladies and gentlemen were treated to an informative breakfast with important speakers in Madrid on the theme of Jihadism from the Middle East, Europe and Globally. WIZO Spain was proud to hold such a successful event and hopes to have many more to put WIZO back on the local map!

Rivka Lazovsky Visit

World WIZO Chairperson Professor Rivka Lazovsky visited Spain on a mission to support the federation renew its activities. After an invitation from President Astrid Mizrachi, Professor Lazovsky joined the chaverot in Madrid for their Sponsor A Child event, which officially relaunched the federation. Professor Lazovsky also had the chance to meet with 15 women who function as the executive of the federation, each of whom was highly impressive, motivated and committed to the future of WIZO Spain.

USA

Florida

Kosher Food and Wine

WIZO Florida’s 2014 Kosher Food and Wine Miami event was a roaring success, harnessing the joint power of over 30 local organizations to promote and support the festivities. The fascinating culinary evening included 275 of the finest Kosher wines, 22 of the finest Kosher caterers and restaurants and 850 guests in attendance. Thanks to the hard work of event chair Sandra Dunnevent and the entire working committee, the evening went off without a hitch. The evening prior to the big event, a more intimate wine master’s dinner was held where 87 guests enjoyed a warm fundraising dinner in a private home. Under the leadership of WIZO Florida Chairperson Ruthy Benoliel and the sponsorship of DFA and others, WIZO Florida was able to take this event to new heights. The chaverot are already looking ahead to 2015!

United Kingdom

Sponsor A Child Lunch

WIZO UK’s annual Sponsor A Child lunch was held at the home of Ilona Rich Schachter in Chelsea. Speaker Betty Crystal addressed the 60 guests and spoke about WIZO’s vital work at its 800 projects across Israel. “Following the recent events in Israel, social workers, trauma counsellors and therapists have been working tirelessly with those suffering from the constant rocket attacks,” she explained. “WIZO is a leader in dealing with trauma counselling and works continuously to support those affected.” This year the annual event celebrated its 20th anniversary and proved to be a great social and financial success.

Guests having a wonderful time at Miami’s Kosher Food and Wine Event

Prof Rivka Lazovsky (l) with Astrid Mizrachi

Guests at the ‘Jihadism’ breakfast lecture

(l-r) Betty Crystal, Pamela Crystal, Sarah Glynn at UK Sponsor A Child lunch

Cricklewood WIZO Shop Makeover

The Cricklewood WIZO shop was refurbished by a group of volunteers, including participants from the Yoni Jesner Award scheme. With the help of these volunteer window dressers, painters and decorators, the shop looked outstanding on Mitzvah Day.
Atit, WIZO Florida’s Young Professionals Chapter held their opening event at SOHO on October 21, 2014. Young Professionals networked, learned about WIZO and had fun at the same time.

The WIZO Yonit Annual Membership Drive event was held on October 28, 2014 at the house of Mrs. Jana Falic, WIZO USA Co-President. The keynote speaker was Mrs. Rhoda Pagano Dermer.

Opening Campaign featured Rocket Scientist Ari Sacher. Over 250 attendees learned about Israel Missile Systems and pledged their commitments to Rocket Proof Shelters.

WIZO Florida’s Ilanit-Tikva Chapter –Smart Snacks for Diet Success on October 21st presents cooking tips with Susan Farkas.

WIZO Florida participated in their community’s 4000-women challah bake the night before the Shabbat Project, in which they also took an active role.

WIZO Florida immediately came together for Israel’s Emergency campaign this summer. Families made donations to have their photographs taken wearing Israel flags, using stickers, and painting faces, all in support of Israel.

New York

Sponsor A Child

Close to 200 guests gathered at the Ana Tzarev Gallery for WIZO New York’s annual Sponsor A Child Evening of Art chaired by board member & WIZO United Nations Representative Lisa Ohebshalom. The reception was an elegant evening of original art work and delicious food, with a keynote address by Ari Sacher, Israeli Missile Defence Systems Engineer and developer of the Iron Dome Air Defence System. The guests were also addressed by Evelyn Sommer, Founding President of WIZO USA, who presented Executive Board Members Haley Binn and Jamie Mitchell with an award for hosting a Shabbat dinner in the Hamptons in support of WIZO’s Emergency Campaign to house families from the south in WIZO’s youth villages during the Protective Edge Campaign last summer. The evening was co-chaired by WIZO USA Vice-Presidents Caren Constantiner and Mira Sofer alongside their husbands.

(l-r) Mira Sofer, Lisa Ohebshalom, Caren Constantiner
Bnei Mitzvah Programme – Healing Arts Kits

WIZO Bat Mitzvah Olivia Domansky, daughter of Board Member, Lizzie Domansky, invited 15 Bnei Mitzvah children who are participants in the WIZO ‘Mitzvahs Matter’ programme to pack supplies for Healing Arts Kits. The Bnei Mitzvah programme promotes chesed projects and tzedakah for children in their Bar/Bat Mitzvah year. Many of the children also choose to donate their celebration’s gifts to one of WIZO’s many programmes in Israel. For this particular Bat Mitzvah, Olivia chose the Healing Arts Kits, a programme created by Artists 4 Israel, a new partner organization of WIZO. The kits help children in the critical first hours after exposure to trauma.

This year, a record number of 11 children participated in Mitzvahs Matter, raising money for important projects like playground renovations, dance and sports programmes, the Emergency Campaign Fund, the Science Centre in WIZO Nir Haemek School and Youth Village and many other projects.

Challah Baking

WIZO mothers and daughters gathered at the home of Board Member Mara Sandler to learn the art and significance of challah baking from baker and Board Member Rachel Shnay. Proceeds from the event sponsored Rosh Hashana meals for families in WIZO’s shelter for battered women in Ashdod.

Spin 4 WIZO

WIZO Young Leadership members gathered at Flywheel Sports and Cyc Fitness for two charity rides in support of WIZO. Participants raised funds through bike sales as well as through the participation of friends and family. Among participants were WIZO USA Young Leadership Co-Chairs, John Argi, Arielle Himoff and Tanya Low, as well as many others.

Tech Series Happy Hour

WIZO Young Leadership held its first Tech Series Happy Hour with some of Israel’s top entrepreneurs and start-up representatives. The event was hosted by WIZO Young Leadership Co-Chair, Tanya Low, at her company Starfarm Ventures, which invests in young Israeli Startups and shows the world the power of Israeli entrepreneurs’ innovation and creativity. Guest speakers included founders of such companies as WeWork, feature.fm, and audiostream tv. With its emphasis on trending topics, the happy hour appealed to WIZO members and newcomers alike.
Entering a WIZO Youth Village means a second chance for Israeli youth at risk. This home away from home provides the warm, nurturing support they need.

No matter how disadvantaged or troubled your background may have been, 
You can turn your life around – That’s the WIZO way.

For further information and to make online contributions, visit our website:
www.wizo.org

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WIZO Facts and Figures

50 FEDERATIONS WORLDWIDE
250,000 MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

- **14,000 children** (3 months – 3 years) in more than 180 day care centres
- **1,600 children** in 19 multi-purpose day care centres (open from 7am -7pm)
- **285 children** (6-9 years) attend after-school programmes
- **166 children** (6-18 years) live in WIZO foster homes
- **32 children** (4-18 years) In four Neve WIZO homes, therapeutic residences
- **5,220 youth** (12-18 years) attend eight WIZO schools and youth villages
- **1,060 at-risk youth** (12-18 years) live in the youth villages’ dormitories
- **27 centres** cater for 380 teenage girls at risk
- **30 subsidized legal advice bureaus** service thousands of women annually
- **80 women and 100 children** at two WIZO battered women’s shelters
- **5,340 women** participate in back-to-work programmes
- **4,500 single mothers** in 86 groups participate in special activities for single parent families
- **10,000 women** participate in enrichment and empowerment programmes at WIZO centres
- **WIZO early age hotline** (only one in Israel) to tackle parenting difficulties
- **WIZO hotline for abusive men**
- **Treatment and support centres** for families of the mentally ill
- **Support groups** for the elderly
- **Support and integration programmes** for new immigrants
- **45 second-hand stores**

and more...