



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENTS Janet & Irwin Tobin

The impact of the COVID-19 virus has turned the world upside down. Despite all the adversities and ever-changing regulations that these times have brought, we are happy to tell you that our children at Neve Hanna have done very well. During these challenging times, our children are more united and yes, proud, to have been placed at Neve Hanna.

Throughout the pandemic Director, Itzak Bohadana and Rabbi Liron Levy along with the wonderful dedicated staff and Israeli volunteers, turned challenges into opportunities by continuing to work with the regular programs while introducing a variety of innovative new programs and activities to serve the education and therapeutic goals helping the children cope. A great thank you to all of them.

A special thank you to Hewlett Packard in Kiryat Gat that has a special relationship with the children of Neve Hanna. They provided critical, digital and remote resources during the lockdown of Neve Hanna, installing technology for Zoom, so the resident children could have contact with their family and the day-care students, who are prevented from attending afternoons at NH, are able to Zoom with their NH therapists, staff and friends.

Please enjoy this newsletter highlighting the activities and programs that kept our children engaged, healthy and safe.

We are hoping that we can count on your needed continued support.

Your donations make a tremendous impact on our children that call Neve Hanna home. Your support will enable Director Itzak and Rabbi Liron to secure the extra necessities that will benefit the future of our children: **YOUR GIFT CAN DO IT.** Thanking you in advance for your support to American Friends of Neve Hanna.

At this time, we want to extend our best wishes to you and your family for the New Year and the upcoming High Holidays. As we greet the New Year 5781, we hope and pray that we will see the end of this terrible COVID-19 pandemic. *We wish you good health, happiness and prosperity in the year ahead. Stay safe and stay well.*

L'shanah Tovah Tikatevu!

Janet and Irwin Tobin

Mazel Tov to the B'nai Mitzvah 2020 Class!

Thursday, June 25, there was a beautiful B'nai Mitzvah celebration at Neve Hanna Children's Home, Kiryat Gat, Israel. Due to Covid-19 it was different than the usual ceremony normally held in Jerusalem at Robinson's Arch, the egalitarian section at the Wall. This year, the coronavirus prevented the B'nai Mitzvah children from travelling to Jerusalem and so the ceremony and celebration was held at Neve Hanna Children's Home.



The staff did a wonderful job building a chuppah and arranging seating for children on one side and their immediate families on the opposite side. Rabbi Liron Levy expressed her love and excitement as the B'nai Mitzvah children marched in toward

the chuppah.

The celebration began at 9am with a welcome coffee followed with Shacharit prayers, Tefillin and Tallit and Aliyah Torah.

When the service concluded, celebrations continued with a "sweet experience" – a chocolate workshop full of fun



and laughter and then on to lunch for just the B'nai Mitzvah and immediate family at a nearby restaurant with the necessary facilities to give them privacy and adequate space. Rabbi Liron Levy planned and organized, as always, a beautiful Moroccan-Jewish Hena, a lavish ceremony to bless the Bar and Bat Mitzvah children. There were many other celebrations planned at the NH campus for the entire weekend.

Jerusalem goes to Neve Hanna

In ancient times, when the Jewish temple existed, pilgrims from all over the world came to celebrate the holidays of Pesach, Sukkot and Shavuot in Jerusalem. This year, 2000 years after the second temple was destroyed, the Neve Hanna B'nai Mitzvah children wanted to take their trip to Jerusalem with Rabbi Liron Levy. This was always a great learning experience and lots of fun. In the past, the B'nai Mitzvah children walked the streets of Jerusalem connecting them to their history and heritage, but this year the Coronavirus stopped them from going on this outing. Imagination took over and Jerusalem was replicated at Neve Hanna Children's Home.

Under the direction and creativity of Rabbi Liron Levy, a great project was set up for the B'nai Mitzvah children to lead their Neve Hanna community in celebration of Jerusalem. First, they imagined themselves as pilgrims going to Jerusalem. Teams were formed. Each had obstacles along the way,

which could be solved by doing a mission involving Jerusalem.

Cryptographic (the art of writing or solving codes) Six different texts were presented. Each one explained one period of Jerusalem history. The children's mission was to solve each cryptographic and place them in historical order.

—Memory game — A double set of pictures set with names of important sites in the city were distributed.

—Charades — Each group had to work to-



gether creating words for Jerusalem, 53 years and Israel to act out.

—Football quiz — Answers to the quiz, which honored the mythological football group, "Beitar Yerushalaim," were placed in a specified memory game box.

The Neve Hanna courtyard was used to create their own Jerusalem with a symbolic Western Wall where the children could



place individual notes. Also created was the Teddy Kollek Stadium, the Knesset and the famous Mahane Yehuda Market, offering special Jerusalem dishes for the children to enjoy. The last mission in the courtyard was a sing-a-long dedicated to their wonderful capital city, Jerusalem, followed by a show with the B'nai Mitzvah group describing the special different figures of Jerusalem and then on to the finale — a Rap show performed by the children.

Rabbi Liron Levy stated, "It was a moving and enjoyable experience, making me proud seeing the B'nai Mitzvah children leading

and tutoring all the groups. Their devotion preparing and organizing the activities was mature and responsible. For the other children and staff it was a celebration of music, games, activities and good food which allowed them to close their eyes and for a brief moment feel like they are standing in the most beautiful city in the world — Jerusalem, our eternal united capital."

COVID-19 Current Situation at NH

Neve Hanna is among the institutions which were allowed to fully function even in times of severe restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its emergency program worked with no cases of infection and "kept the children on track."

Schools are closed, the children cannot go out to school. They are at Neve Hanna around-the-clock. We have a large compound, but freedom of movement is restricted, so the family living groups must maintain social distance from one another. For traumatized children, a stable daily routine plays an important role, which we at Neve Hanna try to maintain through a developed emergency program with fixed times for learning and remedial teaching, therapeutic measures, fun and games, but also meals and helping with households chores.

Everyday life is turned upside down. Not only are the children unable to attend school, in the morning, but also visits to parents and relatives are impossible. In order for the children to have contact with their families and the outside world, more computers and tablets had to be purchased and existing equipment.

These circumstances are very hard for some of the children to understand. They add uncertainty and fears to their scary situation. Therapeutic measures and hiring additional staff were a necessity. Leisure activities had to be adapted to new regulations to enable the children to let off steam.

Additional on-site, on-line supervisors and specialists were temporarily hired for teaching as well as to relieve the staff and lessen stress, fears, restlessness and uncertainty on children. A rotating staff has also been established and quarantine areas were created.

Daycare children who normally attend the afternoon program at Neve Hanna are cut off from leisure activities and school,

trapped in their cramped parents' homes and do not benefit from daily remedial and therapeutic programs, while also adding to the economic burdens that their parents face. Food packages have also been delivered to these families through the Streetlight program.

Neve Hanna needs your solidarity and your help to master these challenges. Please think of us and contribute as you can.

STREETLIGHT — Children Spreading Light Throughout the Community

In 2009, with the initiative of a staff member, a group gathered, to begin a Teenage "Good Deeds" Youth Welfare Club where the children could be actively involved and engaged in Tikkun Olam, a Jewish way of giving and doing for others.

Until now, at Neve Hanna, these teens only experienced "receiving," so it was clear that this would be a perfect opportunity to have them reverse roles and experience "giving." This resulted in starting the first SACHI (Sayeret Chesed Yehudit) group ever in Neve Hanna. Over the years, it developed into an Israeli nationwide youth movement. In 2019, under the strong leadership of Neve Hanna's director, Itzik Bohadana, the Neve Hanna branch of this youth welfare club movement became independent aiming to develop a program reflecting the uniqueness of the Neve Hanna Children's



Home. Thus, Streetlight was born.

"We at Neve Hanna believe in 'giving' as a way of life. We reshape our children from being the beneficiaries to being donors and contributors to their community. The children who are in-need are now making a difference in the community. At the same time, we stress the importance of strengthening the self-image and self-value of the child in their own eyes as well as in the eyes of the community they are part of," said Itzik Bohadana, Director at Neve Hanna and

EMAIL — If you have not been receiving email blasts, over the last 6 months, we do not have your address. Kindly forward it to us — info@afnevehanna.org

initiator of Panas Rehov. The children can join Streetlight, after their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. They take care of all the logistics – the fundraising, planning, purchasing and packing of the parcels with basic food supplies for families in need in their area as well as the distribution. They commit their free time volunteering two evenings a week. One evening is educational learning and discussing social activism, tolerance, mutual respect, giving and sharing, friendship and how they can grow into young leadership roles. Committing to values is a learned experience.



During their second weekly meeting, the teens create food packages to be handed out to those in need, in the Kiryat Gat community. This becomes a very personal experience for each teenager – very often a life-changing experience.

The teens request donations of money and food, from private individuals and companies. During their meeting, it is decided who to approach for money and which stores to ask for grocery item donations.

Throughout the year, teens donate money as well. They collect bottles, to obtain their deposits. This money, along with some of their own pocket money is donated to Streetlight. AFNH also makes a donation to the children to assist them, but not taking over their responsibility to collect necessary funds.

Every weekend, packages are anonymously delivered to disadvantaged families. They are left in front of a door. Deliveries this year due to the pandemic and related restrictions of the Israeli Ministry of Health, were much more complicated, but as stated by Abrel Peikin, staff member and coordinator of the program *“Now we have to help even more families.”* This includes families of daycare children who have to stay home. Among them are Bedouin families whose children attend Neve Hanna’s Path to Peace, a joint Jewish-Bedouin daycare program, operating since 2004.

Streetlight shows the teens that through good deeds, they can help make a difference to others. The Streetlight youth influence the younger children. They see how the teens are part of a larger group. Sticking together makes them stronger attaining so much satisfaction from their efforts. The

younger children look forward to being part of that action and experiencing the rewards of giving. These teens grow into young leaders and goodwill ambassadors.

Neve Hanna Children’s Home is teaching the children the values of Tikkun Olam through acts of Chesed. The children are giving back to the community spreading light throughout Kiryat Gat and the surrounding area, bringing joy to those in need.

Yeladudes Bakery Interview on Israeli Channel 12

Background: In 2006 the idea of the bakery came after Dudu Weger, Director of Neve Hanna and Hanni Ullman z”l, founder of Neve Hanna visited Hershey, PA, home of the Hershey chocolate company. They were inspired how Milton Hershey had founded an industrial school for orphans at the beginning of the 20th century, thus enabling the children to work in the factory.



When they returned, they came up with the idea of creating a bakery. Bread is an important primary basic food and it is used in religious rituals such as Kiddush. With the assistance of a renowned Swiss baker, recipes were created and adjusted to Israeli taste. Al HaShulchan, (On the Table), was a highly rated gourmet magazine, rated Yeladudes Bakery one the top three bakeries in Israel. Recipes are healthy, made with whole wheat flour and are sugar free. Cookies and cakes are also baked. The NH teens can find jobs in the bakery after they finish their morning classes. They enjoy the work and the ability to earn and save some money.

This Coronavirus fallout inspired a mini-series, produced by Menachem and Tehiya Horowitz. It appeared on Israeli Channel 12. The Neve Hanna interview aired on July 15, 2020 on primetime. In general, Menachem is known for his love of food.

Below is a synopsis of the interview. To view the video, please go to afnevehanna.org/yeladudes-bakery and click on the

link. It is in Hebrew, but we suggest that even if you don’t know the language, watch the 5 minute video to experience the feel of the interview and see the beautiful renovated bakery and the delicious baked goods for sale.

The video begins with three NH teenagers, making a short statement about the bakery presenting the current problem – no customers can come to Neve Hanna to buy their many



products and deliveries are not possible. The teenagers wanted Menachem and his wife to come to Neve Hanna to help change this dire situation.

One teenager explains that they go to school in the morning and can work afternoons in the bakery. The bakery produces healthy products. Menachem and Tehiya talk about the educational value of the children’s work in the bakery and bestow many compliments to the teenager.

Dudu Weger, Director of Neve Hanna points out that the invitation to the children’s home extended to Menachem and Tehiya, was initiated by a teenager. They proceed to the bakery where Dudu tells them that the Yeladudes bakery now has an internet site. Presently orders can only be shipped to southern Israel. He continues talking about EL AL Airlines purchases of cookies for business and first-class flights. Unfortunately, El Al has a mandatory furlough extended to the end of August.



Menachem concludes: “We will not allow this special bakery to close or suffer loss.”

Also in the video is, Dudi Danino, Bakery Director,

Meir Imbar, Deputy Director of Osem Nesle, shown buying delicious bakery goods. Osem is one of the largest food producing companies of Israel with a decade long tradition. Inbar makes it known that Osem will buy NIS 30,000 (approximately \$8,775) worth of bakery goods from Yeladudes to

donate to families in need in southern Israel.

Meir Imbar advises them that Yeladudes will be helped with technical assistance from Bonjour, a firm also in the bakery business, to help Neve Hanna with marketing and other questions. Osem Nestle will continue to assist Yeladudes as well. This will be a special additional learning experience for the teens that work in the bakery.

Towards the end of the visit, Menachem comments that he has been in Neve Hanna for 3 hours and has not sampled any of the products. Tehiya comforts him saying that she purchased many delicious goodies and they are waiting for him in the car.

Yeladudes Bakery online store!

(sorry, only available in Israel).

Breads, cakes, cookies and crackers. Lachish olive oil, green olive spread, artichoke and pesto spread and other special dips. They do gift baskets for every special occasion and create delicious memories at special events.

Presently orders are available for those in southern Israel.

Visit their on-line

Store. www.yeladudesbakery.co.il

Tell your Israeli friends and/or family in Israel about Yeladudes Bakery.

TORAH PROJECT DEDICATION OPPORTUNITIES —

Perpetuating the Torah, transmitting it from generation to generation, is a basic tenet of our tradition. We have dedicated ourselves to encourage the children at Neve Hanna to embrace our Jewish heritage through a commitment to study, *ma'asim tovim* (the performance of good deeds), and *mitzvot* (the fulfilling of the commandments). This will give our children a strong sense of self and become accomplished and successful. At this time, we are very pleased to invite you to participate in a special project of American Friends of Neve Hanna designed to realize that commitment in a very tangible way.

The special significance of writing a Torah, is that every letter, word, verse, weekly portion, book and name in the Torah will be sponsored by the friends of the Children of Neve Hanna. Our children will proudly be able to study, read from and carry their own Sefer Torah.



There is still a chance to select a sponsorship in a Sephardic Torah being written for the children at Neve Hanna. A Torah dedication is scheduled for June 2021. All donors will be invited to attend.

To obtain a form and detailed information, please go to the link below or call or email us for assistance.

afnevehanna.org/Torah-project

PROGRAMS FUNDED BY AMERICAN FRIENDS

Horseback Riding Therapy
Petting Zoo — Animal Therapy
Gardening Therapy/Sandy's Greenhouse
Music Therapy
Art Therapy
Teenager Empowerment Program
Path to Bread — Yeladudes in-house bakery
Photography Workshop
Mezuzot Hiddur Mitzvah Project
STREETLIGHT
Torah Project

Steady/Regular Funding:

Rabbi Liron Levy
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program
Masorti Noam Youth Movement Activities
Holiday celebrations: Rosh Hashana, Sukkot, Chanukah, Purim, Pesach
Summer camp allocations

In addition:

Remedial teaching and tutoring teenagers for high school exams
Talis and Tefillin for B'nai Mitzvah children
Scholarships for former children of Neve Hanna pursuing academic studies
Emergency funding (times of war, recreational trips out of danger zone, Covid-19 pandemic)
Renovating housing at Neve Hanna and Rosh Pina

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AMERICANS FRIENDS of NEVE HANNA

PO Box 640685
Oakland Gardens, NY 11364-0685
346-836-8118
info@afnevehanna.org
www.afnevehanna.org

Founding President

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