



LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Janet & Irwin Tobin

We recently returned from Israel after a six month stay. Sirens kept us close to home in Ranana. Finally, we were able to go to Neve Hanna for the B'nai Mitzvah celebration, May 28. We were greeted with big hugs, renewing our feeling of being a part of the Neve Hanna family. Two events made this year's B'nai Mitzvah celebration extra special. Director Itzik Bohadana's son and one of the Israeli volunteers joined the B'nai Mitzvah children and were called to the Torah for their aliyah becoming a Bar Mitzvah. The Gan Ha-Haim (Garden of Life), in memory of Haim Suzanna, who passed away in the fall of 2025, was completed in time to be dedicated during the B'nai Mitzvah celebration. There was much joyful celebrating with dancing. We were so happy to participate. Amidst all that was going on, our Director Itzik, Rabba Liron Rosensaft Levy and our entire exceptional staff and YES the children are doing very well. Social workers, Ishah and Michal, have started taking the teens to the sea (Ziv Neurim Program) again; the library is in full operation; the youth council is busy meeting; Hip Hop will begin again in the fall and the Streetlight Chesed group was able to deliver the 150 packages, to those in need in Kiryat Gat for Passover. Additionally, the Yeladudes Bakery School is up and running.

Some of our former NH children, who are in the IDF, come to spend time at NH. The psychologists and social workers are available to help with any of their concerns. NH will always be their family.

Thanks again to our director and superb staff and all of YOU, our friends, dedicated donors and our Board. We have built a

strong connected and committed resilient community at NH. The children are finding strength and unity in our Jewish traditions during these hard times.

THANK YOU for your generous support and commitment to our future. We look forward to your continuing support. The NH family greatly appreciates the life changing donations we have been able to provide. At this time, let us pray for an end to this war.

May your families enjoy a safe, peaceful and healthy New Year!

Shana Tov Tikateivu,

Janet and Irwin

FROM TRAUMA TO MEANING: Raising Jewish Children in Israel After Three Years of War

Rabba Liron Rosensaft Levy



Every Friday evening, a few minutes before sunset, I watch our children gather around the Shabbat table. Some arrive laughing, some quietly, and some still carrying the weight of a difficult week. Then the candles are lit, blessings are recited, and voices begin to sing. For a little while, every child knows they have a place. After three years of war, I have come to believe that these simple moments of belonging are among the most powerful acts of healing we can offer.

At Neve Hanna, the reality of war has met children whose lives were already shaped by loss, instability, and broken trust. Long before they heard the sound of sirens, many had learned that the world could feel uncertain.

As their rabbi, I often ask myself: **What does Judaism have to offer these children now?**

Not the promise that pain will disappear. It cannot. Rather, Judaism offers a way to transform pain into purpose. Throughout our history, the Jewish people have endured exile, destruction, and heart-break. Yet we responded by building communities, gathering around Shabbat tables, teaching our children, and choosing hope over despair.

That is the Judaism I want our children to



inherit—not a Judaism defined by trauma, but one shaped by resilience, compassion, and responsibility.

This vision guides the year ahead.

We are proud that our children are part of a vibrant Jewish community that extends well beyond Neve Hanna.

Together, we create meaningful Jewish experiences that are joyful, thoughtful, and deeply rooted in Jewish tradition while encouraging curiosity, leadership, and a lasting sense of belonging.

Every Shabbat will continue to be a place where children feel seen and embraced. Our holiday celebrations will invite them to explore timeless questions: What does freedom mean? How do we find courage? How do we rebuild after brokenness? Our B'nai Mitzvah program will continue to emphasize personal growth, responsibility, and discovering each child's unique voice within the Jewish people. Beyond the classroom, children will encounter Judaism through



music, art, nature, volunteering, and acts of loving kindness—learning that Jewish identity is not only something we study, but something we live.

The Talmud teaches that *"Whoever saves one life, it is as though they have saved an entire world."* Working with children has taught me that a world is rarely rebuilt through one dramatic act. More often, it is rebuilt through hundreds of quiet moments: remembering a birthday, listening without judgment, singing one more Shabbat song, believing in a child before that child believes in themselves.

As I walk through Neve Hanna, I find myself thinking less about what our children have survived and more about the remarkable people they are becoming. I see kindness growing from hardship, generosity born from longing, and hope quietly taking root.

My prayer for the coming year is not that our children will forget the years behind them, but that they will carry them differently. May they come to know that they are created *b'tzelem Elohim*—in the image of God—that they are deeply loved, that their voices matter, and that their lives can become a source of blessing for others. If we can help them believe this, then we are doing far more than educating Jewish children. We are helping shape a generation that will carry the Jewish story forward with courage, compassion, and hope.

NEWS FROM NEVE HANNA

Antje C. Naujoks

PR Director, Neve Hanna Children's Home



In our last report from Neve Hanna, we shared updates on the construction and renovation work carried out in our central building in order to welcome an additional group of children. Although the

work continued until this spring, the renovation of the central building on our campus has once again brought new energy to Neve Hanna, providing our children with an even more beautiful, colorful, and welcoming environment.

Another special project was completed under very different circumstances. Last fall, one of Neve Hanna's beloved and longtime staff members passed away far

too soon at the age of only fifty. Haim Suzanna had been part of the Neve Hanna family for twenty-five years. Together with his wife, Ricky, who herself grew up at Neve Hanna, he led one of our foster family groups. Alongside his educational work, Haim was also active as a singer and radio host and, over the years, played an important role in many of Neve Hanna's creative and musical projects.

In his memory, we created a special garden, *Gan HaHaim* ("Garden of Life").



The garden also incorporates our central stage, ensuring that every future performance will continue to carry Haim's memory and legacy. We were able to complete this special project thanks to the generous support of the American Friends. Thank you, dear friends, from the bottom of our hearts!

We dedicated *Gan HaHaim* during this year's Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebration, which, as always, was one of the most moving highlights of the year for the entire Neve Hanna community. We were delighted to welcome Janet and Irwin Tobin, who joined us for the beautiful Aliyah LaTorah ceremony.

We are also pleased to share that our new coexistence project for young leaders from the Jewish and Muslim Bedouin communities has developed into a close-knit group marked by meaningful interaction and a wonderful sense of community. Through numerous educational trips and encounters, participants have had the opportunity not only to learn



about the diverse communities that make up Israeli society, but also to gain a deeper understanding of their own identities.

Some of the participants also traveled to Germany, as we have been able to continue our youth exchange program thanks to the relatively stable security situation.

A Meaningful Visit to Neve Hanna

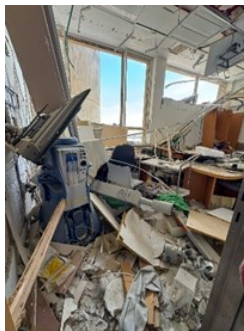
David Friedman



In early November 2025, five of us traveled from Boca Raton to Israel, including my wife Melinda, our close friends Debra and Dr. Larry Halperin, and

Morgan Pressel, professional golfer and sports commentator, all of us proud Jews and Zionists.

Our visit to Neve Hanna followed an intense and emotional morning. Our fellow traveler Larry Halperin, a true hero of Am Yisrael, has been traveling back and forth from Boca Raton to Be'er Sheva since the earliest days of the war to perform retina surgery at Soroka Medical Center on injured soldiers and others in need, entirely on a volunteer basis. Earlier that day, Larry arranged for us to tour the building at Soroka where he had previously worked, which was destroyed by an Iranian ballistic missile in June.



It was from that place of gravity and reflection that we arrived at Neve Hanna, where the focus shifted from emergency care to long-

term healing and hope. The experience left a deep and lasting impression on all of us. We were graciously hosted by Antje, whose warmth and knowledge helped us truly understand the heart of Neve Hanna.

During our visit, we met with the children during their study time, witnessing firsthand their focus, curiosity, and resilience. We also met with Rabbi Liron Rosensaft Levy, whose leadership and presence underscored the depth of



care, guidance, and spiritual grounding Neve Hanna provides.

The visit was especially meaningful for Melinda, as her father, Stanley Miller, had been deeply passionate about Neve Hanna and its mission. Visiting this home that held such a special place in his heart was profoundly moving, particularly as Stanley's first Yahrzeit was approaching.

The visit was also deeply meaningful for me. Following in the path set by my father-in-law and seeing the impact of what he cared so deeply about, strengthened my commitment to do as much for Neve Hanna as he did. It reaffirmed how important it is to visit Neve Hanna when in Israel—to see, to understand, and to connect directly with the children and the extraordinary work being done there.

One particularly memorable part of the visit was spending time at the Neve Hanna bakery. Beyond the exceptional quality of its baked goods and other products, the bakery represents creativity, skill-building, pride, and opportunity. We left feeling that it holds tremendous potential—not only as a vocational and educational tool for the children, but also as a powerful way to share Neve Hanna's story with the wider community.

Throughout the visit, we were inspired by the resilience and spirit of the children and the compassion of the Neve Hanna team. At the same time, we all left with a shared sense that the needs at Neve Hanna will grow dramatically, particularly in light of the profound trauma of the more than two years since October 7. In this context, Neve Hanna's role in providing stability and healing has never been more essential.

Seeing its impact up close strengthened our connection and deepened our commitment to supporting Neve Hanna's vital work. We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to visit and to connect, and we look forward to continuing this meaningful relationship in the years ahead.

Developments within Neve Hanna's Leadership

Antje C. Naujoks

After nearly forty years of service as Director of Neve Hanna, David ("Dudu") Weger passed the position on to Itzik Bohadana in 2017. Following this transition,



Dudu continued to serve as President and remained actively involved in many areas. Even after retiring a few years ago, he continued to contribute his time and experience on a voluntary basis. With his retirement from volunteer service in late 2025, this remarkable chapter of dedication came to a close.

Having assumed responsibility in the late 1970s, only a few years after Neve Hanna's founding, Dudu played a central role in shaping the home. Among many other initiatives, he helped establish the therapeutic petting zoo, our bakery Yeladudes, and pioneering Jewish-Bedouin coexistence projects. In recognition of these and many other efforts, Neve Hanna received numerous honors, including the Golden Dove of Peace Award in 2016.

When Itzik Bohadana became Director in 2017, he had already served Neve Hanna in a variety of positions for more than a decade. Reflecting on his early years, he once recalled: *"When I began working at Neve Hanna, Dudu handed me a book about Janusz Korczak. Korczak taught that every child is unique and deserves to be respected as an individual. At Neve Hanna, we do not make decisions over the heads of our children. We make decisions together with them, so*

that they feel respected, appreciated, and truly part of our community. Guided by this philosophy that has shaped Neve Hanna since its founding, Itzik established the Children's Council several years ago. The twelve members are elected by their peers and represent the wishes and needs of the children while participating in decisions that affect their daily lives. Furthermore, we stepped up the youth club "Streetlight" doing good deeds for others and the Ziv Neurim maritime program for youth at-risk, both supported by you, our American Friends.

This balance between preserving Neve Hanna's traditions and embracing continual renewal has allowed our community to flourish and grow. Even throughout the challenges of the COVID pandemic and the difficult period since October 7, 2023, Neve Hanna has repeatedly been recognized by Israel's welfare and educational authorities as one of the country's leading children's homes.

Miriam Rich, Mitzvah Project



My name is Miriam. I am an incoming 8th Grader at Mill Middle School in Buffalo, NY. I enjoy playing soccer, running track, and spending time with my friends from

both school and Jewish sleepaway camp.

This past Spring, as I prepared for my Bat Mitzvah, I wanted to give back to the community and allow other teens to achieve their goals. So, for my mitzvah project, I decided to raise funds for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program. I chose this cause because supporting Israel is important to me and because I admired the organization's core value of giving every child a chance to succeed no matter their circumstance.

I was humbled to help raise over \$1000 to donate to Neve Hanna. I even found out that my uncle had volunteered at Neve Hanna while on a year course nearly 15 years ago!

Looking back, I am so grateful to have had this experience and to share my milestone with Neve Hanna.

MITZVAH PROJECTS

Lisa Pollack

As you begin planning your **Sisterhood, Men's Club, or Religious School** calendar for the coming year, we invite you to include Neve Hanna on your agenda.

Your **Mitzvah Project** can help support one of the life-changing programs, listed below, at Neve Hanna, helping children at-risk in Israel heal, grow and build brighter futures.

THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMS: *Supporting children everyday*

Neve Hanna works to meet *the physical, emotional, educational, and developmental needs of each child* through a wide range of individualized therapeutic programs, projects, and extracurricular activities.

These programs are designed to strengthen each child's self-worth while fostering *creativity, joy, confidence, and a sense of play and possibility*.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program – Provides meaningful Jewish learning and equal opportunities for boys and girls to celebrate this important milestone.

Hip-Hop – Combines education, culture, therapy, and creativity through rap, dance, and beatboxing while promoting self-expression and well-being.

Library – Fosters a love of reading, vocational skills, and a passion for life-long learning.

Streetlight – Encourages community service and leadership through helping families in need in Kiryat Gat.

Ziv Neurim – Through swimming, rowing, surfing, and sailing, teens build confidence and discover new possibilities for their future.

Yeladudes Bakery School – Introduces children to the professional world of baking while opening doors to new skills and opportunities.

WLCJ 2027 CONVENTION Alexandria, Virginia

Lisa Pollack



American Friends of Neve Hanna (AFNH) was proud to participate in the **Women's League for Conservative Judaism (WLCJ) Convention**.

We had a wonderful time *connecting, learning, celebrating, davening, and sharing* with our WLCJ sisters from across North America. It was a meaningful opportunity to strengthen friendships, build new relationships, and share the **life-changing work of Neve Hanna** with so many passionate supporters.

We were also honored to participate in the **WLCJ Judaica Fair**, where we enjoyed meeting attendees, introducing them to **Neve Hanna's life-changing programs**, and sharing how, together, we are **helping children build brighter futures**. We were delighted to introduce many new friends to Neve Hanna and reconnect with longtime supporters.

Several of our board members, supporters, and friends are active in Women's League, making this gathering especially meaningful to us.



Thank you, WLCJ, for your **warm hospitality**, your **inspiring leadership**, and all that you do for the Conservative/Masorti movement. We are grateful to have been part of

such a wonderful convention!

Shanah Tova to all

THANK YOU, International Kiddush Club — FJMC

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the International Kiddush Club (IKC) for its generous commitment to providing Tefillin each year for the Bar Mitzvah boys of Neve Hanna.

While many know IKC for its camaraderie, its true signature initiative is the **Tefillin Project**. When Allan Gottesman—an IKC member and AFNH Board Member—first proposed that IKC provide Tefillin for Neve Hanna's Bar Mitzvah boys, the organization enthusiastically embraced the idea. AFNH Co-Presidents and IKC members Janet and Irwin Tobin have also been instrumental in encouraging IKC's ongoing participation and support, helping ensure that each year's Bar Mitzvah boys receive this meaningful and lasting gift. We are also grateful to IKC member Creighton Cohn for carrying this tradition forward and helping make it possible each year.



LEGACY and ESTATE PLANNING

Neve Hanna legacy is built every day by caring for our young people. Your legacy is easier to create than you may think. You can have a lasting impact on the lives of these youngsters through long range financial planning. in one of these ways:

- **Through Your Will**
- **Through Your Retirement Plan**
- **Through Your Life Insurance**

To discuss any of these options and to learn how to join, please contact our office.

AMERICANS FRIENDS of NEVE HANNA

PO Box 640685
Oakland Gardens, NY 11364-0685
347-836-8118

info@afnevehanna.org
www.afnevehanna.org

Founding President

Rabbi Benjamin Z. Kreitman z"l

Co-Founder & Vice President

Sylvia Lubliner z"l

Co-Presidents

Janet & Irwin Tobin

Executive Vice President

Rabbi Jill Kreitman Goldstein
Robin Tobin-Hess

Young Leadership

Samantha & Naom Tobin-Hess

Executive Director

Lisa Pollack

Administrator/Editor

Marilyn Noble

PROGRAMS FUNDED BY AMERICAN FRIENDS

Yeladudes Bakery School	Library
Hip Hop	Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program
Teenager Empowerment Program	Masorti Noam Youth Movement Activities
STREETLIGHT	Holiday celebrations
Ziv Neurim	Gardening Therapy/Sandy's Greenhouse
Rabba Liron Rosensaft Levy	Health and Physical Fitness

In addition: Horseback Riding Therapy, Petting Zoo (Animal Therapy), Summer Camp allocations, Remedial teaching and tutoring teenagers for high school exams, Tallis and Tefillin for B'nai Mitzvah children and Scholarships for former children of Neve Hanna pursuing academic studies.

Follow us on:     