

WIZO Review



www.wizo.org

Spring-Summer 2012 ■ No. 329



World WIZO Executive 2012-2016

EGM 2012 VISION FOR THE FUTURE:

World WIZO President
Tova Ben-Dov

World WIZO
Chairperson of the Executive
Prof. Rivka Lazovsky



Dear Chaverot,

This special issue deals primarily with our Enlarged General Meeting which took place in January: read EGM Diary (p.8) and extensive interviews with our newly elected president (p.13) and chairperson of the Executive (p.16): Tova Ben-Dov and Professor Rivka Lazovsky.

A huge tribute must be given to the Organising Committee, especially the Organisation & Education and Tourist Departments.

Soon after the EGM, World WIZO was greatly saddened to lose two most precious members: Honorary Life President Michal Modai and former WIZO Israel Chairperson Shula Braude. We eulogise them on pages 20 and 21.

Continuing with our ever-popular series of highlighting federation presidents and the Jewish community in their country, this issue features (p.22) WIZO Greece President Heather Nahmias. There is hardly a day when Greece is out of the headlines; read how Heather and the community cope with the unstable conditions.

We in Israel know how emotional it is when members from abroad visit the projects they support. Of course, we receive numerous thank you letters. But, the article we received from Carl Davis – a WIZO husband no less – after a visit to Ahuzat Yeladim was so special, we decided to print it in full (p. 24). No more words are necessary.

You will see a new snazzy, splashy Aviv page (p.26) reflecting the character and personality of our new Aviv representative to the World WIZO Executive. Welcome to Laurienne Baitz of South Africa.

The back of the magazine features a Donor Appreciation page (p.27), short profiles of new federation presidents (p.31), WIZO in Israel (p.29) and WIZO Around the World (p.32).

Ingrid

Ingrid Rockberger



We were all devastated on March 19th when news began to filter through of a deadly attack on Jewish school in a quiet leafy street in Toulouse, France. The lone, sadistic gunman killed Rabbi Jonathan Sandler, his two sons aged three and six, and eight-year-old Miriam Monsonogo, daughter of the school principal.

Joëlle Lezmi

As letters of support and solidarity flooded into the office of WIZO France, a few weeks later, just before Passover, the festival of freedom, WIZO France President Joëlle Lezmi, wrote a moving article in the local Jewish newspaper. Here are some extracts:

"...Jews from all over the world felt violated by this act, but so did men and women who identified with these devastated Jews. It is perhaps because WIZO focuses a great part of its efforts on educating its youth for peace and tolerance, it is perhaps that these values were trampled on and crushed that messages of support arrived at French WIZO Headquarters – messages for the bereaved families of course, but also – and this is quite exceptional – for all French Jewry.

Messages also came from non-Jews. Besides expressing condolences and words of comfort, all felt the need to state their shock and horror at this deliberate attack on two fundamental values of our society: the child and the man of worship.

If there is anything positive to come out of this, I would say it is this massive support, these massive demonstrations of solidarity from people all over France – this feeling of connection to the world by the rejection of violence and barbarity.

...slowly, slowly we get back to our daily routine, but we must always remember that we are links in a chain, a chain of solidarity which surfaces when we are threatened. We must always be vigilant; vigilance is our ally.

...We should be assertive regarding our identity, let us shout in the faces of these insane people that we will never give up, we won't disappear and hide. We will continue to participate in normal life, we will celebrate Pesach, the festival of freedom, which reminds us how we should do so.

Joëlle Lezmi,
President of WIZO France

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Graphic Design: StudioMooza.com

Photos: Eretz Lichfeld, Kfir Meir, Yael Tzur

Published by World WIZO Publicity and Communications Department

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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 wrdistlist@gmail.com. Don't forget to add your full name, mailing address, zip code and country.

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Australia	Gilla Liberman
Austria	Dr. Hava Bugajer
Belgium & Luxembourg	Vicky Hollander
Bolivia	Liliana Swerdszarf
Brazil	Helena Kelner
Bulgaria	Marina Nanjova
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United States	Jana Falic
	Gail Perl
Uruguay	Raquel Lapchik
	de Szwedzki
Venezuela	Ena Rotkopf

President's Desk



Dear Chaverot,

This is my first column in my capacity as president of World WIZO. I want to thank everyone for their vote of confidence, support and warm embrace. It is a privilege and honour to be the president of such a wonderful movement. I am proud to be your president.

I pray that the seeds of unity and harmony planted at the 2012 EGM blossom and grow for the benefit of the children, youth and women that need us.

I am doing everything possible to strengthen the bond and cooperation between Head Office, WIZO Israel and the federations. I look forward to leading WIZO, its federations and projects to even greater achievements and esteem.

Looking to our centennial in 2020, we need to increase our membership and income; strengthen our movement and Jewish identity in the Diaspora; combat anti-Semitism in all its forms and the de-legitimization of Israel at every possible opportunity; continue developing new programmes and projects while upgrading and improving existing ones. These are actions we have to take **TOGETHER**.

Seeing is believing, and I know that your delegations witnessed the blessed work carried out at our WIZO projects and experienced many touching moments. The heart and soul of every WIZO chavera is evident in our WIZO projects.

Our World WIZO schools and villages are now preparing for the end of year parties while continuing to develop unique new programmes to be implemented in the forthcoming academic years. We can all be proud of our students who are again the recipients of prestigious awards and citations.

Registration for the WIZO day care centres (dccs) has begun and as in previous years, in most cases the demand surpasses the supply. This is a great source of pride and maybe an omen that we need to consider the building of more day care centres and find the means to do so.

WIZO Israel held its AGM on 8th May 2012 where, while emphasizing the feeling of belonging, unity and togetherness - our chaverot showcased their activities, debated challenges and discussed their work plans for the coming year.

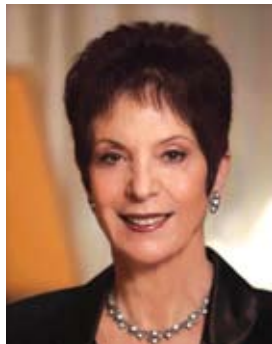
The world around us is changing. The economic crisis in the Eurozone, political changes in some of the European countries, the elections in America, the consequences of the Arab spring, Iran – all affect our lives – as countries, communities and as individuals. Israel is also faced with complex challenges. This is the climate in which WIZO and its federations must continue its blessed work to fulfill our commitment to those who depend upon us.

Hillel the Sage said: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And when I am for myself, what am 'I'?" And "If not now, when?" meaning that at the end of the day, we are the masters of our own fate. It is the hard work and efforts of our loyal federations and chaverot that will guarantee the continuance of our wonderful movement and the creation of a new tomorrow for our service recipients. **TOGETHER** we can face any challenge, rise to any occasion and reach for the skies and beyond.

Affectionately yours,

Tova Ben Dov
President
World WIZO

Chairperson's Column



Dear Chaverot,

This is the first column that I am writing in the WIZO Review after being elected as the chairperson of the World WIZO Executive at the Enlarged General Meeting in January. Through these pages I look forward to writing many more columns and sharing many more thoughts with you in the future.

I am so proud of WIZO and so excited to be stepping into my new position. It gives me the opportunity to get acquainted, in depth, with all aspects of our incredible work. It also allows me to meet our committed and devoted volunteers, professional staff and employees who, day after day, translate our vision and goals into facts, through endless hours of dedication and hard work. Every time I reflect on our WIZO successes, achievements and accomplishments, my WIZO passion is strengthened. Together, we are building and rebuilding people's lives. We are making a mark on the future of the State of Israel, and of the Jewish people, through our generous volunteerism. I'm proud of all that we are achieving and I know that you are too.

My unwavering faith in the love and support of our WIZO federations abroad was affirmed shortly after I took office when, at the beginning of March, the people living in the south of the country found themselves sitting in shelters as dozens of rockets were fired from Gaza. WIZO day care centres were closed according to instructions from the Home Guard, and the economy of the region came to a halt. In this area 1,596 babies and toddlers attend our day care centres and WIZO operates four multipurpose day care centres for children at risk. Despite our continual requests, the government has not yet provided suitable rocket proof shelters in these day care centres. Until one hears the sound of the 'Red Alert' siren one cannot imagine the fear: there are only 45 seconds between the sound of the alarm and the actual rocket attack.

We put together a list of the centres with the most pressing needs, together with a price list, and you stepped up to the challenge. Federations even offered to cover the cost of rocket proofing shelters for federations who could not afford to do so, Jews and non-Jews responded generously and with concern. I want to thank you on behalf of the children in our day care centres in the south of the country.

And so my new term of office has begun. I look forward to a fascinating first four years, to meeting with many of you on a personal level, and to ever strengthening that fundamental link with all our federations and between WIZO and the State of Israel.

With warm regards,

Rivka Lazovsky

Prof. Rivka Lazovsky
Chairperson
World WIZO Executive

World WIZO Executive Resident in Israel

President

Tova Ben-Dov

Hon. Life Presidents

Raya Jaglom

Helena Glaser

Chairperson of the Executive

Prof. Rivka Lazovsky

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Atara Ilani

Chairperson, WIZO Israel

Gila Oshrat

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Fundraising Division

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Education Division

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Deputy: Sarah Delman

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Ingrid Rockberger

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Deputies:

Organization: Esther Yavnin

Tourism: Avital Blumenthal

Special Projects: Tricia Schwitzer

Parents Home

Chairperson: Riki Cohen

Beit Heuss

Chairperson: Saya Malkin

The Next Generation

Chairperson: Sylvie Pelossof

A new Basketball Court for Nachlat Yehuda

Emotions filled the hall as Dr Hezi Josef, director of WIZO's Nachlat Yehuda youth village in Rishon Lezion unveiled the new mezuzah to be fixed at the entrance of the newly renovated basketball gymnasium alongside a silver plaque engraved with the words: *Baruch Rappaport Sports Hall*. The ceremony took place in the presence of former president of the WIZO Geneva chapter and generous donor, Ruth Rappaport who joined students in a game of basketball and astonished them with her skills as she sank the ball through the net. They were later surprised to learn that she was a former captain of the professional basketball team, HaPoel Haifa. Physical education teacher, Tamar Langazer said that the hall will allow students to enjoy a wide range of sporting activities. Particularly evoking were the words expressed by Hagit, an athletic grade seven girl. "Thanks for making our lives better. We used to train under a blazing sun and on broken asphalt, in the rain and cold. Throughout this time we waited and hoped for a new sports hall." President of World WIZO Tova Ben Dov, and Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive Prof Rivka Lazovsky, acknowledged the loyalty and generosity of Ruth and her husband Bruce (z"l). The moving ceremony was closed with the school choir's performance of the new Nachlat Yehuda anthem commemorating the school's upcoming 90th year anniversary.



Ruth Rappaport demonstrates her basketball skills



(l to r) Rivka Lazovsky, Tova Ben-Dov, Ruth Rappaport, Helena Glaser, Irit Rappaport

WIZO Brazil Hadera Inauguration

Sponsored by WIZO Brazil and after much waiting and anticipation, the new WIZO Hadera Women's Centre opened. Present at the inauguration ceremony were WIZO Brazil President Helena Kelner, Past President Sarita Schaffel, members of the World WIZO Executive, representatives of Hadera Municipality, WIZO Brazil EGM delegates and a group of former women from Brazil who now live in Hadera and

form an integral part of the Hadera branch. Entertainment was provided by students from the Hadera High School, which was especially heartwarming as the centre and high school have a close relationship. The talented students danced to both Israeli and Brazilian music – joined by some of the Brazilian chaverot for the latter! Helena Kelner warmly thanked Sarita Schaffel for initiating the project and the devotion and dedication of WIZO Brazil members who worked so hard.



Helena Kelner receives the symbolic key of the centre. (l to r) Ana Marlene Starec, Sarita Schaffel, Gila Oshrat, Helena Glaser, Helena Kelner, Tova Ben-Dov



Helena Kelner and Sarita Schaffel (centre) cut the ribbon and declare the new centre open!

Remembering Teresa

Following renovations, a moving ceremony and plaque unveiling took place at the Zahal Street Day Care Centre in Kfar Saba in the name of former vice president of WIZO Argentina, the late Teresa Jares Kovalivker. The guests, who included World WIZO President Tova Ben Dov, Celia Michonick, members of the World WIZO Executive and members of the Kovalivker family, were entertained by the children and staff of the centre, creating a happy and joyous atmosphere.

The family was particularly happy and moved that Yalon, one of Teresa's grandchildren, attends the centre.



Children enjoying the garden in the Kfar Saba day care centre



(r to l) Sylvie Pelosoff, Rivka Lasovsky, Amalia Polack, Nicole Kovalivker, Marcos Kovalivker, Tova Ben Dov, Norma Kovalivker in the courtyard of the day care centre



At 97 Marianne Continues Donating to WIZO

Ninety-seven year old Marianne van der Poorten of Australia recently rededicated the sensory motor room at the Australian-sponsored Raya Jaglom Day Care Centre in Tel Aviv, which she recently refurbished for the third time. The room also serves as the shelter for the centre, so the children will not be scared to enter it in times of danger. Chaverot were delighted that World WIZO Honorary President Raya Jaglom attended the ceremony at the day care centre which bears her name.

The event took place during the week-long pre-conference tour of the 27-member Australian delegation to the EGM in January.

Marianne has been a member of WIZO since World War II, and became a member of the WIZO International Council at the recent EGM, in recognition of her many years devotion to WIZO.

Marianne van der Poorten takes great delight in the day care centre

Irène Goldberg Renovation

Funds for the renovation of the multi-purpose classroom at the Shapira Multi Purpose Day Care Centre in Tel Aviv were generously donated by Irène Goldberg of WIZO Switzerland, who was guest of honour at the official re-opening of the classroom.

The majority of the approximately 80 children in this day care centre, situated in a very poor area of south Tel Aviv are social welfare cases, including some with special needs. Other children are from single parent families. However, there are some positive demographic changes underway in the area and gradually children from a better socio-economic background are also being accepted to the centre.

(l to r) Hassida Danai chairperson World WIZO Early Age Division, Irene Goldberg, Esther Mor chairperson World WIZO Fundraising Division





Creating a New Tomorrow

***Israel has always been a symbol of triumph, democracy, hope and faith. At this conference, we are reinforcing our pledge to support Israel and hope and pray that from now on, we will all be working together for a strong Israel and a better future with the confidence and knowledge that with WIZO today, we will be 'Creating a New Tomorrow.'* (WIZOuk's chairman Loraine Warren at the closing session of the conference.)**

Ingrid Rockberger

This theme of WIZO's 25th EGM was apparent throughout the exciting few days in January – as around 800 chaverot from around the world met in Tel Aviv – looking forward to WIZO's centenary – eight short years away.

EGM Diary...

Sunday January 15th

Hilton Hotel Tel Aviv: abuzz with WIZO ladies from the four corners of the earth, as they arrived and registered

for the conference. Some federations took advantage of early arrival and spent the morning visiting their own projects – some sleepy heads hardly having time to recover from overnight flights. The afternoon saw the start of serious business – federation presidents and the World WIZO Executive convened for their annual meeting, while the Aviv girls had their own session. The WOW started that evening when WIZO Aviv invited all conference participants to a wonderful fast-moving colourful extravaganza portraying the best of Israeli fashion. Day One really ended on a high!



Aviv chaverot enjoying the conference



World WIZO Honorary Life President Raya Jaglom addresses the conference

Monday January 16th

The first morning of serious business. After usual formalities we stood in silence to remember WIZO leaders who have passed away since the last EGM. World WIZO Honorary Life President Raya Jaglom – 93 years young – addressed the assembly – concentrating her words of encouragement to the younger generation, followed (on video) by World WIZO Honorary Life President Michal Modai, who sadly died a few weeks later.

Giving their reports, outgoing President Helena Glaser and outgoing Chairperson of the Executive Tova Ben-Dov outlined WIZO's achievements in the past four years, but both stressing how much more there is to be done. Helena Glaser insisted that irrespective of the political climate surrounding Israel "the sacred mission of WIZO must be carried out – under all conditions and circumstances. Underprivileged children, youth and women some of whom have experienced domestic violence or discrimination, turn to our organization for help and WIZO does everything humanly possible to lighten their painful, sometimes tragic burden. We create a new tomorrow for them."

Tova Ben-Dov emotionally recalled her eight years as WIZO chairperson..."When I was elected as chairperson, I had many hopes and dreams, many goals. As I look around this hall I see that the most important of goals, and the most vivid of dreams, could never have been even faintly possible without the strength and talent of my executive and you, the WIZO federations, The last eight years have brought extraordinary challenges that have sometimes led to heart wrenching decisions, that have affected many people."

During the well-earned coffee break accompanied by some luscious Hilton treats, chaverot discussed the important and inspiring content of their president and chairperson's speeches; we know what we have to do to continue WIZO's vital work.

Next up was a panel session entitled *Diaspora-Israel Relations – Key to a new Tomorrow*. All the panellists and keynote speaker Minister of Public Affairs and the Diaspora, Yuli Edelstein felt that Israel should be more involved in Diaspora affairs and give support to small vulnerable Jewish communities. Colette Avital stressed that Israel welcomes 'constructive criticism' from the Diaspora, but not 'Israel bashing.' "We should be particularly concerned about the next generation, especially those at university," she added.

Afternoon...no chance of an after-lunch snooze for we WIZO ladies...before starting the afternoon session we were put through our aerobic paces by fitness trainer Elisheva Ginosar.

The afternoon's subject *Today's Zionism – Facing Tomorrow* brought together people from different walks of Israeli life who outlined what Zionism means for them. The conclusion: Zionism today should be aimed at building a better society for the next generation, creating a meaningful environment for our children.

Monday evening was dress-up time for the official opening in the presence of Israel's president Shimon Peres, and Deputy Prime Minister Silvan Shalom. The audience was enchanted by an artistic and musical entertainment programme, featuring many talented youngsters from WIZO schools and youth centres.



WIZO pupils entertain



Helena Glaser (r) and Tova Ben-Dov with President Shimon Peres

Tuesday January 17th

Touring day.....dawned.....grey and wet. We Israelis always feel sorry when the sun doesn't shine for tourists, but.....we need the water! The touring day is always eagerly anticipated because this is the day when chaverot see our projects and get an idea of the enormity and importance of WIZO's work. However, this year was different. Themed *Zionism on Wheels*, in addition to visiting our projects, WIZO teamed up with Keren Kayemet Le'Yisrael to include historical and environmental sites. Fourteen buses with various language guides left Tel Aviv and spread out across the country. Each group had an after-lunch workshop entitled *Being a Zionist Today* – moderated by an instructor from the Melitz Institute. I can only say *kol hakavod* to the Organization and Tourist Departments for this great idea. Despite the weather – and some routes even had to be changed – a most interesting and stimulating day. It was fascinating to hear the different personal definitions of Zionism from women from different countries.



Visiting one of WIZO's day care centres on tour day (1st and 2nd left) Tova Ben-Dov and WIZO Holland President Joyce Numan-Durlacher

Wednesday January 18th

Wednesday morning – down to serious business again – particularly as the day started with the presentation by World WIZO Treasurer Atara Ilani. Atara outlined WIZO's financial problems due to many factors, mainly the global financial situation, reduction in income from the federations and reduction in government support. In addition, WIZO's operational costs have increased: manpower expenses, food and equipment, the cost of energy, municipal taxes. All these factors have contributed to the deficit, despite severe cuts and streamlining activities which are carried out on a daily basis by all WIZO departments.

Given the drop in commitments and WIZO's ongoing efforts to cut expenditures, Atara insisted "it is time to adapt the scope and costs of our activities to our present resources. WIZO does not have internal funds from where we can continually draw out money to cover the deficit. We have

no choice but to prepare a programme which will include closures and/or cutbacks in projects."

She concluded her speech reiterating WIZO's position as a strong and established organization. "We have got to where we are thanks to the strong support of our federations. I am certain that we will reach better times, and we will be able to congratulate ourselves for bringing WIZO to financial stability. We should always remember that we provide services to the Israeli population that no one else does. Our mission is to give women the opportunity to go out to work in order to supplement the family income, and to give an equal chance in life to those who come from low socio-economic backgrounds."

Atara was followed by WIZO Israel's new chairperson Gila Oshrat, who gave a wonderful presentation on – I would call it – the heart of WIZO. Gila provided disturbing statistics regarding various phenomena in Israeli society today including domestic violence, poverty and discrimination against women in various fields. However, this is a challenge to WIZO – through our WIZO centres from Kiryat Shemona to Eilat, services are provided to help alleviate these problems. In addition, WIZO is extremely active – and successful – in proposing legislation in the Knesset regarding women's issues. Gila outlined just a few of WIZO Israel's wonderful projects interspersed with quotes from young women who have benefitted from our services.

After yet another nourishing Hilton break, MK Professor Avishai Braverman gave a comprehensive presentation on *Israel's Economic Strength* – proudly stating that he is the 'only economist in the Israeli parliament.' Hardly time to digest his words of wisdom when a prestigious panel, moderated by Ayala Hasson, one of Israel TV's top political commentators, and comprising of MP Canada and former Minister of Justice, Irwin Cotler, Israel's former Ambassador to the UN Danny Gillerman, MK Dr Einat Wilf, and Editor-in-Chief of the Jerusalem Post Steve Linde, discussed *Challenges to the Image of the State of Israel*.

Of course we cannot have a conference without being updated on Israel's security situation and this topic was comprehensively addressed by Major General (res) Amos Yadlin.



Kadima MK Ze'ev Bielski paying tribute to Helena Glaser

During the afternoon, while voting delegates were casting their ballots for the election of the new World WIZO executive, four different workshops were held, giving participants a chance to get a real insight into WIZO's work, and exchange views and ideas.

Wednesday evening saw a moving and fitting tribute to outgoing World WIZO President Helena Glaser. Tributes were given to Helena from WIZO, her family and public dignitaries with whom she has worked. The audience particularly enjoyed the 'Ode to Helena' sung by WIZO men – some of the staff at WIZO House and school directors and principals.



Dancing the night away



WIZO 'men' salute Helena



Rona Ramon talking about the Ilan Ramon Foundation

Thursday January 19th

Physically we may have been flagging but our spirits certainly were not! First up were the election results as a result of which WIZO will be ably led to her centenary by newly elected President Tova Ben-Dov and Executive Chairperson Professor Rikva Lazovsky.

Presentations were made to new Honorary Life Members of the World WIZO Executive and the World WIZO International Council, followed by an address by then Opposition Leader MK Tzipi Livni.

Yes, there **was** time for one more panel – entitled *Women Create Tomorrow*, Israel TV Channel 2 correspondent Sivan Rahav Meir held face-to-face interviews with three special women including Rona Ramon, widow of Israel's first astronaut Ilan Ramon who was killed when the space shuttle Columbia crashed on re-entry to earth in February 2003.

The final session was approval of recommendations and resolutions emanating from the previous afternoon's workshops, which set out WIZO's work plan for the next four years.



Dudu Fisher sings his heart out

And finally, finally, WIZOUk chairperson Loraine Warren gave her indomitable summing-up - her last – as Loraine's term of office is at an end. Kol hakavod Loraine for your amusing and succinct MOR and EGM resumés for the past six years.

That night – the farewell dinner – wonderful inspiring speeches, a special message from Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a fabulous artistic programme, including a guest appearance of Dudu Fisher – and finally – dancing the night away. A fitting end to an inspirational four days.

The new Executive of World WIZO



*Standing (l-r) Zipi Amiri, Esther Yavnin, Ingrid Rockberger, Riki Cohen, Janine Gelley, Saya Malkin, Sylvie Pelossof, Avital Blumenthal, Mirla Gal, Tricia Schwitzer, Dr Carmela Dekel, Ora Ashur
Sitting (l-r) Ora Barahaff, Hassida Danai, Esther Mor, Gila Oshrat, Prof Rivka Lazovsky, Tova Ben-Dov, Helena Glaser, Atara Ilani, Gila Cohen, Tirtza Rubinsky*

PM meets WIZO



Prime Minister Netanyahu Meets with USA EGM Delegation

During WIZO USA's pre-EGM mission, the delegation had the privilege and honour of meeting privately with Prime Minister Netanyahu at the Ministry of Defence. The Prime Minister dedicated over an hour of his valuable time to discuss the situation with Iran, Syria and Gaza, the issue of illegal immigration from Africa, and other topics brought up by the WIZO USA chaverot.

He was open, frank and friendly and everyone left feeling they had spent an unforgettable, historic moment in their lives.

Present were: Jana Falic, WIZO USA co-president, Judit Groisman Wizo Florida chairperson, Mira Sofer Wizo USA vice president, Evelyn Faigenblat Wizo Yonit president, Evelyn Katz, Lillian Tabacinic, Fanny Cohen, Ruthy and Max Benoliel, Sandra Dunn, Sandra Kaplan, Goldie Retchkiman, Nazarian, Sophie and Tony Sabo, Rebetzen Chani Lipskar, Margarita Minski, Sara Kanarek, Fanny Singer, Lydia Shalem, Riki Cohen, Mirelle Manochrian and Diana Sragowitz.



**Newly Elected World WIZO
President Tova Ben-Dov**

Leading WIZO to its Centennial

*Celebrating pesach with children from the
WIZO Inez Bernstein Day Care Centre on
Weizman Street, Tel Aviv*

Looking back over the past eight years as chairperson of the World WIZO Executive, Tova Ben-Dov reflects on challenges and achievements, and shares her vision for the future as president

Tricia Schwitzer

Sir Winston Churchill said, "It's not enough that we do our best, sometimes we have to do what is required." Throughout her 45-year WIZO career, Tova Ben-Dov, who received the prestigious *Yakir Tel Aviv Prize* (distinguished citizen prize) for her services to the city of Tel Aviv, has employed this wisdom in her unique brand of leadership. Now as newly elected president, Tova draws on a wealth of WIZO experience for the road ahead as she takes the movement forward.

Tova is a woman of passion. She speaks with great affection of the vast army of volunteers that work untiringly for the WIZO cause. She beams with pride as she reports on the 800 plus projects, the eight WIZO schools including five youth villages and the 178 day care centres catering for 14,000 children. When she speaks about the women in WIZO's centres for the prevention of violence in the family and the WIZO shelters for battered women - there are tears in her eyes.

Education – the passport to the future

"I have always been passionate about education. It is the passport to life, to the future. Just as a child needs food, warmth and love, he also needs an education. Israel's future is in his hands. Right at the beginning of my chairmanship, I launched the 'Education' campaign. Everyone said it was not 'sexy enough' but they were wrong. Today, everyone fights for education. I promoted technical education and vocational training development. By this, WIZO ensures that a child who is not academic is still able to complete matriculation studies and graduate with a diploma in technical studies. It is crucial that we continue with this

trend in technical education, as Israel needs the skills of mechanics and technicians, as much as lawyers and accountants. It is equally important that children with special needs and those with attention disorder deficiency are also equipped to maximise their potential. WIZO gives them the tools to excel.

This is the essence of WIZO's work – to create a brighter tomorrow for Israel. We owe it to the country that I am proud to call home.

When the children in our dormitories get good grades and distinctions, or when they are accepted into a top army unit, particularly those children who came from difficult or poverty-stricken family backgrounds, we are so thrilled. It is as if they are our own flesh and blood. We have all played our part in their education and personal development. Together, we gave them a second chance to succeed in life. These children learn by the excellent example we set in our professional standards. They embrace this change for the good in their lives to raise their own children in a more wholesome framework."

Innovative programmes

Tova has always taken an innovative approach to education as can be seen in the 'WIZO Goes Green' campaign, the first of its kind in Israel, wherein children in WIZO day care centres and schools were taught to respect the environment and the importance of the well-being of the planet.

Party to everything that has happened in Israel both in days of triumph and days of need, WIZO's educational facilities also played their national role. "I recall that awful summer of 2006, when I launched the Lebanon II fundraising campaign



Lighting candles in WIZO Israel memorial tent on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. (l to r) MK Zahava Gal-On, Tova Ben-Dov, Minister of Culture and Sport Limor Livnat, Minister of Education Gideon Sa'ar

and led a special WIZO emergency team to aid evacuees from the north escape the incessant bombardment of Katyusha rockets. WIZO opened its schools and youth villages throughout the country to receive thousands of residents who sought refuge out of harm's way. Our glorious federations supported us admirably. Their solidarity with Israel resulted in a magnificent \$3.5million to WIZO so that we could alleviate the suffering of our northern neighbours. I am reminded of that heartbreaking time whenever I look at some of the many letters of thanks written by grateful citizens, one of which contained the phrase: *WIZO bombarded us with Katyushas of love.*"

Tova believes that one can learn at any age, as is evident in WIZO centres all over Israel. "WIZO empowers women. They are trained, counselled and, most importantly, they are endowed with the confidence to take control over their lives. It does not stop there. They learn a trade, they are given all the tools to rebuild their sometimes shattered lives and they do."

Demands for justice

Last summer, a time of social unrest in Israel, young mothers with babies in strollers demonstrated against the high cost of child-care in the 'Stroller March'. WIZO, as an agent for social justice, together with other women's organizations lobbied the government, resulting in the establishment of a commission to look into education subsidies. "WIZO fought for the rights of mothers to have subsidized early education for their children. Remember, a child is not born at the age of three. Similarly, my WIZO sisters and I marched in the centre of Tel Aviv protesting against the exclusion of women."

Fundraising - without flour, we cannot bake bread

Tova's astute business expertise served her well in her previous positions on the World WIZO Executive, as chairperson of the Building Department and then as World WIZO Treasurer. In 2004, when elected chairperson of the executive, her first objective was to make new contracts with the employees. Now, over 1,500 workers are employed under the terms of this new contract, which

saves WIZO millions of shekels every year. WIZO could not have continued otherwise. The world was in the midst of a global economic slump. It is to her and her team's credit that WIZO overcame this crisis.

"We could not afford to let the economic crisis overpower us, so WIZO used this crisis as leverage to raise even more funds and our hardworking federations rose to this challenge. They had confidence in WIZO's cautious approach to its asset management. We are always mindful of our obligation to federations and donors and we never forget that it is their money."

Tova was successful in obtaining considerable funds, which resulted in the opening of new day care centres, not least the potentially life-saving rocket-proof day care centre in Sderot – the first of its kind in Israel, as well as badly-needed refurbishments of many WIZO projects. The continued support and loyalty of our WIZO chaverot in our federations all over the world is a testament of a shared passion for WIZO, and a mark of respect to Tova's judgment of how best to invest in Israel's future.

"Donors have been more than satisfied with WIZO's transparent handling of their donations. Being mindful of the everyday management of funds it is not enough to be efficient, effective and transparent; we also have to overcome unforeseen challenges beyond our control, for instance the strong shekel against foreign currency, which effectively devalues the funds raised by our wonderful federations, or cuts in the national budget.

If we do not have enough funds for the everyday running of our projects, we cannot continue to operate. Moreover, we cut staff at head office. It was awful and painful - but what choice was there?

We had to make shrewd business decisions – radical changes in order to maintain cash flow. Such actions are always painful, but necessary for the smooth running of WIZO. To close a project is sad, however, the alternative - to reduce the level of WIZO services was not an option".



Tova (2nd from left) participates in WIZO Israel demonstration protesting against the exclusion of women in Israeli society

As the newly elected president of World WIZO, Tova sets out her plans to lead WIZO to creating an even better tomorrow.

"My vision is a bigger and stronger WIZO that will become a household name in every Jewish home in Israel and around the world. Increased membership will strengthen the movement and lead to increased income that is crucial to WIZO's continuity and to achieving our goals. I see as my first duty to restore the harmony to our organization and to strengthen the ties with our federations. There are so many successes emanating from our projects, and I feel duty-bound to share the *naches* with the wonderful donors who are committed to the projects, and with the sponsoring federations who are committed to our movement."

"Where WIZO goes, others follow." Tova said. "WIZO's strength is in its ability to adapt to the changing reality in which we live and therefore, WIZO is the spearhead for every need of Israeli society. As a social leader WIZO enjoys much esteem that makes me proud to be a WIZO member and president of this prestigious movement. I want to see more women enjoying that pride and deriving satisfaction from our activities, as we all do."



With pupils at the WIZO Maya Rosenberg High School, Rehovot

should be encouraged to come to Israel, to be touched by the 'WIZO magic'. I want to see visits to WIZO projects on the itinerary of every Jewish youth tour to Israel.

We must strengthen and increase our membership so that our collective voice is heard in important forums – national and international. It allows WIZO to find its rightful place within the national institutions in Israel and facilitates the initiating and promoting of legislation to advance the status of women in Israel, in all areas of life.

Through WIZO, Israeli and Zionist women can make an impact in the international arena. WIZO shares the same issues, problems and challenges with women and children all over the world, and is in the position to help resolve some of these global problems.

I place great emphasis on Zionism. I will laud it and promote it. We are united in our love of Israel and so we must all work together to strengthen our Jewish identity, and our loyalty to the State of Israel. We face a daily barrage of anti-Israel sentiment, which we must fight with positive hasbara. It is my intention to provide our chaverot with the tools to fight Anti-Semitism and the de-legitimization of Israel.

Of course, my vision and plans are based on full cooperation with our WIZO federations: with our WIZO chaverot worldwide who are the backbone and ground roots of our movement, full partners to all our commitments and achievements, and the wind beneath our WIZO wings. TOGETHER we still have a lot to do. TOGETHER we are a power to contend with. TOGETHER we will reach for the skies and beyond."



With former Chief Rabbi Meir Lau selling WIZO's chametz before pesach

We must concentrate our efforts on the future generation. These young women have fresh ideas. Whether professionals or self-employed, they are familiar with modern communication technologies and understand the power of social networking. They can make it work to WIZO's benefit. We must integrate them in a way that will capture their spirit and bond them to our movement by involvement in projects and seats on executives.

WIZO should develop activities to open its lines and integrate not just the women, but the entire family. We must involve the 'WIZO husbands' whose support is so valuable, and the children who share an affinity with Israel through Jewish education and youth groups. Jewish youth in the Diaspora

Theodor Herzl said, 'If you will it, it is no dream.' – Tova Ben-Dov aspires to this.



By the plaque in the room dedicated in her honour by the World WIZO Executive at the WIZO Inez Bernstein Day Care Centre

Young, Professional **Efficient,** **Modern**

***The new face of World WIZO:
Chairperson of the Executive
Professor Rivka Lazovsky
outlines her vision for change to
WIZO Review***

Ingrid Rockberger

World WIZO's new chairperson of the Executive brings a breath of fresh air to World WIZO Headquarters in Tel Aviv. Professor Rivka Lazovsky is a 3rd generation WIZO leader spanning three countries - Austria, Uruguay, Israel; she was born and raised in a Jewish community and was active in a WIZO federation in the Diaspora from a very early age. She came to live in Israel in 1967 and has faced the challenges of adapting to a new environment and lifestyle, whilst at the same time, continuing her contribution to WIZO. She feels that both identities enrich her life and broaden her perspective, furthering WIZO's work as an international movement.

After being chairperson of the Organization and Education Department (1990-1996), she was less active in the World WIZO Executive for some years while pursuing a career in education.

After leaving 'active WIZO life', what made you decide to return?

'A cry from the heart'. In fact I never left WIZO because WIZO never left me. WIZO has always been an integral part of my life. After finishing my PhD, I continued in my profession. The academic world is not an easy one. I had to work very hard in order to pave my way in a man's world in which there is still a 'glass ceiling', making it much more difficult for women to make it to the top. Having reached the top, and despite the fact that I could continue in my profession, I decided that the academic 'ivory tower' was not enough for me. I wanted to do more and to be more involved in community work. And there is only one place for me to fulfil my dreams – WIZO – my home and family.



How is your experience in those years 'out of WIZO' helping you now?

There is a saying, 'How do we know that a people is alive? When we pass by its schools and hear the children singing'. Education has always been my passion and the fact that I am an educator contributes greatly to my current work. Education, whether formal or informal, is crucial to the development of a person. For instance, the empowerment of women, in all forms, is valuable informal education.

From the age of 16 (when I started to teach in the Jewish school in Montevideo, Uruguay), I have worked with the full range of students: children, youth and adults both in academia and the community. I know how they think and act, and how to relate to them. I also easily relate to educators and other professionals; I speak their language and feel 'at home' when confronted by the dynamics in all sorts of educational institutions. This gives me a very important 'edge' in my new role.

I have taken up this new position full of enthusiasm, dynamism and new ideas; I look forward to sharing my experience and I am always ready to adopt innovative ways and apply them – such is the true meaning of the word 'educator'.

My vision involves initiating and implementing new programmes. For instance, I understand the significance of the new technological vocabulary and I attribute great importance to the use of technology in education and in effective organizational administration. Whoever falls behind will be left behind!

I have experience in the international arena, having made



With MK and Minister of Public Affairs and the Diaspora Yuli Edelstein at the EGM in January



With Hassida Danai and Helena Glaser at the opening of the day care centre at Tel Aviv University

many presentations at international conferences, and also during WIZO missions to our federations in my capacity as chairperson of the World WIZO Organization and Education Department and Aviv. There is nothing as motivating or as uplifting as seeing the work and efforts being made by our chaverot in the federations. We are truly a sisterhood, and we have the same aim: an improved Israeli society.

You are now the equivalent of a CEO of a major corporation – WIZO has a multi-million dollar annual turnover. How are you going to approach this challenge?

Overall, I will handle it with professionalism, efficiency, a modern approach and team work. I am used to working in a systematic and methodical way, looking at the whole picture as well as at its individual components and accordingly developing **clear policies and effective procedures**.

It is vital to constantly evaluate our functioning and services in order to improve them, to have a clear definition of volunteers and staff members' roles and also to develop marketing strategies to increase awareness, strengthen our status and address competition. As more organizations search for ways to increase their income, the competition to win government

tenders is getting stiffer.

Having grown up in a federation and in a family where WIZO work was often the topic of conversation around the Shabbat table, I recognize the importance of being in close contact with the federations. It is imperative to constantly report back to the federations about our projects and programmes, donations, allocation of funds and any other relevant information, using transparent and accountable procedures, in full coordination with the divisions at headquarters in Israel and with our federations throughout the world. **There is no 'we' and 'you'. We are one.**

What are your priorities?

Taking into account that WIZO's strength has always been in its ability to adapt to any situation in Israel, and knowing that anything can be demanded of us at any time, my priorities at present are as follows:

- 1) To develop **a good working atmosphere** among the members of the World WIZO Executive and with the professional staff. This is essential for the successful running of WIZO because it leads to wise decision



Rivka enjoying Independence Day festivities with the children at the WIZO Beit Forge Day Care Centre in south Tel Aviv

The new face of WIZO

Executive Chairperson



Tree planting on Tu Beshvat at the Mark Stone Day Care Centre in Raanana

making, saves time and energy and enhances motivation, satisfaction and well-being. Our devoted employees are an inseparable part of the organization, whether it is an efficient secretary, or a house mother who takes the place of a biological mother providing each of the pupils under her wing with care, love and support.

- 2) To **increase our visibility** amongst the public, so that we can help all those who are in need of our services but do not know enough about the myriad of services that we offer.
 - 3) To **balance the budget** so that we have more flexibility,
- and can continue to respond to the changing needs of the society in Israel and of the Jewish people worldwide.
- 4) To continue our services for **populations at risk**. We have developed the expertise to work 'miracles' with challenging populations who come to our institutions as their last resort. For example, we are working in order to expand the technological tracks in our schools and youth villages so that more youngsters can learn a vocation or trade thus ensuring that they will be able to make a living in the future, be independent and lead a normative life. Another example is that we have established contact with the IDF suggesting that we work with them to prepare girls at risk for specific vocational tracks, needed by the Army. We are also developing programmes for students with learning disabilities that will help them succeed in their studies.
 - 5) We must encourage all our federations to make special efforts to **enlarge our membership worldwide**, to prepare our **future leaders** and to give them key roles in our movement. There is an indescribable joy in passing the WIZO message from generation to generation, from grandmother to mother to daughter – I am a living example.
 - 6) To **increase fundraising**. We have to adopt a more business-oriented approach that will allow us to effectively run our assets, analyzing data of income and expenses while at the same time using creative ways and up-to-date technology to increase funding for our projects. We have the turnover of a powerful business enterprise, and we have to manage our finances accordingly.
 - 7) To continue striving to **advance the status of women** and for equal rights and opportunities. I am so very proud of what women have achieved and of WIZO's role in advancing their status - but there is still a long way to go. Israel is one of the most liberal and advanced countries regarding women's rights. WIZO has proposed legislation in the Knesset and, especially since the 1990s, many laws concerning women have been passed (laws dealing with equal opportunities in the workplace, a law for the prevention of violence in the family, equal payment for women and men, a law against sexual harassment, and more). However, these laws are not always applied and there is still a gap between men and women in the occupational, social and public areas. I know that we are all very concerned with the latest issues concerning the exclusion of women from the public arena. If women had a stronger status, nobody would dare to mistreat them!
 - 8) To intensify our efforts in strengthening our **Jewish and Zionist identity** around the world and to **advocate** for the legitimate rights of the State of Israel in challenging times of increasing assimilation, anti-Semitism and existential threats to the State of Israel. You, in our federations, are our strongest ambassadors, our public relations experts, and your work in this area cannot be minimized. It is my job to keep you informed so that you have all the facts at your fingertips.
 - 9) And last, but certainly not least, I would like to repeat a



At WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village on Memorial Day, awarding matriculation certificates to graduates

personal motto: **To lead with wisdom and care**, not only with *chochmat hadaat* - 'the wisdom of the mind,' but also with *chochmat halev* - 'the wisdom of the heart,' sharing, stimulating, delegating authority and caring for the wellbeing of our members and our employees.

In today's world, many women do not have time (or they think they don't!) for voluntary work. How can WIZO attract dynamic professional young women?

First of all, I see myself as a role model. I know that professional women, even if busy, want and need to do something more,

something for their 'soul'. Professional women can be motivated if they can contribute to a cause that is important to them, and which enhances their self-image, gives them new skills, helps them develop social and professional contacts and work with women like themselves, with whom they can socialize, and enjoy working. The satisfaction and fulfillment that come with a job that is well done enhances motivation and commitment, and there is a sense of pride in belonging to an important and respected movement that is doing so much to ensure Israel's future, which, in turn is empowering Jewish communities throughout the world.

What is your personal message to the federations?

The continuing strengthening of the bond between the chaverot in Israel and those in our federations heads my list of priorities. This bond and solidarity are treasures which we must nurture, for they are the secret of our strength and our existence. They are essential for the unity and continuity of our movement.

Since I took over my new position just a few months ago, I have done my utmost in order to cement this bond, by increasing accountability and transparency, by constantly informing, sharing and consulting our federations about our projects and work, by acknowledging their efforts, contributions and accomplishments, and, at the same time, being attentive and responsive to their needs.

Our partnership is sacred and it is what makes us into a movement that is committed to its ideals and goals, and makes them into reality. And I will continue to make every effort to strengthen this partnership with sincerity, encouragement, warmth and friendship. Working all together in cooperation, harmony and mutual trust is the real formula for our success.

And finally, a personal remark. I am often asked: "How is it going in your new job? Is it hard work?" Usually, I answer: "I am working from early morning to late in the night, and I do it with love and devotion because for me it's not a job, it is a mission. Indeed, that's what it is."



Rivka participating in the dedication ceremony of the Baruch Rappoport Sports Hall at WIZO's Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village: (l to r) Helena Glaser, Tova Ben-Dov, Ruth Rappoport, Rivka Lazovsky

Michal Modai

1931-2012



Honorary Life President of World WIZO

Michal Modai, the fourth president of World WIZO died on Friday March 2nd at the age of 81. For many years her name was synonymous with WIZO and an outstanding symbol of a strong and graceful women's leadership in the Jewish world. Michal was a true Zionist, a lover of humanity who devoted her life to helping those less fortunate in Israeli society. She spearheaded hundreds of projects to help children at risk, abused women and other underprivileged sectors of the population.

Michal Modai, a seventh generation "sabrah" was born in the Ultra-Orthodox district of Meah Shearim in Jerusalem in 1931. As a kindergarten teacher she worked with immigrant children in a transit camp near Zichron Yaakov. Here she witnessed for the first time the distress of the new immigrants, and recognized the need for veteran Israelis to extend a helping hand to the newcomers.

In 1951, aged 20, she became the country's second Miss Israel. During her subsequent world tour fundraising for Israel, she visited London where she met Deputy Military Attaché Yitzhak Modai (z"l) who became her husband. Throughout his elaborate political career, Michal had no intention of just being "His Wife". She dedicated her life to volunteering for the benefit of the community.

In 1968, Modai began volunteering at WIZO's Herzlia Pituach branch helping the immigrant population of Neve Israel, one of the town's poorer neighbourhoods. She also devoted special care to the WIZO branches along the country's borders and in the Galilee outposts.

In 1979 she was elected chairperson of WIZO Israel. In this capacity, she established the country's first shelter for battered women. "She succeeded in this, despite the difficulties she encountered for a shelter at a time when the issue of battered women was not discussed and the status of women in Israel was totally different" says her friend Helena Glaser, Honorary President of World WIZO who followed in her footsteps. Consequently, WIZO established a second shelter.

She was chairperson of the World WIZO Executive from 1984 until 1996, when she was elected president.

During her eight year term (1996-2004), she left an impressive legacy and yet with an air of modesty. She concentrated on strengthening the ties between the Jewish communities in the Diaspora with Israel. She regarded the schools and youth villages as being extremely important, and succeeded in engaging the cooperation of the Ministries of Education and Finance to

contribute 50% of the operating costs of these facilities. In 1997 Michal was appointed a member of the executive of the World Zionist Organization and became a member of the Board of Governors of the Jewish Agency.

Whilst being extremely active, Modai was always sure to be there for her children. At age 22, her daughter Harela was tragically killed in a car accident. Her son Boaz currently serves as Israel's Ambassador to Ireland. At her funeral he said "we were privileged to have a mother who was a beauty queen, a woman of society, a recipient of the Prime Minister's Award for Volunteerism, an honorary citizen of Tel Aviv and the wife of the Minister Yitzhak Modai. But not even for a moment did she forget that she was also a mother, a grandmother and a friend."

"It was a pleasure just to look her," recalls the actress Gila Almagor. "She was always elegant and meticulously dressed. She was a regular visitor at the theatre and retained a certain gentleness, a sense of magic and serenity that personified her."

Silvan Shalom, Minister for Regional Development and the Development of the Negev and the Galilee, who was once the close assistant and advisor to Yitzhak Modai (z"l) recalls Michal's revolutionary contribution to women in Israel: "she was a pioneer during a challenging time when the status of women was not as it is today."

President of World WIZO Tova Ben-Dov said "Michal's passing is a tremendous loss to Israel and to the WIZO federations worldwide. She viewed WIZO as her life's calling and was a loyal ambassador of the movement throughout her days. Michal has left each and every one of us with a rich legacy of giving and good deeds and wonderful memories that will never fade. She will continue to be an exemplary role model for us all as well as future generations of WIZO women."



Shula Broide (Kahanovich)

1918-2012



World WIZO Honorary Life Member, former Chairperson of WIZO Israel and former Chairperson of the World WIZO Council

"I have known you for almost 40 years and from the first moment, I fell in love not only with your son but also with you." These were the words of Aliza Broide, daughter-in-law of the late Shula Broide at her funeral.

Close to her 94th birthday, Shula Broide, still vivacious and lucid till her last moments, passed away leaving behind two sons, Eliram and Judah, family, friends and a host of admirers. Shula Broide (née Kahanovich) was born in Russia. In 1923 at the age of five, she came with her family to Palestine. She grew up in Tel Aviv in a Zionist home and was a pupil at the Herzliya Gymnasia School. There she met her future husband, Dr Charlie Broide, who had come on aliya with his family from South Africa and who became a scientist and researcher in the field of nuclear physics and radar.

At the end of her studies in philosophy at the Hebrew University, Shula visited England, where she was stranded until the end of World War II. She was amongst the founders of 'Nili', an organization which helped women escape from Nazi-threatened Europe.

At the end of the war, when her husband joined the Weizmann Institute for Science in Rehovot, Shula converted her home into a centre for absorbing families of the newly formed academic staff, mostly scientists, many of whom were new immigrants. The couple moved to Savyon in 1960, where Shula joined and chaired the first WIZO group.

Shula Broide was chairperson of WIZO Israel from 1972 to 1980. During her term in this position she devoted herself to advancing women in all respects. She was also instrumental in the promotion of social legislation in favor of divorced women whose husbands did not pay their child support. Current WIZO Israel Chairperson Gila Oshrat said Shula worked to reduce social gaps and established the Department of Community Welfare as well as one of those involved in founding the WIZO Parents Home. In recognition of her dedication and achievements, she was awarded the title of Honorary Life Chairperson of WIZO Israel.

She served on the Savyon local council in many capacities and in January 2010, was honoured in the Knesset, where she was presented with a lifetime achievement award for her contribution to WIZO and the community.

"I could fill up pages with memories and stories" wrote her grandson Nir who resides in San Francisco. "Yesterday in San Francisco we went down to the beach to fly a kite for you, to wave goodbye. Perhaps you have seen it? It was in the evening. We were the last ones in the world to watch the sun of your last day set. It will rise again tomorrow but the world will be missing something great. Your heart which gave us so much love will no longer be there."

Shula Broide once summed up her life story thus: "In all my endeavors I saw it as a privilege to participate in the rebirth of our nation."



Shula Broide receiving her award at the Knesset. (l to r) MK Gila Gamliel, Helena Glaser, Shula Broide, Yochy Feller, Michal Modai



Giving Back - Heather's Way

Undaunted by her country's severe economic hardships, deeply committed to WIZO, her community and Judaism, WIZO Greece President Heather Nahmias looks steadfastly to the future

Tricia Schwitzer

The birthplace of democracy, classical arts and the jury system, Greece is a breathtakingly beautiful, sun-baked country. In recent times, however, the Acropolis has been eclipsed by the dark clouds of financial doom and civil unrest. However, for British-born WIZO Greece President Heather Nahmias, Greece is the place where her dreams came true.

"I was working as a secretary in London but I yearned to live in Greece; a country that epitomized everything a young woman finds appealing: sunshine, dancing and laughter. My father was not so enthusiastic but with certain conditions, he agreed to let me move to Athens to work as a nanny.

Prior to my departure, he sat me down one evening with an atlas. 'This is England,' he said, 'and this is Greece. It's not far from Israel and I want you to go to there. I will give you the money to go from Athens. You won't be earning much working as a nanny.' It was a strange request. We were not Jewish and to me Israel conjured images of the bible, nothing more. However, my father, a staunch member of the Masonic Movement and president of his lodge in London, believed in the reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, and that is why he wanted me to go to Israel. Of course, now that I look back on those days I think, oh Dad, if only you knew what you started..."

Introduction to Judaism

Whilst working as a nanny in Athens, Heather met and fell in love with a tall, handsome, young Jewish man. She took lessons from rabbis and underwent full conversion to the Jewish faith. They subsequently married.

"My husband's family welcomed me with open arms from the moment I converted, and my family was also very supportive. My husband, who unfortunately died ten years ago, and I built a flourishing business exporting cotton clothing to mail-order catalogues. We had twin daughters, who are now 43 and now there are four grandchildren: Louise aged 6, Nicholas 10, Stephanie 12 and Philip 15."

...and WIZO

A friend invited Heather along to a WIZO meeting. Before then, she knew little about WIZO but her involvement led her to embrace Israel with the same passion that she embraces Judaism and she steadily rose through the ranks, now serving as president.

Heather recalls, "The first time I came to Israel, it was nothing to do with WIZO, it was simply because my husband's sister lives here. I found it to be such a fascinating and vibrant place but I never dreamed that I would be so involved with the country. Israel is so wonderful and if I had my life over

Heather's Way

again, I would have persuaded my husband and daughters to make aliyah.

Judaism has been great for me and so it is important for me to give back. In WIZO, I found my niche - and Greece has been good to me; I want to be good to Greece. I am so saddened by the debt crisis that cripples the country. Everyone feels the fallout with pay cuts, redundancies and pension devaluations. No one is exempt. Our household income is down by 40% and business is not good. Worse still, people are losing their livelihoods and homes. When you think of Greece – the cradle of civilisation, with its rich history and culture, and now you see homeless people and families begging on the streets. The heart breaks.

I have never come across anti-Semitism on a personal level, but of course where there is ignorance one will find anti-Semitism or anti-Israel sentiment, which I do believe is the same thing. Distorted media images of Israeli soldiers and armoured vehicles against Palestinian women and children feed preconceived notions but I believe that if you talk to people and present them with the whole truth they will listen and take notice. Hasbara is crucial."

The Greek Jewish community

Greeks are extremely friendly people, and the Jewish community is warm, vibrant, and very proud of its links with Israel. Greek Jewry, one of the most ancient Jewish communities in the world, was all but wiped out in the Holocaust. Today there are approximately 5,500 Jews left, and their common thread is a love for Israel and the preservation of their heritage. To that end, WIZO Greece actively supports the Jewish school in Athens.

"Saloniki, known as 'the mother of Israel' was once home to a very big Jewish community. Whenever I am in Israel and tell people that I am from Greece, they will often tell me that their grandmother or grandfather came from Saloniki. It's quite amazing that the tiny Greek Jewish community has so many connections with Israel. Greece plays an important role in our history. You can see the similarities with Israel; the tiny size of the country, the unfamiliar alphabets and the ancient civilisations...

The next generation

I cannot stress enough how important it is that our youth remain in touch with their heritage. Most chaverot have one or more grandchildren in the Jewish schools. In fact, when the students finish junior school at the age of 11, they all come on well-organized trips to Israel sponsored by the community. Last February, when (former World WIZO President) Helena Glaser visited the Jewish school in Athens she made a huge impression on the children. In

fact, my granddaughter, Stephanie, who was 12 at the time gave a talk to her classmates and said, 'when I grow up I am going to be president of WIZO in Israel.' But really, this is so important. We encourage visits to Israel. My grandson was in Israel last year to visit universities and higher education facilities.

Greek WIZO

Greek chaverot, though small in numbers, are hardworking, enthusiastic and committed. We put on many social events and we celebrate WIZO's birthday each year, where we have lunch and a party. It is so difficult in these days of economic hardship to raise funds but we do have cultural activities. Chaverot see WIZO as a way of keeping in touch with each other and their Jewish identity vis-à-vis Israel. So many members have family in Israel so their loyalty comes from a very personal place. We also support local Greek charities such as a home for young adults with mental disabilities. By helping our own community, we demonstrate our social conscience and that enhances WIZO's image. Pro rata, we are a small federation in a tiny country but we are so proud of the work we do for WIZO."



Heather presenting World WIZO's 90th anniversary certificate to Israel's ambassador to Greece Ali Yahya

The biggest challenge facing WIZO Greece is the continuation and strengthening of the movement, but Heather buoyed by her participation in the EGM is keen to put into practice the valuable lessons and good contacts that she has gained.

To recruit the younger women

"Our challenge now is to engage younger women, to bring them onboard.

We have the names but I was never able to get them interested, because nobody showed me, nobody taught me the way to attract them. Meeting and chatting to the new Aviv representative to World WIZO Laurienne Baitz from South Africa has already helped me a lot. As Laurienne told me, we need to make it sexy and fun and we need to grow with it. I can do this – and I will. The women of my age, they come to meetings but it is the youngsters we need and there are many of them out there. I know I will be helped by the World WIZO Organization and Tourist Division too – as its ethos is the commitment to increasing WIZO membership worldwide."

Heather hopes she will see peace in Israel in her lifetime. She confided, "When you are in a happy place, you just want to make other people happy. Israel is so lovely, how proud you must be to live here," and she added, "I would certainly encourage my grandchildren to make aliyah."

There is no doubt that the youthful Heather will have no difficulty in swelling the WIZO Greece ranks with a new generation of chaverot. As she says, "I am 71, but age is just a state of mind, and 'fun and sexy' we can all do!"



Diana (left) with Janine Gelley at the sign recognizing WIZO and Ida Wynn, Diana's great aunt.

At Ahuzat Yeladim not only are lives saved – but souls

Melbournians, Carl and Diana Davis visited WIZO Australia sponsored Ahuzat Yeladim School in October 2011. They were so moved and impressed that Carl felt he had to share their feelings and emotions with all our readers

"...whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world." - Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 4:8 (37a)

Carl Davis

This Talmudic maxim, our rabbis tell us, doesn't mean that by saving someone's life you have actually saved the world. What it means, they say, is that you have saved the world for the person whose life you saved. After an extraordinary visit to WIZO's Ahuzat Yeladim School in Haifa, Israel, late in 2011, we have come more than ever to believe this interpretation of the old biblical saying.

A haven of hope

Correctly described, Ahuzat Yeladim is a therapeutic and post hospitalization residential centre for children from seven to 18 who suffer from behavioural, emotional and psychiatric problems. But after our visit, we would rather describe it as "a haven of hope".

Our tour of this amazing establishment was facilitated by WIZO in Victoria. Janine Gelley, then Deputy Chairperson of the Tourist Department was our host. She told us that she was excited to have the opportunity to show off her "special project".

Travelling from Haifa on a warm autumn day, Janine was reluctant to talk much about her special project. "I want you to gain your impression first hand and not have it coloured by my view," she said.

So Diana and I simply had to contain ourselves and enjoy the ride with Arie, our driver, colourfully describing notable elements of the landscape as we drove along the superb highway from Tel Aviv to Haifa.

at Ahuzat Yeladim



Carl and
Diana Davis

"See the wall separating the West Bank," said Arie. "That was built at the instigation of Ariel Sharon in 2002 to stop wave after wave of suicide bombers entering Israel and murdering Israelis. Once the wall was complete, the bombings stopped almost immediately - but the world condemned us for doing this; but," he said with a typical Israeli shrug, "who cares! They simply forced us to defend ourselves!"

Personal family connections

As we drove, we spoke to Janine of our WIZO connections through my aunt, Martha Jacobson, a past Federal president and Diana's mother, Hannah Halprin, an indefatigable worker and one of the founding members of the WIZO Hadassim group in Melbourne. Janine well recognized how important Australian WIZO is to Ahuzat Yeladim as she demonstrated her remarkable knowledge of our families' connection and contribution to this inspiring institution.

Our anticipation heightened as we approached magnificent Haifa and climbed the hills towards Ahuzat Yeladim. We entered this beautiful place set among gardens with spectacular bougainvilleas and immediately we started to feel the "ruach" - the unique atmosphere where you knew this was a singular place, a place of exceptional achievement.

A very special place

And so it was. . . After entering the main building, we met the Principal/Director, Yossi Saragossi. For over an hour he told us of the *raison d'etre* of Ahuzat Yeladim. He described case after case where seemingly hopeless challenges were not only met but success achieved.

"How do you measure your success?" I asked.

"The army is the test," he answered. "All our graduates are required to do their military service but the army won't admit kids who have problems. So I tell them that this person, for example, is not the same child who entered Ahuzat Yeladim at the age of 11 severely emotionally disturbed. He has become a self-reliant person with a healthy feeling of self-worth and therefore worthy of entering the army. And so he is accepted as are 95% of our graduates. *That* is the measure of our success here."

As he described one case where a young girl was so disturbed that the only way she could express her anger at the world was to violently destroy her environment, her classroom, her personal space. Yossi, who was her teacher at the time, accepted the challenge and relentlessly worked to communicate with her. Eventually he succeeded. He made her a promise that he would sit in the hall when she graduated from Ahuzat Yeladim and that he would, one day, dance at her wedding. He achieved both. Tears flowed down our faces as we listened to this inspired man.

Inspirational people

All too seldom in your life, do you have the opportunity of meeting someone who makes such an indelible impression on you that you will never forget them, and their presence constantly enters your mind. So it is with Yossi Saragossi. And his staff. The commitment, the dedication, the refusal to be judgemental, the dogged relentlessness with which they approach their task - are all qualities which are vital to the remarkable success of Ahuzat Yeladim.

We visited several of the elements of this facility including an innovative small zoo where healing pet therapy is practised. The children are allocated an animal to care for; this connection allows them to experience the unconditional love between creature and carer perhaps for the first time in their lives.

More tears flowed as we saw the honour boards with names so familiar to us including my wife's late parents to whom Ahuzat Yeladim was so important a part of their WIZO agenda.

No words can adequately describe the importance of the role Ahuzat Yeladim plays in the salvaging of young lives in this young nation. The part played by WIZO Australia in performing the mitzvah of allowing Yossi Saragossi and his team to save the world of their precious, damaged children is unparalleled and irreplaceable. And WIZO Australia is just as vital a part of Ahuzat Yeladim as Yossi and the team. New facilities, improvements, constant upgrading of accommodation is WIZO Australia's constant, ongoing task. For without WIZO Australia and its unstinting contributors, Ahuzat Yeladim would simply not be the inspirational reality it is.



The gardens with iconic elephant and covered sports court in the background

Donor Appreciation

Spotlight on the Mary Bendet Foundation

For eight years, the Mary Bendet Foundation has sponsored WIZO projects, improving the lives of children and youth throughout Israel. The foundation was established by Alexander Gruenwald in 2004 in honour of his dear friend, the young and compassionate Mary Bendet. Mary's passions of music and children are the pillars of this foundation that works with WIZO to ensure that children's futures begin with love, education and safety. When the Mary Bendet Foundation first teamed up with WIZO Switzerland, it provided much appreciated individual scholarships for students in Israel to study music. Over the next few years, the Mary Bendet Foundation collaborated with WIZO on projects providing new creative opportunities for youth at risk. The foundation provided instruments, new music classrooms, funding for lessons and even built a recording studio at WIZO's Haberer Community Centre in Jerusalem. The "No Exit Recording Studio" would be highly regarded by anyone pursuing music, but for the at-risk youth that use this music studio, it has far greater meaning - it shows that someone truly believes in them. After spending a day at the "No Exit" studio Alexander Gruenwald said, "To see the way these kids play music, that they have goals in their lives, that they want to achieve something - all of this was made possible through our combined work and generosity".

The music studio and all of the other projects that the Mary Bendet Foundation magnanimously sponsors truly support the foundation's mission to "encourage and inspire children



Children happily playing at the Shapira Day Care Centre



Nirit and Alexander Gruenwald

and youth to reach their greatest potential." The foundation's vision is to create enduring and systematic change, to remove barriers for at-risk youth, to encourage children to make the right choices, and to enable children to study music, dancing, and other creative pursuits. Thanks to the tireless work of Alexander Gruenwald, the organization's chairman, and his wife, Nirit Gruenwald, a dedicated WIZO member, the vision of the Mary Bendet Foundation is a true reality for the many children that it has already impacted.

Recently, the Mary Bendet Foundation expanded its reach even more, and now partners with WIZO day care centres. In 2011, the foundation sponsored much needed renovations at the Shapira Day Care Centre in south Tel Aviv. A new playground was built, bathrooms were renovated, the kitchen was updated; the day care centre was truly transformed into a new, more positive environment. Without taking any time off, the Mary Bendet Foundation already has a new project in the works. The foundation will provide The Roger & Françoise Varenne Day Care Centre in Holon with a much needed make-over.

The benevolence and continued hard work of the Mary Bendet Foundation has created an inspiring and wonderfully appreciated relationship with WIZO. Every day, the lives of at-risk children are improved thanks to this foundation. At WIZO, our goal is to help disadvantaged children break free from their cycle of despair and feel nurtured and safe. Our goal is to empower youth and to provide them with opportunities to excel. We are so thankful to the Mary Bendet Foundation for partnering with WIZO to achieve these goals together. Alexander Gruenwald says it best, "Let us continue this way, to give these children a new chance in life. Like this, society will change. Let's keep it going. It makes me so proud."

ATTENTION AVIVS!

Creating A New Tomorrow

A great big enthusiastic post EGM HELLO to you Wonderful WIZO Women around the world!
Those of you who attended the 25th World WIZO EGM will, I'm sure, agree that it was an outstanding, awesome, & moving event.

I'm Laurienne Baitz
Aviv Representative to the World WIZO Executive

Hi!



I live in Durban, South Africa.
I co-chair WIZO Durban with Michelle Nathan & Colleen Mervis. We're called the 'WIZO TRIO'. We find that by co-chairing WIZO the task is more manageable. We each have strengths to contribute & we have a lot of fun doing it together!



Unite & Ignite

For the coming 2 years my aim is to help the Avivs to 'Unite & Ignite' worldwide. But what does that really mean?

When asked what I thought the biggest challenge to our wonderful WIZO organization is, I thought that it must be the need to **unite** the Federations world wide through improved communication via more effective use of social media vehicles available to us such as the web, facebook, Skype etc.

Meet my family



Zak, me, Isobella, Kevin & Dylan

Fundraising & recruitment ideas of the future can be shared worldwide at the click of a button. Why 'reinvent the wheel' when clever members have already perfected **brilliant new ideas** in other Federations and are dying to share them? Coming from a small community of less than 2000 Jewish members, we are faced by problems such as of lack of numbers & resources that I'm sure some of you share. At the EGM I met motivated members such as the 'Awesome Australians', 'Brilliant Brazilians' & 'Eager English' who not only do wonderful WIZO work but are thrilled to **ignite** others with their ideas & expertise. In Durban, we have ignited our WIZO work force by '**putting the FUN into FUNdraising**' (More about that later)!

World WIZO is contemporizing our WIZO brand by redesigning our image to match the creative, dynamic force that we proudly are. Watch this space!

I hope that you are going to support me by getting involved!

Let's share, motivate, design & improve on all those ideas that I know you have!

Start making plans to
meet & make history
@ the

Aviv conference
November 2012
in Israel.

I've started a new Facebook group.
It's a closed forum especially for Aviv leaders. If you are an Aviv leader, please email me right away laurienne@automation.co.za so I can join you up. Your input & ideas are invaluable to us all

Meet you there!

Luv
Laurienne
xxx



Governor of the Bank of Israel Visits Nachlat

Bank of Israel Governor, Professor Stanley Fisher, visited the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village, where he addressed approximately a hundred pupils and staff who filled the lecture hall, all fervently listening as he spoke about the role of the Bank of Israel, giving facts and figures regarding Israeli currency and the economy.

The students posed countless questions regarding the professional aspects of his work and his personal story, learning about his journey from Zambia, where he was born, to Israel. Mr Fisher was overwhelmed by the barrage of questions targeted at him and the active interest expressed by the students.

One student asked him whether the government considers his opinion regarding whether to attack Iran. Somewhat taken aback, the governor replied, "I do not want to be part of such a secret. I suggest you remember that every time you include someone in a secret, it is no longer a secret!" Dr Hezi Yosef, director general of the youth village expressed how delighted he was to have such a senior figure meet his students.

Are You an Active Grandparent?

A survey conducted by WIZO among grandparents for Family Day 2012, reveals a very high involvement of grandparents in raising their grandchildren. The poll found that 70% of grandparents are active in caring for their grandchildren and see them at least once a week. Despite this, over a third of them feel that their opinions are not considered often enough and more than a quarter admitted that they do not adhere to the guidelines set by the parents whilst the children are in their care because "at Grandma and Grandpa's, everything is allowed." Not surprisingly grandmothers (75%) offer more help and involvement in raising the grandchildren than grandfathers. Today's lifestyle, often with both parents working, raises questions regarding the changing role of grandparents. Often the grandparents have to be careful not to slip into the role of parents and the WIZO hotline receives many calls on this subject!

On the Move with Friends of WIZO

Over 50 supporters (men and women) of Friends of WIZO participated in the group's annual 'day out' – which this year centred in Jerusalem including visits to the Conegliano Veneto Synagogue and WIZOUk's flagship project the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family.

The synagogue, founded in 1701, was in the village which bears its name – located between Padua and Venice, and was last used in 1917. It was dismantled and brought to Israel in 1951. A curator gave the group a fascinating talk about the synagogue and the adjacent museum.



Bank of Israel Governor, Professor Stanley Fisher addressing Nachlat Yehuda pupils

From there the group proceeded to the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family, today a large complex housing a day care centre, vocational school, shelter for abused women and a centre for the prevention of violence in the family. The tour culminated with a dedication by Merlis and David Cohen of the newly renovated courtyard in memory of Mary Cohen. After the trip, participants reiterated the importance of visiting WIZO projects, which always gives them more inspiration and motivation to continue 'working for WIZO'!



David and Merlis Cohen by the plaque in the renovated courtyard in memory of Mary Cohen



FOW supporters learning the history of the Conegliano Veneto Synagogue

Tel Aviv Fundraiser

WIZO Tel Aviv recently held yet another highly successful gala event in Tel Aviv to raise sorely needed funds for teenage girls at risk. The musical evening was held at the Tel Aviv museum with Gil Shochat, Marina Maximilian Blumin accompanied by the Elysium Ensemble. The audience was spellbound by the range of music – classic-pop – from Beethoven and Tchaikovsky to Matti Caspi and Sasha Argov, including some arrangements by Blumin herself.

In recent years WIZO Tel Aviv has built up a following of local supporters, both individuals and businesses, who willingly attend all the gala events, in the knowledge they are donating to a good cause.

Absolutely thrilled with the results, WIZO Tel Aviv Chairperson Meira Drori warmly thanked the audience, saying, "Thanks to your generosity, we will be able to set up two new 'refuge centres' for young girls at risk." The centres will be for girls aged 13-18 and the plan is for the girls to remain in their own environment but at the same time receive help and advice from WIZO.

The event was attended by WIZO's president Tova Ben-Dov, Chairperson of the Executive Professor Rivka Lazovsky, WIZO Israel Chairperson Gila Oshrat and World WIZO and Israel WIZO Executive members.



(l-r) Tova Ben-Dov, Danny Gillerman, Meira Drori, Janice Gillerman, Rivka Lazovsky, Gila Oshrat



Gil Shochat (r) and Marina Maximilian Blumin

Moving Movie in Modi'in

The recently formed WIZO Modi'in English Group with the indefatigable Rolene Marks at the helm continues to thrive. A screening was recently held of Daniel Remer's documentary *Leah*. The film chronicles the journey of Leah Biteolin from her village in Ethiopia through to her new life in Israel. After the film, Leah herself addressed a captivated audience, speaking passionately about the social issues confronting many Ethiopian immigrants. As the audience left the hall, the words 'inspiring, moving, fantastic' could be heard amongst their reactions. Proceeds from the event benefitted WIZO's Pardes Katz project.



Leah in conversation with the film director

Tu Bishvat in Raanana

Fittingly near to Tu Bishvat, WIZO opened the renovated garden at the WIZO Mark Stone Day Care Centre in Raanana. It has been in operation for over 40 years and is actually a "Boutique DCC" for about 55 children aged three months to three years.

The Raanana Municipality invested in the landscaping of the front yard that includes an ecological garden where toddlers and children can plant trees, herbs and vegetables.

The ceremony was attended by Tova Ben-Dov at her first official event as president of World WIZO, Prof. Rivka Lazovsky chairperson of the World WIZO Executive, Deputy Mayor of Raanana Yoel Azarza, Rachel Lapchik de Szwedzki, president of WIZO Uruguay, the sponsoring federation and Hassida Danai, chairperson of the Early Age Division. During the ceremony both guests and children had fun planting trees.



(l to r) Tova Ben-Dov, Yoel Azarza, Rachel Lapchik de Szwedzki, Hassida Danai, Rivka Lazovsky



A Question of Image

Sima Borkovski



Knesset Speaker MK Ruby Rivlin making his point

The way women are portrayed in the media whether it's a reality show or a sexist campaign can be quite disturbing, to say the least.

This subject was thoroughly discussed by a panel held at the Knesset under the umbrella of the Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Women chaired by Knesset member Tzipi Hotovely, and attended by Knesset Speaker MK Ruby Rivlin. Participating in the event, initiated by WIZO Israel to mark International Women's Day, were MKs, public figures from the media, advertising companies and academia. WIZO women from all over the country attended along with World WIZO and WIZO Israel department heads and executive members.

Message to the public

It is quite unusual to find representatives of the media and Knesset members gathered around one table to discuss one of the most sensitive issues – the influence of the media on the way women and girls perceive themselves and the message transmitted to the public. Meirav Michaeli, a journalist renowned for her feminist views, moderated the panel and tried her best to create a coherent and productive dialogue between the participants. However, many times it seemed as though each panellist was convinced that only he or she was right.

Media representatives tried to minimize their influence on the public and claimed their job is not to educate but to entertain and everyone should draw their own red lines.

Danny Nettler of the advertising company "Glickman-Nettler-Samsonov" asked cynically if they are to be blamed for all the wrongs in our world. "I have two daughters at home and I have no intention of offending women. We advertisers simply answer to our clients and try to create original and creative campaigns. All we want to do is to create a provocative statement. The main issue of discussion should be the status of women in real life and not on commercials and here the Knesset should do some work. Commercials do not aim to educate," he emphasized.

Sexist advertising

For the fourth consecutive year WIZO exposed the most sexist advertising campaigns, organising a 'competition' to find the 'worst' advertisement. This year the company which 'won' was FIX-Gibor Sabrina, a company which sells bras. The 'winning' advertisement called for girls to photograph themselves wearing the company's bras and upload the photos to facebook. The judging committee, which consisted of representatives from the media, academia and women's organizations claimed that this advertisement 'crosses the red line by presenting the female body as a sex object.'

WIZO Israel Chairperson Gila Oshrat explained that the primary goal of the stigma award campaign and the debate at the Knesset was to explore – with the advertisers – alternative models for fair advertising, in which women are depicted in a more dignified and realistic manner whilst taking into account marketing requirements. She concluded by saying, "A woman can be assertive, successful and smart - and still sell!"



A view of the panel

Portraits of Presidents

WIZO Review welcomes new WIZO presidents of Finland, Italy and Uruguay – and wishes them great success in their new roles

Ester (Silvana) Israel, president of WIZO Italy

Ester's Italian father and Greek mother lived in Alexandria Egypt, but events in 1956 forced them to leave Egypt and repatriate as refugees in Italy. Ester was born a year later in Livorno. Her father wished to call her Silvana but on official documents her name has always appeared as Ester. She grew up in a traditional Jewish family, is married to Enrique Konigsman and they have a 26 year old son.



Ester has been actively volunteering within the Italian Jewish community for over 30 years. At the tender age of 17 she began her involvement with Jewish Italian youth movements and later served as director of the Jewish community of Verona. Ester has a degree in psychology from the University of Padua; she has always been passionate about history, especially Jewish history and has published several studies and essays in particular concerning the history of the Jewish presence in Verona from the 12th to the 18th century. Ester is also interested in the role of women in Judaism and has organized numerous conferences and meetings on the status of women in monotheistic religions.

She first joined Adei WIZO in 1978, became a member of the central council of ADEI WIZO in 1985, and was president of ADEI-WIZO Verona from 1988 to 2008. She progressed to national vice-president in 2005 and in November 2011 was elected president.

Raquel Lapchik de Szwedzki, president of WIZO Uruguay

Raquel is the third generation of WIZO members in her family – and her daughter, Deborah, already a WIZO member, makes four! Raquel has memories from a small child of weekly WIZO meetings in her home, devotedly organised by her mother.



Raquel herself has already been active in WIZO for 40 years. She studied Business Administration and worked in that field for many years. She and her husband Gerardo (current president of the Uruguayan Jewish Community) have two children Deborah and Roni and two grandchildren.

Raquel has undertaken many roles in WIZO Uruguay and always says that WIZO has given her far more than she has given to the organization. She is delighted to have been elected president of WIZO Uruguay, as is her family – and she regards it as a tribute to the memory of family members who have passed away.

Ever enthusiastic, Raquel and her chaverot have recruited Aviv members to their executive and have organised committees to work in every field necessary for the success of their federation: membership, fundraising, cultural events, hasbara and tourism. In addition to supporting projects in Israel, WIZO Uruguay contributes to the local community, by providing assistance to underprivileged families and various other local causes.

Nina Nadbornik, president of WIZO Finland

Nina Nadbornik, the new president of WIZO Finland tells the Review, "When my boys were small, we visited the mini zoo in Stockholm. There was a little house with kittens and one of the boys asked: "Where is the mother cat?" The other answered: "Maybe she is at a WIZO meeting." Working for good causes has come naturally to them, many thanks to WIZO!"

Nina began her journey with WIZO in 1977. In 1982 she participated in her first seminar in Israel. It was an Aviv congress arranged by Rachel Limon. Prior to her election as president Nina has filled numerous roles including Aviv

liaison, treasurer and vice president. Until last year she also maintained a professional career at Finnair Airlines as Director of Global Sales and Customer Services. She and her husband Kent have four sons and are now the "happy Bobe and Zeide of five grandchildren." One of her sons made aliyah 10 years ago and his daughter Maya is the first sabra in her family.





AUSTRALIA

Aviv's Night Out

Over 160 ladies from WIZO Victoria gathered for a girly night out under the banner 'Girls, we need your help.' Fun-loving women enjoyed punch and canapés while the finishing touches were applied to their makeup and hairstyles. On the menu was a delicious gourmet dinner, singers, a DJ, dancing and a fashion parade with a twist with WIZO Victoria President Sylvia Green modelling the beautiful clothes. The raffle featured five major prizes valued at \$5,000. This fun event was a complete winner, raising valuable funds for WIZO projects in Israel.



(l to r) Hanna Shuvaly, Keren Loyer, Lani Golbandi, Sophia Shuster



(l to r) Sylvia Green, Lani Golbandi, Ronit Chrapot, Keren Loyer

International Women's Day

WIZO Perth celebrated International Women's Day with an assembly at the Carmel High School where students learned of issues affecting women today such as domestic violence, homelessness and other forms of abuse. Videos were shown portraying WIZO's work with women in Israel, enabling them to improve the quality of their lives. The students learned that by supporting WIZO they can make a real difference to the lives of Israeli women and children. The girls enjoyed cupcakes iced with a W to celebrate women and WIZO.



Students at the Carmel High School with (r) President of WIZO West Australia Anne Topelberg OAM

AUSTRIA

Viennese Events

WIZO Austria President Dr Hava Bugajer graciously hosted a fundraising event at her lovely home, where celebrated Austrian movie and theatre actor Dagmar Schwarz delighted guests with a reading from Jewish texts. Among those attending were Daphna Frucht, Cecile Grünwald, Yana Hauptmann, Dina Baranes, Rita Dauber and Israel's ambassador to Austria Aviv Shir-On and his wife, Arnona. The ambassador and his wife also attended a wine tasting evening hosted by Yana & Karl Hauptmann; dignitaries from trade and industry and celebrities from the opera were among the many guests enjoying fine wines and delicious fare thoughtfully prepared by 'hostess par excellence' Yana Hauptmann and served by the Hauptmann children. Karl Hauptmann and another sommelier introduced a range of fine wines from Austria and abroad, encouraging guests to appreciate the varied attributes of wines from different regions. A short movie about WIZO's work in Israel was shown. Funds raised at both these memorable events benefit the Austria-sponsored WIZO day care centre in Rehovot.

Wowed by the Troupe

WIZO Austria was proud to host the Swiss-sponsored WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Song and Dance Troupe who thrilled the audience at the Molière Studio at the French School in Vienna with a truly professional and breathtaking performance. Among the distinguished guests were Israel's ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, HE Ehud Azoulay and his wife Liora, and Mrs Sylvia Bankl-Friedrich, who represented the city of Vienna.

The 44-strong troupe who had travelled by bus from Budapest was accompanied by six adults and school director Dr Hezi Yosef. They enjoyed a tour of the city and lunch sponsored by the City of Vienna.



The WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Song and Dance Troupe fly the flag for Israel on a city tour of Vienna



(l to r) Sylvia Bankl-Friedrich, Dr Hezi Yosef, WIZO Austria President Dr Hava Bugajer



(l to r, centre) HE Ehud Azoulay and Liora Azoulay, Dr Hezi Yosef (2nd from right) with children of the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Song and Dance Troupe

BELGIUM & LUXEMBOURG

Hosting Haberer

Three students from the Haberer Youth Centre's Martial Arts School (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland) were part of the Israeli team which travelled to Belgium to compete in the Taekwondo Open Challenge Cup tournament. Master Oren Levy, the team coach, was overwhelmed by the assistance and hospitality of WIZO Belgium, particularly WIZO Belgium President Vicky Hollander and her husband Charlie. The couple hosted the whole team for a tour of Antwerp culminating in a dinner in a local restaurant. And the team did well in the competition – finishing in 11th place overall out of 68 team entrants. One of the Haberer students, Yonatan Gutkin, was placed first in his category, and Tom Freeman was placed third.



WIZO Antwerp President Nathalie Miodownik (l) WIZO Belgium President Vicky Hollander (centre) and Haberer Community Centre youths

Around Belgium with WIZO

The Belgium and Luxembourg WIZO chaverot are never idle, holding continuous fundraising events for WIZO. In February, devoted member Frieda Jeger organized a bridge tournament in the Romi Goldmutz Centre. Winners Helene Gaertner and Fanny Wilk were delighted with their prizes of wine - in bottles decorated by in-house artist Raya Wimmer. Celebrated modern art gallery owner and art dealer Mr Guy Pieter hosted a studio visit and festive lunch where guests enjoyed a talk about the artists whose work is displayed in his gallery at St Martins-Latem. Participants also visited the studio of world famous artist Arne Quinze.

WIZO Yahad in Antwerp organized an evening of wine tasting featuring Israeli wines. Both WIZO Brussels and Antwerp held debate evenings with prominent speakers, and well-attended musical events were held in private homes. Chaverot were also on hand during the five days of the Brussels Book Fair to help at the Israeli Literature stand at the beginning of March. The WIZO Nana team organized a bridge tournament which took place at the residence of Israel's Ambassador to Belgium-Luxembourg Mr Revah, where the ambassador's wife prepared a lavish dessert buffet, which was greatly appreciated by chaverot.

BRAZIL

Rio Celebrates

WIZO Rio celebrated International Women's Day and Purim at Bar do Tom in Rio de Janeiro. Three hundred guests of all ages entered into the festive spirit, dancing and singing along to the fabulous Mulheres de Chico band whose spirited performance was extremely well received. The Chiquinha Gonzaga Medal, an award from the city council to Brazilian women for their outstanding contribution to national public life, was presented to WIZO Rio President Lúcia Balassiano. On behalf of the entire group, she accepted the accolade from WIZO Rio's very good friend Congresswoman Teresa Bergher.



Lúcia Balassiano (r) receives the Chiquinha Gonzaga Medal from Congresswoman Teresa Bergher



Lúcia Balassiano surrounded by WIZO Rio chaverot

Purim for Children

WIZO Rio de Janeiro held a Purim party for over 200 guests in Teresópolis near Rio. The festive celebration attended by young couples and children was awash with bright colours and much joy as the new Queen Esther for the year 5772 was crowned.



WIZO Rio's Queen Esther Isabella Lerner Leibovici (centre)

Culture and Fun

The São Paulo carnival trip under the banner of 'Carnival with Culture and Fun', organized by the tourism department left all participants with wonderful memories of yet another amazing trip. This year's tour included the Curitiba Jewish Centre, which houses the recently opened Holocaust Museum – the first in Brazil. During the Kabbalat Shabbat, Natalia Kwasniewski, director of the tourism department, was awarded the WIZO Brazil 85 years' medal for her steadfast efforts.



Participants on the Carnival with Culture and Fun trip

International Women's Day

The Chana Szenes Group led by President Frida Malamud honoured two outstanding women: historian and pioneer researcher Prof Anita Novinsky and pedagogue Ms Mara Olimpia de Campos Siaulys. Master of Ceremonies was Rebeca Rosenberg. Dignitaries attending the event included Councillor Floriano Pesaro, the consul general for Israel in São Paulo, Ilan Sztulman and other representatives from Jewish movements.



(l to r) Rebeca Rosenberg, Geni Rinski, Sulamita Tabacof, Margarida Grin, Nava Shalev Politi, Vice President of the Jewish Federation in São Paulo Ricardo Berkiensztat, Iza Mansur, Ilan Sztulman

In Rio Grande do Sul, International Women's Day was celebrated with a talk by psychoanalyst Jussara Dal Zot, who discussed female icons throughout the ages, and the key role of women in volunteer efforts.

No vacation for Shabbat

At a joint event with SIBRA (Sociedade Israelita Brasileira), WIZO Rio Grande do Sul organized an event called 'Shabbat does not go on vacation' with a Kabbalat Shabbat event on the Atlântida Beach attended by many holiday makers. Those attended were asked to bring one item to be donated to needy children at the municipal public school.



(l to r) WIZO RS chapter Vice President Malvina Dorfman, Rabbi Guershon Kwasniewski, WIZO Rio Grande do Sul Promotion Department Vice President Lara Spiguel

CANADA

London Bazaar

CHW (Canadian Hadassah WIZO) London's 51st annual bazaar held at the Jewish Community Centre had something for everyone. Among the bargains were Israeli-made Naot shoes donated by the Solemates Naot store in Toronto, a huge variety of books, toys, clothes, house wares, sporting goods, jewellery, linens, pictures and other treasures. All the hard work by the illustrious bazaar team paid off as an impressive \$14,000 was raised.



Set out and ready for business at the London Bazaar

Hearts are Wild

The third annual 'Hearts Are Wild' Texas Hold'em poker tournament organized by CHW Vancouver's Dorot chapter attracted over 150 people who played, partied and bid for the fabulous prizes in a silent auction. The poker tournament raised \$14,000 for the CHW Hadassim Children and Youth Village. The Dorot chapter committee kept overhead costs to a bare minimum by their hard work and home preparations. One of the innovations this year was selling tickets on-line, with an option for those who could not attend to make a \$36 donation. With limited seating at the venue, this enabled Dorot to raise more money. Kudos to the committee and co-chairs Jessica Forman and Ginaya Peters whose efforts ensured that the event was a total sell-out.



(l to r) Committee members Elana Bick, Samara Bordan, Jessica Foreman, Ginaya Peters, Jessica Folk-Farber, Lori Braha, Michelle Dodek

CHILE

An Active Week

WIZO Chile organized a full week of activity, starting on Sunday evening with the film, 'Sarah's Key', which was introduced and discussed by Prof Miguel Villarroel. The following morning, WIZO board members hosted representatives from Israel's embassy in Chile, presidents and representatives from Jewish community and religious institutions to a community breakfast meeting where WIZO Chile President Agnes Mannheim explained WIZO's work.

On Monday evening, over 110 supporters gathered to try their luck at the WIZO bridge tournament organized by the Jerusalem and Hanoar Aviv groups. The next day, Professor Hans Stange gave an interesting talk on literature. That evening, all the groups gathered to have a good time in the traditional event, 'A Night of Friendship'.

Wednesday's programme, organized by Sima Rezepka from the department of culture, offered 'New Horizons for the Soul' with various serious topics discussed by speakers including Prof. Rachel Elior and Israel's Ambassador to Chile HE David Dadonn. The atmosphere was lightened on Thursday morning in a competition where 30 contestants, under the scrutiny of three expert chefs, offered delicious desserts, cakes and cookies in the 'Sweet Things in Life.' On Friday, in the Jewish Cooking Class, Frida Vainsencher led chaverot in a course of Jewish cookery, making traditional delicacies such as kreplach, knishes and knaidlach.

This motivational action-packed week was rounded off on Shabbat when the Sephardic Jewish Community honoured WIZO in the synagogue where several chaverot attended the service and read psalms.



(l to r), WIZO Viña del Mar President Marisol Garriga, Rachel Hasson, WIZO Chile President Agnes Mannheim (centre) and vice president Yael Hasson with dignitaries at the community breakfast



Chaverot from new groups formed in 2011 enjoy A Night of Friendship



The Jerusalem Group invites the audience to sample 'The Sweet Things in Life'



Jewish Cooking Class

COLOMBIA

Bridge in Bogota

In March, WIZO Bogota presented the annual Ana Sredni Open Bridge Tournament sponsored by the children of the late Ana Sredni, Celia, Clarita and Isaac, which took place at the Bogota Israelite Centre, attended by over 110 people. The lunch and bridge tournament has been a firm favourite for over 13 years on the social calendar of Bogota and WIZO Bogota expresses its sincere gratitude to the Sredni family for their ongoing support.

Bat Mitzvah Girls

WIZO Bogota is always pleased to assist girls preparing for their Bat Mitzvah. This year, as part of their preparations, 12 girls and their mothers attended WIZO cooking classes kindly given by Denise and Myriam Camhi at the Hebrew College Colombo. WIZO Bogota is indebted to Rabbi Avi Amsalem and his wife Keren for their spiritual and religious guidance and the Sephardic Jewish Community for their hospitality and the use of their beautiful new facilities. The Bat Mitzvah ceremony was held in March at the Carmel Country Club in a memorable event that filled the girls, their families and of course WIZO Bogota chaverot with pride.



Bat Mitzvah girls attend cooking class in Bogota

COSTA RICA

For the Children

The Children's Museum in Paseo Colon was transformed into an enchanting concert hall when WIZO Jai Sara Rose hosted Costa Rican international diva Debi Nova accompanied by the Costa Rica Philharmonic Orchestra. Singer Debi took time off from her busy schedule to create a beautiful fundraising event in aid of the children of the Gilo (Jerusalem) day care centre sponsored by WIZO Costa Rica. Attendees were given the opportunity to donate to WIZO's Sponsor A Child project. After the concert, cocktails were served and guests were told about the wide range of WIZO's activities in Israel. The evening was a great success thanks to the hard work of the dedicated chaverot of WIZO Jai Sara Rose, Debi Nova and the orchestra director who also assisted with the event.



WIZO Jai Sara Rose members

DENMARK

Beneficial Bridge

Eighty competitors came together at WIZO Denmark's annual Beneficial Winter Bridge Tournament, which was sponsored and hosted by Tofa and Ivan Nadelmann in their elegant mansion on the outskirts of Copenhagen. With the steadfast support of the Nadelmanns, former WIZO Denmark President Mrs Kaja Sårde and WIZO chavera Ruth Belchuke, this event is an eagerly awaited firm favourite on the social calendar of bridge players in Denmark. At lunchtime, a delicious buffet and excellent wine was served followed by a lottery, for which Mrs Mara Igelski, Kaja Sårde's 99-year-old mother and a venerable role model for all Danish WIZO chaverot, sold all the tickets.

FRANCE

Hosted at the Hôtel de Ville

Because WIZO is held in such high esteem by the management of the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, the elegant hotel hosts an event in WIZO's honour every year. This year it was a dance contest organized by Nadine Feingold. Mrs Anne Hidalgo, first deputy of the Mayor of Paris attended, bringing greetings from the mayor and complimenting

WIZO on its important work in the fields of leadership and domestic violence. Guest of honour, director and actor Stephane Freiss drew the winning raffle ticket. Participants also enjoyed a special screening of his very first film. The festive atmosphere was further enhanced by dancing and a delicious meal.



Participants and organizers in the opulent hall of the Hôtel de Ville



(l to r) Yvette Sebbag, Joelle Lezmi, Stephane Freiss, Anne Hidalgo, Nadine Feingold

Film Première

Queuing in the rain for a long time to get into the Cinema Le Bretagne did not dampen the spirits of WIZO members and supporters anxious to attend WIZO France's film premiere. Some 750 people were keen to see the film, 'Truth, if I Lie' – the third film in a series about the hilarious antics of a group of Jewish friends. Indeed, at one point it was feared that there would not be enough seats for all, but everyone was seated and satisfied as the filmgoers all agreed that it was worth getting wet to see such an enthralling film.

Simcha Dance Competition

Simcha Aviv group's evening of professional dancing held in February attracted a medley of dancers from all over the world including Israel. This popular event, organized by Aviv member Patricia Habib and her husband Eric, featured dances such as salsa, tango, Charleston and waltzes judged by a professional jury. The talented dancers were a visual delight as they moved with poise in their elegant costumes. This year, once again, the Italians took first prize for their

extraordinary grace and skill on the dance floor but the French federation is rather hoping for an Israeli winner in the future.



Simcha Aviv group members with (front centre) celebrated comedian Michel Boujenah



Dancers move with style and grace

GERMANY

Purim Luna Park

The organizing team of Frankfurt WIZO's Luna Park, held at the Ignatz Bubis Community Centre, Gila Uschwaew, Sabina Leibensohn, Sofia Stawski and Minka Wildberger, presented yet another fun-filled event for the children of Frankfurt. The generosity of sponsors also added to the joy with circus



A pretty pair compete in the Luna Park fancy dress competition

attractions and fairground games including a rodeo bull, Arturo balloon figures, duck fishing, face painting and so much more. The fancy dress competition was a huge draw with many princesses, queens, Spidermen and Supermen on parade. Maccabi Frankfurt youth presented an exciting exhibition of *Capoeira* (Brazilian martial art that combines elements of dance and music) and hearty appetites were sated with delicious pasta and home-baked cakes.

A Fascinating Reading

Some 120 guests assembled at the Frankfurt Intercontinental Hotel to listen to a reading by author Michel Bergmann from his new novel, 'Machloikes' wherein he took the audience on a traumatic, yet humorous journey with the Jews, particularly Holocaust survivors, who settled in postwar Frankfurt to build a new life. Guests were mesmerized by his story resulting in excellent book sales. Intercontinental Hotel manager Thomas Hilberath, who hosted the event, welcomed guests, assuring them of his continued support of WIZO Frankfurt. Well-known author and TV personality Bärbel Schäfer moderated the evening with grace, and pianist Marina Lebeson enchanted the gathering with lilting melodies. President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany Dr Dieter Graumann confided that he had read the book but was eager to have it signed by the author. He posed a witty question, "Who knows what a signed Bergmann will be worth in time?"



(l to r) standing: Rachel Singer, Simone Graumann, Diana Schnabel, Bärbel Schäfer, Thomas Hilberath with Michel Bergmann (sitting)

Next Top Model

WIZO Düsseldorf presented its 'WIZO's Next Top Model – Welcome to Tel Aviv – Home away from Home' fashion extravaganza hosted by Natalie Sweid with mini models from the Jewish kindergarten and elementary school strutting their stuff. These lovely young 'models in the making' showed terrific confidence as they presented the brand new children's collection from the Calino fashion house,



skillfully put together by Mrs Bogdanovic. At the art auction, ably conducted by Mr David Klapeck, self-portraits of the children at the Yitzhak Rabin School and Kindergarten were much sought after by guests.

Young models strut their stuff for WIZO Düsseldorf

GREECE

Celebrating in Athens

Every year at Purim, WIZO chaverot are rewarded by big smiles, thanks and *Hag Sameach* greetings when they take *novies* (candy bows) to the children at the Jewish school. The pink, blue and white candies, made by a confectioner in Larissa, are an eagerly awaited tradition, part of the *platicos de Purim* exchanged by the children resplendent in their festive costumes.



Purim Novies for the children at the Jewish school in Athens

Belated 49th Birthday

WIZO Greece celebrated its 49th birthday in March with great aplomb. The event, which was postponed from the previous month because of strikes and civil unrest, was a joyous five-hour-long event, which exceeded all expectations. Guests included the Israeli ambassador's wife Mrs Ruthie Mekele who spoke warmly about WIZO's work and the relationship between Greece and Israel. A number of non-Jewish ladies who are firm friends of WIZO also attended. A talented young singer, excellent prizes in the lottery and delicious food all added to the festive atmosphere. WIZO Greece President Mrs Heather Nahmias thanked the 70 guests present for their support and cut the festive birthday cake.

HOLLAND

Cultural Activities

WIZO Holland's Culture Department organised an afternoon event in Amsterdam around the splendid international exhibition in the New Church: *Judaism, a world full of stories*.

Art historian and curator of the Jewish History Museum in Amsterdam, Edward van Voolen, introduced over 500 special exhibits from museums and private collections from all over the world. He guided the audience through works of art of Jewish, cultural and historical significance including silverware, textiles, medieval books and scale models of synagogues including that of the Temple in Jerusalem. Special attractions included paintings by Chagall and a Dead Sea Scroll.

Mr Van Voolen used an effective PowerPoint presentation that he had devised himself to explain the setting-up of the exhibition, which took some two years to complete.

A firm friend of WIZO Holland, Mr van Voolen refused any payment for his admirable lecture but he was more than happy to be rewarded with the famed WIZO fishcakes and butter cake!

Chaverot also attended an inspiring lecture in the New Church by Judith Frishman, professor of Judaism at Leiden University, entitled Portraits of Outstanding Jewish Women.



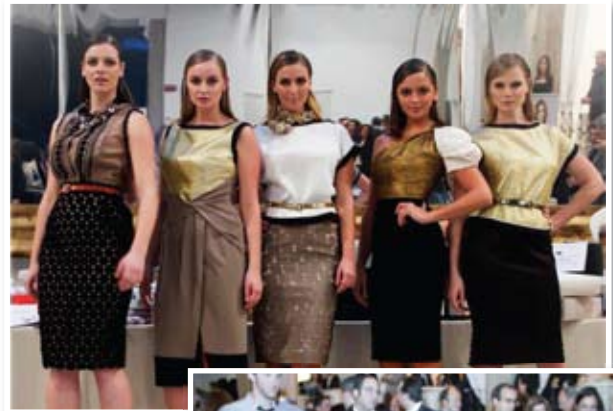
Edward van Voolen lectures at the WIZO Holland cultural event

ITALY

Aviv in Style

Since 2008, Aviv in Milan has gone from strength to strength. Despite the recession, the hard working chaverot were able to find generous sponsorship for their third Casino Royal Gala, which was held in a prestigious location in the centre of Milan earlier this year. Over 200 guests tried their luck at the gaming tables and enjoyed fine food at this sparkling event. Guests included Adei-WIZO Milan President Susanna Sciaky and Adei-WIZO Italy President Ester Israel. Italian design company Elena Miro, a valued supporter of WIZO,

presented a dazzling fashion show. Funds raised at this event are earmarked for the 'WIZO Opens Doors' project, which was unveiled at the World WIZO 25th EGM in January.



Stylish Elena Miro designs



Guests placing their bets for WIZO



Aviv committee with Susan Sciaky (in blue jacket) and (r) Ester Israel

MEXICO

Mexican Medley

A joint organizing effort by the Aliyah, Aviv and Mazal groups resulted in great camaraderie and a successful event attended by around 600 women who enjoyed two fashion collections and the talents of an aspiring young singer/songwriter from the community. Among the other many and varied activities of our illustrious Mexican federation was The Koaj group's 'End of the Year Sale' and the Javerut group's Mexican Ball bowling tournament, where fun was on the menu along with typical Mexican dishes. The Simja group presented a new play directed by an accomplished



director and member of the community, the Yajad group sold chocolates and little gifts for Valentine's Day, and Mexico's youngest group, Neshama, published a prayer book for mothers-to-be and women hoping to conceive. A delicious breakfast and seminar organized by the cultural committee headed by Tere Michán, featured Esther Brown speaking on predictions and astrological forecasts for the year 2012. Renee Dayan Shabot, general director of Tribuna Israelita, the Jewish community movement in Mexico, gave a very illuminating talk on strategies used in the Mexican Jewish Community to combat anti-Semitism in Mexico.

Membership Campaign

Under the slogan, 'Because we are all different we are all the same,' WIZO Mexico embarked on a very important membership campaign to recruit new members and maintain existing members as they reinforce the message that membership is the lifeblood of WIZO.

Holocaust Remembrance

The United Nations International Day in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust was commemorated for the second consecutive year by WIZO Mexico's presence in the Senate as well as in Congress as the Mexican government paid homage to those who were massacred by the Nazis. Holocaust remembrance was also commemorated at WIZO Mexico Headquarters in the presence of Tamara Harari who gave a talk entitled 'Refuting the Different Faces of Anti-Semitism'.



(l to r) Raquel Aptilon, WIZO Mexico President Diana Kuba, Sylvie Mizrahi

Honouring Leaders

In February, WIZO Mexico paid homage to seven of its beloved leaders for their enduring devotion to WIZO for more than 60 years' service and whose legacy of experience and knowledge is an example to be followed by present and future generations. Those honoured were Emma Adler, Raquel Gila Bank, Becky Esquenazi, Sara Goldberg, Sima Kipnis, Sully London and Fanny Temin.



A celebration of wonderful WIZO Mexico leaders



(l to r) Fanny Temin, Sully London, Sara Goldberg, Sima Kipnis, Emma Adler, Gila Bank, Becky Esquenazi

NEW ZEALAND

Valuable Keshet Links

Last December, WIZO New Zealand (Auckland) held a luncheon at the home of Sally Edelman, treasurer of the WIZO Coffee Club. During the year, WIZO New Zealand National President Lorna Orbell joined WIZO Keshet members at the home of WIZO Keshet Taradale leader Linda Cook for a viewing of three short films portraying WIZO's work in Israel, after which guests enjoyed afternoon tea. HE Ambassador Shemi Tzur, Israel's ambassador to New Zealand and his wife Orit were guests of honour at a successful fundraiser organized by Berry Small, leader of WIZO Keshet Hawkes Bay. Guests enjoyed a full entertainment programme and were impressed by the 'Peace' carving by long-time supporter of WIZO, Max Fraser. WIZO New Zealand is indebted to its Keshet group members for their valuable support of Israel.



(l to r) Ambassador Shemi Tzur, Berry Small, Orit Tzur

SOUTH AFRICA

Johannesburg's AGM

WIZO Johannesburg held its 99th Annual General Meeting in March at the Beyachad building where outgoing chairperson Zee Bergman handed the baton to new chair Nava Gonen, the first Israeli ever to head WIZO Johannesburg. Nava has strong support from Israeli followers who have become an integral part of WIZO Johannesburg. The newly elected executive committee consists of chairperson Nava Gonen, vice chairs Marion Brivik and Andrea Wainer. Honorary treasurers Janine Rabbie and Zee Bergman are joined by executive members Ethel Amoils, Naomi Dinur, Gertie Feinstein, Lee Joffe, Crystal Kaplan, Shelley Konforty, Brenda Levin, Sandra Mindel, Raya Ravid, Shoshi Shachar, Isarae Seeff, Anat Shevel, Shirley-Ann Solomons and Sima Zadoc. The guest speaker for the event was South African Jewish Board of Deputies National Director Wendy Kahn.



Nava Gonen (r) is presented with flowers by Ayela Sharir, co-chair of WIZO Tzabar

Durban's Happy Hour

WIZO Durban recently hosted Happy Hour, a hilarious and highly successful comedy evening at the Durban Jewish Club. Durban comedian Carvin H Goldstone kept the audience in stitches as he warmed up the crowd before highly acclaimed comedian Nik Rabinowitz took to the stage.

Family Dynamics

The Hasbarah Division of WIZO Johannesburg continues its excellent distribution of important information to a wider public with written material and fascinating lectures. The recent Forum on Family Dynamics was no exception as a captive audience enjoyed the informative and entertaining lecture.



(l to r) Joyce Chodos-Kruger, Andrea Wainer, Janine Rabbie

Australian Cook Book

WIZO Ilanit in Johannesburg held a tea party in a private home to launch the popular WIZO Australia Monday Morning Cook Book. Guests enjoyed tea in a beautiful garden setting with delicious dishes made from recipes in the book. After watching a video on the production of the book, guests were able to buy the cook book.



(l to r) Beula Spark, Margo Snoyman, Barbara Solomon, Pam Fainman

SWITZERLAND

Remembering Elly

The worldwide WIZO family join World WIZO and the Swiss Federation in remembering a true *eshet chayal* (woman of honour), Elly Abraham-Bulka z'l who died in January, aged 91 years. Elly, who was born in 1921, was raised in a religious home in Zürich. She joined WIZO Zurich as treasurer in 1943 and served as the group's president from 1955 to 1973. She was co-opted on to WIZO's Central Committee in Switzerland in 1948 and was in charge of its treasury for 24 years. In 1972, Elly was elected president of WIZO Switzerland, a position she held until 1979. She attended her first World WIZO Conference in 1951 and served as WIZO's representative

to the Presidium of the United Jewish Appeal for the German part of Switzerland. An extraordinary lady whose passion for WIZO and love for Israel knew no bounds, she was adored by all those privileged to know her, not least her surviving children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to whom World WIZO extends its condolences.



Elly Abraham-Bulka z'l



UNITED KINGDOM

Annual Dinner

A capacity crowd attended the annual WIZOuk dinner under the banner of 'The Sky is the Limit,' which raised over £250,000. Guest of honour, Israel's ambassador to the UK HE Daniel Taub spoke of his admiration for WIZO and its crucial work, telling guests, "WIZO helps to strengthen family bonds and encourage independence through its network of

WIZO Moves On

Executive members donned their hats in the tradition of WIZO founder Rebecca Sieff, but this time the hats were today's styles as WIZOuk says goodbye to its old base at Gloucester Place, London W1 and moves to pastures new in Finchley Road. Young milliner Rosie Norman of Rosie Olivia (Liverpool) provided the lovely designer hats especially for the occasion. The 'house' at 105-107 Gloucester Place was WIZOuk's home for some 60 years, a gift from one of Rebecca Sieff's sisters Miriam Sacher.



Executive members celebrate their founder as they say goodbye to Gloucester Place

vocational projects; this is so important for Israel's future. "Smadar Betsalel, a graduate of the WIZO Nachalat Yehuda Youth Village, received a standing ovation for bravely recalling her sad, abused childhood having been adopted after the murder of her parents. She explained how her fortunes were turned round when she joined the school where she received the love and attention she needed. Smadar lovingly described the WIZO family of carers and teachers who shaped her into the strong woman she is today. Now a successful prosecution lawyer and married, she thanked WIZO for her brighter future. Two outstanding pianists Orian Shukran and Gadi Abu Saman both graduates of the WIZO music centre in Ma'alot entertained guests. The two are a unique duo as Gadi is a Christian Arab, currently studying at the Jerusalem Music Conservatory and Orian, a religious Jew, studies in yeshiva. The two have performed together for many years and believe that harmony created through music can be a key to building bridges of peace. While in England they made other appearances and were interviewed on BBC Radio's In Tune programme, where they also performed.



Gadi Abu and Orian Shukran perform at the annual WIZOuk dinner

Women in the Workplace

Over 100 women came together for WIZOnet and TrainE-Traide's first Women in the Workplace conference, which addressed issues pertaining to working women, those looking to start their own businesses and women returning to work after a career break. The high-profile speakers were Karen Mattison MBE, founder of Women-Like-Us a recruitment agency for part-time roles, Sky News presenter Samantha Simmonds, marketing consultant Tally Elyhani, founder of Savvy Woman, Sarah Pennells and Zoe Sinclair founder of Employees Matter. The conference closed with a networking lunch, which gave the participants a chance to discuss their future business plans.



(l to r) Debbie Sheldon, Dalia Davis, Tally Elyhani, Samantha Simmonds, Sarah Pennells, Karen Mattison, Zoe Sinclair, Maureen Fisher, Francine Barsam

On-line Quiz

One hundred and thirty teams enjoyed a challenging and fun evening across England, Scotland, Wales and the USA for the annual online WIZOuk Quiz@home 2012. Teams were tested on several subjects including music, current affairs, history and general knowledge. Over £30,000 was raised for vocational projects in Israel.



The winning team in Oxford

Talking Sex

The Inspiration Aviv group's event in North West London attracted over 50 women, all of whom were eager to learn from sex therapist Yara Niv-Burrell. In an interesting and entertaining manner, she spoke of her work within the Jewish community in the UK and Israel working with couples from all levels of religious observance and answered direct questions from the audience.



The audience listens intently to Yara

USA

Esther Opens Doors

World WIZO Fundraising Division Chair Esther Mor's fundraising mission to the USA yielded excellent results for the benefit of the women and children of Israel. Esther, who took her 'WIZO Opens Doors' campaign to Miami, Los Angeles and New York, was graciously hosted and met with major donors at a wide variety of fundraising events countrywide where she was able to impart crucial information to assist WIZO USA attain even greater heights in its excellent fundraising record. Esther was inspired by the warmth, generosity and passion for Israel of the WIZO USA executive, members and friends.

NEW YORK



Sponsor a Child Event Co-chair Mira Sofer with husband Benny Sofer at the Evening of Art and Music event in December. (Unfortunately, photo was omitted in error from previous issue)



Purim Masquerade Ball

WIZO New York Young Leadership's Purim Masquerade Ball at the Hudson Terrace was a total sell-out where close to 400 young Jewish professionals gathered to party for WIZO's children. DJ Ryan Skolnick and Israeli born world-renowned mentalist, Asi Wind, provided hours of entertainment for the crowd. The energy and vibe during the evening exceeded everyone's expectations and created incredible momentum for the next generation of WIZO supporters. The event's success is credited in part to the tireless efforts of many of the committee members including Jonathan Aghravi, Adam Cooper, Cobby Gorjian, Lauren Kahn, Ryan Klaus, Deborah Shnay, Adam Starkman, Jonathan Stern, Alex Taic and many others.



New York's Young leadership party to benefit the children of Israel

Taking Action

Over 70 women assembled at the beautiful Park Avenue home of event chair Fortune Dushey to learn from celebrated life coach Meredith Haberfeld, as part of WIZO New York's educational series. Meredith, whose specialty in working with individuals, couples and families in designing and living extraordinary lives has earned her the title of Best Life Coach in many prestigious publications, impressed upon participants how to 'have clarity, take action, and get what you desire'. Mireille Manocherian and Vicki Sakhai serve as co-chairs of WIZO New York's educational series.

FLORIDA

Annual Gala

World WIZO Fundraising Chair Esther Mor was delighted to be among the special guests at WIZO Florida's Annual Gala Dinner alongside US Ambassador to the UN John Bolton and international media celebrity Glenn Beck. Under the leadership of WIZO Florida Chairperson Judit Groisman, over 400 guests listened attentively as Ambassador Bolton outlined the challenges confronting Israel today. Glenn Beck was inspirational in his thanks to WIZO for the Shomrei Israel Award presented to him at the Gala. A performance by renowned violinist Alexander Kroitor enthralled guests. WIZO USA Co-President Jana Falic delivered one of the most successful appeals in the history of the chapter, resulting in the magnificent sum of \$1,000,000 being raised. Cherna Moskowitz was the honoree of the gala. Also attending were Israeli Consul General Chaim Shacham, Senator and Mrs Paul Steinberg, Sami Rohr, Lillian and Moises Tabacnic, Fany Cohen, Mercedes and Menahem Ivcher, Rosita Retelny, Evelyn and Shmuel Katz, Perla Vainberg and WIZO USA Co-President Gail Perl among many others.



*Gala night Miami seated from left to right: Gail Perl, Mireille Manocherian, Ruthie Ben Loliel, (5th from left) Jana Falic, (7th from left) Evelyn Dresner-Faigenblatt
Standing from 4th right: Lillian Tabacnic, Rosita Retelny, Judith Groisman, Glenn Beck, Tania Beck, Mercedes Ivcher, Esther Mor*



(l to r) Goldie Retchkiman, Ruthy Benoiel, Ambassador John Bolton, Lillian Tabacinic, Judit Groisman



(l to r) Rosita Retelny, Cherna Moskowitz, Mercedes Ivcher, Jana Falic

SAN FRANCISCO

A Healthy Mind and Body

WIZO San Francisco Bay Area's successful fundraising event, which was held on International Women's Day, has raised funds for much needed renovations at the Edelstein/Citrin Multipurpose Day Care Centre in Yavne. The event's theme - A Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body - was sponsored by more than thirty businesses in Silicon Valley. Certified sport instructors coached various physical activities including running, walking, yoga, zumba and belly dancing. Professional consultants lectured on nutrition, homeopathy and career coaching. The successful event drew more than 100 participants who enjoyed the varied activities and lunched on wholesome dishes and homemade desserts. It certainly was a day of 'woman power' and female activity to benefit future generations in Israel.



Snapshots from San Francisco Bay's International Women's Day event





LOS ANGELES

Late last year, WIZO LA was proud to host WIZO USA Co-President Jana Falic at the Annual Chanukah Luncheon, which was held at the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills. Over 300 guests were delighted to meet gracious WIZO honouree Mrs Claude Mann and celebrated keynote speaker Patti Stanger, 'The Millionaire Matchmaker,' who gave a fun and vibrant lecture. Before lunch, guests shopped at the bazaar and bid at the silent auction, delighting in the numerous prizes on offer. WIZO LA Co-Chairpersons Miriam Wizman and Hanna Rubinstein's extremely motivated WIZO chaverot and Young WIZO members all shared in making the luncheon an outstanding success, raising over \$100,000 to benefit WIZO projects in Israel.



l to r) Mrs Claude Mann, Hanna Rubinstein, Miriam Wizman, Miriam's daughter, board member Sabrina Wizman-Zamel

Literary Reception

In February, WIZO Los Angeles hosted a dessert reception at the innovative Light in Art Gallery featuring esteemed author Theodore Kohan, who led a discussion about his novel 'Those Who Walk in Darkness.' The book tells of the struggle of the Rabinowitz family to reach and thrive in America. Mr Kohan's daughter read extracts from the book depicting the plight of Jewish families in the early 20th century. Among the guests including figures from the literary world was World WIZO Fundraising Department Chair Esther Mor.



*Literary reception at The Light in Art Gallery
(l to r) Hanna Rubinstein, Miriam Wizman co-chair WIZO LA, Esther Mor, Malka Fogel honorary past president WIZO LA*

Beauty Bites

WIZO Los Angeles hosted a fundraising event at the home of Ruth Davidov with Dr Nathan Newman, innovator of *Stem Cell Lift*[®] cosmetic enhancement without surgery. Dr Newman explained how Stem Cell technology treats Musculoskeletal problems, rheumatologic and neurological conditions and aids cancer therapies. This well-attended event enabled WIZO to raise funds for the Red-Alert Campaign and women and children of Israel.

ATLANTA

Cooking Egyptian

Almost 50 women attended WIZO Atlanta's Egyptian Cooking event in March. Chefs Suzanne Heinen and Suzzane Dinur led the hands-on demonstration of Sephardic and Mediterranean food, hosted by Suzzane Dinur at her home. WIZO Atlanta Chair Leah Wolf, her dedicated committee and WIZO Atlanta members, contributed to the success of this fun and informative event.

HOUSTON

Chocolate Affair

Earlier this year, 100 guests attended the WIZO Houston Chocolate Affair at The Drinkery in Midtown where they enjoyed delectable homemade chocolate delights and a chocolate fondue prepared by the committee, plus a raffle with great prizes. WIZO Houston President Sara Coane Goldberg said, 'I am so happy that WIZO hosted yet another successful event. Every little helps and we are very grateful to everyone who supports the cause. And of course, everyone loves chocolate!'



*(l to r) front: Daniela Yancelson, Ariela Emery, Michael Leitner, Felice Schimmel, Sara Goldberg, Shayna Finn
(l to r) back: Lauren Daily, Jessica Starkschall, Karen Nudelman, Sasha Arch, Sarah Kass*

WIZO Around the World was edited by Tricia Schwitzer



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TO ACTIVATE YOUR KEY
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World WIZO Fundraising Department
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