



Bringing you reports of selected recent activities of the Seymour J. Abrams Orthodox Union Jerusalem World Center

OU Promotes Visits of Tourists and Olim to IDF Army Bases for Simchat Bet Hasho'eva

In what is now an annual event, the OU, together with the Rabbinate of the Israel Defense Forces and the Soldiers' Welfare Committee of the IDF, sponsored four busses of tourists and Olim to visit IDF army bases during the Sukkot holiday.



“This year we were privileged to have a special group from East Brunswick,” noted the OU Israel Center’s Director of Programs, Menachem Persoff, who accompanied three of the buses. Said Jack Stroh of the Israel Action Committee of the Young Israel of East Brunswick, NJ: “It was a smash hit with our children, and their parents loved it too! We will be making a large collage of this for our shul to keep the memories alive... the chayalim gave us more chizuk than we gave them!”

The program in each of the bases in Yehuda or Binyamin consisted of a performance by the IDF Rabbinate Choir of traditional Jewish and modern Israeli songs, much singing and dancing by both soldiers and visitors, and the presentation by the participants to the soldiers of gift packages for the Chagim. During the interludes, all present were

treated to refreshments in the base Sukkah that gave everyone a chance for photo ops and to mingle with the soldiers.

Yossi and Eva Horowitz from Deerfield Beach, Florida summed up the event succinctly when they said, “We have to support the IDF – for who else is going to look after us?”

OU Leadership Pays Homage to Sol Teichman and Family at the OU Israel Center

On the last day of Chol HaMoed Sukkot, the leadership of the OU, including Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, OU Executive Vice President, Steve Savitsky, OU President, and Yitzchak Fund, Israel Center President, gathered in the Sukka of the OU Israel Center in Jerusalem to pay homage to the family of Sol Teichman.

Through the generosity of the Teichman family, the Teichman Youth Center was inaugurated at the time of the establishment of the Seymour J. Abrams Orthodox Union Jerusalem World Center. “This Youth Center has attracted hundreds of young people who have found a “home away from home,” no less than the many adults – old-timers and newcomers – who take advantage of the wide range of programs and projects offered by the Israel Center,” notes Rabbi Dovid Cohen, Director General of the OU in Israel.



At this impressive event, attended by a hundred guests and admirers, Rabbi Weinreb presented Sol Teichman with a plaque and two members of the Israel Center's English-speaking teenage organization (NESTO) also presented Mr. Teichman with a collage of pictures of their activities in the Youth Center in recognition of his contribution.

Guest speaker at the event was Rabbi Michael Melchior, Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Sports, who stressed the importance of Jewish unity and alluded to the varied backgrounds of the participants in the Israel Center's youth programs to illustrate the possibilities of varied cultures in Israel working and living together.

Israel Center family Celebrates Hachnasat Sefer Torah during Sukkot

During Chol Hamo'ed Sukkot one hundred guests participated in the Hachnasat Sefer Torah ceremony hosted by the OU Israel Commission Joint Chairman, Harvey Wolinetz. The Sefer was dedicated in memory of his wife Naomi and mother Edith A"H in the Wolinetz Family Shul in the Israel Center amidst much dancing and singing. Naomi was largely responsible for the design and furnishings of the Wolinetz Family Shul at the Israel Center.



Yeshiva University Joins Forces with the Israel Center for Hoshana Rabba Learning

In a very successful model of inter-organizational cooperation, the Israel Center and Yeshiva University in Israel joined forces in presenting a top-level program of learning for Hoshana Rabba. The speakers were Rabbis Sholom Gold, Reuven Aberman, Norman Lamm, Meyer Fendel, Hershel Shachter, Yaakov Moshe Poupko, Meir Goldvicht, Dovid Miller, Kenny Brander, Asaf Bednarsh,

Binyamin Wolff, and the Israel Center's Phil Chernofsky. The lectures attended by bumper crowds (that spread over to the Dan Panorama Hotel across the road from the Center), continued through the night. This inspiring program culminated with a meaningful sunrise davening in the Wolinetz family shul, for some, and at the Kotel, for others.

Kehilot Yisrael Program Expands to Tiberias

It seems that there is no exaggeration when Israel Center staff talk about our activities taking place, "All over Israel". Meir Schwartz, Director of the Kehilot Yisrael project, reports that as a result of previous Kiruv training workshops under the aegis of the Israel Center (in cooperation with Maayanei Hayeshua) one of the graduates has set up a Bayit Yehudi for "secular" Israelis in the heart of Tiberias. "This is a wonderful achievement," he remarks, "considering that there is such an anti-religious atmosphere pervading the Press in Israel. The truth is that there is much thirst for knowledge of Torah and meaning in Jewish life. It just has to be tapped. I am proud to be associated with the Israel Center that is involved so heavily in Kiruv work."

In addition to strides made up north, this project is making inroads in Lachish, Ariel, and especially Ramat Hasharon where the number of non-observant participants in the newly established Friday night Oneg Shabbat has grown to a regular thirty adults. Finally, notes Meir, some hundred new participants will be joining the new Kiruv training program this week. Behatzlachah.

Makom Balev Learning Seminar Attracts Ninety Young Teenagers

When Yisrael Goren, Director of the Israel Center's network of youth programs around the country – Makom Balev – visited NCSY chapters in the US little did he realize the influence it would have on him. "There I saw teenagers thirsty to learn Torah and I wondered how my youngsters in Makom Balev would ever get there!" Now, only one-half years later, having adopted much of the NCSY methodology, Yisrael led a ninety-strong Seminar Hit'orerut before the Yamim Nora'im. "Yes, ninety boys participated from chapters countrywide. They davened together, stayed up late for Selichot, learned together and even took part in a Mitzva Auction at which the boys undertook to perform mitzvot which varied from 'taking the garbage out every day' to 'learning Mishna every day.' The point is that these young people for whom much of their free time was spent in the streets are now, of their own choice, opting for Torah and Mitzvot. It's amazing!"