PASSOVER UPDATE 2018

YEMIN ORDE
YOUTH VILLAGE

Message from Shmuli Bing
Director, Yemin Orde Youth Village

As we know, the story of the people of Israel is about the liberation from slavery to freedom. This story, of the exodus from Egypt, became a masterpiece of social justice.

Messages of Passover are with me each day through all my activities in Yemin Orde. The understanding that G-d and the many forms of revelation of G-d in the human world (wisdom, kindness, creativity) do not exist only among the rich, or amongst the rulers, but in each one of us. The second message is that the core of life is education.

We are commanded each day to commemorate the miracle of the Exodus from Egypt. We see this miracle at Yemin Orde in meetings with our graduates. The same graduates who, like the children of Israel, went through a difficult journey and managed to reach a safe haven.

For me, Exodus is the realization of social justice. At Yemin Orde, our children engage in social justice, and, together with the resources and care we provide, they break the glass ceiling and succeed against the odds.

Much of this transformation takes place thanks to you. It is a great privilege for me to thank you and wish you all a happy and healthy Passover.

In appreciation,

Shmuli Bing

Yemin Orde Petition in Support of Darfur Graduates

Yemin Orde recently issued a petition in support of African refugees from Darfur who are graduates of the Village and face possible deportation from Israel. The petition reflects Yemin Orde’s moral commitment to a just society as we teach our children to be humane and to support the weak and needy, regardless of color, race and religion. Read petition below:

"We, children and graduates of Yemin Orde Youth Village, members of educational institutions and their graduates and citizens, are calling to consider the unique situation of those African refugees who arrived in Israel as children and youth, alone. We call to give them a permanent status and the possibility to study and work in Israel.

"There are 10 graduates of Yemin Orde who grew up here and today could be deported from Israel. These graduates are certainly not migrant workers. They arrived in Israel at a young age, destitute, and after their families were tortured and even murdered in front of their eyes. After studying the subject, we call upon the State of Israel to act as the Jewish people expected to be treated in times of trouble, and to act according to the educational way we believe in. It is inconceivable that boys who fled here without a family and a supportive system and were educated on the values of the State of Israel, Jewish and Israeli history, heritage and culture will be deported. We identify with the distress of the graduates of the youth villages and the children who arrived alone and are not prepared to accept this terrible verdict.

"We appeal to the decision makers to reconsider their case. We understand the complexity and disagreement that exists around this issue, but it is important for us to shed light on the issue of the children and youth who came here alone. There is no dispute that they are refugees and not migrant workers, and therefore we cry out for their cry, which is actually our cry to be a moral society. We call on the citizens of Israel to stand with us and join this petition."

Auditorium & Cultural Center Challenge

Manny and Brigitta Davidson, philanthropists from the United Kingdom, have generously pledged $4.5 million toward a new auditorium and cultural center at Yemin Orde Youth Village, on the condition that Friends of Yemin Orde raise $1 million for the project. This proposed building would serve to greatly enhance the communal living experience at Yemin Orde.

The Auditorium & Cultural Center will be a safe and comfortable space for gatherings, speaker programs and the enhancement of enrichment and cultural arts programs. Currently, Yemin Orde lacks adequate space for large gatherings.

Staff issues petition supporting graduates.

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Message from Dotan Levi,
Director, Village Way Educational Institute

It’s the last of the rains of the season, and green is everywhere. Spring is beckoning to us that Passover is almost here and you can hear the children singing: "Why is this night different?"

The Seder is, of course, different from all other evenings. It is when we come together to ask what is different.

We know that family and friends are together as free human beings. We are all participating in special traditions in order to strengthen our collective narrative. We remember that we were slaves during difficult times and that it is our responsibility to never forget this suffering.

The days during the Passover holiday are referred to as “the days of the secrets of the heart”. Why? Because confidence is planted in the heart of each child when sitting among their family, singing, eating, reading and being happy.

This year, we reach out to our partners and ask educators to focus on the importance of the Seder, especially for families who are struggling. The Seder table offers youth a sense of belonging and offers adults a chance to lead as role models. After all, it takes a whole village to raise a child.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Happy and Healthy Passover,

Educator Network is Valuable Resource in Arab Schools

Educators from Jisr a-Zarka and Mahat Acco School, both partner schools in Arab communities, participated in workshops, exchanged teaching ideas, and shared teaching styles and transformative stories in order to gain important perspective on their classroom and student successes.

Eyad Salah, Director, Mahat Acco School, said: “Teachers are the only solid thing in the lives of youth at risk. Unlike regular school teachers, who can enter a class and just focus on teaching, we must come from the heart, otherwise it doesn’t work.”

IsraElite Graduates Elevated to IDF Officers

Four graduates of the IsraElite Leadership Program for Women (Women’s Mechina) were congratulated by Israel President Reuven “Ruvi” Rivlin for their achievement in becoming officers in the Israel Defense Forces. President Rivlin “saluted” the women on his Facebook page, which is followed by nearly 250,000 people.

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Ofek Juvenile Prison Update

The staff at Ofek Juvenile Prison now has a better understanding of the teenage population at the facility, thanks to the workshops and training sessions provided by Village Way facilitators. Ofek is the only detention center in Israel for youth under 18 years of age.

VWEI staff received positive feedback from prison personnel. According to a prison social worker, the change in the interactions between guards and the prison population is a highly significant positive element to the overall prison environment. Ofek has approximately 150 juvenile inmates.