

Migdal Ohr at a Glance

A Quarterly Update

Spring 2015 ~ Sivan 5775

www.migdalohrusa.org



AMERICAN FRIENDS OF MIGDAL OHR NEWS: 2015 Gala Dinner



The American Friends of Migdal Ohr (AFMO) recently held its annual Gala Dinner at the IAC Headquarters in Manhattan. Approaching 400 people in attendance, the occasion celebrated Migdal Ohr's 42 years of providing a first-rate education and loving home to nearly 12,000 Jewish children at-risk across Israel annually. Rabbi Yitzchak Dovid Grossman, Founder and Dean of Migdal Ohr, traveled from the Migdal Ha'Emek campus in Israel to attend this momentous event, offering blessings and well wishes to all. He also took this opportunity to launch the fundraising campaign for a critical new project—the \$2 million renovation of a boys' dormitory building for children ages 6-12 who are orphaned, impoverished or have been removed from their homes because their parent(s) have been determined "unfit."



The Fishmans with Rabbi Grossman

The 2015 Gala honored long-time supporters and AFMO board members Tzvi & Nancy Fishman and Laurie & Todd Scherzer. Both Tzvi Fishman and Laurie Scherzer gave moving speeches

describing their initial introduction to Migdal Ohr, shared recollections from their many awe-inspiring visits to the campus in Israel, and expressed their devotion to Rabbi Grossman and the children and teenagers in his care. The event also included a special tribute to one of AFMO's primary founders, Dr. Belle Rosenbaum, Z"L, who was represented by numerous family members. Rabbi Grossman spoke about Belle and her husband Jacob's involvement in raising the original funds needed to open the campus in Israel in 1972. Then, Rabbi Grossman shared a photo of a leather bound siddur dedicated in her memory that is now being used in the Belle and Jacob Rosenbaum Synagogue on the Migdal Ha'Emek campus.

Another highlight of the evening's program was a spotlight on Migdal Ohr's Bar and Bat Mitzvah Twinning program, featuring five local teenagers who had each participated in some capacity: Eli Cattan, Eliana Greenwald, Isaac Mizrahi, Ari Mitchell, and Ilyana



The Scherzers with Rabbi Grossman

Mitchell. Each spoke lovingly (via pre-recorded video) about their special involvement with this important chessed project. At the Gala, AFMO Board Member Jeff Eisenberg presented each of them with a mezuzah that was handmade by the children of Migdal Ohr just for them.

The event was emcee'd by PIX11 Morning News sports anchor and entertainment reporter Andy Adler. Additionally, we showcased the new Migdal Ohr video that is now available worldwide via YouTube.

The AFMO Board of Directors and Staff would like to personally thank ALL of the honorees, the Gala co-chairs, our terrific emcee, and all of the supporters and friends in attendance who helped to make this year's Gala a fun and successful event!

To see even more photos from the Gala, please visit the photo album on our Facebook page.



Bar/Bat Mitzvah Twinning Honorees



PROGRAM FOCUS: Simchat Ohr Day Care Center

Migdal Ohr has four day care centers, dispersed throughout the Migdal Ha'Emek campus, that serve as the daytime home to more than 250 children. From newborn babies to children up to three years of age, these kids come from families at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum and are mostly from the local area. The centers also care for orphaned children living in Migdal Ohr's foster home village. These children are looked after by a devoted and nurturing staff and receive three nutritious meals daily, which are prepared in kitchens at each location. Each center has a playroom and a wide range of enriching activities such as movement, rhythmic music, a mobile petting zoo and yoga.



Simchat Ohr, with 13 teachers on staff, is one of these four facilities. It is run by Migdal Ohr headmistress Limor, who has been with the organization for more than 26 years, formerly serving as the personal secretary to Rabbi Yitzchak Dovid

Grossman. Open from 7am to 5pm, Simchat Ohr provides a great solution for parents who work and have small children.

Although basic elementary education in Israel is free, the cost for day care is approximately 30,000 shekels per year (equivalent to \$7,500). Migdal Ohr provides this wonderful service free of charge to any parent in need. Currently, 14 out of the 70 students at Simchat Ohr are living on welfare. Headmistress Limor has taken it upon herself to collect and distribute new and gently used clothes for her neediest students.



Headmistress Limor

Recently, a two year old Russian boy in her charge was coming to school in torn shoes. The boy's father, a single parent, told her, "I cannot afford to buy him new shoes; this is all we have." Limor asked a few of the other parents to chip in and she bought him a brand new pair of shoes.

This is only one example of the many mitzvot that Limor performs daily at Simchat Ohr, helping to enrich these children's lives.



CHESSD: Chag Save'ah - A Volunteer's Perspective

Moshe, a regular volunteer of Migdal Ohr's Chag Save'ah campaign, was delivering food packages prior to Passover in Israel's northern cities of Pardes Chana, Zichron Ya'kov and Or Akiva. Moshe received a call asking him to deliver one more package to a family in desperate need of assistance in Zichron. A friend of a family had phoned the Chag Save'ah hotline requesting that Migdal Ohr provide a food package to the family. There was one stipulation - all food products for this family had to be under the strict kosher supervision of "Eidah Haredit."



Unfortunately, Moshe had no more food packages like those remaining. Rather than wait, he went to the closest supermarket and filled two big boxes with products he could find marked with the required supervision.

When Moshe reached the address, a woman opened the door revealing an apartment in a dilapidated state - walls with paint peeling off, stains of mildew, and children playing on the floor with cracked tiling all around. It was clear that the family literally used every shekel they had to purchase the bare necessities, and even that was a stretch. Moshe put down the two boxes and handed the woman an additional 200 shekels in food vouchers.



The woman could not understand how these packages had come to them but was extremely grateful, following Moshe out the door with many blessings.

For two days after meeting this family, Moshe could not stop thinking about the condition of their apartment. When he is not volunteering, Moshe is a handyman. Given his skills and the impact the visit had on him, Moshe is now making efforts to organize a free minor facelift of the apartment for the family.



Thank you so much to all of the supporters who donated to this year's Chag Save'ah Passover Campaign so that we can help many more families like this one in Zichron have food for the Passover holiday.

Thanks to your generosity, the American Friends of Migdal Ohr raised \$138,000 for the Chag Save'ah campaign this year!



ON CAMPUS:

Migdal Ohr Student Activities for Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'Atzmaut



Students at Migdal Ohr's Machshava School for Communication & Arts took part in a ceremony on April 22nd for Yom Hazikaron, Israel's National Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism. The program began with the lowering of the national flag to half-mast, the lighting of a memorial flame and the laying of a wreath of flowers by a representative of the municipality. This event utilized students from the choir, dance troupe and drama class. They performed together to create a moving ceremony depicting the solemn nature of the day. In classes, students learned about the wars that Israel faced leading up to its indepen-



dence in 1948 as well as those following its establishment. Students listened respectfully as a siren sounded across the country commemorating those who have fallen and said a prayer of remembrance when the siren stopped.

The contrast between Memorial Day and Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day) was highlighted when students completed the memorial ceremony and began celebrating Israel's 67th birthday with a traditional flag parade and the playing of popular Israeli music.



Our new ANNUAL REPORT is now available!
Please call the office at 212-397-3700 to receive a copy.

American Friends of Migdal Ohr

1560 Broadway, Suite 807 • New York, NY 10036 • Phone:212.397.3700 • Fax:212.397.8515 • migdalohrusa.org • facebook.com/MigdalOhrUsa